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This program is partially supported by a grant from the  
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.....

*This production is dedicated in loving memory  
to longtime JDG supporter  
Maryann Rainville*

**THE JOLIET DRAMA GUILD PRESENTS....**

**STEEL  
MAGNOLIAS**

**by Robert Harling**

**at Bicentennial Park Theatre**

**April 23 - May 2, 1993**

*produced by Special Arrangement with  
Dramatists Play Service, Inc.*

## Cast of Characters

(in order of their appearance)

Truvy Jones (owner of the beauty shop)

Anelle DuPuy-DeSoto (beauty shop assistant)

Clairee Belcher (widow of the former mayor)

Shelby Eatonton-Latcherie (prettiest girl in town)

M'Lynn Eatonton (Shelby's mother and prominent career woman)

Ouiser Boudreaux (wealthy curmudgeon)

Anita Kahl

Julie Kolb

Mary Lerner

Kim Pirc

Pat Tarrant

Sheila Dyer

## Synopsis of Scenes

All the action takes place in Truvy Jones's beauty shop in Chinquapin Parish, Louisiana.

The time is the present.

Act 1, Scene 1 -- April

Act 1, Scene 2 -- December

Act 2, Scene 1 -- June, eighteen months later

Act 2, Scene 2 -- November

There will be a brief intermission between Acts 1 and 2

## Production Crew

Director

Assistant Director

Technical Director

Set Construction

Lois Morse

Joe Boron

Emilie Jones

Skip Robinson, Chuck Crnkovic, Gary

Hernandez, Emilie Jones, Greg Cerven,

Bill Marsh, Tom Csepregi, Ernst Juergensen

Kendra Albritton, Annalis Whalen

Emilie Jones

John and Pat Tarrant

Bob Fox

Cast, Lewis University

Bob Fracaro

Peggy Ashby

Mark Robinson

Properties

Lighting Design

Publicity/Program

Photographer

Costumes/Wigs

Beauty Consultant

Rhett's Picture

Production Booth

## Acknowledgements

Sean Pryby and the "Steel Magnolias" National Touring Company,

Frank's Country Store and Garden Center - Channahon

Lewis University, Tom Lerner, John Tarrant, Herald News, WJOL, WCCQ & WFTW

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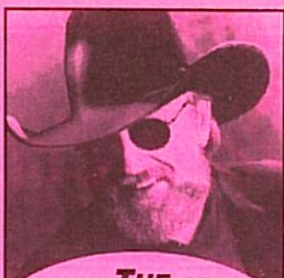
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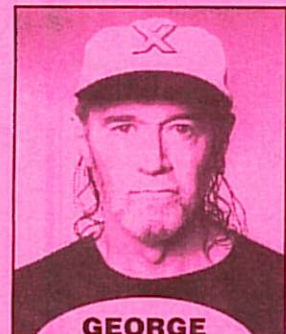
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APRIL 25



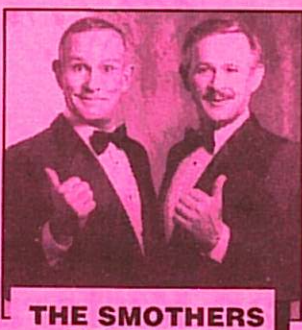
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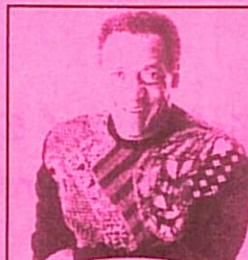


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## About the Author. . . .

When Robert Harling penned this, his first play, in only ten days, his motivation was to leave some record of his sister Susan's short but remarkable life for her two-year-old son. Susan, a diabetic, got pregnant against her doctor's advice, and although her son was born healthy, she suffered kidney failure in the process. An attempt at a transplant using one of her mother's kidneys failed, and a year later Susan was dead.

Robert, an aspiring actor in New York at the time, felt a sense of helpless rage at the loss of his sister. Being four years her senior, he had always felt a special, protective closeness to her. A friend encouraged him to put his feelings down on paper, which Harling initially resisted because he had never written anything before. At first he tried a short story but felt it did not accurately capture Susan's personality. So it was in play form that the last years of Susan's life were finally told.

Some may wonder why, just six months after Susan's death, Harling chose a basically comic format to tell his sister's story. As he remarked to *Life* magazine in a 1989 interview, "My sister had had this incredible sense of humor...She laughed a lot."

Although several elements of the play are obviously based on fact, it is still, for the most part, a work of fiction. The female characters are composites of women Harling knew growing up in Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana (which served as the location for the film version of "Steel Magnolias"). The term "steel magnolias" was one that Harling heard many times while growing up in the South. It was used to describe the special quality of certain Southern women to appear delicate and fragile on the outside while being tough as steel on the inside, able to withstand, through the use of humor and support of one another, any hardship life could deal them.

Harling was inspired to set his play in a beauty shop due to something he remembered Susan telling him when they were youngsters. It was she who observed that at about 8 every Saturday morning, the ladies of the neighborhood would mysteriously disappear into that icon of smalltown life, the home beauty parlor, and emerge a few hours later sporting identical hairdos resembling lacquered football helmets.

It is the gossip, the observations, the interactions, and the mutual affection of the "steel magnolias" of Truvy's Beauty Shop which provide the framework for this play.

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