



Piney Woods Players

# The Prompter

November 2008

## PINEY WOODS PLAYERS SILVER ANNIVERSARY

Where were you 25 years ago? Silver Anniversaries are times of reflection; we remember where we started and try to figure out where we're headed.

2009 marks the 25th year for the Piney Woods Players. You may not have been around in the beginning so let's go back and see how it all started... The Piney Woods Players began as the Pine Tree Players 35 years ago. It was in 1984, however, that the organization was transformed into the theatre company that became today's Piney Woods Players (PWP). In 1989, 501(c)(3) status was awarded by the state. Veteran director/actor Howard Kuscher brought scripts by Neil Simon, Noel Coward, and Woody Allen to Livingston. Dr. Mike Shukan, Ruth Bass-Hollenbeck, Midge Duncan-Buress, BB Burrell, Leah & Emil Vogley, Kim Butts, David & Beth Hancock, and Howard & Doris Kuscher are just a few of the names familiar to theatre goers early in PWP's history.

The first production, *Never Too Late*, by Sumner A. Long, debuted in June of 1984. At that time, PWP hoped to produce two plays per year (one for adults and one for children). It was also hoped early on that we would find a permanent home for our organization. Twenty-five years later, we're still trying to find a stage to call home but we've increased the number of productions to 3 or 4 a year, along with Dinner Musicales and an annual reading of "A Christmas Carol". We also continue to provide young actors and stage hands a Summer Theatre Workshop each June. This has grown from a one week offering to two weeks with a production on the last day for parents and friends.

In 1984, the practice of handing out two scholarships of \$200 each was continued from the Pine Tree Players. The Danny Moore Memorial Scholarship was established early on and awarded to qualified graduates planning to study the performing arts in college. In 1999, a scholarship based on a \$15,000 Piney Woods Players endowment was made to Angelina College in Lufkin. Currently, we award two scholarships of \$1500 each to graduating seniors from schools throughout Polk County. In fact, we're hoping we'll be able to increase the number of scholarships in 2009! The money for scholarships comes from donations, ticket sales, and annual membership dues. As a volunteer organization, it's the efforts and time of the folks involved that raise the money.

So where do we go from here? That's the question asked at almost every meeting of the board and general membership. We're planning

some big surprises for 2009. Our season is currently being set, so keep up with The Prompter for the latest information. You can now read the Prompter on-line at our website: [www.pineywoodsplayers.com](http://www.pineywoodsplayers.com).

You're not going to want to miss what's in store for our 25th year. Mostly, we're all hoping YOU will get involved in the fun. You don't have to join to be part of a production. Just watch for audition dates or speak to a current member. All auditions are open to everyone, as are our meetings. We welcome your input and opinions. We are, after all, a community theatre and looking at the past 25 years, it's been the efforts of the volunteers that has lead the organization to its current position to be able to offer \$1,500 scholarships to students throughout Polk County. Come grow with us and help PWP become a premium center of live theatre in East Texas.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW  
FOR THE NEXT  
QUARTERLY MEETING —  
DECEMBER 7 at 2PM  
in the Dining Room of the  
MEMORIAL MEDICAL CENTER  
in LIVINGSTON

The next quarterly meeting of the Piney Woods Players will be held on Sunday, December 7, at 2 p. m. in the dining room of the Memorial Medical Center in Livingston. The annual election of officers will be held at this meeting. Refreshments will be served. The meeting is open to all members and to non-members who are interested in encouraging and supporting the performing arts in Polk County. Nominations will be taken at the meeting for all board positions, including three positions that have recently or are soon to become vacant—Secretary, Historian and Publicity. Please contact Richard Lyne at 936-646-3622 if you would like to be considered for a position on the Board of Directors.

### THE NEXT SCENE:

Dec 7: Board Meeting, MMC/L, at 1PM

Dec 7: General Meeting, MMC/L, at 2PM

Jan 5: Board Meeting at 7PM-location TBA

2009 Season under construction

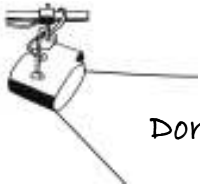
## THE PREZ SEZ:

Well, well, it has been an interesting year. Everything was going along just fine until Hurricane IKE. He backed up the High School's use of the Auditorium and we were going to share the stage. Then something else happened and The school took us off the stage for the weekend performances. Then they scheduled use for another week, only to find out it was all ready booked. Then they gave us the last week before Christmas. That being the last full weekend of Christmas shopping and the start of Christmas vacation for the schools. So, with that in mind the Board decided to postpone the production of 'A Wind between the Houses' until early 2009. One thing that was really great about all the changes in schedule was the actors adjusting to the changes and staying as a cast. I think their attitude was just great and I give them a big stand up applause.

We have a lot of changes coming for 2009, this is our 25th anniversary year. Please watch for the new information coming out early 2009.

See ya.

*RICHARD 'DICK' LYNE*



Doris Kuscher

Have you ever admired the lovely and informative poster boards and notebooks that are displayed at Piney Woods Players performances and other events? These are the work of Doris Kuscher who has served as Piney Woods Players historian in recent years and who has done a fantastic job of documenting and preserving the history of the Piney Woods Players.



Doris has been an active member of the Piney Woods Players since it's inception in 1984. At that time, she was married to Howard Kuscher who served at various times as president and who directed many plays. During his tenure, she took on various responsibilities including, in her own words, "I helped him as assistant, prompter, prop person and in sound effects, for instance, the voice of the parrot in "Light Up the Sky", and the voice of Myra in "Rumors". Finally an "appearance in the play, "Don't Drink the Water" in which David Hancock played the Sultan and I played his wife in a non-speaking role. It's been a great ride!"

Doris' involvement in "theatrical activities began at an early age. When she was about 16 years old, she joined the Scottish Brigade at Stephen F. Austin High School in Houston, where she became Top Sgt and carried the American flag

in parades and at games with what she describes as "great joy and reverence". She says her sense of patriotism had stemmed from elementary school days when the students recited the "pledge of Allegiance" and she felt at the age of 8 that she lived in the most wonderful place in the whole world! During her senior year at SFA, she took a drama class in which she acted in stage plays and began a love affair with the theatre. After graduation, she married Arthur Brady and had two children, Arthur, Jr. and Doris, Jr. When time and money allowed, they attended the old "Alley Theatre" in the round and other plays. After 39 years, her husband passed on. Then, 2 ½ years later, she married his cousin-in-law, Howard Kuscher and it was at about this time that her involvement with the Piney Woods Players began.

Doris has been active in other community activities in addition to the Piney Woods Players including, the Heritage Society, the Livingston Community Concert, Livingston Art League, and Memorial Point civic Club. Recently, Doris moved to another community. She says she "left a piece of my heart when I recently moved. My thanks to all those who are carrying-on and Break-a-leg". While we certainly wish her much success and happiness in her new location, she will be sorely missed.

## OFFICERS

- President:** Richard Lyne  
**1st Vice President:** Jim Hardy  
**2nd Vice President:** B. B. Burruss  
**Secretary:**  
**Treasurer:** Barbara Hardin  
**Membership:** Lester Harlow  
**Hospitality:** Shirley McBee  
**Historian:**  
**Publicity:** Billie Gillean  
**Advisors:** Richard Lyne  
Lester Harlow

The Prompter is a publication of the Piney Woods Players, published quarterly in February, May, August, and November. For information or to submit news, contact Billie Gillean, at (936) 646-3762 or [billiejack@eastex.net](mailto:billiejack@eastex.net). Visit our website at [WWW.PINEYWOODSPLAYERS.COM](http://WWW.PINEYWOODSPLAYERS.COM)