

Belleville Theatre guild tackles spooky story

By Amanda Paulhus

A ghost story comes to life next month as Belleville Theatre Guild prepares to perform the play, *The Woman in Black*.

Diane Burley of the theatre guild was intrigued when the idea to perform this play was suggested.

"I understand why amateur companies don't do it very often. Technically it is very demanding. Lighting and sound are almost like other characters," Burley said. She said she was up for the challenge though and became director of the play.

The play was originally written in 1987 by playwright Stephen Mallatratt as an adaptation to Susan Hill's book of the same name, written in 1983. Because of the theatre's small budget the story, which includes many characters, was written to be performed by only two actors. It was a success and is still being performed in London at the Fortune Theatre.

"It's a great story. A ghost story. You don't often hear ghost stories anymore, the old-fashioned kind. Everything is the *Twilight* series, that kind of thing: vampires, zombies, strange morphing creatures.

"It's not like that at all. She's very rarely seen, the actual woman in black, and we hope that our special effects will make her truly frightening.

"She says in the beginning of the book that 'darkness is the great fear maker for humanity,' and if you can create a play which has possibilities in dark corners, where things might be happening that you just can't see, you pull the audience in," Burley said.

The operations of the play itself are intriguing because the two actors, Rob Lloyd and Ian Feltham, take care of everything on stage themselves.

"They are responsible for all their costume changes, for becoming all the characters. For using just a trunk and a couple old chairs to make trains, offices, a cathedral, a pub. It's very clever. They use a big steamer trunk and turn it around and it becomes a pony and wagon, or becomes a coffin," Burley said, as she explained how the play is presented.

Lloyd, one of the two actors, warns audience to be ready for anything.

"It's live theatre. It's a danger and an excitement whether you're on stage or off, because you really don't know what's going to happen. There's no take two and I guess that's the part about acting on stage that is kind of addictive. If you want to



Photo by Amanda Paulhus

Rob Lloyd and Ian Feltham rehearse for the upcoming play *The Woman in Black*, being held in February at the Pinnacle Playhouse. The play is being directed by Diane Burley and the Belleville Theatre Guild.

scare the crap out of yourself, it's cheaper than jumping out of a plane," Lloyd said.

Lloyd has been acting since 2004 and has been in approximately 24 plays. His

main character in the play is Arthur Kipps, a junior solicitor sent to a small town to deal with the will of a recently deceased town member. He soon finds him-

self dealing with the ghost of the woman in black and a haunting story unfolds.

"I just hope we've done it justice," Burley said about the play.

Tickets can be purchased beginning Feb. 2, and the play will run from Feb 5 - Feb 21 at the Pinnacle Playhouse in downtown Belleville.

Organization strives to put stop to stray cat colonies

By Amanda Paulhus

Stray cat colonies have been a constant problem in the Belleville area. Fixed Fur Life is doing their best to tackle this issue but they have a long road ahead of them, Darlene Quinsey, a representative of Fixed Fur Life said.

The most recent colony, found on Marble Point Lane, had a headcount of 33 cats, 28 of them being female. The average female cat can have three litters per year, ranging from four to six kittens each.

"There are colonies everywhere. We just finished one on Hamilton road, there was another in Belleville, this Marble Point Lane one, there's another big colony in Foxboro. They're just everywhere," Quinsey said.

Fixed Fur Life is a charity organization that was created in 2004 and has been working hard to put a stop to the stray animal problem in Belleville. To date, they have spayed and neutered approximately 17 130 cats and dogs.

"Basically what we do is we take in stray cats and dogs, fix them and find them homes. That's basically the whole philosophy of us, is to get them spayed and neutered so we're getting the stray cat problem at its source," said Quinsey.

Dawn Stafford visited Little Stinkers, one of the Fixed Fur Life adoption centres, with no intention of adopting a cat that day. She ended up coming home with two.

"Mack reached his paw out and gave a meow and touched my heart," Stafford said, describing the first time she met her

two cats, Mack and Mocha.

Living in the Belleville area, Stafford had heard of Fixed Fur Life a few times before this incident but this was the first time she would adopt cats through them.

"I never actually met them but it was good. Six-month-old cats that were already fostered and fixed so it made it affordable," Stafford said. She added that she would definitely recommend adopting through Fixed Fur Life to any other potential pet owners.

Along with rescuing strays, the organization also subsidizes to people who cannot afford the full cost of getting their animal fixed. They run completely by fundraising and donations.

Quinsey said that there are approximately 100 volunteers, all helping in dif-

ferent stages of the rescue process.

"It all depends on what we need volunteers for. We have 54 foster homes and five adoption centres, so as we adopt out we take in more cats. It's a well-oiled machine and it's working well," she said.

The process involved in rescuing a colony of stray cats is a lengthy one. After a veterinary clinic is found to fix the cats, the cats must stay for about a week to recover from their surgeries. After this step, the cats are sent to different locations, depending on how adoptable they are. The adoptable ones will go to an adoption centre while the feral ones are taken by volunteers with heated barns, decided upon prior to the rescue. These cats will usually go as a family unit and are well taken care of by the barn owners,

whether or not they become more tame and friendly, or remain feral.

"They can get friendlier or just let them exist as they are. They'll be fixed and vaccinated so we say to people, when you're rescuing a cat or a dog if you're not taking it to a better situation then they came from, you're not actually rescuing them," Quinsey said.

Currently, the Marble Point Lane colony is recovering and will soon be sent on their way to a happier and healthier lifestyle.

"It's a long process and people say, 'Darlene you can't fix them all, you can't save them all' but look at this group here. In another couple of months there'd be how many kittens? Now they're going to go somewhere safe and that's good."

Seniors strike it big with Wii bowling

By Carla Antonio

Every Wednesday, a group of 16 seniors get together and bowl - but with no pins, no balls, no lanes and no special shoes.

Shortly after Nintendo released Wii Bowling into the gaming world in 2006, the Prince Edward County Community Care for Seniors Association saw an opportunity for seniors and launched a virtual bowling league.

"We're always looking for innovative ways that we can get seniors out and active and making friends," said Debbie MacDonald Moynes, executive director of Community Care.

"One of the things that's really important as people age is that they maintain their social contacts."

The league, which is held at Community Care's office location inside the old Armoury in Picton, is run much like a traditional bowling league. There are both many long-time members and new faces. But old or new, one thing is for certain - everyone is there for a good time.

One group member, Angela Palmer, says she enjoys it so much she will play as long as she can still get up on her feet and get there.

"I come for several reasons - the company, the fun we have, and it's good exercise," she said.

"It's something that gets you out when the weather is unpleasant and you don't feel like doing anything."

Elizabeth Hickey, a volunteer with Community Care for the past eight years, helps to run the league. As a senior herself, Hickey said she began volunteering because she wanted to help motivate others to get out and do something mobile and entertaining.

"When you get out of here you're feeling a lot better," she said.

"I know I am. I know there's days that I don't feel like coming in but I always feel good when I go out."

Hickey said she believes the participants enjoy the little bit of friendly competition and that the activity stimulates their minds.

"Like one lady today has a lot of problems, but when she gets bowling, she forgets it and it's something that she can really get into and enjoy," said Hickey.

"When you get out of here you're feeling a lot better," she said.

"I know there's days that I don't feel like coming in, but I always feel good when I go out. I enjoy it very much."

For a multi-media perspective on this story, go to: <http://www.qnetnews.ca/?p=48576>



Photo by Carla Antonio

Pat LeBlanc, 87, throws a virtual bowling ball at the Prince Edward County Community Care for Seniors Association's Wii bowling league this week.

Outdoor sleepover raises awareness about homelessness

By Alyssa Lloyd

Quinte residents can take part in Sleep Out So Others Can Sleep In from 7 p.m. Friday until 7 a.m. Saturday. The event was created to shine a light on the issues of homelessness and poverty. The Canadian Mental Health Association hopes people will join in teams of five to spend the night outside to raise money and spread the message for the cause.

Sandie Sidsworth, executive director at the Hastings and Prince Edward Branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association hopes people will engage in conversation about the issue at hand.

"We also have Sweet Escape, CDC of Quinte and Little Caesars providing a little pick me up for the night," says Sidsworth. These local businesses will be aiding in the efforts to keep everyone comfortable while participating. "We are hoping to raise \$10,000. More would be wonderful, but that dollar amount helps us out so much.

"There will also be a prize for the team pledge challenge. To participate, donate, or volunteer, please contact ssidsworth@hastings-cmha.org or call 613-969-8874.

Instant replay was born

By Alyssa Lloyd

A hefty risk was taken on Dec. 7, 1963 during an Army vs. Navy football game.

A young television producer decided to take a chance angering a lot of people glued to their television sets by attempting to show an instant replay of what the audience just witnessed.

The instant replay was shown without a hitch and before the television industry knew what hit them, instant replays were taking the country by storm.

That young man was Tony Verna. At the time he was only 29 years old. Using the knowledge from his radio days, he decided to give it a try with television.

Verna passed away Jan. 18 at the age of 81 from leukemia in Palm Desert, California.

"My boy, what you have done here will have such far-reaching implications we can't begin to imagine them today," said Tex Schramm to Verna over a phone call shortly after the game. It was Schramm who hired Verna on at CBS.

Schramm couldn't have been more right. The instant replay has become one of the most overlooked luxuries in sports television today. Can you imagine watching a game on television without it?