



# BEHIND the SCENES

Pioneer Theatre Guild Booster Club Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 1

October 2009

## Pioneer Theatre Guild Presents **'OKLAHOMA!'**

Pioneer Theatre Guild is thrilled to begin their 2009-2010 season with a true American classic: Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Oklahoma!"

According to Wikipedia, *Oklahoma!* "epitomized the development of the 'book musical,' a musical play where the songs and dances are fully integrated into a well-made story, with serious dramatic goals, that is able to evoke genuine emotions other than laughter. In addition, *Oklahoma!* features musical themes, or motifs, that recur throughout the work to connect the music and story more closely than any musical ever had before."

A "family-friendly" show, "Oklahoma!" features wonderful dance numbers and memorable songs including "Oh What a Beautiful Morning," "Surrey with the Fringe on Top," "People Will Say We're in Love," "Cain't Say No" as well as the title song, "Oklahoma!"

The last time Pioneer Theatre Guild presented a classic American musical was four years ago with another Rodgers and Hammerstein gem: "Carousel." Producer Susan Hurwitz and the students felt it was important for each graduating class to have the opportunity to be part of such a timeless piece of musical theatre.

Well over 100 Pioneer High School students are hard at work bringing this masterpiece to life. With sure direction from talented University of Michigan students as well as Pioneer's own theatre staff, "Oklahoma!" is sure to be a show to remember.

### Ticket information for 'Oklahoma!'

All performances are in Schreiber Auditorium

- Saturday, November 7th, 7:30 pm
- Sunday, November 8th, 2:00 pm matinee
- Friday, November 13th, 7:30 pm
- Saturday, November 14th, 7:30 pm
- Sunday, November 15th, 2:00 pm matinee

#### **Tickets:**

**General Admission:**

**Adults \$12, Students/Seniors/PHS staff \$9**

Available at 5 p.m. on Oct. 30 at Morgan and York (1928 Packard Rd. ) or at the door one hour before each showtime. Sorry, no credit cards.

#### **Reserved Patron Tickets: \$25**

Support the Booster Club and watch the show from one of the best seats in the house. No waiting in line! You may purchase these at the Patron Seat table in the lobby before the show, or emailing [ptguild@gmail.com](mailto:ptguild@gmail.com)

**NEW THIS YEAR: FLEX TICKETS** Save money by purchasing a flex ticket good for six admissions to any PTG shows. Cost is \$50 for adults and \$35 for students/children. Available in person or by emailing [ptguild@gmail.com](mailto:ptguild@gmail.com).

### **PTG Annual Gala:**

#### **A Western 'Chuck-Wagon' Dinner**

Saddle up the horses or just mosey on down to a special gala dinner in honor of the opening night of "Oklahoma!" The festivities will start at 5:45 pm in the Pioneer cafeteria on Saturday, November 7. Guests will be treated to a delicious chuck-wagon style dinner and live folk entertainment. Of course, there will be vegetarian choices as well. The party will end at 7:15, just in time for everyone to take their seats in the reserved section of the auditorium for the show. Cost is \$30 for adults and \$15 for students/children and includes your ticket to "Oklahoma!" Come in period costume or as you are!

You should have received an invitation in the mail. Reservations are due by October 30. Please contact Ellen Mozurkewich at [mozurk@med.umich.edu](mailto:mozurk@med.umich.edu) to reserve tickets or for more information.

Photo courtesy of Myra Karmann



[myraklarman.com](http://myraklarman.com)

**HELP WANTED**

It takes the efforts of many to keep the Pioneer Theatre Guild running smoothly. Below are some of the ways you can make a meaningful contribution. **We ask that each Booster Club family donate two hours of volunteer time to each show in which their child is a participant.** We look forward to working with you this year!

**After-School Concessions -- Clinch Steward (clinchnut@aol.com)**

The Concessions committee is looking for volunteers to help with after-school concessions sales to the Theatre Guild kids. The commitment would be 30-45 minutes (3:15-3:45) one day (your choice) a week. Occasional conflicts would not be a problem. We also need parents to help sell concessions during the shows. It's a great way to get to know a fantastic group of kids.

**Dress Rehearsal Dinners — Ellen Dobrusin**

(ellendobrusin@comcast.net) This committee needs many people to help feed our hungry and hard-working students on technical and dress rehearsal nights. You can also contact Ellen if you would like to offer occasional help with set-up, food preparation or clean-up. Be part of the "behind-the-scenes" action with a fun group of parents.

**Fall Gala: "A Western Chuck-Wagon Dinner" -- Ellen**

**Mozurkewich (mozurk@med.umich.edu)** The Gala – our annual Booster Club fundraiser – will kick off the Booster Club year on Sat., Nov. 7, – the opening night of "Oklahoma!" We need many volunteers to work on set-up and clean-up and help with food prep, decorating and planning. We also need a few more folks to bake pies!

**Patron Seats/Flex tickets — Ellen Rabinowitz**

(rabinowitz@comcast.net) Three to four volunteers per show — including one "captain" — are needed to help show patron ticket holders to their seats prior to each performance. We also need parents to sell tickets in the box office and at the patron seat/flex ticket table prior to each show.

**Banquet — Jacqui Grisdale (grisdale@med.umich.edu)**

We could use volunteers to help plan and carry out our fun end-of-the-year party. Contact Jacqui if you'd like to lend a hand in the celebration.

**PTG BOOSTER CLUB SCHEDULE FOR 2009-2010**

11/7/09	<i>Oklahoma!</i> Gala, 5:45 p.m. and opening, 7:30 p.m.
11/8/09	<i>Oklahoma!</i> 2 p.m.
11/13 & 11/14/09	<i>Oklahoma!</i> 7:30 p.m.
11/15/09	<i>Oklahoma!</i> 2 p.m.
11/18/09	Board Meeting @ 7 p.m.
12/?/09	<i>Future Stars</i> and Competition Parent Meeting, TBD
1/13/10	Board Meeting @ 7 p.m.
1/8/10	<i>Future Stars</i> opening night, shows at 7 & 9:30 p.m.
1/9/10	<i>Future Stars</i> , shows at 7 & 9:30
1/16/10	<i>Future Stars</i> finale, 7:30 p.m.
1/30/10	Competition Districts, all day, location TBD
2/5 & 2/6/10	Competition Public Performances, 7:30 p.m.
2/10/10	Board Meeting @ 7 p.m.
2/12/10	<i>Spelling Bee</i> , opening night, 7:30 p.m.
2/13/10	Competition Regionals, all day, location TBD.
2/13/10	<i>Spelling Bee</i> , 7:30 p.m.
2/14/10	<i>Spelling Bee</i> , 2 p.m.
2/19 & 2/20/10	Competition States, all day, location TBD
2/19 & 2/20/10	<i>Spelling Bee</i> , 7:30 p.m.
2/21/10	<i>Spelling Bee</i> , 2 p.m.
3/?/10	<i>Footloose</i> , Parent Meeting, TBD
3/10/10	Board Meeting @ 7 p.m.
4/14/10	Board Meeting @ 7 p.m.
4/24/10	<i>Footloose</i> , Opening Night, 7 p.m.
4/25/10	<i>Footloose</i> , 2 p.m.
4/30 & 5/1/10	<i>Footloose</i> , 7:30 p.m.
5/2/10	<i>Footloose</i> , 2 p.m.
5/12/10	Board Meeting @ 7 p.m.
5/21 & 5/22/10	<i>Student Productions</i> , 7:30 p.m.
5/23/10	<i>Student Productions</i> , 2 p.m.
<b>TBD</b>	<b>End-of-Year Banquet and Annual Meeting</b>
6/9/10	Board Meeting @ 7 p.m.

**Cast and crew learn about the history of 'Oklahoma!'**

In conjunction with the Pioneer Theatre Guild's fall production of "Oklahoma!," producer Susan Hurwitz has put together a series of guest lectures for the cast and crew. Speakers included former Senior Curator of the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village and current Education Director of the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum, Nancy Bryk. She gave a historical background on the state of Oklahoma, including giving the students a look at what life was like for the people who lived there in 1906. Retired Pioneer teacher Claire Dahl returned to discuss the history of Native and African-Americans in the Oklahoma territory, including the importance of the "Trail of Tears." Susan's also trying to set up a visit with Brent Wagner of the UM Musical Theatre Department to explain the role of "Oklahoma!" in the history of American musical theatre.



## SPOTLIGHT ON...

### Guest (Partial Season) Staff:

**Mary Michael Patterson**, director/choreographer. Mary Michael is a senior in the nationally-renowned Musical Theater program at UM. Last year she performed the role of Peggy Sawyer in their smash hit *42nd Street*.

**Kevin Munhall**, assistant director/choreographer, is also a senior in the UM Musical Theatre program.

**Brian Buckner**, vocal director. A graduate of UM's Music department, Brian was vocal director for last year's production of *Urinetown*.

**David Perample**, orchestra director. This long-time piano teacher and accompanist was music director for *Miss Saigon* and *Willy Wonka*.

**Gabrielle Hoard-Vaara**, props and graphics, has a BFA in theatre from Detroit Mercy and a BS in interior architecture from UNC.

**Bob Lester and Drew Leahy**, sound designers. Bob has a degree from UM's school of Music, Theatre and Dance, and is a member of the popular band "My Dear Disco." Drew is a student in UM's Performance Arts Technology program. Both have worked on several PTG shows.

**Laura Munson**, lighting design. Laura has designed lights for many theatre productions, including those at the Williamston Theatre and Albion College.

**Amy Plouffe**, paint supervisor, is a junior in Theatre Design and Production at UM.

**Kathy Lloyd**, costume supervisor and assistant. Kathy is also a PTG parent and Booster Club board member.

Pioneer Theatre Guild is fortunate to have a talented staff that guides our students in all aspects of theater. Below is a partial list of the top-notch professionals working on our ambitious production of "Oklahoma!"

### Full-Time Staff:

**Susan Hurwitz**, PTG co-sponsor and producer. Susan has been with PTG since 1999. Susan also has many years of experience in community theatre.

**Mysti Plummer**, PTG co-sponsor and "Oklahoma!" set designer and technical director. Mysti has been affiliated with numerous theaters through-out the East Coast, Southeast and Midwest. She joined PTG in 1998.

**Ciara Stella**, communications manager, scene shop supervisor and technical director. This mechanical engineer has been working with PTG students since 2003. She has been affiliated with the Detroit Opera House, UM's School of Music, UM's Musket Theater Troupe and The Burns Park Players.

**Kasia Mroszewska-Fenz**, costume designer and costume supervisor, has worked with UM's School of Music, UM's Residential College, Eastern Michigan University, Michigan Classical Repertory Theater and Cracow Satirical Theater (Poland). She joined PTG in 2005.



Photo courtesy of Myra Klamann

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## Pioneer Theatre Guild wins two national awards

By Jenn McKee

Pioneer High School's Theatre Guild recently won two award from National Youth Theatre (NYT)—an organization that highlights and evaluates high school theater groups— for the school's recent production of "Urinetown: The Musical."

Senior Ashley Park won the award for outstanding supporting actress in a musical for her performance as the show's precocious narrator, Little Sally; and the show's cast received the award for outstanding ensemble.

To identify award-worthy work, NYT sends experts around the country to theatrical productions involving young people; this year, 200 productions were considered.

NYT's review of Pioneer's "Urinetown" production can be viewed at [http://www.nationalyouththeatre.com/reviews/review\\_pioneer\\_urinetown.html](http://www.nationalyouththeatre.com/reviews/review_pioneer_urinetown.html).



## Booster Club Treasury Update

Income for the Pioneer Theatre Guild Booster Club is provided primarily by membership dues, program ad payments, non-refunded ad deposits, and fundraisers such as the fall gala, patron seat tickets, season and flex tickets, intermission concessions, and DVD sales among others. Expenses include providing food for students (rehearsal concessions, rehearsal dinners during tech week, snacks during performances), capital expenses, production support, and the year-end banquet among others. We are pleased to report that since keeping detailed records beginning in 06-07, the Booster Club account has ended each year "in the black."

Interesting financial facts:

\*Thirty-seven dollars of a \$55 one-year membership is spent on rehearsal dinners and snacks during tech and performance weeks.

\*For the last two years, the Booster Club has been able to afford giving salary bonuses to the direction staff of each PTG production as gestures of immense appreciation for lending their considerable talents and skills to Pioneer Theatre Guild.

\*The Booster Club has been in communication with Pioneer Administrators about contributing to updates greatly needed in both Schreiber Auditorium and the Little Theatre. Whatever contributions the Booster Club makes will primarily improve the facility for Theatre Guild purposes.

Questions for the Booster Club treasurer? Contact Ellen Abramson at [era@med.umich.edu](mailto:era@med.umich.edu)

## PTG Booster Club Board 2009-2010

Susan Pearlman—President  
Ellen Abramson  
Donna Ainsworth  
Ellen Dobrusin  
Jacqui Grisdale  
Wendy Hiller  
Margy Howes  
Susan Lerch  
Kathy Lloyd  
Ellen Mozurkewich  
Julie Norris  
Ellen Rabinowitz  
Heather Robinson  
Clinch Steward  
Cathy Whitaker

Please contact the board through the link on the [ptguild.org](http://ptguild.org) website.

## Upcoming Events:

### ‘Oklahoma!’

November 7-15

**Gala 2009 —  
A Western  
‘Chuck-Wagon’ Dinner**

**Saturday, November 7,  
5:45 p.m.**

Newsletter questions?

Contact Wendy Hiller at [wskh@aol.com](mailto:wskh@aol.com)

## Money Matters: PTG Dues and Don'ts

As of the October TGBC board meeting, Pioneer Theatre Guild had 123 paid members. That's a great start, but we know there are more of you out there! If you haven't paid your dues or your ad deposits yet, please turn in your checks as soon as possible.

Remember that the dues are \$55 per year or \$30 per semester. Students wishing to join only for "Future Stars" pay a reduced rate of \$40 which covers \$15 for dues and a \$25 ad deposit.

Members are also expected to pay a \$100 ad deposit, which will be held (uncashed) until spring. These checks will be returned once the students have sold at least \$100 of advertising for the production programs.

The dues and advertising revenues are what allow the Booster Club to support the students and the productions throughout the year, so it's important to do your part.

As always, the Booster Club offers a limited number of scholarships to students, based on financial hardship. See Susan Hurwitz for more information.

We also accept donations to help defray the cost of these scholarships. Please contact TGBC Treasurer Ellen Abramson at [era@med.umich.edu](mailto:era@med.umich.edu).