

STANDING VATION

THIS PRODUCTION
GENEROUSLY PRESENTED BY



Nationwide®

ALL IS CALM

THE CHRISTMAS TRUCE OF 1914



A CHARLIE BROWN Christmas



DEC. 1 - 17, 2023



THE PLAYHOUSE

#DMPlayhouse

Great Red Wine

*made in Iowa
from Grapes
grown in Iowa*



Iowa In the Dark

is a dry red with light, fresh notes. First impressions are tangy acid followed by black cherry fading to plum, a dry mid-palate, and a long, pleasing finish. Made from Marquette, St. Croix, Petite Pearl, and Steuben grapes grown in Iowa, it's a versatile wine that pairs well with grilled meat and spicy foods.

2021 Iowa Sabrevois

is a dry red with bold aromas of spices and leather on the nose followed by blackberry and plum notes with hints of baking spice, smoke, and licorice on the palate. Made from Sabrevois grapes grown in our Iowa vineyards, it pairs well with grilled meat.

2020 Iowa

Reserve Marquette

is a dry red with bright cherry notes and hints of baking spice on the nose and palate followed by a long, moderately acidic finish. Made from Marquette grapes grown in our Iowa vineyards, it pairs well with spicy foods.



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Tassel Ridge Dry Red Wines...*Simply Extraordinary*®

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David R. Kilpatrick
Executive Director

Thank you so much for joining us this holiday season. We know that it is a grand tradition to attend The Playhouse at this time of year, which prompted The Playhouse to make two special theatrical events available. *A Charlie Brown Christmas* is a production for the whole family who want to share the meaning of Christmas and see a classic tv show come to life. Also available this holiday, *All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914*, which is different than our traditional holiday fare. It is an exceptional production with 10 performers sharing the once-in-a-lifetime story of the Christmas cease fire in WWI with a cappella music. Both performances demonstrate what The Playhouse does best: create extraordinary and shared experiences.

Twenty twenty-four is just around the corner. I hope you have saved the dates to enjoy the timeless tale of *Our Town* and meet two families from Grover's Corners. Following will be our next children's play, *Dragons Love Tacos*. Who doesn't love tacos or dragons? In addition to these upcoming productions, 2024 will continue with classes in full operation, Friday Funday, and many more musicals and comedies to lift our spirits.

You probably noticed when you entered the building that we have begun the construction of modernizing the Kate Goldman Children's Theatre. We would say pardon our dust, but we are excited to begin digging and a little dust is a small price to pay. Please watch for continuous updates as we make The Playhouse even better.

Would you consider a unique gift by making a donation in someone's name? Both you and your gift recipient will demonstrate support of the arts in our region and the value of The Playhouse. For 105 continuous years, The Playhouse has presented shows for the community. We do this because of the support from those who know theatre can transform lives. Thank you for playing your part.

Here is our holiday cheer to our Playhouse family: May you enjoy theatre the whole year!



ALL IS CALM
THE CHRISTMAS TRUCE OF 1914

A CHARLIE BROWN Christmas

VOTE for your favorite performances!

 **THE PLAYHOUSE**

Scan the appropriate QR code to tell us who your favorite performers were today!

Outstanding performances are recognized at the Dionysos Awards each September.

From all the volunteers, cast, crew,
and staff at The Playhouse...

Thank you for your support!

To make a donation, please contact:

David Kilpatrick

Executive Director

515.974.5353

dkilpatrick@dmplayhouse.com

Donors listed are current from Mar. 1, 2023 to

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An * indicates a deceased donor.

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Don't see your name? Those listed in this program have generously supported The Playhouse since March 1, 2023. If we've made a mistake, please contact Katy McCaull at 515.974.5359 or kmccaull@dmplyhouse.com. Gifts of \$100 or more are listed in every playbill throughout the season. Gifts under \$100 are recognized in the spring musical playbill each year.

GUEST INFORMATION

Accessibility

The Playhouse strives to make its facility and performances accessible to all guests. Our theatres are wheelchair accessible. Service animals are welcome. Assisted listening devices are available in the John Viars Theatre. If your hearing aid has a T-coil, toggle to that setting to receive the audio signal directly without any headset or other equipment needed. ASL interpreted performances and audio description performances are available upon request. For these and other needs, please call the ticket office with specific service requests.

Cameras

The taking of photographs and the use of recording devices are not allowed during a performance and are a violation of state and federal copyright laws.

Cancellations

If a show is cancelled due to bad weather, an email will be sent to ticket holders. Cancellations will be noted on the phone system, website, and social media sites. Tickets for a cancelled performance may be exchanged for another performance. Please be sure the ticket office has your email information and current phone in the event a performance is cancelled. The Playhouse does not sell its contacts and does not sell or trade its email addresses.

Concessions

A variety of beverages and candy may be available for purchase and are allowed in auditoriums. No outside drink or food are allowed. Staff reserve the right to deny alcoholic beverage service to anyone at their discretion.

Elevator

An elevator between levels is located at the east end of the building.

Emergency Exits

Please note the exit nearest your seat location. In the event of an emergency, ushers will provide direction.

Etiquette

Latecomers will be seated at an appropriate break in the play. Lobby chimes are sounded five minutes before curtain as well as the close of intermission. Disruptive, unruly guests, regardless of age, will be asked to leave. Cell phone ringers should be turned off.

Lost Items

Lost items will be held in the ticket office.

Parking

Free parking is available in The Playhouse lots and on streets surrounding the theatre. After 5:00 PM daily, free parking is available in the Shops at Roosevelt's east/back parking lot. Parking in the west/front Shops parking lot is restricted to Shops customers at all times. The Playhouse is not responsible for loss of any personal property left in vehicles.

Performance Content

The Playhouse does not rate subject matter as sensitivities vary from person to person. Questions about content, age appropriateness, or other aspects of the show such as strobe lights and other theatrical affects should be directed to the ticket office.

Performance Schedule

The regular John Viars Theatre performance schedule is 7:30 PM Wednesdays through Saturdays, and 2:00 PM Sundays. The regular Kate Goldman Children's Theatre performance schedule is 7:00 PM Fridays, and 1:00 PM and 4:00 PM Saturdays and Sundays. The Family Holiday Classic performance schedule is 7:00 PM Fridays, and 1:00 PM and 5:00 PM Saturdays and Sundays. All times are subject to change.

Preshow Talk

A preshow talk for each John Viars Theatre performance will begin 30 minutes prior to curtain in the west lobby.

Safety Protocols

In order to best serve our whole community, The Playhouse respectfully requests the following items are not brought into theatre:

- Alcohol, drugs, illegal substances, or any paraphernalia associated with drug use
- Weapons of any type, including chains, knives, and firearms (excluding law enforcement officers)
- Pepper spray/mace/other chemicals
- Noisemakers such as air horns
- Laser Pens/Pointers of any type
- Fireworks

Tickets

Each audience member must occupy a seat and have a ticket, including infants.

Ticket Office Hours

The ticket office is open Noon to 5:00 PM, Tuesday through Friday, and 90 minutes before each performance. Tickets are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, online. Ticketing fees are the same whether purchased online, by phone, or at the ticket office.

Des Moines Community Playhouse

831 42nd Street
Des Moines, IA 50312



DMPlayhouse.com

**Ticket office and
administrative office:**
515-277-6261

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JOHN VIARS THEATRE

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MAR. 1-10, 2024

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All is Calm

Katy Merriman, Playhouse Artistic Director

All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914, is sure to be one of the most unique and beautiful holiday performances in our theatre's history. Originally broadcast live in 2007 as a radio production, it has since been performed throughout the U.S. and Canada and broadcast on five continents. Though it has been heard and performed the world over, *All is Calm* originated just a few hours north in Minneapolis, from a team of composers and arrangers who are Minnesota based and world renowned.

Peter Rothstein created *All is Calm* while working with the award-winning Theatre Latté Da in Minneapolis, for whom he has directed more than 80 productions. Named 2015 Artist of the Year by the *Star Tribune*, Rothstein has also collaborated with the Guthrie Theater, The Children's Theatre Company, Minnesota Opera, and with arts organizations across the nation. His fellow collaborators have similarly impressive resumes.

Arranger Eric Lichte was a founding member and artistic director of the male vocal ensemble Cantus. (Perhaps a few audience members even listened to a few holiday tunes recorded by Cantus on the way here?) Lichte went on to lead the Chor Leoni Men's Choir, transforming the ensemble into one of the best male choirs in North America.

Timothy Takach, a second arranger of today's work, is a composer based in Minneapolis whose work has been featured on A Prairie Home Companion, The Boston Pops holiday tour, and at the Kennedy Center to name just a few. Though this talented team is too far north to fall under the "Iowa pride" umbrella, I think it's worth noting that a work such as this originated so close to home.

All is Calm has obvious historical appeal, but the music is what defines the telling of this story. According to the show's web page, Rothstein believes that music, an important part of life in the trenches, helped create a context that made the truce possible. "Music was the common language, and as winter set in, the men began to hold impromptu concerts, singing to each other across the battle fields, creating trust and a camaraderie." (alliscalm.org/theater-latte-da) Rothstein has



intentionally let the music, supplemented by historical writings, guide the form of *All is Calm*, and the story doesn't require much beyond that. The patriotic American songs, trench tunes, and medieval ballads and carols from England, Wales, France, Belgium, and Germany say all that is needed. As Rothstein said, "Their story puts a human face on war, and that's the story I hope to tell."

You will notice in today's performance that many of the performers identify their name, rank, and country of origin after speaking. This is an intentional choice that we hope you embrace. Rothstein notes that many of the men whose words build the spoken portions of the show never appeared in written history. The repetition of their names today not only honors their place in history, but it also reminds listeners that the words you are hearing today come directly from the men who lived this story.

If you would enjoy reading more about *All is Calm* and the historical context from which it has sprung, I encourage you to scan the QR code on this page. Use the camera on your phone to hover over the code. Before you snap a photo, a small yellow link should appear when your camera phone recognizes the QR code. Click the yellow link, and you'll be taken to a thorough *All is Calm* Play Guide created by Theatre Latté Da.



The background of the page is a light cream color. Overlaid on this are several large, overlapping circles in various colors: a large red circle on the left, a teal circle on the right, a dark blue circle overlapping the red one, a maroon circle overlapping the red one, a lime green circle at the bottom left, and a dark green circle overlapping the dark blue one. The text is centered over these circles.

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FOR THE HOLIDAYS




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Join us for *Winter Safari* camps at Blank Park Zoo

Theme | Turtle Power 
Dates | December 27, 28 and 29
Ages | 5-9 years old

Cowabunga! Jump into the radical world of turtles. Learn the difference between turtles and tortoises, train in the ways of the turtle and discover how turtles have their own mutant-like powers in the animal kingdom.

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JOHN VIARS THEATRE

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CAST LIST

660th Production
105th Season

Opening Dec. 1, 2023
Closing Dec. 17, 2023

Des Moines Community Playhouse Presents at the John Viars Theatre

ALL IS CALM: THE CHRISTMAS TRUCE OF 1914

Written by Peter Rothstein

Vocal Arrangements by Erick Lichte and Timothy C. Takach

All Is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914 was developed and produced by Cantus Vocal Ensemble and Theater Latté Da in Minneapolis, MN, December 2007. The show premiered Off Broadway in 2018 produced by Laura Little Theatricals.

Director: **David Kilpatrick**

Music Director: **Brenton Brown**

Scenic & Projection Designer: **Nicholas Amundson**

Costume Designer: **Jessica Van Essen**

Lighting Designer: **Sam Stephen**

Sound Designer: **Brian Dodson**

Properties Designer: **Robin Breen Fulton**

Stage Manager: **Sarah Coeur**

Assistant Stage Manager: **Abby Kilpatrick**

Artistic Director: **Katy Merriman**

Cast

★Indicates Playhouse Debut

Steve Betz

Brian Bopp

Brad Church

Edwin Griffith★

Brandon Lee

Dean Messerly

Greg Millar

Evan Schettler

Eric Sharp

Christopher White★

All Is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914 is performed without intermission.

All Is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914 is presented by special arrangement with Broadway Licensing, LLC.
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123rd Production
29th Season

Opening Dec. 2, 2023
Closing Dec. 17, 2023

Des Moines Community Playhouse Presents in the Kate Goldman Children's Theatre Series

A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS

By Charles M. Schulz

Based on the television special by Bill Melendez and Lee Mendelson

Stage Adaptation by Eric Schaeffer

By Special Arrangement with Arthur Whitelaw and Ruby Persson

Presented by **Nationwide**

Director: **Jen Green**

Music Director: **Nancy Hill Cobb**

Choreographer: **Stella Webster**

Scenic Designer: **Brynn Kelly**

Costume Designer: **Angela Lampe**

Lighting Designer: **Virgil Kleinhesselink**

Properties Designer: **Marcia Lyon**

Stage Manager: **Ellie Wellman**

Assistant Director: **Sean Canuso**

Assistant Stage Manager: **DC Felton**

Artistic Director: **Katy Merriman**

Cast

★Indicates Playhouse Debut

Charlie Brown	Ben Green★	Schroeder	Nathan Jorgensen
Snoopy	Kara Cody★	Violet	Celeste Brown★
Lucy	Maddie Topliff	Sally	Courtney Rodd★
Linus	Emmitt Reyerson	Patty	Chayse MacLennan★
Pig Pen	JP Unga	Shermy	Porter McClure
Frieda	Josie Thompson★		

A Charlie Brown Christmas is performed without intermission.

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ALL IS CALM - MUSICAL NUMBERS

Prologue

Will Ye Go to Flanders?

Part I: THE OPTIMISTIC DEPARTURE

Come On and Join (Alexander's Ragtime Band)

God Save the King

Good-Bye-ee

Part II: THE GRIM REALITY

It's a Long Way to Tipperary

Les Godillots

Pack Up Your Troubles in an Old Kit Bag

The Old Barbed Wire

I Want to Go Home

When This Bloody War is Over (What a Friend We Have in Jesus)

Raining, Raining, Raining (Holy, Holy, Holy)

Deutschlandlied

Keep the Home Fires Burning

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Part III: CHRISTMAS

Christmas in the Camp

We Wish you a Merry Christmas

Die Wacht Am Rhein

Christmas Day in the Cookhouse

O Tannenbaum (O Christmas Tree)

Part IV: THE TRUCE

Stille Nacht

Angels We Have Heard on High

Er is een Kindeke geboren

Un flambeau, Jennette, Isabelle

The First Noel

Ihr Kinderlein, kommet

Wassail

Minuit chrétiens

Will Ye Go to Flanders? (Reprise)

Es ist ein Ros entsprungen

Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern

Good King Wenceslas

Part V: THE RETURN TO BATTLE

Aulde Lang Syne

We're Here Because We're Here (Aulde Lang Syne)

EPILOUGE

The Last Post

Stille Nacht (Reprise)

A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS - MUSICAL NUMBERS

<i>Christmas Time Is Here</i>	Company
<i>Transition to Snowballs</i>	Orchestra
<i>Snowballs</i>	Orchestra
<i>Transition to Booth</i>	Orchestra
<i>My Own Dog, Gone Commercial</i>	Orchestra
<i>Christmas Is Coming / Linus & Lucy</i>	Orchestra
<i>Finding a Tree</i>	Orchestra
<i>After Finding a Tree</i>	Orchestra
<i>Schroeder's Christmas Concert</i>	Orchestra
<i>After Linus' Message</i>	Orchestra
<i>Finding Christmas</i>	Company
<i>Curtain Call / Carol Sing-Along</i>	Company & Audience

A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS ORCHESTRA

Percussion: **Dan Haymes**
 Piano: **Nancy Hill Cobb**
 Bass: **Rachel Hymes**



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CAST NOTES



Steve Betz (Actor/All is Calm) played Pirate Seymour Braunschwagger in The Playhouse's 2023 production of *How I Became a Pirate*. Since his Playhouse debut in the 1992 production of *Big River*, his roles have included

Underling in *The Drowsy Chaperone* and Neville in *The Secret Garden*. Other area shows include *Urinetown*, *Company*, *Godspell*, *A New Brain*, and his favorite, *Falsettos* (Whizzer). Steve is head of corporate communications at Vestaron Corporation. He and his partner, David, have three French bulldogs and enjoy delicious food and drink.



Brian Bopp (Actor/All is Calm) is a familiar face at The Playhouse, most recently appearing as Max Detweiler in *The Sound of Music*. Since his first and favorite Playhouse role as Mr. Beaver in the 2016 production of *The Lion*,

the Witch, and *the Wardrobe*, he has been seen as Mr. Dussell in *The Diary of Anne Frank*. At Urbandale Community Theatre, he played Underling in *The Drowsy Chaperone*. Brian is a chaplain at Suncrest Home Health and Hospice and enjoys spending his free time sailing.



Brad Church (Actor/All is Calm) is excited to be included in this all-male ensemble. A familiar face in Des Moines theatre, his Playhouse roles include Josh in *Big The Musical*, Wonka in *Roald Dahl's Willy Wonka*, which earned

him a 2017 Dionysos Award, Harold Hill in *Meredith Willson's The Music Man*, and Sir Robin in *Monty Python's Spamalot*. His favorite role was Franz in *The Producers* at The Playhouse. Brad enjoys going to breweries and collecting vinyl records. He works for Disability Determination Services as quality assurance reviewer.



Edwin Griffith (Actor/All is Calm) is making his Playhouse debut but is familiar to vocal music audiences throughout Des Moines. He has performed with various opera companies across the country, and says a favorite role was Casper in

the Des Moines Metro Opera production of *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. Happily retired, Edwin enjoys singing, biking, and fixing up his 140-year-old house with his wife, Francine.



Brandon Lee (Actor/All is Calm) has enjoyed all his Playhouse roles, from the title character in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, to Tony in *Tony 'N' Tina's Wedding*, to Skimbleshanks in *Cats* (the show where he met his

wife, Jennifer), to Caractacus Potts in *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*. He relishes the challenge of finding ways to connect the audience with the world the cast is creating onstage. Brandon works at Principal. He says he has retired from his own hobbies to make sure his kids make it to, and perform well in, everything they do.



Dean Messerly (Actor/All is Calm) has enjoyed performing a number of roles in Playhouse productions including Harold the Hermit in *The New Mel Brooks Musical Young Frankenstein*, Marcellus Washburn in *Meredith Willson's*

The Music Man, and Arvide Abernathy in *Guys and Dolls*. His favorite roles include Dick Deadeye in *HMS Pinafore* with the Madison (WI) Savoyards, Jacob in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* at the Gallagher Blueudorn Performing Arts Center in Cedar Falls, and Fagin in *Oliver!* at theatres in Madison, Waterloo, and Marshalltown.



Greg Millar (Actor/All is Calm) is a favorite with Des Moines area audiences. He has had lead roles in many shows including, at The Playhouse, *Annie*, *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*,

Leaving Iowa, *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus! The Musical*, and *Pippi Longstocking* (Dionysos Award recipient). His favorite roles are Harold Nichols in *The Full Monty* and Nicely-Nicely Johnson in *Guys and Dolls*. Greg teaches spring break and summer theater classes at The Playhouse. His hobbies include horse racing and baking.



Evan Schettler (Actor/All is Calm) was last seen at The Playhouse as Sky Masterson in *Guys and Dolls*, following his debut as Colonel Arbuthnot in *Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express*. He has numerous

credits at Simpson College where he earned his bachelor's degree in music education. His Simpson roles include The Pirate King in *The Pirates of Penzance*, Polyphemus in *Acis and Galatea*, and Tartuccio in *Prospera's Island*. Evan's interests range

CAST NOTES

from running and practicing yoga to video games and Dungeons and Dragons.



Eric Sharp (*Actor/All is Calm*) returns to The Playhouse after his 2014 debut in *South Pacific*. A graduate of the University of Iowa with degrees in history and linguistics, he is manager at The UPS Store in Johnston. In his free

time, Eric enjoys reading books that are centuries old and exploring music (ie listening to his records as he likes to say). He is a dog person.



Christopher White (*Actor/All is Calm*) is honored and thrilled to make his Des Moines Playhouse debut. He performed in a variety of musicals growing up in Anderson, SC, including *Peter Pan*, *The Sound of Music*, *Oliver!*, and *Shenandoah*.

When he's not working as the employee experience manager at Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield, he and his wife, Toni, along with their kids, Cameron, Luci, and Annie, are probably busy planning another trip to a Disney Park.



David Kilpatrick (*Director/All is Calm*) has been the executive director of The Playhouse since May 2017. His career has included producing artistic director of a small professional theatre, owner

of a dinner theatre, production manager, director, lighting designer, and professional stage manager. David's past productions at The Playhouse include *Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express*, *Rounding Third*, *Disney's Newsies*, *Catch Me If You Can*, and *Mamma Mia!* Other favorite directing experiences include *Titanic The Musical*; *Sister Act*; *The Dining Room*; *Boeing, Boeing*; and *Sideways Stories from Wayside School* to name a few. His education includes degrees from George Mason University, Missouri State, and University of Missouri.



Brenton Brown (*Music Director/All is Calm*) is a familiar face at The Playhouse, with previous shows including *Fiddler on the Roof*; *Les Misérables*; *Mary Poppins*; *Monty Python's Spamalot*; *Into the Woods*; *The New Mel Brooks Musical*

Young Frankenstein; *A Chorus Line*; *Disney's The Little Mermaid*; *Mamma Mia!*; *Billy Elliot The Musical*; *Elf The Musical*; *Catch Me If You Can*; *Disney's Newsies*; *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*; *A Christmas Story, The Musical*; and *The Sound of Music*. He was

awarded the Cloris Leachman Excellence in Theatre Award for best musical direction of The Playhouse production of *Ragtime*. He has appeared onstage as the title character in *Sweeney Todd* at the Ingersoll Dinner Theatre and as L.M. in *Pump Boys and Dinettes* at The Playhouse. Brenton is artistic director of the Harmony Delegation Chorus. He and his wife, Jessica, enjoy spending time with their children, Lindy and Bennett.



Nicholas Amundson (*Scenic & Projection Designer/All is Calm*) earned his B.F.A in theatre design and technology from the University of South Dakota. Working on theatre all over town, he has designed in many different styles

with StageWest Theatre Company (*Ugly Lies the Bone*, *Marjorie Prime*), Des Moines Young Artists' Theatre (*The Hobbit*, *James and the Giant Peach Jr.*), Noce (*bare: A Pop Opera*), and Kata Klysmic Productions (*The Rocky Horror Show*, *Reefer Madness*). He served as scenic designer for *The New Mel Brooks Musical Young Frankenstein*, *Roald Dahl's Willy Wonka*, *A Chorus Line*, *Choices*, *Disney's The Little Mermaid*, *Ragtime*, *Catch Me If You Can*, and many more at The Playhouse. In the 2019-20 season, he directed and designed *James and the Giant Peach* in the Kate Goldman Children's Theatre. His favorite thing about theatre is creating out-of-the-box ways to present a story that gives the audience something fun to experience.



Jessica Van Essen (*Costume Designer/All is Calm*) has spent much of her career in schools as a professor/costume shop manager and working with professional theatres as a costume designer and technician. Before moving

back to Iowa, Jessica spent three seasons with the American Shakespeare Center in Staunton, VA, as their costume designer and shop manager, designing such shows as William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Comedy of Errors* among others. She is delighted to bring the joy of live theatre to younger audiences as well.



Sam Stephen (*Lighting Designer/All is Calm*) has a B.A. in live entertainment design and technology from North Central College in Naperville, IL. Their most recent Playhouse production was lighting designer for *Once*, and they previously designed *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Kinky Boots*, and *Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical*. Other

CAST NOTES

design credits include *The Legend of Georgia McBride* at Metropolis Performing Arts Center, *It Runs in the Family* at Citadel Theatre, *Among the Dead* at Jackalope Theatre, *She Loves Me* at Brightside Theatre, and *Cabaret* at Metropolis, all in the Chicago area. www.DesignsBySamuelStephen.com



Robin Breen Fulton (*Properties Designer/All is Calm*) began her theatrical journey at The Playhouse in the 1995 production of *Meredith Willson's The Music Man*, where she was proud to share the stage with her children, Sarah and Matt, for the first time. She is a Playhouse master teacher and has been working in the theatre's education department for 30 years. Robin enjoys "adventure days" with her grandchildren, knitting, gardening, and the support of her husband, Jeff, fueling her theatrical dedication.



Sarah Coeur (*Stage Manager/All is Calm*) is excited to be working her first production with The Playhouse. She is a graduate of Southern Illinois University in theatre and film production. After graduation, she began working professionally as a stage manager across the country. Some of her favorite shows throughout her career have been *Monty Python's Spamalot*, *The Mousetrap*, *Hairspray*, and *Noises Off*. Sarah also is production manager at Story Theater Company in Ames.



Abby Kilpatrick (*Assistant Stage Manager/All is Calm*) was light designer for the 2023 production of *Go, Dog. Go!*. Her most recent production credits include *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus! The Musical!* (lighting designer) at The Playhouse and *A Small Fire* (stage manager) at Northwest Missouri State University. Abby has also been a technical understudy in *The Sound of Music*, *Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella*, and *How I Became a Pirate*. A third-year student at Drake University studying theatre tech and design, she works as house manager for The Playhouse. In her spare time, Abby is an avid reader, having read over 60 books so far this year.



Peter Rothstein (*Writer/All is Calm*) has directed 72 mainstage productions for Theater Latté Da in Minneapolis. Other recent collaborations include the Guthrie Theater, the Children's Theater

Company, Minnesota Opera, the Illusion Theater, Ten Thousand Things, Minnesota Orchestra, Utah Shakespeare Festival, Seattle's 5th Avenue Theater, and Asolo Rep. Peter was named the 2015 Artist of the Year by the *Star Tribune*, Theater Artist of the Year by *Lavender*, and Best Director by *City Pages*. He has received nine Ivey Awards and has been awarded grants and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, Theatre Communications Group, the Minnesota State Arts Board and the McKnight Foundation.



Erick Lichte (*Vocal Arrangements/All is Calm*) has been hailed by *The Washington Post* for the "audacity" of his programming and noted by *Chicago Tribune* for the "meticulous preparation" of his choirs. As a founding member, singer, and artistic director of the male vocal ensemble Cantus, Erick created and sustained one of only two full-time vocal ensembles in the United States. His work with Cantus garnered the 2009 Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence, the highest honor in the professional choral organization Chorus America. In January 2013, he began his tenure as artistic director of Vancouver BC's Chor Leoni Men's Choir, one of the most active and popular amateur choirs in North America.



Timothy C. Takach (*Music/All is Calm*) has been applauded for his melodic lines and rich, intriguing harmonies. Timothy is a full-time composer and has received a number of commissions from various organizations including VocalEssence, the St. Olaf Band, Cantus, Pavia Winds, cellist Kirsten Whitson, Lorelei, The Rose Ensemble and the University of Notre Dame DeBartolo Performing Arts Center. His compositions have been performed on A Prairie Home Companion, The Boston Pops holiday tour, multiple All-State and festival programs and at venues such as the Library of Congress, Kennedy Center, and Royal Opera House Muscat. Timothy has been awarded grants from the American Composers Forum, Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, and the Minnesota State Arts Board and Meet the Composer, and yearly ASCAP awards since 2004.



Celeste Brown (*Violet/A Charlie Brown Christmas*), a ninth-grade student at Valley Southwoods Freshman High School, has showcased her versatility on stage, playing a range of characters

CAST NOTES

including Teen Fiona in *Shrek the Musical*, Ms. Darbus in *Disney's High School Musical Jr.*, Candy Man in *Willy Wonka Kids*, and Rizzo in *Grease: School Edition*. Celeste has also been a PIP (pre-intern program) at The Playhouse since 2022. Celeste is a member of show choir, jazz choir, and marching band.



Kara Cody (*Snoopy/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) is making her Playhouse debut. However, she is no stranger to the stage. Her most recent stage credits include *Legally Blonde The Musical* (Brooke Wyndham) and *Clue* (Mrs. White)

in her hometown of Omaha, NE. Kara is a freshman at Drake University, majoring in musical theatre. In her free time, she enjoys baking, doing puzzles, and juggling.



Ben Green (*Charlie Brown/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) is new to The Playhouse but not the stage. Last year at Des Moines Area Community College, he played Mortimer in *Failure, a Love Story* and Chip in *The 25th Annual*

Putnam County Spelling Bee. Ben works at Cane's Chicken. He plays drums and guitar, and also likes playing video games.



Nathan Jorgensen (*Schroeder*) has a long history with The Playhouse, making his stage debut while a high schooler in *Tuck Everlasting* and more recently playing Hector MacQueen in *Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express*. He

has worked on most backstage crews and directed several children's theatre shows. Nate is on the theatre's education staff. He teaches at Waukeg High School and has an M.A. in theatre directing from Roosevelt University (Chicago).



Chayse MacLennan (*Patty/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) is a freshman at Iowa State University. Her stage credits at Des Moines Christian School include *The Wizard of Oz* (Ensemble), *Mary Poppins* (Bird Woman), *Peter and*

the Starcatcher (Mrs. Bumbrake), and *James and the Giant Peach* (Spider). Chayse participates in choir and colorguard. Her main hobby is archery.



Porter McClure (*Shermy/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) received a Dionysos Award for Outstanding Performance for his role as Charlie Bradley in *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*. At Southeast Polk

Junior High, where he is an eighth grader, he played his favorite role to date, Mike Teevee, in *Willy Wonka Jr*. Porter has grown up watching the Peanuts specials for every major holiday and is excited to be part of this production.



Emmitt Reyerson (*Linus/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) is excited to be back at The Playhouse, having played Calvin in *Guys and Dolls* and Green Dog in *Go, Dog, Go!*, a Dionysos Award nominated role.

His favorite role to date has been Laurie in *Little Women* at Bondurant Farrar High School where he is a sophomore. Emmitt's many interests and hobbies include playing the piano, tap dancing, and going to see local theatre with friends.



Courtney Rodd (*Sally/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) is excited to be making her Playhouse debut. She is a freshman at Drake University studying marketing with a minor in musical theatre. Her past stage credits include *Head*

Over Heels (Pamela) with Ashland Productions in Maplewood, MN, and *Disney's Newsies* (Katherine) at Stillwater (MN) Area High School.



Josie Thompson (*Frieda/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) was active in theatre at Spencer High School, heading the publicity crew in addition to appearing on stage.

Her roles there included Peggy Sue in *The Plot Thickens Like Gravy* and Matilda in *Road Dahl's Matilda The Musical*. She performed in the Iowa High School Musical Theatre Awards finale in May and received an award for her work behind-the-scenes. Josie is a freshman at Drake University, pursuing a B.F.A. in musical theatre and a major in law, politics, and society.



Maddie Topliff (*Lucy/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) is a senior communications specialist at Kum & Go. Her area shows include *Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella* and *Singin' in the Rain* at The Playhouse, *Pippin* at Tallgrass

Theater Company, *Bye Bye Birdie* at Urbandale

CAST NOTES

Community Theatre, and *Twelfth Night* (Sir Toby Belch) at Grinnell High School. In her spare time, she enjoys knitting, reading, traveling, and learning new languages.



JP Ungs (*Pig Pen/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) has been involved in many shows at The Playhouse, most recently appearing as Lt. Brannigan in *Guys and Dolls* and Little Old Lady in *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus! The*

Musical! They've also been involved with The Playhouse's Penguin Project, working backstage for *Annie Jr.* and as props designer for *Disney's High School Musical Jr.* JP recently graduated from Drake University with a B.F.A. in theatre design and technology and works as a freelance theatrical designer and special education associate for Waukee Schools.



Jen Green (*Director/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) is back in the director's chair after having directed *Harriet the Spy*. At The Playhouse, she has also directed *Junie B. Jones in Jingle Bells, Batman Smells*. Her first

performance on stage at The Playhouse was in *Judy Moody and Stink in the Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad Treasure Hunt*, followed by Williamina Fleming in *Silent Sky*, for which she won a Dionysos Award. Jen was last seen by audiences in summer 2023 as Mariah in the Iowa Stage Theatre Company's 2023 Shakespeare on the Lawn production of *Twelfth Night*. With an M.A. in professional communication from Clemson University, her voice may sound familiar, as she is a morning show co-host and listener engagement director for Life 107.1 KNWI. Jen enjoys thrift shopping, cooking, baking, her brilliant children, and her wonderful dogs.



Nancy Hill Cobb (*Music Director/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) retired in 2019 from her career as a music professor (composition and conducting) and administrator at various universities, the last one being the University of Northern

Iowa. Her past production staff roles in theatre were producer and composer for *The Suffragist*, Gallagher Bluehorn PAC, Cedar Falls, and musical director for *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Meredith Willson's The Music Man*, *Showboat, Crazy for You*, and *Hans Christian Anderson* at Oklahoma Baptist University (OBU), Shawnee, OK. She holds degrees in music from OBU, Michigan State University, and the University of

Oklahoma. She and her husband, Terry Trimpe, enjoy playing tennis and bicycling regularly. They also have, between them, five children and 10 grandchildren and enjoy spending time with them. Nancy remains active as a composer and also volunteers as a court appointed special advocate (CASA) in the Des Moines area.



Stella Webster (*Choreographer/A Charlie Brown*) was assistant choreographer for The Playhouse's *Little Shop of Horrors*. Other Playhouse credits include *Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella*

(Ensemble), *Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical* (Ensemble), and *Kinky Boots* (assistant choreographer). Other stage and production credits include *Legally Blonde Jr.* (Brooke Wyndham) at Des Moines Young Artists' Theatre and choreographer and assistant director for *Mamma Mia!* and *Disney's High School Musical* at Des Moines Roosevelt High School. She is assistant choreographer and a member of the ensemble for Iowa State University's upcoming production of *Head Over Heels*. A senior at ISU, Stella is a swim instructor at Lifetime Fitness and an entertainer for Little Princess Parties.



Brynn Kelly (*Scenic Designer/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) is back at The Playhouse after her 2023 Playhouse appearance in *Kinky Boots* (Ensemble, Lauren/Nicola Cover). After her 2022 Playhouse debut in *Singin' in the*

Rain (Ensemble), her stage credits include *Much Ado About Nothing* (Beatrice), *Athena* (Mary Wallace), and *Carrie The Musical* (Miss Gardner). Offstage, Brynn is a fifth year senior at Drake University, pursuing a B.F.A. in musical theater with minors in business, writing, and theater tech and design. She enjoys spending time reading and snuggling with her two cats and dog.



Angela Lampe (*Costume Designer/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) began her tenure with The Playhouse in 1993 and has designed costumes, sets, and props for nearly 300 productions including *Guys and Dolls*, *Meredith*

Willson's The Music Man, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, *Ella Enchanted*, *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*, *Ragtime*, *Les Misérables*, *Disney's The Little Mermaid*, *West Side Story*, *Into the Woods*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Sunset Boulevard*, and *Hairspray*. She has a B.A. from Central College in Pella and an M.F.A. in theater from the University of

Nebraska. She is the recipient of five Cloris Awards for excellence in costuming and puppetry.



Virgil Kleinhesselink (*Lighting Designer/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) owns VTEC Productions sound company and is technical director at Des Moines Hoover High School where he designed lights for their production of *Les Misérables*

School Edition. Virgil began his Playhouse career in 1979 and since then has been involved with more than 200 shows as designer or actor. Most recently, he was inducted as a 2023 Playhouse Legend.



Marcia Lyon (*Properties Designer/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) is CEO of Creating Spaces, a company that provides architectural consulting across North America. She has written her syndicated newspaper column, "Creating Spaces," for

28 years. Each column features a problem and solution to various remodeling dilemmas. She has also been published in national magazines including *Better Homes and Gardens* and is the author of the book *The Essential Planner for Home Remodeling*. Marcia frequently speaks at home shows across the country. She enjoys salsa dancing and traveling in South America, gardening, reading, and going to the movies.



Ellie Wellman (*Stage Manager/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) was stage manager for The Playhouse's production of *Once*. Their Playhouse production credits include *Godspell* (assistant stage manager), *Singin' in the Rain* (stage

manager), and *Junie B Jones The Musical* (stage manager). Ellie works as a line cook for Central Standard Craft Beer and Burgers in Waukee and enjoys going on long walks and playing The Sims.



Sean Canuso (*Assistant Director/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) is a resident artist with Iowa Stage Theatre Company (ISTC) and a graduate of the Iowa State University Theater program. He completed his post graduate work

at the William Esper Acting Studio in New York City. This is Sean's second time on the direction team for *A Charlie Brown Christmas*. Other directing credits include *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* and *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*. Sean has performed both touring and regionally in 46 different

states. His Des Moines credits include *Twelfth Night* (Malvolio), *King Lear* (Gloucester), and *A Christmas Carol* (Bob Cratchit) with ISTC and *Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express* (Monsieur Bouc), *A Love Offering* (Stewart Turner), and *Weekend Comedy* (Frank Jackson) at The Playhouse. He can be seen in the film *Opening Doors: The Simon Estes Story* and in the television series *Back to Our Nature*.



DC Felton (*Assistant Stage Manager/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) is excited to be returning for his third show with The Playhouse after serving as assistant stage manager for *Go, Dog. Go!* and *Roald Dahl's Matilda*

The Musical. He most recently appeared on stage in his dream role of Man in Chair in Urbandale Community Theatre's production of *The Drowsy Chaperone*. He also served as stage manager for Des Moines Young Artists' Theatre's production of *Descendants: The Musical*. When not serving onstage or off, DC enjoys writing reviews for *Broadway World*. He also serves as a judge for the Iowa High School Speech Association and as an adjudicator for the Iowa High School Musical Theatre Awards.

Charles M. Schulz (*Creator/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) was born in Minneapolis, on Nov. 26, 1922. His *Peanuts* comic strip debuted in 1950 in just seven newspapers and when he announced his retirement in December 1999, *Peanuts* was syndicated in over 2,600 newspapers worldwide, with book collections translated in over 25 languages. The recipient of two Reuben Awards from the National Cartoonists Society and inductee into the Cartoonist Hall of Fame, Charles also scripted and storyboarded numerous television specials, earning five Emmy and two Peabody Awards. Charles died on Feb. 13, 2000, but his *Peanuts* gang continues to entertain and inspire the young and the young at heart.

Jose Cuauhtémoc (Bill) Melendez (*TV Special Creator/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) was hired by Walt Disney in 1938 and contributed his talents to such projects as *Fantasia*, *Dumbo*, *Pinnocchio*, and *Bambi*. He founded his own production company, Bill Melendez Productions, Inc., in 1964. Besides his commercial work, Bill produced his first television special, *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, and received both an Emmy Award (the first of eight) and the prestigious George Foster Peabody Award for Outstanding Children's Program. In addition to numerous awards and nominations for his *Peanuts* work, Bill won an Emmy in 1975 for *Yes, Virginia, There is a Santa Claus*; an Emmy (the first awarded in the specific category of Animation)

CAST NOTES

for *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*, as well as an individual Emmy for authoring that show's script. Bill Melendez Productions was the first to animate Jim Davis' "Garfield the Cat," and that first special won an Emmy Award in 1982.

Lee Mendelson (*TV Special Creator/A Charlie Brown Christmas*), along with Charles Schulz and animator Bill Melendez, produced 45 "Peanuts" prime-time specials. He was also the executive producer of four "Peanuts" animated feature films. Lee produced 12 "Garfield" prime-time specials as well as a 120-program series, *Garfield and Friends*. His first of four "Peanuts" movies (*A Boy Named Charlie Brown*) received an Oscar nomination for Best Musical Score and the "Peanuts" music has received four Grammy nominations. Lee is the author of the book *A Charlie Brown Christmas: The Making of a Tradition*, which was on *The New York Times* Bestseller List for eight weeks and sold over 200,000 copies, as well as two other books on Charles Schulz. He was the lyricist for "Christmas Time Is Here," (music by Vince Guaraldi for *A Charlie Brown Christmas*) which has become a Christmas standard. The music from the "Peanuts" shows has sold over 4 million albums, and has been performed by such artists as Vince Guaraldi, David Benoit, Wynton Marsalis, George Winston, and Sarah Maclachlan.

Eric Schaeffer (*Stage Adaptation/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) co-founded Signature Theatre in Arlington, VA, in 1989 and was its artistic director for three decades. The theatre received the 2009 Regional Theatre Tony Award and became home to the American Musical Voices Project (AMVP) – the largest musical commission program in America. Eric has directed *Gigi*, *Follies*, *Million Dollar Quartet*, *Glory Days*, and *Putting It Together* on Broadway. At the Kennedy Center, he served as artistic director of the Sondheim Celebration, where he also directed *Sunday in the Park With George* and *Passion*, along with *Mame*, *Follies*, and *First You Dream*. He has received six Helen Hayes

Awards for outstanding direction, eight Helen Hayes Awards for outstanding musical, 31 Helen Hayes Award nominations for outstanding director and the Washington Arts Founder Award.

Arthur Whitelaw (*Producer/A Charlie Brown Christmas*) has been producing, directing, writing, and acting for the past 61 years. His productions have won every major industry award, including the Tony, Oscar, Emmy, Olivier, Evening Standard, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle, etc. His television shows include: *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, (NBC, Emmy nomination); *Celebrating Gershwin* (PBS/ BBC, Emmy Winner); and for HBO, *Camelot*, *The Rainmaker*, *Separate Tables*, *Bus Stop*, *Barefoot in the Park*, *Plaza Suite*, *Sherlock Holmes*, *Vanities*, *Wait Until Dark*, *The Deadly Game*, and *Groucho*. His film credits include *Butterflies are Free*, *Tom Sawyer*, and *Huckleberry Finn* with Jodie Foster. He has just finished his autobiography, *Working For Peanuts*. Last year Arthur donated his vast theatre files to the Library of Congress.



Katy Merriman (*Artistic Director*) has been an active member of the local theatre community since moving to Des Moines in 2013. Her Playhouse directing credits include *Go, Dog. Go!*; *Guys and Dolls*; *The Sound of Music*; the world premiere of *Escaping the Labyrinth*; *A Love Offering* (co-directed with Tiffany Johnson and Pyramid Theatre Company); and *I and You*. Other local performance and directing credits include *The Glass Menagerie* (Laura), *King Lear* (Cordelia), *Our Town* (Emily), and *Fun Home* (director) with Iowa Stage Theatre Company. She has coached for Iowa High School Speech Association and will adjudicate the monologue competition this summer at American Association of Community Theatre's national festival. Prior to her time in Des Moines, Katy worked with numerous theatres in the Midwest as a performer, director, musician, and administrator.



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Technical Directors: **Nicholas Amundson, Paul Cartwright**

Dialect Coach (*All is Calm*): **Rachel Meyer**

Run Crew (*All is Calm*): **Abby Kilpatrick**

Run Crew (*A Charlie Brown Christmas*): **Mario Calise, DC Felton, Madalyne Rutledge**

Sound Board Operator (*All is Calm*): **Lindsey Nelson**

Light Board Operator (*All is Calm*): **Sarah Couer**

Light Board Operator (*A Charlie Brown Christmas*): **Ellie Wellman**

Followspot Operator (*A Charlie Brown Christmas*): **Paul Honold**

Set Construction (*All is Calm*): **Paul Cartwright**

Costume Crew (*All is Calm*): **Susan Eisenhour, Sharon Hensley, Phebe Klobnak, Barbara Mydland, Rachael Nash**

Costume Crew (*A Charlie Brown Christmas*): **Susan Eisenhour, Barbara Mydland**

Light Crew (*All is Calm*): **Mia Dank**

Audition Crew: **Kyle Bochart, Kate Garner**

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Historians: **Mark Morrison, Lloyd Von Hagen**

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Due to print deadlines, these individuals could not be acknowledged in the previous playbill.

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Hannah Butts	Evie Smith
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Ailie McLaren	McKenna Yu

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To create extraordinary, shared experiences through live theatre.

VISION

To be the home for artistic collaboration where any story can be told.

STATEMENT ON EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

We at The Playhouse grieve at the injustice and systemic inequalities committed to marginalized people in our world.

We support community as we bond to create awareness and encourage dialogue.

We denounce racism and violence against all people.

Our team makes it our mission to engage and enrich all people to provide lifelong educational opportunities and is committed to creating and supporting an inclusive theatre that will give everyone a platform to heal and to move forward into better days.

Published: June 2, 2020

POLICY ON EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

All volunteers who come to audition for a show at The Des Moines Community Playhouse are welcome, and we do not ask or keep a record of their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, sexual identity, age, or disability status.

The Playhouse is deeply committed to and supportive of diversity in local theatre. We work to include and serve all members of the community, to the extent possible, in stage productions and in our educational offerings.

The Playhouse has a strong and well-documented history of reaching out to diverse groups for inclusion in its programming.

Our goal is to provide a rewarding experience for all volunteers and participants, from performers and students to their families and our audience members.

Policy published August 18, 2016

Reiterated June 2, 2020

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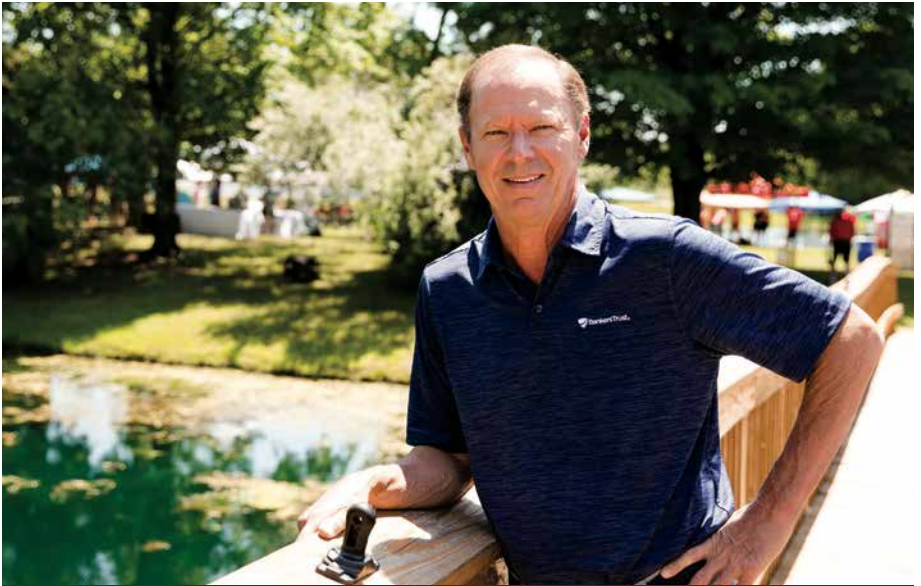


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