

the PROMPTER

ALL THE NEWS THAT FITS, WE PRINT



the Cemetery Club

...from Jay Sydow

This summer the Village Players keeps alive its tradition of laughing in the face of death! This year's show is **The Cemetery Club** written by Ivan Menchell. The title may sound like a downer, however the show is anything but.

The play is about three Jewish widows who meet once a month for tea before going to visit their husbands' graves. Ida (Carol Bense) is sweet tempered and ready to begin a new life. Lucille (Diane Sullivan) is a feisty embodiment of the girl who just wants to have fun. Doris (Kathleen Hill) is priggish and judgmental, particularly when Sam (Len Miller) the butcher enters the scene. He meets the widows while visiting his wife's grave. Doris and Lucille squash the budding romance between Sam and Ida. They are guilt stricken when this nearly breaks Ida's heart. Throw into the mix the ladies "friend" Millie (Village Players newcomer Christine Muehlhausen) who is already out on the dating scene and you get some very funny and some very touching moments.

The production staff is filled with some fresh and some familiar faces. We welcome back Carol Light as the director teamed with Russ Ellis as her able assistant. For the first time our assistant also has an assistant as Betty Sherwood learns the ropes of the rehearsal process. Athena Ellis is moving out of the spot light and is taking the reigns as stage manager. She will be in direct contact with Gil Perham in the lighting booth. Newcomer Jacqui Pettit will be in charge of hair and make-up by Delina Bickford while Corky Mork designs and builds both the New York living room and the cemetery where the action will take place.

Diane Sullivan will be dressing the cast and Kathleen Whitehead will put together the finishing touches to the set... and viola! We will have a show. If everything goes well, that means that both producers, Diane Mork and yours truly, Jay Sydow, will have done our jobs.

Of course there are many others who will be adding their talent to this production... Posters and ads designed by Jeannette D'Onofrio, banner by Jerome Holden, publicity by Phoebe Van Scoy-Giessler, photography from Michael Wilfert and Hopefully YOU! There are always jobs to fill and Diane and I are ready to put your name on the list. We do need hands to build the set and Kathleen Whitehead may need help decorating so if you think that sounds like fun...jump in! Contact **Jay, sancho@worldpath.net** or **Diane, ddmork@yahoo.com**.

OPENING NIGHT SPECIAL advanced tickets for the July 27th show...\$8 each - such a deal! Thereafter, advance tickets \$10 each are for sale downtown at Black's and on line: www.village-players.com or you can get them at the door the nights of the show for \$12 each. Showtime is 8:00pm at the Village Players Theater on Glendon St. **July 27 & 28 and August 3, 4** and matinee on the **5th** at 2pm. See you all there!

Directing Workshop PERFORMANCES (Coming in August)

...from Carol Bense

Our three budding directors will be presenting their short plays to the public on **August 24th and 25th**. Village Players members will be admitted FREE of charge and the general public will be charged \$5.

The shows are "**If Men Played Cards as Women Do**", a 15 minute show directed by Theresa Crowell; "**The Refund**", a 25 minute show directed by Gordon Brooks; and "**Laundry and Bourbon**", a 50 minute show directed by Diane Sullivan.

Look for more information on this three-show special event in the next Prompter.

JUNE 2007

IN THIS ISSUE

(pg. 1)

SUMMER show
(about the show)

Directors' Workshop
(special performances)

(pg. 2)

Fluhr Fund
(aid to fellow thespian)

ANNUAL MEETING
(talent show & vote)

(pg. 3)

COMEDY SERIES
(theater fundraiser)

(pg. 4)

TheaterMember Profile
(our new Prez)

(INSERT)

By-Law Opinion page
(Pro & Con members' voice)

Did you know?

You can purchase tickets on-line from the Village Players website for any of our upcoming shows.

Go to:

www.village-players.com

Click on the link:



Fund for the Fluhr Family

Our good and long-time friend, Bill Fluhr, is in the middle of a struggle against Lymphoma and needs our help. Bill has run out of sick time and now has to pay to maintain his insurance. We would like to help cover the costs of maintaining his insurance which, right now, is about \$65 per week. Anything you can contribute will be greatly appreciated by Bill and his family.

Bill started out with the Village Players way back in 1978 in our very first production, "Yesteryears of Broadway." Since that time he has appeared in a multitude of roles including Curly in "Oklahoma", and more recently, Watson in "The Hound of the Baskervilles", and Samuel in "The Pirates of Penzance." Bill and his wife Chris also donated the seats in our theater which were then restored to their present condition.

If you can help, please send a check made out to **The Fluhr Family Fund, TD Banknorth, N.A., PO Box 549, Wolfeboro Falls, NH 03896.** Any amount will be gratefully accepted. We are hoping to bring in enough to cover the insurance costs for a year.

If you know anyone who knows Bill, but doesn't receive this newsletter, please pass the information on. Any questions can be referred to Carol Bense cwbense@adelphia.net, Michael Wilkes mwilkes@metrocast.net, Wayne Gehman waglag@verizon.net or Jay Sydow sancho@worldpath.net. Many thanks!



Bill Fluhr

COME ONE, COME ALL

**Dear Village Players,
Please plan to attend
the Village Players Semi-
Annual meeting on June 10,
2007 at the Village Players
Theater on Glendon St in
Wolfeboro.**

**The festivities will
begin at 3:00 pm with our
4th Annual Talent Show. A
collection of your friends
will show off some talent
that you may not know
that they have.**

**Immediately following
the talent show will be the
Village Players Semi-Annual
Meeting. You will hear
about our past year and our
plans for the future. After
the meeting there will be a
pot luck dinner (please
bring a dish to share with a
crowd and your beverage of
choice.)**

**For the past four years,
this has been a fun time for
everyone, so I hope to see
you there again.**

**Russ Ellis,
President Village Players**

**P.S. There is still time to
get into the talent show.
Call me at 569-9218 or
e-mail: ram2sak@aol.com**

**Voting on the By-Laws will take
place at this meeting. Please take
the time to read the insert of
opinions from two Village Players
members for consideration,
prior to your vote.- Thank you.**

**CONTACT US...
snail-mail
P.O. Box 770
Wolfeboro, NH 03894**

**voice-mail
603.569.9656**

**web site
www.village-players.com**

**2007
Village Players
Board
(President)**

Russ Ellis
569-9218

(Vice President)

Mandy Ferriman
569-6068

(Secretary)

Kathleen Whitehead
539-4973

(Treasurer)

Diane Ducret-Mork
569-5726

(Past President)

Jay Sydow
875-6792

(Members-At-Large)

Dick Cary
569-4654

Megan Brady
767-7207

Kathleen Hill
520-1372

Patti Pardy
859-0007

Newsletter Committee

Carol Bense

Dick Cary

Phoebe VanScoy-Giessler

Willie Mork

(Art production)

Jeannette D'Onofrio
virgodesign@verizon.net

Board meetings are
scheduled for the first
Monday evening each month.

All dues-paying members
are also welcome to attend.

If you have a topic to
present to the Board,
please contact
a member listed above.

Be sure your membership
is current to receive your
newsletter. Contact Marge
Wilson 569-6533

if you have changes
to your mailing address.

Sit Down for Stand Up

...from Jeannette D'Onofrio

We are bringing back a popular favorite to the Village Players stage for the months of June, July, August and September – **SIT DOWN FOR STAND UP, a comedy series.**

This theater building fundraiser was so popular last year we are hoping you will all return and bring your friends to this very relaxed, PG-13, all-new, series of shows once again.

Professional, Boston area comedians, perform live on the third Friday of the month.

Here's the line up, so be sure to mark your calendars:



June 15th: *Bob Gautreau and Chuck Grover

Versatile comic, impressionist and impersonator, Bob Gautreau has played at the Comedy Connection in Boston and has appeared on HBO TV as well as A&E's "An Evening at the Improv."

Chuck Grover's quick, dry wit makes him a popular performer in comedy clubs, colleges, fund-raisers and at private functions all over the Northeast. A former semifinalist in the Boston Comedy Festival, he's also an accomplished writer who joins comic talents such as Doug Stanhope (The Man Show) as a contributor to the web site, an e-zine that describes itself as a cross between Maxim magazine and The Man Show.

July 20th: LADIES NIGHT *Kelly MacFarland and Carolyn Plummer

Kelly simply tells it like it is, and the audience adores her effervescent style. Kelly has been the opening act for Melissa Etheridge at the Cape Cod Melody Tent. She was featured in Boston Magazine's 2003 'Best of Boston' issue. Kelly has also appeared in the Boston Comedy Festival and was first runner up in the "2003 Comedy Central Laugh Riots Semi-Final Competition in Boston."

A home-grown favorite, Carolyn has appeared in many Boston area clubs. Her dead-pan delivery adds to the humor of her wry observations on life as a young, single woman. Her mom still lives here in Wolfeboro and both were formerly active in the Village Players.

August 17th: *Bob Siebel and Dave Rattigan

To say Bob is a unique act is an understatement. The audience is totally aware, and becomes willingly involved with his presence the moment he steps onto the stage and takes command of their attention. His reputation for quick, sustained improvisation is well known throughout the Comedy Clubs in the New England area. "You never know what he will say next!" A guaranteed evening of pure entertainment for any audience young and old willing to take a deep breath and hold onto any fixed object while Bob takes them on a fast paced, non-stop tour of life as seen by one of it's most off beat visitors.

Dave Rattigan, a former semifinalist in the Boston Comedy Festival, he's also an accomplished writer who has been published in The Boston Globe, The Sporting News, Sports Illustrated, Boston magazine, and other national and regional publications. He's won 15 writing awards, and for many years wrote a popular and funny column for a north-of-Boston newspaper. He also teaches college-level and corporate writing and public speaking courses as well as stand-up comedy classes.

September 21st: *Paul D'Angelo and Steve Guilmette

Paul is a regular in comedy clubs in Boston and Los Angeles and across the country. He was named Boston's Best Comedian by Boston Magazine in 1994 and 1995. He has performed on TV's Comedy Central and NBC's Friday Night. His act is clean, clever and refreshing. Paul is one of the BEST Comics working today and one of the most requested comedians in the country.

Steve has performed at comedy clubs throughout New England including The Comedy Connection, The Comedy Studio and Nick's Comedy Stop. His great wit and down-to-earth sensibility make him a popular performer, and his abilities as an imposter inform his comic characters.

Advance tickets **!!SPECIAL DEAL!!** on-line from our web site: www.village-players.com (or) downtown at Black's Paper & Gifts, **\$40 for the entire series** if purchased before June 8th. That's only \$10 per ticket for the entire series! – Wow! All Tickets will be available for sale in May. The sales were brisk last year, so my advice is to get your tickets early. Thereafter tickets will be \$12 in advance or \$15 at the door the night of the shows. Proceeds from the shows will benefit the ongoing reconstruction effort at the theater.

A special round of APPLAUSE to our generous sponsors for the entire series:



As an added bonus, The Barn Door will treat ticket holders the night of the shows to **\$2 OFF their dinner entrée** if they come in between 5 and 6pm, **EARLY BIRD SPECIAL, for dinner before the show.** Simply show your Comedy theater ticket to the server and it's done!

What a wonderful way to spend your Friday nights, dinner and a show...happy summer!

Meet the Prez ...from Willie Mork



The new 2007 Village Players President is Russ Ellis, who you may remember as the frantic manservant in last fall's "A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum". Russ was born and grew up in Needham, MA where he met his wife of 23 years, Sandra. The whole Ellis family, including daughters Athena and Meegan, have been active in Village Players since '98.

Russ was sucked into the VP family when a member talked him into joining the stage crew of "Hello Dolly!" He was hooked! He got so involved in all our shows that he unconsciously learned everyone's lines from backstage. He finally was persuaded to audition for a musical and was cast as Luther Billis in "South Pacific" ("101 Pounds of Fun"). Russ has acted in many VP shows since. He has a real comic streak and likes doing comedy best, but has taken on several serious roles. Behind the scenes, Russ has helped build sets, stage-crewed and assistant directed. He has lent his skills as a carpenter and mason to many of our volunteer theater renovation projects. (continued below)

**RED DOT MEANS THAT THIS IS YOUR
LAST ISSUE OF THE PROMPTER.
(Your dues have not been paid.)**

P.O. Box 770 Wolfeboro, NH 03894



NON-PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
COMPUPRINT
03867

In his spare time, Russ is a golf duffer and loves playing pop guitar with a group of friends. He also likes to build furniture. His favorite thing is family fun, cheering on Athena and Meegan at their various sports events. He feels that the theater is a great place to do things with his daughters, with everyone pulling together on equal footing to put on a good show.

In real life Russ is a stone mason who also works at Purity Springs Resort and does grooming and snow making at King Pine ski area in the winter.

As President, Russ sees The Village Players concentrating on putting on good theater for the community as well as continuing to restore and renovate our historic theater.

PROMPTER DEADLINES

Need to send some theater info. for inclusion in one of the PROMPTERs this year?

Here is our usual deadline:

August Prompter copy deadline - Friday, July 20th
October Prompter copy deadline - Friday, Sept. 21st
December Prompter copy deadline - Friday, Nov. 23rd

Please forward your copy to Jeannette
via email:

virgodesign@verizon.net

(NOTE: the Newsletter Committee will review content and may edit for clarity.)

This page has been included for YOU (the members) to review and consider when casting your vote at the next Annual Meeting on June 10th. No text has been edited, as requested by both parties.

Why We Need Updated Bylaws

The concept for updating the bylaws began when I was working on providing info. for the VP web site. I realized we did not know if the bylaws we had on the web site were the latest. While reading them I realized we were woefully unprepared to protect our organization and, most all, leaving this valuable theater unprotected.

Prior experience with a similar situation I was involved with, in a non-profit organization, that was taken over easily because of their weak bylaws. We had a state wide organization but no property. We tried to change the bylaws when we realized what was happening but it was too late. We had to dissolve the organization or give it over to a group that did not deserve it.

There are 4 other major non-profit arts organizations right near us with no theater that would love to have a theater. They are already non-profit 501c(3) organizations. The way the bylaws are now written, it would take only 10 months to take over the theater.

There are 3 main weaknesses: 1) Most of the board is replaced every year, 2) The board can be replaced from the floor in a general meeting, and 3) The bylaws say "These bylaws may be amended or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a meeting of the general membership called for that purpose.", with no time notification requirements.

That means it would take 25 people with \$10 each to join before April, go to the annual meeting and vote in a new Majority of the board, call a meeting and vote to change the bylaws, change the bylaws and take over the theater. They could then do what they wished, like tear down the theater and convert it to non-profit condos if they wanted to.

In order to keep the building safe we need to fix all three weaknesses. 1) We need 3-year rotating terms for board members so that you can not replace the Majority of the board all at once, 2) the board officers should not be chosen from the floor of a general membership meeting, but be elected by the board, and 3) there should be a lengthy period of notification to the membership to change the bylaws.

The experience I had in previous organizations taught me that if you try to change the bylaws without following procedure you break your own bylaws and it makes them null and void. Because of this possibility we have added a clause that says in essence, "failure to enforce one part of these bylaws does not make the rest of these bylaws unenforceable."

Bylaws are an insurance policy that protect you in the event of a problem. Even if the language is hard to understand, legal-ease usually is, it is there for a purpose. A persistent aggressor, that understands bylaws, can figure out how to get around weak bylaws. The right elements need to be in place so that the Village Players and the theater are protected no matter what.

The VP board you elected courageously took the challenge to stay on for 3 years. The VP board you elected has spent countless hours reviewing and rewriting these really dry bylaws to the nauseating bitter end. They have realized through this process that these changes need to be made. Your VP board of directors has retained Attorney Thomas Bickford to make sure everything is legal. They believe these changes are necessary. Please give them the confidence you did when you elected them and grant them the protection we all need to protect this community theater and vote in the new bylaws.

Thank you, Jerome Holden

This page has been included for YOU (the members) to review and consider when casting your vote at the next Annual Meeting on June 10th. No text has been edited, as requested by both parties.

Opposition To The Proposed By-laws: A personal opinion from Carol Bense.

First let me applaud the hard work and thought that went into the proposal for changing our by laws. By now, all paid up members should have received a copy of them, and you will see that a great deal of effort went into the new proposal.

While I believe that we need to make some changes to our by-laws, I have problems with the current proposal. Since we cannot amend this proposal on the floor, I believe it should be defeated and sent back to the board for changes.

My strongest objection is to:

Article VII: Section B: Amendments

This proposal states the following "The Board of Directors may alter, amend, repeal or adopt new bylaws by a majority vote of the Board of Directors subject to repeal or change by a two-third (2/3) majority of voting members of the organization." To me this means that the 9 members of the board can change or repeal our bylaws and if we do not approve of such a change we must enlist 2/3rds of the members of this group in order to repeal or change them. I strongly disagree with this wording.

Changing of the bylaws of an organization should be the function of the membership and not of the board. I suggest that the proposal be altered as follows: "The Board of Directors may propose alterations, amendments, repeal of bylaws or the adoption of new bylaws to the membership. Any and all of these proposals must be presented in writing to the membership at least 30 days before voting. Any and all of these proposals require a two-thirds majority of the members present at a meeting called for this purpose to be effected. However, in no event may any amendments be made which would affect the Organization's qualification as a tax-exempt organization pursuant to Section 501(c)3 of the Code or corresponding section of any future federal tax code."

Secondly I object to the proposed plan for electing officers and the board:

Article 1V: Sections C & D: Elections

This proposal sets forth a new method of governing The Village Players. If this passes, all board members will be elected for a 3-year term. Each year the membership would get to elect three board members and three board members only. The board itself would then elect its officers. I believe that three years is a commitment that not everyone is willing to make. I think that we would be eliminating good people who might be willing to serve one or two years, but are not willing to make such a long-term commitment.

I also believe that the membership should elect the officers, and not leave that task to the board members. I believe that by taking this function away from the membership, we further distance them from the governance of the organization and increase apathy in regard to the work that needs to be done to keep such an organization healthy and functioning well.

I suggest that we continue to elect the officers for 1-year terms, but that we elect two directors each year who will serve for 2 years each. In those years when the immediate Past-president was not able to serve on the board as a director, the group would need to elect three directors in order to fill that seat as well.

Article II: Objectives. The proposal states that our purpose is "to provide entertainment at reasonable prices", etc. I believe this should be changed to "to provide live theatrical entertainment...etc.". While we also may wish to present films or music or some other forms of entertainment, this is not our purpose. I believe that our purpose is to provide live plays and musicals for the community. Although the bylaws have not stated this as our purpose in the past, I believe that they should.

Article V: Section A: Annual Meeting.

I do not believe that 15 days is enough time for notification of the membership. Some people travel and some people simply need more time to adjust their schedules. I believe notification should be at least 25 days prior to the meeting.

Section C: The same holds true for the provisions for a Special Meeting of the Membership. Indeed it would seem that such a meeting would portend a major upheaval and certainly we would want all the members to have the opportunity to attend.

Again I believe that notification should be at least 25 days prior to such a meeting.

All other articles seem pertinent and helpful to our organization. It is unfortunate that we cannot simply amend these articles on the floor, but, for our bylaws to be legal, the process requires that we defeat this proposal and send it back to the directors for revision. If you would like to see copies of our current bylaws, the proposed bylaws and past bylaws, go to our website: www.village-players.com.

Thank you for your attention.

I hope you will attend the Semi-Annual Meeting on June 10th and voice your opinion and vote.