Greetings!

Below you will find information regarding the audition process for our upcoming production of David Bottrell and Jessie Jones’s *Dearly Departed*. Please read through the packet carefully. It’s my hope that this will better prepare you for your audition. If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. The rehearsal calendar will be online in a few days. Thank you for your interest and I hope to see you on December 6th!

Cheers!

Mrs. T

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Auditions: Tuesday, December 6th from 3:30 – 6:00 p.m. in the theatre room

Callback (if needed): Wednesday, December 7th from 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Rehearsals: *Typically* Monday – Friday from 3:30 – 5:30 (Rehearsal calendar will be out shortly)

One-Night One-Act Performance: Wednesday, February 15th at 7:00 p.m.

UIL Contest Date: Saturday, February 18th at Ryan High School
SUGGESTIONS FOR BEFORE THE AUDITION

1. Read the Play
   a. All actors are highly encouraged to have read *Dearly Departed* prior to auditioning. I cannot stress how useful this can be. Reading the play will be immeasurably helpful as it will allow you to make informed, appropriate choices during auditions. Due to copyright, I am not able to put *Dearly Departed* online for you to read, but even if you are not currently in a theatre class, you are more than welcome to check out a copy from me.

2. Practice your Audition
   a. I understand it is difficult to prepare for cold readings, however, practice reading aloud with inflection and emotion. This will help your audition stand out. Rather than just “reciting the lines” you will be able to bring the character off the page; and don’t be afraid to make bold choices. Therefore, practice your pieces for others. Don’t let audition day be the first time anyone has heard it.

3. Sign up for an Audition Slot
   a. Before auditioning please sign up for an audition slot on the side whiteboard in Mrs. T’s theatre room - F103. Please pick up and fill out the required form next to the sign-up sheet. Audition forms will be due to by Friday, December 2nd. The reason for the sign-up is to get a feeling for how many individuals will be auditioning and better gauge our time.

WHAT I’M LOOKING FOR

I’m looking for actors with good fundamentals- vocal energy, diction, clear motivation (knowing what you want with each line) and confidence. I am also looking for actors who make and commit to bold physical, vocal and emotional choices. Don’t be afraid to take risks and go outside of your comfort zone! Each character in *Dearly Departed* is complex and demonstrates an array of emotion and motivation; your audition should reflect this complexity. Please see character descriptions below.

This is an important note – These auditions are open to 7th and 8th grade students who are currently enrolled/ or have been enrolled in an HMS theatre class, worked on a production with Mrs. Turek, or are currently members of Jr. Thespian Troupe #88870 (or being inducted in December). In addition, all individuals who are interested in being a part of the UIL Company of “Dearly Departed” must go through the acting audition, even if you are only interested in a technical position. There is an additional question on the audition form that is specifically geared towards tech. Please answer the question honestly and thoughtfully for consideration. Lastly, the rehearsal schedule is rather rigorous for One-Act. Please see the rehearsal schedule (coming next week) for the time commitment.
CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS *(Please note some roles may be combined and or cut)*

**MEN**

**BUD TURPIN** (Mid 60’s): An elderly man

**RAY-BUD** (Mid 30’s): He is Bud’s elder son and is married to Lucille. As the only sibling with a paying job (He’s a mechanic who works for Clyde’s Auto Repair and Body Shop), Ray-Bud is saddled with the responsibility of paying for his father’s funeral. Needless to say, he’s resentful. He hates funerals, and while he loves his family, he wishes they would just go away. Nevertheless, he’s determined to get the job done, even if it means taking a drink or two to get through it all.

**JUNIOR** (Early 30’s): He is Ray-Bud’s younger brother, and is married to Suzanne. Like her, he is a dreamer, but he’s a failed entrepreneur, and his dreams have gone sour. He has recently had an affair (in the Kmart parking lot) and must try to make amends to his angry wife.

**ROYCE** (Late 20’s): He is Marguerite’s younger son, unmarried, and unemployed. His dream is to live on welfare and do as little as possible. He must cope with his difficult, judgmental mother, and fights back as best he can. He’s not the world’s brightest guy, but there’s something likeable about him.

**REVEREND HOOKER** (Any age): Although he tries to be diplomatic, he feels over-worked and put-upon by his difficult flock. He’s given to platitudes. He has an embarrassing attack of Montezuma’s revenge at the funeral!

**CLYDE** (Mid 30’s): He is Ray-Bud’s boss and owner of Clyde’s Auto Repair and Body Shop. He’s a loyal good ol’ boy, eager to help Ray-Bud get revenge on Cecil DePew, owner of the funeral parlor. This actor

**NORVAL** (late 70’s): An ancient man with every illness under the sun who speaks only in grunts
WOMEN

RAYNELLE (Mid 60’s): She is the widow of Bud Turpin and mother of Ray-Bud, Junior and Delightful. She’s a basically nice woman, religious, diplomatic, and eager to keep the peace with her difficult family members. She is not at all sorry that her husband has died, since they haven’t gotten along for 36 of their 39 years of marriage. She is funny in an ironic sort of way.

LUCILLE (Mid 30’s): She is Ray-Bud’s wife. Her one great sorrow is that they are childless, due to her numerous miscarriages. She is a down-to-earth, no-nonsense woman with a sense of humor who steps up and takes charge of the funeral arrangements while trying to keep Ray-Bud and the rest of the family on an even keel.

SUZANNE (Early 30’s): She is married to Junior and mother to a bunch of impossible children. She imagines herself to be a wonderful singer (but isn’t). She imagined her life with Junior would be wildly romantic, but it has turned out to be deeply disappointing, and she never lets Junior forget it. She is highly emotional, nervous, and given to headaches. She loves being the center of attention. Although he’s been unfaithful, deep down, she loves her husband. (MUST SING)

MARGUERITE (50’s): She is Bud’s younger sister and mother of Royce (and another son who is in jail). She is very worried about Royce’s lack of motivation and his Godless ways. She is also very religious, judgmental, and a holier-than-thou, bossy nag, but she actually means well. (MUST SING)

DELIGHTFUL (Early 20’s): She is Raynelle’s and Bud’s youngest child (She was a “surprise” baby!). Obese (or played as high metabolism) and virtually silent, she deals with her sorrows by eating constantly. She is probably not too bright. Although she has little to say, she’s very funny!

NADINE (Late 20’s): She shows up for the viewing and funeral. She has been married multiple times, has eight children, all of whom are named for celebrities, and is very pregnant with number nine. She may not be the brightest candle on the cake, but she’s a tremendous talker!

JUANITA (early 30’s): She is a cousin-by-marriage to the Turpins. Stylish, sophisticated, and catty, she has made the only “good” marriage of the bunch, a fact she never fails to rub the other women’s noses in, but secretly, her marriage is crumbling.

VEDA (70’s): Another family friend, Veda is married to Norval and is his primary caregiver. Despite having to care for her husband’s many needs, she is cheerful, upbeat, and a great talker.
THE JOY OF LIFE SINGERS: This mixed chorus appears in two scenes and must be able to sing without accompaniment. Need at least three, but will double as other parts.

AUDITIONS AND CALLBACKS

Who will be there?

There will be a panel of educators at the audition.

What do I do?

Each auditioner is required to go through the cold reading process, which is reading from sides of the script (including dialogue and monologues). Above all, relax and have fun in your audition.

Do I stay the whole time?

Plan on being there the entire time, as I hope to see people read multiple times, but it could be that you are done early. Do not read into it at all if you are told that you are finished early. It could be that we saw everything that we needed to see already! You will get to read at least once for your first choice in role preference.

What are callbacks and when would they happen?

Callbacks are purely a way for directors to see you again. Being called back has no indication at all as to whether you’re going to be cast. *If these are needed*, they will occur on December 7th from 3:30 - 5:30. Actors will most likely be reading sides again from *Dearly Departed* if callbacks are needed, but be prepared for anything! A cast list will be posted as soon as possible after callbacks, but no later than 7:00 p.m. on Friday December 9th.