



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*



This Make-an-April-Fools-Puppet activity is from a website (teacherspayteachers.com) where teachers can upload their self-made materials and others can buy them (enabling the teachers to get paid a little extra for their creative work!) (**Does this remind anyone of our guild logo character?**) This project is available for \$2.95 at the website listed below. It's long so hopefully you can copy and paste it!

<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Mardi-Gras-Craft-Clown-1784818?epik=dj0yJnU9TkFyRlp2T1RUVFIHZUYwel9mb3lxVi1naGx3ek5LclomcD0wJm49cmRrYkJsDhhWTQzYUJuWEVNVzdJdyZ0PUFBQUFBROJrZ2FV>

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# May Guild Meeting: Presenting *Stinky Tales*® plus the Basics & Tips of Grantwriting

Sun. May 16 from 3-5 pm

More information will be in the April Newsletter

## *Stinky Tales*®

Meet the dynamic duo, Doug and Annie Zesiger, producers of the video series *Stinky Tales*®. They will share how they produce their own videos, shooting in their home studio. Doug has a true gift for talking to children in an empowering way, a new Mr. Rogers and Annie encapsulates the show's life lessons in her memorable songs. Their presentation will be filled with samples of their videos and what they have learned over the years about children and puppets.

*Stinky Tales*® is an interactive puppet show helping kids navigate the challenges of social emotional learning. Dillard the dragon and his friends often need the help of the humans in the audience to help them find their way. As the kids help the puppets, they also help themselves, cementing some pretty important life skills along the way. Check it out at

<https://www.stinkytales.com/>.



Doug & Annie Zesiger, Producers of *Stinky Tales*®

Doug & Annie are both teachers who work live, on the web and zoom. “*Stinky Tales* is a project in the making for many years, Doug and Anne Zesiger voice the lead characters, their son sings the theme song and their daughter creates all of the graphics. Anne also writes and performs original music for each of our full episodes.

## Plus Grantwriting for Puppeteers

Jill Valavanis is an artist, educator and grantwriter. She has years of experience in writing grants for the arts. She will share some basic information to get you started, some valuable tips and answer your questions.

Jill Valavanis completed her graduate work at California State University, Long Beach where she earned her Master of Fine Arts in Integrated Three-Dimensional Media, utilizing skills



developed in working with fiber, metal, and wood. In addition to making and teaching art, she is a grant writer for a local nonprofit visual arts center. She recently joined the staff at the Sonoma Community Center as their Fine Arts Manager.

### **PROGRAMMING HELP WANTED!**

- Would you like to suggest a program for a Guild meeting?
- Do you have a show or skill that would be of interest to our membership?
- Would you like to be on the Programming Committee?

If so, please contact Lee Armstrong, [images@vom.com](mailto:images@vom.com), cell 707 738-5906, Judy Roberto [be\\_artsy@hotmail.com](mailto:be_artsy@hotmail.com), or anyone on the Programming Committee or Guild Board.



## **Hey! You!**

Do you share our common goal of promoting the art of puppetry in the Bay Area? If so, you might be interested in serving on the SFBAPG Board. If so, please contact the Nominating Committee before April 15th for more information.

Eligibility: Candidates must have been members of the SFBAPG for at least one year prior to the elections. Term limits:

Each Board member shall serve for three years. Each Board member shall be allowed to serve no more than two consecutive three-year terms. Each Board member must want to be an active volunteer, taking on such positions as President, V.P., Programming, Membership, Publicity & Social Media, Hospitality, etc.

Candidates need to provide a short bio and photo to the Nominating Committee, prior to April 25th, to be published in the May newsletter. Elections will be by mail or email.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Your Nominating Committee

Judy Roberto [be\\_artsy@hotmail.com](mailto:be_artsy@hotmail.com), Tree (Glynn) Bartlett [glynntree@hotmail.com](mailto:glynntree@hotmail.com), Talib Huff [tahuff@dcn.org](mailto:tahuff@dcn.org)

# Member News

## News from the North

Mary Nagler

Here are a few of the monsters I made, after the Nick Barone workshop I led a few years ago, in a video teaching Spanish. They were rented out to a client of mine , Anna Sobel, Director of Puppet [PuppetSpeak.com](http://PuppetSpeak.com) who has used her Covid year+ to develop some online courses for kids! She has me making three talking table top car puppets. Always a fun challenge! Here is the link to a trailer for her classes:



<https://youtu.be/6fhBSLXpZmQ>

## Giant Mother Nature Puppet

Hi, my name is Sandra Starr of Starr Players and The Company of the Unicorn. I have been presenting puppetry in many forms professionally since 1970. My credo has always been to thrill an audience with the joys of a loving nurturing life expressed as racially free as possible – a lot of anthropomorphizing. I am now 80 and I have thought I had retired from the puppet world of presentation. But Terry Johnson, who is the charge woman for “Following Francis - Francis in the Schools”,

asked me to create an 8' to 10' version of Mother Nature who would move in a parade with live petting zoo animals and a variety of theatrical characters for underserved children and families in Richmond. How can one say "no" to that? I thought about the larger puppet heads that I already have that I could use. I remembered a lovely

African American Angel I had made many years ago. With several months of demanding work (I also work at a school M-F and teach 10 piano students virtually and do 9 hours a week volunteering) I was able to create my vision of her as this youthful lovely woman holding a white dove in one hand and a sparkling

(battery powered) wand in the other hand. She wears green of course. I have good friends who were able to design with me and make a very strong rolling base that she could easily move with. Happily Terry found a delightful dancer who was more than qualified to bring her to life for these events and radiate blessings and love to the gathered audiences They will be sharing these events in April as well as the ones that were presented in March.

I am amazed she took form with such a personae of her own. It has taken me a while to recover from the birthing however but who cares.



## HMTC This Week: Huey and Louee's puppet show

Silvia Gonzalez Scherer Nov 27, 2020



Editor's note: The below article is being reprinted with permission from the author (a guild member!) While the article is from last November, the project is on Youtube! Enjoy!

Over the summer, Hanford Multicultural Theater Company was awarded an Arts and Accessibility Grant from the California Arts Council and the National Arts and Disability

Center. The grant supported a project that promotes the inclusion of our challenged population in the artistic world.

At 7 p.m. this Sunday, Nov. 29, the project will be available on HMTTC's YouTube channel. See "Don't Just Look," a puppet show on film, the grant supported project.

"Don't Just Look" is a puppet show for all ages. It is a social awareness story featuring Huey, the chicken puppet, and his friend Louee, the physically challenged turtle puppet. A slice of life puppet play with a Good Samaritan concept. Also, embedded on the film is closed captions and sign language interpreters.

Mark Saltzman, from Kiwuppit Studios and on staff with HMTTC, workshopped and trained the main puppeteers for the show. The plan was to perform the show at the theater. However, it needed to be re-imagined with safety in mind during the pandemic. The plus on this, is that this allowed HMTTC to explore the project as a film. This film experience has been positive and HMTTC is considering additional film projects.

Ricardo Sierra and Christopher De la Rosa are the puppeteer leads. Their gusto in working under restrictive conditions is admirable. Auxiliary characters were performed by Charlotte Young, John Young, and Josh Gilles. Omar Pimentel was engaged to do his multiple voices talent. Vizual Voice assisted in sign interpretation with local signers Sean Hopper and Alex Stimpson.

Restrictions thwarted the usual rehearsal process with this project. Nonetheless, HMTTC took the challenge, followed guidelines, and kept in contact with NADC representative to stay the course to a final production with safety.

In addition, a successful rehearsal enticed me to bring out the podcast equipment and ten-foot corded microphones. We discussed the restrictive rehearsal process, and how

the pandemic restrictions affects all artists. This audio can be accessed on our HMTC Behind the Scenes Podcast.

All in all, challenges make completion of a project all the more satisfying.

See project at <https://youtu.be/MtSbxq459eo>

Hear episode 4 of podcast at <https://silgo86.wixsite.com/mysite/podcast>

Silvia Gonzalez Scherer is the Executive Artistic Director and co-founder of the Hanford Multicultural Theater Company. She is also a playwright and an actress.

## Our Amazing Puppet World: Bil Baird

by Ilene Kennedy (vice president)



William Britton "Bill" Baird was born on August 15, 1904 in Grand Island, NE.

His interest in puppets began at age

eight, when his father made him a simple string puppet. By the age of fourteen, Baird was making his own puppets and giving performances of "Treasure Island" in the attic of his parent's Mason City home.

What exactly is a puppet? According to Bil Baird, as defined in his book "The Art of the Puppet," a puppet is "an inanimate figure that is made to move by human effort (not



mechanized) before an audience.” Puppets are figures constructed so that various parts can be moved to imitate imaginary or actual characters. They may or may not resemble human beings but are generally given exaggerated human characteristics.

Besides the book that he wrote he also was well known for his sidekick Charlemagne the lion.

Besides his sidekick Charlemagne, He loved puppets so much that he founded Baird’s marionettes in 1934 and they did their very first performance at the Chicago World's Fair. He was also instrumental in puppet productions in traveling shows, movies and TV. He also even ran a marionette theater in New York for 10 years.

Baird and his “little friends”, as he called them, touched the lives of millions of people as they worked the nightclubs, city streets, Broadway stages, World’s Fairs, television, Hollywood films, his own New York City puppet theater and other venues. Baird’s puppets participated in the Macy's day parade for several years. Bill’s wife Cora Eisenberg was also a bit of a puppeteer herself. She was the hands behind the Lonely Goatherd Scene in a film in 1965, The Sound of Music. That same



year Baird published The Art of the Puppet. Sadly Cora died in 1967. Baird continued working in New York with his marionettes until he passed away in 1987.

Baird's creative legacy and accomplishments are recognized and preserved at the **Charles H. MacNider Art Museum** in Mason City, Iowa. He was a very

creative and energetic puppeteer ,who enjoyed sharing his accomplishments with the world, so everyone could laugh and smile and enjoy Bill Baird’s special talents with his "little friends."

Send your newsletter articles and photos to [newsletter@sfbapg.org](mailto:newsletter@sfbapg.org).