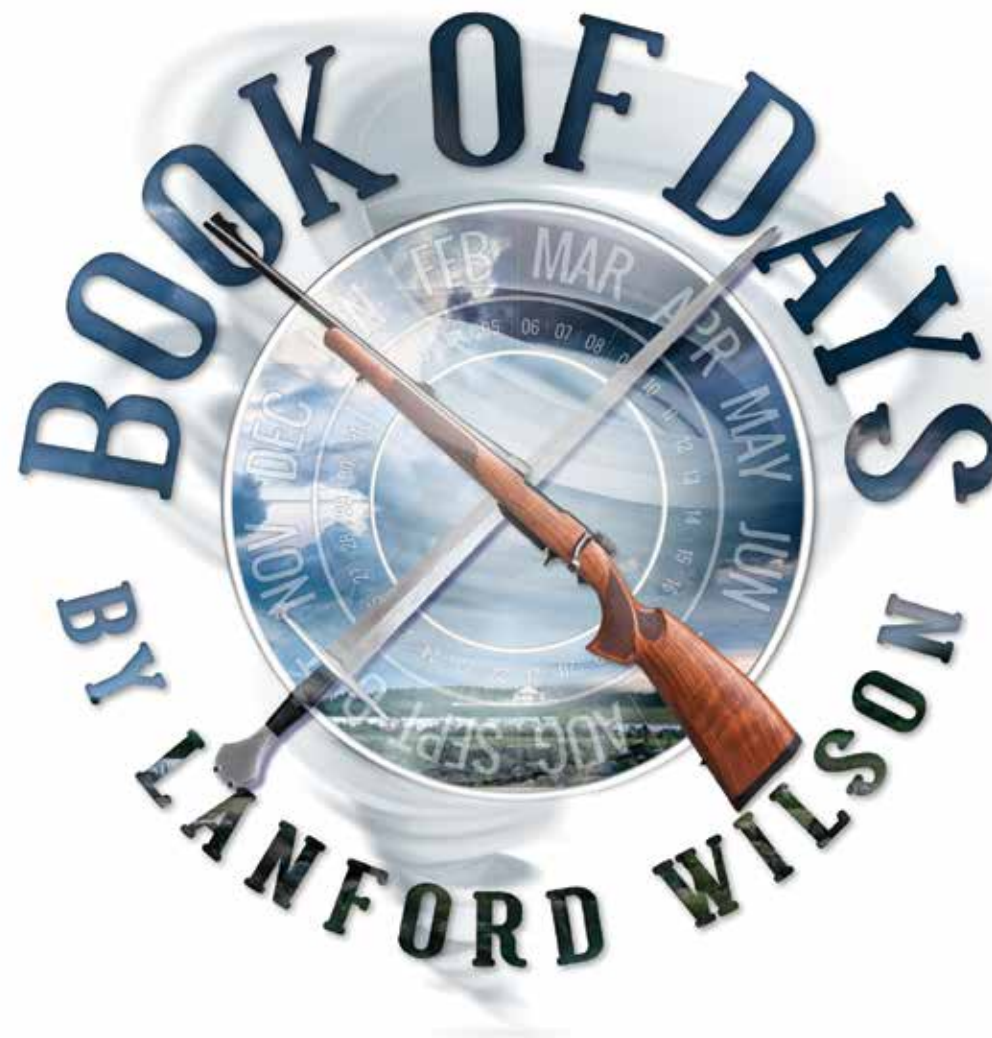


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Assistant Director.....	Janet Coffey
Producer.....	Judi Wobensmith
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Costume Designer.....	Amy Atha-Nicholls
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FEBRUARY 21 TO MARCH 14 2019/2020 season



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to The Colonial Players!

This is a first for me. As you read through the program you'll find three notes from me – the Director's Notes, About the Director, and this President's message. I want to take a moment to thank Tom Stuckey, a long-time member and volunteer at CP, who puts together the program for each of our productions. He has the patience of Job – primarily because I often get him my President's Message just as the program is about to go to print. This playbill may have been especially stressful for him with three messages he needed from me, but there is a light at the end of the tunnel for him.

If this is not your first time at The Colonial Players and you've read my previous President's Messages, you may notice a recurring theme of membership and volunteerism. Since 1949 – that's 71 seasons and 380 mainstage productions – we have been an all-volunteer, 501(c)(3) non-profit, membership-based organization. We have a Board that consists of 10 members, voted on by the Membership. I have been proud to serve on the board for eight years (four as Human Relations Director and four as President), and by the time this show ends we will have elected someone new as President. Next season, our new President will be writing these messages. But there are still two more shows for me, two more President's Messages, and four more months during which I am privileged to serve this amazing organization as a Board Member. Please keep reaching out to me to let me know what you like and what we can do to improve.

Thanks for coming, and enjoy the show!

– SHIRLEY PANEK

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

LANFORD WILSON was an American playwright who won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama for his 1980 play, *Talley's Folly*. He received three Tony Award nominations and won a Drama Desk Award for *The Rimers of Eldritch*. Wilson also was elected to the Theater Hall of Fame in 2001 and to the American Academy of

Arts and Letters in 2004. He helped advance the off-off-Broadway theater scene with his early plays, and was one of the first playwrights to move from off-off-Broadway to off-Broadway to Broadway. Wilson wrote more than 20 plays as well as television scripts and libretti for operas.

ABOUT OUR NEXT PLAY

The Colonial Players will welcome the arrival of spring with *Freaky Friday*, a joyous musical based on the beloved 1972 novel by Mary Rodgers and the four Disney film versions of her work. A bit of magic from an hourglass causes high school student Ellie and her mother, Katherine, to switch bodies, just as Katherine prepares for her wedding and Ellie is determined to take part in her school's social event of the year. It couldn't happen at a worse time, but as they attempt to carry on with their new identities until they can switch back, Ellie and Katherine gain a better understanding of

each other, learn self-acceptance, and realize the immeasurable love and mutual respect that bond a mother and daughter. Tom Kitt and Brian Yorkey, Pulitzer Prize-winning composers of *Next to Normal*, provide a score filled with the kind of songs you will be singing as you walk out of the theater. Television writer Bridget Carpenter's laugh-filled script keeps the story moving at breakneck speed. *Freaky Friday* begins a five-week run on April 3 and closes May 3. Tickets are available at thecolonialplayers.org or by calling 410-268-7373.



The 20th Annual Washington Area Theatre Community Honors (WATCH Awards) honored The Colonial Players with 12 nominations for productions presented in 2019. Results announced in January were based on judging of 40 musicals and 61 plays presented by 28 community theater companies in the Washington region.

The Colonial Players congratulates all of the many volunteers who helped earn nominations for excellence in the production of these four shows.

- **Arsenic and Old Lace:** Outstanding play, outstanding lead actress and lead actor, outstanding makeup design, and outstanding hair design.
- **A New Brain:** Outstanding featured actress, outstanding light design, outstanding sound design, and outstanding special effects.
- **Silent Sky:** Outstanding lead actress and outstanding hair design.
- **Toward Zero:** Outstanding set painting.



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Thank you for your support. Your generous gifts help us to continue to provide educational and training programs, encouragement and entertainment to all who are interested in dramatic arts.

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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

What I remember most from when I read this show the first time is having the clearest picture of this theater in my head. How it seemed that this show was almost written for our space – its unique theater-in-360° stage lending itself to a minimalist set. I knew I would need a talented cast of actors to tell the story of this small mid-western town and light and sound designers who could enhance this tale that spans different places and time.

What drew me in was the honesty of all the characters in this little town. They are real people with all their flaws (greed, hypocrisy, jealousy) and principles (loyalty, honesty, passion) – at once good and bad, admirable and not. The townspeople join together as a chorus – rare to see in modern theater. The Greek chorus in ancient Athenian tragedies combined spoken word, songs, and dance to tell the story. Both then, and in *Book of Days*, they act as a window into other places and times – speaking directly to the audience, yet retaining their own identities and opinions. As chorus, our storytellers make no judgments; as re-enactors, their foibles are brought to light.

What are the principles we as the audience bring when we watch this show, and what are the judgments we make about the choices made?

Lanford Wilson, when he wrote this play, was moved by the idealism and hedonism of the pre-Vietnam era. The public movement to end the Vietnam war through peaceful protests showed that people could make a difference and change the country as well as the future of the world. He was shocked and appalled by the divisive role religion played in the post-Vietnam era, and what he saw as a lack of hope among young people coming along behind him. Today, it seems we are even more divided. Religion, misogyny, ambition – all force us to look at our morals, and what is right, and true, and just. Maybe, like Ruth, what we learn is that an individual must stand up and fight for what is right despite the consequences. Thank you for joining us to hear our story. And thank you to an extraordinary cast of individuals who brought my little town of Dublin, MO to life.

– SHIRLEY PANEK

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR



SHIRLEY PANEK is excited to be making her directorial debut on The Colonial Players mainstage among friends she's come to know as family. Shirley is the current President of

Colonial Players, and you may have seen her in both onstage and offstage roles in recent CP productions: *Job Loss Figures* (Kimberly Barlow), *Good People* (Margie), *Rocket Man* (Louise), *Superior Donuts* (Ofc. Randy Osteen); as producer (*33 Variations*, *Sex with Strangers*), as stage manager (*Arsenic and Old Lace* (WATCH nominee), *A New Brain*, *Nine*), and as

lighting designer (*Calendar Girls*, *The Cripple of Inishmaan*, *A Few Good Men*). Though she has worked in many aspects of theater, this is the first time she's sat in the director's chair, and as she's recently told friends and colleagues, "After working on a number of shows, I have ideas. And once you have ideas about how a production should look and feel – you need to put your money where your mouth is and step up and take the reins." She could not have done this without the support of the extremely talented production team. "Special thanks to Judi, and all my love to J, A, & E."

The Colonial Players gratefully acknowledges the generous bequest from Roland Riley, a longtime patron whose gift helps ensure the future economic viability of our theater.



The Colonial Players gratefully acknowledges the recent gift from the Donald M. Reed Living Trust that made possible the critical upgrade of our stage lighting control system.



THE CAST



JEAN BERARD

(Martha Hoch)

Jean may be familiar to you from previous CP productions such as *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *33 Variations*, and *The Unexpected Guest*, or *Young Frankenstein* at Silhouette Stages. She is more than thrilled to be back "home" at The Colonial Players and to be playing such a sympathetic part! (In her other life she is a high school teacher.) It is an honor to be part of this cast in one of the most creative productions seen in this area. "Thanks to director Shirley Panek for providing the opportunity; and all my love to my partner in life, love, and onstage antics, Jim Berard."



DARICE CLEWEL

(Sharon Bates)

Born and raised in the Midwest, Darice is glad to be back home in the Great Plains states in this production! With a degree in Theater Arts/Drama from the University of Wisconsin, she has found a home for play here at CP, acting, directing, choreographing, and serving on the board of directors. Darice has appeared here in *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, *Calendar Girls*, *Enchanted April*, *Lettice and Lovage*, *Steel Magnolias*, and *Splendour*. Elsewhere, she's played in *The Women of Lockerbie*, *The Crucible*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Sordid Lives*, and *The Vagina Monologues*. As a director, Darice has helmed *Quartet*, *Trying*, *Copenhagen*, *Art*, *Stones in His Pockets*, *Is There Life After High School?*, *The Shadow Box*, and *Isn't it Romantic?*, among others. What a privilege to work with this strong ensemble under Shirley's clear-sighted, creative direction. Thanks always to my partner in theater and life, Sweet Jimmy Blue Eyes.



DAVID COOPER

(Reverend Bobby Groves)

After... some time, David is returning to the stage. This is his first performance at The Colonial Players. He has

provided technical support, sound design, and consulting for a number of shows at CP over the past few seasons. Long past favorite roles include Oberon/Theseus (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) and Austin (*True West*). "Big love and thanks to a great cast and crew for all the support. To Jennifer - acting coach, line memorization support, 2nd unit director, grounding presence, and all around partner in crime - I love you."



MATT LEYENDECKER

(Earl Hill)

Matt returns to The Colonial Players for his third show, having previously played the odious Anton Mahler in *The White Rose* and the odorous Sir John Falstaff in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. He received a WATCH nomination in 2018 for BCT's *Becky's New Car* and has appeared in several other area productions such as LMP's *An Inspector Calls*, Vagabond Players' *Inherit the Wind*, and PGLT's *The Mousetrap* and *A Shot In The Dark*. He has been honored to work on this show with such a wonderful company and such a talented cast. He owes all his success to the unending support of friends and family, primarily his sons and soon-to-be wife, Hillary.



ERICA MILLER

(Louann Bates)

Erica is proud to be a part of this show. The play has many thought-provoking themes and sends an important message about the corruption that can come from neglect and abuse of power. Previous roles at The Colonial Players include Belle in *A Christmas Carol*, Emily in *Late Nights In Cars*, Mistress Page in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and Claudia Nardi in *Nine*. Most recently, Erica took a break from performing on the CP stage to co-direct *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* in December. She hopes you are moved by this production and remember to never stop questioning. As always, she sends her love and appreciation to her family.



THE STAFF (continued)

and Laurel Mill Playhouse. His sound design has garnered three WATCH nominations. Richard has appeared on area stages and in his spare time helps run Discworld conventions. Occasionally he has been known to direct. Love to C, A & P. Always in my heart, O.



JANICE COFFEY

(Assistant Director)

Janice has produced, stage managed, and worked as a set designer and props mistress for several shows for Bowie

Community Theatre and Greenbelt Arts Center. She is also a professional actor, having performed in film, TV, and theatrical productions and was last seen at The Colonial Players as Eleanor in *Casa Valentina*. Janice was assistant director for *The White Rose* earlier this season. She thanks Shirley for giving her the opportunity to help tell this important story.



SARAH IRVING

(Properties Designer)

Sarah is pleased to be working on her fourth production with The Colonial Players. Last season she assistant directed *Rumors* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and will produce *The Revolutionists* this spring. Sarah is a recent graduate of St. John's College, where she served two terms as president of King William Players. She has also worked with Annapolis Summer Garden Theatre, Folger Shakespeare Library, and the Kennedy Center. Many thanks to her mentors, Connie and Lois; the wonderful cast and crew; and her supportive partner, Sean. Play it with love!



ERIC LUND

(Lighting Designer)

Eric's last work at CP was onstage playing Gloria in *Casa Valentina*, and before that he appeared in *Calendar Girls*, *Rebecca*, *The Clearing*, and various iterations of *A Christmas Carol*. He designed lights for *The Secret Garden* and was nominated for a WATCH award for his

designs for *Side Man* and *Venus in Fur*. He has worked extensively in area theaters, including Dignity Players, Annapolis Summer Garden Theatre, Vagabonds, and others. He appeared in Dignity Players' productions of *The Laramie Project*, *Gross Indecencies*, and *The 39 Steps* and directed their production of *The Vagina Monologues*. Eric has directed for CP with *The Voice of the Prairie* and two productions of *A Christmas Carol*. He is also very excited to be directing CP's scheduled 2021 production of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. As a founding board member of Annapolis Pride, he helped bring Annapolis its first Pride Parade in 2019. He is very honored to be working with this amazing cast and crew. And, as always, he thanks his husband of 26 years, Mickey, for his support and endless patience!



JUDI WOBENSMITH

(Producer)

Judi has been involved in many productions in the Annapolis/DC area both on and off the stage since 1979. She has produced shows at The Colonial Players, Annapolis Summer Garden Theatre, Children's Theatre of Annapolis, and Petrucci's, to name a few. Three of CP's productions were nominated for WATCH Awards. Previous directing credits include: *A Christmas Carol* (four times at CP), *The Music Man*, *Gigi*, *The King and I*, *Carnival*, *Marriages*, *Something's Afoot* (at The Colonial Players and 2nd Star Productions), *The Sunshine Boys*, and *Mrs. California*, among others. She served three terms on the Board of Directors at CP and also as Production Director at Annapolis Summer Garden Theatre and Children's Theatre of Annapolis. Judi has also appeared in various TV commercials and documentaries as well as on MPT. Judi spends her spare time working at the House of Delegates in Annapolis. She thanks all the production staffs, past and present, for giving unstintingly to all the productions on which they have worked. But then, every volunteer at CP invests a lot of time and love. Judi thanks her husband, John, for supporting her in all of her theater forays.



THE CAST (continued)

support. She would also like to thank the cast and production team for making rehearsals and the stage such a joy!



JASON VAUGHAN

(Boyd Middleton)

Jason is delighted (and a bit overwhelmed) to be part of the amazing cast and crew of *Book of Days*. Previous roles at Colonial include Howard in *Moon Over Buffalo*, Nicky in *Bell, Book and Candle*, and most recently, in December 2019, as the dad in *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*. Jason has also appeared on stage with Dignity Players of Annapolis (*Last Days of Judas Iscariot*) and Baltimore's Spotlighters (*The Man Who Came to Dinner*). During the day he works as a consultant in the historic preservation and heritage tourism field and currently serves on the board of the Maryland Federation of Art. Jason would like to thank Scott for all his love and support.



PAUL VALLEAU

(James Bates)

Paul is thrilled to return to The Colonial Players stage. He is excited to share the journey with this tremendously talented cast.

"Thank you for your dedication, support, and hilarious nature." Paul also thanks his family. "To my beautiful wife, your constant love and support mean everything to me, PS. Mom, thank you for all your love and encouragement. To the kids, you bring me the greatest joy." Paul previously was co-director of *The Crucible* and performed as Michal in *The Pillowman*, both at Vagabond Players. At The Colonial Players, he appeared as Mike (33 Variations), Homer (*Mornings at Seven*), Lt. Kaffee (*A Few Good Men*), and Leo Irving (*In the Next Room*). Other roles in Iowa include Leo Bloom (*The Producers*) and Robert (*Don't Dress For Dinner*) at The Des Moines Playhouse and Brandon (*Next Fall*) and Kent (*Reasons To Be Pretty*) at Stage West Theatre.



THE STAFF



BERNADETTE ARVIDSON

(Stage Manager)

Bernadette has thoroughly enjoyed stage managing so many wonderful productions over the years. She has had the privilege to stage manage for Crystal Gayle, the Artie Shaw Orchestra, The Russian Ballet Theatre Company, the premiere of *Rumpelstiltskin's Daughter* (which went on to enjoy a successful run in London), The Chesapeake Arts Center opening gala, a brilliantly executed United Way fundraiser, and dozens of community theater productions. It is in community theater that Bernadette finds her most joy; that's where all the fun is! Break a leg kids, and enjoy the show! As ever, Bernadette thanks God for all the good in her life.



AMY ATHA-NICHOLLS

(Costume Designer)

Maker of stuff, nonsense, and mischief by decree. Amy has worn many hats, including puppeteer, costumer, pyrographer, designer, short film producer, playwright, archer, wench (when required), and assassin on occasion (specializing in heart attacks...). Mostly she acts as Polly Filler for all the jobs that need doing. Love always to R & P, evermore O.



RICHARD ATHA-NICHOLLS

(Sound Designer)

Richard is delighted to be designing sound again for The Colonial Players. He has previously engineered or designed sound for numerous productions, primarily at CP, Bowie Community Theatre,



THE CAST (continued)



JEFF MOCHO

(Len Hoch)

Last seen at The Colonial Players as Master Page in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Jeff Mocho is excited to be a part of this stellar cast. He has performed in other Colonial Players shows such as *Venus in Fur*, *A Few Good Men*, *Communicating Doors*, and *The Unexpected Guest* (where he met and fell in love with his wife and now director, Shirley). Thanks go out to Shirley, who not only puts up with him daily but also, in an act of what must have been temporary insanity, cast him in this show. "Thank you, Mom and Dad, for coming all the way here yet again from Albuquerque to see my show. And thanks to Mom for reading the program and pointing out my bio to Dad."



TIMOTHY SAYLES

(Walt Bates)

Tim has appeared on the The Colonial Players stage a dozen or more times since 2008, most recently as Mr. Potter and many other characters in the 2017 CP production of *It's a Wonderful Life, a Live Radio Play*. He has also performed at other area theaters, from Vagabond Players in Baltimore (*The Crucible*) to Laurel Mill Playhouse (*One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*) and 2nd Star Productions in Bowie (*Hello, Dolly!*; *Fiddler on the Roof*; et al). Formerly editor in chief of *Chesapeake Bay Magazine* (1996-2014), Tim is now an editor with the *Bay Journal*, a monthly newspaper covering environmental issues in the Chesapeake watershed. He can't imagine a lovelier or more hardworking cast and crew than this one, or a better director than the splendid Shirley Panek.



ROBIN SCHWARTZ

(Ruth Hoch)

Robin is deliriously thankful to be back at The Colonial Players with our incredible group of cheesy Dubliners. She was last seen on the CP stage as Mary Aldin in Agatha Christie's *Towards Zero*. Favorite credits include

Dawn in *The Universal Language* (Outstanding Performance from the Maryland Community Theatre Festival), Thea Elvsted in *Hedda Gabler*, Margaret Leavitt in *Silent Sky*, and Joan Dellamond in *The Babylon Line*. "Special thanks to my husband, Daniel, for supporting me tirelessly and unconditionally, to my sons, Jacob and Henry, for being Mommy's cheerleaders, and to family and friends for their loving encouragement. So much gratitude to the whole CP team for the opportunity to create theater with some truly amazing people."



BOB SINGER

(Sheriff Conroy Atkins)

Bob is a satellite operations engineer working for Peraton at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center. His career in the space business is eclipsed in length only by his hobby of performance art. Since starting in 1973, he has performed on stage, screen, TV, radio, and now the internet. Bob has been in more than 46 movies and television shows, from *Year One* to *Love Different*, and from *Evil Stepmothers* to *House of Cards*. Onstage, Bob has performed in more than 40 dramas, comedies, and musicals and was last seen at The Colonial Players as both The Rev. Dr. Harper and Mr. Witherspoon in *Arsenic and Old Lace* and at the Green Globe Theater as Frank Geyer in *Devil in Me*. Bob has just finished filming as the lead in the short film *Hoodie* from Key 13 Film Partners and will be producing audiobooks for Audible.com starting in January.

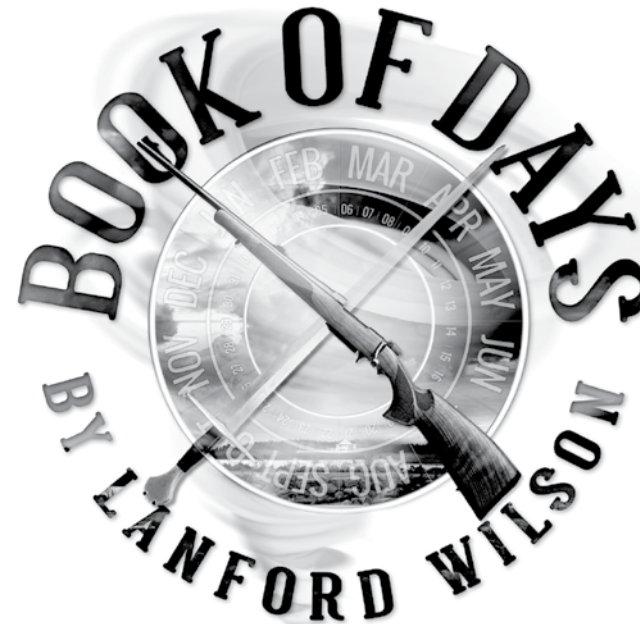


ASHLEY SPOONER

(Ginger Reed)

Ashley is delighted to take the stage as Ginger Reed in *Book of Days*, marking her fifth production with The Colonial Players of Annapolis. She previously played Ranger Wilson in the theater's 2017 production of *Shiloh Rules*, as well as Cassandra in the 2017 production of *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*. As always, Ashley is grateful to her family and friends for their encouragement and

THE COLONIAL PLAYERS, INC.
presents



Written by
LANFORD WILSON

Directed by
SHIRLEY PANEK

THE CAST

Ruth Hoch.....Robin Schwartz
Len Hoch.....Jeff Mocho
Boyd Middleton.....Jason Vaughan
Ginger Reed.....Ashley Spooner
Martha Hoch.....Jean Berard
Walt Bates.....Timothy Sayles
Sharon Bates.....Darice Clewell
James Bates.....Paul Valteau
LouAnn Bates.....Erica Miller
Earl Hill.....Matt Leyendecker
Reverend Bobby Groves.....David Cooper
Sheriff Conroy Atkins.....Bob Singer

TIME AND PLACE

A recent summer in Dublin, Missouri,
county seat of Chosen County

Originally commissioned, developed, and produced by
the Purple Rose Theatre Company, Chelsea, MI.

The world premiere of *Book of Days* was presented by the Purple Rose Theatre Company, Jeff Daniels, executive director; Guy Sanville, artistic director; Alan Ribant, managing director. The production was directed by Guy Sanville.

Book of Days was subsequently produced by Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Steven Woolf, artistic director; Mark Bernstein, managing director; and by Hartford Stage, Michael Wilson, artistic director; Elaine Calder, managing director.

This production will be performed with one intermission between Act I and Act II.

Produced by Special Arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc.
 Taking photographs and using any recording devices are strictly prohibited.
 Smoking is prohibited throughout the building.