



Tom Barrett
Mayor, City of Milwaukee

January 20, 2011

Dear Friends,

In 2010, Milwaukee added an essential event to our thriving arts scene with our first free Shakespeare in the Park. Produced by Optimist Theatre in cooperation with Alverno College, Shakespeare in the Park brought live theatre to thousands of Milwaukee residents with no charge for admission.

The Tempest, Optimist Theatre's 2010 production, was a popular and critical success. Starring Scrooge himself, James Pickering as Prospero, the play was created entirely by local professional artists and production personnel. In 2011 Milwaukee audiences will be treated to Shakespeare's masterful romantic comedy *Twelfth Night*. Mr. Pickering will star as Malvolio under the direction of resident Milwaukee Rep actor Laura Gordon.

Shakespeare in the Park brings more to our city than a first-rate play. It is a festival, with musical performances, picnicking, and other outdoor celebration. It drives business to local restaurants and other venues, helps make Milwaukee attractive to new and growing businesses, and enhances our reputation as "The Festival City."

I enthusiastically endorse Shakespeare in the Park for its efforts. I encourage all Milwaukeeans to partake in this public celebration of the arts.

Sincerely

Tom Barrett
Mayor