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This play is dedicated to the playwright's second father, Bill (Pop) Santen.

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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

COMING HOME

In 2008 a group of Beloit Civic Theatre board members and I traveled to Theatre at the Center in Munster, Indiana to see a performance of MAKING GOD LAUGH. We felt it would be a good show for our audience. By intermission I knew I wanted to direct it. We were unable to attain the rights to the show as it was very new and not yet available to community theatres. So, as the saying goes, we made other plans. I directed other shows, traveled for a year in a motor home, and settled in Southern California. I never forgot the script; thankfully neither did BCT. When approached to direct it I jumped at the chance to not only direct the show, but to come home.

MAKING GOD LAUGH on the surface can be seen as a story that spans three plus decades jumping a decade at a time. We follow the empty nesters and their three adult children as they return home for holidays. We watch as everyone must adjust their plans as their lives take the inevitable twists and turns. Perhaps we even hear God laughing. But there is another story the playwright gives us, the story of returning home.

Most of us have experienced the feeling of returning to a place we thought of as home. It could be our family home where we were raised or a theatre where we worked and found a true family. Sometimes it isn't the place but the people that give us a nostalgic feeling, reminding us of a way of being from years ago. Perhaps you can relate to our characters as they try to become their true selves but when they return home are placed under the constraints of their parents' and siblings' perception of who they were or who they should be now. We are often haunted by a childhood nickname or an embarrassing story that just won't die. Are you a dreamer always looking for the next big thing? Are you a free spirit living your life outside the norms of your family? Or are you the "good" son/daughter fulfilling the dreams of your parents? My wish for you is that no matter how awkward the situation, it's still always nice to go home.

THE PRODUCTION TEAM

Director .....Patricia Moran Collins
Stage Manager.....Les Blumreich
Set Design .....Loren Sass
Set Construction .....Donna Balsley, Les Blumreich, Deb Burns, Mary Easland, Mike Fallon, Dee Fischer, Dawn Kabor, Tom Lepinski, Mary Mowers, Harold Pann, Loren Sass, Ed Skwarlo, Gerry White, Tom Young
Lighting and Sound .....Peter Tropp
Costumes.....Donna Balsley
Properties .....Donna Balsley, Dee Fischer
Running Crew ..... Donna Balsley, Les Blumreich, Deb Burns, Mary Easland, Mark Ehle, Dee Fischer, Pat Hoye, Loren Sass, Lisa Scholten, Abby Smith, Susan Smith,
Make-up Design .....Dee Fischer

BELOIT CIVIC THEATRE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Pat Hoye.....President
Loren Sass .....Vice President
Doris Tropp .....Secretary
Les Blumreich and Rebecca Wallendal .....Treasurers

Deb Burns, Donna Balsley, Mary Easland, Mike Fallon, Dee Fischer,
Mary Mowers, Lisa Scholten, Susan Smith, Brad Thorp, and Tom Young.

Special Thanks

Beloit Memorial High School Theatre Department
Roscoe Methodist Church Music Department for the loan of the drums
Al and Phyllis Wendorf for loaning us the Christmas tree

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PLEASE NOTE

Refreshments will be available during the intermission. All proceeds go to the Beloit Civic Theatre Helen Hayes Teed Scholarship Fund. Each year awards are given to students going on after high school to study theatre arts or communications.

Please be aware that Beloit Memorial High School is a "non-smoking" facility. Please respect the school policy and state law and refrain from smoking on school grounds.

No photography is allowed during performance.

Please turn off ringing cell phones during performance.

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please leave your name, address, and phone number with one of the volunteers at the ticket tables in the lobby. Address changes may also be given to one of our lobby personnel.

Please check out our website at www.beloitcivictheatre.org

Gift certificates are available for the entire season or for individual shows. They make wonderful gifts for all occasions. If interested, contact our box office at (608) 362-1595 or Loren Sass at (608) 365-0235.

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THE CAST

Ruthie .....Doris Tropp

Bill .....Brad Thorp

Richard .....Aaron Crary

Maddie .....Bernice White

Thomas .....Conner Martin

THE SETTING

The entire action of the play takes place in the living room of Bill and Ruth.

ACT I

Scene 1: Thanksgiving 1980

Scene 2: Christmas 1990

ACT II

Scene 1: New Year's Eve 1999

Scene 2: "Easter" 2012

There will be a twelve-minute intermission between the acts.
Enjoy the cookies in the lobby.

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WHO'S WHO

Aaron Crary as Richard

Aaron Crary (Richard) Aaron previously appeared in *Squirrels in the Attic, A Talent for Murder,* and *Lend Me a Tenor* for Beloit Civic Theatre. Other theatrical experience includes, for Beloit Memorial High School Theater, *Cinderella, Hairspray, Arabian Nights, Urinetown (the musical), Almost Maine, In the Heights* and *Zombie Prom.* He also appeared in *Hairspray* for The Janesville Summer Program, and in *Legally Blonde* at the Janesville Performing Arts Center. He works as a security officer and his family consists of parents, Helen and Randy and sister, Destiny. Aaron's interests outside of theatre include writing stories, comics and music, drawing, parkour and martial arts. Aaron writes, "I am furthering my education; I am working on taking an Associate's Degree in Criminal Justice to a four-year school to become a Crime Scene Technician/Forensic Scientist of Fingerprinting, Ballistics and Firearms while minoring in Theatrical Arts. UW Whitewater is currently the school I plan to attend. Other goals include: auditioning for a few television series as well as joining the Cinematic Universe and possibly acting in a few Broadway productions."

Bernice White as Maddie

Bernice White (Maddie) Bernice appeared for Beloit Civic Theatre in last season's *Same Time, Next Year.* Her other previous theatrical experience includes roles in *As You Like It* for The Milton Historical Society and *Never Too Late* for Janesville Little Theater. Bernice works as a service leader at Perkins restaurant, and her hobbies include exercise, writing poetry, and playing the piano. "I discovered my aptitude and love for the stage when I joined my forensics team in high school, performing the monologue, 'Finishing School', and I have participated in several plays since then. I fully intend to continue my involvement with community theatre any way I can. I hope everyone enjoys the show!"

Connor Martin as Thomas

Conner Martin (Thomas) Conner debuts for Beloit Civic Theatre in this production. He previously appeared in *Miss Saigon* for EPAC, *All Shook Up* and *Les Miserables* for Janesville Parker High School, and *Sweeney Todd* for THD. Conner recently became manager of The Beloit Club Pool and has also been employed by Activ-Pak and T.E.A.M. Contracting. His family consists of mother, Stephanie, father, Patrick and brothers, Camdyn and Caleb. He enjoys singing, listening to music and in general, staying active. Conner just moved back to Beloit from Los Angeles where he took improvisation classes at The Upright Citizens Brigade.

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Brad Thorp as Bill

Brad Thorp (Bill) Brad appeared in *Moonlight and Magnolias* and *Talent for Murde*r for Beloit Civic Theatre, while also working on set construction and running crews for various BCT productions. Brad works as Reliability Services Manager of Novaspect and is married to wife, Theresa; they have 4 children, Matthew, Mary, Luke and Timothy. Brad enjoys Milsim (Airsoft), old cars, and building and repairing…things. He also serves on the Board of Directors of Beloit Civic Theatre.

Doris Hunter Tropp as Ruthie

Doris Hunter Tropp (Ruthie) Doris serves as Secretary of the Board of Directors of Beloit Civic Theatre where she also is a dedicated behind-the-scenes volunteer. In addition, Doris has appeared onstage for BCT, most recently in *Death Trap;* other of her BCT acting experiences were in such plays as *Showboat, The Man Who Came to Dinner, Hot L Baltimore* and *Driving Miss Daisy.* Doris works as an Administrative Assistant at Roscoe Methodist Church and serves as Steward of the Board for the Village Nursery School in Roscoe. She and her husband, Peter, have 3 children, 1 grandson and a granddaughter on the way. Doris enjoys directing skits at church, reading and binge watching TV series on Netflix.

Patricia "Trish" Moran Collins

Patricia "Trish" Moran Collins is ecstatic to be back at BCT. She directed here from 2008-2013 but moved from WI to travel the country in an RV for a year, finally settling in Southern California. Since relocating to Vista, CA she has continued to follow her passion into the theatre. Highlights include The International Fringe Festival in San Diego which consisted of three new one-act plays by local playwrights. She has directed twice for Moxie Theatre & SDSU Theatre, TV, and Film Department 10-minute Play Festival where the plays are written and performed within a 24 hour period. Most recently *CAREGIVERS ANONYMOUS* was a new work and toured San Diego County. She was thrilled to be a letter writer in the judging process for the California Young Playwright's Contest. One of Trish's favorite plays she directed at BCT was *GREETINGS!* and she will be directing it at Patio Playhouse in Escondido, CA as soon as she gets home. She would like to thank her husband, Patrick for supporting her trip back to WI for this directing job. A GIANT thank you to Loren & Diane Sass, Pat Hoye, and Donna Balsley for allowing me to stay with them during the rehearsal process.

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Neil Simon's
Barefoot in the Park

AUDITION NOTICE

Auditions for our winter show, Barefoot in the Park by Neil Simon and directed by Barry Nyquist, will be held in the theatre on October 29 and 30 at 7 p.m. The cast calls for four men and two women. You may request to be added to our actor database if interested. Postcards announcing auditions are mailed before each show's auditions. Just give your name, phone number and postal mailing address to anyone working in the lobby or e-mail us at beloitcivictheatre@gmail.com

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