

## WITH MANY CANCELLATIONS, SENIOR THESPIAN JOANIE SHAFER'S HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE CAREER COMES TO A SUDDEN END.

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Joanie Shafer started her theatre career acting in her first show as Miss Casewell in "Mousetrap," and was inducted to the International Thespian Society. Now as a senior, she has earned the title 22-star thespian, been a part of 13 different shows and served as Darby Theatre president. Since her freshman year, Joanie has acted in many different roles. From Martha in "The Secret Garden" to Vera Claythorne in "And Then There Were None."

Joanie says out of all of the roles she has acted in, her favorite role was Fraü Blucher in "Young Frankenstein."

Each performance is different and comes with unique characteristics and challenges. Joanie says she has had to learn to be confident in herself and her acting.

"I think the biggest challenge I face in theater, and in life, is being afraid of what people think about me or my performance. I always want to be 100% and perfect. The reality is that nobody is perfect," Shafer stated. "I am learning that you don't need other people's approval to be yourself. You can't spend your day thinking about the "What if's."

Heather Sherrill, the director of Darby Theatre, says this year as president Joanie has added many great things to the program.

"As President of Troupe #5658, Joanie has brought her officers to a light. Her goal this year was to bring more awareness to theatre at Darby and to the members of Troupe #5658. Her ability to listen to everyone and collaborate with a team blows me away," Sherrill stated. "Together, they have arranged many outreach opportunities and team building activities."

Mrs. Sherrill also says she has grown and developed on the stage.

"In the fall of 2016, Joanie took command of the stage in Agatha Christie's 'Mousetrap'. Fast forward to fall of 2019, Joanie once again took command of another Agatha Christie masterpiece, 'And Then There Were None'," Sherrill said. "It was a delight to see her growth. Joanie dives into each role through exploration and research. Joanie takes the time to go through the history of her characters and the time in which the play was written."

With the COVID-19 outbreak, many things have gotten canceled including the last show of the 2019-20 theatre season: "Kiss Me, Kate."

Joanie says she is disappointed about not being able to perform, but she still has a positive outlook on what the future holds.

"I am absolutely heartbroken. Honestly, it has been one of the hardest things to go through. Having everything taken away so suddenly is heart-rendering, to say the least," Shafer said. "As upsetting as this is, I know that this experience will only bring the troupe and the senior class closer together. I believe everything happens for a reason and although we can't see it now, this will only make us stronger. I know better things are yet to come."

As she graduates, the Darby theatre program will never be the same.

"We will miss Joanie terribly. That is true for every graduate of Darby Theatre. With Joanie, specifically, we will miss her daring exploration of the roles she inhabits. She has the ability to take her roles into places few actors can," Sherrill exclaimed.

Next year Joanie will be attending Indiana University South Bend to major in Theatre Performance. As she ventures into her next steps, we wish her good luck in the future. Break-a-leg Joanie!

### Darby Theatre Performances

# Joanie Shafer

2016-2020

## Role~Show

- Miss. Casewell~ "The Mousetrap"
- Juror 8~ "12 incompetent Jurors"
- Ensemble- "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying"
- Raja~ "I never saw another Butterfly"
- Aunt Belinda, Aunt Sarah, Gertie Straub~ "Jabberwock"
- Edith, Understudy Charlotte~ "Charlottes Web"
- Ita~ "The Lost Light"
- Martha~ "The Secret Garden"
- Viola~ "Twelfth Night"
- Student Director~ "The Snow Queen"
- Fraü Blucher~ "Young Frankenstein"
- Vera Claythorn~ "And Then There Were None"
- Boggis~ "The Fantastic Mr. Fox"