



Great Lakes Region 2009 Fall Newsletter

Parliamentarian Rick Morse Resolves Issue

Because of an oversight on the part of the regional director (probably because he and his wife were having too much fun) at last year's regional festival in Shipshewana, the election for a second term did not take place as it should have. It became a point of legality only because the business of the region needed to proceed and it seemed as though the region was in limbo without an "official" vote by the membership. But, thanks to the watchful eye of Rick Morse it was determined that, in fact, there was a



voice vote of acclamation by the membership at the 2008 Potlatch. According to the P of A Guidelines for Regions, section six allows for such a vote if there are no contenders for the position. Thank you Rick!

During the past several months of summer the region's Executive Committee voted to make "Potlatch" a recognized "Annual Meeting" for the Grt. Lks. Region

Voight Reviews National Festival in Atlanta

The show everyone was talking about at the P of A National Festival in Atlanta this summer was the Tanglewood Marionettes' "The Dragon King."

It had everything you want in a good puppet show: good story (based on a combination of Chinese fairy tales); good characters – the grandmother was the heroine, a conscious choice by the puppeteers; wonderful puppets and good manipulation, plenty of surprises and Wow moments. Two funny fish suddenly turn into beautiful Chinese maidens, a giant squid puts on a puppet show and – most wonderfully – a giant Chinese dragon swoops out into the audience squirting everyone with a supersoaker! To top it off, the scenery, which rolled on a vertical scroll, resembled old Chinese paintings.

Other highlights from the festival at Georgia Tech:

- ✓ Mallery Lewis performing with her late mother Shari Lewis' "Lambchop"
- ✓ Paul Mesner's energetic "The True Story of the Three Little Pigs"
- ✓ Hobey Ford's "The Rainbow Bridge and Other Tales" – fabulous shadow puppets

✓ "Poli Degaine," a French Punch and Judy with occasional hilarious glimpses of the puppeteers from behind the masking.

✓ "Entertaining a Thought," a high energy one-woman show by Leslie Cerrara-Rudolph, in which she took her brain for a walk on a leash --- her mind wonders!



Leslie Cerrara-Rudolph on stage

Those were our favorites, as well as the visit to the Center for Puppetry Arts, featuring a performance of "The Little Pirate Mermaid" and a Jim Henson Day exhibit hosted by Jane and Heather Henson.

As always, there was much, much more, including a wonderful festival store in which Sandye personally did all she could to jumpstart the economy or at least her Christmas shopping list for little people.

The workshops filled our heads with ideas for lightweight marionette bodies and better shadow puppet controls as well as war stories from someone who had worked with Bil Baird. And the best part, as usual, was catching up on old friends and meeting new ones.

A dozen people from the Great Lakes Region attended the Friday morning regional meeting. New member Kat Pleviak, who recently moved back to Chicago from Hawaii



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Atlanta continued

said she will (and has!) worked on a Facebook page for the region.

The regional festival next summer will be in Springfield, Ill., hosted by Ollie and Bridget DePriest. It will be **July 29 – August 1 at the Abraham Lincoln Hotel**, within shouting distance of Lincoln's home (two blocks away).

"Talk it up," suggested Chicagoland's Dave Herzog, who is helping with the festival. He pointed out that Bridget is basing the budget numbers on 80 paid registrants, a modest number. Great Lakes' festival in Shipshewana was the only one last year to break even.

Dave Herzog urged puppeteers to use PuppetHub.com to connect with other puppeteers. Some puppeteers, he learned, don't even know there are guilds out there!



The Puppet Auction we had in Brad Lowe's barn in May was a huge success, bringing in over six hundred dollars. Everyone who attended donated something to sell, and we had dozens of wonderful puppets, posters, props, photos and even a puppet stage from the estate of Karol O'Dell. (The Guild still has some of these donated items to sell at Potlatch.) Short puppet performances were interspersed between auctions and there were nibbles, beverages and desserts to nosh on during the intervals.

Thirteen Guild members made their way down to Atlanta for the P.of A. Festival in July, where they enjoyed an inspiring five days of performances, workshops and social events. Nancy Henk presented a workshop on her experiences with Lotte Reiniger and Tih Penfil took part in a round table discussion on puppets in therapy and education.

Marty and Diane Boatman hosted the annual potluck picnic at their home in Southfield. The kids enjoyed a peanut hunt and the adults took part



Brad Lowe & Natasha Khusid perform "Hansel and Gretel" in a relay race which didn't, thank goodness, involve running. Prizes and ribbons were awarded to everyone. After the meal, Brad Lowe and Natasha Khusid performed "Hansel & Gretel" on the Oakland County Puppet Mobile, and eight other members contributed five-minute acts of puppetry, ventriloquism and comedy to round out the day's entertainment.



Martv Boatman-L & Brad Lowe-R at DPG Auction

An election of officers took place this last summer, and the new DPG President for 2009-10 will be Mary Ellen Clark. Annabel Griffiths serves her 3rd term as Recording secretary and Sue Ostrowski will be the Treasurer. The newly elected Members-At-Large are Diane Boatman, Igor Gozman and Theresa Randolph. These officers will be installed at the birthday dinner in September.

A circus theme is planned for the Guild's sixty third birthday celebration at the Polish American Century Club. Daren Dundee will present his famous *International Flea Circus* before the lavish buffet meal is served. Following the installation of new officers, our guest performer will be Guy Thompson, (Indiana) with his *Stringling Brother's Circus*. A group photo will conclude the celebration

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“Puppets in the Land of Lincoln” 2010 Great Lakes Regional Puppetry Conference Update By Dave Herzog

Bridget De Priest of *The De Priest Puppets* in Springfield Illinois has taken upon her shoulders the huge job of becoming the Regional Conference

Director for the 2010 Great Lakes Regional Festival of The Puppeteers Of America.

Assisting Bridgit will be her conference Staff:

Jennifer Rozmarynowski : Co Director

Dave Rozmarynowski : Workshop Director

Mel Biske: Exhibit Curator

Dave Herzog : Artistic Director

Tih Penfil : Festival Photographer

The Festival dates will be July 28 through August 1, 2009 . The Festival will take place at the

elegant Abraham Lincoln Hotel and Conference in Springfield, Illinois. Located just minutes from the world famous Abraham Lincoln Historical Sites, Springfield offers a great chance for a fun and educational mini vacation for the whole family. Springfield is easily accessible by car, Amtrak, air transportation, and bus.

A fabulous line up of performances, and workshops are being planned as well as special events that will allow you to enjoy the historical sites. We will still need lots of volunteers to help with the Conference as well as donations for the raffles and silent auctions that will help in part to pay for

Chicagoland Puppet Guild

Members of the guild had the unique experience of visiting the Reversible Eye Gallery in the Humboldt Park neighborhood of Chicago for a showing of *“The Tragical Ballad of Black Bonnet”*. Here’s a review of the show.

By Tom Lang and Yvonne Yosseif

So, Yvonne and I were charmed to find this little gallery in the Humboldt Park neighborhood on a not-so-quiet Sunday evening, quite a change from the North-side-oriented puppetry we’re used to seeing. Set in a storefront space, we all but stepped into the intro when we arrived. The two performers (Pandora Gastelum and Nina Nicholos) had adapted (considerably!) an old radio play to a gender-bender theme, and both have fine voices (and wireless mikes) which liven up the opera/cabaret songs they wrote.

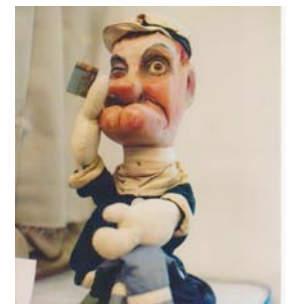
Puppetry was all hand-made figures, since each has a design background, and the action was “intense” making good use of a 7 foot wide 4 foot high foldout (traveling show) stage made to serve as a grand mansion with scullery and upper floors, and later as a gloomy forest. Puppets were fixed-string marionette style, two of them groups of local yokels and milkmaids that were made to turn and swoop with ease. The main figures the “Black Bonnet” outcast and the pampered wealthy Lilliana, were nicely detailed but not over-worked. The Devil made a guest appearance, aided by a red lamp, and the performers, several times, put their figures aside and came out to play the parts (dressed as their characters) in front of the stage. Their creativity and voicing kept everyone frankly spellbound.

Sure hope Pandora and Nina will return to Chicago, but glad to know they’re also teachers in the New Orleans public schools, passing along some of their knowledge in workshops for large scale parade puppetry and floats to kids in the 8th and 9th Wards. We’ll surely hear more from Elena Kenny at Reversible Eye, who is interested in supporting puppetry and its more edge-of-the-fringe forms in that space!

Lest We Forget - by Fred Putz

Excerpts from Marjorie McPharlin & Jay Marshall

McPharlin wrote, “Punch and Judy is still popular.” And so this ancient team continues its popularity thanks to artists and showmen such as George “Pinxy” Larson and his wife, Grace Larson who entered show business in 1908 and was active until 1958. Larson was a master woodcarver and made ‘ventriloquial’ figures.



“Popeye” by Pinxy Larson

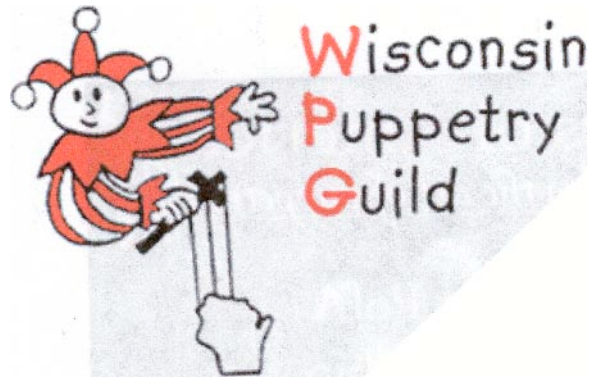
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Marshall recalled, "I first came in contact with "Pinxy" when I was playing out in Indiana. I came to Chicago and went up to his 4th floor studio. Well, Pinxy, his real name was George; and if you look in the dictionary under 'Pinx-it', it is something that an artist used to put in the corner of the canvas, 'painted by'. And so, he took the name Pinx-it because he was an artist who painted side show posters and banners. Grace got him on the carnival scene. In spite of her crippled hand she used to do Punch & Judy with George as well as typed, played the piano, sew (she put together the costumes for the puppets) and she probably was a woodcarver too. Not only was Pinxy a fine artist, woodcarver and Punch showman but he also had another very unusual profession. The shock of my life in 1939 after knowing him for sever or eight months was to discover that he was a totally tattooed man!"

War Stories by Dave Herzog

Every puppeteer that makes his or her living performing for the public hears certain phrases at performances that after a number of years tends to drive them nuts. Here are a few of mine.

1. Wow! You really have this down to a science.
2. What's your real job?
3. Where did you buy the puppets?
4. This is really a dying art you know.
5. We're going to put the toddlers in the front row.
6. Your dolls are really cute!
7. Do you do birthday parties?
8. The magician [or clown or animal act or whatever] likes to set up over there.
9. Oh, is there a show today?
10. Do you have anything to bring in?
11. Just move whatever is in your way.
12. What time is the show again?
13. Can we just send your check?
15. Oh, You're early, the show isn't until 10:00 A.M. [You hear this a lot when you show up at the agreed upon hour in advance]



Gene & Lynette Lombard take Puppets to a new level

The project started when an out of state land developer proposed building a huge factory farm (3200 cows) about 300 yards from the edge of our small town, Westby .

Some of the citizens were not pleased (to put it mildly .) Especially when the city fathers did not seem to be doing anything about it . Letter-writing , meetings , etc. followed which no doubt had their effect but it just seemed a little tame . This required something more exciting , something stronger . This required puppets ! So with a little cajoling I talked the group into letting me design some protesting cows who hate the idea of factory farms .



I assembled the creatures , a number people helped paint them .Lyn put the finishing touches on them , and I sprayed every darn spot on the safety suits. Nasty job! Did they help? (The cows , not the spots .)Time will tell. They have marched in several parades and gleaned appearances in 3 or 4 news - papers, with attending stories of the displeasure of the citizens . Last report was that the developer had put the project on hold . Don't know if it is the cows, the protests, or the economic downturn .We shall have to wait and see . Whatever the case, puppets are on the moooove in Westby. Sorry, bad pun . – Gene L.

Hazel Green Opera House hosts first mini festival as Day of Puppetry

Wow, it's been a whirlwind of puppet activity in southwest Wisconsin in the last several months with the design and building of a two level hand puppet stage and Sandye writing and building the puppets for the Easter show "The Tale of Bunny Cotton-Tail". Then her dream of developing a one day mini festival for the Day of Puppetry became a reality on the last weekend of May.



Besides the help from WPG members we also enlisted Monica Leo of West Liberty, Iowa, who performed "Willy the Woolly" and Tim Reed from Milwaukee who brought his "Planet Protectors" show. Pam Corcoran taught kids to make either a woolly mammoth or a butterfly in the make-and-take workshop.



We ended the day with a puppet parade on Main St. serenaded by the high school tuba band.



Summer Workshop in Benton – Sandye Voight



Here is a picture of the 4 fabulous marionettes that my summer mini-class at Benton Elementary School made. I taught the class as part of the summer rec program. We met for an hour and a half each morning (I arranged to spread a day of vacation across the week, so that I could do the workshop during the day.)

Only 4 kids signed up, but that proved to be just right. They had to apply Paper Clay (a papier mache product) to heads, hands and feet that I pre-cut. After a night of drying in our garage where the temperature was toasty, the body parts were dry. They sanded and painted. They chose the fabric for the bodies and I sewed the bodies (trunks), which they stuffed (with pennies in the bottom to weight down the butts). We made the arms and legs out of toilet paper rolls that we rolled tighter and covered with fabric.

They had to sew the arms and legs to the body. "I CAN'T SEW!" they wailed. But they sewed. I made the wooden controls and then allowed the last day for the complicated process of stringing. I pre-cut the fishline and even knotted certain lengths ahead of time and that really worked well.

The end result: a Cowardly Lion and Tinman (they couldn't talk the other 2 into making the Scarecrow and Dorothy), a Princess and a Dallas Cowboy.

I view the whole experience as a test run for workshops to be done at the opera house. I think adults would enjoy this project. Also, it would be

Pokagon Potlatch comes together

Only a month and a half away is the 2009 annual "Potlatch" celebration. Chicago-land's Fred Berchtold is setting up workshops and the line-up so far looks to include "Puppets in Education", "Script Writing", "How to Grow a Guild", "Low Cost/No Cost Puppets", and "How to Write a Press Release".

Shows for the weekend include Linda Roberts Puppets doing "Beauty and the Beast", Guy Thompson doing "Jack Frost-Winter Wonderland", Byron Thompson – "The Punch Brunch", and The Fever River Puppeteers doing "The Tale of Bunny Cotton Tail". Contact Dave Greenbaum (Columbus) if you have a show to perform.

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Guild Assignments for "Potlatch"

Exhibits: Detroit - (judizachary@hotmail.com)

Performances: Columbus – Dave Greenbaum
(starsonstrings@netzero.net)

Workshops: Chicago-land – Fred Berchtold
(godslovestories@comcast.net)

Registration: PGNO – Jean Jackson
(jeanjackson@ameritech.net)

Potpourri: Cincinnati – Linda Mason
(LMASON18@cinci.rr.com)

Ice Breaker: Wisconsin - Sandye Voight
(voight@mhtc.net)

Trading Post: IN, TR, Central IL, W. Mich.
Joanne Schroeder (adventureland1@mac.com)

West Michigan Guild meets

— by Bill Henderson

The W. Michigan Guild met just a couple of weeks ago at the Saugatuck Masonic Lodge – no pancakes this time around.

However, to kick off the meeting Guild member Ginger Miller and her troupe from Kalamazoo performed their puppet show "Myrtle and Gertrude, the Hasenpfeffer Sisters". The story line suggests that when Myrt confides to Gert that she is lonely, Myrt uses her computer to find a boyfriend for her. The fun starts when some unusual men show up. Will Myrt ever find a soul mate? What do you think?



After the show ventriloquist Joanne Schroeder presented a workshop on writing humorous puppet skits. "Humor is based on pain", Joanne says. "Think of what upsets or annoys you. This is what you use to write your humor." Group members who came to the event were encouraged to bring ideas along with pen, paper, a puppet with a moving mouth (if available), and munchies for snacktime!!!

In the meantime Joanne Schroeder attended a ventriloquist convention in July and made some interesting purchases for her collection



This is Nacho Cheese. She is a ventriloquist dummy purchased by Joanne Schroeder at the Ventriloquist conVENTion when she attended in July. Nacho is dressed in her pastor's robe.

She gave her first children's sermon titled "Adam & Eve". The applause was rewarding.



Joanne Schroeder with Jimmy Nelson, Danny O'Day and Farfel at the ConVENTion. Linda Mason – below.



Watch for the Pokagon "Plan of the Weekend" in a couple of weeks !!!



Registration Form
GREAT LAKES REGION PUPPETEERS OF AMERICA, INC.
“PUPPET POTLATCH”
November 6 through 8, 2009
Potawatomi Inn, Pokagon State Park, Angola, IN

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

E-mail address: _____

Phone number: _____

Adult registration is \$30 per person

**Child (12 years and younger) registration is \$10 per person*

Number of adults _____ x \$30 = \$ _____

Number of children _____ x \$10 = \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

Additional people registering under this same family/address:

Name/age: _____

Name/age: _____

Name/age: _____

Name/age: _____

**Send check (payable to “Great Lakes Region P of A”) and
registration form to:**

***Jean Jackson, Registrar, Great Lakes Region, Potlatch
2980 Washington Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44118-2450***

***PLEASE NOTE: this registration does NOT reserve a room at the Inn for
you! Contact Potawatomi Inn directly for room rates and reservations:
1-877-768-2928 or <https://potawatomiinn.dnr.state.in.us> (block of rooms
under “puppeteers” group code 1106GR --held through 10/6/09).***