

READING COMMUNITY PLAYERS

Pennsylvania's Third Oldest Community Theater ... Founded In 1920



THE CALLBOY • NEWSLETTER FOR READING COMMUNITY PLAYERS • October 2011 ISSUE

October Dates to Remember:

October 21 & 22.....**Dragtoberfest** at RCP theatre

October 21.....**The Little Dog Laughed** opens at Genesis

October 29.....**Mad Hatter Masquerade** at the Hendel House

• *To Kill a Mockingbird* a Critical and Commercial Success •

Congratulations to the cast and crew of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, which completed its run this past weekend. In addition to being well-attended (three of the performances drew over one hundred people), the show was a critical success as well. Below is a review of the show by The Pottstown Mercury's Cheryl Thornburg. Thanks, Cheryl for reviewing our show and all local theatre productions as well.

RCP's 'To Kill A Mockingbird' is a must-see production

By Cheryl Thornburg • <http://curtaincallpottsmmerc.blogspot.com/>



Kathryn Majesky and William Santoro as Scout and Atticus Finch.

No matter how many times you read Harper Lee's "To Kill A Mockingbird" or see it brought to life on stage, it is an incredibly moving experience, and Reading Community Players current production is no exception. Director R. Bruce McLean has put together a strong cast and drawn powerful performances from them as they take on some of the most memorable characters in literature.

The story is required reading in most high schools and the familiar plot still evokes powerful emotions. Set in the deep South in 1935, it is the story of Atticus Finch, a small-town lawyer who is defending Tom Robinson, a young black man with a crippled arm who has been falsely accused of attacking a young white woman. The tension in the town is palpable and tempers flare as the trial draws near. The Civil War has long been over, but the lines are still clearly drawn in Maycomb, Alabama.

Atticus is played by William Santoro with a depth and sincerity that is quite remarkable. Whether dealing firmly with his children, Scout and Jem, or delivering a passionate closing statement at Tom's trial, Santoro is totally believable. His delivery of the summation speech is powerful and poignant. James Barksdale plays Tom, and although we only see him on stage in the second act, he delivers a subtle and stirring performance as the gentle and stoic man on trial.

Christopher Sergel, who dramatized the classic novel, uses the device of Atticus' daughter Scout, now the adult Jean Louise Finch, to narrate the complex story as she looks back on what happened when she was a child. Beth Farmer, plays the adult Scout with just the right touch of nostalgia and sadness as she recounts the events from long ago.

The young Scout, a feisty tomboy, is played to perfection by Kathryn Majesky, who was seen earlier this year in the title role in RCP's "A Little Princess." Whether princess or tomboy, she can handle it all.

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Luke Ott plays her older brother, Jem, who's equally mischievous, particularly when he's egged on by their friend Dill, played by Panayiotis "Pete" Clauser. The target of some of their antics is Boo Radley, a recluse that no one has seen in years. This trio's chemistry is fun to watch. Perhaps they've become really good friends in real life, for their interaction is quite believable on stage.

Kevin Wade is superb as the mean, foul-mouthed and violent Bob Ewell, the father of the young woman who was allegedly attacked by Tom Robinson. I suspect Wade is a really nice guy, but he is very convincing as the intimidating Ewell. He never breaks character. Watch his face in the background at the trial.

Julia Minotto plays his daughter Mayella with a sensitivity as she cowers while testifying under the glaring eyes of her father.

Brian Miller plays Mr. Gilmer, the persistent prosecutor who is determined to convict Tom of the crime, with intensity and style.

The large cast features actors ranging in age from 12 to 80+, and even the "smaller" roles give everyone a chance to shine on stage.

Margaret Orner is fun to watch as the mean Mrs. Dubose and Diann Stewart evokes lots of laughter from the audience with a gleam in her eye as the town gossip, Stephanie Crawford.

Ruth Martelli's Maude Atkinson is sincere and likable as another of the townsfolk who supports Atticus and tries to help Scout and Jem.

As the Sheriff Heck Tate, Randy Miller brings a depth to this complex character who is a product of the era, has strong sense of right and wrong and tries to keep the peace in Maycomb.

Earl Boehmer as Judge Taylor has a brilliant moment at the trial as he reacts to an outburst by Bob Ewell.

Colin Long also only has a short time on stage as the reclusive Boo Radley, but he captures the essence of the strange young man who hides from society.

Rounding out the cast are Joan Reppert as Calpurnia, John Foster as Rev. Sykes, Bob Barskey as Walter Cunningham, and Kenneth Dreistadt as Nathan Radley.

This is a cohesive cast with no weak links. They recreate Lee's Maycomb with honesty and compelling story-telling.

Bruce McLean designed the set, which is quite ingenious, somehow compressing an entire town into one small stage -- and it works.

The entire production is first-class community theater, allowing the entire audience to "climb into other people's skins and walk around in them" to understand that time in our history, as well as some things that are still happening today. The play's message of courage, integrity, loyalty and tolerance are as relevant today as they were when Lee first created this remarkable story more than 50 years ago. "To Kill A Mockingbird" is a must-see production.

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• *House of Yes* Cast List Announced •

Director Ray Rhodes has announced his cast for the Reading Community Players Production of Wendy MacLeod's *House of Yes*. The show opens on November 11th.

Jackie O.....	Gabby Lewis
Marty.....	Jon Browning
Nathony.....	Josh Austin
Lesly.....	Kelly Schmehl
Mrs. Pascal.....	Kathy Newville

• The 2012 Season •

From the President:

Whenever a season is selected, it is done with fingers crossed; there is no guarantee that any particular show will do well, nor can dismal attendance be anticipated. Still, every year, our play reading committee goes about the task, hoping that our selections will be well received by our potential audiences. With pride, and relief if we're honest, our choices for 2010-2011 have done well, especially *FAME* and *To Kill A Mockingbird*. At each performance of *FAME*, our audiences topped the hundred mark, with one completely sold out. Attendance for *Mockingbird* has been robust as well with three performances topping one hundred audience members. Now we are ready to announce our ninety-second season. Fingers crossed, with your support, we will enjoy continued success.

This year we are trying a new approach to selecting our season...we are, in fact, laying out a three year schedule of shows. The play-reading committee, Chaired by Pat Perfect, began this process by identify the types of shows that have been most successful for us in the past: children's shows, classic drama, comedy, cutting edge and Black History Month selections. We have attempted to assign each of these categories to a predictable time of year: if it's April, it must be a comedy at RCP, for example. That being said, we realize that if some amazing show becomes available, or, as has happened recently, falls into our laps, we may have to adjust the season selections. So, here's the line up for the 2012 season at Reading Community Players:

February 17 - 25.....	<i>My Name is Ossian Sweet</i> (Directed by Ruth Martelli)
April 20 - 29.....	<i>Leading Ladies</i> (Director TBA)
June 23 - 30.....	<i>The Pirate's Life for Me</i> (Directed by Debbie Silas)
August 17 - 26.....	<i>Angel Street (Gaslight)</i> (Directed by Bruce McLean)
October 19 - 28.....	<i>War of the Worlds</i> (Directed by Pat Perfect)

The 2013 and 2014 seasons will follow this format. Please give us your feedback prior to your vote at the December meeting.

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• Board of Directors for 2012 •

Like any other organization, RCP is only as strong as the support provided by its membership. We are relying on you to attend our December membership meeting at the theatre on Tuesday, December 13, 7:30 PM to vote for your new Board as well as to meet and greet your fellow members. Your slate of candidates for next year are:

President.....	Ruth Martelli
Vice-President.....	Lizz Taylor
Secretary.....	Kim Richards (her surname name will change after her marriage in November!)
Treasurer.....	Jodi Gibbs
Business Manager.....	Pamm Savage
Membership.....	Diann Stewart
Tech.....	Joseph Majesky
Production.....	Pat Perfect
Publicity.....	Celeste Montgomery
Backstage Manager.....	Kevin Wade
House.....	Debbi Silas
Web Master/Graphic Design.....	Mark Martelli

• Special Thanks •

Special thanks for those members who donated their time and special talents to make much-needed improvements to the theatre. Be sure to thank them when you see them!

- **Jessie Didow** for hemming our new Grand Curtain, an overwhelming job completed in record time!
- **Jake Cassaday** for getting us reconnected and ready to light up the lobby.
- **Earl Boehmer** and his son for rebuilding the thrust.

Dedicated people like you keep us moving forward!

• Wish List •

The theatre is in need of many things, but chief among them is the following wish list. If you can donate any of the following, give us a call.

- Laptop for the Box Office
- Heavy-duty vacuum
- Gift cards to Lowes/Home Depot
- Paper goods
- Office Supplies

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READING COMMUNITY PLAYERS 2011 SEASON

HATS

Directed by Ruth Martelli
February 19 & 20

A LITTLE PRINCESS

Directed by Debbi Silas
June 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 26

TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD

Directed by Bruce McLean
September 23, 24, 25, 30, October 1, 2

DOUBT

Directed by Bruce McLean
March 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20

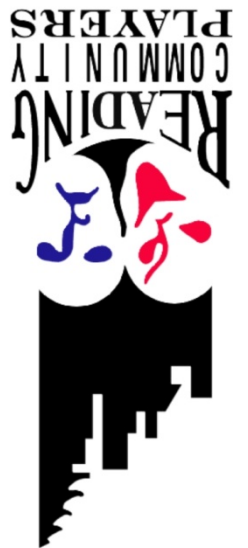
FAME

Directed by Hope O'Pake
July 29, 30, 31, August 5, 6, 7

HOUSE OF YES

Directed by Ray Rhoads
November 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20

www.rcptheatre.org



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