



S.C.S. Players' Newsletter

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WELCOME TO THE SCS PLAYERS

Special points of interest:

- *Upcoming meetings*
- *Picnic*
- *Membership Information*
- *From the Director*
- *From the President*
- *Seeing Plays*
- *Photo Play*
- *Calendar of Events*

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Our 53rd Season has come to an end. The end of the season picnic will be Sunday, August 11, 2013 at 3:00pm. *We are in the process of planning for a memorable season for our 54th year to provide community theater to the public.* The St. Clair Shores Players will continue the tradition of producing a variety of plays, from serious to comedy, realistic life to fantasy, with the intention of entertaining the public and giving them a glimpse of another life for a little while.

If you have an idea for a play that you would like to see performed,

or would like to direct a play, contact script reading committee chair person, Rachel Robinson, at rachelrobinson@quickenloans.com for more information.

In case you haven't had a chance to check it out, the SCS Players have a Facebook and a Twitter account. We are continuing to gain more followers checking for updates of our activities.

There are many jobs and tasks that keep the St. Clair Shores Players community theater group running smoothly, so if you would

like to volunteer to help email us at: scsplayersorg@yahoo.com.

- Volunteer to take a place on the Board of Directors for our 2013—2014 Season. There are 4 elected positions and a number of appointed positions. All members are welcome and encouraged to get involved in the running of this group's activities. We a community theater groups so everyone's voice is more than welcome to be heard.

End of the Season Picnic

*Join us for our End of the Season Picnic on
Sunday, August 11, 2013*

At Spindler Park

On Stephens Road, Eastpointe

3:00 pm until ??

Theme of this year's picnic will be "The Beach Boys," so wear your Hawaiian shirts, beach hats & sandals. Be sure to bring lawn chairs, beach balls and a dish to share (hot dogs & hamburgers will be provided to members). Your family and friends are invited to joins us for a relaxing day at the park.

From the President Matthew Sheehy

Hello Everyone,

Well, we made it through another season and I think overall it went well. As *GLORIOUS!* Director Doug Ralston mentions in his article on page 3... success is not measured in dollars earned, but in the overall achievement. Speaking of money, however, I'd like to mention that for the first time in a number of years the SCSP are not facing two of their biggest issue: 1) a lack of money and 2) a lack of a place to perform. Sadly, we face a third issue that is even more dangerous to the longevity of this group. What is that you ask? It is membership of this group. As I see it, we have two main membership issues. First, we have had very few members join and stay involved in recent years. In 2012—2013 we had just three new members join (Katey Snover, Brian Duchnicki and Laura Shunk). I am both please and proud of these new members and what they've

achieved this season, but I'd really like to see 2 or 3 times as many of them. The group is in serious need of an injection of new members with fresh energy, new ideas and new faces. I put the question to you, the members of the SCSP, "What can we do to attract and keep new membership in the group?"

The second issue is that the group is currently suffering from a serious bout of member apathy. I know this is a bitter pill to swallow, but the evidence is all too clear. We have General Membership meetings which almost no members attend. We have social events which almost no members attend. We have auditions which very few members attend and we end up begging good, loyal and true members to take a part in a show. Has everyone lost interest? Are we not doing plays/events that interest the membership? On this same line of thought, we have Board members who've been

serving this group faithfully for years, but when their term of officer (2 years) is up, they can't be replaced because no one is willing or interested in taking on the challenge of running the group. What can we do to reverse this dangerous trend of apathy? If we don't act soon, the group will simply cease to exist due a lack of interest. The decision is in the hands of the membership... we are all stewards of the SCSP and its future depends on what we do now.

I'd really like to hear from the membership on this. Am I off track and mis-reading the signals? Are meetings and social event a desirable aspect of the groups life? How can we keep everyone involved and informed without them? Or, if I'm not off track, what can we all do to put the ship back on course that will keep the group alive and vital for another 50+ years. Please let know your thoughts. Thank you.

- Matthew Sheehy

Renew Your Membership

Now is the time to show your continued support for the SCS Players and renew your membership for the 2013 - 2014 season. Single memberships are still only \$20.00 and families are \$30.00. Make your checks payable to "SCS Players" and mail it in care of **Rachel Robinson, Membership Committee Chairperson**. You can also pay your dues at any General Membership Meeting.

Here are a few things to remember about memberships. Single members are for anyone 18 years of age and up. Family Memberships include you, your spouse (husband or wife) and your children. Family memberships **DO NOT** include grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and/or boyfriends/girlfriends. Rollover membership are only available to NEW members (those who have never belong to the group in the past) who join after

the Winter show has ended. Rollover memberships are not available to current or returning SCS Players.

[Mail your 2013 - 2014 membership dues check to:](#)

Rachel Robinson
22514 Benjamin
St. Clair Shores, MI 48081

Thank you!

General Membership Meeting

Join us for our September General Membership Meeting

At Good Shepherd United Methodist Church

31601 Harper Avenue, between 13 Mile and Masonic

Tuesday, September 10, 2013 at 7:30pm

(Date & Time Subject to Change)

FROM THE DIRECTOR, DOUG RALSTON

It Was Glorious!

Looking back at the spring production of *Glorious*, the first question that comes to mind is, "Was it a success?" If success is having sold out houses each performance and making a lot of money during the run, then this show was not successful. We need to do better getting the word out to the community that we are staging a production and excite them about coming. But if success can be measured as having a really solid, funny script and a cast of talented and skilled actors who cared about portraying the story of Florence Foster Jenkins to the utmost of their abilities, this show was a monumental success. Looking back on the cast and what they did, one has to be amazed.

One of the actors was very fluent in Spanish, but had to sing in German, while the Mexican maid could speak not a word of Spanish. The ages of the actors portraying the characters weren't even close to what the playwright called for but they carried it off brilliantly. They fought through all the familiar limitations of our performance space and did so in a way that each member of the audience had a thoroughly joyful experience. One couple from Ann Arbor made it a point to say the quality of the acting was far superior to what they had experienced in other community theater productions and put it on par with many of the professional ensembles they had seen.

Rachel Robinson played the much older Florence convincingly. The extraordinarily versatile Ms. Robinson is capable of acting a rainbow of character types and ages. I only wish that we had had her sing something at the end of the show to illustrate the beauty and strength of her actual singing voice since it is 180 degrees opposite the forlorn screeching that Florence offered as music. Mark Salewski nailed Cosme McMoon...I mean to say he really understood the character and portrayed him with grace and style. With his long experience, acting prowess, and wry sense of humor, Mark is a joy to work with.

We were very fortunate indeed when Phil Potter brought his talent to us from the Pointes. Phil played St Clair Byfield flawlessly, pushing his humor to the edge without ever letting him go over the top of believability. There isn't enough that can be said for the professionalism and persistence of Karen Ferreri Drum. Although suffering from real life pain and difficulty, Karen was at each rehearsal, working hard, bringing life to Maria, the Mexican maid. Trying to make a character real when you don't speak the language the character speaks was a unique challenge that she carried off exceedingly well.

"Glorious!" was Laura Shunk's second production with the Players. Dorothy was a "simple" person. That makes her quite complex to portray. Laura's Dorothy was an excellent foil to Florence, Cosme, and St Clair. Each evening Alice Carr became the critical and feisty Mrs. Verrinder-Gedge. Alice had the difficult task of holding up a mirror to the ludicrous nature of Florence' concerts and doing it in quite an abrasive manner. She did it very well and in fact it was the first time I have heard the "villain" receive an ovation upon exiting the stage.

A production doesn't happen without the crew that works long hours but never receives accolades commensurate with what they deserve. For our production these people made the unreal believable and ensured that each prop was in place, each scene could be seen, and that a foam piano played beautiful music. Julie Bradley was our stage manager while Sharon Kusch acted as crew chief and properties person. Everett Bradley spent long hours building and repairing set and props along with Jason Pawelczyk. Mr. Scott Smith provided the design and execution of the lighting plan while Kevin Kusch orchestrated the complex sound requirements of the show.

It's over now, all except for taking some props back to the trailer, and the only thing I can say as director is, *"It was Glorious!"*

SEEING PLAYS — BY MATTHEW SHEEHY

Hello again Everyone!

I want to take this page to talk about some of the theater I've seen in the last two months. In my opinion, if you are interested in theater (the community variety like we do, or Broadway style shows that cost millions of dollars to produce) and want to continue to grow and learn more about it, one of the best ways is to get out and see some theater. As I'm sure you are aware, theater is unique in the realm of all the arts in that it only exists while its happening before an audience. Let's think about this for a second... if you paint a picture and if its good enough, it'll still be here to enjoy hundreds or thousands of years from now. Sing a song, record it and put it out on the internet and its there for many people to enjoy over and over again for years to come and each new performance is as good as the last . A movie is shot once and everything is controlled in that process so that the final product is perfect and ready to be consumed by a mass audience. None of these things are true with theater... its only happening while its happening, in that one place and once its over its over, done and gone. Each performance is a unique one time event that once it is over is carried in the minds of the actors and the audience... no one else will ever have the same experience as that single performance. Even if you video record a play, its not the same... there is no interaction between the audience and actors... it loses its energy and it becomes a lifeless record; no longer a performance. So, with that in mind, I encourage you to get out and see some live theater this summer. Here's what I've seen since our own show **GLORIOUS!** closed on April 27th.

33 Variation at the Purple Rose Theater (Chelsea, MI):

On May11th I went to see a play titled "33 Variations" at the Purple Rose theater in Chelsea, MI. This was my first time going to the Purple Rose, although I had wanted to get out there for maybe as long as 10 years now (Yup... I'm slow... plus something else always came up and got in the way). Chelsea is about an hour and 15 minutes drive from St. Clair Shores, so it is a bit far, but oh so worth it. The lovely little theater is just off main street and just the perfect size with 168 seats set up around a thrust stage. I had a front row seat which cost less than \$40.00.

The play itself was very engaging. Here's the summary from the play bill:

In 19th century Austria, Ludwig van Beethoven works obsessively on a commission he cannot complete. In present day, musicologist Katherine Brandt struggles to solve the mystery behind her professional passion: Beethoven's oft overlooked "Diabelli Variations". As she races against time, Katherine not only discovers the true nature of Beethoven's work, but gains insight into the other mystery in her life: her daughter. Moving between the past and the present, *33 Variations* illustrates how the very passions that threaten to overwhelm us can also save us.

The acting of the play was excellent. The performances were nuanced (especially that of Michelle Mountain who played the part of the musicologist, Katherine Brandt) and each character brought their love, fear, passion and humor to the stage. I was extremely impressed. If you know me, you know that the Stratford Festival in Ontario Canada is my "Gold Standard" for stage productions and so when I say this production was at that level I hope that conveys just how good it was. Get out there and see a show at the Purple Rose... I highly recommend it!

I Hate Hamlet at the Tipping Point Theater (Northville, MI):

As some of you may recall, the SCSP was schedule to perform *I Hate Hamlet* for our Fall 2012 show, but at the very last minute we were told we could not as a "professional group" had secured the rights. Well, after a bit of research I learned that the "professional group" was the Tipping Point Theater in Northville, MI. So, with that knowledge in hand, I wanted to see how they performed the play they "swiped" from the SCSP (OK... I'm still a little bitter about this... I'll get over it... some day). So on June 22nd I made the hour drive out to Northville to check it out. The theater itself is a little bit outside of the main part of town in a converted light industrial space. The building was quite nice, seating was "in the round" and there was not stage properly speaking just a playing area marked out on the floor which was surrounded by the seats (did I mention that some of the seats were pretty much right in the playing area?). The set pieces weren't overly elaborate and I'm pretty sure we could have built the same quality set without too much effort.

The play (if you aren't familiar with it) is about a young actor about to play Hamlet for the first time and how the ghost of John Barrymore (one the greatest Hamlets of the 20th century) helps him to prepare for the role of a life time. Overall the acting was good and they hit the humor well. The two lead males (Andrew Parker as *Andrew Rally* and Andrew Huff as *John Barrymore*) put in two fine performances. The rest to the cast was also good, but they didn't have as challenging parts as the two leads.

In the end, if Stratford is my 10 (and the Purple Rose gets an 8.5 to a 9 on that scale) I'd have to give the Tipping Point a 7.5. Not as tight as I would have expected from a profession group... not bad by any stretch, but not great. Still I wouldn't mind going out there to see another show. (PS—Tickets were just \$30.00).

Hard Ball a new play reading by the Jewish Ensemble Theater (Oak Park, MI):

I was invited to hear a reading of a new script on June 26th. Not much room left in this article, but let me wrap up by saying the reading was excellent, the actors were really great and I'd definitely like to see a full production by this group if they put this much work into the reading of a new script by three unknown playwrights. *Bravo!* (By the way, tickets to the reading were \$5.00 each. I was given two free tickets as the President of the SCSP.) Also, if anyone is interested, I have a copy of the script you can read.

So to wrap up... get out there and see some great live theater this summer! It's a unique experience.



SCS Players

End of Season Picnic



Come celebrate a season of hard work and amazing talent!

When: Sunday, August 11th, 2013 3:00PM till we leave

Where: Spindler Park 19400 Stephens Dr, Eastpointe, MJ 48021

What to Bring: Yourself, a dish to pass, your own beverages, any outdoor games you would like to play, your family and friends.

What the SCSP will provide: Hot dogs and hamburgers with all the fixings, as well as the grill to cook them on. If you would like to bring something else to grill, that is perfectly okay too.

And guess what else! We are going to do a "Beach Boys" theme, so if you would like to participate, wear your Pendleton shirt, baggies... your Huarachi sandals, too! Do up your bushy bushy blonde hairdo and join us at Spindler Park on August 11th.

Can't wait to see everyone there!!!!



The
Beach Boys



Photo Play

GLORIOUS!—Spring 2013 Show Cast Photos



Cast of Characters... clockwise from left to right...
Alice Carr (*Mrs. Verrinder-Gedge*), **Phil Potter** (*St. Clair*), **Doug Ralston** (*Director*), **Karen Drum** (*Maria*), **Mark Sulweski** (*Cosme McMoon*), **Laura Shunk** (*Dorothy*), **Rachel Robinson** (*Florence Poster Jenkins*).

Congratulations to this very fine cast!

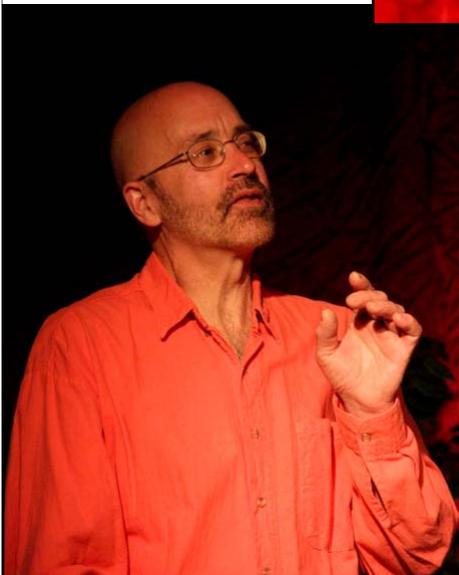
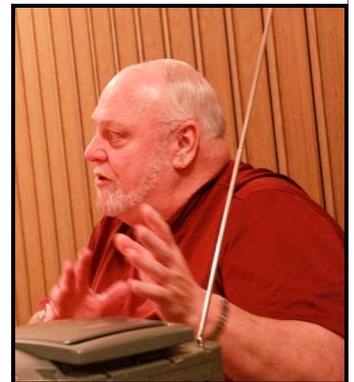
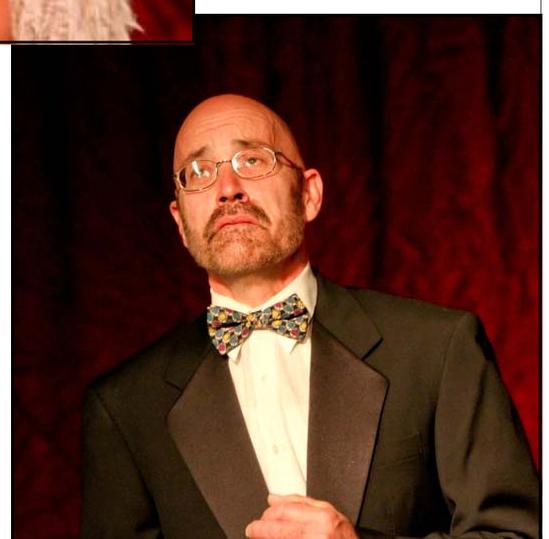
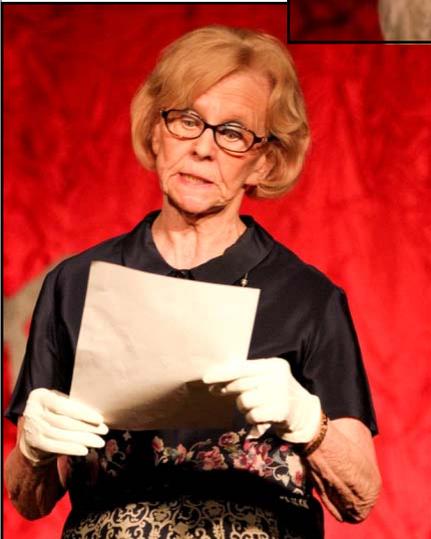
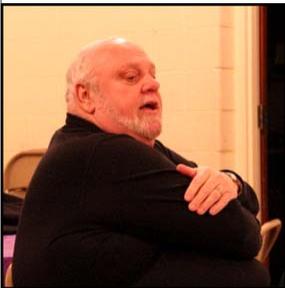
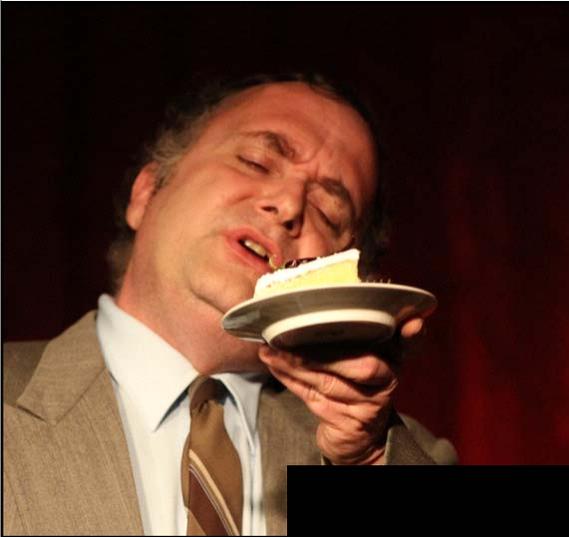




Photo Play

GLORIOUS!—Spring 2013 Show



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The St. Clair Shores Players

*A Celebration of Community Theater
Since 1959*

WWW.SCSPLAYERS.ORG

Mission Statement

The St. Clair Shores Players is a non-profit community theater group serving the city of St. Clair Shores and the surrounding environs. The SCS Players seek to provide a quality live theater experience to the community and also to provide an outlet for local talent in the production of these plays.

Membership to this group is open to anyone interested in furthering the purpose of the group (you do not need to be a citizen of the city of St. Clair Shores).

The SCS Players have, since the group formed in 1959, always held open casting calls for its productions. If you've got talent and the desire to be in a play or helping in some other capacity we are interested in having you as a member of our group.

Upcoming Events—MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- 07/30/13 Board of Directors Meeting - Good Shepherd United Methodist Church 7:30 - 9:00 pm
- 08/11/13 End of Season Picnic Spindler Park 3:00 pm - ????????
- 09/05/2013 Board of Directors Meeting - Good Shepherd United Methodist Church 7:30 - 9:00 pm
- 09/10/2013 General Membership Meeting - Good Shepherd United Methodist Church 7:30 - 9:00 pm

