

**NORTHERN SKY**  
*theater*

# Volunteer Handbook

- 2019 -



# **Volunteer Handbook**

**(Northern Sky Customer Service Awesomeness!)**

## **Index**

- I. Welcome!
- II. Northern Sky Mission Statement
- III. Northern Sky Service Mission
- IV. Organization Chart
- V. Northern Sky Volunteer Program Goals
- VI. Volunteer Rights & Responsibilities
- VII. Volunteer Scheduling
- VIII. Overview of Opportunities
  - Front of House Opportunities at Shows
  - Seating Charts
  - Special Events and Other Opportunities
- IX. Volunteer Benefits
- X. Tracking of Hours
- XI. Parking Policies at Peninsula State Park
- XII. Useful Information

## I. Welcome!

Dear Volunteer,

Thank you for choosing to volunteer for Northern Sky Theater! We recognize that there are many opportunities to volunteer throughout Door County and we're glad you've chosen to give some of your time to us. This year marks our 29th Season!

As a volunteer, you are a critical component of the Northern Sky experience. We entrust you with the care of our theatre patrons. As a show volunteer, you may be asked to usher, assist with parking, sell merchandise or concessions, greet patrons as they come up the path, seat handicapped patrons, or seat patrons in the Reserved Section. We take your preference into account, but at times you may be asked to do something you haven't expressed an interest in doing. Please keep an open mind when trying a new task – we do our best to make sure each position will be an enjoyable experience for you.

Northern Sky offers other chances to volunteer as well, including assisting with special events, such as our Opening Night Reception, our Red Carpet Night, and benefits and readings that take place throughout the year. We also occasionally need help in the office with a mailing or other office tasks.

Sometimes a need for volunteers arises suddenly – thank you for being willing to help on short notice when you can!

If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact us:

(920) 854-6117 OR [volunteer@northernskytheater.com](mailto:volunteer@northernskytheater.com)

See you under the stars!



Claire Erickson

Box Office Manager & Volunteer Coordinator

## II. Northern Sky Mission Statement

The mission of Northern Sky Theater is to create, develop and present professional musical and dramatic productions which will further the knowledge and appreciation of the culture and heritage of the United States.

The theater is dedicated to maintaining standards of artistic excellence; celebrating and illuminating the human condition; reaching a large audience of all ages, including families; and fostering a humanistic work environment with adequate and appropriate emotional, financial and creative support for all those associated with us.

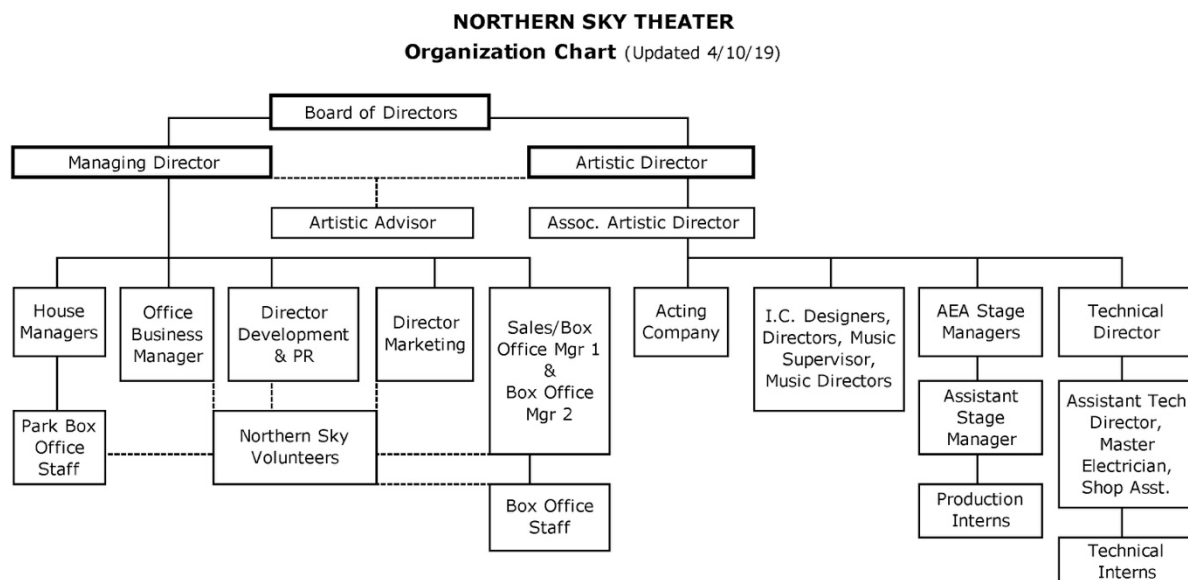
## III. Northern Sky Service Mission (Customer Service Philosophy)

At Northern Sky, we take responsibility for the entire patron experience. We embrace the mission of creating lasting and rich family memories. Northern Sky celebrates relationship and connection, and we encourage a sense of familiarity with our audience. We treat people with kindness and generosity, and we enjoy sharing a good laugh.

We give people the benefit of the doubt. When issues arise we shape our response by prioritizing safety first, and always strive to make "greatest-good" choices that benefit the entire audience. If a patron makes a request for something special, we do everything we can to say, "Yes!" - to go the extra mile.

Patrons will leave knowing we're thankful that they chose to spend time with us.

## IV. Organization Chart



## **V. Northern Sky Volunteer Program Goals**

To furnish friendly and capable front of house staff at Northern Sky Theater performances and support staff for Northern Sky's special events and office operations as necessary.

To provide Northern Sky Theater volunteers with an enjoyable and fulfilling experience.

To support an enthusiastic group of Northern Sky Theater advocates.

## **VI. Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities**

### ***Your Rights***

- You have the right to be given proper information and training to carry out your assignment.
- You have the right to a safe and friendly environment.
- You have the right to enjoy the performance or event at which you are volunteering when you are not occupied with your assignment.

### ***Your Responsibilities***

- You must only accept jobs that you will be able to commit to.
- You should ask questions when you do not understand an assignment.
- You are required to be on time for your assignment.
- You will represent Northern Sky in a positive light.
- You will defer to the seating needs of paying customers.
- You are expected to respect and follow the instructions and requests of the House Manager, Stage Manager, Artistic Director, Technical Director, Volunteer Coordinator, Managing Director, and any other staff members you may report to.

## **VII. Volunteer Scheduling**

Sign-up packets are typically emailed to interested volunteers in April for the Summer Season and in August for the Fall Season. These include a sign-up sheet, calendars, and volunteer interests checklist. We are very lucky to have close to 200 returning volunteers each summer and fall. Because of this, we often have more volunteers than needed for certain dates/shows. Therefore, we use a selection system that allows us to be as fair as possible. We suggest that you sign up for a variety of dates and duties to increase the likelihood of working on a specific date. You will be emailed a list of your date assignments before the season starts. The week of the show(s) assigned you will also receive a reminder email. *NOTE: If you do not have email, please let us know and we will mail your information.*

## VIII. Overview of Opportunities

There are many volunteer opportunities at Northern Sky Theater. Some of the most frequent are listed below:

### **Front of House Opportunities at Shows**

**When you arrive at the show, please check in with the House Manager for your assignment. Please wear a Northern Sky vest and name tag, available at the venue.**

**Summer: Plan to arrive at the amphitheater 75-90 minutes prior to show times.**

**Fall: Plan to arrive at the Door Community Auditorium 60-75 minutes prior to show times.**

<b>Disabled Seating*</b> (Summer only)	In this position, you will meet people with special needs, assist them as they enter the theatre from the backstage handicapped parking area, and help them to their seating. Many of these patrons are elderly. Most will have called ahead to purchase handicap specific reserved tickets; you should get those tickets from the house manager. Or, you may have to direct the able-bodied person in the party to go to the box office to purchase tickets. You will manage the backstage entrance area to ensure a trouble-free experience for these guests.
<b>Greeter</b> (Summer only)	Our Greeters are often the first contact that our guests have with Northern Sky. You will greet theatre-goers a short distance from the parking lot steps on the path, answer questions, and direct them to the box office. In this position, you should enjoy talking with people and be able to give our guests a friendly welcome.
<b>Golf Cart Shuttle Driver*</b> (Summer only)	This position is very important for many of our patrons. The person in this position is responsible for shuttling patrons who are unable to make the walk from the main parking lot to the amphitheater. The driver assists patrons into the golf cart, shuttles them to the backstage area, and assists them in exiting the golf cart. Those interested in this position <b>must complete special training</b> prior to the season.
<b>Merchandise Booth Sales/Concessions Sales</b>	In the summer, there are two concession areas: one where Northern Sky merchandise is sold before and after the show, which also serves as the Will Call window, and one at which we sell candy, soda, and water before the shows. The merchandise area accepts credit cards, but the concessions stand does not. Both areas will use cash boxes. A touch screen computer will be used in the Merchandise Booth to sell items. Training will be provided to familiarize you with the merchandise and procedures. You may be asked to assist with re-stocking of some items. In the fall, these two areas are combined: there is one concession stand that sells Northern Sky merchandise and water only.
<b>Fire Ring Captain*</b> (Summer only)	We have a fire ring that is used before shows to welcome guests and after shows for a short sing-along with cast members on select nights. The task is to be in charge of the lighting, maintaining and distinguishing of the fire.

**Parking Lot Assistant\***

You will help direct cars in and out of the parking lot before shows and between shows on two-show days. In the summer, two or three Parking Assistants will be on duty – one to greet and direct cars as they enter the lot, and one to direct the car to the appropriate stall. On some days, we may need you to direct traffic in the handicapped parking area backstage. Extra orientation will be given for this position. In the fall, we typically staff four volunteers to facilitate parking at the Door Community Auditorium in Fish Creek.

**Reserved Seating Usher**  
(Summer only)

We have a reserved seating area of 215 seats; each row in this section is labeled with a letter and each seat is labeled with a number. Before the show, you will place cushions on each seat in this section. You will be positioned down by the section to collect and tear patrons' tickets and direct them to the correct seat(s). Reserved seats are for our company members' guests and our donors; or, patrons may purchase reserved seats for an additional \$7/ticket. Only people with reserved section tickets will be seated in this area unless the house manager advises differently. After the show, please collect and store the cushions.

**Usher**

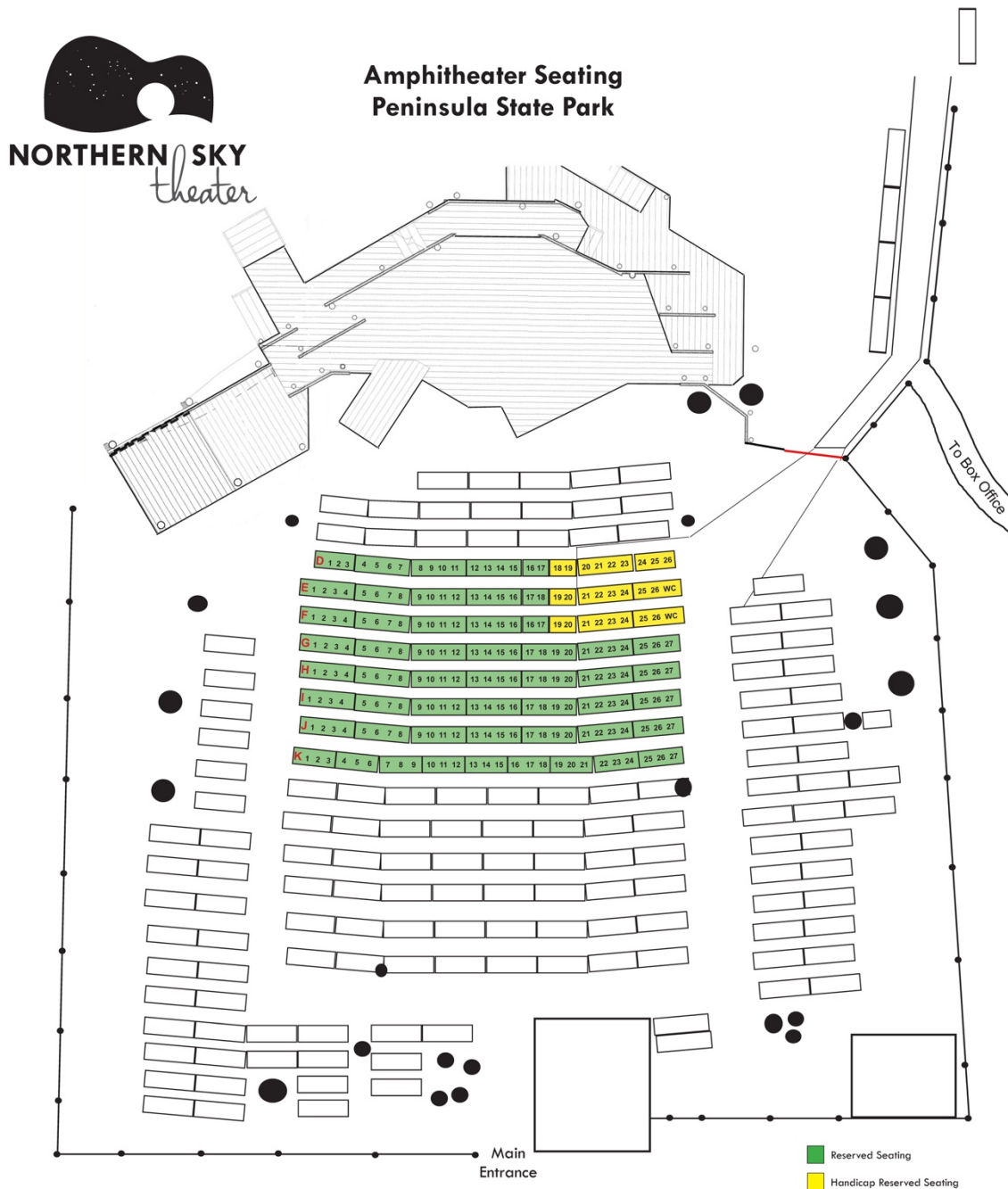
There are a few different tasks for those who are ushers. The House Manager will coordinate specific assignments for each volunteer.

Duties for this assignment may include:

- Sweeping the benches and checking for garbage in theatre before the shows
- Removing or placing plastic coverings in case of inclement weather
- Putting program inserts in playbills before shows, if necessary
- Handing out programs to people waiting in line before the show starts and as people enter theatre (seating 30 minutes prior to show)
- Collecting and tearing tickets
- Setting up folding chairs (if needed) before the show and taking chairs down after show
- Staffing exits as directed by House Manager and collecting playbills from those who wish to turn them back in
- Collecting donations at the exits as directed by House Manager
- Picking up garbage left in theatre after the show
- Checking returned programs and putting them back in boxes, checking for correct inserts

**\* Please refer to the more detailed responsibilities outlined on the laminated Protocol Sheets located in the Volunteer Closet (including the Emergency Protocol Sheet).**

## Amphitheatre Seating / Layout

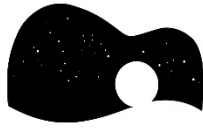


The Reserved Section is located in the middle starting at the fourth row.

The Special Disabled Reserved Section is located down house right.

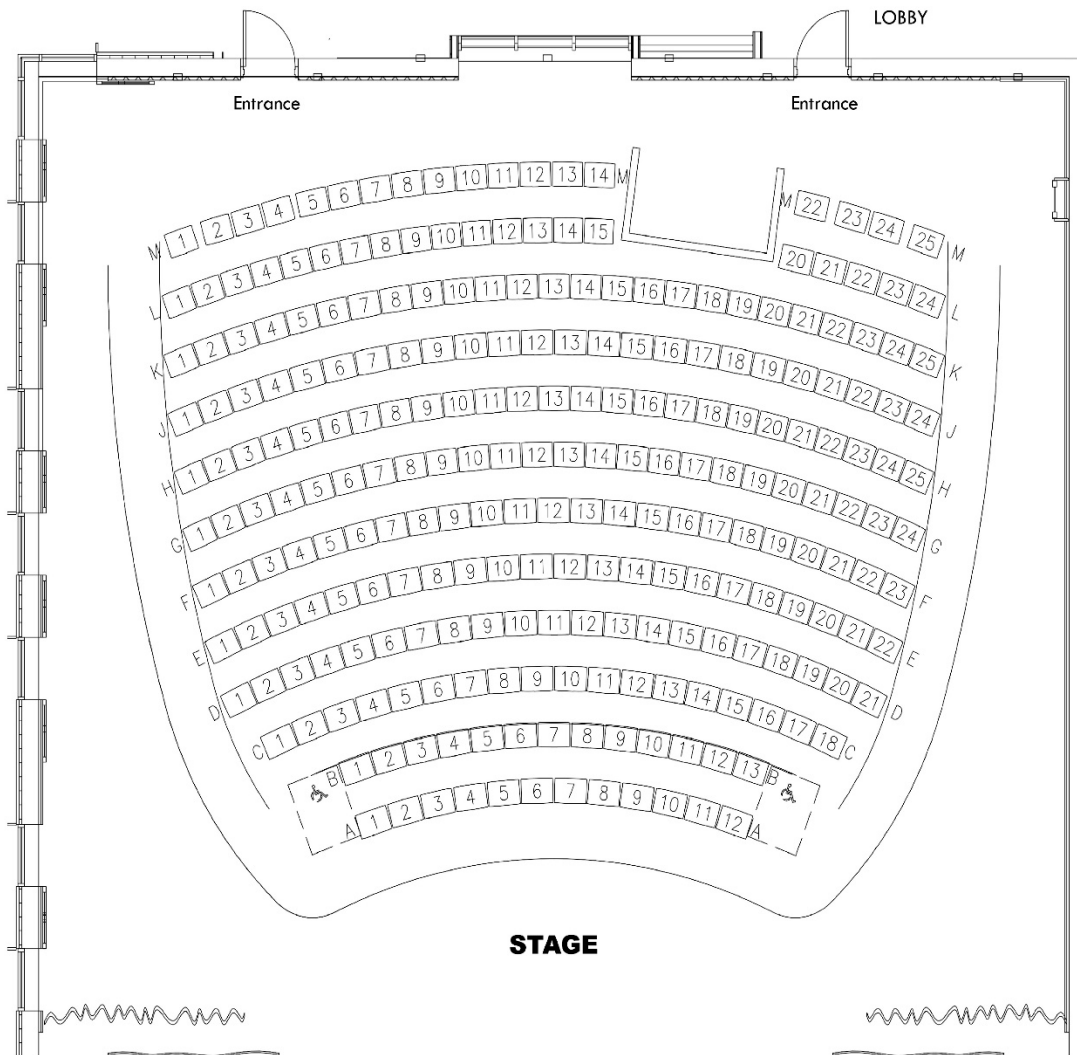
Handicap parking (wheelchair/walker only) and shuttle drop-off is located backstage with a wooden ramp leading to the seating area.





**NORTHERN SKY**  
*theater*

**Indoor Theater Seating  
Northern Sky's Creative Center**



## **Special Events and Other Opportunities**

<b>Northern Sky Ambassador</b>	We need one or more ambassadors for each town or locality in the county. The ambassadors are primarily responsible for the distribution of brochures and posters to shops, hotels, and information centers spring through fall. They also assist office staff in maintaining a designated list of such business places, and may be asked to distribute additional marketing materials for special events in their designated area. Ambassadors may also be those who can be routinely called upon above and beyond volunteering situations listed in this handbook.
<b>Benefit Events</b>	At our benefits, we need people to assist with set-up, on-site operations, and tear-down. You may be asked to set up tables, decorate, assist with on-site ticket and/or merchandise sales, assist with silent auction management, stack tables and chairs, etc. You will be in direct contact with donors and fellow fans and friends of Northern Sky.
<b>Mailings</b>	From time to time we have small mailings that may require folding, taping, sealing, labeling, stamping, and/or stuffing envelopes.
<b>Opening Night Receptions</b>	We usually have a reception either prior to or following our opening performances of our world premiere shows. If you assist at these events, you may be asked to help set-up/tear-down, decorate, assist distributing food/beverages, etc. You will be in direct contact with donors and fellow fans and friends of Northern Sky.
<b>Red Carpet Night</b>	Each year, we host an evening for hospitality staff in Door County as a thank-you to them for helping spread the word about Northern Sky and also to give them an opportunity to enjoy the Northern Sky experience first-hand. Usually, we serve picnic-style food to these attendees before the show. You will primarily be responsible for assisting with set-up & tear-down of a tent and tables, and serving food/beverages. You may be asked to assist with tracking attendees and reservations.
<b>Worker Bee</b>	You will assist in a variety of manual labor and construction projects at Peninsula State Park. Duties include general clean up of theatre area, raking wood chips, repairing theatre benches, mending fences, painting, or maintaining Northern Sky buildings. Contact the office if you are interested in this opportunity.
<b>Tuesday Crew</b>	This dedicated group of men and women meets weekly throughout the season to work on a variety of projects: construction, maintenance, repair and upkeep of buildings and paths, and many other duties necessary to keeping the amphitheater and facilities in great shape.

## IX. Volunteer Benefits

We value our volunteers and are very thankful for all of your help!

Here are few of the benefits to volunteering at Northern Sky Theater:

- Meet members of our community and welcome visitors from all over.
- Feel pride in contributing to the arts, culture and heritage of Door County.
- Enjoy the outdoor amphitheater experience in Peninsula State Park.

### Invitation to Opening Night Receptions

Immediately following the official opening performances of our world premieres, there is a party back stage. You'll be invited to attend the performance and the reception as our guest.

### Discounted / Complimentary Summer Tickets

Volunteers will receive the following benefits based on **hours per household**:

*Level 1* (10-20 household hours) rewarded with a Camper Discount Card.

*Level 2* (21-35 household hours) rewarded with *Level 1* plus 3 complimentary tickets.

*Level 3* (36-50 household hours) rewarded with *Level 1* plus 6 complimentary tickets.

*Northern Sky Ambassador* is rewarded with a Camper Discount Card and an Ambassador Pass.

An Ambassador Pass includes: Two [2] complimentary admissions per volunteer per show [6 total] for family and friends plus one [1] complimentary admission to all performances for only you, the volunteer (non-transferable).

**Please Note:** The Camper Discount Card applies to all members of a family for each of Northern Sky's summer shows.

### Personalized Name Badge

A *Personalized Name Badge* is rewarded to individuals with 21 or more individual volunteer hours.

### End of the Summer Season Thank You Party

In August, we have a party to celebrate "you" and everything you do for Northern Sky. This party is traditionally an outdoor picnic. You'll be invited to enjoy some food, camaraderie, and special Northern Sky entertainment.

### Complimentary Fall Tickets

Volunteers who work at 5 fall performances will be given one complimentary ticket for that show, based on availability. We encourage you to make a reservation in advance since fall shows are reserved seating only.

### Between Show Meals

Volunteers who work for both summer shows on Mondays or Thursdays will be given a free meal. The House Manager will inform the volunteers when they may go back stage for dinner. Because the food is served outside behind the stage during the performance, please be as quiet as possible.

### FREE Popcorn

Indulge in one popcorn cup on the night you volunteer! (Summer Only)

### BIGGEST BENEFIT!

Watch one or two shows on the night you volunteer for free once your assigned pre-show duties are fulfilled.

## X. Tracking of Hours

It is important for us to keep track of volunteer hours for grants and reporting purposes.

**We'll keep track of your time spent volunteering at shows, special events, etc.**

However, if you are an Ambassador or if you take on a special project or task that doesn't have specified hours, PLEASE keep track of your hours for these tasks. You may simply email or call the Volunteer Coordinator to report your hours, or you may use the form below to keep track. Please report your hours as you go, at least once a month; or, at the very latest, by December 31.

### Non-Performance Volunteer Hours

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Work performed	Total Hours (inc. travel time)
Total Hours		

## XI. Parking Policies at Peninsula State Park

Northern Sky staff and volunteers arriving before 60 minutes to show time or parking in the Nicolet Beach lot need to have a park sticker attached to their car's windshield. Display the pass on your car's driver side windshield.

The Nicolet Beach overflow parking lot is used for the amphitheater parking. This is usually very busy - some days well past 5pm - with beach users who do need stickers. We encourage you to park in the Nicolet Beach lot to leave spaces for patrons in the main lot. You should not park in the boat trailer area as the Park is extremely short on boat trailer parking.

Northern Sky customers do not need a sticker if they arrive one hour or less before the show (i.e. after 5:00pm) and they are not using any of the other park facilities (i.e. they park and walk directly to the Northern Sky area). If they arrive more than an hour in advance, they do need to purchase at least a one-hour Park sticker.

## XII. Useful Information

- The **House Manager** is a volunteer's "go-to" supervisor. They will answer all questions any time before and during the performance. Don't hesitate to ask if you need help or clarification.
- **Amphitheater Restrooms** (pit hole toilets) are available near the entrance of the amphitheater. There are also flush toilets in the backstage primarily for the actors. However, if a special need arises, patrons can use those facilities. Remind patrons to lock both doors when using flush toilets so the actors do not walk in on them.
- Patrons can bring **drinks and food** into the amphitheater. However, alcoholic beverages are not allowed in or around the amphitheater. Please ask them to be mindful of noise.
- The use of **photography and recording devices is prohibited during the show**. Please notify the House Manager if there is a problem.
- **Hearing Amplification Devices** are available at Will Call for hearing impaired patrons.
- **Unhappy Patrons:** please try to help them to a low-traffic area and always strive to make "greatest-good" choices that benefit the entire audience. If you are not comfortable managing a patron's requests, excuse yourself and find the House Manager.
- **Handicap/Shuttle Exit** at the amphitheater should never be used by patrons who are walking due to the dangerous and poorly lit driveway. Please direct these patrons to the front exit by the Merchandise Booth.