

## Newcomers, Veterans Combine to Lead *Deadwood Dick*

The light-hearted melodrama, *Deadwood Dick*, by Tom Taggart, is the next production for Community Players. **Bruce Parrish** is directing the cast of 24 that features a healthy combination of veterans and newcomers: Seven in the cast are making their Community Players' debuts.

Sub-titled *The Game of Gold*, the play centers around the conniving of the central villain, Black'n Red, played by **Brian Artman**, and the two heroes' attempts to thwart him. The heroes are Ned Harris (played by **Bob McLaughlin**) and Wild Bill Hickock (played by newcomer **Scott Duffield**).

Being a melodrama, there must be ladies in distress and *Deadwood Dick* has two sisters, Rose and Lily Blossom, played by



Chuck Palm, Scott Duffield, Melody Palm and Reena Rhoda rehearse a scene from *Deadwood Dick*.

**Julie Dawson** and newcomer **Kristi Zimmerman**, respectively. The blind Lily's misadventures in the saloon provide some delightful comic shtick a la Mel Brooks and Laurel & Hardy.

The action of the play takes place in Calamity Jane's Mantrap Saloon, which is populated by a wide range of interesting characters, led by its hardheaded but softhearted proprietor, Calamity Jane, played by **Reena Rhoda**. The head "girl" at the saloon is La Paloma, a femme fatale wannabe, played deliciously by newcomer **Tricia Nicole Miller**.

Representing the established law, such as it is, in *Deadwood* are Judge Nix (**Dave Lemmon**) and Sheriff Loveless (**Kameron Cox**). The sheriff's wife, Molly (**Opal Virtue**), provides the

emotional angst within the play as she reveals and then deals with her past indiscretions. Interestingly, the moral rock of the production is the stereotypical Chinese cook, Pong Ping, played by **Alexis Wood**.

The bartender and partner-in-crime with Black'n Red is Chet Pussy, played by **Chuck Palm**. Others making their Community Players debut in this production are **K.C. Cox**, **Catherine Uruquhart**, **Charles Maaks**, and **Jeremiah Ryburn**.

The play will be speckled with musical numbers. **Melody Palm** as Piano Annie imparts some musical undertones for the scenes and provides the accompaniment for songs sung in the course of the action as well as during scene breaks.

The set, co-designed by Director Parrish and **Gary Schwartz**, is your typical Wild West saloon, equipped with obligatory swinging doors, bar, tables, chairs and a hidden staircase. The wallpaper is amusingly adorned with six-shooter fleur-de-lis.

Others on the production team are **John Lieder** (producer), **Eddy Arteman** (costumes), **Gary Ploense** (sound), **Tony Meizelis** (lighting), **Sherry Bradshaw** (properties) and **Paul Dillow** (Master Builder).

*Deadwood Dick* promises to provide a couple hours of pure enjoyment. Audience members will be encouraged to boo, hiss, cheer and – especially – laugh. It is appropriate for all ages, but not intended for very young children. The pay-what-you-can preview is Thursday, January 12. Regular performances are January 13-15, 19-22 and 26-28 with standard curtain times: Thursdays at 7:30, Friday and Saturday at 8:00 and Sunday matinees at 2:30.

—John Lieder



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January - February 2006

**Board Meeting**

Tuesday January 10, 6 p.m.  
Community Players Theatre  
All members welcome.

**Deadwood Dick**

Preview: Jan. 12  
Shows: Jan. 13-15, 19-22, & 26-28  
Community Players Theatre

**Opening Weekend Dinner**

Sat Jan 14, 2006  
430 p.m.  
Ming's Buffet on Hershey Road

**The Desperate Hours**

Auditions: Jan. 23-24, 2006

**Director/Producer letters**

due back to Bruce Parrish  
Friday, Jan. 27.

**Spring 2006**

Keep your eye on this space for  
another theatre trip!



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**Newsletter Committee**

Jim Kalmbach  
John Lieder  
Bob McLaughlin  
Joann Yant

We are always looking for writers,  
artists, designers and story ideas.

Send comments and  
suggestions to  
lieder78@yahoo.com

# THE DESPERATE HOURS Auditions

Tricia Stiller



I've always been fascinated by the nature of human beings. What makes us tick? Will the answer to that question always be the same? Over the course of my life I have come upon my own philosophies, as I'm sure most people do. One thing that rings true for me is that we are all capable of far more than we ever realize. Think about times in your life when you have been put to the test. Changes in careers, relationships, health, threats to one's safety ; all of these separately are enough to throw one's life off course.

In his multiple award winning drama *The Desperate Hours*, author and playwright Joseph Hayes examines the fragile nature of humanity in the person of Dan Hilliard, a typical suburban family man. God fearing and law abiding, his world is shattered one afternoon when he and his family are held captive in their own home by 3 escaped convicts. The playwright masterfully asks the audience to look beyond the clearly defined lines of good and evil in this captivating study that pushes Dan beyond the limits of his own character, and challenges our own understanding of right and wrong. As I prepare to direct this production I am humbled by the complexities of the human spirit, and how quickly our faith and our will can be shaken by events beyond our own imagining.

Auditions for *The Desperate Hours* will be held Monday and Tuesday, January 23 and 24 beginning at 7 pm. The script calls for 10 men, ages 20 - 70; 3 women, ages 18 - 45; and 1 male youth, age 10. All auditioners will be asked to take direction and read from the script. Please be advised that this play does contain adult situations, language and mild violence, and might not be appropriate for more sensitive individuals.



## Bleeding for Players

Bob McLaughlin

Many of us have bled on the stage, but on October 29, we got to bleed big time. Thanks to Carol Plotkin, the American Red Cross held a blood drive at Players to tie in with the opening of *Sweeney Todd*. Giving blood in the theater made me realize how the donation process develops theatrical skills.

I learned about theater history. As I checked in and waited in the lobby, volunteers Carolyn Beyer, Jean Lieder, Opal Virtue, and Sally Parry debated the merits of the cast recordings playing in the background. The discussion about *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas* was particularly lively. The brief medical exam and health interview in the green room let me practice some performing skills, like responding to cues confidently ("Do you have hemochromatosis?" "Wha?").

Passing the test, I moved into the theater, where technicians had beds on stage. Here, I had an acting opportunity ("No, the needle didn't hurt") and chatted with other donors. I got to practice marketing ("Yes, *Sweeney Todd*. What's it about? Well . . . uh . . . it's really funny!") and explain set design ("Up there, that's where he kills his customers!"). After the donation, I had another acting opportunity ("No, I'm not dizzy") and practiced movement: walking with only a little help.

Good things were accomplished that day: we promoted *Sweeney Todd*, reached out to the community, and potentially saved lives. Blood donation is practically painless, and if Carol is involved, it's downright fun. Find out if you're eligible and the dates of upcoming blood drives at [www.givelife.org](http://www.givelife.org) or call 1-800-448-3543.



Cathy Sutliff gives blood on the set of *Sweeney Todd*.

# A Season For Change

## Play Reading Committee Announces 2006/2007 Season

On December 13, the membership committee hosted an announcement party presenting next years' shows. **Bruce Parrish**, play reading committee chair, announced the slate, explaining that this season's theme will be "A Season for Change." Not only do all of the season's shows involve themes of change, but also show times are changing. Friday and Saturday shows will start at 7:30 instead of 8 pm. The shows in the 2006/2007 season are as follows:

### **Noises Off** (Farce)

Michael Frayn

Auditions: July 24-25, 2006 Cast: 5 male, 4 female

Preview: September 7

Performances: September 8-10, 14-17, 21-23, 2006 (10 shows)

This wonderful Broadway hit is a farce that takes the clichés of the genre and shakes them inventively through a series of kaleidoscopic patterns. Never missing a trick, it has as its first act a pastiche of traditional farce; as its second, a contemporary variant on the formula; as its third, an elaborate undermining of it. The play opens with a touring company dress-rehearsing *Nothing On*, a congenital farce. Mixing mockery and homage, the author heaps into this play-within-a-play a hilarious melee of stock characters and situations.

### **Sugar** (Musical based on the movie *Some Like It Hot*)

Book by Peter Stone Music by Jule Styne, and Lyrics by Bob Merrill

Auditions: September 10-12, 2006

Cast: minimum 20 and maximum 47

Preview: November 2

Performances: November 3-5, 9-12, 16-19, 2006- (11 shows)

Joe and Jerry, two musicians working Chicago in the 1920's, inadvertently witness the St. Valentine's Day Massacre and must get out of town. The only way is to take jobs as two female musicians in an all-girl band. Once they're dressed and have joined as Josephine and Daphne, both take a shine to Sugar Kane, the featured singer. When she tells them that she wants to marry for money, Joe/Josephine takes on yet another new identity as a (male) millionaire. Speaking of millionaires-Jerry /Daphne's attracted one, named Osgood, and Jerry doesn't tell Osgood he's really a man until the final curtain, when he finds that Osgood doesn't care. Joe eventually tells Sugar the truth and she doesn't care either. He is not the millionaire she thinks him to be.

### **Over The River And Through The Woods** (Comedy)

Joe DiPierro

Auditions: Nov. 13-14, 2006 Cast: 3 male, 3 female

Preview: January 11

Performances: January 12-14, 18-21, 25-27, 2007- (10 shows)

Nick is a single, Italian-American guy from New Jersey. His parents retired and moved to Florida. That doesn't mean that his family still isn't in Jersey. In fact, he sees both sets of his grandparents every Sunday for dinner. This is routine until he has to tell them that he is being offered a dream job. The job that he's been waiting for-marketing executive-would take him away from his beloved, but annoying, grandparents. He tells them. The news doesn't sit so well. Thus begins a series of schemes to keep Nick around. How could he betray his family's love to move to Seattle, for a job, wonder his grandparents? Well, Frank, Aida, Nunzio, and Emma do their level best, and that includes bringing to dinner the lovely-and single- Caitlin O'Hare as bait....we won't give away the ending here.

### **Inherit The Wind** (Drama)

Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee

Auditions: January 22-23, 2007

Cast: 21 men, 6 women, 2 boys, 1 girl and extras

Preview: March 8

Performances: March 9-11, 15-18, 22-24, 2007 (10 shows)

This is a play that has its genesis in the famed Scopes trial. The play is one of the most outstanding dramas of our time. This drama is as relevant today as it was in the 1920's. The major theme of this play is "every person has the right to think, to learn, and to teach.

### **Big River** (Musical)

Music and Lyrics by Roger Miller - Book by William Hauptman- Adapted from the novel by Mark Twain

Auditions: March 18-20, 2007

Cast: 14 men, 8 women. Singing ensemble with many small roles. Much doubling is possible.

Preview: May 3

Performances: May 4-6, 10-13, 17-20, 2007-(11 shows)

Twain's timeless classic sweeps us down the mighty Mississippi as Huck Finn helps his friend Jim, a black slave, escape to freedom at the mouth of the Ohio River. Their adventures along the way are hilarious, suspenseful, and heartwarming, bringing to life your favorite characters from the novel.

# Members' Road Trip a *Wickedly* Good Time

December 3rd marked the date of the first official members-only field trip to see professional theatre. Organized by membership chair, Joann Yant, twenty tickets were purchased for members and a limited number of guests to see the touring production of the hit musical *Wicked* at the Fox Theatre in St. Louis. Some of us also took the opportunity to do a little sightseeing and try out some St. Louis restaurants. For the Cardinal fans, seeing the half-demolished old Busch Stadium and the new stadium taking shape, made for a nostalgic look back and an exciting look ahead. To say, "a good time was had by all," is certainly an understatement. Many of us have urged Joann to hurry up and plan the next trip! Players' member, Cynthia Slater, writes about her experiences of the trip and thoughts about the production:



I jumped at the chance to see *Wicked* after hearing so much about the play. I traveled in a caravan with a group of my fellow CPTers to the Fox Theater in St. Louis, which was an experience itself.

We first stopped at The Hill and ate at Ameghetti's, a no-frills Italian fast food eatery that served ample portions. After stopping by the bakery and visiting a souvenir shop, we pushed on to the Fabulous Fox Theater.

If you go to the Fox, take a pair of binoculars or opera glasses. The ornate and detailed décor is a marvel to study while waiting for the play to begin.

Even dreams have a beginning, and "Wicked" begins long before Dorothy's twister-induced adventure.

#### Question:

Can the most repulsive girl in town win over the most popular girl in town and steal her boyfriend, the handsomest guy in town?

It's possible, because this is The Land of Oz and nothing is what it seems.

*Wicked* is a story about perceptions and how shallow thoughtless characters learn to see past the physical and into the spirit. Even less-than-pretty people have thoughts, feelings, and talent. And, seemingly perfect people, like Galinda and Fiero, aren't quite so perfect under the glitz and glamour.

This is also a tale about good intentions and how they take unexpected turns down the Yellow Brick Road. Have you ever wondered how the woodsman became the Tin Man? Long before he lost his heart, he lost something else. *Wicked* tells about his past, as well as The Scarecrow, The Cowardly Lion, and those coveted ruby slippers.

Although she doesn't get first billing, Elphaba is clearly the star of the show. Her powerful singing, detailed makeup and costume, and special effects make you believe in her and sympathize with her plight. We learn why we are supposed to think of her as wicked, but at the end of this play, you won't be able to.

*Wicked* is a wondrous tale full of lovable but misunderstood characters and a feel-good ending. The lines separating good and wicked are blurred by the soulful tales of the characters and how they each becomes who they are by the time they meet Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*.

I haven't met anyone who has seen the play and doesn't enthusiastically recommend it. *Wicked* is destined to become a part of our adulthood the way *The Wizard of Oz* became a part of our childhood.

—Cynthia Slater



## ***Beauty and the Beast***

### *Player's Summer Fundraiser Production*

This year's summer production will be *Beauty and the Beast*. As with past summer shows, the production will not be part of the season ticket series, but will instead be presented on a limited budget in order to raise money for the theatre. Here is the show information.

#### *Beauty and the Beast*

Music by Alan Menken, Lyrics by Howard Ashman & Tim Rice,  
Book by Linda Woolverton

Auditions: May 15-17, 2006

Cast: 13 male, 11 female

Preview: July 13

Performances: July 14-16, 20-23, 27-30 2006 (11 shows)

Step into the enchanted world of Broadway's modern classic, Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*. Based on the Academy Award winning animated feature, the stage version includes all of the wonderful songs from the film, plus new songs written especially for the Broadway version. Adult and child actors will transport the audience through this "tale as old as time" and offer a great opportunity to bring the entire community together for family theatre at its best.