



# MEET LYNN, GRUNT & COMPANY

September 20 • 7:30pm

(Read all about it on page 1.)



CARROLLWOOD  
CULTURAL CENTER

4537 Lowell Rd., Tampa, FL 33618

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## ■ Message from the Editor

### Summer's a Variety Show

Welcome to the summer! Many stories in this issue profile the entertainment coming to the Center during our swelter months. The shows reflect the diversity of our communities and your interests. We have something for everyone. If you're looking for something a little different, we have that for you too. *HAIRSPRAY The Broadway Musical* performed by our MAS community theatre. *G2K Once Upon a Mattress* performed by Broadway Bound kids. An award-winning female comic ventriloquist. A nationally known alt-country band. An Elvis tribute concert. Plus more comic drama, children's theatre, jazz and art events. Visit us at [CarrollwoodCenter.org](http://CarrollwoodCenter.org) then come and get it. It's summer and it's hot, and the Center has very cool performances waiting for you.

**Evelyn Bless**

[evelyn.bless@carrollwoodcenter.org](mailto:evelyn.bless@carrollwoodcenter.org)



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# CENTERPIECES

CARROLLWOOD CULTURAL CENTER • Summer 2012 • Vol. 5 No. 3

## ■ Comedy + Ventriloquism = Lynn Trefzger

Almost everyone remembers playing with action figures, stuffed animals or dolls as a child, and inventing different voices for them. Children naturally learn and make sense of the world this way. In the process, they entertain themselves for hours on end. What's far less common, however, is for a child to combine the play with real ventriloquism, creating the illusion that a puppet is alive and talking. Lynn Trefzger, a comedy ventriloquist for 35 years, says she found her calling this way: it was "a childhood hobby that got out of hand."

Lynn grew up east of Cleveland, Ohio, in a family of five brothers and two sisters. She was a shy child, but admired famous ventriloquist Jay Johnson, as well as Edgar Bergen and Shari Lewis. One Christmas, when she was nine years old, Lynn's parents gave her a ventriloquist dummy she'd shown them in a Sears catalog. With the wooden boy dummy, called Simon Says, Lynn felt comfortable expressing herself. People took their attention off her, a little strawberry blonde with freckles, and focused on her sidekick instead.

This inspired Lynn to borrow books from the library that helped her master the skill of talking without moving her lips. She practiced on her own and

performed for her family, saying smart-aleck things that she wouldn't normally get away with. "I found that I had a sense of humor," Lynn says. Her parents reacted with laughter and encouragement, but always said to each other, "she'll put the dummy down one day." She never has. *(continued on page 4)*

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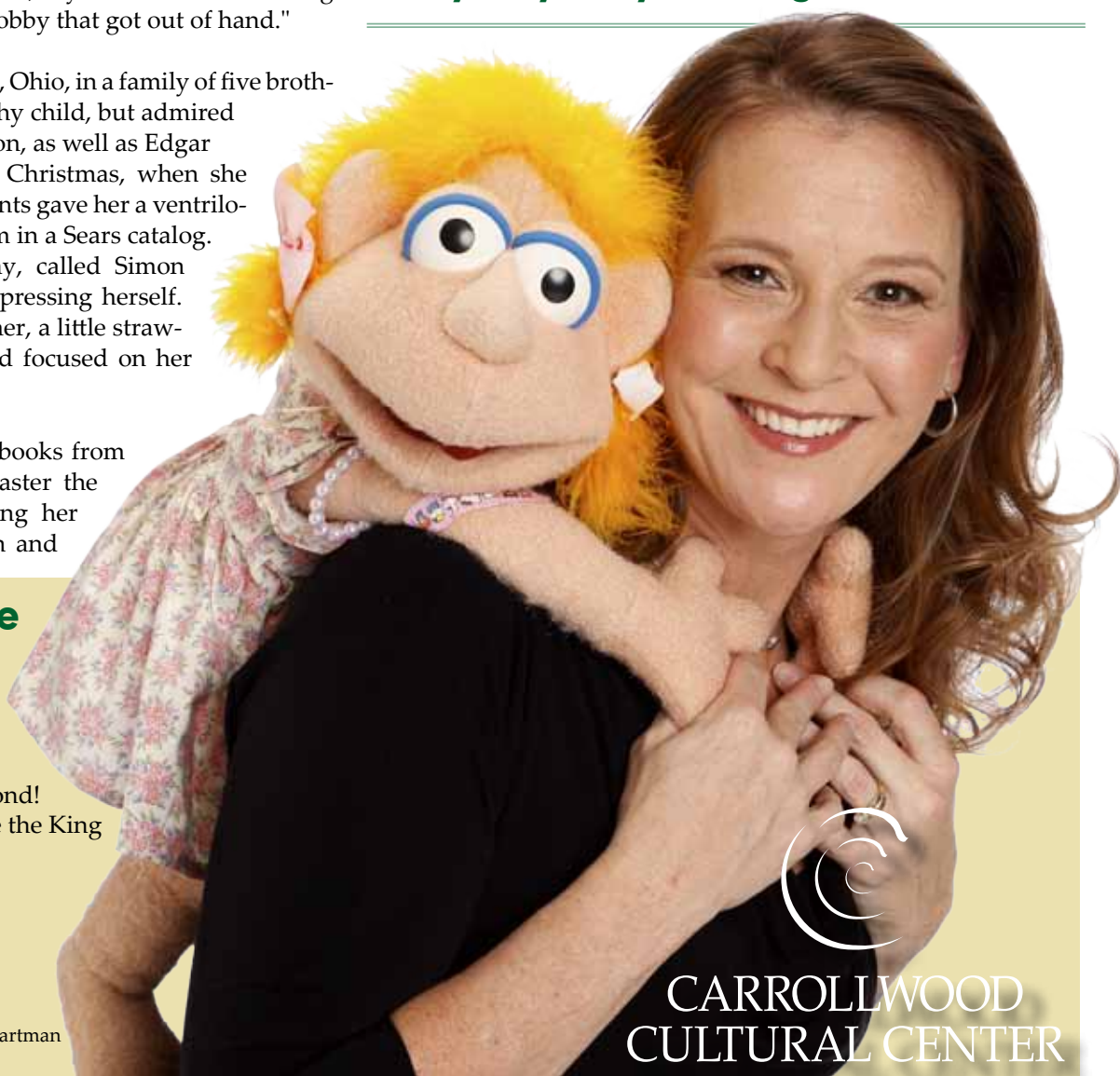
**"The greatest compliment I get from people is that my show is appropriate for all ages, but has so many things for everybody." - Lynn Trefzger**

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- Get a Load of This!
- Welcome to our Intern

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## ■ Centerpieces

Official Newsletter of the Carrollwood Cultural Center  
Summer 2012 • Vol. 5, Issue 3

*Centerpieces* reports quarterly on activities, people and issues associated with the Carrollwood Cultural Center. Letters to the editor and reader submissions are welcome. Please email the editor at [centerpieces@carrollwoodcenter.org](mailto:centerpieces@carrollwoodcenter.org) or mail to *Centerpieces*, Carrollwood Cultural Center, 4537 Lowell Road, Tampa, FL 33618. Include your name, address, phone number and the date. *Centerpieces* may edit your submission or withhold publication.

*Centerpieces* is produced by volunteers of the Carrollwood Cultural Center. New staff members are welcome.

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Thank you to all of the volunteers who contribute to the success of the Center. We couldn't do it without you!

## ■ Center Mission

Our mission is to provide cultural and educational programs and events to our region that enhance learning, creativity, and a sense of community across groups and generations.



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## ■ Get a Load of This! Have Gun, Will Travel

When Have Gun, Will Travel rocked The Ritz this year for WMNF radio's Tropical Heatwave, fans packed the main room from wall to wall and stood shoulder-to-shoulder by the stage. Women danced esstastically as Matt Burke, the alt-country band's lead singer and songwriter, belted out many of their hits, like "Blessing and a Curse," "Kerosene and Candlelight" and "Sons and Daughters of the Gilded Age." Meanwhile, men on either side of me sang along to every word.

"I live in Bradenton," the man to my right said, "so I get out to see the Burke brothers play around town all the time when they're not on tour."

Matt and his younger brother Danny, who plays stand-up bass, are original members of Have Gun, Will Travel, along with their drummer JP Beaubien. The fourth man behind the Gun is Scott Anderson, who joined as lead and lap steel guitarist in 2009. Scott is originally from Woodstock, Georgia, but the other three are natives of Bradenton, where they played in punk bands as teenagers and formed an indie-rock trio called The Chase Theory in 1996.

After about 10 years of touring with the trio and recording more than 19 songs, Matt noticed his musical tastes shifting to include more folk artists, like Bob Dylan, Woody Guthrie, Johnny Cash and Son Volt. He still loved the bands he'd grown up listening to, such as Radiohead, Nirvana and The Pixies, and he continued playing gigs and rehearsing with The Chase Theory. But in secret, Matt took on a side project that would later evolve into Have Gun, Will Travel.

His solo experiment included teaching himself to play the harmonica and the banjo with no pick. He wrote new songs and recorded them on a seven-track EP doing all the instrumentation himself. Eventually, Matt asked Danny and JP to join in. They officially launched the band in 2006.

Ever since, they've been on their way up—so far up that Richard Haerther, the Center's Artistic Director, doesn't know if a third Blessing & A Curse Festival will happen next year. "We

may not be able to afford them!" he said with a smile.

The band's first feature album, *Casting Shadows Tall As Giants*, came out in 2008 and was featured on National Public Radio. That year, it was one of the five most-played albums on WMNF and snagged the *Creative Loafing* Staff Pick for Local CD of the Year in their Best of the Bay Awards.

In 2009, the song "Blessing and A Curse" spent two months on the CMJ Top 200 college charts and appeared on every episode of PBS's *Roadtrip Nation*. Three years later, "Blessing and A Curse" remains

a signature song that keeps bringing forth blessings to the band. Chevrolet Motors used the song in a 2011 Chevy Traverse commercial, and this April it was featured in an episode of *The Good Housewife*.

Matt's evocative songwriting has held constant in the band's two new albums, *Postcards from the Friendly City* and *Mergers and Acquisitions*. "The Friendly City" is a nickname

for Bradenton, and many songs on that album depict life there, with themes of family and recollections of youth. *Mergers and Acquisitions* takes another direction, focusing on the band's cross-country journeys.

All four members of Have Gun, Will Travel have young children now, and Matt says it's difficult for them to be away from their families when they tour.

To check out more of the band's music, visit their website at [www.hgwtmusic.com](http://www.hgwtmusic.com). You can hear some of their newest songs at the Center's 2nd Annual Blessing & A Curse Festival on August 18, where they'll be joined by jam-bluegrass, ukelele funk band The Applebutter Express and Dean Johanesen.

Marianne Galaris

## ■ Welcome to our Intern

Marianne Galaris, a graduating senior from The University of Tampa, is *Centerpieces'* new intern. Marianne has participated in workshops in music, writing, dance, visual arts and drama since she was a child, and enjoys writing articles about artists and events. An award winning fiction writer, she also writes and performs her own songs, accompanying herself on guitar. We are proud to have her on the *Centerpieces* team.

## Broadway Bound (continued from page 7)

Senior troupe member Brianna Wyler sees herself in commercials, plays or maybe as a concert pianist in ten years. She played the mayor's daughter Gracie in *The Music Man*.

This cadre of talented, determined youngsters is mentored and trained by the best Tampa has to offer.

Teil Rey, choreographer and dance instructor, has been with the group since its inception a little more than four years ago. She has been a professional actor and dancer since she was six. She helped run the Frank Rey Ballet companies with her father. Teil also teaches tap and ballet at the Center.

Craig Hartfield is the newest instructor and acting coach. He's been acting and singing from the time he was six all the way through college. He currently has his own show, *Broadway By the Numbers*. When I attended the recent Saturday lessons, Craig was coaching the aspiring performers on stage directions and presentation.

Broadway Bound has exceptional instructors, but the glue that holds it all together is Mary Jo Hahn, the musical director and vocal coach. (She also directs the Community Chorus.)

"Anyone can play the piano," says Teil, "But Mary Jo knows how to play for dancers and singers. I wouldn't be here if it weren't for being able to work with Mary Jo." The children also say they love the warmups and singing lessons. Mary Jo was profiled last month in *Centerpieces*.

## About Broadway Bound

The young performers are all excited about the summer camp,

rehearsals and performance of G2K (*Getting to Know*) *Once upon a Mattress*. The Center's Broadway Bound youth camp, six weeks of lessons and rehearsals, began right after school let out in June. The troupe will perform G2K *Once upon a Mattress* July 28 and 29.

Broadway Bound, which has year-round lessons as well as the summer camp, is audition-only. Ten-year-old Trinty Morgan says she had to sing "Happy Birthday" (She was asked, "Can you carry a tune?"), perform a dance she created herself, and submit a letter of recommendation from a trusted teacher who attested to her discipline, commitment and ability to take direction.

And the result? Kids grow in self-confidence, skills and focus. They have a unique, unforgettable experience of creating theatre together. Some also discover a life-long passion—they know they are bound for Broadway and beyond. That's what Broadway Bound is all about. *Pat Keeley*



**Music by:** Mary Rodgers

**Lyrics by:** Marshall Barer

**Book by:** Jay Thompson,  
Dean Fuller,  
Marshall Barer

**Adaptation by:** Tom Briggs

**Original Orchestrations by:**

Hershy Kay,  
Arthur Beck and  
Carroll Huxley

**Musical Preparation and  
Additional Orchestrations by**

John Higgins  
**G2K...Collection of  
Musical Adaptations Edited by:**  
Tom Briggs and Bruce Pomahac

G2K...ONCE UPON A MATTRESS  
is presented through special  
arrangement with R&H Theatricals:  
[www.rnh.com](http://www.rnh.com).

## ■ Homegrown Trivia (part II)

Here's the second installment of our quizzes on little-known local figures and events that make us all proud.

**Name a famous "homegrown" Tampa baseball pitcher.**

Dwight Gooden

**He was born in Ybor City to a cigar factory worker, played catcher in the Major League, managed Major League teams, and was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame. Tampa has named a park after him. Who is he?**

Alfonso Ramon "Al" Lopez (Al Lopez Park)

**He was born in Ybor City and became Muhammed Ali's personal physician and corner man. He is also a well-known artist and writer; his designs are on the sidewalks of Ybor's Central Avenue. Who is he?**

Dr. Ferdie Pacheco.

**His films include *Garlic is as Good as Ten Mothers*, *In Heaven There Is No Beer?*, *Burden of Dreams*, *The Blues Accordin' to Lightnin' Hopkins*. He was born in Tampa. Who is he?**

Les Blank, founder of Flower Films.

**Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young (CSNY) is a folk rock supergroup. Which one of them hails from Tampa?**

Stephen Stills, acoustic guitarist. He was listed in *Rolling Stone* Magazine as one of the 100 Greatest Guitarists of All Time.

**Name two science fiction films that were shot in the general Tampa area.**

*Cocoon* (1985) and *Edward Scissorhands* (1990). *Cocoon* was filmed in St. Petersburg. *Scissorhands* was filmed in Lakeland and Pasco County.

**Who is KJ-52?**

A: Jonah Kirsten Sorrentino, a Christian Hip Hop artist from Tampa.  
*Janet Bucknor*



# hairspray



The story of *Hairspray* takes place in 1960s Baltimore—a turning point in the civil rights movement. Change is in the air! Loveable plus-size heroine, Tracy Turnblad, has a passion for dancing, and, thanks in part to her interracial friendships, wins a spot on the local TV dance program, "The Corny Collins Show." Overnight she finds herself transformed from outsider to teen celebrity. The "Integration Now" movement paints the background of the show as Tracy seeks to unify the until-now segregated dance shows.

Indeed integration and diversity, or "looking beyond what society tells you" as the director puts it, are pillars of the show... themes that are not untimely today, with public questioning of everything from gay rights to illegal immigration.

In preparing the cast for their roles, Domenic charged them with making it personal and current, not just bringing back the civil rights movement of the 1960s, which is now somewhat distant. He said to the cast, "What do you feel you bring to the table? How is this meaningful to you? Bring it all together so that every step, word, note means something." He said there was a huge difference when they performed with this mindset. "We all got goosebumps."



## ■ HAIRSPRAY, Looking Good!

HAIRSPRAY *The Broadway Musical* is coming to the Center July 13-22 with an injection of new blood and a cast that takes its themes personally. The Center's own MAS Community Theatre's summer musical production introduces director Domenic Bisesti and a cast of mostly newcomers bopping and crooning to the Broadway play that resurged in popularity with the 2007 movie remake starring John Travolta.

Walking into a rehearsal, I was delighted by the energy and enthusiasm that this charismatic director and cast exude—it is palpable. Domenic comments that of the 85 or so people who came to auditions—a record turnout for the Center—he could've cast 70 of them based on the talent! The cast is about 30, which at times is still a challenge for him given the modest size of our stage and the grandiose dance scenes central to the show. Yet the smallish space is also an advantage; Domenic points out that the coziness of the theater lends a special intimacy and opportunity. "We can push harder on the more touching moments," he commented.

A dancer himself, Domenic has already directed and choreographed numerous shows in his young career, mostly in the Tampa area but also with some experiences in New York, L.A. and on cruise ships. He is focused, articulate and concerned with the depth and creative "inventiveness" of the work at hand; his intense excitement is contagious.

As director and choreographer, he has staged performances ranging from high school musicals to full-scale shows like *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* at American Stage in the Park and *Age of Aquarius* at Largo Cultural Center. He also teaches jazz and runs the competition jazz team at Dance Evolutions in Tarpon Springs. And...he has his own production company. "My life is the arts" he says.

Kendra Langlie

**Book by:** Mark O'Donnell and Thomas Meehan • **Music by:** Marc Shaiman • **Lyrics by:** Scott Wittman and Marc Shaiman  
**Orchestrations by:** Harold Wheeler • **Arrangements by:** Marc Shaiman  
Based on the New Line Cinema film written and directed by John Waters.

HAIRSPRAY is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. 421 West 54th Street, New York, NY 10019 • Phone: 212-541-4684 Fax: 212-397-4684 • [www.MTIShows.com](http://www.MTIShows.com)

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A friend of her parents who worked as a square dance caller offered Lynn her first gig. "He'd seen me play around with it when I was 10 and said, 'why don't you make up an act and come perform during intermission?'" From then on, she did shows at local dance clubs, schools, hospitals and birthday parties. At age 12, she attended her first ConVENTion in Fort Mitchell, Kentucky, which is also home to Vent Haven, the world's only museum dedicated to the art of ventriloquism. ("Vent" is the trade word for ventriloquist.) There she met the famous Jimmy Nelson, who made some of the earliest instructional recordings on ventriloquy technique. She has remained in touch with Nelson, who currently lives in Florida. "I've known Jimmy for years, and he's a wonderful man," Lynn says. "He's in his 75th year in show business now, and has always been very encouraging."

Lynn continued performing through grade school and high school, and was in college when agents first contacted her. They started booking her to perform on cruise ships and for college engagements, so at age 20, she planned to take a year off from school. "But then things took off," Lynn says, laughing, "and I've never had a real job."

Instead she got to see Europe and other parts of the world with young eyes, something she might not have been able to do in another vocation.

Now, after more than 20 years of performing professionally and numerous entertainer awards, Lynn still enjoys her job of making people laugh with puppets. Her parents, husband and five kids are all very supportive when she goes on tour to colleges, nightclubs, performing arts centers and cruise ships with her goofy, off-the-wall characters.

This is not to say, however, that success didn't come with its challenges. About a decade ago, many considered comedy "vents" to be unhip, in part because electronic media allowed voices to be easily projected from anywhere.

According to Taylor Mason, fellow vent and author of *A Complete Idiot's Guide to Ventriloquism*, Lynn was perhaps the only woman in the U.S., besides those who worked in specialty shows and the Christian circuit, who persevered at that time. She made a name for herself and her craft in casinos, colleges and clubs. "We owe her a tip of the hat," he said in an interview with VentriloquistCentral.com this year, putting Lynn in a category with nationally-known artists Jeff Dunham, Terry Fator, Ronn Lucas, Jay Johnson, David Strassman, and Willie Tyler. "This is the golden age of vent if you consider how many people today work and make a living doing it." Mason observed that vent's popularity now is very similar to vaudeville in the 1900s, when variety shows flourished.

When I told Lynn what Mason said about her, she seemed tickled that he gave her "a shout out." She mentioned that Johnson recently won a Tony for his show *The Two and Only*, Fator won in the first year of *America's Got Talent*, and Dunham has reached superstardom, filling 20,000-seat venues. All this, she says, has helped ventriloquists become more popular, along with the availability of videos on the Internet. "But it's not vaudeville like it used to be," she jokes. "We were actually on the same level as mimes back then."

At 24, Lynn competed on the TV talent show *Star Search* and won several times. She was also on *America's Super Showcase* with Carrot Top, and has performed with Jeff Foxworthy, Ray Romano, The Smothers Brothers, Drew Carey and Faith Hill.





The first impersonator appeared in 1956, when Elvis was still building his reputation. A 16-year-old boy named Jim Smith would jump on stage and imitate Elvis. Smith lip-synched; he couldn't actually sing or play guitar.

Many impersonators during Elvis' lifetime emerged from small town talent competitions. A popular joke is that Elvis himself entered an Elvis look-alike contest at a local restaurant shortly before his death, and came in third place. After Elvis died in 1977, the impersonators went mainstream. People didn't want to let go.

Andy Kaufman, the late great comic genius, delivered the best-known comic impersonation. In the mid-1970s, Kaufman would break into full-blown Elvis mode during his routine. Elvis, who saw Kaufman's act, said the comic was his favorite impersonator.

## Why is Elvis painted on black velvet?

Right up there in the camp stratosphere with legions of bearded, bowlegged Elvises (or "Elvii") are the "velvet Elvis" paintings. These are images of Elvis on black, red, navy or dark purple velvet. Elvis wasn't the only velvet subject: John Wayne, Jesus and cowboys were also popular.

The King was the best known velvet due to timing and location. The genre became known in the U.S. during the late 1950s, peaking in the 1970s. Velvet paintings were most popular in rural areas, which were Elvis' home turf.

Velvet painting is actually an ancient art. It originated in Kashmir, where velvet was first produced. Early velvets depicted religious themes. Marco Polo brought velvet paintings to the West; some hang in the Vatican (although probably not a velvet Elvis).

## Why do people believe Elvis is not dead?

The short answer is that they don't want to let go. The longer answer (look on websites) is that there are...ambiguities. For example, the body wasn't recognizable to a nurse who saw it. Elvis exhibited unusual behavior before his death that suggests, in retrospect, that he intended to disappear. The day he died, a man using an Elvis alias purchased a plane ticket to Buenos Aires. Elvis was into numerology; some say numbers show he planned the whole event.

Then there are the sightings. They started right after his death. The first to reach national attention was in Kalamazoo, Michigan in 1987. Elvis was seen in the back of a police car and in a supermarket checkout lane. Sightings still occur. Websites are devoted to them; some even have photographs. Like people who see UFOs, people who witness Elvis have a fervent need to testify to other believers.

## Religion of Elvis

If thinking about Elvis helps someone get through the day, I say it's all for the good. But you see where this is going. We have the image, the music, the adulation. We have iconic pictures, stories from his life, the tragic early death, the doubts about his death, the after-death sightings. Some of the sightings are visitations—Elvis dispenses spiritual advice or is surrounded by light.

Yes, we are once again over the top on the weirdness scale. There are Elvis churches. The First Presbyterian Church of Elvis the Divine is in the U.K. and Australia. The 24-Hour Church of Elvis is in Portland, Ore. The First Church of Jesus Christ, Elvis has a picture of Elvis as Jesus. One sincerely hopes that most of this is tongue-in-cheek.

*Evelyn Bless*

## Join the Elvii-Project!

Send us a picture of your best Elvis impersonation, or upload your pic to our Facebook page!





# ■The King is Dead, Long Live the King

He started out as Elvis the Pelvis. Later he became known as the King of Rock and Roll, shortened to The King. Elvis Presley was the most popular music performer of his time.

I'm not immune to this. I grew up with Elvis songs. I have visited his birthplace in Tupelo, Mississippi. The Elvis magnet I bought as a souvenir is still on my refrigerator. I have used Elvis questions in database administrator tests. What fascinates me most, however, is how fascinated people are by Elvis.

In honor of Jim Jinelli's upcoming tribute performance and our interest in all things Elvis, I researched the answers to a few burning, campy questions about The King. This is for you, fellow Elvis aficionados. Enjoy.

## Elvis Impersonators

What is it with Elvis impersonators? No other performer has inspired so many variations of imitators that they could hold their own Star Trek convention.

Elvis impersonators started the whole genre of "tribute" artists. But they have taken it to a place far, far away. There are bearded Elvises, child Elvises, Italian Elvises, Greek Elvises, Indian Elvises, Jewish Elvises, fat Elvises, female Elvises, black Elvises. They perform in duos, groups and singly. There's El Vez the Mexican Elvis, a lesbian Elvis known as Elvis Herselvis.

They hold fairs and competitions. Some impersonators mimic the Elvis look, others only the music. Some do not perform; they just "live" Elvis, transmitting his "message." Airlines offer cut-rate tickets to Elvis look-alikes on holidays.

Elvis imitators have their own classification system. People who perform professionally, full-time as Elvis are known as Elvis Tribute Artists (ETAs). ETAs have several online registries. They have an international guide, *I am Elvis*. There are also the categories of amateurs and comic performers.

What is this about?

We all understand that, at least on the amateur level, many of these look-alikes are people who need to get a life. A group dynamic is operating. There's identity and reinforcement in numbers. Pop culture is also self-transforming—the more people imitate Elvis, the more people try it with variations. In addition, playing at Elvis is just plain fun. It's like an ongoing costume party where you get to do the entire character, not just the outside.

The deeper answer lies in Elvis' iconic status and the mysteries of the human psyche.

Leonard Bernstein said, "Elvis Presley was the singular most

important cultural identity of the 20th century." Elvis transformed popular music. He combined gospel, blues, soul and country in a new genre that became rock and roll. He was a new kind of performer. His singing, dancing and sex appeal broke ground for the youth movement and the sexual revolution.

The young Elvis has been described as so physically beautiful that he mesmerized men as well as women. Elvis' life—youthful poverty, Nashville, records, TV appearances, Army, movies, marriage to Priscilla, comeback, Vegas, later drug abuse—is a classic American story.

He has become the idea of Elvis, embodiment of a unique mix of music, masculinity, style, attitude and energy. He's larger than life, but in his mannerisms and flaws, he's also accessible. Just as he can be named by one word—Elvis, The King—details like his jumpsuit or slicked-back hair are parts that evoke the whole. When we adore an idea, we crave mementos. They are triggers for memory and associations. Whether a refrigerator magnet, costume or performance, they start a video playing in our heads. Depending on who you are, you play the video or the video plays you.

## ■Elvis: A Concert Performance

On August 16, the 35th anniversary of Elvis Presley's death, the Center welcomes Jim "Elvis" Jinelli in *Elvis: a Concert Experience*. At age 13, Jinelli saw The King in concert at Chicago Stadium. He was instantly hooked; as a teenager he imitated Elvis for hours on end.

Fast forward years later: Jinelli is a professional musician and has created a tribute concert memorializing The King. Jinelli reproduces Elvis' music and stage presence so accurately that all of us may suspend belief, as the saying goes, that Elvis has left the building.



Jim Jinelli will perform at the Center on August 16

*Campus Activities* magazine named her the 2006 Funniest Female Performer of the Year, based on votes by thousands of college students. The following year, she was nominated Funniest Female by *American Entertainment Magazine*. More recently, Lynn starred in the 2009 documentary *I'm No Dummy*, about the art of ventriloquism, alongside Johnson and Dunham. She also received the People's Choice Award from the Ohio Arts Presenters Association in 2010.

Elements that are crucial to a ventriloquist's success include lip control, manipulation of the puppet, acting and comedy. The most important, Lynn says, is comedy. "People talk about lip control all the time, which is something you want to master if you're going to be a ventriloquist, but Edgar Bergen moved his lips all the time. If you're a brilliant comedian, people will be entertained, so it doesn't matter if you move your lips sometimes. People are involved in the performance."

Lynn writes all her own material and has never taken an acting class. "I'm always thinking of ideas," she says. "If my kids say something funny, I write it down . . . or I'll be looking through different blogs on parenting, and if something catches my eye, I'll twist it." She allows her characters to develop slowly, so she can get to the point where she's comfortable enough to adlib. "I have a lot of staple jokes that started out as adlibs."

Her longest companion is Simon, who still appears in shows with her as her "smart-aleck alter ego." Lynn says he's the best when it comes to adlibbing, but her favorite character right now is Chloe, a silly, precocious, three-year old. Some of her audience favorites have been a goofy drunken camel, a grumpy old man and a sassy teenage girl.

"The greatest compliment I get from people is that my show is appropriate for all ages, but has so many things for everybody," Lynn says. "My favorite cartoons are ones that are geared toward kids but throw in adult humor, like some of Pixar's movies that you have to watch over and over to get everything."

Currently, Lynn works for Disney, Crystal and Norwegian cruise lines, and corporate and college venues. She encourages young people who are interested in ventriloquism to pursue it as a vocation. "As long as you love what you're doing and are willing to practice," she says. "I'm still always practicing."

Lynn performs her comic ventriloquism on September 20 at the Center. Bring your family and friends; she will have laughs for everyone. But be forewarned; Lynn is big on audience participation, and you could become part of the show!

Marianne Galaris

## ■ Star Spangled Art

"Star Spangled Art," an art exhibit at the Center in May, was a collaboration between the Gallery at the Carrollwood Cultural Center, James A. Haley Veteran's Hospital and Operation Helping Hand.

The exhibit showed art created by active and non-active military who have been patients at James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital. All the artists, some of whom are current patients at Haley, have used art as a form of therapy during recovery from injuries or wounds.

The ending ceremony was as unique as the exhibit itself. The ceremony opened with an Honor Guard from American Legion Post 238. Captain Robert J. Silah, U.S. Navy (Ret.), Chairman of Operation Helping Hand, Inc., explained that his organization supports injured and wounded service members by helping families during their stay in Tampa Bay.

Mary Donovan and Cathy Williams, recreational therapists at James A. Haley, oversee the art therapy program. With great pride, they presented certificates of appreciation to the artists who were present. They also gave Gainor Roberts, the Center's Art Curator, a plaque in appreciation for her organization of the program.

"Star Spangled Art" was the result of a series of events which seemed to fall into place. Stuart Dwork, President of The Exhibiting Society of Artists (TESA), and Carol Zieres, retired Army Colonel and also a TESA member, viewed the patients' art exhibit when they were at Haley for an appreciation dinner. Stuart brought the idea of what he named a "Star Spangled Art" exhibit to Gainor. Thanks and congratulations to all involved! *Judy Schiavo*

## ■ Calendar Snapshot

<b>July 13-22</b>	<b>HAIRSPRAY</b> <i>The Broadway Musical</i> with MAS Community Theatre
<b>July 27</b>	<b>Jazz with Jim</b>
<b>July 28-29</b>	<b>G2K</b> <i>Once Upon a Mattress</i> with Broadway Bound
<b>August 9</b>	<b>Art Program: Colombia, "Face of the Past"</b>
<b>August 10-12</b>	<b>Thoroughly Modern Millie Jr</b> with DJ Productions
<b>August 16</b>	<b>ELVIS: A Concert Experience</b>
<b>August 18</b>	<b>Annual Blessing &amp; A Curse Music Festival</b> with Have Gun, Will Travel, The Applebutter Express & Dean Johannesen
<b>August 24</b>	<b>Jazz with Jim</b>
<b>August 25</b>	<b>The Music of Motown &amp; Beyond</b> featuring the Sounds of Soul
<b>August 26</b>	<b>Sherlock Holmes &amp; The Opera Mystery</b> with A.C.T. for Youth
<b>Sept 15-16</b>	<b>A Night at the Popera</b> with MDHF Productions
<b>Sept 20</b>	<b>The Comedy Ventriloquism of</b> Lynn Trefzger
<b>Sept 21</b>	<b>Jazz with Jim</b>
<b>Sept 23</b>	<b>Little Red Riding Hood</b> with Play'N Around Theatre Company
<b>Sept 28-Oct 7</b>	<b>Goodbye Charlie</b> with MAS Community Theatre



## ■ Mama Mia LaRosa!

Her email name is mamalarosa. Terry got the name when she worked in the MIS Department at Tallahassee Memorial Healthcare. "At the time I was the Executive Secretary for the department, and everyone came to me with their problems—work related or not. Someone started calling me Mama LaRosa, and it just stuck."



This is typical. People like and trust Terry LaRosa. She is a woman who gets things done. "I am the consummate volunteer," she says. "I have a hard time keeping my hand down when volunteers are requested." Terry was involved with the Center before it formally existed. She and her husband Frank served on the original planning committee.

Now, Terry is a member of the Programs/Events and Art committees. She does whatever is needed. You can find her at the monthly Jazz with Jim concerts behind the refreshment counter, selling her delicious home-baked desserts and donating the proceeds to the Center. Terry has also enjoyed several art classes, but has come to the conclusion that "I will never be another Grandma Moses."

Terry's most memorable experience at the Center was in those first planning meetings, when she met Mary Ann Scialdo, the Center's late Artistic Director, and her sister Vicki Cucchia. "Meeting Mary Ann changed my life in so many positive ways. She encouraged me to try things I never thought I was capable of doing. She talked me into joining the chorus. I told her I couldn't sing. She asked if I had a song in my heart, and, if I did, then I could sing!"

The rest, as they say, is history. In addition to singing in the chorus, Terry has performed in *Oliver!*, *The Music Man* and *Come Blow Your Horn*.

"I would spend as much time as possible with this extremely talented person. Mary Ann had so much knowledge of all areas of the arts and had a life one could only dream about. The best part of it all was that she was willing to share all her knowledge, experiences and talent with us.

"As a personal friend of Mary Ann, I—and all of us at the CCC who knew her—were so blessed to have her come into our lives. I know that I will never again have the privilege of meeting another Mary Ann."

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### "The friends I have made at the Center have become an extended family to me." -Terry LaRosa, volunteer

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Born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, Terry grew up living in the same house with grandparents and parents. "I was one of four children, and there were always numerous cousins, aunts and uncles around, most of them named Joseph or Frank," she notes. She has a New York story about another fellow named Dick:

"I love to dance and as a teenager appeared on *American Bandstand*. Not the dancing show from Philly, but when Dick Clark was at the Little Theatre in NY. He sat down right next to me, which really angered my girlfriend who had to give up her seat to Dick. And, by the way, she was the one who got the tickets...I was her guest!"

Terry was the first one in her family to move out of New York. Her husband Frank's work as an architect and city planner took the family to Saudi Arabia. "Having lived overseas and traveled the world, my education is far beyond book learning."

Returning to the states, the family moved to Tampa in 1984 and three years later to Tallahassee, where Frank completed his Ph.D. In 2003, Frank and Terry moved back to Tampa to be near their family.

"I have a great love of food and of cooking. We are adventurous in our sampling of foods. Cooking is a form of relaxation for me, and part of being an Italian mother is to feed your family and friends—over and over again."

Terry and Frank have two children: daughter Traci, who lives in upstate New York with her husband and two children, and son Michael, who lives with his wife and two children in nearby St. Petersburg. "Needless to say, our four grandchildren are the light of our lives."

Terry has other volunteer commitments besides the Center. She and Frank are both poll workers. She also belongs to The Carrollwood Service League.

Nevertheless, Terry considers the Center home. "The Carrollwood Cultural Center has become a big part of my life. The friends I have made at the Center have become an extended family to me." *Judy Schiavo*

## ■ Bound for Broadway & Beyond

When you were nine, did you know what you wanted to be when you grew up? I didn't. But ask nine-year-old Zachary Pillai that same question and you'll get a definitive answer—actor and singer.

Zachary is a serious musician. He performed in *The King and I* last year and is the lead singer in his own rock band, which performs benefits for Metropolitan Ministries and other charities.

"His singing, acting and confidence have dramatically improved since joining Broadway Bound," says Megan, his mom.

Broadway Bound is the Center's program for kids learning the ropes of musical theater.

Nine-year-old Callie Rhodes, a dazzling redhead, tells me her dad and stepmom encouraged her to join last January so she could "get out of the box and learn new skills." They also told her she was a "good singer."

Fifteen year old Andrew Aman, a 9th grader at Blake who takes musical theater classes, is interning at Broadway Bound and helps with dance. He plans to attend Rollins for their musical theater program. When asked what he'd like to be doing ten years from now, he assured me it would be in the entertainment field. "Disney, New York, anything in live performances." (continued on page 10)



THE CARROLLWOOD CULTURAL CENTER'S  
**Broadway**★  
**BOUND**