

THE THESPIAN

Portland Civic Players

Spring 2014
Ruth Ann Frederick, Editor



Summer Theater

For nearly fifty years, Portland Civic Players have proudly provided a unique six-week program for students entering grades 4-12 where they can gain theater experience, both onstage and off, all while having great fun. The program integrates theater games, improvisations, and exercises, culminating in full-length plays performed by our young thespians.

Meet the Directors

Devann Hattis

The first PCP production I can remember attending was the 1999 Summer Theatre performance *The Wizard of Oz*, and I immediately fell in love. After jealously watching my older sister join the year before, I started Summer Theatre in 2002 and played a maid in Sara Pohl's production of *The Secret Garden*, loving every minute. I was in Summer Theatre for the full nine years I was eligible to participate, playing everyone from a love-struck secretary to the Wicked Witch of the West. This probably would have been the extent of my theatrical experience had my best friend not convinced me to join her in the children's chorus in the 2005 PCP production of *50 Years of Musical Memories*. From then on, I was at the auditions for every Civic Players production I was old enough to join, culminating in my playing the title role in *Junie B. Jones* and *A Little Monkey Business* my senior year of high school. I attribute many of my friendships, my public speaking skills, and the growth of my own self-confidence to the theatrical experiences I was afforded by the Portland Civic Players during my childhood and adolescence, but ultimately I think my most rewarding experience with PCP has been coming back and directing Portland's young people in the Summer Theatre program that so shaped my own coming of age. These past two years of directing have been extremely rewarding, exciting, fun, and certainly a learning experience. I cannot wait to see what this summer has in store!



"All the best performers bring to their role something more, something different than what the author put on paper. That's what makes theatre live. That's why it persists."

- Stephen Sonheim

Rory Miller



This is the sixth year Rory has been a summer theatre director. He was in the program for 10 years as a child. *Little Shop of Horrors* was his debut as a co-director for PCP adults, and he was the musical director for *Junie B Jones* and *Little Shop of Horrors*. The Portland Playhouse is like a second home to him. He has appeared in over 40 productions on it's stage and made his acting debut at six in *Alas Poor Yorick or Happy Grails To You*, which was written by his father. Rory is looking forward to another fun, productive summer.

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Meet the Directors

Sara Pohl



When I was ten years old, I decided that summer softball was not for me. I shied away from any ball that came my way and wasn't much for sliding into home. However, I thought that that was about the only occupation in the summer time for school kids with three months off. That is until I ran into a classmate at the 7-11 that used to be on Kent St.

I walked into 7-11 to get a Slurpee after a softball game, where I am sure I was safely behind first base. There was Sara C. with several older boys. They were dressed up as Dorothy, the Scarecrow, and Tin Man. My curiosity was

piqued as it was nowhere near Halloween. When I asked what they were doing, they informed me it was their dress rehearsal for Little Theater. It was then that I knew what I would do the next summer instead of dodging fly balls.

The first day was intimidating. The only familiar people were ones who I didn't really know and who I thought were way too "cool" for me. Rosemary Leik was directing that summer with the help of Tyanne Wallace, neither of whom I knew. The only thing to do was plop down and wait to be put on stage.

That was pretty much how things ran for the next eight years. We rehearsed for five weeks, walked in the 4th of July parade, and performed our shows, one performance each, at the end of July. The now famous Lip Sync competition was not added until a few years later and there was no prize. The "dancing game" was brought back when I returned the first summer from Western Michigan's drama department. However, there has always been "bloody potato."

In 1994 I began directing the program and did so until the summer of 2003. I resumed six years and four children later. I have worked with Jeff Miller, Rachel Miller, Rory Miller, Katie Bergeron, Dan Thelen, Molly Moore, and, most recently, Devann Hattis. Each person has brought something new and interesting to the shows. We have had multiple dragons, can-can dancers, singing animals, melodramas, and sweaty performance. I have had many wonderful families and kids come through who have changed my life in so many ways it would take another article to articulate.

To me, Summer Theater isn't just a program; it is a home, a friend group, a confidence builder, and a place to go anywhere and be anything. I hope this program runs for many more years to be a place for a little girl who can't play softball to become a queen, a scullery maid, a con-man, Aunt Polly, a town gossip, Alice's big sister, and happy.

Theater Wish List:

- ⇒ Restore ticket window area and box office exterior shelf/window trim
- ⇒ Replace or restore floor tiles
- ⇒ Paint interior ceiling and walls
- ⇒ Update office furniture
- ⇒ Repaint auditorium floor
- ⇒ Replace top of leaning rail with hardwood, color to match seating armrests

Before



Backstage Improvements

What do you do with your winter break?

Well, Chad and Mary Teachout spent an extreme break making improvements to our backstage. Now our thespians can stretch out their legs comfortably and even sneeze without being heard in the audience.

After



Thank you, Chad and Mary Teachout



Summer Theater:

McDonald's Fundraiser

Come on out and join us at McDonalds on May 14th @ 4-8pm and sign up for summer theater. Your directors will be there to chat with you, and you can catch up with all your theater buddies. At this point, we believe summer theater will begin on 6/19 and run for five weeks. Check the website for more information closer to the begin date.

Don't forget to bring new friends and share your summer theater experience. Ask friends and neighbors to join in the fun!

Register on our [website!](#)

Media Award:

The Portland Civic Players were awarded a webisode video service by the Portland Main Street Program. Main Street partnered with Quarterline Media to offer webisode services to five downtown businesses, which were chosen through a competitive application process. The webisode was filmed by Quaterline Media of Portland and will be used as a promotional tool on The Civic Players website and social media links. It may also be used to familiarize the community with our organization by displaying it at fundraisers and public events.

~Shelley Perry



Cast and Crew for *Bye-Bye Birdie*

Bye-Bye Birdie—Spring Play

It's hard to believe another show is in the books. When we start auditions for a new production, it always feels like we have so much time to perfect it, and then all of a sudden, we're at opening night, my job as director is done, and I leave it in the capable hands of our actors and crew.

We were so sad to say "Bye Bye Birdie." Even with all the snow and ice, the cast and crew pulled off a very memorable and fun production. This lively musical comedy—a Tony Award winner in 1961 for Best Musical—tells the story of Conrad Birdie, an Elvis-like rock and roll singer who is about to be inducted into the army. His agent, Albert Peterson, and his faithful secretary, Rose Alvarez, concoct a final publicity plan before Conrad's induction. Conrad will bid a typical American teen-age girl goodbye with an all-American kiss. Kim MacAfee from Sweet Apple, Ohio, wins the honor. The MacAfee household is completely turned upside down by the visiting celebrity. Throw in a pack of screaming teenagers, a hilarious mother-in-law, and an appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show, and you have a show we hope you had the opportunity to see! The cast and crew were fun, energetic, and put all they had into their roles. It was a joy to watch a new light crew learn the ropes and click with what we do. It was a hoot to watch all the teenage girls twirl themselves to death in their skirts once they had their costumes. These productions are exhausting to put on and at the same time, exhilarating. They are worth every minute. We hope you had a chance to enjoy the hard work of all involved, and we are looking forward to the upcoming season and celebrating sixty years in our community in 2015! ~Mary Teachout

Fall Play

Harvey is both a Pulitzer Prize winning 1944 play and a 1950 film about Elwood P. Dowd, a mild-mannered, pleasant man, who claims as his best friend a Pooka, in the form of an invisible 6-foot, 3-and-a-half-inch tall rabbit (6-foot, 1-and-a-half-inch tall white rabbit in the play). The Civic Players' own Roger Miller will direct.

Well, I've wrestled with reality for 35 years, Doctor, and I'm happy to state I finally won out over it. ~Elwood P. Dowd

Winter Production

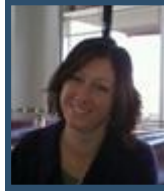
Stay tuned for more info on our Christmas special!

Meet the PCP Board



- **President, John Tannery**

- **Vice President, Mary Teachout**

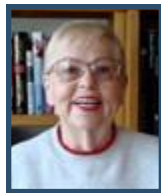


- **Secretary, Nita Massey**

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Contact Us

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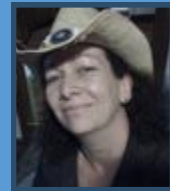
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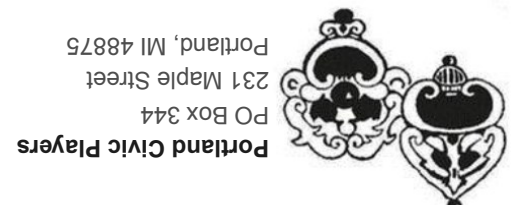
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