



P. O. BOX 744 GREENFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS 01302

December 2009

Dear Friends,

“I was only 12 years old when I stumbled upon Arena Civic Theatre. I found a voice, found a place where I learned to sing in public for the first time and felt unstoppable. I never left the theater after that. It was imbedded in my soul.” These are the words of Elizabeth Perkins, who eventually left her home in Shelburne Falls and has starred in such movies as *Big*, *Avalon*, *The Doctor*, *Must Love Dogs*, and *The Flintstones* and Emmy-nominated for her supporting role as Celia Hodes in Showtime’s *Weeds*.

In 2010 Arena Civic Theatre will be celebrating its 40th Anniversary season. While most of us adults or kids won’t be starring in movies or television shows like our most famous alumnus Elizabeth, her words show the incredible value that live theater and ACT can have in our lives. Theater is and can be imbedded into the souls of all of its participants – onstage, offstage, and in front of the stage as our audience. Its value is priceless.

Forty years of exceptional excellence is a long run and we could not have done it without your support. This is a critical time in the life of ACT. Your support is more crucial than ever. Today many families, individuals, and communities are facing a difficult economic environment. Schools have reduced or eliminated arts programs, including theater. But for those who have helped us in the past and to our new friends we ask that you find a way to support Franklin County’s longest running community theater.

ACT is more than a community of actors, directors, designers, carpenters, painters, and volunteers. When you come to one of our shows you become part of our community because you experience the immediacy that only live theater provides. Without your help our stage will go dark. So please consider a donation.

Most importantly with school arts programs in jeopardy we have a vital role as a creative outlet for all children who, like the 12 year old Elizabeth Perkins, want to have the opportunity to feel the warmth of the stage lights on their faces and the warmth of new friends.

Just some of the ACT shows that have made us laugh, cry, and sing along with: *The King and I*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *Kindertransport*, *The Miracle Worker*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *The Music Lesson*, *The Foreigner*, *The Sound of Music*, and *Inherit the Wind*.

Community is a wonderful word. Please become part of our community. For a tax-deductible donation of \$35 or more you will receive two tickets to our spring 2010 production of *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

With warmest gratitude,

Robert Freedman

Robert Freedman
Board of Directors

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