

TIGERBILL

2024 Spring Original Musical

Vivia

An Original Musical by Beth Brannon
Composed/Arranged by Brad Henderson

*A Celebration of
Fort Gibson's Bicentennial
1824-2024*

Fort Gibson High School
Tiger Theatre Company
April 18, 20, 21, 2024



Tickets and Info @
fortgibsonigers.org

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Finding peace shaped our **legend.**



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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Vivia, A New Musical opens with a short prologue commemorating Fort Gibson's history. Act 1 then transports us to Boston, where the strong-willed Vivia is about to be presented to society with next door neighbor Graham Richardson standing in for her brother Jamie, who was killed in the Civil War. Vivia not only blames her father, Colonel Thomas, for the death of her brother Jamie, but believes her father intends to "box her up like a China doll" and auction her off to a wealthy widower at the ball. Instead, Vivia is swept off her feet by Corporal Stephen Gardner, and the couple are soon engaged. Graham, who has always been secretly in love with Vivia, accepts a Chaplaincy commission at Fort Gibson in order to distance himself from her. After Stephen breaks Vivia's heart by calling off the engagement, Vivia dresses as a man and heads to Fort Gibson, where she believes Stephen has gone. Vivia soon finds herself smack dab in the middle of "The Graveyard of the Army," where she enlists as a soldier and tries to find Stephen and convince him to return to Boston with her, but Vivia soon discovers Stephen's real name is David McWilliams and that he is involved with a Cherokee maiden named Unodena (Cherokee for sheep). A heartbroken Vivia runs into the woods where she meets Tsula (Cherokee for fox), who is acting as a spy for Major Warren's bootleg whiskey investigation. As spirit animals act out the story, Tsula tells Vivia how her sister Awi Usdi (little deer) was killed by her drunken husband He-Ga (Osage for buzzard). As the rest of the plot unfolds, Vivia and Tsula form an unlikely, but empowering, friendship that binds them together in secrecy and eventually helps both young women heal past griefs.

Vivia, A New Musical explores the frailties and strengths of both men and women, celebrates friendships that have the power to break down cultural and societal boundaries, and, of course, romanticizes the giddy highs and heartbreaking lows of love. Through Vivia's story, we learn how easy it can be to get lost in bad choices and how beautiful it is to be found by grace. But, more than anything else, Vivia's story is a story of peace - one of both making peace with others and finding peace within ourselves - and that makes Vivia Thomas the perfect "haunt" for our little town, since "peace" was the foundation on which Fort Gibson was established in the first place.

Thank you for attending our show and supporting Tiger Theatre Company.
Melanie Wicks, Director



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SONGS AND SCENES

Act 1

Prelude - Indian Territory/National Cemetery/Fort Gibson

“Prelude”Arbuckle

“This Fort”Arbuckle, Chief John Ross, Vivia, Tsula

“Homeland Lament” (Music Traditional - Lam. 1:6)...Cherokee Mother

Scene 1 - A Ballroom Terrace, Boston

Scene 2 - A Ballroom, Boston

“Doll Song”Vivia

“Prelude” Reprise.....Colonel Thomas

Scene 3 - A Ballroom Terrace, Boston

Scene 4 - Warren’s Office, Fort Gibson

“The Doll Song” Reprise.....Tsula

Scene 5 - The Thomas Home, Boston

“The Furthest Edge of You”Graham

Scene 6 - The Thomas Home, Boston

Scene 7 - The Horse Barn, Fort Gibson

“The Ending of My Story”Tsula

Scene 8 - The Thomas Home, Boston

“The Ending of My Story” Reprise.....Vivia

Lyrics by Beth Brannon

Music by Beth Brannon & Brad Henderson

Composed & Orchestrated by Brad Henderson

Act 2

Prologue - Fort Gibson

“This Fort” Reprise.....Arbuckle

“Prelude” Reprise.....Arbuckle

Scene 1 - The Square, Fort Gibson

“Graveyard of the Army”.....Cookie, Callum, Burton, Soldiers

Scene 2 - Warren’s Office, Fort Gibson

“The Furthest Edge of You” Reprise.....Graham

Scene 3 - The Hospital, Fort Gibson

“Sweet Polly Oliver” (Lyrics/Music—Traditional).....Tillie

Scene 4 - Horse Barn, Fort Gibson

Scene 5 - Grove of Trees, Fort Gibson

“The Healing Song”.....Vivia, Tsula

Scene 6 - The Square, Fort Gibson

“Drinking Songs”.....Burton, Callum, Miss Polly, Soldiers

“Prelude” Reprise.....Graham

Scene 7 - Grove of Trees, Fort Gibson

“The Morning Song” (Lyrics/Music Traditional).....Tsula, Vivia

Scene 8 - The Hospital, Fort Gibson

“Ain’t Nothin’ Like It Seems”.....Cookie, Vivia

Scene 9 - Grove of Trees, Fort Gibson

Scene 10 - Dressler’s Cave, Fort Gibson

Scene 11 - Fort Gibson

“Prelude” Reprise.....Graham

“Nothin’ Like It Seems” Reprise.....Arbuckle

Scene 12 - Dressler’s Cave, Fort Gibson

“The Healing Song” Reprise.....Vivia, Tsula

Scene 13 - Fort Gibson

“Second Chances”.....Graham

Epilogue - National Cemetery, Fort Gibson

“The Ending of My Story” Reprise.....Vivia

“This Fort”.....Arbuckle, Cast of Vivia

Cast

Vivia	Emma Perdue	Graham	Easton Wicks
Tsula	Addison Rouse	Colonel Thomas/Burton	Chance Berlin
Caroline	Avery McDaniel	Steven-David	Elijah Scaggs
Violet	Aspen White	Major Warren/Samuel	Kade Keeling
Unodena/Ashley/Wolf	Tai Correa	Wohali	Karson Tanksley
Hattie	Abby Vahdatipour	Mark/Buzzard	Aiden Brown
Delilah/Laurel/Fox	Jenna Phillips	Chief John Ross/Reeser	Tyler Jones
Belle/Sara/Tillie/Deer	Chloe White	Callum	Ethan Mosteller
Miss Polly	Josie Smith	Stennis/William	Jake Spencer
Elsie	Larkin Carlson	Holcomb/Andrew/Bear	Stavros Vafeas
Laundress	Gemma Kolmer	Cookie	Gideon Wood
Laundress	Makenna Burris	Newsie	Wiley Gayler
Laundress	Lizzy Melton	Newsie	Jaxon Seacrest
Laundress	Kensli Doke	Colonel Arbuckle	Barrett Vanlandingham
Laundress	Kaylee Moore		
Laundress	Emma Fitchte		

Crew

Students Stage Managers	Ashlynn Berry	Sound	Daniel Lundy
	Brody Massad	Lights	Rin Strong
	Addy Bracken	Projections	Shyann Gray
	Lilly Whittmore		Gabby Wallace

Creative Staff

Playright/Lyricist	Beth Brannon
Composer/Arranger	Brad Henderson
Director	Melanie Wicks
Assistant Director	Beth Brannon
Music Director	Brad Henderson
Stage Manager	Susie Kilpatrick
Acting Coach	Jake Daniel
Technical Director	Jason Wicks
Set Construction	Doug Brannon
	Lori Bottger
Photography	April Massad
Costumes & Props	Melanie Wicks
	Beth Brannon

Orchestra

Keyboards/Conductor	Brad Henderson
Bass	Dean Demeritt
Bass	Ethan Doty
Fiddle/Mandolin	Shelby Eicher
Guitars/Banjo	Pat Savage
Drums/Percussion	Jake Martin
Percussion	Andrea Denison
Violin 1	Dina Litvinova
Violin 2	Elena Gavrilov
Viola	Aubrey Allen
Cello	Erica Parker
Oboe/English Horn	Lisa Wagner
Horn in F	Marsha Willson

Keeping peace shaped our **legacy**.
Finding peace shaped our **legend**.

A NOTE FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT

I have so many people to thank for helping make Vivia a reality. First and foremost, I thank my God for making possible what I once thought to be impossible. I could fill a thousand pages with stories of His miraculous provision. "Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine..." Next, Melanie Wicks - Thank you for believing in me before I did. Thank you for being the most talented, selfless, and hardest working director anyone could ever hope to have staging her show. Thank you for taking a blueprint and using it to build something breathing and tangible and other-worldly. Heart words! To Brad Henderson - Thank you for turning simple tunes into a symphony. Thank you for joining us in our dream and for donating your time and heart to this project and to our kids. What a privilege and joy it has been to work with such an accomplished musician and to share the auditorium once again with a fellow FTG 70s drama kid. To Jason Wicks - Thank you for your endless support of this school, Tiger Theatre, and of me. You may be behind the scenes, but I see you. To Jake Daniel and Susie Kilpatrick - Your talent and work ethic are surpassed only by your beautiful hearts. Thank you for your passion for this program. You are loved always. To Andrea Denison - Thank you so very much for sharing your musical talents once again with us. Your involvement in this process has been invaluable. To our beautiful cast and crew - Thank you for your trust, enthusiasm, positivity, and willingness to take on this HUGE challenge. You have risen to the occasion beautifully, and I could never be more proud of any cast than I am of each of you. To Doug - thank you your help with the set and for every sacrifice you've made so I could follow this dream. I love you. To my treasured children and grandchildren - Andy, Kenna, Fischer, Gray, North, Eric, and Ashley (who happens to share an April 21st birthday with the fort and was the first to edit the script) Thank you for supporting, guiding, and encouraging me along the way. I love you all more than life. To Barrett Vanlandingham, Todd Friend, Mr. Farmer, Mr. Stiles, Mr. Pemberton, Mr. London, the FGHS staff, Camerin Fite-James, Tonia Weavel, Lori Bottger, Joyce Huggins, Mike Roe, Darren Vermillion, and so many other kindhearted people who inhabit and love this little town and its kids as much as I do— Thank you from the bottom of my heart for personifying the selfless spirit of this special little place we get to call home.

Beth Brannon

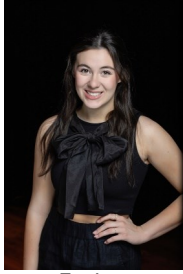
CAST

Emma Perdue



Vivia Thomas

Addison Rouse



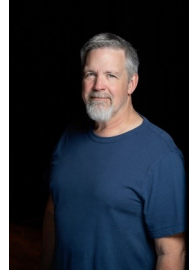
Tsula

Easton Wicks



Graham
Richardson

Barrett
Vanlandingham



Colonel Arbuckle

Chance Berlin



Cologel Thomas
Burton

Gideon Wood



Cookie

Elijah Scagg



Stephen—David

Avery McDaniel



Caroline/Tillie

Aspen White



Violet

Kade Keeling



Major Warren

Tyler Jones



Corporal Reeser

Aiden Brown



Mark/Buzzard

Karson Tanksley



A Wohali

Ethan Mosteller



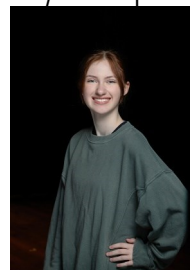
Callum

Josie Smith



Miss Polly

Abby Vahdatipour



Hattie

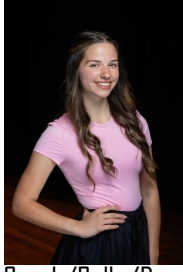
CAST

Jenna Phillips



Laurel/Delilah/Fox

Chloe White



Sarah/Belle/Deer

Tai Correa



Ashley/Unodena/Wolf

Larkin Carlson



Elsie

Jake Spencer



Stennis

Stavros Vafeas



Warrior/Holcomb

Gemma Kolmer



Laundress

Kaylee Moore



Laundress

Kensli Dake



Laundress

Lizzy Melton



Laundress

Wiley Gayer



Fort Child

McKenna Burris



Laundress

Ella Mounce



Cherokee Mother

Emma Fichte



Laundress

Thank you, Seniors!

Emma Perdue, Avery McDaniel,
Jenna Phillips, Gideon Wood, Elijah
Scaggs, Tyler Jones, Josie Smith,
Jake Spencer, Rin Strong, Daniel
Lundy

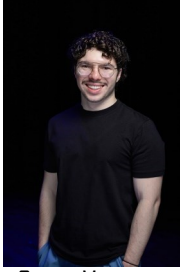
CREW

Ashlynn Berry



Stage Manager

Brody Massad



Stage Manager

Addy Bracken



Stage Manager

Lilly Whittmore



Stage Manager

Daniel Lundy



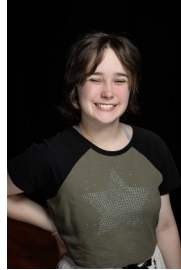
Sound Engineer

Shyann Gray



Projections

Gabby Wallace



Projections

Rin Strong



Light Engineer

THE LEGEND OF VIVIA THOMAS

“The Legend of Vivia Thomas” evolved from a headstone in the Circle of Honor at the Fort Gibson National Cemetery. Legend claims the stone marks the final resting place of a beautiful, young debutante from Boston, who had her heart broken when the soldier to whom she was engaged left her behind in search of western adventures. According to the legend, Vivia followed the man who jilted her and, disguised as a man, enlisted at Fort Gibson as a soldier herself. Once she arrived, however, Vivia discovered her runaway love in the arms of a young Cherokee maiden, and in a fit of jealous rage, she shot and killed her former sweetheart. It’s said she later regretted her decision and that early one January morning, soldiers found Vivia’s frozen body curled up on her beloved’s grave - a victim of the freezing weather and of her own guilt and grief. It was then that a medical officer revealed the young private’s secret, and the fort’s chaplain admitted the young woman had confessed her vengeful intentions to him.

In truth, no record of a Vivia Thomas ever being in Fort Gibson exists, so we have no idea who the person occupying the mysterious grave really is, and as much as I love the legend with its archetypal plot and grieving ghost, it left me feeling more haunted by the way Vivia was represented than by her ghost. So, this is Vivia’s story “reimagined,” or as I imagined she might have told it had she been given the chance to tell “the ending of her story” herself.

Beth Brannon

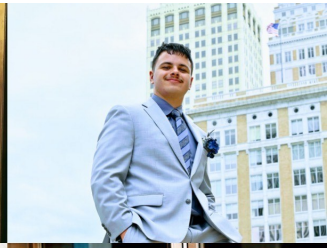
ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Elizabeth (Beth) Andrews Brannon describes herself as a small-town English teacher who has loved musical theatre for as long as she can remember and really caught “the bug” in 1975 after being cast as Louisa in *The Sound of Music*, the first musical performed on the FGHS stage. Since 2009, Beth has had the privilege of acting as assistant director for Tiger Theatre Company musical productions, and as an assistant coach for the Tiger Speech and Debate Team. She graduated Summa Cum Laude from NSU and was recognized as the “Outstanding Student in English Education” in 2001. In 2010, she was selected as Fort Gibson School District’s Teacher of the Year and recognized as a Rising Star in Oklahoma Education by the Oklahoma State Teacher of the Year Selection Committee. Beth is a proud, lifelong resident of Fort Gibson with Cherokee ancestors who first arrived in the area via “The Trail of Tears.” Beth is wife to Doug, mother to Ashley and Andy, mother-in-law to Eric and Kenna, and grandmother to Fischer, Gray, and North. She is a member of the Fort Gibson Church of Christ and credits God for every good thing she has ever received or accomplished.

ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Brad Henderson, accomplished musician and composer, joined the Up With People touring program as a bass player at the age of 18. After his first year of touring, he served as cast musical director, sound engineer and finally, as show manager. His casts performed for presidents, with major symphonies, MLB, NBA, NFL events, in Costa Rican high school gymnasiums, Canadian hockey rinks and bull rings in Spain. He worked for UWP for almost 6 years and by the time he left, he had traveled extensively all over the world.

Upon returning to Oklahoma, Henderson worked at Northeastern State University (NSU) in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. He was responsible for managing the NSU Jazz Lab, handling contracts and arrangements for national jazz artists. He also arranged and directed several jazz groups. He produced “An Evening on Ellington,” a two-hour multi-media musical tribute to Duke Ellington. That production was used as the season opener for the Jazz at Walton Arts Center’s in Fayetteville, Arkansas. He also served many years as pianist/arranger and musical director for the Oklahoma Music Hall of Fame, including inductions of David Gates, Patti Page, Vince Gill, and many more. He is the Worship Associate at First Baptist Church in Tulsa and also serves as conductor for the Oklahoma Baptist Symphony. Brad still finds time for service and travel, serving several times a year with Global Missions Project. He has a Bachelor of Arts in Education (Instrumental Music) from NSU and a Master of Music in Composition from the University of Arkansas.



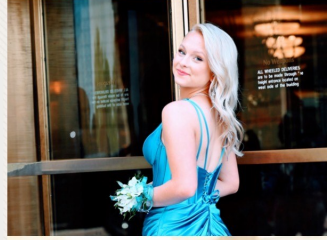
THE *Vm*

Studio

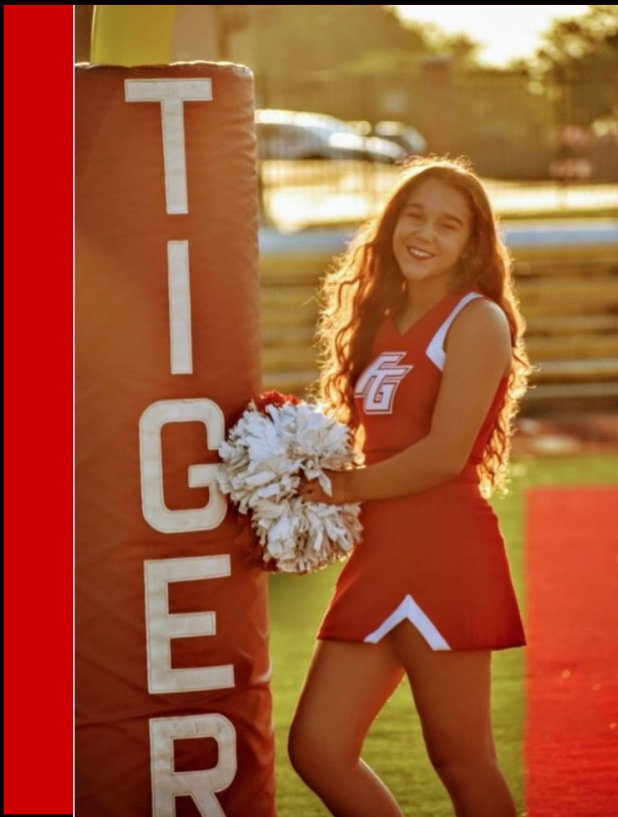
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Congrats to our Studio Seniors!
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Jenna Phillips
Gideon Wood
Emma Perdue
Jake Spencer



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Go Tai

We are SO proud of you. keep chasing your dreams, Harvard.

Brodee, Gatlin, Little Pete, Dad and Mom



Gideon Wood

Senior

**We're proud of you
& we love you!**

**Love,
Mom, Dad,
Savannah, Rachel,
Logan, & Mariah**



THE GRAVEYARD OF THE ARMY

During its operation as the country's most western military post, life was hard and deadly at Fort Gibson, partly in thanks to a Congress whose ongoing arguments over the fort's importance to the nation managed to stall much needed improvements and supplies. Add to this the labor needed to maintain an isolated fort, and the result was what one officer called "the most infernal of all military posts" with a desertion rate that topped 20%. Assistant surgeon J.B. Wright came to the fort in 1834, and noted its reputation as the "Charnel House of the Army." A surgeon general's report that same year stated the fort had a mortality rate of 21.2%. The deaths were attributed to a variety of causes including medical errors, lack of medical supplies, harsh living conditions, cruel punishments, fevers, consumption, floods, rashes that reportedly made skin swell up "like a bologna sausage," and contaminated bootleg whiskey that managed to make its way into the fort and into the central plot of our show. The sound of muffled drums and bugles were often heard accompanying a soldier's body to its final resting place, and one soldier reportedly claimed the savings on coffins, drum heads, and brass instruments worn out in burying Fort Gibson's dead would offset the cost of moving the fort.

Source: Cook, Kevin L. "The Infernal but Necessary Fort Gibson." *HistoryNet*, 17 January 2018 www.historynet.com/infernal-necessary-fort-gibson/.

**We are so proud of you,
Ethan Mosteller!**

You never fail to amaze us.

Love, Momma, Aunt Netta, Aunt Nanny, & Aunt Charlene

Be Strong and courageous...

Joshua 1:9



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Gemma Kolmer

Break a leg!

Congratulations!

We are so proud of
you!



Josie Smith
Class of 2024

So many “theater” memories! -
acting along with Kids Praise!
5, preparing for the “Jane” au-
dition/ being part of Mary Pop-
pins, Newsies, Footloose, &
Cinderella. You have rocked
this change and we are so very
proud of you!

Break a leg, Karson!



Never afraid to be your favorite character,
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We are so proud of you!
Love,
Mom, Dad and Kennedy

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Our sweet V,

This is it! You have left your beautiful mark on the Tiger Theatre Company and we are infinitely proud of everything you have accomplished along the way! Break a leg, Caroline! Shine like the star you are!

We love you, V!
Love, Mom & Dad



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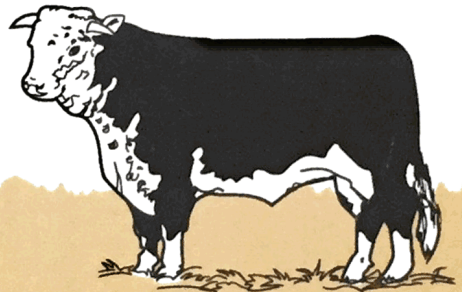
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**Kade,
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Congratulations
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Love,
Dad, Mom, &
Kolt**



**Congratulations, Stevie!
We are so proud of you!
We love you!**



Congratulations Tyler! We are so proud of the man you have become. As you head to college, stay true to God, seek wisdom and keep shining your light for all to see the hope that abides in you. All our love, forever and always, Mom and Dad

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Chloe,

We are so proud of you! Your passion for theatre is infectious. We love cheering you on and will always be your biggest fans!

Love,

Mom, Dad, & Sissy

We are very proud of you!

Love,

**Mom, Dad,
Kaleb, & Caden**



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Emma Danielle Perdue

2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019,
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024



Our Darling girl-

Here we are! The last scene of your FTG Tiger Theatre career! It has been the biggest joy to watch you continue to reach for your dreams and succeed! Always remember dreams are achieved only through trying! We can't wait to watch all your successes to come!

We love you to the moon and back,

Mom, Dad and Amanda, Jaxon and Katelyn

THANK YOU!

Scott Farmer

Ben Pemberton

Chuck London

Tom Stiles

Jason Wicks

Todd Friend

Jake Daniel

Wiley & Lori Bottger

Kim Hummingbird

Susie Kilpatrick

Doug Brannon

Ashley Rouse

Camerin James

Janet Freeling

Tonia Weavel

Brad and Mary Kay Henderson

Monica @ Kimberly's

Jim & Joyce Huggins

Ryne and Amanda Perdue

Denise & Tonia @ Sonburst Graphics

Jim & Joyce Huggins

John Johnson

Bullseye Wealth Management

Mike & Missy Lasater

Doug and Marilyn Burt

Louie Mosteller

Charlie's Chicken

Jason & Shawna Phillips

Max Wicks

Darren & Susannah Kilpatrick

Jennifer Rouse

Kristin Perdue

Misty McDaniel

Gina White

Andrea Denison

Carol Corley

Gail Saunders

DeeDee Landers

Ella Mounce

Darren Vermillion

Fort Gibson Historical Site

Mackenzie and Ben Haff

Robbie Walkingstick

Fort Quick Stop

Simple Simon's Pizza

Brandi Adair

Angela Fairchild

AUTOGRAPHS

AUTOGRAPHS

AUTOGRAPHS

FINAL DIRECTORIAL THOUGHTS

In 1999, when I knew I was destined to become a theatre educator and director, I remember dreaming of directing an original production since that, in my mind, was a pinnacle moment in a theatre teacher's career. However, this seemed like an unrealistic dream since I was an Oklahoma gal from the small town of Stilwell. In the early days of my profession, this dream seemed to be an impossibility, and, as time passed, one that might not ever come to fruition. Little did I know what God had planned for me. I have been blessed enough to direct and stage numerous musicals in this area and each one has taught me lessons that have prepared me for this very moment.

Beth Brannon and I met 17 years ago while teaching and the rest is history. A lot of life has been lived in our auditorium. We have watched students blossom and grow into mature, talented, incredible actors and actresses who tell authentic and honest stories. And in life, together, we have experienced the highest of mountain top moments and lowest of lows deep in the valley of despair.

Beth - I know that you have written so much of yourself into this show and although that has left you feeling vulnerable and exposed, the beauty of it all has left me speechless. I am infinitely proud of your work, your witness, and your willingness to give the world a piece of your heart. It is an inspiration to me and to our students. Honestly, having a best friend and confidant as a writer has come in extremely handy. Thank you for allowing and trusting me to direct your show. Thank you for giving this community such a brilliant gift. Thank you for answering the call and following God's lead. And, thank you for helping me make one of my lifelong dreams a reality. You are a pillar of hope and light in this little community and we are all deeply indebted to you for writing this beautiful show as a celebration of Fort Gibson's Bicentennial. Directing your work has been, not only a highlight in my career, but one of the greatest joys of my life and a moment that I will never forget.

Melanie Wicks