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February 2009

**The New Jersey Theatre Alliance presents
FAMILY WEEK AT THE THEATRE
and *THE STAGES FESTIVAL*
**FREE and discounted tickets to performances and events offered by
New Jersey's Professional Theatres****

*For the second year: Workshops and Classes offered in Libraries in all 21 Counties
with additional activities throughout the month of March!*

A PERFECT RECESSION ENTERTAINMENT SOLUTION!

(West Orange) The New Jersey Theatre Alliance, its professional member theatres, and partner organizations are happy to offer the twelfth annual *Family Week at the Theatre* scheduled from **March 1st through March 11, 2008**. Throughout the state, in all 21 counties, *Family Week* provides the opportunity for young people ages 3-18 to receive free tickets to performances and special events including classes, workshops and more – while offering free and/or deeply discounted ticket prices to parents and adult friends.

Since its inception in 1998, *Family Week at the Theatre* has served over 140,000 young people and their parents with professional theatre performances and activities. For the second year in a row, the free and discounted programming continues throughout the month with *The Stages Festival*.

Family Week at the Theatre is a co-sponsored project of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, originally developed to give families the opportunity to experience professional theatre by offering affordable, exciting and educational programming. “We are thrilled to have been able to offer this week of live theatre to the families of our state for the past twelve years,” commented John McEwen, Executive Director of the New Jersey Theatre Alliance. “And for the second year in a row, we are proud to expand those offerings for the entire month of March. During these challenging economic times, it’s particularly gratifying to be able to share this opportunity with so many people. The New Jersey Theatre Alliance and our member theatres are determined to give every young person and the opportunity to see a live performance or participate in a theatre workshop with their family – and extended family of friends – during *Family Week at the Theatre* and *The Stages Festival*, and we hope they will continue to make attendance at the theatre a part of their lives.”

Steve Runk, Executive Director of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts says of the Council’s twelve-year involvement with *Family Week*: “The Council is proud to have supported this exceptional program since it began. *Family Week* touches the lives of so many people in New Jersey, introducing the wonder of live theatre to young people and their families through fun and meaningful experiences that help them learn and grow.”

The Theatre Alliance is happy to be partnering with the New Jersey State Library and the New Jersey Library Association for the second year in a row in order to bring high-quality workshop and theatre experiences to at least one library in each of New Jersey’s 21 counties. These events will be geared toward middle-school and junior-high-school students, and the programming will be selected by a panel of their peers.

A new partnership with Barnes & Noble Booksellers will bring three of New Jersey’s professional touring productions into the Livingston, North Brunswick and Deptford branches of the popular bookstores on Saturday, March 28. A voucher – downloadable at www.familyweek.com – can be presented at ANY Barnes & Noble on March 28th and a

portion of the sale will be donated to The Theatre Alliance to help support future *Family Week at the Theatre* and *The Stages Festival* programming. Audience members at the events will also have the opportunity to enter into a drawing for a pair of tickets to their choice of any New Jersey Theatre Alliance member theatre.

Classes and workshops have always been a popular aspect of *Family Week*, and for the third year Bank of America's *Beyond the Stage* programs offer theatre lovers a chance to participate in a variety of workshops under the guidance of professional artists, a great way to unleash creativity. ***George Street Playhouse, Playwrights Theatre, and Centenary Stage Company*** will each offer playwriting workshops, and several member theatres will be offering acting, scene study, improvisation and stage combat workshops for young people and adults.

Older children will appreciate the dynamic programming provided by some of the most exciting companies in the region, while younger children will delight in the experience of seeing many familiar fairy tales and fables enacted in a live format.

Some **highlights** of this year's *Family Week at the Theatre* and *The Stages Festival* include:

FOR THE YOUNGER SET

Familiar stories told with laughter and adventure serve as a wonderful way to introduce children to the delights of live theatre, while keeping their parents happily entertained.

Pushcart Players will be performing throughout the state on several dates with *Happily Ever After (A Cinderella Tale)*.

The Growing Stage in Netcong will be offering a performance of their critically acclaimed *Petite Rouge, A Cajun Red Riding Hood*

Tri-State Actors Theater will offer *Stuart Little: The Musical* twice on March 7.

FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL and up ...

Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey's Shakespeare LIVE! Company will bring the best of the Bard to audiences in a fast-paced and exciting productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (adapted for young audiences), and *Macbeth* at their Madison, NJ theatre/home.

Paper Mill Playhouse will offer two sessions of their popular musical theater performance workshop in Millburn.

Surflight Theatre's touring company will perform its popular *Schoolhouse Rock LIVE!* – one that many parents may recall from the Saturday morning television of their youth.

SPANISH/BI-LINGUAL PERFORMANCE

Cuentos del Arbol (Tree Tales) will be performed by *Pushcart Players* in Lakewood on March 31st. Sharing delightful stories with universal themes, this language-enriching show inspires an appreciation for other cultures.

ADULTS WILL LOVE

In conjunction with *Dreamcatcher Repertory Theatre*'s production of *The Great God Money*, audience members will have the opportunity to join in on one of three post-performance workshops—one on the process of playwriting, and two others that connect themes of the play to timely issues of work, money and career.

East Lynne Theater Company will offer its popular “radio play” *Sherlock Holmes’ Adventure of the Speckled Band* in Cape May.

12 Miles West Theatre Company will offer several free post-performance discussions in conjunction with its production of Sam Shepard's biting *True West*.

The highlights listed are only a sampling of the diversity of this years’ schedule of more than 130 events, and reservations are necessary for most of them. For an up-to-the-minute schedule of *Family Week at the Theatre* and *The Stages Festival* events, please visit the website at www.familyweek.com.

The New Jersey Theatre Alliance is committed to making all of its programs and services fully accessible to the public. Most venues participating in *Family Week at the Theatre* and *The Stages Festival* are wheelchair accessible. Please call the venue directly for details regarding physical access (i.e. parking, wheelchair seating, restroom access). Any attendees requiring assisted services (i.e. sign language interpretation, assistive listening) may contact the New Jersey Theatre Alliance at 973-731-6582 x15 at least two weeks prior to the scheduled event. The Alliance will work with the venue to meet accessibility needs.

Family Week at the Theatre and *The Stages Festival* is a co-sponsored project of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. [Discover Jersey Arts](#) is our marketing partner. Additional support has been provided by Barnes and Noble, The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, Johnson & Johnson, Fund for New Jersey Blind, The F.M. Kirby Foundation, The Prudential Foundation, New Jersey Library Association, New Jersey Division for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, New Jersey State Library. *Beyond the Stage* programming is made possible by the support of Bank of America.

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