



St. Clair Shores Players

# S.C.S. Players' Newsletter

50 Years of Theater

VOLUME 50, ISSUE 9

MAY 2, 2010

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: LINDA NEUWIRTH

## 50th Anniversary

### Special points of interest:

- *History of the St. Clair Shores Players*
- *Membership*
- *Upcoming Events*
- *Memories from the Past*
- *President's Note*
- *June's Social Event*
- *From the Director's Chair*

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*As each year goes by and new members arrive, it becomes imperative that some record be made of what your organization has gone through so that you may have a better understanding of how we arrived at this point.*

- Les Wilson

**The History of the St. Clair Shores Players** as told by Les Wilson.

### On The Road (con't)

We were forced once more into finding another garage and move everything over to it. At this point we decided to appeal to the city council for some help. The only thing that they could find available was an old building that sat behind the Blossom Heath facilities. It had originally been an ice house for the one time road

house. It was a large building as far as ice houses go. Maybe 20 X 30 feet. But, it was also decrepit with many shingles missing on the roof. It didn't even have secured doors. With nothing else available and the fact that there would be no charge, we moved into it. We bought large sheets of plastic visqueen to cover everything. This kept not only the rain off, but also the bird droppings. The place was a haven for most of the roosting birds in the neighborhood.

Still, these early years were great. The membership was vibrant. There were many times when we would run out of chairs at our meetings and had to bring some from other rooms. The meeting didn't really close with the sound of the gravel, but would continue

at Pat O'Briens Tavern after — sometimes into the wee hours.

### Many Moves

After thirteen years at the Chipewa location it was decided the time had come to find a more modern location for presenting our shows. We then moved to the new South Lake auditorium on Nine Mile Road near Mack Avenue. It was a beautiful establishment that would hold over 720 people and had a very large stage.

Now we were presented with new problems right from the start. To begin with, we had always been lucky if we had audiences of about one hundred people. In this huge auditorium it always appeared as though there was hardly anybody there.

We were not allowed to operate the lighting system, but had to hire the audio visual instructor at time

## Upcoming Events

### GENERAL

WHEN: MAY 4TH

### MEMBERSHIP

WHERE: Jefferson Middle School

### MEETING!

11 Mile and Little Mack

TIME: 7:30 - 8:30 pm

## MEMORIES FROM THE PAST

I have always been kind of a crazy person and had thought that I missed my calling as an actress! Then one day I saw an ad in the St. Clair Shores Sentinel to audition for the St. Clair Shores Players. I called the number instead of going to the audition — cold feet already. I believe that was in 2006. Well I went to the audition and ended up joining the St. Clair Shores Players and being designated as a “prop”

person for the next play, **Blythe Spirit!** What the heck is a “prop” person? Well, a very wonderful person, Linda Neuwirth, helped me understand and told me all the things I needed to do!! That was the beginning of a great relationship with the St. Clair Shores Players!! I have been on stage in one play (**Play It Again, Sam**), a very short part, and had a blast. I’m not sure that having a part in a play is my

cup of tea, but I thoroughly enjoy being part of all the background stuff.

I am now the Treasurer and enjoy that too!! I love all the people, each one has their special talent! That’s what makes this small group so special! I plan on sticking around!!

— Sharon Kusch

## Membership

**MEMBERSHIP DUES  
FOR THE 2009 -  
2010 SEASON  
SHOULD BE PAID IN  
FULL BY THE  
SEPTEMBER  
GENERAL  
MEMBERSHIP  
MEETING**

your check payable to “**SCS Players**” and mail it to Matthew Sheehy our

Membership Committee Chairman (see address at the end of this article.)

Here are a few things to remember about memberships:

Single memberships 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.

Now is the time to show your continued support for the SCS Players and renew your membership for the 2009—2010 season. Single memberships are only \$20.00 and families are \$30.00. Make

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Mail your 2009 - 2010 Membership dues check to:

**Matthew Sheehy  
22521 Doremus  
St. Clair Shores, MI 48080**



## JUNE'S SOCIAL EVENT

**END  
OF  
SEASON  
PICNIC!**

**WHERE: SPINDLER PARK  
Stephens Road  
Eastpointe**

**WHEN: JUNE 13, 2010**

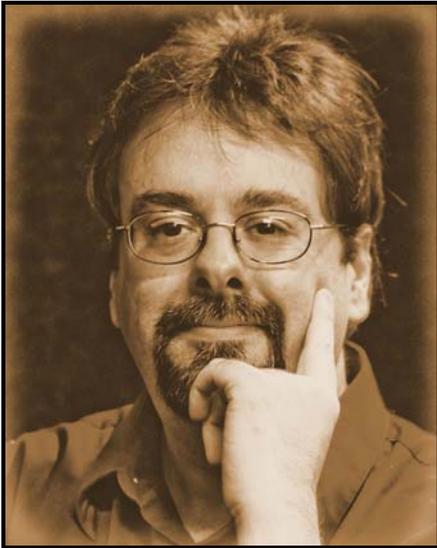
**TIME: 3:00 pm - ??**

**Everyone is welcome to come!**

**Bring your lawn chairs, your own meat dish and drinks, and a dish to share. Hope to see everyone there!**

## A Few Words from the President

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Hi Everyone,

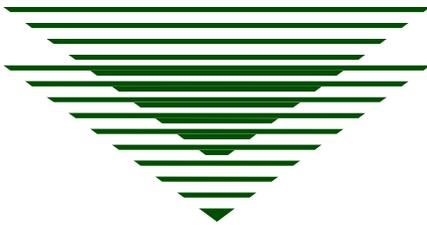
I was overjoyed to see so many people in the audience for our production of ***Guilty Conscience*** these past two weekends. It is wonderful to perform and hear the audience response. Thank you to those members who sold advance tickets for the play.

Just a reminder that our next General Membership Meeting is Tuesday, May 4th at Jefferson Middle School, 7:30 pm. I hope to see everyone there as we have a lot to discuss. See you there,

Scott Smith, President

Visit our website:

<http://www.scsplayers.org>




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## History of the St. Clair Shores Players (con't)

And a half to do the work. We also had to hire the custodian at time and a half also whenever we were using the stage. All this above and beyond the rental of the facilities. To make matters worse, the school needed the use of the stage during the week. So, after the first Saturday performance we would have to dismantle the set and store it backstage. Then we would be required to return early the next Friday and re-assemble it. When the show was over, the scenery had to be completely removed the following Monday. We were at the school in the middle of the 1970's. This was the time when most of all the school's millage proposals were voted down. Whenever this happened, the South Lake Board of Education would raise the rent on us. I went to a Board meeting and appealed to them to give us a break, because they were pricing us right out of the market. Their reply was: "We have been subsidizing groups like yours for years and can no longer do so."

In 1979, the Italian Cultural Center was located in an old

Church with four classrooms attached. The building was near Frazho Road and backed up to the Ford Expressway. We approached them to see if we would be able to use their facilities. They were delighted to have us and at a rate much cheaper than the cost a South Lake. What's more, they included an empty classroom in the rear that we could use for storage. This was indeed a God send!

The place, of course, had no stage. Just a small alter area at one end. We eventually built some 4' x 8' platforms with folding legs which were bolted together to make a presentable stage. When the show was over they could be folded up and stored along with the flats. Over five years at this location was some of our most enjoyable years. The only setback that I can recall was when we found that someone had broken into our storage room and taken all of our lights, including a large follow spot. We were sure it was done by the C.E.R.T. kids that worked at

## From The Director's Chair by Matthew Sheehy



### WE DID IT!

Yes, sir we got ***Guilty Conscience*** up on stage and in front of an audience. *Whew!* I

kept it to myself, but there were many times over the past few years that I really doubted this would ever happen. I'm glad that this feeling was proved wrong.

I am very **PROUD** of what we achieved. Over the past three weeks (April 5th thru April 25th) we accomplished a laundry list of tasks.

- April 5th through the 8th we rehearsed the entire play through and I was very pleased with what I saw.
- April 10th we moved all the set pieces from my house over to the Eastpointe Community Center and put up the set... all in less than 4 hours.
- April 12th & 13th we had TECH rehearsals and those went very

well overall (even when we got kick out before we finished on 04/12). A few issues, but really very little that was worrisome.

- April 14th was a very solid Dress rehearsal (see PHOTO PLAY for pictures).
- April 16th Opening night! Solid performance and GREAT audience (my favorite of the whole run).
- April 17th another great performance and a large audience.
- April 21st line rehearsal at Jenny Miller's house... what can I say... final line rehearsal is always FUN!
- April 23rd my least favorite performance. Many small mistakes from both the cast and crew and a TOTALLY DEAD audience. Thankfully it was the smallest crowd of the run.
- April 24th very very solid performance. I saw stuff going on that

just made me say, "YES!"

- April 24th was also set tear down. Tear down was smooth (I believe we had the entire structure down in about 20 minutes), but the move was a mess thanks to a pretty heavy rain. Thanks to everyone who helped!
- April 25th set put away a the trailer. Only four people came out for this event. (Thank you Pat, Shawn, Scott and Matt!) Thank fully these four dedicated souls work well together... they were able to replace all of the set pieces in approximately 23 minutes.

So that's it. Over. Done. The end of a five year odyssey for me. A three year journey for the SCS Player and a two year rehearsal schedule for the cast and most of the crew (did I mention that only ONE crew member did not return after our two year break? That's truly amazing!).

***Thanks again to my terrific cast and my fantastic crew!***

## History of the St. Clair Shores Players (continued)

center. There was, however, no way to prove it. Fortunately, our insurance covered the cost of the replacements.

In 1984, the Cultural Center itself felt that they needed more room. They then bought the abandoned Hickory Jr. High School in the city of Warren. It was located near 12 Mile Road and Hoover somewhat behind the St. John Macomb Hospital. They were able to purchase this beautiful fifteen year old facility for about one million six hundred thousand. A mere pittance compared to the original cost. When they moved, they asked us to join them. Since there was no affordable place in the Shores available and especially places with necessary storage area, we agreed. The new building had a

small, but adequate size stage. More importantly, across the hall from the stage was what originally had been the wood working shop. Next to it was what had been the metal shop. We were allowed to use these rooms for storage and construction. Between the two rooms was another small connecting room we could use to lock up our lights and other valuables.

Since the stage was only ten feet high, it became necessary to alter all of our flats, which were twelve feet. While we were at it we decided to go along with Pat Sheehy's suggestion of letting him construct them with 1/4 inch plywood. This was a radical change from the old muslin covered flats. They were then put together with dry-

wall screws instead of being laced together by rope. When the show was over, it was very simple to back the screws out then store the flats conveniently on top of each other. What's more, the flats proved to be more solid and didn't move or flap when the doors were slammed. They were also much easier to paint. Finally, we found that acoustically, the sound was propelled better toward the audience.

# PHOTO PLAY

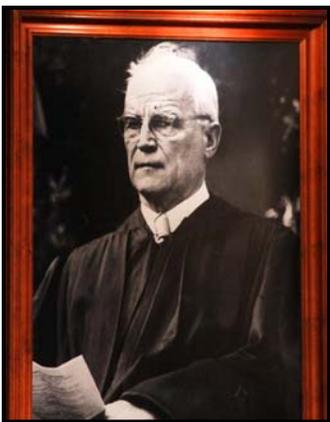
## Guilty Conscience—Last Regular Rehearsal



For more photos go to [www.scsplayers.org](http://www.scsplayers.org) and click of the photo gallery link!

# PHOTO PLAY

## Guilty Conscience—Dress Rehearsal



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## Newsletter Editor: Linda Neuwirth

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### The St. Clair Shores Players

*A Celebration of Community  
 Theater Since 1959*

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WWW.SCSPLAYERS.ORG

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### 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 would like to try out for a play, or work behind the scenes assisting with props, set design and construction, costumes, etc. we would be pleased to have you as a member of our group.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

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- 05/04/10 General Membership Meeting - Jefferson Middle School - 7:30 pm
- 05/11/10 Board of Director's Meeting - 7:30 pm
- 06/01/10 General Membership Meeting - Jefferson Middle School - 7:30 pm
- 06/08/10 Board of Director's Meeting Randa's House - 7:30 pm
- 06/13/10 End of Season Picnic - Spindler Park, Eastpointe 3:00 pm - ??