



# SPOTLIGHT

401 North 6th Street

September 8, 2022

www.fslt.org

**Dates:** Opening Night of *The Philadelphia Story* will be Thursday, September 22. Regular performances will be September 23-24, 28-30 and October 1. A matinee will be offered on Sunday, September 25.

**Show Times:** Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m. Patrons may be seated after 6:45 p.m. The matinee will begin at 2:00 p.m. Patrons may be seated after 1:15 p.m.

**Season Flex Pass Seat Selection:**

Seat selection begins 7:00 a.m.

**Saturday, Sept. 10** for Flex Pass patrons. Select seats online at [fslt.org](http://fslt.org) or call the Box Office at 479-783-2966 (extn. 2) to request seats on the phone. Flex Pass patrons may also purchase an additional ticket for every pass they have.

**General Public Tickets:** General public tickets are available beginning 7:00 a.m. **Thursday, Sept. 15.**

Purchase online at [fslt.org](http://fslt.org) or call the Box Office at 479-783-2966 (extn. 2) to purchase on the phone. Opening Nights are \$20. All other performances are \$12.

**Box Office Phone Calls:** Be prepared to leave a message with details about your seat/ticket request including a phone number where you can easily be reached. Volunteers will return calls during variable hours. Reminder: To reach the Box Office select extn. 2.

**Sip Sip Hooray!** Oh the excitement of Opening Night! Courtesy of **Sodie's Wine and Spirits**, wine and champagne is served pre-show. At intermission, a special dessert is served along with brew from **Fort Smith Coffee**. Tickets are \$20. (By calling the Box Office, Flex Pass and Wednesday Night Subscribers can attend Opening Night for an \$8 fee.)

FSLT Performs  
**The Philadelphia Story**  
 A Classic Romantic Comedy

*"Don't say 'stinks,' darling. If absolutely necessary 'smells,'—but only if absolutely necessary." - Margaret Lord, The Philadelphia Story*

A society wedding, a scandal brewing, and a bride distracted by a brash reporter and her charming ex-husband make a bubbly brew in *The Philadelphia Story* which plays September 22 through October 1 at FSLT. The play by Philip Barry opened on Broadway in 1939 as a vehicle for Katherine Hepburn. The 1940 film is a beloved classic starring Hepburn reprising her role as Tracy Lord and costarring Cary Grant and Jimmy Stewart.

The show is a favorite for FSLT having been previously produced in 1957 and in 1981. After successfully directing an off-season Christmas show in 2021, FSLT veteran Tina Dale is now making now her full-run directorial debut with this show.

The play opens on a flurry of wedding plans for the marriage of society divorcee Tracy Lord (Grace Andrews) and up-and-coming politician George Kittredge (Ian Miller). Scandal is brewing because the family patriarch Seth Lord (Charles Belt) has left his wife Margaret (Jill Ledbetter) to take up with a glamorous dancer and the media smells blood in the water. To prevent a tabloid from publishing a story about the affair, brother Sandy Lord (Brandon Bolin) offers full wedding access to a journalist McCauley "Mike" Conner (Eric Wells) and his photographer/girlfriend Liz Imbrie (Jamie Lambdin-Bolin). Complicating matters further is the arrival of Tracy's charming and still devoted ex-husband C.K. Dexter Haven (Christian Meurer). The action is enlivened by Tracy's younger sister Dinah (Isabella Ree) who is determined to get Tracy back with

See *The Philadelphia Story* on page 3



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR SHOW SPONSOR



Our customer base and employees are as diverse as the communities we serve, which requires us to stay informed and be supportive of how we can help close inequality gaps. We continue to make use of our resources and platforms to benefit these communities. That's why we are proud sponsors of Fort Smith Little Theatre and continue our commitment to supporting organizations and projects that strengthen the Fort Smith area.



### Kudos for Kindness

Thanks to **Arvest Bank**, free admission to the *Annie* Dress Rehearsal was provided to the Fort Smith Boys & Girls Clubs as well as other children's and senior citizen groups. Additionally, **Bill Engles** and **Jeremiah and Stacy Gentry** financed half price kids tickets for two Thursday performances. Their generosity allowed a lot more folks to enjoy live theatre and the fun of *Annie*.

### Hosted By Homewood Suites

When the descendants of Flo Pattee, FSLT's "Founding Mother," traveled here to attend *Annie*, they were hosted by **Homewood Suites by Hilton**. We appreciate this lovely hotel for generously providing accommodations for our special guests!

## Director's Letter

*The Philadelphia Story* has been a favorite movie and play of mine for years. When I learned I was going to have the chance to direct it for the 2022 season, it was a very happy day. I am very excited to see this show brought to our stage.

This classic romantic comedy has a way of staying relevant even though it was written more than 80 years ago. While the story is set soundly in the 1930s-1940s, it is a relatable story for today's audience. It's also just plain fun.

I first saw *The Philadelphia Story* with my dad when I was a young teenager. Not only did he spark my interest in classic movies at a young age, he always encouraged my involvement in theater as a high school student and an adult. He would have been so proud to see this production and tell all he knew that his daughter was the director. Unfortunately, Daddy died about a year before I learned I would be directing this play. His passing was part of the stimulus that led me to submit it for this year's season. I'm personally dedicating this show to him.

I hope everyone who sees it connects with it in some way and thoroughly enjoys it. I just want to share my love of this story with all our patrons, and hope they leave with a smile in their heart.

-Tina Dale, Director



### Seat Tickets Checked By Ushers

If you selected your seats online, you can bypass the Box Office when you arrive and show your print-at-home ticket or your ticket confirmation on your smart phone to an usher. Alternatively, go to the Box Office upon your arrival, pick up your seat ticket, then proceed to an usher at either aisle.

### Remembering Lindy

The following persons have contributed to FSLT in memory of Lindy Cotner, a talented actor and volunteer who was a part of our theatre family for many years. We appreciate these memorial gifts as well as the contributions Lindy made to FSLT. *Bonnie and Mike Smets, Rick and Jan Beauchamp, Twana Troutt, Pettus Kincannon, Alan Swaim, John Furness, Mr. and Mrs. Donald Lewison, George and Carole Beattie, Bernard W. Beall, Marshall Yantis, Don and Delores McMillan, and Kitty Holohan.*



## The Philadelphia Story opens September 22

Dexter, and by Uncle Willie (Brett Short) whose relentless skirt chasing creates complications aplenty.

Other characters include Trent Gregory as butler Thomas, Lexi Housley as maid Elsie, T.J. Dudley as Mac the night watchman, and Joe Graham as Dr. Parsons. Understudies include Maddie Webb, Jackie Reaves, Brad Nance, Wesley Fox, and Joanne Peterson.

Dale's experienced crew includes assistant director Joanne Peterson, stage manager Audra Sargent, and producer Joe Graham. Emilee Dale is in charge of costumes, Sharla Cameron is prop mistress, and Rebekah Martin is designing lights. Gary Cameron designed the set with Brad Nance and Brett Short contributing to construction.

Dale is delighted to be directing. "My dad was a big classic movie buff. I can vividly remember sitting beside him watching *The Philadelphia Story* with Katherine Hepburn, Cary Grant and Jimmy Stewart. I had seen Jimmy Stewart in a few movies by then and had a huge crush on him. I think I had seen Cary Grant too. But it was the first time I saw Katherine Hepburn and I was in awe. Because of my personal attachment to the film, I was thrilled when I was chosen to direct *The Philadelphia Story* for this 75th season. I just wish my dad (who has now passed away) was here to see it."

Leading lady Grace Andrews is excited to be returning to FSLT for her first lead role on our stage as an adult. Andrews recently moved back to Fort Smith after a decade of working in television and film. "I think Fort Smith Little Theatre is the perfect venue for live theatre! My biggest challenge has been making the transition back from film acting to stage acting. But I

am super thankful to be back and thankful to the cast and crew for such a great time!"

Assistant director Joanne Peterson has acted, directed, and played multiple crew roles since she began volunteering with the theatre. "After directing the off-season show *The Whole Shebang* last April, I wanted to get more experience seeing how others direct to prepare for directing a full-run show in the future. I have loved watching and learning from Tina!"

Director Dale concludes, "This is a really fun show. The females are strong and sassy. The male characters are great. Though it was written in 1939, there is something timeless about it. Don't misunderstand; the story is not one that could be set in today's world, but the emotions and actions are something people can always understand. I know our audiences will be entertained. They will laugh and leave smiling. And that's my goal."

Performances begin at 7:30 p.m. September 22-24 and September 28 through October 1. There will be a 2 p.m. matinee Sunday September 25. Season Flex Pass patrons will be able to select seats beginning at 7 am Saturday, September 10. Tickets will go on sale to the general public beginning at 7 a.m. Thursday, September 15. Tickets are \$20 for the opening night performance and \$12 for all other performances. To purchase seats, go to [www.fslt.org](http://www.fslt.org) or call the theatre at 783-2966.



### Hat's Off To The Harlequin Man

In 1962, local artist Al Reis and his student, Jay Anderson, created a stained glass sculpture known as the Harlequin Man. The unique art piece was placed outside FSLT's first location on No. O Street and soon became the symbol of FSLT. When we moved to our current building in 1986, the sculpture made the move as well. We never had the opportunity to say thank you to his creators, but we were able to recognize Al Reis's descendants who came from Sherwood and Hot Springs to attend *Annie*. It was great to recognize three generations of Al's family who came to see his legacy and be a part of our 75th Anniversary Celebration! From left: Natalie Sheppard and her son Noah. Jessica Dempsey and her daughter Savannah. Mary Bryan (Reis). Bryan Reis and his wife Linda.



### 75th Commemorative Booklet

Our anniversary publication has received great reviews! Pick one up in the lobby while quantities last.

### Diamond Bracelet Raffle

Congratulations to **David Craig** (right) – the grand prize winner of our Vahan Diamond Bracelet Raffle. Although David participated in the raffle at more than one production this year, his winning ticket was the one purchased when he attended *A Southern Exposure*. Thank you to everyone who bought raffle tickets – and special thanks to Kelly Newton (left) of **Newton's Jewelers** who generously donated the bracelet as part of our 75th Anniversary Celebration.



### Worth A Thousand Words

Check out our collaborative Facebook album called "Your FSLT" for fond memories and good laughs. Upload your own pictures at <https://www.yogile.com/yourfslt/upload>.

### Walk Down Memory Lane

Collected remembrances from volunteers and patrons are available for your reading enjoyment. Through links at the bottom of our home page ([fslt.org](http://fslt.org)) you can read the memories of others and add your own.

### Season 2023

You're gonna love the 2023 line up we have planned! 2022 Opening Night and Wednesday subscribers will have until October 31 to retain their same seats for 2023. Details will be announced soon.

Fort Smith Little Theatre  
**SPOTLIGHT**

P.O. Box 3752, Fort Smith, AR 72913

[www.fslt.org](http://www.fslt.org)

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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## From the Top...



Don't you just love it when things come together? The cast and crew of *Annie*, who rehearsed all summer long, delivered an excellent production. They were rewarded with full houses that boisterously sang along during each night's curtain call.

The show's success started on Opening Night when descendants of Florabel Pattee, FSLT's "Founding Mother," were in attendance. Their earlier trip was cancelled, but this time the stars aligned so they could travel from Louisville and Shreveport to visit FSLT

and witness Flo's legacy. Holding Flo's photo is her daughter Penny Robertson (center), Penny's son Wyman Marshall (left), and Flo's niece Kathy Hostetler (right). Not shown is Kathy's husband Milton.

And the fun just kept coming! Descendants of Al Reis who created our Harlequin Man traveled to Fort Smith to attend *Annie* and see the beautiful stained glass sculpture that is the symbol of our theatre (see page 3). Then at the final *Annie* performance, everything fell into place for David Craig – as his name was drawn as the winner of the diamond bracelet raffle (see page 3).

Some of these magical moments came from hard work, determination, and planning. Others were unexpected, resulting from plain old good luck. But together, they created some very memorable events in celebration of our 75th Anniversary.

After such a busy summer, do we now take a rest? Absolutely not! Two days after *Annie* closed, FSLT held auditions for *The Philadelphia Story*. When this classic romantic comedy opens September 22, you can bet that, once again, things will come together and the stars will align. See you at the theatre!

- Sherry Hester, *President*

## Auditions – Join The Fun!

Auditions for *Coffee Shop*, written and directed by Jamie Lambdin-Bolin will be held **Monday, October 3** at 7:00 pm. Callbacks will be held Tuesday, October 4. The cast calls for 4+ males approximately 30+ years of age and 5 females approximately 30-65+. Production dates are November 10-19. With quirky characters, southern insults, and heart-warming moments, this will be the stage debut for an original script authored by an active FSLT volunteer. For more information, visit [www.fslt.org](http://www.fslt.org) or find us on social media.



**Season Flex Pass patrons are urged to select seats before September 15.**