

BART'S BLOG – JULY 2025

🕒 19 hours ago 👤 Bart Lovins 🔗 http://bartlovins.com

Part 5: Behind the Curtain: “And there was distant music...”

Welcome to the fifth installment in an ongoing series exploring the journey of bringing the musical *Ragtime* to the stage as the PAC's 2025–2026 season opener.

Wow. So much has changed and flourished since the last blog post that it's hard to know where to begin—but let's start with something truly inspiring.

- **For the first time, I'm working with a co-director.**

Joey Stone, a professional actor with national touring credits (and family right here in Radcliff), has joined our production as co-director. His fresh perspective has already reshaped how I approach this material, and I believe his insight will help us craft a more inclusive, authentic production. Joey traveled down from Chicago for the auditions last weekend, met most of the creative team, and worked with the auditionees, immediately raising the bar. He challenged us all to dig deeper into the text and ourselves in the best way. Over the next few months, I'm looking forward to learning from him and sharing his incredible artistry with our cast and community.

- **We're also hard at work on staging and set design.**

Over the last month, I've been building both digital and physical models of our unit set so that Joey and I can coordinate blocking, transitions, and technical elements long-distance with the rest of the team. These models help us map out movement with our choreographer, Sherry Barnard, ensure clear sightlines for music director Kimberly Strange, give costumer Cyndi Mattingly what she needs to plan quick changes and help our technical director, Aaron Taylor, and lighting designer, Paige Johnson, know precisely what is required to roll, fly, or glow — when and how.

- **Casting is nearly complete.**

While our audition turnout was lighter than expected, the talent that showed up was nothing short of inspiring, and we're confident we have what we need to bring this powerful story to life. We're also exploring ways to involve additional performers who were unable to audition due to scheduling conflicts. We want *Ragtime* to be a community effort, and that may mean considering new casting and staging possibilities we haven't previously considered.

- **And now... the great puzzle: scheduling.**

With everyone's availability now in hand, I'll be spending the next few weeks building a rehearsal schedule that is fair, efficient, and sustainable. It's a delicate balance: respecting people's time, maximizing productivity, and making sure we bring *Ragtime* to life with care, energy, and purpose. Opening night – September 19 – is just around the corner!

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The links below provide a video version of this month's blog and a link to HCECTV's **The Monthly Marquee**, an interview program hosted by Bart focused on performing arts activities in our region.

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Congratulations to Dennis Castenir, Robert Stith, George Stockton Jr, and Dan Weidner, each the lucky winner of a \$20 PAC gift certificate for completing an audience survey the during the 2024-2025 Season, and thank you for helping us learn how to serve our audiences better!

Audience Survey

Share your thoughts on your recent PAC visit and get entered into the next drawing.

AUDIENCE SURVEY

PAC Spotlight

The JULY PAC Spotlight shines on North Hardin High School's Kaden Lucas

What do you want to do when you grow up?

Teach band/music at North Hardin.

What have you participated in at the PAC?

I've acted in NHHS, YTHC, Allegro, and TDC performances; I've teched for JHHS performances, and I've also played trumpet in two KMEA concert assessments and one NHHS concert.

What have been your most rewarding PAC experiences?

YTHC's *Matilda* and NHHS's *The Little Mermaid*. These shows helped me meet so many new amazing people, and without those people, I wouldn't be who I am today. Thanks to the PAC, these shows came to life.

What did you learn from your PAC experiences?

I learned that I love the arts more than anything. I know that I want a career in the arts for many reasons. The PAC helped and is helping my arts dreams come alive in front of my eyes every time I step onto the stage.

How have you benefited from the PAC?

I've benefited from the PAC by being able to perform in such a nice facility and having the opportunity to interact with many new, diverse, and talented individuals.

Why is the PAC important to you?

The PAC is important to me because I have known the place my entire life. I have performed and watched in the PAC for as long as I can remember. It is almost like a second home to me.

Why should the PAC be important to others?

The PAC should be important to others because it is an inspiring place where dreams can come alive and be showcased to the world. Whether you are a

the film and stage, except for the bigger stars. I think a lot of many others are very fortunate for that fact.

[Click HERE to learn more about all the PAC Spotlight Ambassadors we've recognized over the years.](#)



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