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“A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD”

*Bergen County Players Present the Area Premiere of **A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD***

*Based on the Newberry and Caldecott Honor **Frog and Toad** Books of Arnold Lobel*

Music by Robert Reale / Book and Lyrics by Willie Reale

Oradell, NJ, November 7, 2005 -- The Bergen County Players, one of America's foremost little theater groups, proudly presents the award-winning musical comedy **A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD** at the Little Firehouse Theatre in Oradell on Saturday, November 26 through Sunday, December 18. **A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD** is based on the award-winning works of Arnold Lobel, with music by Robert Reale and book and lyrics by Willie Reale.

The underlying premise of the story is simple. “Frog” and “Toad” are the very best of friends. The story that is woven around the events of their everyday lives, however, is an engaging one filled with music and adventure. Much like many famous duos, “Frog” and “Toad” are quite different in demeanor and personality. While “Frog” is like a jolly English gent, “Toad” is his stodgier, somewhat lackadaisical counterpart. The characters in the play have been compared to Felix and Oscar in terms of friendly banter, Hope and Crosby for their dancing prowess and Abbott and Costello for their comic timing.

A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD, as the title suggests, takes place over the period of a year, beginning with the spring, when the “Birds” fly back from the South and the land-based creatures awake from a restful hibernation. As seasons change, “Frog” and “Toad”, along with their entourage of feathery friends, tell tales which make the mundane magical. The jazzy tunes and catchy lyrics appeal to audiences young and old.

Family ties, as well as the bonds of friendship, surround this play. The original classic books were inspired when, as a young child, the author's daughter gave her father a lecture on the differences between frogs and toads. Arnold Lobel's first **FROG AND TOAD** books were published in 1970. When the collection was first presented as a play in August 2002 at the Children's Theater of Minneapolis, it was Arnold's daughter, Adrienne, who designed the set. The family ties became more evident as Adrienne's husband (actor Mark Linn-Baker) took on the role of "Toad." After Minneapolis, **A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD** hopped over to the New Victory Theater off-Broadway before making the ultimate leap to the Broadway's Cort Theatre in the spring of 2003.

In keeping with the spirit of family, a family guide is available on the BCP website (www.bcplayers.org) and parents are encouraged to take advantage of its availability in order to enhance their youngsters' overall theatrical experience. A teacher's guide is likewise available online.

Larry Landsman of Wyckoff directs the Bergen County Players' production of **A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD**. Landsman has amassed numerous acting and directing credits with The Players. Some of his BCP directorial credits include Rupert Holmes' *Thumbs, Jack & The Beanstalk, A Few Good Men*, Neil Simon's *Brighton Beach* trilogy and *Lost in Yonkers*, as well as *Into the Woods, Little Shop of Horrors* and *The 1940's Radio Hour*. He appeared most recently on the BCP stage in lead roles in *Art* and *Oliver*. Other acting credits include roles in *The Heidi Chronicles, Aladdin, The Foreigner* and *Lend Me a Tenor*, among others.

Steve Moldt of Cresskill portrays "Frog" in this production. Moldt's onstage BCP credits include prominent roles in *The Pirates of Penzance, The Mikado, Company, City of Angels* and *The Most Happy Fella*. Moldt is also an accomplished set designer at the BCP. At other venues, Steve has performed in such favorites as *Damn Yankees, West Side Story, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum, Into the Woods, Kiss Me Kate* and *Guys and Dolls*.

Steve Bell of Teaneck takes on the role of *Toad*. Bell has appeared in key roles onstage in *Anything Goes, City of Angels, The 1940's Radio Hour, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum, The Pajama Game, Into the Woods, Noises Off, They're Playing Our Song, Pirates of Penzance* and *The Nerd*. Bell has likewise directed BCP's productions of *Urinetown, Deathtrap, Lucky Stiff, Epic Proportions, The Emperors New Clothes, Gypsy, Don't Dress For Dinner, Only Kidding, Jerry's Girls, Light Up the Sky*, and *Baby*. He has also served as musical director for several BCP productions.

Tyne Firmin of New York City plays “Snail/Bird/Lizard/Father Frog.” He was last seen in the BCP production of *Little Shop of Horrors*. Outside of the Players, Tyne has worked on stage and behind the scenes on productions in NYC, upstate New York, Pennsylvania and Germany. Favorite shows outside the Players include *Little Shop of Horrors (once again)*, *The Country Girl*, *Rose Marie*, *The Show Off*, with original productions of *Skin*, *Last Chosen*, and *Mushroom Planet*.

Karen Asconi of Bogota plays “Bird/Mouse/Mole/Young Frog/Squirrel”. Asconi has appeared onstage at BCP in assorted comedic ensemble and lead roles including *Lucky Stiff*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Stepping Out*, *Nunsense* and *Olympus on My Mind*. Most recent roles outside of the BCP include Boz and the Bard Productions of *Lady Macbeth*, *Miss Lizzie A. Borden Invites You to Tea*, *The Lion in Winter* and *Like Bees to Honey*.

Alyson Cohn of Wyckoff is “Bird/Turtle/Mole/Mother Frog/Squirrel”. Cohn is both a seasoned BCP performer and director having appeared on our stage in many productions including *Jack & The Beanstalk*, *Lucky Stiff*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Into the Woods*, *Rumplestiltskin*, *Cinderella*, *Vanities*, and *Miracle On 34th Street*, among others. Some of her directorial credits include *Art*, *Marvin’s Room*, *True West*, *Proposals*, *Six Degrees of Separation*, *Lips Together*, *Teeth Apart*, and our live radio production of *It Happened One Night*.

Michele T. Roth of New Milford will support Landsman as assistant to the director and Darrell Dragoo of New York City is the Musical Director. Larry Kadish of New Milford and Pat Solomon of Teaneck will split the producer responsibilities. Dottie Fischer of Tenafly is the choreographer, assisted by Myra Richards of Paramus. Rick Holloway of Roselle Park will serve as stage manager. Linda Behrle-Correll of Winfield Park lends her expertise to the set design and construction. Lauren Zenreich of Oradell, Jill Hendrickson of New Milford and Madeline Giotta of Ramsey team-up to create the set décor.

Lighting Design will be conceived by Allan Seward of Bardonia, NY and be operated by John Maher of Ramsey and Mary Joachim of Upper Montclair. Sound will be designed by Rob DeScherer of Woodcliff Lake and will be operated by Linda Macchio of Dumont. The trio of Pat Bain of Englewood, Dorsey Winant of Jersey City and Alene Rucker of New Milford will design the costumes. Stage crew includes Bill Macchio of Dumont, Steve Mintz of Englewood and Ron and Sam Siclari of Oradell. Property masters will be Loretta Youngs of New Milford, Gloria Bumbaco of Dumont, Neil Kahn of Maywood, David Drumm of Rivervale and Kathi Nubile of Mahwah. Alan Zenreich of Oradell serves as production photographer. Sharon Podsada of Emerson and Robin Peck of River Edge are handling make-up design.

A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD Press Release

As a novelty this season, our holiday production will hold a fifteen minute intermission, during which time magician Josh Zenreich of Oradell will appear onstage to entertain the audience with his wizardry and magic.

A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD will run at the Little Firehouse Theatre, 298 Kinderkamack Road in Oradell, from November 26 through December 18, with performances on Friday evenings at 7:30 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays at 12:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. Please note there will be no performance on Friday, December 2. Tickets are priced at \$13.00 for all performances and are available at the box office, or by phone at (201) 261-4200 (VISA, MasterCard and American Express accepted).

Bergen County Players, now in its 73rd year, is recognized as one of the country's foremost community theaters. Following **A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD**, the 2005-2006 season continues with Neil Simon's **THE ODD COUPLE**, which runs January 14 through February 4.



L: Steve Bell (Teaneck)
R: Steve Moldt (Cresskill)

L-R: Tyne Firmin (Manhattan), Steve Moldt (Cresskill),
Steve Bell (Teaneck), Karen Asconi (Bogota), Alyson
Cohn (Wyckoff)

L: Steve Moldt (Cresskill)
R: Steve Bell (Teaneck)

These and other photos available at: www.bcplayers.org

The Bergen County Players, Inc., is a non-Equity, non-profit community theater company dedicated to presenting quality productions for the enrichment of the community.

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