

Hear Ye, Hear Ye

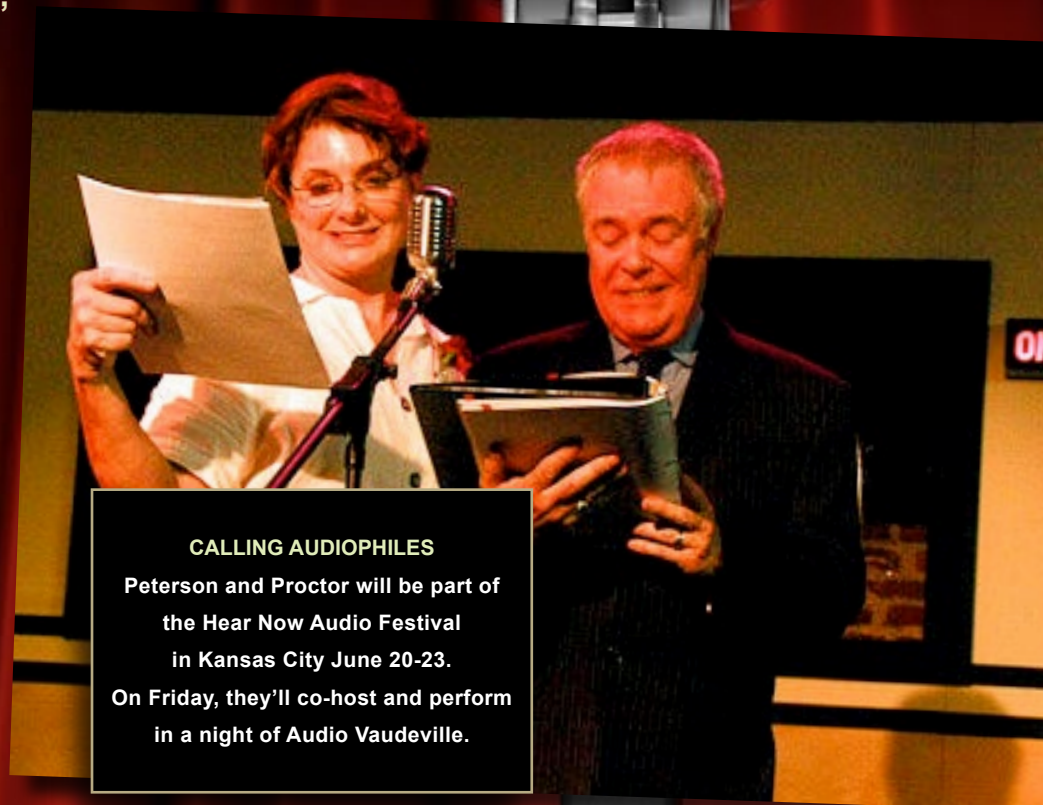
"God is a comedian, playing to an audience too afraid to laugh." ~ Voltaire



This week, **Melinda** and **I** are off to Kansas City from June 20-23 for the first **Hear Now Audio Festival**. It's touted as "a film festival for contemporary audio storytelling" with live solo and multi-cast performances, classic radio drama recreations, experimental narratives, and demonstrations of modern audio technology from participants like **Lucas Ranch's Randy Thom**, presented in theaters and other "listening" venues around town.

On Friday, we will co-host and perform in a special night of **Audio Vaudeville**, with **Dion Graham** and special guest Missouri storyteller **Gladys Coggswell**, which will showcase talent from all across the country in original audio drama, poetry, short stories, and more. I'll also be reading "Bradbury," a short story by **Denice Rovira Hazlett** to be released in an audiobook.

■ *continued*



CALLING AUDIOPHILES

Peterson and Proctor will be part of the Hear Now Audio Festival in Kansas City June 20-23. On Friday, they'll co-host and perform in a night of Audio Vaudeville.

Then, on Saturday, I'll be guest starring with the clever, topical **Right Between the Ears** players, who currently have a long-running show on **Sirius/XM Radio**. Also, the **Mark Time Awards**, initiated by fellow Firesign **David Ossman** 15 years ago (gasp), will be celebrating the ever-growing art form of audio storytelling with the only international honors dedicated to recognizing the best in science fiction, fantasy, and horror (with **The Ogle Awards**) in audio productions from all over the globe. I'm a judge, and I could be bought -- but it's too late...

"In 2010, the Chinese consumed half the swine on the planet."
~ Phil's Phunny Phacts

'A FART ON THOMAS PUTNAM'

I'll be saying this three or more times a week through mid-July in the extremely well-reviewed **Antaeus** production of **Arthur Miller's** powerful play, *The Crucible*, and you can still get tickets by going to **WWW.ANTAEUS.ORG** – but do it now, because we're selling out fast! And FYI, here's what really happened...

girls blamed **Tituba**, the Parris's Caribbean slave, and two "bag women," **Sarah Good** and **Sarah Osborne**, and more teenage girls began to demonstrate bizarre behavior, to disrupt church meetings, and to accuse reputable churchgoers – especially people with whom their parents had feuded.

According to an account of events sent to me by **Patricia Willson**, "Alibis were useless because the afflicted girls would say that the accused had sent her specter to torment them, and anyone who spoke out ... soon found the accusing fingers pointing at them." Then **Governor William Phipps** (I went to Yale with one of his descendants) created a Special Court of Oyer and Terminer – "to hear and determine" the guilt or innocence of people like tavern owner **Bridget Bishop**, who had been called out for playing shuffleboard and dressing in unsuitable clothing. She was found guilty and was hanged on June 10, the first of 19 executions that took place over the next four months. A twentieth victim, **Giles Cory**, whom I portray in the play, was tortured to death by pressing when he refused to enter a plea.

THROUGHOUT THE 'PLANET,' CLICKING **BOLD, DARK RED TYPE** OPENS A RELATED INTERNET LINK.

The hysteria spread to nearby towns, and feuding neighbors began to see it as a handy way to get revenge or gain land, and any who refused to confess were executed. Thus, in the course of eight months, over 200 villagers were tried and incarcerated, many dying in captivity.

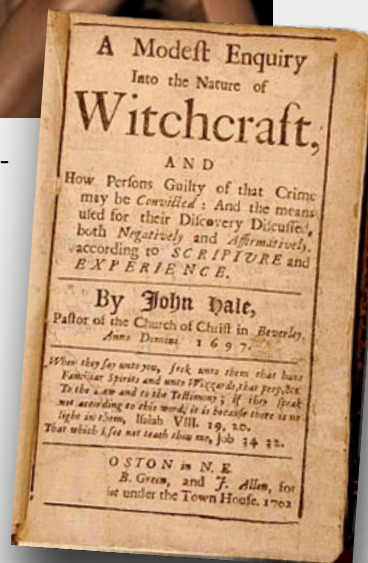
But finally, possibly because Puritan ministers had called for an end to the proceedings or because some of the children had accused Phipps's own wife of witchcraft – the Governor abruptly dissolved the Court and prohibited further arrests, and some examiners actually expressed remorse. **Reverend John Hale**, for instance (portrayed in our production by partners **Ann Noble** and **John Prosky**) wrote in 1695, "Such was the darkness of the day, and so great the lamentations of the afflicted, that we walked in the clouds and could not see our way."

"Breathtaking! Mega Powerful! Absolute Must See Performance! The Antaeus Theatre Ensemble has once again raised the bar..."
~ Ron Irwin, The LA Examiner



In **June of 1692**, the Salem Witch Trials began, so-called because the hysteria had begun in Salem Village (now Danvers, Mass.) when a few preteen and teenage girls, including the daughter of **Samuel Parris**, the village pastor, began throwing fits and witchcraft was suspected.

Soon the



CONJURED UP

Ann Noble as Reverend John Hale and Sandra McClain as Tituba in the 'Putnam' cast of Antaeus' 'Crucible.' Right, Hale's 'Modest Enquiry' into Witchcraft.

AN UPLIFTING STORY

A man walked into the ladies department and shyly walked up to the woman behind the counter and said, "I'd like to buy a bra for my wife." So the clerk replied, "What type of bra?"

"Type?" inquires the man. "There's more than one type?" The saleslady says, "Look around." And she showed him a sea of bras in every shape, size, color, and material imaginable. "But, actually, sir, even with all of this variety, there are really only four types of bras to choose from," she explained, "Catholic, Salvation Army, Presbyterian, and the Baptist. Which one would you prefer?"

Now totally befuddled, he asked about the differences. "It's all really quite simple," the Saleslady responded. "The Catholic type supports the masses, the Salvation Army type lifts the fallen, the Presbyterian type keeps them staunch and upright, and the Baptist type makes mountains out of molehills."

And now you know...

*"Folks seem to read The Bible a lot more as they get older. Of course, they're cramming for their finals."
~ Phil's Phunny Phacts*

IN THE NOOSE

In light of the recent rampage at **Santa Monica College**, home of radio station **KCRW**, where I spent many hours hosting fund-raising efforts years past, it struck me that I should once more turn my sights to gun control, especially since we still don't know how this troubled young man was able to amass his deadly arsenal.

According to several polls, 90% of Americans support better background checks for gun purchasers while the loud-mouthed **NRA** represents fewer than 2% of us. Are they holding a gun to the head of Congress, or are they packin' pockets instead of pistols?

And although according to an article by **Emily Alpert** in the *LA Times*, statistics reveal that gun violence has actually fallen significantly in the past two decades, "guns remain the most common murder weapon in the United States ... [we still have] a higher murder rate than most other developed countries... [and] more guns per capita than any other country, though not the highest in the world."

The article concludes, by the way, that it is assumed that increased incarcerations, reduced crack cocaine use, and

even reduced levels of lead in gasoline have contributed to the decline.

So get the lead out and lead the way to true reform!

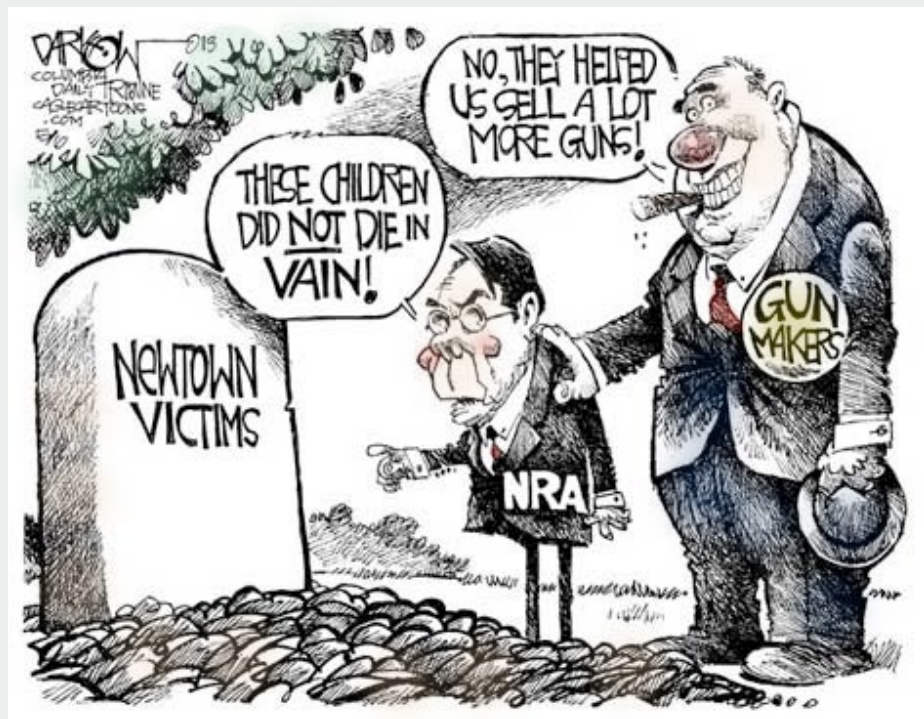
*"The accomplice to the crime of corruption is frequently our own indifference,"
~ Former Miss America **Bess Myerson***

AN ARTISTIC SOLUTION

NBC's **Katy Tur** reports that a school in Roxbury, Mass. had been plagued by bad test scores and violence; but principal **Andrew Bott** decided to fire the security guards and hire art teachers to help turn it around.

"A lot of people actually would say to me, 'You realize that **Orchard Gardens** is a career killer?' But now, three years later, the school is almost unrecognizable. Brightly colored paintings, essays of achievement, and motivational posters line the halls. The dance studio has been resurrected along with the band room and an artists' studio.

The end result? Orchard Gardens has one of the fastest student improvement rates statewide. And the students



– once described as loud and unruly – have found their focus; and although the school is far from perfect, Bott says they're "far from done, but definitely on the right path." No guns, more done...

"A cracked cell-phone screen has become a status symbol among teenage users." ~ Phil's Phunny Phacts

■ CONTINUED

THE PENIS POEM BY WILLIE NELSON

My nookie days are over,
My pilot light is out.
What used to be my sex appeal,
Is now my waterspout.
Time was when, on its own accord,
From my trousers it would spring.
But now I've got a full-time job,
To find the f***in' thing.
It used to be embarrassing,
The way it would behave.
For every single morning,
It would stand and watch me shave.
Now as old age approaches,
It sure gives me the blues.
To see it hang its little head,
And watch me tie my shoes!

*"You know what they say about people looking more and more like their pets? Well, it must be true because yesterday my neighbor yelled at me for sh*tting on his lawn." ~ Roger Miller*

ME AND MY BIG MOUTH

My Goshen bud, dentist **Rob Riddle**, writes: "Just read in latest **Planet Proctor** about the search for the biggest mouth. My dad (also a dentist) used to tell about a patient who bragged he could put a billiard ball in his mouth. Yes, he did have his teeth.

"One time after demonstrating his unique ability, his jaw muscles went into spasm and he could not get the ball out. In a desperate and growing panic, he consulted my father who with considerable difficulty managed to cut the ball apart with dental drills. I doubt if that trick was ever repeated."

And finally, **Paul "Off the Wall" Willson**, fellow Antaeon, longtime pal, loyal Planeteer, and Cheers alumnus, responded to my Phunny Phact, which stated that of the world's 7 billion people, 6 billion have mobile phones while only 4.5 billion have toilets, by writing:

"In a more innocent time, I used to say that more American homes had a television set than indoor plumbing. Which is why there was so much crap on TV."

*"Inspiration does exist, but it must find you working."
~ Pablo Picasso*

MOUR BRITISH HUMOUR

These are collected extracts of letters written by UK tenants: "It's the dog's mess that I find hard to swallow. I wish to complain that my father twisted his ankle very

badly when he put his foot in the hole in his back passage. Their 18-year-old son is continually banging his balls against my fence. I want some repairs done to my cooker as it has backfired and burnt my knob off.

"I wish to report that tiles are missing from the outside toilet roof. I think it was bad wind the other day that blew them off. Our lavatory seat is cracked, where do I stand? The toilet is blocked and we cannot bathe the children

until it is cleared. This is to let you know that our lavatory seat is broke and we can't get BBC2. My lavatory seat is broken in half and now is in three pieces. I am writing on behalf of my sink, which is coming away from the wall. Please send a man with the right tool to finish the job and satisfy my wife.

"Will you please send a man to look at my water? It is a funny colour and not fit to drink. I request permission to remove my drawers in the kitchen. Fifty percent of the walls are damp, 50% have crumbling plaster, and 50% are just plain filthy.



My wife tripped and fell on it yesterday and now she is pregnant. Our kitchen floor is damp. We have two children and would like a third, so please send someone round to do something about it.

"I want to complain about the farmer across the road.



UNINTENTIONAL SIGNS OF HUMOUR
British road signs, including a likely spot for Willie's serenade to his Willy.



■ **CONTINUED**

Every morning at 6 a.m. his cock wakes me up and it's now getting too much for me. The nextdoor neighbour has got this huge tool that vibrates the whole house, and I just can't take it anymore. The man next door has a large erection in the back garden, which is unsightly and dangerous. I am a single woman living in a downstairs flat and would you please do something about the noise made by the man on top of me every night?

"My bush is really overgrown. I have had the clerk of works down on the floor six times but I still have no satisfaction. The front and my back passage have fungus growing in it."

*"Travel offers the opportunity to find out who else one is."
~ Rebecca Solnit*

THIS JUST ON

According to the **Hollywood Huckster**, just outside an Indian reservation in a remote part of Arizona a lovely woman's car broke down. Fortunately, a Native American on horseback came along and offered her a ride to a nearby town. She climbed up behind him and off they rode.

The ride was uneventful, except that every few minutes the Indian would let out a "Y-e-e-e-h-a-a-a!" so loud that it echoed from the surrounding canyons. When they arrived in town, he let her off at the local service station. He yelled one final "Y-e-e-e-h-a-a-a!" and he rode off.

"What did you do to get that Indian so excited?" asked the attendant. "Nothing," the Huckster's wife said. "I merely sat behind him on the horse, put my arms around his waist, and held onto the saddle horn so I wouldn't fall off."

"Lady," the attendant said, "Indians don't use saddles."

*"For an Amish woman to be satisfied, she needs five Mennonite."
~ Phil's Phunny Phaccts*



WE GO ON

Several notable folks showed up in the *LA Times* obituaries this week, all of whom I knew or performed

with, but eerily, early this morning, when I let the cats out to kill things, I suddenly thought about the "Twilight Zone" episode where a beautiful woman had plastic surgery to become

ugly like the rest of her race. And then when the paper arrived, I read that **Maxine Stuart**, who acted in that very episode, had died.

And what's more. I had worked with her in 1962 in my first recurring TV role fresh out of Yale, as bad boy **Julie Kurtz** in "The Edge of Night." Did she remember me, or did I remember her?



We also lost the great and unique **Jean Stapleton** with whom I appeared on "All in the Family" as Archie's nephew, **Wendell Hornsby**, in an episode entitled, "**The Insurance is Cancelled**" (left). She



had a great career and will be long remembered.

And we also said goodbye to restauranter **Harry Lewis** (right), a former successful actor who with his brand-new girlfriend **Marilyn Lewis**, founded the Hamburger Hamlet franchise and ultimately the **Kate Mantelini** restaurant where we enjoyed his company for years and still patronize every time we go to a Writers Guild screening down the street on Doheny.



You died but we still dine. *Bon Voyage et Bon Appétit!* We love you.

"Here let him lie where savage indignation can lacerate his heart no longer." ~ Jonathan Swift

"Without deviations from the norm, progress is not possible." ~ Frank Zappa



TAKE A DEEP BREATH
You can now inhale – and exhale
– in the state of Washington.



And congrats and sympathies to KRISTIN & GEOFF for my granddaughter AUDRE's passage into the Terrible Twos ...



AUDRE'S BIRTH ANNIVERSARY
Every good party ends in the hot tub, top, with, left to right, Audre, Bowen, Charlie and Walker; the birthday girl, center; and, left, with Grand Dude and Dad Geoff.

THIS JUST IN

Washington State passed two laws on the same day legalizing gay marriage and marijuana. This makes perfect Biblical sense because Leviticus 20:13 says: "If a man lies with another man they should be stoned."

The verse just hadn't been correctly interpreted before now.

"It's OK to date a nun once in a while; just don't get in the habit." ~ Phil's Phunny Phacts

CONTRIBUTING

Joan Allemand, Robert Riddle, Frank Dwyer, Rick Waldron, Roger Olson, Daniel Brenton, H. Lee Kagan, Victor Kopcewich, Keith Knebble, Harry Lewis, Richard Dale Carlson, Kenneth Wilhite Jr., Ivan Berger,

Charles Mayer, and David Garber. And congratulations to our dear friend Wayne Newitt, whose son Ryan finally received an artificial heart! (In photo at left.)

"I'm motivated by avarice, by greed. I'm not motivated by art, for God's sake. If I worried about those things, I'd be a raving maniac."
~ Sci-Fi writer Jack Vance



"All religions are cults that succeeded."
~ Paul "The Happy Wanderer" Ross

PLANETCLICK

ORBITING

- DAZE
- МИШКА
- DON'T MIND ME
- DRAGON
- SOMEWHERE
- PASTBLAST
- SAMESIES
- MARSRAT
- FUTURENOW
- MARSLIZ
- BRIT GREED
- HI ODDNESS
- NAILS IT

CLICK THE WORD TO GO TO THE SITE

"Love your neighbor as yourself; but don't take down the fence." ~ Carl Sandburg

BEARWHIZ BEER <http://www.eagletshirts.com>

FUNNY TIMES: <http://www.funnytimes.com>

FST: <http://www.FiresignTheatre.com>

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