



Courtesy of Christie Storms

GOOD MORNING...Thor (Alex Oleksij), center) tries in vain to make a point to his sister-in-law Arry (Debbie Badal, left) while his wife Cora (Jackie Levine, right) and her sister Esther (Sharon McGuire, sitting) suppress their laughter in WCP's 'Morning's at Seven'.

Finding Humor in the Bittersweet: 'Mornings at Seven' is a Tender Look At Life

By DEVON GOHDE

WESTFIELD — Opening their 2026-2027 season, the Westfield Community Players premiered Paul Osborn's 'Mornings at Seven,' di-

rected by Greg Northam. Set in a small Midwestern town in the 1920's four aging sisters who live close to each other find themselves caught in regrets, secrets, and what they can change before it's too late.

Cora (Jackie Levine) lives with her husband Thor (Alex Oleksij) and her unwed sister Aaronetta "Arry" (Debbie Badal) across from the front porch is their sister Ida's (Terri Spinellis) backyard where she lives with her husband Carl (Allen Roberts) and 40-year-old son Homer (Dale Monroe). Not too far from their home are their oldest sister, Esther "Estie" (Sharon McGuire), and her husband, David (David Williams), who doesn't allow her to see her sisters and their husbands, calling them all "morons."

Preparing to meet Homer's long-time girlfriend, Myrtle (Amy Lewis), for the first time, the sisters find themselves questioning the choices they have made over the years and wondering how much time they have left to fix them.

The small, intimate setting of Cora and Ida's home, designed by Jackie Hartley, brings a sense of coziness to the production by showing the small corner of the world the sisters have. Paired with the cast's unbreakable chemistry on stage.

The standouts of the production are, of course, the four sisters. Alone, each actress wonderfully represents each sister and where they stand in their dynamic, but together they are a powerful stage presence. Their conversations and small jabs at each other's troubles feel completely natural to the group, as if these women have known each other for years. Levine's Cora is pragmatic but subtly shows the audience that she is under pressure to keep the family together. Arry, who is more carefree and eccentric, is where Badal shines through, revealing the warmth beneath her big personality.

Spinelli brings a different comedic approach to her character, the high-strung Ida, trying to make sense

of the chaos unfolding around her, using more of her facial reactions to elicit laughs from the audience. McGuire's Esther is vulnerable but truly brings out her character development throughout the story. Her performance captures both the humor and vulnerability of Esther, who is overwhelmed as her familiar world changes around her.

Oleksij, Roberts, and Williams, as Thor, Carl, and David, bring a different type of eccentricity to the world of the sisters. Oleksij gives Thor a grounded, understated quality, finding the comedy in his attempts to maintain some sense of reason amid the confusion. Roberts brings a more animated energy to Carl, creating a character whose reactions and timing add an extra spark to the ensemble. Williams' David is equally engaging, coming off more rigid than the other two husbands but slowly revealing the warmth that he tries to hide.

Homer and Amy show a different side of growing old: while they may seem young to their relatives, they, too, are scared they are running out of time to enjoy life's simple pleasures. Together, Monroe and Lewis have a natural rhythm. Where Homer is more high-strung and nervous about everything that can go wrong, Myrtle sees the beauty and simple joys around her.

'Mornings at Seven,' while filled with humorous moments that brought the theatre to an uproar of laughter, is bittersweet. Taking a realistic look at what it means to grow old and look back on the life you have lived, wondering if it's truly what you wanted from this one life. It is more than a charming comedy—it is a gentle reminder to appreciate the ordinary moments of our lives, to embrace the people who share them with us, and to look forward to the time we still have rather than remaining trapped by what should have been done in the past.

The show continues through October 18. For tickets and showtimes visit wcptheatre.org.