

# COMMUNITY PLAYERS

## CURTAIN CALLS

Vol. 6.3

September, 2010



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## Smokey Joe's Café Kicks off the 2010-11 Season

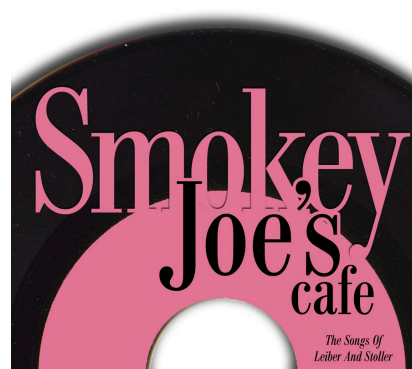
by John Lieder

A little different from the standard fare of Broadway musicals we have served up in recent seasons, *Smokey Joe's Café* is a musical revue based on the 1950s through 1970s music of composers Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller. There is no plot and the hard working performers have no lines to memorize, but there is an absolute ton of music to learn (about 40 songs) and plenty of choreography. *Smokey Joe's Café* promises to be a fun evening of, as cast member **Charles Andrews** puts it, "stage boppin' and natural finger poppin'." Those of us who are old enough to have actually listened to the hits of Leiber and Stoller on the radio will hear our favorites. Mine are the novelty songs "Yakety Yak" and "Charlie Brown" (my older brothers owned them as 45 RPM records), but there's not a lemon in the bunch.

Director **Brian Artman** and Music Director **Melody Palm** have put together a wonderful ensemble of ten fine singers, each of whom gets their time in the spotlight

- literally. The women are **Megan Clark, Wendi Fleming, Reena Rhoda, Christie Vellella** and **Evelyn Young**. The men are **Charles Andrews, Chris Bronson, John Poling, Chuck Stuckey** and **Austin Travis**. All

of the performers do wonderfully well with their solo work, but really shine in the large ensemble pieces. For example, The Act One finale "Saved" features Evelyn Young, but the whole ensemble gets a thumpin' and a bumpin' in this high-energy gospel number.



The *Smokey Joe's* cast performs the opening number, "The Neighborhood".

**Sherise Kirvan** and **Stacy Terry** are sharing duties with the choreography and the two have collaborated extremely well in this production, keeping both the stage and the lobby busy, teaching and rehearsing dance numbers. Many of the songs were hits for The Coasters and The Drifters, and Terry and Kirvan do homage to these groups, but with their own creative spin.

The set, designed by **Bruce Parrish** and Artman with artwork by

... continued on page 4.

## COMMUNITY PLAYERS Calendar

Sept. - Oct. 2010

### Board Meetings

Sept. 7 6:00 p.m.  
Oct. 12, 6:00 p.m.  
Community Players Theatre

### Smokey Joe's Café

Preview: Sept. 9  
Shows: Sept. 10-12, 16-19,  
and 23-26

### Dracula

Auditions: Sept. 13-14  
Preview: Oct. 28  
Shows: Oct. 29-31, Nov. 4-7,  
and 11-13

### Art

Auditions: Oct. 4-5  
Shows: Nov. 18-21



### Community Players

201 Robinhood Lane  
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### Newsletter Committee

Jim Kalmbach  
Aimee Kerber  
John Lieder  
Bob McLaughlin  
Sally Parry

We are always looking for writers, artists, designers and story ideas. Send comments and suggestions to [kalmbach@ilstu.edu](mailto:kalmbach@ilstu.edu)

*Curtain Calls* is published six times a year for the voting members of Community Players.

For information about joining us, please contact our membership chair, Aimee Kerber at [cplayersmember@aol.com](mailto:cplayersmember@aol.com).

Back issues of *Curtain Calls* are available on the Community Players web site. Click on "Newsletter Archive."

## The Undead Walk Among Us

*Dracula* to visit Community Players' stage in October.

Bram Stoker's gothic tale of the passion of Count Dracula will be shared October 29-31, November 4-7 and November 11-13.

Due to a series of unexplained murders and odd occurrences, Professor Abraham van Helsing and Jonathan Harker have concerns about the dark and mysterious Count Dracula who is visiting Seward's Sanitarium. Since his arrival, Lucy (Jonathan's fiancée) has been suffering from horrific dreams and an unexplained illness.

Because of her symptoms, van Helsing and Harker are concerned that the Count may be one of the undead who prowl the darkness and prey on innocent souls. How can two mortal men protect Lucy from this demon?

Bram Stoker's novel, based on European folklore, became an international phenomenon when it was first published in 1897. Hamilton Deane and John L. Balderston's play, *Dracula*, was first produced in 1927 and made into the classic 1931 film with Bela Lugosi. The novel continues to influence writers today as evidenced in Ann Rice's *Vampire Chronicles*, Stephanie Meyer's *Twilight* series and L. J. Smith's *The Vampire Diaries*.

Audition dates are September 13 and September 14 at 7 o'clock at the theatre. The 8-person cast requires two women and six men between the ages of 21 and 65. The "Pay What You Can" performance will be on October 28 followed by performances on October 29-31, November 4-7 and November 11-13.

The show will be directed by **Bruce Parrish** and produced by **Kathleen Parrish**. Corporate sponsor for the production is **Frank Hoffman**.



## Community Players-Heartland Summer Theatre Course Update

For the second summer in a row, Community Players partnered with Heartland Community College to offer a four-part course on the basics of the theatre.

Called "Welcome to the Theatre!," Community Players members **Judy Stroh**, **Sally Parry**, **Jeremy Stiller**, and **Opal Virtue** each met with the group for two hours at the theatre and discussed various aspects of how theatre works. The

topics covered included Introduction to the Theatre, Directing, Scenic Design, and Costume Design.

The enthusiastic group was given a tour of the theatre, sat in on auditions for *Smokey Joe's Café*, and learned about the importance of scenic and costume design in the overall production of a show. The course met July 12-August 2.



# Board Spotlight

## Historian

by John Lieder

For a guy who doesn't actually have an "official" position as such, **Bruce Parrish** does an awful lot as the Community Players Historian. Bruce is an official emeritus member of the Board of Governors and he is recognized by the Board as "Historian," but there actually is no provision for a historian in the constitution or bylaws. That doesn't keep Bruce from faithfully fulfilling the much-needed function as Community Players' archivist, and as such and with his long association with Community Players (since 1974!), his value to the Board is immeasurable.

Bruce has been collecting just about any published item about Community Players since 1991. Before that the historian function was rotated among various board members.

The types of things he gathers and stores include

- Public service announcements (e.g. auditions)
- Show advertisements
- Reviews
- Programs
- Newsletters
- Posters
- Tickets
- Season brochures
- Photographs (wall pictures) and slides
- Archived footage
- Just about anything in the newspaper that mentions Community Players
- Scripts
- Copies of the constitution and bylaws

Most of these documents are kept either in the tall locked cabinet in the Green Room or at the Parrish's home. Duplicate copies of some of the archived material are kept in the Illinois Room at the Bloomington Public Library.

Another major contribution by Bruce as historian was his collaboration with the esteemed Tony Holloway on the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary History Book. You can read a summary of the history on the Community Players web site. Just go the home page and click "History" on the left side panel. In future issues, Bruce will be discussing a decade by decade review of the history of our theatre. This will serve as material for a 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary History Book. The 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary will be coming up in 2013.

While you're on the web site, take a look at "Past Shows". This includes photos from most shows since 1950 and many shows prior to that. Bruce is working on filling in cast and staff information for each show. Bruce has recently been able to add two shows from 1957 and 1961 thanks to Don Freese, who allowed him to borrow his scrapbook and make copies. He is diligently looking for programs and photos from 1923 – 1975. If you can help, please give him a shout.



*The Butter and Egg Man* by George S. Kaufman, produced by Community Players in 1928. Although the actors may look familiar, Bruce assures us that he was not in this show.



## Summer Raffle a Win-Win!

Community Players again held a raffle this summer to help raise funds for the theatre. Every night during the run of *Fantastic Mr. Fox* a prize was given away at intermission. At the final performance a grand prize of four all-day passes to the four Disney World parks was awarded. The lucky winner was **Karla Smith** of Bloomington.

In all, the raffle raised \$836 for Community Players. We would like to thank the many sponsors who made the raffle successful:

- A. Renéé
- Applebee's
- Babbitt's Books
- Children's Discovery Museum
- The Chocolatier
- The Coffee Hound
- College Hills Meat Shop
- Fox and Hounds Day Spa
- The Garlic Press
- Jesse's Grille at The Marriott Hotel
- Kelly's Bakery
- Leighton Legal Group
- Miller Park Zoo
- The Olive Garden
- Prairie Thunder Hockey



... *Smokey Joe's Café* preview continued from page 1.

**Dave Fuller**, is minimal, but totally suits the needs of the show. The four-piece orchestra (combo, if you prefer) of keyboard, bass, guitar and percussion is located on a platform upstage center. The stage is otherwise left open for the performers. Orchestra members include Palm at keyboard, **David Homler**, **Russ Knapp** and **Michael Manak**.

**Karen Clark** is costumer and **Dorothy Mundy** is doing properties with help from **Carol Plotkin**. **Mark Wright** is providing lighting design. **Rich Plotkin** is setting up the sound and **Chris Strupek** will run the sound board for performances. **Judy Stroh** and **Joe Strupek** are sharing stage manager duties. **John Lieder** is producer and he and his wife, **Jean**, are managing the house.

The pay-what-you-can Preview Performance is Thursday, September 9. Regular performances are September 10-12, 16-19 and 23-26. As usual, all evening performances begin at 7:30 and Sunday matinees are at 2:30.

## 'art' Auditions

Community Players continues its Lab Theatre series with the production of 'art' by Yasmina Reza. This Tony winning comedy will be performed one weekend only on November 18, 19, & 20.



'art' is not so much a discussion of what constitutes good art, but rather an examination of what constitutes good friendships. Three longtime friends find their relationship spiraling out of control when one friend invests in an all-white painting. Such a simple act brings out the worst in all three as they try to define friendship.

Auditions for 'art' will be Monday, October 4 and Tuesday, October 5 at 7 pm at the Community Players Theater. Director **Cathy Sutliff** is looking for three men, all older than 25 years.

Part of the script can be viewed on Google Books:

<http://books.google.com/>



The men's quartet (Chris Bronson, Charles Andrews, Chuck Stuckey, Travis Austin) gets duded up for "On Broadway".