EVERY HOLIDAY HAS ITS OWN TRADITIONS. ON MEMORIAL DAY WE GRILL OUT; ON THE FOURTH OF JULY WE WATCH FIREWORKS; ON THANKSGIVING THE FAMILY SITS DOWN FOR A TURKEY DINNER. ONE OF THE TRADITIONS AT CHRISTMAS TIME IS FOR THE FAMILY TO SIT AROUND THE TV AND WATCH GREAT CHRISTMAS MOVIES.

I know that I, for one, wait all year to see my favorites. One of the most beloved of those films is IT’S A WONDERFUL LIFE. With its heart-warming message of love, hope, and redemption it’s the perfect story for the season.

Another Christmas tradition for tens of thousands of people is to come to The Fireside to see our annual Christmas offering. Whether it is one of our beautiful Christmas revues or a book musical, folks know that when they come to The Fireside they will see a show that will re-kindle the true Christmas spirit and celebrate all that is warm and good about this festive time of the year.

Now you can come and celebrate both of those traditions at the same time when we present the musical version of that classic movie called A WONDERFUL LIFE. It is the familiar story you know and love – the story of George Bailey who sacrifices so much to enrich the lives of his family and friends and when he is filled with doubt about his own worth he is given the unique gift of seeing what the world would be like had he never existed. It is truly one of the most uplifting stories of all time and in The Fireside’s production it will be filled with glorious, beautiful music by Joe Raposo and Sheldon Harnick.

Joe Raposo wrote much of the wonderful music of SESAME STREET and Sheldon Harnick wrote many Broadway hits including FIDDLER ON THE ROOF. Together they have written a score that speaks to the soul and soars to the skies.

I’m very excited about being able to present this unforgettable show. As always I have assembled a stellar cast of some of today’s best Broadway and regional performers. I know you will be totally enchanted by this new version of this great Christmas classic.

Don’t miss it!
“It’s A Wonderful Life” has received such praise as being named one of the most popular films in American cinema, one of the most critically acclaimed films ever made, and one of the most inspirational American films of all time. It was also legendary director Frank Capra’s personal favorite of all the films he directed.

Although the film originally aired in 1946, it received a resurgence in the late 1970’s when it first became a staple of the Christmas television schedules and became popular with a new generation. By 1990, the film was deemed “culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant” by the United States Library of Congress and was selected for preservation in their National Film Registry.

The musical version you’ll be enjoying at The Fireside features book and lyrics by Sheldon Harnick who is best known for FIDDLER ON THE ROOF and music by Joe Raposo, best known for the music of Sesame Street. The musical closely follows the original plot of the movie and the music is a marvelous addition you’re going to love!
Eunice Wink has been bringing a group based out of Divine Mercy Congregation in South Milwaukee to see shows at The Fireside for 20 years. Several of her current travelers have been with her the whole time as has her helper, Lucy Birschbach. Together they are a force to be reckoned with - a force of fun and laughter and good times!

It’s a pretty cohesive group, maybe 75 - 80 people overall that make up each tour of 40 - 60 with about 30 of them that are so committed they come to each show. When it comes to the Christmas show, and occasionally another like our recent production of ALL SHOOK UP, they have to add a mini-coach that seats 13 and has the luxury feel of a limousine. While the group is based out of the church, the travelers come from throughout the Greater Milwaukee area from Pewaukee to Caledonia. How do they reach out to those other areas? “They just like us,” quipped Eunice.

Everyone likes them! As Restaurant Manager Wendy Janecek (pictured with them above along with Asst. Manager Heather Gerlach at our recent group leader appreciation party) noted, “Eunice and Lucy are the life of the party every time they’re here.”

There’s a definite spirit of fun with this group. Mostly women, the group includes some couples and even more than normal for their recent trip to GUYS ON ICE, the hilarious ice fishing musical. Since they’re not out to make a profit, and don’t have to work very hard at getting their one bus filled, they don’t do much in the way of marketing. Handing out the list of shows and maybe putting it in the church bulletin is all it takes.

This is a completely volunteer effort by a couple of gracious and generous ladies. Not only does Eunice not make a profit, she and Lucy don’t take the complimentary tickets we offer to the group leaders. They use them to reduce the amount everyone else has to pay. She even tips the driver and the server out of her own pocket. She just wants to help make it as affordable as she can for everyone else so they can get out and have some fun.

Eunice and Lucy each spent over 40 years teaching in the Milwaukee Public School system - Eunice in Middle School and Lucy at the Elementary level. Never married, they each dedicated their lives to teaching, their weekends to correcting schoolwork and designing bulletin boards, and now their retirement years to serving others. They are truly an inspiration!

Eunice talked about how much fun they have on the ride out from Milwaukee. She talks to everyone, kids around with everyone, and calls them by name. She lets them know they’re important to her. If someone signs up for a trip but forgets to send their payment in, she reminds them in a fun way, never scolds them. They’re all getting older and just getting on and off the coach can be a challenge but she makes sure everyone is cared for, that they know it’s OK to take it slow. Eunice is just about 90 herself, though she doesn’t look it at all.

Eunice and Lucy are already booked for The Fireside’s 2016 season and think it’s a wonderful line-up. They shared the list of shows with their travelers on this recent trip and said they got a great response, everyone’s excited to keep coming back. Partly because they know that just as in this photo from our 2014 party, their group leaders aren’t afraid to have fun!

“Learning from each other”

Eunice Wink (far right) and Lucy Birschbach (far left) bring a group to every one of our shows and they’re the life of the party!

“How do you take care of a group? Be happy, kid around with them, and let them know you care!”

– Eunice Wink
Managing for a delightful shopping experience!

When Bethany Stallman was growing up in Watertown, Wisconsin she dreamed of a life in the theatre. Active in theatre, show choir and forensics throughout high school and college at UW-Whitewater, Bethany enjoyed the magic of the arts and excelled at competitive reading. As her life took turns and her early study in Elementary Education became a study of Business and a part time job at Kohl’s Department Store from age 19, which led to full time once she graduated, Bethany found herself with a career in Retail Management. She worked her way up to the position of Assistant Store Manager at Kohl’s over 13 years until about three years ago when an intriguing “help wanted” ad from The Fireside caught her eye.

She liked the idea of being part of the great Fireside legacy, having a chance to make her mark in a smaller organization, and getting closer to her original dream of being involved with theatre even if it wasn’t as a performer. “It was exciting to think about being part of a customer experience that was so well known and well liked and it really has turned out to be great,” remarked Bethany. “Helping our guests find that perfect gift for their loved ones is the best part of my job.”

Having worked in her family’s car wash business, at a day care while in college, and then Kohl’s; this is only the fourth job she’s ever had. Her education and life experience has served her well and she was chosen by owner Jane Klopcic to manage The Fireside Gift Shops in 2012. Now she works with Jane training and managing a staff of 33 sales associates as they work to help make your shopping experience one that’s both fun and successful.

Among the most important aspects of her job is buying, finding fun new items for you to enjoy and share with your family and friends. Bethany, Jane and display designer Diane Engan attend the huge Atlanta Gift Show each January (where they’re buying for the following Christmas season!), three apparel shows each year, and see several sales reps each week here at The Fireside. To give you an idea of the scope of this, the Atlanta Gift Show is housed in an 18 story building with 30 to 50 showrooms per floor. They meet with product reps for five days to see what’s new, what’s trending, who has what, compare prices, assemble product lines from different companies that will fit together in one themed display, and decide what they believe you will find interesting enough to consider purchasing. This was new to Bethany and she’s learned a lot from Jane and Diane about how to put it all together; like dishes from one vendor, towels from another, and pillows from a third that will all look perfect together in your home.

What’s hot and trendy now? Apparel and accessories are leading the way with everything from shawls and wraps to scarves and jewelry, to slippers and boot socks. While it comes as no surprise that our gift shop’s target market is women, we like to think we have something for everyone for your gift-giving needs. Whether you’re looking for a baby gift, or something for a 50th Anniversary you can find it at The Fireside!

Bethany lives in Jefferson with her husband, Corby, and their two teenagers, one about to go off to college. They enjoy their family time but when she and Corby have a chance, they’ll hop on the Harley and take off. Their longest road trip was to the Sturgis rally in South Dakota last year.

New merchandise arrives at The Fireside just about daily, keeping what’s popular and adding what’s new. The displays are moved around a lot to keep things looking fresh, so if you’re ever looking for something you’ve seen before and can’t find it please ask a sales associate. They can also point you to what’s new or offer helpful advice if you have a specific need. We really do want you to have a delightful shopping experience and find the perfect gift for yourself or someone special!
Our Featured Menu for A WONDERFUL LIFE centers around the Roast Holiday Capon Chicken that will highlight your “Christmas dinner.” A step up from standard roast chicken or turkey, the Capon is specially bred and raised to be more tender and flavorful. The process they use results in a bird raised to about 10 months (instead of the traditional 12 weeks for a roasting chicken) that is not gamey at all with a bigger, meatier breast. We steam 130 of them for a typical full performance, making them tender and juicy, then slice the white meat on the bias and shingle it onto our Mushroom and Herbed Stuffing that includes Jones Original Sausage for extra flavor. Alongside the Capon and Stuffing, you’ll enjoy Whipped Yukon Gold Potatoes, Fresh Asparagus, Brandied Cranberry Sauce and Baked Southern Style Corn Pudding.

Groups on Thursday evenings will enjoy our Signature Buffet, and Sunday mornings our Brunch Buffet. Saturday evening groups can enjoy this featured meal or choose from our expanded party menu.

For dessert, we bring you not one, not two, but three of our most popular sweet treats. So save room for our warm British Sticky Date and English Toffee Pudding Cake, a Pecan Caramel Turtle Ball Sundae, and Lemon Mousse Cheesecake. Yumm!!!

Michael Scott
Executive Chef

Come Early for Additional Savings | Book Early for the Best Seats
$64.95 plus tax for groups of 18 or more.
Save over $12 per person off individual prices when you book these Premier dates.

SHOWS:        Premier Discount Dates:
LEGENDS IN CONCERT    January 7 - 31
PETER PAN           February 25 - March 20
SISTER ACT          April 14 - May 8
ROCKIN’ AT THE FIRESIDE  June 2 - 26
SINGIN’ IN THE RAIN  July 21 - August 14
TO BE ANNOUNCED      September 8 - October 2
A FIRESIDE CHRISTMAS November 3 - December 23

Show descriptions are available on our web site under “2016 Season.” Menus will be available late this summer. If you need logos or other marketing material let me know and we’ll get it to you just as soon as we have it. Look for the complete 2016 Marketing Catalog in September when we’ll be sure to have everything available.
It seems impossible we are at Christmas already!

There are a few changes I want to share with you.

**A Farewell and Best Wishes:** Jackie announced in the last FLAME the happy news (for her) that she was retiring on June 12, 2015. You all know she loves The Fireside but she is lucky to have the chance to explore new options, no doubt creative projects, back in Racine.

**A Hello:** I have been promoted to Box Office and Sales Manager and will continue to direct Group Sales. Gay, Charlene and Tanya are here during the week to assist you. Julie is still here on some Saturday and Sunday mornings so all your favorite Group Reps remain, as will I.

**Group Sales Moving into “New” Technology:** We are always looking for ways to make your job as group leader easier. If you have not called recently, Group Sales now has voice mail. A real person will still answer your call (no machines) but now if all Group Reps are busy, you will have the opportunity to leave a detailed message on our voice mail. Just as we did before, when you left a message, one of us will call you back as soon as possible. If you leave a detailed voice mail we may be able to eliminate the need to bother you or play phone tag, saving you time in the long run. We always like to keep in touch so unless you tell us not to call back, we will be happily returning your call.

**Price Increase:** For the last four years we have not increased the group ticket price, so I hope the $2.00 increase for 2016 will not affect your travelers too much. We still offer the $3.00 discount off our group rates for the first four performance weeks. Compared to other professional theatre opportunities in the region, The Fireside’s dinner theatre package is still an incredible value!

**December Fridays:** A FIRESIDE CHRISTMAS 2016 has continued December Friday matinees, and we also offer evenings in December 2016. Friday evenings offer two meal options, our award-winning Friday Night Fish Fry or the always delicious featured show meal. You may choose to offer only one but it might be nice to offer your guests a choice.

Don’t forget we still have three “not to be missed” 2015 shows available to book - PUMP BOYS AND DINETTES, WEST SIDE STORY, and A WONDERFUL LIFE-The Musical. Lots of fun tunes, unforgettable songs, unbelievable dancing and a Christmas classic set to music. Call me!

For personal help with any of your bookings, call me at 800-477-9505 or email jean@firesidetheatre.com.
Give Yourself A Warm and Cozy Christmas

BEFORE YOU KNOW IT THE WARM DAYS OF SUMMER WILL TURN TO THE CRISP COOL OF AUTUMN AND THEN IT WON’T BE LONG AT ALL UNTIL WE’LL BE WRAPPING UP AGAINST THE COLD OF DECEMBER AND DECORATING FOR THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS. TAKE A LOOK AT THESE GREAT NEW LOOKS FOR YOURSELF AND YOUR HOME.

This merry medley of friendly snowmen from Italian artist Monica Sabolla Gruppo will lend anything but a frosty chill to your holiday decor. The homespun collection of decorative accents, tablewares and ornaments warms the eyes and the heart with its folksy artistry, rich color palette and cozy wool accents.

Born and raised in Italy, Monica inherited the love for brushes and colors from her maternal Grandfather, an award-winning painter. She has spent over 20 years nurturing her creative soul through painting, crafting and photography.

Snoozies, with their “cozy little footcoverings and more,” have become quite the in-demand footwear for those cold days ahead. Did you know that 98% of women have cold feet? If that includes you, look no further than these high quality, machine washable, ever-so-soft slippers that come in many colors and patterns from plaid to bling and now even in camo for men!

You’ll also find a great selection of warm weather clothing and accessories including ruanas as shown above, ponchos, sweaters, scarves, hats, gloves, and even boot socks from designers such as Charlie Paige and Noelle.
Visit early to get the best discount!

• In addition to the Featured Menu, try our Sunday Brunch, Thursday Evening Signature Buffet or five course dinner on Saturday nights.
• Groups of 18 or more are $65.95 (Sat. Evening $69.95) plus tax.
• Save an additional $3.00 per person when you book a performance from October 29 - November 22, 2015.
• Ask about our Incentive plan for Wednesday & Thursday matinees.
• Arrive at 10:30 a.m. for Matinees, 2:30 p.m. for the Sunday Midday, 5:15 p.m. for Thursday and select Friday Evenings and 4:45 p.m. for Saturday Evening.

A WONDERFUL LIFE
Featured Menu October 29 - December 27, 2015
Served Wednesday through Saturday Matinees, Friday & Saturday Evening and Sunday Midday

A Gift From the Sea
Fresh Atlantic Diver Scallop surrounded by Shredded Idaho Potatoes, sautéed to a crisp golden brown, presented on a Sun Dried Tomato Beurre Blanc Sauce.
Freshly Baked Breads from our Artisan Bakery

Roast Holiday Capon Chicken
Chef Carved over Mushroom and Herbed Stuffing, glazed with a Rich Stock Gravy au Naturale full of flavor. Served with Whipped Potatoes, Fresh Asparagus, Brandied Cranberry Sauce and Baked Southern Style Corn Pudding.

Trilogy of Sweet Tastes
Warm British Sticky Date and English Toffee Pudding Cake, Pecan Caramel Turtle Ball Sundae and Lemon Mousse Cheesecake.
Coffee, Tea and Milk