



# GEORGIA THEATRE CONFERENCE

Convention Edition

## Theatre News

January, 1999

# Willis Named Ballew Award Winner at Convention '98

Jay Willis, former director of the Augusta Players, received a standing ovation Saturday November 7, when he was named the recipient of the 1998 Leighton Ballew Award for Outstanding Service to Theatre in the State of Georgia. In making the presentation, former GTC President Bolton Lunceford said that it all started for Willis when he first took the stage at the age of seven, and his distinguished career included commendable service to the USO and a long and successful tenure with the Augusta Players, as well as distinguished service during his term as president of GTC. Lunceford drove home the image of Willis as a stalwart supporter of theatre arts in general and the Georgia Theatre Conference in particular when she reminded the conference that Jay and his Augusta Players hosted the annual convention of the organization three times. Anyone who has been associated with hosting a statewide convention for any organization can appreciate the challenge of hosting just one such event. To organize and execute three during a career is, in Lunceford's words, a reflection of his incredible dedication or severe senility.

Willis, in his acceptance remarks, told of a few years earlier when he had the pleasure of sitting next to presenter Lunceford when she won the award. As the presenter that year began describing the Ballew recipient, Willis said that Lunceford turned to him and said "that sounds like me." Then came the recognition that she was indeed the recipient of the organization's highest honor. Willis told the capacity crowd at Saturday's Awards Banquet that he now understood how she felt. He acknowledged a difficult year in his professional and personal life, with his departure from Augusta Players and the loss of his mother last summer, but he said that the presentation was a welcome step towards moving on with his life and career.

Jay Willis joins the ranks of some of Georgia's finest. In addition to Lunceford, past recipients of the Ballew Award, named for longtime University of Georgia Theatre Chair and GTC Founder Leighton Ballew, include Don Kordecki, Jim Sligh, Bolton Lunceford, Fred Chappell, Mickey Foreman, Ray Home, Vic Lambert, Randy Wheeler, and the late Lynn Woody. The first distinguished service award was presented to actor Charlton Heston in 1981. It was later named for Leighton Ballew, who once chaired the University of Georgia Theatre Department and helped to found GTC.

To Jay Willis, the Georgia Theatre Conference extends its heartfelt thanks and its hearty congratulations for this well-deserved recognition. It is a reflection of the wisdom of the Board of Directors of GTC that they consistently realize the highest caliber of professional and most dedicated advocates of the craft are the ones most deserving of our highest honors. We look forward to a continuing relationship with Jay, and many more years of faithful service with him in the organization.

## **Burkhalter and Soderberg Present Secondary Awards**

After expressing appreciation to the State University of West Georgia's faculty and student staff, and the student workers from Glynn Academy and Hepzibah High School, Secondary Division Co-Chairs Shirley Burkhalter and Leah Soderberg presented Certificates of Participation to each school in the Secondary Festival, then made the following awards presentations:

### **ALL STAR CAST**

Michelle Garrigon, as Gert  
Lost in Yonkers  
Brookstone High School

Blake Mallard as Louie  
Lost in Yonkers  
Brookstone High School

Raleigh Isaacs as Kreon  
Antigone  
The Galloway School

Zach Hunt  
All In The Timing  
Harrison High School

James Immekus  
All In The Timing  
Harrison High School

Chris Maddox as Leon  
The Voice of the Prairie  
Greater Atlanta Christian School

Britt Kitchen as Davey  
The Voice of the Prairie  
Greater Atlanta Christian School

Mayer Jollay as Frankie  
The Voice of the Prairie  
Greater Atlanta Christian School

Tara Williams as Lora  
Impromptu  
Rabun Gap-Nacoochie School

Tripp Eldridge as Narrator  
Cotton Patch Gospel  
Warner Robins High School

### **Honorable Mention Productions**

*The Voice of the Prairie*  
Greater Atlanta Christian School  
Clif Jones, Director

*Butterflies Are Free*  
Gainesville High School  
Pam Ware, Director

### **Best Actor**

Jim Morrow as Algernon  
The Importance of Being Earnest  
Camden County High School

### **Best Actress**

Katie Cunningham as Mrs. Baker  
*Butterflies Are Free*  
Gainesville High School

### **Runner Up Production**

Antigone  
The Galloway School  
Elaine Malone, Director

### **Best Play**

All In The Timing  
Harrison High School  
Susan Reid, Director

## **Sims Recognized For GTC Service**

Sue Sims, a.k.a. Sue Jordan, of Fort Valley, Georgia recently resigned as Executive Director of Georgia Theatre Conference. During the Business meeting on Saturday, November 7, GTC President Connie Fritz recognized Sims for her service to the organization. Members in attendance applauded Sims, who has served as the organization's director for two years.

## **Thank You UWG!!!**

Conventions are always difficult, but when personnel changes occur in the midst of the planning process, they can be especially difficult. The Georgia Theatre Conference wishes to express its heartfelt thanks to the faculty and staff of the State University of West Georgia, and especially to Shelly Elman and others in the theatre program whose dedicated service really made this convention happen. "We couldn't have done it without you," is a too oft-used cliché, but it is one that is appropriate in this instance. Shelly, Pauline, David, and all of the theatre students at University of West Georgia, we thank you, we love you, and we are forever in your debt. You truly helped us "make our fortune" at the GTC convention at UWG!



## Matthews Reports on Screening Auditions

SETC Screening Auditions Coordinator Julia Matthews reports that 1998 brought the highest number of SETC Screening Auditionees to the state convention that Georgia has ever seen. In her remarks at the annual awards banquet, Matthews expressed thanks to the three adjudicators for the process, from Seaside Music Theatre, Dad's Garage Theatre, and Auburn University. She indicated that the adjudicators thought this year's auditions were the best they had seen. Matthews also congratulated all of the auditionees, 47 of whom (plus 5 alternates) were selected to continue the process at the SETC convention in March where they will audition for more than 90 hiring companies. She also announced the recipient of the annual award for the best audition score. Kudos, and a check for \$50, go to Valdosta State University student Warren Candler Budd.

## CALL FOR ARTICLES

Do you have thoughts on theatre you would like to share? GTC is soliciting articles of general interest in relation to theatre for publication in its newsletter. Direct questions to the editor or to Jacque Wheeler, Christy Costello or Susie Hammond, all of whom serve on the newsletter's editorial board. (Addresses on the GTC Board listing on page 3) Articles must be no longer than 2 pages, double-spaced, and may be submitted via email or hard copy.

## Community Theatre Festival

Incoming Community Theatre Division Chair Jim Adams presented the Awards for the Community Theatre Division Festival at the '98 Awards Banquet. In his remarks he expressed thanks to the excellent crew of students and faculty at State University of West Georgia, with special recognition to technical director David Manuel. He also thanked the festival adjudicators and introduced John Sullivan, Vice President of Festivals for the American Association of Community Theatres. Sullivan assisted in the presentation of Certificates of Participation to the five companies involved in this year's festival. Community Festival Awards included:

**Best Director:** Kathy Waldrop,  
The Fantasticks - The Encore  
Theatre (Carrollton)

**Best Supporting Actress:** Susan  
Brown as Cherie Bus Stop  
Carroll Community Theatre

**Best Supporting Actors**  
Bill Anderson & Richard Entrekin  
Hucklebee & Bellamy The  
Fantasticks - The Encore Theatre

**Best Actress:** Kersha Griffith  
Luisa The Fantasticks - The  
Encore Theatre

**Best Actor:** Scott Stanton as  
Andy Travey Lovers and Losers  
Theatre Albany

**Runner Up Play**  
Lovers and Losers  
Theatre Albany

**Best Play**  
The Fantasticks- The Encore  
Theatre (Carrollton)

## Pennington and May Extend Invitations

In her remarks to the membership at our annual awards banquet, SETC Representative and Valdosta State faculty member Victoria Pennington invited GTC members to attend the 50th anniversary convention of the Southeastern Theatre Conference in Greensboro, North Carolina next March. Pennington named keynote speakers for the convention as actress Polly Holliday and designer Ming Cho Lee, both of whom have established long-standing relationships with SETC. Pennington also said there would be a number of special events centering around the anniversary, and special tributes to retiring Executive Director Marian Smith who has faithfully served the organization for a number of years.

Columbus State University's Brenda May also invited the membership to her campus next November when they will host the next GTC Convention, with a focus on Theatre for Youth.

## Secondary Schools Audition Report

GTC Secondary Schools Auditions Coordinator Dean Slusser reports that 31 high school students and 17 college representatives took part in the second annual GTC Secondary School Auditions. He thanks all college reps, congratulates all auditionees and encourages everyone to take part next year.

## Theatre For Youth Holds Annual Festival

The GTC Theatre for Youth Division held its annual fall festival in conjunction with the annual convention. The festival included a performance of *Tickle*, by the Junior Pump House Players in Carrollton, Georgia, under the direction of Carole Roach. The Glynn Academy Players, directed by Shirley Burkhalter, performed *Cinderella Wore Combat Boots*. The G.A. Players are from Brunswick, Georgia. For information about the Theatre for Youth Division of GTC, you may visit their website at <http://home.att.net/%7Esue.sims/>

## Georgia Theatre Conference Board of Directors 1999 Meeting Schedule

Friday & Saturday, January 15 - 16, 1999	Macon, GA
Sunday, March 14, 1999	Fort Valley, GA
Saturday, July 10, 1999	Barnesville, GA
Saturday, September 11, 1999	Columbus, GA
Saturday, October 9, 1999	Columbus, GA

### **Annual Convention**

Thursday - Sunday, November 4 - 7, 1999  
Columbus, GA

For more information, contact GTC President Connie Fritz at (912) 941-2990

## **GTC Theatre News Publication Deadlines 1999**

<u>Publication Date</u>	<u>Deadline for Submission</u>	<u>News Mailed by</u>
April, 1999	March 15	April 5
July, 1999	July 10	July 16
	<i>Special Convention Registration Edition</i>	
September, 1999	September 13	September 24
October, 1999	October 11	October 22
	<i>Special Post Convention Edition</i>	
November, 1999	November 8	November 17

Please send your production information and news items for GTC's Theatre News to

Dean Slusser  
P. O. Box 1549  
Kingsland, GA 31548

## Georgia Theatre Conference 1999 Board of Directors

- Connie Fritz, President** (Colquitt County Arts Center, Moultrie) 2120 Lower Meigs Road, Moultrie GA 31768  
H: 912-941-2990 / W: 912-985-1922 / FAX: 912-890-6746 / email: <fritz2@surfsouth.com>
- Jacque Wheeler, Past President** (Valdosta State University) 408 Parkview Circle, Valdosta, GA 31602  
H: 912-242-3992 / W: 912-333-5820 / FAX 912-245-3799 email: <jwheeler@valdosta.edu>
- Shelly Elman, Vice President for Membership** State University of West Georgia, Department of Mass  
Communication & Theatre, Carrollton, GA 30062 H: 770-590-7679 / W: 770-836-4792  
FAX: 770-830-2322 email: <relman@westga.edu>
- Brenda May, Vice President for Programming** Columbus State University, 4225 University Avenue, Fine Arts  
Hall 125, Columbus, GA 31907 H: 706-653-7169 W: 706-568-2048 FAX: 706-568-2119  
email: <blmcsu@aol.com>
- Susie Hammond, Secretary** 4435 Academy Street, Acworth, GA 30101 H: 770-917-9175  
FAX: 770 - 917-9175 / email: <shbree@aol.com>
- Christy Costello, Treasurer** Georgia Shakespeare Festival, 4484 Peachtree Road NE, Atlanta, GA W: 404-504-  
3404 / email: <christy@gashakespeare.org>
- Sue Sims, Theatre for Youth Division Chair** (Peach Area Civic Theatre) 106 Anderson Avenue, Fort Valley, GA  
31030 W: 912-825-3450 / FAX: 912-825-0940 / email: <sue.sims@worldnet.att.net>
- David Thompsen, College/University Division Chair** Agnes Scott College, 141 E. College Avenue, Decatur,  
GA 30030 H: 770-736-7933 / W: 404-471-6250 / FAX: 404-471-5369  
email: <dthompson@agnesscott.edu>
- Jim Adams, Community Theatre Division Chair** (Pumphouse Players, Carrollton) 125 Maysfield Road NE,  
White, GA 30184 H: 770-382-9968 / W: 770-382-1270 / FAX: 770-386-7350 / email:  
<jima54@hotmail.com>
- Kathleen McManus, Professional Division Chair** Georgia Shakespeare Festival, 4484 Peachtree Road NE,  
Atlanta, GA W: 404-504-3404 / email: <kathleen@gashakespeare.org>
- Shirley Burkhalter, Secondary School Theatre Division Chair** (Glynn Academy) 104 Musgrove Place, St.  
Simons, GA 31522 H: 912-634-6446 / W: 912-267-4210 / FAX: 912-267-4246  
email: <bigred1@gate.net>
- Tommy Cox, SETC Auditions Coordinator & C/U Vice Chair** Gordon College Theatre, 419 College Drive,  
Barnesville, GA 30204 H: 770-358-9624 / W: 770-358-5292 FAX: 770-358-3031 /  
email: t\_cox@falcon.gdn.peachnet.edu
- Ray Horne, SETC Representative** (Northside High School) 223 Atrium Court, Warner Robins, GA  
H: 912-329-8462 / W: 912-929-7874
- Mary Norman, Secondary School Auditions Coordinator** (Colquitt County High School) 123 Poplar Trail,  
Moultrie, GA 31768 H: 912-985-8194 / W: 912-890-6254 / FAX: 912-890-6166  
email: <mnorman@colquitt.k12.ga.us>
- Dean Slusser, Newsletter Editor** (Camden County High School) P.O. Box 1549 Kingsland, GA 31548  
H: 912-882-8063 / W: 912-729-7463 / FAX: 912-729-2986 / email: <dslusser@thebest.net>
- Leah Soderberg, Secondary Vice Chair**, 226 Lakewood Circle, N Augusta, South Carolina 29841  
H: 803-593-9521 / W: 706-592-2089 / FAX: 706-592-3975 / email: LEAHAM@JUNO.com
- Carole Roach, Theatre for Youth Vice Chair**, 22 Glory Lane, Cartersville, GA 30120 H: 770-975-0452  
W: 770-955-7553 / sfroach@mindspring.com
- Sarah Robinson, Professional Division Vice Chair** Georgia Shakespeare Festival, 4484 Peachtree Road NE,  
Atlanta, GA W: 404-504-3404

## *Call For Articles*

The Board of Directors of the Georgia Theatre Conference believes that the GTC Theatre News should reflect what is happening in theatre in our state, and should also address the issues and the events that are meaningful to our members. We encourage you to submit articles and/or editorials for consideration by our editorial board. Items may be submitted to editorial board members Jacque Wheeler, Christy Costello or Susie Hammond, or may be sent to Newsletter Editor Dean Slusser. Addresses for these individuals are found in this newsletter under the listing of the 1999 Board of Directors.

This project of the GTC Theatre News is designed in part to provide juried publication of articles for individuals who have vested interest in publication for promotion and tenure.

Topics which we would like to address in future issues include but are not limited to the following:

Censorship issues in university, school and community settings  
Sexual harassment and its impact on theatre education and production  
Building community support for your theatre  
Innovative ways to promote your season, production or theatre in general  
Establishing your theatre as a meaningful member of the local community

The list is endless. What do you have to offer your colleagues across the state? Articles submitted must be no longer than two double-spaced pages, and may be submitted via e-mail or hard copy. Check the enclosed Board of Directors listing for addresses! We hope to hear from you soon.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR SOUGHT**

The Georgia Theatre Conference seeks a part-time administrative director to manage and direct day to day affairs of the organization. Candidate must be experienced in non-profit management and possess computer skills. Grant writing skills a plus. Part-time candidate could work out of home, and must be able to attend bi-monthly board meetings and annual convention. Salary: \$300 a month for approximately ten hours a week. Send resume to Connie Fritz, 2120 Lower Meigs Road, Moultrie, GA 31768 by February 21, 1999.

## *Call For Theatre Profiles*

One of the ongoing concerns in our state is the need to know one another, and learn more about our own programs. We invite all member institutions be they college/university, community, secondary, youth or professional, to submit a two page, double-spaced profile of your theatre for placement in the GTC Theatre News. Ideally we would be able to place one or more profile in each edition of Theatre News. Guidelines below might help you get started..

### **ALL theatres might address the following ideas.**

1. What is the name of your organization? Where are you located?
2. What kind(s) of shows do you produce? What's coming up?
3. What are your ticket prices? Do you offer discounts to GTC members?
4. What is your annual operating budget? Do you have paid staff? What are your major sources of funding?

### **College/University Theatres might let us know:**

1. What size is your school? Do you have a theatre major? A minor? Are scholarships available?
2. How many students are in the theatre program?
3. What are your graduates doing now? Tell us about 3-6 current and former students.

### **Community Theatres could answer:**

1. How do you select a season?
2. How do you promote attendance at rehearsals?
3. What are some effective approaches to membership and marketing campaigns?

### **Secondary Theatre might address the following issues:**

1. Is censorship a problem in your school and community? What steps do you take to avoid controversy?
2. How do you approach administration when discipline procedures interfere with performance dates?
3. Do you adhere to no pass/no play guidelines for noncompetitive productions? Is it school policy or yours?

### **Youth Theatres could share information in the following areas:**

1. Does your theatre involve adult or youth actors? Both?
2. What kind of rehearsal schedule has been most effective?
3. Do you have a parent's support group to assist in production? How do you organize them?
4. How can you tap in to the local school system to bring theatre to students throughout your system?

The Georgia Theatre Conference, and GTC Theatre News are here for you -- to serve your needs and to benefit your programs. Let us help tell the entire state about the quality of theatre across the state and in your community. Send your submissions to:

GTC Theatre News

PO Box 1549

Kingsland, GA 31548

FAX: 912-729-2986

e-mail <dslusser@thebest.net>

GTC Theatre News  
P.O. Box 1549  
Kingsland, GA 31548

### **Slusser Appointed Newsletter Editor**

Georgia Theatre Conference President Connie Fritz has announced the appointment of former Board Member Dean Slusser as the organization's Newsletter Editor. Slusser served on the GTC Board from 1987-1993 in a variety of offices including College/University vice-chair and chair, secretary, vice-president for membership and even newsletter editor. Slusser left the Board a few years ago when he and his wife had their third child, but remained an active member of GTC and has not missed a convention since he came to Georgia in 1987. Now that "Gabe" is in pre-kindergarten, Slusser has decided to give more time to the organization. He took the first step in that direction last fall when he agreed to coordinate the Conference's new Secondary School auditions program, which will now be turned over to Colquitt County High School's Mary Norman. Slusser, Fine Arts Coordinator for Camden County Schools and Director of Theatre at Camden County High School, lives in St. Marys with his wife, Susan, and their three children, Stephanie, Phillip and Gabe. Slusser is excited about the new position and asks for your help in making GTC's Theatre News better than ever. Please send production information, people news, and season brochures to him at:

Camden County High School Theatre P.O. Box 1549 Kingsland GA 31548

You can call him at (912) 729-7463/ Fax him at (912) 729-2986/ or e-mail him at <dslusser@thebest.net>