



Potlatch 2017 — A Four Star Event! Complete Coverage in This Issue

What's Happening with Our Guild

by Fred Berchtold, Guild President

New Members Have Been Joining Us

Bradley Blankenship – joined & attended his 1st Potlatch [his story in this issue]

Zach Duenow – has many years in marketing (boy, can we use him!)

Steve Widerman – one of our “Golden Puppeteers” moved here from N.Y.C.

Conner Asher – joined after connecting with us at World Day of Puppetry in Glenview & new on Bd.

Devin Marx - CPG Scholarship Award Recipient for 2017 [his story in this issue]

This year’s attendance of 143 was the largest ever (21 came from CPG).

(See the story by a 1st time attendee [In this issue]

A highlight for CPG was the honoring of our “Golden Puppeteers” those who have been dedicated to their profession for 50 years or more.

The Melikin Puppeteers , Mel & Laverne Biske

Fred Putz

Steve Widerman

The Trading Post

We set what was probably a record for CPC profits, with c.a. \$1,000 primarily because of the sale of about 50 puppets donated by Fred Williams. Most were marionette style rod puppets used by his deceased uncle Clarence Williams in shows & movies.

Parade Puppet Workshop

A Workshop to make Parade/giant puppets will be held at Sacred Heart of Mary Academy at 5250 N. Sheridan Road, in Chicago. It will be held on Feb. 6, 8 & 9 from 3:30-6:00.

Jill Frederickson will lead a team making a giant puppet of our CPG logo puppeteer.

Conner Asher will lead a team in making a Walking Wildcat, the girl’s mascot.

Fred Berchtold will lead a team in making a flying Falcon, the boy’s mascot.

The last two will be our gifts to the school for allowing us to use their space & working with some of their students.

World Day of Puppetry, 2018 Edition

This will be held in March, location to be announced, with Anne Newman being our featured performer presenting “Jack and the Beanstalk”.

Workshop for Librarians

Susan Fulcher is working to set up a Puppetry Workshop for librarians early in 2018.

The Glenview Puppet Theater Series

The series continues with puppet shows once a month at the Book Market in Glenview. [See reviews for October and November and Coming Attractions in this issue]

All photos in the Potlatch review, and throughout this issue, are those of Tih Penfil, Official Potlatch Photographer

*That's our photographer,
Tih Penfil, high steppin' with
Douglas.*



CPG's Annual Scholarship Award Winner



Left to right: Devin Marx; Brother, David Marx; Mother, Shayla Wheeler; and Auntie Alicia Wheeler.

Devin Marx, age 11, is a part of the Junior Puppeteers program led by Susan Fulcher and Dave Herzog, at the Matteson Area Public Library District in Matteson, Illinois. Because of Devin's dedication to learning the art of puppetry, the Chicagoland Puppetry Guild awarded him a \$250 scholarship to attend the 2017 edition of Potlatch. Devin, along with his mother, brother and auntie, had a wonderful time. Everyone was in awe of the puppets being displayed, and the various styles of puppet performances.

When Susan asked Devin what he thought of everything he said he wanted to make a marionette! One week after Potlatch, Devin's mother visited Susan at the library. She asked when the next Potlatch was going to be held because she wanted to put it on their calendar.

CPG Potlatch Class of 2017



In Review

2017 Annual Potlatch

By Fred Putz

The Great Lakes Region of the
Puppeteers of America 2017 Annual Potlatch REVIEW
Angola, IN
November 3,4 & 5 2017

Friday, November 3

At 4:00 PM, puppeteers from all over the Midwest and beyond started arriving at the Potawatomi Inn near Angola Indiana. A whirlwind of activities began: while the puppet exhibit was being set up, Bob Brown set up his stage and Joe Emory set up his extensive lighting and audio equipment. We all gathered in the dining room for dinner and at 8:00 PM in the banquet room we settled down for the first of six wonderful puppet shows.

The History of the Great Lakes Region Potlatch

by Nancy Henk

"In 1981, three Detroit puppeteers headed down I-69 on their way to a gig in Indianapolis, and decided to stop at the Potawatomi Inn for lunch.

Charmed by the Inn's woodland setting and rustic interior, Nancy Henk, Dick Waskin and Bill Wilson began to talk about the possibilities of having a regional festival there. They broached the idea to the Great Lakes Regional Director, Kathy Piper, and she agreed — except it wouldn't be a regular festival — but an informal get-together of people who love puppets. There would be shows, workshops and social activities, but nobody would be paid for doing anything — and so Potlatch was born!"

This year a record 143 puppeteers from all over the Great Lakes Region and beyond gathered for the 36th annual Great Lakes Region of The Puppeteers of America at the Potawatomi Inn near Angola, Indiana. Unlike the "normal" puppetry festival, all performers and workshop leaders volunteer their services and with a low registration fee it makes the Potlatch an event that most people can afford. To obtain a good idea of what a Great Lakes Potlatch is really like, on line visit Great Lakes Potlatch 2017 Final.

I thought that, after our using the noun, "potlatch" for 36 years it be a good idea to find its definition. Wikipedia states; "(among North American Indian peoples of the northwest coast) an opulent ceremonial feast at which possessions are given away or destroyed to display wealth or enhance prestige."

A problem with facilities is that height of the stage does not allow all of the audience a perfect view of the solo marionettes which are manipulated at floor Level.

Friday Evening's Performances — 8:00 - 8:40 PM

We were greeted by Christine Thompson, the current President of the Great Lakes Region. The first performance was:

*Christine Thompson, at left,
with Dave Herzog.*

"The Snow Show"
by Bob Brown Puppets



Brown Puppets performs to over 300,000 children a year". During the performance Bob talks to his puppets, giving advice and encouraging them when they seemingly are unable to perform a trick. Most of Bob's puppets were costumed in white with and green trimmings. Since my space is limited, I can only review a few of my favorite acts.



Above left: Bob Brown with some cast members.

Above: Bob and his skier puppet.

The Setting

In keeping with the show's title, the stage was decorated with ice-blue draperies topped with a large white snow drift. The stage floor was also draped in blue with snow trimmings. On the stage was a miniature ski run from which hung icicles. A little white rabbit wearing a red sweater and carrying ski poles entered and proceeded with some trouble, to don a pair of skis. With the skis in place he tried to walk up the run, but, as it is with most of us beginner skiers, he had trouble getting traction. Finally, with a little encouragement and help from Bob he reached the top of the run and proceeded to ski up and down the run with no trouble at all.

Bob set up a teeter board, a box and a fence. A cute penguin

wearing a red hat entered and was instructed to balance himself on the board. His next challenge was to jump over the fence. After a couple of failures he managed to complete that assignment. His final job was to jump into the box. Jumping into the box was not easy, especially with such short legs. But, jump he did and managed to land squarely in the box.

It has been a long time since I have seen a “transformation puppet” which is a figure that appears to be one character and then when “triggered” turns into another. A female puppet wearing a green dress and a red cape entered and proceeded to move gracefully about the stage. Then, Bob flipped the puppet over and in place of the puppet was a gift box from which came a snow man. In the words of Albrecht Roser’s “Grandmother”, “My, What a surprise!”

The next act was a snowman with a carrot nose, a green, scarf and mounted ice skates. With sure and skilled movements the snowman performed several skating tricks until he came too close to the edge and nearly fell off the stage. However, with Bob’s help he regained his composure and he finished the act.

Ending the “Snow Show” was a little white dog with long ears who jumped onto a large white ball and did an amazing hand stand. A large box was placed on the stage and out of the box came a puppet with a banner saying “The End”. When compared with other variety puppeteers, I find Bob’s manipulation technique to be a bit rough. As an example, his characters usually walk on to the stage and then, often they are abruptly dragged or “flown” off stage, destroying the illusion of life. Nevertheless, the audience was delighted with this fun filled performance and awarded Bob with a standing ovation.



Bob Brown's dog with ball.

Accolades



“50 Years Plus” puppeteers — from left: Fred Putz, Peggy Melchior-Pearson, Steve Widerman, Nancy Henks, Bob Brown, Mel Biske, LaVerne Biske, David Syrotiak, and Jim Rose.

This year of 2017 is an important milestone because it marks the 50th year that several of our members have been involved with the Art of Puppetry. Special recognition was given to Dave



PofA 80th Anniversary cake.

Syrotiak and Mel and LaVerne Biske for this achievement. All of the other puppeteers who had been involved with puppetry for 50

or more years were asked to stand and we were amazed at how many there were. It was also mentioned that in the year of 2017 the Puppeteers of America had reached its 80th year milestone. Thank you, Paul Mcpharlin. In



celebration of these historic events, Linda Mason and Christine Thompson brought in two huge cakes which we all enjoyed.

Thus ended the first day and most of the puppeteers headed for their rooms while others caught up with old friends.



50th Anniversary cakes for Syrodiaks (above left), and Melikins (above).

The Exhibit

In the past years we have had very nice exhibits. However, this exhibit of 2017 was exceptional. It included all types of puppets. Some of the old puppets had been created by deceased masters and others had been recently finished by the younger generations.



Exhibit area



Memory Table

An outstanding part of the exhibit was the photographic exhibit mounted by Thi Penfil, the official Potlatch Photographer. Hundreds of photographs in albums were available for viewing and there were many pictures that had been mounted and framed all documenting Potlatch's 36 years of continual success.

Thank you, Cincinnati Guild.

Saturday, November 4

Workshops

As you will note, there were many different types of wonderful workshops. The only problem was that one could choose only one from each session.

First Workshop Session 9:30-10:30 AM

Susan Fulcher and David Herzog, "Starting A Puppet Club In Your Library"

David Syrotiak, "Marionette Manipulation"



Dave Herzog and Susan Fulcher workshop

Peggy Melchoir Pierson, "A Puppet Stage For All Types Of Puppets"
Langston Hatch, "Puppet Construction"

Second Workshop Session 10:45-11:45 AM

Sharon Peck, "Tabletop Puppetry For Children's Literature"

Janice McDonald, "Making A Moving Mouth Foam Hand Puppet"

Steven Widerman, "3D TV Puppets"

Darlene Fedele Thompson, "Playwriting For Puppets"



David Syrotiak



Widerman workshop

The Trading Post 1:00-2:15 PM

The 2017 Trading Post was amazing! Four or five tables were required to hold the huge number of significant items brought by Jim Rose from the Rose Family collection. It would be impossible to list all the items included. All types of puppets and puppet parts, most of which had been hand carved were available, as well as many collector items such as two small Rolando marionettes in full armor. The



Marc Dunworth at the Tradin' Post.



More Tradin' Post photos.

other tables were stacked with costume materials, books, old P of A journals. You name it and it was there.

The Afternoon Performances 2:30-3:40 PM

"The Three Little Pigs"

By Connor Asher assisted by Jill Frederickson.

The Setting

Connor's stage was draped with a dark blue shiny material and the playboard was covered with a bright red material. The backdrop/scrim was decorated with a non-objective painting that resembled pink and violet clouds.



Jill and Connor with show puppets.

The Play

The opening was a different way

to begin the Pigs' story. The Wolf was the first character to enter. He asked the audience what he could do so that the Pigs would not recognize him. There were several answers. One solution, among many others, was to disguise himself as a Pig. So, he put on



*Above: The Three Little Pigs.
Left: The "Pig" Bad Wolf.*

Pigs which did not help his quest in the least bit. In another scene the Wolf destroyed his disguise by chasing the Pigs with a meat cleaver. Well, so much for the plans of "Mice and Men and Wolves too". The Pigs went about building their houses which were flats painted to resemble straw and sticks which the wolf was able to blow down. However, he did not get to eat the first two pigs because they retreated to the third Pig's brick house, which withstood the Wolf's blast. The Pigs (of course) won out in the end. This was a very refreshing and clever variation of an old and sometimes tired script.

"Jack and The Bean Stalk"

by Ann Newman

Ann is one of those brave individuals who dares to accept the challenge of performing a full length show alone. Her pungent sense of humor is vividly displayed in her well-designed scripts.

The Setting

A red barn with a large window in the door stood on stage right. *Ann Newman with Jack and the Golden Goose.*



The Play

Jack, with a full head of blond hair and wearing a green tunic, entered and his brown and white cow stuck her head out thought the barn door window. The cow exited and Jack's mother entered to tell Jack that he must sell the cow.

Closely following the original story, Jack, on his way to sell the cow met a man with a wheelbarrow full of packages of "magic beans". The man convinced Jack that the beans were a fair trade for the cow. However, the smart cow ran away.

Jack with the Salesman.

"Jack and the Bean Stalk" always presents a problem for



the puppeteer – how to simulate a bean stalk that grows up and reaches above the clouds. (That is the reason that I never tried to produce "Jack and the Bean Stalk".)



Jack's mother and the Giant.

Ann's bean stalk grew up and reached the top of the stage. Unfortunately, during this scene the stage scrim was too short and Ann was visible, which destroyed the illusion.

Jack managed to climb up the stalk where he met the animated Magic Harp with a basket full of laundry and Mrs. Giant. Jack found the bag of gold in the laundry basket along with the Giant's smelly socks. The Giant discovered Jack and chased him back to earth. Jack cut the stalk down. What about the Giant? He reappeared above the stage with the bag of gold that Jack had forgotten. What a nice guy! But now the Giant could not go home because the bean stalk was down. What will happen to the Giant? Perhaps the Harp and Ann know.

The Evening Performances 7:00-8:45

"Shoes and Ships and Sealing Wax"
by the Melikin Puppets

The Setting

The Melikin Puppet's variations on a story are delightfully funny. Shoes and "Ships and Sealing Wax" is a prime example. To begin the show, Mel finds a sack in front of the stage. He questions the audience to see if anyone lost it. Getting no results he excuses himself to take the sack backstage, enter the Dream Peddler looking for his sack. Mel returns, meets the Dream Peddler and carries on a brief conversation about being careful not to misplace important things and returns back stage.



Darlene and the Dream Peddler.
(Melikin Puppet File photo).

The Dream Peddler explains to the audience that his sack contains his dreams in the form of objects that remind him of a poem. He samples one for the audience and produces a pail. He recites "Jack and Jill". Enter Darlene, a little girl who is interested in poetry but rejects the peddlers offering of simple poems. He removes a musical pipe, sets it down on stage and introduces the story poem of "The Pied Piper of Hamlin".

The first short scene features two busybody women, Mrs. Dill Pickle and Mrs. Bratwurst. Suddenly a rat peeks out of Mrs. Dill Pickle's shopping basket and causes quite a stir. The second short scene shifts to the local guesthouse where two men are discussing the rat problem. Suddenly a rat appears from one of the steins on the table, again causing quite a stir.



Pied Piper of Hamlin. Melikin Puppet File photo.

stage, illuminated in a single spot, the Pied Piper appears above the play area. As the Piper plays a seamlessly parade of rats appear and jump into the river. One rat evades the river and ends up on top of the scrim but only falls under the musical spell and is chased away by the Piper.

The final scene is back at the town hall where the Piper returns for his payment. The Mayor reneges on the deal. The disgruntled Piper leaves, telling the Mayor he would soon regret his folly.

Our attention is focused at the window where the Mayor and his Aide hear and watch the Piper playing as the children follow him out of town. As the stage lights dim to black, the Dream Peddler appears above the play area to wrap up the story. He concludes by saying, “A lesson was learned by the whole town that day, live up to you bargain and make a good your pay, instead of complaining and being a griper, tis always best to pay the Piper.

The Dream Peddler returns to the main portion of the stage. Enter Darlene suggesting she would like to learn how to write a poem. In searching the ranks of famous poets they decide on Edgar Allan Poe. Each time his name is mentioned lightning flashes and thunder roars. That scares the pants off the Dream Peddler (literally) as he leaves the stage. Mr. Poe enters looking very scholarly and agrees to teach Darlene how to write a poem. They choose, The Raven. Fidrick, Darlene’s pet, a small yellow bird that became known to the audience prior to the show, by playing peek-a-boo, decides he wants to play the part of the Raven. Poe suggests he does not fit the part and instructs him to see what else he could find.

Poe puts Darlene to work to set the proper scene. First a desk, and put a candle on it, then a door for someone to tap on, and a window, over there.

The following scene takes place in the town hall where the Mayor is discussing the rat problem with his Aide, and at this point there is a knock on the door and the Piper is admitted. Closely following the original story line of the poem, a deal is struck and the Mayor promises to pay the Piper when the rats are gone. The following scene is on the banks of the River Wesser.

Taking advantage of the arena

Poe asks if anyone has found someone to play the part of the Raven. Fidrick pops up from below and sits on the desk. He is donned in a Zorro costume complete with hat, cape and mask. He gets the part. He has one line to learn, “never more!” He leaves the stage to rehearse. As Poe begins writing he is constantly interrupted by Fidrick going in, whispering nonsensical requests, and out, slamming the door. Poe puts an end to the nonsense and decides to demonstrate how to properly knock on the door on cue. He goes outside, tries the door but it is stuck and he can’t get back in. In frustration he is banging on the door, shouting “Fidrick, when will you open this door?!” That is when Fidrick delivers his one line.

“Casey at The Bat”

The final poem centered on “Casey at the Bat”. To play the part of Casey, Woofer, the white furry dog (a Muppet-like moveable mouth puppet from the Melikin’s “The Night before Christmas” program) was chosen. A look-alike Howard Cosell mouth puppet reported the action on the field with a voice sounding like Howard himself. With bat in hand, Woofer enacted the whole tragedy from Casey’s confident walk to the plate, his pounding the plate viciously with his bat through strikes 1 and 2 and finally on strike 3, a mighty swing and the lights went dark. He returned to the stage under a single blue spot, head turned down in disappointment. As Howard delivered his last line, the stage lights flashed on, Woofer removed his hat and threw it up and back over the stage and took his well deserved round of applause.

After such an introduction, who could resist learning more about poetry? Being convinced that poetry was not so bad, and even fun, Darleen Dimples recited the poem she wrote for the Dream Peddler titled, “Thank You”, ending the show.

“Puppets Kapow” by the Frisch Marionettes

The Setting

Talk about multipurpose stages, the Frisch stage is unique in that it encompasses a marionette proscenium arch stage, and shadow stage. Above the marionette stage is a hand puppet stage, the back drop/scrim of which was painted with a pastoral scene. The marionette stage was decorated with what might be considered a starburst of red and yellow strips which radiate out from the proscenium arch causing one to focus on the stage and not the surroundings. There were no wings from which the puppets entered and exited. Therefore, the puppeteer had to leave the stage to return a puppet and pick up another puppet. As it had been mentioned earlier, the solo marionettes were manipulated at foot level allowing only the front row to have a good view. Because I was sitting in the middle my view was limited. In the first act, a Court Jester marionette entered and sprinkled seeds around the stage. In the hand puppet stage a sunflower grew up and a hand puppet entered and kissed the flower which grew larger and larger with each kiss. A basket was



*Darlene, Fidrick and Edgar Allan Poe.
Melikin Puppet File photo.*



placed on the marionette stage and a robust snake charmer entered and began to play his pipe and dance with very realistic movements. I was not able to see the snake exit the basket or it's movements. Then, suddenly, the Charmer was flying through the air and I realized that he was riding on a magic carpet.



The third act consisted of three colorful Albrecht Roser style scarf puppets on a tandem bar. Their dancing movements were very graceful. The fourth act took place on the hand puppet stage. To the soothing music of Greg's "Morning Mood" a large egg appeared on the playboard and it opened to reveal a cute



yellow chick. Abruptly, the music stopped and the sound of jack hammers, sirens and automobile horns penetrated the reverie. This infringement upset the chick, as it did the audience and the chick crawled back into his egg, something I am sure that we all have wished that we could do. The fourth act took place on the shadow stage. The setting was a woodland pond. A gosling appeared followed by his mother. He was hesitant about going into the water. They crossed the pond and went up the opposite bank where she left the gosling. Darkness fell and when the lights came back up the gosling had become a graceful swan.



Circus music introduced the next act which was a marionette acrobat. Because of the aforementioned staging problem, I was only able to see him walk on his hands. But, from the reaction of the audience the manipulation of this puppet must have been astounding.



Next was another marionette, which was a stout juggler who manipulated a golden ball. With great ease he balanced the ball on his nose, and toes. The final act was a break-away skeleton who's antics pleased the audience. I was able to see him as he turned his back on the audience and swiveled his hips. Beautifully constructed puppets and impeccable manipulation only begins to describe Frisches' puppets.

Potpourri 9:00-11:00 PM
by Staff Writer



The Potpourri Crew — Justin Haveman, Smith Henderson, Joe Emory and Kevin Kammeraad.

Always an event to look forward to each year. The 2017 edition of organizing the mayhem was the responsibility of three guilds, Indiana, Central Illinois and Western Michigan. The signup sheet indicated about twenty anxious puppeteer wantabees. Through the years regular Potlatch attendees have witnessed and enjoyed the early trials and tribulations of up and coming puppeteers getting their first opportunity as a performer, watching and encouraging others develop and expand their talents through the years. Some just do it just to have some fun and entertain their peers. Staging and producing Potpourri is a real challenge. The results were admirable with sound and lighting handled by Joe Emory, stage hands Justin Haveman and Kevin Kammeraad, setting the stage for each performer and Smith Henderson working as M.C.



Allynn Gooen, The Balloon Man.

Conner

Asher and David Quesal are always an entertaining duo with their comical vignettes. Then, certainly not a puppet act, but the comical story of a house that became too crowded, using a house made of balloons with audience volunteers and the rapid fire delivery by Allynn Gooen had everyone roaring with laughter.

There was a clever presentation by a newcomer to Potlatch. Barbara Leigh. She is the Artistic/Producing Director of the Milwaukee Public Theatre in Wisconsin. She presented her piece while working in a wheel chair with a small table set in front of her with three canes. She brought each cane to life to animate her

story about the people who live with them and provide assistance to. It was a cleverly delightful!!

A classic piece in Potpourri history is the story of “Petey”, a poor little snake. The original version, created by Gus and Carolyn Schmidt, was revived using the original recording and performed by Linda Mason and Jill Landsman. Nancy Henk said she wants them to do it live next year.

Some of the simplest routines maintain their charm. Potlatch regulars felt rewarded, while those watching for the first time were enlightened by past inventive puppeteers.



Phillip Huber Femme Fatale (from the Huber Marionette website).

States.

Sunday, November 5

The Punch Brunch 10:00-11:00 AM



we retreated to the puppet stage for the final performance:

“Punch and Judy” by Nancy Sander

Wearing her wildly decorated hat and her exuberant smile, Nancy took the stage and explained that a Punch and Judy show is made up of many traditional vignettes any of which can be used at any time during a show. And, we all would agree that Nancy is a master of all of them. One of the most



impressive aspects of Nancy’s shows is that her characters voices are always audible. She does not use a swazzle or “call”, therefore, her Punch is understandable and her other characters’ vocalizations are clear and distinct. In the final scene the Gator ate Punch which seemed an appropriate fate after his misdeeds. But Nancy allowed Punch a reincarnation and he assured us that he would be back for Potlatch 2018.

It seemed impossible that our time together had come to an end so abruptly. There were many tearful goodbyes, wishes for safe trips home and promises to be at Potlatch next year.

More Fun and Frivolity at Potlatch



From top: Dave meets Dave the puppet with Dave the puppeteer. The Widermans, Steven and Linda. Dave Herzog with great nephews, Fritz (6) and John Paul (5).

Potlatch, Puppets, and The Enchanted Forest

by J. Bradley Blankenship

Potlatch Is Coming

My path to puppetry was both foretold and unexpected. Beginning at age twelve, I've kept a personal journal. At the age of eighteen, I started rereading my journals every August as a way to "check in with myself." Now, more than twenty-five years into this process, the month of August has become a ritualistic time of reflection where I ask myself; "Who am I? Who do I want to be? And are my answers congruent with my actions?" I admit, it's a bit cheesy and obnoxiously philosophical. But, in my defense, I've spent most of my adult career working in some form of academia. Aren't professors supposed to be cheesy and philosophical?

This past summer, as I read my way through past journals, I noticed an ongoing theme in the entries. A timid longing that, quite literally, spanned decades. Buried deep within the drama of my various life narratives was a repeated statement: "One day, I want to be a puppeteer. I want to work with puppets." After twenty-five years, I decided that one day would be today. Next thing I know I quit my job, bought a sewing machine, and started building monster puppets!

As August drew to a close I solidified my new quest into puppetdom by joining the Chicagoland Puppetry Guild. For someone new to the world of puppetry, I was immediately welcomed with opened arms. Warmth and kindness flooded my inbox as I received emails from various guild members. Amidst all the welcomes, one thing was made abundantly clear, "Potlatch Is Coming!"

Potlatch: An Introduction to Puppetry

Like Alice through the Looking Glass, I registered for Potlatch and suddenly found myself far away from home and in a world full of magic and wonder. Pulling into the Pokagon State Park and up to the Potawatomi Inn, a kaleidoscope of fall colors embraced my arrival. Upon check-in, I was greeted by Rick Morse. "I don't know you," he said warmly. "You must be new?"

"This is my first Potlatch," I confessed. "And I'm pretty new to puppetry in general. I'm not exactly sure what I'm doing."

Rick assuaged any anxiety I had and introduced me to a number of other puppeteers. From the moment of arrival it was made abundantly clear that Potlatch was not simply a Great Lakes Regional Conference, it was also a family reunion. A family that spans multiple generations. And a family that was eager to embrace new members.

The evening began with a welcoming puppet show by Bob Brown. To be honest, it was my first live marionette show and I was mesmerized. The mélange of festive music, memorable characters, and flawless manipulation captured my attention. "This is a thing?!" I thought to myself. "I want to do that?! How do I learn to do that!"

As it turned out, the following morning offered a workshop in Marionette Manipulation. Here, I experienced an hour crash course in the mechanics and fundamentals of Marionettes by David Syrotiak. Like the performance the night before, I was hypnotized. Observing the science behind marionette manipulation reminded me of watching a professional musician with mastery over her instrument. The hands intuitively knew every inch of the controls. The marionettes were extensions of the puppeteers and, together, they were beautiful; together, they were magical.



J. Bradley Blankenship

My second workshop was with Darlene Fedele Thompson and involved Playwriting for Puppets. This was a well attended writing group where we reviewed strategies for character development and how to build contrast and conflict into a scene. The exercises encouraged interaction and I left with a healthy list of options for future characters and stories! By the time lunch arrived, both my brain and heart were full.

As I continued to meet different conference attendees, each person welcomed me with open arms and encouraged my interests. I learned about Ventriloquism and the mythology of why the puppet's head must be covered with a bag when it is stored. During the Trading Post, I didn't buy anything but attendees helped me navigate the diversity of merchandise, pointing out historical puppets and important books, giving me even more context for my experiences.

It was during the Trading Post that I had a chance to explore the puppets on display. The beauty of David Herzog's marionettes and various pieces from The National Marionette theatre made me lose track of time. Before I knew it, lunch was over and it was time for the first of several Puppet Shows.

Despite my secret longing to be a puppeteer, it had been quite a while since I attended a legit, honest-to-goodness, puppet show. Connor Asher's interpretation of The Three Little Pigs had me, quite literally, laughing out loud. Anne Newman's Jack and the Bean Stalk evoked empathy for a giant, while the Melikin's

production of Shoes and Ships and Sealing Wax transported me to a world of poetry, adventure, and dreams! Where these three shows used hand puppets to tell overarching stories, master puppeteer Kevin Frisch, of Frisch Marionettes, used a combination of hand, marionette, and shadow puppets to perform vignettes that made me feel as though I had stepped into a dream. Watching each show, once more time stood still for me. Each story and each puppet left an impact. “Yes,” I remember thinking to myself. “This is what I want to do! I want to tell stories! I want to inspire dreams!”

Where the morning and early afternoon provided structured activities, the annual Potpourri, a puppet open mic, displayed the array of talent in attendance. It was here that I first saw performances from the middle school and high school students. Their enthusiasm and fearlessness as they commanded the stage brought a smile to my face. As attendees took turns displaying their talents to tell stories new and familiar, I wondered what I would perform if I were to partake in the Potourri next year? Who would I bring to life? What would they have to say? Who are the characters that live within me?

Into The Woods

As the night ended, I made my way across the field to my cabin in the woods. Where most attendants were staying in the actual hotel, my lateness in registration left only the cabins available. Despite the distance from the conference center, my room was a peaceful refuge from the day. The illuminated path through the forest reminded me that for many fairytales and numerous characters, the greatest adventures begin in the woods. Is the same for me? Is this the beginning of a great adventure where Big Bad Wolves live alongside the Dream Peddlers of the world? What magic will I take with me from this enchanted forest?

On the final day, I woke before the sun and listened to the rain outside my window. Walking back to the lodge, a foggy sun rose over the lake and I was reminded once more of the magic this



The Potawatomi Inn at Pokagon State Park, Angola, Indiana

forest held. At brunch, I sat with Librarian and School Liaison Susan Fulcher where I learned about the role puppetry can play in the Library system. Smiling, she informed me that “3D printers are gaining in popularity. We use them to print marionette pieces, eyes balls, you name it!” Whether it’s the use of 3D printers or 3D TV Puppets, the world of puppetry is diverse, and the technology for this ancient art form continues to evolve.

It was here, as brunch wound down, that I found myself making my way back to my car and out of wonderland. My dog sitter had called and had to leave early. This meant I had a tight deadline in making it back to Chicago. Sadly, I missed the farewell Punch & Judy show as well as any other formal or informal goodbyes. With my car loaded up, the forest fog lay thick across the morning. It was as if it knew my departure was premature. A sign from the universe that I was to stay? Driving out of the forest, I rolled my window down and took in the crisp fall air. “It’s okay” I called out to it. “The show isn’t over, it’s only intermission.” As I turned on to the toll road, I knew one thing was true; next year, I’ll be back.

The Glentown Puppet Theater Series will present The Shoemaker and the Elves & The Night Before Christmas, by the Melikin Puppets, on Friday December 29, 2017. It would be a good time for guild members, both new and old, to attend for the final gathering of 2017.

In Memorium

Fred Sauers

November 22, 2017

By Fred Putz

Our thanks to Linda Roberts, Puppeteer and Steve Abrams, Editor of *The Puppetry Journal* for their contributions to this article.



Linda Roberts and Fred Sauers.

Although he was not an active puppeteer, Fred was dedicated to the art of puppetry. Many of our members will remember that Fred was the volunteer coordinator of The P of A's Insurance Program for which he was given the P of A's 2011 Trustee's Award. (The following taken from text of the Award program.) "Fred Sauers recently retired as the coordinator of the P of A Liability Insurance Program. In fact, Fred developed the insurance program that all puppeteers can buy into and has served our professional puppeteers since with good humor and prompt service." He also served as Treasurer of The Great Lakes Region of the P of A. for more than a decade and along with Linda Roberts served as Registrar for many regional and national puppet festivals.

Fred attended Lyons Township High School in LaGrange, Illinois. He continued his education at Grinnell College in Iowa and earned an MBA from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. The title of his thesis was "Music in Labor Movements". He entered the field of data processing at ITT-Kellogg and was a pioneer in Electronic Data Interchange with Sears Roebuck. He also worked for IBM and retired from IBM in 1998.

How Fred became involved with puppetry is an interesting story. When he was a youngster, he began woodworking as a hobby. He considered himself to be "a serial hobbyist" and enjoyed many artistic pursuits. "He was an accomplished stage, radio and movie actor (look for his 3-second appearance in *Dark Knight*), make-up artist, set designer, sculptor, potter, and puppet maker; he also explored magic, sewing, weaving and jewelry-making."

Forty years ago, he attended a performance by puppeteer Linda Roberts. (Linda is one of those brave marionette artists who successfully produced full length puppet plays single handedly, and had presented nearly 12,000 performances.) That meeting resulted in their founding Roberts Marionettes in 1982. Their wonderful relationship lasted for forty years with Linda performing and Fred carving over 100 beautiful marionettes, designing settings and building portable stages for Linda's productions.

One of his most impressive achievements occurred several years ago when "table top" puppet shows were becoming a fad. There was one problem; the puppets were unable to stand on their own, creating a difficulty when more than one puppet was on stage at the same time. To solve this problem, Fred followed the designs of HansJurgen Fettig, who developed an amazing hip and leg mechanism that allowed puppets to walk and, also stand unassisted. Those table top puppets were used in Linda's "The Secret Garden", a beautifully designed and well received production.

"A kind gentleman of the first order and friend to all" is an inadequate description of Fred Sauers. He will be sorely missed.



In Review

The Glen Town Center Puppet Theater Series

By Fred Putz

The Pumpkin Patch Review

THE PUMPKIN PATCH REVIEW

DAVE HERZOG'S MARIONETTES

October 21, 2017

One can always anticipate surprises galore when attending a performance of David Herzog's marionette variety show, and his "Pumpkin Patch Review" is no exception to that rule. We were treated to no less than thirteen different variety acts.



puppets, a staging aspect ignored by too many puppeteers.

Both Dave and the stage were dressed in black allowing the audience to concentrate on the puppets and not the puppeteer. A four-foot high backdrop hid the waiting puppets. The two eight-foot side panels acted as wings and were decorated with jack-o-lanterns in keeping with the season. With a background of lively music, David stepped out onto the stage, carefully explained the "rules of the show" and he then introduced Billy Bob, the star of the show. However, for some mysterious reason Billy did not appear, enhancing the audience's anticipation. Finally, the red headed Billy entered c o s t u m e d in overalls, a plaid shirt and bright red shoes. David explained that Billy lived in a pumpkin patch.



Billy Bob was a teacher in disguise. He asked the children to take a "multi-faceted oath" that include eating all servings of vegetables, drinking all of their milk, being careful on the street and following their parent's instructions.

The first act was a break-away puppet, the "Pumpkin King", a Jack-o-lantern with arms and legs. At the closing of the act, the top of its head opened up and out popped a miniature jack-o-lantern.



Billy's sister, Judy Berry Brown arrived in the second act wearing roller skates. Her red hair was tied up in braids and below her blue gingham dress there were white bloomers. Under Dave's guidance Judy was able to gracefully perform some very complicated roller skating stunts.

A foot stomping "Pumpkin Patch Polka" performed by two scarecrows had some of the younger audience members on

their feet

dancing along. At times the puppets joined hands and then were also able to dance in a row. They delighted the audience by doing handstands while continuing to dance. With bright colored patches on the boy's overalls and the girl's gingham dress the puppets were a colorful sight.

Costumed in a multi-colored long coat, yellow green hair and dark violet face, a zombie entered. Walking with Frankenstein-like footsteps, he moved deliberately about the stage. With his scary looks and very deep voice he was reminiscent of the "Munsters".

A space ship arrived and expelled two Martians, one pink and one blue with sparkling faces. These were "expanding puppets" whose necks, arms and legs more than doubled in length and then, returned to their original size.

Who would expect that a farmer would be able to walk a tightrope? Dressed in a cowboy hat, green overalls, an orange and green shirt Farmer Brown proved to be a master rope walker. After a few moments of insecurity Farmer Brown was able, with the exception of one little accident when he almost fell, to walk the rope with ease.

You will most probably remember Doctor Dolittle's "Push-Me-Pull-You". Well, the "Push-Me-Pull-You" has finally found its way onto the puppet stage. Dave's character had two lamb-like heads and his body was covered with a colorful fleece.



With its white fuzzy body and long spindle legs Dave's Chicken was no "Chicken Little". The poor girl looked about the stage for a place to lay her egg. Finally, the time had come and the egg was laid. But that was not the end of the act. The egg opened and a little yellow chick appeared.

Can pigs dance? Dave's bright pink pig, "Miss Polk" with her red velvet skirt and high heels could dance and sing as well. "Putting On The Ritz" was her selection.

Costumed in multi-colored overalls and with a jack-o-lantern head, David's juggler dazzled the audience. A David Herzog performance would not be complete without Walter the famous Basset Hound, making an appearance. In keeping with the Halloween spirit, Walter wore a pair of red horns on his head. Walter, who always leaves the stage and visits with the children in the front row and accepts pats on the head graciously did not disappoint us.

A marionette variety show would not be complete if a trapeze artist was not included. With his violet overalls, stovepipe hat and blue shoes David's Scar-a-crow artist performed flawlessly. Two unusual features of David's trapeze artist are, the trapeze is rotated in a complete circle and being held for a breath-taking moment far above David's head.

For the closing act a pumpkin arrived using its vines as legs. The pumpkin strutted about the stage and was joined by a second pumpkin. A third pumpkin arrived, and they joined together to form a caterpillar like creature. Upon the rear of the last segment was a sign stating, "The End".



The Puppet Patter is the Official Quarterly Publication of the Chicagoland Puppetry Guild. It is published on line and available in hard copy version to those CPG members without access to a computer. It will also be posted on the CPG web site. Publication dates are on or about the first of March, June, September and December. All items for publication by CPG members should be submitted no later than fourteen days prior to publication date to:

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Publisher: Bridget DePriest

CPG Web Master: Jeff Biske

Notices of regular gatherings and/ or special events will be posted on the CPG web site: www.chicagopuppet.org by email or direct USPS mail to hard copy members. Future dates for events, performances, announcements or scheduled gatherings (meetings) will appear in the "Patter" if they apply to the time frame the publication covers.

Elected Officers and Directors for 2017-2018

President: Fred Berchtold
Recording Secretary: Jill Frederickson
Director of Guild Member Relations: LaVerne Biske
Guild Historian: Fred Putz
Director of Outreach: Susan Witek

Vice President: Connor Asher
Treasurer: Marilyn Putz
Director of Guild Publication and CPG Web Site: Mel Biske
Director of World Puppetry Day 2018: Susan Fulcher
Liaison with Other
Puppet Organizations: Dave Herzog
Glen Town Center Puppet Theater Series: Dave Herzog

In Review

The Glen Town Center Puppet Theater Series

By Dave Herzog

The Three Little Pigs

The Three Little Pigs
Creventive Studios
November 12, 2017

Playing to a crowd of approximately eighty people, Connor Asher's Creventive Studios, The Three Little Pigs was a hit at the Glen Series November 12th, 2017 performance. Assisted by puppeteer Jill Fredrickson Creventive Studios innovative new take on an old classic delighted audience members both young and old.



The Three Little Pigs was Connor's first fully staged "live" puppetry production. Starting with a family friendly Old Macdonald sing along, and moving into a fresh take on the time honored classic, with the three little pigs visiting a big box type home center to gather their materials, the story moves along nicely, still manages to give the story's core message to the children, and delights the adults with some hip dialogue, and modern references.



The story kicks into high gear with the appearance of a menacing, but still appealing big



bad wolf. The wolf is all business and does his best to turn the pigs into bacon. Two well placed, fast paced and very funny chase scenes ensue, even going so far as to have the wolf chasing the pigs with a oversize meat cleaver. The audience (adults included) realize it's all in good fun, and of course the wolf is vanquished, (at least for today) and the pigs live happily ever after.



Connor's stage.

While a bit hampered by a nice looking, but too small stage, Connor and Jill manage to "open up" the staging by utilizing several different stage levels, and the entire top of the stage for the chase scenes. The production is pre-recorded but "live" feel to it, even allowing for audience response to direct questions. The voices are well acted, with a modern feel to the dialogue. Nothing is stilted or cliché, and the production is well paced.



There is a real freshness to Creventive Studios approach to live performance. While still very young Connor has managed to learn a great deal from seeing the work of his more senior colleagues. Wisely keeping to time honored tradition of form but mixed with his fresh outlook, and youthful exuberance, Connor is well on his way to being an important producer of puppetry.

Register now for "Earth to Puppets" coming up on January 24, 2018 at Mather's!



By the Way.....

By Ann Onymous

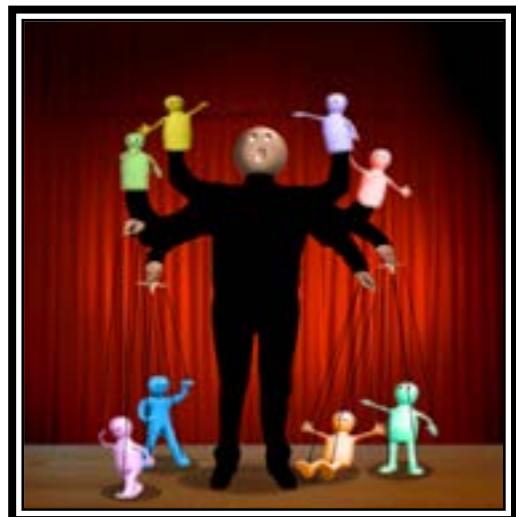
The Glen Town Puppet Theater Series marches on into the new year, starting with the CPG's newest member, Steven Widerman's, "The Puppet Company", presenting his "Al E. Gator" show.

Program Director, Dave Herzog has programs lined up, ready and waiting for each month through the end of the year. We will keep you posted with future editions of the Puppet Patter as well as regular postings on the CPG web site.

CPG, s Outreach Program is helping to spread the word that puppetry is alive and well in the Chicagoland area. Susan Witek and Connor Asher have organized a puppet variety show at Mather's Café on January 24, 2018. See the poster in this issue for details. Connor has also proposed and is planning a Potluck event for a puppeteer's potpourri gathering. . Stay tuned.

Some of you may recall a performance by The Village Puppeteers, "Lost in Story Land", as presented in conjunction with our 2015 annual banquet. Just got word that Michael Schwabe and Larry Bascomb, are planning to join our guild! You guys will be most welcomed,

When was the last time, or when was the first time your name appeared in an issue of the Puppet Patter? Sure maybe you made a shot at facebook but unlike facebook, with random happenings worth passing along at the time, but are soon forgotten, the Patter is more of a news magazine, reporting in depth what will become the history of the present CPG members for future generations to learn from and enjoy. It would be of interest to other guild members to let us know what you are doing in your world of puppetry. Any photos, your opinions and ideas, your experiences or a review of a show you attended. I may be reached at the Patter/ Website address at melikinpuppets@comcast.net. Address your email to the attention of Ann Onymous. Hoping to hear from you.



Have You Visited the CPG Website Lately?



Be sure to visit our guild's web site on a regular basis for the latest postings on what's happening in the Chicago area. Posted you will find the current and upcoming performances at the Glen Town Center monthly Puppet Series co-sponsored by the CPG.

Our address is www.chicagopuppetguild.org

Included is a page listing the performing companies within our guild and a link to their web sites.

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Mission Statement

The Chicagoland Puppetry Guild is a non-profit organization and is part of a national organization of performers promoting the art of puppetry. Our role is to honor, promote, encourage, and inspire all forms of puppetry arts' and puppeteers in their endeavours and to provide a fellowship of cooperation and inspiration to puppeteers everywhere.

Chicagoland Puppetry Guild Membership Application for September 1, 2017 - August 31, 2018

Send this application with check payable to: **Chicagoland Puppetry Guild** to: LaVerne Biske • 169 Woodlet Lane • Bolingbrook, Illinois 60490

Please Print All Information Neatly

Membership Yearly Votes

- Couple/Family.....\$30.....2
- Adult\$20.....1
- Company\$30.....2
- Senior (62+)\$15.....1
- Student\$15.....1
- Junior (15-).....\$15.....1
- Associate\$15.....0

Application Date _____

Check enclosed for \$ _____

Name _____ Birth date _____
mo/day/year

Company _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone (_____) _____ Cell (_____) _____

Email _____ Preferred contact Home phone Cell phone Email

Additional names associated with this membership:

Name _____ Birth date _____
mo/day/year

A membership directory is published and distributed among the membership in November. Would you and/or your company like to be listed in this directory? (please check all that apply)

YES - Please list me in this directory

YES - Please list my company in this directory

NO - I do not wish to be listed in this directory

Please list any additional information you would like to add. CPG will make every effort to include this additional information in the directory.

The Chicagoland Puppetry Guild is interested in you. Please tell us about your interest in puppetry: what you are doing and your status as a puppeteer. (please check all that apply)

I perform	I am interested in	I perform	I am interested in
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Marionettes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Puppet Builder
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Hand Puppets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Librarian
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Shadow Puppets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ventriloquist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Puppet Ministry
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Rod Puppets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Puppet Enthusiast
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Film/Video	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Semi-Professional (part time puppeteer)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Costume Maker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Professional (make my living in puppetry)

Other: _____

Occasionally the Guild is asked for sources for puppet shows, workshops, and more. If you are interested in our referral, please indicate what services you or your company can provide and what your limitations are. Please include your website if applicable.

Are you a member of any other puppetry related organizations? (please check all that apply)

Puppeteers of America UNIMA USA Storytelling Guild or network Other (please specify) _____

For more information about the Chicagoland Puppetry Guild contact CPG President - Fred Berchtold at 847-529-1725

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Please print your name and return address in the space below

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Check must be made payable to:
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