

Our Town To Raise Funds For Historical Society

By Kendel Currier
Beacon staff

Eight years ago, when a New London group staged *Our Town*, directed by David Cleveland, Andover's Marge Leber was in the audience – no doubt because of her daughter Deborah's involvement. This year Marge suggested that the Andover Historical Society put on *Our Town* as a fundraiser.

Sunapee-Kearsarge Intercommunity Theatre (SKIT) wanted to do a spring production, and David Cleveland wanted to direct a play for SKIT and loves the play *Our Town*. So all the pieces came together for an exciting production of Thornton Wilder's classic play about a small New England town.

David has Andover connections that run back to his early childhood. His grandparents, the Pattersons, moved out of New York City during World War II to the safety of Horizon Farm on Beech Hill and a cottage on Bradley Lake. David made a similar move out of NYC after 9/11, back to New London.

Andover was "a huge part of our life," David recounts, with fond memories of hiking up the old road from Route 4 to Horizon Farm at age six, "picking Gandy's peas," discovering the Underground Railroad passages in the farmhouse, and stories about the farm in Andover, told by his father after the extensive ritual of building a fire, lighting a pipe, and setting the scene for storytelling.

Andover is the town in *Our Town* in many ways. But *Our Town* is also about more than a small New England town. David calls this play, "The best sermon ever written," because it reminds us to enjoy every moment of every day. It's not about the grand moments in our lives so much as the ordinary happenings that make any day a "good" day.

Our Town is a classic, David says, a play of many different layers, with a simplicity that can answer some of life's most complex questions. But there are also moments of humor and levity – qualities essential in a classic play as well as in life.

And David Cleveland knows about

finding the layers of a play. He has worked in many aspects of theater, both regionally and nationally, including acting for ten years in the Broadway production of *Phantom of the Opera*.

He also knows about working with other talented theater people, and ranks Deborah Barton, the producer of *Our Town* (and Marge Leber's daughter) as



Deborah Leber, producer, and David Cleveland, director, plan an Andover-tinged production of *Our Town*.

Photo: Bob Bussey

"the best you can get." And he should know, because he and Deborah have been working together in various productions over the years since they were "kids at the Barn Playhouse."

David is happy to have Deborah producing *Our Town* because she will use her multiple skills from years of costuming and managing and directing at New London's Barn Playhouse and at Colby-Sawyer, as well as traveling widely as a costume design professional. This will leave David free to direct this play, as he loves to do.

The May production of *Our Town* promises to be a memorable event for our town and everyone involved.

Auditions for Our Town will take place on April 2 from 2 PM to 5 PM and on April 3 from 7 PM to 10 PM at Wilmot Town Hall. Performances will take place on May 12, 13, and 14 and on May 19 and 20 at the Wilmot Town Hall. For more information or to help with this exciting project, please contact Marge Leber at leber@tds.net or 735-5144.

VOICES OF SPRING AT PROCTOR

Everett Jones, one of Proctor Academy's long-time teachers and benefactors, continues his vision of an on-going concert series at the school with a concert entitled *The Voices of Spring*. Scheduled for Saturday, April 8, it will feature three accomplished classical musicians: mezzo-soprano Eva Nagorka, tenor Kristofer Johnson, and pianist Dan Perkins.

Eva Nagorka, an elegant singing actress, is equally at home on the operatic, concert and musical theatre stage.

Joining Eva this evening will be director of vocal music at Proctor Academy, Kristofer Johnson.

Instrumental support for the evening's concert will be provided by Dan Perkins at the piano. Dan is Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Plymouth State University.

The evening's program will include early Italian songs; *An die Ferne Geliebte* by Beethoven; Carmen's aria *Habanera* by Bizet; *The Songs of Travel* by Vaughan Williams; and several Af-

ican-American spirituals (as well as a surprise duet or two).

The concert is to be held in Proctor Academy's Norris Theatre in the Wilkins Meeting House. This beautiful, state-of-the-art, 400-seat performance facility is home to the school's beautiful Yamaha C7 concert grand piano and is a perfect setting for this exquisite evening of classical vocal music.

The concert will begin at 8 PM and tickets are \$15 for adults and \$10 for students 17 or under. To reserve and/or purchase tickets in advance, call the box office at 735-6870 or e-mail AlexE@proctornet.com. Advanced ticket purchases are strongly recommended.

Discover Proctor Academy's Norris Theatre in the Wilkins Meeting House and join Everett Jones and the entire Performing Arts Department as they present both guest artist and student performances throughout the year as part of their on-going series of performing arts.

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**PROCTOR
ACADEMY
presents**

The VOICES of SPRING

**A BENEFIT FOR THE
PROCTOR MUSIC DEPARTMENT**

featuring

EVA NAGORKA, mezzo-soprano

KRISTOFER JOHNSON, tenor

DAN PERKINS, piano

Concert Program will include:

**Early Italian Songs, selections from
Beethoven, Vaughan Williams
and Bizet's Carmen,
plus Spirituals & Duets**

SAT., APRIL 8, 2006

Concert Begins 8:00 pm

**Tickets: Adults - \$15
Students-\$10**

Please reserve seats and/or
purchase tickets by calling

603-735-6870

or by email to

Alexe@proctornet.com

**- At the Norris Theatre
in the Wilkins Meeting House -
Andover, NH**

AUDITIONS

For a production of Thornton Wilder's *OUR TOWN*

to benefit the Andover Historical Society
and the Sunapee-Kearsarge Intercommunity Theatre (SKIT)
Directed by David Cleveland

Auditions at Wilmot Town Hall off Route 4A in Wilmot

Sunday, April 2, 3 PM to 5 PM

Monday, April 3, 7 PM to 10 PM

All ages, from four to 94; men, women, and children.
Speaking and non-speaking parts
No experience necessary
Presented by the Andover Historical Society and SKIT

