

# The land trust did it

## Mystery fundraiser helps OLT

By Emily Thurlow  
Staff Writer

STURBRIDGE - The town of Palmer is known for having seven original rail lines, but according to a traveling performing acting troupe out of Ware, they could only count five. To uncover what may or may not have happened back in 1911, join the troupe - Colonel Mustard Presents - at the Oliver Wright Tavern at Old Sturbridge on Thursday, April 10 for "Murder on the Diamond: a Dinner Theater Murder Mystery."

The theatrical meal is sponsored by Opacum Land Trust (OLT), a regional, all-volunteer organization that was formed in

2000 to protect natural and cultural resources in South Central Massachusetts, as part of their annual fundraising efforts.

"It's going to be lots of fun," said Jennifer Ohop, president of OLT. "It's something the land trust has never done before."

Traditionally, OLT holds a plant sale in May. While it's a lot of fun, it's also a lot of work.

"We love to hold the plant sale, but our grower is Leslie's [Dulhie] mother who is 90, we decided to give her a break this year and look for an event that wouldn't have us schlepping plants all around or hovering in the garden," she said. "We're pretty excited about the show."

In addition to have their taste buds tickled to a three-course meal, guests will watch as Colonel Mustard Presents performs a "Murder on the Dia-

mond." While Nate Murphy, owner and director of the traveling troupe said that the script was originally written for The Steaming Tender and includes local history of the railroads with the use of fictional characters; it has been modified to include some Sturbridge history as well.

"There's a lot of great local pride in the show," said Murphy. "And while we're creating a performance, there is a lot of audience participation with clues by the whimsical cast to find out: who dunn-it?"

During the time dessert is served, clue cards are passed out so that members of the audience can register their own guesses and whoever guesses correctly wins an award.

"We just performed a show last week [for a fundraiser as

well] and we booked another one [for them] just after. Afterwards, a lot of people came up to us to tell us that they 'hadn't laughed that hard in years,'" said Murphy. "The performance [at Old Sturbridge Village] is sure to be powerful and memorable."

Tickets are \$44 a piece and includes dinner and the show and \$12 of that ticket supports the land trust stewardship fund [and is tax-deductible.] Tickets are only available prior to the event by calling 508-347-9144.

"Here is a great chance to support your local land trust and have fun too!" said Dulhie, vice president of OLT. "The Opacum Land Trust, the same one that protects some of the great places you love to walk, hike and hunt, the same one that helps you replant your backyard trees,

and the same one that helps you plan to protect your land forever. That means we will be out there marking the trails and clearing the brush and trees to keep your walk in the woods a safe one!"

Guests will also have the opportunity to bid on a number of silent auction items including a hummingbird basket courtesy of The Bird Store and More in Sturbridge, a "man basket" courtesy of Scott Gerrish, a gardening basket with a landscape design consultation and more.

For more information about Colonel Mustard Presents: "Murder on the Diamond," hosted by the Opacum Land Trust at The Oliver Wright Tavern on Thursday, April 10, visit [facebook.com/dinnerentertainment](http://facebook.com/dinnerentertainment) or [colmustardpresents.com](http://colmustardpresents.com).