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**Notes from editor (not for publication):**



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

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1 Guilford Center Stage opens 2026 season with ‘Shorts’

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3 TEXT BODY:

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Photo & “Shorts” graphic attached

4 It’s “Shorts” season at Guilford Center Stage, which  
5 opens its 11th year with a program of eight short plays.  
6 Performances are Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, April 30, and  
7 May 1 and 2, at 7:30 p.m., and May 2 at 2 p.m. at Broad Brook  
8 Community Center.

9 Half of the playwrights are known in the area theater  
10 community, and the other half, gathered through a search, are  
11 from other states.

12 The show opens with “Of Mice and Zen,” by Susan  
13 O’Hara, Jessey Ina-Lee, and Georgie Runkle, who describe the  
14 play as “a light-hearted encounter between a feisty woman and a  
15 helpful police officer.” Dyana Lee directs.

16 Next up is “A Blessing” by Jennifer O’Grady, of New York  
17 City, who describes her work: “On the morning her big  
18 departure, Lil and her mom Carly spar over their differing ideas of  
19 religion and what constitutes ‘comfort’ for those who remain  
20 behind.” Director is John Moran.

21 Two women, walking their dogs, meet in a park, with  
22 surprising results, in “He Looks Like a Burrito,” by local actor and  
23 playwright Rebecca Saunders, directed by Kay Beckett.

24 Guilford Center Stage producer Don McLean directs the  
25 first performance since its 1964 debut, at Boston University, of his  
26 “Cows and Other Esoterica,” in which new students encounter  
27 both the vastness of a large university and each other.

28 Sue Kelly, assistant producer and stage manager for  
29 “Shorts,” is also on the bill with her short play, “Strangers,” a  
30 chance meeting of a young man and an older woman in a  
31 sandwich shop. The playwright directs.

32 An artist painting a landscape contends with passers-by  
33 critics in “The Sky,” by R.A. Pauli, of Edgewater, Maryland,  
34 directed by Kay Beckett.

35 In “Meeting Fingerman,” by Mark Evan Chimsky, of  
36 Portland, Maine, a novice writer — of a story set in a Jewish  
37 village in Eastern Europe — meets his idol, the literary lion of  
38 Yiddish fiction. Robert Marcus is director.

39 Playwright James McLindon, of Northampton,  
40 Massachusetts, comments, “Asking the person you love to marry  
41 you should be easy, but the path of love rarely is,” describing his  
42 play, “Path of Love,” which closes the show. Sue Kelly directs.

43 "Shorts" actors, in order of appearance, are Evelyn  
44 McLean, Tino Benson, Laura Lockie, Emily Reid, Denise Evans,  
45 Lois Scott-Conley, Nick Morgan, Sean Fitzharris, Brandy  
46 Reynolds, Ragan Anderson, Gabriel Capy, Sue Kelly, Tracy Berchi,  
47 Rus Janis, Dyana Lee, Michael Sola, and Randy Lichtenwalner.

48 In addition to producers Don McLean and Sue Kelly, and  
49 the casts and directors, the show comes to the stage thanks to  
50 scenic painters Nancy Detra and S. Rose Watson, principal  
51 stagehand Brandy Reynolds, and lighting designer Julie Holland,  
52 with assistance from the Guilford Center Stage Advisory Board,  
53 sponsoring organization Broad Brook Grange, and Broad Brook  
54 Community Center.

55 General admission tickets are \$16 and are only available  
56 at the door for this show, which includes sales tax (cash, check  
57 payable to "Guilford Center Stage," or Venmo or Paypal.) Broad  
58 Brook Community Center is located at 3940 Guilford Center  
59 Road in Guilford, just under four miles west of the Guilford  
60 Country Store, and is fully accessible.

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