

StD Guild

ST. DUNSTAN'S GUILD OF CRANBROOK



MAY 2012

AND THIS MONTH...

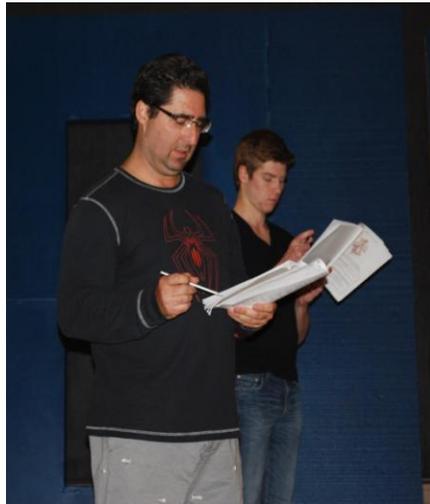
MAC	May 8
May Board Meeting	May 15
Annual Meeting	May 17

THE BRIGHT SIDE OF LIFE!

PR&C is thrilled to announce that St. Dunstan's has acquired the rights to Monty Python's Spamalot, and we are replacing "Guys and Dolls" so we can debut the very funny and very popular musical to the local community theatre world in the Greek in June, 2013.

Candidates for the St. D's Board of Directors, Term ending 2015

Tom Edson - I'm very honored and excited to be nominated to the Board of Directors for St. Dunstan's Theatre Guild. I've been a member of St. Dunstan's for two years and have served as head of the Set Committee and Master Carpenter on many productions at St. D's, Andover High School and Stagecrafters. I'm a retired mechanical engineer with over 35 years of experience in the automotive industry. When not building sets, you might find me playing golf at Plum Hollow Country Club. I served on the Board of Directors there for four years and am very appreciative of the challenges of leading a non-profit organization. I'm blessed to have the support and encouragement of my wonderful wife Maureen and three daughters Elise, Adrienne, and Lauren for my theatrical endeavors. I'm very



Mitch Master (Pseudolus) plots with Michael Petrillo (Hero)

impressed with the talents and dedication of St. Dunstan's members and the very high quality of our productions. As a member of the Board I will endeavor to help cultivate that spirit and enthusiasm that makes our Guild a special group.

Janie Minchella - I've been a member at St. Dunstan's since 1993, the year we did *Grease*. Since then I've done many shows both inside and out on the Greek stage. I have worked on the costume committee, lights, producers, and play reading and casting. I was also a part of the *Our Town* art exhibit at the community house for a couple of years. I have been doing the voice over for the announcement telephone recording, and helped wherever I could throughout the years. I am currently



Hysterium and Senex discuss blocking

the Wardrobe Mistress, in charge of the costume closet, storage and rentals. I have really enjoyed working at St. Dunstan's and am excited to be a part of the Board. (Editor's note: Janie's stage credits are SO many and varied, they were omitted here, but may be seen in full at the annual meeting!)

Nat Towle – Mairo and I came to St. Dunstan's through our condo neighbors, Anthony and Jeff, when they asked Mairo to be the dialect coach for *A Man of No Importance*. I came along into the theatre, where I helped with various sets. We produced *Annie*, co-chaired the Producer's Committee and even wrote a manual for Producers. Since joining, I have built sets, co-produced several plays, was apprentice director for *The 39 Steps*, and acted in five plays (including two children's plays.) I have helped Ian develop a budget, sold ads, tracked down payments, run the light board (only once for a rehearsal!) and generally helped where needed. We have met many new friends through the theatre and enjoy the camaraderie offered by St. Dunstan's. I hope to be able to contribute to its continued success.

DIRECTOR UPDATE 2013-2014

Play Reading and Casting is pleased to announce that Rita Leigl will be directing our opening show, *It Came From Mars*, in October, 2012. Anthony Marsalese will assist as direct. In November, 2012, Jake Zinke will direct an original holiday show for children that he wrote. *The Three Bears' Christmas*. Jeff Davison will direct *Chicago* opening in January, 2013, with Nancy Wegienek as his A.D., John Luther as choreographer and Deb Tedrick as Music Director. We are currently taking written director proposals for *Monty Pythons' Spamalot* until May 20, 2012. Due to the popularity of this show, we will be asking potential directors to make "in-person" proposals to PR&C on June 5, 2012. For more information or to submit a proposal, contact Anthony Marsalese at tonyjeff@comcast.net

GODOT HAS COME AND GONE

After only four performances the waiting is over and we all can return to theatre that has a plot. Five talented and extremely hard-working actors took on the great challenge of Beckett's confusing script. Scott MacDonald as Vladimir, Paul Dorset as Estragon, Keith Lepard as Pozzo, Andrew McMechan as Lucky, Fiona McMechan as The Boy and until the last performance, they continued to uncover more meaning in the script. Molly Dorset and Anthony Marsalese added their assistance, with publicity and hair and makeup respectively. The remainder of getting the show ready was accomplished by three women who were committed--certainly committed to me and to the production. Susan Holmes, props and set, Linda Watson, costumes,

and Kathy Brooks--everything else. These 10 members created an exciting, thought-provoking and entertaining production. A special thanks to Ruth Bennett for handling tickets, too! Thank you to all for a wonderful theatrical experience. --Obie

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING, THURSDAY, MAY 17.

FOOD FOR CONVERSATION?

From the Editor: After opening night of *Godot*, new member Jon Huegeli and I were discussing the play. As we talked, I asked Jon to put down some of his thoughts and ideas to share with the Guild. He suggested that it might be fun to occasionally have a get-together to discuss different theatrical subjects, or productions, fueled by wine and cheese and the love of theatre. If interested, send a note to snakeladypam@yahoo.com! Even though I enjoyed *Waiting for Godot*, I would have been even more engaged by the script if I had done my homework BEFORE the show!

Who Was Waiting for What . . . Some Reflections on Waiting for Godot

--Jon M. Huegeli PhD, DD

Was Beckett a Hebrew Bible reader who picked up this theme from the Book of Ecclesiastes 2:20-23 and explored it as an avowed existentialist? Like Solomon, perhaps Beckett was telling audiences that life without fellowship with God[ot] was vanity—useless and empty.

As an acting and directing student in the 60's, I was introduced to Beckett and *Waiting for Godot*, from literary criticism and acting perspectives. We spent hours deconstructing the script and learning how the literary devices Beckett used helped explain and bring meaning to the host of non-sequiturs his characters deliver.

In keeping with existentialists such as Sartre, Pinter and Ionesco, who lived through the ravages and destruction of World War II, Beckett's work also reflects a despair tinged with some hope. Raised in an Irish, Christian family, Beckett was taught about God's providence and presence in the human condition. But those assumptions were challenged by the realities of war and later, when a few leading Protestant theologians were declaring that "God was dead." Maybe this providential God was much more distant and angry with His creation than alive in it. Maybe He chose to absent Himself and to let His creatures flounder in despair and disillusionment, giving up on them. Why would a providential God not intervene in a war of mass destruction led by an evil and satanic monster?

However, Beckett didn't totally buy into a nihilistic perspective of God, as supported by the literary devices and techniques that he used in his writing. The series of non-sequiturs play like antiphonal litanies, a common device particularly found in the Hebrew Bible Psalms, where verses were paired. In the first of the pair, David expressed despair; in the following verse, he voiced his hope about how God would intervene in his "vanities" and bring him out of them. How often did David, as did Estragon and Vladimir, express that he was "waiting" on God for His intervention in difficult times?

Beckett heightens the contrast of despair and hope in the play when he introduces climaxes and anti-climaxes, as represented by the entry of three characters. While the audience itself despairs at the banality of the dialog between Estragon and Vladimir, and the decline in the script's energy and interest, Pozo and Lucky appear. This introduction of the two characters raises the beginning of a climax because they may reveal more about Godot and save the audience from the previous monotony. The audience's attention is regained for a moment, looking for some meaning in the characters' dialog—only to find it mundane, even insipid.

But wait . . . Who is this Lucky, actually? Beckett has introduced this character early on in the plot. In a peculiar monolog, the crucifixion scene is referenced along with the two thieves on either side of Jesus, the Son of God. A parallel image is presented whereby one thief experiences hope and the other despair about life eternal in believing in this Jesus. And during the second act, Beckett uses a boy to re-introduce Godot to the audience, readying them to find Godot in the returning Pozo and Lucky who follow on.

Beckett peaks the audience's curiosity about the mysterious Godot when he has Vladimir and Estragon mention that they asked Godot for "a kind of prayer...a vague supplication," which he is currently considering. But, why would Beckett use the language of "prayer" and "supplication" in an otherwise secularized story? And, what does this tell the audience about Godot and his relationship to the two main characters? This offers up for consideration a parallel between Godot and God. It seems that Vladimir and Estragon do consider Godot a kind of religious figure when they mention coming in on their hands and knees.

Is this a portrayal of the two characters' condition in their relationship with the Godot character? Could this Lucky servant, dragged along by the neck, described as stupid on the one hand and brilliant on the other be a personification of God[ot], himself, but in a different form? The blind Pozo could represent humankind as well as Vladimir and Estragon and their inability to recognize this God[ot] figure. In their anticipation, have they superimposed their perceptions and expectations of who Godot is? And is that why they don't see him in Lucky? Was Beckett's use of these literary devices too subtle for the audience? Was the audience, like the two characters, caught up in the nonsense of the absurd dialog and unable to recognize the obvious entrance of God[ot] Himself?

Perhaps Beckett did read Ecclesiastes. Chapters 1-11 alone might leave him with despair and hopelessness. However, Solomon ends on a note of hope in Chapter 12. Like Solomon, has Beckett challenged his audiences to recognize and to trust in a God and prize Him for who He is? Unlike Solomon, has Beckett presented an image of humankind as desolate, hopeless and desperate when we fail to grasp God as He has comes to us in human form and to embrace His way of life now and into eternity?

r, are we still waiting unable and unwilling to recognize His presence among us . . . ? Or, is *Waiting for Godot* actually an allegory of the evils of capitalism, the despair of labor at the hands of owners? Or is it a story of the desolation of the French at the hands of the oppressive Germans? Or...

ARTISANS AWAITS YOUR HELP

St. Dunstan's Artisans Program graciously accepts funds—any amount, large or small, to further our theatre efforts. All contributors are listed in our season program. It

makes the perfect gift for a theatre lover. Mark a significant birthday or remember a loved one in a unique way! Contact Jeff Davison, or pick up a flyer in the lobby for details on giving.

HEALING CORNER

Connie McEwan remains in Beaumont Hospital. Ian is remarkable! While in Beaumont with Connie as her loving husband and fearless advocate, he is writing emails and STILL helping with St. D's business! In his last note, Ian said there had been some signs of improvement in Connie's condition, after a change in her medication. In spite of tremendous pain, she has been undergoing extensive therapy each day, gaining flexibility in her back and upper body. Ian wrote: "She gets into her wheelchair and goes to the gym. The exercises are still focused on building her core strength. Her pain is primarily in the front of her hips and thighs which is a good sign that her leg muscles are beginning to respond. But there are still many weeks to go. The continued messages of support and cards that she gets from all of you are a sustaining force, perhaps more for me at this time, but at some level she knows the love that surrounds her." Note: Connie's birthday is May 13, and she will still be hospitalized. Send a card to her address in the Roster, if you have time.

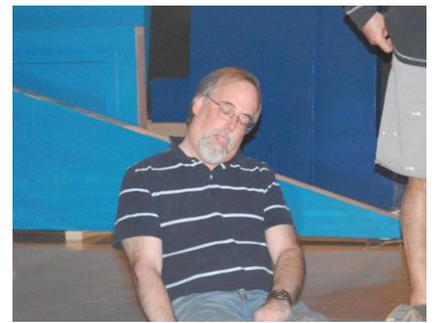
Mary Jolliffe, continues to recover and get stronger. Give her a call or send a card! She continues therapy on her arm.

LET'S GO KROGERING!

As a nonprofit organization, St. Dunstan's relies on donations and fundraising for much of its expense. By making the Guild the recipient of benefits from your Kroger Plus card as part of Kroger's Community Rewards Program, (at no cost to you!), we get MONEY\$--and that makes the



"world go ahround," as Joel Gray and Taylor Gray have so often told us. Refer to the April **Guilder** on how to sign up! **MACH SCHNELL!** This program is open to all St. Dunstan's members, family, friends and supporters. Please pass this on to your family and friends. St. Dunstan's will be mentioned at the bottom of each Kroger receipt.



St. Dunstan's outgoing President, Mark Walters, is REALLY out, as he rehearses to be Protean Curly in Forum.

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

By the time you read this, the Greek will have been taken over by *Forum*. We were able to move out a week early due to some serious time commitments by the set construction crew and permission from Cranbrook. Let's

hope the snow holds off and the weather cooperates, as well. After drag out, of course, it means our season is winding down. We've had a great season with ***The 39 Steps, Aantsy Aardvark, She Loves Me, Escanaba in Love, Waiting for Godot***, and now just waiting for the opening of ***A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum***. Forum is well along in rehearsals, progressing on schedule, and (in my humble opinion) going to be a laugh riot!

It's a terrific and talented cast and crew, and has been a blast to work with thus far. Winding down the season and working in the Greek also means that we're coming up on the annual meeting. This year, that happens on May 17. I hope you will all come out for this very important get-together of the membership, where we'll hear reports from the committees and most importantly, elect the new board which will take us into next season, then have a chance to catch up with friends. I'd like to thank the board that has had to put up with me this year: Ruth Bennett,



Sue Mancuso, Nina Kircher, Jim Luzenski, Ian McEwan, Paul Dorset, Susan Holmes, and Alan Canning.

The end of the year also means our moving out of the pavilion so Cranbrook Theater School can move in. Mark your calendars for Clean-up Week after Forum closes, starting with set strike on Sunday June 17, and then continuing throughout the week. We'd love to see EVERYBODY give an hour or two to this herculean effort. Many hands make light work. We'll have more information for you in the weekly newsletter in the first part of June.

I hope to see most of you at the annual meeting and certainly at ***Forum***.



Nat Towle and Props Chair Paul Dorset dig out the rubber fish in preparation for Spamalot next year!



Members of the Set Committee pause for a break and bagel at Drag Out. From L to R, beginning in front row: Chance Morgan, Bill Myers, Nat Towle, Jim Conner, Set Chair Tom Edson and Jon Huegli

Contributors:
 Ruth Bennett
 Obie Burch
 Paul Gillin
 Jon M. Huegli
 Ian McEwan
 Anthony Marsalese

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