



# prairie arts

The Newsletter of the Prairie Arts Council

## Holiday show visits Christmases past

*The Meaning of the Star* is the 2012 Prairie Arts Council Children's Christmas Musical. This year's show, written, as has been PAC custom for the past nine years, by local playwright Rachel Gorenz, is a delightful story of a family of children who complain about their grandfather coming for Christmas because he never plays with them or pays attention to them. The oldest child remembers how much their grandmother loved Christmas and how she made snow angels with her and made their time together at Christmas extra special. Their grandfather overhears the children complaining, and the children are in big trouble with their mother.

Enter three mischievous elves who have been exiled from the North Pole for various offenses and have to do a good deed to regain admittance to the Pole. Follow their madcap adventures as they whisk the children back in time to the Christmas pageant in the 1940s where their grandparents fell in love. See how the elves and the children help their grandparents to find each other, almost ruin everything, and, in the end, save the pageant, their grandparents' relationship,



Kids in the cast of *The Meaning of the Star* try to figure out what to do after their Christmas pageant director, Mr. Clark, played by Fox Webber, falls and injures his leg.

and their chances of returning home. Armed with information about their grandparents as young people, the children are able to unlock the love within their grandfather and help him to see how their grandmother's spirit lives on to make Christmas extra special always.

Some of the songs featured in the show are "Boogie Woogie Santa," "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing," "Up on the Housetop," and "Little Saint Nick."

*The Meaning of the Star* debuted on the PAC stage in 2006 with two casts

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### *The Meaning of the Star*

will be performed at  
the PAC Theater  
24 Park Avenue East, Princeton.

**November 17-18, 3:00**  
**November 17, 7:00**

Tickets: \$10/\$7

Order tickets by calling the PAC box  
office at **815-200-4789**.

Tickets available at the door  
while they last.

# Are you an *artist*?

By Daniel Acker

People are always seeking to label each other. It seems to give us comfort to be able to define someone within a category. Black, white, Republican, Democrat...the list is endless. As a photojournalist, I have traveled both domestically and abroad during the past decade, and my personal experiences have convinced me that these labels do nothing to further our understanding of differing viewpoints or encourage relationships. In fact, they generally divide us unnecessarily.

A point that comes up with relative frequency is whether I consider myself an "artist." This can be a difficult question to answer, particularly when the answer people are looking for is as simple as the label they're seeking to apply: Yes or No?

I make the majority of my living as a photojournalist. I cover the news. This carries with it an expectation of truth, honesty, and transparency. I would never consider my news photography to be "art." However, I do strive to be artistic in my visual interpretation of the world around me. I use camera angle, lens selection and depth-of-field to visually represent the reality in front of me. Photographs have the ability to define our present and shape our future, particularly in the context of photojournalism. This is a responsibility not to be taken lightly.

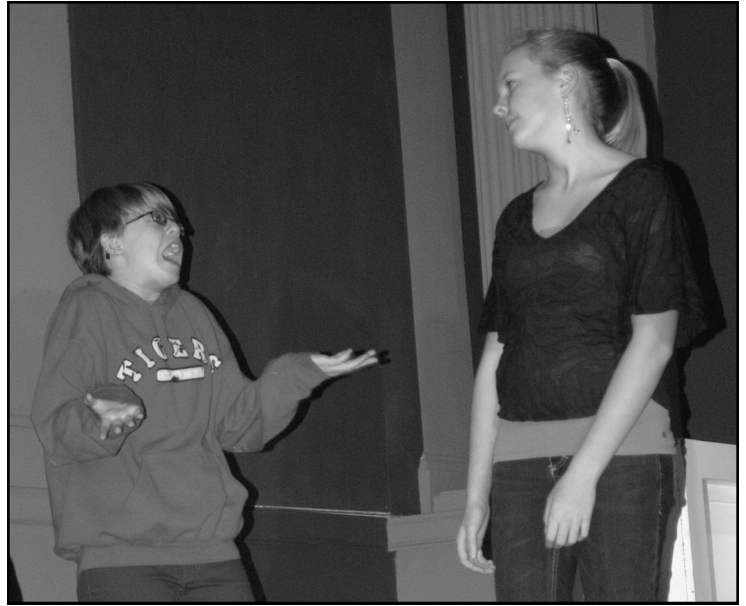
On the other hand, using the medium of photography for "art" purposes can mean many things. The ethical rules of photojournalism do not apply, and the artist is free to use the medium as he chooses. Digital manipulation and staging elaborate film-like scenes are common tools used to reflect some artists' visions. Both are career ending no-no's to a photojournalist.

I'd consider my personal work to fall somewhere in between these two extremes. I do make pictures purely for my love of the process, but I continue to use my camera to document the world around me as it presents itself. With no client storyline to follow, I'm free to make a picture of anything I choose, but it doesn't mean I manipulate things to fit my vision. Many photographers call this genre "fine art," which serves only as a way to differentiate it from work done for client purposes. Basically, you're making pictures because you want to make pictures, not because you're being paid for it.

I suppose my personal definition of an artist is someone who makes their livelihood selling artwork. I've had a few gallery shows, and I've sold a few images over the years, but it has never been the focus of my energy. Perhaps this will change at some point in my life, but for now you can just call me a photographer.

*About the author: Daniel Acker is Secretary of the Prairie Arts Council Board and lives with his family in Tiskilwa. More about him and his work can be found at [www.danielacker.com](http://www.danielacker.com).*

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Troublesome elves Frank and Nikki, played by Sabrina Bickett (left) and Maggie Daluga, find themselves in the middle of a dilemma of their own making in *The Meaning of the Star*.

totaling over 60 young actors. Siblings of some of the actors who created the original roles in *The Meaning of the Star* in 2006 are performing in this year's production, creating a new layer of Christmas memories for their families.

The cast includes Courtney Cook as Mom, Grace Wolbrecht as Haley, Cameron Tieman as Brandon, Mia Bowen as Molly, Vicki Tieman as Audrey, Doran Cotter as Grandpa/James Callahan, Maggie Daluga as Nikki, Kimmie Glenn as Christy, Sabrina Bickett as Frank, Myla McCune as 1940s Mom Rose Bennett, Emma Roden as Susan, Savannah Birkey as Beverly, Niklas Schneider as Robbie, Margaret Moore as Shirley, Tori Pellegrini as Linda, Courtney Pointer as Betty, Fox Webber as Mr. Clark, Myah Headley as the Grand High Elf, Olivia Eiken as Alice, Isabelle Gerber as Eleanor, Sophia Pellegrini as Dolores, and Rachel Cook as a 1940s child.

David and Rachel Gorenz serve as directors, and Theresa Cotter is producer. Barry Maywood is handling set design and artwork.

## **Art events wanted**

What's happening in the Illinois Valley arts scene? We would like to add a Community Arts Calendar to our newsletter. If you have a cultural art event which you would like listed in our calendar, please let us know by calling 815-875-ARTS.

# Mini-Tree Festival kicks off holiday season at PAC

## Opening reception set for Nov. 3

The third annual Christmas Mini-Tree Festival at the Prairie Arts Center will be held from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays, November 3 through December 2. Extended hours will be from 1 to 7 p.m. November 17 and from 1 to 6 p.m. November 18. An opening reception will be held from 1 to 4 p.m. November 3.

The trees, ranging from 18 inches to 36 inches tall, are individually designed and uniquely decorated by local creative artists. A raffle for these beautiful

trees will be a fundraiser for the Prairie Arts Center. Tickets are \$2 each or three for \$5. You do not have to be present to win. The lucky winners will have a lovely addition to their Christmas holiday. Come, enjoy, and delight in the wonder and

beauty of this Christmas Mini-Tree Festival.

At right, Daniel Acker shows off the tree, called “Emerald Spirit,” that he and Bruce Acker designed and created together for the Mini-Tree Festival.

**1-4 p.m.  
Saturdays and  
Sundays,  
Nov. 3-Dec.2**



**In the Gallery**

Princeton artist, Dana Collins is featured in the Prairie Arts Center Gallery this month, from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays and 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesdays through November 4. Forty-six recent oil paintings depict a year of the changing seasons on the water.

“I work from direct observations of the sites,” Collins said. “I mostly work from a small rowboat in the backwaters of the upper Mississippi River, though for some current works showing ice and snow, I set up my easel in front of the big windows facing the water at my Wisconsin home. I always find something new and interesting on the water. It is more than a matter of form — the composition, reflections, movement, all that. What draws me is something more still and, for want of better words, spiritual, profound.”

Dana Collins retired from college teaching in 2004 and currently conducts workshops in studio teaching throughout the Midwest and California, and has presented illustrated lectures on “Working on the Water.” Her work was recently exhibited at Outside the Lines Art Gallery in Dubuque, Iowa. She enjoys gardening, writing poetry, and plays the viola with the Illinois Valley Symphony Orchestra.

## Outside work draws thanks

A huge thanks to the City of Princeton, Pete Nelson, and superintendent of streets Steve Wright, and his departmental crew for the wonderful job in front of the PAC theater on the sidewalk and new handicapped ramp from the street to the sidewalk. Later, the crew returned and filled the needed black dirt and planted seed where needed.

On Wednesday, October 10, Carol Dremman, and Hope and Gary Browning trimmed the bushes on the east side of the building to a manageable height. Work was also done around the building trimming weeds and such.

The plants that were removed from the flower bed, so that the city could replace dirt, will be replanted in the spring.

Thanks also to Ron Piper for removing the mulberry trees and stumps behind the PAC, and to Taylor’s Natural Green Lawn Inc. for treating the PAC yard this year.

**New board member**

Welcome to Sue Garvin, new member of PAC Board of Directors. Sue is a retired schoolteacher. She and her husband, John, are PAC members. We appreciate their support to PAC and look forward to working with Sue.

# AUCTION OF NORRIS ART SCHEDULED AT PAC



**Mary Win Norris**

The Prairie Arts Council would like to welcome the family of Mary Win Walter Norris as they prepare for an auction of the numerous paintings and sketches that she has created throughout her ninety-some years of life. Her work will be exhibited from 10 a.m. to 12 noon and from 1 to 3 p.m. December 1 at the Prairie Arts Center. Her art will be sold at auction in the auditorium of the Prairie Arts Center at 6 pm December 1, with a one-hour reception and viewing time beginning at 5 p.m. in the gallery. In addition to the auction, there will be many unframed sketches and watercolors available for the public to purchase at a fixed price before the auction.

Don't miss this once, and last, in a lifetime exhibit of the complete artistic works of Mary Win Walter Norris.

*"There are two means of refuge from the miseries of life: music and cats."*

~ Albert Schweitzer

## Thank you!

**Recent volunteers who have provided baked goods and appetizers and/or served as hosts for PAC events and receptions include:**

Marilyn Anthony	Lou Brown
Joan Cichy	Barb Schwind
Jan English	Vern Shaffer
Joan Marella	Carol Dremann
Linda McCabe	Linda Gustafson
Joanne Swan	Barry Mayworm
Cathy Elliott	Roger Swanson
Karen May	Esther Tracy
Marcie Jagers	Jan Lohaus
Audrey Monier	Mary Michael
Mary Ellen Dugosh	Ramona Wedding
Cindy Smucker	Lisa Vincent
Anna Roadhouse	Kathy Ballard
Mary Damon	Sharon Peterson
Diane VanDenBorre	Barb Schiff
Barb LaVelle	

## October is Illinois Arts and Humanities Month

The Illinois Arts Council (IAC) and the Illinois Humanities Council (IHC) are pleased to present Illinois Arts & Humanities (AH!) Month, a statewide celebration encouraging all Illinoisans to establish, deepen, and expand our relationships with the arts and humanities.

Illinois Arts & Humanities Month marks the expansion of Illinois Arts Week, established in 1978 to focus attention on our state's vast cultural resources and to increase public awareness of the arts. In the years since Arts Week's inception, hundreds of communities and countless individuals throughout Illinois have come to appreciate and celebrate the animating force of the arts and creativity.

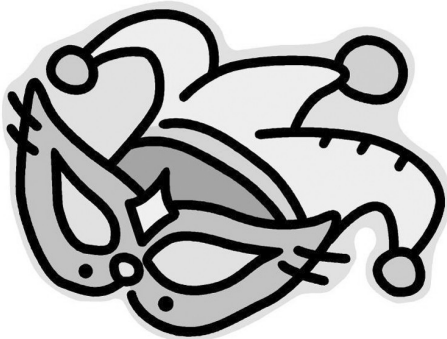
Whether exploring or expressing the human condition, Illinois AH! Month is a great time to create and share more of these AH! moments with people throughout our communities statewide.

**ILLINOIS**  
**AH!**  
 ARTS + HUMANITIES  
**MONTH**

2013 gala to be a  
**'Mardi Gras Masquerade'**

**Donations needed for live auction**

Mark your calendar and save the date for PAC's annual gala, "Mardi Gras Masquerade" to be held Saturday, February 2, 2013, at the Underground Inn in Princeton. This is the main fundraising event for the Prairie Arts Council, and will be a gala evening including a live auction. Members and friends are invited to donate an art item or other item of interest for the auction. Contact Deb Young at 815-303-7444 or any PAC board member.



**Our Mission**

*The guiding purpose of the Prairie Arts Council is to strengthen and support the participation in cultural arts in Princeton and the surrounding areas.*

**ATTENTION  
PAC MEMBERS!**

This is your chance to voice your opinions, express your views, and give us your ideas on what kind of events, classes, workshops, and exhibits you would like to see happen at the Prairie Arts Center.

YOU ARE INVITED to our annual meeting which will take place at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, November 20. We will start with a 45-minute business meeting, after which our members are invited to participate in any discussion of events. This is also an opportunity to sign up for any committees or events that the Board needs help with.

Our Board of Directors consists of ten volunteers from our community. We do not have any paid employees to help maintain and organize community-wide events that take place at the Arts Center. Currently, we have more than 50 volunteers that come and help on a regular basis to perform various tasks, such as ushering, baking, and attending to guests who come into the building during business open hours.

Plan to join us at our annual meeting. We would like to meet you and thank you for being a member of the Prairie Arts Council.

It's never too late to join. Just fill out this form and send it in with your payment to continue receiving this newsletter. THANK YOU for your support!

**Make checks payable to Prairie Arts Council.**

**Please return this form and remittance to:**

Tammy Tieman, Membership Chairman  
24 Park Avenue East  
Princeton, IL 61356

**Categories of Membership (Please check one)**

<input type="checkbox"/> Student .....	\$10	<input type="checkbox"/> Family .....	\$25	<input type="checkbox"/> Patron .....	\$150
<input type="checkbox"/> Single .....	\$15	<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor .....	\$50	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate .....	\$300

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Preferred method to contact:** In an effort to go green and minimize postage costs, the PAC would like to begin notifying members of events using e-mail. Please indicate your contact preference below.

E-mail Notification       US Postal Service



24 Park Avenue East  
Princeton, IL 61356  
815-875-2787

[theprairieartscouncil.org](http://theprairieartscouncil.org)



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the Illinois Arts Council,  
Illinois Valley Fine Arts Trust,  
and the Sun Foundation.

## Upcoming Events

- OCTOBER** Illinois Arts and Humanities Month
- Oct. 12 - Nov. 4** “On the River: New Paintings by Dana Collins” in the gallery, 1-4 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays, 6-8 p.m. Wednesdays
- November 3** 1-4 p.m. Opening reception for the Christmas Mini-Tree Festival
- Nov. 3 - Dec. 2** Christmas Mini-Tree Festival in the Fireplace Room, 1-4 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Extended hours 1-7 p.m. Nov. 17 and 1-6 p.m. Nov. 18
- November 17-18** *The Meaning of the Star*, Children’s Christmas Musical in the theater, 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday and 3 p.m. Sunday
- November 20** PAC Annual Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- December 1** Mary Win Walter Norris art auction at PAC, 6 p.m. Viewings earlier in the day (see page 4 for times)
- February 2, 2013** Annual Gala, “Mardi Gras Masquerade”

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