



CITY NEWS



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Dinner Theatre at Cowtown

Vagabond Players bring “Red, White & Tuna” to life

Old Cowtown Museum is reviving its dinner theatre tradition with the production of “Red, White and Tuna” on July 30-31, featuring the talents of the newly formed Vagabond Players acting troupe. Cowtown’s Empire House will host one performance each evening beginning at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$23.95 per person, which includes a fried chicken dinner and the show. There will also be a cash bar. Reservations can be made by calling (316) 350-3323.

The Vagabond Players includes many recognizable faces in the Wichita theatre community: Jean Ann Cusick, Paul Jackson, Liz Willis Henry, Chistine Tasheff and Bucky Walters (actor bios attached). The group of seasoned actors came together with a desire to give back to the community, and it is carrying out that mission with its first performance at Cowtown. Nearly all of the proceeds from the show will stay with Cowtown to support its programs and services.

The actors are thrilled about using Reader’s Theater to bring the popular “Red, White and Tuna” comedic play to life at Cowtown.

“We will use scripts, and there will be minimal props, costumes and music,” Cusick said. “Our goal is to create so much excitement and energy on stage that you won’t even notice the scripts. We are definitely a new kind of Reader’s Theater.”

“Red, White and Tuna” is the third in a series of comedic plays set the fictional town of Tuna, Texas. This time around the characters are getting ready for the Fourth of July Tuna High School Class Reunion. The play – written by Jaston Williams, Joe Sears and Ed Howard – takes the audience through a satirical ride into the hearts and minds of the polyester-clad citizens of Texas' third smallest town.

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The Vagabond Players

Jean Ann Cusick

Jean Ann has a long and successful tenure on the Wichita theatre scene that can only be matched by the likes of Dick Welsbacher, Joyce Cavarozzi and Mary Jabara. Jean Ann has forgotten more credits than can be listed in a short biography and done everything imaginable: acting, directing, writing, producing, marketing, teaching and even a stint at Walt Disney World. Along the way in order to feed the brood, she accepted a few "day jobs," including real estate sales, travel agent, hotel manager and department store employee at Towne East Square (for a single day only). The name of the store shall forever remain nameless – and forgotten.

Liz Willis Henry

Liz has been acting with theatre companies around the Wichita area since 1968, and she is one of the original founders of The Vagabond Players. She made a major life change this year when she retired, but she is continuing to use her expertise in fine arts and marketing to get the company ready for its first two productions. She is also delighted to have more time to spend time with her grandchildren, her husband and his business and, of course, theatre.

Paul Jackson

Paul is dean of Wichita's ITT Technical Institute and a staunch supporter of Wichita. He considers our city to be one of the nation's best kept secrets and is excited to be home after a year away. Paul loves acting and singing – something he's done with almost every theatre company in the area – and is committed to his position as tenor soloist at University Congregational Church.

Christine Tasheff

Christine is the original owner of Cabaret Old Town. She also starred in and produced many of its successful musical comedies. Christine was first introduced to Wichita theatre by fellow Vagabond Player Bucky Walters, who came to know her through the hair industry. Her first stage outing was in COMMEDIA for Wichita Community Theatre. Christine now focuses much of her time on decorative painting with an emphasis on the Trompe l'oeil technique.

Bucky Walters

Bucky's stage life began many years ago when he was part of the "front group" for Johnny Cash's road show. In between gigs, he made extra money as a hair stylist. Today, Bucky is best known for his stand-up comedy and uncanny impersonations of the rich, famous and infamous. He is the "What's Wrong Guy" Wichitans have become familiar with over the years in both COMMEDIA and Gridiron productions. Bucky writes most of his own material, including an ongoing piece in the Old Town Gazette newspaper.