

Gateway Players Theatre, Inc.
PO Box 171
Southbridge, MA 01550

founded 1975
May, 2025

Barbara Day,
editor since 1991



It's May- On Golden Pond was a terrific show. Patrick Bracken did a great job directing this full production. He was part of the directors workshop in 2007 and had been part of the original cast in 2013. Auditions were held for the summer musical, Fiddler on the Roof. This will be performed in the Southbridge Middle High School auditorium- comfy seating and air-conditioned! Be sure to see this vibrant and poignant show.



(above) cast of "On Golden Pond". Lynn Boucher and Richard Clark.
(front) Linda Bouthillier, Jordan Miller, TJ Lee, Elizabeth Jacoby, John Golden.
Patrick Bracken directed with Lou-Ellen Corkum as producer and Gwen O'Brien as stage manager.

2026 SHOW PROPOSALS

Even though we are not yet halfway through the season, we need to start preparing for the next season.

Gateway Players Theatre is currently accepting proposals for shows for our 2026 season. Submissions are due by August 5th. Please go to the link below, and read the relevant information, and fill out and submit the proposal form.

Submissions are due by August 5th. Please fill out the proposal form. You must also provide us with a copy of the script which can be dropped off to Lou-Ellen Corkum (email lcorkum14@gmail.com to meet up). Anyone submitting a proposal must have previous directing experience. The Gateway Board will be reviewing the submissions, and deciding on shows at the September Board meeting. We will contact you if we need any additional information concerning the production. If your proposal is accepted, you will also need to fill out a complete Budget proposal form.

The season usually includes comedies and dramas, adult and youth productions. Take a look at our history to see past productions. August will be here before you know- start perusing scripts NOW.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe9ev3G3JUJgUZnKm5jyJc kso7maDyWmDi32d1pQ5MrRtnJ6A/viewform?usp=header>

BILL MASTRO MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

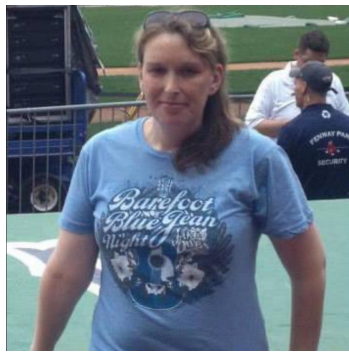
Since 1998, Gateway has been awarding this scholarship to a college bound Gateway senior.

Congratulations to Abi Simpson, this year's recipient of the Bill Mastro Memorial Scholarship. She will be heading to Lasell University in the fall. The scholarship is awarded each year as a way of encouraging the arts among our youth and rewarding their hard work and support, both on stage and/or behind the scenes. Abi started at Gateway in 2017 in "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever". She received her cosmetology license from Bay Path Regional Vocational High School and will graduate from Auburn High School this month. At Lasalle, she plans to major in fashion design. We wish Abi well and are fortunate to have her as part of Gateway.



Abi Simpson in "There's A Monster in my Closet". Congratulations Abi.

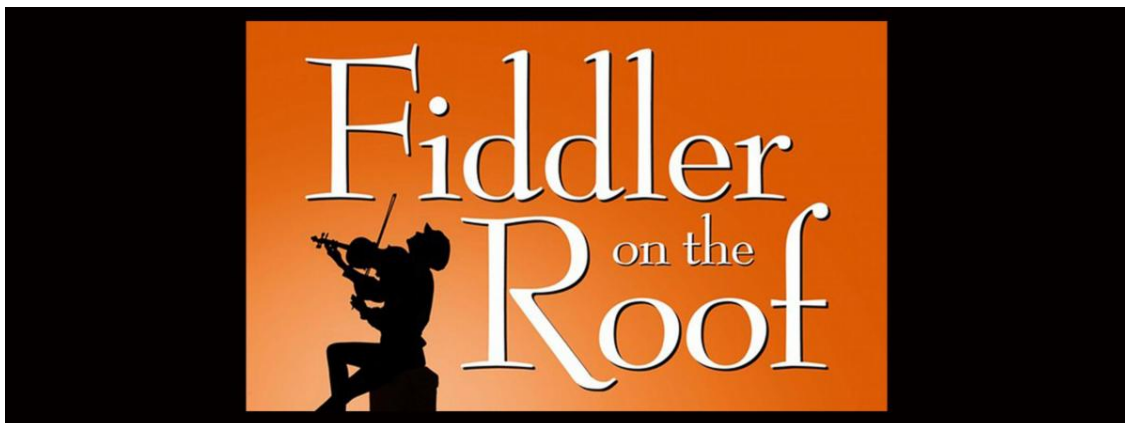
Past scholarship recipients include Dawn Guy and Tyler Morrill.



Dawn Guy Varrichio (1999)
Back in 1999 scholarship helped me in my college days to get a start on life moving forward even though my major was broadcasting I quickly learned I rather wanted to help people instead of wanting to report news of all kinds The past 22 years I have worked for seven hills which we support adults and kids of all disabilities. I am currently the administrator manager for our SHFS affiliate . On weekends I help out with my family coffee business and have been married going on 18 years.



Tyler Morrill (2007)
Bill Mastro cast me in my first role as the Munchkin Mayor, my life changed from that point on and helped make me the person I am today. Without him I wouldn't have the life experience. I wouldn't have been as outgoing, personable, understanding, compassionate, able to excel in anything I put my mind to. I wouldn't have studied acting, I wouldn't have met so many amazing people while being a professional actor, been part of meaningful shows that sent messages to society and wouldn't have traveled and seen the world. He gave me an opportunity. Although I am no longer a professional actor, all those experiences have translated me into being a funeral director who cares for families in need, which gives me meaning.



Gateway Players Theatre recently held auditions and the cast selected

includes: Mike Lapomado (Tevye), Dawn Sedlier (Golde). Hilary Robertson (Tzeitel), Beau Hicks (Hodel), Sarah Tonkin (Chava), Brooke Swistak (Shprintze), Kora Reale (Bielke), Lynn Boucher (Yente). Jonathan Martin (Motel). Chris Lam (Perchik), David Yutzler (Lazar Wolf), Matt Sedlier (Mordcha), Kevin McGee (Rabbi), Jackson Reed (Mendel), Ray Petrelli (Avram), Martin Nieski (Nachum), Marina Matuzek (Grandma Tzeitel), Linda Bouthillier (Fruma Sarah), Harry Pearson (Constable), Ducati Sedlier (Fyedka), Chris McTigue (Shaindel), Cheyenne Grenier (Fiddler), Lily Nellis and Kirsten Small (villagers). More villagers will be added to the cast. If interested, contact Gateway at 508 764 4531.

Pat Haddock will be directing, with Kathi Grenier as producer. The show will be performed at the Southbridge Middle High School on Torrey Road the first weekend in August. The auditorium has comfortable seating and is air-conditioned. Connie Galli, formerly of Sheperd Hill Regional High School, is musical director. Be sure to mark your calendar NOW. Tickets will be available soon.

Over the 50 years Gateway has performed many musicals- usually in the summer when the larger school stages are available. "Fiddler n the Roof" is a poignant tale of love, courage, family and TRADITION. We are glad to welcome the cast- new and old members- who will spend the summer working, singing and dancing to entertain YOU. Don't miss this show.

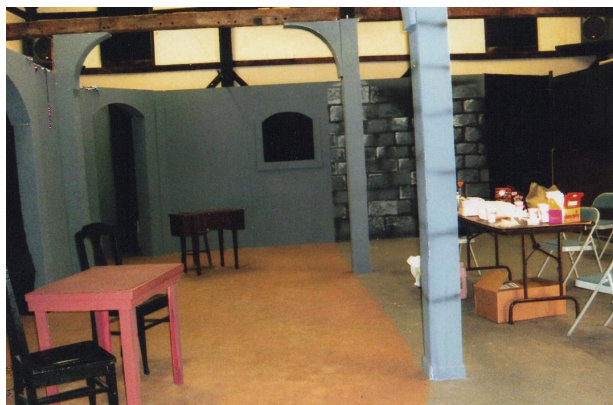


Gateway Players Theatre - Various places we called home

Over the past 50 years Gateway Players Theatre has brought quality theater productions to the Southbridge area. The first few years Gateway used different facilities to audition, rehearse, build sets and offer entertaining productions. Initially Aileen Lau, the driving force behind the theater, utilized local schools, businesses and community spaces to put productions together. Set pieces were constructed at an AO donated shop, auditions held at area schools, rehearsal held at Marianhill and the home of Elaine Black in the early days. Most performances were done at the local high school. The goal was always to find a place to all home. In 1977 Ruth Wells purchased the town's

historic Dresser House and donated it to the Quinebaug Council for the Arts. The office of Economic Affairs granted a CETA endowment to Gateway Players Theatre in the amount of \$53,659. This money was to be used to build a Southbridge Cultural Center at the Dresser House. This included plans for a theater and museum. In the beginning the carriage barn, now known as the Gateway Barn, housed the costume collection and scene shop space in the basement. In 1979 a new roof was put on and interior renovations began. First was shoring up the sagging beams and redesigning the floor plan. The ancient beams were left exposed to keep the barn looking as it did in its heyday. The main thrust of the construction effort was to build a thrust stage with seating on three sides. This type of setting would add an intimate air to the productions, putting the audience in touch with the performers. The local Chamber of Commerce solicited help from area businesses and got all the Styrofoam insulation donated. Volunteers worked away at installing the insulation to make the Barn weather tight. Electrical and plumbing work was done as the theater had a deadline to meet – the first show was to be performed in May 1980. Actors, directors and other volunteers worked weekends putting up wallboard in anticipation of the first show. Ruth Wells could be found cleaning up after the construction crews, showing her dedication to this project she began. The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams was performed on May 30th and 31st 1980 in the newly renovated QVC Cultural Center Barn. This was now the new home to the Gateway Players summer theater, however most shows continued at Southbridge High School. In 1982 the Board decided it was more cost-effective to perform most of their shows at the Gateway Barn. Audience numbers had been dropping, which directly affected the bottom line. The intimate atmosphere of the barn was what appealed to the audiences who were attending. It is not often that you can see a quality theater production and be no more than a few feet from the actors. There was storage space here for costumes and sets could be built here and easily put into place. Of course, the barn had some unique features, namely the poles that held the roof up. These were sometimes painted a dark color so that they blended in, or they became part of the shows set. For the next 35 years Gateway Players called the barn home. If you ask anyone involved with the theater, they will have fond memories of their times in the barn. From the creaky stairs that went down to the musty green room where the actors waited for their cues, to the tech booth high above the main theater with a hazardous ladder that need to be climbed for access, to the various critters that also considered the barn home from time to time – the barn was the greatest place. In 2017 after an inspection was done of the barn, we learned that it had become structurally unsound. Gateway Players Theater's home was no longer at the barn. Elm Street Congregational Church was kind enough to open their hall to us. We have been utilizing the hall at the church for all of our auditions, rehearsals and performances, with the exception of summer musicals which we perform at Southbridge High School (air conditioning).

Lou-Ellen Corkum



The Gateway Bern was a happy home for many years. We had ample parking, handicap ramp and accessible bathrooms inside the building. With the open space, sets could be configured in different arrangements. The tech booth was treacherous to access- but a challenge. We had tons of costumes in the upper storage rooms. We had many organizing projects to keep props and costumes easily accessible. The goal was to KEEP the organization going!

The basement held set materials, tools and wood as well as couches for cast to await the call. When it rained, the waterfall cascading over the stone

foundation was amazing! We all loved theater and performing- so what's a bit of water and inconvenience. We had several seating drives to buy new chairs. It took a lot of work to support community theater- but we did it for 50 years! Thanks to the space at ESCC- we are still going!

Be sure to check out our UPDATED WEBSITE. Thanks to Deb Hollett, we have a new and exciting site. gatewayplayers.org. You can read the most current news, history, production history and see photos from past shows. Even COVID didn't stop us. We did videos and virtual shows- which may be found on facebook.







As we look back on 50!!! years, it really is amazing at our history. With adult and youth casts, musicals, dramas and comedies- we really have had an eclectic history. Wonder if our founding members envisioned 50 years- and still going strong!



Along with the 50th season of revivals, Gateway will celebrate this milestone with an exhibit at Jacob Edwards Library in August and the GALA on Nov.1.

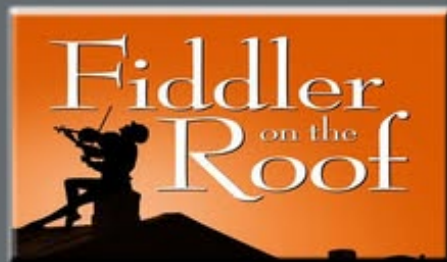
Gateway Players Theatre 2025 Season



February 21, 22, 28 March 1 & 2



May 2, 3, 4, 9 & 10



August 1, 2 & 3



October 4, 5, 10, 11 & 12



December 5, 6 & 7



508-764-4531
www.gatewayplayers.org

Gateway Players Theatre Board:

Lou-Ellen Corkum-- president,

Chris McTigue- secretary, Bill Guy- treasurer.

Members at large- David Corkum, Mikey Dearn, Kathi Grenier,

Deb Hollett, Deb Ostiguy, Stephanie Ruggiere.

Pat Haddock- past president.

GATEWAY PLAYERS THEATRE, INC. HISTORY

If you would like to see a listing of ALL the shows Gateway has performed since 1975- just go to website, gatewayplayers.org under Past Seasons. You

will even find photos from many of the shows. When Gateway started in 1975, we used borrowed rehearsal and storage space, and performed at Southbridge HS on Cole Ave. In 1978 we moved into the Arts Barn at 111 Main St, on the property donated by Ruth Wells (of American Optical Company family). We were there for decades, until the Barn needed more repairs than were affordable. For the past few years, we have used space in Fellowship Hall of Elm St. for rehearsals, performances and storage, for which we are very grateful.

Thanks to DAVID CORKUM for maintaining our facebook page and to Deb Hollett for website.

WE ALL WORK TO KEEP GATEWAY-- AND THEATER--ALIVE

Thanks to Elm Street Congregational Church for giving us a home



Gateway Players Theatre, Inc. | PO Box 171 | Southbridge, MA 01550 US

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