

# **ALT's First Agenda For 2021 Is A 'Pay It Forward' Program, To Help Local Schools, Other Theater And Arts Organizations**

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ALTON - Alton Little Theater's first agenda for 2021 is a "Pay It Forward" program, aimed at helping local schools and other theater and arts organizations get back on their (performing) feet in grand style.

The oldest theater in the State of Illinois has weathered the financial challenges of the national COVID-19 Pandemic with the support of true "guardian angels", and while the theater has learned to work in new and creative ways to develop productions down the road with a Restart Goal In Mid-March '21, the Theater also wants to help other organizations regain their ability to develop programs for the cultural enrichment of the whole community.

ALT has offered space for streaming services and a local Production Company will be utilizing that offer on January 9th. Lee Cox ( Executive Director) and Kevin Frakes (

Artistic Director) are also organizing some opportunities for young performers to safely gather at the Showplace and talk about their struggles with isolation and lack of performance opportunities; informal FREE Support group will meet on Thursday evening at 7 p.m. beginning January 7th.

The theater is also actively looking for good storage space nearby to house the vast amount of furniture, props, and costumes that the Theater group has collected and organized during the last nine months. Lee Cox states that the theater wanted to make sure that the group would have at least a dozen shows "ready to go" once state mitigations were lifted - and in doing so, Kevin Frakes purchased a trailer and made plans to greatly expand the theater's storage space so that OTHER organizations could receive help with needed items for their productions.

The St. Louis Rep Theater Rentals in South St. Louis has been a role model for what ALT hopes to be on the "east-side" of the River - and so the plan is that ALT will not only anchor the Arts and Cultural Opportunities in the Riverbend Region but will also be a resource for production values like lighting and mounting a production.

ALT has profited from a director-internship program and hopes in the very near future to do more partnering with local high schools.

"The talented youth in the area are the future for all of us," says Frakes - and of course, the BIG Dream ALT has to build a State-of-the-Art Performing Arts Center is still on the table ( in a few years!). MEANWHILE, Productions will resume at the Showplace in Mid-March and small houses will enjoy a new production every 4-6 weeks at very modest prices.

ALT's goal is to enrich and give back to the community that has supported the theater group for nearly 88 years without any state funding!

Call (618) 462-3205 to have a discussion about collaborations and new opportunities being considered for a GREAT NEW YEAR!