



Dec. 19, 2003

Contact: Lisa A. Fellers  
Director of Communications  
Office: (817) 531-4498  
Cell: (817) 874-8683  
lfellers@txwes.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Texas Wesleyan department chair receives royalty check for original play  
*Playwright says she'd 'rather be teaching'***

FORT WORTH, Dec. 19 – Connie Whitt-Lambert’s original play “The Radio Show: It’s a Wonderful Life,” was performed Dec. 3-5 by Southwestern Oklahoma State University Theatre. Whitt-Lambert is currently a professor of theatre and department chair at Texas Wesleyan University. Oklahoma’s performance is the third production of the play, having been previously performed only by Texas Wesleyan theatre troupes at Stage West and Circle Theatre. Wesleyan alumnus Mike Skipper, who currently produces shows on Broadway in New York, directed both Wesleyan performances.

Whitt-Lambert wrote the play in 1999 specifically for Texas Wesleyan as part of a fundraiser for the visual and performing arts fund.

“Claudia Stepp had started a fund for visual and performing arts, and she loved ‘It’s a Wonderful Life,’ so I researched it, looked into copyrights and wrote the script,” says Whitt-Lambert. Stepp is on the board of trustees at Wesleyan.

The play is a comedy, set backstage in a radio station while the station is preparing to air the Christmas classic: “It’s a Wonderful Life.” It showcases the quirks and chaos behind major productions while still delivering heartwarming scenes reminiscent of Jimmy Stewart’s

-more-

Dec. 19 – Playwright Says She'd Rather Be Teaching, page 2.

memorable performance.

Whitt-Lambert has been writing scripts since she was in seventh grade when her family started moving to accommodate her father's career as an electrical engineer. Always the new kid, Whitt-Lambert says living in so many places inspired her to write.

"I've had lots of adventures because we moved around so much. It's easy to write when you've had a lot of adventures," says Whitt-Lambert.

C. C. Clere, Whitt-Lambert's late uncle, played a large role in Whitt-Lambert's development as a playwright. Clere was an actor and musician who performed vaudeville-style. He gave Whitt-Lambert her encouragement and her first typewriter.

"He worked with stars such as Tex Ritter, who was John Ritter's father, and Grandpa Jones. He played a character on the radio called Nimrod and was a violinist. He was my first supporter," says Whitt-Lambert.

Several of Whitt-Lambert plays have been produced over the years, and though she may enjoy the royalty checks, she says she'd rather be teaching.

"Working with kids on their plays, seeing your students succeed at something you love is a real vicarious thrill," says Whitt-Lambert. "I used to do this (write and produce scripts) as a living, but I missed teaching. I love the interaction with the kids, seeing their faces when they get it. ... I enjoy it and I want to do what I enjoy."

###