

***Crimes of the Heart* brings tears and laughter to Playmakers' stage**

by Desirée Waguespack

Who knew that a play about murder and suicide could be so funny?

Dark humor successfully walks the fine line between tragedy and comedy in Playmakers' production of *Crimes of the Heart*, on stage at the community theatre through May 27.

Perfectly directed and cast by veteran director Anne Pourciau, it's easy for audiences to forget they are watching amateur theatre. This is a "must see" for mature patrons, though strong language and mature themes make it inappropriate for young teens and children.

Crimes of the Heart, which won a Pulitzer Prize in 1981, was written by Mississippi native Beth Henley. It is the story of three sisters living in Hazelhurst, Miss., who are so different, yet, incomplete without each other.

The play tells how the three dysfunctional Botrelle sisters, all loaded with lots of emotional-baggage, unite to survive their chaotic lives, which includes suicide, attempted murder, adultery, loneliness and a deformed ovary.

The strange sibling bond is illustrated excellently by **Megan Eddy** as Babe, the youngest sister; **Denise Centola** as Meg, the middle sister; and, **Melissa Cretin** as Lenny, the eldest.

Veteran Playmakers actress **Wendy Schneider** as



Melissa Cretin, as Lenny, Wendy Schneider, as "Chick the Stick," and, Denise Centola, as Meg, are featured in Playmakers production of *Crimes of the Heart*, on stage through May 27.

first cousin, Chick the Stick, gives an outstanding performance. Her authentic 1960s polyester outfits add to the production, especially for those nostalgic, or not, for printed, wide-legged bell bottoms.

Other stand-outs, **Michael Eddy** as Doc Porter and **Kyle Riche** as Barnette Lloyd, provide some of the play's more humorous moments.

Russell Krogsgard, with assistance from Director Pourciau and **Norman Pourciau**, have created a realistic 1960s kitchen, complete with authentic appliances and furnishings. Stage Manager **Patricia Gunderson**, assisted by crew members **Tim Gunderson** and **Peter Barszcski**, keep the pace moving briskly. Lighting is handled by **Randy Perkins** and light-

ing technicians **Mary West**, **Mike West** and **Nicholas West**.

Not enough can be said about the great musical score, orchestrated by Sound Technician **Catie West**, who seems to know exactly what music is needed to convey and enhance the play's emotional themes.

The play poster was designed by Schneider, with **Ellen O'Connell** handling publicity.

Performances of *Crimes of the Heart* continue on May 18, 19, 25 and 26 at 8 p.m., with 2 p.m. matinees on May 20 and 27. Playmakers Theatre is located at 19106 Playmakers Rd., off Hwy. 437, north of Covington. For reservations call 893-1671 or visit www.playmakersinc.com. If available, tickets will also be sold at the door.