

Providing quality local community theatre since 1984, the all-volunteer Prince William Little Theatre is partly funded by grants from the Prince William County Park Authority, the City of Manassas, and private contributions. PWLT has won NVTAs One Act Festival Awards, Virginia Theatre Association awards, and Washington Area Theatre Community Honors (WATCH) awards.

Arts Alive! September 12



Melanie Dionne and Tim McCleerey will sing "Suddenly Seymour"

Mark your calendar for *Arts Alive* on September 12th. This will take place starting at 12:00 Noon at the Hylton Performing Center. This is a co-production of the Prince William County Arts Council and Hylton Performing Arts Center. The event is family-friendly and features Prince William County Arts Council members, of which Prince William Little Theatre is a member, as well as other community performers and fine artists. Enjoy hands-on activities for all ages, multiple stages of performances indoors and out, exhibits, food vendors, and more! Come out and celebrate your local arts community! Free, no tickets required. PWLT performs at 12:05 to 12:30 in the Gregory Theatre.

We have a wonderful and talented group to entertain you. Tina Mullins will be singing "We Need a Little Christmas" and points out that it reflects the feelings of frustration we are experiencing with this seemingly endless pandemic. Melanie Dionne and Tim McCleerey will be singing "Suddenly Seymour". Melanie explains, "We're a nerdy, married couple who love larger than life characters and enjoy high-lighting that not every white knight has to

ride in on a steed. We're a real love story!". Katie Morris assisted by Melanie Marie McGuin will be signing "Sisters" by Rosemary Clooney. Other performers are Aaron Talley, Avery Heisey and Ashley Williams. We hope to see you there.



Katie Morris and Melanie Marie McGuin will sing "Sisters"

Thanks for Original Works Success



THANK YOU to the 11 very talented authors that had pieces selected for the inaugural Prince William Little Theatre's Original Works Festival. Your creativity with the written word made this newfound project a huge success.

Writers:

Nicole Lust
Adam Szudrich
Craig Houk
Thomas Piccin
B.L. Hardgrove
Marilyn Bennett
Jasmine Michelle
Shayne Gardner
Andrea Fine Carey
Tyierra Henderson
Jacqueline Youm

We also want to share an enormous amount of gratitude to everyone associated with making this three night festival come to life. This list includes our directors, cast members, production team, play reading committee, and audience!

If you didn't get a chance to view these on the performance dates, we're sure you'll enjoy seeing the different productions on our YouTube channel. You'll laugh, you'll cry and you'll come away with thoughts on topics of discussion impacting our society – exactly what theatre is

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Chrissy's Corner Member Spotlight: Bob Thompson



Photo by Mark Moorstein

Greetings theatre lovers! As summer winds down to a close, things are ramping up at PWLT.

Our first Original Works Festival was a rousing success. We received great feedback from our viewers and the authors. Don't worry if you missed it, all of the works are on our YouTube Channel. Go to youtube.com and search for Prince William Little Theatre. Don't forget to subscribe.

We're also in rehearsals for our first production back in the Gregory. *Dial M For Murder* has a wonderful cast. It opens October 8th and runs for two weekends closing October 17th. Tickets are on sale now.

Mark your calendars for September 12th – Arts Alive is back! This celebration of the arts in Prince William County will be held at the Hylton Performing Arts Center from 12:00 Noon to 4:00 pm.

PWLT will be performing at 12:05 in the Gregory – come check us out!

Looking for an audition? Auditions for our December production of *A Christmas Carol* will be coming up. Watch our website and Facebook page for more details.

Let us know if you have any ideas. What would you like to see? We'd love to hear from you. Reach out to us at info@pwlt.org.

Thank you for keeping up with PWLT. Stay safe, take care, and keep performing.

See you at the theatre! (soon)

Chrissy Mastrangelo, PWLT President



Bob has been a member since December of 2019 when he was cast as Monsignor O'Hara in our production of *Sister Act, the Musical*. However, after the show was "postponed" in March 2020 due to COVID, he was cast in two of PWLT's Zoom productions - the first being *21 Days to Save a Life*, an original musical where he played a hard-nosed detective. Later, he was featured as a crooked lawyer in *Superstition and Espionage*, one of the contributions in our Original Works Festival. Obviously, he has made an impression on us and vice versa.

However it's not only his fun personality we were taken with, but also his willingness to jump in with both feet to help us move our production forward. "When I am involved in a show, I dive in to help in all aspects - set building, painting and publicity to name a few. I love to help collect and make props for my character and others, searching for just the right things." For example, during *Sister Act*, he designed and printed fake Philadelphia Enquirer and Variety newspapers for the show to use during one of the musical numbers.

It's interesting to see how people become drawn to the stage. In Bob's case it was his junior year in high school. He describes his first time on stage in *You*

Can't Take It With You, when he played a bit-part as a G-Man: "It was a disaster - on opening night, I forgot my cues and half of my lines and bluffed my way through it - but I was hooked!" Later he was cast in *Lil Abner* and then as Benny VanBuren in *Damn Yankees*. Bob tried some local theater shows into the 80s, but realized he needed to get a real job and take care of his family and had to put theater out of his mind. However, as it often happens, once theatre is in your blood it never leaves you. In 1999, his daughter's group of friends decided to put on *Annie, Jr* and the director heard he had a background in theater and asked him to help. "Stepping back on that stage was all it took to get the bug again. Now it's 21 years and counting in the DC Metro theater community. So many great memories."

Bob's favorite role with PWLT is without a doubt, Monsignor O'Hara in *Sister Act, the Musical*. He is so excited it is going forward and will finally be on stage in March of 2022. He loved bringing the role to life and it's one of those roles that an actor loves to play. Why? "Because you get to build the character and how he grows in the show with the discovery of Delores' beautiful music." He did warn that he might steal a few scenes. He readily admits, "Getting up there on stage brings out the inner ham in me". However, it's the joy of becoming that character and working hard with his fellow actors and crew in order to see the audience's response to the work that gives him such a lift. "It's hard to put into words, but comedy or drama or musical, it's magical."

While acting makes his day, by far the best thing in life is being a proud Grandpa. "Mason is 2 years old and will soon be a big brother. He lights up our world and makes us smile and laugh every day, and I enjoy watching him grow." Bob made a DVD of his performance as Crazy Old Maurice in *Beauty and the Beast*, "So that when he gets older he can watch his Grandpa on stage, and always remember me and how I made him laugh."

Considering his philosophy in life comes from his father, it is easy to see why family is the guiding principle in his life. "My Dad taught me several things – one was "get up and rub some dirt on it, you'll be fine", but more importantly he always said "Family is everything, never forget that". And I never have." PWLT is so happy that Bob has become a member of our family and we think he should make another DVD of his role in *Sister Act*, because that too will make his grandson laugh.

Prince William Little Theatre Newsletter

Newsletter Editor: Terri Ritchey

PWLT Board of Directors:

President - Chrissy Mastrangelo
Vice President - Becky Gould-Levine
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 Pat McInerney
 Justin Stretetz
 Tina Mullins
 Terri Ritchey
 Sharon Veselic



Welcome To Our Returning Board Member – Tina Mullins



Tina Mullins in Bye Bye Birdie.
Photo by Dave Warner

PWLT was lucky to have Tina on our board in the past and even luckier that she has decided to join us again. I asked her why she wants to work with us on the board and she indicated a desire to give back her love of theatre and to help continue the growth of theatre within our community. Tina pointed out “It takes a village to produce quality plays” and for Tina, this is her contribution to community theatre because she wants everyone “to enjoy the thrill of performing like she has.” She has jumped right into board activities and is heading up our Membership Committee.

Like so many of us, Tina likes PWLT because it feels like her theater home and the members feel part of her family. One thing she zeroed in on was the qualities she values in an organization, “inclusiveness and non-judgmental people”. Tina’s first show with PWLT, *Baby the Musical*, occurred after a 40 year hiatus from performing on stage. She followed up this performance with doing shows with neighboring theatre organizations, but “none of them felt like my family.” We are glad she sees us as a safe haven as we also view her as family.

Tina has always loved to sing and act. “It was therapeutic.” She took theater classes in high school and was cast as Gooch in *Mame* in her senior year. It must have been a great performance, because the owners of Burn Brae Dinner Theater saw her performance and called her at college a year later to ask if she would do the role for them! While getting a Bachelors in Speech and Hearing Science and Masters in Audiology, Tina did several other college and dinner theater shows but eventually had to stop to focus on her career as a clinical audiologist at Saint Elizabeths Hospital and, after retiring, as a social worker. She also had to find time to care for ailing parents and to raise her own family. “Theater would need to take a back seat but later I moved to Heritage

Hunt Active Adult Community and I stepped back on stage. It was then that I realized I had acting in my blood.”

In addition, Tina has been singing with the Manassas Chorale for over 10 years. “Music grounds me and choral music challenges me.” While she loves musical theater, she pointed out that opportunities are rare, but when roles are suitable for her, she likes to audition. “The talent in this area is amazing and I am humbled when I see others audition. So when I am able to actually get cast...no matter how small the part...I love sinking my teeth into it.”

Her favorite role was when she was cast as the Mayor’s wife in *Bye Bye Birdie*, because she was able to use her face and body to get the audience laughing. Her biggest role was Dolly in *Hello Dolly* and she worked hard to embrace the character.

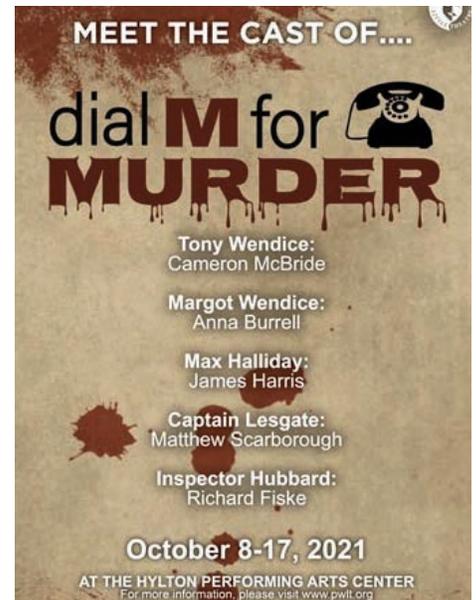


Tina’s puppy Cookie

Currently, her biggest “hobby” is training her new puppy (Mal-Shi Teddy Bear) to be a therapy dog. “I would like to take her to hospitals and nursing homes. She keeps me entertained for hours on end and she certainly kept us busy during the long Covid quarantined months.” Now that theatre is back doing live performances, we know that her next biggest hobby will be working diligently to help PWLT continue to provide quality shows for our audiences. We are thrilled she is with us because one thing you can count on with Tina – she gives everything she can to a role, a position and life in general. Her motto is “there are no small parts, only small actors.”

Obviously, Tina realizes even a small gesture can contribute to the whole and make a big difference. Thank you for your dedication to our theatre.

Dial M for Murder



We are back with live performance in the Gregory Family Theater in the Hylton Performing Arts Center. Our first show is this classic murder mystery that originally premiered on BBC in England, eventually brought to Broadway, then to the big screen. Dates are Oct 8 through the 17th. Directed by Susy Moorstein, it features the following performers.

Come and get in the spooky October spirit with this production. After a year away, we look forward to providing you with the same quality shows you have come to expect from us. See you in October!

Thanks for Original Works Success

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designed to do.

Watch Day 1 (YouTube) On Replay - originally aired on July 27th at 7PM
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j-QJwGJwFbY>

Watch Day 2 (YouTube) On Replay - originally aired on July 28th at 7PM
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cJ-PNeowdG0>

Watch Day 3 (YouTube) Live On Replay - originally aired July 29th at 7PM
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E5x5k2rth3l>

We received such positive feedback that PWLT has decided to continue to provide similar online content in the future. We are forming a new committee specifically dedicated to online content. Please contact us if you are interested in joining us in this new endeavor.