

# A New Season Opens

Tonight was the opening for the WCCT's first show of the 2009-2010 season. [Over the Tavern](#) tells the story of Rudy, a young Catholic boy who questions his upbringing in the church. The young man finds himself at odds with his teacher, the formidable 'ster Clarissa. Life at home is not much better. I will call it nearly normal. Not quite insane enough to be termed dysfunctional; but nowhere the idyllic lifestyle which Rudy longs for: the world of 50s family series television headed by Robert Young (of *Father Knows Best*). If anyone tells you that their family is the picture of perfection, they are either delusional or pulling your leg. Each member of Pazinski clan (father Chet, mother Ellen, oldest brother Eddie, sister Annie, Rudolph, and little Georgie ... HE HAS TO BE SEEN TO BE BELIEVED) each have life experiences which play into the drama.

Each member of the cast was just great from veterans who have been on stage several times to the young boys who are just beginning to step on stage. Those of us who were raised in a Catholic home were transported back to the classroom in which the fear of God was instilled in you with a ruler cracking your hand. Rudy and Eddie in the bedroom on bunk beds took me back to my childhood when I shared a room with my older brother and the battles therein.

I would feel terrible if I did not mention my friend's return to the stage. Megan was just terrific. Although I have shared the stage with her before, I have never had the pleasure of seeing her on stage. Her facial expressions, timing, entire characterization made everyone believe that she was 16 years old going through her own life's trials and whose hair belongs to her parents until she is 21. Ironically, Carol reminded me that that would be in a few short days. I told Megan that I hope it is not another 2 seasons before she graces the stage.

The whole cast, set, the entire production of Over the Tavern kicked off the new theatre season in hilarious fashion. I arrived a bit early to offer good wishes to all and found myself stuffing programs and running into the frantic director who typically appeared to be quite frazzled for whatever reason.

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## **One... Two... Three aaand One... Two... Three**

Tonight's rehearsal was full of fun. We had a visitor from an area newspaper who may also be of help in the costuming area. She was there to discuss the show individually when we were not needed in a scene. "John Truitt" and I happened to be available at the same time (it was not the scene in which we are part of). As I introduced myself to the interviewer, "John" said "I know who you are. You look just like your brother." Apparently, the young man is a self-acclaimed nuisance to my oldest brother at school by dropping in on him quite frequently with computer problems. Knowing my brother quite well, I doubt if he sees the teenager as a nuisance.

Part of the fun was watching people attempt to waltz as well as trying to dance myself. Then, the real challenge came: waltzing and talking at the same time. At least I only have one line to remember while I dance. Hopefully, waltzing will come back to me on Sunday when the choreographer joins us.

I also found a lot of other humorous possibilities as well as some very quick costume changes... how fun THOSE will be.

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# Choices

A few weeks ago, I saw a post on a website for a theatre that I have been looking at announcing their summer season. This week, I looked back to see if any additional information had been posted (audition information, performance dates, etc). Oddly enough, the [Wagon Wheel](#) is staging *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* as is a local [theatre group](#). My experience with the show goes back at least 16 years when I saw it on Broadway. I was on spring break tour with the BGSU Men's Chorus which made its way to the Big Apple. In 1999, I auditioned for a local production; however, I was not offered a role. The next summer, a neighboring community group staged the musical. This time, I was cast in multiple walk-on roles. I actually was responsible for selling Jacob the coat of many colors. Later, I was one of Potiphar's attendees and carried a large fan adoringly waving it on him. Later still, I was one of Pharoah's guards and hauled Joseph to the King's feet. Being my first role with this theatre, I must have made quite an impression as the following year I was cast as Motel in *Fiddler*.

The Wagon Wheel is a theatre about an hour and a half away. The stage is quite interesting as it is in "a round." The stage is smack in the middle with the audience surrounding it. This would be a very unique experience for me as I have never before acted on a round stage. I have never auditioned for what can only be considered a summer stock situation. There are a total of 6 different shows over the summer (*Joseph*, [Brigadoon](#), [Nunsense](#), [High School Musical](#), [Brighton Beach Memoirs](#), and [A Chorus Line](#)). If what I feel is correct, each person who makes the cut will be involved somehow in each of the shows whether it be on or off stage. This would mean a

neccessity for quick memorization, characterization, dedication, hard work, and more commitment than ever. Sounds like a complete drag to me... AAARRRRRRRRGH! That is funny. It sounds like a totally rewarding as well as professional experience. An open call was announced for SUNDAY(?) March 22 at Western Michigan University.

I know that I have a lot to do between now and then. I need to find 16 measures of an up-tempo song and a ballad. I have half of that. Not to mention *Meet Me in St. Louis*. However, I KNOW that that will not be a problem. I think I can prepare and be involved in one show at the same time. Especially if I will need to learn to balance six at once. But if all else fails, I can always come back and audition for another production of Joseph.

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## Fun In A Different Costume Room

Tonight's rehearsal was extremely interesting and cut short because of our limited space. The stage was being used for final dress rehearsals for the production of [Steel Magnolias](#) going up this weekend. The community room in the building (which has been used as our practice area prior to the stage opening up) was being used by another civic organization. Our final option was to use the costume room. On Sunday afternoon when I found out that this was where we would be practicing, I had to laugh. The WCCT costume facility is wall to wall, floor to ceiling, full of rods, shelves, totes, and boxes full of clothes with very little space to move around. Tonight, I walked into a room that was much larger and less packed with clothes. Maybe this was because it seemed that there was a

fraction of the costumes present. There was still a limited amount of space.

Before we began, I met the young man who will be playing John Truitt, the “boy next door.” We have something in common: both of us are featured in a youtube video. And of course, this lead to the introduction by everyone’s favorite Liswathistani. This drew quite a reaction (a good reaction) from everyone there. I made sure to invite everyone to look up the video. “John” and “Grandpa” share one brief moment on stage together. One of the highlights of the evening was seeing “John” learn how take an on-stage punch from a girl. I had an experience taking an on-screen punch during a melodrama, In one performance, the hero’s fist actually collided with me... OOPS ☐ OOPS again, I took an on-STAGE punch.

By the time we had finished (early), we had blocked the largest scene in the musical and one smaller scene. Some good Grandpa moments in those scenes including a very lovely, tender moment with Esther... right before we do that thing that will be taught this weekend... looking forward to that ☐ .

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## **Yet Another “Role Model” Slips Down A Few Steps From The Diving Platform**

Why oh why? Just a few short month ago, Michael Phelps was on top of the world, setting Olympic records, winning gold medals in every swimming event he competed in in Beijing (8 in total) and the world watched. In 2004 in Athens, he won multiple gold and silver medals and a few months later was involved in

a DUI incident. Funny how this was never mentioned this season... not that I remember anyway.

Over the weekend the golden one was at a college party in which marijuana was present. And of course Mr. Phelps was human and young enough that he admittedly partook as a photo most likely from one of the fellow partiers cell phones surfaced.

I'm not going to defend anyone in this post. Not Phelps nor the person snappin the picture. I will say that anyone living in any high profile position needs to be careful. I'm not sure if Michael felt that he would be able to escape the limelight twice but apparently he was not being careful. Human but not careful. I think the people who are ultimately responsible are those who place these people on such a high pedestal that if they blink, or turn right when they should have turned left they are forever demonized when mere moments ago they were "heroes."

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## **Give 'Em The Old Razzle Dazzle**

HEHE... much to a friend's chagrin, I have entitled my first post with my new them after one of the signature numbers from the musical, *Chicago*. From what I gather, the producer for our community theatre's production of the musical was fond of using the phrase whenever he could. ("This show is full of razzle dazzle," etc.). Unfortunately, I was not yet involved in the group when this production was presented. I do however know that I would like to play the role of Mr. Cellophane, himself, Amos Hart. However, as most know, I am not one to

stand in the shadows. For better or worse, I do tend to stand out. I dunno.

Perhaps I should have waited a few weeks to celebrate the first year of our little group of bloggers, but I was looking through various themes and came upon this little number. I kinda like it. So... don't be afraid to comment on the blog of Morat's new look.[poll id="16"]

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## **I Need To Know About A Super Weekend Under The Sea**

This weekend has been one of the busiest but most fun I have had in sometime. It all started Thursday night when a group of us met at the theatre to practice singing the songs we had selected for our concert on Saturday night. I did not get to practice mine because circuits got crossed and the clip that held the accompaniment to my piece was not there. But it was fun to see some of the others practice. Chris practiced his two selections from [Jekyll & Hyde](#). I had forgotten that the song "I Need to Know" (one of my favorites from the show) had eventually been taken out of the Broadway production. It was replaced by "Lost in the Darkness" which is sung by Jekyll over his comatose father. I often listen to the Anthony Warlow Gothic Musical Thriller version and find it far superior. Chris also shone brightly on "Confrontation" which is sung toward the end of the musical as Jekyll battles the evil that has risen to the surface and is about to totally consume him.

On Friday morning, I had to go to church to practice singing the songs I would lead the congregation in Saturday night.

Then I returned home to practice the song I eventually chose to perform Saturday night at the theatre. When I decided to sing this weekend, I had two selections picked out that were very special to me and I thought would challenge me; however, they were deemed "not modern enough." The theme for the concert was musicals of the past decade. I eventually chose "Under the Sea" from *The Little Mermaid*. Very fun piece. However (and I don't know why it bothers me), I was not able to memorize the entire piece. But I had fun with it and heard many compliments from some close friends and also from newcomers to the theatre group. Megan even noted that she could see me one day performing the role of Sebastian on stage. Another great character with not one but two very memorable songs. Carol also expressed an interest in eventually performing a duet with me in the near future. I would relish the opportunity to perform a duet with Chris and one with Carol. I loved Carol's duet of "Feed the Birds" from *Mary Poppins*. The song really lends itself well to beautiful harmonies. I must say that all of the performers as well as the MCs were very good and the evening was a great success.

Super Bowl Sunday found me at work then immediately onto rehearsal. We got to watch some of the choreography begin to take shape. One of the signature pieces from *Meet Me in St. Louis* is the "Trolley Song." Just in the beginning of the staging of the song, I can see that it will be very intensive but fun. However, Grandpa does not get to ride the car. After rehearsal, I made my way to a game party. I thought the game was good; sad to say the team I picked was not victorious but it is always fun to watch the game with a large group of friends as spirited as mine. I will watch the Super Office Special episode tomorrow.

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# You'd Hide Too If Your Name Was...

At least [one](#) of us here at tangents have made posts about the odd names celebrities and everyday people have given their children. I say if we find more, why not post those as well. Unless you live under a rock, you know of the quartet of Frank Zappa's offspring (Diva, Ahmet, Moon Unit, and Dweezil). Those actually seem tame to some of these other monikers... of course, I think the novelty of those names has since worn off.. How about these:

- *Jermajesty* (son of Jermaine Jackson. He must have high hopes for this one. Or maybe the entire family has a thing for royalty.)
- *Moxie Crimefighter* (daughter of Penn Jillette. I wonder if his name was bestowed upon him or he chose that as his stage name.)
- *Pilot Inspektor* (son of [Jason Lee](#). Perhaps foreshadowing a future position.)
- *Fifi Trixibelle, Peaches Honeyblossom, and Pixie* (daughters of musician [Bob Geldof](#).)
- *Tu Morrow* (Rob Morrow's little beauty. I see a young girl with huge, curly, red hair belting out the famous song from *Annie*.)
- *God* (Ok... rapper Lil'Mo REALLY has high aspirations for this one.)
- *Messiah Yamajesty* (yet another rapper Clifford T.I. Harris shooting for the stars).

Very unusual names that make Nicholas Cage's choice of Kal-el for his son seem tame.

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# Something (Truly) Evil's Lurking In The Dark

So... what is a has been, reclusive, much ridiculed performer to do with any shred of dignity he has left to him? Revisit his heyday and make a Broadway musical of it, of course. For the first time in a few years, Michael Jackson has reemerged (or at least given a statement) that he will be working with the prestigious [Nederlander Organization](#) on a fully realized musical adaptation of the iconic tune and music video Thriller (Oh, help). The tale of boy meets girl, boy and girl go to a scary movie, and boy has a big, dark, hairy secret. Wacko Jacko will be involved in the entire production in what capacity has yet to be released. This will probably depend upon the performers willingness to come out of his plastic bubble (oops... that was another story). Is it just me or does it seem that even Broadway is going back to the 80s along with all other forms of entertainment? The British stage show, [Thriller Live](#), (a musical based on the life of Jackson... HELP, AGAIN!) has been playing to audiences across the pond since 2006. Let the bashing (or support... I do not wish to alienate any legitimate readers) begin. I wonder how far into the story the British extravaganza goes. I wonder if Thriller will come up with a clever way to resurrect Vincent Price (not only his voice)... that would be a thrill.

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## I Get Ideas

Tonight was the first night that the fun began to take shape at rehearsals. Especially when you are with a new cast, it does take a few rehearsals to get acquainted. But I was

greatly impressed with the two youngest girls who have for the most part memorized each of the songs they are part of at least in the first act.. "Tootie" has an adorable solo all to herself which is sure to be a crowd-pleaser. She also has a cute little choreographed ditty with sisters "Esther" and "Agnes." And the two young ladies looked great while the older sister admitted that she did not know the steps as well. But it really looked good for the second week of rehearsals.

As for GRANDPA, let me just say, the director has given me a very long leash from which to create the character and there is a lot to give character to. In fact, Mr. Prophater is in a scene with the young ladies in the family room in which he has no dialogue. I was quick to ask... what is he supposed to be doing? "You'll think of something." My eyes lit up and I felt a rather mischievous grin come upon my face. COOL

Given the fact that we were practicing in a very small music room in a church while the theatre was being used for another production, we had very limited space to choreograph our on stage movement but we managed to basically take a stab at entrances and minimal (dare I say) dancing. But I have some ideas during the title song to interact with the family octet.. pending director's approval of course. Guidelines: Grandpa is a rather eccentric old man. Lots of Possibilities.