



The official newsletter of
San Francisco Bay Area Puppeteers' Guild
Looking for updates and missed information?
Check for it at SFBAPG.ORG

SFBAPG is a charter guild of the Puppeteers of America, Inc., a non-profit, tax exempt organization

August 2009



In this issue:

- August Guild Meeting at Fairyland
- From your President
- Arts Center on the Hudson
- Giant Horse Puppet in Vallejo
- Adventures in Puppetry
- News and Notes
- Calendar
- And Much More!

AUGUST GUILD MEETING AT THE DAY OF PUPPETRY AT FAIRYLAND

Sat., Aug 29, 4:30-7:30 (after the annual Fairyland Day of Puppetry)

Location: Children's Fairyland, on the shore of Lake Merritt at Grand Avenue and Bellevue, Oakland, <http://www.fairyland.org/>

4:30 **Guild Meeting** - Meet your new Board of Directors, Ideas for Future Programs, Guild Library, and more

5:30 **Potluck Supper** - Please bring something to share. If you are bringing a pot luck item that needs refrigeration, contact Randal Metz at 510 569-3144 to make cool arrangements. Main dishes are always appreciated. Guild will provide paper products and utensils.

6:30 **"Ask the Pros"** - "Ask the Pros" will be a panel of puppet experts. Guild members get to select the topics! Yes, you can direct the discussion and get answers to questions that are relevant to you. The questions above are just samples. Do you like any of them? Do you have something else that would interest you? Email or mail in your questions NOW. The panel will select questions in advance so they can bring samples, etc. Send your questions to Lee Armstrong, [images\(at\)vom.com](mailto:images(at)vom.com), 720 Ladera Dr., Sonoma, CA 95476. Questions might include

How do you get bookings in tough economic times?

What are handy tools to have when working in foam?

What are some tips for covering puppets in fabric or fur?

What sound system do you recommend for a portable show?

What are some great puppet building ideas for elementary age students?

How can I make the videotaping of my puppet show look more professional?

The experts are some of the Bay Area's busiest puppeteers, including Kevin Menegus of Fratello Marionettes, Randal Metz of the Puppet Company, Michael & Valerie Nelson of Magical Moonshine Theatre. We can always add more experts, so if you'd like to be an expert for this panel, contact Lee Armstrong.

Randal Metz & the Puppet Company have been creating "Fantasies in Miniature" for over thirty years. Trained by such famous puppeteers as Lewis Mahlmann of Children's Fairyland, Bob Baker of Disneyland, and even the Muppets. Randal creates shows that appeal to audiences of all ages.

Kevin Menegus of Fratello Marionettes developed his unique style of puppetry while performing throughout the world. Kevin has studied with puppeteers Tony Urbano, Bob Baker, Randall Metz and Lewis Mahlmann.

Michael & Valerie Nelson of The Magical Moonshine Theatre are celebrating 30 years of puppetry, including coast to coast performances in the U.S. and tours in over 15 countries abroad.

Puppets for the Puppet Exhibit at Fairyland - If you would like to display some of your puppet creations, contact Randal Metz at 510 569-3144.

Continued next page

Guild Library - The Guild has just added some new books and DVDs purchased at the National Festival in Atlanta. Be the first to check them out! The Guild library has hundreds of books covering a variety of topics. Books & DVD's will be available for checkout at the meeting, to people that have been members for at least 6 months. Are you looking for books or DVD on a particular topic? Contact the Guild Librarian, Lee Armstrong, images(at)vom.com 707 738-5906, and she will email the library list or do a search and bring related books to next meeting.

Pixar Memorabilia - Karen Prell (RED on Fraggles Rock) donated some amazing and rare Pixar memorabilia to the Guild, including "employee only" T-shirts & jackets. One article will be a door prize at the Fairyland meeting and a few others will be silent auction items, proceeds going to the Guild scholarship fund. Other pieces in this collection will be raffle and door prizes at future meetings.

HELP!!!! Volunteer Update at Fairyland - The guild will be hosting the craft booth, Puppet Exhibit/Information Table at Fairyland in Oakland on Sat Aug 30th. The Puppet Exhibit starts at 10am. An area of the exhibit will have a place for a Guild member to talk to visitors about puppetry and the guild and watch the exhibit at the same time. We urgently need people to take the 10am or 11 am shift. Other times are also available. Can you do these early times???? The craft booth will be making paper bag puppets, from 12:30 to 4 pm on Saturday. We definitely need volunteers from 3-4 pm, but the more the merrier. If you are coming on Sunday, Aug 30th, Randal is always looking for people to help watch the Puppet Exhibit. Anyone wishing to volunteer please contact Lee Armstrong at 707 996-9474 or at images(at)vom.com. On the day, if you haven't pre-signed to volunteer, but would like to help, just find Lee. Volunteers are always welcome.

Admission - Admission to Fairyland is free when you flash your puppetry guild membership card. If you can't find it, say that you're with the Puppet Guild and have come to help. However, if you are bringing friends that are not members of the Guild and are not helping, they must pay admission (unless they want to join that day). You must be inside the Fairyland gate by 4 pm.

Parking - Parking is on Bellevue Ave (City of Oakland sometimes charges \$3 to park there on weekends)

Carpool - Want to save gas, parking fees, and hang out with other puppeteers? Arrange carpooling through the guild email list! Meet and park cars at the nearest park and ride (find them on the internet) and ride-share. It's fun and saves the environment.



Scheduled Shows



Fairyland - The Fisherman and his Wife by Lewis Mahlmann and Benjamin Blake.

The Puppet Company - Aesop's Fables

Lewis Mahlmann -- For Whom The Trolls Bell

Nick Barone - New Mermaid Show

Michael and Valerie - Show to be announced.

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

National Puppet Festival 2009! What a wonderful gathering and celebration of puppetry. In July, 500 plus puppeteers and puppet enthusiasts gathered at Georgia Tech University in Atlanta, GA for what many old timers were calling one of the best puppetry festivals ever. The shows were outstanding (and there were shows all afternoon and evening each day) and everyone said that the workshops were of a very high caliber as well, thanks in part to Guild members Kevin Menegus, Lee Armstrong, Conrad Bishop and Elizabeth Fuller, all of whom shared their expertise with the pros by offering workshops at the festival. In spite of dire warnings about Atlanta's unpleasant July weather, I thought it was pretty darn good, one day even noting that it was almost as good as the Bay Area!

One of the many highlights of the festival was the field trip to the Center for Puppetry Arts (also the home for UNIMA-USA, the US branch of the international organization of puppetry) where we saw a marvelous marionette show that demonstrated just how elaborate you can get with your own home theatre space, visited their puppet museum and saw puppets from around the world as well as the three Henson exhibits, and then attended a reception hosted by the Henson Legacy with Jane and Heather Henson where July 18 was officially proclaimed Jim Henson Day in Atlanta (this year and on!)

In between all of the workshops, shows, meetings and meals together, puppeteers also networked, sharing their interests and ideas and connecting with each other. As our guild had just had our first "open mic" and is looking toward future puppet slams, some of us connected with a national puppet slam group, looking to encourage future slam like events. Jim Henson's daughter, Heather Henson, is one of the big proponents of the slams and promised to be in touch, offering one of her puppet film collections that can be used in conjunction with live performance at a slam. I also talked with her about presenting one of her films at one of our guild movie nights in the future, as we start to build up more and more of a following for puppet flicks.

The Guild and Bay Area were very well represented at the festival. Bay Area attendees included Michael & Valerie Nelson, Lee Armstrong, Mary Decker, David Morley, Barbara Grillo, Kevin Menegus, Larry Schmidt, Lex Rudd, Flora Jane Larkey, David Bayer, Gloria Cox, Luz Gutierrez, Conrad Bishop, Elizabeth Fuller, and Jim and Jan Bartz.



PUPPETS IN THE ARTS CENTER ON THE HUDSON

by Talib Huff



My wife (and partner in puppets) and I were recently invited by a friend to come perform at a newly renovated venue. The Arts Center on the Hudson is in the once-condemned St. Luke's Church, in Mechanicville, New York, about 30 minutes away from Albany. The aim of Jaimen McMillan, the founder of the Arts Center, is to engage the community, and its surrounding towns, in all forms of artistic endeavors. So far there has been storytelling, plays, dance, and now, a puppet show. While the show was sparsely attended (partially due to the newness of the center, it has only been open since December, 2008) we

found it an excellent venue for a puppet shows. We encourage you to look into the Center if you are performing in New York, either as a venue or just to see the building itself. For further information please contact: Fonda Black 518-852-8870 or fonda@artscenteronthehudson.com



GIANT HORSE ADDED TO VALLEJO 4TH OF JULY PARADE



The City of Vallejo Parade Association has decided to brand themselves with puppets (YAY!) and each year has commissioned a new puppet from Michael and

Valerie Nelson for the annual 4th of July parade. Two years ago the first puppet was General Mariano Vallejo. Last year they commissioned his wife Benicia, and this year his horse "Blanca" whom Mare Island was named after. (Mare Island is the island across from Vallejo that became the site of Mare Island Ship Yard, a very important US Naval yard until the government closed it about 12 years ago.) The 12 foot



tall kinetic sculpture/puppet was created in a workshop space in the Vallejo Ferry Terminal on the waterfront, and is, for now, still on display there along with the 10 foot tall Mariano and Benicia puppets.

Operating the 3 puppets in the parade required 12 puppeteers. Local professional puppeteers Kevin Menegus, Fred Riley III, and Benjie and Michael



Nelson led the local volunteers in some parade street theatre which can be seen on a short You Tube video. There is also a 10 minute documentary on the

building of the puppet at the giant puppet website. www.magicalmoonshine.org/giantpuppet.htm

I'm aimin' to attend a
Guild Meetin'. How 'bout
you?



2008-2009 SFBAPG

Board of Directors and Staff

BOARD

Lee Armstrong, Librarian, Future Meetings
720 Ladera, Sonoma, CA 95474
707-996-9474 * [images\(at\)vom.com](mailto:images(at)vom.com)

Conrad Bishop, Calendar Editor
502 Pleasant Hill Rd., Sebastapol, CA 95472
707-824-4307 * [eye\(at\)independenteye.org](mailto:eye(at)independenteye.org)

Sharon Clay, Secretary
925-462-4518 * [sharonclay\(at\)comcast.net](mailto:sharonclay(at)comcast.net)

Mary Decker, E-mail Coordinator,
Procedures C.
650-361-1310 * [marydeck57\(at\)sbcglobal.net](mailto:marydeck57(at)sbcglobal.net)

Barbara Grillo
510-964-1513 * [bgrillo\(at\)contracosta.edu](mailto:bgrillo(at)contracosta.edu)

Talib Huff, Newsletter Editor
916-484-0606 * [tahuff\(at\)dcn.org](mailto:tahuff(at)dcn.org)

Randal Metz
510-569-3144 * [puppetcomp\(at\)yahoo.com](mailto:puppetcomp(at)yahoo.com)

Valerie Nelson, Treasurer & Guild Roster
Box 1258, Vallejo, CA 94590
707-363-4573 *
[mail\(at\)magicalmoonshine.org](mailto:mail(at)magicalmoonshine.org)

Michael Nelson, President, Box 1258, Vallejo,
CA 94590
707-363-4573 *
[mail\(at\)magicalmoonshine.org](mailto:mail(at)magicalmoonshine.org)

STAFF

Matt Baume, Webmaster
415-688-7679 * [mattymatt\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:mattymatt(at)gmail.com)

**P OF A TRUSTEE SEARCH**

The Puppeteers of America Board of Trustees is searching for people to run for the office of Regional Director of the Pacific Southwest Region. The director would serve for a two-year term.

Primary duties of the director include:

- Representing the Pacific Southwest (PSW) Region during Board of Trustees' teleconferences, regional festival meetings and the regional meeting at the national festival.
- Serving as a liaison between PSW guild presidents and the Board of Trustees.
- Creating, if possible, a PSW regional newsletter (electronically or otherwise) to share information about guild work and opportunities within the PSW Region.
- Serving as the key person in helping to facilitate the forming of, or partnering with another region, for a biannual regional festival. Serving as key facilitator for the regional, or sometimes bi-regional, festival that occurs in even numbered years.
- Maintaining communication between the Regional Treasurer and the Regional Executive Board (PSW guild presidents) so that all involved parties know the current financial status and obligations of the PSW Region.

Interested persons can contact POA Trustee Don Kruszka at [omnipuppets\(at\)peoplepc.com](mailto:omnipuppets(at)peoplepc.com). The board would like to fill the now vacant position as soon as possible. There is no monetary compensation, but regional directors are given free registration and travel assistance to national meetings.



**I've got me
sights set upon
attendin' a Guild
Meetin'**

BENJAMIN NELSON MARRIED

Guild member and son of Michael and Valerie Nelson, Benjamin Nelson, was married to his partner of 9 years, Stephanie Holdermann on August 1 at Mills College in Oakland. They will honeymoon in Thailand then return home to Mountain View where Benjie works at Anybots as a robot engineer and Stephanie teaches at Bing Nursery School on the Stanford Campus. I am sure many of you still think of Benjie as a little kid, doing puppets with his parents! He no longer performs regularly with Michael and Valerie, but still does his one man show, and he assures us that working the humanoid robots his company makes is really nothing more than technical puppetry.

CALENDAR

Storybook Puppet Theater
Children's Fairyland, Oakland

Aug. 1-2, 8-9, 15-16, 22-23,
11 a.m., 2 p.m., 4 p.m.

The Fisherman & His Wife

A lowly fisherman captures an enchanted fish one day. As a favor for letting him go, the fish grants the fisherman a wish. When the wish is granted, the trouble begins. How will it end? A valuable lesson is learned at the finish of the tale. Puppets and script by Benjamin Blake.

Puppet Fair Weekend
Children's Fairyland, Oakland
August 29

11am & 2pm & 4pm
Storybook Puppet Theater - The Fisherman & His Wife. A lowly fisherman captures an enchanted fish one day. As a favor for letting him go, the fish grants the fisherman a wish. When the wish is granted, the trouble begins. How will it end? A valuable lesson is learned at the finish of the tale. Puppets and script by Benjamin Blake.

1:30pm - Nick Barone Puppets performs "Tales from the Enchanted Forest"

3:30pm - Join Magical Moonshine while they perform "Little Elephant Finds a Ball" Monkey and Zebra are better players and Little Elephant has trouble keeping up. Finally all the animals figure out a fun way to play together.

All Day - Puppet Petting Zoo! Now's your chance to get up close and make these wonderful puppets come alive.

August 30

11am & 2pm & 4pm
Storybook Puppet Theater - The Fisherman & His Wife. A lowly fisherman captures an enchanted fish one day. As a favor for letting him go, the fish grants the fisherman a wish. When the wish is granted, the trouble begins. How will it end? A valuable lesson is learned at the finish of the tale. Puppets and script by Benjamin Blake.

12:00pm - Perez & Mondinga Mexican Fiesta. A tale of a cockroach who marries a mouse. Presented by The Puppet Company

1:30pm - The Fratello Marionettes will use their impressive talents to present the "Vaudeville Follies".

3:30pm - The Vagabond Puppets perform "A Day in the Forest - 3 Pigs, Marx Brothers' Style".

All Day - Puppet Petting Zoo! Now's your chance to get up close and make these wonderful puppets come alive.



Magical Moonshine Theatre

Saturday, August 15
11:00 a.m - 2 p.m.

Children's Wonderland, 360 Glenn St., Vallejo, CA

Puppet Making Craft Table (ages 4 and up) - Come and make a puppet with your child between 11:00 and 12:45 pm, then join us for a fun story time performance at 1:00 pm. Ticket required for puppet making \$5.00. Puppet Story Time free with Children's Wonderland admission (\$2.00)

7:00pm

Br'er Rabbit and the Goober Patch

Sat, August 15, 7pm – 8pm

Children's Wonderland, Mullen Theatre, 360 Glenn, Vallejo, CA

Br'er Rabbit and the Number Nine Shoes- In this African American trickster tale, the clever Br'er Rabbit plays a trick on Br'er Bear, and steals his fish from him. Br'er Fox watches the whole trick, but when he tries it himself his efforts end in disaster. Once again Br'er Rabbit survives by relying on his wits. The story is told with large, direct-manipulation puppets, live banjo music and singing. Tickets: Adults \$10.00, Youth (15 and under) \$5.00

Saturday, August 29

All day

Little Elephant Has A Ball

Saturday, Aug 29, 2009

Children's Fairyland, Oakland

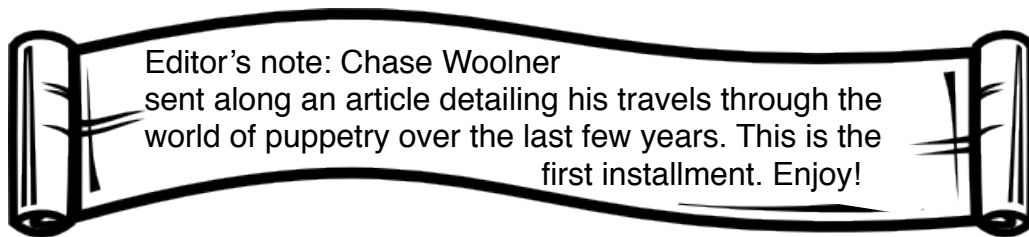
(See listing for Day of Puppetry)

Did you know...

When you do an image search on Google you can specify format, size, color, and even usage rights? Just click on the "Advanced Image Search" link next to the search box.

That's how I found this fellow to the right and knew I could legally use him in the newsletter.





ADVENTURES IN PUPPETRY: A PUPPETEER'S STORY

By: Chase Woolner

It's been almost two years since I've written an article for this newsletter. I've been a member of this guild for eleven years, many of you may not know me as I have been to only a handful of meetings due to my location living in Chicago, but as time goes on I am getting closer and closer San Francisco. Currently I live in Valencia, California attending California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) and this article is an update of what I've been doing in the world of puppetry for the last two years.

In my previous article I had just come back from the 2007 National Puppetry Festival (Puppet Rampage) in Minnesota. Rampage was my first Puppetry Festival and a really wonderful experience where I learned so much and met so many new and interesting people, many of whom I'm still in contact with and/or have worked with on subsequent subsequent projects.

When I attended Puppet Rampage it was the summer between junior and senior year in high school and as I was entering senior year I was looking for colleges to attend. My only strong interest in life is puppetry an art I have been training myself in since the age of five. Freshman year in high school I founded one of the nations few high school puppetry clubs, which to date has 16 members and 53 alumni. I was in the search of colleges in addition to the University of Connecticut where I knew I could study and perfect my skills as a puppeteer as well as major in puppetry. At the festival I learned of programs at both the University of Hawaii and CalArts. On the last day of the festival at the College and Job fair I interviewed with representatives from both schools to learn more about their programs, Kat Pleviak from Hawaii and Marsian DeLellies from CalArts. Hearing about both programs back-to-back was very interesting and helpful. Marsian sold me on CalArts with his presentation and that fall the only school I applied to was CalArts for their program in puppetry.



CWoolner-Puppetry Club = A Group shot of Puppetry Club Chase Woolner founded in High School after their Third Annual Performance.

I finished up my senior year of high school very well, producing the annual Puppetry Club show at the end of the year. As Founder and President of the Puppetry Club my duties for the show meddled in all aspects of the show from writing, designing, build, advertising, sound design, performing and directing. For this final show of mine as a high school student I was naming the next President and board of the club at the end of the show, I also created a show format and characters that would be very easy for future club members who were not familiar with puppetry to follow. Fast forward one year to this year's Puppetry Club show of which I had no involvement not even in the writing stage, the format I created turned out to be very effective as the format of the show and the characters stayed the same but the humor changed. *To be continued in the next newsletter*

August 2009

Special tear-out calendar! See Calendar listings for details on events. When an event has multiple shows on one date at the same venue only the first time is listed.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Theater Fisherman & His Wife	27	28	29	30	31	1 ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Theater Fisherman & His Wife
2 ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Theater Fisherman & His Wife	3	4	5	6	7	8 ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Theater Fisherman & His Wife
9 ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Theater Fisherman & His Wife	10	11	12	13	14	15 ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Theater Fisherman & His Wife ■ 1:00 AM Magical Moonshine Puppet Making Table ■ 7:00 PM Magical Moonshine Br'er Rabbit
16 ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Theater Fisherman & His Wife	17	18	19	20	21	22 ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Theater Fisherman & His Wife
23 ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Theater Fisherman & His Wife	24	25	26	27	28	29 ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Theater Fisherman & His Wife ■ 1:30 PM Nick Barone Tales From the Enchanted Forest ■ 3:30 PM Magical Moonshine Little Elephant Finds a Ball
30 ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Theater Fisherman & His Wife ■ 12:00 PM Perez & Mondirga Mexican Fiesta ■ 1:30 PM Fratello Marionettes Vaudeville Follies ■ 3:30 PM Vagabond Puppets A Day in the Forest	31	1	2	3	4	5 ■ 11:00 AM Storybook Theater Fisherman & His Wife

SFBAPC
Carmichael, CA 95608
5137 Robertson Ave.
San Francisco Bay Area Puppeteers Guild



DRIVING DIRECTIONS TO FAIRYLAND

I'm starting from...

Marin, Richmond: Take 80 west to 580 east (toward Hayward).

San Francisco: Take the Bay Bridge to 580 east (toward Hayward).

Walnut Creek: Take 24 through the Caldecott Tunnel to 580 east (toward Hayward) Berkeley: Take 580 east (toward Hayward).

Once you're on 580 east: Take the Harrison Street exit in Oakland and turn right onto Harrison. Turn left at Grand Avenue. Fairyland is one block away, at the intersection of Grand and Bellevue. Turn to the right and park.

I'm starting from...

Hayward, San Leandro, and Pleasanton: Take 580 west to the MacArthur/Harrison exit in Oakland. Turn left on Harrison and left on Grand Avenue. Fairyland is one block away on the right, at the intersection of Grand and Bellevue.

San Jose, Hayward, and Fremont: Take 880 north to the Oak Street exit in Oakland. Turn right on Oak, which becomes Lakeside Drive. Turn right on Grand Avenue. Fairyland is located one block away, at the intersection of Grand and Bellevue (right side).

Transit Directions:

BART: Get off at the 19th Street station. Take the 20th Street stairway to street level. Walk on 20th Street to Harrison Street. Turn left on Harrison. Turn right on Grand Avenue. Fairyland is one block away, at the intersection of Grand and Bellevue (right side).

AC Transit: Take the #12 bus from the 19th Street BART station to Children's Fairyland.

If you have additional questions, please call (510) 452-2259.