



CENTER STAGE

Shelby County Players

Unlocking Creativity through Theatre Arts

December 2025 Newsletter



Member of



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provided by



MANAGING DIRECTOR & PRESIDENT MESSAGE

I found myself alone in the Wortman Family Civic Theatre on a cold, rainy afternoon. I sat quietly in the front row of the main auditorium and stared at the darkened, empty stage. As Pogo once said, “Sometimes I sits and thinks and sometimes I just sits.”

Then I heard a few raindrops hit the roof, followed by the “whoosh” of air as the heating system completed its current run.

Suddenly, in my mind, I heard an actress scream from the stage. It was followed by the laughter of hundreds of children watching a matinee performance. Then came the ringing telephone, images of nuns dancing and a stage manager leaned against the wall smoking his pipe. Sights, sounds and smells came rapid fire for those few moments as I thought of all the things community theatre has meant to me and so many others.

Then, the loudest sound filled the theatre. It was a heartbeat, strong and steady. It was a reminder that our role as the Shelby County Players is to serve as the heart of the arts community for our citizens. Not just presenting performances on stage at The Wortman, but as a host of community group meetings, education programs for youth and anyone interested in using the theatre.

I sat back and smiled like a proud papa. Being part of an organization like SCP is something special. Thank you for supporting SCP with your time, your talent and your treasures. I can hardly wait for the next new sound or sight to come from our stage.



David Sheets
Board President

BOARD OF TRUSTEES



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Shelby County Players is a 501c3 organization.

ARTISTIC TEAM - Volunteers Who Work Year-Round To Create SCP Programming.



Cindy Leahy
Executive Director



Debbie Stafford
Communications
Manager



Hilary Haymond
Digital Marketing



Jenna Sutton
Encore Representative



John Barker
Board Liaison



**Laura
Stieneker Taylor**
Costume Liaison



Russ Gross
Show Director



Mark Owens
Show Director



Lindy Meyer
Show Director

Our Vision

To be a vessel through which those aspiring to practice the craft of dramatic arts will be encouraged and promoted.

Our Mission

To provide quality live theatre experiences to audiences in Shelby and surrounding counties, and promote the active participation of actors, directors, and technical people from our community.

Marketing ain't what it used to be...

One of the challenges currently facing your Shelby County Players is the changing face of Marketing. Older strategies including a sign on the square, marquee advertising, and individual show posters have evolved into tapping the electronic devices we all carry in our pockets...i.e. social media. And while social media can be efficient, immediate, and even targeted, incorporating its various platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube most certainly entail a learning curve. Fortunately, some SCP volunteers are relatively tech-savvy; and they're contributing greatly toward the future of SCP's marketing efforts moving forward.

And while SCP is more than grateful for the continuing support of local entities such as The Shelbyville News, The Addison Times, Giant FM radio, The Chamber of Commerce, and more, the move to adding social media channels for getting our word out is simply a sign of the times; and Shelby County Players is committed to evolving with the times.

So, if you're not yet following us, please visit our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages, and watch for our videos on the TikTok app. Perhaps even more importantly, visit our website at ShelbyCountyPlayers.org, and sign up for our e-mail list to receive specific performance and event information directly to your inbox.

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SCP Nominated for 12 Encore Association Awards, winning Five!

Shelby County Players is one of 9 community theatres in the Indianapolis area who belong to the Encore Association.

The Encore Association, formed in 1970, is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes. Encore provides for the exchange of ideas and communication between groups and individuals interested in furthering community theatre.

The Encore board of directors hosts an annual awards ceremony recognizing excellence from the previous theatrical season. A committee of Encore judges attend productions and select nominees. This year's nominees and winners were recognized at the Encore Award Ceremony November 3rd at the New Fields Toby Theatre.



Amanda Greene
Best Light Board Operator for a Comedy
Don't Drink the Water



Greg Cox
Best Lighting Design for a play
Murder on the Orient Express



Tony Brazelton
Best Sound Design for a Drama
Murder on the Orient Express



Erich Davies
JUDGES'S SPECIAL AWARD FOR
ORIGINAL MUSIC COMPOSITION
Murder on the Orient Express

S.P. Erney
Best Sound Board Operator for a Drama
Murder on the Orient Express



Also nominated:

DON'T DRINK THE WATER

- Best Lead Actor in a Male Role for a Comedy: Tyler Amos
- Best Lead Actor in a Female Role in a Comedy: Letitia Clemons
- Best Set Design for a Comedy: Mark Owens
- Best Set Decoration for a Comedy: Letitia Clemons

MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS

- Best Set Design for a Drama: Tony Brazelton
- Best Light Board Operator for a Drama: Chanta Quillen
- Best Lead Actor in a Female Role for a Drama: Letitia Clemons
- Best Lead Actor in a Male Role for a Drama: Tony Brazelton



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See what's to see....from your Shelby County Players!



The best laid plans...

“We don’t know what we don’t know.” This has been a common refrain around our new Wortman Family Civic Theatre. We have been learning about the opportunities and challenges of managing our own building. From maintenance to safety and everything in between, we’ve begun to get a better picture of what we need to be the premiere civic theatre in central Indiana.

First and foremost, we need YOU! Not just as patrons (although we appreciate your support very much!), but as volunteers. Our new facility has opened up a whole new range of opportunities. We need people with various interests and skill sets. This includes skills to manage different areas of the building, skills to assist and learn from these managers, skills to help make theatre/facility improvements, to clean, etc.

If you’re interested in sharing your time and talents with us in ways that don’t involve being on stage, reach out to info@shelbycountyplayers.org so we can arrange a time to talk.

In addition to needing YOU, we also have some physical needs and wants that we’ve identified since occupying the building for several months. Some of these items might be things you already own and are willing to donate, others may be larger ticket items that you’re willing to make a cash donation to help purchase. Items already donated include wall clocks, music & mic stands and a concession stand refrigerator! Click on this [link](#) or scan the QR code to view the most current wish list!



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“We’ve Come A Long Way Baby” ...Greg Cox’s Tech Talk



SCP’s journey to build its new home has been a long one, but my journey to become SCP’s Technical Director has been a longer one. In middle school, circa 2006/2007, I supported SCP productions by running and operating sound in the little sound booth at the Thompkins Street theater. From that point on, I jumped between acting and tech throughout high school. After college, around 2017, I returned to SCP serving as lighting designer on multiple productions eventually becoming the SCP Technical Director.

At that time we were moving each production into The Strand the week before the show opened. As most SCP volunteers know, during our Strand years, it was a lot of work to load in and mount a full show in just a week. After SCP officially began the process of fund raising for our own space, we converted SCP OFFSTAGE, our rehearsal space, into a functional performance space, partially due to COVID. I don’t know that anyone would have described that performance space as “pretty,” but it allowed us to continue bringing live theater to the Shelby County Community.

“You have thought of everything!” is a reoccurring statement from those touring the Wortman Family Civic Theatre. A team of passionate SCP volunteers spent more than 10 years touring other theatres and discussing the layout and design of the facility you see today. Our goal was to create a space that could be SCP’s “forever” home while at the same time allow for expansion to meet additional needs the group may have long after I and the rest of the design team move on.

In all technical aspects, our facility offers SCP and any creative team using the theater more capabilities than we’ve ever had. Currently we have converted our lighting to LED fixtures, upgraded our sound board to allow for immersive digital sound mixing with 120 input channels, and installed an automated fly system for safety and creative flexibility.

However, each of these areas are only in the first phase of upgrades. For lighting we will continue to work toward adding LED moving heads allowing our entire volunteer base to adjust, change, and focus lighting fixtures directly from the lighting console instead of using ladders or lifts. For audio, while the sound board can handle immersive mixing, we are working to raise funds to install a sound system to match its capabilities. For our fly system, all hoists installed serve as masking to hide the backstage areas. We have open spaces in the fly system to add more hoists for future expanded scenic capabilities.

Each of these expansion efforts will be spearheaded by a dedicated theatre tech team consisting of myself, now serving as a theatrical consultant, SCP’s new Technical Director: Chris Gross, and the Wortman Family Civic Theatre Facility Manager: Russ Gross. It has been an honor to serve SCP over the years and I look forward to working with the new team in supporting live theater in Shelby County for years to come.

COSTUMERS & SEWERS & WARDROBERS...OH MY!!

“You have to pick clothes for everybody in the show?” To which I replied, “Why yes, yes I do.” This is a question that one of the construction workers asked me earlier this year when I was setting up our new costume shop. He was amazed at what costumers do.

And in case you were wondering, here is what we do.

There are different levels of the costuming job. For each production, we have a **lead costumer** who creates the vision for the actors. They pull costumes from our inventory, choose patterns and material if costumes have to be built (sewn) and shops for pieces that can’t be built. Then we have the **sewists**. These people actually build the new pieces or alter the pieces from our inventory. Then there is my favorite job; **wardrobers**. These volunteers care for the costumes once the show starts, keeping them clean, mending any tears and helping out with quick changes during the show.

All of these positions come with *me* as a mentor to help all succeed! We have openings for several of these positions for our next three shows. Contact Laura Stieneker-Taylor at 317-512-1876 if you are interested.



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Our Journey – Our Community – Our Gratitude

DESIGN TEAM & SCP VOLUNTEERS



Formulated plans beginning in 2012 by visiting theatres and gleaned ideas.

CAMPAIGN TEAM / DONORS / GRANTS



Worked hard since 2019 and have raised \$4.5 of \$5 million to complete Phase 1.

INKIND DONORS



Freudenburg NOK & Christian Investments provided storage during construction with Runnebohm & subcontractors donating labor & materials.

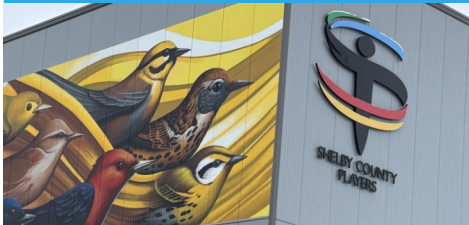
Our Pride – Your Community Gem – Wortman Family Civic Theatre

STATE OF THE ART THEATRE TECHNOLOGY



Join our technology teams to learn and experience new creative possibilities.

SHOWCASING THE ARTS



Come experience the National Audubon Society mural, Shelby Art Guild Association galleries, Shelby Community Band concerts, Blue River Youth Choir performances and more!

COMMUNITY EVENTS



Attend or book events like the Shelby County Queen Pageant and Mardi Gras Night in Shelbyville, February 13, 2026.

Our Future

LEADERSHIP



Volunteer Executive Director, Cindy Leahy is stepping aside in 2026 to focus on leading SCP's artistic programming.

TRANSITIONING



Debbie Stafford, longtime SCP volunteer, is stepping up as Interim Executive Director during the search for a full-time Executive Director.

FUTURE PARTNERSHIPS



Will enhance our community beyond Shelby County unlocking more opportunities for people of all ages to explore and showcase their creativity through the arts.

We invite you to continue 'Playing Your Part' by donating [online](#) Or by Check: PO Box 1129, Shelbyville, IN 46176



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SCP unlocks opportunities for people to explore and showcase their creativity through theatre arts.



SHELBY COUNTY
PLAYERS

P.O. Box 1129
Shelbyville, IN 46176
317-392-6844
www.ShelbyCountyPlayers.org

To purchase Event and
Performance Tickets scan QR
code or visit:
<https://shelbycountyplayers.ludus.com/index.php?sections=events>



Wortman Family Civic Theatre Events:

January 30 - State of the City

February 13 - Buck Rogers Jr. & La Louisianne

10th Annual Mardi Gras Night "A Decade of Love"

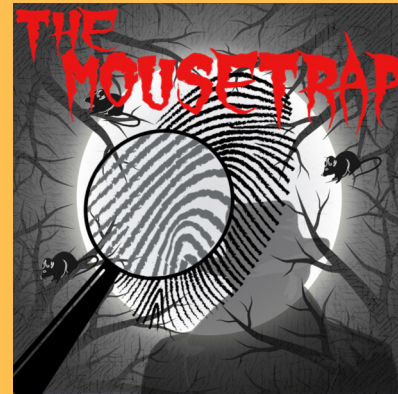
SCP 2025-2026 Season



Directed by Russ Gross
Performances:
2/20/26 - 3/1/26



Directed by Mark Owens
Auditions:
2/23/26 and 2/24/26
Performances:
4/24/26 - 5/3/26



Directed by Lindy Meyer
Auditions:
5/4/26 and 5/5/26
Performances:
7/17/26 - 7/26/26

Visit Shelby County Players [Facebook](#) page for information or leave a message 317-392-6844.

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