June 2007

At the 2005 Harry Potter event, Lydia (left) is decked out as Madame Rosemerta and Angela (right) got her Gryffindor on as Colin Creevy. See more photos of this fun event on the theatre website at:

http://tinyurl.com/3dbsu7

Ponderisms:
If the professor on Gilligan’s Island can make a radio out of a coconut, why can’t he fix a hole in a boat?

To remove old wallpaper, mix one capful of Downy Fabric Softener with one quart of hot water in a plastic bucket, sponge the wallpaper, wait twenty minutes, and peel off the paper.

To celebrate the publication of Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, the fun folks at Witchy Wearables will sponsor another Harry Potter Event. Mark your calendars for Friday, July 20, 2007 and prepare to have a blast. The event kicks off at 6:00 pm in the shop’s parking lot at 4459 147th Street in Midlothian, IL.

If you were there for the 2005 event, you won’t want to miss this one. Bring the kids, too! There are quite a few activities planned for young Potter fans, such as Hogwarts classes, games, wand making, costume contest and more.

You can come as you are or dress the part in your Gryffindor garb, Hufflepuff hat, Ravenclaw robes or Slytherin scarf.

Wander the shops of “Diagon Alley” where there will be crystals, clothing, Alivans wands, lots of “official” Harry Potter candy and action figures. Plush toys like Buckbeak, Hedwig, the Sorting Hat, the Monster Book of Monsters and Crookshanks will be featured. All manner of wares to satisfy your shopping urges will be available.

Explore your inner eye and have your tea leaves read by Professor Trelawny or consult with Professor Dumbledore. There’s something for everyone to enjoy!

Sales of the book will commence at midnight. Pre-orders are recommended. Call Witchy Wearables at 708-389-1313 to place your order!

As all good Harry Potter fans know, the seventh and final book in the series will be released on July 21, 2007 and the latest movie in the series, The Order of the Phoenix, opens on July 13, 2007. To prepare for such monumental occasions, we’re going to celebrate with a movie marathon!

Join us in the Kindig Performing Arts Center on Sundays, July 1 and 8, 2007 at 12 Noon when we begin showing each of the four released Harry Potter films.

While this is a “kid friendly” event, you should be aware that parts of some of the movies might not be appropriate for your child. You should also discuss appropriate “theater behaviour” with your young ones.

There will be about a 60 minute break in between the movies. During the break, we will nosh in the lobby. Popcorn, Pepsi, Diet Pepsi and Sprite will be provided.

Also for fun, we’ll have Harry Potter quizzes (for grown ups and kids) and some silly prizes for the winners - maybe some of the stuff we’re trying to unload from the prop room!

If you plan on coming, please bring a dish to share (we can’t live on soda and popcorn alone!). RSVP to RatRagStaff@yahoo.com or leave a voice mail message at 708-596-2000, ext. 2345 and let us know what you’re bringing.

The building is closed on Sundays, so you’ll have to come to Door #5 (the backstage door). If you’re late, knock LOUDLY. Access outside of the PAC area will be prohibited.

The theatre MUST be pristine clean when we leave. Be prepared to help clean up!

All email addresses or websites in the digital edition of the Rat Rag are “clickable.” Point your cursor over a URL, click your mouse button and you’ll be whisked away to the website. Click on an email address and a new email form will open.

To remove old wallpaper, mix one capful of Downy Fabric Softener with one quart of hot water in a plastic bucket, sponge the wallpaper, wait twenty minutes, and peel off the paper.

In Hawaii, it is illegal to appear in public wearing only swimming trunks.

In Hawaii, it is illegal to own a mongoose without a permit.
E’s Podcast Palace

About a year ago, it finally dawned on me that I didn’t need an iPod to listen to a podcast. Duh. I now subscribe to 25 different programs that I listen to right on my Mac in the Hermit Hole. Yep, I’m thoroughly addicted!

For those of you who don’t know a podcast from a pod person, here’s the skinny: a podcast is a recorded program, much like a radio show. The recording is converted to a computerized audio file and made available through various means on the internet. You can download them to your computer and listen while you work or play.

I use the iTunes application for this task. iTunes is available for FREE at the Apple Computer website and is both Mac and Windows friendly. http://www.apple.com/itunes

There are a gjillion different types of programs you can subscribe to. Personally, I enjoy history and science stuff and the same kinds of programming found on Public Radio. Here are a few of my favorites (all FREE). You can find any of these by clicking on “Music Store” in iTunes. Just search on the title and they’ll pop up.

The Naked Scientists: Interactive science, medicine and technology weekly show with Cambridge University’s Dr. Chris Smith. The “Kitchen Science” feature is great fun.

This American Life: First-person stories and short fiction pieces from Chicago Public Radio (WBEZ). Spellbinding!

Science Talk: Weekly science audio show covering the latest in the world of science and technology. It’s like potato chips for science geeks.

Colonial Williamsburg; Past and Present: Interviews with the people who work in the restored 18th-century capital of Williamsburg, Virginia.

Car Talk: Yes, that’s right - Click and Clack, the Tappet Brothers are now offering their weekly laugh fest (disguised as a show about car repair) as a FREE podcast. (If the Furniture Guys would get a podcast, my listening list would be complete.)

If none of these shows are your cup of tea, check out http://www.podcastdirectory.com. You’ll go buggy trying to choose something!

Invasion of the Podcasters: The podcasting technology is fairly accessible to folks like you and me. With the right goodies on your computer, you can produce your own show for people all over the world to enjoy. We know one such person who has done just that: Dennis Duffner, long-time fan of the PAC hosts a show he calls Duffy’s Rant - News and My Views on Things Happening in the South Suburbs of Chicago. Tap into Dennis’ wesite at http://www.duffysrant.com to subscribe. If you listen closely, you might just hear the PAC Rats’ latest production mentioned!

A,D,RR,ZZ

Henna Rosenthal
15800 State St.
South Holland, IL 60473-1200

What is THIS all about??

Ever wonder what those mysterious letters are above your address on the mailing labels from PAC flyers and postcards? Each letter represents a different list type (e.g.: A=Audition, D=Drama, RR=Rat Rag). When sending out a mailing, we can match people to the mail. Folks who want to know when a jazz concert is will get those announcements, but won’t get audition notices (unless they want to).

In 1999, two Boston residents founded Zipcar, a car sharing service. In 2006, Zipcar came to Chicago. Today it’s the world’s largest and fastest growing car sharing service, with more than 100,000 members and 3,000 vehicles in major metropolitan areas and college campuses, including Boston, New York, Chicago, Washington, DC and London, England.

So what’s the big deal? If you live in a big city like Chicago, you know that parking and maintaining your own car is a big hassle and expense. Public transportation is great, but sometimes you really do need a car to get around. Sharing a car becomes a great option.

For a $50 annual membership fee, you can have 24/7 access to a car. You pay as little as $8 an hour or $56 a day each time you use a car. The fees include gas, parking and insurance. Each vehicle has a home location near you - a reserved parking space located on a street, driveway or neighbourhood parking lot.

Book a Zipcar online or over the phone at any time, any day of the week. Then all you have to do is walk to the nearby car, unlock it by swiping your unique Zipcard across the windshield and drive away with the minimum of fuss.

You get the convenience, freedom and comfort of a car with none of the expense and aggravation. What’s more, you can drive a whole variety of fun and environmentally vehicles from a luxury BMW to a run-around MINI. It’s the perfect alternative to car ownership.

Our own Mike Aguayo is a Zipcar member and he loves it.

With each Zipcar taking 20 plus personally owned cars off the road, think of all the good that’s doing for the environment and community. Check out their website at http://www.zipcar.com for more info.

A Tip From the Furniture Guys

Glue that oozes from joints should never be wiped away with a wet sponge. It introduces water to the finish which can result in a moisture blush, or cloudy spot if the surface is lacquer (especially, if the finish is shellac). Allow the glue to set so you can peel it off easily.
**New Postal Rates Are Making People…**

**“Go Postal”**
FIRST RATE STAMP NOW COSTS 41¢

The postal rate increase is shaping up to be a big headache. Along with the new rate, there are new regulations, which mean larger envelopes and packages will automatically cost more than the smaller mail.

Before, postage was determined by weight, unless it was an especially large or odd-shaped package that warranted special handling.

If you think that stuffing the same amount into a smaller envelope is the answer, the post office is going to get you there as well because there are new thickness restrictions!

For instance, postage for a three-panel brochure weighing an ounce would cost the new rate of 41¢ (up from 39¢) UN-LESS it is not folded well and the envelope puffs up to 1/2 inch. In that case the postage would shoot up to 80¢.

The only good thing that seems to be coming out of the post office is that…

**PATRICK – SHANNON: ARE YOU READING THIS?**

The new Star Wars stamps have been available since May 25th.

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**What did you say…?**

**PART II**

The Washington Post also hosted a Style Invitational where readers were asked to take any word from the dictionary, alter it by adding, subtracting or changing one letter, and then supply a new definition.

The most notable entries are:

- **Bozone (n.),** the substance surrounding stupid people that stops bright ideas from penetrating The Bozone layer, unfortunately shows little sign of breaking down in the near future.
- **Foreploy (v.),** Any misrepresentation about yourself for the purpose of sex.
- **Cashtration: (n.),** The act of buying a house, which renders the subject financially impotent for an indefinite period.
- **Giraffiti (n.),** Vandalism spray-painted very, very high.
- **Sarchasm (n.),** The gulf between the author of sarcastic wit and the person who doesn’t get it.
- **Inoculatte: (v.),** To take coffee intravenously, when you are running late.
- **Hipatitis (n.),** Terminal coolness.
- **Osteopornosis (n.),** A degenerate disease.
- **Decalfalon (n.),** The grueling event of getting through the day consuming only things that are good for you.
- **Glibido (v.),** All talk and no action.
- **Dopeler Effect (v.),** The tendency of stupid ideas to seem smarter when they come at you rapidly.
- **Arachnoleptic Fit (n.),** The frantic dance performed just after you accidentally walk through a spider web.
- **Beelze Bug (n.),** Satan in the form of a mosquito that gets into your bedroom and cannot be cast out.
- **Caterpallor (n.),** The color you turn after finding half a grub in the fruit you are eating.
- **Ignoranus (n.),** A person who is both stupid and an ass.

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I BELIEVE…
that no matter how good a friend is, they’re going to hurt you every once in a while and you must forgive them for that.

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**REMEMBER TO CONTACT US**
with any article, photo, want ad or idea at:

✉️ RatRagStaff@yahoo.com ✉️

Rochelle monitors this email daily and will respond to all.

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Understanding The Invasion

The billions of periodical cicadas are expected to launch their invasion of northern Illinois and parts of Iowa, Wisconsin, Michigan and Indiana this week.

Cicadas spend most of their lives as nymphs, burrowed underground and sucking sap from tree roots. They emerge once every 17 years to mate.

- Cicadas are often called locust.
- Periodical cicadas are found only in the United States, east of the Great Plains.
- Only the males sing.
- The males die soon after mating.
- The wing of the cicada filters out UV light.
- Cicadas generally leave no lasting damage.
- Cicadas are said to make good eating:

**SOFT-SHELLED CICADAS**

1 cup Worcestershire sauce
60 freshly emerged 17-year cicadas
4 eggs, beaten
3 cups flour
salt and pepper to taste
Oil for frying

Marinate cicadas alive in a sealed container in Worcestershire sauce for 1-2 hours.

Dip them in the beaten egg, roll them in the seasoned flour and then gently sauté them until golden brown.

Serve with hot mustard or cocktail sauce.

- Experts say that the best time to collect cicadas for eating is in the middle of the night, as they emerge from their burrows and before their skin hardens.
- When boiled, like soft-shelled crabs, it is said that they taste like asparagus or clam flavored potatoes.

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CICADA
The Importance of Using Sunscreen

Red alert! If you regularly soak up the sun's rays without proper protection, you could be setting yourself up for serious damage to your skin. We’ve all heard about the potential dangers of skin cancer.

If you’re beyond the pale when it comes to using sunscreen, keep these tips in mind:

• Always use a sunscreen with SPF15 or higher.
• Use at least one ounce to cover your arms, legs, neck and face.
• Protect your lips by using sunscreen lip balm.
• Avoid using sunscreen on babies younger than six months – use hats, clothing and shade for protection.
• Consider cosmetics that contain sunscreen.
• Choose broad spectrum products that guard against the sun’s UVA and UVB rays.

Getting sunburned or tanned on a regular basis could signal a red flag about your skin’s health. Whenever you’re in the sun, heed the warning and slather on some sunscreen to keep beauty – and your health – skin deep.

Hey, I have an idea!

While most media companies, fearing copyright suits, discourage the general public from submitting unsolicited scripts and program ideas, Mark Cuban, the owner of HDNet, said on his website that “one of the fun things” he does at the channel is reading ideas for new shows. Cuban, who also owns the Dallas Mavericks basketball team, gives this advice to anyone wanting to submit an idea to him: “I don’t need to be pitched another cooking, poker, pimp my whatever, American Idol knockoff. What I would like to read are original show ideas. So post them if you got them.”

Here’s the URL to the site: http://www.hd.net

Fun Websites

WWW.PROFILEFARM.COM
Make your MySpace.com profile page look better using the free tools this site offers: MySpace layouts, MySpace codes, MySpace generators and MySpace tweaks.

WWW.BUDDYCON.COM
Instantly create your own custom animated buddy icons using your own pictures and text. Now your icon can say or show anything you want! You can install your custom icons directly into AIM or save for later use.

Surprising Things You Can Get For Free

1. U.S. Small Business Administration
Learn how to write a business plan, register your company, and deal with the tax details of running a home business at your local Woman’s Business Center evening classes. (Men are welcome too)
What is the catch? Novices and more advanced learners share the same classroom.
Find Out More: www.sba.gov
Click on “Local Resources” for a nearby center and for financial and marketing information.

2. Apple Stores
Apple gives excellent classes on business and entertainment software, music programs, and computer basics, all remarkably free of sales pitches. There are also classes on how to use Apple hardware, like iPods. Most of the company’s stores – there are more than 170 – offer several classes a day.
What’s the catch? All classes relate to Apple products.
Find out more: www.apple.com
Click on “Visit an Apple store.”

Did You Know That...

• Use air freshener to clean mirrors.
• 23% of all photocopier faults worldwide are caused by people sitting on them and photocopying their butts.
• Ants will not cross a chalk line.
• Spinach consumption in the U.S. rose 33% after the Popeye comic strip became a hit in 1931.

IN HONOUR OF STUPID PEOPLE...

On most brands of Christmas lights: For indoor or outdoor use only. …as opposed to where???

PAC Rat Meeting
Summer Schedule!
The next PAC Rat meeting will be THURSDAY, June 7th @ 7:00pm in the PAC Lobby.
(Location subject to change)
While the summer schedule is fairly clear of concerts and plays, it’s time to clean up the mess we made throughout the year. The major projects will include the costume and scene shops. We sure could use some help with this! If you have some free time in the evenings and weekends, come on by and give us a hand. Some of the work will be really hard. And some will be lots of fun. Sorting costumes: fun. Putting up a new lumber rack: hard. Still, we can guarantee lots of laughs as we trip over each other and all the crud we’ve collected.

On the bottom are the before and after plans for the costume shop. Ellie’s guess is that it will take 6 days to accomplish all that needs to be done. We don’t have fancy drawings on by and join the fray (and the frey)!

Even though these pictures are pretty darn scary, the reality is MUCH more frightening! Check out the drawing below to see what we’ll do to organize the space and lessen clutter.

Shriek!!!!

Here’s a brief rundown of the costume shop tasks:
1. Go through all the boxes in the front of the costume shop and get rid of at least 1/3 of the collective contents.
2. New boxes of all the same size will be purchased. All the old boxes will go away (Megan? Want ’em?). Re-pack and re-label new boxes.
3. New shelves and cabinets will be purchased. Remove all old shelves and replace with the new stuff. This requires hanging cabinets on the walls. Drills and screws and anchors, oh my!
4. Build a drop down table that hinges to the wall underneath the new cabinets.
5. Get rid of shoes we don’t need and sew new shoe bags with deeper pockets.
6. Go thru racks and get rid of stuff we don’t need. Any costume items we aren’t keeping will be donated to other theatre groups or the Good Will.

Sounds like fun, right? (say “yes!”) Here’s when we’ll start working on costumes. Come on by and join the fray (and the frey)!

Monday, June 4 ............. 7:00-10:00pm
Tuesday, June 5 .......... 7:00-10:00pm
Wednesday, June 6 ....... 7:00-10:00pm
Thursday, June 7 ........ 7:00-10:00pm

At this point we don’t know exactly what we will be getting rid of in the costume shop. However, there will be some nice pieces that must go. Ellie would prefer these items go to another theatre company or school. If you’re involved with our sister companies, please contact Ellie via email only. No phone calls – she’ll never get around to calling back! Anything given away must be picked up. We are not able to deliver.

We sure could use some help with this! If you have some free time in the evenings and weekends, come on by and give us a hand. Some of the work will be really hard. And some will be lots of fun. Sorting costumes: fun. Putting up a new lumber rack: hard. Still, we can guarantee lots of laughs as we trip over each other and all the crud we’ve collected.

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**LETTER TO THE EDITORS**

Dear Rat Rag,

In your April issue, you mention wrapping celery in “tin” foil to keep it fresh. This brought to mind the occasional tin foil vs. aluminum foil debate my son and I have. My son decided it was finally time to put this to rest. Who better to clear this up but his wise ole Gramma Shunko. At 83 years young, she’s seen it all, been through it all!!! (besides, she watches Jeopardy everyday!!)

“G-MA!” sez son. “My mom calls it aluminum foil. I call it tin foil. What do YOU call it????!”

Without battling a South-Side-of-Chicago-Italian-Catholic-Great-Depression-WWII-Rosie-the-Riveting Eyelash, she proclaims:

“ME?! I CALL IT REYNOLD’S WRAP!!!!” Thus putting the end to another kitchen mystery.

Sincerely,
Christine Anne Mary Frances Fraüligne Shunko Roth, a/k/a #6

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Dear Rat Rag Readers,

Honest to Pete, we don’t make this stuff up. Although Mom says she’s goofy because of her kids, WE maintain we get it from HER. The real truth may never be known.

– Alexis Jean Anne Mary Frances Fraüligne Shunko, a/k/a #7

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**WE GET AROUND**

With the wonders of the internet, The Rat Rag is now being used as bird cage lining or cat box filler in the following locales:

Alabama, Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia and even Korea!

Submit your ideas for articles today so you, too can be internationally published!

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**Eight Amazingly Simple Home Remedies**

submitted by Amy DiFiore

1. If you are choking on an ice cube, don’t panic. Simply pour a cup of boiling water down your throat and presto, the blockage will be almost instantly removed.

2. Clumsy? Avoid cutting yourself while slicing vegetables by getting someone else to hold them while you chop away.

3. You can avoid arguments with the Mrs. about lifting the toilet seat just by using the sink.

4. For high blood pressure sufferers: simply cut yourself and bleed for a few minutes, thus reducing the pressure in your veins. Remember to use an egg timer.

5. A mouse trap placed on top of your alarm clock will prevent you from rolling over and going back to sleep after you hit the snooze button.

6. If you have a bad cough, take a large dose of laxatives. Then you will be afraid to cough.

7. Have a bad toothache? Smash your thumb with a hammer and you will forget all about the toothache.

8. Sometimes, we just need to remember what the rules of life really are: In life, you only need two tools - WD-40 and Duct Tape. If it doesn’t move but should, use the WD-40. If it should not move and does, use the duct tape.

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**Mark Your Calendars**

FALL SHOW Auditions:
Friday, August 24, 2007 from 7-10pm
Saturday, August 25, 2007 from 1-4pm

KID SHOW Auditions:
Friday, November 16, 2007 from 7-10pm
Saturday, November 17, 2007 from 1-4pm

SPRING SHOW Auditions:
Thursday, February 7, 2008 from 4-10pm
Saturday, February 10, 2007 from 11am-4pm

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**Most Popular Myths in Science**

as reported on www.livescience.com

**IT TAKES SEVEN YEARS TO DIGEST GUM**

While it may prove a bit more difficult to break down than organic foodstuffs, chewing gum gets no special treatment from the digestive system. Doctors figure this old wives’ tale was invented to prevent kids from swallowing the rubbery substance.

**YOU GET LESS WET BY RUNNING IN THE RAIN**

Actual mathematical equations devoted to this popular question have suggested it is true, though not for the simple reasons you might think. Complexities include factoring in the number of rain drops hitting the walker’s head versus smacking the runner’s chest.

**HAIR AND FINGERNAILS CONTINUE GROWING AFTER DEATH**

Though hair and fingernails appear to keep growing after death, this is merely a morbid optical illusion at work. In death the human body dehydrates severely, retracting enough skin to expose more nail and hair.

**HUMANS USE ONLY 10 PERCENT OF THEIR BRAINS**

This media darling has been around for at least a century. Fortunately, it’s just not true. MRI imaging clearly demonstrates—with fancy colors no less—that humans put most of their cerebral cortex to good use, even while dozing.

**WATER DRAINS BACKWARDS IN THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE DUE TO THE EARTH’S ROTATION**

Not only is the Earth’s rotation too weak to affect the direction of water flowing in a drain, tests you can easily perform in a few washrooms will show that water whirlpools both ways depending on the sink’s structure, not the hemisphere.