

The Barcroft Players  
Present

# Three Generations Of Imbeciles

A Play in Two Acts by Rick Hodges



Jean McGurrian

**Friday June 27, 2008 7:30 p.m.**

**Saturday June 28, 2008 7:30 p.m.**

**Barcroft Community House**

• **Cast** (in order of appearance)

Linette Keogh.....	Nancy Mercer
Joyce McNally.....	Lisa Good
Dr. Halsey Jennings.....	Phil Cackley
Voice of Judge.....	Gerry Connolly
Glenn Keogh.....	Chris Spadoni
Lemonade.....	Jill Egle

**Act I:** 1938

Scene 1: Spring

Scene 2: September

Scene 3: Two weeks later

**Act II:** 1960

Scene 1: Midmorning of an autumn day

Scene 2: Afternoon same day

Scene 3: That evening and several months later

*There will be a short intermission after Act 1*

## Crew

Director.....	Cecilia Cackley
Playwright.....	Rick Hodges
Producer .....	Barbara Swart
Set Design.....	Dan Junker
Lighting.....	Randy Swart
Costumes.....	Joanne Balzano
Makeup.....	Cecilia Cackley
Stage Crew.....	Ana Cackley
Program/Flyer Artwork.....	Jean McGurrin
Lobby Board.....	Bob Morrison
Box Office.....	Peg and Gary Lefebvre
Set Construction.....	Randy Swart, Rick Hodges
Set Painting.....	Barbara Swart, Rick Hodges
Set Dressing.....	Barbara Swart, Rick Hodges, Nancy Mercer, Joanne Balzano, Dan Junker
Publicity.....	Nancy Mercer, Rick Hodges, Barbara Swart

## Cast and Crew bios

**Joanne Balzano** (Costumes) loves doing live theater and has done shows everywhere, including the Sinai, in her work with the State Department. Besides doing costumes, she sings soprano and this weekend is performing concerts in Montana with the Alexandria Choral Society.

**Ana Cackley** (Stage Crew) has starred in numerous Barcroft Players productions and most recently appeared as Nick in "A Thousand Clowns." She also performed this past winter in "Urinetown" at H-B Woodlawn in Arlington, where she is a rising 10th grader.

**Cecilia Cackley** (Director, Makeup) is a founding member of the Barcroft Players. She has stage managed for Rorschach Theatre, GALA Hispanic Theatre and Catalyst Theater and has directed two productions for the Capital Fringe Festival. Upcoming projects include *Hijos del Limbo* with Las Jamonas for the Capital Fringe Festival.

**Phil Cackley** (Dr. Halsey Jennings) is a founding member of the Barcroft Players and most recently appeared as Murray in *A Thousand Clowns*. He is an adult ESL teacher by day and is happily married with four kids. He's very excited to be working again with his favorite director.

**Gerry Connolly** (Voice of Judge) is the chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. He is seeking election to Congress to represent Virginia's 11<sup>th</sup> Congressional District.

**Jill Egle** (Lemonade) is making her acting debut in *Three Generations*. Even as a little girl, she always wanted to be a star. This play brings both of her worlds together: advocacy and art - what a way to make a debut.

## Cast and Crew bios

**Lisa Good** (Joyce McNally) is no stranger to performing, whether with special Olympics or on stage and is thrilled to be playing Joyce in the play. She is a wonderful self advocate, and in this role she reminds us how important it is to support A Life Like Yours.

**Rick Hodges** (Playwright, Set Construction) is a writer who lives in Arlington with his wife and two daughters. His older daughter, Audrey, has Down syndrome. Audrey inspired him to write *Three Generations*, as well as his one-man show *The R Word*, which he performed at the Capital Fringe Festival in July 2007.

**Dan Junker** (Set Design) has played many roles for the Barcroft Players on and off stage, including actor, director, art director and set designer. Dan studied theater in college and is now a real life rocket scientist living in Barcroft.

**Peg and Gary LeFebvre** (Box Office) Peg and Gary Lefebvre are the membership chair and treasurer respectively of the Barcroft School and Civic League. The Barcroft Players thank them for all their good work and support of all things related to the Barcroft neighborhood.

**Jean McGurrin** (Program/Flyer Artwork) is an artist who works with Art Enables in Washington D.C. Art Enables is a program for adults with disabilities who love to draw and paint and who would like to work at becoming producing artists.

**Nancy Mercer** (Linette Keogh) is excited to bring Rick Hodges' play to life with two of her favorite ladies and thanks the Barcroft Players for making this happen. Nancy is the Executive Director of the Arc of Northern Virginia, an advocacy group for people with disabilities.

## Cast and Crew bios

**Bob Morrison** (Head Shots, Lobby Board) of Bonnie Briar Productions believes in community theater. He loves doing portraits and head shots.

**Chris Spadoni** (Glenn Keogh) is a recently married IT guy who lives in Arlington. After many years of missing theater, he was lucky to find and join the Barcroft Players and perform in last year's *A Thousand Clowns*.

**Barbara Swart** (Producer, Set Painting) has produced shows for the Barcroft Players since 2001, although since becoming a senior citizen, can no longer remember how many. She is grateful to Rick for letting the Players perform his play and ever grateful to Randy for everything.

**Randy Swart** (Lights, Set Construction) enjoys doing lights for the Players. His greatest theatrical achievements were building our lighting console and creating Bubbles for *A Thousand Clowns*. His on-stage experience includes playing the piper in *Brigadoon* and an early role as one of the three bears in *Goldilocks*.

### VERY SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Casey Hammeke, Velma Mercer, Darrell Capwell, Christine Scullion, parents, spouses, friends and the Barcroft School and Civic League.

And to the Down Syndrome Association of Northern Virginia for their generous donation.

## Note from the Playwright

This is a work of fiction. However, the characters and events are inspired by a true story. Carrie Buck was committed to the Virginia State Colony for Epileptics and Feeble-minded in 1924. The state sought to forcibly sterilize her under a law passed that same year allowing the state to try to stop the "insane, idiotic, imbecile, feeble-minded or epileptic" from passing their conditions to their offspring. Carrie sued to stop it, though it is likely the case was simply filed on her behalf by the state to get a court ruling backing up the law. Her case went to the U.S. Supreme Court, which obliged by ruling against her in 1927. Some of the quotes from the court case in this play come directly from that case, *Buck v. Bell*, including the pivotal declaration: "Three generations of imbeciles are enough." Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote the majority opinion, which the Court adopted 8 to 1.

The decision opened the gates for 30 states to sterilize as many as 60,000 people against their will over the next five decades, 8,000 of them in Virginia. As part of an overall eugenics movement - an attempt to purify and improve humanity through genetics - the sterilization policies appealed to the Nazis, who conducted their own sterilization programs before moving on to mass murder. The Nazis even set up a special court to decide who would be sterilized.

But in 1927 there were no Nazis to shock us into thinking twice about these policies. Indeed, the people who instituted these sterilizations, or went along with them, believed they were doing the right thing. The world was very different 90 years ago. I created the Dr. Jennings character in that light. He is no monster. Dr. Jennings sincerely thinks he is pursuing the right course, and I wanted to show how that was possible. If you find yourself almost agreeing with Dr. Jennings sometimes, and scaring yourself a little at the prospect, then I have succeeded. We must learn to examine our own times with a critical eye and wonder if we are doing what is right or only what we are used to doing, or can't imagine not doing. And sometimes we need to imagine something better.

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Which brings me to the other message delivered by this play. As I intended, the two characters with intellectual disabilities (ID) are played by real actors with ID. By standing on stage, tackling real acting jobs alongside the other actors, they are making a point about people with ID at another level. Like Linette showing off Lemmy's reading skills to Dr. Jennings by asking her to review a shopping list, Jill and Lisa are not just talking about what they can do, they are doing it. They are the stars of this production.

In 2001, the Virginia General Assembly adopted an apology for the treatment of Carrie Buck and other victims of the Commonwealth's eugenics laws. Today people with ID are living in the community, working at jobs, going to college, getting married, and even having children. At the end of the play, the characters find a way to turn disturbing circumstances into joy. They imagine something better.

My thanks to the cast and all the hard-working people of The Barcroft Players for taking on this challenge and bringing my imaginings to life.

Rick Hodges

