

October 2006



# *The Summit Playhouse*

## *Green Room Notes*

*The Summit Playhouse is a community theatre formed to encourage and practice theatre arts. The proceeds of its performances not required for the support and extension of its activities will be devoted to educational or charitable purposes. Established in 1918.*

### **New Jersey Cultural Trust Grant**

A standing ovation for our Gurus of Grants, Nancy Boucher and John Bauer. Because of their initiative and persistence, the New Jersey Cultural Trust has awarded the Playhouse Association \$30,000, the largest possible grant, for the restoration of our historic building.

### *“The Children’s Hour” Opens November 3d*

Our season opens with Lillian Hellman’s controversial 1934 drama, *The Children’s Hour*. The original production ran for 691 performances. Its theme of the power of accusations to destroy lives caused a sensation at the time. **Kate Schlesinger** of Summit directs a cast of 14: **Liza Harris** of Mountain Lakes and **Kristin Barber** of East Stroudsburg, PA play the two headmistresses accused of improper behavior. The schoolgirl accuser is **Rachel Donahue** of Summit. Also from Summit are **Paulina Casey, Hallie and Loring Bowen, Katt Claypoole, Shay Strelzick, and Ellie Terrett. Linda and John Correll** of Winfield, **Jean Kuras** of Glen Ridge, **Isabel Zeoli** of Sparta and **Audrey Attencio** of New Vernon complete the cast. The production runs from Nov. 3- Nov. 18. Our ACCESS matinee will be on Sunday, November 12 at 2 p.m. This performance will be audio described, signed, and assistive listening devices and large print programs will be available. Summit Lions Club will underwrite all our



Rachel Donahue, Kristin Barber, Liza Harris Access performances this season. The New Jersey Theatre Alliance will lend the Playhouse the listening equipment to make the performance possible and the Union Center National Bank will pay for printing the programs. Tickets are \$17 for adults and \$12 for students under 18. To reserve, call (908) 273-2192 or go online to [www.SummitPlayhouse.org](http://www.SummitPlayhouse.org).

## **Kaleidoscope**

Kaleidoscope’s *Once on This Island, Jr.* was a big success! With a cast of 31 kids from 8-18, our stage was filled with beautiful music and intricate choreography. We played to full houses with many people visiting the Playhouse for the first time. The parents of our cast members were true team players and

could be found helping with every aspect of the production; stage managers, wranglers, set painters, photographers, publicists, and also helped with lighting, costumes, props, and strike. Thanks to all our dedicated volunteers, our talented, hard-working cast and our wonderful directors, Renee and Judy, and organized producer Abbe Maron, for making *Once on This Island, Jr.* an amazing experience for everyone involved. An attendee was heard to remark that they found the show by a Google search for theater in NJ and hoped to make it an annual event. Another said, "We caught the show and thoroughly enjoyed it...The sets were fantastic and the kids seemed to have a lot of fun...We look forward to catching future performances at the Summit Playhouse.

## PLAYHOUSE NAMED THEATRE OF THE YEAR

On Sunday, September 17, 2006, The Summit Playhouse received the Perry Award as Community Theatre of the Year from the NJ Association of Community Theatres. Our past President, Nancy Boucher accepted the award. The award was given because of the continued excellence of our productions, our accessibility, and the restoration of our historic building. Also honored was Paulina Casey, our Helen in *The Miracle Worker* as Outstanding Young Actress. Megan Guinan, Annie Sullivan was also nominated. Bill Roome was nominated for Best Sound in *The Sisters Rosenzweig*. The Perry Award recognizes achievements of theatrical artists in all disciplines, onstage and behind the scenes. The NJACT is part of the American Association of Community Theatres.

### Upcoming Auditions!!!

**LIVING OUT**- by Lisa Loomer - Open Auditions will be December 5 and 6 at 7:30 at the Playhouse. *Living Out*, directed by Mike Driscoll, produced by Nina Deutz runs Feb 23- March 10, 07. *Living Out* is an absorbing and thought-provoking play about motherhood and the "American Dream" as seen through the eyes of immigrant nannies and the moms who employ them. Cast includes 3 nannies- 30s to 40s, 3 moms- all 30s, 1 man- 30s to 40s and 1 man -30s. All parts require actors who have a true sense of comedy and are equally comfortable with drama. The dialogue includes some Spanish language phrases for the nannies and one husband. For further information, please visit our website [www.SummitPlayhouse.org](http://www.SummitPlayhouse.org)

Please help us spread the word about this play and its casting needs, particularly with the local Hispanic community. It's a new and different play which speaks to many issues in our contemporary society and will strike a chord with many of us.

Interested in learning how to direct or produce? This is an excellent opportunity to try something new and different. We are looking for assistants at these positions as well as other staff and crew. If you want to enhance your theatre skills and try a job you've never done before, call Nina at 973-457-4324.



**A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM** by Burt Shevelove, Larry Gelbart and Stephen Sondheim. Get out your togas! Auditions for our spring musical *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, directed by Vincent J. Balzano, will be held in January of 2007. *Forum* is a crazy, fast-paced, witty, irreverent, zany farce of a musical. Based on the time-tested comedies of the Roman playwright Plautus, *Forum* is a non-stop laugh-fest in which a crafty slave struggles to win the hand of a beautiful but slow-

witted courtesan for his young master in exchange for freedom. There are many wonderful parts for men and women of all ages and everyone is encouraged to audition. We are also looking for an assistant producer. Please look on our website [www.SummitPlayhouse.org](http://www.SummitPlayhouse.org) for the exact audition dates. For further information, email the director at [AFunnyThing07@aol.com](mailto:AFunnyThing07@aol.com).

## Clarification

In response to concerns of a few Playhouse members, about my signed op-ed piece in the June 2006 Newsletter, I wish to clarify my use of the terms “museum” and “public trust”. I was using them in a popular sense: “ a building where a collection of artistic, historical, and/or scientific items is displayed” and a “charity or a 501(c)(3) organization.”

My assertion that we own the building but not the land has resulted in a deed review by an attorney familiar with the Playhouse, dispelling a long-held notion that many people, including the writer, had. **We do own both.**—W. John Bauer, Editor, 2004-2006.

## *Four Centuries in One Weekend*

The Playhouse Association will participate in Four Centuries in One Weekend, a journey through Union County’s historical and cultural sites featuring 23 sites on Saturday, October 21 from 10 AM-5PM and Sunday, October 22 from 12PM to 5PM sponsored by the Union County Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs. It is a great opportunity to share our playhouse and its history with a larger audience.

## Clean up and Kick Off Party

The Fall Cleanup and the Kick Off Party were the weekend of September 23d. On Saturday morning a willing crew assembled led by **Jim and Mary Lou Mayfield and Betty Kaus**. Assisting were: **Bill Roome, Brent Baab, George Doherty and Robbi Curtis, Roy Pancirov, John Luckstone, Nina and Ted Deutz, Bill and Ann Houpt, Kathy and Mike Tatlow, Frank and Cathy Hawrusik, Lyn Mackie, Sue and Linn Smith, and Kathy and Tim Lynch**. They washed windows and the display case, tidied the storeroom, cleaned out the makeup drawers, organized the script library, organized costumes, made several dump runs and snacked on mostly healthy foods. On Sunday, the Fall Kick Off Party was held at Joann Scanlon’s, hosted by Theresa Turner and Liz Messineo. The attendees feasted on wonderful hors d’oeuvres and desserts and caught up with old friends.

## On Other Stages



In each newsletter, we’d like to report where our members are performing so if you are appearing elsewhere, just email me at [robgeo@verizon.net](mailto:robgeo@verizon.net) for inclusion. Vincent W. Balzano, a recipient of this year’s Playhouse Performing Arts Award and currently a freshman at Georgetown University, will be performing there this October in *The Importance of Being Earnest* with the Mask and Bauble Dramatic Society, the oldest college theatre group in the United States.

## Final Exits

This past summer, the Playhouse lost three past members who contributed years of their talents, Gil Leigh, actor, designer and painter, Ruth Paulsen, and Norm Anderson, actor. We mourn their loss and remember them with joy.

## Summit Fair 2006

Special thanks to Rhoda and Robert Roper for their canopy as July 29<sup>th</sup> was sunny and oh-so-hot!. Thank you to members for setting up, manning, and taking down our display: **Kathy, Bob, and Tim Lynch, Rose and Roy Pancirov, Dee Robertson, Maddie, Meghna and Priya Marathe, Sue and Linn Smith, Kate Schlesinger, David Hoffman, Theresa, James, and Caroline Turner, Mary Lou and Jim Mayfield, and Betty Kaus.** A total of 136 names were entered in the drawing for five pairs of tickets for one of our 2006-2007 productions. The winners were **Steven Mauer** of Roselle, **Marty Robertson** and **Christine Vaugle** of Summit, and **Karen Brackin** and **Caroline Turner** of New Providence.

## Playreading Committee

The Playreading Committee is looking for a few good plays. Submit any suggestions to Roy Pancirov, the Chair of playreading at 973-377-6314 or [rrpan@optonline.net](mailto:rrpan@optonline.net). Thanks.

## Membership

Ed Johnson reminds all to renew their membership NOW if you haven't done so.

## Tri-County Community Theatre Association

What's happening at other community theatres? Thanks to Bill Roome and Rose Pancirov, the Tri-County Community Association is on the web. Six community theatres in Essex, Morris, and Union Counties list their schedules and audition notices. Go to [www.tricountycta.com](http://www.tricountycta.com) or [www.tricountycta.org](http://www.tricountycta.org). Among the plays coming up are Chester Theatre Group's *Music from a Sparkling Planet* and Westfield Players *The Cemetery Club* (Co-directed by Joann Scanlon and Sue Smith) in October. In November: Hexagon Players of Mendham's *The Sound of Music*, Maplewood Strollers' *Urinetown*, and Stony Hill Players' *A Man for All Seasons*. Do visit their website for further information.

A "Fun Raiser"

Five years ago, Christopher Durang returned to the Playhouse to perform in a benefit for our accessibility project. In January, his new musical, *Adrift in Macao*, will have its New York premiere at Primary Stages. We'd like to return the favor and support his new show. We are putting together a bus trip to a preview performance. Look for more information later in the mail. Chris said, "I think it's a lovely idea."

Funding for the Playhouse is provided in part by grants from the NJ Cultural Trust

If you would like to receive future Green Room Notes on email please email that request to Ed Johnson, our Business Mgr., at [gej1936@aol.com](mailto:gej1936@aol.com)

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