



Summer Newsletter

July-August-September 2014

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Remember the Pasadena Playhouse Alumni
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vamidon@ppa-a.org

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Henry & Joyce Sumid Scholarship
www.Sumidscholarship.com

Pasadena Playhouse Archives
archives@pasadenaplayhouse

Playhouse Website:
www.pasadenaplayhouse.org

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

A sincere 'Thank You' to all of our members who voted in the election of our new constitution. The revised constitution you received in the election is now the official constitution of the PPA&A. Your board is grateful for your involvement in the process and encouraged by your overwhelming support to remake our organization and allow us to be prepared for whatever may come. Please know that we will continue to work hard to make the best decisions for the PPA&A and that we will keep you informed as things develop.

We are also extremely encouraged by the success of the Greenhouse program's first year! The pilot program that brought 1st year Masters' students in playwrighting from USC Drama school to work and learn at the Playhouse went so well that the school and our theatre are busy refining the class further for its return this Fall. Please see Pete Parkin's article inside about his experience working with the students as a dramaturg for Greenhouse.

Finally, we are very excited to announce that the Mainstage house will receive new seats and carpeting during August!!

continued on page 8.

BOARD MINUTES EXCERPTS

Board Meeting of June 23 2014

President's statement:

Constitution has been ratified; New Board elected; Letter to membership on constitution

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Administrative:

172 ballots were received; 170 affirmative

Greenhouse:

The plan is to continue the project next year.

Archives

Busy screening photos; 3 for each production in small theatres

Sumid Scholarship:

A total of 6 scholarships awarded

Submitted by Marje Cates, Recording Secretary

NEXT MEETING

AUGUST 25, 2014 7pm

TREASURER'S REPORT

Pasadena Playhouse Alumni and Associates

Cash Flow Statement

Ending June 23, 2014

Check book balance from 4/28/14	\$2,233.64
Income	
Annual memberships (2)	\$80.00
Life memberships (0)	\$0.00
Directories (3)	\$11.25
Donations	\$385.00
Refund of membership fees and directory postage	(\$48.75)
Bank interest, 4/30 and 5/31	\$0.23
Total Income	\$427.73
Expenditures	
Greenhouse reception advance	\$200.00
Postage for directories	\$56.60
2014 tax return	\$36.66
Annual fee - Registry of Charitable Trusts	\$25.00
Fee for filing tax return with State of California	\$10.00
Bank fees - April and May	\$34.00
Total Expenditures	\$362.26
Check book balance, 6/23/14	\$2,299.11
Other cash assets	
Unexpended legal retainer	\$1,000.00
Cash balance, 6/23/14	\$3,299.11
Investment Fund Balance (Franklin Income Class A - \$2,500 from Rose Freeman)	
As of 4/25/14	\$48,179.38
As of 6/20/14	\$49,916.06
Gain/(loss)	\$1,736.68

Election Results and Thoughts

The votes are in. It was nearly unanimous - 170 of our members voted for our new PPA&A Constitution vs. 2 members voting against. Your Board thanks you for the confidence you have placed with those of us who are left to continue to run this Association and pursue our continuing efforts to maintain our membership base and to take the next steps necessary to hold on to our non-profit, tax exempt, 501(c)(3) designation.

Your votes are in for your Board to push ahead for another year of Greenhouse, the pilot program that brought forth USC graduate students for the first accredited college level classes to be held at the Playhouse in over 40 years, maybe our last best chance for a resurgence of theatrical education at 39 S. El Molino.

And your votes are in to continue moving forward with another year of the Sumid Scholarship Fund, a program that since 2007 has already awarded to 37 deserving and needy students over \$185,000.00 in scholarships.

Make no mistake. Our Association is at a precipice. We've had a remarkable run over the past 4 decades without our beloved educational institution to support us. Our time to hold on to our mission may be running out. But your votes are in to give our old college playhouse another try.

R.J. Muehlhausen

ADMINISTRATOR

SUMID SCHOLARSHIP - 2014

For the 8th straight year, the Sumid Scholarship Committee has awarded scholarships valued at \$5,000 each to deserving students. Many thanks to committee members, Ross Clark, Anne La Rose, RJ Muehlhausen, Kim O'Rourke and Pete Parkin for their hard work and long hours spent reviewing applications and deliberating the selection of those most qualified. This year's awardees are:

Natasha Gutterud - American Academy of Dramatic Arts - Actor

Meghan Lang - American Musical and Dramatic Academy - Actor

Azaela Lewis - The New School for Drama - Actor

Alyssa Rupert - American Musical and Dramatic Academy - Actor

Rose Strasen - California Institute of the Arts - Costume Designer

Kayla Yazloff - California Institute of the Arts - Stage Manger/Technician

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!

From Our Awardees

Thank you so much for the wonderful news!!! I cannot tell you how much I appreciate your consideration and the scholarship award!

I will be attending American Musical and Dramatic Arts (AMDA) college and conservatory at their Los Angeles campus.

Meghan Lang

Yes! I have received this wonderful email, and am so incredibly grateful. Thank you!

I will be attending the New School for Drama. (in New York)

Azalea Lewis

*Thank you so much. I'm very very grateful for this award.
Rose Strasen*

Oh my gosh! Thanks so much! This really helps me and I'm flattered that you would award this scholarship to me. It makes me so happy!

*Oh, wow. Seriously, this helps me. Thank you.
Kayla Yazloff*

Thank you so much!!! I can't even begin to thank you for the happiness and encouragement this has brought me!

I will be attending American Academy of Dramatic Arts

Thank you again so very much!!

Love, Natasha Gutterud

THOUGHTS ON THE GREENHOUSE PROJECT

I had the good fortune of being gently volunteered to be a dramaturgical responder on the first ever Greenhouse Project between the Playhouse and the USC graduate playwriting program. Thank you Sheldon, I had a great time, particularly interacting with students in a class AT the Playhouse.

At our first meeting Sheldon asked me to tell the students- three writers and three directors - about the Alumni. The students were stunned to learn that there had been a school at the Playhouse. This resulted in a lot of questions by the students wanting to know more and hanging around after the meeting to talk about the curriculum.

More on Ellen's 90th

Shortly after the announcement of my 90th birthday in the January newsletter, requested contributions came into The Playhouse to help match my brother's generous donation, and I also received many thoughtful cards of congratulations. I wrote a letter of thanks and appreciation to be printed in the next newsletter. Unfortunately, something went wrong. It did not appear in the last issue's original email newsletter and was not included in the mailed out one. So I am repeating it here because I am very grateful for your responses.

In the last few months my jaw has kept dropping open repeatedly! First, at the wonderful surprise 90th birthday party at The Playhouse. Then at my brother's generous donation. And since The Playhouse requested contributions to match my brother's gift, your donations keep coming in. Not that we're anywhere near \$25,000, but every little bit helps.

So I want to thank all of you who answered the call. I am really astounded by your generosity and appreciate your ready response. Thank you, thank you all. This money is going toward the badly needed new seats to be installed in the theatre sometime during this summer. All the money is not raised yet, but we're getting there.

In case you would still like to make a donation and weren't aware of it, contributions can also be made by credit card on the Playhouse website. Just be sure to fill in the note section saying that the money is at my request and is to go toward the new seats.

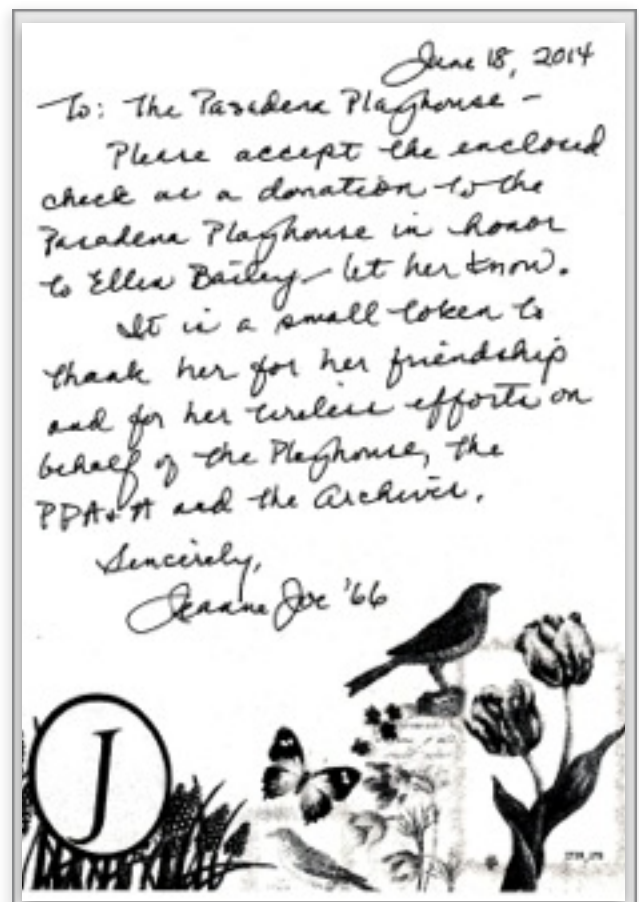
Responses are still coming in. Let me quote from the most recent card I received:

"Happy 90th birthday. I know this is a few months late, but I didn't forget you! Many thanks for your help and guidance while I was at the Playhouse in 1963-64. You were always wonderful to all of us who were a long way from home and loved the theatre as much as you did...and wanted to study our craft and better ourselves."

Jonnie King ... (Jim Edwards while he was in school. Check out his website; There's a section on the Pasadena Playhouse. www.jonnieking.net/gpage11.html) Many thanks Jonnie, and to all of you who sent similar greetings. You brought back fond memories.

Ellen Bailey

One of the many notes and donations received by the Playhouse in Ellen's honor.



WHAT THE ALUMNI ARE DOING

John M. McElveney '63 Seema Sueko, Playhouse Associate Artistic Director, will be directing *STOP KISS* at The Playhouse in November. As part of that process, Seema held a reading using members of the Playhouse staff and alumnus John McElveney.

John was stellar in the part of the detective; it was a thrill to have one of our alumni participating.

Will Diaz '54 The thoroughly entertaining Amy G in *ENTERSHAMEMENT* in The Carrie Hamilton Theatre included some audience participation. Will Diaz was sitting enjoying the show when suddenly the spot light was on him and he was being enticed by Amy G up to the stage. Will was able to meet her wit with his own and everyone was delighted at his performance.

Ross Clark '69 Mounted his sixth original children's musical in his quest to bring Children's Theatre back to the Playhouse and Pasadena. His production of *TOAD!* (book, music and lyrics by Ross Clark) premiered at the Scottish Rite Temple just down the street from the Playhouse. The temporary move from the Playhouse was necessitated because the program has outgrown the Carrie Hamilton and a larger theatre was needed to help the program to grow. The goal is still to return Children's Theatre to the Main Stage in the future.

**Please send your alumni doings to:
newsletter@ppa-a.org
so we can keep everyone up to date!**

Greenhouse
continued from page 3.

Oliver Mayer, the playwriting professor at USC and I discussed how best to work this when the plays were "performed". He thought that it would be most beneficial to have two voices. One from him since he had advised the students through the process from the beginning. The other from someone who would only have seen it once with fresh eyes on the night the plays were done. We had originally discussed my being involved in the whole process from casting through rehearsals and performance. I thought that was a great idea, and so that is what we did.

The plays were performed in the Vault rehearsal space at Los Robles and Green St. on three consecutive nights. There was a discussion after each play moderated by Seema Sueko, and then a reception. On the fourth day we met at the Playhouse with the three writers for about three hours and went over each play in great detail. Oliver was really terrific with the students. They are very lucky to have someone like him as a mentor. He was very generous with me, allowing me more than my share of time to add my critiques. The students were thrilled with the program, and the experience that they had.

As for me, I became very emotional when in the middle of the critique I realized that this was really happening! Students in the Playhouse again.

I'm happy to report that this program will continue again next year, and beyond.

Pete Parkin

WE GET LETTERS

Rob Schaumann writes:

I went to the playhouse school around 1993 or 94. I forget what the date was really. I would like to know when that was if someone knows.

Also I have been in several plays and musicals around the LA area and am currently singing in the quartet in *The Music Man* at the Glendale Centre Theatre. It runs thru July 5th. Ticket information can be found at www.glendalecentretheatre.com

editor's note: the school closed in 1969; during the early 1990's, a workshop program was offered by Alumni at the Playhouse.

Tony Oseguera '60 writes:

The Newsletter from the Pasadena Playhouse is always a real treat to read, to remember, and a great tonic to become reenergized! How I wish it were possible to magically attend any number of the superb opening nights that have graced the magnificent Main Stage Theatre! As a professor emeritus of international broadcasting and film, I am very pleased to see the Playhouse offering yet another first:

STONEFACE - The Rise and Fall and Rise of Buster Keaton

The Electric City Playhouse, our humble little theatre, yet quite divine with its own southern charm, has just celebrated its 30th anniversary with the performance of *Bus Stop!* *Bus Stop* was chosen simply because, it was the first play presented at ECP.

As is the case with communities throughout the US, community theatres, such as the Electric City Playhouse, provide an incredible fare of contemporary plays. If you are in the area, please drop in!

Since 2009, the Electric City Playhouse has been proudly offering "six season shows each year, along with Special Event Fundraisers, and a great, two-week children's youth drama camp and production." For those Pasadena Playhouse Alumni who might just remember me, yes, I played the role of the Sheriff; in fact the sheriff of Anderson, SC, Sheriff John S. Skipper Jr., allowed me to use his official sheriff's hat and badge, for the run of the play; ECP returned the favor by presenting him with two guest tickets to the performance. Every time I donned his hat, I was immediately and semi-officially able to bring Mr. William Inge's character to life, according to our director Richard Cowan. Any success I may have had, I attribute to my years at the famous Pasadena Playhouse, College of Theatre Arts, State Theatre of California! (Arnold, stick to movies, lol!) The laugh, however, was on me. During one of the last performances, I managed to accidentally flip a full glass of water with my hat! The audience roared for what seemed like an eternity! Bo, Marilyn Monroe's leading man, was quick to demand that the waitress, on stage, clean up the mess I had created. I hope the playhouse college reopens soon, so that I can take some stage-movement classes. Where is Ms. Farnsworth and Mr. Canna when you need them?

Break a leg!

Tony Oseguera

PS The sheriff's hat and badge were secured after each performance.

continued on page 7.

*We Get Letters**continued from page 6.***Don Frabotta '69** writes:

I just watched a local PBS show called Leonard Nimoy's Boston....that was VERY good...he directed, wrote and produced...a "walking tour" of Boston ...his son was in it with him...it was it was about his growing up days in what was Boston's West End...which was all taken by Eminent Domain because it was such prime property, very near Downtown and right on the Charles River....the area was comprised of immigrant Catholics and Jews....he showed where he lived, went to synagogue...got his first acting experience...where his father's barber shop was, where his grandfather worked...the many places where he sold newspapers...then worked at a card shop...then sold vacuum cleaners....and how the head of the theatre dept at Boston College, a Jesuit priest, selected him for a theatre summer program at the college (where he later received an honorary doctorate)...then came the time to leave Boston, get the train out of South Station and head to Pasadena Playhouse after sending \$600 for his tuition, arriving at Pasadena train station, walking from there to Playhouse in a blue wool suit, carrying a suitcase, looking odd...talked about getting rid of his Boston accent..and...and...Spock. I wish he had put in photo(s) of Playhouse at that time. Overall, his love for Boston shined through.....

Don

Dear Ellen,

My article on my great-uncle Helmuth and the Pasadena Playhouse was published in today's issue of the Pasadena Weekly. It will be on newsstands for the next week, but in the meantime, here is a direct link to the article: http://www.pasadenaweekly.com/cms/story/detail/family_history/13238/

Thank you so much for all your assistance. It helped a lot in fleshing out Helmuth's story.

Very gratefully,
Matt Hormann

Editors Note: It is a wonderful article. We will try to get permission to print in a future edition of Stage Whispers in the mean time check out the web link to read the full text.

Ted Soares '50 writes and sends a large box:

Hi Ellen-

You are welcome to all that's here in the box. No need to send them back. Knowing where they are and really where they should be to be enjoyed of what it was like back then at the Playhouse is good enough for me.

Lots of many great memories are in these pictures and programs.....

Enjoy,
Ted

Kerry Allen (son of Casey Allen '38) writes:

Ellen,

I hope these few items are of some use to the Playhouse Archives. When my Dad was there he was know as Arthur Allen. When he started working on Broadway in New York, there was another Arthur Allen in Equity at that times he changed his name to Casey.

He loved the Playhouse and the friends he made there. Martha Shaw, who was in his class, also lived here in the City and they stayed friends for the remainder of their lives.

Kerry

President's Message
continued from page 1.

For those of you who have visited the Playhouse in recent years, you know just how much the theatre has been in need of new seating. The seats will not only be comfortable, they will be attractive too.

New students, new seats... all in all, these are encouraging and exciting times. Stay tuned.

Best,

Valerie

New Seats for Main Stage!

New theatre seats and carpeting for the Mainstage house will be installed in August and ready for the new season. Here is a sneak peak!



Still Missing

In the last issue I listed some missing programs that are needed to fill in the gaps in our archival collection. They were from the Prickett and Huxley theatres. I got one response, but every little bit counts. So I'm going to try again. Listed below are missing programs from the East and West theatres in the 50's. If you have any of these, please send the originals or email copies to me at archives@pasadenaplayhouse.org. Any pictures you have would be welcomed as well.

West Theatre

The Wolves.....7/20/1950
I Like It Here.....5/10/1951
Soldier's Wife.....10/6/1953
Rope.....2/27/1959

East Theatre

Skylark.....3/15/1951
So This Is London.....5/03/1951
White Oaks.....7/19/1951
Second Chance.....8/09/1951
The Vortex.....3/11/1952
The Thirteenth Chair.....3/??/1954

We know these are missing. There may be others. If you have any programs, please send me a list of what you have and I will let you know if they are needed or not. We would like to make our collection as complete as possible. Can you help?

Ellen Bailey

FINAL CURTAIN



Martha Hyer '46, who received an Oscar nomination for playing a prim small-town schoolteacher opposite Frank Sinatra and Shirley MacLaine in the 1958 drama *Some Came Running*, has died. She was 89.

Hyer was married to producer Hal B. Wallis (*Casablanca*, *The Maltese Falcon*, *True Grit*) from December 1966 until his death in October 1986.

She was born in Fort Worth, Texas, and studied at Northwestern University and the Pasadena Playhouse. She was signed to a contract at RKO after a talent agent spotted her in a play at the Pasadena Playhouse, and she made her movie debut in *The Locket* (1946).



Louise Kane Grueneberg '47 was born in San Francisco on December 17, 1921. The family moved

to Boyle Heights, Los Angeles when Louise was three months old. From early on, Louise knew

she wanted to act and got involved in local radio shows while still in high school. She later enrolled at the Pasadena Playhouse conservatory, where she was cast in many main stage productions, most notably playing Rosalind in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, and Helen in the premiere of Tennessee Williams' play *Stairs to the Roof*. It was at the Playhouse that she met her husband, E. William Grueneberg. The story she told was that she borrowed a book from him in class and told her father that same night that she'd met the man she was going to marry.

Louise and Bill were married in 1946 and she continued to act, being cast in Hollywood movies that included *He Walked By Night*, *Squad Car* and *Paula*.

Louise passed away quietly in the early morning hours of Friday March 6, 2014 at the age of 92.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that donations be made to The Pasadena Playhouse at www.pasadenaplayhouse.org.

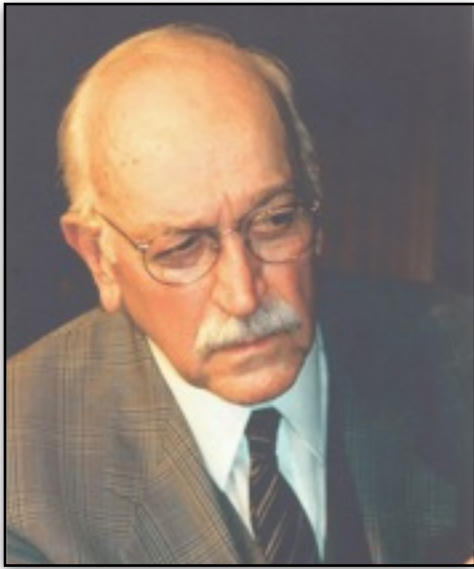


Adrian Brachfeld '65
Nikki Harmon '65 writes: For those of you who had the chance to work with Adrian Brachfeld ('65)

I wanted to let you know that Adrian passed away May 9th . He died in Ottawa, Canada, with his family at his hospital bedside. Adrian loved theatre and

STAGE WHISPERS Summer 2014

more than anything else, he loved the Playhouse. I designed the set for his production of *A Cue For Passion*, and I still remember how intense he was on every detail being just right. Adrian was, and always will be, one of the most passionate directors I ever worked with. He will be missed. Alav ha-shalom, my dear, dear friend.



Gene DeWild

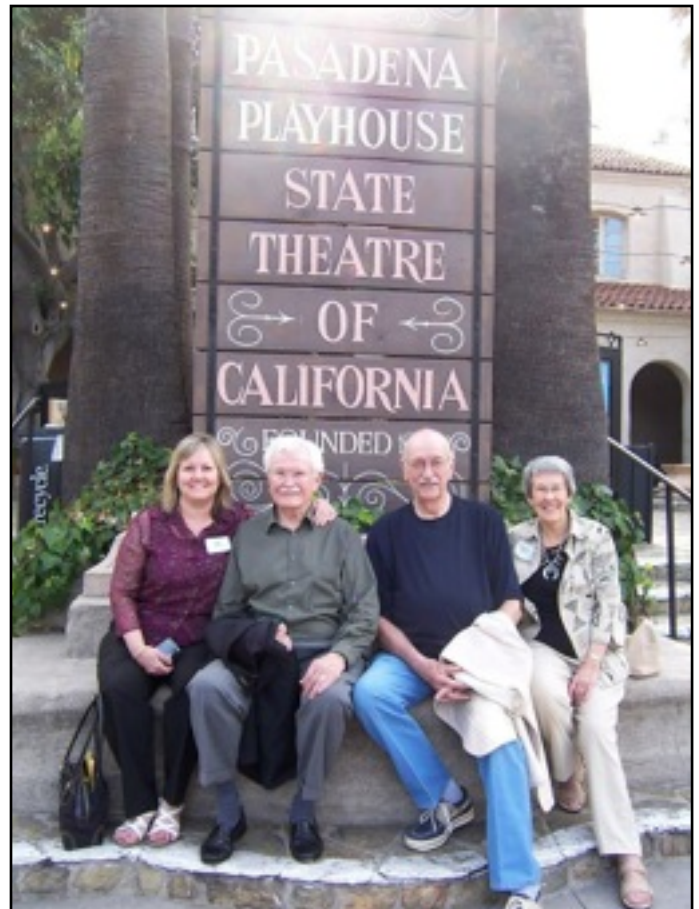
'55 It is with great regret that I report the passing - on Saturday, June 7th - of our good friend and highly regarded

professional colleague. Gene graduated in the class of 1955, a recipient of the prestigious Evalina C. Hale Award. Two years later he earned the MFA Degree at the Playhouse College of Theatre Arts. He then joined the faculty - teaching makeup and various courses - and served as Dean of Students in the early 1960s, and was named in *Who's Who in American Theatre* in 1962.

From 1965 to 1981 Gene taught theatre in the public schools of Fairbanks, Alaska. Upon his retirement the city named West Valley High

School theatre after him. As an actor Gene appeared in the United States in many drama festivals, stock and repertory companies - including the Farnsworth Park Summer Festival in Altadena, The Fairbanks Summer Arts Festival, the Light Opera Theatre there, and the Sierra Repertory Theatre of California.

In Europe, Gene appeared in numerous productions at the International Theatre and the English Theatre - both in Vienna, where he lived for a number of years. He also appeared with Artists in Prague in the Czech Republic, and toured *The Mouse Trap* to twenty-four of Germany's major cities.



Pictured Lisa Shoup, Gail Shoup, Gene DeWild, Dorothy Shoup

Gene's film credits include *Anastasia* - a critically acclaimed made-for-television movie starring Amy Irving, and *The Train* starring Ben Kingsley. He has also appeared on numerous TV programs produced by ORF in Vienna, Austria.

Although I never acted with Gene I directed him in *Summer and Smoke* and *Hedda Gabler* and greatly admired his dedication to his craft. Personally, he was a great friend to Dorothy and me, and our children (Gary and Lisa) still remember him picking us up in his Cadillac convertible when we arrived at the Pasadena train station after a trip back to Michigan. During the years he was in Alaska or Vienna he frequently came back to stay with us, and we then would go down to see Bea Hassel in *Leisure World*.

Gene will be greatly missed by all who knew him or who had the privilege of working with him.

Since the Playhouse was such a major part of Gene's life anyone wishing to do so could contribute to whatever funds are already established for the Playhouse..

Gail Shoup



Billy Dare (Sedares) '54 we have received word that Billy Dare passed away in Chicago on June 11, 2014. He was quite an entertainer and performed all over the

world and many many clubs here in Los Angeles and Palm Springs. playing piano and singing either with the Bily Dare Trio or on his own. His many fans always packed the clubs where he was working enjoying both his music and his enigmatic and magnetic personality.

After he retired, he moved back to his home town of Chicago, but several times he would fly back to L.A. for the summer, always timing his visits so he could attend the Alumni Brunch.-

Editor's Note: If you know of the passing of one of our Alumni please send us any information you have so that we can publish it in our newsletter. Any obits and photographs that you have will be used and will be greatly appreciated. We want to celebrate the lives of our wonderful Alumni!

Editors Note: *Before the Tony Awards weekend, Charles McNulty sat down with several of the leading artistic directors in Southern California Theatre including the Playhouse's own Sheldon Epps. Here are some excerpts from that article. The entire article can be read at the LA Times web site: <http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/envelope/tonys/la-et-cm-tony-awards-2014-round-table-la-theater-leaders-20140605-column.html#page=1>*

How would you assess the health of Broadway based on this season?

Epps: I'm a Tony voter, and I'm about to leave tonight on the red eye to start my voting sweep, but overall, based on what I've seen and what I've read, Broadway is certainly economically very healthy. But I always wonder whether it's artistically healthy. The boast has always been that you go to New York to see the best theater in the country. I certainly don't believe that's true anymore. There's great theater happening in this city, but also all over the country, that never makes it to Broadway.

Do actors want to perform here for the visibility?

Epps: There are people who go to the Pasadena Playhouse who literally have been coming to that theater for 40 years. That's a dyed-in-the-wool, intelligent audience. And in terms of casting, this is a great pool of acting talent. You don't have to worry if you choose to do a play and you don't get the people who did it in New York.

The paradox for me is that while the artistic health of Broadway has suffered in the last decade, its influence has grown greater,

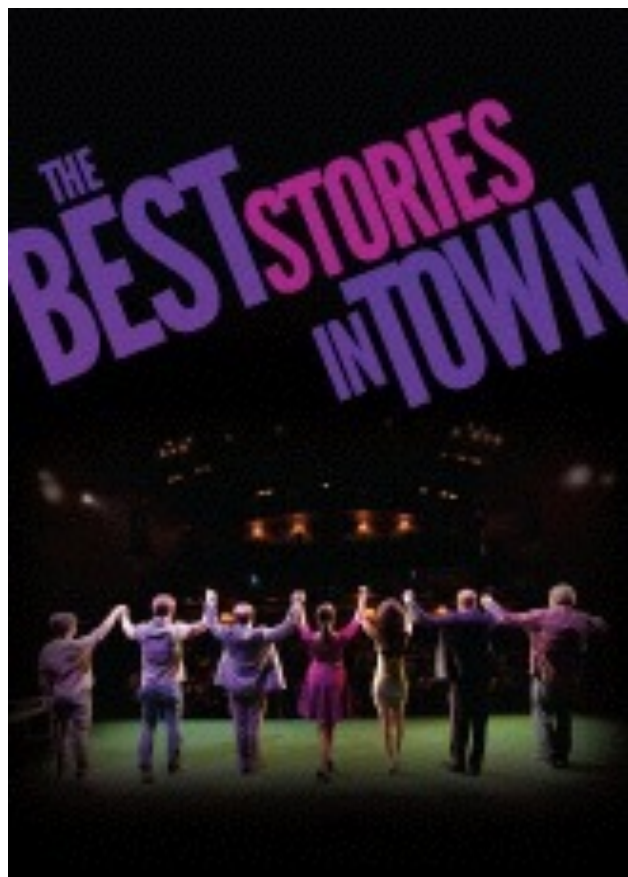
especially in the nonprofit realm in which all of you are producing. First, what's your diagnosis of what's ailing Broadway?

Epps: The audience has changed drastically. I don't know the exact statistics, but a huge number of people going to Broadway now are tourists, and they're going to say that they've been to a Broadway show not necessarily because they are theater lovers but because it's kind of like going to the Eiffel Tower in Paris. It seems to me that Broadway has become more about who can build the most attractive Eiffel Tower, because the tickets are very expensive.

Has the changing economics of non-for-profit producing — the loss of public funding, the continued impact of the recession — forced you to conform to a more commercial model?

Epps: I think those factors are all relevant, and for us to sit here and say we're not responsive to the need to support our theaters by selling more tickets wouldn't be telling the truth. We are. That said, the kinds of theaters we all work for were started so that we did not have to follow the Broadway model. That was what Gordon Davidson was doing; that's what Martin [Benson] and David [Emmes] were doing at South Coast — creating theater that was not subject to the same kinds of economic demands of Broadway theaters. So I think the choices we make are the result of economic realities that we all deal with wherever our theaters are, but they are not the result of a Broadway influence.

THE NEW SEASON AT THE PASADENA PLAYHOUSE



AND ONE
MORE
EXCITING
SHOW TO BE
ANNOUNCED