



# THE MINOTAUR

ATHENIAN BEREAN COMMUNITY PLAYERS NEWSLETTER

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## Tragedy Befalls A Member Family

Tanyah and Andy Stone lost their dream home they built together in 2004 to a house fire on Friday, January 8th. Although they were able to escape with their two children and dog, everything else in the home was destroyed in the fire.

They are especially crushed to have lost family photographs, scrapbooks, and the quilts that Tanyah held dear. If anyone has photos of Tanyah and her family please go to the following shutterfly account to upload and share them: [www.shutterfly.com](http://www.shutterfly.com). The user ID is [cweeks02@hotmail.com](mailto:cweeks02@hotmail.com), and the password is [stone](#).

The Stones are currently in temporary housing at the Presbyterian parsonage in Nelsonville. ABC Players has been helping with meals, kitchen, and cleaning supplies. Other friends and co-workers including those from Rocky (Tanyah's employer) and the City of Athens (Andy's employer) have contributed supplies and services as well. If you would like to extend a helping hand, please contact Celeste Parsons at [the.abc.players@gmail.com](mailto:the.abc.players@gmail.com) for a list of items or services that they may still need.

Good luck, Andy and Tanyah, as you re-build your lives and home.



These two photographs were taken by Jim Korpi on Saturday, January 16th, during a volunteer effort to clean up after the fire.

In the top photo Tanyah peers down from the edge of the foundation as friends, family, and other volunteers work below sifting through the rubble.

In the bottom photo, a volunteer uncovered these photographs that were spared in the fire. There were other "finds" like these that delighted Tanyah and Andy.

In just five hours, with the help of some loaned heavy equipment and strong backs, the area was transformed from a destruction zone to a site for new beginnings.

Photographs by Jim Korpi

Check out Jim's photographs at <http://www.jimkorpi.com/blog>

# Spotlight

## Joe Balding

Birthday: March 19

Birthplace: Rahway, New Jersey

Hometown: Athens (his mother's hometown)

Siblings: One brother who lives in Athens

High School: Graduated AHS 1970

College: Undergraduate Education degree OU

Occupation: Retired Special Education Teacher  
at Vinton County High School

Favorite Musical: *Les Miserables*



Joe Balding is known to most of us as the co-founder of Athenian Players Theater. He, along with partner Steve Haskins, formed APT in the summer of 1992, and debuted with *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* in December of the same year. Joe has been an active member and officer of APT since its founding and its merger with BCP (Berean Community Players) in 2009.

Joe's first taste of theater was as a student at Athens High School. He took a drama course which at the time was offered as part of the regular curriculum and taught by Gardenia Obloy. Joe decided to audit the course, which meant he wouldn't receive credit or a grade for it and hence not be responsible for the entire amount of required course work. He thoroughly enjoyed it and apparently impressed Mrs. Obloy because she ended up not only giving him credit for the course but gave him an "A" to boot!

Joe fondly recalled his high school drama club experiences: being a member of the chorus of Oliver, understudying roles, and dancing to "Black is the Color of My True Love's Hair" in a variety show they put on. The entire process from start to finish is what hooked Joe into theater.

After high school Joe enrolled at Ohio University in the Education Department. After he graduated with a degree in Education, he was hired by the Nelsonville-York High School as a Special Education teacher. Unfortunately, Joe

had no real office and had to teach from a cart that he pushed from class to class. In fact, Joe tells me that he shared an office with Sylvia Abbott (another long time ABC Players member) for those two years.

After two years of teaching in this frustrating manner, Joe decided to return to OU to pursue a Master's degree in Education. As a grad student he did a lot of work in the field as a teaching assistant for undergrads, fulfilling their student teaching requirement.

Joe left the grad program before he completed his masters thesis and joined the Peace Corps where he was assigned to Ponape, Micronesia. His experience there was cut short after he became sick with an infection. There only 3 weeks, Joe returned to Athens. Once home, he landed a job as a Special Education teacher (with an office) at Vinton County High School where he remained until his recent retirement.

It wasn't until Joe was settled in his position in Vinton County that he began to pursue his love of theater that he discovered as a high school student. He began taking theater classes taught by OU theater faculty that were offered at OU's Communiversiity. He also traveled to Columbus to take Saturday workshops conducted by CATCO.

He auditioned for a variety of roles with OVST,

and finally landed his first “real role” (as he put it) as the “White Rabbit” in OVST’s 1985 production of *Alice in Wonderland*.

His life took a major setback when his partner of five years died unexpectedly in his sleep from a heart defect. However, Joe continued to stay involved in theater. He took part in several productions with the Columbus Children’s Hospital Pleasure Guild: he was a harem guard in *Aladdin* (1990), “Wilbur” the pig in *Charlotte’s Web* (1991), and the “Tin Man” in the *Wizard of Oz* (1992).

Joe’s first paid theater gig was with The Theater Project in Columbus. He and long time partner Steve Haskins had met by then and they both were cast in a musical adaptation of *Robin Hood*, Joe as “Robin Hood” and Steve as “Friar Tuck”. How much did they make, you ask? Oh, about \$7 apiece! But the best reward from the experience was meeting and forming a life-long friendship with a fellow actor from the show. Joe and Steve became the godparent’s of her children.

Joe has performed in film (*The Little Black Book*), outdoor theater (*Trumpet in the Land*, New Philadelphia), audio books, and radio and TV commercials, but his favorite medium is live theater.

Joe’s favorite aspect of theater is discovering what the words in a script mean. At some point during the process he usually has an “aha!” moment when he realizes why his character is saying a particular line. Joe feels that going over and over lines in and out of rehearsal is so crucial to learning the meaning behind the lines. His least favorite



Joe as “Wargrave,” Tracy Corrigan as “Marston,” and Steve Haskins as “Blore” in APT’s 2005 production of *And Then There Were None*.

***“Poor Steve and Nancy were beginning to think they would have to ‘do it’ right there in front of God and everyone.”***  
Joe Balding

part of theater? When the commitment to and responsibility for being in a production is not shared by others involved.

Although Joe has done some directing he really loves acting. He would jump at the chance to be in a production of *Les Miserables*, in any role—to be a part of it would be a definite highlight for him. And he feels he has absorbed so much knowledge throughout his experiences that maybe someday he could impart this to fellow actors by serving as an acting coach.

Joe’s biggest hurdle to overcome in life has been his lack of self confidence, which he still struggles with today. His partner Steve believed in and supported Joe in a manner that no one else had before. Steve helped pull Joe into theater and enabled him to become the actor he is today. He helped Joe gain self confidence, and although Steve is gone (he died unexpectedly in 2006) Joe still tries to live up to Steve’s example.

I asked Joe to relate a memorable theater experience, and he replied: “My most memorable theatre experience was in a production of *Social Security* for OVST. Debbie Daniels was playing my wife and Steve Haskins and Nancy Neunn were playing our brother and sister in-law. Debbie and I were supposed to enter and interrupt Steve and Nancy in an amorous moment. When we tried to open the door, it was stuck. We were pulling and pulling, and Steve and Nancy had to keep going at it like wild animals, and finally Debbie and I were able to push the door open enough to squeeze through and keep Steve and Nancy from having to start removing pieces of clothing. I don’t know what the audience thought. Poor Steve and Nancy were beginning to think they would have to ‘do it’ right there in front of God and everyone.”

I wish I was in the audience for *that* one! I must say, knowing Joe has been a joy for me. And getting to know him better was delightful!

You can catch Joe next in ABC Players’ *Little Women* as “Mr. Laurence.”



# Fall Reflections



## Quilt Raffle Winner

Celeste Parsons, Director of *Quilters*, and Winnie Brelsford (right) of Urbana, stand next to the quilt that was used during ABC Players' August 6 - 9 production of *Quilters*. Winnie had the winning raffle ticket for the quilt, which earned over \$1,170 for Stuart's Opera House in Nelsonville. Susan Holmes, of the Nelsonville Quilt Company, coordinated the piecing and quilting of the quilt.

## Successful Garage Sale

by Celeste Parsons

Rain didn't prevent a surprising number of shoppers from showing up at our "garage sale" in the Stuart's Opera House lobby on Sept. 26. Even before the official 10 a.m. starting time, the first visitors were knocking at the door.

As a result of the sale and the cleanup day that preceded it we are now \$156.20 richer, both the costume room and the storage area under the 1879 room are a lot more accessible, and a Nelsonville secondhand store was happy

to take the leftover items.

Thanks to all those who helped in the cleanup and sale: Sylvia Abbott, Carol Ault, Joe Balding, Dean Barker, Karen Chan, Jim and Celeste Parsons, Ginny Puhl, Shelly Riggs, Cecilia Rinaldi, Sandy Russell, Valerie Schrader, Julie Stout-Dickelman, Heidi Wilhelm, and Patty Witmer. A serendipitous benefit was having some time just to visit among ourselves!



## Humble Play Winner

Celeste Parson's play, *An Elegant Solution*, won "Appalachian Pick" at the Humble Play Festival this past October. Her play was read October 2nd by ABC Players under the direction of Ruth Borovicka.

Here is Celeste accepting her award.

Congratulations Celeste!

## New Faces and First's

Director Dean Barker's vision for Terry Pratchett's *Wyrd Sisters* came to life with the help of many new faces and firsts this fall. Not only was this Dean's first foray into directing, we saw many new faces in the cast and crew. This was thanks mainly due to Dean's personal campaign and outreach to the community. Early on, Dean contacted Timothy S. Klugh from Columbus to provide the original music and sound effects for the play. In addition, Dean held auditions in two locations which expanded the talent base for him to choose from. The four day run drew 304 attendees.



Castle guards (Clyde Tippee and Mike Ritter) confront "Magrit" (Heidi Wilhelm)



"Hwel" (Chris Neumann) listens to "Vitoller" (Jim Parsons)

## A Christmas Carol

Julie Stout-Dickelman dusted off her scripts and costumes and returned with another successful run of *A Christmas Carol* this past December.

**The three performances drew 782 in attendance!** All proceeds went to benefit Stuart's Opera House in Nelsonville.

Congratulations Julie on your triumphant return with your wonderful adaptation!



The cast of  
*A Christmas Carol*

## Logo Design Selected

On January 13th at the general ABC Players meeting, the selection process for a winner of the Logo Design Contest was begun. The review of the six design entries culminated in a vote to narrow the entries down to three. It was then determined that an additional meeting would be held Thursday January 21st to further discuss the designs and conduct a final vote.

The January 21st meeting drew 17

ABC Players and after several pieces of pizza and a lively discussion facilitated by member Ardelle Donohue, there was a final vote on the three top entries.

The winning design, by majority vote, was from artist **Wendy Van Sickle** of Nelsonville. As outlined in the contest rules, ABC Players reserved the right to "tweek" the winning design, so Ardelle will meet with the artist to present the proposed changes

and request a new mock-up of her design.

When the design is re-worked and accepted by ABC Players, we will begin to use it. Hopefully in the May 2010 newsletter we will have the design ready to publish in its final form!

Congratulations Wendy, and thank you to all the artists who submitted entries.

Please plan to attend our **next meeting** to be held at Stuart's Opera House:

**Wednesday  
February 17  
6:00 PM**

You don't need to be a member to attend. Come and see what we're all about!

**Attention!**

**Play  
selection**  
for the  
2010/11  
season will be  
at the  
**April 14th**  
meeting!

If you would like to propose a play, please go to our website for more information.

## This and That

**Wanted: "Refreshment Czar"** for *Seussical*. Responsibilities include scheduling counter workers for each show, soliciting/coordinating donations of food, drink and supplies. If you are interested, please contact Celeste Parsons at [the.abc.players@gmail.com](mailto:the.abc.players@gmail.com).

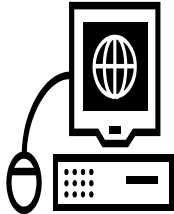
**Wanted: Business Sponsor** for *Seussical*. If any one knows of a local business that is or may be interested in sponsoring this musical, please contact Karen Chan at [karenmargaretchan@gmail.com](mailto:karenmargaretchan@gmail.com)

**Wanted: Delegate to OCTA**, whose job would be to attend regional meetings. If you are interested or would like more information, please contact Celeste Parsons at [the.abc.players@gmail.com](mailto:the.abc.players@gmail.com).

**Officer Change:** Alison Bartlett officially resigned as 2009/2010 Corresponding Secretary. Jim Parsons, as Webmaster, will take over most of the corresponding work.

## Web Site Address Change

by Jim Parsons



If your Web browser bookmark for the ABC Players Web site points to the old address ([www.athenianplayerstheatre.org](http://www.athenianplayerstheatre.org)), it will stop working on February 15, 2010. The new address is [www.abcpayers.org](http://www.abcpayers.org).

Here's a quick way to see if there's anything new on the site: the last item on the home page is the "What's New"

section that tells the date and purpose of the most recent update to the home page. But the site is constantly being updated, and there may have been several changes since the last time you looked at the page. So, there's a "Details" link that takes you to a page that lists all changes from the most recent back into time. That makes it easy to see what's been changing on the site.

## New Acquisitions

Jim Parsons recently purchased through eBay six used dimmer modules, each of which contains two dimmers. Three of these have now been installed in the SOH dimmer rack thereby providing six additional channels for use in controlling lighting instruments.

The remaining three modules are available to be swapped out with any module that is malfunctioning until the malfunctioning unit is repaired — or, if the required additional wiring were installed, they could be used to add still another six channels for stage lighting.

The new modules were put to first use during Wyrđ Sisters to light the demon. Any group performing in Stuart's Opera House will benefit from this lighting capability improvement.

Jim also purchased through eBay four new headsets. Now we have six fully functioning sets, plus two spare headsets.



When asked about these purchases, Jim replied:

*"I had planned to get two headsets that were exact matches for the ones that came with our Kenwood radios for about \$120. But, by the time we had voted to do it, the offer was no longer on eBay, and the other sources wanted as much as \$200 for two.*

*So, for \$39.80, I bought two headsets that were designed for another model of Kenwood radio. We tried them out during A Christmas Carol, and they worked fine. In fact, people liked them better than the original equipment because they have a PTT (press-to-talk) switch on the wire between the headset and radio. So, I bought two more for another \$39.80. Now we have four new headsets for \$79.60."*

Thanks for getting these great deals Jim!

# Upcoming

## Fun in McArthur

by Penni AlZayer

The Friends of the Library and the Friends' Community Players have a Mad Tea Party hosted by Alice, the Hatter and all the other Wonderland folk. It's at the Herbert Wescoat Memorial Library in McArthur on Sun., March 14, at 2:00. Tickets are \$5.00 - on sale at the library after

Feb. 1. Guests are invited to wear their best or most unusual hats for this fun-filled event.

Also, this year's Spring Literary Arts Festival "All That Jazz" will be a Roaring 20's themed event with a Speakeasy Night (cocktails, mocktails, gambling, dancing, etc. -

(Fun in McArthur, continued...)

password required, of course) on Fri. April 16, an antique car show, extraordinary guests speakers on Sat., April 17, a Gatsby-themed dinner/dance with a live dance band and fashion show the evening of the 17th and a luncheon

followed by a vaudeville-follies type performance the afternoon of Sun., April 18. Details should soon be up on the library's website, [www.vintoncountypublic.lib.oh.us](http://www.vintoncountypublic.lib.oh.us).

## Two down, two to go!

It's always sad to see the end of a show's run, as was the case for *Wyrd Sisters* and *A Christmas Carol*. But fear not, we have two more productions on the horizon!



**Mar 4-7: *Little Women*** by Louisa May Alcott, adapted by Peter Clapham. Directed by Valerie Schrader, with assistance from Heidi Wilhelm. \*\*\*In Rehearsal\*\*\*



**May 7-8 & 14-16: *Seussical*** by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty, based on the works of Dr. Seuss. Sylvia Abbott will direct, and Lynn Sullivan will be musical director. \*\*\*Auditions in March/Stay Tuned\*\*\*



## Winter/Spring Southeast Regional Theater

Actor's Guild of Parkersburg	<i>The Foreigner</i>	1/15-16, 22-24, 29-30	Parkersburg
	<i>Fiddler on the Roof Jr.</i> (youth theater)	2/26-27, 3/5-7	
	<i>Man of La Mancha</i>	4/23-24, 30, 5/1-2, 7-8	
Actors Moveable Theater	<i>Lone Star</i> and <i>Bourbon and Laundry</i>	4/2-3, 9-10	Arts West, Athens
The Ariel Players	<i>The Odd Couple</i> (female version)	2/5-7	Ariel-Dater Hall, Gallipolis
	<i>Seussical</i> (Jr theater)	3/5-7	
	<i>The Princess Plays</i> (Jr theater)	4/16-18	
Athens High School	Senior One Acts	February	Athens High School
	<i>The Mouse That Roared</i>	April	
Coshocton Footlight Players	<i>Moonlight &amp; Magnolias</i>	3/5-20	Triple Locks Theatre, Coshocton
The Hope Players	<i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i>	1/29-31	Hopedale
	<i>An Evening of One Acts</i>	3/5-7	
	<i>Joseph &amp; the Technicolor Dreamcoat</i>	4/30, 5/1-2	
Little Theater of Tuscarawas County	<i>Cinderella</i>	2/19-21, 26-28, 3/4-6	New Philadelphia
	<i>A Grand Night for Singing</i>	4/23-25, 29-30, 5/1-2, 7-8	
Mid-Ohio Valley Players	<i>Social Security</i>	1/15-16, 22-24, 29-30	Players Theatre, Marietta
	<i>You Can't Take it with You</i>	3/5-6, 12-14, 19-20	
	<i>Black Coffee</i>	4/23-24, 30, 5/1-2, 7-8	
Zanesville Community Theater	<i>J.B.</i>	1/22-24, 29-31	Zanesville
	<i>Death of a Salesman</i>	3/19-21, 26-28	