

For Immediate Release  
January 11, 2011

Fort Wayne Civic Theatre proudly announces the winners of the  
2nd Annual Northeast Indiana Playwright Festival:

**1st Place: *Discom-BOOB-ulated* by Denise Buhr**

**2nd Place: *Knitters Row* by Ruth Tyndall Baker**

**3rd Place: *Struggling For My Sanity* by Rachael Kooi**

The 2nd Annual Playwright Festival is presented in collaboration with the Allen County Public Library and will be held at the downtown branch June 3-5, 2011. Our guest moderator is Dan Clancy, an International Playwright who resides in New York City. Clancy will lead post show discussions, serve on a Guest Panel Discussion and conduct a Workshop. Clancy's play *The Timekeepers* will be the featured production of the Festival along with the 1st Place Winning play *Discom-BOOB-ulated* by winner Denise Buhr. Former First Presbyterian Theatre Artistic Director John Tolley will be directing *The Timekeepers*, leading post show discussions, and will serve on the Guest Panel Discussion. Civic Theatre's Executive/Artistic Director Phillip Colglazier will also be a part of the Guest Panel Discussion.

The 3-day festival will also include a staged production of the winning play and stage readings of the 2nd & 3rd place winning scripts. Discussions on the production or reading will follow each presentation.

Scripts were submitted by 15 playwrights from Fort Wayne, Auburn, Argos, Elkhart, Wabash, Warsaw, Mundelein, IL and Toledo, OH - all of whom are either current or former residents of Northeast Indiana. These 15 scripts were adjudicated by a committee of local and national theatre professionals who determined the winners.

The Northeast Indiana Playwright Festival was established in 2009 as a part of Civic's Growth Initiative Campaign and was initially funded in part by a Foellinger Foundation INSPIRE Grant. This year's festival is sponsored, in part, by 80/20, Inc. Foundation. The festival was established to help nurture the creative writing talents of playwrights in Northeast Indiana.

In addition to 80/20 Inc. Foundation, sponsors include Indiana's NewsCenter, Punch Films, and Northeast Indiana Public Radio. Civic Theatre is an Arts

United funded member group and receives support from the Indiana Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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**Denise Buhr (First Place Winner)** has been writing plays since her years at Concordia Lutheran High School. After graduation, she served three years in the United States Army and then attended Indiana University, Bloomington, where she received a bachelor's degree in English (concentrating on dramatic forms of literature) and a master's degree in library science. She returned to Fort Wayne and found employment at the Allen County Public Library. Her debut play *Just Good Sense*, written for the ACPL Players, was performed at the library's Laura Ingalls Wilder Day in 1987 and also at the Johnny Appleseed Festival later that year. It was the first of ten melodramas she would write for the ACPL Players and later the Hiss and Boo Revue, which were performed at festivals in Fort Wayne, New Haven, Hometown, and as far away as Indianapolis.

Her next plays were one-acts written for three playwriting workshops at the Pulse Opera House in Warren, Indiana. One of these works led to a commission from Sophia's Portico in Fort Wayne to write a play on midwifery which was presented in 2005 at St. Francis University. The Primrose Theatre Project was formed out of that collaboration and did a reading of a full-length version of one of the workshop plays, *Discom-BOOB-ulated*, a play about breast cancer. Her most recent work, *Fighting Words: A Dialogue on Women in Combat*, was a staged reading that looked at the role of women in the military throughout the history of the United States. This was presented as part of The Remnant Trust at IPFW during the 2009 spring semester. She is currently researching material for plays on the Civil War, girls and baseball, and the life of a former IPFW faculty.

Ms. Buhr is a librarian at IPFW's Helmke Library, where she works closely with the department of the School of Visual and Performing Arts and also serves as the interim archivist. She lives on a small farm and is an avid baker and collector of old cookbooks.

**Ruth Tyndall Baker (Second Place Winner)** writes full time, and a reading of her drama about Clara Schumann, *Papillon*, was included in Fort Wayne Civic's 1st Annual

Northeast Indiana Playwright Festival. Other local productions are *A Christmas Key* by all for One and *Al Capone & Me* by Firehouse—diverse in styles. Her favorite plays such as *Summer Storms*, *Winter Skies* spring from her Indiana roots. *Knitters Row* is special to the playwright because she grew up across the street from the Wayne Knitting Mills and listened to humming looms throughout her childhood. She is excited that the Civic is engaged in the developmental process and thanks the board for this important undertaking. Also, thanks to her friends for reading her scripts around the table! She welcomes your feedback at [RTBplaywright@Frontier.com](mailto:RTBplaywright@Frontier.com).

**Rachael Kooi (Third Place Winner)** is a recent college graduate with a BA in Theatre Arts. She's currently out on the East Coast, pursuing a career in theatre. Rachael, or Roxie as she is more commonly known, became interested in theatre thanks to her father, who worked as a Technical Director for both community theatres and college departments. She began writing because of a protracted [and unfortunate] angsty teenager phase; she kept writing because she fell into a protracted [and unfortunate] belief that she could create better characters and more engaging stories than those she saw in movies and a vast majority of the books she was reading. Roxie dreams of traveling the world- current pit stops include Ireland, Morocco, Egypt, Turkey, Romania, India, and Japan- and finding compelling stories to write. She has yet to give up her delusion of becoming the female Orson Wells, and is continually searching for her own *Citizen Kane*. Her interests include comparative religions, history, a smattering of philosophy and psychology to make her look sophisticated, and turning sarcasm into an art form.