

# Planet Plus

"The longer I live, the more convinced am I that this planet is used by other planets as a lunatic asylum." ~ G.B. Shaw



## THE HAPPY BIRTHDAY CELEBRANTS

From left: Rob, Melinda, Mr X, Jaime, Phyllis, Phil, Sarah, Leonard and Alice

## Happy Birthday, Dear Melinda

Yes, Planeteers, my darling child bride, **Melinda Peterson**, is now six months younger than **Billy Joel** (more or less). To surprise her, I invited some of our beloved (and funny) friends to a "secret" dinner at Il Segreto on Beverly Glen Circle. I would have thrown a larger bash here at home, but it is in disarray due to extensive (expensive?) upgrading by my pal, and fellow ex-VO partner, **Billy Bowles** of Beachwood

Builders, and then I heard there's a sort of a plague going on, so – maybe next year!

But fear not (more or less), because we are planning more get-togethers with friends (and you know who you are, more or less) as the year goes on, when hopefully we will all feel a little safer about venturing out.

So, here is a picture of the happy party, (and a total stranger), after a most satisfying meal... And be assured, we love you all (more or less).

Age 60 might be the new 40, but 9:00 pm is the new midnight. ~ Phil's Phunny Phacts

## At a loss

**A**S CHESTER LEFT A POTTERY CLASS, HE GAVE himself a TSA personal pat down. He was looking for his keys; but they were not in his pockets! Suddenly he realized that he must have left them in the car.



Frantically, he headed for the parking lot. Chester's wife, Sally, had scolded him many times for leaving the keys in the ignition. Chester's theory is that the ignition is the best place not to lose them. Sally's theory is that the car will be stolen.

As Chester burst through the doors, he came to a terrifying conclusion: Sally's theory was right. The parking lot was empty! He immediately called the police and reported the theft of the car. Then Chester made the most difficult call of all.

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

"Honey," he stammered (he always calls her "honey" in times like these), "I left my keys in the car, and it's been stolen." There was a pregnant pause, and then he heard Sally's voice.

"Chester!" she barked, "I dropped you off!"

Now it was his time to be silent. Embarrassed, he said, "Well, come and get me."

"I will!" Sally retorted, "Just as soon as I convince this cop to take off the handcuffs!"

*Have you noticed that our system of checks and balances has been usurped by billionaires with checks and big balances?  
~ Phil's Phunny Phacts (more or less)*

## Broadway 'Bound'

**T**HIS REALITY CHECK FROM THE ESTEEMED character actor **Dakin Matthews**, a founder of our beloved **Antaeus Theatre Company**:

"So, to keep you up to date on what it's like to restart theatre in the latter end of a pandemic. We moved into the theatre on Sunday. It's a new theatre for most of us; we were across the street in the Brooks Atkinson for the original Broadway run of

■ **CONTINUED**

## New tricks for old dogs

1. Name the one sport in which neither the spectators nor the participants know the score or the leader until the contest ends.
  2. What famous North American landmark is constantly moving backward?
  3. Of all vegetables, only two can live to produce on their own for several growing seasons. All other vegetables must be replanted every year. What are the only two perennial vegetables?
  4. What fruit has its seeds on the outside?
  5. In many liquor stores, you can buy pear brandy, with a real pear inside the bottle. How did the pear get there?
  6. Only three words in standard English begin with the letters 'dw' and they are all common words. Name two of them.
  7. There are 14 punctuation marks in English grammar. Can you name at least half of them?
  8. Name the only vegetable or fruit that is never sold frozen, canned, processed, cooked, or in any other form except fresh.
  9. Name 6 or more things that you can wear on your feet beginning with the letter 'S.'
- 
1. Boxing.
  2. Niagara Falls. The rim is worn down about two and a half feet each year because of the millions of gallons of water that rush over it every minute.
  3. Asparagus and rhubarb.
  4. Strawberry.
  5. The bottles are placed over pear buds when they are small and are wired in place on the tree. When the pears are ripe, they are snipped off.
  6. Three English words beginning with dw: Dwarf, dwell and dwindle.
  7. Period, comma, colon, semicolon, dash, hyphen, apostrophe, question mark, quotation mark, brackets, parenthesis, braces, ellipses and -- exclamation point!!
  8. Lettuce.
  9. Shoes, socks, sandals, sneakers, slippers, skis, skates, snowshoes

*Volunteers don't get paid not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless.*

*~ Sherry Anderson*

**Waitress.** We closed down our studio rehearsals at New 42nd Street on Friday afternoon with a final run-through; then the entire company spent six hours on Saturday in a training session, not about the pandemic, but learning about the other kind of ‘safety’ that many companies are concerned with these days: company ‘core values’ and diversity and inclusion and dealing with bias, harassment, and micro-aggressions.

“The workshop involved discussion, lectures, videos, role-playing, self-testing, and written commitments to activism and allyship. This

was a workshop instituted not by the Waitress Company itself, but by the producing organization NAMCO, and it was facilitated by two outside experts.

“On Sunday, we were called to the Barrymore Theatre for our first tech at 1 pm, where we were met at the door by our Covid Safety Manager, who re-checked our awareness of the protocols of the new space. There was no code needed for entry (as there had been at the rehearsal studio); but at the same time, no one was allowed through the stage door without proof of vaccination and a recent Covid test. Also at the stage door were hand sanitizers, a collection of masks, as well as a few boxes of quick tests for those who had not recently self-tested; and there were similar stations at most of the landings in the “dressing room tower.” (For those unfamiliar with Broadway theatres, dressing rooms are usually stacked atop one another up to five stories high, with very few dressing rooms—often only one—on the ground floor.)

“The new protocols were that masks must be worn at all times, by all personnel, with only two exceptions, both for actors -- when they were in their dressing rooms and when they were in “performance mode.” And that meant when you were either actually performing or rehearsing or waiting in the wings. Otherwise, full masks were required in all hallways, staircases, bathrooms, and auxiliary rooms throughout the theatre.

“First activity, as is typical, is a meet-and-greet of everyone involved in the production. This was done onstage with

everyone fully masked, so it will take some time to learn the names of everyone involved (70-80 people) when all we could see was eyes and hair. These are the people on whom not just the smooth success of the show will depend, but also the continued health of the entire company. And

every one of them, except the “actors in performance mode” will be masked the entire time.

“This was followed by a safety tour of the backstage area --always amazingly small and cramped in Broadway theatres, and



#### A MOVABLE FEAT

Sara Bareilles and Dakin Matthews  
back on Broadway in ‘Waitress.’

(© Jeremy Daniel)

usually involving multiple steep

stairs and infrequent and tiny bathrooms, and almost always no “green room,” and unless you’re at Lincoln Center, don’t expect anything like comfort or luxury backstage on Broadway.

“Our safety tour was followed by a welcome from the resident staff of the theatre itself (run by the Shubert Organization), and the now traditional presentation on its emergency procedures, including “active shooter drills.”

Then after a break, the actual tech began, and as usual, the first cue took over an hour-and-a-half. (I believe that’s actually the second rule of tech, first rule being “sit when you can.”) We met the usual roadblocks of transferring a show from one theatre to another: the sets didn’t quite fit that way they did before, and now without deck automation, everything had to be hand-moved by a combination of actors and stagehands; and many marks had to be re-set to accommodate the disparity of stage and set sizes and transitions re-run. And communicating all the changes by masked stage managers to masked stagehands did not exactly speed up the process.

“I was released early (they seem to be treating me gently, like an 80-year-old man with a cane, which I am), but I doubt they even got 15 minutes into the first act in the first five hours. Ah, tech...”

To which I add, “What? Give up show business?”

■ CONTINUED

"Singing is a way of remembering to breathe."  
~ Shunryu Suzuki Roshi

## RIP Jackie and Markie

### Say what?

Fellow voice artist **Gar Roberts** writes –

"Okay: Old guy question: I really need someone to explain to me the following phrase I found on a casting site:

*"Male Narrator (Voiceover): Male, Gender Nonconforming, Non-Binary. Voice styles, Approachable, Corporate, Genuine."*

"Here's the question," he continues, "I can be approachable, corporate, and genuine; but how is one gender-nonconforming and non-binary as a voice? I am seeing things like this frequently and am seriously wondering if there is some coding system I am missing here. Old guy, like I said.

"Thanks in advance."

*"When everyone is somebody, then no one's anybody."*  
~ W.S. Gilbert

### Pull up, Bob!

More palindromes, thanks to **Carole Peterson** –

**ABLE WAS I ERE I SAW ELBA** – Napoleon in exile

**I PREFER PI** - Einstein's favorite dessert

**A MAN, A PLAN, A CANAL: PANAMA** – Route, route, route

**A DOG, A PAN, A PAGODA** – Sightseeing in Japan

**FEEBLE TOM'S MOTEL BEEF** – they didn't keep the light on for him

**PULL UP, BOB, PULL UP!** – Too late

**RENO LONER** - A gambler without Lady Luck

**STEP ON NO PETS** – How not to fall down

*"All is flux, nothing is stationary."*  
~ Heraclitus

**Y**ACOV MOSHE HAKOHEN MAZA WAS the son of a rabbi. His three brothers became rabbis, and so did he, with congregations in Pennsylvania and North Carolina. But comedy eventually proved to be a more persistent calling than God, so God gave us **Jackie Mason** and took him back at the age of 93.



"A person has to feel emotionally barren or empty or frustrated in order to become a comedian," he affirmed. "You're searching for something and you're willing to pay a high price to get that attention."

I paid a fair price to see him in **The World According to Me** and laughed my ass off; and I'm not even Jewish, I'm Amish! A longtime friend said that Mason had a Talmudic outlook on life: "Whatever you would say to him, he would start an argument with you."

And then, sparkling **Markie Post**, best known as the public defender in the long-running 1980s sitcom "Night Court," was conquered by cancer at 70; and now joins fellow co-stars like **Harry Anderson**, who died at 65 in 2018, and **Charles Robinson**, who died recently at 75.

She had a long and fascinating career, both behind and in front of the camera, but I had the distinct joy of working with her in several "Night Court" shows over the years, and like the lecherous character played by **John Larroquette**, I had a crush on her, too.

NBC is currently developing a sequel to the series, but Heaven beat them to it.

*"On this earth, there are pestilence and victims... one must refuse to be on the side of pestilence."*  
~ Albert Camus



#### MASON AND POST

Top, Jackie Mason. Bottom, the cast of NBS's 'Night Court,' clockwise from top left: Richard Moll, Harry Anderson, Charlie Robinson, Marsha Warfield, Markie Post, and John Larroquette

## Debs in New York

**SUE ZIZZA AND DAVID SHINN** wrote that their production of *Debs in Canton* is a finalist in this year's New York Festivals Radio Awards in October at NAB. Sue recently accepted the Norman Corwin Award from NATF and says "I was delighted to be able to include *Debs in Canton* on my submission and presentation reels. Working with a great cast makes directing a real joy - so thanks again to all of you."

And thank you Sue and David at SueMedia from me and Melinda.

"It's astonishing how much you can accomplish... if you just don't care who gets the credit!"  
~ George C. Marshall

## It's really bad

**WE NEVER GOT A CAST AND CREW SCREENING** or a Wrap Party for the Trump-tell-all movie, *Bad President*, but now it will be part of the Burbank International Film Festival, thanks to our director, writer and producer **Param Gil**.

On September 11, at the Burbank AMC 16 Theatres, 125 E. Palm Ave. Burbank, join us at 6:30 pm for the red carpet reception, and for the 7:30 World Premier, with a party to follow. Come see **Stormy Daniels, Jeff Rector** (as you know who) and me, among others!

Tickets are only \$20 and include the Premier Screening and After-Party! **TICKETS | HERE'S A TASTE**

"Telling the truth about the past, helps cause justice in the present"  
~ James Loewen, 'Lies My Teacher Told Me'

## Fake radio, really?

**YES, AT LAST, DAVID KOFF'S HILARIOUS LIVE** audio improv group is back in action! And Melinda and I will be heading up to Portland, OR to help them deconstruct the Lux Radio Theatre's 1954 broadcast of *The Day the Earth Stood Still* at 8 pm, Saturday, September 18 in the Alberta Abbey theater. Tickets are **HERE**. And by the way, SciFi fans, GORT the robot,

# PLANETCLICK

View

WANK  
ZEN WHAT  
WELL WELLES  
LIES  
OUR ED

was played by **Lock Marshall**, who was actually an usher at Grauman's Chinese Theatre and stood 7' 7" tall!!  
KLAATU BARADA NIKTO

"An uncanny sense of a time warp gone horribly right... A palpable sense of infectious goofiness... A must-see!  
~ The LA Weekly

## Sexy Paul

**CHECK OUT THE LATEST** episode of **PHIL AND TED'S SEXY BOOMER SHOW**. If

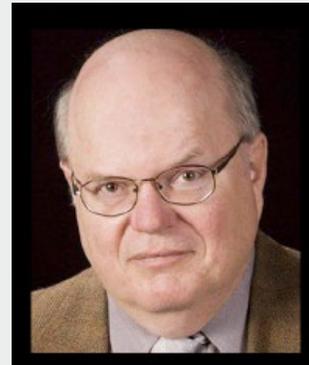
you've enjoyed *Office Space*, *The Larry Sanders Show*, *Cheers* and countless other TV shows and movies, **Paul Willson** (right) has made you laugh...a lot. His on-screen characters are deadpan hilarious. Paul's fast-draw talent comes from groundbreaking work in political comedy improvisation groups in the wild days of 1960's San Francisco, where he grew up.

It's also where Paul witnessed the birth of the counter-culture movement and became politically radicalized. Paul describes an amazing San Francisco that is unrecognizable today. He remains politically astute about today's societal discord and offers a no-holds-barred approach to address it.

Press "play" now for some laughs and ear-opening conversation. Please help make **Phil and Ted's Sexy Boomer Show** a success by spreading the joy and copying and sharing this link: <https://sexyboomershow.com>

"Sure, I posed that way. I needed the money. And it's not quite true I had nothing on - the radio was on."

~ Marilyn Monroe



## Crew

**ALL CREDITED ABOVE, PLUS RICHARD FISH, Sandy Goldfarb, Spider Robinson, Nick Oliva** and special thanks to Roving Genius **Andrew Hollis** for solving our technical challenges, big and small!

"I restore myself when I'm alone. A career is born in public — talent in privacy."

~ Norma Jeanne Mortinson

"A multitude of words is no proof of a prudent mind." ~ Thales of Miletus

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