

Candidate Statements
Four County Players Board of Directors
2020 election

Members may vote for not more than six candidates for five expired terms and one unexpired term (one year remains.) If reelected, incumbents will serve three year terms. The successful new candidate with the lowest number of votes will occupy the unexpired term.

Candidates running for reelection:

Christian Eberle

I am writing today to express my sincere interest in joining the Four County Players Board of Directors.

My first experience with Four County Players was an audition for “Hello, Dolly!” just over 18 months ago, shortly after my wife and I had moved to Charlottesville. In that time since, I’ve appeared on-stage in two productions (*Hello, Dolly!* and *White Christmas*) and have volunteered both time and resources o-stage. The experience has left an incredibly positive impact on myself and those that I’ve been lucky enough to share our school house productions with.

My prior experience with theater began years before discovering Four County Players, going back to my high school years. This includes previous on-stage appearances, o-stage live production support, technical theater projects, lighting design, and set construction. It has been an absolute joy rediscovering my love for the theater and becoming a part of the community while continuing these activities at Four County Players.

In addition to my prior theater experience, I believe my professional experience will provide additional support and insight towards the operational success of Four County Players. I have a wealth of experience in the field of Customer Engagement technology and consulting. This includes marketing, sales and community development, and how technology can better support the growth of existing customer and community groups.

Because of my immensely edifying experiences as a creative participant and an audience member at our theater, I strive to give back to our theater community by assisting in the further growth and success of Four County Players as a member of the board. Even in the face of our current struggle with shutting down in the midst of Season 47, I believe our best days are still ahead of us.

I am prepared to work hard as a board member to ensure that Season 48, and all future seasons, are our best ones yet. Thank you for the opportunity to apply to become a board member, as well as your thoughtful consideration of my candidacy.

Meg Hoover, incumbent

I am writing to seek support for my reelection to the Four County Players Board of Directors. I am completing my three-year term and have placed my name in the running for re-election. I first became involved with 4CP when I was cast in the play *Moon Over Buffalo* about six months after moving to Louisa from Northern Virginia. When I moved to Louisa I knew I wanted to continue my community theater involvement. Barboursville is a short drive and 4CP was such a welcoming community, I knew acting would not be my only involvement.

In addition to acting, you can frequently find me at Saturday set builds. The talented set designers and master carpenters are great to work with and I confess I love working with the power tools. It is rewarding to see a set come to life from the first cut boards to the final paint treatment. Getting to know the volunteers who also work on set builds is terrific and regardless of ability, everyone is welcome. I have been backstage to help with costume changes, set changes, and manning the follow spot. I have helped with props construction as well as their design for a few shows. I was the Assistant Director for *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* during Season 46. This past season I had the wonderful privilege of directing a terrific group of ladies for *The Savannah Sipping Society*, a sold-out cellar show. Two summers ago, I was support help for the two summer theater camps and last summer was the improvisation teacher at the week-long camp. It was wonderful working with such talented kids. Their excitement for theater is infectious.

As a member of the working board I regularly manage the bistro for shows and have served as house manager too. I am chair of the Volunteer Committee and have organized two successful Volunteer Orientations at the theater. I serve on the Education Committee which has responsibility for our summer theater camps. It is an honor and privilege to serve on the board and I hope to continue for another three-year term. This is certainly a challenging time and I know we will all get through it together. Regardless of whether I continue serving on the board, I will continue being part of this wonderful theater community family. Thank you for your consideration.

David Merriman

Thank you for the opportunity to be considered for a seat on the board at Four County Players. Over the last few years my family has grown to love the people, place and organization as we became more involved both on and off stage. Contributing to the lifeblood of Four County Players and increasing its impact to the community drives my interest as a board member.

I first fell in love with local theater at a show in Fayetteville, NC with my parents. They were season ticket holders; I was a reluctant teen attendee. When the fashion challenged male protagonist entered wearing a 5 inch wide blue paisley tie, my step mother Chris gasped and shot me a sideways glance. "Didn't your Dad have a tie like that?" she mouthed in my direction. I shrugged. Each costume change revealed a tie more outdated and outworn than the one before it. Four ties into the show we found the "shout out" to the local clothing closet where my step mother donated my Dad's auspicious tie collection in the program. Whether or not the show was interrupted by our poorly timed laughter is a closely held family secret.

The lifeblood of Four County Players is a strong community. Four County Players builds community by creating an excellent forum to move people past the factors that politics and the media manipulate to separate us. The people we have met at Four County Players allow their love of people and art to out-weigh the details of life that could hinder their sense of community. Theater is a place for everyone. Just in our family, my son performed on stage in Barboursville at age 6 in the same cast as his teenage sister and mother while I ran spot. This was an amazing bonding experience for us in many ways. I can only imagine the number of families impacted by the healthy environment of Four County Players.

I can bring a business mindset and listening ear to the board. Over the past 28 years I have taught school, coached and organized sports teams, owned and operated two businesses, and currently work in commercial insurance sales. This background helps me look analytically at the factors contributing to the health of an organization: finances, attendance, volunteer base, training, risk mitigation, and long term planning. A thriving Four County Players has a greater impact on the community and my business perspective can contribute to that goal.

From witnessing my father's tie collection debut to lighting my family onstage, theater has connected my past and present. Becoming a board member at Four County Players gives me an opportunity to serve the future of local theater and assist with its positive influence on the community.

Karen Schlicht

Thank you for considering me for the open vacancy on your board. Over the last year or so, while volunteering my time at this beautiful theater, I have come to fall in love with the place and people. It truly is magical and I find a sense of peace each time I walk through those doors.

While running for a board position has been presented to me over the the past year I tried to picture how I would fit or what I could offer. It was hard for me to picture if I would even be a good fit. What was needed was for me to first volunteer for a while in different aspects and get to know the workings of 4CP. During this time, I discovered that I wanted to do more but was limited to how much I could do while not serving on the board. When discovering the expectations of board members I knew I wanted to serve and that I could be a good fit. I would not look at my duties on the board as commitments I have to do, I would look at it as opportunities I would get to do. Since I myself am not a performer I needed to find ways I could be part of theater. Working behind the scenes has been one way that I could be part of it all.

What I can bring to the table is the ability and desire to dedicate much of my time serving. I also bring to the table several years of board experience. During the 21 years of being a military spouse and "Stay at home" mom, I spent much of my time as a volunteer. I have served for West Point NY Mom's Club as their historian, West Point DUSA (Daughter's of the United States) scholarship chair, and APG Protestant Women of the Chapel President.

I am in a new chapter of my life now. My children are older, my spouse is retiring from the military and we are about to purchase our first home in the local area. I look forward to making this area my home and being able to give back to the community. I hope to do that by being a bigger part of 4CP.

I will end by saying that I am able and willing to work in any capacity you need me. If it is not on the board I will still continue being a big part of 4CP. Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to many years to come with all of you.

Carl Schwaner, incumbent

I am submitting myself as a candidate for reelection to the Four County Players Board of Directors. I have served on the Board of Directors since late 2013. For the length of my tenure, I have led the Technical Committee of the Board, and served on the Building Committee, assuming leadership of that group two years ago. I have been involved in nearly every production during the time I've served on the Board, most often as the Sound Designer. I typically take on other responsibilities throughout the production process of our shows.

The highlight of my service over the past seven years has been the completion of the Build a Backstage campaign. This five-year project involved the talents, and hard work, of many individuals to bring it to fruition, and I am proud to have played a lead role throughout the process. The long-term vision of a welcoming, flexible, and more efficient space for our volunteers to ply their craft has been achieved and will be of tremendous benefit to the productions of the future.

Due to sudden, and as yet not completely understood, events in our Country/World, the future of our theater is the main topic of concern at this time. There is little doubt that the nature theater of the (at least immediate) future will change. We have many challenges ahead, yet I am confident that this family will design creative solutions and continue to offer high quality theater to Central Virginia. I look forward to assisting as I'm able with these challenges.

Thank you for your consideration for re-election to the Board of Directors.

Charif Soubra

I am writing to declare my interest in running for election as a member of the Four County Players Board of Directors.

Since 2013, as an actor in multiple productions, I have had the pleasure of being a part of the Four County 'family.' Through the direct experience of those shows, as well as enjoying many other shows and activities over the years, it has always been apparent that the teamwork and drive required to ensure the theaters' success stretched far beyond any specific production team. The presence of a strong and supportive Board is displayed in more than just the impressive audience numbers, but also through a healthy volunteer base and the broad support of a community far beyond immediate localities. It's that sort of energy that now compels me to be a part.

With a recent shift in my professional life I am now afforded more time to devote to the local community. And it would be a pleasure to help and serve Four County.

To the table I bring over twenty-five years of direct sales, marketing, and operations experience. Translating to the world of theater that background will, first and foremost, allow me to be a huge advocate and ambassador for Four County Players. Additionally, I have a track record of assessing, delegating, and packaging complex ideas into easily manageable and actionable plans. Establishing processes for individual and operational success has always been

a hallmark of my professional career. These are but a few of the professional assets that I believe I could bring to the Board.

The performing arts have been a part and passion of my life for 35 plus years. By having a broad perspective; from acting and performing in various genres of the arts, to working in multiple capacities behind-the-scenes, and by helping promote events, big and small; I will be able to draw from my personal experiences to contribute to the well-being of Four County.

I would be happy to discuss in further detail what I hope to contribute. But overall, I know it would be an honor to be considered for a position on the Four County Board.

Gary Warwick White, incumbent

For those I have not met, my name is Gary Warwick White, and I am seeking reelection to the Four County Players Board of Directors.

My first involvement with 4CP was at age 16 in the 2002 production of *Man of La Mancha*. Since that time – 18 years ago -- I have remained consistently involved with the theater in many aspects. While my first love was (and is) performing onstage, I became very interested and invested in the theater's operations overall.

I was first appointed to the Board of Directors in 2006, and served as its secretary on the executive committee until 2014. I have served on the programming committee since 2007, and became its chairman in 2011 (Laurie Lowrance became co-chair of this committee in 2018). I have also served on the volunteer and marketing committees/advisory groups, as well as the Build a Backstage Committee.

In 2014, I began my work as the theater's first production manager, and have worked hands-on – from play selection to strike – with every single production since summer 2014. The production manager's role is to ensure consistency in quality and overall experience – a goal that we are meeting more and more with each season. Keeping Central Virginia's longest running community theater not only surviving, but thriving – perhaps more than it has ever been – is one of the most rewarding journeys I have been on in my life.

I would very much like to keep on this journey with 4CP, particularly as we are now in uncharted waters with COVID-19. The programming committee and board are hard at work on plans to keep our beloved theater going strong for years to come, whatever the circumstance. I am seeking the approval of 4CP members to continue this work.

