

The Minotaur



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ATHENIAN PLAYERS THEATRE Newsletter

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the minotaur --- apt newsletter
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GOING FOR THE GOLD

Athenian Players Theatre was one of the shinier "Nuggets of OCTA Gold" in New Philadelphia on June 14th, as our excerpt from *Is There Life After High School?* brought home some awards from the SE Region OCTAfest, including the honor of representing our Region at the State Conference in Columbus over Labor Day weekend!

APT was recognized with several awards, including one each for Ginny Puhl and Joe Balding for Merit in Acting. The five women in the cast won an award for Excellence in Ensemble for the musical number "Nothing Really Happened", and the entire cast won for Excellence in Ensemble Performance.

As it turned out, six of the ten SE Region member theatres took excerpts to OCTAfest. That's a record, at least in recent history. There was comedy, drama and music (something for everybody!). It was a long, good day and a lot of fun for those who attended.

Also invited to perform at State Conference was Actors' Guild of Parkersburg, with their excerpt from *Art*, a play about three friends whose friendship is strained when one of them buys an expensive all-white painting. Take it from one who



was there, this play is better than it sounds. The actors make very engaging characters.

The alternate group for this year's Conference is Excalibur Productions, performing *It's Tough to be Somebody*, the third in a trilogy of one-act plays. For the past two years Excalibur has brought *It's Tough's* companion plays to OCTAfest with resounding laughter and applause from the audience. *It's Tough...* is a "brashly insensitive look at sensitivity that touches on modern tolerance-mania with all the politeness of a cattle prod".

Filling out the OCTAfest on June 14 was host Little Theatre of Tuscarawas County with a rousing excerpt from the musical *Gypsy*, Coshocton Footlight Players with the hilarious *Don't Dress for Dinner*, and Mid-Ohio Valley Players of Marietta with the much loved *On Golden Pond*.

The directors, cast and crew of *High School* went to New Philly on Friday evening and checked into the specially-discounted rooms at Days Inn, then went across the road to enjoy dinner at Hog Heaven, a relatively new motorcycle-themed restaurant with good service and even better food. The good folks at Little Theatre of Tuscarawas County who hosted OCTAfest had lunch available on Saturday, including delicious sloppy joes (which lived up to their name!) and lots of decadent donuts and pies. Then on our way home, several of us grabbed an excellent supper at the Texas Roadhouse. There are lots of good eateries in New Philly. Will you just listen to me...? If you didn't know better, you'd think all I cared about is food! Well, a man has to eat.

Anyway, as usual, the only regret of this event is that many APT members missed out on the fun.

So....now that Athenian Players Theatre is taking the *High School* excerpt to State Conference, will more of you be interested in going along for moral support? It's right up the road in Columbus (at the Airport Radisson), so any claims of "too far" are unfounded! This year's Conference over Labor Day weekend celebrates the Golden Anniversary of the Ohio Community Theatre Association (OCTA) with the special theme "Building on Golden Memories", and will be an event to remember. With an expected crowd of about 600, there will be parties, games, play excerpts, workshops, dances, banquets, karaoke, bands, contests, scavenger hunts and more! It's really great fun. Trust me. Have I ever lied to you? ...well, trust me anyway.

Answers to questions like "How much will it cost?" and "What should I take?" and "What happens on what day?" can be answered by contacting Joe Balding or Steve Haskins. Consider the fun you'll have!

THE EARLY BIRD...

Director Norm Cohn got the jump on APT's 12th season by holding early auditions and has now cast Neil Simon's *Rumors*, due to hit the boards in November.

The cast will include APT veterans Tom Scmitz, Linda Watkins, Steve Haskins, Charlie Smith, Ginny Puhl, Chris Coleman, Tawna Rogers and Sylvia Abbott. Also on board is relative newcomer Shelly Riggs, who made her APT debut as Morgan La Fay in May's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. And we welcome Anna Starzyk to our stage in her first production for Athenian Players Theatre.

Although the play won't open until November 5th, Norm wanted to give the cast lots of time to familiarize themselves with the script well before rehearsals begin in late September, in the hope that everyone will be off book much sooner than is typical.

Rumors will run for only one week, but will still deliver five performances. The dates are November 5-9, with an 8:00 curtain through the 8th, and the last show being our usual 2:00 matinee.

Membership dues for the 2003-2004 season of Athenian Players Theatre can be paid any time! Send your \$10 check to:

APT
P.O. Box 283
Athens, Ohio 45701

SOUTHEAST CALLBOARD

Several of our sister theatres in OCTA's SE Region have shows running this summer. They include:

Actors' Guild of Parkersburg (Parkersburg WV) 304-485-1300
Honk July 25 - August 9



The Little Theatre of Tuscarawas County (New Philadelphia) 330-343 4012
A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum July 11- 26



Mid-Ohio Valley Players (Marietta) (740) 374-9434
Mee Haw Hayride July 25 - 27



Ohio Valley Summer Theater (Athens) 593-4800
Driving Miss Daisy June 19 - July 6
Annie July 16 - August 3



Potter Players Community Theatre (East Liverpool) 330-385-5400
George M August 8 - 16

Support the other theatres in our region and treat yourself at the same time. Go see a show!



AIKEN COMMUNITY PLAYHOUSE

by **Marvelous Marvin Bowman**

(Editor's note: Marvin, past President and long time member of APT, retired from Ohio University and moved to Aiken, South Carolina in May.)

Aiken Community Playhouse-

I attended their production of *"Into The Woods"* on May 30. It went very well. It was a very visual show. Several appropriate projections on the back scrim: two or three moving trees, towers, etc.; many sets, trees flown in and out. Overall, perhaps a little better than ours but of course there were a few who could not project. That first act is too long.

ACP is completing its 50th year. I helped move set pieces, etc., etc. from their old corrugated building to the new theater. The new one is in downtown Aiken which their local government and a large company and other donors have provided. They still owe several hundred thousand but with good terms, I am told. Just like us; they have to share. There was a wedding the other week. They have a big shop, and on the same floor, wow! There is a large door where a truck can back into or put a car on stage. It appears well equipped and even has an orchestra pit. It has seats for about 300.

They do eight shows a year, including one for their youth wing which is in rehearsal now. Aiken is about the same population as Athens but the county has at least twice as many people. Though there is a four-year USC at Aiken with about three thousand students, naturally there is not a big theater group as OU has.

I was cast as Dr. Chasuble (which both Norm and Peg Cohn suggested I try for) in *'The Importance of Being Earnest'*. In Athens, I could generally expect 2/3 competitors for "My" roles. Here there are at least 7/8. This audition had about 35 people for 9 roles. Only a few were too nervous or inexperienced. The director had to have callbacks for the younger women roles. As with every little theater I know about, the women have more competition, thank goodness for me. This Wilde play opens August 8. I hope it progresses well.

Evidently, ACP is narrowing the play list for the 2004/5 season. I am told they try to stay about 18 months ahead. Next year's has been chosen. They are having tryouts for their first musical in mid July. As you all know, I will have to pass. I do not want to be too greedy, ha.

-Marvin, your stringer in South Carolina.
www.atlantic.net/~acp

The Minotaur is considering a summer vacation, so if you don't receive an August issue, don't think you've been forgotten. And in case there is no August issue, please remember to mark your calendars now for "Building on Golden Memories" in Columbus over Labor Day weekend! Don't miss it! -Ed.