

Spruill Property Management  
and Starkville Community Theatre present

P.J. Barry's GRAND SLAM

*The*  
*Octette Bridge Club*



September 13-16  
and 18-22, 2012



# *The Octette Bridge Club*



By P.J. Barry

Directed by Pattye Archer

## *The Cast*

Betsy (Mrs. Daniel Bailey) ..... Allyn Flemmons \*  
Lil (Mrs. Peter Carmody)..... Marianne Ulmer  
Ann (Mrs. John Conroy) ..... Cindy Ruff  
Alice (Mrs. Walter Monahan) ..... Tracey Millsaps \*  
Connie (Mrs. David Emerson) ..... Madeline Golden  
Nora (Mrs. Lawrence Hiller) ..... Lorraine Hughes  
Mary Margaret Donovan ..... Brenda Mayo  
Martha (Mrs. Michael McDermitt) ..... Terry McDowell  
Robert Foster, the photographer ..... Matt Crane

\* SCT Regular Season Debut

## *The Setting*

The living room of Ann (Mrs. John Conroy)  
in a small Rhode Island town

### **Act I**

Scene I - A Friday evening in October, 1934

Scene II - same evening, a few hours later

### **Act II**

Scene I - A Friday evening in October, 1944

Scene II - same evening, a few hours later

*There will be a 10-minute intermission between acts.*

# *The Production Team*

Director .....	Pattye Archer
Assistant Director .....	Alison Stamps
Stage Manager.....	Alison Stamps
Hair Design .....	Jansen Fair
Set Design .....	Pattye Archer
Set Construction.....	Marty Haug
Costumes .....	Nan Donohoe, Sue Helms & Sue Snow
Lighting Design.....	Thomas La Foe
Stage Crew .....	Matt Crane
Lighting Operator.....	June Garner
Choreography .....	Laurel Sammonds
Photography .....	Lisa Brandon McReynolds
House Manager Coordinators .....	Barry & Grace Ward
Box Office .....	Bob Anderson, Edwin Ellis and Marsha Williams
Opening Night Party .....	Brad Moreland and Paula Mabry

## *Set Construction*

Marty Haug

Pattye Archer  
Isa Stratton-Beaulieu  
Matt Crane  
Edwin Ellis  
Abby Farragher  
Allyn Flemmons  
Madeline Golden  
Lorraine Hughes  
Lauren Hughes  
Maureen Hughes  
Brenda Mayo

Thomas La Foe  
Tracey Millsaps  
Terry McDowell  
Paul Ruff  
Reagan Ruff  
Daniel Ruff  
Craig Ruff  
Cindy Ruff  
Alison Stamps  
Marianne Ulmer  
Austin Vollar

# About the Cast



## *Matt Crane (Mr. Foster)*

You can chalk this performance up to art imitating life. Matt is a MSU graduate currently working at the *Starkville Daily News* as a reporter / photographer for the Lifestyles section. He is happy to be back sharing the stage (if only briefly this time) with his wonderful SCT family. Love and attention must be given to Pattye (director extraordinaire), Alison (actor wrangler and keeper of quiet), June (lighter of lights and intermission DJ), Jansen (hairstyling aficionado) and the Sues Plus One (sassy seamstress sirens all). “Knock ‘em dead, ladies!”



## *Allyn Flemmons (Betsy)*

This is Allyn's debut with the SCT crew, and she could not be more excited! Although she is no stranger to the stage, Allyn's most recent acting credits include “Elvira” from *Blithe Spirit* and “Nurse Kelly” in *Harvey*. Having only arrived in Starkville this past June, being cast so soon into the SCT family has been a wonderful experience! She thanks her sweet ‘sisters’ for being so welcoming as she adjusts to her new hometown and her best friends back home who have been so supportive. A special thanks goes to Pattye for taking a chance on “the new kid in town,” and a special thanks goes to her sweet boyfriend, who has helped her practice this challenging script! She looks forward to many more shows with her new theatre family, and, as for her sisters, “Don Quixote!!! Let’s break some legs!”



## *Madeline Golden (Connie)*

Madeline played the role of “Betsy,” youngest of the eight sisters, in SCT's production of *The Octette Bridge Club* twenty-five years ago. “In my mind, I can still hear the voices of the original cast members delivering these lines!” Madeline is thrilled to be playing “Connie,” the cut up of the family, this time around. “Getting to work with this wonderful group of women has been a joy. We have laughed together, cried together and supported one another through the rehearsal process. It's truly like we are a family.” Madeline is delighted to work again with Pattye Archer, one of her favorite directors of all time. She sends out love and thanks also to Alison, to the Sues and Nan, to June and especially to Matt for putting up with this group of crazy women! In real life Madeline works in the Office of Agricultural Communications at MSU.

## Lorraine Hughes (Nora)

After a few summer musical revues and a chorus part in *She Loves Me*, Lorraine was ready for the challenge of working in an ensemble of seasoned actors! It has been GRAND! Being called “Nora” for a few weeks has also been quite fun since it is her mother's name and the name she gave her oldest daughter. Another item she has in common with her character is that she loves her husband, Ben, very much and is thankful for his gracious manner when she is out at rehearsals most nights. “It has been such a treat working with these talented ladies; with Matt; Alison and Pattye.” Lorraine has to admit she is hooked on live theatre! Lorraine has been teaching mathematics at MSU for 13 years – not always an unlucky number – and is the proud mother of four lovely daughters: Nora, Maureen, Lauren and Mary Kate!

## Brenda Mayo (Mary)

Brenda is thrilled to take the stage again with Madeline and Terry. She performed with these talented ladies years ago in *Steel Magnolias*. Since then you may have seen her as “Sister Aloysius” in *Doubt* and “Jean Flynt” in *Feeding on Mulberry Leaves*. Brenda made her SCT directorial debut with *See How They Run* and has costumed Project P.L.A.Y. for the past two summers. Onstage or backstage, Brenda is happiest when she is involved with the Playhouse on Main. “The exciting thing for me with *The Octette Bridge Club* is, in real life, I only have one brother. Here, I have seven onstage sisters and two wonderful backstage sisters. Thank you, my sisters, for taking me into your hearts. Thank you, Pattye, for believing in me with ‘Mary.’ Thank you, Zak, my awesome son, and Aunt Scottie for taking care of me and everything else so I can play dress up.” Brenda also sends special thanks to Alison. “You're doing a great job. You're a valuable member of this team, and we couldn't do it without you. Keep up the good work!”

## Terry Reese McDowell (Martha)

“I have loved being a part of the reprise of *The Octette Bridge Club*. I have wonderful memories of the first time around, when we advanced at MTA, with all eight women being named Best Supporting Actress and then going on to the SETC regionals in Richmond. We had many fundraisers to charter a bus, and we all rode together with the set stored in the baggage area. This new sister group is just as special as the first one, and we have both laughed and cried during the rehearsals.” Terry is a part-time instructor at The Learning Center at MSU. Terry thanks Pattye, Alison, Jansen, June and all others who helped make *The Octette Bridge Club* happen behind the scenes. “I love all my sisters! My SCT family just keeps getting bigger.” Terry sends a special thank-you to her husband, Ledge, for all his support.

## Tracey Millsaps (Alice)

Tracey has loved being a part of the *Octette* sisterhood! “Thank you, Pattye, for choosing me to bring the fifth of these eight sisters to life on the SCT stage.” Tracey has always had a love of the stage. She has been a cast member in several of the SCT summer musical revues, but this is her first time in a SCT regular-season production.

## Cindy Ruff (Ann)

Cindy is thrilled to return to the SCT stage after her most recent role in this summer’s *SCT: Unplugged*. You may remember her in the roles of “Amalia” in last season’s musical hit *She Loves Me*, “Olive” in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* or as “Jerry Neal” in the award-winning *Dixie Swim Club*. Cindy thanks Pattye and Alison as well as her “sisters” for their hard work and dedication to this production. Cindy also thanks her children – Daniel, Craig and Reagan – for pitching in with the set work and running lines with her. Lastly, Cindy expresses a special thank-you to Paul for his love, support and encouragement: “You are so good to me, and I love you!”

## Marianne Ulmer (Lil)

This year marks 28 years and counting with this wonderful Theatre for Marianne. “Twenty-five years ago I didn’t get to audition for the first *Octette Bridge Club*, and I have regretted it ever since! Having heard all of the stories over the years, I was thrilled when SCT decided to do a revival. Thank you, Pattye, for letting me finally get to experience the fun of having seven wonderful sisters!” Marianne’s real job has been teaching in the Department of Communication at MSU for over 20 years. As always, she thanks Allen for his encouragement and support.

## *From the Director*

I have known two great bridge clubs in my life – the first included my mom and her friends Sylvia, Gloria and Dana; the second includes my bridge ladies Ida, Mary, Martha, Lynn and Evelyn. I am delighted to now add to a third – one that includes Terry, Brenda, Lorraine, Madeline, Tracey, Cindy, Marianne and Allyn.

When SCT began talking about reviving a show, one of the first mentioned was *Octette*. Those of us who became a part of the theatre during the past 24

years have heard the stories of the original – directed by the one-and-only Monroe Dewberry and featuring John Wells and eight award-winning actresses: Alice Carol Caldwell, Barbara Bouchillon, Catherine Conroy, Frances Heller, Terry McDowell, Dixie McMillan, Marsha Williams and Madeline Golden. The show delighted our audience and competed at the 1987 Mississippi Theatre Association Festival, where it won best production and where, for the first time, there was an 8-way tie for Best Supporting Actress. I think you know the eight who won! When the show moved on to the regional competition, Jean Snyder stepped in and became a part of this special club.

Being selected to direct a show with that kind of history was daunting to say the least. But I am so blessed to have had the opportunity. I wanted to honor the work done by Monroe and the original cast, but I also wanted us to create our own vision of this delightful script. I hope we have accomplished just that.

If our hard work pays off, what you see tonight will seem effortless. But trust me when I say that it was anything but. This cast worked tirelessly – taking on challenging dialogue, a time period that is unfamiliar and a card game that takes a lifetime to master. In addition, many unseen heroes worked behind the scenes. Their names are listed on the next page. Please know we could not have done it without them. I mean that sincerely.

“Roland LaMassney might have a cornucopia of women,” but I have a cornucopia of guys and I just have to thank them. Marty, Thomas, Kris, Lyle, Brad, Matt and Stephen thank you for all your support along the way. I also want to thank Debbie for her help; June for playing one more hand with us before she rides off into the sunset; Jansen for creating hair that is truly inspiring and the Sues and Nan for their amazing work on the costumes. I also have to say a very special thank-you to Alison for everything, especially the pinky shakes.

My biggest thanks go to this cast. These nine actors – eight beautiful and talented ladies and our Matt – have given so much of themselves to this show. They’ve trusted me when I know they only wanted to doubt me, and they have believed in not only me but in each other, from the start. We have become a family, complete with laughter and tears, and “nothing could make me happier.”

I dedicate this show to my own two wonderful sisters; to the memory of my favorite bridge partner, Lora; and to the one I always wanted to play with but never got the chance, my beautiful mother. Lora & Mama, I hope you both have grand slams tonight in heaven! Save a seat at the table for me.

And now, I open with one (happy and thankful) heart ...

# *Very Special Thanks*

Tom Booth  
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# SCT NEWS & NOTES

## SCT GENERAL MEETINGS

Starkville Community Theatre holds its general monthly meeting on the first Thursday of the month at 6 p.m. These meetings are open to anyone interested in getting more involved in SCT. Please join us.

Upcoming meetings include:

- Thursday, October 4
- Thursday, November 1
- Thursday, December 6 - Christmas Potluck Dinner

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## OUR NEXT PRODUCTION

*Six Dance Lessons in Six Weeks* By Richard Alfieri

November 8-11 and 13-17, 2012

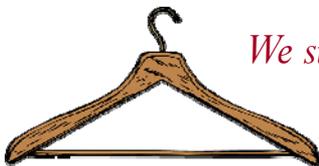
Starring Marsha Williams and Lyle Tate

Directed by M. J. Etua

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## FOURTH FRIDAYS FOR 2012-2013

- Friday, September 28 - Plays
- Friday, October 26 - Poetry
- Friday, January 25 - Flash Fiction
- Friday, February 22 - Plays
- Friday, March 22 - Song Writing
- Friday, April 26 - Poetry



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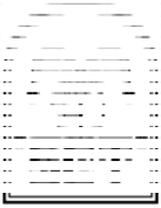
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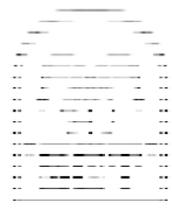
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