

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof

The cool play that really sizzles

The Wimberley Playhouse stage will be sizzling this summer when Tennessee Williams' classic play, "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof," opens July 30. The air conditioner may need to be set up a notch as the colorful Pollitt family starts coming on stage.

Greed, power, sex, death and dysfunction abound in this Pulitzer Prize-winning play. The setting is a summer in the 50s in Mississippi. "Big Daddy" Pollitt is coming home to celebrate his 65th birthday after a lengthy illness. He is looking forward to ruling his plantation empire, using his usual profanity as much as the bottle. But his family has other plans.

Director of the production is **David Schneider**, president of the Gaslight-Baker Theatre in Lockhart. Schneider was seen on the Wimberley stage recently in *Rumors*. Producer is **Jana White**, theatre manager and frequent producer for the Players.



Brian Villalobos and Deanna Lalich

Deanna Lalich simply sizzles as Maggie the Cat, Brick's beautiful and desirable wife. The role was made famous by Liz Taylor in the 1958 screen adaptation. Deanna has played in *Rumors*, *Mousetrap* and *Stop the World* with the Players. **Brian Villalobos** of Austin plays a sensual, brooding, tortured and drunken Brick (Paul Newman's movie role) to a "T". Villalobos has been working on independent films and returns to the theatre after a substantial absence.

José Shenkner of Dripping Springs, new to the Players, is the personification of Big Daddy, complete with commanding voice and presence. Shenkner has a long list of operatic and theatre credits and has a degree in opera performance from Yale. **Carla Daws** is poignant as Big Mama, a woman desperate to hold onto the ones she loves. Daws has been in many Players and Second Act Troupe productions, including *Leading Ladies* recently at the Playhouse.

Rick Fitzgerald, who also appeared in *Rumors*, plays Gooper, the gruesomely obnoxious Pollitt son who thinks his obsequious behavior has given him the corner on Big Daddy's affections. **Melinda Ellisor**, most recently seen in *Inspecting Carol*, *Dracula* and *Deathtrap*, plays Mae, Gooper's distressingly greedy wife, now pregnant with their sixth "no-neck monster." **Dan Williams**, just off the stage of Lee Colee's summer camp production of *West Side Story*, and seen recently in *Dracula*, is Doc Baugh, who hasn't told Big Daddy yet the truth about his illness. **Dan LaFleur** as Reverend Tooker beautifully rounds out the cast. LaFleur has been on many area stages but is new to the Players.

This completes the picture of a family on the brink of change. The key word throughout the play is "mendacity," and the family demonstrates it well. Big Daddy curses the "lying, dying liars" around him, but doesn't know how to handle the truth about his own health when it is finally revealed to him.

You'll hold your breath waiting to see what happens next. Come out and see a few old friends and some new faces on the Wimberley Playhouse stage.

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof will run July 30 – August 22. Friday and Saturday shows begin at 8:00 pm and Sunday shows are at 2:30. Tickets are \$18 except opening night (\$25, with a reception at 7:00), and may be purchased online at www.wimberleyplayers.org or by calling (512) 847-0575.



Among those Players greeting marchers passing the Playhouse during the July 5th parade were **Donna Bailey**, **Reed Neal** (posing as the Statue of Liberty) and **Judith Laird** (with a plate of cookies for the marchers).

at 7:00 p.m. At intermission, complimentary wine and sweets are served.

The June concert concluded with a standing ovation and cheers of “Bravo!” as the vibrant young professionals from Houston proved just how exciting the Players’ Expanded Offerings can be. The goal of these events is to enrich cultural life in Wimberley when the Players’ show schedule permits. The Divisi Strings concerts would not be possible without generous underwriting by the Wimberley Community Fund. It is also the intent of the Fund that the concerts serve as fundraisers, benefiting the Wimberley Players. Thank you, Wimberley Community Fund!

Don’t miss two great summer evenings of music: Sundays, July 18 and August 15. Programming for the July concert will be announced soon. Tickets are \$15 at www.wimberleyplayers.org or call 847-0575.

Coming up next!

The 2009-10 Season continues after *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* with the following productions:

Seven Brides for Seven Brothers, Sept. 24 - Oct. 17

This musical romp is a fun-filled, rowdy western about Adam, a man who goes to town to find a bride. He quickly meets Milly at a local restaurant, and then they quickly marry. But the honeymoon is over even more quickly when Milly discovers she’s married to a slob...and his six brothers. Her only hope is to find brides for them, too. Directed by **Lee Coleé**.

Pinocchio, Nov. 19 – Dec. 12

Relive the much-loved fairy tale of a woodcarver named Geppetto who resides in a small Italian village, where one day he carves a puppet from a piece of pine. The puppet is, of course, Pinocchio, whose dream is to be a real boy. The entire family will enjoy a magical night watching his dream come true. Directed by **Robert FitzGerald**.

Stage Notes...

Audition dates for *Pinocchio*

- August 28 (10 am-2pm) -- age 0-15
- August 28 (2:30 pm-6:30) -- age 13-21
- August 30 (6:30 pm-9:30) -- adults (21+)

More information available at www.wimberleyplayers.org

Talkbacks

The Players had their first “Talkback,” a chance to talk to actors, directors and stage crew and ask them questions about a production, following a first-weekend performance of *Virtual Devotion*. The Talkback for *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* will follow the performance on Sunday afternoon, August 1.

Members Only Event! 2011 Season Announcement Party

Sunday, August 29, 2010, 6:30 p.m.

Wimberley Playhouse

*Take a sneak peak at the shows
coming up next year...*

The Players Hit Parade –

Hear songs and see scenes from the past seasons.

***Wine & cheese reception in the
lobby***

Seating Limited

Reservations Required!

e-mail info@wimberleyplayers.org or call 847-0575
and leave your name and telephone number to
reserve your seats today!

Purchase Season Tickets

The early bird gets the best seats!

If you missed Divisi Strings...

You don’t want that to happen again – not if you love classical music! Reserve your seat now for two remaining chamber music concerts in the series: July 18 and August 15 at the Wimberley Playhouse, beginning

(Continued in next column)



Help us entertain you...

Everybody loves a volunteer! Here at the Wimberley Players, we not only love them, we couldn't survive without them! For... ***without volunteers the show would not go on!***

There would be no script reading committee to choose our shows; no one to tell you about them through stories, publicity and newspaper ads. No one to sell you tickets. No one to greet you at the box office on show nights. You would need to find your own seats, and open the stage curtain yourself.

But the stage would be empty. There would be no show to see because there would be no actors...and no costumes for those actors to wear. No director. No producer. The set would not be designed, much less built. The scenery would go unpainted. The lights would not be hung. The sound system would remain mute. The tech booth would be unmanned. The backstage crew—nowhere to be found.

There would be no Board of Directors to run things and figure out how to make ends meet. There would

be no *Curtain Call*, and if there were, there would be no one to fold it, stuff it in an envelope and mail it to our members.

Without our volunteers at the Village Store and the income they produce to support the Players we would not be able to pay 14% of our bills.

Without volunteers The Wimberley Players would be a name on an empty building that had no soul. Yes, we love our volunteers—and we need more! We need you... and your friends... and your neighbors.

So, please help us continue to entertain you by volunteering today. It's fun! You get to be creative while making new friends and you feel a great sense of accomplishment in the process. For more information e-mail us at info@wimberleyplayers.org or call **Vivian McDonald** at 512-847-9346 or **Charlotte Caldwell** at 512-847-8015. Remember, "There's no business like show business, there's no business I know..."

Volunteers who help entertain you!

Have Hammer . . . Will Nail

Don Stephenson moved to Wimberley from Chicago three years ago. His expertise was in publishing—hammers and saws were not his friends. Undaunted, he became a volunteer during the construction of *Deathtrap*, and has been an integral part of the set building process for most shows for the past three years. He's even helped out backstage.



Have Brush . . . Will Paint

Ten years ago **Mary Owens** moved from San Antonio to Wimberley with her husband and three children. Not only a fine art artist, Mary also owns a graphic design business. She has used her artistic talents for the Players' benefit as a scenic artist, designing show posters, and numerous stage sets. Her next project is creating the set for *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*.



Have Script . . . Will Act

Ten years ago **Perry and Donna Redden** left Houston and moved to Wimberley. Three years ago Perry Redden walked into the Wimberley Playhouse to audition for *Bright Ideas*—landed the part—and has been entertaining us in a variety of roles ever since. Although he stays busy as construction foreman for Thyssen Krupp, in addition to acting, he still finds time to help out when needed to assist in set building, handling the spotlight during some musicals, and he has also been seen working back stage.



Am Ready, Willing, and Able . . . Will Do (almost) Anything

For several years **Donna Redden** cheered on the sidelines as Perry took the limelight on the Wimberley stage. Finally she decided that she too had to become involved. A regional sales manager for Data Trace by day, in her spare time she delivers rack cards for current shows to stores, restaurants, etc., has produced one show, been involved in stage management of several others, has been a light tech, and is currently production assistant for *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*.





Thanks to volunteers...

Playhouse lobby is Players Memory Lane

When you come to the Playhouse you always expect to be entertained after taking your seat in the theatre. Now you can be entertained and take a stroll down the Players memory lane by just entering the lobby or standing around during intermission. The walls in the lobby are festooned with framed theatrical posters, representing Players productions dating back to some of the very early plays at the Greenhouse and as current as *Inspecting Carol* from this season.

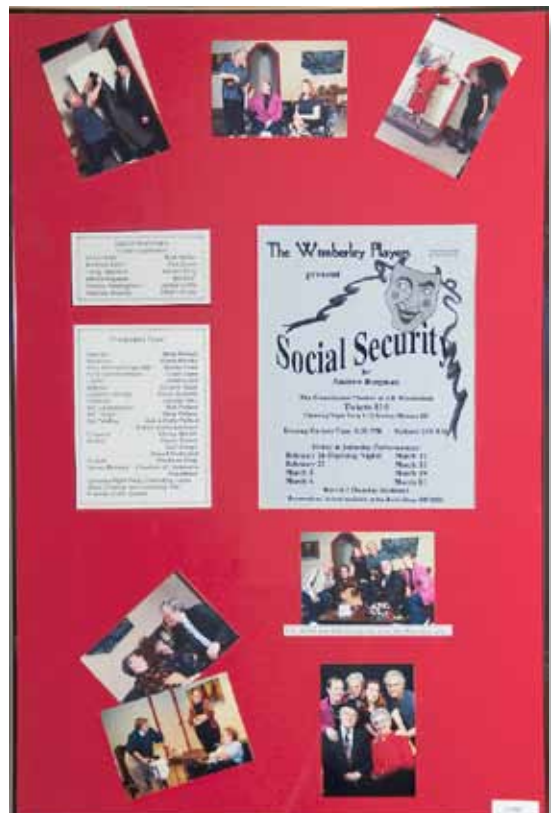
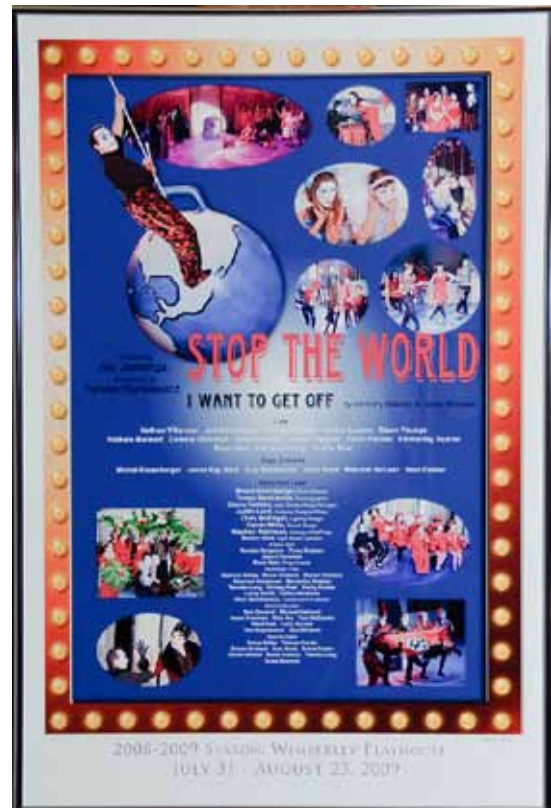
Like everything else wonderful that happens in the Players, these posters are the result of very talented and generous volunteers. Many years ago, **Betty Wright** and “**Stillie**” **Stillman** took time away from their framing business to manually design, produce, frame and donate numerous posters from Greenhouse productions. Many of these historic posters are on display in the lobby. With the opening of the Playhouse, it was time to take advantage of the digital technology available in photography, design, production and printing. Up stepped photographer **Jim Gillock** who volunteered to do the design, production and printing of the new digital-age posters while Betty and Stillie volunteered to continue donating the framing and the frames.

The first digital poster produced was for *Six Dance Lessons*, the last production at the Greenhouse. The next poster was for *1776*, the first production at the Playhouse. Since then, a digital poster has been produced for every play at the Playhouse, totaling more than 15. The most recent one to be hung was for *Inspecting Carol*. Posters for *1940s Radio Show* and *Virtual Devotion* are in the process of being produced.

Jim Gillock recently retired as photographer for the Players after 5 years. He has agreed to continue designing and producing the digital posters even though the posters will be using someone else's photos. The Players' new photographer is **Tom Brown**. The first poster displaying Tom's photos will be the *1940s Radio Show*.

Thanks to Betty, Stillie, Jim and now Tom, the lobby of the Playhouse is truly Memory Lane. Next time you're at the Playhouse, be sure to take time and look at these attractive windows into our history.

Shown in the right column are examples of the two types of historic posters on display in the Playhouse lobby. At top is a digitally created and printed poster and at the bottom is one of the manually created nostalgic posters from the Greenhouse era.



Behind
the
curtain
with

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It's about all
the people who
magically transform a
starkly empty stage into a
wonderfully
performed and
produced play.

Proudly Published by The Wimberley Players

Carla Daws... Too much talent and not enough stages

Carla Daws wasn't always an actor, but you would have a hard time convincing anyone of that. Her talent goes beyond what is usually seen in small town community theatres. It comes without effort.

Carla was attending college at Corpus Christi State University in 1986 when she took a class in Theatre Appreciation on a whim. A lecture by Jaston Williams (Greater Tuna creator) was scheduled and she was excited to hear what he had to say. By the time she arrived, the classroom was completely full and she turned around to try and sneak out. But fate had already taken over Carla's life. The instructor, with five commanding words, changed her life forever. "You, come down here, now."

Well, she slowly walked through the crowd to the center stage and in a voice that was hardly audible, confessed that she had never been on a stage in her life and was there by mistake. Famous last words! The instructor immediately paired her with a fellow actor, and told her she was in an elevator with an escaped parolee and that she was the parole officer.... "Now start your scene." Being scared beyond words, she had no clue as to what to do next so she nervously started laughing. The other actor started laughing, too, and so did the audience. A comedy routine was in the works. She was bitten by the show biz bug and that's just the beginning of the story.

Carla has been acting ever since in plays, films, commercials.... you name it. She took 10



years off to get her MBA from 1989 to 1999, doing no acting during this time. But the talent was still there. She managed to audition and get parts in 20 film/television productions, five commercials, and 25 live theatre performances, 13 of them at our own Playhouse. She somehow managed to take theatre classes and workshops at TAMU-CC, and study voice and dancing with our home-

town guru Lee Colee, Participation in various theatre workshops and studies with a Reiki master followed.

Okay, we have summed up the talented Carla Daws with more skills than would seem humanly possible in an 8-hour, 7-day week. Impressive isn't it? Put all that together with a **full-time** job with the Texas Water Development Board as their Staff Resources Officer, add to that being a volunteer at the U.T. Film School, a member of The Stock Movie Company, a Certified Yoga Instructor teaching here in Wimberley and in Austin and giving private lessons...Carla is also now a screen writer with her first film "in the can," so to speak. It is yet to be named but you can be sure

to know that I will be the first in line to see more of this very talented young lady that is actually living and breathing right here in our sweet little town of Wimberley with her also very talented husband, John Daws.

You can see the multi-faceted Carla Daws playing none other than Big Mama in the Players' Cat on a Hot Tin Roof. The role suits her personality very well because when she tells you to show up, you had better be on time.



Sometimes it's hard to recognize gorgeous Carla in certain roles, like this character in Leading Ladies.

Written by Judith Driscoll

David Schneider...**Buy your lottery tickets now...
we're all lucky to get David**

Guest Director **David Schneider** is a founding member of the Gaslight Theater, which formed in Lockhart in 2000, and is the current President of the Gaslight-Baker Theatre in Lockhart. When a neighbor noticed David's carpentry skills, she suggested he assist the Lockhart Community Theater in its remodel of their new home in the historic Baker Theater. What started as a new coat of paint, evolved into set construction; and when they found out he did theatre in high school he was asked to audition. "I got the lead role in *Bloody Jack*, a drama about Jack the Ripper. From the moment I stepped back on stage, it was in my blood."

And was it ever. In the past decade, David has performed in 39 productions, including last year's Wimberley Players production of *Rumors* as senate candidate Glenn Cooper. Although he is hard pressed to pick a favorite production, he is particularly fond of his role this past year as David O' Selznick in the Gaslight-Baker Theatre's production of *Moonlight and Magnolias*. Other memorable productions have included *How the Other Half Loves*, *Amateurs*, *Bus Stop*, *The Paris Letter*, and *Noises Off*.

When not on stage, David has appeared behind the scene, directing over 45 plays



and designing sets for over 50 productions. David's set for *Sleuth* and his production of *Boom Town* have been recognized for Applause Awards by AustinLiveTheatre.com. With all the artistic blood flowing through his veins, you would hardly expect that David's real job is that of an Accounting Manager for a large state agency. "One keeps me sane and the other pays the bills. I'll leave it to you to decide which is which."

David has done a number of costume designs for several productions, including a full set of 16th Century Spanish court costumes for a youth production of *Infanta*, based on Oscar Wilde's short story of the princess of Spain and her love for a hunch-backed dwarf. "When I designed each of the dresses for the Infanta and her lady-in-waiting with 9 yards of black velvet upholstery fabric, I thought my seamstress was going to kill me." This production traveled to San Antonio and performed in the Texas Non-Profit Theatre's Youth Workshop.

David was very excited to be considered as a candidate to direct *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. "The play is such a classic. Most people are familiar with the movie and have never had the opportunity to truly experience Tennessee Williams' amazing play." David has been very pleased to see such a dedicated group of volunteers assisting in creating this vision. "The original set design created for the Broadway production was very minimalist, with fabric and light establishing the performance spaces. I had a decidedly different vision when it came to the set design for this production. The construction, set decorating and props volunteers have done an amazing job in bringing that vision to life."

We hope you can meet David and this amazing cast and crew when you attend a performance of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*.



David was hilarious as Glenn Cooper in *Rumors*