

THE ICT REVIEW

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For One Night Only, The Good Guys Are Back

IOLA - When most of us think of the 1950s, we think of rock 'n' roll, greasers, hot rods, Elvis, Annette, Fabian, D.A. haircuts and teenage rebellion. But there was a flip side to this era - the side of harmony, innocence and the sincerity of dreams. It is the side that's been lost in the shuffle of progress. It was a time when most parents and kids listened and danced to the same music; when families partook of the ritual of gathering in front of the TV to watch their favorite variety shows, like the Ed Sullivan Show or the Perry Como Show. It was a time when every family worked to fulfill the American Dream.

It was a period when four-part guy groups harmonized their way across the airwaves, jukeboxes and hi-fis of the country. Throughout the land they would stand at a quartet of microphones, crooning a multitude of chaperoned prom-goers into dreamy romance.

They wore dinner jackets and bow ties (or perhaps cardigans and white bucks). Each move was drilled to precision. Each vocal arrangement soared to stratospheric heights of harmony. This sound crested right before rock 'n' roll stole the heartbeat of music across the globe.

During this time, guys across the country banded together to sing in the basement for fun. If things worked out they might be hired to sing at weddings, conventions, proms and country club socials. Inspired by the success of the recording stars, they made plans to zoom into careers of fame and fortune. But the musical taste of the U.S.A. was changing, and the country would not stop to listen to their dreams.

This is the story of such a group - FOREVER PLAID.

Once upon a time, there were four guys (Sparky, Smudge, Jinx and Frankie) who loved to sing. They all met in high school, when they joined the audiovisual club (1956). Discovering they shared an affection for music and entertaining, they got together and dreamed of becoming like their idols - The Four Aces, The Four Lads, The Four Freshman, The Hi-Los and The Crew Cuts. They rehearsed in the basement of Smudge's family's plumbing supply company. It was here they became **Forever Plaid** - a name that connects the continuation of traditional values of family, home and harmony. Although rock 'n' roll was racing down the fast lane like a candy apple "vette", they believed in their music. As their sound developed, they sang at family gatherings, fund-raisers, and eventually graduated to supermarket openings and proms. They had little time for romance or leisure for they supported their fantasy by holding down day jobs - Frankie was in dental supplies, Jinx was in auto parts, Smudge was in bathroom fixtures. Sparky was in better dresses. They devoted themselves to singing at nights and on weekends. Then, finally, they landed their first big gig at the Airport Hilton cocktail bar - The Fusel Lounge.

February 9, 1964

En route to pick up their custom-made plaid tuxedos, they were slammed broadside by a school bus filled with eager Catholic teens. The teens were on their way to witness the Beatles make their U.S. television debut on the Ed Sullivan Show and miraculously escaped uninjured. The members of **Forever Plaid** were killed instantly. It is at that moment, when their careers and lives ended, that the story of **FOREVER Plaid** begins.

Through the Power of Harmony and the Expanding Holes in the Ozone Layer, in conjunction with the positions of the planets and all the astro-technical stuff, they are allowed to come back to perform the show they never got to do in life.

And having completed their Mission of Harmony, our men in plaid must return to the cosmos. Although they may be gone, through this production their dreams live on forever.

Forever Plaid is dedicated to the "good guys"; to the guys who wheeled the projector carts for the AV club; to the guys who saved their allowance to give their parents a special night on the town for their anniversary; to the guys who carried an extra handkerchief; to the guys who never went beyond first base, and if they did, they didn't tell anyone. We salute you!



The
Iola Community Theatre, Inc.
 Production of



Forever Plaid

Cast

Frankie Jim Gilpin
 Sparky Glen Singer
 Jinx Bryan Johnson
 Smudge Jack Suit
 Delivery Nathan Gill

Combo

Uncle Joe (Bass) Joe Tholen
 Uncle Kendall (Drums) Kendall Ashford
 Hall Pianist (Keyboard) Jan Knewton

Crew

Director Greg Martin
 Musical Director Jan Knewton
 Technical Director Jim Talkington
 Lights Rachel Martin
 Sound Nathan Gill
 Props Connie Flack
 Costumes Dolores Hoff
 Dessert Arrangements Staci Crews
 Program Dee Sell

Acknowledgments:

Tuxedo's Courtesy of Litwin's

Antique Hatchery	Carol Chrisenbury	Al Guinn
Robert Gericke	Iola Fire Department	Iola Register
Betty Miller	Tom Mudrick	Sophisticated Rose
Jim Stuckey		Phyllis Warren

Iola Community Theatre gratefully acknowledges the support and assistance provided by the generous friends that have aided in this production. If we have missed anyone, please forgive our mistake. Without all of you, we would not exist.

The Iola Community Theatre Board of Directors

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	Phyllis Warren	

Written and Originally Directed and Choreographed by

Stuart Ross

Musical Continuity Supervision and Arrangements by

James Raitt

Originally Produced by

Gene Wolsk

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