

Hope fills the theater for 2007 school year

News for New Richmond Thespians

By: Joanna DeSalvo

It's the beginning of yet another school year, as expected clubs are coercing freshmen left and right to join their groups, strengthening the ranks; the drama club is no different. A miraculous turnout was noted by veteran theater goers as a spectacular fifteen or more freshmen arrived at the first drama meeting of the year.

Over the last several years, drama club hasn't been overflowing by any means with serious theater kids. It is the hope of many that, after seeing so many Thespians off at last year's graduation, that the survivors will be able to keep life in the theater.

Drama Club President Maddie Murray declared that her biggest dream concerning the theater was visibility, and with that, preservation. "I want the drama club to be more than just background; I want it to become visible this year so that it may be preserved. I want drama to

have more put into it this year than it has in the past, that way, in the future, it'll be better," she said.

Thespian, artist, and backstage guru Trisha Richter also had a few words to lend about the upcoming year of drama. "We need a lot in the theater, materials wise, but we also need a lot of support from the high school," she said.

What do you say, school? How about some support?

Bill Harris, drama director/teacher/soccer coach at New Richmond High School, claimed that he had high hopes for theater. "I'm hoping for many great performances and very large audiences. I'm also hoping that no one has to get hurt to make it happen. Some people just come to watch an actor crash and burn!"

Well, drama club hopes that no one will face such humiliation (unless it's part of a comedy!) this year. Fortunately there's a marvelous comedy

and drama balance in the plays. Over the course of this school year, the drama community will be performing *Blithe Spirit* and *Witness for the Prosecution*.

Harris declared that he had his reasons for picking the shows he did. "Whenever I'm choosing a play, I look for something that fits to the talent we have here in the high school, and also things that are well known among the theater kids. I

switched to *Blithe Spirit* from another show so that there would be a balance between the drama and the comedy instead of simply drama. It's a very witty and verbal play," he said. "I chose *Witness for*

the Prosecution because I like Agatha Christie and I wanted to do another one of her shows. *Ten Little Indians* was one of the best shows we've done! I believe these were good choices because you've got the rather small cast of *Blithe Spirit* versus the larger cast of *Witness for the Prosecution* that will allow many more students parts," he added.

Thespian McLane Nagy said there are two things she wants from the-

ater this year. "First, I want that curtain to get fixed! But also, just to have fun," she said.

Well that shouldn't be too hard. For, no matter how trying on the patience, frustrating is the rest of the world, theater itself is always fun.

New Richmond of old

A tale of two villages

By: Joanna DeSalvo

While there is now only one New Richmond, in the beginning there were two. Well, sort of.

On June 3rd in the year 1778, two land surveys were created, one by David Jackson and one by Richard Beale, according to *The Village in the Valley* by Chester L. Hamilton. The Jackson survey passed between the hands of David Jackson to the hands of Jacob Light who laid out the plan for the original 85 acres that was the New Richmond village. Mr. Light, however, then passed this survey onto his nephew, Daniel Light. The Beale survey eventually became the property of General William Lytle, who, in 1813 conveyed to Englishman Thomas Ashburn 875 of the 1000 acres depicted for \$10,000. Ashburn proceeded to lay out Union Street and 10 blocks more, which he named Susanna in honor of his wife.

Clermont Historian Rick Crawford lent the information on how the two became one to this research piece. "After the death of Thomas Ashburn in his home on Augusta Street in

1828, the postal services demanded that the two towns conform to one name, and one postal service. Since Light was an American and his town stood on more land, it was New Richmond that came out in the end," he said.

Therefore, on January 11th of the year 1828, by order of the General Assembly, the two villages were combined, and thus became known as "New Richmond."

While researching these interesting tid-bits, a rather unexpected gold mine emerged. Did you know that the Presbyterian Church of New Richmond was once the cradle of the local abolitionist movement? George Beecher, brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe, preached there from 1835 until 1836. During that time, the first meeting of the anti-slavery coalition was held at the church.

Records show that during that period of 1836 until the Civil War ended, New Richmond was a recognized center

of abolitionist activity.

It's amazing what a few types on the keyboard can tell you nowadays about a world that existed a couple hundred years ago. It's a wonder how few people know that this little village ever played such a big role. Guess we're not that far off the map, are we?

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