



New Kensington Civic Theatre February 2014 Callboard



The weather has certainly been frightful and the glow of the fireplace makes one feel delightful; but, we do have some place to go! Stop the snow, stop the snow, stop the snow!

The place to go is the General Meeting, Friday, February 14, at the workshop on the corner of George and Carl. Light snacks will be served. (I know this to be true because Yvonne Pelchar and I are creating some tasty treats.) So, why not stop by and catch up on the news of the theatre and visit with friends! It will help you beat the winter blues.

Cast of "Boeing, Boeing"

The cast for our next production, "Boeing, Boeing" is: (drum roll, please!)

Bernard: Dan Brisbee
Robert: Chris Pastrick
Gloria: Jen Kwiatek
Gretchen: Pam Farneth
Gabiella: Renee Kern
Berthe: Shelly Spataro

"Boeing, Boeing" will be presented at the Forum Theatre, March 13-16. (Hopefully, we have better weather.) This wacky comedy is sure to be a hit.

Out and About

Bill Mitas is directing Penn State's production of "Almost, Maine" at the Forum Theatre on April 8, 9, and 10th. The play is a series of nine vignettes that explore love and loss in the mythical, almost-town, Almost, Maine.

Speaking of out and about...Tom Liesiewski is doing well since his surgery a few months ago. He is even able to take his dog for short walks! Tom and Dick Devlin have been keeping busy with shopping and, most importantly, stopping for lunch or dinner afterward.

Also, Ron Ferrara is doing just fine following his two surgeries! Now, he is back at the helm directing the marvelous cast of "Boeing, Boeing."

This month's "15 Minutes with..." features Bob Stein.
It is printed as written by Bob; no edits, folks...you can't improve on perfection!

In 1976, I came across an audition notice for the New Kensington Civic Theatre musical "1776" to be presented the July 4th bicentennial weekend at Valley High School stadium. I had never been in a play, but I had sung in choirs since I was a boy in St. Joseph School. The audition notice indicated that 26 men and two women were needed. I thought to myself: "26 male singers! I think I can get a part." And boy did I! One of the best parts in the show — that struttin' popinjay Richard Henry Lee.

(For years afterward, whenever the Civic Theatre would have a strike party, my song, "The Lees of Old Virginia," was regular feature. Along with "The Moose Joke," of course. Did you ever hear it? "Well, I was hunting in upstate New York." ...)

Anyway, my boss at the newspaper told me: "Watch out. They'll want you in every play now." He wasn't far off. I've appeared in 40 Civic Theatre productions, directed four and rattled milk bottles as bookholder for "Our Town."

In addition to Richard Henry Lee, my most satisfying roles were Henry Higgins in "My Fair Lady" and Artie Shaughnessy in "The House of Blue Leaves." Both plays were directed by my dear friend Sylvia Garzotto," who saw something in me that I didn't know I had and brought it out.

I also remember with fondness roles in "Da," "Foxfire," "Noises Off," "Pack of Lies" "Diary of Anne Frank," "The Dining Room," "True West" and "Death of a Salesman." My favorite directing experience was "That Championship Season," which Steve Pastrick convinced me to do. I also had great fun with "The Odd Couple (female version)," "Brighton Beach Memoirs" and "Gypsy." Carla Ann Guzzo, as bookholder, kept me sane through the productions.

I've thoroughly enjoyed my experiences with the New Kensington Civic Theatre and am disappointed that circumstances keep me from fully participating these days. I've met so many wonderful people who have become lifelong friends. They've made me feel valued and loved.

As they say in those awards shows, I'm afraid if I start naming names, I'll leave somebody out. But I can't go without mentioning a few friends who I dearly miss: Bob Seagriff, Mike Nardozi, Paula Wiedl, Dorothy Holleran and the incredibly talented trio of Steve Pastrick, Pat Martini and Rita Devlin.

In closing, let me say theater friends are special. The relationships are cemented by working together toward a common goal — a good show. As Dick Devlin would say as he filled glasses from yet another pitcher of beer: "This is theater!"

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Respectfully submitted,  
Cynthia Ansani