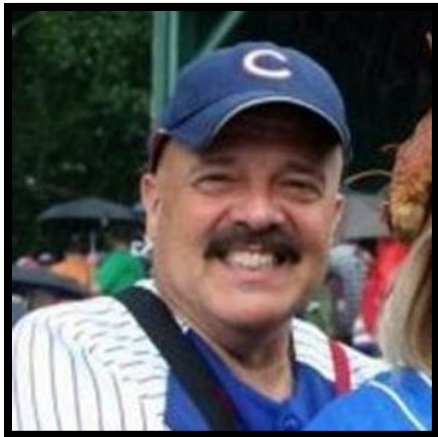


## 2024-2025 Peoria Players Theatre Board of Directors Candidates Voting opens April 18

You are allowed to vote for up to five (5) people listed below. Cumulative voting (multiple votes for a single candidate) in the Board elections is not allowed. You are allowed to cast only one (1) vote per candidate. You may choose to vote for only one (1) candidate, but that vote will count only once. You may choose to vote up to the maximum number of votes allowed on the ballot. In order to run for the Board of Directors and/or to vote in the election, you must be a current Peoria Players company member.



### STEVE BORTOLOTTI

I have been associated with Peoria Players since 1979. During this time, I have appeared on stage and worked back stage in many productions. The different projects and programs I have developed include the following: served on the committee that established the first Normie Awards (1988); developed Players' first website (2000); originated the Summer Youth Theater program and directed its first four shows (1997-2000); directing achievements include *Amadeus* (1987), *West Side Story* (1989), *Bleacher Bums* (1992), *The Gifts of the Magi* (2002), *Ragtime* (2004, 2014), *Brigadoon* (2005), *Miss Saigon* (2008), *Little Women* (2008), *The Women* (2011), *Titanic* (2012), *Sunset Boulevard* (2018), and *(Something Rotten!)*; established, organized and directed the first five productions of the summer fundraiser *Showstoppers!*, (1989-1992, 2004); and established, organized, and directed five productions of *King Henry's Christmas Feaste – a Madrigal Dinner* (1990-1994, 1997).

My onstage credits include Arthur (*Camelot* 1988), Sheriff Ed Earl (*Whorehouse/Texas* 1991), Che (*Evita* 1993), Samovar (*Hollywood/Ukraine* 1994), Petruccio/Fred (*Kiss Me Kate* 1995), Vernon (*They're Playing Our Song* 1999), Cyrano (*Cyrano!* 1999), Growltiger (*Cats* 2006), Aldolpho (*Drowsy Chaperone* 2012), and Thenardier (*Les Mis* 2013).

I served on and over the PPT Board since 1986. During that time, I have served as secretary, vice president, and 13 times as president. I am also a two-time recipient of the Outstanding Service Award. I am honored to be asked to run for the board again, and I sincerely hope you consider voting for me.



## **HOWARD GORMAN**

I did my first show at Peoria Players in 1984, and I was hooked. Since that time I have been busy onstage and backstage. I am usually found building sets for several of the local theaters. I have served on the board twice before and am looking forward to serving Players as a board member again.



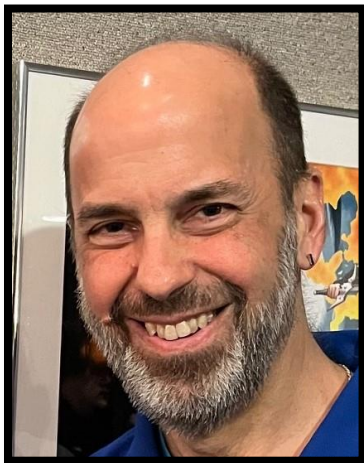
## **LEIGH HAGER**

Hello! My name is Leigh Hager, and my family moved back to Illinois in August of 2019. Shortly thereafter, I began working at Willow Hill UMC. I continue to work there today and serve as the Director of Online Ministries, managing the social media, graphic design, and video editing. My reunion with the Peoria Players Theatre community was delayed due to the pandemic, followed by a battle with cancer. Overcoming these challenges, I was thrilled to join the exceptional cast of *In the Heights* last season, though it wasn't my first time performing at PPT. In my youth, I graced the stage in the *Jungle of Nool* as part of the 2005 cast of *Seussical the Musical*. Since last season, I performed in *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*, co-choreographed *The Music Man*, and I am prepping to choreograph *Footloose* in the upcoming season.

I discovered my love for community theatre in my youth, and I have been fortunate to be involved in it for much of my life. After finishing my enlistment in the USAF, my family moved to Phoenix, AZ, and I was lucky to find a community theatre near our home. The whole family, including my ten-month-old daughter, performed in a show, and my passion for community theatre reignited. From 2016-2019, I performed in, and worked on, numerous productions in Phoenix, including productions of new works and staged readings. I organized and executed fundraising events like trivia nights and makeup workshops. I was blessed with the opportunity to serve in various capacities on productions from set painting to costuming. I designed the hair for *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* which was awarded a National Youth Arts award for Outstanding Hair & Makeup Design in 2017. I assistant directed a multi-award winning production in 2019, including the National Youth Arts award for Outstanding Direction, of *The Velveteen Rabbit*. That same season, I was also nominated for Outstanding Set Design for *Farce of Nature*.

All that to say: I am no stranger to community theatre, though I seem fresh on the scene at Peoria Players. My interest in community theatre is multi-faceted, as you may have gleaned. I deeply value Peoria Players Theatre's role in the local arts community and recognize the importance of continuous growth and improvement. I am particularly passionate about promoting youth involvement and fostering diversity and inclusion, both on and off the stage. Furthermore, I believe in supporting new works to enrich the community's cultural landscape and provide opportunities for emerging artists.

I understand the complexities involved in balancing artistic vision with practical considerations, and I am committed to contributing to the Board of Directors in a way that ensures Peoria Players Theatre continues to thrive. Serving on the board would be a tremendous honor, and I appreciate your consideration during this election season. Thank you!



**SETH KATZ**

I have loved the theater for my entire life, having listened to and attended school, community, regional, and Broadway productions since before I can remember. In my first stage role, I played Max in my school's fifth-grade production of *The Sound of Music*. In both the family I was raised in and the family I have helped create, reading, writing, performing, and singing theater -- often spontaneously -- have simply been part of everyday life. Since 2002 I have been in eighteen shows at PPT, CST, and Bradley University, playing roles as diverse as Malvolio in BU's *Twelfth Night* and Benny Southstreet in PPT's *Guy and Dolls*. In 2015 I was honored with the Director's Award for On-stage Performance for my work in the role of the Police Sergeant in PPT's production of *The Pirates of Penzance*.

As a “day job,” I have been an English professor at Bradley University since 1992, specializing in grammar, linguistics, and writing and editing. In 2019 I performed at the PPT Century Gala Celebration, and I have served as a consultant on Jewish content and Hebrew, Yiddish, and Russian pronunciation for several performers and shows in the Peoria area.

Along with my life-long love of theater, my most relevant experience for serving on the PPT board comes from my 22 years as the volunteer executive director of Bradley University Hillel, the campus Jewish student organization. I thus have lengthy experience running a small non-profit organization, working with a constituency with diverse and sometimes conflicting interests. In my time with Hillel, I took the annual budget from \$25,000 to \$150,000; developed partnerships with various offices at BU and a variety of external organizations; raised the entire annual funding for the organization through soliciting grants and developing ongoing relationships with individual donors; managed and supervised maintenance of the Hillel building; and, by assembling and working with a team of knowledgeable and talented Peoria residents, fundraised \$750,000 for the 2011 construction of the current Hillel House (actually, a to-the-studs renovation and expansion of an existing building). In addition, I managed to make my own volunteer position obsolete by developing partnerships with the regional and national Hillel organizations and successfully pursuing ongoing grant and donor opportunities that allowed Bradley Hillel to hire a permanent, full-time professional director, with ongoing funding to make the position self-sustaining.

In short, I love theater; I have experience in helping run a non-profit organization; I am a professional writer and editor; I value working on a team for a common goal; and I am not shy about asking people for their in-kind, service, and monetary support for an organization that I believe in deeply.



**JILL MORITZ**

Hello, Peoria Players Theatre members. My name is Jill Moritz, and I am asking for your vote for my second term to the Peoria Players Board of Directors. Peoria Players Theatre has been a second home to myself and my family since 1999 when my then 6-year-old son Seth Hannan played the role of the Mayor of Munchkin land in *The Wizard of Oz*. Then and now, the members of Peoria Players Theatre have been like family to me and amongst its members I count my dearest and closest friends.

I was first elected to the board in 2000 serving until 2006, my most recent term has been from 2021 thru 2024. During my time on the Board of Directors, I have served in the following capacities: Fundraising committee chair, nominating committee chair, Play selection committee chair and Volunteers for ushers

and house manager's chair. I have also served as a member of the Finance committee and the Play selection committee for the 2024 – 2025 season. I am passionate about continuing to provide top rate quality entertainment at Peoria Players Theatre the oldest continuous running theatre in the State of Illinois.

My daughter Darah Hannan and I have costumed more shows at Peoria Players Theatre than I can count. I love creating visually moving art on stage and I thank the actors who have made our work come alive. Through costuming I have found my creative niche and purpose to serve this great organization.

A vote for me means I represent YOU. During my tenure as a board member, theatre members and patrons alike have approached me with ideas, concerns, and suggestions. I take this feedback very seriously. If elected, I will continue to be YOUR voice and to assist in running the business side of Peoria Players Theatre through the Board of Directors.

Thank you for much for your consideration and I sincerely appreciate your vote!



## **HOLLY OTT**

Hi, my name is Holly Ott, and I am running for the Board of Directors for Peoria Players Theatre. A lifetime Peoria resident, I currently live as an “empty-nester” in Dunlap with my husband, Jeff Ott (yes, the 5-time Peoria Senior Golf Champion!) and our 2 dogs and 2 cats.

After graduating from the Academy of our Lady/Spalding Institute in 1986 (Go IRISH!) I earned a BS in Business Management with a minor in marketing. My professional experience ranges from medical practice management to business development, marketing strategies & training.

Although I was introduced to theatre as a child (both Broadway and community theatre productions), it was just two years ago that I was encouraged to audition for Peoria Players production of *Mamma Mia* - Thank you, Jimmy Ulrich! It was performing in that show that I FELL IN LOVE WITH community theatre! I have performed in 5 shows since then, including *Freaky Friday*, *The Wedding Singer*, *Sister Act*, *Chicago* and, most recently, *Something Rotten*.



It was as though my soul had been ignited through the music, the songs, and the dancing, but, most of all, through the PEOPLE! I couldn't wait to jump in again, so I did!

I immediately immersed myself into a supportive role, volunteering as an usher, a stage mom (when my dog, Sassy, appeared in *Gypsy*), special event emcee for the BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY sing-along and a fervent social media poster of all PPT shows and events. It was through this support that I was nominated (and won!) the SPIRIT of the THEATRE award at Peoria Players' NORMIES last year.

I wish to continue to give to our community through volunteering my time and diverse business experience as part of this board. I will provide a fresh perspective with the goal of working with this committee to help make changes where needed, support initiatives that work, and continue to provide a community theatre experience of excellence that you have come to expect. A strong past is a great start. Forward-thinking for growth and opportunity is key for an equally great future. When voting opens, I would be grateful for your support.



## **ED PECK**

My name is Ed Peck and I am running for the Board of Directors at Peoria Players Theatre. I have been involved with Peoria Players since 1998 when I was cast as Prince John in *The Lion in Winter*. I absolutely fell in love with this theatre and it has held a special place in my heart ever since. I've met some of my closest friends doing shows here. I met my wife at Peoria Players!

I appeared in many Peoria Players shows through the years. Recent appearances include *Big Fish*, *Gypsy*, *SpongeBob*, *Kinky Boots*, *Shrek*, and *Bonnie & Clyde*. I've also run a spotlight and worked backstage.

Theatre has always been a passion of mine and I've had many unique opportunities learn and grow in all aspects of theatre.

I went to Bradley University for Theatre with an emphasis on performance, directing, stage management and design. While at Bradley I worked as a professional stagehand/wardrobe crew for Equity tours of

*Cats, Les Miserables, The Will Rogers Follies, and Jesus Christ Superstar* (Ted Neeley and Carl Anderson tour.)

After Bradley I spent 9 years at Conklin's Barn II Dinner Theatre as an actor, stage manager and ran lights and sound. Several shows I did all of these roles at the same time!

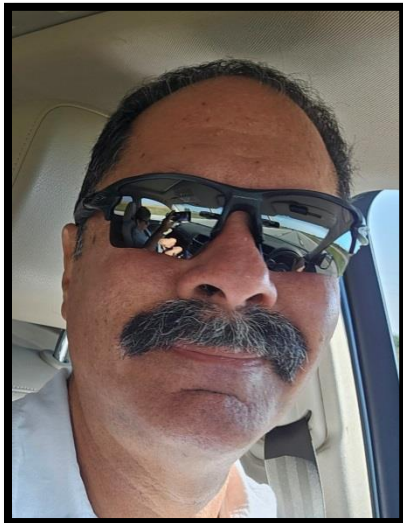
I was a founding member of The Peoria Cabaret Theatre at The Waterhouse where I directed *I Love You Because* and Assistant Directed *Songs for a New World, The Musical of Musicals, and The Awesome 80s Prom*. I also ran lights and sound, hosted Broadway Open Mic nights and ran the blog.

I was in charge of the Dinner Theatre Ministry at Pekin First Church of God for 3 years. My responsibilities included play selection, budget, directing, acting, set, light and sound design, props and social media promotion.

All of these roles have taught me about creativity, time management, working within a budget, clear and open communication between departments and to treat everyone involved with kindness as we work towards the same goal.

I would love the opportunity to serve on the Board of Directors for Peoria Players Theatre to use my skills and experience to give back to the theatre that I love. I am excited about the direction Peoria Players is headed. From the technical advances of our lights, projection and sound, to the fresh, innovative and buzzworthy shows that continue to bring new faces both behind our beautiful red curtain and into our audience as well.

At a time when many theatre companies are struggling, Peoria Players is thriving and continuing to grow. I would be honored if you consider voting for me as a board member to help oversee the future of this special place we all call our second home.



**CARL WILLIAMS**

I am a current member of the Peoria Players Board, and I have been honored to be on this special Board for the last three years. We are very proud of Peoria Players history, and we hope to continue to provide a great product for the Peoria entertainment community for the next 100 years. Thank you for voting me onto the Board three years ago, and thank you for your consideration this election.