



Greetings to All,

Editor: Fred Thompson • 26 Howard Avenue • New Haven, CT • 06519-2809

For those who are REALLY tired of Winter, we now have something wonderful to look forward to: **The National Puppetry Festival** is now open for registration!

This summer marks the 75th anniversary of Puppeteers of America. We hope to celebrate this in a very special way at the National Festival, so please plan on attending. Go to the website, check out the performances, make your plans, the game is a foot (afoot?). Whatever.

Puppeteers of America is a unique organization, held together by the untiring efforts of so many people. I would like to take this time to thank all of you: those working on the National Festival of course, but also all the committees, all of the consultants, all of the contributors to the Puppetry Journal, the executive committee and the board members. Thank you for going the extra mile for PofA; thank you for giving back to this wonderful organization. You are greatly appreciated.

And all of you who are now feeling like - what can I do? There's always a way to serve. Check out the PofA Directory for a committee that might interest you, come to Atlanta and volunteer at the festival. Seen a good show? Write a review and send it to Paul Eide for the Journal.

We are all PofA. Let's celebrate!

Thanks,
Anna Vargas, President

The Puppeteers of America
NATIONAL PUPPETRY FESTIVAL
July 11-17, 2011
Georgia Tech University, Atlanta, Georgia

Online: www.nationalpuppetryfestival.org
Not Online? Please Call 215-885-7073

A festival postcard will be sent out in the next week or so.
All contact information will be provided there.
If you do not have access to the internet, you may be able to use the public computer services at your local library. You can download and print forms and other information from the website.

MEMBERSHIP
Address, email, phone changes???

PLEASE let us know as soon as possible so that your PofA publication mailings will not be interrupted. Thanks.

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REUM ~

... with a view

M'EI Reum

I hope by this time everyone has thawed out, the snow is shoveled and the sun is shining brightly in your hometown. What a wild winter. One day it was 69 and the next we had three inches of snow and the next day it was 12 below. It was a tough holiday for me. My Reum-mate of 54 years died in December. He had a wonderful life working with young people and as Time magazine described his life, "He changed the world one kid at a time."

The new year looks busy for **The Puppet Co Playhouse** at Glen Echo, Maryland. They are celebrating their 28th anniversary this year and are the recipient of the Cherry Adler Award from the Maryland State Arts Council for excellence in Children's theatre.

Bob Brown will be there, offering a number of shows for tiny tots. "Penguins, Playground," "Snow Show," and "Panda Monium" are on the agenda.

Up in Seattle the **Carter Marionettes** are working on a Baroque marionette opera "The Burning House." Puppets and opera seem to have a long history together.

Z Puppets Rosenschnoz in Indianapolis are doing "Monkey Mind Pirates" and in their Toy Theatre after dark they will be doing "Gnip Gnopera."

Puppet Slams have become a craze all over the country. Chicago. Los Angeles, Detroit, Virginia, etc. etc. That is a good sign. Let's put puppetry on the rise,

We often find that our puppeteers cross-country are multi talented. **John Byrne** is a contemporary poet is published in "Many A Trail to the Summit."

I had a wonderful visit with **Peter and Debbie Allen** of Jamestown, Missouri. They are revving up for **Puppet Fest Midwest**. **Paul Mesner**, Kansas City, Missouri also stopped by on his way through Colorado. He was lucky enough to hit one big snow, but it was great for me; I had the day off.

Chris Neely is working on Shadow puppets. She has traditional Greek shadows she made from spray painted matt board and other large images inked on Mylar. She has had great success with a screen made of t-shirt material.

In Los Angeles **Rick Mitchell** has written and directed a "Shadow Anthropology." The story is about an Afghan family and its struggles. The puppets are by **Maria Bodmann**. The performance includes lots of characters and wonderful battles.

I have a review of **Alissa Hunnicutt's** "The Kid Inside" from **Elise Handelman**, New York. Alissia, with puppets, video, and her beautiful voice, treated the audience to thirteen well-developed vignettes. **Lindsey 'Z' Briggs** and **Chad Williams** were assistant puppeteers.

"Holiday Spectacular," a new show, with **Carole D'Agostino** and **Brian T. Carson** was presented at **New World Stages** in New York City. I was delighted to hear they used black light. I haven't seen much black light lately. **John Tartaglia** created wrote the book and produced the show. William Wade wrote the lyrics and music.

Puppetworks - Park Slope New York is doing "Alice in Wonderland." **Penny Jones** is pleasing the kids with "Mother Goose" and "The Magic Forest".

Joe Santoro. Martinsburg, West Virginia is having a wonderful time with the "Little Red Hen Cooking". That's a fun new twist. He is performing at the **Wonderment Puppet Theatre**. Joe's sense of humor shows through his next show has Cinderella at a sock hop.

Lois Corwin, of Leonia, New Jersey has written and directed "The Tall Tales of Paul Bunyan."

Joseph Therrien is doing an adaptation of August Strindberg's "Dream Play" as his MFA project at the University of Connecticut

Puppeteers in Brooklyn were lucky enough to hear a lecture/film presentation on the Manteo Sicilian Marionettes. I was lucky enough to see a performance in Washington at the UNIMA Festival. You never forget the fun, the noise and the excitement of a performance by the Sicilians.

Lots of workshops are happening in New York. Outstanding presenters are **Puppetry of Taiwan**, **Puppets Alive** and a master class by **Luman Coad**, Vancouver, Canada

The International Puppetry Museum in California, **Alan Cook**, Director, has acquired **Bob Bromley's** puppets, a gift of **Charles and Elaine Taylor**. They have also acquired **Rogers Barns** "Granny" and **George Latshaw's** "Indian Brave."

Suisun City, California hosted the **Fratello Marionettes** of Danville for performance of "Carnival of the Animals." Puppeteers were **Kevin Menegus** and **Fred C. Riley III**.

Heart of the Beast, of Minnesota, one of the ever-busy puppet theatres in the country, has a wonderful puppet lab going on with rising stars **Bart Buch**, **Blake Love**, **Soozin Hirschmug**, **Angeela Olson** and **Janaki Ranpura**.

Janaki Ranpura also has a new show that sounds fascinating "Your Heart is in my Mouth." It includes a heart that leaps up and takes off. Puppets and shadow projections fill the show.

Los Angeles had a visit from the **Slovene Betontanc**, Umkav, and the Slovene group **Silence**. They performed "Show Your Face" it is a contemporary parable about a faceless snowsuit. The story follows the Everyman theme.

Los Angeles also hosted "Quixote" a film by **Classic in Miniature, Inc**. The marionettes were crafted by Russian **Eugene Seregin** and brought to life by **Steven Ritz-Barr** and directed by **Hoku Uchiyama**.

Shaun McNamara of California is doing "Hamlet has no Legs." His puppeteers are **James Ko** and **Dany Montooth**.

Lynn Jenning, San Diego, a perpetual motion puppeteer is directing puppeteers in San Diego and teaching them to work with masks as well as experimenting with puppets for staged readings.

The Detroit Institute of Art opened its new puppet gallery with performances by **Preston Foerder**, Brooklyn, New York. They have new lighting, easier access, and plan to change the exhibits twice a year. Hooray for DIA.

In closing; I need to remind everyone please let me know what you are doing. If you are written up in your local paper or have some wonderful grant, new show, or visiting puppeteer, PLEASE e-mail me, write me, phone me, whatever--- if you want it in print, we will try to cover you.

Let me know what you are up to. Have a great spring! Plan on Lattening the National Festival it will renew you creative juices. See you in Atlanta. M'EL

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the GUILD CONNECTION

KURT HUNTER

We're finally in the midst of our first pre-spring thaw here in Minnesota. We've lost about a foot of the white stuff in the last few days. We still have enough snow to measure in feet not inches, but the thaw has improved the general mood in Minnesota considerably. It's just the natural cycle of things here.

- Guilds go through cycles too. The guild that I "grew up in," **The Prairie Guild of Puppetry**, went on the inactive list several years ago. In the Pittsburgh area, however, they appear to be on an upswing. Cheryl Capezzuti, Daniel Stilker, Kristen Barca and Sara Eckleberry are working to reactivate the **Three Rivers Puppetry Guild**.

- Good news is coming in from the Carolinas as well. Mac McCord reports that the **Puppetry Guild of the Carolinas** is revitalizing under the presidency of Frank Byrne. Mac is serving as Secretary/Treasurer. They are gearing up for National Day of Puppetry events. Shows and events are planned throughout the Carolinas with Frank Byrne and Mac McCord in Fayetteville, North Carolina, Yostie Ashley in Buford, South Carolina, John Scollon in North Augusta, Georgia and Hobey Ford, Lisa Sturz and Susan VandeWeghe in the Ashville area.

- **The Wisconsin Puppetry Guild** is also looking forward to the NDOP. They are planning an event at Chuck and Sandye Voight's Hazel Green Opera House.

- It's part of the yearly guild cycle, National Day of Puppetry in the spring, festivals and picnics in the summer and fall, and holiday parties on one side or the other of the New Year. My own **Twin Cities Puppeteers** had an especially good holiday party in early January. We met in the festively decorated party room of Mary Ellen Kruger, a fifty plus year member of our guild. Guild VP Benjamin Peterson put together a puppet improv game that was the hit of the party.

- The members of **The Puppet Guild of Long Island** had their holiday party in December hosted by Artie Poore. The party included a gift exchange and short performances.

- Linda and Bob Brittan hosted the **Phoenix Guild of Puppetry** for their mid-January holiday party complete with the usual festivities, food, gift exchange, etc.

- **The Puppeteers of Puget Sound** waited until the end of January for their holiday party and potluck.

- Maybe the holidays just last longer in the Pacific Southwest. **The San Francisco Bay Area Puppeteers' Guild** also waited until the end of January for their party. The entertainment for their party was Images in Motion's wonderful new show "Water Works."

- **The Los Angeles Guild of Puppetry** has to take some kind of the prize for their holiday party held in December at the Bob Baker Marionette Theater. Mallory Lewis and Lamb Chop served as Masters of Ceremonies and performers included Tony Urbano and Tim Blaney, Doug Seymore, Robin Walsh, Three Chairs Theatre, Mario Seki, Mini-MooDoo Puppets, Leslie K. Gray, David Markham, Erik Kuska and Co., and Ezra Peterson Behnen.

- VP of the **Greater Houston Puppetry Guild**, Bob Abdou, organized the first Texas Ventriloquist/Puppeteer Gathering in Manor, Texas in February. The event included a lunch gathering and a performance by mask and mime performer Michael Cooper.

- **The Orange County Puppetry Guild** had a very interesting idea for their November meeting. They held a Puppetry Swap Meet. From the photos in their newsletter they had tables loaded with goodies ready for the shopping.

- Shadow Puppetry was the focus of the December meeting of the **Willamette Valley Puppeteers**. Chris Neely, who apprenticed with Larry Reed, offered insights into a variety of shadow puppetry approaches and traditions with live demonstrations and video.

- **The Detroit Puppeteers Guild** had a multi-part meeting program in November. They started with a video of "The Man Who Lost His Head," a puppet show that the guild performed in the 1970s. That was followed by a demonstration of break-away puppets by Rick Morse and Nancy Henk. They finished with a hands-on workshop lead by Judi Zachary and Annabel Griffiths to make three string penguin (and nun) marionettes.

- David Goboff reports that the **Puppet Guild of South Florida** set up a puppet exhibit at the Northwest Regional Library in Coral Springs, Florida in December that ran through the end of January. They also did a Make-It / Take-It workshop in the lobby in mid-January.

- **The Savannah Coastal Puppetry Guild** received a grant from the City of Savannah, Leisure Services Bureau to hire Angela Beasley's Puppet People to perform at seven neighborhood Golden Age Centers.

- It seems like one guild or another is always working to improve their on-line presence. Yonatan Kaganoff is working on revising the website for the **Puppetry Guild of Greater New York**, www.pgogny.org

- A lot of effort has recently gone into the website for the **National Capital Puppetry Guild**. As can happen in a volunteer organization critical information about domain name registration, webhost login information, and FTP passwords had gone missing, all of which were tracked down by Christopher Hudert. Christopher Piper took on the work of bringing them up to the modern world of websites moving to a CMS (Content Management System). You can find them at www.dcpuppetguild.org and on Facebook and Twitter and Flickr and YouTube and ...

You can find me enjoying the thaw and waiting for your guild news to arrive. Let me know what your guild is doing.

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EUREKA!!!

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Greetings Survivors,

Snow, ice, sleet, blizzards...and we keep going.

Oh, what fun job! Do you get paid for that?" I am so glad to see the back of Old Man Winter finally breaking. We here in Ohio had three and a half inches of solid ice laid down before the snow began. Even the letter carriers were throwing the mail up onto the porch rather than tackle the stairs. But we puppet people all stayed in touch via Facebook, Puppet Hub, Puptcrit and now the new Internet group, the Worldwide Puppetry Network, hosted by Facebook. So let's see...

NEAT AND CHEAP HAIR 2011: I got an e-mail from **Anne Newman**, from **Paxton, Illinois**. She writes, "I needed a quick hair change for a hand puppet. At the dollar store, they had scrunchies with attached hair for, yes, a dollar. They're perfect puppet-size and with the elastic, they work for instant wig or beard. Just had to tell somebody!" Thanks, Anne. I wish everybody were like you!

HANDY WORK TABLE: **Peggy Pearson**, of **Greenwood, Illinois**, says that she likes to work in front of TV so she lowers her ironing board to lap level, creating a nice work table. She says that the important thing is not to get hot glue on the cover. Now she tells me! A lot of my husband's shirts are now the "stick to the ribs" variety...

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT: Speaking of working in front of TV, many years back I felt I had reached a plateau in my head modeling skills. Then, thinking of how a pianist has to practice eight hours a day, I decided to practice head modeling. So every night for three months, while watching TV, I made a head. As a result, my head modeling skills jumped way beyond what I hoped for. I suggest it to everyone.

BLACK FISH LINE: **Rick Morse**, of **Flushing, Michigan**, and I spent some of our winter mornings, talking puppet shop. He passed on a great tip that he got from **Dave Herzog**, of **Chicago**. Both Rick and Dave generally use 16 pound test black fish line, but when it comes to lines that are very high wear, Dave switches to thirty pound test, or even (in the case of the juggler) fifty pound test. Veteran string-pullers generally agree that black fish line is so much superior to the nylon see-through filament, since it doesn't tangle as easily and doesn't stretch, but here's a real goodie: You can buy "mill ends" from Cortland very cheaply. You can't choose which weight, but you get lots and lots of it. The name of the company is Cortland Line Company, Cortland, NY; log onto Cortland's site: www.cortlandline.com

TREASURE TROVE: When I finally got out of my driveway I headed for Archiver's, the local scrapping store, to find just the right paper for the background of my new flyer. Oh, what a wonderful store for puppeteers! So I Googled it and saw that it is a franchise with locations all over the Midwest and many other states as well. Not only do they have a huge assortment of paper, they also have a whole section of doily-type papers perfect for shadow puppeteers. They have little "skylines," great for overhead projector scenery. And they have other things as well—all puppet sized! They have teeny-tiny paper fasteners (which they call brads) in a large assortment of colors. They have "brads" that have heads that look like buttons. Yes, buttons! And they have jewel headed brads. Wow! I could hardly resist the teeny-tiny iron-on rhinestone designs, and the itty-bitty stick-on slogans in rhinestones.

SMOOCH: They also have something that looks like nail polish called, "Smooch," and is described as "a pearlized accent ink." Fifteen truly brilliant colors! Smooch is as bright as glitter.

EGG EYES: While you're out shopping, in the hopefully balmy spring air, remember, this is the only time of year to get your supply of plastic eggs for eyes. I am not talking about the kind that you hide jelly beans in; I mean plastic eggs that are the same size, but are white and are used in floral arrangements. They don't break apart and are made with a more flexible plastic, rather like ping-pong balls, but even more flexible. I always think that ping-pong eyes are great for hairy animals, but for humans, I like a less protruding look. These eggs are perfect for an eyeball that is has the same protruding-ness as the human eye. I cut the egg in half, from top to bottom, and then cut an eye from each half.

THRIFT SHOP DIVING: Your next shopping stop has to be the local thrift store Who doesn't haunt the local thrift shops for great puppet stuff? **Lois Sansone**, of **Blossvale, New York** suggested that, when adapting denim coveralls or jeans, I should use little girls' outfits. It is much easier to cut down a girl's straight skirt than trying to eliminate the crotch in boy's clothes. And by the way, in my question and answer session after the show, I always mention that I get all my materials and stuff from the thrift store because I like to recycle. The teachers really like that reinforcement, and the kids get a laugh when I say, "This used to be a lady's dress. Can you imagine wearing that!!!"

FINGER STALL: This year, at the Great Lakes Regional Potlatch (aka Pokagon) we were privileged to see **Brad Lowe's** "The Fisherman and His Wife." **Brad**, from **Clarkston, Michigan**, made his hand puppets turn their heads much further than usual. Come to find out, and he was glad to share the idea, he has two finger stalls inside his neck stall, which gives his puppets a great head-turn.

ACRYLIC PAINT CRACKING: I also overheard some folks swapping puppet talk and someone said that in order to reduce brittleness in acrylic paint, add liquid acrylic medium. I was rushing somewhere and didn't have a chance to track it down. Have any of you tried this? I'd be interested...

RETURN POST CARD: As I write this column, I am already booking my summer shows. My husband, Eric, gave me a great tip from when he was a salesman in college. He told me to include a return postcard with my flyer. On this postcard I have boxes to check: 1) I don't want to miss this one! Put me down!; 2) Hmmm...sounds good, but I'd like more information; and 3) not this year, but do keep me on the list. This is followed with lines for choice of dates, name and address, e-mail and phone. You would be surprised how many of these I get back and I can fill in my dates in half the time.

So off I go to lick envelopes. My husband always likes it when I send out my mailings - after two hundred envelopes my lips get stuck together...

So have a great season and keep those tips coming. And how about you folks on the West Coast? Do you have anything to share?

Here's smilin' atcha.

Nancy