

Killing Time

I know that continuing to think about something does not make it approach faster, but if I've said it once, I've said it a zillion times! I HATE WAITING! I think the audition went fine... better than fine since I did get to read the script twice. There were only three of us at the audition (enough for a cast but there was another round today and one tomorrow... UGH!) After the very quick table read-through audition, I did get to sit in a rehearsal for [Curious Savage](#) which goes up next weekend. Break a leg [Mare](#), Trav, and the rest of the cast! I was pleased to see Mr. Potter's secretary on stage again with a meatier role. I will be in the audience either a week from tonight or next Sunday... depending upon when we get back from the cathedral on Saturday.

Last night's evening wrapped with a long overdue game night. Overdue because I was sick for the last one. And I got to assist in moving a television... not a huge undertaking but big enough. C and I got both the tv and stand back in their proper spot and a picture with sound came on so...

Now, I think I will read a bit of *The Goblet of Fire* before [Taylhis](#) catches up with me. I forgot to ask how many pages "plowing through it" means. ☐ Of course, with any luck, she will catch up with me before I get to *Order of the Phoenix*.

Better Unheard?

Since I was unable to deliver it vocally, I will post it for posterity.

I would like to first thank everyone in the three shows I was

in for making me feel so welcome this past year. I want to thank all my directors; Virlyn, Beth, and Travis. I want to thank everyone sitting at my table:

- my parents for putting up with me which is not always easy
 - my brother for recommending me to Virlyn for *St. Louis*
 - Megan and Carol for their unfailing support
 - Lisa for telling me to go “where my talent is appreciated”
 - and my wingman, Chris, who is always there behind me in EVERYTHING and who, if you did not already know, has created a whole new website for the Village Players.
- THANKS PAL!

I also want to thank everyone I have had the pleasure to work with on and off the stage over the past year. Working with such a fantastic group of people has made the past year Wonderful. I want to especially thank Greg, Dawn, Mary, and Travis who have all been there since last January.

OK... so maybe it is a good thing I was not expected to give a speech. I would surely have been given the music cue to wrap it up long before I was ready.

Some Fun To End A Rather Dismal Week

Tonight was the annual banquet/awards for the Village Players.

Someone once thought that the awards were known as the Hickies. Personally, I would change the name right away (“I got a Hickie...where’s yours?”). Presently, they are known as the Villies. I must say that I believe my table of family of 8

thoroughly enjoyed the entire event. It was very relaxed, informal, and just plain fun. Kudos to Mary and her helpers. Poor thing was frantic because of little things, but it came off nicely.

I really wanted a table large enough to sit my group of originally 7. Late last night, while not being able to sleep after the events of the past week, I really wanted my oldest brother there so I sent him a message on his facebook wall..

He was instrumental in my getting the role of Grandpa Prophater in *Meet in in St. Louis* last January. By a happy occurrence, the table was right by the food so we got to go first.

The evening began with a recap of last year's shows... 3 of which I was pleased to be a part of and the fourth show I thought was great. Then came a preview of the upcoming shows:

The Curious Savage, Miracles, The Hound of the Baskervilles, and an, as of yet, undetermined holiday show... but the ones being looked into sound GREAT. Director's Awards were also presented. I am pleased to say that Chris was recognized for his contribution to the theatre's website (and this would not be the end of the table's night).

Later, came the excitement of the award presentations. First up... Best Cameo by an Actor presented to... **ME!** for his role as Harnell Chesterton in *You Have the Right to Remain Dead*.

Later, the award for Best Supporting Male Actor presented to... **ME!** for his role as Henry F. Potter in *It's a Wonderful Life*. I swear I only voted for myself once. I don't know if it is fortunate or not but I guess we were not expected to give a speech; however, I did come prepared. I should have taken the initiative and gave it anyway (but, I will save them for my next post).

Honestly, I don't know who was prouder of my night: me or my "wingman." Chris was absolutely ecstatic. His motivation, compliments, and just plain being there are just so great.

The rest of the awards from what I can remember are

- Zuzu Bailey (Best Cameo by an Actress, *It's a Wonderful Life*)
- Katie, the maid (Best Supporting Actress, *Meet Me in St. Louis*)
- Esther Smith (Best Lead Actress, *Meet Me in St. Louis*)
- George Bailey (Best Lead Actor, *It's a Wonderful Life*)
- Travis (Best Director, *It's a Wonderful Life*)
- Mary (Best Producer, *It's a Wonderful Life*)
- Best Set (*Meet Me in St. Louis*)
- Best Costumes (*Meet Me in St. Louis*)
- Best Tech (*It's a Wonderful Life*)
- Best Show (*It's a Wonderful Life*)

Ok... next post: my speeches. A fabulous time organized by Mary and her help.



That Which You Take With You

Is only what you put into it. I don't know if it is the play, the cast, the character, the direction, but it is probably the whole lot combined into one that makes a production completely worthwhile. *It's A Wonderful Life* is so brilliant because it tells the tale of an everyman who is shown that one person can indeed make a difference to those people around him. I humbly submit that everyone involved in this production set out to and accomplished this in extraordinary fashion, Through all the hard work, goofiness, talent, and everything, each member of the cast, crew, direction team put their hearts into it and hopefully it came through in the splendid audiences we had each performance. If I made even one audience member hate my

take on the “Evil” Henry F. Potter then I did exactly what I set out to do. As Mother Bailey so frequently intoned “You’re a Mean One, Mr. Grinch!”

I don’t care what show it is, how many lines I have, or how long I am on stage, I ALWAYS find it so Darn hard to break away. Two weeks were definitely not long enough for this show. I loved all the carts, pictures (Jeff’s portrait *Chance of a Lifetime* truly captured the image of Stewart and Reed). Even the card addressed to “The Evil One” from my Traitorous Secretary was beautiful.

Now... a few tidbits from the history of the movie, itself:

- Lionel Barrymore (Mr. Potter) convinced Jimmy Stewart to accept the role of George Bailey, despite Stewart’s feeling that he was not up to it so soon after WWII)
- Mary was Donna Reed’s first starring role.
- Lionel Barrymore also played Rasputin (hmm... something to shhot for?)
- Instead of “Auld Lang Syne” the original ending was supposed to be “Ode to Joy”
- The film was voted “Most Inspirational Film of All Time” and “Most Powerful Film of All Time” by the American Film Institute.

So there we have it... the end of a Wonderful Show with a Wonderful Cast, Wonderful Crew, Wonderful Direction and Producing, and most importantly... **WONDERFUL AUDIENCE! THANK YOU ALL FOR MAKING THIS TRIP TO POTTERSVILLE SO MEMORABLE!**

I almost forgot about the donuts in the wheelchair. If you missed them they were something which “George” will take with him.

The End Of A Wonderful Show

Well.. "Once again we have saved humanity as we know it. And the good news is they are not going to prosecute." (Anyone care to take a stab at that?)

Today wrapped up one of my favorite stage roles and experiences. Although I have become almost used to a one weekend run this year, it is going to be really hard to close the two week run of this show. The cast, crew, direction, producing for this Wonderful production was top notch. I got to work with two awesome friends I have made this year and a few others who were there at the beginning back in January. So thanks especially to Travis, Mary, Greg, and Dawn. Lots of laughs along with the hard work!

This afternoons crowd was superb! Potter kept drawing laughter from the crowd thanks to a few WCCT regulars. Such great accolades... seriously did I really deserve them? "George" even mentioned that he had a rough time during our first scene together. But one of the crowd mentioned that I was spot on in every aspect. Vocalization, presence, command, total characterization.

After peeling some tape off the stage floor and helping load some flats onto the truck, I went upstairs to the costume room to help organize a bit. A picture was taken that I will let the photographer share and that is as far as I'll go with that. Then, we had leftovers from our Friday night feast.

Closing thoughts in my next post.

A New Week... A New Goon

Well... Friday night began our final weekend of performances and this was another dandy. My goon had to take over the lights and sound, so I had to hire a new man. Good help is sooo hard to find. I am happy to say that my new employee did an admirable job... except for one moment when I had to crack the whip and prod him a bit faster by ad libbing a line. All of my friends and family who came tonight loved the show and again I was booed. As long as I know that it is for a good reason, then I think the jeers are almost as good as getting cheers.

After the curtain fell on our fourth performance, Mare led another small group on the nickel tour of the Huber. Including a few people who just moved to the area from Ft. Wayne where one of them worked at the glorious Embassy Theatre (I have not been there for years).

Finally, it was time to feast at the cast party. And what a cast party... catered Italian spread: lasagna, fettucini alfredo, bread, salad, and (as is typical) more than enough desserts. Leftovers for tomorrow. We presented Trav with his director's gift of a nice copy of *Tom Sawyer* among other trinkets.

There was one minor technical glitch. Somehow, during the off time, the sign that magically changes from "You Are Now In Bedford Falls" to "Pottersville" became damaged and did not work for tonight's show.

Once again, thanks to everyone: cast, crew, director, producer, and most of all.. Wonderful audience members for another tremendous show!

Now Why Couldn't We Have Taped This?

tonight, the cast had a brush up rehearsal. Necessary when you have a two weekend run to keep it fresh in our minds so it doesn't become stale. Well... it may not have become stale, but it was far from sane! It was just a fun, goofy time something that could have definitely made the gag reel of the DVD. No sets, no curtains, bare stage, and a cast full of clowns. Mr. Potter somehow became acquainted with some tinsel while getting himself from place to place *sans* Goon. George couldn't keep a straight face while being raked over the coals. Clarence and Potter continuing their quest for world domination in the sequel... who said the angel gets his wings? What a Wonderful time! **Bring on the final weekend!** But don't let it end too soon.

A Short Intermission

WOW! This show is definitely number two on my list! The audience reaction each show gets better and better! We had 124 in the audience for a Sunday matinee which is tremendous! The boos get better and better each time! "We love to hate your Potter!"

After the curtain, we had our cast photo taken then we had to make room for another school concert tomorrow night by moving the sets and props backstage. We also had to take the steps leading from the stage into the house. Poor "Clearance"

missed the low ceiling sign and whacked himself on the lip of the stage. **OUCH!**

I also learned of next season's attraction. It starts in March with *Curious Savage*. I told Dawn (who is directing and has been involved with each of the three shows I have been in this year) that I would love to try out but it conflicts with my nephew's Confirmation... sorry, Dawn.

Just in time for Halloween, the Village Players are presenting the immortal *Hound of the Baskervilles*. Perhaps we can encourage another Holmes fan to audition for that... hint, hint. I know I am anxiously awaiting that one!

Finally, the TENTATIVE Holiday production will be *Babes in Toyland*. That would be a LOT of fun.

So... lots coming up. But first... the second week of *It's A Wonderful Life*. Still not too late to check out the final three shows. Thanks again to the fantastic cast, crew, and director and the fabulous audiences!

A Show And A Cop In A Mall

Before the curtain went up on night two of the play, I got to watch the hilarious escapades of *Paul Blart: Mall Cop*. The film finds officer wannabe and quite agile mall security man Paul Blart (Kevin James of "The King of Queens") up against a group of high-tech robbers on Black Friday. I must congratulate the writers of the piece for setting the action at the end of the busiest shopping day of the year... what a coup that would be! The bad guys take a number of hostages including the object of Paul's affection. The security officer takes it upon himself to not only defend and protect

his mall but also rescue the hostages. Several laugh out loud moments abound. I also loved the use of 80s tunes throughout, including "I Can't Hold Back" by Survivor. I also found Paul's "Detroit Rock City" on Guitar Hero very entertaining. A hilarious movie that was a much more family oriented take on *Die Hard*.

Night two *It's a Wonderful Life* was great! Dan and Carla were up from Sandusky. After the show, Dan told me that I rivaled Lionel Barrymore (who originated the role in the classic movie). Quite a compliment from someone who watches the film annually. Over 100 people were in the audience so while only filling about a third of the seats, a great turnout. For some reason, I got more boos at curtain call that night one. And several audience members told me how evil my performance was.

After intermission, there was a drawing for a free ticket to a show next year (something that was forgotten Friday night... sorry). I could have sworn that the name ShelBY Shaffer was announced. However, two things are wrong with that. One, I don't think she could win since she is part of the show. Two, she did not sign up for the draw. The winner was Shelly Shaffer (no relation).

So for a good time... check out *Paul Blart: Mall Cop* and come to one of the final four productions of *It's a Wonderful Life*. Incidentally, I did watch the last half hour of the movie after returning from the performance.

A Wonderful Opening

It really was a great premiere. Not sure how many audience members we had but on a Friday night during basketball season... Mr. Potter is definitely now high on my favorite character

list. I love doing evil!

Admin and Taylhis sat in the front row but with the lights on stage, I would have never known... not that I would try to look! Beth (another game nighter) and her sister were in the audience. The game nighter's significant other was in another show... I do not believe successful human cloning is yet possible.

Jeff brought the three little ones. After the show, they came to congratulate me. Noah had gone under after the first act. Elizabeth enjoyed it but Joshua stated that he did not have a great view... was he sitting behind a pole?

A Wonderful show a Wonderful cast, Wonderful fans (which someone is always quick to acknowledge... thanks pal! just wish my special one was still here, but know she was in spirit), and 5 more Wonderful shows to go. So glad we have two weekends. One is not nearly enough for this show... and two might not be (it's been awhile since I have gone 2).

And a shoutout to my great Goon who finally was able to wheel me on and off every time.

Kudos also to the genius behind the 7.30 curtain time. It allowed some people to stay and chat longer! Just the right time.