

April 1, 2023

Weathervane Theatre

PO Box 127

Whitefield, NH 03598

Dear Community,

In a recent meeting of the National Coalition of Artistic Directors, leaders of some of the most influential performing arts organizations used unsettling phrases like “financial emergency” and “sounding the alarm.” While 2021 was among the Weathervane’s most successful financial seasons and 2022 was undeniably our strongest artistically, we find ourselves facing a precarious financial position. A decision was made among Arts leaders to be transparent and direct with patrons that fundraising efforts are no longer a hopeful request, but a mandatory plead for our survival. Beyond survival, we must lean on new initiatives, robust experiences, and quality programming to eventually return to sustainability and ensure we can serve our community for many seasons to come.

It is imperative that we increase our annual fund revenue by at least 30%.

This is not optional. The reality is our beloved Weathervane has been gravely financially impacted by the pandemic. With rising year-round costs at the Spalding Inn, where we house our artists, the Grange, where we rehearse, and The Barn, where we perform, we must turn to you, our community, for support. As we thankfully move into a post-pandemic world, we are also left with new challenges from inflation to staffing shortages and shifts in audience behavior.

This is where the 30% comes in. Even with shifts in programming and more efficient staffing, inflation continues to outpace our ability to deliver the level of professional theatre you have become accustomed to. You may have noticed big titles such as *Kiss of the Spiderwoman*, *In the Heights*, and *Trouble in Mind* have been replaced with smaller cast shows like *Stones in His Pockets*, *Hoky Tonk Laundry*, and *Skeleton Crew*. Despite this trying moment in the Weathervane’s history, I refuse to compromise our commitment to quality, but we need your help. To bring this moment into stark relief, the sobering fact is if we are not able to significantly increase fundraising and ticket sales this season, we simply can’t continue.

The closure of an institution like the Weathervane means more than just losing a few fun nights out each year. It means losing a piece of our community’s history. It means significant economic repercussions for the North Country. It means a loss of a space that provides education, opportunity, experiences and enriches the quality of life for locals and visitors alike.

We can’t let that happen.

And finally, as an “artist driven” leader, I must highlight another major casualty that would come with the loss of the Weathervane: our talented and dedicated staff who have invested in and become a part of the energy and vitality of the North Country. A world without Weathervane means one less employment opportunity in a world of ever decreasing sustainability in this profession. I feel a deep responsibility to keep opportunity alive.

Do it for Tom’s legacy. Do it for Gibbs’ vision. Do it for the artists past, present, and future that this organization has cultivated. They do so much for you. They have more to give. I hope you will give too.

With hope, gratitude, and transparency.



Ethan Paulini
Producing Artistic Director



Ethan Paulini
Producing Artistic
Director

Robert H. Fowler
Associate Artistic
Director

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