

The OP Happening

February 2010



Greetings All!

While we're still in the midst of winter, the promise of spring is around the corner and, with it, Orange Players will be mounting the production of Picnic previously postponed from the fall. We are happy to report that our production staff is in place and we look forward to auditions in April. In addition to actors, we invite anyone interested in dipping his or her feet into the theatrical waters to participate in the technical aspects of the production. We will need people to help put up sets, hang lights, gather props, act as ushers, gather advertising and help move scenery (among other things) during the show. While the actors get to take bows, the production staff is the real unsung hero of any show. It's a great way to become involved in the show without the time commitment of numerous rehearsals or opening night jitters. If this sounds tempting to you, call or email me (see below) and I'll connect you to the right people.

I'd also like to invite you to our next membership meeting on March 24th at 7:30 p.m. at the High Plains Community Center (in the café). Our director, Pat Miller, will discuss the production, the roles and casting and other members of the production staff will be available for questions or comments.

It is also my hope that we will have another opportunity for a social event early in the spring. March is always such a dreary month and a gathering of theatre people always livens the day. Suggestions for events, fundraisers, etc. are always welcome.

Well, it's back to rehearsal for me. I look forward to seeing you in the no-so-distant future.

Cheers,

Suzanne Powers, Co-President

Phone: 203-520-1805

Email: singingscientist@comcast.net



COME ONE, COME ALL.....

General Membership Meeting March 24, 2010

It would be great to see everyone at our next general membership meeting in January. The meeting will be in the cafeteria of High Plains Community Center at 7:30 p.m. One of our goals this year will be to expand our membership through new members and rekindling our past thesbian friendships! Please join us on this night and learn more about our community and theater!

Performance Committee Report



AUDITIONS FOR "PICNIC"

Auditions for the Orange Players production of William Inge's "Picnic" will be held on Tuesday, April 13th and Wednesday, April 14th from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at High Plains Community Center, 525 Orange Center Rd, Orange, CT. Callbacks, if necessary, will be held Thursday, April 15th. Production dates are June 11th, 12th, 18th & 19th at High Plains Community Center. "Picnic" will be directed by Pat Miller and produced by Patt Brotschul.

"Picnic" opened on Broadway in 1950, featuring the young Paul Newman in his first Broadway role. "Picnic" was made into a movie in 1955, starring Kim Novak and William Holden. Inge's work springs from the heartland of America, illuminating the lives of ordinary men and women as they struggle to overcome problems from circumstances that have spun out of their control - a whirlwind beyond their understanding. The characters are beautifully delineated. The action of "Picnic" takes place in the adjoining back yards of neighbors in Kansas whose major focus of attention at the moment is on the upcoming picnic, a highlight of the social life of the town. A handsome drifter appears, who precipitates a series of unplanned events.

Young actors are encouraged to audition, since the cast includes teens as well as middle aged actors.

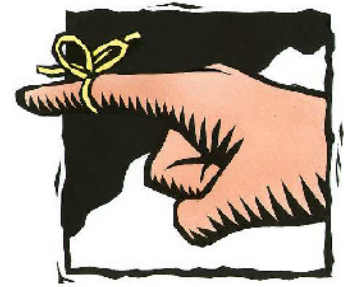
There may be some flexibility in ages for some of the characters, depending on the tryout population.

Backstage, artistic and construction crew members are also needed, as well as other production staff.

For more information, call 203-397-8915 or 203-506-8227

REMINDER FROM THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE:

It's never too late! If you haven't remitted your annual dues or know of a potential new member - please contact Bruce Spiewak; OP Membership Chairperson; 945 Red Fox Road, Orange, CT 06477 - \$15 Regular/\$25 Sponsor/\$50 Angel - Thanks! - Bruce



SHOUT- OUTS!

- Kudos to Pat Miller and Bill Taylor who presented a wonderful program of staged readings at our January membership meeting. Fun was had by all!

- Bravo to Co-President Suzanne Powers Spanulo who just ended a great role in "Forum" at Center Stage. Be sure to catch her upcoming appearance in "Oliver" at the Warner Theater 3/20 - 3/28.

Let us know what YOU are doing - send your shout outs to Susan Kulp at thekulps4@aol.com by March 15th to be included in the next newsletter.

READING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Reading Committee finished its work for recommending non-musical shows for the 2010-11 season. We have recommended the Board choose one from A.R. Gurney's drama "Scenes from American Life"; the zany comedy "Dearly Departed" or a mystery "Laura". All have medium size casts and were critically acclaimed shows when first published. The Committee felt any of these shows would be a good choice. I want to thank the Reading Committee members, Suzanne Powers, Patricia Miller, Marianne Miller, Jackie Koral and Robin Lewis for their hours of work on reading and discussing many plays, and finally on recommending three for the Board's final decision.

- Ken Lenz

ATTENTION STAGE CRAFTERS!!

The set for "Picnic" is under development by our Technical Director John Miller. Soon many people will be needed in various capacities to build set pieces and flats and assist with set painting and set dressing.

If you would like to participate in the backstage artistic and technical aspect of PICNIC please contact John Miller at: JHMDESIGN@SBCGLOBAL.NET

Calling All Directors!

Orange Players is extending an open call to all Directors, Musical Directors, and Choreographers for their autumn production of "I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change".

A musical comedy with book and lyrics by Joe DiPietro and music by Jimmy Roberts. It is the second-longest running Off Broadway musical and was nominated for the Outer Critics Circle Award as Outstanding Off-Broadway musical in 1997.

Orange Players is planning to mount the production during the first two weeks of November 2010. Anyone wishing to apply for a position on the directorial staff must provide copies of their current resume and references (including contact information) to Orange Players no later than June 1, 2010.

Submissions can be mailed to: **Orange Players; Attn: Marianne Miller; P.O. Box 1162; Orange, CT 06477** or via e-mail to Marianne_Miller@sbcglobal.net

We are also soliciting **Producers** for this production. If you have an interest in Producing please contact Marianne Miller at Marianne_Miller@sbcglobal.net

Another Opening.....

It is difficult to believe that we are already half way through our 2009/2010 season. Our Wizard of Oz sing a long; decorating the Orange Players tree at the Library; play selection for the upcoming season; teaming up with the Orange Arts and Culture Council and preparation for our Spring production of "Picnic" has kept us a pretty busy. It is an exhilarating and rewarding feeling to be part of the planning and execution of artistic events in and for our community. And although our season is not over we must always be planning and looking ahead to ensure that Orange Players is a vital party of our community and holds a treasured place in our hearts.

Key to those efforts is our Board of Orange Players. These individuals do a great deal to keep the organization moving in a positive direction with the support and encouragement of the general membership. And as the current season moves into its second half it is time to begin thinking about our Board for the 2010/2011 season. I would like to extend an offer to each and every one of you to consider joining us on the Board for the upcoming season. My hope is that members new to the organization as well as members in long standing would work together on the upcoming Board bringing both experience and diverse perspectives.

If you have an interest in joining us on the Board or perhaps have questions about our efforts and responsibilities, please do not hesitate to contact me at 203-506-8227. I would be more than happy to discuss your interests and any questions you may have.

Allow me to express my thanks for your consideration and my best wishes for the continued success of Orange Players and the 2009/2010 Board.

Best Regards,

Patt Brotschal

President Elect



HISTORIAN'S CORNER

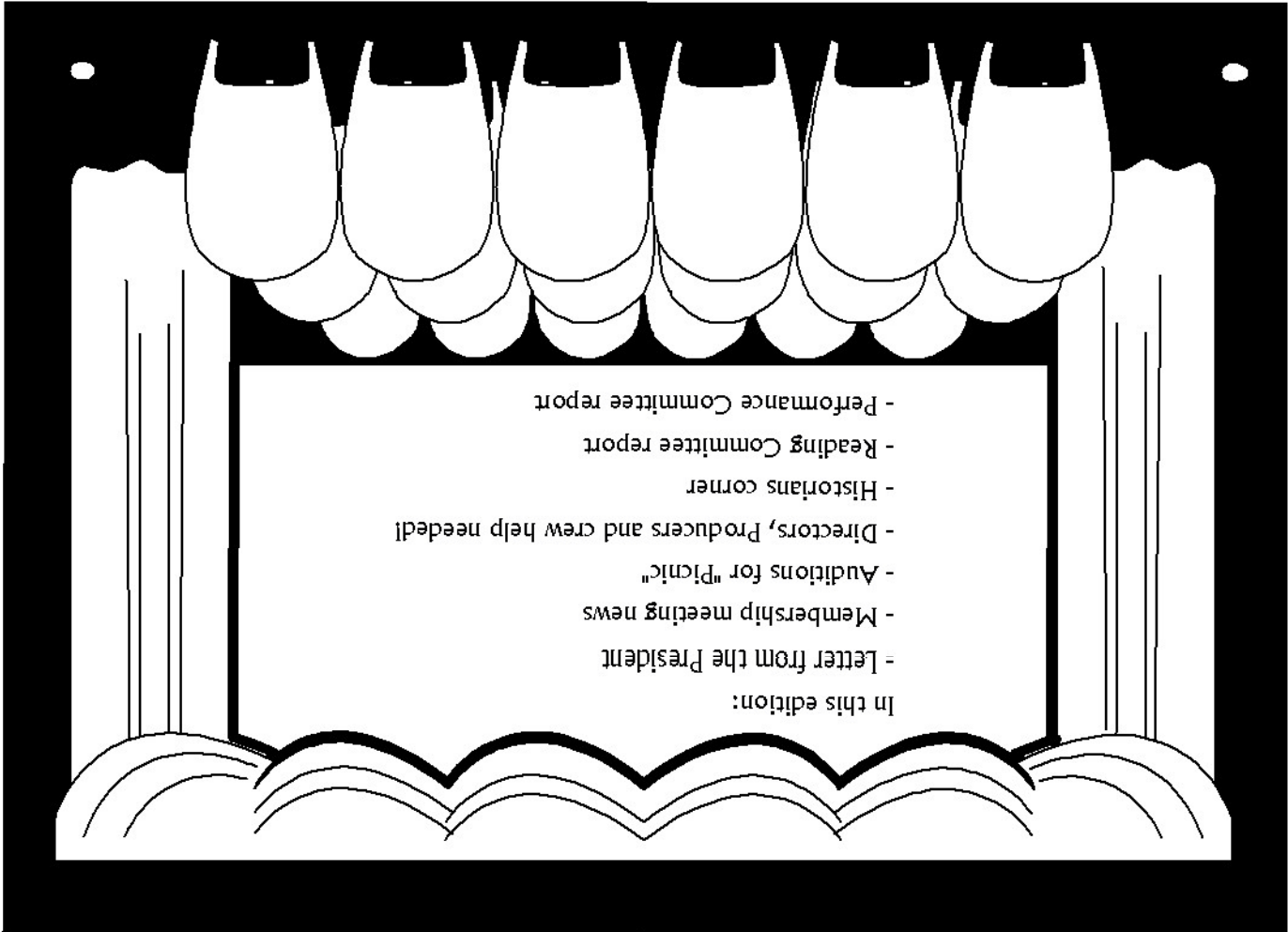


In the OP production of “Anything Goes” (1977) we had a set of varying platform heights on which over 50 members of the cast tap danced. Director Janet Arena set up dance workshops for the cast that took place throughout the rehearsal period. With very few exceptions, all cast members wore dance shoes and tapped like pros!! We did all of our major musicals at Amity High School before asbestos removal, total renovation and cost changed our course.

In the first production of “Fiddler” (979) directed by Fran and Gary Scarpa, a bench slowly gave way during a major chorus number. No one was hurt, and the four or five seated women went with the flow and continued singing as they rose and the bench slowly gave way! Also in that show was a memorable moment when Teyve forgot an entrance and left Motel onstage alone for what seemed a very long time. Motel (Howard Sherman) improvised brilliantly—praying, talking moving—until finally Tevye entered! Howard was then either a student at Amity High School or in college. Since then he has had a successful career in the theatre. His many professional commitments have included Publicity Director at Hartford Stage, Artistic Director of the renowned O’Neill Festival in Waterford, CT and is presently Executive Director of ANTA, the giver of the Tony Awards. Not bad for a kid from Orange!

The last Historian’s Corner, written by Christine Gill, brought back many memories and occasioned a few tears from all of us who knew Maury. When he first came to the Orange Players, he was just a teenager, playing the role of the youngest son in the Wang household, and over the years became an integral part of the group—a choreographer, director, actor, dancer—and most of all—a treasured friend. He is missed.

Hunter Spence, former Prop Master at the Yale Repertory Theatre, contributed much to our productions and to the development of our skills in technical theatre. He took us on tours of the Yale Rep, presented long term workshops for us in scene painting and construction techniques and designed sets and oversaw construction for “Music Man”, “Hello Dolly”, and “South Pacific”, among others. He also was called in at the last minute to add final touches to the set for “Carousel”. He has retired as prop master, but still teaches prop making at the Yale School of Drama. He was recently the subject of a feature article in the Yale Alumni Bulletin.



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