

PREZ SAYS



Table of Contents

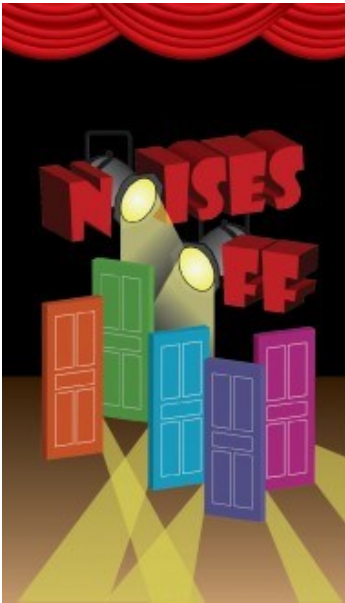
Page 1	Prez Says
Page 2	Noises Off Casting
Page 3	VYT Update
Page 4	Looking Back at VP
Page 5	One Act Auditions Let's Talk Turkey
Page 6	Fundraising Member Updates
Page 7	Auditions Elsewhere
Page 8	Upcoming Events

FINAL THOUGHTS

As I wind down my Presidency, I think of all we've accomplished this past year and all of the people it took to mount our five main stage shows, the One-Act Festival "Shorts and Sweets," the Youth Theater shows and camp, other events and parties and myriad of tasks it takes to run this theater. We have so many talented people working both onstage and off, and with so little complaining! I'm always bragging about the welcoming atmosphere here, and the ability to join in and do as little or as much as one wants. We have had great shows, but unfortunately not large enough audiences to stem a shortfall. We've learned a lot of lessons to apply to future seasons: don't start a season with an unknown show or two, try many different forms of advertising, and put some well-known shows in each season. Also, we need to use our members to sell tickets and get the word out. Both Boards have tried hard to keep the theater going strong, but we do need all of you to help. If you have a talent or an interest that hasn't been tapped, please let someone on either board know about it and you'll get a chance to use it! Thank you to all that have made my tenure so easy this year. See you at the annual meeting on July 1st! Happy Summer!!!

SUSIE





Noises Off director David Reinke smiled at the twenty plus people assembled for a second night of auditions and urged them to have *fun*.



And why not? Nervous as they were, would-be cast members got caught up in the spirit of what has been called one of the funniest comedies of the last 50 years. They chortled at a well-delivered reading of a comic line, applauded phrasing that turned a simple line into a double-entendre, and laughed out loud as some of those trying out added a touch of physicality.

“This play is hard to resist,” Reinke said. “It’s almost impossible not to laugh. And, the group that tried out was great. They were fantastic on stage, and they were a wonderful audience off stage.”

Thirty-eight people tried out May 31 and June 1 for Michael Frayn’s farce about the on-stage and back-stage drama of a small theater company’s production of the (fictional) bedroom farce “Nothing On.” And Reinke and his assistant director Joe Gadon, had the unenviable task of deciding who would be in the show, which will kick off VPs 2015-16 season when it opens September 4. Among those auditioning were several theater students from Avondale High School, drawn to the tryouts by the participation of the school’s theater director, Edmond Guay. While none of the students was cast, an Avondale alumnus, Joe Danz, will join his former mentor on the stage in September.

“I hope some of the high school students will come back another time,” said producer Laura Bradshaw Tucker. “I was very impressed by their talent. I wish we had enough parts to cast them all.”

“I know it’s cliché to say that casting the show was hard,” Reinke said, “but it was. Very hard. In the end, we had to go with people I thought would work well together and who didn’t have too many conflicts.”

Bradshaw Tucker didn’t envy Reinke his job. “You have to make a decision, even though you hate to tell someone who is obviously gifted and who gave a great reading that, this time, they didn’t get the part,” she said.

AD Joe Gadon echoed her sentiments. “I hope everyone who didn’t get cast will come back and try out for another show.”

Cast in *Noises Off* are:

Dotty/Mrs. Clacket -- Kez Settle

Lloyd -- Edmond Guay

Garry/Roger -- Joe Danz

Brook/Vicki -- Erin Hobbs

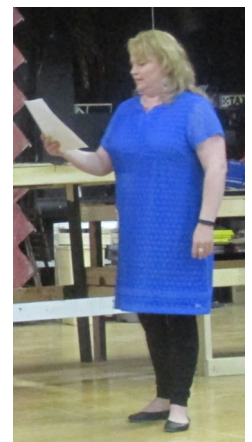
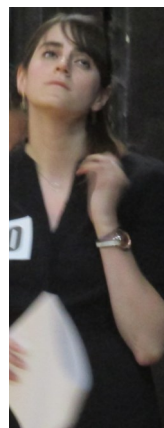
Frederick/Phillip-- Alan Elias

Belinda/Flavia -- Liz Hutchinson

Poppy -- Emma Kennedy

Tim -- Dale Feldpausch

Selsdon -- Ralph Rosati





SHREK The MUSICAL

VYT is ready to Let Its Freak Flag Fly as it presents “Shrek the Musical,” a song and dance-filled stage adaptation of the Oscar-winning DreamWorks animated film.

This entertaining, family-friendly fairytale features a terrific score and hilarious twists. Instead of a knight riding a noble steed, the hero is Shrek, a swamp-dwelling ogre teamed up with a chatterbox donkey. And the princess? She’s the slightly temperamental Fiona. Shrek rescues Fiona from a dragon-guarded tower and the two fall in love before she reveals there’s more to her than meets the eye. Other fairytale misfits add surprise, from a Gingerbread Man with an attitude to Three Blind Mice channeling their inner DreamGirls to Pinocchio still insisting he’s a real boy.

Based on the children’s book by famed New Yorker cartoonist William Steig, the musical stays true to Steig’s fractured fairytale vision where dragons are friendly, swamps are better than castles, and the true hero isn’t handsome or noble, but rather, a grouchy-on-the-outside, tender-on-the-inside ogre who is more or less content with himself and his life in a swamp.

“Shrek the Musical” runs June 18, 19 and 20 at 7:00 p.m. and June 20 and 21 at 2:00. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$12 for students and *\$10 for groups of 10 or more attending the same show.

Tickets are available on the VP website (www.birminghamvillageplayers.com), by phone (248-644-2075) or at the box office. *Group tickets must be purchased by phone or at the box office.



Just a few more weeks until Shrek opens--costumes fill the dressing rooms



Lord Farquaad Guard, Evan Krasnick guards the Three Little Pigs, from left to right, Sophie Champion, Grace Velthoven and Jamie Trepeck.

Looking Back at Village Players History

By Tania Velinsky

If the name Bonstelle is familiar to Village Players members at all, it is as the name of the undergraduate theatre at Wayne State University. Few people know that the theatre is named for Jessie Bonstelle, one of the first female stage directors in the United States, and the driving force behind local theater in Detroit during the early decades of the 20th century. Fewer still know of her connection to VP.

Laura Justine “Jessie” Bonstelle was born on a farm in Greece, New York, and was groomed for the stage from a young age by her mother. At the age of 10, Jessie landed a role in a touring production of the melodrama “Bertha, the Beautiful Sewing Machine Girl.” She spent decades performing on Broadway, in regional theatres, and in touring companies, and in 1900, she became the manager of the Lyceum Theatre Company in Rochester, New York. In addition, Jessie directed shows for the Shuberts in New York, and worked with the 125th Street Theater in Harlem. In 1906, she took on the management of the Star Theater in Buffalo, and in 1910, added the management of the Garrick Theatre in Detroit, moving weekly between Buffalo and Detroit.



In 1925, she founded the Bonstelle Playhouse in Detroit, purchasing a former synagogue on Woodward Avenue and commissioning C. Howard Crane to renovate it. This building is now the Wayne State’s Bonstelle Theatre. She mounted productions of many recent Broadway hits, as well as classics including modern-dress productions of “Romeo and Juliet” and “Hamlet.” In 1928, Jesse raised over \$200,000 in donations from the public, and she agreed to make the playhouse the city’s unofficial premier theater, which became known as the Detroit Civic Theater. She emphasized the importance of providing the public with the best drama, including both classics and modern works, and improving young people’s knowledge of dramatic literature.

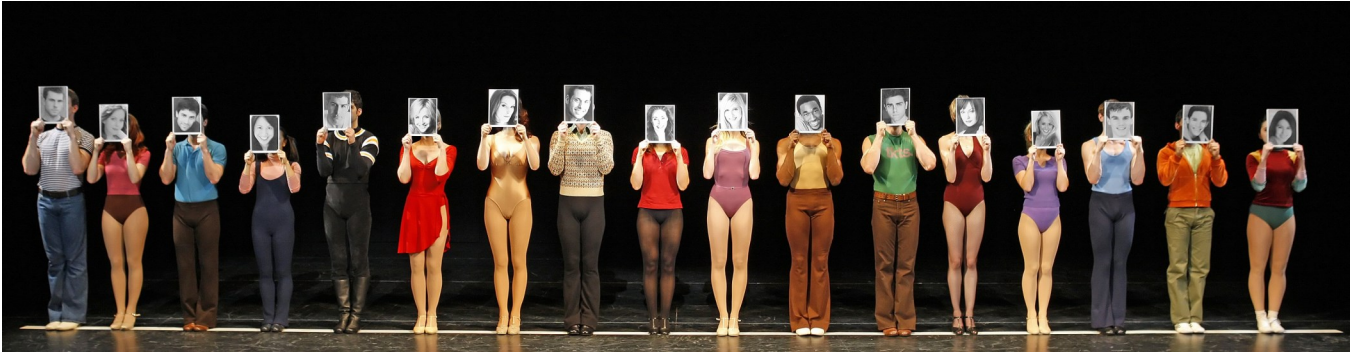
In June 1932, Jessie left for Hollywood with the ambition to direct films, but unfortunately she was soon diagnosed with cancer. She returned to Detroit and died in October of 1932 in the home of a friend.

And her connection to VP? In 1928, Jessie Bonstelle was made an honorary member of The Village Players. The following is from the January, 1928, newsletter:

“President Lynch is going to ask the membership to elect Miss Jessie Bonstelle to Honorary Membership. We think that The Village Players is very fortunate in having a woman of the caliber of Miss Bonstelle willing to become a member of our organization. She is ready at all times to help us with suggestions and criticisms and has offered us the use of anything that she has in her theatre to help our performances, and I am sure that it will be a splendid thing to elect Miss Bonstelle an Honorary Member of our Club.”

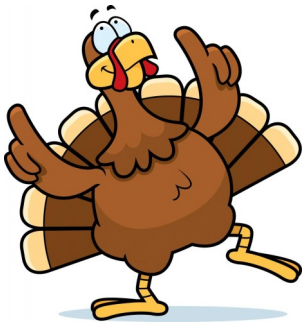
Even after her death Jessie contributed to The Village Players; in 1954 two gowns that were originally designed for Jessie were used in our production on *The Heiress*.

Playwrights @ Work announce open audition for One Act Festival



Sunday and Monday, June 7 & 8, 2015, the P@W will hold open auditions to cast the 4 One Act plays that have been selected to be presented during their annual festival. Registration will begin at 7 pm each evening and the auditions will start promptly at 7:30 pm. Roles for 7 men and 7 women of varying adult ages will be cast from those who audition. The 4 plays, all original works, are: ***The Luckiest Man***, by Joe Feinstein and directed by Art Tucker; ***Blood Ties***, written by Ann Forsaith and directed by Janie Burkey; ***The Gift***, penned by Stephen Sussman and directed by Alan Canning; and ***Timeline***, by Barbara Schmitt and directed by Marcus Laban. Auditions will be from the script and cuts are available at the Village Players front desk.

The P@W One Act Festival will be presented Friday and Saturday, July 24 & 25 at 8:00 pm. And Sunday, July 26 at 2:00 pm. The performance should last approximately 2 hours with a short intermission. Tickets are just \$10 for the show, and seating is general admission. Many hands are needed to help put the production together. If you would like to be a part of the production team, please contact Eileen White, Producer at eileenwhite@wowway.com or (586) 872-6558.



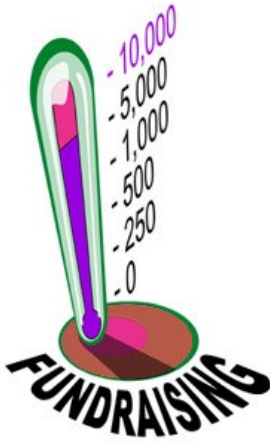
Let's Talk Turkey

On November 27 at VP (day after Thanksgiving), Paul Housey will perform his one-man show, "This Wonderful Life," based on the movie, "It's a Wonderful Life." Paul pays VP \$1500 in a rental fee and \$2 per ticket sold to this performance. (Paul held this performance last year at VP.)

We need a VP member to act as host for the event. The host is responsible for securing someone to work sound, lights and box office and must be onsite during the event. If you can volunteer to host this event, call Diane D'Agostino at [248-760-2146](tel:248-760-2146).



Have Fun Raising Money



New Fundraising Committee.

Your Board of Trustees would like to find a small group of dedicated and knowledgeable people to create and administer an on-going series of events dedicated to raising significant funds for Village Players over the coming years. Initially, this effort will be led by Gary Mach, and if this type of activity is within your skill set, please contact Gary directly at gary16006@live.com to volunteer. This will be a long range planning group with the initial target of identifying the type of fund-raising activities that could take place, and then arranging for a series of such events beginning as soon as reasonably possible, and extending on to the future. The future of the club may well depend on the success of this initiative. Please consider your potential role and contributions as you step up to this challenge.



Member Updates

The following have moved:

Chuck & Isabel Himelhoch
24111 Civic Center Drive #722
Southfield, MI 48033-7440

Barbara Underwood has a new email address: bjuslp@outlook.com.

Steve Sussman also has a new email address: stevesuss248@gmail.com.

Please welcome new member Andrew Catterall.

6577 Edith Court
Troy, MI 48085
Ph 248-250-4777
Email acattera2@gmail.com



BOARD OF DIRECTORS ANNUAL MEETING

The Board of Directors will hold their ANNUAL MEETING on **WEDNESDAY, JULY 1, 2015 at 7:00 P.M.** at the playhouse. All members are encouraged to attend.

Auditions Elsewhere

Stagecrafters Baldwin Theatre
Mel Brook's

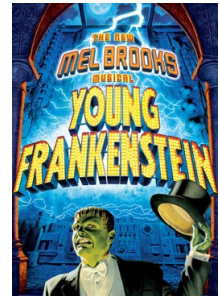
Young Frankenstein

Saturday, June 13, 2015

Registration 8-9am

Auditions begin 9am

<http://www.stagecrafters.org/auditions.html#frank>



Avon Players

The Musical PARADE

June 28th - 6PM & June 29th - 7:00PM

<http://www.avonplayers.org/>



Barefoot Productions

Man of LaMancha

June 21 - 2 PM to 5 PM, 22 & 23 - 7 PM to 9:30PM

<http://www.justgobarefoot.com/>



Farmington Players

Boeing Boeing

Sunday, June 28—1PM

[http://farmingtonplayers.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/](http://farmingtonplayers.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/AuditionNoticeBoeingBoeing.pdf)

[AuditionNoticeBoeingBoeing.pdf](http://farmingtonplayers.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/AuditionNoticeBoeingBoeing.pdf)





34660 Woodward Ave.
Birmingham, MI 48009



Upcoming Events

Prompter deadline June 21, 2015

View the VP online calendar at www.calendar.yahoo.com/vp_calendar

June 7 & 8, 7PM - P@W One Act Auditions — Playhouse

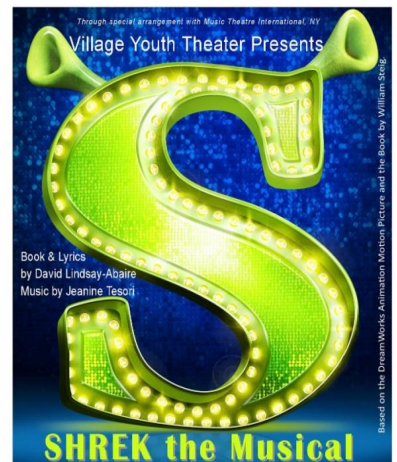
June 10, 6:30PM - Board of Trustees Meeting—Green Room

June 14, 1PM - Shrek Long Sunday

June 18-21 - Shrek Performances

June 28, 6PM - VP Birthday Party

Join the Village Players family as we celebrate our 92nd birthday with a potluck dinner and games



This edition of The Prompter was created and compiled by your newsletter team Randy Gilchrist, Michael A. Gravame & Tania L. Velinsky. Please send all newsworthy articles, pictures and items to anyone in the new team.



Randy—randygilchrist@comcast.net ♦ Michael—littletevy@yahoo.com ♦ Tania—tania.velinsky@siemens.com