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directed by Michael Mayer. The show began performances on October 22; opened on November 14.

On October 27, SHAUN FILLION received the Faberge Theater Award, awarded by the Princess Grace Foundation to “outstanding young artists in the arts in the United States.”

In September, GUIL FISHER played Gene Dooley, the lead character in an independent film called “The Dance of Jim Beam”. He is now in rehearsals for New York Men’s Chorus’ Christmas concert at Lincoln Center’s Avery Fisher Hall and is workshoping a new musical version of a one-act play he showcased a year ago called Throwing Ice Cubes At The Sun.

JENNIFER HARTSHORN (WV ’81 – ’90) works as a corporate communications editor for Hewitt Associates in Atlanta, GA. She earned a BA in English Literature/Medieval Studies at Wesleyan University in 1994 and in December, will finish her MA in Professional Writing from Kennesaw University. In the last decade, she’s been a game designer for White Wolf, a game producer for Chimera Interactive, and a “Celtic-Goth-Rock” singer in a band that toured throughout the southeast—including Anne Rice’s Halloween party.

TIM KAUFMAN (Costume Designer/Shop Manager, ’04) was in Hollywood, Florida, at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino where he was the wardrobe and wig supervisor for Singin’ In The Rain through November 12.

From LAURA KAVANAUGH (Company Chef ’93 - ’98): “I have been teaching English at Timberlane Regional High School for the past four years and am preparing for my fifth right now while my husband, Scott, works on his Ph.D.”

ANITA KEAL is Off-Broadway at the Westside Theatre in From Door To Door by Jim Sherman (Beau Jest) playing Bessie in an open-ended run which opened March 16.

FRANCIS KELLY began work on his new theatre company just before the New Year and after nine months of labor and emails, Any Minute Now Productions’ inaugural concert, Triumph of Love, was presented at Lincoln Center on Monday, September 27.

JUDY KUHN stars with Marc Kudisch and Jason Danieley in the world premiere of The Highest Yellow, Michael John LaChiusa’s new musical about Vincent van Gogh. The musical, directed by Eric Schaeffer, runs October 26 - December 12 at the Signature Theatre in Arlington, VA.

HOWARD LEVITSKY (1976 Cabaret Music Director) is Associate Conductor of the Chicago National Tour (Cellblock Company).

MARY LEE MARSON and husband Dan Aloia are the parents of Alexandra, Christopher, and, as of August 20th at 5:54am, daughter Ava, weighing in at 7 lbs, 4 oz. and 19 inches long.

From DON PAUL MARTIN, JR: “I have been the Gift Administrator at St. Paul’s School in Concord, NH, since last fall. My short play, Snacking, has recently been performed at theatres in Nashua, NH, Chicago, IL, and in Sydney, Australia, and my full-length play, Finding Jean Ratelle, will be produced next spring. On October 16th, 2004, Jessica Lynn Brothers and I were married.”

RHONDA PICOU is a graduate student at Columbia University where she is pursuing an MFA in Stage Management at the School of the Arts.

BARRY ROCKLIN performed his cabaret show in Ballina, Ireland June - July, 2004 and provided the music for the Boston Theater Critics Association’s Elliot Norton Theater Awards for the 10th consecutive year. This fall, he returns to the sea, with 12 weeks on Royal Caribbean’s JEWEL OF THE SEAS, singing and playing through England, Ireland, France, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Estonia, Russia, the USA and Canada.

From Sharon McQueen (SHERRI SUTHERLAND): “My doctoral research was selected for presentation this summer (June 2004) at the American Library Association’s annual conference hosted by The Library Research Round Table. I also presented this research in May at the Connections Conference in Toronto, Canada.”

From JASON SIMON: “Last September, my theatre company put up its second production and I went to New Hampshire where I played the Cowardly Lion in the Seacoast Rep production of The Wizard of Oz for which I won a Spotlight Award for Best Supporting Actor. In Pennsylvania, I played King Herod in Jesus Christ Superstar. This past summer, my friends and I put up our first theatre festival to rave reviews! We did five shows: Midsummer In The Park, Of Mice And Men, Anything Goes, The Curious Savage, and Pirates Of Penzance. Miraculously, we ended in the black! I’m currently playing Old Deuteronomy on the national tour of Cats! Who knows what is next!!!”

From GEOFF TARSON: “I’m still living in LA with my wife, Holly. Half & Hal” is back for a

third season on UPN and I’m happy to be back as one of the writers. My writing partner and I also wrote a musical episode of That’s So Raven on The Disney Channel which aired in July. Seeing the actors rehearse and perform seven numbers in less than two weeks was very reminiscent of my Weathervane days. I do hope to get back and see a few shows and maybe even take part in one of the alumni performances one of these summers. Best to everyone.”

From KARENA THURSTON (Costume Designer, 1997 - 2002): “I am finishing my Bachelor of Architecture degree which is a six year process (only 2 more years to go!). For the last year, I have been employed at Hooper Shiles Architects working on a major project for the School District of Philadelphia’s Administrative Offices. Meanwhile, I’m designing skyscrapers in school, and am only nine months away from selecting my thesis project. I anticipate designing along the lines of Paolo Soleri’s conceived “arcology” where architecture and ecology combine within a built community to foster sustainable design at its best.”

CULLEN TITMAS performed in The Happy Prince, a new musical at the New York Musical Theatre Festival (TALLY SESSIONS played the Prince). Cullen was also recently seen at North Shore Music Theatre for its production of Aida.

Submissions may be sent to wvalum@yahoo.com. Submissions may have been edited and/or omitted for space considerations. A complete list will be posted at WVALUM.org.



Newsletter Layout: Nanette DeWester (Actor, WV ’90)



A Word From Nick Searcy

(WV ’80-81)

Jeff Zadroga: Tell me about how you came to the Weathervane. What were you doing, where were you living, who did you audition for?

Nick Searcy: I was a sophomore at UNC Chapel Hill, and Tom Haas was still the artistic director there (1980, good GRIEF!). I don’t think he had ever spoken to me and he saw a production of “Jesus Christ Superstar” in which I played Jesus. His friend Errol Selzbee had directed it. Afterwards he asked me if I wanted to come. I think this was about four weeks before the season started in Whitefield, and I said sure! He also hired my then sweetheart Megan Macknee for the cabaret, and on the road we went.

JZ: What is your most vivid memory in Whitefield from the Weathervane stage?

NS: I played Harry in “Brigadoon”, the bad guy (story of my life), and had to do that damn sword dance right before intermission every night, nearly breaking my fool neck. I vividly remember kicking the swords so badly when I was trying to Riverdance between them that they were flying around like rotating knives in a slaughterhouse. It is a miracle none of the Brigadooners were butchered by my clumsiness.

JZ: What is your most vivid memory in Whitefield “off” the Weathervane stage?

NS: It has to be the two films I made, one for both of the summers I was there. I shot a one-take super 8 chase scene called “There’s One in Every Crowd” in 1980, basically all the cast running through Whitefield chasing Connolly Simmons, a friend of mine, doing various sight gags. It was all great fun, and it gave me the filmmaking bug. The next year I tried to recreate the magic with an extravaganza called “The Hill People”, which starred Alice Bernstein Couch and featured amazing handmade title cards (it was a silent film) crafted by Gibbs Murray. Unfortunately, “The Hill People” was much more elaborate and was not as much fun. I kind of turned into Francis Ford Coppola making “Apocalypse Now” and had to shame, cajole, and berate my fellow

40th Anniversary Commemorative Book

The Weathervane Theatre Alumni Association is extremely proud to announce that there will be a commemorative book created to celebrate and honor the first 40 seasons of the Weathervane Theatre. Weathervane alumni Mary Whithed and Rick Farrar are spearheading the project along with several others who have volunteered to participate. The hardcover book will be published by Stinehour Press of Lunenburg, Vermont. Stinehour Press boasts an impressive history in the publishing industry. They have a longtime relationship with the theatre and have graciously provided their services at a very reasonable cost for such an important historical document. The format of the book will be an oblong 208 page historical retrospective of the theatre and Whitefield. Every season will be represented by photographs, memories, events of the day, cast lists and a replica of the season poster. There will also be pages dedicated to the Chase Barn – Whitefield’s first summer stock theatre, the Inn at Whitefield, the town of Whitefield, Gibbs’ Murray’s scenic designs and much more. This document is intended to represent the history of theatre in Whitefield and celebrate a very important milestone in the Weathervane theatre’s history. Copies will be available for purchase in the spring of 2005. The expected publication date is August 2005 in order to include photos and memories from the 2005 season – the 40th! If you would like to participate in this exciting project, please send an e-mail to wvalum@yahoo.org

“Nick Searcy” cont

cast members into finishing the movie. Bill Ingram had a great cameo and it is probably my best work. One friend of mine says it’s the best thing I’ve EVER done, and he includes all my Hollywood roles in that. Some friend. But that was great fun, and all those people are etched in my mind forever. I still take it out and run it for people from time to time. It is a wonderful memento.

“Nick Searcy” cont

JZ: You’ve had quite a career in TV & film. Was there something that you learned during your summer stock years that you have kept with you during your career?

NS: Jumping between plays and learning to perform the different styles in a short period of time was invaluable, both for my confidence level and for technique. You can’t play “Cabaret” in the same style as “Showboat”, you know? But David Adamson gave me some advice one time when he was directing “Ten Little Indians” that I have never forgotten. I was cast as the old colonel, walking with a cane, covered in old man makeup, and I was 21 years old. I kept thinking, “I’m terrible. I can’t pull this off. I’m stinking up the stage...”, etc. I talked to David about it. After a few minutes of listening to me whine, David said to me on the front porch, cocktail in hand: “Look, Nick. It’s not going to be like Gregory Peck would do it. But it’s what you’ve been cast as! Do the best you can, and start the next show Monday, and forget about it!” Great advice, and I’ve never forgotten it. I try to do the best I can, and if I suck, IT’S THE FAULT OF THE GUY WHO CAST ME!

JZ: What film role has been most significant or impactful for you and why?

NS: Frank Bennett in “Fried Green Tomatoes” gave me a career. If I had not done that role, and the movie had not been so successful, I probably would not be acting today. “Cast Away” was a significant



Nick Searcy



“Nick Searcy” from page 1

step for me, as was “Runaway Jury”, and “Head of State” allowed me to break into comedic roles. But nothing will ever be as great an event in my film career as “Fried Green Tomatoes”.

JZ: Describe what it's like to work on a film set verses a TV set.

NS: Films are much more relaxed, for the most part, although low-budget films are much like TV, except with more cussing. There are less pages to shoot in a day, and more attention is given to the acting, so in that sense it is much more satisfying artistically. Series television, especially dramatic series, are just hell, long days, rushed, too much to accomplish in a day, everyone's half insane from no sleep the night before. Sitcoms are the LIFE, baby. I'm having more fun right now on “Rodney” (ABC, 9:30 Tuesdays) than I have ever had. The schedule is great, and it's like doing a 22 minute play every week for a live audience. Plus the focus is more pleasant: instead of trying to act deadly serious and catch a serial killer or save the world every week, you're just trying to get a LAUGH. I love it. I hope I just do sitcoms from here on out.

JZ: If you had not been so successful as an actor, what would you like to be doing?

NS: I had considered going back to school to get a graduate English degree before “Fried Green Tomatoes” happened for me. That might be what I would be doing. But probably not. I never wanted to be anything else but an actor since I was 10 years old, so I probably would have kept doing it whether I had any success or not. I purposely set my life up so that I would NOT have anything to fall back on so that I would keep going. There were plenty of times I wanted to quit, but I couldn't get a job doing anything else, so I had to keep going. I never made a living as an actor until I was 31 years old. SO I don't really think I could have done anything else.

JZ: The Weathervane Theatre Alumni Association recently welcomed over 20 new members after their 2004 season in Whitefield. What advice do you have for them after having spent a summer in the White Mountains?

NS: Have as much fun as you can, and if you are not having the best time of your life at the Weathervane, then you probably should not be an actor. It's a GREAT place to learn and be on stage.

JZ: Tell me about your family, where you live now and what you do in your off time.

NS: Wife Leslie, married 18 years, daughter Chloe, 15, and son Omar, 4. In my off time I drive Chloe around to various activities, spank Omar, and ask my wife if she thinks I'm getting fat. And play golf. We just moved back to LA after 9 years of living in NC and Daddy being gone a lot. Now I have my nice sitcom job on

“Rodney”, and I'm home with my wife and kids a lot more. Life is pretty great. I try to remember to be grateful to God every-day for allowing me to make a living as an actor, and try to remember what is important in life. Which is really not whether or not I am getting fat, as my wife exhaustedly tries to explain to me over and over again.

JZ: What's next for you? What kind of work as an actor would you like to tackle?

NS: I have given up predicting what will happen to me next, because i am always wrong, and I couldn't change it if I knew it ahead of time. I just hope I can continue to work until I'm the old man on the set. Which I already am on “Rodney”, except for the episodes when Mac Davis is on the show! This past summer I did a horror movie where I play a disgusting serial poisoner. I really just want to keep doing good work, and working with great actors. I have worked with Gene Hackman, Tom Hanks and Sean Penn. If I could do a part with Robert Duvall, I would die a happy man. I always just wanted to act, and I have been so lucky, so blessed, that it is humbling. I just want it to continue. So please, everybody, WATCH “Rodney” so I'll have a steady job for about 10 years!

2004 Alumni Show

I have a confession to make. With regards to this past summer's Alumni show...I was not a willing participant. I went up to New Hampshire kicking and screaming. From the start I said, “No! It's too much work and not enough time to rehearse!” It was going to be “too stressful” - I hadn't sung in two years, I was going to have to take time off from work; we had just had a baby and the thought of rehearsing and getting a sitter, etc. It all was just too complicated and I didn't feel like doing it, end of story. My wife (Diane DiCrocce) on the other hand, very much wanted to be a part of the show, so guess what...I got out-voted.

OK, so we all met and rehearsed in the city, and that was fine. I got my music on tape and started practicing. Samara Neely-Cohen (WV 2003) helped us out with baby sitting duties so we could both be at rehearsal. I was able to get time off from work, and so, still not thrilled about it, away we went up to Whitefield.

We hit the road on time, me, Di, Arthur Atkinson, Samara and baby Grace. Arthur packed some healthy snacks, frozen grapes I think. We had the junk food, so it was a good balance. The proverbial ‘stick up my butt’ started to loosen and somewhere along the 7-hour drive north - somewhere just outside of Deerfield, MA, like around the Yankee Candle shop - I think it fell out. I started to not worry about dumb-ass stuff. (It's funny its right around there you lose cell phone service too – think there's a correlation?). I actually started to look forward to the weekend. To seeing Gibbs,

Jacques, Chad, and others; having a drink at the Inn, having everyone meet Grace (our baby) and of course seeing the theatre.

So we rehearsed together and ate together and laughed together performed a complete and wonderful show together and all was right in the world – or at least right in our little part of the world for one day. The audience had a great time. We 'gave em their money's worth and put on a hell of a show. Like all great Weathervane shows, everyone stepped up to the plate and delivered “The Gibbs” (a euphemism I came up with for delivering ‘the goods’).

It was somewhere between the first act and second act that I had a Charlie Brown moment. You know that realization that Charlie Brown always has towards the end that makes all his struggling and suffering worth while. I had one of those moments. I was reminded that this was never about me. It wasn't about how my voice felt, how tired I was, the fact I had to take off time from work, if I liked my ‘number’ or not. It was about the audience. It was about the theatre. It was about doing something for somebody else. That's what this was about.

So was it stressful? Yes. Did we have to juggle the baby? Yes, but thanks to Mary Jane Chase, it went pretty smoothly. Was I completely sung out and ragged Saturday night? Yes. Unequivocally, yes. Will I go up next year to participate in the 40th Anniversary? Of course I will, but I'll take another day off from work and may even start the trip begrudgingly – at least until about exit 24 on Interstate 91, roundabout Yankee Candle.

So make your plans now to celebrate the 40th season and participate in the alumni show the weekend of August 13th & 14th. You'll be guaranteed a Charlie Brown moment of your own.

Ron Trenouth



Photos, Poster & Program Needed for Book!

As you have read in this newsletter, the WVAA is assembling an impressive commemorative book for the theatre's 40th anniversary season. While there are many wonderful photos in the theatre archives, there are some that are missing. Most urgently needed are photos from the entire seasons of 1980, 1981 and 1982. Photos are also needed from the production of Painting Churches in the 1985 season. Finally, we are missing the poster from 1979 and the programs from 1966, and 1967.

News For You

Roger Sturtevant Award

Many of you remember Roger Sturtevant from your cabaret days at the Weathervane. Roger passed away last year but we are fortunate that he left behind a legacy for future theatre entertainers. Roger's family has begun the Roger Sturtevant Musical Theatre Award for members of the Actors Equity membership candidate program. The award will go to one male and one female EMC based on a videotape audition, written recommendations and a completed application. For application information, visit the Actor's Equity website at www.actorsequity.org. The recipient will be announced in April, 2005.

Starry, Starry Night 2005

The annual Weathervane Theatre gala will be held on February 5th and promises to be a smashing success just like this past February. The gala will once again be held at the newly restored Mountain View Grand in Whitefield. Entertainment will be provided by the Weathervane Theatre Alumni Association in addition to the 18-piece Berlin Jazz Band with their repertoire of jazz and big band standards. Tickets will be very hard to come by. If you would like to join the festivities, get your tickets early by calling Lyn McIntosh at (603) 838-5008, or Pam Remick at (603) 788-2444 (evenings). There will once again be a silent auction. If you have something you would like to contribute to the auction (artwork, time-share, tickets to a Broadway show, etc.), please contact the theatre at the same phone number.

Retail Outlet Needed

The Weathervane and WVAA boards have been discussing ways to get the Weathervane Drummer Boy logo items into the hands of as many people as possible. If you have a retail outlet or have experience in mail order, please get in touch with us by calling Jeff Zadroga at 212/721-7940

Holiday Appeal

You should be receiving a holiday greeting this year from the alumni association. Now that the capital campaign for the Grange Hall is complete, it is time to continue an annual giving campaign. The alumni association does many great things for the theatre and your help is needed to fulfill the mission. Please remember the alumni association in your annual giving considerations as 2004 nears an end!

Grange Hall Painted

The Grange Hall is sporting a beautiful new coat of paint. Bob Bergin, a local Whitefield painter, has completed a much needed exterior painting. Bob stripped the old paint, repaired loose clapboards, reglazed the windows and primed each façade in

preparation for giving the whole building a new coat of paint. Bob has done an amazing job and the alumni association is proud to have such a beautiful building as part of the Weathervane Theatre.

Weathervane Theatre Board Retreat

On Saturday, November 6th, members of the WVAA board attended a joint retreat with the Weathervane Theatre board at the Rocks Estate in Bethlehem, New Hampshire. The retreat was an opportunity for both organizations to discuss the theatre, finances and the future fiscal health of the Weathervane Theatre. This past season was a rough one for the theatre. Because there is a new theatre barn to pay off and the economy has not been strong in the North Country, the theatre ended the 2004 season with a debt of \$135,000. A challenge grant has been established to help ensure the theatre manages itself out of its current debt. Specific action items were agreed that would help the theatre board achieve success in meeting the challenge grant by December 31, 2004. The retreat also addressed the need for a new business plan and sources of revenue that would make sure the theatre does not find itself in the same predicament in the future. If you would like to contribute to the challenge grant, please send your contribution to the Weathervane Theatre, P.O. Box 127, Whitefield, NH 03598. Please be sure to mention that you are an alumnus of the theatre..

2005 Alumni Weekend – Saturday & Sunday, August 13th & 14th

The 6th Annual Alumni Show is in the planning stages and your participation is welcome. There is a need for performers, directors, music directors, designers and tech crew. New York rehearsals begin in June. But don't worry if you can't rehearse in NYC. You can learn the material on your own and join the rest of the company, Weathervane style, for the one full day of rehearsal and blocking at the Chase Barn Playhouse in Whitefield on Saturday, August 13th. The Alumni Show will be presented at 2 PM on Sunday afternoon, August 14th at the new Weathervane Theatre. Traditionally the alumni show has been held the last weekend of July. However, since the weekend will include the unveiling and book signing for the 40th season commemorative book, the date is being pushed back to mid August to make sure the book includes photographs and stories from the 40th season. If you're interested in participating in any capacity, please let us know by writing to wvalum@yahoo.com.

Newsletter Editor Needed

If you are interested in becoming the editor of this newsletter, please send an e-mail to wvalum@yahoo.com. The newsletter is published in the Fall and the Spring. It is an essential aspect of the alumni association by communicating with Weathervane alumni globally.

Mark Your Calendars for NYC Cocktail Party

Plans are underway for a gathering in New York City at a location to be determined. For now you should mark your calendars for Monday, March 14th

Planned Giving

The Weathervane Theatre Alumni Association is entering its 5th year as a 501C3 organization. The association has contributed in many ways to the Weathervane theatre and the alumni of the theatre. Please consider including the alumni association in your will. For more information on planned giving or to make a memorial contribution to the alumni association, please contact Jeff Zadroga at wvalum@yahoo.com.

The Beat Goes On

Rhonda Picou, editor

EDWARD M. BARKER directed the Ray Cooney farce, Caught In The Net for the Weathervane's 2004 season. He rehearsed a staged reading of the musical Fair Liberty's Call in New York and is now at North Shore Music Theatre where he is performing in the New England premiere of Aida, directed by Stafford Arima. He will remain there for his second appearance in their 16th Anniversary production of A Christmas Carol.

From LIZ BEHNKE: "I am still practicing real estate law as a partner in the Phoenix law firm of Fennemore Craig (since 1990), and am the chair of the firm's hiring committee. Married since 1998 to Steve Brueckner, who is in the software business, and have one stepdaughter, Brandy Brueckner, who is starting her career as an event planner. I am on the Board of the Arts & Business Council of Greater Phoenix. Hope to make it back to Whitefield next summer for a stay at the Mirror Lake and some great theatre!"

DAVID BURTKA who recently played Tulsa in the revival of Gypsy, will replace Hairspray star Matthew Morrison in the upcoming world premiere of the musical The Opposite of Sex.

KIRSTI CARNAHAN who directed the Weathervane's 2002 production of Baby, spent the summer portraying Reno Sweeney in Anything Goes at Carousel Dinner Theatre in Akron, Ohio.

From WHITNEY COHEN: "I've been cast as Terry, the Fix-It Gal, for the national tour of Sesame Street Live: Out of this World, so I'm hitting the road in a week! After playing four hookers and a murderess onstage in the last few years, becoming a friendly, wholesome singing/acting/dancing human who interacts with Bert, Ernie, Big Bird, Grover, Elmo, Count von Count, and the rest will be quite a switch. I'll keep my LiveJournal updated with stories and news and observations from the road so feel free to read, comment, and marvel at the lack of capitalization at whitneybelle.livejournal.com.

From WENDY COLES: "Just a quick note to let you know Derek & I welcomed our daughter Ryan Shaye Thompson into the world Wednesday July 14th at 6:40 a.m., weighing in at 7 lbs! We are over the moon!"

HEATHER COUSENS is stage managing the Royale Theatre's production of Marsha Norman's 'night, Mother, starring Brenda Blethyn and Edie Falco and