

?Moving? experiences explored at Townhall Players

By Bill Rea

Most people will agree it's a benefit to have parents who are attentive, but not necessarily adhesive.

And does anyone really want them around for moving day?

There are a lot of issues involved in such a situation that are currently being explored by the Caledon Townhall Players (CTHP) in their current production of *Things My Mother Taught Me*.

The play, written by Katherine DiSavino, deals with Olivia and Gabe (played by CTHP newcomers Stephanie Williams and Kyle Adams) moving into their first apartment in a new city, and as is common with many moving days, things are not going all that well. Olivia's precious new chair wouldn't fit through the door, creating a barrier for the first part of the production that people have to somehow get over.

Enter Gabe's parents Lydia and Wyatt (Sharon Ching and Dale Pringle), who have undertaken the long drive to help. Wyatt is very much in the moving-day spirit, brandishing his tool box and a six-pack. The pair might remind some of Fred and Ethel Mertz from *I Love Lucy*.

?Am I old fashioned?? she asks at one point.

?You are old,? he replies.

And Olivia's parents Karen and Carter (Silvana Di Bello and Brian Moller) show up, there to back up their daughter.

Add to the mix Max (Daniel Olien), the superintendent who's still having trouble with English, but who offers pithy observations of the situation.

?If it's not a problem with the building, it's not my problem,? he says.

On the other hand, he's very good at coming up with honey vodka when it's needed most, and even when it probably isn't needed.

Add to that a lack of sleeping accommodations for everyone, efforts to track down a stolen truck, some very sage and well-meaning parental advice, and very clear indications early on that a question is about to be popped (yes, that question), and there is room for tons of laughter, even if there isn't a lot of room on the stage.

Directed by John Thomas and produced by Kim Blacklock, this play involves a lot of movement among the performers. Stage managed by Devon Madden, they have everything down to the finest detail.

The set, designed and built by Chuck and Kim Blacklock, is a little on the bare side, befitting an apartment that is being moved into. But there is a huge steamer trunk that sees a lot of action, along with the chair in the door that people have to get by. And they step on it on pain of Olivia's wrath.

It's an evening of watching people who love each other who simply can't avoid getting on various nerves during the stress of a move and other factors, from Karen trying to offer maternal advice to Olivia to Lydia refusing to allow anyone to use the facilities until the new toilet seat has been installed.

If you've ever been through a move, or had parents or in-laws who maybe got a little too much in the way (and who among us have not?), then it's time to get a good laugh from those frustrations.

There's one more weekend to catch *Things My Mother Taught Me*. There will be performances tomorrow (Friday) and Saturday evening, as well as a Saturday matinee.