The more you dream, the more you can do.

Michael Korda

Newsletter of the Heritage Hunt Little Theater



### From the President

by Denny Cumber, President

Here we are in March; one day, it's spring and the next day, we're cranking up the thermostat. But no problem with HHLT. We're all warmed up.

Love Letters, our first Reader's Theater, was a rousing success for all four performances. A few people asked if I regretted spending all the time for preparation only to have one night's performance and I enthusiastically said "No!" I think that all the Andys and Melissas enjoyed their experience. Thanks for the opportunity to try something different, Bets.

Art Moscatello, Membership Chair, is spotlighting our new members in PlayTime. What a great way to be introduced to new members and show how much we appreciate their decision to join our merry band.

A group of 24 HHLT members and spouses joined other residents in watching our own Aileen Drennan in Steel Magnolias at the FCT on March 9th. Many more members went to other performances. She really 'made us proud' by doing a fine job and there wasn't a dry eye as the play ended.

Auditions for Old Time Radio are finished and we're busy working toward making this our second successful production of 2008. Any residents with whom I've spoken are looking forward to it.

The Board of Directors have included their phone numbers by their names in PlayTime. We want to make it easy to hear your suggestions. Also, there will be membership lists available at our General Meetings to facilitate communication among members. Thanks for any suggestions.



### **May Production: Old Time Radio**

by Bets Knepley, Director

We had a great group audition for Old Time Radio—27 people (17 gals & 10 guys). The

surprise was that two new HH residents chose to audition. The Audition Team (Director Bets Knepley, Producer Elena Portoles and Program Manager Dot Schuetze) had a ball with this zany talented group.

The Production Team is zipping right along, getting all its ducks in order. The first rehearsal on March 13th was a tech one where we determined how many live mics we can have on the stage at one time. Ted Day also brought a few of the SFX (sound effects) contraptions that he has created. We're now able to store them in the Club House, thanks to Elena's initiative.

On March 25th, all who audition will receive an email from me, announcing their

role(s). The first rehearsal is Thursday, March 27th in the Ball Room, right after our general meeting at 7pm in the Craft Room. Our overall plan will be discussed, as well as costuming, set, mic placement and sound effects.

### **INSIDE**

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### Highlights from the **February Minutes**

by Arlene Maroney, Secretary

Jane Becker reported that our bank account does not pay interest. The present

Board does not know the reasoning behind this and will look into it further.

Highligh

from the

February

Minutes

Activities—March classic movie night is being cancelled. The next Classic movie night will be April 5.

Site and Bite: Joyce Mancini reported that on March 9th a group will attend the FCI's production of Steel Magnolias. Everyone will meet at 1pm. After the performance, the group will go to Glory Days Restaurant. The total cost will be \$24.

- $\overline{\mathsf{V}}$ Membership—Art Moscatello reported that we have two new members, Eugene Schmiel and Chuck Breder. Art also reported that we now have 65 members—44 females and 21 males and that 30 have paid their dues.
- Play Selection—Bill Harrison announced he will hold a meeting of the Committee in the near future. He is trying to form a position of "Assistant Director" with the thought that this will be a chance for someone to learn "How To" and is maybe shy about volunteering for Director. Bets will try to teach on this and is encouraging people to sign up to learn. It will be an opportunity for everyone.
- Theater Workshop —Bets  $\overline{\mathsf{V}}$ Knepley reported that the Little Theater Workshop will be discontinued until June inasmuch as so many will be involved in the production of the Old Time Radio show.
- TTT—Ina Mayer reported that  $\overline{\mathsf{V}}$ the "Winter Wonderland" show at Caton Merchant Center was a success. They were to perform at Marywood but, on arriving there, found that they had no parking for anyone other than the residents. Any other parking spaces within a couple of blocks was a tow-away zone.

Needless to say the TTT decided not to stay. There will be a performance at Sudley Manor on March 13th by the Winter Wonderland Group.

- Love Letters —Bets gave thanks to all who participated in Love Letters and also thanked all the members who support our productions.
- May Production—Producer Elena Portoles is in charge of auditions for the Old Time Radio Production. She suggested that we all audition because they do need everyone. Next week OTR Staff will hold its second meeting.
- President Cumber gave a report on the Baltimore Senior Performance Festival being held on June 10th through the 15th, 2008. She has brochures if anyone is interested.
- Lois Cozzi, HHLTs historian, made a plea for any pictures that members may have of past productions. She has write ups on the plays but is lacking photographs for the scrapbook.

### **Board of Directors**

**President** 

Denny Cumber X1452

Vice President

Bill Harrison X1644

<u>Secretary</u>

Arlene Maroney X5076

<u>Treasure</u>r

Jane Becker X5466

Communications & Membership

Art Moscatello X5354

Activities

Joey Wagner X1043

Member-at-Large

Pat Boggs X5047



### Put these Dates on Your Calendar

March General Meeting Thurs., March 28 at 7pm-*Craft Room* 

Classic Movie Night

Life is Beautiful

Sat—April 5—7pm

Joyce Mancini's at 13278 Fieldstone

May 2008 Production Dates
Old Time Radio
May 21-23

Senior Theatre USA 2008 Fest June 5-10 in Baltimore, MD

### Comments on a Few Plays

by Bets Knepley

This March I saw three plays, *Steel Magnolias* at FCT, *Lovers & Executioners* at Winchester Little Theater and *Urinetown* at Reston Community Players.

Steel Magnolias by Robert Harling, is a 1987 off-Broadway play, made into a movie in 1989. Based on the author's experience with the death of his sister, Steel Magnolias is a comedy-drama about the bond among a group of Southern women in northwest Louisiana. The FCT did a fine job with it, as those of us who saw it will agree.

Arena Stage in DC commissioned John Strand to create a play based on Montfluery's La Femme juge et partie (1669). His creation, Lovers & Executioners, is a startlingly modern tale about attempted murder and a woman's revenge. Calling the play "funny, grim, superb" the Washington Post wrote: "Strand's very free adaptation is like the best comedy, wild yet precise. He's dared to translate Montfleury's 17th-century poetry into 20th-century verse..." I liked the costuming and set, as well as the sword fighting scenes. And the acting wasn't bad.

Urinetown...it's not an attractive name for a play. But, of the three plays, I thought Urinetown, by Greg Kotis and Mark Hollmann, was the most entertaining. It's an award-winning satirical comedy musical that pokes fun at capitalism, social irresponsibility, bureaucracy, corporate mismanagement, and petty small town politics. Whew! But, wait, there's more... Urinetown rejects musical theatre convention, parodying successful Broadway shows such as Les Misérables, West Side Story, etc. and even satirizes its own significance. In reverse pantomime style, the unconventional plotline shatters audience expectations of a pleasant ending.

By the way, the main topic is "peeing." It ran on Broadway from 2001 to 2004, winning three Tonys in 2002. I'd rate Reston's production as one of the best musicals I ever saw.



## New Members Betty Hitchcock and Gene Schmiel



### The Workshop

by Bets Knepley, Workshop Coordinator

Workshops will be suspended for several months until July.

The search is afoot for

an outside speaker for our July or August Workshop. The topic will be directing. I hope after attending this Workshop, more members will see what a director does and how much fun it can be. Really.

After the Directing Workshop, I plan to have readings of several intriguing and different type of plays for all women casts, as our men will be tied up in our Fall Production, *Twelve Angry Men*.

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### On the Social Scene....

by Joey Wagner, Activities Chair

### **The Birthday Party**

We gathered in the Card Room on February 21 to celebrate the fifth birthday of the Heritage Hunt Little Theater. While nibbling on cheese and crackers, crudités and dip and luscious fruit, we were entertained by our fellow thespians.

Alan Mager strummed his autoharp and kept us laughing with such ditties as: *The Cat in the Kettle* (to the tune of *Cat in the Cradle*), *Oral*-God's rant to Oral Roberts, *Walking Around in Women's Underwear*, and *If My Nose was Running Money, I'd Blow It All on You.* 

Art Muscatello and Joey Wagner brought Erma Bombeck into the room with *Son Home from College* (Who was that boy in the house?) plus Art's version of *When I Wore a Tulip* with female vocalist Denny Cumber.

Remember *Who's on First* by Abbott and Costello? Ina Mayer and Joyce Mancini brought that great bit to life for us with side splitting results! Where those Nats ball caps I saw?

Sandy Mills lamented and kept us in stitches with jokes about the older generation; an old woman with the phenomenal young husband cried, "I Can't Remember Where I Live/" another lady discovered where she put her hearing aid and a man at his wife's funeral begging the pallbearers to "Watch Out for that Wall." Thank you Sandy. May we all continue to laugh together for a long time to come.

Dave Daniels concluded the entertainment with two versions of the English folk song *Scarborough Fair* followed by Ralph McTell's widely covered ballad *Streets of London*. Dave brought us back home with Don Wood's classic "Good Old Boys like Me."

We sang *Happy Birthday* to ourselves and dove into the carrot cake with cream cheese icing. Joyce Mancini ordered the cake and remembered to have big chocolate roses on top for the chocoholics in the group!

### Sight and Bite

The audience attending the Fauquier Community Theater's performance of *Steel Magnolias* on March 9 was packed with Heritage Hunt residents. Over twenty members of Little Theater were in attendance. Alleen Drennan captured the irascible Ouiser Boudreaux perfectly as she announced "I'm not crazy. I've just been in a very bad mood for the last 40 years." We loved the play (there were lots of tears) and are so proud of Alleen's outstanding performance. Afterwards, we met a Glory Days for a quick (?) bite to eat and enjoy time with our Little Theater friends. Thanks to Joyce Mancini for arranging the tickets and the dinner.

### **Traveling Theater Troupe**

By Ina Mayer, Coordinator

The "Winter Wonderland" group will be performing on St. Patrick's Day with the addition of appropriate pieces and songs. As Winter is almost over, we will be substituting that season's material with things for Spring and hope to be able to perform through June. "Just For the Fun of It" was featured at the meeting of The Lifelong Learning group. Because of Grace Baier's illness just Joyce and Goldie performed with Ina as a substitute. We were warmly received and enjoyed a delicious lunch at the Olive Garden.



# WELCONE!

### **Welcome New Members**

by Art Moscatello, Membership Chair

Please join me in giving a warm welcome to two new members of our Little Theater—Betty Hitchcock and Gene Schmiel.

Betty Hitchcock...Betty moved to Heritage Hunt in 2003 from Springfield, VA. Her husband, James, passed away a couple of years ago (his name is still listed in the directory). Betty has two sons, Michael and Randy, and her husband had two sons, Brian and Barry. Betty boasts a total of seven grandchildren.

She was employed as a Configuration Manager for the Federal Government before she retired after 32 years of service. Her husband was an executive with a defense contractor after retiring from the Navy.

Betty joined the Little Theater to become more active in our community and to offer her talents to our productions. She has not acted recently, but performed during her school years. She had the lead role in a junior high school play and played the saxophone in the school band. She plays golf several times a week and enjoys playing bridge.

Gene Schmiel...Gene and his wife, Kathryn, moved to Heritage Hunt in October 2006 from Springfield, VA. They have two married children, David and Jennifer, three grandsons and a fourth grandchild expected this summer. He retired from the Department of State in 1996, but continues to work at State part time, and as a Director of Academic Programs at the Washington Internship Institute in DC. So Gene traded in his full-time job for two part-timers. He also was a history professor before working for the federal government. Gene has no acting nor theatrical experience, but always wanted to get involved with the theater when he retired and time permitted. With two parttime jobs, I hope Gene finds time to fulfill his theatrical aspirations.

### Play Reading Committee Report

by Bill Harrison, VP

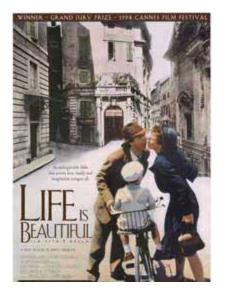
The Play Reading Committee will meet the end of March; time to be determined.

Anyone wanting to participate on the PRC should contact Bill Harrison at X1644.

### Classic Movie Night... Again

by Joey Wagner, Activities Chair

Classic Movie Night will be held on Saturday, April 5 at 7pm at Joyce Mancini's home on 13278 Field-



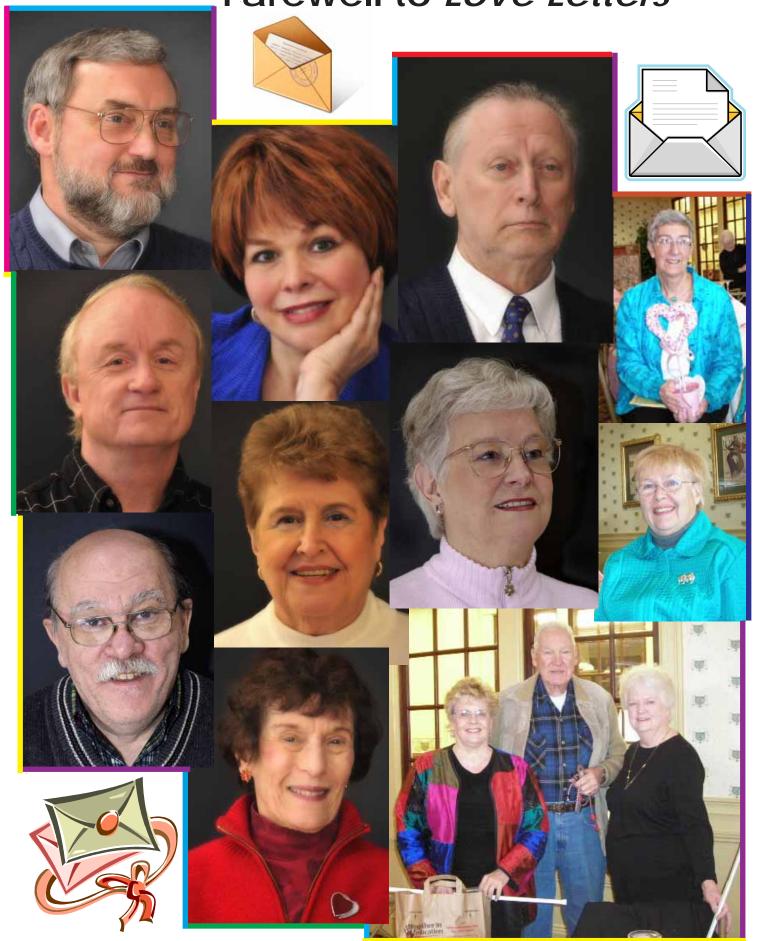
stone Way. Call Joyce at 1622 for more info. Popcorn provided. Join the fun!

An inspired motion picture master-piece, Life Is Beautiful was nominated for seven Academy awards—winning three Oscars including one for Best Actor Roberto Benigni. In this extraordinary tale, Guide (Benigni)—a charming but bumbling waiter who's gifted with a colorful imagination and an irresistible sense of humor—has won the heart of the woman he loves and created a beautiful life for his young family.

But then, that life is threatened by World War II...and Guido must rely on those very same strengths to save his beloved wife and son from an unthinkable fate!

Honored with an *overwhelming* level of critical acclaim, this truly exceptional, utterly unique achievement will lift your spirits and capture your heart.

Farewell to Love Letters



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