

**State of the Pelican (Illustrated)**  
**Fiscal Year Report: October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2020**  
**Community Theater in the Heart of It All - Miami Springs, Florida!**  
**Not theater with an "edge", but theater with an "awww."**

That's the Pelican Playhouse motto. And for more than twenty years now, because of the wisdom, generosity and support of the City of Miami Springs, we have been able to grow - what I can say without fear of contradiction - is quite simply the finest true Community Theater in the State of Florida. What do I mean by "true" Community Theater? A theater that is open to *anyone* in the community (and surrounding South Florida area) interested in doing live theater before an audience. Many theaters are "audition" oriented. Only the best are taken. The rest are encouraged to try again. Here, at the Pelican Playhouse, we pride ourselves in being a "no experience necessary" teaching theater. One of our great joys is watching people who have never acted before, grow into amazing players with abilities they never dreamed they had. And more than that, we are intergenerational. That means "all ages" on stage together. Whole families on stage together. Parents, who heretofore have only rooted for their children from the sidelines, are suddenly in the "game" with them. It is a joy like no other.

Usually we start our recap with the Fall, but as this is needed before summer is out for the Budget process, we always leave out what went on in our Summer Recital. And it is always amazing! The Summer Recital 2019 was no exception. Thirty-five Pelicans from seven to seventy performed a cornucopia of theater pieces they selected. (It's *Actors Choice* during the summer) and for two performances at the end of the summer they shined. The show opened with Mary Reed's clever adaptation of the opening number to "Kiss Me Kate" turning "We Open in Venice" into "We Open on Westward" sung by the entire company. Looking back on it, we had so much fun it might have been the "musical seed" that would bloom in the fall. The show featured classic scenes from the *Twilight Zone*, Carol Burnett, and "Quack, Quack Stick to My Back." A hilarious one act we reprised from 2002.



The Speeding Ticket starring new comer and rising star Yma Tejada with Pelican vets Juan Iglesias and Mary Reed.



Sofia Alpizar, the "Ugly" patient in *Twilight Zone's* classic "Eye of the Beholder," Doctor Tyler Reed and Nurse Sam Chesser, the "beautiful" people.



Kim Calil as the Kleptomaniac and Mary Reed as Carol, in the Classic Carol Burnett "As the Stomach Turns".

As Summer turned to Fall we had a momentous decision to make. What would be the show to start our 21<sup>st</sup> season. It showed up unannounced in my inbox. From London. An email from the International Theatre & Music company. Would we be interested in producing "*Peter Pan the British Musical?*" I had always yearned to do Peter Pan at the Pelican Playhouse, but a musical? We have done only one other musical in our history. In 2011 we did "*The Fantasticks.*" And it was fantastic, Councilman Bob Best can attest because he was one of the stars. The reason for so few musicals is this simple fact: it is three times the work. In a play, you have acting. In a musical, you have acting, singing and dancing. The play has one director. The musical has three. But I was intrigued. I struck up a email correspondence with the author/composer, Piers Chater Robinson, and before you can say "Second star to the right, straight on till morning" I had convinced the Theater Manager and our Board of Directors, that *this* was a momentous way to celebrate the beginning of our next twenty years. We posted our call to the players and were amply rewarded when more than fifty turned out. There was one more thing. On my acting "bucket list" was the role of Captain Hook. But I knew acting and directing this massive piece would be too much, so I convinced long time Pelican, Sam Chesser, to put on the director's hat so I could put on "the Hook!" Twelve weeks of hard musical rehearsals lay before us.



Early September, the Company put out a players call for “Peter Pan the British Musical”  
The first reading was well attended.

We broke rehearsals just before Halloween to reprise last year’s big hit, “The Haunted Tent” at the Miami Springs Halloween celebration on the Circle. It was more popular than ever. And we had a blast. Serious props to Community Center Director Omar Luna and his team for all their support. We couldn’t have done it without them.



Halloween is always  
Werewolf Time.



The “Haunted Tent” was open for two two-hour sessions.  
The line to get in stretched half-way around the circle.



Beyond this point,  
there be dragons.

Every Christmas, my “Acting For Young People” class performs for the Miami Springs Seniors from our Senior Center. This year, twelve of our pint-sized players performed “The Great Manger Mystery.” They portrayed the animals (a donkey, a camel, two oxen, three sheep and five chickens) living in the stable the night a mysterious visitor came. It made the audience laugh and touched the hearts of the more than 100 that attended.



The Great Manger Mystery first dress rehearsal  
with their Santa Director.



A full house of Seniors, friends and family watched the story of  
the animals in the Manger and their mysterious visitor.

After 12 weeks of rehearsal Peter Pan the British Musical opened to two solid weeks of sold out houses.



The entire Peter Pan cast aboard Hook's Jolly Roger



Captain Hook and his crew close in on the Lost Boys secret hideaway.

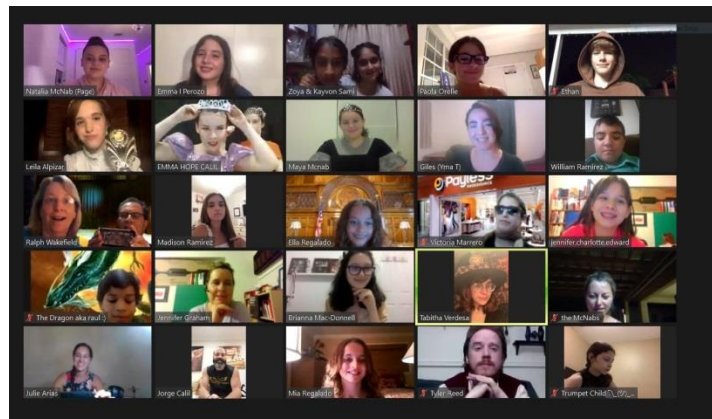


Peter, Loreann Mapp, takes a well-deserved curtain call.

After the enormous success of Peter Pan, where could we go next? After taking a full week off, we came back for two weeks of registration. More than forty players turned out. It is the policy of the Pelican Playhouse that we gather the Players first and then decide what would be the best play we could do with this group of players? Of the more than forty that registered, seventeen of them were girls between the ages of ten and seventeen. Now "tween" and teen-age girls has always been our "strong suit" but almost half the company? The Theater Manager and myself were stumped for a few days until we searched the Pelican archives, and there it was. The perfect fit. In 2002, in the old Rec Center's Caviler Annex we did a show called "Girls to the Rescue." Five short plays threaded together with the hero in each piece being a girl. We held two weeks of auditions and at the end of February cast the show with a mid-May two weekend performance scheduled.

And then the hammer dropped. Covid-19: The Pandemic.

We, along with everyone else, were shut down. We have had Hurricane delays before, but nothing as open ended as this. Might it be cleared up by the middle of May? Uncertain. There were no definitive answers. What to do? Besides being family oriented, the Pelican Playhouse is a faith-based initiative. I firmly believe we could not have accomplished all we had in the last twenty years, if God hadn't had His hand on all of it. I have heard it said, "When God closes one door, He opens another." And this "other door" was in the form of the new "Zoom" virtual on line technology. We had no experience with it, but it was a way to engage my actors and keep them focused on something other than the closing of schools, businesses, and life as they knew it. And it was a way we could still keep the Pelican family connected. We started slowly with small groups, and within a couple of weeks, got the hang of virtual theater. After ten weeks of Zoom rehearsals, we performed "Girls to the Rescue" on two Saturdays. The large cast was double cast to ensure everyone had a good role so each cast Zoomed one Saturday night performance. Reviews were off the chart. So much was learned about this new medium. It's not live theater, but it's not bad.



**The "Girls to the Rescue" Week One curtain call. Over seventy people viewed their performance on line.**

And so that brings us up to this Summer. We were elated to be back "live" with classes this summer. We are following CDC guidelines to the letter. My thirty-one players are divided into five groups with no more than ten in a

session. Currently, plans are for individual September performances. If, and that is the operative term, “if” the virus will allow it.

What of the Zoom company? To be honest, I don’t trust this virus to slowly go away. My concerns are that it will continue to spike until we are forced to shut down again. With that a real possibility, I decided to not only retain the Zoom company, but expand it. Three weeks ago I went on my FB site and announced I was opening it up to any interested players. I was unprepared (in a good way) for the response. Former Pelicans who had moved away from South Florida, responded from all over the country. Even former high school students of mine from the ‘70s responded. Now we have three Zoom companies to go with our “live” company. God is amazing. Rise up now and see what tomorrow brings.

Before COVID-19, things were busy at the Rebeca Sosa as per usual. The Junior Orange Bowl tournament pageant, the Miami Springs Halloween Costume Contest, Homeland Security training, Summer Camp 2019, and just last month a City of Miami Springs Council meeting.

Rebeca Sosa Rentals: \$1,120.00 to the City of Miami Springs, included Silvia’s School Christmas Show (\$280) and Society of Financial Awareness (3X for a total of \$840.00).

Needless to say, however, there were cancellations because of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Once the Community Center opens again, we will speak to those organizations about re-scheduling.

We continue to partner with the Miami Springs Senior High Math Club, Mu Alpha Theta. They provide refreshments at intermission for a “donation” and make enough to finance their trips to various math competitions around the country. We also would like to acknowledge hearty appreciation for our sister city, the Village of Virginia Gardens, which co-produced “Peter Pan the British Musical” to the tune of \$1,000.00. They have continued their support for us over the years.

Facebook “Likes” are at 578 and climbing! What’s not to “like?”

What does the future hold?

Only God knows, but we at the Pelican Playhouse are willing and ready to give it our all!



**The Calil family sports their new PPPs: Pelican Pandemic Protectors.**

Thanks again for all your support throughout the years!

Ralph Wakefield  
Artistic Director  
Pelican Playhouse Inc.