SE Regional OCTAfest

Representing the Berean Community Players on June 4th, the cast and crew of *California Suite* (Visitors from London) hit the stage of Little Theatre of Tuscarawas County in New Philadelphia as the second of four excerpts from member theatres in the Southeast Region of the Ohio Community Theatre Association. The cast of Miki Brooks and Charlie Smith gave a terrific performance. It was, according to director Joe Balding, as good as, if not even better than, any performance during the regular run of the show, which is saying a lot. The audience, made up mostly of members of other SE Region theatres, seemed to love it, too, if their frequent bursts of laughter were any indication.

So, in the end, *Angel Street* was selected to represent our region at State Conference over Labor Day weekend, and *Night Watch* was chosen as the alternate. We are hoping that both will be able to perform at Conference, as both were very strong excerpts. *Angel Street* is a Victorian drama which earned awards for directing, acting, costumes and hairstyles. *Night Watch* is a present-day drama with some very surprising twists and an amazing performance by the female lead, Chris Dolen.

You can see these and many other excellent excerpts at “Close Encounters of the Theatre Kind”, this year’s State Conference at the Holiday Inn French Quarter in Perrysburg, Ohio over Labor Day weekend. The Conference always offers many great theatre workshops, too, as well as games and dances and parties. There’s always more to do than one has time for, so it’s impossible to be bored. Talk to SE Regional Representative Joe Balding or Steve Haskins for more information!

Grant approved

The Athens Foundation awarded us $2,313 for this year! Kudos to Karen Chan for writing and submitting the proposal, and to our officers and board members (and anyone else involved!) for prioritizing our needs and gathering the specs. The funds will be used for the following:

1 - curtains (legs and borders)
2 - three tall stools with arms and backs to be used in the light and sound booth
3 - two stage work lights
4 - three garment racks
5 - two sanders

These items will certainly enhance our sets, rehearsals, and performances! Now, we need to have more of you become ACTIVELY involved in our thriving community theatre group. We are excited about our upcoming season - *Belles*, *Oliver*, and *The Man Who Came To Dinner*. Check out our web site www.athenianplayerstheatre.org - maintained by Jim Parsons - for the latest scoop about auditions and other information about our organization.

Visiting the neighbors

June has been a busy month. Your humble editor and Joe Balding have been taking in a good bit of good theatre.

Ohio Valley Summer Theater’s first show of their 2005 season, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, is great fun. Its cast includes fine performances by some veterans of APT shows, including Karen Chan, David Whealey, Nicki Mazzocca, Dean Barker and Ron Luce. The rest of the cast wasn’t too shabby, either.

We also went to see *All Kinds of People*, the summer production by the OCTA Southeast Region’s newest member theatre, the Deersville Community Players. This potpourri of songs by Oscar Hammerstein II was a great vehicle for an enthusiastic and talented
cast of local performers. DCP founder and Executive Director Joyce Lannum gave us a very interesting and informative tour of their theatre, the 1913 hall they fondly call their "Unique Antique". It's a lovely, intimate venue that seats 137, including the balcony.

Also, we went with some friends to Schiller Park in Columbus' German Village to catch a performance of William Shakespeare's Two Gentlemen of Verona, this season's first production of Actors' Theatre. The major role of Silvia was beautifully played by Athens' own Hayley Van Meter, who appeared in APT's first show in 1992, The Best Christmas Pageant Ever.

So far, it's been a pretty good summer.

Nunsense, a musical comedy by Dan Goggins. If you've never seen it (and even if you have) you're in for a treat. The outrageous premise for this zany show is that five of the Little Sisters of Hoboken are putting on a talent show to raise money to bury the last four of fifty-three nuns who died of food poisoning after eating soup prepared by Sister Julia, Child of God.

Whether or not you're Catholic you are bound to enjoy this irreverent and highly entertaining look at the many hidden talents of these nuns. And besides, the music is really good! Nunsense is directed by Joe Balding with musical direction by our beloved Lynn Sullivan. The cast includes Linda Watkins, Tawna Rogers, Ginny Puhl, Katie Chaney and Sylvia Abbott.

Call Stuart's Opera House at 740-753-1924 for tickets.

APT's partner in crime, the Berean Community Players, are staging a fundraiser for Stuart's Opera House on July 8, 9 & 10.

The Ohio University School of Film will be making a feature film late this year using mostly local actors from OU and the Athens area.

The film is Winesburg, Ohio and is based on the Sherwood Anderson novel of the same name. First published in 1919, the story follows young George Willard and the unforgettable characters who touch his life.

Several APT members have been cast in the project, including current president Carol Ault, Karen Chan, Joe Balding and Steve Haskins. There may be even more by the time shooting starts in the fall.

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SE Callboard
...here's what's happening around our region:

Actors Guild of Parkersburg
Seussical the Musical Jul 29 - Aug 13

Berean Community Players
Nunsense Jul 8 - 10

Coshocton Footlight Players
Schoolhouse Rock Jul 7 - 17

Deersville Community Players
Opal's Million Dollar Duck Oct 21-30

Little Theatre of Tuscarawas County
Teddy and Alice Jul 7 - 17

River City Players
Bye Bye Birdie Sep 3 - 4

Get out there and see some theatre!