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# THE BACKSTAGE PASS

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Season 40 Letter 10

April 16, 2003

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## The Newsletter of the Zanesville Community Theatre

### A Note From the Prez

I've been knocking around in theaters for 25 or so years and I've been fortunate enough to have been involved in some great projects with good people. The Cast of "DIARY OF ANNE FRANK" may be the most intelligent cast I've ever worked with, they get it. They know who they are, what's happening and why and where they are going. It's exciting watching these characters grow and mature. A show of this nature takes on special commitment, but the end result is it becomes a living, breathing thing. When a show has a heart beat you can feel, it's something special. The Heart of Anne Frank is alive and well.

Don't end up being one of the people who ends up saying "I wish I had seen that one."

-Richard Tolliver

### The Cast of Diary of Anne Frank is Announced!

After a very tough audition screening process we are proud to announce the cast of THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK.

Maury Kenily plays the part of Otto Frank.

Conni Matz-Tolliver plays his wife, Edith.

Sabrina Shuey is our Anne.

Jillian VonGunten plays sister Margot.

Sarah Andersen is our Mrs. Petronella VanDaan.

Rick Milheim plays husband Mr. VanDaan.

Ian Milheim is their angst filled son, Peter.

Emmy Allen won the part of Miep.

Sean Rice plays Mr. Kraler.

Randy Guthrie is our Mr. Dussel.

Liza Winland joins the crew as Production Assistant.

Look to the next issue of the Backstage Pass for the inside scoop on our actors and actresses. Break a leg, Gang!

### Our Season "TBA" is Announced!

Our second show in the 41<sup>st</sup> Season line-up is...drum role please.....*LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS!* The Director of this floral mayhem is Jan Smith! Thanks to the Board and the Play Reading Committee for a job well done!

### Confirmed Bachelor WEDS!

An April weekend brings nuptials to a friend of ZCT and other area theaters. Bob Skidmore takes the plunge with long time girlfriend Laura. Bob has groomed his talent here at ZCT and followed the acting bug to as far away as Alaska! Did you know he played Pap Finn in the traveling version of Big River? We wish him and Laura the best! Welcome to married life!!!



### Winners Announced!

It's time for Announcing the Winners for the Audience Choice Awards! The winners for "The Taming of the Shrew" are.....

The Audience Choice Winners were Ansel Burch and Ian Milheim. Our participation winner is Kevin McCarthy! Congrats!

## Award Winning Author

Robert Leland Taylor is a busy man; a man who is as talented on stage as he behind the scenes. By “behind the scenes” I don’t mean a stage crew member, I mean he writes the scenes..without him..there are no scenes to be behind. ZCT has proudly brought his words to life with “Billy Would’ve been Thirty Today”. His latest play to gain recognition is “Kentucky Wings”. I bumped into Robert while he was in rehearsal for Mary Jo Dondlinger’s “Taming of the Shrew”. I asked him to send me some info on his latest play and the award it has earned him.

Robert writes:

Thanks for asking about info regarding KENTUCKY WINGS for Backstage Pass. I wrote most of the play while recovering from acute pancreatitis a couple of years ago, with plenty of time on my hands. I had no idea where to submit it after it was finished, and discovered the Southern Playwrights Competition almost by accident while flipping through the Dramatist Guild's resource directory. I figured it was a long-shot since there's only one winner each year involving fourteen states, but something told me to go ahead and invest in the cost of postage. I'm hopelessly negligent when it comes to marketing my plays, finding the process to be pure drudgery, and I also have this dread of rejection (How DARE they trash my play?). I'd love to have an agent, but they're hard to come by--reputable ones, that is--so my goal now is to spend more time on the marketing side. After all, it's very unlikely that theaters will send their artistic directors door-to-door asking to read plays that are stashed away in drawers and closets. Another hindrance to the marketing process is my love for acting, and I can't seem to stay away from the stage for more than a few months at a time. I'd be hard-pressed to choose between the two, almost as if you're choosing between two children. From time to time a little voice pops up telling me I should focus on one or the other, but I continue to do both, happy and poor for now with both kids intact.

I'm not sure what compelled me to write KENTUCKY WINGS, as with my other plays, and there are no major parallels to my own life, even though I was born and raised in Kentucky, and my father was an abusive alcoholic and my childhood was extremely traumatic (Wait--maybe there ARE a few parallels). I'm no psychiatrist but I suspect that the benefits gleaned from both fields represent approval not received in the early years. Applause is approval. And that's a wonderful and most-appreciated thing.

Currently ZCT is working on bringing “Kentucky Wings” to life. Our hope is to look into broadening our horizons and making this show our return to Dinner Theater. Keep posted to the BACKSTAGE PASS for updates!

## Let Them Eat Cake!

A Cake from the Carr Center Cake Auction to be exact. Sit back, close your eyes and think...A German Sweet Chocolate Ten Inch Cake baked by the wonderful people of Kennedy’s Bakery, on Wheeling Avenue. Can you picture it?



It can be yours! This ZCT Logo Decorated Cake number 189 will be up for bid on Thursday, April 24 around 5 p.m. It can be yours for a winning bid.

If the thought of a delicious cake doesn’t prompt a move to mark the calendar and ready the phone - how about what goes with it? This Cake brings with it a ½ page ad in our season program as well as a Season Ticket Package to our 41<sup>st</sup> Season and a pair of tickets to see THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK.

Not too shabby, right? Tune in to the Carr Center Cake Auction and place a bid. It’s fun to participate in an auction and it goes to a good cause. Besides, if you win, this yummy dessert will be all yours! (You may want to share the tickets, though. :-) )

## The Inside Track

James Alcock used his theatrical confidence to participate in an LTV (Longaberger Television)

Basket Demonstrating Video! A few years ago, you couldn’t have bribed James to wave at a camera, but now! Look out World! James is a new man!

I was working and thought I heard a familiar voice. Here it was James on TV!!! Cool beans James!

James also has an inside track on an up-and-coming band called “Pay the Girls”, with a new CD of the same name. It is BonJovi-esque in sound and I enjoyed listening to it. James knows the members of the band. This band has a hit single with the movie SWIM FAN. They also opened for pop sensation Shakira. Look for their CD and listen to a sample. If you enjoy a BonJovi sound and want a bit of a change, try this CD.

## Meet our Member of the Month!

Our April Edition brings us our Board Member of the Month. This edition's feature is Mrs. Melanie Von Gunten. If ever you look at your calendar and think you are busy, I dare you to compare yours with Melanie's. Double Dog Dare! I guarantee you - her schedule makes mine look languid. Now THAT's saying something!!!

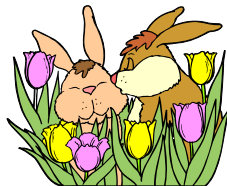
Melanie has a strong history with both the community and with theater. She is our hairstylist for THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK and the upcoming director for THE TEN LITTLE INDIANS next fall. She is a super busy teacher, hostess, cosmetologist, wife and mother. I asked Melanie the standard "Meet a Member" questions, and here are her responses.

### Who or what brought you in?

Dan and I were dating, and his brother Bobby and sister Ruth E were involved in ZCT. There was a picnic during the summer for theatre members and their families. We all went and as part of the festivities, everyone read parts from a bunch of scripts that were there. Bette Christman was directing Charlie's Aunt as the season opener, and she invited us to be involved in the production. Dan auditioned and got the part of Lord Fancourt Babberly. So began our involvement with ZCT.

### Tell us a little about yourself...family, work, hobbies, etc.

Just a little about myself? Hmm...that could be difficult. Well, I've been married to Dan for 23 years this coming June, and we have the lovely diva Princess Jillian the First as our only child.



Work is what I do best. I have been a licensed cosmetologist for 29 years, and still keep my fingers in that a little (especially when working on some shows). Several years ago (about ten, I think), I shifted gears, went to Ohio Dominican University and got my BA in Theology. I have been the Director of Religious Education at St. Thomas Aquinas since. I take care of everyone from cradle to grave. I recently completed my Master's in Pastoral Studies with the concentration in Spirituality.

I do have hobbies, too. Vacations, beaches with lighthouses, reading, crafts, quilting, and history are just a few of my interests.

### What is your favorite part of theater?

The finished product! All of the efforts of so many people on stage and behind the curtain coming together to create the perfect fantasy that we can escape into, be part of, and realize our own experiences in the characters on stage.

### What is your favorite show?

It is hard to pick a favorite show, because there are so many that I love. I think that it probably is a tie for me. I love Brigadoon, because it is the first show that Dan and I worked on together. I love The Wizard of Oz, because Jillian made her acting debut in it at the ripe old age of four, and she's been acting up ever since. Finally, I love The Mousetrap, because it opened up a new dimension for me as a director. I was so blessed because Rich and Shelley created the most wonderful set. The cast was perfect, and everything came together so well. (And not just because I prayed a lot!)

### What are your goals as a member?

I think that I would like to see our patron membership grow to be a couple of hundred people or more, so that we would be more solvent. I would like to draw more members into the general membership, so that we have "new blood" to do some of the work. I would like to always have the perfect season to fill the seats of every production. I want to see quality theater continue far into the future, so that our children's children inherit a great theatrical legacy from us, and it will give them pride to know that we always tried to give our community the best that we could offer.

## Congrats!

Troy Alford is testing a new job for the next month. You can see him demonstrating the art basket making at the Longaberger Homestead. If you are curious about how the "Longaberger Weavers" do their thing - Troy is the man to tell ya,... heck - if you want to try your hand at it, for a Longaberger fee, he can do that too. He'd be the one I'd want to teach me...and I weave for a living! Take a country ride to the Longaberger Homestead, then a nice walk to the Crawford Barn and visit Troy. Congrats - Enjoy the job!

## Feel Better Soon!

Recently Janice Blake underwent oral surgery. We are thinking of you and hope you are on the mend!



## A Soldier's Address

Adam Johnson's Dad, Skip, is overseas doing his part in this "War in Iraq". If you get some time, drop him a line or a funny postcard. His address is:

HHB 2-174 ADA  
Wilbur F. Johnson III  
ATTN: MRCS Bldg 2444  
Fort Bliss, TX 79916

A note from home is an appreciated moment to smile.

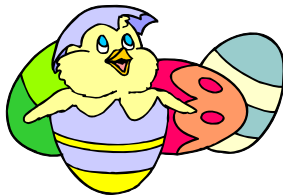
## A Competitive Weekend

This weekend several families of the ZCT Thespians are in competitions. Angel Palmer's children have earned the honor to compete in the State Competition for Cheering.

Amy Ritchey's boys were in a competition of another sort...Basketball!

Jillian VonGuntzen danced her way to the top! Two Golds and a Silver were bestowed upon her after her performance in her dancing competition.

Congratulations to ALL!  
Great Job!



## Doing Her Part

Sarah Andersen is a Mary Kay consultant who is doing her part to help the soldiers overseas. The people of Mary Kay have contacted the Armed Service Representatives to see what is needed for those fighting in and around Bagdad.

I know what you are thinking...what is Mary Kay going to send our soldiers? A make-up kit?? And you want ME to help with a make-over? Going beyond their first catalogue pages of make-up and other vanity products, you'll find skin care products. The Armed Services asked for lip balm and sun screen. Very practical and *very* needed items. Face it - the temps circle the 90's and its all hot sand over there.

Sarah and her crew of consultants are taking up collections to send overseas. Do you want to contribute? They are looking for other things like Twizzlers and other non-melting tastes from home. If you would like donation information, please e-mail me at [rtollive@columbus.rr.com](mailto:rtollive@columbus.rr.com) and I'll forward your queries

on to Sarah. They are looking for donations of goods and/or funds.

Why is Sarah heading up a project like this? Her brother-in-law will be going overseas. A brother-in-law with an adorable 18 month old child and loving wife. Supporting our troops takes more than hanging a flag in a window. What can you do to help out? I don't have a lot right now, but maybe my little bit can add to Sarah's to make something big.

For every package assembled by the public, the people of Mary Kay will match it. That really makes something big of a little contribution!

## "RUMORS"

They are everywhere, but the one in question for this article is the show that Jillian VonGuntzen is appearing in early next month. I know you are thinking, "Isn't she in THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK?". The answer is "yes", but as with many talented folks - one project simply isn't enough. Jillian turns towards the eccentric I the Rosecran's High School production of RUMORS by Neil Simon, directed by Alice Mauk.

I asked Jillian to jot down some details and send them my way. Here it goes:

Basic plot:

RUMORS chronicles the 10th wedding anniversary of a high-ranking New York City official and his wife. The happy occasion soon sours -- the deputy mayor shoots himself in the head, (no need to worry, it's just a flesh wound.), his wife is missing and his lawyer, a guest at the party, decides it's time for a cover-up. More guests arrive and soon nobody can remember who has said what about whom. The cover-up unravels in a storm of slamming doors and hilarity.

Yours truly plays...alas...the consummate ditz, Cookie Cusack-I fall off of things and over things, and at one point I crawl offstage...THE SET IS WONDERFUL (thanks Rich)!!!!



Show Dates are May 9 and 10 at 7:30pm. I've met some of the cast and I love the story. This one looks good, folks. And yes, Rich designed the set so expect the unexpected! Support the arts and enjoy an evening out!

## A Board Member's New Job

**O**CTA Rep. Darren Brown is now the Sous Chef for the Shultz Mansion! I know, you guys thought I was giving "Get-Well" wishes for Darren. Surprise!  
On second thought...Keep staying well, Darren!  
(It couldn't hurt. :-)

## OCTA Does What Again?

**G**reetings my fellow thespians. It's me again, your amazing ZCT OCTA rep (ha ha). Once again I have been asked by our First Lady of ZCT to explain how one could or would avail themselves of the resources of OCTA. For instance, let's say Shelley was thinking about directing WIZARD OF OZ next season but wanted to read it first.

Shelley would come to me to let me know that she needs a copy of OZ and maybe some other plays that she is considering for down the line. I would give her the OCTA script library order form which she would fill out with her name and address, date, phone number, refundable deposit, and her affiliation with the theatre. Don't forget the titles she's interested in. She would also need a signature of the ZCT President, Treasurer or myself as OCTA delegate.

Let's also say that Shelley knows that ZCT doesn't have much in the way of set pieces, nor does it have a simile of the coveted "Ruby Slippers". She could again come to me for help. I'd need a list of what she is looking for and what kind of budget she is working with. I'd then go to the Theater Resource Directory and start to call up other theaters in the area and talk to their contact person(s) for costumes and set pieces. When the appropriate pieces are found - we'd talk turkey - terms and conditions. For example, a theater may just want a deposit, others may have a rental process, and there are some who are questing - and a trade is just what they are looking for.

That, my friends, is how you could put OCTA to use. Like my example with Shelley who is now singing my praises for getting her a set, slippers, and script.

Darren Brown

Thanks Darren!



## Work Party Wonders!

**S**aturday, April 6<sup>th</sup> was the first work party of the season. Even though the turnout wasn't huge, those that did venture out were phenomenal! The small prop room was sorted out, the furniture/green room was re-arranged, the downstairs bathroom was even cleaned. (Yes, that yucky toilet, too.) Carl's Domain - brace yourself - has cabinets and SORTED items in them! Amazing - YES! But wait, there's more! Have you ever been downstairs to where the cabinets are? All those tin cans, with all that stuff EVERYWHERE....folks - that, too, is sorted and orderly! I bet you are thinking this an excellent belated April Fool's Joke, but it isn't.

Who are the folks to thank for this? Rich Tolliver and Joe Marks are the cabinet makers for Carl's Domain, (Carl was there to sort and load them) I worked on the furniture room, Liza Winland and Mary Jo filtered out the small prop room, and Mary Jo is the sorting QUEEN of the theater's hardware area! Take the tour and be amazed!

A HUGE Thanks goes out to these people. As for those who didn't make it to this work party, we'll catch ya on the next one!

Thank you Carl, Liza, Joe and Mary Jo! Your work is definitely appreciated! And we'll be on guard as to not let it get messed up in the future!!!

## Volunteers Recognized!

**T**he March 24<sup>th</sup> Issue of *Longaberger This Week* ran an article about their employee volunteers who helped with the Chuck Spires Benefit concert and with the ZCT Angel Tree Project. It is neat to read a publication and see your name or names of those you know. The article covered the volunteer activities of James Alcock, Melanie and Jillian VonGunten, Troy Alford, Georgia and Jason Wilcox, Rich and me.

Did you know that Longaberger sponsors a volunteer recognition program? It is called Charitable Champs. Longaberger employees who volunteer 25 hours of their time to a non-profit organization can earn that organization \$500. It is a wonderful program that really helps such organizations keep doing what they do. Which reminds me...I have to turn in our papers! (Note to self!)

It's a neat program and the article was fun to read! If you are around Longaberger, check out the March Edition!

A special thanks to Jen Wolfe for doing the interviews!

## Trivia

**C**ongrats! Last month's trivia question - What is the musical based on "The Taming of the Shrew"?

Two sly folks jumped with the answer! Sam Wilmoth was the first to fire me an e-mail answer! Conni Matz-Tolliver phoned! The answer is indeed KISS ME KATE! Looks like we have some wizards on our hands!

This month's Trivia Question is - What famous actress won an Oscar for her portrayal as Mrs. VanDaan in the original movie "THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK"?

## Important Dates!

**S**abrina Shuey is an April Fool's Baby! In a family of boys..perhaps that was a funny from the stork! Happy 13<sup>th</sup>! May you have many, many more!

## Mark Your Calendars

**G**rab the markers and highlight some dates.

Passover begins April 17th.

EASTER!!!!

WHEN - Sunday, April 20

ALL DAY

May you have a wonderful day filled with laughter and peace.

BOARD MEETING

When? Sunday, May 4<sup>th</sup>

Time? 5:00

Where? ZCT

THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK

When? The weekends of May 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>

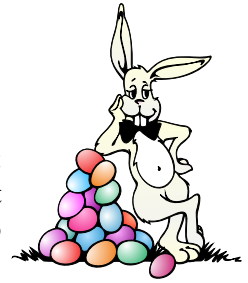
Times? 8:00 on Fridays and Saturdays

2:30 on Sundays

\*\*Don't forget to make reservations! 455-6487\*\*

## Happy Easter

If you have any questions, comments, concerns feel free to email me at [rtollive@columbus.rr.com](mailto:rtollive@columbus.rr.com). If I don't have the answers - I'll do my best to find them for you.



Enjoy the holiday and the wonderful spring weather! Think good thoughts for our countrymen and women who are overseas.

Yours Truly,  
Shelley Tolliver

-Editor of THE BACKSTAGE PASS