



## *De's Dazzles – Upstage, Downstage, Backstage, Offstage*

Who knew there were so many stages in theater? March has been SETTING THE STAGE or paving the way for the next few months! First Friday Friends has secured some speakers from alpaca farms to cowboy mounted shooting, to Nancy Drew books! Plus, the details are now all worked out for our first Southwest Iowa Regional Theater Spotlight with 3 communities, Shenandoah, Greenfield, and Corning's traveling thespians performing 6 short 10-minute comedy plays on April 12 in Corning. And we've rescheduled the show from Christmas, so The Finesse will be performing April 19 and featuring songs from Motown! And we've added a country concert by Chris Moreno on May 2.

With our unique raked stage (meaning it is sloped) Shakespeare's Upstage and Downstage directions are very visible. UPSTAGE means toward the rear of the stage. We enjoyed hosting the Iowa Nebraska Heartland Film Festival with our screen upstage and showing 42 films over two days! DOWNSTAGE is a term that refers to the front of a stage or closest to the audience and that is where we presented the awards for the film festival! The film winners featured a 10-year-old cold case, a GI Joe action adventure, and a documentary about Abraham's Bridge.

OFFSTAGE refers to a location where people cannot see, an area that is not visible to the audience. Sometimes it refers to your private life as opposed to your public life. Well, in the quiet, offstage activities this month, we have been very busy! Lighthouse Glass repaired the water damaged walls in the second lobby. After five days the plaster is repaired, and the walls repainted. Come take a look! Then our hot water heater went on the fritz and was replaced, and the leaky toilet has new parts!

BACKSTAGE refers to the area behind the stage where performers get ready. I am always looking for ways to keep up with industry standards and prepare for the ever-changing future. Early March, I attended the Regional Arts Forum and was voted to be one of six southwest Iowa regional representatives. Our discussions focus on educating the public about the arts, regional collaboration, collective marketing, and resources for community engagement. In August we will meet with all regions in the state to formulate a 4-year plan.

Life is a stage, so perform your masterpiece! Whether it's film, plays, musicals, concerts or whatever, enjoy those moments!

Sincerely,  
*De Heaton*, Executive Director  
April 2, 2025