



The Parker Family Celebrates Christmas
 (Stephen Mease Photography)
Do you have your tickets for
A Christmas Story The Musical?

LYRIC'S 43RD ANNUAL MEETING WAS TERRIFIC
 By *Syndi Zook*

On October 1st, Lyric celebrated its 2016-2017 Season at the Eagle's Club in South Burlington. The Membership Committee did a great job organizing a pot-luck and music and Christopher Brown was a terrific host for the evening. Thank you to Justin Brault and Rick Pingert for organizing the tech for the meeting and to Andriana Chobot for putting together such a nice DVD retrospective of our past year. Board Secretary Margaret Welch called the slate of the nominated Board members, who were then voted in unanimously by the membership. Joining the Board will be: Tim Henderson, Skip Potter, Mary Margaret Lee, Kathy Grise and Andy Pearson. Returning for a second term will be: Christopher Brown and Doug Viehmann. Board Chair Stephen Kendall gave the Treasurer's Report and Executive Director Syndi Zook gave her report on the good health of the organization. Lyric's Annual Report is available for viewing on our website. The meeting concluded with a good-bye to Stephen Kendall as he steps down from the Board and as Chairperson of the Board of Directors. Steve has been on the Board for 17 of the last 19 years, and played (and will continue to play) a key role in the growth and success of Lyric Theatre Company. A spontaneous standing ovation erupted as Stephen accepted his parting gifts.

Thank you to all who attended the Annual Meeting. It is part of our pact with the community to hold one, and we are gratified that each year, more people seem to want to know about the inner workings of Lyric and volunteer to do the business of show-business that is vital to Lyric's future.



Lyric Theatre Company's
New Executive Director:
Jose Rincon

The Board of Directors of Lyric Theatre is pleased to announce the hiring of Jose Rincon as Lyric's next Executive Director.

Jose Rincon has spent the past ten years working in the nonprofit arts sector with a focus on program and personnel management. Most recently he served as artistic personnel manager for Orchestra of St. Luke's where he oversaw a roster of more than one hundred freelance musicians, and helped produce concerts at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and the Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts. In his previous position at Opera America, he produced professional development programs for singers, composers and other artists working in the opera field. As a fundraiser, Jose has led successful campaigns for Classical Action, AIDS Walk New York, and the New York City Gay Men's Chorus.

Jose states, "Lyric Theatre Company exemplifies the best of what a community arts organization can be by offering people of all ages and skill sets the opportunity to participate in every step of the creative process. I look forward to working with the Lyric membership, board of directors, staff, and community partners to further strengthen the company's commitment to high-quality programming that is accessible to all. My passion for the performing arts began in Burlington, and I am honored to lead such a unique and essential organization into its next 50 years and beyond."

A native of Burlington, VT, Jose received a bachelor's degree in music from the State University of New York at Potsdam, and a master's degree in arts administration from Florida State University.

Jose will start his new position with Lyric Theatre mid-October, working with Syndi Zook through the conclusion of the first half of our season. We will be celebrating Syndi's 13 years of leadership later this winter so stay tuned, but for now, please join us in welcoming Jose to the Lyric family!

NEW TEAM MEMBERS FOR
A CHRISTMAS STORY THE MUSICAL

The team is delighted to welcome Mary Beth Nuovo, Chair for the Opening Night Party and Production Party, and Rob Parzych, Chair for Hair.

TOM DUNN IS LYRIC'S VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR!

By Syndi Zook

The organization was proud and happy to award the Stanley Greenberg Volunteer of the Year Award for 2016 to Tom Dunn. Stan himself was on hand to give Tom his award and gave a lovely speech detailing Tom's gifts to Lyric. Tom was very active with Lyric back in the 1980's, but since he has made his way back to us the last couple of years, Tom has been invaluable. This season alone, Tom was the set designer for "Tommy" and worked on the lighting crew for 9 to 5. As a member of Lyric's Board of Directors, Tom sat on the Show Selection and Facilities Committees and was also a member of the Search committee for the six months it took to find a new Executive Director. Tom spent a great deal of time working with the Lyric staff this year, spearheading the project of transferring to a new database system and upgrading the intake protocols. He worked tirelessly, along with so many others, on the renovations of the new Creative Space, taking on very specific tasks that involved unique carpentry skills. He even used his truck and hauled much junk to the dump for us. Thank you, Tom, for all of the wonderful things you have done for us this year, and all with good humor and a great story to go along with it!

VERMONT ARTS COUNCIL TOASTS LYRIC MEMBERS

By Pat Boera

Each year, the Vermont Arts Council, in association with the Governor's office, recognizes outstanding individual and organizational contributions to the arts. This year, two of the five honorees are members of the Lyric Theatre Company family—Chris Bohjalian and Taryn Noelle.

Chris will receive the Walter Cerf Medal for Outstanding Achievement in the Arts. He is the author of 18 books, most of which have been *New York Times* bestsellers, including *Sandcastle Girls*, *The Light in the Ruins*, and his 2016 novel *The Guest Room*. Chris served on the Lyric Board and has been a longtime supporter of the organization with his wife Victoria Blewer and daughter Grace Experience.

Taryn will receive the Ellen McCulloch-Lovell Award in Arts Education. Taryn began performing at an early age and later pursued theatrical training at Circle in the Square Theatre School in NYC. Since returning to Vermont more than two decades ago, Taryn has been performing, teaching, choreographing, and directing. She currently teaches dance at Green Mountain Performing Arts in Waterbury and is the Theatre Program Director for Stowe High School. Taryn was Laurie in Lyric's production of *Oklahoma!*

SAVE THE DATES: BOWLING AND HOLIDAY CAROLING

By Christopher Brown

The Membership Committee invites everyone to come and enjoy an evening of bowling at Champlain Lanes on Sunday, October 22, 5:30-8:30 p.m.; \$7.50 will get you two games and shoe rental.

Bring family members, friends and your best voice and join fellow Lyric members for our Annual Holiday Caroling event on the Church Street Marketplace. Save the date—Sunday, December 10. Join the group for a post-caroling gathering with soup and cider hosted by the O'Connells.

REFLECTING ON LIFE IN A SMALL MID-WEST TOWN DURING THE ERA OF A CHRISTMAS STORY:

A CONVERSATION WITH MARCUS CERTA

By Pat Boera

Lyric member Marcus Certa loves to tell a good story. Recently, we shared lunch and he reminisced about his Dad, a native of Hammond, Indiana—hometown of Jean Shepherd, whose autobiographical stories were the inspiration for *A Christmas Story*.

David Certa and Jean Shepherd were contemporaries who shared a neighborhood and a school. Eggers Elementary was an iconic brick building with a flagpole out front. Close your eyes and you can picture Flick sticking his tongue to the pole! Marcus's Dad was part of a generation that grew up relying on their imagination and the radio. In the evenings, families gathered around the radio console and listened to the adventures of The Shadow, The Lone Ranger, and Little Orphan Annie. A radio was a luxury, but becoming more common.

Kids spent time outdoors...playing cowboys and indians and street ball. As an 8- or 9-year-old, the only instruction from parents was "be home for dinner." As long as a cop or another parent was not escorting you to your front door, everything was okay. Marcus chuckled when recalling that his Dad was probably one of those bullies in the alley (aka Scut Farkas) while Jean was much like young Ralphie Parker.

Class was a big thing in Hammond, where the major economy was steel mills. David Certa was a second-generation steel worker, following in the footsteps of grandparents who emigrated from Italy. There were lots of immigrants in the community, even though they didn't become part of the narrative of *A Christmas Story*. Marcus's Dad commented more than once that if it wasn't for Hammond, Indiana, he wouldn't have the work ethic he has today. The Bumpuses were an amalgamation of the lower-class families from Hammond. It seems the poorer you were, the more animals you seemed to have.

When *A Christmas Story* (the movie), debuted in 1983, Marcus's Dad told him, "I know that guy. This is my neighborhood. These were my people." It did not surprise David Certa that the kid from the neighborhood moved away and became a writer and radio personality. He did not have contact with Jean Shepherd as an adult. In the years following the debut of the movie, there were reunions, but Jean Shepherd did not attend.

Marcus grew up in a suburb of Chicago, literally within sight of Hammond. His grandmother, uncle, and in-laws still live there. During annual visits, he can see remnants of the good old days when, as a kid, he imagined himself as a cop, firefighter, or superhero. "It felt freer; we didn't have fears of terrorism." He credits the old stories, told long ago by his Dad, for sparking his interest in radio. Marcus is especially drawn to morning talk radio because you get to talk more and tell stories.

He hopes that the cast of *A Christmas Story The Musical* gets to "play with it and be kids again."

ELVES AT WORK FOR A CHRISTMAS STORY

Costumes: Monday and Wednesday, 5:30-8:30 p.m., and Sunday, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Contact: Andi Olsen, andrea.olsen@uvmhealth.org or 860-1950; or Diantha Howard, Diantha.howard@uvm.edu or 343-0884

Props: Tuesdays, 4:00-8:00 p.m.; Fridays, 6:00-9:00 p.m.
Contact: Donna Riera, drieria46@gmail.com or 922-1946

Set Construction: Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 6:30-9:30 p.m., and Saturday, 9:00 a.m.-Noon

Contact: Bruce Cowan, cowanbm@ieee.org or 881-2340; or Len Rubin, ljrubin2@comcast.net or 238-2206

Set Decoration: Thursday and Friday, 6:00-9:00 p.m., and Sunday, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Contact: Janet Bessmer, reallyfastread@gmail.com or 324-2841

MEET THE DIRTY ROTTEN TEAM!

By Serena Magnan O'Connell

Set and lighting designs reflecting the beautiful French Riviera, sound and costume design are all well underway as we near auditions for *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* this coming January. I couldn't be prouder to introduce the talented team heading up our technical crews for Lyric's spring show.

Please consider joining one of our crews or auditioning for this hilarious musical! We are also still looking for our Production Parties Coordinator. Contact Serena Magnan O'Connell at serenamagnan@hotmail.com with any questions regarding how to get involved.

Production Supervisor	Serena Magnan O'Connell
Artistic Director	Andrea Cronan
Music Director	Martin Hain
Choreographer	Kate Whalen
Assistant Music Director	Howard Kalfus
Assistant Choreographer	Doris O'Brien
Stage Manager	Freda Tutt
Assistant Stage Manager	Donna Riera
Rehearsal Pianist	Carol Wilcox-Schein
Technical Director	Ted Anderson
Set Design	Ann Vivian
Set Engineer	Doug Viehmann
Set Construction	Tim Henderson
Lighting Designer	Tom Dunn
Set Decorator	Cathie Covey
Properties	Lesley Graham
Sound Design	Corey and Linda Gottfried
Costume Design	Lyn Feinson
Costume Construction	Debby Dot Decker
Hair	Ron Cook and Jennifer Honeywood
Make-Up	Sarah Crowley
Promotions	Erin Evarts
Promotional Wear	Hannah Marshall
Graphic/Logo Design	Don O'Connell
Mardi Gras	Michael Tutt
Photography	Ryan Bent
Program	Linda Whalen
House	Elizabeth Wilkins and Bill Suiter

SAVE THE DATE:

AUDITIONS FOR *DIRTY ROTTEN SCOUNDRELS*

By Serena Magnan O'Connell

Auditions for *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, under the artistic direction of Andrea Cronan, music direction by Martin Hain, and choreography by Kate Whalen, will be held Wednesday through Friday, January 3-5, 2018, with callbacks on January 6. Location TBD. Stay tuned for character descriptions coming your way next month!

ON OTHER STAGES

★ Vermont Stage Company's 2017-18 season opens with *Fun Home*, October 4-29. Performances are held in FlynnSpace. Tickets/info: vermontstage.org

★ Girls Nite Out Productions presents *Ripcord* by David Lindsay-Abaire, October 5-14, at the Black Box Theater in Main Street Landing. Tickets/info: girlsniteoutvt.com

★ Lost Nation Theater presents *Sense and Sensibility*, October 5-22. Performances are held at City Hall Auditorium. Tickets/info: lostnationtheater.org

★ Essex Community Players present *Dracula*, October 13-28; *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*, December 1-10; and *Doubt*, February 22-March 4. Performances are held at Memorial Hall. Tickets/info: essexplayers.com

★ *Gorey Stories*, a musical based on the creepy tales of Edward Gorey, will be presented October 19-28 at The Off Center for The Performing Arts. The actors, sing, dance, act and work puppets to such stories as "The Ghastleycrumb Tinies" and "The Doubtful Guest." Directed by Kevin Christopher with Nate Venet as Music Director and Lyric's Syndi Zook, Katie Bessette and Andriana Chobot among the cast. Tickets/info: saintsandpoetsproductions.org

★ *Carpenters Tribute Concert*, starring Sally Olson and her all-star band, will be presented on Saturday, October 28, 7:00 p.m., at the Enosburg Opera House. Tickets/info: enosburgoperahouse.org or call 802-933-6171

★ Middlebury Community Players present Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, November 2-5, at Town Hall Theater. Tickets/info: middleburycommunityplayers.org

★ UVM Department of Theatre presents *Sense and Sensibility*, November 8-12; and *The Toys Take Over Christmas*, December 2 and 3. Performances are held at the Royall Tyler Theatre. Tickets/info: uvm.edu/cas/theatre/

★ Shelburne Players present *I Hate Hamlet* at Shelburne Town Center November 10 through 18. Tickets/info: shelburneplayers.com

★ Lamoille County Players present *Murder Inn*, November 10-19. Performances are held at the Hyde Park Opera House. Tickets/info: lcplayers.com

★ *Broadway Neat, with a Twist*, directed by Erin Evarts with Nate Venet as Music Director, stars Kim Anderson, Justin Bouvier, Nick Caycedo, Jayden Choquette, Sarah Connor, Kelly Teal Goyette, and Sarah Wright. This cabaret will be presented one day only—December 2nd—at ArtsRiot on Pine Street, with shows at 3:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. A portion of the proceeds from this event will go to benefit the Junior League of the Champlain Valley and their focus on affordable living in our community. Tickets/info: artsriot.com/events/broadwayneat



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

AT YOUR SERVICE—LYRIC THEATRE COMPANY BOARD & STAFF

Christopher Brown	christopherbrownvt@gmail.com
Andrea Cronan	ajcronan71@gmail.com
Tom Dunn	tedunn@comcast.net
Kathy Grise	kgrise@comcast.net
Tim Henderson	
Sean Leach	leachs@aol.com
Mary Lee	MaryMLVT@gmail.com
Shane McCormack	smccormack@vtlaw1.com
Mary Beth Nuovo	mbnuovo@aol.com
Annie Ode	ode.annie@gmail.com
Andy Pearson	apearson@gmail.com
Skip Potter	spotter@rlvallee.com
Roz Saunders	rzsanders@yahoo.com
Karen Sheedy	kos@jmmcpa.net
Elizabeth Stallings	esieghardt@gmail.com
Doug Viehmann	avidvi@msn.com
Margaret Welch	tapwelch@aol.com
Syndi Zook, <i>Executive Director</i>	Director@lyrictheatrevt.org
Doris O'Brien, <i>Bookkeeper</i>	Doris@lyrictheatrevt.org
Andriana Chobot, <i>Administrative Assistant</i>	Office@lyrictheatrevt.org
Kristina McSalis, <i>Campaign Assistant</i>	Kristina@lyrictheatrevt.org

MEETING TIMES FOR LYRIC'S STANDING COMMITTEES

Board (Chair: Rosalind Saunders): 3rd Tuesday of the month, 6:30 p.m., Lyric Office, 7 Green Tree Dr., South Burlington
Facilities (Chair: Doug Viehmann): 1st Monday of the month, 6:00 p.m., Lyric Office, 7 Green Tree Dr., South Burlington
PR/Development (Chair: Annie Ode): 1st Tuesday of the month, 6:00 p.m., Lyric Office, 7 Green Tree Dr., South Burlington
Education (Chair: Andrea Cronan): Meeting details TBA
Finance (Chair: Karen Sheedy): Meeting details TBA
Membership (Chair: Christopher Brown): 4th Tuesday of the month, 7 p.m., home of the O'Connell's, Burlington
Show Selection (Chair: Margaret Welch): Monthly, Time TBA, Location varies

A Christmas Story The Musical takes the stage by snowstorm ... pink bunny suit, kooky leg lamp, sticky flagpole and all, and the message that even in hard times, what's really important is the love of your family! We triple-dog-dare you! Don't miss Lyric Theatre Company's *A Christmas Story The Musical* on the Flynn MainStage for just one weekend—November 9 through 12. Order online at flyntix.org or call 802 86-FLYNN. Generous support from Trust Company of Vermont, Kountry Kart Deli, and WCAX make it possible for Lyric to present quality productions at affordable prices.



November 9-12, 2017
MainStage
Flynn Center for the
Performing Arts