

When you change the way you look at
things, the things you look at change.

Newsletter of the Heritage Hunt Little Theater



Play Time

August 2005

From the Prez

by Murray Schooner

I suspect everyone is excited as I am, about our upcoming production. We have a most able Director in Alan Mager. I hope by now we have been able to find a "A Few Good Men" to try out for, and fill all of our roles.

I'm also excited about the progress we are making in Sound and Light equipment, which will be enjoyed by us, hopefully as soon as our upcoming show, increase the professionalism of our productions, and also be available to everyone that conducts events in the ballroom. We are really blessed with having a number of enthusiastic, skillful sound and light volunteers who are anxious to provide their time and all of their many talents to improving our performances. Wouldn't it be nice, if whenever you needed a major home improvement, that all you only had to do was write a check for the hardware, and "consider it done"—the research, the shopping, the shipping, the installation, and the maintenance were free....WOW! Thanks again to Yablonski and his merry men.

The Readers Theater Workshop is drawing a crowd, and are not only enjoying themselves, but also entertaining the rest of us as well, which is what we are all about. I look forward to seeing more of them soon, and am still anxious myself, to be a part of that group. Everyone is welcome to attend a meeting at any time, to read, and to play a part in entertainment, without having to tax our strained skills of memorization.

Remember—if you want to be an active participant in our many activities, especially our stage productions, there is, I believe, always room for more volunteers. If you want to be in our Spring 2006 production, whether as an actor or part of the crew, just whisper that to our Director Bets Knepley.



Highlights

Where is Fantasy Land?

What's up with AOTD?

What did Clare Keating do?

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Treasurer's Report

by Helen Esposito, Treasurer

Greetings from your new Treasurer. I was delighted to write my first check to the LSTV group for new, improved lighting for our ballroom. As approved at our July General Meeting we donated \$5,850 to this project. The only other check written in July was \$154.31 for expenses associated with *Afraid of the Dark*. As of July 31, our checkbook balance is \$3,644.54.

Play & Movie Reviews

by Murray Schooner, President

I decided, instead of a party, to celebrate my latest birthday by spending a week in NYC. Lorraine and I, besides having a deli night and terrific hot bagels every morning, attended five Broadway Shows.

As we always do, we purchased all our tickets for 50% off, at the Discount Ticketplace in Times Square (some shows are only 35% off). Only one time did we have to wait in line more than 10 or 15 minutes. All of our seats were very good.

Here are my comments on the shows (my first attempt as a theater critic):

Sweet Charity—Not too exciting....Charity could have had more than one costume; disappointing; did not live up to the billboards.

Beauty and The Beast—This is not just for kids—this is theater at its best. Costumes, music, scenery, incredible staging—special effects were delightful. Never a dull moment. Don't wait until the grandchildren are old enough. Go see it yourself and then you'll go again, when the grandchildren are ready. Tell all your friends.

La Cage aux Faux—The audience spent more time on their feet applauding than they did in their seats. It is a good story—very funny with romance and poignancy. The music is great, the dancing girls, (well,

July Meeting Highlights

by Joan DeBell, Secretary

Helen Esposito accepted the position of HHLT Treasurer. Member-at-Large position is open. Membership voted to donate \$5,850 to the LSTV Team, chaired by Ed Yablonski. With these funds, the LSTV Team will purchase lights and sound equipment that will make a great improvement in the quality of our productions as well as for other HH organizations. The Publicity is working on a packet of information for new and prospective members.

men), were incredibly talented. They brought the house down. Not just because they were brave, they were also good. And don't believe those other critics—Robert Goulet was very entertaining and can still carry a tune. He did a fine job.

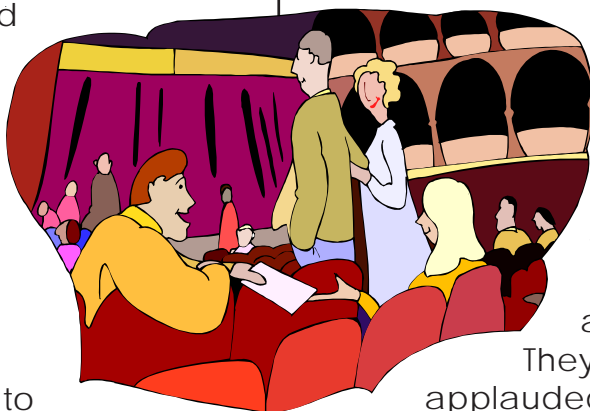
Light in The Piazza—at The Lincoln Center. Mostly in Italian and rather operatic. The language is not a problem...they cleverly repeat in English. Super scenery. Good ro-

matic comedy, beautiful to listen to, beautiful scenery, wonderful voices. If you can't get opera tickets, or can't afford the opera, I urge you to see this show.

Steel Magnolias—The audience was electric.

They were excited. They applauded each member of the cast, when they came on stage.—because they knew them from television. I thought the story was just ok—a slow show. Maybe I was tired. I didn't like it. Lorraine liked it more than I did. I would have disliked it even more if I had paid full price.

Cinderella Man—We also saw a movie. If your parents were living in the U.S. during The Depression, or if you were a baby then and can't remember, this is a must see film. Contrary to his critics, Russel Crowe did a great job. It is a true story. If you don't mind the boxing in the ring, go see it.



Afraid of the Dark

Auditions Underway

by Alan Mager, Director

As I write this, auditions are underway for our fall production, *Afraid of the Dark*. We have a good number of both male and female actors signed up for auditions, and I know I'll be able to select a fine cast for the play. As usual, it was a bit of a struggle to get enough men involved, but thanks to some recruiting by Clare Keating, I was able to sign up several newer male residents for auditions. They all seem eager to take part in theater activities, and I hope they'll become loyal and enthusiastic HHLT members.

I will announce the cast for *Afraid of the Dark* on or about August 16, and then the cast will have three weeks to get a head start on memorizing their lines before our first rehearsal on September 7. If I do a good job in selecting a cast, the rest of the preparation for the show in November will be relatively easy for me. Frankly, with the people on my audition list, I don't see how I can miss. The only difficult and unpleasant part for me will be in disappointing many good actors, because there are simply not enough roles for everyone.

We had two excellent readings of scenes from *Afraid of the Dark* at the last two Readers Theater Workshop sessions. Many of our actors had the opportunity to read entire scenes as just one character which they really seemed to enjoy. This was just fun, but the hard work of rehearsals will soon begin. Then, for two months, our production will become like a part-time job for the actors as well as behind-the-scenes personnel. Producer Bets Knepley and I will soon be approaching many of you to ask that you join the *Afraid of the Dark* production crew. Of course, volunteers are always welcome. If you have any particular area in which you'd like to work,

please contact Bets (743-1360, bjknepley@comcast.net) or me (743-5436, alanmager@comcast.net).

Thanks to Jeanne and Dave Milbradt, I have made a very worthwhile connection with Fauquier Community Theater (FCT) in Warrenton. FCT owns a large building in which they store scenery, props and costumes, and they are willing to loan us anything they are not using in current productions. Stage Manager Sandy Mills and I have visited the building twice and have selected several items that we will borrow for our production. We will also take our cast members out there to browse through their rather extensive wardrobe room. Using this resource will help keep our production costs down and give us access to items that might otherwise be difficult to obtain. Roaming through the FCT facility gave us a lot of ideas for future productions – does anyone know of a play that calls for an out-house?

I'm looking forward to working with everyone involved in *Afraid of the Dark* this fall. I think it will be a great learning experience and a lot of fun for all of us.



RTW Update

by Bets Knepley, RTW Coordinator

The Readers Theater Workshop is zipping right along. You're invited to join us.

RTW members have worked on monologues from Charlie Brown to Shakespeare. This September we'll be starting on a full length play. At our LT General Meeting in August, Lloyd King, Joyce Mancini and Joanne Smith will perform.

Coming up soon will be a session on accents with MJ Brickach.

RTW meets the first and third Saturdays at 10 AM in the craft room. **There will be NO MEETING on September 3rd.**

Dates to Remember

General Meetings

Fourth Thursday at 7 PM
in the Craft Room

Readers Theater Workshop

1st & 3rd Saturdays at 10AM
in the Craft Room

NO RTW MEETING ON Sept. 3rd

First Annual Varsity Show

Saturday, August 27th

AOTD Ticket Sales

Oct 4, 5, 6 and 7
Board Room—6 to 8pm

November Production Dates

November 1, 2, 3 & 4



A TRIP TO FANTASY LAND

by Sandy Mills, Vice President

It was an aspiring actor's dream or a child's fantasy of make-believe to find myself at the Fauquier Community Theater's (FCT) costume and props warehouse on a hot

summer day. Through the kind networking of Dave and Jean Milbradt who belong to FCT, Alan Mager and I were invited to look at the scenery, props and costumes in the warehouse to see if we could use any of it for *Afraid of the Dark*. We had a list of furniture and props which I thought would be difficult to find—Victorian furniture, a cannon, costumes for our loonies. So, armed with a digital camera we climbed the steps into the musty warren of rooms and what a delight we found!—Staircases, a fireplace, a grey rowboat with oars, a ship's wheel, and an outhouse! My imagination was working overtime! There were rooms crowded with furniture of all eras: Leather sofas, plaid sofas, loveseats, bookcases, chairs fit for a Shakespearean drama to a sled fit for Santa! They have it all.

It is obvious this collection has been accumulating for years. We found our Victorian sofa and two chairs to go with it, and some spooky pictures for the walls. Against the wall we found old suitcases just right for Chauncey and Lillums to carry. There was one room that was all hats—military hats, fedoras, straw boaters, ladies bonnets, hats of all descriptions! Another two rooms held costumes all separated by gender and color. A bold red and white tie caught my eye, one of hundreds of ties arranged on hangers. Now how could we use that? We finally decided on a royal purple velvet cloak with gold trim and a gold crown for our Queen Elizabeth, who will now be able to sweep royally onto the stage. After auditions, we may return to find more costumes. Thanks to Fauquier Community Theater for their generosity and for a wonderful trip for my imagination.



Clare Gets A Few Good Men

by Bets Knepley, Editor

Director Alan Mager was worried. He had only two men

signed up to audition for *Afraid of the Dark*. He needed six men! What to do...what to do? Ideas were tossed around and some were initiated, but it took Clare Keating to come through by convincing four men to audition!!

Curious as to how she managed to accomplish this great feat, I called her and asked how she did it. Did she charm them...or wine them...or black mail them...or perhaps coerce them by twisting their arms? (Isn't Clare a black belt?) Clare only murmured that she just chatted to them at a recent Happy Hour.

Yes, that's the magical time and place to pick up a few good men for Little Theater. She has proved that face to face contact is the best way to gain new members. Let's give Clare a big round of applause and a heartfelt thank you for remembering that and doing it!

The Auditioning Experience for the Actor and Director

by Bets Knepley, Editor

Auditioning can be a nerve wracking experience that we—actors & directors—wish we could avoid. But it is one of the many steps we must go through in order to have a great production.

Is it worth it? You bet it is—even if you, the actor, don't get the role you auditioned for or even a part in the play at all. But keep on auditioning. Casting is like placing a bet in a roulette game. You never know when your number's going to come up, but you can't win if you haven't placed a bet.

The director may have too few or too many actors auditioning. Directors always have to balance the theatre experience for the audience and the theatre experience for the participants (cast and crew). Each casting choice affects every other casting choice. It's like a domino effect. The director's job is not to select the best players but to select the right players.

Kudos to all members who auditioned and kudos to those who volunteered to be on the production staff.



Activities Committee Update Potluck Picnic

by Joyce Mancini, Activities Chair

Summertime and the livin' is easy! That was the general feeling at our gathering at Murray and Lorraine Schooner's home.

We sat and chatted. Ate and laughed. Just a wonderful relaxed afternoon. Good food—Good friends—Good times. What more could you ask for? Forty-five of our members and their spouses enjoyed the view of the pond and the gentle breezes.

If you missed this one, another opportunity is on hand. We are trying to gauge whether there is interest in attending a performance at a regional theater as a group. Would you like to attend? It would be interesting to see how other theater groups do things. It might give us some ideas as well. Let me know if you like this idea. The number to call is 1622. The lines are open and operators are waiting to take your call. We are going to try for a late October performance.

Fauquier Community Theater 2005-2006 Season

Guys and Dolls

Oct 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22 & 23

Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol

Nov 25, 26, 27 Dec 2, 3, 4, 9, 10 & 11

Proof

Jan 27, 28, 29 Feb 3, 4, 5, 10, 11 & 12

Private Lives

Mar 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, & 19

Oliver!

May 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20 & 21



Welcome, New Member

A warm welcome
to our new member
Joey Wagner

The Second Annual Potluck Picnic at Lorraine & Murray Schooner



From the Prez



Lorraine and I want to thank the 40 or so HHLT members, and their significant others that came to our house for the annual picnic. It was a delightful event. Good weather, good friends, camaraderie, new



acquaintances, and a bountiful variety of of good food, and drink.



Photos by Bob & Lynn Levvis