



# STAGE LINES

Volume 5, Issue 3

November/December 2004

*The Official Newsletter of Stage Coach Theatre*

## 'Harry and Sam' just regular Joes

After the pomp and spectacle of "Jekyll and Hyde," it's time for Stage Coach patrons to change gears and enjoy a laid-back, laugh-out-loud evening with a couple of regular Joes ... whose names are Harry and Sam.

"The Harry and Sam Dialogues" is a funny, fast-paced, and ultimately heartwarming look at two blue-collar guys who can talk and talk about the minutiae of life, but when it comes to really communicating, they haven't got a clue.

Sound like anyone you know, ladies? It's no wonder that this show was written by a woman (Karen Ellison) because it perfectly captures what we women have always known about men—they'd rather talk about sports and their own brand of "philosophy" than tackle the real questions of relationships and communication. Director Erin Van Engelen keeps the show moving briskly, and her choice of pre-show and between-scene music adds another level to this fascinating look at the truth about men.

This down-to-earth comedy stars two of Stage Coach Theatre's most popular actors—Anthony Polidori as Harry, and Kevin Labrum as Sam. Harry's been spending more and more nights on the couch, and Sam seems to be unusually interested in self-improvement. What secrets are these guys masking as they kill time comparing the Three Stooges to the Holy Trinity or wondering if a half-fish, half-woman would be more desirable with a fish head or fish tail?

This is an excellent production that men AND



Sam (Kevin Labrum) and Harry (Anthony Polidori) can't decide which half of a woman should be a fish in "The Harry and Sam Dialogues."

women will enjoy. It has humor, pathos, and a whole lot of heart. Don't miss it!

**"The Harry and Sam Dialogues" opens Friday, Nov. 26, and runs through Dec. 11 with performances at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays, 8:15 Fridays and Saturdays and 2:00 on the single Sunday matinee on Dec. 5. Tickets are \$12 Fridays/Saturdays, \$10 Thursdays/Sundays. Call the box office at 342-2000 for reservations and information. (Please note: Invited dress rehearsal will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 23.)**

### Callboard

The place to look for upcoming auditions:

**"Rocket Man,"** presented by Stage Coach Theatre and directed by Jeremy Chase. Show dates are Mar. 4-5, 10-13, 17-19. Needed are 2 men (ages 40s-50s), 2 women (30s-40s), and one woman late teens-early 20s. For questions or more information, please call Jeremy Chase at 447-7325.



STAGE LINES  
is edited by  
Michele Cronen.  
Send submissions to  
MLCronen@rmci.net

## Home ec's loss is Stage Coach's gain

**Name:** Erin Van Engelen

**Where are you from?:** Well, I was born in good 'ol Twin Falls, Idaho—lived there for 20 years until I came to Boise. I've been here for 7 years—I guess I don't like to move around a lot.

**What is your first memory of live theatre?** I took ballet for 8 years, and I think my first real memory was when I was in about second grade auditioning for "The Nutcracker." There was this professional company coming in to perform, but using locals in the smaller parts. I was told I couldn't audition with my own class due to my height advantage, and it broke my heart. Turned out they let me audition with the advanced class for the part of a "lamb." ...everything works out in the end in theatre, as they say, and I got to perform in my first "professional" show. ...and without the pink tutu.

**What made you get involved in theatre?** Ballet was a blast, but my joints couldn't handle it! I turned to acting when I was in junior high. The reasoning is quite pathetic—I didn't want to take wood shop, home economics, or typing. Now you're stuck with me!

**Give a brief synopsis of your past theatre history.** Brief? Hmm—can I do this? Junior high to High School to Old Lyric Repertory Company in Logan, Utah, for an apprenticeship; back to High School to College of Southern Idaho to Boise State to Stage Coach to Spontaneous to BLT to North End Films to owyheesound productions. ...whew! Many, many shows and a couple of directing experiences here and there. If you're curious to know which ones, feel free to find me and I'll tell you all about it, but I'm afraid it would bore you to death.

**When and why did you get involved with Stage Coach Theatre?** I don't want to downplay any other theatre in the area, but I will be honest and tell you I was frustrated with my education—I was always getting called back for the second or third round of auditions, but never getting cast. I had heard rumors of community theatre in Boise but had never been to one or met anyone who had participated with one. Then, by some miracle, a friend told me about Stage Coach and in-

vited me to a rehearsal of "Bone Chiller." I went to check it out. They invited me to the annual New Year's Eve Party (where everyone was very friendly!) That summer I auditioned for "Nurse Jane Goes to Hawaii," and it seems I've been running around in my underwear since. ...well, in shows and only sometimes.

**What is it about Stage Coach that made you choose this theater?** The people I met were so welcoming! I had no idea who anyone was at that New Year's Eve party and the person I did know wasn't there when I arrived at Kevin's house. As soon as I walked in the door, everyone had open arms— it was great! I have stayed for many reasons in addition to that. I love our mission, I love the people, I believe we all work hard within our crazy time schedules to put on quality theatre. The best part is that everyone wants to be here—our audiences, our actors, directors, crew, etc. It's a wondrous place to be!

**What are your goals for the Stage Coach board during your term?** I want to make sure we continue performing quality entertainment for our audiences. This is really a hard question... I love Stage Coach, and I simply want to keep it going in any way we can. If people need help with something or have questions/suggestions I am an open ear to all!

**What is your most embarrassing theatre moment?** I have to pick? I guess I would have to go waaaay back to performing a scene in a summer acting camp. I was in "Anastasia," playing the Empress. I could never remember in memorizing my lines whether the word was "introduced" or "announced." Apparently it didn't matter—I was so into what I was doing, I made up my own word. Intronounced. I didn't even know until the instructor pointed it out to me after the performance—and then I argued with him! "I did not say that!" Well, video tapes prove all and I was red for about a week. The second runner up would be bouncing a cake off of Mary Stumpp's head in "Nurse Jane" off the kitchen door and into the audience.

**What is your dream role to play on-stage (or your dream show to direct)?** Zelda Fitzgerald—"The Last Flapper."

### Meet the Board

Have you ever wondered about the people who give their time to keep Stage Coach Theatre running? Since we're an entirely volunteer-run theatre, the many people who work at Stage Coach do it for love, not money.

In this continuing Q&A feature, you will meet the various members of the Stage Coach Theatre Board of Directors.

This month, we talk with Erin Van Engelen, the Vice President of the Board, who is the director of our current show, "The Harry and Sam Dialogues."

# Backstage Chatter

*News and notes from the Stage Coach Theatre "family"*

I am positively thrilled to report that **Joan Gordon**, a longtime Stage Coach patron and our volunteer Web master, recently celebrated her 60th birthday by getting some GREAT news. As some of you may know, Joan had surgery for a brain tumor last year. But you can't keep a good woman down—Joan's latest MRI was completely clear, with "no tumor lurking around anywhere." She'll get a 4-month break from doctor appointments and MRIs. Now THAT's some news that's worthy of a standing ovation.



**Don Walker**, who directed last season's kick-off show, "Solitary Confinement," recently sent a video of our production to the play's author, Rupert Holmes. Rupert was delighted to see Stage Coach's production and sent Don an extremely laudatory letter of thanks:

*"...I was stunned by how smoothly and handsomely all was rendered, and by the extraordinary way you were able to make something that was conceived for a Broadway scale stage work so well on a smaller venue. ... What a delight! I thank you for taking such excellent care of my play, and for delivering the goods in such an abundant fashion. I actually learned (and/or remembered) some aspects of the play that I'd forgotten, thanks to your adroit direction. ..."*

Congratulations to Don and his cast and crew. Don will be directing another of Rupert Holmes' shows, "Thumbs," this spring.



I recently heard from **Heidi Tucker** (*Dearly Departed's* Lucille). She and her husband, **Marc**, recently moved to Florida, where Marc is going to school. They plan to stay in touch via the Stage Lines newsletter. Best wishes to them in their big adventure.



The theatre's Script Committee, under the leadership of Artistic Director **Kevin Kimsey**, is busily reading scripts as they work to ensure that Stage Coach continues to offer the finest selection of shows in the Treasure Valley. If you would like to submit a show for consideration, please contact Kevin at [kkimsey@computrol.com](mailto:kkimsey@computrol.com).



**Kim Labrum** sent along a picture of **Phil Ulmen**, and this story:

*"I was working on a project for my graphic design class which is about pirates. I decided I needed a picture of a pirate and mentally ticked through my theater friends. The first person to come to mind was Phil Ulmen. I gave him a call and asked him if he was interested in dressing up like a pirate for me. Not only was he interested, he brought his own costume and sword. I knew I picked the right man."*

Here's Phil in pirate regalia. Phil also has space-man and vampire regalia and is willing to rent himself out.



**Arrrrrrrr, it's Cap'n Phil Ulmen.**



Celebrations in December/early January:

**BIRTHDAYS:**

- Dec. 1: **Claudia Scott**
- Dec. 2: **Darrel Carver**
- Dec. 4: **Rick Hoover** and **Kim Labrum**
- Dec. 23: **Gregg Irwin**
- Jan. 1: **Rachel Adamson**
- Jan. 10: **Kevin Kimsey**



## Care to Coordinate Casino Night?

We're looking for someone with good organizational skills who would like to oversee our next Casino Night, scheduled for Saturday, February 5th.

This twice-a-year event is Stage Coach Theatre's big fundraiser. Past Casino Nights have been coordinated by Erin Van Engelen, but Erin is unable to take on this February's event. However, now that we've held Casino Night several times, the event runs smoothly with a regular team of volunteers, and Erin is happy to give the new coordinator full instructions on how to manage the event.

If you'd like to volunteer for this fun and important job, please call Erin at 841-5940.

**SUBSCRIBE TO OUR E-MAIL LIST.** Get updates, opening night reminders, and Stage Lines on line (with color pictures!). To subscribe, send an e-mail to: [StageCoachTheatre-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:StageCoachTheatre-subscribe@yahoo.com)

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER  
OF STAGE COACH THEATRE

***Dare to do it live!***



5296 Overland Road  
Boise, ID 83705  
Phone: 208-342-2000

---

VISIT US ON THE WEB!  
WWW.  
STAGECOACHTHEATRE.COM

---

## How three top comedy writers came to lose their trousers

By Larry Dennis

The most successful comedy writing team ever in Britain is Ray Galton and Alan Simpson. Starting in the 1950s, the pair wrote for and with some of England's top comedians including Spike Milligan, Peter Sellers and Terry Thomas. Galton and Simpson were pioneers in the development of situation comedies and created two of the most popular sitcoms ever broadcast in England, *Hancock's Half Hour* and *Steptoe and Son* (which they later brought to America as *Sanford and Son*).

In this mix of comedy writers of the time was John Antrobus who would come to be known as one of the BBC's great comedy writers of the century.

Galton and Simpson met as teenagers in 1948 when they were both convalescing from tuberculosis in the Milford Sanatorium. Writing and performing scripts for the hospital radio, they continued their partnership after being released. They ap-

proached the BBC with the idea of a half-hour show featuring comedian Tony Hancock, but using only one storyline per episode rather than sketches. Thus, the radio show *Hancock's Half-Hour* was born, with the duo's scripts making it arguably the greatest comic creation of the post-war years and turning Hancock into a national institution. The radio series ran from 1954 to 1959. The television series that followed met with equal success, winning Galton and Simpson the Guild of TV Producers and Directors "Scriptwriters of the Year" award in 1959.

The team continued to write together for almost two more decades until 1977, when Simpson decided to retire.

Galton continued to write and in 1985 teamed up with John Antrobus in a partnership that would last more than 10 years and spawn several hit TV shows and two hit plays, one of which was *When Did You Last See Your Trousers?*. The London Daily News called the play "brilliantly con-

structed" and "a superbly ingenious chain of events." The Guardian called it "achingly funny." The play is as pure a British bedroom farce as you can get and is based on a TV skit that Galton and Simpson wrote in the early 1960s. *Trousers* ran in London's West End for more than a year.

*Trousers* will open at Stage Coach Theatre on Jan. 7th. The cast includes Jeff Thomsen, Kevin Kimsey, Deanna Crawford, Jake Koepl, Katie Crane, Karl Gautschi, Melissa Montgomery and Gerry Fields.

Ray Galton, Alan Simpson and John Antrobus are all still alive. Galton is 74, Simpson is 75 and Antrobus is 71.

Antrobus has a play opening this month in London's West End, *Of Good Report*. Galton and Simpson won lifetime achievement awards from the Writers' Guild in 1997 and were awarded OBEs in 2000.