



June 16, 17, 22, 23, 24, 2023 - 7:30 pm June 18, 2023 - 2:00 pm

Badger Ridge Middle School Performing Arts Center (300 Richard Street, Verona)

32nd Season, 173rd Show



# Enjoy the night of entertainment with Verona Area Community Theater



# The Verona Area Community Theater Production of



# By L. FRANK BAUM With Music and Lyrics by HAROLD ARLEN and E. Y. HARBURG Background Music by HERBERT STOTHART Dance and Vocal Arrangements by PETER HOWARD Orchestration by LARRY WILCOX

Adapted by JOHN KANE for the Royal Shakespeare Company

Based upon the Classic Motion Picture owned by Turner Entertainment Co. and distributed in all media by Warner Bros.

Performer flying effects created by Vertigo<sup>TM</sup> ~ www.getvertigo.com *The Wizard Of Oz* is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Tams-Witmark LLC. www.concordtheatricals.com

Please enjoy all refreshments in the lobby only and remember to turn off all audible electronic devices, cell phones. watches etc. during the performance.

The videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.

Smoking on school property is prohibited by state law.

# Acknowledgements

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Set Design
Dance Captain
Stage Manager
Assistant Stage Manager Emily Williams
Orchestra Conductor
Youth Director
Lighting Design
Sound Design
Assistant Sound Design
Props
Orchestra Manager
Youth Assistant
Spotlights
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Program
Tickets
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Publicity Marsha Heuer, Sara Ward-Cassady
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Costume Construction Paula Blankenheim, Amondee Brandt,
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Kenzie Ford-Merucci, Theresa Gardocki, Nicole Gile, Gail Gomach, Tom Gomach,
Kristen Hanson Jillian Hepinstall, Bryce Hitchcock, Courtney Hitchcock,
Missy Holcomb, Claire Johnson, Ellie Leibold, Melissa Mosser, Liz Nickels,
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Kathy Erickson, Jeff Erickson

Thank you to everyone that helped with costumes, props, sets, backstage, ushering and everything else that makes this production possible!



It is my pleasure to welcome you to Verona Area Community Theater's 32nd season and 173rd production .... Welcome to *The Wizard of Oz.* 

I feel honored to be able to bring this iconic story to life for VACT's 3rd time in the past three decades. When I started planning for this show, I knew that I wanted to recreate the magic of what I remember as a child.... From the transition of sepia tones in Kansas to the literal colors of the rainbow in Oz and the marvelous journey that Dorothy goes on as she learns what it means to be "home".

As a social studies teacher by day, I always like to dive into the history of any show I direct. Based on a children's fantasy novel published in 1900, the musical movie version of *The Wizard of Oz* premiered in 1939 using Technicolor, although contrary to what many people believe, it was not the first movie produced in color. What made *The Wizard of Oz* different from other movies was the mass appeal and way the technicolor was utilized to tell the story. I try to imagine what it would have been like to go to see a movie in 1939 and see this story for the first time, especially after enduring challenges from the Great Depression and the dust bowl storms ravaging the Great Plains in the United States. The world was also just weeks away from the official start of World War II.... truly, people in America (and everywhere) needed this movie and story to escape. As hard as life may feel right now, I always try to put it in perspective. Regardless of whatever is happening in your life right now, try to use this time in the theater and escape to enjoy this musical as if it is the first time you are seeing this story unfold before your eyes!

With any theatrical production, so much time and effort are put forth behind the scenes... a very special thank you goes to our entire production team. So many individuals helped bring this show to life on stage. An extra special thank you to: Marcus Wisnewski, Brett Wagner, Dale Nickels, Stefanie Merucci, Rachel Erickson, Paul Stiller, Steve Nickels, Sara Ward-Cassady, Tom Blankenheim, Marie Kyle, Denali Kraemer, Nicole Gile, and Dee Baldock - all of whom I worked very close with in tackling this massive show. I am so thankful to be able to work with enthusiastic people who love theater as much as I do and are willing to think outside of the box with me!

Theater provides its audience with an escape from real life for a couple of hours. It gives you a chance to dream, fall in love, cheer for the underdog, and laugh or cry with the characters. I urge you to let *The Wizard of Oz* move you in some way: tell someone that you care, put yourself out there, travel the world, or simply just tap your feet along to the amazing music. Now, sit forward and smile as you experience this story unfold onstage! And remember, regardless of where you go or what you do... There's no place like home.

Thank you and Enjoy the show!

Marsha Heuer Director & Choreographer



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# the scenes and musical numbers

### ACT ONE

Over the Rainbow
Munchkinland & Ding Dong! The Witch is Dead Glinda, Dorothy & Munchkins
Yellow Brick Road
If I Only Had a Brain Scarecrow, Dorothy & Crows
We're Off to See the Wizard Dorothy & Scarecrow
If I Only Had a Heart Tinman, Dorothy & Trees
We're Off to See the Wizard Dorothy, Tinman & Scarecrow
Lions, Tigers and Bears Dorothy, Tinman & Scarecrow
If I Only Had the Nerve
We're Off to See the Wizard Dorothy, Tinman Scarecrow & Lion
Poppies
Lion & Chorus

There will be one 15 minute intermission

### ACT TWO

Optimistic Voices
The Merry Old Land of Oz Dorothy, Tinman, Scarecrow, Lion,
Guard & Ozians
If I Were King of the Forest Lion, Dorothy, Tinman & Scarecrow
March of the Winkies
Jitterbug Dorothy, Tinman, Scarecrow,
Lion & Jitterbugs
Reprise: Winkies March Winkies
Winkies March with Friends &
Reprise: Over the Rainbow Dorothy, Tinman, Scarecrow, Lion & Winkies
Reprise: Ding Dong! The Witch Is Dead Winkies



# the orchestra

Conductor: ANNE VANDERBLOEMEN **Bass: ARLENE SYKORA** Cello: JAMES WESSON Flute/Piccolo: JUDY PELLERIN-GOLL Harp: CAROLINE MOORE Horn: TOM FJELSTAD Keyboard: SUSIE KITTEL MOORE Oboe/Cor Anglais: BECKY RUSH Oboe/Cor Anglais: KATI SEITER Percussion 1&2: EVAN METCALF Percussion 1&2: LAURA SCHRAM Reed 1: TOM BLANKENHEIM Reed 2: DION MILLS Reed 3: JERRY HROVAT Trombone: GUY DEE Trumpet 1&2: CHARLIE CICCIA Trumpet 1&2: GREG GILLESPIE Viola: FAITH HOWE Violin 1: ROBYN CHASE Violin 1: NAOMI HASAN Violin 2: BRYCE SANVILLE

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# the cast

Dorothy Gale
Aunt Em/Glinda
Uncle Henry/Emerald City Guard
Zeke/Cowardly Lion
Hickory/Tin Man Garrett Coombs
Hunk/Scarecrow
Almira Gulch/Wicked Witch of West
Professor Chester Marvel/The Wizard of Oz
Understudy Dorothy Gale Kenzie Ford-Merucci
Understudy Aunt Em/Glinda Lauren Rowe
Understudy Uncle Henry/Emerald City Guard Bill Owens
Understudy Zeke/Cowardly Lion Shane Ceniza
Understudy Hickory/Tin Man
Understudy Hunk/Scarecrow Justin McDermott
Understudy Almira Gulch/
Wicked Witch of West
Understudy Professor Chester Marvel/
The Wizard of Oz $\hdots$
Mayor of Munchkinland Corinne Kuenzi
Coroner of Munchkinland Brooks Bartell
Barrister of Munchkinland
Parents in Munchkinland Payton Sarbacker, Alex Klaas
Winkie General
Nikko
Toto Eris Wisniewski-Carter (at certain performances)
Nudge Hepinstall (at certain performances)

### Lullaby League

Scarlett Doll, Paige Kleber, Fiona Reichhold, Stella Roltgen, Sadie Uberto

### Lollipop Guild

Phillip Doll IV, Dante Ejercito, Theodore Heuer, Kieran Reichhold, Chase Schutte, Preston VanEck

### **Munchkin Citizens**

Emily Baker, Levi Barnett, Annie Charles, Penelope Coombs, Bradie Greiber, Delaney Emond, Allison Felker, Kate Felker, Anu Gregory, Charley Hoy, Hazel Kennitz, Nolan McDermid, Olivia Mitchell, Luke Moser, Mira Olson, Claire Owens, Liam Reichhold, Tristan Schmelzer

> Crows Shane Ceniza, Philip Doll III, Eric Jansen

# <u>the cast</u>

### Trees

Heather Felker, Anna Plaunt, Amanda Reichhold, Monica Ewing, Anna Gumberg, Jillian Hepinstall

### Flying Monkeys

Emily Baker, Annie Charles, Delaney Emond, Bradie Greiber, Charley Hoy, Chase Kleber, Nolan McDermid, Liam Reichhold, Claire Owens, Payton Sarbacker, Tristan Schmelzer

### Poppies

Anna Delaporte, Emma Eckmayer, Bryce Hitchcock, Ellie Leibold, AJ Stoffels, Hailey VanEck, Georgia Volkman, Lauren Welch, Kait Wiemann, Peyton Yancey

### **Snow Dancers**

Morgan Armbruster, Natalie Coombs, Cassandra Derfus, Sarah Emond, Kenzie Ford-Merucci, Nicole Gile, Gail Gomach, Lydia Hanson, Justin McDermott, Stefanie Merucci, Peyton Morgan, Liz Nickels, Catherine Raynor, Alexa Schaefer, Sage Yort

### **Cyclone Dancers**

Natalie Coombs, Cassandra Derfus, Kenzie Ford-Merucci, Justin McDermott, Liz Nickels, Alexa Schaefer

### Jitterbugs

Natalie Coombs, Peyton Morgan, Liz Nickels, Cassandra Derfus, Sarah Emond, Kenzie Ford-Merucci, Nicole Gile, Gail Gomach, Justin McDermott, Stefanie Merucci, Catherine Raynor, Alexa Schaefer, AJ Stoffels, Hailey VanEck, Peyton Yancey, Sage Yort

### Winkies

Amondee Brandt, Bradley Carter, Shane Ceniza, Cal Compe, Riley Custer, Philip Doll III, Eric Jansen, Mike Olson, Bill Owens, Dominic Jacobson, Corbin Schroeder, Jeff Wisniewski

### Ozians

Morgan Armbruster, Amondee Brandt, Bradley Carter, Shane Ceniza, Cal Compe, Natalie Coombs, Riley Custer, Anna Delaporte, Cassandra Derfus, Philip Doll III, Emma Eckmayer, Sarah Emond, Monica Ewing, Heather Felker, Kenzie Ford-Merucci, Nicole Gile, Gail Gomach, Anna Gumberg, Lydia Hanson, Jillian Hepinstall, Bryce Hitchcock, Dominic Jacobson, Eric Jansen, Ellie Leibold, Justin McDermott, Stefanie Merucci, Peyton Morgan, Liz Nickels, Mike Olson, Bill Owens, Anna Plaunt, Catherine Raynor, Amanda Reichhold, Dennis Reichhold, Alexa Schaefer, Corbin Schroeder, AJ Stoffels, Lauren Welch, Kait Wiemann, Jeff Wisniewski, Peyton Yancey, Sage Yort, Hailey VanEck, Georgia Volkman **BROOKS BARTELL** (Munchkin Coroner) is ecstatic to proclaim the death of the Wicked Witch of the East and perform in this great show! Some other roles Brooks has played are Captain Bones in *Pirates Past Noon* (VACT), Seahorse and Flounder understudy in *The Little Mermaid JR*. (VACT), North Pole Elf and Michael understudy in *Elf The Musical* (VACT), and Pinocchio in *Pinocchio* (First Act.) Brooks would like to thank his family and friends for supporting him and attending all of his shows. Enjoy the show!

**SHANE CENIZA** (U/S Zeke/Cowardly Lion, Crow) is delighted to be in his fourth VACT show, having appeared in *Beauty and the Beast*, *Encore! 2022*, and *Elf The Musical*. He is endlessly grateful for the friends he's made at VACT.

GARRETT COOMBS (Tinman/Hickory) is proud to be at VACT for his 10th year and 10th show. You may recall him as Bad Guy with Long Hair (Gaston in *Beauty and the Beast*), Selfish Guy with Long Hair (Clopin in *Hunchback of Notre Dame*), or Creature with No Hair (Shrek in *Shrek The Musical*). The thrill of performing with short hair, if only temporarily, is eclipsed only by sharing the stage with his whole family for the first time. Many thanks to Marsha for letting Mama and Daddy share in Penelope's onstage debut.

**EMERALD DOLL** (Almira Gulch/Wicked Witch of West) has been performing for most of her life. Some of her favorite roles include Tracy from *High Society*, Narrator from *Joseph...Technicolor Dreamcoat*, Mole from *Wind and the Willows*, and Brooke/Vicky from *Noises Off.* She has been performing with VACT on and off since 2007 and is happy to be back on this stage. "I feel so privileged and excited to have the opportunity to play such an iconic role. It's been a blast getting into Miss Gulch's and Wicked Witch's head. Most importantly, I am so ecstatic and grateful to be on stage with my entire family making many priceless memories."

**TIMOTHY FEHLING** (Hunk/Scarecrow) is stoked to be in his 9th VACT show. Favorite roles from the past include Gideon in *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, and Finch in *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying.* Thanks for coming and enjoy the show! KENZIE FORD-MERUCCI (U/S Dorothy Gale, Dance Ensemble) is excited to be on stage, once again, with VACT! Previous roles of note at VACT include; Jovie in Elf The Musical, Babette in Beauty and the Beast, Ali in Mamma Mia!, and Ariel in The Little Mermaid. Kenzie has also choreographed previous VACT productions including: Spongebob, Rock of Ages MSE, Encore, Something Rotten, Singin' in the Rain Jr. and Matilda(which she also Co-Directed). You may also know Kenzie from productions with Edgewood College Theater (SHOUT: A Mod Musical, Calamity Jane, Clue: The Musical) and Middleton Players Theater (Parade). Kenzie would like to thank her husband, BJ, for always supporting her throughout her theatrical journey.

NUDGE HEPINSTALL (Toto) is the happiest boy to be making his theater debut with VACT and sharing the stage with his mom! A natural talent, he has no formal training in acting (or...otherwise), but loves treats, making friends, and getting lots of scritches. When he's not on the stage, you can find him doing *biiiig* stretches, sitting on a human, protecting the house from animals on the TV, and generally being the handsomest dog. He'd like to thank his mom for adopting him in 2015, and to dad for letting him sleep in the human bed. Thank you to his aunties for their love and encouragement. He'd also like to thank the makers of all treats, everywhere.

**CHASE KLEBER** (Barrister) is excited to be part of such an awesome munchkin crew! She's been a part of VACT productions, classes, and camps for over half of her life, with favorite roles in *The Jungle Book Jr* (Thistle), *Annie Jr*. (Orphan), and *Seussical Jr*. (Cat). Chase would like to thank the whole cast and crew for being so fun and her parents for always giving her rides home because...there's no place like home.

**RACHEL KLEBER** (Aunt Em/Glinda) is so honored to portray this role she grew up loving and watching as a kid. Rachel's first VACT show was *A Very Virtual Merry Hometown Holiday* show in 2020, and she enjoyed kicking off last summer's *Beauty and the Beast* shows as narrator. She'd like to thank her two munchkins for bringing her into their theater world and for trusting their mom when she borrows Glinda's line "You don't need to be helped any longer. You've always had the power".

# the cast



BROOKS BARTELL



SHANE CENIZA



GARRETT COOMBS



EMERALD DOLL



TIMOTHY FEHLING



**KENZIE** FORD-MERUCCI



NUDGE HEPINSTALL



CHASE KLEBER



RACHEL KLEBER



CORINNE **KUENZI** 



MYA LEBAKKEN



BILL **OWENS** 



J. PETER SHAW



LINDGREN



DENNIS REICHHOLD



SCOTT WIELAND



JUSTIN **MCDERMOTT** 



TRISTAN **SCHMELZER** 



KAIT WIEMANN



OLSON



CORBIN **SCHROEDER** 



ERIS WISNIEWSKI-CARTER







**CORINNE KUENZI** (Mayor of Munchkinland) is thrilled to be in her first VACT show! Earlier this year Corinne debuted in her first production with CTM in the World Premiere of *Finder and the North Star* (Destiny cover). Corinne would like to thank her Voice teacher Dr. Cayla Roche, MYC Choir Director Ms. Lisa Kjentvet, and piano teacher Ms. Marie Kaczmarek for their guidance and support. She would also like to acknowledge her awesome family for always cheering her on. Welcome to Munchkinland!

**MYA LEBAKKEN** (Dorothy Gale) is delighted to be joining her third VACT production! You may have seen her previously in *Encore! 2022* and *Elf The Musical*. She is very grateful to be working with such a fabulous cast and crew in bringing the magical world of Oz to life. Special thanks to Mom, Dad, Aaron and Corbin for being her home, because there's no place like it!

**LOREN LINDGREN** (Uncle Henry/Emerald City Guard) returns for his second show with VACT. He joined the community in *Beast in Beauty and the Beast*, and hopes to return for many seasons to come.

JUSTIN MCDERMOTT (U/S Hunk/Scarecrow) is a graduate from the University of Northern Iowa where he received his degree in Theatre for Youth. After graduating from UNI, Justin has performed and choreographed for multiple different theatre companies in the midwest and even sailed the seas while performing on board Disney Cruise Line. Justin is thrilled to be a part of his third production with VACT. He wants to thank his friends and family for always supporting his theatre endeavors.

**MIKE OLSON** (U/S Professor Marvel/Wizard) is overjoyed to be in his first VACT production, and his first production with his daughter Mira. He has recently appeared as Pressley Pettifogger in *Baby Bump Bingo* at SPCT. Many years ago he was seen in roles such as Motel the Tailor in *Fiddler on the Roof*, and Mayor Shinn in *The Music Man*. He would like to thank his family for helping juggle the scheduling difficulties that come with being in a big production like this one.

**BILL OWENS** (U/S Uncle Henry/Emerald City Guard) is over the moon, or at least the rainbow, to be back on stage in his eleventh VACT show. Favorite past roles include Inspector Kemp (*Young Frankenstein*), Jack Worthing (*The Importance of Being Earnest in a Pandemic*), and Grimsby (*The Little Mermaid*). When he's not in the cast, you can often find Bill lurking just offstage wearing a headset and pushing set pieces around. As always, Bill thanks his wife Kathleen for her constant support.

**DENNIS REICHHOLD** (Winkie General) is excited to be a part of his 11th VACT show. Favorite roles include Lumiere (*Beauty and the Beast*), Toad (*The Wind in the Willows*), and Chef Louis (*The Little Mermaid*). Big shout-out to the whole family who are all together on stage for the first time: Amanda (22nd show), Liam (5th), Fiona (4th), and Kieran (1st). Love you all!

LAUREN ROWE (U/S Aunt Em/Glinda) is very excited to be in another VACT show. You may remember Lauren from *Sondheim on Sondheim*, *Matilda* (Miss Trunchbull), and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* (Baroness Bomburst). Enjoy the show!

**TRISTAN SCHMELZER** (Nikko) is very excited to be playing the role of Nikko and getting to monkey around with his VACT friends. There's no better way to spend the summer than practicing monkey voices and learning to fly. Previous VACT shows include *Elf The Musical, Willy Wonka Kids* and *Beauty and the Beast.* Thank you to everyone who has supported me along the way!

**CORBIN SCHROEDER** (U/S Tin Man/Ensemble) is excited to be returning to VACT for his 3rd show. Corbin has participated in previous shows of *Beauty and Beast* (Ensemble) and *Elf The Musical* (Sam). He has also played roles in college at the University of Wisconsin Platteville in their productions of *Sweeny Todd* (Beadle Bamford) and *1776* (Ben Franklin). Corbin would like to thank the very talented cast and crew for all of their hard work on the production. He would also like to thank his family, friends, and girlfriend Mya for their continued support. Enjoy the show!

# who's who in the cast

J. PETER SHAW (Professor Chester Marvel/The Wizard of Oz) This is his first time working with VACT. Past favorite roles: Stage Manager in *Our Town*, Martin Vanderhoff in You Can't Take It With You, Benjamin Franklin in 1776, Norman in *On Golden Pond*, Hucklebee in *The Fantasticks*, Ali Hakim in *Oklahoma!*, Scrooge in A Christmas Carol. J. Peter encourages everyone to support the Arts - attend live performances as much as possible!

**SCOTT WIELAND** (Zeke/Cowardly Lion) is scared of how excited he is for playing the Cowardly Lion. This is his 9th show with VACT. His favorite roles have been Judd Fry in *Oklahoma*, a brother in *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* and Elvis in *4 Weddings and an Elvis*. Thanks to all my friends, family and clients who found the courage to attend. I hope you find it frighteningly good.

**KAIT WIEMANN** (U/S Almira Gulch/Wicked Witch of West) is over the moon (or rainbow) to perform for you alongside the rest of this wonderful cast. Formerly a music major, she now hones her skills performing with her talented VACT family, singing in the car, and random dancing with her kids. She welcomes you to our performance and is thrilled you could make the trip to Oz with us! \*Extra special thanks to Mom and Dad for always being there and supporting me in my passions. I love you!\*

**ERIS WISNIEWSKI-CARTER** (Toto) is thrilled to be making her VACT debut in this production of *The Wizard of Oz.* She is a 10 year old pomeranian and has been with her dad Marcus since she was just about 5 weeks old. She enjoys meeting new people (and licking their faces), going for walks, playing with her dog brother Atticus, and barking at just about everything.



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MARSHA HEUER (Director, Choreographer) is thrilled to be part of her 42nd show with VACT. She has directed one other (High Society 2012), choreographed 22 since 2003, and been on stage for 29 shows. Some favorite past VACT roles include Corie Bratter in Barefoot in the Park, Meg Brockie in Brigadoon, Ulla in The Producers, and Cherie in Bus Stop. She is a high school social studies and theater teacher of 16 years and has directed over 19 high school productions in her career. She is currently teaching at Oregon High School. Being able to direct this show and have both her husband, Craig, and son, Theodore, involved has been a joy and she hopes this is the first of many theatrical experiences for them as a family. Enjoy the show! "Love to C, T, K, FM, R, and K!"

MARCUS WISNIEWSKI (Assistant Director) is elated to be a part of this production of Verona Area Community Theater's The Wizard of Oz. While he has been a part of many VACT productions since 2008, this is his first time (and hopefully not last!) being a part of the production team. The Wizard of Oz has held a special place in his heart since he was cast as the Scarecrow in VACT's production of this same show 12 years ago. He is filled with gratitude for this opportunity, and hopes that the audience takes as much joy in watching this production as he took in helping to bring a timeless classic to life with this incredible cast and crew. A very special thanks to Marsha, for her invaluable guidance and support through the entire rehearsal process, as well as to the rest of the production team, cast, and crew, for making this experience unforgettable. Lastly he sends his love to Jeff and Macarey. Enjoy the show friends! After all, we're certainly not in Kansas anymore.

DALE NICKELS (Producer, Sound Design), with SARA WARD-CASSADY (Producer), DEE BALDOCK (Producer) Speaking for the three producers, this has been a collaborative effort as all of us had other shows going on throughout the production schedule. Thanks much to Sara and Dee for getting us started in the early stages. It's my great pleasure to pull this one across the finish line. Thanks, also, to the very talented production staff who carried on without missing a beat as we shuffled leadership. As always - "Thanks to my lovely wife, Deb, for letting me play."

BRETT WAGNER (Music Director) is ecstatic to be music directing The Wizard of Oz 2023! He regularly performs various roles on the VACT production staff including conductor, rehearsal accompanist, and music director. Brett is always excited to work with actors of all ages and this show certainly has that range! In the fall, he will be leaving VACT to pursue medical school at Rush University in Chicago, IL. While this next adventure is sure to be incredible, he will miss the quality of music and relationships that VACT has fostered over the last decade. You, the staff, actors, friends, and audience play a crucial role in making this music come to life. VACT has been a cornerstone of Brett's life and he will miss all of you dearly. "I hope that throughout my ~30 shows here that I have given someone the joy of music that VACT has gifted to me". Enjoy the show!

**DENALI KRAMER** (Youth Director) is so excited to be the Children's Director for *The Wizard of Oz.* Denali has had so much fun Directing our fall youth show *Willy Wonka KIDS* and spring youth show *Lion King KIDS!* Denali wants to thank her friends and family for their support through her theater journey and all of her theater students and their big imaginations that inspire her everyday!

**STEFANIE MERUCCI** (Costume Design and Dance Ensemble) is excited to be experiencing this all-time classic from multiple perspectives – on stage and off. She has been performing with VACT since 2015. Throughout the years she has happily donned a fork, elf attire, a lampshade skirt, neon camo pants, and more! She hopes you enjoy the unique costume pieces created for this show too. She is humbled and grateful to share the stage (and the sewing room) with so much talent! Stefanie would like to thank her daughter, Kenzie, and her family for supporting her no matter what color the road she travels down. Have a jolly good time!

**RACHEL ERICKSON** (Set Design) They are very happy to be set designing for the first time for VACT. They previously stage managed for VACT's winter play *The Childrens Hour*. They would like to thank their family and friends for supporting them through their theatre journey.

# who's who in the crew

**STEVE NICKELS** (Lighting Design) Steve has been designing lights for VACT shows for over 15 years, and can usually be found in the lighting booth. He has also worked backstage as a stage manager, ropes operator, spotlight operator, and producer, and occasionally can even be found on stage, but always manages to be involved with the lights. "May the Light shine on you!"

**PAUL STILLER** (Stage Manager) is thrilled to be involved with his 20th VACT show. Paul participated in twelve VACT shows as an actor during his childhood and has been the stage manager for the most recent eight productions he has participated in. Enjoy the show!

**EMILY WILLIAMS** (Assistant Stage Manager) is excited to be back on stage left for *The Wizard of Oz*! She enjoys all aspects of theater and in her time with VACT she has appeared on all sides of the stage. Recent favorites include *The Children's Hour* (Mrs. Amelia Tilford), *Beauty and the Beast* (costume assistant), *Mamma Mia*! (ensemble), and *Young Frankenstein* (assistant stage manager). *The Wizard of Oz* was one of her family's favorite movies growing up, but it remains to be seen if her siblings will make good on their threat to have any future nieces and nephews call her "Auntie Em."

ANNE VANDERBLOEMEN (Orchestra Conductor) is excited to conduct her first pit orchestra! A lifelong Broadway fan, Anne teaches 7th & 8th grade band at Glacier Creek Middle School and directs the ARTS for ALL Madison Choir for adults with disabilities. She lives in Cross Plains with her husband and two of her three children. "There's no place like home!" **NICOLE GILE** (Dance Captain) is absolutely delighted to be in her 10th production with VACT. This is her first time as dance captain, and she's now hooked on the role! Past favorite shows include *Encorel* 2022, *Young Frankenstein*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, and *The Little Mermaid*. Nicole sends all her love to Sherry, Wayne, Ryan, Eleanor, and Guppy.

MARIE KYLE (Prop Master) has been the elementary music teacher at Sugar Creek Elementary School in Verona for over 25 years. She has worked as the music director, and appeared on stage for many VACT shows, as well as directing the teen productions of *Grease*, *Legally Blonde*, *Bye*, *Bye Birdie* and *The Drowsy Chaperone*. Favorite roles include Narrator in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, Glinda in *The Wizard of Oz* (2011), Betty Haynes in *White Christmas* and Mother Superior in *Sister Act*. Marie loves being in shows with her husband Jim and playing the role of mom to sons Joe and Tom.

**TOM BLANKENHEIM** (Orchestra Manager, Assistant Sound Design) If VACT is producing a musical, you can usually find Tom in the pit with an assortment of clarinets and/or saxophones. Tom's first VACT pit appearance was for *Annie Get Your Gun* (2007). As Orchestra Manager, Tom coordinates musician recruitment, pit setup, and ensures the pit runs smoothly so that Anne may concentrate on the music. Tom has also been assisting Dale with sound when not wielding a clarinet or sax. It has been a pleasure working with Anne, Dale, all of the talented musicians, cast, and staff to bring this musical to the Verona Community.



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Praise to Timothy Farley! It is simply amazing how he manages to restore old pianos and to bring them to new life again. -Paul Badura Skoda

I am profoundly grateful to Timothy Farley, piano rebuilder, scholar, technician and tuner par excellence, for demonstrating the precious benefits there are in applying older, traditional tunings to keyboard instruments.

-Peter Serkin

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# recent VACT Productions

2013	The Producers; Disney's Winnie The Pooh KIDS; Disney's The Little Mermaid Jr.; Legally Blonde, The Musical; Peter Pan; Seven Brides for Seven Brothers; The Best
	Christmas Pageant Ever
2014	Heaven Can Wait; Disney's 101 Dalmatians, KIDS; Encore Jr.; Bye Bye Birdie;
	The Music Man; How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying;
	Getting to Know The Sound of Music; White Christmas
2015	Singin' In The Rain; Aladdin, KIDS; Hairspray Jr.; The Drowsy Chaperone;
	Shrek The Musical; Forever Plaid; Elf The Musical Jr.; A Very Merry Hometown
	Christmas
2016	Brighton Beach Memoirs; Dinosaurs Before Dark, KIDS; High School Musical Jr.;
	Bring It On the Musical; Mary Poppins; Billy Elliot the Musical; A Seussified
	Christmas Carol; It's A Wonderful Life the Musical
2017	South Pacific; The Lion King, KIDS; Guys and Dolls Jr.; West Side Story; The Little
	Mermaid; Sister Act the Musical; Stone Soup; Godspell Jr.
2018	The Hunchback of Notre Dame; Bus Stop; A Race To The Finish; The Jungle Book
	KIDS; Bye Bye Birdie YPE; Roald Dahl's Willy Wonka; Little Shop of Horrors; Annie
	KIDS; Legally Blonde Jr.; A Christmas Story
2019	The Odd Couple; Three Nanny Goats Gruff; The Aristocats KIDS; 42nd Street YPE;
	Disney's Newsies; Chitty Chitty Bang Bang; Young Frankenstein; We Are Monsters;
	Disney's Frozen Jr.
2020	Mamma Mia!; 4 Weddings and An Elvis; Chicago High School Edition*;
	Getting To Know Footloose The Musical*; Seussical KIDS*; Pajama Party*;
	VACT Virtual Youth Theater Fall 2020; A Very Virtual Merry Hometown Holiday
	(*cancelled due to COVID)
2021	The Importance of Being Earnest In a Pandemic; VACT Virtual Youth Theater Spring 2021;
	The Radio Play Disaster; Seussical KIDS; Singin' In The Rain Jr.; Matilda The Musical
2022	Don't Dress for Dinner; Something Rotten!; Pirates Past Noon KIDS;
	High School Musical 2 Jr.; The Music Man Sr.; Disney Beauty and the Beast; Encore! 2022;
	Elf The Musical
2023	The Children's Hour: The Lion King KIDS: The Little Mermaid Ir: The SpongeBob Musical

2023 The Children's Hour; The Lion King KIDS; The Little Mermaid Jr.; The SpongeBob Musical Singin' In The Rain Sr.

For a complete list of VACT's past productions since 1992, please visit www.vact.org/page-pp

## Verona Area Community Theater, Inc

VACT, Inc. originated in the summer of 1992 and is now producing ten shows a year. From the beginning, our goal has been to offer the people in the Verona Area community opportunities to utilize their talents in all facets of the arts. Our primary goal is to have fun! If you are interested in participating in any way, please contact one of the board members listed below:

### VACT Inc., Board of Directors

<u>Officers</u> President: Dale Nickels Vice President: Sara Ward-Cassady Secretary: Elizabeth Kraemer Treasurer: Brian Johnson

<u>Additional Members</u> Tom Arnol, Dee Baldock, Kim Eckmayer, K.B. Kendricks, Marie Kyle, Sarah Lederer, Alex Rosenbaum, Lynn Vilker



Thank you so much for attending *The Wizard of Oz.* Like many arts organizations, the past several years caused many changes for VACT. Our regular operations were greatly disrupted and for the first time in VACT's almost 30 year history we were forced to cancel productions and stop operations. We are thrilled that this season we are finally back to our full season, bringing 10 live shows to the stage! We are so grateful for all of the support we received during the last several years. Every kind message, donation, and show of support has meant the world to us. VACT will always work to reach new theatrical heights alongside members of the greater Verona area and surrounding communities. We will also work to make our programs accessible to anyone with an interest in any of our programs or

productions. Please consider making a donation to VACT and help us continue to bring theater and arts programming to the community.

Visit www.vact.org/donate-now to make your donation today!





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