

***Don't Drink The Water* Entertains Expanding Audience Base With Plenty of Laughs**

Our second show, *Don't Drink The Water*, played to two sellout crowds in between snowstorms. From our audience feedback we learned that they love the venue, the parking under the garage, the acoustics, the new lighting, and of course the excellence of the show itself.

Word is starting to spread in the Canton/Stoughton community that great theatre is just around the corner. The large neon sign outside the school advertising our productions causes some drivers to stop at that guard's hut to inquire about the shows.

A quick analysis of shows we produced over the last six years compared to our first two shows at MHS reveals that we are growing our audience base by 30-40%.

So spread the word - the Milton Players are Alive and Well, and producing great theatre in Canton. And with our last show of the season having been cast we can promise the audiences will love our next show - the thrilling mystery *Laura*.

Special thanks to the Kirichok boys for helping out with front of house setup and Richard White's daughters for their excellent work doing the 50/50 raffles. Their energy and enthusiasm were infectious. Also kudos to Judy Leonardo and Maureen Truax for stepping in at the last moment to replace Diana Kane the last weekend of show.

Here are some important dates for upcoming activities:

- Setup for *Laura*: March 29 (flats painting in basement and furniture setup on stage), and April 5 (set construction). Coffee and lunch provided.
- *Laura* performances: April 25 and 26; May 2, 3, and 4.
- Volunteers still needed to help Vickie for parking attendants, wine pourers, ushers, and hospitality setup. Contact her at vgkp93@yahoo.com

Executive Board Proceedings, Monday, February 10, 2014 (Minutes recorded by Glenn Ryan)

- 1) Dawn, Cathy, Kevin, Frank, Laura, Erin, Vickie, Maureen, and Glenn were in attendance.
- 2) Minutes for January 6, 2014 were approved.
- 3) Corresponding Secretary report: Best wishes to Michael Bradley on recovery from detached retina surgery and to Diana Kane who is back home from Beth Israel after a mini-stroke scare – she is home and doctors have given her medications and the okay to go back to work.

- 4) Treasurer report: Dawn will give a breakdown of expenses at the March meeting but her preliminary report shows that we are still in good shape financially and that we will have come in under budget for *Don't Drink The Water*.
- 5) Production report for *Laura*: Director Tom Coon has cast the seven roles in the show and a readthrough was held February 12. Production manager Frank Moffett and assistant production manager Dawn Crowell reported that the stage manager will be Bruce Houston, costumes will be done by Pat Brawley, and the set design by Kevin Lowney.
- 6) Erin presented a schedule of publicity dates for *Laura* and provided us with a breakdown of communications sent out in January via the Constant Contact software program. There were 8 communications sent out, three of which included an email blast to over 1,100 each on our mailing list advertising *Don't Drink The Water*. There were also two audition notices sent out to 233 prospective actors/actresses each for *Laura*. Erin showed us how Constant Contact keeps track of how many people open the emails and click through, thus giving us an 'open rate' for us to judge how successful our communications are getting read. Comments on the show feedback sheets mentioned our audience wanted more desserts available, they liked the new theatre space, and asked us to provide more information about handicapped accessibility.
- 7) Laura Dunkum reported that we had 455 tickets sold for the show. That total did not include front of house workers who viewed the production. Laura has changed the message machine to advertise *Laura* and announce we are open for sales.
- 8) Vickie announced that during *Laura* she will try letting the audience in the auditorium through both left and right entrances. She expects this will reduce the number of ushers needed to walk them to the Tables 4-6 side of the aisles.
- 9) After a lengthy discussion the board voted not to do a musical during the 2014/15 season. There was strong sentiment that we do one for the 2015/16 season. Planning should commence with a musical subcommittee this Spring and the board must address the technical issues (such as fly space, sound, mic-ing, cost to produce in the new space) limiting us right now to produce a musical so that we will be ready for 2015/16.
- 10) MHS Issues: Board approved purchase of material for new table cloths; Vickie volunteered to make new black tops. Dawn requested that we remind MHS coordinator Paula to have fire marshals in on a specified date for show clearance; Frank said he would ensure it was done.
- 11) New Business: (a) Better scheduling for auditions and readthroughs were discussed so as not to interfere with a current production – MHS might not have restricted dates in May like the Woman's Club which would allow us to slip our last show into May; (b) Kevin was given approval to purchase a new XLR cable; (c) Frank took on the action item to contact MHS building maintenance to have them fix the three leaking pipes in the props/costume room; (d) Frank to investigate for March board meeting what it would cost

us to hire a photographer to do black and white head shots for each show; (e) the LED lights for house lights is the responsibility of the engineer at MHS. They will be responsible for purchasing incandescent or new LED lamps that dim and hopefully fix the flickering lights that occurred during the show; and (f) Frank volunteered to arrange a lighting/sound class with Dan Sheehan so that we can have more trained people in lights and sound.

Next board meeting is March 17, 2014, 7:00 PM, Milton Yacht Club.

Meeting adjourned at 8:34 PM.

(End of board minutes)

Frank Notes from Our President