



# Crosseyed Rascals

*the clean edge of comedy*

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## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE RASCALS

The Crosseyed Rascals have been blazing a trail across the local improvisational theatre scene since forming in 2001. The three founding members shared a vision of a Christian improv troupe that could rely solely on clean comedy, bringing pure, joyous laughter to audiences. On February 2, 2001 they had their first meeting to dream about what such a troupe might look like and what its purpose would be. When it came time to decide a name a week later, one proposed "crosseyed," another "rascals," the third suggested melding the ideas, and together they became the Crosseyed Rascals! From there, the idea of a clean-comedy troupe snowballed and practices began.

From the beginning, troupe members have met for at least three hours every week to hone their skills and develop new ones. Eager to learn, the Rascals have also brought in other experienced improvisers such as Herbie Barnes (Second City), Justin Deeley (Spleen Jockeys), Aaron Merke, Ken Rudderham (ACME Improv), and Rick Skene (University of Winnipeg) for workshops.

The Rascals are more than just a comedy troupe: they are a faith community, interacting according to Biblical principles as they live, laugh, play, and work together. Membership has always been fluid, as many of the troupe members are at the "life-change" stage: beginning or finishing university programs, getting engaged or married, leaving on mission trips, or starting down career paths, and so have come and gone as necessary. A five-year reunion/birthday show in 2006 revealed that 26 improvisers have been Rascals at one time or another! The current performing roster stands at five (see **Troupe Bios** for more details).

The Crosseyed Rascals have had over *one hundred* public & private performances at and for: churches, universities, corporations, businesses, charities, non-profit groups, fund-raisers, fringe and other festivals, special events all the way from Edmonton, AB to Toronto, ON. They even taught a workshop in Anaheim, CA! They are listed with the Artists in the Schools program run by the Manitoba Arts Council and defined their legal status as a workers' co-operative in 2005. In 2007, they coached Arthur Leach's junior high improv team through a government grant awarded to the school.

Public performances are scheduled roughly every six weeks during the regular theatre season (September to April), with private performances sandwiched in between. Because of the unpredictable nature of improvisational comedy, no two shows are ever alike. Although the performers will arrive with a "game plan" or "set," the enacted scenes are then based by suggestions solicited from the audience right then and there, resulting in high-energy performances suitable for all ages! A show can vary in length from thirty (30) to ninety (90) minutes, depending on the requirements of an organizer. The Crosseyed Rascals work hard to ensure that each and every show is a safe environment for young and old alike to have some good, clean, wholesome fun!

For more information, contact:

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