

*A Quarterly Publication*

## Puppet Palooza! March 6-9, 2014

Chicago's Annual Celebration of Puppet Arts



Known as "The National Day of Puppetry" celebrated each year by puppet guilds across the country that represent the Puppeteers of America, this event has grown in the Chicago area to now include three days of puppet related events.

Under the guidance of Silvia Kraft-Walker, CPG Director of the NDOP along with Laurel Shapiro, Youth Services Librarian of the Vernon Area Library District, the outreach program will now include not only children of all ages but families, teens and adults. In this issue of the "Patter" you will find a full page description of all the activities planned with locations and times.

All CPG members are invited to take part in the Saturday, March 8<sup>th</sup> celebration at the Vernon Area Library, 300 Olde Half Day Road in Lincolnshire, Illinois. There will be an exhibit table to display puppets and if you desire, a registration table to display your promotional material. CPG Guild members will be on hand to

*The Green Fairy, Dyspepsia and Sleeping Beauty.*

greet the library patrons with their favorite puppet. Doors open at 9:00 am.

At 11:00 am, Michigan puppeteer, Rick Morse, will present a family puppet show, "Sleeping Beauty" (Will Dyspepsia, the green fairy, curse the innocent princess to sleep forever; or will the bumbling good fairy, Euphoria foil her evil plan?) After the performance, young audience members will be invited to a workshop to create their own puppets.

This is your opportunity as a member, to join in and support the efforts to promote the art of puppetry in the Chicagoland area.



*Puppeteer Rick Morse*

# Puppet Palooza • March 6-9

## Chicago's Annual Celebration of the Puppetry Arts

### SCIENCE MEETS ART... IN THE DARK:

The Physics of Shadow

**Hands-on Workshop for Teens**

Thursday, March 6

7-8:30 PM

Registration begins February 6  
for grades 6-12

**FREE!**

Vernon Area  
Public Library  
300 Olde Half Day  
Lincolnshire  
[www.vapld.info](http://www.vapld.info)

### SLEEPING BEAUTY

Friday, March 7

7-7:45 PM

Registration begins  
February 21

for families

Glenview Public Library

1930 Glenview Road

[www.glenviewpl.org](http://www.glenviewpl.org)

(847)729-7500

**FREE!**

**FREE!**

### SLEEPING BEAUTY

Saturday, March 8

11-11:45 AM

Registration begins  
February 8  
for families

**Kids make a puppet  
after the show!**

Vernon Area  
Public Library  
300 Olde Half Day Road  
Lincolnshire  
[www.vapld.info](http://www.vapld.info)  
(847)634-3650



For  
Adults  
& Teens...

Saturday & Sunday  
March 8 & 9

### ODDITIES:

a collection of curious puppetry

Madison J. Cripps—"A Slice of Crazy Pie"

Carole D'Agostino—"The Hoarding Show"

Sea Beast Puppet Company -

"Mefiez-Vous de la Vache Garou "

(Beware the Were-cow)

**Advance Ticket Purchase Recommended.**

**Elastic Arts Foundation**

2830 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago

[www.elasticarts.org](http://www.elasticarts.org)

(773)772-3616

Chicagoland Puppetry Guild \* [www.chicagopuppetry.org](http://www.chicagopuppetry.org) \* Like us on Facebook!



# Dave Herzog Reunites With an Old Friend

*By Dave Herzog*

When I was in my late teens and early 20's I worked with several other puppet companies, including a Chicago puppeteer known as he who shall not be named, (LOL in joke for those in the know); Bob Kramer's Marionettes in St. Louis; and The Fred Cowan Puppets, helping to build Fred's Bicentennial show in the Wisconsin Dells.

Just short of my 21st Birthday I moved to Wichita Kansas to work for a production company known as Trotter Brother's Productions. The Trotter Brothers, David Trotter, and Bob Munson, had been a relatively successful marionette act on the European night club circuit in the 50's and 60's.

In the Early 70's they moved back to Bob Munson's home town of Wichita Kansas to be nearer Bob's elderly parents. They began to produce large puppet shows including Hansel and Gretel, Jack and the Beanstalk, both rod puppet shows with adult puppets topping out about four feet tall; and Santa's Magic Circus, a variety show featuring a combination of hand puppets, marionettes, costume characters and magic illusions.

The Trotter Brothers started producing shows for amusement parks starting with Joyland in Wichita Kansas, and eventually branching out to about six major family owned large amusement parks, on the east coast. The Trotter Brothers wanted everything to be BIG! Most of the marionettes we built over the years had to be in the three foot tall range.

Fast forward from the late 70's to Potlatch 2013. Imagine my surprise when Ginger Lozar showed up with a lot of old Trotter Brothers puppets for sale. She had acquired them from someone else who just wanted to get rid of them. I recognized most of them and some of them I had built. Most were in pretty bad shape except for two beautiful portrait marionettes made by Ray Moore of Petersburg Tennessee of Grandpa Jones and Minnie Pearl. I can still remember the day I unpacked these puppets in the Trotter Brothers Studio. They were three feet tall and made of celastic and very light weight for their size. They were really very fine spot on portraits of the two famous Country Western stars. My memory

gets a little fuzzy here but I think they were first used in Santa's Magic Circus that Christmas manipulated by Mary Susan Clement and myself. Later they were used in a Barnyard Follies Show at several theme parks.

I was surprised that except for a new red dress for Minnie (the original had been yellow), and a pretty bad pinkish repaint of Grandpa Jones face by David Trotter who said it looked better on stage, the puppets were in very good shape considering they had been built in the late 70's and performed thousands of times in the theme park shows. The only real problem was Minnie Pearl's mouth spring had been replaced by a rubber band which had broken long ago.

Well fast forward a month or so, and our Guild president Fred Bertchold showed up at a board meeting Minnie Pearl in tow. It seems he bought both of them. I told Fred I would be glad to fix the mouth spring, and bring her with me to the Guild meeting the next Sunday. During the guild meeting which was a great show and tell at Cynthia Von Orthal's studio we showed off Minnie Pearl and I must say she was just so proud to be there.

I must say in closing the fact that these two well used puppets were in such good shape is a real testament to the brilliant work of Ray Moore, who is well known as a builder and costumer. Ray's works are among the most prized by people who commission puppets to be built.

His costumes and figures are among the very finest in puppetry. I'm glad these two wonderful puppets have found a home with our own Fred, and Dee.

Editor's Note:

*We're glad that so many members were present at the January 12th gathering to witness Dave's reunion with an old friend. He carefully examined the puppet, checking out the strings and the response to his manipulation. Then, as he had done probably a hundred times or more, he put Minnie through her routine. Not everyone watching a Puppeteer work realizes the connection that exists between Puppet and Puppeteer.*



# A Christmas Wish

By Fred Putz

Quest Theater Ensemble

December, 2013

The Blue Theater, Chicago, Illinois

## Directors

Book and Lyrics – Andrew Park, Music – Scott C. Lamps, Director – Andrew Park, Music Director – Tobi Mattingly, Choreography – Jamal Howard, Set Design – James T. Schott III, Puppets – Megan Hovany – Nick Rupard & Luke Verkamp, Costumes – Emma Weber, Lighting – Erik S. Barry and Sound – Samuel Silva.

## Cast

Molly LeCaptain, Andrew Behling, Jomar Ferreras, Veronica Garza, Vince Lonergan, Amber Lee Oliver, Lindsey Spencer, Amy Stricker, Kieran Welsh-Phillips, Kent Joseph and Kirk Osgood.

## Orchestra

Piano – Illana Atkins, Bass – Jack Walbridge, Percussion – Thomas Jasek, Tenor sax – Jomar Ferreras, and Guitar – Andrew Behling.

The Blue Theater (the performing home of Quest Theater Ensemble) is a rather small and intimate space, seating about 75 people. The entire stage area was masked with dark draperies. The main stage was flanked by two smaller stages; the one on stage-left housed the orchestra. It is always amazing that the Quest Directors manage to organize such large numbers of actors and action in such a small space.

The first scene of this well written, fanciful and delightful



musical opened with Jane Doe, (Molly LeCaptain) who sat on a stool in center stage and sang, “Every Magic Cent” in which she expressed her dissatisfaction with not having a happy ending to her story such as in a Disney production. In her second song, “I Wish”, she expressed her concern that her “Prince” may never come.

The main curtain opened to reveal a back drop showing the interior of Tom’s Taxidermy Shop, with fireplace and open hearth. Mounted trophies were hung on the back wall. Among the trophies on the wall were: two pairs of Reindeer Hooves, a large Fish, and a Turkey. A mounted Beaver was seated on the

counter top, on the window seat resided a large Black Bearskin rug and, standing against the window seat was a mounted goat. Tom entered and on the mantel above the fireplace he placed a new trophy that he had purchased on E-bay, a deer’s head that he named “E-bay”. Jane Doe and the Carolers sang, “Magic Time” which led the audience to understand that this was no “ordinary” night or an “ordinary” taxidermy shop.



To our great surprise each of the “Trophies” was a puppet that was animated from behind the backdrop! Led by the Beaver the Trophies sang, “Feel Good Tonight” from which the audience learned that on Christmas Eve, the Trophies were given an evening of life. The story centered on “Dasher” the Reindeer, who at one time had worked for Santa Claus and how he had sadly become a trophy as opposed to joyfully hauling Santa’s sleigh. (And herein was an inconsistency: the trophy was a four-pointed white tailed buck as opposed to a reindeer, which have totally different antlers. However, that did not seem to matter to the audience.)

During their discussions, the Trophies talked and sang about their successes and regrets during their former lives. At this point, human actors replaced the Trophies, acting and dancing out each story. There were eighteen songs and each one was delightful and well sung. Unfortunately, there is not enough space in this article to review each song, but one that must not be missed was, “Billy Goat Blues” which only Chicagoans could really appreciate. At times, the transition from Trophy to actor was a bit confusing because the actor’s 18 century “dance hall” costumes did not reflect the animalistic characteristics of the Trophies. However, one must keep in mind that Quest Theater Ensemble depends upon donations to support its programs and its costume budgets are limited.

Due to lack of space, it is not possible to relate each of the Trophies stories. Therefore since he was the star of the show, I will reveal a bit about Dasher’s story: Dasher had become infatuated with a young reindeer, who we learned was “Jane Doe”. Following Santa’s advice to follow his heart, Dasher left Santa’s reindeer team to pursue his love. Unfortunately, Dasher ended up as a trophy and never realized this love. However, in the end, this sad and dark situation was remedied and Dasher and Jane Doe were reunited in a bitter-sweet ending. I will not reveal how this came about in the hope that Quest Theater Ensemble will present “A Christmas Wish” again next December and you can find out for yourself. If it is repeated, I intend to see it again and hope that you will too, it is a Christmas must!

*Christmas Wish photos courtesy of Andrew Park, Quest Ensemble.*



# What a Way to Start the New Year!

By Ann Onymous



The road to the January 12, 2014 CPG Gathering led to Evanston, Illinois and the relocated puppet studio of Cynthia Von Orthal. A wonderful afternoon was had by all! "All" meaning nearly thirty members and guests were present. You might say there were members and guests wall to wall, save for the large work table, starting at the wall facing the front with three large windows providing natural light and extending nearly ten feet into the room. Three of Cynthia's clay head works in progress had to share the work space with an array of goodies for potluck supplied by the visiting members.

The new studio is in a perfect setting. The neighborhood is a mixture of residential homes, small manufacturing businesses and storage facilities. The storage facility housing the new studio was converted by the owner into separate units to accommodate

artists and small business offices. The 600 square foot, open air room has one wall housing shelving ten feet high, filled with labeled containers with materials waiting to be converted into works of art.

On another wall, floor to ceiling, reside Cynthia's puppet creations. Turn around and there's another wall displaying more creations patiently waiting to perform again. Look up...and you will be amazed once again...more creations! Cynthia shares her craft by offering classes in sculpting and puppet creations. We were fortunate to have present five of her adult students. Obviously proud of their work, each student took a turn introducing and explaining the personality and story behind their creation. Each one a work of art...the result of spot on teaching.

The afternoon moved along with renewing old acquaintances, meeting new friends and endless conversations. Over heard was the comment. "We should visit Cynthia's studio every year!" I'll make it a motion. Do I hear a second?



*Top left: Cynthia welcomes fellow CPG members to her new studio.*

*Top right: Student Sharon Watkins.*

*Above, clockwise from top left: Students Jill Frederickson, Susan Cane, Cynthia's work in progress, Students Garry Shehan, Sean Ewert, and Doria's Show and Tell time for a reflective audience.*

## ...And What A Way to Follow Up !

The February 9, 2014 CPG Gathering was held at the Unity Church. 1925 West Thome, in Chicago. It was a cold Sunday afternoon, but the sun came shining through and so did our members and guests. Twenty three and a few curious members from the Unity Church.

Sad to report, the program originally scheduled, Sculptor and Finger Puppet Artist, Dan Crowley, had to cancel his appearance. Last minute cancellations can sometimes squelch what promises to be an interesting and entertaining afternoon...but Nooooo! Need a program filler? We have one of the best. Dave Herzog Marionettes to the rescue with his wonderful Circus Marionette Show! Describe it? I think Tom Lang sums it up best with this following review:

At our February 9<sup>th</sup> gathering, we were treated to Dave Herzog's show "Cirque Internationale Fantastique". When the dust settled we'd had no idea what had hit us, nor did anyone get a license plate number....but we had a room full of smiles!

Dave's usual artistry with marionettes sets a high standard, and high expectations, but this time around he was in exceptional form. His nine musical and humorous vignettes, each centered on a new character "from around the world" (such as Senor Froggy) move smoothly from one to another with fun transitions. Two three year olds in the front row were agape, laughing and

reaching out when Dave moved the marionettes tantalizing closer. Of course "Walter the Basset Hound" stole the show in the end, but nobody seemed to mind!

Thanks, Dave, for an entertaining afternoon! It was a perfect setting for your show in the posh Library at the Unity in Chicago, and the audience would have loved it if you'd done the whole thing over again on the spot!

After the performance, we all retired to the gathering area for a Pot Luck lunch and some get acquainted and greet old friends' time!



*Dave Herzog's Clown Marionette.*

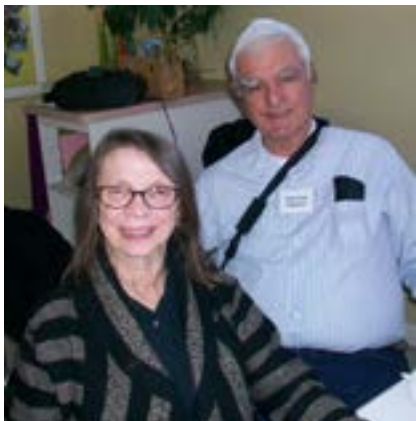


*Dave Herzog's "Walter the Basset Hound".*



*Left, Tom and Dave chatting with Jennie Lindfield and Caren Carlson, Unity members.*

*Bottom left, Norma and Harvey...not taking minutes and not counting money, just having a great time.*



*Opposite page, top row: Cynthia, Fred and Yvonne. . .All smiles; You know Sherry..... she's with Leah Glance; Jeff, Silvia and LaVerne engrossed in conversation;*

*Second row: Tom, Fred, Dave, Mark (taking notes) and LaVerne – not a meeting...just "Happy Talk!"; Mark Dunworth sporting his latest creation; Tom Skinner The hat says it all*

*Third row: Cynthia and Avalon Rose took first place in the "Smile Contest" Joe Funke and Sherry Rugen Unity members who stayed to join in*

*Fourth row: New members, Sean Ewert and Scott Gryder are welcomed by Ellen Lustig; Fred keeps the "deviled" eggs in line; Visitor Gary Goldman has his eyes on those chocolate morsels (or vice versa).*





# Getting to Know You

By Fred Putz

Although we may have known a fellow CPG Member for years, it is not often that we have the time in which to chat with him and learn about the events and motives that have brought us to become fellow puppeteers. This column, "Getting To Know You" is designed to reveal those unknown life changing experiences and to develop a better understanding of how each of us became a puppeteer.

## Introducing Kat Plevak

This interview with Kat took place on November 11, 2013 at the Sea Beast Studio in Glen Ellyn, Illinois.



Kat was born on June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1979 and grew up in the same house which now houses her studio. She attended Lincoln Elementary School, (a block away from the house) and Glenbard West High School.

## Education

As I have mentioned in my previous articles in the Puppet Patter, "One can never tell from where an inspiration will come". Kat's interest in theater began in junior high school after reading a book called, "Glass Slippers Give You Blisters". The story was about a girl who wanted to be an actress but ended up on the light crew. That story inspired Kat to volunteer for the lighting and technical crews in junior high and high school. She took part in as many productions as she could. After graduating from high school, Kat enrolled at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana and graduated with a BFA in Directing and Performance Studies. Although she was involved in the technical aspects of the productions at the university, technical theater was not a part of her degree.

## Puppetry

During her last year at the U. of I. Kat needed two more credits in order to graduate. Her advisor suggested that she do an independent study. She had seen Harry Bellefonte in a Muppet Show and she greatly admired the African puppets that were used. So she blithely said, "Ah, I'll do an independent study in puppetry! That'll be fun!", and that started her on the road to a career in puppetry. "The puppets were terrible, I have them in a box, they're really gross, they don't work." The marionette was weighted incorrectly; the hand puppet was a doll that she hollowed out and the rod puppet weighed a ton and was made of very breakable clay."

Upon graduation from U. of I. in the 2002, Kat was excited to enter the working world, get an apartment and live independently. Since she had no money and did not want to live at home she decided to move out of the state. She sent out 20 letters of inquiry to puppet companies all over the U.S.A. (except Chicago) and received an

answer from the Renaissance Artist Puppet company in Philadelphia. Therefore, she decided to move to Philadelphia. Kat said her parents were "so awesome!" and supportive. Her father purchased a "huge used van" with which to move her to Philadelphia because he found that it would be cheaper than renting a U-Haul. (After 12 years, that same old van was recently sold. It served Kat well.) In Philadelphia, Kat apprenticed with Liz Evans at Renaissance Arts for six months from the summer of 2002 until November of 2002. It was from Liz that Kat learned many disciplines, performance and building techniques and how to run a puppet business. Liz was a puppet builder for hire. She had also employed a young man named Ryan. Kat worked with Ryan and Liz and together they built a Halloween show that included shadow puppets, rod puppets and hand puppets. A Betsy Ross walk-around puppet was also built which Kat manipulated at several events. While apprenticing with Liz, Kat lived in the basement of a doctor's house and as a part of the rent agreement, Kat took care of her dogs. It was through Liz that Kat was introduced to the P of A. and attended several festivals making new and valuable friends and contacts within the organization.

When her apprenticeship ended, Kat returned to Glen Ellyn and planned to become a puppet designer. But, there was little work for a puppet designer, so she began designing props and worked for several small Chicago community theaters which she continued doing that for the next four years. She also did puppet work for the Marriott Theater in Lincolnshire, IL, built shadow puppets for Looking Glass Theater and also did some puppet work for Chicago Shakespeare. Her real goal was to be appreciated as a puppeteer. Unfortunately, there was one drawback to her work. When she signed contracts for designing and building props, puppets were on the prop list and she was expected to build the puppets, but was never paid for her time.

## How "Sea Beast" Came About

It was when she was still an undergraduate that while swimming one warm summer night with her friend, Amy, in an off limits quarry that "Sea Beast" got started. Trees had been submerged and the tree tops were casting strange shadows on the water. The two girls were swimming and making up stories about the possibility of a monster living in the quarry. The more they talked more real the monster became and the more "freaked out" they became. Eventually they scared themselves out of the water. That experience planted the "Monster" seed in Kat's mind. Kat said, "I wanted the title to be super imaginative and filled with magic and wonder. I've always wanted to be able to scare myself out of the water so I thought that Sea Beast was really cool." It seemed to be a neutral title which would be acceptable to all audiences.

In 2005 Kat was being considered for the position of main prop designer at Columbia College, but, unfortunately she did not get the position. With that disappointment, she realized that a career in set and prop design was becoming a dead end with little chance of advancement. She decided to open her own puppet company and to



go to graduate school for a Master's degree. She selected the University of Hawaii because of its open ended "do it yourself program". While she was studying there she was also working on the title and structure of the "Sea Beast Puppet Theater" and its logo. She attended every puppetry festival that she could, collecting more friends, techniques and ideas. Upon graduation from the U. of H. in 2009 she had a Master's degree, a show title, a logo, a studio, a marketing plan, a web site and her "associates" all in place. Her theory about good theater became, "If you don't have a good solid and well-constructed story it does not matter what you have in the way of props and puppets, the production is going to be boring". (Good advice for all of us.)



*Kat teaching a class on Hand Puppet Manipulation.*

At this point, one would think that Kat was ready to start performing, but there were two big items missing; a story and puppets. The "associates" involved with the early Sea Beast productions were friend Mary Kate Rix, Kat's brother Tom and Kat herself. They went about searching for the right pre-existing story that would be acceptable to libraries and other children's venues. They worked together on three different, but related stories and developed their first show together which is still their preferred work style. Their first real break occurred when they wrote and built "Surf and Turf" which was showcased at the Harvest of Resources library showcase. Although Sea Beast has used all styles of puppets, they developed a growing interest in shadow puppets. Kat had developed a shadow puppet improvisation technique, called "The Shadow Puppet Conspiracy" which was presented at the O'Neill Puppetry Conference where it received very positive reactions. It was then performed on tour at venues across the nation, including the 2013 Puppeteers of America' National Festival. Although Kat has incorporated all styles of puppets in her shows, it appears that "Sea Beast" is becoming more and more associated with shadow puppetry. All of their shadow puppets are cut by hand. Detailed scenery that could not be cut by hand is often made from multiple print outs which create solid black images that are projected on overhead projectors. When asked what she would consider her best production she said, "There is a tie between two, Méfiez-Vous de la Vache-Garou!", (Beware The Werecow) and "The History of Light".

## **The C.P.G.**

Kat first became a member of the CPG when she moved from Philadelphia back to Glen Ellyn. She attended a few meetings, but while she was doing freelance set designing there was not much time for attending the meetings. It was after Sea Beast became established in 2003 that she became fully involved with the Guild. She had been a member of the P. of A. and UNIMA U.S. since 2002.

## **P. of A. Board of Trustees**

In 2013 the CPG was proud to announce that Kat had been elected to the Board of Trustees of the Puppeteers of America! When asked what spurred her to take on such a huge responsibility she said, "It was because of my membership in the P. of A. that I have become a puppeteer". The P. of A. is so welcoming and the festivals are places where novices (such as she) can obtain that necessary initial knowledge and get their feet wet". From her studies of P. of A. history, Kat noticed that every 20 years or so the organization would find the necessity to "re-invent itself". At this present time, changes are taking place and she wanted to be a part of the effort. She said, that she has a strong sense of respect for the traditional as well as the modern puppet styles and feels that she can help create a bridge between the traditional puppeteers and the Avant-garde. She believes that with collaboration between these two groups, amazing things can happen. Some of the issues that she feels need attention are: (1) since only under 25% of the membership vote in the elections a campaign to induce more members to vote is needed, (2) the budget, (3) create an audio archive project in which vocal recordings of all puppeteers can be kept, (4) organize an accessible collection of all Puppetry Journals and (5) establish a research facility where all aspects of puppetry can be stored.

## **Current "Sea Beast" Productions**

"Sea Beast" is creating a shadow puppet show, "Twas the Night before Christmas" to be presented in early December 2014. The production will include 20 puppets. For the annual National Day of Puppetry 2014, on March 8 and 9, Sea Beast is presenting, "Oddities: A Collection of Curious Puppetry" a show for adults and teens at the Elastic Arts Foundation, 230 N. Milwaukee Ave. in Chicago.

# Von Orthal Puppets to Perform For the Humanities Festival

Long time member and past President of the CPG, Cynthia Von Orthal, Artistic Director, leads a company of Chicago based artists dedicated bringing to children and adults, quality cultural experiences in the puppetry arts. Their style blends imagination, music and story with expressively alive characters and a refined artistic quality.

Their current production, *A White Heron* is Von Orthal Puppets' interpretation of the classic short story by Sarah Orne Jewett, which explores the relationship between society and nature through the experience of a little country girl, Sylvia. The story, an example of "New England Realism", reminds us of the value of nature, written at a time when conservation to protect endangered species was only the beginning to be debated.

Sylvia meets a young hunter who is seeking a rare bird that has been spotted in the area to add to his collection. Sylvia must decide whether to reveal the location of the bird to her new friend or to conceal and protect it.

The poignant story is told with a variety of puppetry styles including hand, rod and Bunraku puppets, shadow play and music — with puppets designed by Cynthia and original score by her husband, Paul Von Mertens, Musical Director for Von Orthal Puppets and the Brian Wilson Band.

They will be premiering *A White Heron* for the Humanities Festival at Chicago's DCA Storefront Theater on May 11, 2014. For additional information contact [www.humanitiesfestival.com](http://www.humanitiesfestival.com)



*"Mom" with Avalon Rose.*



*Clay model sculptures for puppets in *A White Heron*.*



# The World of Puppets Meets the World of Clowns

CPG member, Fred Putz, is also a member of the World Clown Association. He brought to the attention of the CPG board and directors, the fact that professional clowns very often incorporate puppets in their routines. We have an opportunity to connect with these entertainers and lend a helping hand (as puppeteers often do) by introducing them to our guild.

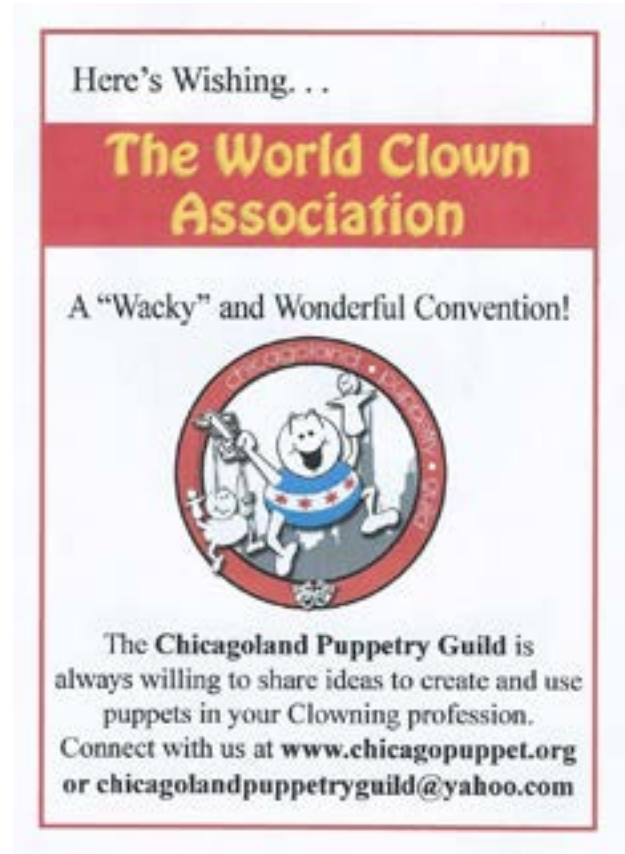
The WCA will be celebrating a convention, March 25-29, 2014, at the Crown Plaza in Northbrook, Illinois. The guild is placing this quarter page ad in their convention program book, hoping to make some new friends. Up to now the only connection we had with the clowning world was with CPG associate, Bob Cordero (and of course, the clown marionettes used by Ollie DePriest and Dave Herzog). The Melikin Puppets have “Fumbles” in their hand puppet show, The Melikin Puppet Circus. Anyone else have a clown in their show?



*Smiley, by DePriest Puppets'*



*Clown, by Herzog Marionettes*



*Fumbles, by Melikin Puppets*

# Lest We Forget

By Fred Putz

*Chicagoland Puppetry Guild's Historian*

Had it not been for the endeavors of the showmen who came before us, the art of puppetry would not exist. Often as we go about claiming our individual and collective greatness we forget that we are only copying and applying new materials to ancient techniques and processes. The purpose of this column is to remember and pay homage to the puppeteers who have "played on the boards" here in Chicago before us. Perhaps, some day you will be so remembered.

## Who Were Roy Thomas Brown, Garfield Goose, and Cooky the Clown?

The information in this article came from an interview conducted by Norma McLennon and several other Chicagoland Puppetry Guild Members as a part of the CPG's "Living History Project" and Wikipedia, the free online encyclopedia. At the time of the interview, Roy, the father of four sons, was 58 years old.

### Part I - Who was Roy Brown?

#### The Informative Years

Roy Thomas Brown was born in July of 1932 in Tucson, Arizona, but grew up and was educated in Chicago. He considered Chicago to be his "home base". Roy died on January 22, 2001.

One can never tell from where an inspiration will come. Roy said that he got his start in puppetry as a youngster when he received a Dopey puppet, such as the one in "Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs" and built himself a puppet stage. Roy's mother was an artist and kept a studio in her home. Due to her example, he became interested in art. Roy's interest in theater also began at an early age when on Sundays, he took the L train to downtown Chicago and attended the vaudeville shows. At that time, they were called "presentation houses" and presented three sets of vaudeville acts and a movie all accompanied by a huge "Wonder" theater pipe organ. Roy especially liked Spike Jones and His City Slickers. (By the way, if you need some "zany" music for your shows, look up Spike.) Some great and funny sequences happened on those vaudeville stages and Roy absorbed as much as he could. Speaking of his career in show business Roy said, "I loved it so much and I had a chance to do it. I think I'm a lucky guy."

#### The Big Break

It was from viewing the vaudeville artists doing quick chalk drawings that Roy developed the quick sketching techniques that eventually landed him a job in television with producer, Thomas Frazier. In 1952 Roy was attending The Chicago Academy of Fine Arts at the Chicago Art Institute and majoring in painting and cartooning. On Huron and Rush Streets, right around the corner from the Art Institute was the Ivan Hill Advertising Agency which was producing the "Pettycoat Party" show, a segment of which was "Garfield Goose and Friend". The Agency needed an artist who could write on the "Magic Drawing Board", which was a seg-



*Roy Brown with toy dog Beauregard.*

ment of the "Garfield" show. The "Magic Drawing Board", which was used to illustrate children's recordings, consisted of a slab of plate glass with a sheet of bond paper attached to it. A camera was stationed on the opposite side of the glass. A felt pen was used to draw on the paper allowing the ink to bleed through the paper making it appear that the "magic board" was drawing itself. Roy applied and got the job. This was in 1952 when Roy was twenty years old.

#### Professional Associations

Along with Screen Actors Guild and AFTRA, (American Federation of Television and Radio Artists) Roy belonged to The Three Sheeters as did many world famous artists such as Chicago magician and Punch and Judy man, Jay Marshall. The title, Three Sheeters (a show business club), came from the old vaudeville posters which were printed in one, two and three sheets and were posted on the theater's billboards. If an act warranted a three sheet poster, that meant it was a hit. The act of "three sheeting" was when an actor smeared a little makeup on his collar and stood outside the theater next to his three sheet poster in hope of picking up girls.

#### Who Was Garfield Goose?

Garfield Goose and Friends; created by Frazier Thomas, written by Frazier Thomas, directed by Ron Weiner, starred Frazier Thomas and Roy Brown. The theme music, "Monkey On A String" was played by Ethel Smith (famous Hammond organist). The "Garfield Goose and Friend" television show was produced by WGN-TV in Chicago and ran from 1952 until 1967, and was the longest running children's TV show at that time.

#### How It All Got Started

According to Roy, Chicago television host and producer Frazier Thomas, invented Garfield the Goose. The idea for a goose puppet came to Frazier when he was doing a children's TV show in Cincinnati with Ruth Lyons called, "Meet The Little People". Frazier needed a gimmick with which he could present birthday





*Roy's puppet cast including Garfield with Frasier Thomas.*

gifts to the children. He had seen a group of Catholic nuns using a sock puppet goose to solicit funds for charity. A goose puppet was the perfect answer to his problem. The telephone exchange at the TV studio was "Garfield 1234" and from that came Garfield's name. However that puppet was not the Garfield Goose that became the star of the Garfield show.

In 1951 Thomas relocated to Chicago and started working at WBKB TV, a CBS affiliate where he became the host of a variety show called, Pettycoat Party which was broadcast from the new studios at the Garrick Theater, on Randolph Street. For the new Garfield goose puppet, Frazier had a bill made at a sheet metal shop in Wilmette. Lee Wymer, Frazier's secretary cut the arm from a new sweater for the body and sewed buttons on the head for eyes. Garfield's crown was made from a tuna fish can and his head was constructed from Celastic. Roy said, "I used to make him smile by twisting my thumb under my fore fingers."

At first, with Lee Wymer as manipulator, Garfield was only a guest on the Pettycoat Show. However, after his character was well developed, Garfield was given a show of his own, Garfield and Friend, the friend being Frazier.

The premise of the Garfield show was thus: against his mother's warnings, a young Garfield climbed into a cuckoo clock. He continued to live in the clock and grew up attending church bazzars. Because of his "cuckoo" background, Garfield eventually decided that he wanted to become a cuckoo. Since geese are generally aggressive and protective of their territory, "Gar thought that he was the king of the United States" and Frasier pretended to be his prime minister and admiral of the navy which necessitated that Frazier wear a uniform. That same uniform is now a part of the Museum of Broadcast Communications Collection. It was in September of 1952 that Chicagoans got their first glimpse of the Garfield Goose and Friend Show.

## Controversy

It is at this point that a controversy exists. According to Roy Brown, it was only Lee Wymer, Frazier's secretary and himself who manipulated Garfield. However, according to Wikipedia, prior to Roy's appointment, Frazier had employed Chicago puppeteer Bruce Newton to manipulate Garfield. Newton left the show

because of the restrictions placed on TV actors by the AFTRA. After leaving the TV show Newton developed a traveling show that sported, (according to Roy, a "rather poor copy of Garfield") where he told about his experiences while working on The Garfield Goose and Friend Show.

## The structure of the show

Frasier and Roy were the only writers of the Garfield show and when Frasier was on vacation Roy wrote the show. Roy did all of the art work and Lee Wymer manipulated the Garfield puppet. The Garfield show was on at different times of day: three, three-thirty, five and six o'clock. Roy said, "The reason that the Garfield show was so successful and out rated the network news was because of its animation. The buyers at that time wanted animation". The show quickly became a viewer favorite. The shows were 30 minutes long and even though there was a written script, a lot of adlibbing occurred during the broadcasts. Roy said, "Frasier was a very precise person and the show had a very definite beginning, middle and closing. He would not let me see a written script, but would provide an outline and give some instructions as to staging and timing. When I finally got the script I would pencil in notes and stick it up behind the scenery. It gave the show a kind of freshness." Whenever it was necessary for Garfield to leave the stage quickly, "roast goose" was mentioned.

## Roy Became the Puppeteer

Early in 1953 Roy began to operate Garfield. During that period more characters were added and Roy built and manipulated all of them. The cast included: Beauregard Burnside III, the bloodhound, Mackintosh Mouse, Christmas Goose (Garfield's cousin), Romberg Rabbit and Mama Goose (Garfield in drag wearing a wig and granny glasses). Each member of the cast had his own special characteristics. As an example Roy said, "Beauregard the bloodhound would wake up when food was mentioned — hotdogs, hamburgers and such. He would be snoring, then his eyes would flicker and he would wake up. His eyes and mouth were articulated. Mama, was a karate black belt, a sky diver and coached a hockey team". Other characters were Ali the Alligator and Cousin Gunga Goose who was an alligator wrestler (Garfield with a turban and long white beard). According to Roy, "The only and original Garfield Goose puppet lasted for 35 years and is now on display at the Museum of Broadcast Communications". Over the years, the puppet took quite a beating and Roy had to rebuild him constantly. He hated to rebuild Garfield because, although Garfield always had the same eyes and bill, every time Roy changed the sleeve, the eye position would change just minutely and that changed Garfield's looks. With the influx of the new characters, the final title of the show became Garfield Goose and Friends".

The Question, Who was Cooky the Clown? will be answered in the next Puppet Patter.



# By the Way.....

*By Ann Onymous*

The Melikin Puppet Troupe has been invited to perform for the Saint Louis Puppetry Guild on Saturday, May 10, 2014, for the guild's celebration of the National Day of Puppetry. They will be presenting their production, "Dragon Feathers!". Their Chinese dragon, "How-Long" will be on display at the Vernon Area Library for the CPG celebration on March 8<sup>th</sup>.



Puppetry time at the Irish American Heritage Center, 4626 North Knox Avenue, Chicago, Illinois on Saturday, April 26, 2014. The 11:00 am show features the performance of "Finn McCool", written by Joan Wittenberg. The show will be performed by local puppeteers, Chris Krawczk, Robert Malone Anderson and Susan A. Witek. The day features not only a performance, but also a puppet market for those who would like to take a memory home with them!

There is a \$7 suggested donation at the door. For more information visit [www.damenavenuepuppeteers.com](http://www.damenavenuepuppeteers.com) or call 847-259-5167. There will also be a raffle to benefit Gigi's Playhouse Chicago, Down Syndrome Achievement Center.



Susan Witek and the Damen Avenue Puppeteers are sporting a new stage these days. It's the creation of Bob Anderson, and it's a BEAUTY!



Remember..... If you have a new stage, if you have a special performance scheduled, If you have photos of your puppets that you would like to share, If you saw a fantastic puppet show.....Don't keep it a secret. Share it with us! Email it to Mel Biske, Editor [melikinpuppets@comcast.net](mailto:melikinpuppets@comcast.net)



Tell Mel, Ann Onymous sent me.

For an up to date look at The Great Lakes Regional Festival. . .



visit [www.greatlakespoa.com](http://www.greatlakespoa.com) click on Festivals.

The 2013 Potlatch of the Great Lake Region of PofA is a memory. But it doesn't have to fade away. Now you can relive the memories of Potlatch 2013. For a sample of what is on this beautiful 8 minute DVD visit:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ehO8xblCaqs>



Raise your hand if you had a good time at this years Potlatch! How would you like to relive the memories? Well, now you can with a DVD presentation from this years event. 710 Productions and Home Movie Entertainment presents the 2013 Potlatch of the Great Lakes Region DVD. This can be yours for only \$10 per DVD. Now you can share the fun any time with friends and family. Or just pop it in and celebrate again and again.

For your own copy, please send a check for \$10.00 to:  
**Jeff Biske**  
710 Feather Sound Dr. • Bolingbrook, IL 60440

Please make checks payable to: Jeff Biske  
Cost includes shipping and handling • Allow 7-10 business days for delivery  
[www.710productions.com](http://www.710productions.com)

Cut out order form and mail to: Jeff Biske • 710 Feather Sound Dr. • Bolingbrook, IL 60440

## 2013 Potlatch DVD Order Form

*Please make checks payable to: Jeff Biske*

Yes! Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ copy(s) of the 2013 Potlatch DVD

My check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed (\$10.00 per copy - payable to Jeff Biske)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE PRINT NEATLY**



# A Call for Workshop Presenters

*By Mel Biske*

As announced in this edition of the Puppet Patter, the Detroit Puppet Guild, along with the Detroit Institute of Arts, will be hosting the Motor City Puppet Blast!, July 25-27, 2014. Arrangements are in the works and it has the makings to rival a mini National Festival all wrapped up into three days!

I have been invited to co-chair, along with Rick Morse of the DPG, the position of Workshop Director. Our goal is twenty-four workshops. I am calling out to our CPG membership to help fill open workshop positions.

Our Chicagoland Guild membership roster has listed some of you who have already presented successful workshops in the past. Many of you are capable but perhaps you never had the opportunity to present a workshop. Here's your chance! When the call went out at Potlatch, four of our guild members offered their talents to join in. Many thanks to Dave Herzog, Fred Putz, Kat Pleviak and Joe Emory.

In this issue of the Patter, I have enclosed a Workshop Proposal Application. Please take a few minutes to look it over, check the categories that interest you and consider making a contribution of one hour (or more if you want it!). There will be a

compensation for your efforts. If you would like more information, or wish to discuss particulars, please don't hesitate to give me a call. The number is listed on the application.



*The DIA will be providing seven rooms for workshops.*

*The rooms will be assigned according to the needs of the Workshop Presenter.*



The Puppet Patter is the Official Quarterly Publication of the Chicagoland Puppetry Guild. It is published on line and available in hard copy version to those CPG members without access to a computer. It will also be posted on the CPG web site. Publication dates are on or about the first of March, June, September and December. All items for publication by CPG members should be submitted no later than fourteen days prior to publication date to:

Mel Biske, Editor  
169 Woodlet Lane  
Bolingbrook, IL 60490  
email at: [melikinpuppets@comcast.net](mailto:melikinpuppets@comcast.net)

Publisher: Bridget DePriest

Notices of regular gatherings and/ or special events will be posted on the CPG web site: [www.chicagopuppet.org](http://www.chicagopuppet.org) by email or direct USPS mail to hard copy members. Future dates for events, performances, announcements or scheduled gatherings (meetings) will appear in the "Patter" if they apply to the time frame the publication covers.

## **Elected Officers and Directors for 2013-2014**

President: Fred Berchtold  
Recording Secretary: Norma McLennon  
Director of Relationships with  
Guild Members: Joan Wittenberg / Fred Putz  
Director of NDOP: Silvia Kraft-Walker

Vice President: LaVerne Biske  
Treasurer: Harvey Kahler  
Director of Outreach: Tom Lang  
Director of Puppet Patter: Mel Biske  
Director of Relationships with  
Other Puppet Organizations: Dave Herzog

# Make Plans Now for the July 25-27, 2014



The Detroit Puppet Guild, in collaboration with the Detroit Institute of Arts, will be hosting the 2014 Great Lakes Regional Festival. The festival has been officially sanctioned by The Puppeteers of America and P of A Board Members will be present at the DIA for their board meeting.

The workshops and the performances, which the DIA is sponsoring, will take place in the Museum. Workshop rooms will be provided as well as the 300 seat capacity theatre for performances. The Festival committee is in the planning stages to present eleven performances, twenty four workshops, a work-thru Children's workshop and performance, two potpourris, a Puppet Exchange and a midnight madness sale, and of course, a Private Collection Puppet Exhibit!

Housing accommodations will be at near-by Wayne State University. Secure parking is available and shuttle bus service will be available. Festival participants will be allowed free admission to the museum and preferential seating at all the performances.

There will be a Saturday evening Banquet at the International Institute followed by a performance of world renowned marionettist Phillip Huber.

Come join us in July and you will have a **BLAST!**



*Above: The Detroit Institute of Art.*

*Right, from top: The lecture Hall Theatre. Committee members checking out housing at Wayne State University. Dining area at Wayne State University.*





## GREAT LAKES REGIONAL FESTIVAL

July 25-27, 2014  
Detroit Institute of Art  
Detroit, Michigan

### WORKSHOP PROPOSAL APPLICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Workshop Title \_\_\_\_\_

Workshop Information: (Check all that apply)

Who will benefit: ☐ Beginner ☐ Intermediate ☐ Professional

Type of Workshop:

☐ Lecture ☐ Demonstration ☐ Hands-on ☐ Work through  
☐ Education ☐ Manipulation ☐ Construction ☐ Directing  
☐ Performance ☐ Promotion/Publicity ☐ Therapy ☐ Business  
☐ Recorded Media Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Puppet Form: ☐ Hand ☐ Rod ☐ Marionette ☐ Shadow  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

What will participants gain from attending this workshop? \_\_\_\_\_

Provide a brief outline of the workshop content (may use separate sheet for description)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Time required for the workshop: ☐ 1 hour ☐ 3 hours ☐ 6 hours = work through  
Set up time \_\_\_\_\_ Strike time \_\_\_\_\_

# of Participants recommended \_\_\_\_\_ Maximum \_\_\_\_\_ Minimum Necessary \_\_\_\_\_

Is pre-registration required? \_\_\_\_\_ Is there a materials fee? \_\_\_\_\_ Cost per person \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Materials which I will furnish \_\_\_\_\_

Materials which participants will furnish \_\_\_\_\_

Name\_\_\_\_\_ Telephone:\_\_\_\_\_

Address:\_\_\_\_\_

e-mail address\_\_\_\_\_

Space/Equipment Requirement:   ☐ Open floor space   ☐ Lecture seating   ☐ Sink  
☐ Work tables   ☐ Darkened room   ☐ Other\_\_\_\_\_

Special equipment: It is possible to arrange for the DIA to furnish some of the following equipment.

Please check the equipment you will need to present this workshop:

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bulletin Board  | <input type="checkbox"/> White Board        | <input type="checkbox"/> Display Tables     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slide Projector | <input type="checkbox"/> Carousel tray      | <input type="checkbox"/> Overhead projector |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CD Player       | <input type="checkbox"/> DVD Player/Monitor | <input type="checkbox"/> Microphone         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extension Cord  | <input type="checkbox"/> Electric outlet(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> A sink             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Large Easel     | <input type="checkbox"/> Display tables     | <input type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint         |

Other:\_\_\_\_\_

Please provide supplemental information: biography, background, puppetry experience, etc.  
(may use separate sheet for description)

This workshop has been presented \_\_\_\_\_ times. Where?\_\_\_\_\_

Past sponsors who may recommend your workshop for our festival:

Name\_\_\_\_\_ Name\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_ Address\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone\_\_\_\_\_ Phone\_\_\_\_\_

Mail a hard copy to:  
Mel Biske  
Festival Workshop Co-Director  
169 Woodlet Lane  
Bolingbrook, IL 60490  
630-378-9303  
e-mail address: melikinpuppets@comcast.net  
For additional information contact:  
Rick Morse  
e-mail address: rmorse21@comcast.net





## Chicagoland Puppetry Guild Membership Application for Sept 1, 2013 – August 31, 2014

chicagopuppet.org [chicagolandpuppetryguild@yahoo.com](mailto:chicagolandpuppetryguild@yahoo.com) facebook.com/cpguild

For further info contact CPG President Fred Berchtold at 847-516-1440

Send this application with check payable to "Chicagoland Puppetry Guild", 2041 W Birchwood Ave, Chicago, IL 60645 or Pay online on [chicagopuppet.org](http://chicagopuppet.org) using our PayPal membership application.

Membership	Yearly	Votes	
<input type="radio"/> Couple/family	\$30	2	
<input type="radio"/> Adult	\$20	1	
<input type="radio"/> Company	\$30	2	
<input type="radio"/> Senior 62+	\$15	1	
<input type="radio"/> Student	\$15	1	
<input type="radio"/> Junior 15-	\$15	1	
<input type="radio"/> Associate	\$15	0	Enclosed \$ _____

Names \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Dates \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_ preferred contact \_\_\_\_\_

A membership directory is published and distributed among the membership during November. If you want to be listed, indicate here: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ We also include the name of your puppetry company name. If you want to limit or add to information:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ . . . . .

Chicagoland Puppetry Guild is interested in you. Tell us about your interests in puppetry, what you're doing and your status as a puppeteer.

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Marionettes    | <input type="radio"/> Puppetry Enthusiast                        |
| <input type="radio"/> Hand Puppets   | <input type="radio"/> Librarian                                  |
| <input type="radio"/> Shadow Puppets | <input type="radio"/> Teacher                                    |
| <input type="radio"/> Ventriloquist  | <input type="radio"/> Puppet Ministry                            |
| <input type="radio"/> Rod Puppets    | <input type="radio"/> Semi professional - part-time puppeteer    |
| <input type="radio"/> Film/Video     | <input type="radio"/> Professional - make my living with puppets |
| <input type="radio"/> Costume Maker  |  |
| <input type="radio"/> Puppet Builder |  |

Other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Occasionally the guild is asked for sources of puppet shows, workshops and more. If you are interested in our referral, include what you can do, and your limitations . . .

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member of other puppetry related organizations?

- \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Puppeteers of America  
☐ UNIMA USA  
☐ Storytelling Guild or network  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

For additional information, call CPG President, Fred Berchtold at 847-516-1440

Make your check payable to Chicagoland Puppetry Guild. Mail it with this application to:

Chicagoland Puppetry Guild  
2041 W Birchwood Ave #2  
Chicago, IL 60645

Applicant, date today \_\_\_\_\_ Treasurer, Date Received \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_