

MILFORD, PA.

Theater group to perform 'God of Carnage'

By Jessica Cohen
For the Gazette

Side of the Road theater company will perform "God of Carnage" June 5-7 at Milford Theatre.

"God of Carnage," a play by Yasmina Reza, is about two sets of parents, one of whose child has hurt the other at a public park. The parents meet to discuss the scuffle in a civilized manner, but as the evening wears on, they become increasingly childish themselves, and the evening deteriorates into chaos.

The play was a success in London in 2008 and on Broadway in 2009.

In the Milford production, the parents of the boy who broke two teeth of one of his peers are Alan, a lawyer played by Milford lawyer John Klemeyer, and Annette, who describes herself as a "wealth manager," played by Rebecca Robbins, of Middletown. Aiming for conciliation, they visit the victim's parents, Michael and Veronica. He is a plumbing supply wholesaler, and she is writing a book about Darfur. They are played by an actual couple, Patrick and Gillian Turner of East Stroudsburg, Pa. He is project manager of a door and hardware company, and she teaches English at East Stroudsburg High School South.

As they confer and bicker about how their sons' conflict should be addressed, other issues emerge: Michael's abandonment of a hamster and failure to be a "stroller dad," Alan's support for a client selling a dangerous drug and his inability to stay off his cell phone, marriage inequities, and various forms of misanthropy.

Beth Kelley, who directed, has been a Milford resident and teacher for 32 years and thus



Rebecca Robbins, of Middletown, plays Annette, the "wealth manager" wife of Alan, a lawyer, played by lawyer John Klemeyer, of Milford, Pa. JESSICA COHEN/ FOR THE GAZETTE



Real-life couple Patrick and Gillian Turner, of East Stroudsburg, Pa., also play a couple in "God of Carnage."

knows its cultural habits. She says she formed the Side of the Road theater company to bring dramas and comedies to the Pike County area, where musicals are frequent but dramas are rarely presented. Teaching theater at Delaware Valley High School, she said, she found that many students had never seen a live drama until Side of the Road performed "Wait Until Dark" last year, when the company began.

"I hope we'll have enough interest and support to do another show in July and August," she said. "We're bouncing around ideas."

Local theater people dotted the audience when "God of Carnage" opened last weekend. Among them was Delaware Valley High

School graduate Kelsey Stalter. She had been in previous productions directed by Kelley, and now makes a living in theater. Based in New York City, she has been touring the country with Theater Works USA, performing in a play based on the children's book, "Teacher from the Black Lagoon." She accompanied her mother, Sandy Stalter, who has been an actress and musical director in other shows at Milford Theater by City-Stage, based in Port Jervis, including "Little Shop of Horrors" and "Legally Blonde."

"It's wonderful to see something in the theater that everyone can relate to," said Kelsey.