Community Players Proudly Presents

Friday, May 9, 8:00 pm
Saturday, May 10, 8:00 pm
Friday, May 16, 8:00 pm
Saturday, May 17, 8:00 pm

Community Players
Community United Methodist Church
20 N. Center Street, Naperville, IL

Arsenic and Old Lace

by Joseph Kesselring
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Arsenic and Old Lace is produced by
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Director's Note

Community Players is pleased to present *Arsenic and Old Lace* as our fortieth production. It is the twenty-fifth anniversary of the first time we performed the play in 1983.

Arsenic and Old Lace was written by American playwright Joseph Kesselring in 1939. Kesselring taught at Bethel College in North Newton, Kansas. He lived in a boarding house called Goerz House; many of the features of its living room are like the Brewsters' boarding house. (The Goerz house is now the home of the college president.)

According to Wikipedia, the plot line of *Arsenic and Old Lace* may have been based on "actual events that occurred in a house in Windsor, Connecticut, where an older woman took in boarders and allegedly poisoned them for their pensions. Kesselring originally conceived the play as a heavy drama, but a friend, reading the half-finished play, convinced him it would be much more effective as a comedy."

In the original cast, the role of Jonathan Brewster was actually played by Boris Karloff, making the comparisons of Jonathan's appearance to that of Boris Karloff even funnier.

For the Community Players who have been involved since the inception of the group, *Arsenic and Old Lace* has a very special place in our hearts. It was the first show for which we had a real set. Fellowship Hall was turned into the Brewster boarding house!

The enjoyment which the audience and the actors experienced during that show, encouraged the Community Players to move upstairs into the present location for the plays in 1984. We have been presenting a great variety of quality performances since our beginnings in 1981. Thank you for your support. Enjoy the show.

Oliver J. Taylor, Director

Production Crew

Director ..... Oliver J. Taylor

Assistant Director ..... Dean Craig

Producer ..... Ed Green

Set Design ..... Ken Cox

Set Construction ..... Ken Cox, Garth Lawson, Ed Green, Eddie Green, Dean Craig, Bryan Craig, Nate Burke, Scott Shallcross, Ron Van Buskirk, Stephanie Hild, Jim Morrow, Brian Murphy, Ollie Taylor, Graham Wills

Costumes ..... Pam Smith, Jill Morrow, Ollie Taylor

Properties ..... Kay Lawson, Evie Burke, James Morrow

Light Design ..... Graham Wills

Lights ..... Mary Wu

Stage Manager ..... Dean Craig

Program ..... Toni Reiss

Artwork Design ..... Ed Green

Photographer ..... Toni Reiss

Ticket Sales ..... Ken Cox

Box Office ..... Dave Hollander

House Managers ..... Rosemary Zimmerman

Ushers ..... Debbie Craig, Shannon Craig, Sarah Hollander, Keri Hartman

Cast of Characters

(in order of appearance)

Abby Brewster ..... Pam Smith
The Rev. Dr. Harper ..... Dale Zimmerman
Teddy Brewster ..... Dave Jenkins
Officer Brophy ..... Eddie Green
Officer Klein ..... Bryan Craig
Martha Brewster ..... Jill Morrow
Elaine Harper ..... Stephanie Hild
Mortimer Brewster ..... Ed Green
Adam Hoskins ..... David Green
Mr. Gibbs ..... Jim Morrow
Jonathan Brewster ..... Ken Cox
Dr. Einstein ..... Nate Burke
Mr. Spenalzo ..... D. Ummy
Officer O'Hara ..... Graham Wills
Lt. Rooney ..... Garth Lawson
Mr. Witherspoon ..... Dean Craig

Synopsis of Scenes

The entire action of the play takes place in the living room of the Brewster home in Brooklyn, New York, 1941.

Act I: Late afternoon.

Act II: Later that night.

Intermission (cookies and water will be available)

Act III: Scene 1: Still later that night.

Scene 2: Early the next morning.

Biographies

(in alphabetical order)

Nate Burke (Herman Einstein) is delighted to be involved in this production. After many Community Players' shows having portrayed policemen, he is excited to finally be pursued. He is elated to be a partner of the revered and sought-after Jonathan Brewster. In recent years, he has captured the information superhighway and works with a local Internet Provider.

Ken Cox (Jonathan Brewster) thanks all those who, when told he was playing a psychotic mass murderer, said "Oh, you'll be perfect." It's good to know what people really think of you. When not on stage, Ken works as a programmer for Visualytics LLC, and also in the Community UMC office.

Bryan Craig has really enjoyed being a part of this production. He is a Junior at Neuqua Valley High School. Bryan has been in shows at both Neuqua and with Community Players - most recently *The Diary of Anne Frank.* He especially enjoyed being in Neuqua's production of *Les Miserables* last year.

Dean Craig (Mr. Witherspoon) was the house manager for Community Players' first production of *Arsenic.* Since then, Dean has been on-stage and backstage in several Community Players' productions. He enjoys being on stage with his son Bryan.

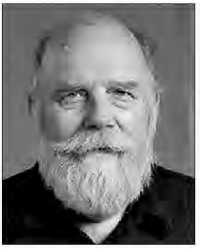
David Green (Adam Hoskins). Dead men tell no tales.

Ed Green (Mortimer Brewster) is excited to be playing Mortimer again after almost 9 years. This show is one of Ed's favorites and he is thrilled to be doing it with Community Players along with all of the men in his family. You would have seen him last fall as Otto Frank in *The Diary of Anne Frank*. As always, he thanks his wife June for her patience and continued support.

Eddie Green is honored to be in this production of *Arsenic and Old Lace*, one of his favorite plays. This is Eddie's 7th production with Community Players and he is glad to be part of the 25th anniversary. His recent performances include *Inherit the Wind* and *The Diary of Anne Frank*.

Stephanie Hild (Elaine Harper) is excited to be part of Community Players. This is her first play since high school where she had the lead role in *Oklahoma*. She has been spending her years with her loving and supportive husband, Jeff and her two girls, Emily and Chloe (who are not quite sure of the "kissing scenes" with Mortimer!!) It's been very fun to be part of the Community Players and everyone involved! Thanks for the opportunity.

Dave Jenkins (Teddy Brewster), Presidential trivia is one of Dave's favorite hobbies, so playing a man who thinks he's Teddy Roosevelt is perfect. Most of the characters that he has played in the troupe have been a little looney, so this one came naturally. In his spare time (?!?) he teaches music and works with the youth of CUMC.



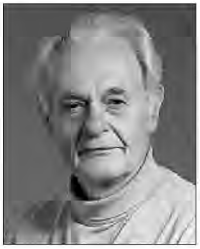
Garth Lawson (Lieutenant Rooney) was Officer Brophy for Community Players' first production of *Arsenic*. It only took twenty five years to get my promotion. In real life Garth drives a school bus for district 203.

Jill Morrow (Martha Brewster) is elated to be in this show. It's her first major role. She thanks her family for being so patient. It's the first time she's done a show with her husband Jim Morrow as he is usually behind the scenes. She knew he was a good catch when she married him, but she CAN'T even poison him after 38 years of marriage.

Jim Morrow (Mr. Gibbs) This is Jim's first play in front of the set. His wife Jill (Aunt Martha) will be glad when he gets out of character and is not grumpy at home! He feels fortunate to work with such a great group of people.

Pam Smith (Abby Brewster) Pam is pleased to be making her 4th appearance on the Community Players stage. She was previously seen as Mrs. Krebs in *Inherit the Wind*, the first lady of Sweet Apple in *Bye, Bye Birdie* and Letty Blacklock in *A Murder is Announced*. She has spent the past 6 years using her light & breezy creative energy in local theater, both on stage & behind the scenes. She would like to thank all her friends on stage & in the audience for the never ending support & encouragement. She's Deelighted!

Graham Wills (O'Hara) has appeared in and directed numerous Community Players' shows since *Brigadoon* in the early 90's. Despite living two decades in Ireland, this is his first time playing an Irishman. Graham organizes drama for Community's contemporary service, plays recreational soccer and is a black belt at Tae Kwon Do. In his spare time he has been known to work occasionally. As always, it is a joy to work with both old and new friends in Arsenic.



Dale Zimmerman (Rev. Harper) This is my 14th play with Community Players since I first appeared in *Life With Father* in 1992. It is also the 6th play I've been in with our son-in-law Ed, the 4th with our grandson Eddie, and the 1st with our grandson Dave. I thank my wife Rosemary for supporting me in something I love to do.

Special Thanks

The cast and crew of *Arsenic and Old Lace* would like to graciously thank the following people:

Clyde and Joan Uebele, Patti Hollingsworth, Beth Elders, John Murr and Pam Smith for the loan of props used during the performance.

Ron Van Buskirk for the construction of the special windows over the window seat.

Avery Sipla for her invaluable help with casting.

The Community Players Present

Community Players is celebrating its 27th year of quality community theater with its 40th production, *Arsenic and Old Lace*. On behalf of the entire troupe at Community Players, we would like to thank you sincerely for your patronage and encourage you to join us again very soon. If you should have an interest in working with this group, in any capacity, please fill out the information requested at the bottom of this page and give it to one of the ushers before you leave the theater.

Name: _____

Telephone (with area code): _____

Email Address: _____

Would you like to be included on our email list?

Yes ____ No ____