

Curtain Up!

ACT NEWSLETTER

Summer 2012

Whitemud Comedy Company Hosted ACTFest 2012

It was a lot of work, but it was worth the effort. From the first play to the last we were entertained and challenged. Each of us came away with a different interpretation of the plays presented. Some of us loved them ... some of us hated them, but we all learned from the weekend.

153 members, from 14 Theatre Groups attended, and 9 groups presented plays. There were 45 walk ins that came from different areas, just to see the plays.

Our adjudicators were excellent. We had Jim Forsythe returning, and Simon Miron and Chris Brauer were both new to the Festival. They were all impressed at the number of people that came out simply for the love of theatre.

There were a number of new people in the host group that had never attended an ACTFest. They all want to go again. (And, I might add..... enjoy without working)

ACTFest is a venue for growth and development of our own skill levels. We are challenged by the professionalism of some plays, and are smug in our certainty that we could do better than other plays. It is a learning experience, surrounded by fun and friends.

I'm going to be at the next ACTFest, hopefully acting, but if not I will be there to learn from others. I am looking forward to seeing you there.

Cathy McGrath
Whitemud Comedy Company



ABOVE: Roxy Theatre, Neepawa TOP: The 2012 ACTFest Adjudicators; Jim, Simon, Christopher

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On page 2 find out who the 2013 ACTFest host is!



President's Message

I am six months into my first term and am so encouraged by the member groups of our association. Whitemud Comedy Company of Neepawa hosted our 34th annual ACTFest and they did it in fine form! The hospitality, terrific food, beautiful venue and of course, the camaraderie of our fellow thespians all make for a

fantastic week-end. There were some glitches and anyone who has had the privilege of hosting this event knows that trying to accommodate everyone's needs can be difficult. The board hears you and at our June meeting we have tried to simplify the process for host groups. There will be some growing pains but please bear with us as we try to improve. We have also been working hard to understand our insurance policy and what works best for our groups. Please check out David Johnson's update in the newsletter. John Tait also keeps our web site up to date with this information. Maureen Taggart and Stephanie Clarke have been working on a Mentorship program that we hope will be up and running by fall. We are pleased to welcome two new members to our board, Genny Carriere will take over as the N.W. Rep and Lynn Andrews will replace Stephanie Clarke in the S.E. We wish Stephanie all the best of luck as she furthers her education. Her short time with us really brightened up our board.

Well, until next time...and have a great summer.
Cathy T.

ACTFest 2013

The ACT board is pleased to announce that ACTFest 2013 will be held in Portage la Prairie courtesy of the Prairie Players. The dates for this event are April 26-28, 2013. Please note the change from our usual slot. We are also thrilled to notify our "theatre enthusiasts" that ACTFest 2014 will be held back in Dauphin in the capable hands of Theatre Amisk. The dates for this will be May 2-4, 2014. When we put a search out for someone to take on the responsibilities of our beloved ACTFest, there were two other groups also interested and this is wonderful news that so many of us enjoy all that ACTFest has to offer. Thanks again to everyone and we'll see you in Portage April 26-28, 2013.

Do you have time and commitment to give to the act board?

This is the last newsletter opportunity to communicate with you about Board elections. Yes, we are heading for that time of year again – the Annual General Meeting!

There are positions available every year. If you feel that you want to commit time and ideas on the ACT Board please get in touch with Hazel Lamont at (204) 748-3580 for more information and to put your name forward for election.



ABOVE: *Waiting for the Parade* by Theatre Amisk

Amateur Theatre Bloopers

I have very poor vision in the dark. So, you can imagine what it is like for me when the lights go off and I have to make my way to an exit, especially if I happen to be mid-stage at the time. It takes awhile for my eyes to adjust. Generally, if there are others on stage, one of them will grab my hand and lead me off. This one time, though, I was close to the exit; the door was already open; it shouldn't have been a problem. I just had to step over the threshold. Darrel would be right behind me, and he would close the door. I don't know what happened; but somehow, once I was through the open door, I became totally disoriented. I forgot that I didn't have to shut the door – that there was someone coming through after me. Frantically, I reached behind to pull the door shut. I couldn't find it. I was struggling. Panic. Gropping. And then, in the dark behind me, I heard an urgent whisper. "That's not the doorknob, Donna." He's never let me forget it!!

Donna Cuddy

Did You Know??

You may know that we, as members of ACT, have insurance coverage through Multimedia Risk Consultants of Winnipeg.

YOU MAY KNOW:

- That we have Liability Insurance worth \$2M.

BUT DID YOU KNOW?

- The deductible is \$1,000.00 per occurrence.
- This insurance covers injury due to negligence of the theatre company.
- This insurance covers only 3rd parties i.e. members of the general public/audience.
- This insurance does not cover injury to members of the group.

YOU MAY KNOW:

- That we have a Miscellaneous Equipment and Theatrical Property Floater.

BUT DID YOU KNOW?

- Any group that has over \$10,000 in equipment, etc. should have additional coverage accompanied by an up-to-date schedule (list) of insurable items.
- This insurance has \$1,000 deductible per occurrence.

YOU MAY KNOW:

- That we have Tenants Legal Liability Insurance of \$250,000 per premise.

BUT DID YOU KNOW?

- This means that a group that rents or has care and control of a space has protection to the maximum listed above against property loss or damage.

YOU MAY KNOW:

- That we have Medical Expense Insurance maximum \$25,000 per person.

BUT DID YOU KNOW?

- That although Medicare takes care of most treatments, something as basic as an ambulance ride to the Hospital is not.

DID YOU KNOW?

- That in order to ensure uninterrupted insurance coverage, group memberships must be received by September 1st each year? Groups that pay their ACT membership dues at a later date shall have their insurance coverage activated the day their membership is processed.

DID YOU KNOW?

- That you can read and/or download our insurance policy and coverage in full from the Insurance Page of our web site?

DID YOU REALIZE:

- That ACT's insurance policy is like any other insurance policy? Whenever a claim is initiated, the more documentation a group has, the easier the process will be. The ACT Board urges all members to maintain an active inventory of all sets, props, etc. and, if possible, the cost of all material, properties, etc. This makes it much easier, in case of a claim, for the theatre group to offer written evidence of what may have been lost or damaged. Photographs and a video inventory are also excellent additional sources of information that will help any claim go smoother.

BOTTOM LINE:

The bottom line is that Insurance is just that: Insurance. We need it but we hope that we never have to use it. If, however, we do have occasion to need it, we need to know for what we are actually covered. We also need to know what we can do in advance to help alleviate as much stress as possible from a future traumatic situation. On behalf of the ACT Board, I hope this helps.

David Johnson

INSURANCE LIAISON
& INTERIM SOUTH WEST REP

This Issue's Quote of the Day

I hate that people think going to the theatre is a special occasion. I wish people would treat it as normally as going to the cinema.

Brenda Blethyn



ABOVE: Clowning around at ACTFest 2012



SOUTHWEST

7 Ages Productions

As promised, in January of 2012, 7 Ages Productions of Brandon returned from a brief hiatus with a celebration of Patsy Cline and her music in the production of A Closer Walk with Patsy Cline. 7 Ages also kept itself very busy with a follow up presentation in April of the classic American musical, Guys and Dolls. Looking ahead, the theatre group will be busy over the next few months preparing for the January, 2013 staging of the hilarious musical version of Mel Brooks' The Producers as well as the March, 2013 presentation of Forbidden Broadway, a parody of musical hits from your favourite Broadway shows. All are invited to visit the 7 Ages web site at <http://home.westman.wave.ca/~gaturi/index.htm> for more show time and audition information.

The Castouts of Brandon

The Castouts of Brandon had originally planned to perform an original work at the 2012 ACTFest but the need arose to cancel the performance and they were unable to attend.

Mecca Productions

As per its web page, Mecca Productions of Brandon offers a full slate of musical fare this fall to complement its choir component and youth program. On October 11-14, 2012 Mecca is proud to offer Ring of Fire, a show that, through his songs, takes you into the world of Johnny Cash. The small cast of 6-8 singers create a show about struggle and success, love and faith, rowdiness and redemption. It is not a biography of "The Man in Black" but a tribute told through his music as it features 38 of Johnny Cash's hit songs from across the board. Then, on November 29/30 and December 1/2, 2012, Mecca Productions is excited to bring, for the first time in Westman, the hit Broadway version of the holiday classic A Christmas Carol.

The theatre group also has April, 2013 performance dates set for 9 to 5: The Musical. Further information on all performances and activities can be obtained by visiting the Mecca web site at <http://www.mecca-productions.com>.

In early May, the Outcasts of Brandon performed a portion of the Irish based play, The Cripple of Inishmaan at ACTFest. It was well received at the festival and when they did a 3 night run at the Evans Theatre at Brandon University in late May, their attendance got bigger and bigger every night. Craig Russell, the play's Director, described the production as a "wickedly black comedy with lots of eggs broken". Those who have had the pleasure of seeing the play will understand.

Phoenix Players

Phoenix Players of Virden took two short plays written and directed by resident playwright George Baker to ACTFest 2012. The skits, the farcical Good Help is Hard to Find and the amusing Ups and Downs were light hearted productions preformed this spring specifically for the ACTFest stage.

Spotlight on Shilo

Spotlight on Shilo of Brandon/Shilo had originally planned take a one act play to the 2012 ACTFest but, due to unforeseen cast circumstances, was forced to cancel production mid way thru the rehearsal schedule. The theatre group is looking forward to being active for the fall production season.

Tumbleweed Productions

Tumbleweed Productions of Virden was pleased to perform "Lafferty's Wake" again in March: March 3rd in Carberry and March 17th in Kenton. The audiences were very appreciative of the play. They also performed Robert Service's poem Bessie's Boil as a shadow box to help Virden's Costume Closet fundraiser for much needed funds. A few group members attended and thoroughly

enjoyed taking in this year's ACTFest 2012 in Neepawa. All members have been asked to be a part of this fall's production of The Wizard of Oz. Something new and exciting for the group! Greg and Cathy Tough and Frank and Jane Van den Hoek attended the Outcast's performance of The Cripple of Inishmaan and thoroughly enjoyed the evening.

David Johnson

SOUTHWEST REGION



ABOVE: A toast to clowning around

SOUTH - EAST

Tiger Hills Amateur Theatre

Following the success of the Fall 2011 production, THAT is concentrating on vetting scripts and recruiting cast and crew.

flatlands theatre company

During the winter flatlands hosted a group of children, ages 3-11, for a workshop that lasted from January to March. The workshop culminated in a production of "Through the Looking Glass," which was adapted largely by the children. The flatlands group are taking a break this summer after holding auditions for their next production in the fall.

NORTH - WEST

Theatre Amisk of Dauphin

In conjunction with the Dauphin Branch of the Parkland Regional Library, Theatre Amisk of Dauphin participated in a reading of Charles Dickens "A Christmas Carol". Readers were partially costumed to set the atmosphere and start the Christmas season with a bang.

Theatre Amisk members assisted with the MTC Production "the Melville Boys" at the Watson Arts Centre on Dauphin on February 8, 2012. We continue to work with the Dauphin & District Allied Arts council with the stage refurbishment project at the Watson Arts Centre, which is designated as a heritage building in our community.

Our spring production of "Waiting for the Parade" was directed by Yvonne Lillie and was very challenging for our cast of 5 actors. As always it was very well received by the community. We were pleased to present a portion of the play at the ACTFest in Neepawa in May.

Valley Stage Players Swan River

The Valley Stage Players are in the preliminary stages of getting organized for our next production which will be held at the Veterans Community Hall in Swan River, on November 23-25, 2012. Like the two previous years, we will be partnering with the Foundation of the Swan Valley. The first night of our production will be a dinner theatre fundraiser for the Foundation, the Saturday & Sunday shows will be our productions totally. We have a perspective play chosen, but are not ready to name it until we have cast member commitments. As usual, we are in a bit of a struggle finding people willing to commit to acting roles. We are planning to set up a table at this falls mass registration in Swan River to find a few more people interested in joining our theatre group. We are still on the lookout for finding more suitable, permanent and affordable rehearsal and production venues.

NORTH - EAST

Thompson Playhouse

In March, for the first time ever, Thompson Playhouse performed an interactive murder mystery for a local not for profit agency, the Juniper Centre. It was in Dinner Theatre format and was also a great success; with every ticket sold and great participation by the audience. This is definitely something they will do again! They are now in the start of rehearsals for their next Fall/Winter production. This year they will be performing Play On! by Rick Abbot on November 2nd and 3rd at the Letkeman Theatre in Thompson. If the actual performance is as much fun as rehearsals have been, it should be great!

Pinawa Players

This spring they took a much needed hiatus. ACTFest was attended by some of their members but they were unable to pull a production together to take this year. Looking ahead to the fall they are undecided as to what play or what director but we do have a something in the works. They are probably doing another dinner theatre. IN the mean time they are working on getting a float to put in the yearly Pinawa Birthday Parade in July and also working on a huge upgrade to their lighting system in time for the fall production - very exciting!

Prairie Players (Portage la Prairie):

Prairie Players performed their spring production of the comedy, 'Til Beth do us Part', by Jones, Hope and Wooten, April 26-28 at the William Glesby Centre, and it was a great success. It was directed by Rosa Albanese Rawlings, and featured a cast of 6, with a mixture of veterans and rookies. Returning to the stage were Lisa Marie Tessier, Danica Turcotte, Vicki Hooke and Nettie Neudorf. Newcomers to the stage, and to Prairie Players, were Wayne Loepky and Jordan Thiessen. An excellent job by all the cast and crew.



ABOVE: Clowns abound, ACTFest 2012

Prairie Players will be holding auditions in June for their Fall Dinner Theatre production of "A Christmas Carol", November 14-17, 2012, directed by Christopher Kitchen.

The Holy Hams (Selkirk)

They put on their 11th Dessert Theatre production this year, holding four performances of Sinners by Norm Foster on April 25, 27 28 and 29th. It was very well attended (over 800 people) and even the non- dessert night on the 25th, was full.

They were very fortunate to have the use of the wonderful theatre in the high school in Selkirk...it is a perfect venue.

This is the second time they have produced Sinners. It was our first production in 2002 and has been talked about as one of their funniest plays, so they just had to do it again.

The play was directed by Pat Bird. She was very excited by her directorial debut and she hopes to get the chance again in future. She was also really happy to see the plays done by Aspire Players and Haystack Productions. It is great to have such wonderful talent in our region and our province.

A-Spire Players (Gimli)

On the weekend of June 1st A-Spire Players (formerly: The Gimli Theatre Association), for the second consecutive weekend - gleefully staged The Art Of Murder. Having rehearsed, intensively, for the past three months, their performers: Michele Broadhurst, Russ

Goossen and Jaycen Snyder; the director: Scott Cameron and the sound and light technicians: Tony Ducharme and Pierre Parent ... are delivering smashing shows!

WINNIPEG

Merlyn Productions recently presented 3 short plays at the Ellice Cafe Theatre.

R-g productions presented 'Have You Ever Tried Listening?' (One of the three one-act plays developed by the company for Community Living Manitoba) at The ACT Festival in Neepawa in May.

Currently, they are rehearsing 'Shades of Grey' for the Winnipeg Fringe. Check Venue 6 for times and dates. 'Shades of Grey' will be presented in Gimli at the A-Spire Theatre on August 10, 11 and 12, for the Summer Gimli Theatre Festival.

Shoestring Players presented the condensed (1 hour) version of 'Inherit the Wind' at the ACT Festival in Neepawa in May. The adjudicators' comments, as well as the excellent workshop given by Christopher Brauer all contributed to a very positive experience.

Subsequently, the full two-act 'Inherit the Wind' was presented in Winnipeg at the Forrest Nickerson Theatre (Deaf Centre), Pembina Highway, May 24, 25, 26, 27th. Houses were very satisfactory and the play was very well received.

Next stop, Gimli, for June 22, 23, 24, at The A-Spire, for the Festival. The playwrights for 'Inherit the Wind' are Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee. Dr. Peter Spencer, assisted by Angela Rajfur, directed.

Shoestring's Maureen Taggart is currently rehearsing a remount of last year's 'Mary & Martha' (ACTFest and Gimli) by Winnipeg's Veralyn Warkentin, for the Winnipeg Fringe. Three new cast members have taken the roles of the three young women in last year's production.



ABOVE: The cast of *Bingo Wings*.

Venue: The John Hirsch Mainstage, R.M.T.C. (Venue 1).

Check Fringe Website or Programme for dates and times.

Time Boom Productions presented 'Bingo Wings' by Paddy Gillard-Bentley, a Canadian Playwright, at the ACT Festival in Neepawa, in May. Nervous but excited before performing, hearing the audience laugh (in all the right places) provided the incentive to the group to do it all again! T.B.P. has decided to head back to the rehearsal hall to incorporate the adjudicators' suggestions into the play, and hope to gain a spot in next Year's Fringe.

The Company also has plans to repeat the play at the Gimli festival in 2013. This play is the second undertaking for Time Boom.

Members include, Joan Wilton; Janet Taylor; Dorothy Talman; Bryce and Christine Hallick, Bernard Boland, S.M., and Bill Moore, Director.



ABOVE: Clowns need to eat too!

Write some lines!
Deadline: November 16th, 2012

Summer 2012

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Visit us on the world wide web at: www.actmanitoba.mb.ca

REGIONS

NORTH-EAST

A-Spire Players	Gimli
Haystack Productions	Beausejour
Holy Hams (Selkirk United Church)	Selkirk
Pinawa Players	Pinawa
Prairie Players	Portage la Prairie
Thompson Playhouse Inc.	Thompson

WINNIPEG

Merlyn Productions	Winnipeg
New Stage Productions	Winnipeg
R-G Productions	Winnipeg
Shoestring Players	Winnipeg
Time Boom Productions	Winnipeg
Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre	Winnipeg

NORTH-WEST

Rapid City Drama Club	Rapid City
Theatre 53	The Pas
Theatre Amisk	Dauphin
Vagabond Theatre Co.	Russell
Valley Stage Players	Swan River
Whitemud Comedy Co.	Neepawa

SOUTH-EAST

flatlands Theatre Co.	Winkler
Tiger Hills Amateur Theatre (THAT)	Holland

SOUTH-WEST

7 Ages Productions	Brandon
The Castouts	Brandon
Mecca Productions	Brandon
The Outcasts	Brandon
Phoenix Players	Viriden
Spotlight on Shilo Theatre Co.	Shilo
Tumbleweed	Viriden