



Puppet Patter

The Official Publication of the Chicagoland Puppetry Guild

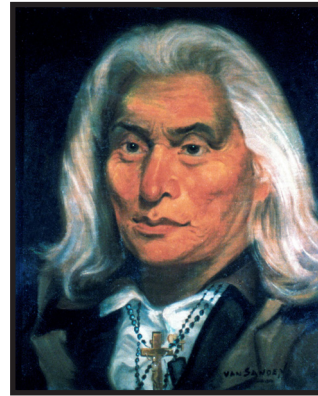
A Quarterly Publication

December 2024

No More Potlatch!

by Silence Dogood

Now that I have your attention, I want to say, “Don’t panic.” The event still exists, it is just called something different. At least publicly. Privately, however, it will always be Potlatch. The new name, *The Great Lakes Regional Puppet Family Reunion*, came about because it was thought that the name Potlatch enculturated Native American culture and traditions and demeaned them, and P of A people would not attend because of that. That’s the story as this reporter understands it. How this can be when we hold this event at the Potawatomi Inn at Pokagon State Park. The locale is, of course, named for the 19th-century Potawatomi chief, Leopold Pokagon, and his widely known son, Simon Pokagon, at Richard Lieber’s¹ suggestion. With that said, let’s talk about the 2024 version of this... get together.



Potawatomi chief Leopold Pokagon



Simon Pokagon

Friday was check-in, setup of displays and basically getting settled in before the official welcome by Vincent (Vinny) Polowy - our new Regional Director - and the opening night performance by Joe Emory’s My Air Productions. The evening’s festivities also included a video tribute to former Regional Director and friend to all, Rick Morse, lovingly presented by Dave Herzog. How he got through it without crying is beyond me.

Saturday morning brought sunny skies, comfortable temperatures and workshops. Rumor has it Jeff Biske’s workshop was the best one. At least that’s what he told me. Later, lots of buyers and sellers filled the ballroom during the Tradin’ Post and after a one-year delay (and an additional 45 minutes) we were finally treated to the documentary, *The Life and Times of Bob & Judy Brown*. We were fortunate to have half of the subjects of the documentary there. Bob graciously addressed the assembled after the viewing. After a delicious dinner (not at the inn), the puppeteers were entertained by the evening’s performances; Three stories from Seabeast Puppets and one from The Village Puppeteers. After a short break it was time for Potpourri. Whew! Always a long day so we retired to our rooms, set our clocks back an hour and went to bed.



Sunday, of course is Punch Brunch time! After consuming some bacon, eggs, bacon, pancakes, bacon, biscuits and bacon, Anne Newman’s Puppetfolk Productions treated us to what is usually a traditional Punch & Judy show. This performance was anything but traditional, though.

Throughout the weekend Tih Penfil could be seen doing what Tih does best: Snapping pictures and preserving memories. The best photographers can do their job invisibly and Tih is no exception. She often sneaks up on someone and “CLICK!” A wonderful candid moment. Thank you Tih for your hardwork and for letting us “borrow”

some of your memories.

And now the time has come to face the final curtain (to paraphrase the song *My Way*). With room keys turned in and cars packed, it was time to say so long to everyone and head to wherever home is until next year when we do it all over again.

¹ **Richard Lieber** (September 5, 1869 – April 15, 1944) was a German-American businessman who became the father of the Indiana state parks system. At his death, he could be considered the most powerful spokesman in the United States for the conservation of natural resources.

A Review of Potlatch 2024

Performances

Friday, November 1st

The Reluctant Dragon - My Air Productions

Review by Jeff Biske

The 2024 installment of Potlatch kicked off, as it usually does, with a performance by a Great Lakes Region puppeteer. This year's lead-off performance was from My Air Productions of Western Michigan. Joe Emory along with his grandson, Cayden Grimshaw, entertained the assembled puppeteers with their version of *The Reluctant Dragon*. The original story, written by Kenneth Grahame in 1898, has been skillfully updated to include lines to entertain the adults in the audience, including references to buying items on Amazon and information about dragons found on TikTok and YouTube.



The story begins in a little cottage in the small town of Brookshire Downs. Robert and his mother are discussing the existence of dragons. Robert has been told, and has also read, that dragons are fictional but believes they may really exist. Hearing that they live in caves, he sets out to a nearby cave at the edge of town to see if he can find a real dragon. Once there, he of course finds one living there and discovers that they are not as bad as everyone believes.



Meanwhile, rumors spread (by the town gossip) that there is a 30 foot... 45 foot dragon outside of town and is poised to terrorize the village. Not only that, he has eaten Robert! The call goes out for the most famous dragon slayer known - Sir George. He rides in on his trusty steed, Muttonchops, to avenge Robert and save the village only to find out that the stories have been greatly exaggerated. The dragon, like most dragons, are reluctant to fight and just want to live in peace and quiet. The two devise a plan to save Sir George's reputation as a dragon slayer and allow the dragon to live peacefully alongside the villagers. Spoiler alert: Robert did not get devoured by the dragon and they become great friends.

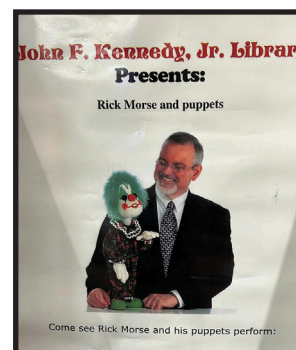


The original Bob & Judy Brown marionettes are skillfully manipulated by Joe and Cayden and the sets are absolutely gorgeous. While most puppeteers transition from one scene to another by dropping the curtain or dimming the lights to remove and replace props and backdrops, My Air does their scene changes in storybook fashion. Literally. The stage lights dim and the backdrops swing over like pages of a book. Genius! My only critique of the show would have to be pacing. There is a little too much lag time in the dialog. Other than that, a great kick off to another Potlatch.

Tribute to Rick Morse - Dave Herzog



(left) Dave Herzog prepares to present the video tribute to Rick. It was a touching testimonial to a man many of us knew and loved for decades. Dave combined a somber respect and a "Herzogest" sense of humor to honor him.



(right - top) One of Rick's posters on display.

(right - bottom) Rick's iconic creation watches over Potlatch.



Saturday, November 2nd - Evening Performances

Tailypo - Sea Beast Puppet Company

Review by Steven Wideman

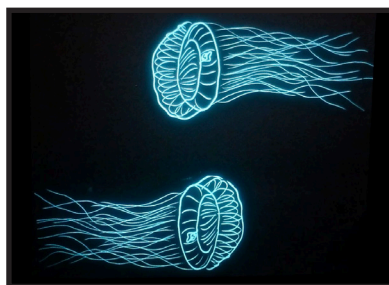


Founded in 2009 by Artistic Director Kat Pleviak with Mary Kate Jenkins (M.K.), Sea Beast Puppet Company is known for being a leader in puppetry excellence in the Chicagoland area.

For the 2024 Great Lakes Regional Puppet Family Reunion (nee Potlatch), Sea Beast performed 3 short shadow pieces, *Best Day Ever*, *The History of Light (excerpt)*, and *Tailypo*. The two puppeteers employed overhead projectors with prepared scenes, carefully stacked in the proper order, to achieve wonderful imagery to tell their stories. Recorded soundtracks and pacing of the images enhanced the experience. Live voices were used very sparingly, allowing the imagery to convey most of the narrative.

The Best Day Ever depicts the travails of a young sailboat captain out on the bounding main. He encounters various challenges, including a leak in the boat, heavy rain, raiding pirates, a mermaid and a sea monster. *I Can See Clearly Now*, by Jimmy Cliff, provides the soundtrack for the piece, and the action is cleverly tied to the lyrics of the song. The imagery is engaging and timing concise. Is it a happy ending? You can view the entire piece here and decide for yourself at https://youtu.be/k_Mj7hV44Us

The History of Light is a montage of depictions of various natural light sources, including the sun, the stars, bioluminescence and man-made light. We were treated to images of light emitting organisms such as fireflies and deep-sea fish. Images of black space filled with stars are achieved effectively with mostly black projections.



Tailypo is the dark tale of a lonely man living with his dogs on the bayou. The piece has the folksy flavor of a scary swamp story, told effectively through imagery depicting an evil creature lurking in the swamp at night. The man and his dogs have various encounters with the creature leading to a stark conclusion.

Audience members were invited to view the performance both in front and behind the scenes, which many took advantage of, viewing the quick changes and timing employed by the puppeteers to great dramatic effect.



Lost In Storyland - The Village Puppeteers

Review by Jill Frederickson

The most recent Great Lakes Puppet Family Reunion was treated to a show many love, *Lost in Storyland*, from the Village Puppeteers. The Village Puppeteers show packs up pretty tidily as their stage is constructed of pipe and drape tripod setups and beautiful felt flats that set the scenes. The scenery uses high contrast colored felt cleverly cut which gives the viewer a 3D impression. The tower for Rapunzel feels much more rounded than it is. Larry Basgal and Michael Schwabe use sound very effectively in their performance.

Sometimes it is built into the ingenious rod puppets, as is the case with the Knight who makes a “chink, chink” noise with every bouncy step. It isn’t the heavy chain mail he wears, that too is felt, but the small sack of nickel washers attached to him that clinks with each manipulation. There are well deployed crash boxes to add hilarity to comic falls and kazoo and slide whistles to emphasize other action.



photo by Steve Williford

Most important is their use of vocal variety. Each character has unique and robust vocal styling that coordinates with the visual character designs. From the reassuring announcer tones of the Narrator ushering the story along, to the Rodney Dangerfield accent from Puss in Boots, individual unique voices help keep the population of Storyland distinct. A silly song with a catchy bounce frames the three pigs who speak like classic Warner Brothers cartoons. There are hints of Burt Lahr in the vocal characterization of one of them. The entire audience is reduced to 12-year-olds giggling at the appearance and reappearance of the Tuffet, with its farty interjections. The show keeps up its energy by switching places and storylines, hopping along nimbly from one to the next.

The puppets are mostly rod puppets. They are made of felt and again high contrast color choices keep the show aesthetic bright and upbeat. Of special notice is the spider character, who is threatening with its clever, gangly articulation emphasizing various parts of his lines and endowing his movement with the scurrying effect which makes spiders uncomfortable for many. The show ends up in the tale of Rapunzel and Prince Charming. He is delightfully dopey in look



and sound. The Wacky Witch, Dobashoba, enters and exits as a flashing piece of ribbon accompanied with kazoo sound effects. She is properly threatening in her human form. The final character to appear is a dragon who is utterly adorable looking.

This high energy offering was very well received by the audience whether they had encountered it before or not. Dialogue included references which are current as well as some older ones, so every age related to the jokes. Thanks to the Village Puppeteers for a great romp to start the Saturday night shows.



Sunday, November 3rd - Punch Brunch

Punch & Judy - Puppetfolk Productions

Review by Mel Biske



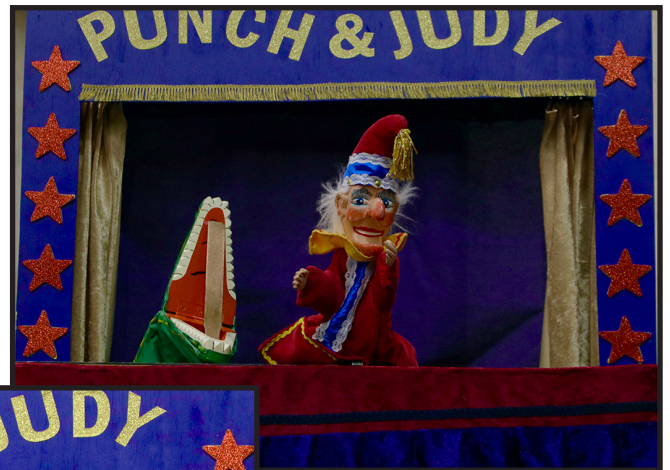
It has become a Great Lakes Regional Puppet Family Reunion (formerly referred to as Potlatch) tradition to conclude the weekend celebration with a Punch and Judy Show. While the original story has survived for centuries, modern day audiences have shunned it too violent and out of date with current morals for children.

In recent years there have been talented puppeteers who have studied and researched the basic story line and took to reforming the identity and personality of the main character, Punch. They modified his cruel, self-centered life and developed a more comical personality. His downfall is he is inept and shuns responsibility especially when it involves babysitting his son. Anne had Mr.

Punch believe that “baby sitting” actually meant “sitting on the baby”, which had her audience objecting very loudly.

At Potlatch we have been entertained with Punch and Judy shows by the likes of Jim Rose, Guy Thompson, Nancy Sander and others, with original comical adaptations. When I saw her name in the program, I recalled her adaptation of Punch and Judy a few years back with a Christmas theme. She was just beginning to study the Punch and Judy genre and I became curious to see how she eventually created her updated adaptation. She obviously became distracted because at Potlatch 2023 she performed another project she was working on, involving a children’s story book she discovered titled, *The Dragon Who Lived Downstairs*, authored by Burr Tillstrom. She immediately recognized it as being a visual puppet show. She took it upon herself to obtain the legal rights from the Burr Tillstrom Foundation to adapt the story, create a cast of Burr’s puppets with scenes drawn by Burr. She also obtained an audio narration, recorded by Burr, and used that in the well-rehearsed, finished production and presented it as a Saturday evening performance last year. Her entire story is available in the November, 2023 Puppet Patter in the Chicagoland Puppet Guild website.

With those credentials, I would venture to say our audience was rewarded with a now polished presentation of Anne Newman’s adaptation of *Punch and Judy* at the 2024 installment Sunday Morning Punch Brunch. On a personal note; Having just attained a milestone event in my life, Mr. Punch interrupted his wild ramblings with a “Happy Birthday Mel Biske”! Thank you, Mr. Punch, and thank you Anne.



Workshops - Saturday, November 2nd

Here's a quick review, synopsis, wrap-up and general information on the workshops presented on November 2nd. (*Workshop description not available at time of publication)

SESSION ONE - 9:30 AM

Sandye Voight

Gingerbread Crankie (Craft/Demo)

While at first glance, it might not seem that gingerbread has anything to do with puppetry, by popular request (2 people), Sandye Voight did a workshop/demonstration on how to make a gingerbread crankie. A crankie is a kind of scrolling scenery that can be used as scenery for puppet shows, especially shadow puppet shows. The gingerbread version has four walls, with a proscenium for crankie viewing cut into one. Working without a kitchen, Sandye demonstrated rolling out dough and tips for cutting out gingerbread patterns. She had pre-baked pieces to decorate and “glue” together using sturdy royal icing. The crankie scroll attached to a candy cane/dowel rod. She provided recipes and patterns and will do so for anyone who emails her at voight1970@me.com.



Jeff Biske

Graphic Design (Lecture/Demo)

Puppeteers are artistic people and are great at creating beautiful props, scenery and the puppets they use. However, there are times that creating an effective print and web design puzzles them. In this workshop Jeff discusses basic design principles, type and type usage, color choices, useful (and sometimes essential) computer programs used, and shows how to put it all together to create pleasing and successful print and web designs.



Linda Sigismondi

Scarf Puppet (Craft)

In this workshop, participants made basic scarf puppets. We used bandanas for bodies, wooden beads for hands and feet and wooden ball knobs for heads. The head and hands were strung to T-bars (made prior to the workshop) and all were dancing by the end of the workshop.



* Peggy Melchior Pearson

Make A Puppet (Craft)



* Nancy Sander

Oh That Birthday Party! (Lecture)

David Quesal

Character Development (Lecture/Demo)

With the help of Scott Gryder, David gave several different ideas, pointers and examples on ways to develop characteristics and personalities for their students' puppets. Puppeteers who brought their own puppets to the workshop, gained some excellent direction tips under David's tutorage.



Ginger Lozar

Downsizing Gracefully (Performance/Discussion)

Since Covid, my two person show has downsized to a one person show. My large stage with huge fender speakers and stands downsized to a very small microphone that is quite powerful and a calliope stage that rolls right into my van. My workshop demonstrated through a short puppet show, how one can carry less and still do a very entertaining puppet show. I also shared shorts, which are easy to carry in various baskets and instant puppet shows where children can become instant puppeteers with a little nurturing and direction.

Jean Kuecher

Blacklight Puppetry-Make A Puppet (Craft/Demo)

I brought glowing neon fluorescent materials and a black light puppet stage. Participants handcrafted their own hand puppet from fluorescent materials. The puppeteers manipulated and spoke for their puppets. Groups of 3 or 4 created their own original stories and presented their puppet shows from behind the hand puppet stage. Story development incorporated main character, goal, problem and solution. One story had a horse that wanted to eat seafood instead of grass. One story had a cow that learned to jump. The participants were very creative!



* Phillip Huber

Marionette (Lecture/Demo)

The Chicagoland Puppetry Guild Files

by Dave Herzog

The Chicagoland Puppetry Guild files were meticulously kept by Fred Putz for decades. This November we lost Fred and our incredible Guild Historian. While perusing this amazing collection of Chicago, national, and international puppetry ephemera, I continue to discover files of historical significance or special note. I am fortunate to be able to share my findings as a regular feature in each quarterly issue of The Puppet Patter. Appearing in this Issue...

A Tribute to Fred Putz

I started this column several years ago when Fred Putz asked me to take possession of several filling cabinets full of ephemera relating to puppeteers and puppetry in the Chicago area. Fred had been collecting these materials for over fifty years, but felt he could no longer take care of the collection due to the advancing effects of Parkinson's Disease.

As readers of The Puppet Patter know, I started this column to share this wonderful resource with the Guild. When it came to puppetry in the Chicago area Fred was always looking for events to promote, whether for a Guild member or any other puppeteer, local or visiting. Whenever possible, Fred would attend performances and carefully file programs and other support materials into his fast-growing collection of ephemera. Most importantly Fred reviewed these performances, for inclusion in the Puppet Patter, and often in The Puppetry Journal. In the case of major productions, he would often attend the opening night performance and receive a press packet after letting the companies know that he would be reviewing the performance for The Puppetry Journal and of course those press packets made it into the files.

Fred was man of many interests and skills, he had a deep interest in pipe organs and theater organs. In fact, for many years, Fred had a pipe organ in his home in Highland Park which he built himself! Fred was also for many years a teacher of Industrial Arts and Art at Highland Park High School. Fred was very interested in the well-being of youth and was a wonderful mentor to any puppeteer, young or old, who wanted to become a part of our community. Fred was a very kind and patient man and welcomed all, no matter how eccentric, into our circle. Above all, Fred was always open to the possibilities of puppetry and felt that all contributions to our art form big or small were of importance.

Fred promoted and heartily supported all organized puppetry he was the backbone of our Guild. A strong supporter of Potlatch and regional festivals always contributing his time and talents by heading a committee or being the Festival Director for the whole shebang. In the days before computers were in wide use, Fred would communicate with all his workers through rather large packets of correspondence. Fred could fit more into a standard size business envelope than anyone I ever met. We used to joke that Fred must have cut down a couple of Redwood trees to run a Festival. I'm sure the post office saw dollar signs any time Fred entered the facility with one of those mailings. Of course, what matters most is Fred always got the job done and did it well.



The content of most Fairy Tales includes positive and useful moral lessons which can be applied to a child's daily life and to later adult life. It is the purpose of The Tag-Along Puppet Theatre to develop scripts that place emphasis on these lessons and present them in an understandable, yet entertaining manner.

"Puppets with a Purpose" Frederic E. Putz, Puppeteer

The Three Little Pigs' Cast

Professor Oscar Owl

The Big Bad Wolf Blows Ham Pig's straw house down

Mother Pig instructs Hock Pig in the use of a garden hoe

Harry Pig builds his house

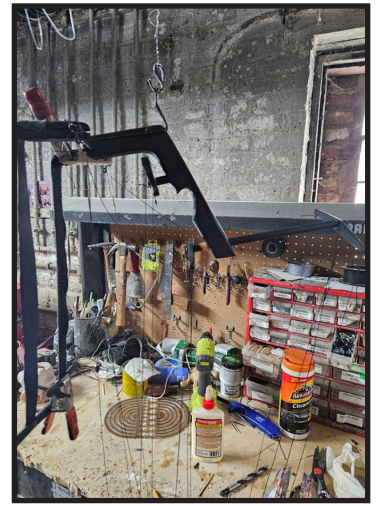
TO RECEIVE A COPY OF "THE THREE LITTLE PIGS" TEACHERS GUIDE, INFORMATION ON OTHER PROGRAMS, AVAILABLE PERFORMANCE DATE & FEES CONTACT: TAG-ALONG PUPPET THEATRE, FRED E. PUTZ, PUPPETEER 2580 OAK STREET, HIGHLAND PARK, IL 60035 PH 847.433.3429

Fred had two puppet companies over the years, Frederick's Marionettes which he actually started when he lived in Denver Colorado, and Tag Along Puppet Theater (AKA Magic Hand Puppets) later in life when he switched to hand puppet to make the schlepping a little easier. Richard Shnadig of Highland Park was Fred's partner in the Magic Hand Puppet Theatre. I can't imagine how many people he charmed with his performances over the years. Personally, my favorite was "Hippondra," his Opera singing Hippopotamus dressed in a harem girls costume with her fan and fainting couch. Poor Hippondra, she never got through a performance without "having the vapors." Fred always carried Guild and P of A materials when he performed, always eager to let folks know about our organizations.



As a young man Fred studied with marionette master Albrecht Roser in Germany. Fred’s lovely signature marionette “Innocence” was a tribute to his studies with the German puppet master, emulating Rosser’s famous character “Gustav.” The Rosser Bross style control used on the Innocence control is a wonder to behold and one of the most advanced marionette controls I’ve ever seen. Fred had the mind of an engineer, and it shows in this wonderful piece of puppetry paraphernalia.

I think one of Fred’s proudest achievements was advocating for the late Bill Fosser, of Opera in Focus, to receive the President’s Award for the Puppeteers of America and making it possible for Bill to fly to the P of A Festival at Concordia College in St. Paul, MN, to receive the award. Bill was so thrilled, later that year Bill was buried wearing the award that meant so much to him.



For me Fred was a dear friend, mentor, advisor, loyal fan, and promoter, his many acts of kindness and inclusion will never be forgotten. He was in fact responsible for me joining the CPG in the first place.

The Guild files read like a who’s who of worldwide puppetry, featuring major Chicago and Midwest puppeteers as well as world famous puppetry artists. Indeed, it would take several dozen pages just to list all the names included in the Guild Files.

This column is really a continuation of Fred’s column “Lest We Forget” and so, as I have begun for several years and will continue to do so, “The Chicagoland Puppetry Guild files were meticulously kept by Fed Putz for decades. While perusing this amazing collection of Chicago, national and international puppetry ephemera, I continue to find files of historical significance or special note. I am fortunate to be able to share my findings as a regular feature of The Puppet Patter. Appearing in this Issue...



In Memoriam



Fred Putz



It is with deepest sorrow that the Chicagoland Puppetry Guild must announce the passing of Fred Putz on November 15, 2024, at the age of 91. Fred was a beloved mainstay of our Guild, and attended many Potlatches with his dear wife Marylin.

In 2013 Fred received the Trustees’ Award from the Puppeteers of America. He has written and published articles in the Chicagoland Puppetry Guild Newsletter “Puppet Patter.” His articles on early puppeteers have been most informative and represent a great deal of research and writing of oft-neglected puppeteers’ history. Through these articles we can look back for ideas and inspiration and these essays by Fred give us the materials from which young and old puppeteers alike benefit.

Fred was the Corresponding Secretary of the Chicagoland Puppetry Guild as well as the Historian. He will be deeply missed.



Ahhh. The Afterglow of Potlatch.

I always enjoy the December issue of the Patter, or as I like to call it, “The Potlatch Edition.” The recap of the weekend is just like being there. Recently, I asked our editor if he would send out an email asking you to send your memories of the event. Thanks to all that responded (and helping me keep my job). Maybe someday I’ll find the time to get out there and enjoy the gathering myself.

As like so many other Potlatch regulars who have been attending for decades, I always look forward to visiting once again with dear friends. With some it would have been a year since we had seen each other, but just the first site of a friend immediately refreshes our friendship. It has been a wonder in knowing each family attending with children watching their children growing up to adulthood. This is an afterglow first and foremost each and every year.

We have known Bob and Judy Brown for as long as each of us have been attending Potlatch. It was so rewarding to be able to finally see the excellent filmed production of their life story, recalling outstanding events in their lives as we were witness to during our friendship. It was great Bob was able to attend this year.

With the knowledge I have accumulated throughout the years from puppeteers sharing their talents with their workshop specialties in the business. I enjoyed looking in for a short time on each presentation, just to take note of the undivided attention and appreciation on display with workshop students. I must admit however I did happen to spend a little more time absorbing the presenter’s subject, *Graphic Design Workshop*. But then again, I was being a little “partial”.

The Punch Brunch tradition with an audience of puppeteers totally familiar with the standard story line is always a challenge for the “Punch” aficionado. It is only a success if done live, in that it requires audience participation. Year after year our Great Lakes Region of *Punch and Judy* performers have managed to apply their own personality in creating a personal version for his or her audiences to totally enjoy. When it was time for me to approach an audience member and ask that person to write a review for Anne Newman’s interpretation of *Punch and Judy* I thought, “Why not review it myself?”

Mel Biske

Potlatch was infused with a plethora of puppet magic this year. I am particularly thrilled to have performed my piece *The Sensational Clockettes*, with David Herzog and Phillip Huber. This was especially relevant in light of the article about these tandem marionettes recently published in the last issue of Puppet Patter!

Steven Widerman

Memories... where do we begin?

Rose says she was quite taken by Sandy Voight’s Crankie class, which we will be introducing to a future *Bits and Pieces* workshop. She says it was informative and very understandable. Nicely done Sandy.

I try to get involved in whatever workshop is available and it’s really a tough choice. Jeff Biske held a very helpful session that was easily understood.

We appreciate the amount of talent involved during the whole weekend. We really appreciate the effort put forth during Potpourri. It’s not always easy getting up in front of folks to perform.

We both love the camaraderie expressed at Potlatch. We don’t have the same history as most folks do, but we always feel welcome. We love interacting with everyone, but especially sharing stories about Marc. He LOVED Potlatch!

We appreciate the opportunity to be a small part of this wonderful group.

Tim Dunworth

Warm memories of the weekend include learning Sandye Voigt’s secrets for masterful gingerbread crankie cases. I was gifted our demo model and can’t quite decide what to put on the scroll. It will be a feature of the holiday table for my family.

Seeing Joe Emory and grandson, Caden, perform the *Reluctant Dragon* delighted me, especially when the scene changed and the puppeteer audience oohed and ahed. The story was great but the awareness of how tough seemingly small things are is such a puppeteer thing.

I was happy to get to do a little SeaBeasting, it has been a long time since we three worked together.

I enjoyed so much that I cannot pick just one memory. Of course the people behind the puppets are so dear as I see them mostly only once per year. I am inspired to make a cute dragon after so many good examples this weekend....

Jill Fredrickson

Oh, where to start? Friday dinner, instead of whatever the restaurant offered, opted to make Beef Stroganoff in Dad’s room. So good. Bed so soft I couldn’t roll over. Ended up pulling the ironing board out of the closet and slept on that for a good nites sleep. Lots of good shows. Lots of good workshops. Lots of good people. So much fun. And bacon!

Neal Biske

I think my favorite moment was performing *The Sensational Clockettes* with Steven Widerman and Phillip Huber. Phillip had never done the number and learned it a half an hour before dinner. Phillip was a real trouper but then he always is. Steven's design for this number and the controls for the marionettes is pure genius.

Dave Herzog

I came away from Potlatch/The Puppeteers Homecoming with an excitement to get busy on new puppet productions. Recharged would be another word I'd use. I was also so happy to have seen friends and share with them this love for puppetry.

Another treat for me was being to perform for my peers and Bob Brown using the characters he created.

(reply from Jennifer Emory) The fun being a big happy family. And the support she saw of our Grandchildren and seeing and meeting with old friends and making new ones. She did not say watching her husband perform...LOL.

Joe Emory

Who's That Lady?

Mel was recently working on an article for the Puppet Patter regarding one of the founders of The Chicagoland Puppetry Guild, Hans Schmidt, and while searching the photo gallery for photos of Hans. He located this photo of Hans which shows him, as many of his students and friends remember him, as a true friend doing what he did best; Teaching puppetry. He was a professional teacher of the art of puppetry hired by a government program, the WPA (Works Progress Administration). He had an office and workshop at the Douglas Park field house. The photo includes a young lady, one of his students. Mel glanced at the photo and put it aside. Later, he had to return and look closer at the young lady. She reminded him of a person he have seen before. Then he was certain he had known this young lady for many years! Mel finally had a chance this year at Potlatch to confirm his hunch. It was true! Let me give you a chance to figure out who the "mystery lady" is. If you know who she is, please drop Mel an email and let him know.



(right) ??? and Hans Schmidt



The Marc Dunworth Foundation for the Performing Arts

The Marc Dunworth Foundation for the Performing Arts, is a non-profit organization founded to promote and encourage the performing arts, especially the puppet arts, through grants, scholarships, performances and education.

Any help you can provide to this cause, whether monetarily and/or spreading the word would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you

Please visit our web site for more information
<https://www.dunworthfoundation.org>

Publisher's Note: We here at the Patter are always looking for stories from our members: What kind of things are you working on? Is there a new technique that you come across that you want to share? Or whatever you think might interest others in the puppetry world. Check out the ad on the last page. Who knows? You might be published in the next Patter and become world famous in Chicago!

And Now A Bit of "Shameless Self-Promotion"



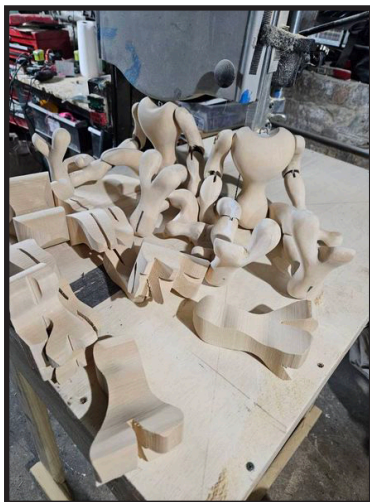
(No! this does not involve slot machines.)
by Dave Herzog

Those buzzing band saw and belt sander grinding noises you hear emanating from Chicago are coming from the Margate Park workshop of CPG member, Dave Herzog of Dave Herzog's Marionettes. In addition to shows and rehearsals, I'm busy carving up to 25 space cadet roller skating marionette kits for my next workshop at Team Land Productions in Las Vegas, Nevada. That's right! I'll be back at Team Land March 28 through 30, 2025, with my *Build a Space Cadet Roller Skating Marionette* workshop based on my own roller skating marionette Space Cadet, Zork Jr., from my production *Captain Zork's Outer Space Adventure*.



In addition, to accessing to my fifty plus years' experience as a professional puppeteer, you'll take home quite a bit from my workshop, each student will take home a fully-finished, carved wooden marionette roller skater painted and decorated any way you like, which you will fully string on a double airplane control designed to allow your marionettes to perform a wide array of skating moves including jumps and spins. There will be a hands-on Saturday morning lecture demo on creating all the various joints used in the creation of the figures. In addition, each student will receive a full set of patterns a sample of the "trunk fiber" used in the knee and elbow joints. But wait! There's more! You will also receive a full set of patterns for the marionette, as well as a black protective "puppet bag." Of course we will provide the string, paint and craft supplies for you to customize your figure. As if all of that was not enough Dave Herzog's Marionettes will have a drawing at the class for one of Dave's fully finished marionettes as well as some puppet books and other "goodies".

Interested in attending? Private Message Lisa Land Team Land Productions LLC on Facebook. The price of the workshop will include lodging and three sumptuous luncheon buffets catered at the studio.



What I Want To Be When I Grow Up

by Mel Biske



George & Lucille Cole

As a student of the James Shields Public School in Chicago, Illinois starting in 1940 and graduating in 1948, I can recall annual event our principal provided for the students. It wasn't until I was in the fifth grade that I could fully enjoy and appreciate a performance by the Cole Marionettes. Each year a new production. "Beauty and the Beast", "The Hearty Tin Soldier", "The Pied Piper of Hamelin", and I would never forget the special effect of the rats continuously jumping in the river. At the conclusion of each performance the curtain would draw closed, then moments later re-open with Mrs. Cole, wearing a sparkling long dress, posed lying across the set, which shocked the audience to see this giant person invade the scene designed for marionettes created for about one third life-size tall. Mrs. Cole (Who later became known as "Lucille"), as we became friends with her and George when we met at CPG meetings) would then present a backstage demonstration. When the Melikin Puppets began performing the school assembly circuit we always presented a backstage demonstration.

At the age of eight my parents perked my interest in becoming a Cub Scout. I joined and at the age of ten, mom and dad joined in as a Den Mother and Cub Master. My interest in puppetry was rekindled when one evening my dad came home after attending BSA Commissioner's meeting. He mentioned seeing a hand puppet show presented by Cub Scouts. The reason for the meeting was to promote puppetry as an activity for Cub Scout Pack Night. Den #1 went into production! Books from the library taught us the papier mâché technique to make puppet heads over various shapes (light bulbs worked the best). Mom made the costumes (the glove) and dad and I built a stage complete with footlights using Christmas tree light sets. We pulled off a variety show pantomiming novelty songs of the time, played with 78RPM records. Amazingly it went over quite well. Matter of fact, at Pack Night there were leaders present from visiting Cub Packs who invited us to perform at their Pack Night. We became a "Road Company!". By the time I had reached the age of 12 we had produced a few more variety shows with a mix of live comedy sketches and found our family performing the church basement circuit for woman's club meetings.



Some of Mel's early creations

Upon entering Kelly High School, I soon discovered the high school curriculum and homework assignments did not leave much time for puppet shows. During the first two years I took the required basic classes and as an elective I chose Art I first year and Art II the second. For the third as well as the fourth year both of my art instructors suggested to continue carrying on in art education as an Art Major. In addition to my daily classes, they also provided for me, while in Junior and Senior year, a ten-week Art Scholar Award at the Art Institute of Chicago. While running the course of learning various art forms and techniques I would, on occasion, use my sketching skills in cartoon format, to design original puppet characters always keeping hopes alive for future puppet endeavors. When my instructors noticed my work, they questioned me as to what purpose I intended to use these ideas for. I mentioned my long interest in puppetry and what I had accomplished in puppet creation and performing as a hobby.

They were anxious to see some of my puppet creations and asked me to bring a few to school. I brought a Yosemite Sam, Tweety Bird and Sylvester Cat, a copy of Kukla and Ollie and the cast (2 puppets) from the story of "The Three Wishes". They asked if it would be possible to present a performance for the Kelly High School P.T.A. As simple as it was, it was well received. I am ever thankful for my parents for setting me on the road to puppetry and for two teachers who recognized a possible future in the arts for a student.



(right) Mel entertains his Daughter-in-Law, Sandy, and her Grandniece, Kara. "Teddy" was used to entertain scouts for Blue and Gold dinners. Of course "Teddy" is wearing his official "Cub" Scout uniform.

2024 Potlatch In Pictures

Relive the fun of this years Potlatch with these beautiful pictures courtesy of Tih Penfil. And for even *more* pictures, visit the Great Lakes Puppet Potlatch Facebook page at facebook.com/groups/media



An impromptu discussion about why marionettes are the best of all puppets



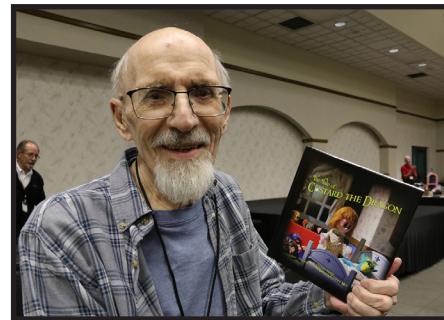
Dave and family



The Emory clan help Joe celebrate another birthday



Why do they always look like they're up to no good?



Mel shows off a book he put together for one of his Great-Granddaughters



David Syrotiak Sr. and Bob Brown compare notes



That's not a toy, young man! Put it down!



Opera in Focus display from the Melikin Puppet Collection



Playing "keep away" with the Great Lakes Region's checkbook



It's always difficult to cast the front end



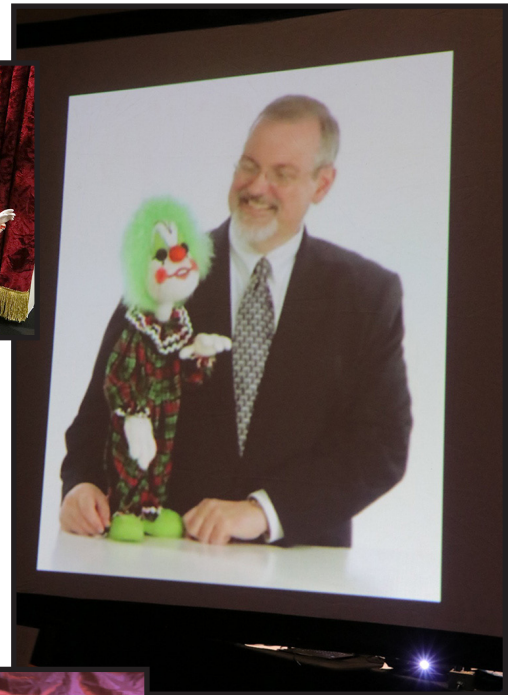
Okay. Next year it'll be Ernie. Can't wait until they try Big Bird



David Quesal "lends a hand" during a Potpourii act



(right)
Some of Rick's creations on display



Honoring Rick with a 28 Black & Red Flannel Shirt Salute



Dave pays tribute while Rick looks on. Of course he was looking down and correcting Daves grammer.

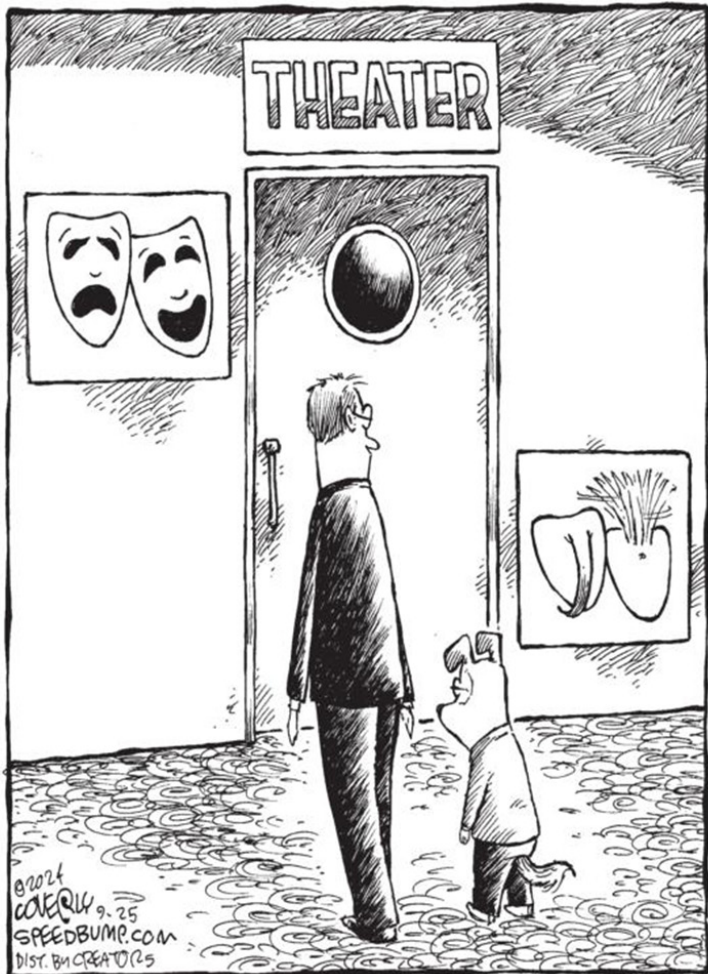
CPG - Class of 2024



The CPG is on Facebook, too!
Be sure to check us out!



Leave 'em Laughin'!
SPEED BUMP by Dave Coverly



STILL

HELP WANTED!

Chicagoland puppetry publication desperately seeking contributors for quarterly newsletter. Publications are read on-line and printed versions stored in the CPG archives for future reference. In addition, a copy is placed in the Newberry Library's archives for anyone to read. Publications are March 1st, June 1st, September 1st and December 1st, but submissions can be sent any time. Submissions (and maybe some photos) should be emailed to Mel Biske any time.

No experience necessary!

The Puppet Patter Editorial Staff.
Our address is:
melikinpuppets@comcast.net

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