



Grinder's Grumblings

November 2006

The newsletter for Grinder Productions members, media contacts, patrons and friends

Notes From the Director's Chair

I decided the newsletter was in need of a makeover!

This month's edition is chock-full of information on a wide variety of topics. I've tried not to be too long-winded with any of them, but if I have I do apologize! The last six months have certainly been a busy time, and the company has went through some sizeable "growing pains." Now I'm very happy to report that we're beginning to see the pay-off of our struggles over the last few months; attendance is up and continues to climb over last year, new members are joining us every month, and as you'll see in the article on page 2, we've now reached the point where a dedicated marketing professional can grace us with her presence. Way to go, everyone!



*I found this cleaning up my computer! Pictured above are Stephanie Russell and Shannon Miller in **Muzzle Blast**, the second show we did at Grinder Productions.*

Thanks, ladies!

Of course, there's still much more to be done. In this newsletter alone there are no less than three calls for people to help out or participate in various shows or projects. Please come on out and join us! Even if it's only for a couple of hours, any help you are able to give us makes a difference. With any luck, in another six months I'll be telling you about how far we've come yet again, and you'll be able to say to yourself, "I helped to make that happen!"

So until then, take care.

Eric

Change of Dates! Picasso at the Lapin Agile

It seems there has been a scheduling mix-up at the theatre! Elora Community Theatre and Grinder Productions were double-booked for the same weekend in May. While it wasn't anyone's fault, ECT had just sent their season brochure to print, an item involving considerable cost. In the interests of good theatre etiquette, I decided to push Picasso to one week later and save ECT a lot of grief. I hope the ability of our two companies to reach a consensus on this issue will be a good example of how the groups who use the Fergus Grand Theatre can co-operate within the building for their mutual benefit.

The new show dates are May 17th, 18th and 19th.

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Grinder Productions now has its own telephone number!

Drop me a line anytime at 519-780-7593.

Introducing Sarah McGoldrick, Director of Marketing

Selling tickets is probably the biggest, toughest, in theatre, and one that is often overlooked when it comes to organizing theatre companies. Quite often producers don't want to bother with having a marketing person (thinking they can do it all themselves), or they give their marketing person so much other work they have very little time to devote to selling shows. When I started Grinder Productions I was determined not to make the same mistake as so many who have come before us.

Sarah brings a wealth of experience to Grinder Productions. As a reporter and columnist with the Fergus-Elora News Express she has her hand on the pulse of the community. She also works as a freelance writer for several publications and also takes on work in promotion and event planning, thus making her an ideal fit for live theatre. Sarah is also an active volunteer Green Spaces Centre Wellington at the Fergus Grand, so she's no stranger to Grinder Productions, and live theatre.

Welcome aboard, Sarah!

Final Report: Wuthering Heights

This time the power stayed on!

I'm happy to report that the second show of our fall and winter season at the Fergus Grand went off almost without a hitch (a few scraped knees and a wardrobe malfunction or two). Many thanks to the cast and crew on this one, all of whom went far above and beyond the call of duty, whether it was building, painting, finding props or bugging everyone they knew to come and see it, these guys did it all and more. While our final house count wasn't quite as high as our last show, with nearly all the bills in I'm thrilled to tell you that the show still came in under budget and in the black. And perhaps more importantly I can tell you that this particular show has generated a lot of good feelings about Grinder Productions in the community, specifically through our "Thanksgiving Postcards" promotion. Thanks, everyone!

Thanksgiving Postcards

For this promotion we sent out postcards to everyone on the Grinder Productions Mailing List offering anyone who brought their postcard to the box office by October 13th \$4 off a pair of tickets to Wuthering Heights. Several people took us up on the offer, but several more were simply thrilled that we had thought of them at this time of year.

Progress Report: Everyman/Everywoman



*Better graphics
coming soon...*

Rehearsals are just now getting underway for our next show, Everyman, or Everywoman, as we should be properly calling it. We still need people to be in this show! This is a fairly "open-ended" production, so anyone who wants to get involved and can make the rehearsals is welcome to join us. We also need at least one person who's very creative to help with finding/building prop and costume pieces, someone to head up the sourcing, editing and operation of the sound for the show, and someone to operate the follow spot once we get into the theatre. If you are interested in any of these jobs, or would like a part onstage please let me know ASAP (by phone at 519-780-7593 or e-mail at grinder@grinderproductions.org), and we will get you on board. No experience necessary.

Watch for more details on this amazing show in the December newsletter!

HEY KIDS! IT'S YOUR TURN TO BE THE STARS!

It's tough being a kid in theatre these days, isn't it? You want to be onstage so bad, but there just aren't that many opportunities to do stuff. Well you're in luck, because here is a show that's all about you!

On Saturday, January 20th, 2007, Grinder Productions will present a show called "Future Stars" at the theatre, a variety show for young performers. If you're under 18 years old and a member of Grinder Productions then I want YOU to be in it.

If you sing, dance, play an instrument, then



***You could
be here!***

you'll fit right in. Want to get together with a friend and do a short skit? No problem! Maybe you juggle, tell jokes, do magic tricks, make funny noises, almost anything goes. And if you don't know what to do just let me know you just want to be in the show and we will find something that's right for you.

Sign up today! You (or your parents) can call me at 519-780-7593 or e-mail me grinder@grinderproductions.org and I'll put you on the list, talk to you about your act, get you all the info about the show.

November Workshop: Set Design

The 2006-2007 workshop series continues in November and December with the focus shifting to the world of the designer.

Our November workshop will be on set design. It will cover the "aesthetic" aspects of working onstage; form, colour, line, contour, texture, movement, and how these elements come together. We will also talk briefly about the various movements that have inspired (and continue to inspire) stage design today, including naturalism, impressionism, and others. In addition we will also cover the practical considerations of designing a show for an actual production, including the creation of ground plans, front elevations and other technical drawings, stock scenery pieces, stage terminology, and the steps involved in taking a show from its original concept to opening night.

The workshop will be held over two days, November 27th and 29th, from 7pm to 9pm at the Grinder Studio. The cost will be \$50 per participant. Everyone who successfully completes this course will be offered the chance to design a set for an upcoming Grinder Productions show. Class size is limited so please reserve your spot early via e-mail at grinder@grinderproductions.org or by phone at 519-780-7593.

December Workshop: Costume Design

Our December workshop will deal with the practical and aesthetic considerations of costume design and working on costumes for a show. This course will cover some of the historical trends in fashion that have influenced stage costumes, as well as common characteristics of various period costumes, along with some tips about how to "fake" some pieces to get authentic period looks.

We will also cover the purely practical consideration of doing costumes for a show, from what measurements to take and how, to making a costume breakdown, conducting fittings, and working on a show as a dresser. These are the skills that are most often overlooked in workshops on costumes, yet most shows are set in the present day, so these are the skills you will most likely find useful on an actual production.

The workshop will be held over two days, December 4th and 6th, from 7pm to 9pm at the Grinder Studio. The cost will be \$50 per participant. Everyone who successfully completes this course will be offered the chance to design costumes for an upcoming Grinder Productions show. Class size is limited so please reserve your spot early via e-mail at grinder@grinderproductions.org or by phone at 519-780-7593.

Volunteers Needed: Santa Claus Parades

Grinder Productions is entering a float in this year's Santa Claus Parades in Fergus and Elora and we want our float to be a memorable one! We also want promote Everyman, the balance of our season, Grinder Productions and the joys of becoming a member of Grinder Productions.

I would love to have one of our members take this project and run with it, but even if I have to do it all myself I still need people to ride the float, hand out flyers, etc.

Please help me out!

Call 519-780-7593 or e-mail grinder@grinderproductions.org Today!

Introducing the Belwood Division

And then there were 3...

I'm pleased to announce that Grinder Productions is set to expand yet again! In addition to our fall-winter-spring season at the Fergus Grand Theatre and our summer season at the Ennotville Historical Library we will produce two shows in the summer of 2007 at Lions Hall in Belwood.

For those you who don't know about Belwood, it is a small, quaint village on the shores of Belwood Lake, just East of Fergus. In the wintertime it's pretty quiet, just a church, a pretty good restaurant, a general store and Lions Hall, often rented out for dances and other events. But in the summer Belwood comes alive, a major tourist attraction for cottagers, campers, boaters, etc. That and the "satellite communities" of Belwood; Maple Leaf Acres Trailer Park, Pine Meadows Retirement Community, Highland Pines campground and others increase their activities as well, thus making it an ideal place for a small-scale theatre operation, just like us.

We're going to start out very cautiously for the first year with just two productions, each running for three performances each. Nonetheless, these shows will be full productions, and there will be plenty of opportunities to help out onstage, offstage and with the unique challenges of promoting theatre in a new venue.

Check out the playbill below, and see you this summer in Belwood!

Announcing the Grinder 2007 Summer Seasons

You're getting it here first!

Here are the shows I have selected for the 2007 summer seasons in Ennotville and Belwood. I have to stress that this list is VERY tentative, and all the shows, dates and even venues are subject to change (though I would like things to stay as I have set them out here). At this time I don't think I will be directing any of these shows, so I'll be looking for directors for all these shows soon, especially those who participate in our Directing workshop, coming up in February. Having two shows in two venues at the same time will offer more opportunities for everyone to get involved, both onstage and off, but will also make new demands on company members, and I'll be looking to all of you to help us make this summer a success.

Ennotville Library

I Ought to be in Pictures—a comedy by Neil Simon, June 15th—July 7th

Talley's Folly—a romantic comedy by Langford Wilson, July 13th—August 4th

Billy Bishop Goes to War—a Canadian Musical by John Gray, August 10th—September 1st

Belwood Lions Hall

The Melville Boys—a Canadian comedy by Norm Foster, July 13th—14th

Noises Off—a farce by Michael Frayn, August 17th—18th