



A Note From The Director
Doug Instenes

New Year's Resolutions

As we flip our calendars to 2010 and look at a new year and a new decade, we often make resolutions for the upcoming months. Most of them, I don't end up keeping. However, here at the RTG we resolve to keep presenting the best possible quality community theatre, to entertain, to provide laughter, and to give local people a chance to explore their creative side through theatre. These resolutions, I will see through.

We resolve to continue to thank our volunteers, who provide many hours of work for each production. We thank our patrons who donated to our patron drive, helping to keep the RTG strong, even in tough times.

We resolve to provide outreach programs and classes that enrich the lives of children and families; to provide a variety of entertainment throughout the new year that will "light up the lives of people at all stages." We will continue to present comedies, dramas, musicals, and the Racine Children's Theatre Packy Plays. Jean's Jazz Series opens the theatre up to the best regional musicians for lively concerts. The Comedy Tonight series has been a hit from the start, continuing this year with outside talent that will make everyone laugh.

We resolve to give Racine-area citizens every opportunity to see quality theatre, or become involved in it, as a volunteer, donor or season ticket holder. Is there any better way to forget your troubles than to sit down and be transported to another time and place for a couple of hours?

Please make your New Year's resolution to attend one of the many activities at the RTG. It is one promise you won't mind making.

CALLBOARD

racine theatre guild **January 2010**

Murder at the Howard Johnson's Opens Jan. 22

A love triangle turns hilarious as three people plot to do away with each other, in the comedy *Murder at the Howard Johnson's* by Ron Clark and Sam Bobrick. This slightly twisted look at love and relationships opens January 22 and runs three weekends, through February 7.

The entire play is set in various rooms of the Howard Johnson's motel, where we meet Arlene Miller and the two men in her life. She is married to a boring used-car salesman, Paul, and has taken up with a more dashing (but smug and smarmy) dentist, Mitchell. She has asked Paul for a divorce, but he loves her too much and will not agree to break up. So Arlene and Mitchell plot to murder Paul. The two have made an elaborate scheme to lure Paul to the motel and then drown him in the bathtub. But when Paul shows up, the three begin to talk about relationships, and things go awry.

Plotting and failures continue through the remaining scenes, as this trio attempts to come up with more convoluted schemes to commit murder, all the while talking about love and life and happiness. Will the gray-wardrobed and boring Paul try to change to please his wife? Will he learn that buying her a new watch each year is not enough to satisfy a woman? Will the self-serving Mitchell find true love with Arlene? Will he

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Murder at the Howard Johnson's

by
Ron Clark & Sam Bobrick

CAST

Arlene Miller Sam Shelby
 Mitchell Lovell Joseph Vignieri
 Paul Miller Andrew Wallace

CREW

Director Norm McPhee
 Technical Dir. Jacob Warren
 Scenic Designer .. Scott Wirtz-Olsen
 Prod. Stage Mgr. Cindy David
 Stage Manager Jill Dexter
 Asst. Stage Mgrs. Karen Hamilton
 & Katelyn Christensen
 Costume Design Lori Stefanski
 Wardrobe Fran Maccanelli
 Light Design Kevin Edmonston
 & Stephen Kalmar II
 Light Technician Lynn Swanson
 Sound Design Janet Petrik
 Sound Technician ... Suzanne Sikora
 Makeup Jeanne Christensen
 Props Spencer Carlson
 & Jeff Kaulzarich

Jan. 22 - Feb. 7 • Production Calendar • *Murder at HoJo's*

| S | M | T | W | Th | F | S |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| | | | | | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | | | | | | |

| | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| FRIDAY, Jan. 22 | 7:30 PM |
| SATURDAY, Jan. 23 | 7:30 PM |
| SUNDAY, Jan. 24 | 2:00 PM |
| FRIDAY, Jan. 29 | 7:30 PM |
| SATURDAY, Jan. 30 | 2:00 & 7:30 PM |
| SUNDAY, Jan 31 | 2:00 & 7:00 PM |
| THURSDAY, Feb 4 | 7:00 pm |
| FRIDAY, Feb. 5 | 7:30 PM |
| SATURDAY, Feb. 6 | 4:00 & 7:30 PM |
| SUNDAY, Feb. 7 | 2:00 PM |

Spotlight on Cindy David

She Caught the Theatre Bug

Cindy David never intended to become a Racine Theatre Guild volunteer. She had a casual interest in theatre and saw a play now and again over the years. Then in 2001 her friend Jill Dexter (and long-time RTG volunteer, along with her husband Art) invited Cindy to come down to work on the show *Communicating Doors*.

"My eyes were opened," Cindy says. "I had an entirely new appreciation for what goes on behind the scenes when a play is put on. I had no idea there was such a flurry of activity, from costume changes and props setups to stage managers calling light and sound cues. It was amazing to me. And I decided I wanted to be part of that."

Around that same time, Cindy's husband began working second shift, so she found that her evenings were wide open for volunteering. In no time Cindy found herself helping out backstage, working on wardrobe crews, helping with makeup, and working in the booth as light technician and sound technician. She has designed costumes for about one show a year, including *Daddy's Dyin' (Who's Got the Will?)* (2003) and *The Foreigner* (2006).

"I particularly love working on the musicals," Cindy says. "I worked two years of *Annie* (2001, 2002), two years of *Honk* (2003, 2004), and was production stage manager for *Beauty and the Beast* (2008). That meant lining up all the crew positions for the daytime performances and a second set of crew people for the weekend shows. It was a lot of work, but so rewarding. I never got tired of that show, and seeing it over and over, I just came to appreciate it more."

Cindy certainly respects the time the actors put in, especially with singing and dancing rehearsals for musicals, but it's the backstage work that continues to impress her.

"People sitting in the audience have no idea what is going on back stage," she says. "There are lightning-

fast costume changes, and someone has to put all those costumes in the right places backstage and be on hand to help with the changes. There are props changes and hand-offs. Set pieces are pushed on and off for scene changes. And I think you need to work in the booth to really know what the stage manager does, with all the light and sound cues. We are so lucky at the RTG to have talented and willing people to perform all these important jobs."

Cindy calls herself a "people person," and practices her personal skills on the job as a benefits and compensation specialist at Lincoln Lutheran, where she's been employed for 35 years. "I think I use my people skills when I serve as PSM, like I am for *Murder at the Howard Johnson's*. It's all about networking to find the volunteers for each position. It amazes me to see how our RTG volunteers work so long and hard to put on a show."

Cindy treasures her time spent at the RTG and the opportunities it has given her. She points to the fun of traveling to Ireland when she was on the wardrobe crew of *Visiting Mr. Green* in 2005. Her two years spent on the playreading committee opened her eyes to another aspect of theatre: finding the right shows for our stage to please our audiences.

"Above all, my approach as a crew person is to give TLC to the cast," Cindy says. "The crew is there to support the cast and all that happens on stage, under the lights. I don't mind working in the background, in the dark, and knowing that what I do is helping to make the show happen. My goal is always to be as close to perfection as possible. We don't want to let our standards fall, or be satisfied with second best."

A few more of Cindy's favorite shows were *Forever Plaid* (2006) (one of her nephews was in the cast) and *Godspell* (2009). She says she has such an appreciation for the stage manager and what he or she does to manage all the cues.



Cindy says *Murder at the Howard Johnson's* is going to be a hoot. "Norm as director has such a vision for what he wants this show to be like on stage," she says. "I love watching the show go from the first reading, the early blocking rehearsals and roughing things out, to the finished product. Getting the crew for this show has taken some time, to find the right people for each position, but it's going to be an absolutely hilarious show."

Laughter and working with people are part of what motivates Cindy David to keep coming back to volunteer at the RTG. We hope she continues to find the hours to share her talents with us.

The Tony Award-winning

Billy Elliot

is coming to Chicago's
Oriental Theatre.

Join us May 20

Balcony \$98, Orchestra \$133

(Price includes show ticket, round-trip transportation on a Lamers bus, driver tip, snacks & beverages)

Call 262-633-4218

or pick up a registration form from the box office.

Educators Credit Union Presents 9th Season of

Jean's Jazz Series

The Racine Theatre Guild and Educators Credit Union invite you to warm up your winter with hot music at Jean's Jazz Series, which is kicking off its ninth season. Individual show tickets and season packages are available for lively jazz performances by top artists.

Thursday, January 28, 7 p.m.

Keith Watling

Gypsy Guitar

Experience the ambiance of gypsy jazz, the music of Django Reinhardt and the Paris cabaret scene of the 1930s. Keith Watling has shared the stage with Melvin Rhyne, Brian Lynch, Dan Schneck and Paul Spencer. He played lead guitar for Mary and the Jazz Guys, and currently, in addition to a busy solo career, he fronts the Blue In Green trio.

Who's Your Daddy Trio

featuring Dan Trudell and the Hammond B3 Organ

Expect fresh arrangements of past popular songs, ranging from The Zombies rock group to "Theme from Star Wars," as well as original tunes drawing from the varied influences of band members Dan Trudell (B3 Bombers), drummer Dave Bayles, and guitarist Mike Standal. The trio has performed worldwide and for the movie Sex and the City.

Thursday, February 18, 7 p.m.

Anne Morse-Hambrock

Jazz Harp

Ms. Hambrock has been active as a performer of both classical and jazz repertoire throughout the Midwest. She specializes in new and avant-garde music. Her improvisational skills are evident on the recordings of area artists, including WAMI-winning guitarist Jack Grassel. Her debut CD of original jazz and world music has been aired on WLIP, WGTD and WNIB.

Davina & the Vagabonds

This high-energy quintet has a unique retro sound with a New Orleans vibe that defies description. Singer-pianist Davina has been compared to Bonnie Raitt, Etta James, Amy Winehouse and Betty Boop. Superb musicianship and panache has gotten this act gigs with Ten Years After, Robert Cray, Los Lonely Boys, and Booker T and the MG's.

Saturday, April 3, 7 p.m.

Alan Gresik's

Swing Shift Orchestra

The Swing Shift Orchestra has been the house band at Chicago's hottest jazz club, The Green Mill Lounge, every Thursday for the past 10 years. Granted exclusive and unlimited access to the Balaban and Katz Theatre Orchestra Collection of 26,000 stock arrangements from the 1930s and '40s, Alan Gresik delivers fox trots, tangos, waltzes, ballads, and swing with an authenticity and vibrancy not heard since the golden age of American dance music. The Swing Shift Orchestra will entertain with a spectacular old-time radio show, complete with commercials and vintage radio personalities.

A night of Jean's Jazz is a total audio, visual, social and soulful experience. Two sizzling sets are separated by a half-hour break to enjoy complimentary desserts and coffee provided by Tricia's Tasty Pastries and Mocha Lisa. Jean's Jazz Series offers superior acoustics; smoke-free surroundings; comfortable seating; a cash bar; room to dance; and the chance to meet and greet some of the area's finest musicians, as well as fellow music lovers.

Season tickets for all three nights are \$32 for adults, \$27 for seniors, and \$15 for students. Individual tickets are \$14 for adults, \$12 for seniors, and just \$5 for students.

Call 262-633-4218 or order tickets on line at www.racinetheatre.org.



Seussical Jr.

Feb. 12, 13, 14

Peter Pan

March 26, 27, 28

Performance Times:

Friday 5:30 & 7:30 pm
Sat. & Sun. 12:00, 2:00, 4:00 pm

Ticket \$6.00

Comedy Tonight

The highly popular series has two remaining shows.

DOBIE MAXWELL with STEVE DECLARK 8pm, February 20

One of the top touring comedians in North America, Dobie, aka Mr. Lucky, has worked with Robin Williams, Tim Allen, Dennis Miller, Drew Carey and many others. Steve DeClark, a stand-up comedian turned therapist, was seen on TV in *America's Funniest People* and *Comedy Central--Stand Up*. RTG audiences will remember Steve as the husband in *Trying to Live... Happily Ever After*.

ComedySportz 8 pm, March 27

Always fresh and lively, each performance is unlike any other. It's improv comedy played as a sport with two teams battling for laughs.

Tickets

\$18 adult, \$16 senior/student

Auditions For **HOLES**

7pm Feb. 8 & 9

Numerous roles available for adults and high-school-aged children. Must be available for 5 weekday school performances. No experience necessary. Scripts can be checked out from the box office. Performances are April 14 -25.

Annual **RUAF Raffle**

Every January we kick off the fund-raising campaign for the Racine United Arts Fund (RUAF), which raises money to support Racine's four arts groups.

**Racine Theatre Guild
Racine Symphony Orchestra
Racine Art Museum
Racine Arts Council**

These four member groups rely on the money that comes from RUAF as a vital part of their budgets.

During the run of *Murder at the Howard Johnson's*, proceeds from 50/50 raffles will benefit RUAF. Brochures with donation envelopes will be stuffed into the programs.

Please give generously and *Help Keep the Arts Rooted in Racine!*

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experience more drama through the patients in his dentist's chair? Will Arlene get over her mid-life crisis and settle down with one man or the other?

This comic romp is not meant to convey deep meaning, but to entertain, as we get to know these three people and their searches for happiness. Each scene will keep the audience guessing and laughing, as they try to figure out who will ally with whom and try to get rid of the third.

When *Murder at the Howard Johnson's* opened on Broadway in 1979, the review in *Variety* stated, "Enough laugh lines, mirth-provoking situations and extravagant sight gags to outfit two rapid-fire farces-of-the-absurd."

WNBC-TV's reviewer said, "A holiday of laughter... Beautifully polished, very funny, very American comedy."

The show has had great success in regional and community theatres across the nation.

Come to the RTG for *Murder at the Howard Johnson's*, which is a fun way to see in the new year, with laughter and absurdity. Pick a date from January 22 through February 7, bring a friend or relative, and prepare for a great time.

Call the Racine Theatre Guild box office at 633-4218 for more information and to reserve tickets, or go online to www.racinetheatre.org.

Remaining **RTG Shows**

**Murder at the
Howard Johnson's**
Comedy, Jan. 22 - Feb. 7, 2010

**A Bad Year For
Tomatoes**
Comedy, Mar. 5 - 21, 2010

Holes
Comic-Drama, April 16 - 25, 2010

The Producers
Musical, May 14 - 30, 2010

Reserve tickets at 262-633-4218 or
www.racinetheatre.org

The Callboard is written by
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a free-lance writer

Non-Profit
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Online ticketing at
www.racinetheatre.org

