

**ANDRÉ JACQUE**

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Madison, WI 53707-7882

## ***Testimony before the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Revenue***

Senator André Jacque

Senate Bill 185

*August 28, 2025*

Chairman Testin and Fellow Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support before you today as the author of Senate Bill 185, which will correct inconsistency in our statutes by allowing a property tax exemption for longstanding nonprofit theaters.

The Northern Sky Theater, located at the corner of County Highways A and F in the Town of Gibraltar, has been a summer tradition in Door County for 50 years. Many town residents might assume the theater is already property-tax exempt. But of the three professional non-profit theaters in Door County - Northern Sky, Peninsula Players, and the Door County Auditorium - only Northern Sky pays property taxes.

Northern Sky's outdoor amphitheater at Peninsula State Park does not pay property taxes and would not be covered by this legislation. However, that facility has a 15-year agreement with the park and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources that requires it to pay 6 percent royalties on everything - including ticket sales, concessions, and merchandise, etc. - at that venue. That amounts, on average, to about \$35,000 annually.

In addition, because Northern Sky cannot own property within the state park, any improvements must be gifted to the state. One of the most recent examples is a \$220,000 restroom facilities project. Over the years, Northern Sky has gifted nearly \$2 million to the State of Wisconsin. In addition, while the theater is tax-exempt when it comes to donations, it pays sales tax on tickets, concessions, and merchandise, which amounted to about \$57,000 in 2023.

If passed, Senate Bill 185 would exempt the Northern Sky Theater from property taxes, adding them to the existing group of theaters in Wisconsin that do not pay property taxes. The bill follows current statutes and as drafted limits the number of theaters that would qualify. This proposal has local support from the Town of Gibraltar, the school district of Gibraltar, and the Door County Board. My thanks to Rep. Kitchens and Sen. Spreitzer for their efforts in support of this legislation, which has already passed the Assembly Ways and Means Committee unanimously on a 10-0 vote.

Northern Sky is a vital part of the local community. It contributes to the vibrant Door County tourism economy and community activities that are very positive for Northeast Wisconsin. Thank you for your consideration of Senate Bill 185. I'm happy to answer any questions committee members may have.



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# JOEL KITCHENS

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 1<sup>ST</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

## **Testimony for the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Revenue Senate Bill 185 August 28, 2025**

Thank you, Senator Testin, and members of the committee, for holding this public hearing on Senate Bill 185.

For more than 50 years, Door County's Northern Sky Theater has delighted summertime audiences with original musical shows performed in one of Wisconsin's most beautiful state parks. Probably their best-known musical is the hit, "Guys on Ice." It is a Northern Sky Theater production that has played to sold-out crowds across Wisconsin and the nation. For many years, Northern Sky was known as American Folklore Theater.

The Town of Gibraltar hosts three of Door County's largest professional non-profits: Northern Sky, Peninsula Players, and the Door County Auditorium. Only Northern Sky pays property taxes. Under Wisconsin law, several qualifiers have been used to exempt some theaters from paying property tax, including being in a historic building and being exempt from federal income taxes. The Legislature used those qualifiers to exempt the Pabst Theatre in Milwaukee and, in 2003, Peninsula Players. Despite being a non-profit, Northern Sky Theater doesn't currently qualify under state law.

Northern Sky's outdoor theater draws thousands every year, generating significant sales tax revenue for the state and county. Additionally, Northern Sky pays the DNR 6% on ticket sales, snacks, and merchandise for shows in Peninsula Park.

Unfortunately, the shows are vulnerable to rain. A rainout on a two-show night can cost the company as much as \$20,000 in losses, making their financial situation precarious. This bill would help that significantly.

SB 185 would exempt Northern Sky Theater from property taxes, adding it to the existing group of theaters in Wisconsin that are exempt from property taxes and removing a competitive disadvantage. The bill follows current statutes and does not specifically name Northern Sky, but it is the only theater that would qualify under its language.

While everyone is aware of the natural beauty of Door County, our citizens understand that the arts are also a major contributor to our tourism economy. The arts are one of the reasons so many choose to make Door County their permanent home, and this bill is

overwhelmingly supported within our county. It has the support of all of the local taxing authorities that would be affected. The Town of Gibraltar, the school district of Gibraltar, and the Door County Board have all voiced their support.

We have one amendment to SB 185 that clarifies the date Northern Sky was deemed exempt from income taxes by the IRS. The Wisconsin Department of Revenue alerted us that they had a different date on file than what the bill originally had. Because of name changes over the years and a difficult-to-read hand stamp by the IRS, we have changed the date to ensure the theater is covered.

Thank you for your time, and I hope you consider supporting Senate Bill 185.

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

Daily Newsletter

## NEWS

## CURRENT WEATHER

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**43°**   
 Partly Sunny  
 Dew Point: 39°  
 Winds: SE @ 6 mph  
 Pressure: 29.58"

		
Wed	Thu	Fri
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## Door County Board supports property tax exemption for Northern Sky Theater

### Theater

Posted Today At 8:19am by Tim Kowals

Northern Sky Theater took another step toward future sustainability after the Door County Board of Supervisors voted last week 12-5, with four absent to support an Assembly bill granting them a property tax exemption. According to the resolution, property owned by a non-profit organization operating a theater is exempt from general property taxes if the property includes buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places or reaches specific capacity requirements. Other theaters, such as the Milwaukee Repertory Theater and Peninsula Players, have become property tax-exempt. Managing Director Holly Feldman addressed the board during the open comment period, explaining how they currently pay property taxes on their 40-acre creative campus and pay royalties and sales taxes on their performances. Feldman added how she feels Northern Sky Theater positively impacts the community.

▶ Play Audio

A similar resolution was supported by the Town of Gibraltar 3-2, which is where Northern Sky Theater is located. Several supervisors like Vinni Chomeau and Ryan Shaw voiced their support for the measure, saying it was essential to support the arts in Door County. Supervisors Joel Gunnlauggson, Roy Englebert, David Enigl, and Elizabeth Gauger raised the snowball effect their support could send to similar entities locally and across the state. Englebert, Enigl, and Gauger joined Ken Fisher and Walter Kalms in voting against the resolution.

Watch the meeting below:



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# Cheese and Packers Stories Help a Wisconsin Theater Thrive

[nytimes.com/2025/08/04/theater/northern-sky-wisconsin-theater.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/04/theater/northern-sky-wisconsin-theater.html)

Elisabeth Vincentelli, Jenn Ackerman and Tim Gruber

August 4, 2025



Northern Sky Theater in Door County programs original musicals steeped in local history, archetypes and customs.

Credit...

By [Elisabeth Vincentelli](#)

Visuals by Jenn Ackerman and Tim Gruber

Reporting from Fish Creek, Wis.

Here they are again, those enamored youths hiding their passion from their feuding families in Verona.

Verona, Wisconsin, that is.

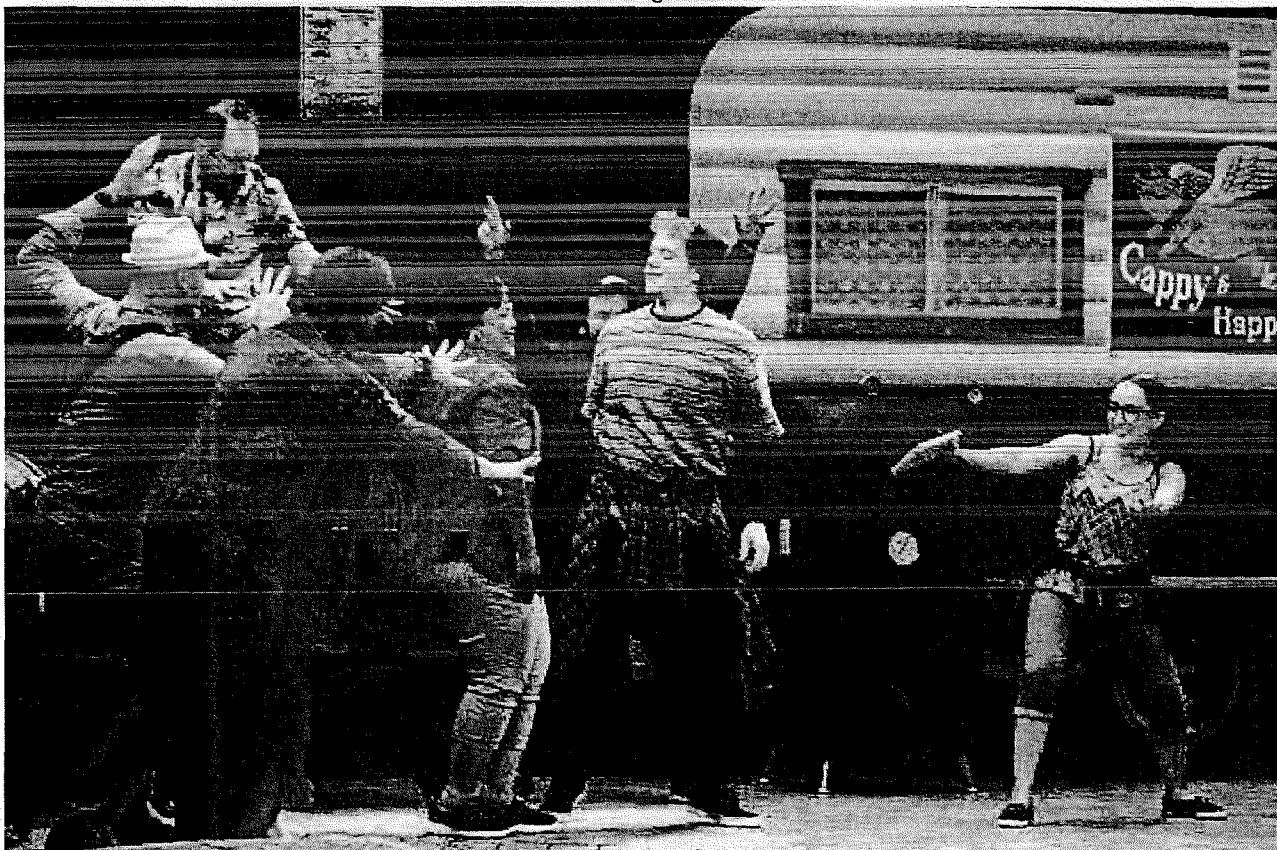
For this is not the latest revival of “Romeo and Juliet” but the musical “No Bones About It,” whose lovers, Ronny and Julie, hail from “two smokehouses / Both alike in enmity” that are competing at a barbecue contest. The audience laughed its way through the performance I attended last month, and I’m pretty sure I wasn’t the only one who left humming the song “Better Keep Away.”

The plot’s transposing was par for the course for Northern Sky Theater, in Fish Creek, Wis. At a time when many companies are undergoing identity crises or struggling to connect with audiences, this one endures by programming original musicals anchored in local history, institutions, archetypes and customs.

For regional audience members, the company’s artistic director Molly Rhode said, a Northern Sky show “is not just sort of about me — it’s *really* about me.”

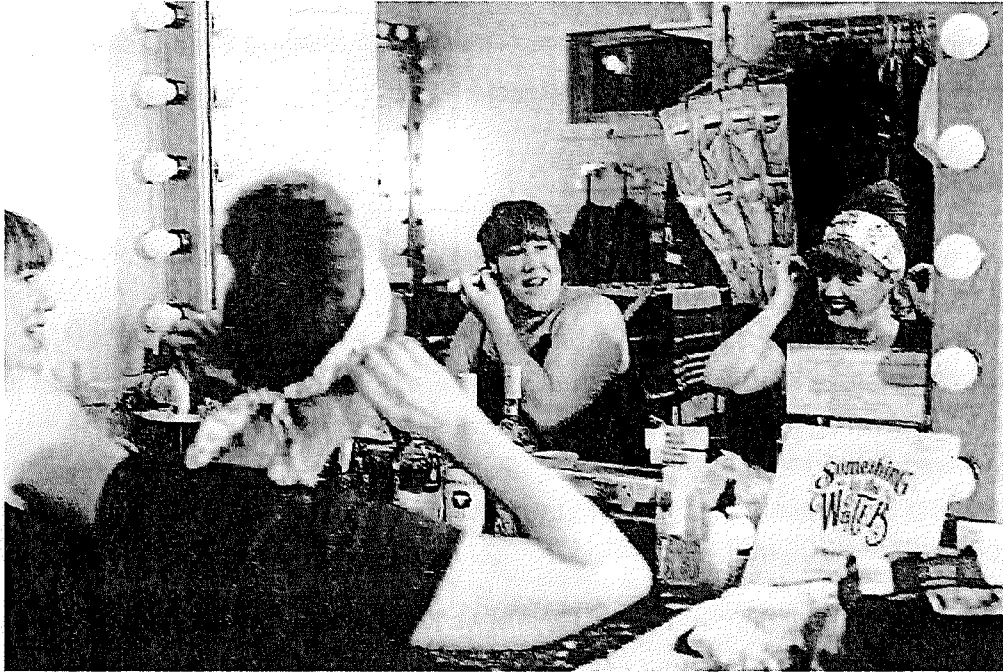
Despite being decidedly ~~not from the area~~, I very much enjoyed this summer’s three offerings, which are running in repertory through Aug. 23. Along with “No Bones About It,” the company is presenting “Something in the Water,” set in early-20th-century Waukesha, when that city was ending an unlikely run as a tourist hot spot popularized by mineral springs, and “Dairy Heirs,” which has a subplot involving a soothing hybrid of provolone and pepper jack called projack.

Image



Owen Foulds, middle, as Ronny and Ava Giorgione, right, as Julie in “No Bones About It.”

Image



The company's artistic director Molly Rhode, right, and Kelly Doherty preparing for a performance of "Dairy Heirs."

Image



Foulds backstage before "No Bones About It." As a production intern, he's taking on many roles for the company this summer.

"The joy and silliness that perfumes the entire air of Northern Sky is something that I think a lot of theater is missing right now," said Ava Giorgione, a rising junior at New York University who is playing Julie in the Shakespeare spoof.



Technically speaking, Northern Sky, located in scenic Door County, was born in 2015. But its story goes back to 1970. More on that later, so please keep reading for a tale so ingrained in Badger State lore that it deserves its own musical.

## A Certain Kind of Storytelling

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In the summer, the company presents its productions in a 748-seat outdoor amphitheater in the heart of Peninsula State Park, which juts out into Lake Michigan. In the fall it moves indoors to the 248-seat Gould Theater, which opened in 2019. (This year, “The Bachelors,” about a pair of immature Madison men, runs from Aug. 29-Oct. 25; there’s usually also a holiday show.) Encouragingly, attendance has almost recovered from the pandemic, when Northern Sky was limited to a virtual season. “Prior to 2020 we hovered between 25,000 and 30,000 attendees in the park,” the managing director Holly Feldman said. “This year we are projecting closer to 23,000 in the park and 10,000 in the Gould.”

With a budget of just \$2 million, the company leans on mutually beneficial relationships with local donors and businesses. Its staff of eight swells to 56 in the summer, and is supplemented by a pool of about 200 volunteers.

And when it comes to finding playwrights, Northern Sky has long recruited contributions from its very audiences. For example, consider the journey of Matt Zembrowski, a Milwaukee native who wrote “Something in the Water.”





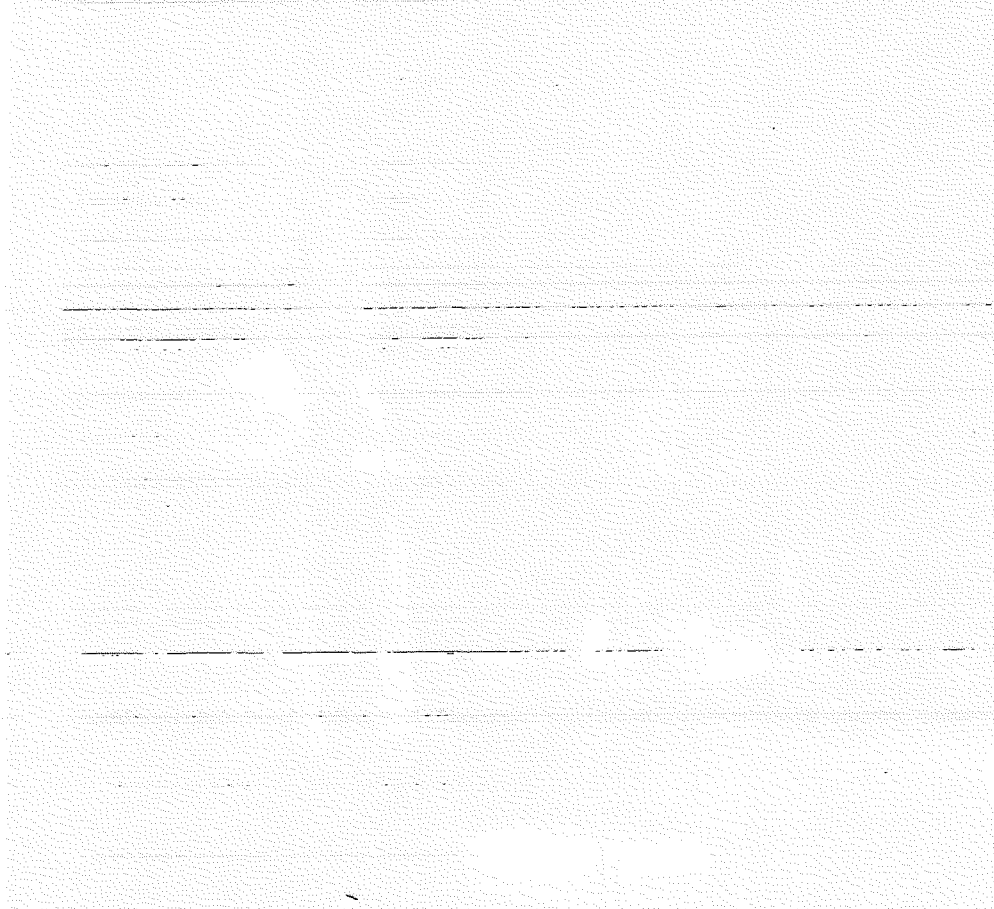
The cast of "No Bones About It." Credit Credit...

As a kid, Zembrowski and his family used to camp in Peninsula State Park, and in 1995, they saw "Bone Dance." He was only 12, but was instantly hooked. As his love for musicals expanded, he remained enthralled by the company's productions. "There's kind of an

ownership because you saw shows about people that you know, Midwesterners,” Zembrowski said. “I connected to that far more than I did a lot of the Broadway shows I was listening to.”

At a post-show gathering around a fire ring, a gregarious patron named Jerry Pomprowitz told Zembrowski that he loved another of his musicals, “Dad’s Season Tickets.” In that “King Lear” riff, three daughters vie for their father’s Green Bay Packers tickets — “and in the end it worked out that everybody gets to share them,” Pomprowitz said. Unlike Shakespeare, Northern Sky believes in happy endings.

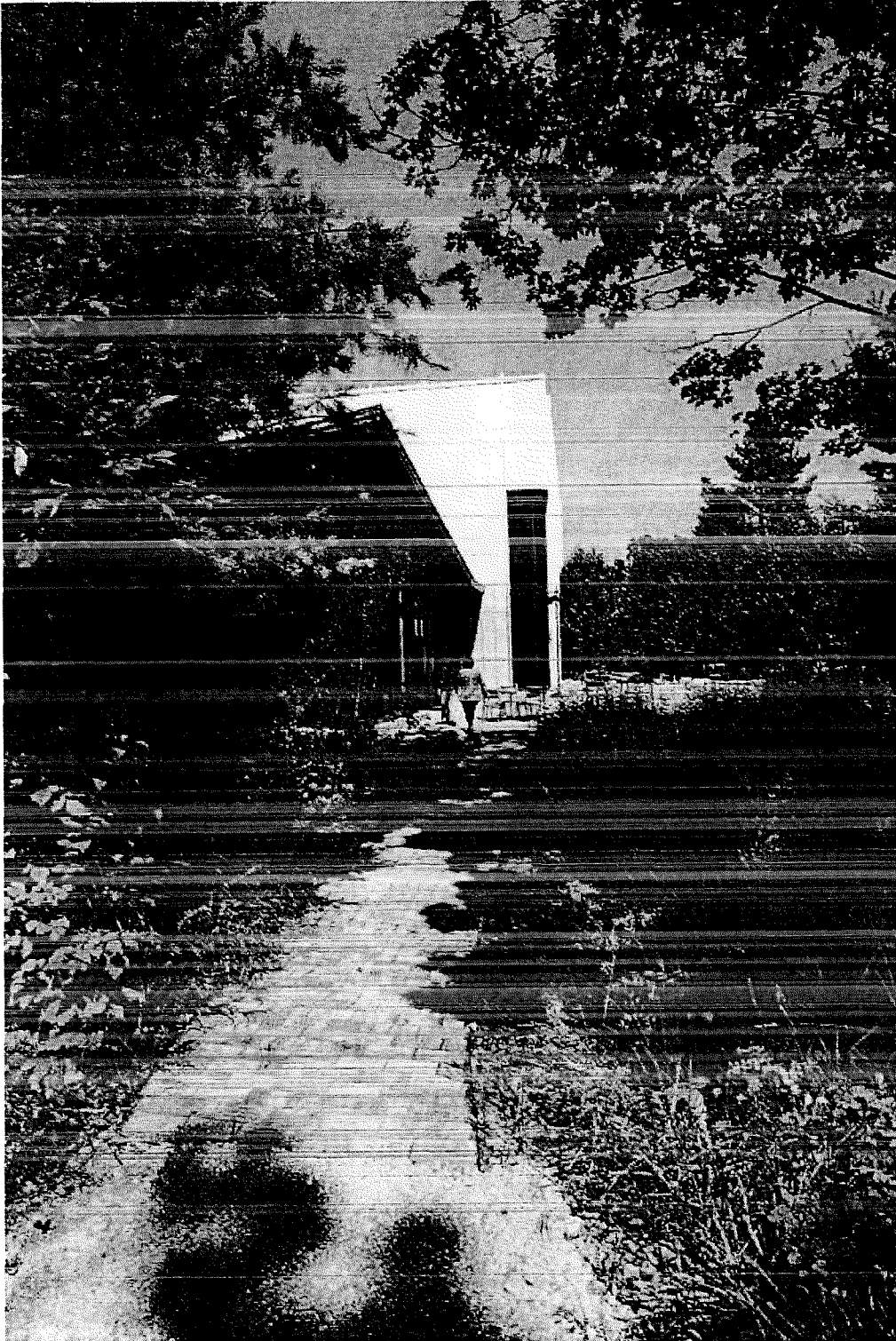
Pomprowitz and his wife, Lynn, both in their early 70s, regularly drive about an hour to the theater from their home in Green Bay. Fish Creek has other theater companies, including Peninsula Players (“America’s oldest resident summer theater,” it boasts), but the couple especially enjoy Northern Sky. “The shows are funny, they have character, they have heart and they are family friendly,” Jerry Pomprowitz said. “It’s very nice that they do it that way.”





Members of the Bennett family, with their puppy Millie, settling into their seats at the Peninsula State Park Amphitheater.

Image



In the fall, the action moves indoors to the 248-seat Gould Theater, which opened in 2019.

Indeed, the audience is filled with multigenerational groups. It's also not rare for multiple family members to be involved with the company. Rhode's sister Alissa wrote the music for "Dairy Heirs," for example, and when I went to the White Gull Inn for a fish boil, the owner

mentioned her years as a house manager at the theater. Her sister acted in “Northern Lights” in 1997. Another sister co-wrote the musical “Victory Farm” (2012), about German P.O.W.s working in one of the area’s cherry orchards in 1944.

## It’s in Their D.N.A.

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History-inspired shows are popular at Northern Sky, which loves good yarns. And one happens to be attached to its birth. The company’s ethos can be traced back to Robert E. Gard, a Madison professor who promoted the interconnection of local roots and culture. (With research financed by the National Endowment for the Arts, he published a 1966 study-cum-call to arms, “The Arts in the Small Community: A National Plan,” that deserves to be rediscovered today.) One of Gard’s colleagues, Dave Peterson, spotted the amphitheater while camping and thought it would be a perfect place to present his revue “Song of the Inland Seas.” It ended up kick-starting the Heritage Ensemble, in 1970.

Image



Fred Heide, co-founder of the theater, leading a song around a fire ring.

An early fan was Fred Heide, currently Northern Sky’s artistic adviser. “It was songs of the Great Lakes sailors, the lumberjacks, the early immigrant farmers,” he said of the show. “They were authentic folk songs, but Dave arranged them with complex Broadway

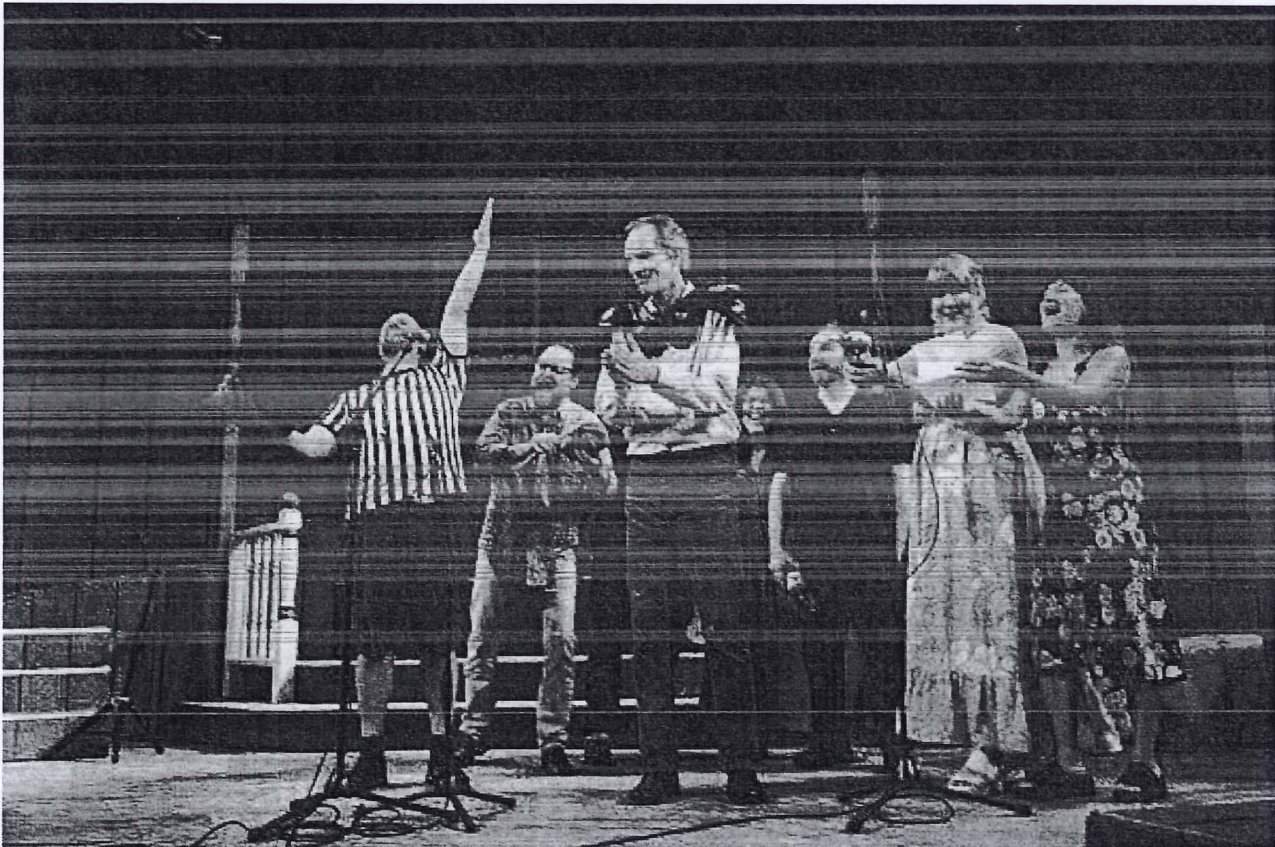
harmonies. And he combined them with interesting bits of our history and humorous things he had pulled out of books. There was a tremendous depth to these songs, and power and universality to the stories they were telling.”

Heide joined the Heritage Ensemble in 1972, and performed in and wrote many shows. In 1990, he rebooted the troupe as American Folklore Theater with Gerald Pelrine and Fred Alley — the latter a tireless director, performer and writer whose hits with James Kaplan, “Lumberjacks in Love” (1996) and “Guys on Ice” (1998), have been produced around the country and are regularly revived at Northern Sky.

Being multi-hyphenate is as much a part of the company’s D.N.A. as the shows’ subject matter. As production interns (they are paid and receive housing), Giorgione and her “No Bones About It” co-star Owen Foulds, who plays Ronny, also help put up and take down sets, prep for meals and more. Giorgione said she found internships “to be very invaluable when it comes to learning the tricks of the trade and what I need to know outside of acting.”

Foulds said he loved the need to “commit to everything 110 percent.”

Image



Jeff Herbst, who was the theater’s artistic director from 1993 until last year, and other artists during a trivia event.

Another busy multitasker, Jeff Herbst, started collaborating with the company in the 1980s and became artistic director in 1993. He would preside over the Northern Sky rebranding in 2015.

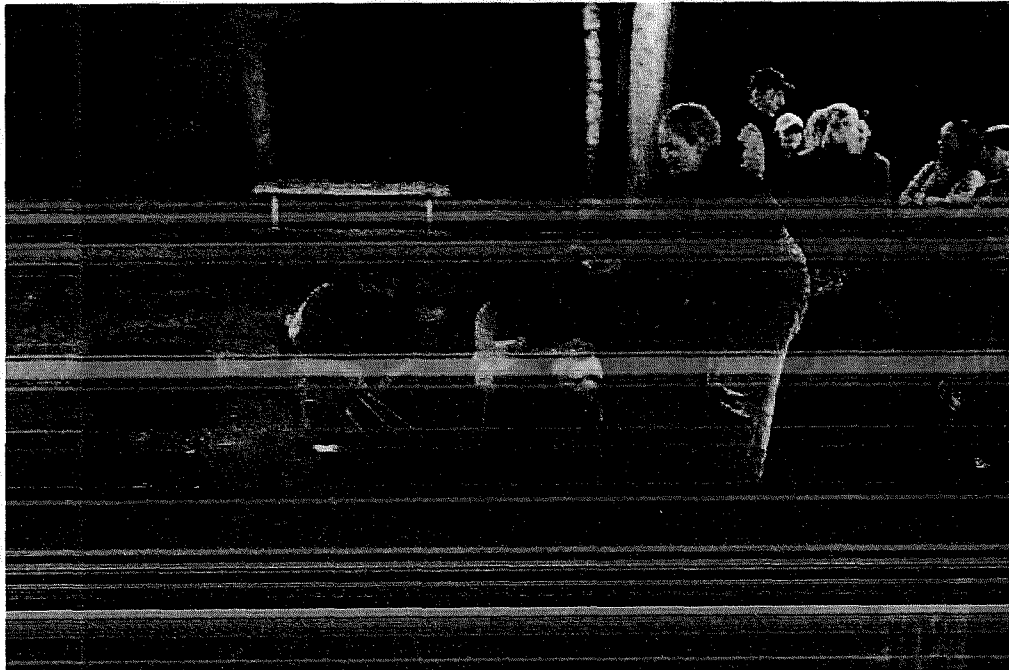
“All of the musicals that we were writing were really not folklore,” said Herbst, who stepped down from the artistic directorship last year but continues to direct and appear in the company’s productions. “So I wanted a name that I could pitch to people around the country and would also resonate more fully with the demographic that was starting to come to Door County — a lot more affluent people have found their way up here for second homes.”

The population changes may explain why Door County, which had been a bellwether in presidential elections since 1996, went for Kamala Harris by a slim margin last year. Northern Sky navigates political waters gingerly, and by gingerly I mean it avoids them. Besides localism, the throughline is that the shows are, as Pomprowitz said, “family friendly,” though Feldman, the theater’s managing director, appeared chagrined that to some the term translates to a specific type of “family values.” (“What keeps us up at night is not the occasional email about something we had on our stage,” she said, “but our outdoor season being impacted by erratic weather from climate change.”)

This does not mean the company is stuck in place, either. A key program is NOVA (Nurturing Original Voices and Artists), which since 2021 has welcomed 62 playwrights from around the country to workshops and writing circles, both physically and virtually. Its director, Lachrisa Grandberry, was in the original production of “Dairy Heirs,” in 2018, for which she also learned to play the stand-up bass. (“People collect skills when they come to us,” Molly Rhode said, laughing.)

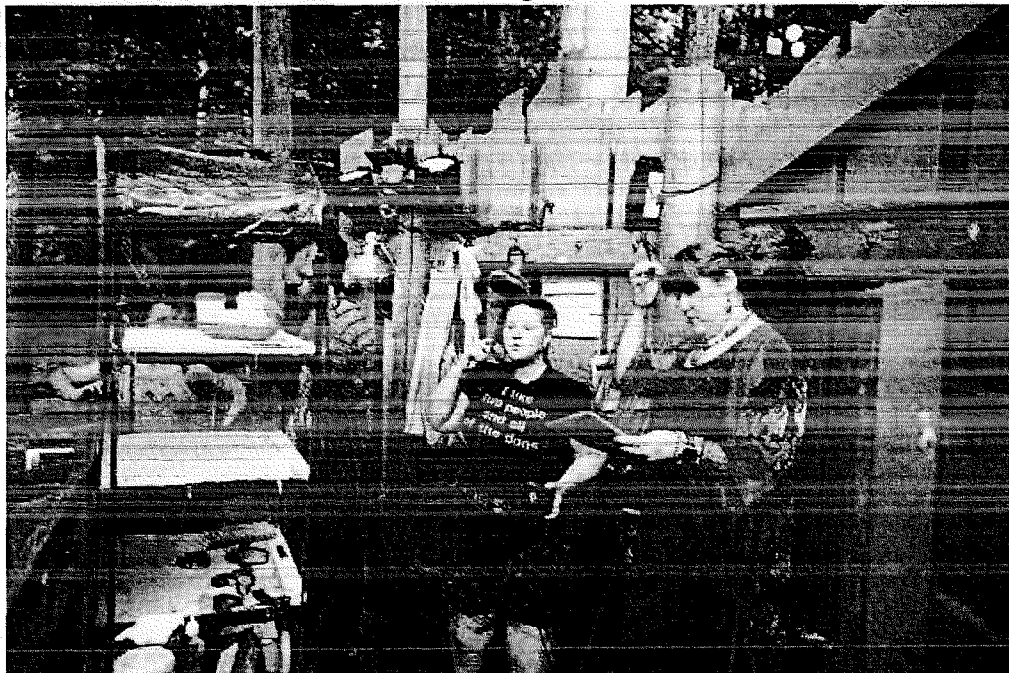


Image



S'mores by the campfire after a performance of "No Bones About It."

Image



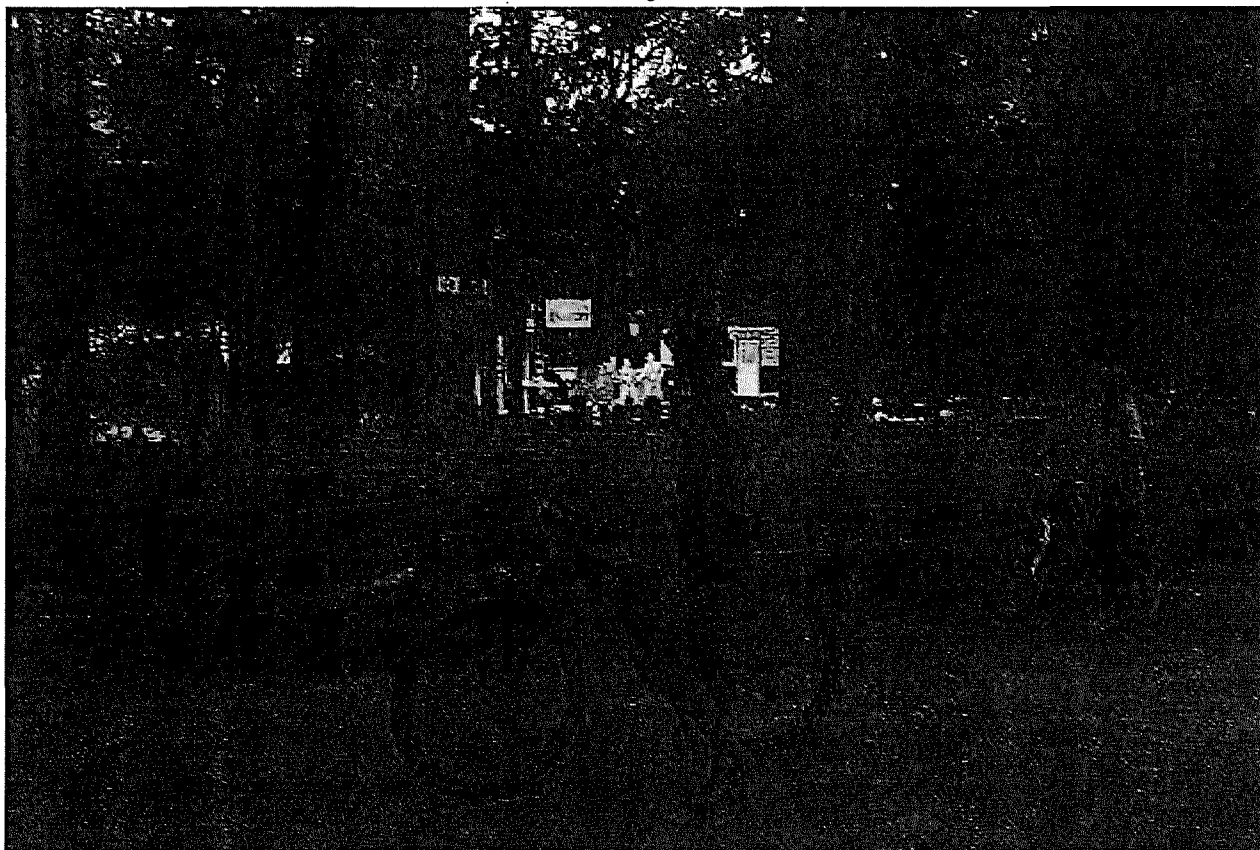
Anna Brooks, left, a stage manager at Northern Sky, with Doherty backstage.

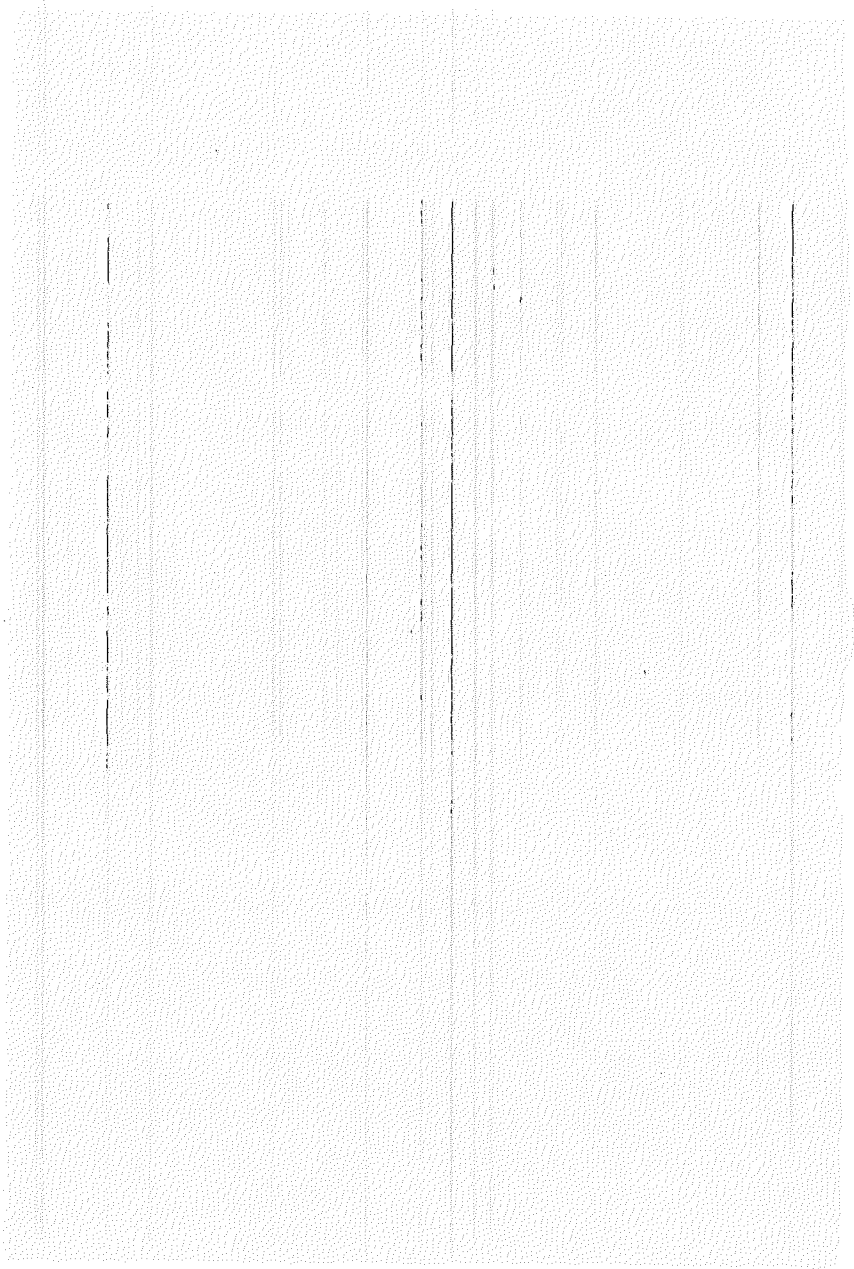
Grandberry and two others set out to write "Sunflowered," a musical about a camping trip to Peninsula State Park that premiered in 2022 at Northern Sky. In parallel, she developed initiatives inspired by a workshop for writers of color, and those led to NOVA.

“Northern Sky is a very unique theater that only produces new works so it felt like there should be a place or a program within it that cultivates them,” Grandberry said. As a Black woman in a predominately white area, she said, “I know for a fact that I would not have been able to write for Northern Sky without first working there. I would not have understood the culture of Door County and of this theater. The challenge we have as a company is trying to cultivate new voices and make room for them in our space.”

All told, Northern Sky has about a dozen shows in various stages of development. Looking at the slate, one feels that the company will evolve while holding on to its identity and values in a world roiled by uncertainty. After all, Grandberry said, “Northern Sky is really good at creating stories that feel like home.”

Image





The image shows a highly magnified view of a material surface, characterized by a dense, fine-grained texture. The texture appears to be composed of small, interconnected particles or fibers, forming a complex, porous structure. This structure is typical of a material that has been subjected to a high-temperature treatment, such as sintering, where the individual particles have fused together to form a continuous network. The overall appearance is that of a highly porous, interconnected network of particles, which could be a result of a chemical reaction or a physical process like sintering. The texture is uniform across the entire area, suggesting a consistent material composition and processing conditions.

**Testimony before the Wisconsin State Senate Committee on Agriculture and Revenue**

**RE: Property Tax Exemption for Northern Sky Theater**

**Presented by Holly Feldman, Lachrisa Grandberry, and Molly Rhode**

**8/28/2025**

We want to begin today by sincerely thanking Representative Joel Kitchens and Senator André Jacque for their leadership and advocacy in championing this bill. And thank you to Senator Spreitzer for signing on as well.

Property tax exemptions for cultural institutions like Northern Sky Theater are not unprecedented, but they are rare. I'd like to share a few key reasons why Northern Sky is uniquely qualified for this exemption and why it is so vital to our future sustainability.

**First, our partnership with the State of Wisconsin through the Department of Natural Resources is unlike any other.**

Our Gould Theater and Creative Center, located on the property described in the bill, directly support our operations for our home in Peninsula State Park which is under a 15-year agreement with the DNR. As part of that agreement, we pay royalties to the state:

- 6% in years 6–10 (which in 2025 will amount to about \$45,000)
- And beginning in 2027, that rate increases to 9% onward, or about \$67,000 per year.
- Additionally, Northern Sky pays the State of WI approx. \$60,000 in sales tax on our ticket, merch and concessions revenue.

On top of that, any improvements we make in the park are gifted back to the state. That includes everything from our buildings to infrastructure like flush toilets—our latest facility upgrade, which cost \$220,000.

To date, Northern Sky has donated nearly \$2 million in capital improvements to the state of Wisconsin. None of the other organizations with this tax exemption have this same type of relationship with the state.

**Second, like our peers, we are a major economic driver in Door County.**

The nonprofit arts and culture sector in Door County generates \$21.8 million in audience-related spending annually. On average, a single audience member spends \$100 in the community in addition to the price of a ticket.

In addition to Northern Sky, it is worth noting that the township of Gibraltar is home to two more of Door County's largest professional performing arts nonprofits—Peninsula Players, and Door Community Auditorium, neither of which pays property taxes.

**Third, we manage our resources with extraordinary care.**

As confirmed by members of our board Northern Sky is diligent and frugal. We stretch every dollar, and that's getting harder.

We're supported by two award-winning volunteer crews, more than 200 people strong, as well as more than 1,000 annual donors.

Still, we face risks that are entirely out of our hands. An outdoor season means that inclement weather can cancel a show and result in an \$8,000–\$10,000 loss—per night.

We are increasingly dependent on unearned revenue from those generous individual donors who expect us to be smart stewards of our finances. They want to see us do everything we can—including pursuing opportunities like this one—to ensure long-term sustainability.

**Fourth, we already have local support.**

The Town of Gibraltar and the Door County Board of Supervisors both back this exemption. In part, they support this bill because of the way it avoids unintentional loopholes and is mindfully drafted to minimize the impact it would have elsewhere.

The Door County Finance Director calculated that the fiscal impact locally would be just 28 cents annually on a \$350,000 property. This is a modest ask with a high return in cultural and community value.

**Fifth, we've been recognized for our role in shaping Wisconsin's identity.**

We were honored with the inaugural Arts, Culture, and Heritage Award by Governor Walker—a recognition that underscores our statewide impact.

**Finally, what truly sets Northern Sky apart is our storytelling.**

We are, quite literally, Wisconsin's history theater.

As artistic director, I am in charge of our programming and supporting our playwrights creative process. No theater celebrates Wisconsin like Northern Sky does and we have a wide reach. Maybe you saw our most recent mention in the Arts Section of the Sunday New York Times in August?

Our productions have featured Great Lakes seafarers, World War II veterans, shipbuilders, family farmers, Packers fans, and—of course—ice fishermen.

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You may know our most famous show, *Guys on Ice*. That show was originally commissioned by the state to celebrate Wisconsin's sesquicentennial and has since become a cultural ambassador in its own right.

It's been produced in over 100 theaters across 16 states and even in Canada—with notable runs in Michigan, Minnesota, New York, and Texas.

Two years ago, the show received a proclamation from Representative Kitchens, Governor Evers, Speaker Vos, and Speaker Pro Tem Petersen honoring its 25th anniversary. And since we're here with the committee on Agriculture, you should know that our hit show *Dairy Heirs*, which celebrates our state's family farms, returned to the stage this summer and played to over 7,000 patrons in Peninsula State Park. We call *Dairy Heirs* our family farming moosical. You can stream the soundtrack on any streaming platform.

We're proud of what we do. We are proud to carry Wisconsin's stories across the country. And we are proud of the care we take with every dollar, every donor, and every performance.

This exemption would allow us to better weather tough seasons—literally and figuratively—and direct more of our limited resources toward programming, community engagement, and sustainability.

In short, the \$45,000 we expect to pay in park use royalties this year alone shows our ongoing commitment to the state. What we're asking for now is the opportunity to operate on a level playing field with our industry leading peer group.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



**NORTHERN SKY**  
T H E A T E R

August 27, 2025

Honorable Patrick Testin  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Revenue  
Wisconsin State Senate  
P. O. Box 7882  
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Senator Testin,

We're writing in support of 2025 Senate Bill 185 providing a property tax exemption for Northern Sky Theater. We believe there are multiple reasons to endorse this bill due to Northern Sky's exceptional nature:

(1). To our knowledge, Northern Sky Theater is the only nonprofit professional theater in rural America that solely creates and produces original musicals. Since its founding in 1990, Northern Sky has produced over 65 original musicals, performing for an annual audience of 35,000 people in both indoor and outdoor venues.

(2). All Northern Sky's shows are designed to further knowledge and appreciation of the culture and heritage of the United States. In practice, virtually all Northern Sky productions are set in Wisconsin and focus on celebrating its culture and history. Its shows have helped increase awareness of a vast array of historical topics (e.g., the life of Wisconsin-raised naturalist John Muir, the role of women shipbuilders in Sturgeon Bay during World War II, the founding of the Wisconsin State Park system, the Civil War experiences of Wisconsin governor George Peck, etc.) Northern Sky shows have also cast a spotlight on multiple Wisconsin sub-cultures (e.g., the largest Belgian American community in the US) and pursuits (e.g., ice-fishing, farming, cheese manufacturing, etc.). Musical theater is an especially powerful and memorable way of conveying information, as anyone who has ever had a showtune stuck in their head can attest.

(3). Because Northern Sky Theater's musicals showcase Wisconsin-based themes, they earn stronger identification from audience members than those mounted by most theaters. Patrons "see themselves onstage" in shows that center on Packer fans, deer hunters, and so on. This generates a huge return audience and fierce loyalty to the troupe.

(4). Unlike most theaters which appeal largely to older audiences, Northern Sky writes its shows to be accessible to all ages. Its audience is multi-generational; every night grandparents who first saw shows as children attend with their own children and grandchildren. A significant percentage of its audience consists of children, helping to build theatrical interest among future generations.

(5). Despite doing the most expensive thing in the performing arts (i.e., creating and producing original musicals), Northern Sky has consistently maintained the lowest ticket prices of any professional theater in our state. A critical part of its mission is making its shows available to the widest possible audience, including campers and those of lesser means. Relief from property tax will assist the troupe in pursuing this commitment.

(6). Shows created at Northern Sky have had significant impact both within and beyond our state. Its show *Guys on Ice*, which explores Door County ice-fishing, has been one of the most successful in the history of the Milwaukee Repertory Theater and earned over 100 productions coast-to-coast, including on PBS-TV. *The Spitfire Grill*, set in small-town Wisconsin and created by two Northern Sky writers, has had over 700 productions worldwide including Off-Broadway, Los Angeles, Washington DC, London, Germany, Korea, etc.

(7). In addition to being highly entertaining, Northern Sky's original shows have been demonstrated in published psychological research to have direct social benefit. *Guys & Does*, its deer-hunting musical, is the first musical comedy empirically demonstrated to shift audience attitudes in favor of deer-hunting, an important way to thin overabundant herds ([DOI: 10.1037/a0027574](https://doi.org/10.1037/a0027574)). Over 75% of patrons who see its hit musical *Belgians in Heaven* develop strong intentions to be kinder and more forgiving toward family members. The experience of attending NST has been shown to increase social cohesion and connectedness.

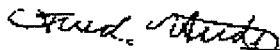
(8). Northern Sky Theater's shows have earned multiple awards and widespread critical acclaim. Four of its writers have won the prestigious Richard Rodgers Award for Musical Theater. Productions of their shows have been given the Drama Desk Award, Outer Critics Circle Award, Helen Hayes Award, LA Dramalogue Award, etc. *The Chicago Tribune* described Northern Sky as "one of the most exceptional professional troupes in the country."

(9). Finally, Northern Sky is being increasingly recognized for its unique role in the state. In 2012, it received the inaugural Wisconsin Governor's Tourism Award for Arts, Culture and Heritage from Governor Scott Walker. The Wisconsin History Museum currently under construction in downtown Madison will feature an exhibit about the troupe.

In combination with Northern Sky's clear economic impact detailed in Ms. Feldman's testimony, we believe these reasons more than justify passage of this bill.

Please feel free to contact us for clarification. Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Frederick "Doc" Heide  
Co-founder  
[doc@northernskytheater.com](mailto:doc@northernskytheater.com)



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