

## *Leading Ladies* Cross dressing has never been so much fun

The Wimberley Players do it again! The springtime show which opens April 17 and runs until May 10 is an uproariously funny romp of mistaken identity and eccentric characters with imaginative entrances, exits, dialogue and costume changes. Written by Ken Ludwig, *Leading Ladies* features two financially-challenged English Shakespearean actors. Empty pockets have them performing *Scenes from Shakespeare* on the Moose

Lodge circuit in Pennsylvania. When they hear that an old lady is about to die and leave her fortune to her two long-lost English nephews, they resolve to pass themselves off as her relatives. The trouble is that the relatives aren't nephews but nieces. Romantic entanglements abound, especially when Leo falls head-over-petticoat in love with the old lady's niece, Meg, who's engaged to Duncan, the local minister. Throw in an inept old country doctor and his intellectually-challenged son, Butch, who is madly in love with Audrey and you have the ingredients for a production that will keep you laughing all night long.

**David Bisett** is the director and **Jana White** the producer of this "laugh-a-minute" comedy. The leading men who play the leading ladies in this show are **Alex DeLeon** (a newcomer to the WP stage) as Jack Gable and **David McCullars** (last seen as Anselmo in *Man of La Mancha*) as Leo Clark. They go back and forth as their alter egos, Stephanie and Maxine. Character Jack is in love with Audrey and he keeps hugging her all night long while portraying both Jack and Stephanie. Meanwhile, the doctor and his son, Butch fall



Before pursuing their fortune-hunting adventure, Alex DeLeon as Jack (left) and David McCullars as Leo perform as itinerate Shakespearean actors.

madly in love with Stephanie. David McCullars moves with ease from Leo to Maxine and back again. Leo falls in love with Meg while he is dressed as Maxine, which leads to wacky moments of hilarity.

**Katie Combs** is Meg. She blossoms in this role, standing up to her cheap-skate boyfriend Duncan and finding true love at last. Duncan,

a dastardly minister, is portrayed by **Carl Galante** (most recently seen in *Mousetrap* as Mr. Paravacini). **Rebecca Stokinger** (seen on the WP stage in *Man of La Mancha*, and *Dracula*) plays ditsy Audrey, a waitress whose roller-skating antics are guaranteed to add to the hilarity. Ornerly Aunt Florence, who never seems to die, is played by **Carla Daws**. Carla's most recent role on the WP stage was Josiah Bartlett in *1776*. Her funny one liners all hit pay dirt. **Gary Yowell**, appearing as the doctor (his most recent WP role was in *Christmas Belles*), has some insulting dialogue with Duncan and some romantic conversation with Stephanie. **Stephen Reynolds**, who was last seen in *1776*, is dumb Butch, who recites Shakespearean dialogue too fast. To say anymore about the antics of the cast would be giving away the many twists and turns of this charming farce.

The Wimberley Players will perform *Leading Ladies* April 17 through May 10 at the Wimberley Playhouse, 450 Old Kyle Rd, Wimberley (Fridays and Saturdays at 8 pm and Sunday matinees at 2:30 pm). Tickets can be reserved by calling 512-847-0575 starting April 6. Ticket prices are \$15 except for Opening Night (\$20). Visa and MasterCard are accepted.



## Ozzie, the stage door cat... Landed on his feet and in our hearts

It was last summer and Lee Coleé's children's summer camp had just begun. The year's production was *The Wizard of Oz*. Witches, munchkins, and Oz townspeople arrived each day for rehearsal and costume fittings. Each morning (as many people involved in the production will recall), when the children arrived, a skinny orange cat met them at the front door begging for food. After a day or so, several compassionate people donated a bag of Brookshire Brothers cat chow. We could count on seeing this pathetic, dingy little stray every morning as he looked for his breakfast.

He seemed happy to see the children and quickly became a friend of theatre manager Adam Witko's dog, Otis. They enjoyed each other's company (when the little orange cat got past whoever was guarding the door). You could see that his survival was becoming difficult. He not only had to avoid the raccoon's evening raid on his rations and dodge cars coming in and out of the theatre parking lot, but had to sit out the loud cracks of thunder and soaking rains of mid summer. Sometimes the sight of the little orange cat with his water soaked fur nearly broke my heart.

My husband and I finally gave in after everyone else at the theatre said NO to kitty cat adoption. We brought the little orange stray home and named him Ozzie, after the play in production when we first met him. The little orange cat has not only made himself at home, watching the morning and evening news with me and sleeping at the foot of our bed, but has gained 8 lbs. Where his fur was once dingy and matted, he now sports a lovely frosty orange coat with a tail as bushy and beautiful as a full grown raccoon.

Ozzie is a very important part of our family now and we are very fond of him, hoping to provide him with a friend in the near future whom we will name, "Dorothy" (of the Yellow Brick Road). *(Continued in next column)*

For those of you who wondered what had become of the little stray orange tomcat from last summer, now you know the rest of the story...

**Linda Addeo**

## DAR gets tour of the Playhouse



*On Jan. 12, a group of DAR members toured the Playhouse with Adam Witko. These ladies may be remembered in colonial period costumes when they took part in the Grand Opening weekend of the Playhouse during the inaugural show, 1776.*

## The morning after...

Wimberley Players teams were hard at work the day after our Annual Meeting, with the mail-out team folding and stuffing Curtain Call newsletters in the lobby, another group discussing our expanded offerings program in the dressing room...and when the newsletter group finished its work, our membership director and production manager took the table to add up membership dues collected during the Annual Meeting! Never a dull moment for the Players, off stage or on.



*The new Wimberley Players Board for 2009 gathered at the Annual Meeting in January. Board members on the front row, l to r: Barbara Alexander, John Crosby, Linda Addeo, Sharon Drobeck, Darlene Kukla, and Suzanne McCord. Second row: Jane Dunham, Kay Henderson, Kay Allison, Charlotte Caldwell, Gina McClure, David Bisett, and Jana White. Back row: Joe Maverick, Judith Laird, Lynn Adelson (President), Michael Iles and Dell Hood. Missing are Russell Cox and Adam Witko.*



## Death in the Afternoon ... and ...Tea in the Manor House

Remember all of those cucumber sandwiches that Madam Arcati kept eating in *Blithe Spirit*, commenting on how delicious they were? Well, we found out they really are that good! And, did you know that high tea means low (society) tea? And afternoon tea means high society tea... and savories, and scones and desserts. And...have you ever had a radish sandwich or made a pot of proper English tea?

After much research on English tea protocol, all of this happened upon the stage of the Wimberley Playhouse on Sunday, February 22, in the setting of Monkwell Manor for the Players production of Agatha Christie's sell-out murder mystery, *The Mousetrap*.



The event was labeled "Tea and Mystery" in the 2009 Hobby Lobby booklet, and those who signed up for the event were treated to a *Mousetrap* matinee, a behind-the-scenes tour of the theatre given by **Adam Witko**, a boisterous chat with several of the actors, and a quiet elegant hour of tea, finger foods, and friendly conversation.

Each year the **Civic Club's "Hobby Lobby"** raises money to give back to the community of Wimberley. **Kay Allison**, Players VP of Development, hosted "Tea and Mystery" to help aid this organization in their fund raising efforts. Kay also helped serve tea to the seventeen ladies and two gentleman who were lucky enough to get reservations. **Julie Ray**, Community Relations Chair, also donned an apron and helped pour. Meanwhile, in the kitchen (AKA Concession Stand), I, as Hospitality Chair, and Players member **Karen Nielsen** were busy plating a total of 57 plates for the three courses served. A wonderful time was had by all—even the workers.

The Players provided the funding for the refreshments that were served, as well as the labor to set up and tear down the make-shift tearoom. It was their way of helping an organization that has been so generous in their donations to our theater.

**Charlotte Caldwell**

## A lot going on with the Players

The Wimberley Players were pleased to host the Starlight Honors Recital at the Playhouse on March 8. A near-capacity crowd enjoyed the musical talents of 10 young musicians specially selected by the Starlight Symphony Orchestra. Bravo to them and to their Music Director and Conductor, **Cina Crisera**. The technical assistance of the Players' **Adam Witko** and **Michael Caldwell** were key to the success of the event. **Julie Ray** served as coordinator from our Expanded Offerings committee.

The railings have been installed! They not only look fantastic, but add a much-needed safety factor in our theatre. We send a huge thank you to the **Lions Club** for generously supporting this effort. Thank you, Adam Witko, for your work in getting this project completed.

The Players will be among the recipients of the annual **Rotary Club** gala. We plan to upgrade the production tech capabilities with new video equipment from this donation. You can help by supporting their always fun Art Gala on May 3, 2009, at the Salt Lick Pavilion. For ticket information, contact **Marsha Cooper** of the Rotary Club at 847-5505 or go to [www.WimberleyRotary.org](http://www.WimberleyRotary.org).

The **Wimberley Valley Art League** is sponsoring a Festival of the Arts on Saturday, May 9, and we are participating in this celebration of the incredible opportunities for visual and performance art in our community. Join us on the Square!

Put Nov. 1 on your calendar – Last year the Players, in consideration of the economic times and the devastation of Hurricane Ike on our own Gulf Coast, held a hugely successful benefit for hurricane relief at spectacular **Old Glory Ranch**. This year will be our turn! We will be bringing Oaxaca to Wimberley as we celebrate Dia de los Muertos to benefit the Players. Don't miss this fun event! Underwriting help is being accepted – call **Kay Allison** at 847-1873.

## Mark your calendars...

Remember humming "What Kind of Fool Am I?" and "Once in a Lifetime"? Those songs came from **Stop the World - I Want to Get Off** (written by Anthony Newley) the hit musical of 1961. Toe-tapping feet and those great songs will make you want this world to spin on and on. **Stop the World - I Want to Get Off** will be directed by Jay Jennings (recent director of the Wimberley Players production of *Deathtrap*) and will run from July 31 to August 23, 2009.

## Starlight Symphony Orchestra

The upcoming Pops Concert will be performed Friday, May 1 at 7:30pm at the Hill Country Galleria, Bee Cave, Austin, and Saturday, May 2 at 7:30pm at the Emily Ann Theater, Wimberley. The Pops Concert will feature music from popular Broadway musicals. Favorites will include selections from *Grease*, *Guys and Dolls* and *My Fair Lady*. As always, admission to the Starlight Symphony Orchestra performances are free and open to the public. Donations are accepted.

### Thanks For A Great Year!

Some say it was the best Annual Meeting they have ever attended! Others say it was a great party complete with music provided by the **Ash Family Band**, an attractive and delicious buffet prepared by **Linda Allen Catering**, wine contributed by the Wimberley Valley Spirits and gifts of lovely pearl necklaces for all in attendance – (don't run your teeth over them!). Actually it was the Wimberley Players Annual Dinner and 30th Anniversary Celebration, held at the Playhouse on January 25.

Our President, **Lynn Adelson**, led us through a beautiful slide presentation created by **Julie Ray** which was a visually attractive and concise wrap-up of 2008 with previews of what's to come in 2009. So concise in fact that the business part of our meeting was finished before the food was scheduled to arrive! .....more time to visit and enjoy a little more libation!

The second annual Drammy Awards were presented with our very special thanks to **all** our hard working, talented and loyal volunteers.

In 2008 a record \$26,345 was contributed through annual dues. Your dollars are essential to our operating budget. We're hoping 2009 will exceed last year, even in today's economy, so that with your continued enthusiasm and support we can continue to provide quality performances and entertainment for the community.

### DATES TO REMEMBER

**April 22....Focus on Members Luncheon & Dinner** (for those who can't attend daytime)  
**September....Member Picnic** (date & place TBD)

**It's not too late to become a member.** There's a membership application in every production Playbill and on-line at [www.wimberleyplayers.org](http://www.wimberleyplayers.org). You may also call me at 722-3170 (no 512 needed) and I'll have one sent to you.

Thank you so much for joining our happy band of players and we look forward to seeing you at all future productions.

### 2009 DRAMMY AWARDS

Girl Who Can't Say "No".....**Dody Spencer**  
 Pin Cushion .....**Donna Bailey, Donna Frazier & Pennye Graves**  
 Handy with a Hammer.....**Don Stephenson**  
 Hop, Skip & Jump.....**Claire & Bruce Billingley**  
 Sweet Talker.....**Glenette Kuhs**

Miles of Smiles.....**Maxine Stevens**  
 We've Got It Nailed.....**Gregory Dunham**  
 Princess of the Palette.....**Denise Bjerke**  
 Energizer Bunny.....**Gerin Hood**  
 Miss Congeniality.....**Chris Sauer**  
 Angels in the Outfield.....**John & Linda Addeo**

### Our 2009 Annual Meeting Facebook



**Ben and Jackie Duffie**



**The Ash Family Band**



*l to r:* **Melinda Gumbert, Kay Henderson, Kay Allison and Maxine Stevens**



**John and Patty Crosby**



**Dody Spencer (l) with Bruce and Claire Billingsley**



**Barbara Alexander and Whitney Marlett Mollahan**

### Special Notice

If you are not already a member in 2009, please join us because this will be the *LAST Curtain Call* you receive in the mail; the *Curtain Call* is a benefit of membership. Information about the WP is always available online at our website [www.wimberleyplayers.org](http://www.wimberleyplayers.org). If you would like to receive email updates about the WP, please send an email to the players from our "contact" icon, with your name and email address.

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

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## Katie Combs When you need beauty, talent and grace

Being a very photogenic face at the Wimberley Playhouse certainly does not earn you points, but undoubtedly wins you dozens of admirers and bunches of attention. Just who is that young lady with the lush brunette curls and smiling hazel eyes? She has been known by many names – Rosemary, Mrs. Potts, Ginny, Shelby, Sylvia, and most recently, in her favorite role onstage as Mina in *Dracula*. Of course, at the theatre everyone knows her as **Katie Combs**, one of the darlings of the stage. Not only does she wear her acting ability like a well-earned badge, but she goes out of her way to make you smile, to share your concerns, and (according to her fellow actors), she helps to make you look good on stage.



in the WP production of *Leading Ladies* which opens April 17<sup>th</sup> at the Wimberley Playhouse.

Katie is grateful for the opportunity to work with so many talented, caring, fun-loving people in the Wimberley Players organization, and the results of a recent survey indicate that the feeling is mutual.

The big goal in Katie's life is to become a professional entertainer. Having taken singing lessons with **Lee Coleé**, she is a member of "The Vintage Divas," a singing group arranged and directed by Lee. Katie has taken acting lessons from **David Bisett**, which she admits were interesting and informative. She sings constantly and claims that the sound of music is soothing. Entertaining is in her blood. She admits to eating, breathing and sleeping the desire to sing and act.

Having lived previously in Buda, Katie now resides in Austin. She is the middle child in her family, with six sisters and one brother. Katie credits **Carla Daws** (a veteran of the WP stage) with introducing her to the theatre when she auditioned for the play *Over the River and Through the Woods* and got the role.

Recently Katie changed jobs. She had previously been employed as a veterinary assistant, a position she said was difficult due to the many crises and unpleasant situations which arise each day in the field of animal care. Now she is a chiropractic assistant and her sensitive and empathetic nature allows her to enjoy a healing, calming atmosphere.

Not just another pretty face, Katie recently showed off her technical skills by working in the booth for her debut as sound coordinator for *Mousetrap*. She will appear as Meg



*In the title role of Sylvia opposite David Bisett.*



*As Mina in Dracula opposite Chris Higgins (left) and Rick Billings.*



*Playing opposite her sister, Ashley, in Jake's Women.*

## Donna Bailey and Donna Frazier Their work is a lot more than SEW, SEW

There are two ladies with needle and thread hanging around the costume room at the theatre. These two are among the busiest people in a production. They work hard, moving in and out of the shadows of the dressing rooms without a sound, and sometimes without acknowledgement. They are known as the “Two Donnas.” There is “Tiny Donna (Bailey),” and “Tall Donna (Frazier).” They have designed and constructed costumes for WP which have amazed audiences not only with the exquisite choice of fabrics and fabulous tailoring, but in many cases with their fine attention to historic detail.

“Tiny Donna” was only five years old when her grandmother (a fabulous seamstress in her time) taught her everything she knew. She was soon designing and making her own clothes. She refers to herself not as a seamstress, but as a tailor, a title she says many would apply only to a man who does this type of work. She disputes this gender specific claim as she explains that tailoring is a step beyond cutting and sewing an article together. It is an art form.

“Tiny Donna” got her nickname understandably by being small in stature. This is the only thing tiny about her. She is multi-talented. Not only is she a grand mistress of the sewing machine, and queen of the tiny stitches, but this tiny woman has a voice bigger than she is. Having learned to play the guitar a mere six years ago, she can not only carry a tune, but leaves everyone entranced with her sweet Texas vocalizations. She claims she owes



*Tall Donna Frazier (left) and Tiny Donna Bailey literally never see eye-to-eye except when they're sitting down.*

her singing talent to her mom, who won her dad's heart when singing ballads with the USO.

Donna is recognizable in town as the little lady with the big hat. It has rapidly become her trademark. The assorted pins which adorn her cowboy hat have been gifts to her by fans and sometimes strangers. Small children give her feathers to stick in her hatband. One must never underestimate the fact that great things come in small packages or, at the least, “tiny” packages.

“Tall Donna” comes by her nickname honestly as she is more than a head taller than “Tiny Donna.” You don't really have to be tall to be that much taller than “Tiny Donna,” but it became a way to distinguish between both of these talented women without having to use last names (which sound impersonal in the family atmosphere of the Wimberley Playhouse).

Another multi-talented volunteer, “Tall Donna” is a cool, calm, collected woman, who organizes both the actors and the costumes to create a panic-free atmosphere during a performance. “Where's my green jacket?!” screams an anxious actor about to make his entrance on stage. “Look on the repair/alterations rack in the costume room,” Donna calmly whispers. “Tall Donna” is the finder of costumes, the organizer of outfits, and the “cleaner upper” of messes.

We applaud the commitment and service of these two ladies who are rarely seen, but greatly appreciated.