

## New CAT Contract Features Increases in Salaries, Health

The new three-year Chicago Area Theatres (CAT) contract approved by the Central Regional Board on July 11, 2011 features increases in salaries each year in all Tiers, increases in health each year in most Tiers and significant increases in other areas as well.

The increase in weekly minimum salaries in all Tiers is 3% each year; overtime rates also increase by 3% each year in all Tiers; in commercial productions, the increment for Term Contracts and Six-Month Chorus Riders increases from no less than \$50 to no less than \$100 per week; in commercial musicals, the Dance Captain increment goes up from 10% to 15%; there is an increase in travel reimbursement to/from station/airport from \$30 to \$50; the meal allowance rises from \$8 to \$10 and there is an increase in payment for costume calls prior to the start of rehearsals from \$10 to \$20 per hour.

There have been achievements in safe and sanitary provisions, as well. One significant improvement is that the incline playing surface (the rake) is limited to 1/2 inch

per foot. Additionally, the trigger for the assistance of a qualified instructor or therapist on an inclined surface was lowered from 1/2 inch to 1/4 inch per foot. Improvements were also achieved in the area of branding. The Equity logo will now appear in all programs and the Equity logo and bio will appear on the Producers' websites whenever possible.

"We're very pleased with the results of what was a very cordial negotiation," says Central Regional Director Kathryn V. Lamkey, who was the Union's Chief Negotiator. "Our primary goal was to achieve significant pay increases and we did just that. The team did a great job."

Central Regional Vice President Dev Kennedy chaired the Negotiating Team, which also included Malcolm Ewen, David Girolmo, Richard Shavzin, Dina DiConstanzo, Larry Neumann, Ross Lehman, and Doug MacKechnie, and for the staff, Senior Business Rep Christine A. Provost and Business Reps Ann Gordon, Luther Goins, Ryan Hastings and Cynthia Hanks. There was consultation with Madeleine Fallon and Executive Director Mary McColl and assistance from Contract Associate Jessica Mitolo.

## Council Approves New Three-Year TYA Pact

A new three-year Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA) contract was approved by Council at its meeting

on June 28, 2011. The agreement was reached with the re-constituted group of 18 employers under the banner of Producers' League of Theatre for Young Audiences (PLOTYA). Negotiating sessions were held in New York from May 16 through May 18.

"We achieved many improvements in the contract despite the general economic climate at this time and the challenges facing these companies given continuing cuts in education funding," said Western Senior Business Representative and Equity's Chief Negotiator, Joe Garber.

Improvements include increases in both weekly and per performance salaries of 1% in the first year, 2% the second year and 3% in the third, as well as increases in per performance rehearsal salary and increases in driving the company vehicle rates and overtime rates; increases in weekly health rates; free housing plus a \$30 per diem for touring companies and

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## Production Contract Negotiations Underway

Production Contract negotiations began in late July. The contract, set to expire September 25, 2011 covers Broadway and much of the road, and is one of the highest income earners for Equity members.

The Negotiating Team is co-chaired by First Vice President Paige Price and Third Vice President Ira Mont and includes members who have worked under the Production Contract. The chief negotiator will be Executive Director Mary McColl, assisted by Senior Business Rep Kimberly Rimbold, Regional Directors Rick Berg, Kathryn V. Lamkey and Mary Lou Westerfield and staff from all three regions.

Preparations for the negotiation began in late 2010. A survey was sent to those members working on the contract, or who had worked on

the contract in the last eight years. The material gathered from the respondents became the basis for a thorough examination of the contract, leading to discussions that examined the rules from every angle. The purpose behind the initial work was to create a wide-reaching list of items for consideration. After careful consideration, a comprehensive list of negotiable items was created and is now the foundation of Equity's strategy in these negotiations.

"We have adopted a strategy of focus and discipline as our guideposts for the Production Contract negotiation," said Executive Director Mary McColl. "This strategic direction will allow the Equity team to concentrate on strengthening crucial elements in the contract that matter most to our members, such as

compensation and specific work rules and protections. In addition, we are proposing that a Labor-Management committee be formed so that we can have real conversations throughout the life of the contract about our workplace concerns. Our goal is to achieve a contract that reflects the numerous contributions our members make to the success of Broadway and road productions."

Bargaining sessions are scheduled throughout August and September. For information about the schedule and how you can attend a session as an observer, go to the Members Only section of Equity's website, [www.actors-equity.org](http://www.actors-equity.org). Periodic updates on the progress of the talks will also be posted on the site. **SETA tours are not part of the Production Contract and will be negotiated in the fall.**

## Central Regional Director Kathryn V. Lamkey to Retire

After 25 years of dedicated service, Assistant Executive Director/Central Regional Director Kathryn V. Lamkey will retire from Equity's staff on December 29, 2011.

When asked to reflect on her career at Equity, Ms. Lamkey said, "They say that time passes quickly when you are having fun. I must have had a lot of fun because 25 years have come and gone in the blink of an eye. Over those years, I have had the privilege of working for and with the dedicated membership and staff of Equity. Through the years, they inspired me to tilt at many a windmill. I may have won only some of the battles, but I always lived to fight another day.

I am certain the new Central Regional Director will be equally inspired to work tirelessly on behalf of the entire membership as Equity enters into its second century in 2013."

Indeed, Ms. Lamkey has



Kathryn V. Lamkey.

many accomplishments to her credit that have helped shape Equity as it is today. She was instrumental in the establishment of Tier N in the Chicago Area Theatre contract that has been a true developmental process and brought over a dozen theatres onto the contract. She holds the distinction of being the first Business Rep outside New York to be the Chief Negotiator for a national contract, the MSUA. This paved the way for greater participation by staff from all Regions.

Central Regional Vice President Dev Kennedy credits Ms. Lamkey as an important contributor to Equity and the region. In 2009-2010 Ms. Lamkey was very involved in all aspects of the purchase and renovation of the Equity Building in Chicago, establishing a sound investment and permanent presence in the Windy City. She has created a strong relationship with Equity's many bargaining partners in the Central Region that has resulted in continued growth for the theatre scene. Mr. Kennedy said of his long-time colleague, "Kathy has been a huge factor in the operation of this region. Her long tenure with

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## Meetings Set for 2011-2012 Season

The following dates have been set for Equity membership meetings in 2011-2012:

### Eastern Region

Friday, October 14, 2011 – 2 p.m.  
Friday, January 6, 2012 – 2 p.m.

### Central Region

Monday, October 10, 2011 – Time TBA  
Monday, January 9, 2012 – Time TBA

### Western Region

Monday, October 10, 2011 – Time TBA  
Monday, January 9, 2012 – Time TBA

### All Regions

The Annual Membership Meeting is Friday, April 13, 2012 at 2 p.m. Eastern Time, 1 p.m. Central Time and 11 a.m. Western Time. The Regions will be connected by telephonic hook-up in order that members in all Regions may hear the statements of candidates running for election.

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## Area Liaison Hotline system

Call 877-AEA-1913

Equity has a National toll-free hotline system for members who live in Area Liaison and office cities. The number is 877-AEA-1913 (honoring the year of Equity's founding). Each Area Liaison city has its own extension, where members can access news and information in their region.

**(1) Dial 877-AEA-1913**

**(2) Dial your city extension:**

811 Atlanta  
812 Austin/San Antonio  
813 Boston  
814 Buffalo/Rochester  
**815 Chicago**  
816 Cincinnati/Louisville  
817 Cleveland  
818 Dallas/Fort Worth  
819 Denver  
820 Detroit  
821 Florida – Central  
822 Florida – South  
823 Houston  
824 Kansas City  
825 Las Vegas  
**826 Los Angeles**  
827 Milwaukee/Madison  
828 Minneapolis/St Paul  
829 Nashville  
830 New Orleans  
**831 New York**  
832 Philadelphia  
833 Phoenix/Tucson  
834 Pittsburgh  
835 San Diego  
836 San Francisco  
837 Seattle  
838 St. Louis  
839 Washington DC/Baltimore



**ACTORS'  
EQUITY**  
ASSOCIATION 1913

**EQUITYNEWS**

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## Equity Rebuilds Core Membership Contracts Information System System Redesign Will Streamline Numerous Internal Operations, Improve Services

For almost two years, Equity has been building a vast, new enhancement to its information technology infrastructure that will radically streamline internal operations for the 49,000 member Association. The new, state-of-the-art system will be launched this fall and will vastly improve the way various Equity departments interact with each other and the membership at large.

Equity News checked in with National Director of Information Technology, Doug Beebe, to see how this massive project is going and to learn more about the new system.

**EQUITY NEWS: What is your role in this project?**

**DOUG BEEBE:** As the National IT Director at Equity for almost 14 years, I was the logical person to initiate and oversee this project. I inherited the system we are replacing, so I have long observed its functionality and the eventual need for an upgrade. This is a journey in information gathering and analysis, political juggling, brainstorming, breaking, fixing, and testing. A lot of hard work and a little bit of luck.

It was important to me that this not be an exclusive IT project, so an internal design team was formed – composed of a creative and talented mix of technology, membership, and contract administration staff — to help lead the project. In addition to my own team of IT professionals, I am very lucky to have Karen Nothmann, Joe DeMichele, John Fasulo, Tom Kaub, Dave Thorn, Russell Lehrer, and Joan Glazer by my side. If you bump into any of them at Equity – thank them for their tireless work.

**EN: What is the scope and size of the project?**

**DB:** A good information system reflects the work of its organization. This project is the first phase of enhancing our core Membership and Contract Administration systems. These systems track and manage our 49,000+ members, their status with the Union and their

**“...we are building a more modern, efficient solution to help us manage our members and their work.”**

employment in the Theatre. It is a major overhaul, moving to a web browser interface from a mainframe-type system. We have also migrated our accounting system to a new platform that will communicate with the core system.

**EN: What necessitated these changes?**

**DB:** The rapid change in technology has impacted almost all aspects of our daily lives. The same is true of Equity. When I became the IT Director in the late 90s, we were introducing email and a public website as “new” technology. Although we’ve expanded many services over the years, the core membership database has reached the end of its life cycle. The new system will offer more flexibility, rapid development, improved integration with other technologies, and the ability to facilitate communication and business process workflow. I guess that’s a lot of technical talk to say that we are building a more modern, efficient solution to help us manage our members

and their work.

**EN: What process did you go through to determine what kind of system Equity needs?**

**DB:** Companies often make the mistake of focusing exclusively on the technology itself and forget the most important part: the people who use the system. That was our starting point. Working with our Business Systems Analyst, Karen Nothmann, I conducted extensive internal interviews with staff in every office to gather feedback and ideas. We also sifted through hundreds of emails we’ve gathered over the years from members, especially regarding our Members Only web portal services. Some of the key technology questions involved determining what platform we would use, whether we would host the system in-house or through a provider, and whether we would hire outside developers to assist in the design and implementation.

After writing an in-depth RFP (Request for Proposal), and completing an extensive selection process, we decided to adopt a Microsoft Dynamics CRM platform, to bring the system in-house, and to partner with Broadpoint Technologies for development. Broadpoint has extensive experience with other unions, including the AFL-CIO, and has proven to be a terrific asset.

**EN: How many departments does this affect?**

**DB:** This project is all about managing our members and their employment, so the system will affect our entire staff. Because the current Membership and Contracts system had limited flexibility,

many fractured solutions developed over the years. The new system will help consolidate these solutions and offer a single, comprehensive backbone for all of our business processes.

**EN: What impact will this have on overall member services for the Union? What improvements will be most apparent?**

**DB:** The more efficiently our staff performs, the better the membership is served. That efficiency may be realized through improved communication between staff and members, workflows to guide the staff through our many business processes, and streamlining those processes through a more intelligent technology platform. By bringing the system in-house, we also hope to reduce the large price tag of hosting through a provider.

On a more visible level, we will be taking credit cards over the phone or in person, offering paperless billing and Equity News, new online Member and Employer Portals, and self-managed email subscriptions.

**EN: You mentioned that this is Phase I. What’s coming up in the future?**

**DB:** An information system is constantly changing. It must adapt to the goals of the Association, our members’ needs, and the world at large. But change is difficult for most organizations, and resources limited. So this phase is focusing on our core business processes. Future enhancements include: a re-design of CastingCall, our job search engine; expansion of our National Council and Board management system, and the expansion of both our Member and Employer web portals. This includes online payment and report submission by employers, electronic contracts, and more. Our work is never done, but I couldn’t be more proud to serve our Membership by helping Equity use technology in an effective, efficient way.

### Kathryn V. Lamkey

*continued from page 1*

Equity has provided the membership with leadership, wisdom and heart. Kathy loves this Union and its members and has devoted her working life to it in a way many of us cannot imagine. It’s the kind of quiet dedication that can all too easily slip away unnoticed. I will miss her terribly, the staff will, the community will, and so will the members.”

Executive Director Mary McColl echoed Mr. Kennedy’s sentiments: “Kathryn has been an important part of the leadership of Equity and we are grateful for all she has accomplished on behalf of Equity’s membership. Through

her creativity and thoughtfulness, she has been influential in the growth and prosperity of theatres throughout the Central Region and she has been a tireless champion on behalf of our members.”

A member of Equity since 1972, Ms. Lamkey joined the staff as a Business Rep in 1986. She was promoted in 1991 to Senior Business Rep. In 1996, Equity tapped her to be the Central Regional Director where she oversaw contracts administration, contract negotiation and related matters in 16 states in the middle of the country. She has served as the chief negotiator for such contracts as the MSUA, CAT, Children’s Theatre Company, Second City, several special agreements and spearheaded

the creation of the Midsize Contract. She has also served on the negotiating teams for the Production, LORT, COST, TYA and SETA agreements. Ms. Lamkey also supervised a staff of 20 business reps, contract associates and support staff.

Prior to joining Equity’s staff, Ms. Lamkey was a stage manager for theatrical and dance productions. She was the General Manager for Mordine and Company, the resident professional modern dance company at the Dance Center of Columbia College in Chicago. She has also directed and designed lights for educational, community and professional theatre. Her early career found her at Elmwood Park High School where for 14 years she taught social studies, directed

theatre, negotiated for the teachers’ union and coached girls’ basketball. She is a graduate of Eastern Illinois University and Columbia College Chicago.

Ms. Lamkey has long planned for her retirement and is excited by prospects the next phase of her life holds. “I am going to visit family and friends and stay that extra day or two, not worrying about getting back to the office. I think I’ll get back to my younger self and volunteer on political campaigns. And I’m considering joining a Senior Women’s Basketball team in Evanston. There’s a lot I want to do, including celebrating Equity’s 100th Anniversary with all of the wonderful Equity members and staff.”

## Three-Year TYA Pact

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free housing and a \$25 kitchen set up fee at resident theatres; increases in Stage Manager pre-production days in some circumstances and reduction of the number of three performance days permitted in a week.

In addition, there is an expanded Media rule to replace the current televising and recording provisions for weekly non-profit seasonal companies who will pay a Media fee of 1.5% in the first year and 2% in the second and third years based on the actor Tier 1 weekly minimum for the expanded Media terms.

Equity's negotiating team included Scott McGowan, Chair; Julia Breanetta Simpson, 1st Vice Chair; Madeleine Fallon, 2nd Vice Chair; Vernon Willet, Kaaron Briscoe, Barbara Callander, Nancy Slusser, Linda Carol Young, Roger Preston Smith, Peggy Thorpe, Stephen Pawley and Steven Alan Black (Alternate). Mr. Garber was assisted by staffers Kathy Mercado, Bradley Bartolo, Patrick Lee, Lawrence Lorczyk, Joe Erdey, Keith Sklar, Pearl Brady, David Westphal, Alessandra Williams-Bellotti and Zalina Hoosein. Tim Jennings, producer of Seattle Children's Theatre, was chief negotiator for PLOTYA.

## Marriage Equality, Health Care, Taxes Top Public Policy Agenda

The start of summer saw activity surrounding marriage equality and health care reform in California and New York.

New York State made history in June with the passage of its Marriage Equality bill on the eve of Gay Pride Weekend in Manhattan. In the six weeks leading up to the vote, Equity had a small but visible part. Equity was represented by Eastern Regional Vice President Kate Shindle at a New York City press conference and in the last week of debate about the bill, Ms. Shindle wrote an op-ed that appeared in the Huffington Post.

Californians kept a close watch on the New York proceedings because Prop 8, which eliminates the rights of same sex couples to marry, is moving slowly through the District 9 Federal Court, where it was ruled unconstitutional. Prop 8 is in the Court of Appeals waiting for a ruling from the California State Supreme Court, which will be announced in September.

California's AB 52, the companion bill to SB 810 (the state's single payer bill) was voted on in July and passed out of the Senate Health Committee by a 5-3 vote. AB 52, which would regulate and require approval of health care insurance rate increases, now moves on to the Senate Appropriations Committee. In June, a rally was held in San Francisco outside the convention center where executives of insurance companies were gathered for their annual meeting. The rally was coordinated by Labor United (of which Equity is a member) and several other organizations and was a big success. In New York, a single payer bill (S. 5425) was

introduced into the Senate and referred to the Committee on Finance, while a similar bill (A. 7860) was put forth in the State Assembly and referred to the Committee on Health.

On another front, a coalition came together rapidly over last month to push for improvements to the Qualified Performing Artist federal tax provision, known as QPA. The QPA became part of the tax code in 1986 as a result of our VITA Program's initiative. It permits qualified performing artists to deduct ordinary and necessary business expenses "above the line" to arrive at adjusted gross income (AGI). Equity, AFTRA, and SAG have engaged a lobbying firm to push for long overdue adjustments to the QPA. NY Senator Charles Schumer is poised to place the bill for consideration by the Senate Finance Committee. This bill would raise the current AGI ceiling to qualify for use of the QPA and would index that cap to inflation going forward. Furthermore, the bill would make the QPA available to married taxpayers filing jointly whose combined adjusted gross income is under twice that of a single filer. This number too would increase automatically with inflation. Americans for the Arts, an arts advocacy group with over 300,000 members, both organizations and individuals, also has agreed to endorse this bill.

The AFL-CIO We Are One Campaign will culminate in Labor Day Parades throughout the country. If anyone plans to participate in their local parade and would like instructions for creating signage or would like to receive some promotional items, please contact Stephanie Masucci at [smasucci@actorsequity.org](mailto:smasucci@actorsequity.org).

From the  
**PRESIDENT**

## Happy 100th Birthday

By Nick Wyman

Okay, what do you want for your birthday? Oh, c'mon, it's not every day you turn 100. Yes, Actors' Equity turns 100 on May 26, 2013; and although you were shamefully irresponsible about showing up during AEA's first few decades, you've been much better in recent years, so I'd like your opinion on how we should mark our Centennial.

AEA's Council, in keeping with their universal response to any issue, has formed a committee, cleverly named the Centennial Committee, which has been working on this for over a year already – but I'd like your input. (Remember that point from my last column about the running theme in these columns? "Participation and communication?" No? You have been reading these things,

right?)

My thought is that the Centennial should focus on two things: Education/Communication and Celebration. We need to let folks who are not in the business — as well as those in the business (especially our fellow members) — know who we are, who we've been and what we've done. AEA has done great things for Actors and Stage Managers over the years: rehearsal pay, bonding, sick pay, pensions, etc., etc. AEA has also taken a number of laudatory stands on social issues such as the Blacklist, segregation, marriage equality and AIDS. We need to spread that word. To that end, in addition to our website, we have a Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/AEA100](http://www.facebook.com/AEA100)); we have commissioned a coffee-table book; and we're

talking about such things as a touring exhibition of Equity history, walking tour podcasts of theatre districts, master classes across the country, and televised roundtable discussions of the Actor's craft.

We will also Celebrate. We hope to kick off our Centennial year with something splashy, perhaps a live outdoor event staged in Times Square. We're discussing the possibility of a gala to be televised nationally around the actual Centennial date in 2013. We particularly want to celebrate in the local Equity communities around the country; and I am eager for suggestions as to events/festivals we can focus on and partner with. In the meantime, get started on those aerobic exercises: it's not going to be easy to blow out 100 candles.

## Yes, You Can—Book Jobs Through EPAs and ECCs

By Melissa Robinette

(In the May issue of *Equity News* we introduced a series based on EPA/ECC success stories. In the June issue, we included stories from the Central Region. This month, we are focusing on members from the Western Region who have booked work as a result of attending Equity Principal Auditions and Equity Chorus Calls.)

Outside Business and Audition Representative for the Western Region, Ivan Rivas, reports that in 2010 the West had 318 Equity Principal Auditions (EPAs) and 115 Equity Chorus Calls (ECCs). Of those auditions Los Angeles had 87 EPAs and 53 ECCs while Las Vegas had 2 EPAs and 13 ECCs. The Los Angeles numbers do not include Orange County.

Two summers ago Ian Gould attended a combined EPA for the Great Lakes Theatre Festival and the Idaho Shakespeare Festival. With only one call back he booked the entire season for both festivals. That was nine months of work! In fact, one of the productions was able to remount itself for the Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival this summer.

Sandy Rosenberg has had much success with Equity Auditions and she has two stand out stories. She auditioned in Los Angeles in the mid-1990s for the out-of-town try out for *Jekyll and Hyde* and booked it. From that job she booked the original Broadway company of *The*

*Scarlet Pimpernel*. Recently she auditioned for *Menopause, The Musical* and that led to almost a full year of employment all over the country.

Councillor Kevin McMahon "dragged" fellow Councillor Doug Carfrae to the EPA for *Phantom Las Vegas* and Doug booked the job! (Thank you, peer pressure!)

One of the best stories I came across—In 1969, Councillor John Herzog auditioned in Los Angeles for this new musical that was sweeping the nation called *Hair*. He got the job, his Equity card and he remembers fondly, the dance captain was Kay Cole. He says, "I've never kept count but I believe I've gotten about half of my jobs from open calls in my life and I must have been on at

least 1,000 by now."

I spoke with Steven Gladini, freelance director and Artistic Director of Musical Theatre West. He said, "For the Musical Theatre West EPAs and ECCs I have the entire artistic staff in attendance at every audition because that is very important to me as an Artistic Director." I asked if he had any insight to help actors with auditions. He enthusiastically replied, "People book jobs that they didn't audition for through EPAs and ECCs. You never know. The audition is *your* time. Do what you do. *Show Me!* We want you to succeed."

(Do you have a story you would like to share? Contact [Helaine Feldman, helfel22@aol.com](mailto:HelaineFeldman@helfel22@aol.com))

## Does Equity Have Your Correct Address?

If you are out of touch, you could be out of luck. If Equity does not have your current contact information, including mailing address, telephone number and email address, the Union cannot give it out to agents or producers who may want to find you. You will also not be able to receive important announcements and other information from the Union, including dues notices, which could lead to a loss of membership. Each month, hundreds of issues of Equity News are returned because they have been sent to an incorrect address. The

Membership Department reports that over a recent six month period, 1,545 copies of Equity News were returned for bad addresses. This may not seem like so many when you consider the total number of copies sent, but when you take into account the cost of printing each issue and the cost of postage, the numbers add up.

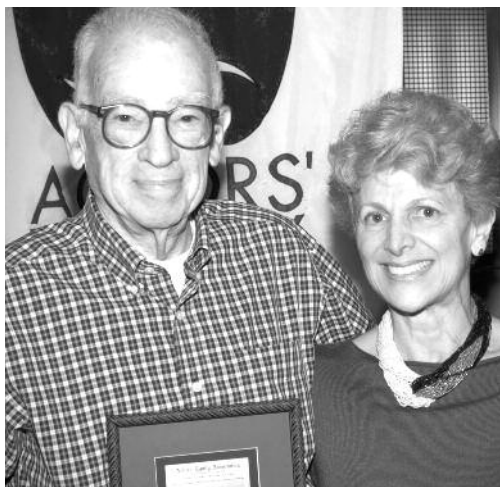
To update your contact information, you can call the Membership Department in New York (212-869-8530); visit your nearest Equity office or click on the Members Only section of Equity's website ([www.actorsequity.org](http://www.actorsequity.org)).

## Four Honored By Equity A Texas-Sized Accomplishment

### VITA Volunteer Awarded Honorary Life Membership

Veteran Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program volunteer Leonard Garbin has been awarded an Honorary Life Membership in Equity for 15 years of extraordinary service to Equity members. The presentation was made at the June 7, 2011 Eastern Regional Board meeting.

Reading from a statement prepared by Equity Treasurer and



Leonard Garbin with Equity Treasurer and VITA Coordinator Sandra Karas.

VITA Coordinator Sandra Karas, Eastern Regional Vice President Kate Shindle noted that Mr. Garbin was "a non-union VITA volunteer whose service to our membership rivals any of our own." For the last 15 years, he

"has devoted between 35-40 hours a week during tax season and one full day a week during the other eight months of the year, providing free tax assistance to our members. As all of our volunteers must do, he must train, study and take examinations each year to qualify in Basic, Intermediate and Advanced tax preparation. He goes beyond that,

however, by staying current with the ins and outs of our industry, what is and isn't deductible and how our members are faring in audit examinations. In addition, he is one of only a few who attends IRS update compliance reviews and he alone maintains the examination and volunteer certification records for our program each year." It

Mr. Garbin comes in early and stays late if necessary to make sure everyone receives help.

A standing ovation followed the presentation and Mr. Garbin, now an Equity member, took a bow.

### ACT's James Haire Receives Life Membership

"I attended the retirement celebration for Jim on Saturday, June 4 in ACT's Old Scene Shop," says Western Regional Director Mary Lou Westerfield. "The event was low key with guests from all corners of the theatre world, including ACT Board members and staff, many Jim's 'mentees.' Everyone had stories to tell about Jim and considering his 40 years at ACT, how could it be otherwise? The love in the room was palpable. Jim was surprised and visibly moved when I presented his Life



James Haire.

Membership in Equity. In a handwritten note I received the week after his retirement, he wrote, 'I can't really express adequately how deeply touched I was and how much the great honor of becoming a Life Member of Actors' Equity means to me.

To be noticed by my peers is so wonderful. Thank you, thank you. I'm still overwhelmed.' Quite the gentleman."

James Haire has been in the professional theatre for 50 years and was at San Francisco's American Conservatory Theatre (ACT) since 1971. He retired as the theatre's Producing Director in 2011.

### Donald Grody Dies Equity Executive Director 1973-1980

At press time, Equity received news of the passing of Donald Grody, an Equity member since 1952, who served as the Union's

Executive Director from 1973-1980. Further details will appear in the September 2011 issue of Equity News.

On press opening night of *Pippin*, the final show before Theatre Three begins its record-breaking 50th anniversary season, Area Liaison Pam Dougherty and members of the Dallas Fort Worth Liaison Committee surprised Jac Alder with a giant version of his AEA Life Membership card, which Council recently awarded.

Jac and his late wife Norma Young founded Theatre Three in 1962. He has been at the helm of the theatre ever since. He is one of the two longest continuously running Artistic Directors in American theatre, and has been a paid-up Equity member since 1972. Theatre Three was one of the first in Texas



(Top, l to r) Chamblee Ferguson, Bradley Campbell, Gregory Lush; (middle) Sharon Garrison, Sally Soldo, Jac Alder, Linda Coleman, Natalie King; (bottom) Pam Dougherty, Max Swarner, Connie Coit Kitchens.

to hire AEA members, and Jac began the regional movement to hire North Texas-based professional actors. "His loyalty and commitment to hiring AEA members is one of the reasons so many theatre artists are able to build professional careers in North Texas," said Ms. Dougherty.

After the presentation, Mr. Alder spoke briefly to the packed house, and left the stage amidst an emotional standing ovation.

### Honorary Life Membership Bestowed on Susan Cole

In honor of her dedication to affordable housing for actors, the Council has awarded an Honorary Life Membership to Susan Cole, who for more than 30 years worked at Settlement Housing Fund, which drafted the original marketing plan for New York's Manhattan Plaza. Western Regional Director Mary Lou Westerfield presented the honor at Settlement Housing Fund's annual fundraiser on June 1, 2011. Marisa Redanty, past president of the Manhattan Plaza Tenants Association, shared the occasion.

"Of all of Susan Cole's efforts to achieve affordable housing, perhaps the most significant to Equity was her contribution to the creation of Manhattan Plaza, a housing project in New York City which is the home of hundreds of members. When



Susan Cole flanked by Marisa Redanty (l) and Western Regional Director Mary Lou Westerfield.

Manhattan Plaza was being sold in 2004, Susan was our 'go to' person for information and anything we needed during our negotiations with the new owners," said Ms. Westerfield. "With the success of those negotiations, Susan

once again ensured that actors in the city would have a safe and affordable place to live."

"Susan Cole is one of the most incredible people I have ever met," says Marisa Redanty. "I think of her as a mentor. Though Susan is an expert in the world of affordable housing, what I admire most about her is her natural ability to connect with

others on a human level. She understands the needs of others. Whether she's talking to a developer or a resident, Susan is the same person. It's a quality that can't be learned. I am honored to know her."

### BRIEF NOTES

• **Joseph Ruskin**, who has served on the Equity Council continuously since 1979, has received the Screen Actors Guild's Ralph Morgan Award for distinguished service to the Guild's Hollywood membership. Mr. Ruskin was first elected to SAG's Hollywood Board in 1976 and served multiple terms for more than 20 years. He has served four times as 1st Vice President and twice as 3rd Vice President and also serves as a

Trustee on the SAG-Producers Pension and Health Board.

• The **Human Race Theatre Company** of Dayton, Ohio is celebrating its 25th Anniversary. The company presented its first production, *Count Dracula*, under the leadership of Kevin Moore, the company's first and still only Executive Director. *Count Dracula* featured Scott Stoney and Michael Kenwood Lippert, who remain Resident Artists with the company.

• A survey by the Research Center for Arts and Culture at Teachers College at Columbia University, directed by Equity

member **Joan Jeffri**, has found that while performers ages 62 and older tend to have low incomes and face age discrimination, they rank high in life satisfaction and self-esteem. Of those interviewed, 86% in NYC and 92% in LA would choose to be an artist again. The study, titled *Still Kicking*, was the result of interviews conducted with 219 performing artists in New York and 51 in Los Angeles, and was supplemented by data provided by Equity and the other performers' unions.

**Central Region**

**The Barn is Back; Still a Family Affair**

The Barn Theatre in Augusta, Michigan is one of the nation's oldest Equity resident summer stock theatres. It was founded in 1946 by Jack Ragotzy, an Obie award-winning director, and his wife, Equity member Betty Ebert Ragotzy. With \$875 in their pockets, the Ragotzys opened the theatre as the Village Players in Richland, Michigan. Three years later the company moved into its current home, an abandoned dairy barn located between Kalamazoo and Battle Creek. Jack and Betty nurtured the theatre through the years, seeing it become a Michigan entertainment destination. However, despite its illustrious past, in 2009 the theatre fell victim to the economy and declining revenues, and was forced to cancel its 2010 season.

The good news is that it has reopened for the 2011 season utilizing an Equity LOA-CORST contract. The theatre is now under the leadership of Equity member Brendan Ragotzy, son of the original producers, and his wife, Equity member Penelope Alex. No stranger to Barn operations, Brendan



literally grew up in the business, from his walk-on debut in 1966's *Oliver!*, to his work as a stagehand, spotlight operator, stage manager, actor, director, assistant producer, and now Producer/Director. He said that having to announce the closing "broke our hearts." And he is delighted to be back. "My family's theatre is a huge source



of pride for me for many reasons," he says, "but the biggest is that we continue to present quality productions—and, frankly, we wouldn't want to do theatre not being an Equity house. The quality is, simply put, much higher employing Equity actors. We are proud to employ at least 11 Equity members per

show, all summer long. I also get immense satisfaction from witnessing the growth of our Equity Membership Candidates as they learn from our resident

Equity members and to signing them to their first contract," he continues. "Because we have an Equity theatre, they are able to learn and develop their craft from our Equity performers, and gain invaluable training and experience necessary to becoming working Equity performers."

Equity member Roy Brown is

"Working in summer theatre stretches you as an actor," he adds. "Especially as a resident, you typically are cast in five to seven shows a summer playing a multitude of different characters. In 2007, my age range went from 28 to 80. I played a son in one show and a father in the next. This summer I have already grown a big shaggy beard and shaved it off for the next two shows. I'll probably have to grow it back and add some gray before the season is finished. I wouldn't have it any other way."

Roy and his wife, Emily May Smith, played opposite each

other this summer in *Chicago*. "Meeting my husband Roy Brown here is just one of the many special moments the Barn holds in my heart," she says. "I earned points at the Barn Theatre from 2002 to 2004, when I earned my Equity card and I am now in my third year as a resident Equity member. It's wonderful to be part of an Equity house with such an amazing history and to be a part of the community here in Augusta, my 'home away from home.' It's particularly special to hear from the patrons how happy they are that the Barn is

back and what an important place it holds in their lives. Many patrons have been coming to the Barn for longer than I've been alive."

Robert Newman's relationship with the Barn began 30 years ago, in the summer of 1981 when I drove from LA to the small town of Augusta, Michigan to work as an apprentice and earn the right to become a member of Equity. Last year, when Brendan called and told me they would not be opening the Barn, it was devastating. I simply could not believe that this historic theatre would be closing its doors forever." He was "thrilled" when he heard that the theatre would be reopening and he was asked to play Don Quixote in the first musical of the season, *Man of La Mancha*. "I arrived on a beautiful day in mid-June and the theatre was once again alive. There were young, talented, energetic apprentices everywhere and a full slate of Equity performers leading them both on-stage and off as they worked to earn the right to join this great Union and begin their own professional careers. The Barn is a fully functional Equity professional theatre that brings quality productions to the people of southern Michigan. It deserves to be fought for."

**Eisenberg Scholarship Goes to Michigan Grad**

By Stephanie Masucci  
Communications Associate

Desiree Oakley, University of Michigan Class of 2011, has been named the recipient of the AEA/Alan Eisenberg Award Scholarship. She is the fifth graduating student to receive the award, which was created in honor of former AEA Executive Director Alan Eisenberg, an alumnus of the school. The award, in the amount of \$5,000, is given to a graduating senior in the University's Musical Theatre Program.

"Receiving this award is one of the biggest blessings in my life. After knowing my summer plans, I wanted to move to New York City right away, but made plans to do otherwise since I couldn't afford it. This award is allowing me to move immediately—and to live here for the first few months without the stresses that lack of funds can bring. Because of Mr. Eisenberg, I can freely focus on my passion, without the worry of finding a temporary job or scrounging for money. I am undeniably grateful," she exclaimed.

Ms. Oakley performed in her first musical theatre production

when she was eight years old and decided to make this her career when she was 16. She learned about the Eisenberg Award when Mr. Eisenberg visited the University to talk about AEA.



Desiree Oakley.

Ms. Oakley explained that her time as a musical theatre major at the University of Michigan changed her life. "This award is the absolute best 'first step' into the real world. I am so thankful. And so far, it's more than I could have ever dreamed of." Ms. Oakley can be seen this summer performing "Ariel" in *The Little Mermaid* at Music Theatre of Wichita (August 5-7 and 10-14).

**A LOOK BACK**

**75 Years Ago  
July/August 1936**

- Equity reports that more than 50 summer stock companies are in operation in early July and, according to the Equity newsletter, "it is believed that at the peak of the season there may be 75 in the eastern area, from Delaware to Maine, alone."

- The International Union of Persons Connected with the Stage, an organization to which Equity belongs, is dissolved. This is an early coalition of actors' organizations from all over the world (similar to today's International Federation of Actors) formed to discuss mutual problems.

- An editorial in the August issue of the Equity magazine calls for government subsidy for the theatre and the establishing of a National Theatre with, "possibly, a seat in the Cabinet for a Secretary of Fine Arts."

**50 Years Ago  
July/August 1961**

- The Equity Library Theatre (ELT) Children's Theatre in

association with the New York Shakespeare Festival and under the auspices of the NYC Department of Parks performs *Niccollo and Nicollette* at the Wollman Rink in Central Park. This is the first attempt in New York City to present free, professional theatre to children.

- Employment for Equity members through USO tours continues, as a unit bearing the title "Broadway, USA-1961" leaves for the Mediterranean on July 24 to begin a European tour.

**25 Years Ago  
July/August 1986**

- Equity strongly protests a tax bill detrimental to freelance employees working under multiple employers in the entertainment industry. The proposed bill includes elimination of itemized deductions, change in deductibility of out-of-town living expenses, taxing of unemployment insurance from the first dollar and elimination of tax averaging. In a joint letter to President Ronald Reagan, the leaders of the theatrical unions write: "We urge you to

renew your personal interest in the fate of your fellow performers and union members and help us prevent this grave injustice."

**10 Years Ago  
July/August 2001**

- Equity supports the rehabilitation of the long-vacant Biltmore Theatre in New York and the subsequent tenancy of the Manhattan Theatre Club. (The theatre finally opens in 2003 and in 2008 is renamed in honor of Broadway publicist Samuel J. Friedman.)
- Equity mounts a boycott of an upcoming national tour of a non-union production of *The Music Man*. The 40+ week tour began rehearsals in New York in August.

**Answers to Musical Quiz**

- B. The soldier's helmet is bothering him.
- E. The Champions danced their way through "Summer in Fairview Falls."
- C. Thomas Jefferson kept the weather records for Congress.
- A. Berlin's "Heat Wave" (*As Thousands Cheer*) came up from Martinique.
- D. "All My Trials" gave Heyward lyrical cues for "Summertime."



# NATIONAL NEWS

## Boston

### Spring in Boston: Theatre in Bloom

By Donna Sorbello  
Boston Liaison Committee

Three annual spring events signified the thriving theatre scene in Boston: The Independent Reviewers of New England Awards (the IRNES), The Boston Theatre Marathon, and the Elliot Norton Awards.

On April 25th, the IRNE committee, comprising more than 14 local theatre reviewers dedicated to covering every production that is mounted in the New England area, hosted the awards at the Boston Center for the Arts. Forty-eight—yes, count ‘em—48 awards were distributed; many going to local AEA actors including Tommy Derrah, Karen MacDonald, Will Lyman and Anne Gottlieb, all Boston favorites. Spiro Veloudos, Artistic Director of Lyric Stage, was honored with a Best Director Award. Huntington Theatre came away with twelve awards honoring artistic efforts for *All My Sons*, *Ruined*, and *Vengeance is the Lords*, while American Repertory Theatre garnered six awards for its production of *The Blue Flower*. The IRNES began in 1999, originated by Beverly Creasey (writer for *Journal Newspapers*) and Larry Stark (*Theatre Mirror*).

On May 22nd, the Boston Theatre Marathon, a day of 50 ten-minute plays by local playwrights held at Huntington’s Calderwood Theatre, delighted and surprised audiences with its comic and dramatic range. The prior day “warm ups” offered readings of four longer plays by New England writers. Through a Theatre Authority agreement, many AEA actors performed this spring in the Marathon’s 13th season, with all proceeds going to the Theatre Community Benevolent Fund. Boston Playwrights’ Theatre Artistic Director, Kate Snodgrass, began this smorgasbord of drama and the event has been magically coordinated from its onset by Marc Oliver, production coordinator of Boston Playwrights Theatre. Nobel Laureate Derek



Members volunteering at the Food Bank are (standing, l to r) Alexandra Matthew, Tuii Eva Rebane, Laura Benitez (EMC), Ray Renati (BAAC); (front) Dyan McBride, Michael Patrick Gaffney (BAAC), Les Reinhardt (BAAC).

## San Francisco

### Members Volunteer at Community Food Bank

Bay Area Equity members and Membership Candidates volunteered on Monday, June 13, 2011 at the Alameda County Food Bank. Les Reinhardt, Michael Patrick Gaffney, Alexandra Matthew, Ray Renati, Dyan McBride, Laura Benitez (EMC) and Eva Rebane spent the afternoon working the conveyer belt and bagging approximately 4,000 pounds of

oranges.

The Alameda County Community Food Bank has been in business since 1985. It is the hub of a vast collection and distribution network providing food for 275 non-profit agencies in Alameda County. In 2010, the Food Bank distributed 20.1 million pounds of food—52% of it fresh fruits and vegetables.

Walcott founded this theatre for Boston University’s Masters Program in Playwriting.

On May 25th, at Emerson College’s magnificently restored Orpheum Theatre, the Elliot Norton Awards (lovingly called the “Norties”), were last but not least in this annual spring triumvirate. The Norton Awards were started in honor of Elliot Norton, the Boston critic who reviewed more than 6,000 productions for Boston newspapers, as well as for Boston’s WGBH, from 1958 to his retirement in 1982. Elliot Norton passed away in 2003 at the age of 100. Mr. Norton was, himself, a multi-award winner for his boundless work in theatre. The Norton Award originated as the Norton Medal and has since grown to over a dozen annual awards, selected by the 12

members of the Boston Theatre Critics Association. This year, again, Equity co-sponsored the awards and several local AEA members were honored including actors Johnny Lee Davenport, Stacy Fischer, John Kuntz (actor and playwright). A Special Citation was given to Wheelock Theatre in its 30th year, and the Norton Sustained Excellence Award went to Scott Edmiston, local director and university professor, for his continued skill and artistry in directing a plethora of diverse productions, all with inventiveness, and attention to his work with actors. Along with the Boston theatre community, the Norties were also attended by AEA Executive Director, Mary McColl, and AEA Senior Business Representative, Russell Lehrer.



AEA members Neal Moeller as Brick and Sheila McCarthy as Big Momma in Irish Classical Theatre’s *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. (Photo: Gene Witkowski)

## Buffalo-Rochester

### Equity Actors Shine at Annual Artie Awards

By Don Gervasi, Area Liaison

The 21st Annual Artvoice Theatre Awards honoring local productions from the 2010-2011 theatre season were held at the Town Ballroom in Buffalo, NY on June 6, 2011. The “Arties” were started in 1991 by Anthony Chase, Theatre Editor of *Artvoice*, a free weekly newspaper dedicated to the arts in Western New York. All proceeds from the evening (along with proceeds from area theatres’ sale of red ribbons) go to Benedict House, which provides non-discriminatory residential housing opportunities and supportive services for persons living with AIDS. As always, the evening was emceed by Mr. Chase, Lisa Ludwig, Doug Weyand and AEA Member Norm Sham, with music direction by Michael Hake.

Equity members had quite a presence at the Arties this year. Member Christian Brandjes received the award for Outstanding Actor in a Musical playing Henry Higgins in MusicalFare Theatre’s production of *My Fair Lady*, while member Barbara Link LaRou took home Outstanding Actress in a Play for her portrayal of Katherine Cornell in Kavinoky Theatre’s *The Grand Manner*. (Twenty years ago she also won the very first Artie in the same category.) Usually nominated for musicals, member Sheila McCarthy was awarded the Artie for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Play for playing Big Momma in Irish Classical Theatre’s *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*.

AEA member Eileen Dugan received Outstanding Direction of a Play for Shakespeare in Delaware Park’s all-female

*Macbeth* (which also won for Outstanding Production of a Play). *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (MusicalFare Theatre) got the Artie for Outstanding Production of a Musical and was directed by Equity member and Buffalo native Greg Stuhr (who played Vice-Principal Panch on Broadway).

Two members received the Katherine Cornell Award for Visiting Artists: Kate Konigisor, who played the title role in Shakespeare in Delaware Park’s all-female *Macbeth*; and Sally Struthers for appearing as Mayor Matilda Hyde in *All Shook Up!* at Artpark.

Other AEA members nominated for Arties were Ellen Horst (Mrs. Higgins in *My Fair Lady*, MusicalFare Theatre), Saul Elkin (Direction, *Lebensraum*, Jewish Repertory Theatre) and Richard Lambert (Outstanding New Play, *Fillmore*, New Phoenix Theatre).

Under the musical direction of Michael Hake, the 2011 Artie Awards Memorial Choir (Kerry Kate Abel, Chris Kelly, Kevin Kennedy and Katy Miner) sang “Infinite Joy” by William Finn, in honor of longtime Equity member Emanuel “Manny” Fried who passed away in February, just a week shy of his 98th birthday (three months older than Equity!). Manny was a respected union organizer, political activist, writer, teacher, mentor and actor who devoted his life to fighting for working class rights—and his Equity dues were paid in full!

Over 500 people attended this year’s Artie Awards, with almost \$12,000 raised for Benedict House. Over the years the Artvoice Theatre Awards (and the connected sale of red ribbons) has raised over \$200,000 for AIDS-related causes.

**New York**

**Broadway Bares' "Masterpiece" Brings \$1 Million to BC/EFA**



by Tony Award-winner Jerry Mitchell, *Masterpiece* was conceived and directed by Equity members Josh Rhodes and Lee Wilkins, leading a team of 13 choreographers. Since its first performance in a small New York City club in 1992, where eight dancers raised \$8,000, 21 editions of *Broadway Bares* have raised more than \$8.6 million for BC/EFA.

*Masterpiece* opened with the original number "Going, Going, Gone" sung by (1) Tony Award-winner Beth Leavel, who then

Whoever said art museums are boring was not at the Roseland Ballroom on June 19, 2011 for the presentation of *Broadway Bares XXI: Masterpiece*. Nearly 6,000 ticket buyers packed the house, raising \$1,103,072 for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS.

From Whistler to Warhol, the production featured 192 New York dancers in 14 numbers as some of history's



introduced BC/EFA's own "David," (2) Tony Award-winner David Hyde Pierce. The works of 12 master artists were depicted in various states of undress, vaudeville and dance. For the grand finale, (3) Tony Award-nominee Patina Miller from Broadway's *Sister Act* brought down the house with the



most famous paintings came to life in ways whimsical, sensual and erotic. Executive produced

entire cast for a representation of George Seurat's "A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte." Guests included Judith Light, Rory O'Malley, Jim Parsons, Roger Rees, Christopher Sieber and a rare appearance, in the flesh and off the page, from New York Post columnist Michael Riedel. Hats and much more off to the scores of Equity dancers who participated in the event, with a special salute to Equity Stage Managers Richard Hester and Jennifer Rogers.

**Buffalo/Rochester**

**Annual Meeting Is September 19**

The Buffalo/Rochester AEA Annual Meeting will be held from 7-9 p.m. on Monday, September 19, 2011 at Empire State College, Room 308 in the Apple Tree Business Park, 2875 Union Road, Cheektowaga, NY. Don't forget to bring your AEA card.

Members will meet Business Representative Tripp Chamberlain, discuss the Buffalo/Rochester Special Appearance Agreement due to expire in August, and select members to serve two-year terms on the Liaison Committee. All members who wish to serve on the Liaison Committee must acknowledge

eligibility and willingness to serve, either in person at the meeting or in writing. For more information about serving on the Committee or to submit agenda items, contact Liaison Committee Chair Don Gervasi ([dongervasi@gmail.com](mailto:dongervasi@gmail.com) or (716) 901-6086).

The Buffalo/Rochester Liaison Committee would like to hear from all AEA members in the area. If you would like to receive emails about upcoming meetings, events, casting notices or information about serving on a subcommittee, contact Don Gervasi ([dongervasi@gmail.com](mailto:dongervasi@gmail.com)) or check on Facebook.

**New York**

**"Merchant of Venice" Receives Diversity on Broadway Award**

**Mayoral Proclamation Sets June 7 as Diversity on Broadway Day**

The Public Theater's acclaimed production of *The Merchant of Venice* received AEA's Extraordinary Excellence in Diversity on Broadway Award for the 2010-2011 season. The Award, presented by the Eastern Region Equal Employment Opportunity Committee, honors and encourages those who actively promote the goals of diversity, inclusion and equal opportunity for those who work in the theatre. Public Theater Artistic Director Oskar Eustis accepted the award for the production at the Equity offices on June 7, 2011.

The presentation coincided with a Mayoral Proclamation, presented by NYC Media and Entertainment Commissioner Katherine Oliver, designating June 7 as Diversity on Broadway Day.

Eastern EEO Co-Chairs Christine Toy Johnson and Julia Breanetta Simpson welcomed VIPs and guests saying "We want to thank Commissioner Oliver, Mr. Eustis, Mr. Eustis' family, and members of the cast for being here today, not only so that we can acknowledge your stunning production — a continuation of the commitment The Public Theater has always had to bringing diversity to New York City theatre — but also so that we can celebrate, together, the important and joyous impact that inclusion has on each one of us, every day."

Commissioner Oliver read the proclamation, which says, in part, that "AEA has provided unparalleled resources and support to our dynamic theatre community for nearly a century" and commends "everyone associated with Equity and the Extraordinary Excellence in Diversity on Broadway Awards for their commitment to ensuring that Broadway is as diverse as

our city and our country." In addition, "I [Mayor Michael Bloomberg] applaud this year's honoree for exemplifying the spirit of this award and for its invaluable contributions to our cultural preeminence."

Next, Mr. Eustis came to the podium to accept the Award:

"The Public Theater has gotten a lot of honors lately, but there are very few that I can accept as un-ambivalently and whole-heartedly as I can accept this award.

"There are three things I want to mention. The first, as you've already referred to, is the history of The Public Theater. The Public was founded on the idea that America is an inclusive, democratic nation and that its theatre is only as great as it is inclusive. And if it isn't about everybody, it doesn't deserve to be there.

"The theatre is the most democratic of art forms. What Joe [Papp] started in the parks and has continued in the parks, downtown on Astor Place and Broadway, is an ideal of what theatre can be - a place where society can imagine itself and imagine itself as a Community and a Unity. It has been the greatest privilege of my life to sit in the seat that Joe Papp and JoAnne Akalaitis and George C. Wolfe sat in and continue that tradition at The Public Theater.

"I also think it's fantastic to be able to accept this on behalf of the company of *The Merchant of Venice*. I just got off the phone with Mr. Pacino a few minutes ago who thanked all of you and kept saying 'wow,' 'wow,' over and over again.

"The production was amazing and it was amazing in a way that, of course, was inclusive and diverse (as all of The Public's productions are). But one of the things that was particularly

striking about *Merchant* is that Dan Sullivan (Director) understood that this play, which is set in such an anti-Semitic world, only makes sense if you understand that this is a play about dividing people into different races, dividing people into different classes, in order to extol the primacy of money and the primacy of the market. And when you measure everything by the primacy of the market, then it divides everybody. It divides races, it divides ethnicities, it divides religions, and it divides classes. It divides families. It divides men and women, man and wife. And that understanding of the heart of *The Merchant of Venice* was what made it such a scintillating and brilliant production.

"And finally, it's an incredible honor to get an award from this Union — from Actors' Equity — when at this moment (and let's not pull any punches), the idea of unionism in the US has been under attack for 30 years. The Right has done everything possible to equate the idea of collective bargaining and organized labor with thugs, with gangster-ism, with somehow extorting an inappropriate profit out of their inappropriate profit.


"We know this isn't true, and we know it isn't true as an economic truth. The fact that actors have organized to bargain collectively has made all of our lives better. I cannot imagine what I would do without the ten-minute Equity break! My life would not be possible without the 12-hour turnaround — I promise you. These are not things that producers would have given up without a struggle. And I can say that as a producer.

"It's important that Labor is powerful. It's important that Labor argues for things. But it's also important that I'm getting this award from a labor union, from a group of people who are theoretically just bonding together for economic advantage. It points to something much deeper, not only about Actors' Equity, but about the union movement as a whole: that unions are not simply about economic advantage. That unions are about understanding that we are all at our best when we see ourselves as part of a group. We are all at our best when we see ourselves as part of a community that is larger than just our single selves, that's larger than just our families, that's larger than our individual shows or individual theatres.

"Being part of something larger than ourselves is the promise of Unionism; the promise of Democracy; and the promise of America. I am very grateful that you've given this award to The Public Theater."

The presentation ended with a standing ovation.

**SAVE THE DATE!**



Mark your calendars now for the Central Region's 2nd Annual Equity Solo Performance Workshop: Saturday, October 15. The workshop will be held from 10 am - 2 pm at the Actors' Equity Building: 557 W Randolph Street, Chicago, IL 60661.

This year's workshop will focus on 4 creative stages: "The Idea," "Writing & Editing," "Development & Collaborators," and "Pre-Production" Workshop. Some attendees will be able to present performance excerpts for feedback from professional coaches!

Don't miss this exciting event!

*If you would like more details about this October workshop, please send contact information to Diane Dorsey via [Dmdorsey@aol.com](mailto:Dmdorsey@aol.com).*

## Labor Day: 2011

### New York

New York City's Labor Day Parade will kick off at 10 a.m. on Saturday, September 10, 2011. Equity members will assemble at 9:30 a.m. on West 44<sup>th</sup> Street between Fifth and Madison Avenues. There are free t-shirts or caps for all participants. Join working families and your fellow Actors and Stage Managers in the annual march up Fifth Avenue. Information: (212) 869-8530, x 330.

### Philadelphia

There will be a parade on Monday, September 5, 2011 along Columbus Boulevard starting near Washington Avenue and continuing to the Great Plaza located at Penn's Landing along the Delaware River. Equity, AFTRA and SAG members will gather at the Sheet Metal Workers' Local 19 Union Hall, Columbus Boulevard and Washington Avenue, between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. before the Parade kick-off at 10. From 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. the Philadelphia Council, AFL-CIO and the Tri-State Parade Committee will co-sponsor a family celebration with refreshments, crafts, music and activities for the kids at the Great Plaza, Penn's Landing. If interested in participating, email: [phlliaisoncommittee@yahoo.com](mailto:phlliaisoncommittee@yahoo.com).

### Buffalo/Rochester

Members are invited to ride the AEA-IATSE Labor Day Parade float on Monday, September 5. The parade begins at the Buffalo Irish Center on Abbott Road near Stevenson Street and continues into Cazenovia Park. Afterwards, friends and family are invited to the AFL-

CIO Picnic for food, fun and Equity t-shirts. For more information on when and where to meet, contact Parade Committee Chair Don Gervasi at [dongervasi@gmail.com](mailto:dongervasi@gmail.com).

### Kansas City

Kansas City has planned a weekend full of Labor Day events. On Friday, September 2 from 7-9 p.m. at KCMO, 2018 Baltimore, there is the Mid-America Arts Alliance's first *Live! in the Crossroads Cel-LABOR-ation*, an ongoing multi-media presentation highlighted by a stage reading of organized labor-related materials from theatrical literature, screenplays and journalism. This is presented in association with EARTH (Equity Actors' Readers' Theatre) and members of other performer unions. (The EARTH performances are under the Members Project Code.)

On Saturday, September 3, beginning at 6:10 p.m. at Kaufman Stadium members are invited to take advantage of significant savings on ticket prices for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Labor Union night at "The K" to watch the Kansas City Royals take on their divisional rivals, the Cleveland Indians, at Kaufman Stadium.

On Monday, September 5 at 11 a.m. at Union Station, KCMO, members of AEA join fellow performer union members marching in the annual Labor Day Parade. Following the parade, at 1 p.m., there is the Labor Day Community Picnic on the front lawn at Liberty Memorial Park featuring live music, clowns, inflatables and refreshments. BYOP (picnic basket). Information: [KipNiven@gmail.com](mailto:KipNiven@gmail.com).

### New York

## Join Performers for the Cure to Help Fight Breast Cancer

Equity member Anne Fizzard will be leading the team, Performers for the Cure, in the Komen New York City Race for the Cure in Central Park on Sunday, September 18, 2011. This is the 17th consecutive year that a team of female and male performers, Equity, AFTRA, SAG and family and friends, will run or walk in the Race. The money raised through the Race funds vital education, screening and treatment programs for

underserved women in the tri-state New York metropolitan area and will support the national search for a cure.

To register to be part of the team, or to make a contribution, you may do so online at [www.komennyc.org](http://www.komennyc.org). Click into "Race for the Cure," then "Join a Team" and follow the prompts. The registration fee is \$40. Deadline for all online team registrations is Tuesday, September 6 at Noon.



Equity members and friends celebrate a special occasion with Roger Allan Raby (c).

### Houston/Galveston

## AEA Stage Manager Celebrates 50 Years of Union Membership

By Rebecca Skupin  
Stage Manager, former member of Houston/Galveston Liaison Committee

On Monday, June 20, 2011, Houston-Galveston Area Equity members, along with members of IATSE Local 51 and the staff of Theatre Under

the Stars, celebrated the 50th anniversary of Roger Allan Raby joining Actors' Equity Association. The evening was hosted by four of Roger's Assistant Stage Managers, both past and present—Terry Cranshaw, Debs Ramser, Lynda Radisi and Rebecca Skupin—in conjunction with

TUTS and Nicole Young.

Local Equity membership presented Roger with a crystal award, engraved with the Actors' Equity logo and his years of service. He was also honored by Local 51 with a gold Local card making him an honorary member of the Houston Local. There were readings of two Roger-themed poems, written by conductor Robert Linder and Equity News puzzle creator Jim Bernhard. Finally, Roger spoke of his years of Equity work both as a performer and a Stage Manager and of how grateful he is to still be a working member of Actors' Equity Association.

(In the Theatre Under the Stars' 2011-2012 season, Roger will be Production Stage Manager for *Urban Cowboy*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Irving Berlin's White Christmas* and *Annie*. Additionally, he will be directing *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*, his second mounting of the show for TUTS.)

### New York

## Shubert Alley Welcomes Two-Legged Stars and Their Four-Legged Friends



Thousands of animal lovers descended on Shubert Alley on July 9, 2011 for *Broadway Barks 13*, the Broadway community's annual pet adopt-a-thon. Founders Bernadette Peters



and Mary Tyler Moore were on hand to host the event, joined by over 40 of Broadway's favorite stars to help dozens of homeless dogs and cats find "forever homes" and emphasize the importance of spaying and neutering.



"I'm so happy that the Broadway community embraces *Broadway Barks* and so grateful to our friends at Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS for joining me in producing the event each year," (1) Bernadette said. "It's a sweet day for all of us, working to make New York City a more humane place for animals. So many find wonderful homes, many of them with folks working right here on Broadway."

Taking the stage (2) with mutts of every variety were (3)

Sutton Foster, Adam Godley, Joel Gray and John McMartin (*Anything Goes*); Nikki M. James, Andrew Rannells and Rory O'Malley (*The Book of Mormon*); Reeve Carney, Jennifer Damiano, (4) Michael Mulheren, Isabel Keating and Patrick Page (*Spider-Man: Turn off the Dark*); Victoria Clark and Patina Miller (*Sister Act*); Bobby Cannavale, Elizabeth Rodriguez and Yul Vazquez (*The Motherf\*\*ker with the Hat*);

John Benjamin Hickey (*The Normal Heart*) and many others. Equity members served as "celebrity dog walkers," presenting a slew of lovable pups and armfuls of friendly kittens and cats from 27 shelters and rescue organizations in the

New York City area.

Since 1998, over 1,100 formerly homeless dogs and



cats, puppies and kittens have been adopted after making their Broadway debuts at *Broadway Barks*.



**New York**

**“Be Free and Imperfect”**

— **Barbara Deutsch, Career Coach**

**By Tom Miller  
Director of Outreach &  
Career Development**

On Wednesday June 22, 2011 Equity hosted a Career Development Workshop featuring Barbara Deutsch, Career Coach and Mentor. The Workshop provided tools to help navigate through industry challenges. Barbara spoke in depth about authenticity as a castable attribute. She asked “Can you find the courage to be free, imperfect and weird; then whether you get the job or not, know you represented your true self and not a demonstration of what you think they wanted?” She discussed how we unduly raise the stakes of an audition, making negative assumptions when we walk in and find the person we don’t want to be there is there – with their arm around the casting director. Barbara recommends noting when situational behavior leads to a negative presumption – this awareness will aid in

understanding that a particular reaction or behavior is often not grounded in fact, but based in fear and low self esteem. Can you “intervene and know you will be good no matter what?” The question “Tell me a little about yourself?” is often heard as a judgment and interpreted as “What haven’t you done?” We sometimes forget that people may like us and not care about our resumé.

**Tips:**

**Don’t Be Casual in Thoughts or Actions**

- Ask for what you want – be brave.
- If you are not embarrassed by what you don’t know or have – you can ask for anything.
- Things happen through enthusiasm.
- Stay connected whether you are working or not.
- Don’t sell yourself short.

**Free Yourself**

- Perfect may get you a

callback, but being free gets you a job.

- When you are asked a question, you are not on the witness stand, take a moment and find your breath.
- The person who is free will have a great time.
- Know your obstacles – your Achilles heel.

As a benefit of membership, Actors’ Equity presents free educational Workshops and Seminars for Members and Membership Candidates. The event was sponsored by the Eastern Region Membership Education Committee, Chair Mark Aldrich.

(For more on Barbara Deutsch visit the Equity website [www.actorsequity.org](http://www.actorsequity.org) *Education & Outreach link - Member Workshop & Seminar*)

*The products and services noted herein are provided as an informational service to AEA members and Equity Membership Candidates. This information is not intended to serve as an endorsement by the Association nor is any warranty or guarantee implied.*



**(From l) AEA staffer Ivan Rivas with Member Ed Committee members Susyn Duris and Cameron Oro at LA’s Tony Party.**

**Los Angeles**

**NYC Had Times Square; LA Had Rocco’s**

**By Maggie McColester  
2nd Vice Chair  
Western Membership  
Education Committee**

The 2nd Annual Tony Viewing Party, sponsored by AEA’s Western Membership Education Committee, rocked Rocco’s Tavern in Studio City on Sunday, June 12, 2011. LA Equity members and their friends, over 100 in total, cheered on our fellow members as the 65th Annual Tony Awards was broadcast on 13 large-screen TVs. The Committee provided light appetizers, and everyone enjoyed

15% off on food and \$5 specialty cocktails, including the “TonyTini,” the “Mormon Mojito” and the “Lombardi Lemon Drop.” Every member even went home with a Tony or AEA-related raffle prize.

Western Outside Business Rep, Ivan Rivas, emceed the festive evening and announced all the winners, while Western Office Manager Maura Murphy-Barrosse captured all the fun in photos. And when the Tonys were done, the party continued on with karaoke hosted by fellow member Eddie Driscoll.

**San Francisco**

**Bay Area Committee Offers First Aid Training Course**

The Bay Area Advisory Committee (BAAC) is offering a First Aid Training Course from American CPR from 3-7 p.m. on September 5, 2011 at the TheatreWorks Rehearsal Hall, 1390 Willow Road in Menlo Park. There will be two classes: OSHA Standard First Aid & Emergency Care and Adult, Child & Infant C.A.R.E. CPR. The training is open to all AEA members at a

cost of \$60 (due August 12). Payment may be made by cash, check or via PayPal. Information on payment will be sent when you register. RSVP at [BASMNNetwork@gmail.com](mailto:BASMNNetwork@gmail.com). If you require assistance with transportation, you may email BASM Network and carpools will be arranged. Deadline for enrollment and payment is August 12.

**New York**

**Stage Managers Network With Theatres, Producers**

The 5th Annual Off-Broadway Stage Managers’ Networking Event took place on June 10, 2011 in Equity’s Council Room. The five-hour event, co-sponsored by the Eastern Regional Stage Managers’ Committee and the League of Off-Broadway Theatres and Producers, provided the opportunity for 45 Equity Stage Managers to meet-and-greet 16 members of the League. Utilizing an informal, speed-dating format, Equity members were given five minutes with each League participant to learn about upcoming seasons, schedules and hiring practices, and to present their resumes for future consideration. Off-Broadway League participants included representatives from Atlantic Theater Company, Briarpatch Productions, DR Theatrical Management, La Vie Productions, Manhattan Theatre Club, New York Theatre Workshop, Playwrights Horizons, Second Stage Theatre, Signature Theater, Snug Harbor Productions and the Public Theater.



**Attending the Philadelphia Social are (l to r) Patreshettarlini Adams, Pat Sabato, Margie Price and Cheryl Mintz.**

**Philadelphia**

**Another Year, Another Successful Equity Social Event**

**By Julie Czarnecki**

For the second year in a row, the Philadelphia Liaison Committee hosted a successful social at Coco’s Restaurant & Bar. I had the pleasure of organizing the June 14, 2011 event which attracted more than 40 AEA members and Equity Membership Candidates from the Walnut Street Theatre, the Wilma Theater, People’s Light & Theatre Company, the Arden Theatre, the McCarter Theatre and Interact Theatre, among many other area companies.

Bruce Graham, recently returned from Chicago where his play *The Outgoing Tide* was having a successful run, was glued to the Phillies game as he nibbled on chocolate chip cookies. Stage Manager Pat Adams brought along the cast of the

Wilma’s *My Wonderful Day* and they were thrilled to meet and mingle with local artists. The homemade desserts were so popular that Scott Greer, who had been playing the Flea in *The Flea and the Professor* at the Arden, was seen leaving with several pieces of Jewish apple cake.

The atmosphere was warm and light-hearted. Attendees were eager to relax after performing in or stage managing their shows or just happy to have a night out with fellow Union members enjoying hot appetizers, drink specials and home-baked treats that Pat Sabato and I gladly provided.

Thanks to fellow Committee members Pat Adams, Lori Aghazarian, Tom Helmer, Paul Nolan, Dan Olmstead and Pat Sabato, photographer Cherie Tay and Equity for helping make the evening a great success.



**Remembering Gwen Verdon are (l to r) Paul Phillips, Tony Stevens, John Sefakis, Marge Champion, Donna McKechnie, Harvey Evans, Lee Roy Reams and Rachelle Rak.**

**New York**

**Gwen Verdon Remembered by Dancers Over 40**

Gwen Verdon was honored with a video tribute by Dancers Over 40 at St. Luke’s Theatre on May 23, 2011. “The audience was filled with a gaggle of gypsies from over 60 years of Broadway’s best, starting from 1947,” said DO40 President John Sefakis. There were some rare clips, some interviews, some not-so-new-videos and friends from all over. It was,

according to Mr. Sefakis, “all Gwen—all the time.”

Speakers included Gwen’s friend and stage manager, Paul Phillips, who flew up from Florida for the event and came with Gwen’s daughter, Nicole Fosse. Other speakers were Marge Champion (who met Gwen when she was seven; Marge, eleven), Donna McKechnie, the late Tony Stevens and Rachelle Rak. It was a wonderful evening with stories of the legacy and life of Gwen Verdon, as told by the people who were there—mostly members of DO40.

## South Florida

### Florida Stage: 1987-2011 - A Lost Garden

By Suzanne Clement Jones

On June 6, 2011 at 10 a.m. all of the Florida Stage staff gathered in the lobby of the Rinker Playhouse at the Kravis Center. We had just closed a world premiere of Carter Lewis' *The Cha Cha of a Carmel Spider* the night before, and 12 days later, we would be opening our summer production of *Ella*.



Suzanne Clement Jones.

In retrospect, one of the most unusual aspects of that meeting was that it started on time. By 10:05 a.m. we knew that Florida Stage would be filing Chapter 7 bankruptcy, and was closing its doors forever.

You will not find the answers here as to why Florida Stage ceased operations just shy of its 25th Anniversary season. The reporters, columnists and bloggers from South Florida, the nation, as well as the Florida Stage website, have looked at the course of events quite closely. (Do an internet search of "Florida Stage closing" and you'll find more than enough information.) But if you would like to know why the end of a company in Palm Beach County is such a loss to the South Florida region and to the theatrical community nationwide, you're encouraged to keep reading.

Florida Stage's roots actually go back to 1985 when Louis Tyrrell, armed with a small sound system and minimal sets and costumes all packed into a white van, founded The Learning Stage, a small theatrical troupe, which toured throughout Palm Beach County, bringing new theatre pieces directly to students. In 1987, the company, now known as Theatre Club of the Palm Beaches, began producing work for mainstage audiences—originally on the 2nd stage of the Duncan Theatre at Palm Beach College. The first production was *On the Verge*, starring a young actress named Nancy Barnett, who would go on to become the Managing Director of the organization. In 1991, the company renovated what was a German delicatessen in Manalapan into a 250-seat

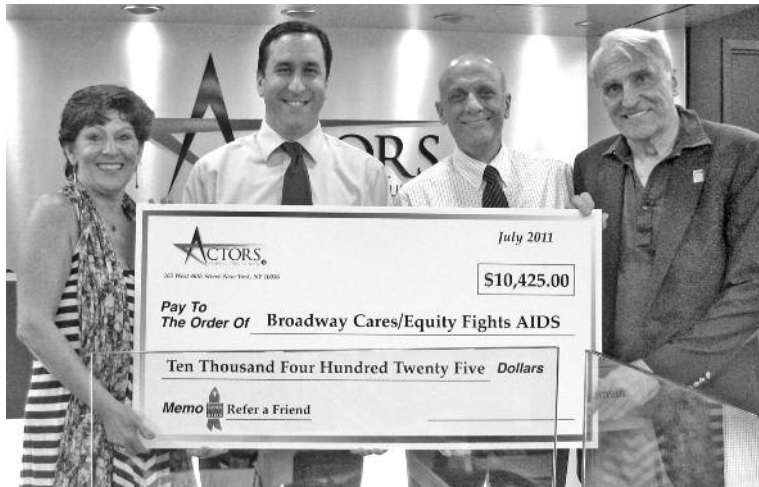
theatre, and took up residence there as Pope Theatre Company. The name change was in homage to Lois Pope, whose donation to the theatre made the new space possible. In 1997, the company changed its name for the final time—to Florida Stage.

While the names changed, the mission of the theatre did not: Florida Stage was committed to bringing engaging, innovative and entertaining

new and developing plays and musicals to the South Florida community and youngsters attending student matinees. In addition, the theatre continued its ongoing programs for young people: The Young Playwrights Festival began in 2000, the Young Voices Monologue Festival in 2003, the Gen Z Global Stage Initiative in 2007, and the Young Playwrights Mentor Lab in 2008.

Florida Stage, over the course of its tenure since 1985, worked with 62 directors, musical directors and choreographers, many doing multiple productions. One hundred and twenty-two scenic, lighting, sound and costume designers plied their crafts here, and again, many returned for subsequent productions. Four hundred and twenty-three Equity Actors from across the country and from South Florida played here. Were I to add the Actors engaged in the theatre's numerous play readings and the 1st Stage Play Festival, the number would likely swell to over 500. The most prolific actress, Elizabeth Dimon, would need four hands to count her productions with the company at 16; Dan Leonard would need a few more appendages as he performed here 29 times. Both are South Florida-based Equity Actors.

Florida Stage produced over 150 plays and musicals. Forty-two of these were world premieres; 17 were regional premieres. Playwrights who premiered their work here include Lee Blessing, William Mastrosimone, Deborah Zoe Lauffer, Steven Dietz and Pulitzer Prize winner Nilo Cruz. Musicals that had their first productions here include *Beguiled Again*, *Cagney!* and *Backwards in High Heels* – *The*



(L to r) Credit Union Chairwoman Denise Nolin, BC/EFA Director of Communication and Development Danny Whitman, BC/EFA Executive Director Tom Viola and AFCU Board Secretary (and Equity Councillor) Gil Rogers show the check presented to BC/EFA by AFCU.

## New York

### Credit Union's "Refer-a-Friend" Contributes \$10,425 to BC/EFA

In the six years since its launching, Actors Federal Credit Union's "Refer-a-Friend" program has donated more than \$10,425 to Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS—and contributed the same amount into members' accounts. The

program is simple: When a credit union member spreads the word about ActorsFCU and a friend or family member joins as a result, \$25 is donated to BC/EFA and \$25 is deposited into the member's Share Account.

## Ginger Rogers Story.

Florida Stage was the largest theatre in the nation dedicated to the production of new and developing work. That statement bears repeating: the largest theatre in the nation dedicated to the production of new and developing work. To reflect that mission, the 1st Stage Festival was established in 2007. The event gathered playwrights from across the country, giving them the chance to work on their new plays with talented directors, dramaturges and actors in a true spirit of collaboration. Many of the plays that started their development in the 1st Stage Festival went on to have full productions on the company's mainstage.

Actors, directors, designers and playwrights had found an artistic home here at Florida Stage. They say it was a special place where they found their work to be respected, cherished and supported. As a Stage Manager here for over 20 years, I would often be asked about this unusual collaborative atmosphere. The answer was easy. It came from the top. The respect, care, love and support that Lou Tyrrell and Nancy Barnett had for the creation of new work in the theatre permeated the entire administrative and production staff. They, in turn, nourished all the artists who directed, designed, wrote and performed at Florida Stage, and it showed in the work.

South Florida has lost a wonderful company, and all artists in the theatre have lost a garden where new work was grown.



The Actors Fund's Dan Kitowski flanked by (l to r) Luisa Amaral-Smith, Susan Shofner and Janel Badrina. (Photo: Trish Avery, SAG)

## Houston/Galveston

### New Friendships Forged at Tri-Union Health Care Workshop

By Luisa Amaral-Smith  
Area Liaison,  
Houston/Galveston

Local Equity, AFTRA and SAG members were invited to participate in an Actors Fund Workshop titled *Every Artist Insured: Understanding Health Care and Health Care Reform* on May 14, 2011. The workshop was presented by Dan Kitowski, Director of Health Services for the Western Region.

The Houston/Galveston Liaison Committee arranged for the free workshop to take place at Main Street Theater, a local beloved and popular Small Professional Theatre. The intimate space was the perfect setting to listen to the informative presentation by Mr. Kitowski.

The topics covered included finding health insurance options, getting health care when you are uninsured, government subsidized programs, and how the new health care reform law affects us now and in the future.

"The best advertising is always word-of-mouth. It's one thing for us to encourage potential members to join, but when a friend says how great the credit union is, credibility goes way up," says Nick Curzio, Director of Member Services. "And by sharing the wealth with BC/EFA, an outstanding organization, it's a great way for us to support the Broadway Community that's kept us growing for nearly 49 years," he adds.

Members are reminded that credit union eligibility extends to their entire family, including but not limited to spouses and significant others, children, siblings, and parents (Certificate of Relationship forms are available at [actorsfcu.com](http://actorsfcu.com) or with Member Services). New members must meet credit union eligibility.

"Refer-a-Friend" forms are available on the credit union's website, [actorsfcu.com](http://actorsfcu.com), and from the Member Services staff.

Additionally, Mr. Kitowski was happy to answer questions posed throughout his presentation. He also prepared a table filled with helpful resource materials and made his contact information available.

Positive comments, praise and expressions of gratitude for an excellent presentation filled the air at the conclusion of the workshop. And not surprisingly, the spirit of union and solidarity was clearly evident as new friendships were forged at this gathering which, as far as anyone could recall, was the first tri-union event hosted in Houston. We have resolved to continue our collaborative efforts with the local SAG and AFTRA branches to keep our members connected. The fact that we are all union members bonds us in a very special and unique way. The Actors Fund Workshop was an exciting way to launch our tri-union relationship.



**Jeanette Hartunian at the Teleprompter workshop.**  
(Photo courtesy of SAG member Larry Degala)

**Philadelphia**

**Teleprompter Workshop Draws Tri-Union Participation**

Over the past six months, AEA, AFTRA and SAG have coordinated a number of seminars and workshops for the Philadelphia membership of the three unions, including sessions entitled “Taxes and the Working Actor” and “Presentational Skills.” On June 20, 2011, 50 AEA/AFTRA/SAG members, along with ten Temple University students, attended a workshop on Teleprompter Skills.

Attendees listened to a presentation concerning the development and use of the teleprompter from the early days of TV up to the modern uses and applications that are now available. Many had the

opportunity to sit in front of a teleprompter to read from scripts provided by the TV affiliate NBC10. The instructor was veteran producer, station manager and general manager Paul Gluck.

Many thanks to SAG North Region Executive Frank Traynor for coordinating the event and to Paul Gluck and Patrick Gordon of the Department of Communications and Theatre at Temple University.

The Philadelphia AEA Liaison Committee will be continuing its coordinated efforts with AFTRA and SAG. Look for more workshops in the future as well as participation in the 2011 Labor Day Parade.



**Scott Emanuel and Ed Reggi as Grand Marshals of the St. Louis Pride Parade.** (Photo: Scott Lokitz)

**St. Louis**

**Members Work for Charities**

By Kari Eli

Stages St. Louis opened its 25th season with *A Chorus Line* and a check for \$25,000 to the Red Cross to benefit the Missouri Tornado and Flood Relief Fund. The cast presented the check to Red Cross Executive Director Cindy Erickson at the June 29, 2011 performance. Donations were accepted after each performance by members of the company and by the box office staff. In addition, a car wash was held and hosted by the cast at the Robert G. Reim Theatre. A big thank you goes out to the company for their time and efforts, as well as to the Stages audiences who, once again, demonstrated their overwhelming generosity.

On June 11, Equity member Anna Blair led Blair’s Buddies/Actors’ Equity Association in the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. Anna, a breast cancer survivor and member of the Liaison Committee, has worked tirelessly through the years in organizing the St. Louis Equity participation in this important national event. Whether walking or “sleeping in” for the Cure, members are grateful for her extraordinary efforts.

Equity Liaison Committee member Ed Reggi led this year’s St. Louis PrideFest Parade as the Festival’s 2022 Grand Marshall. Ed, a long time gay and lesbian rights advocate, is renowned in the city for his outstanding work on behalf of many deserving causes.

**New York**

**Derwent, Seff Awards Presented at Eastern Regional Board meeting**

Aaron Tveit was a surprise guest at the presentation of the 2011 Clarence Derwent and Richard Seff Awards at the Eastern Regional Board meeting on June 14, 2011 and agreed to act as co-host of the event with Councillor Emeritus and Equity Foundation President Arne Gundersen. Currently starring on Broadway in *Catch Me If You Can*, Mr. Tveit received a Derwent Award in 2009 for his performance in *Next to Normal*,

“blown away” by the honor—and the check. “Rent!” she enthused.

Santino Fontana’s Derwent Award was presented by casting director Jay Binder, who said, “There’s nothing this actor cannot do. He’s got intelligence, wit, humor and is an actor of tremendous skill.”

Mr. Fontana, recipient for his performance in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, was happy to be welcomed and recognized by the theatre community. He noted



**Richard Seff is flanked by Deirdre O’Connell and Reed Birney.**  
(Photo: John Quilty)

but was unable to accept it since he was in Seattle with *Catch Me*. So he dropped by at this year’s ceremony to officially claim his prize.

For this year’s presentation, all four recipients were in attendance and Mr. Gundersen took the opportunity to acknowledge the contribution of Anne Fortuno, Assistant to the Equity President, in coordinating the event.

First came the Derwent Awards for most promising newcomer on the New York metropolitan scene. Nisi Sturgis presented the award to Tracee Chimo, honored for her performance in *Bachelorette*, part of Second Stage Theatre Uptown’s series. Ms. Sturgis said she and Ms. Chimo had met ten years ago at the American College Theatre Festival as competitors for the Irene Ryan Award and became friends. She called Ms. Chimo an “incredible conduit for connection” and a “master of the moment,” with an “incredible ability to open herself to any character.”

Ms. Chimo said she was

that his career had come full circle—from his Broadway debut with the Roundabout (*Sunday in the Park with George*) to the production of *Earnest*, also produced by the Roundabout.

Marin Ireland, a fellow cast member of *In the Wake* at the Public Theatre, presented Deirdre O’Connor’s

Richard Seff Award (for best performance by a veteran character actor in a Broadway or

Off-Broadway production). She said her friend had “the quality to make everyone fall in love with her,” along with “charisma, charm and humor.”

Ms. O’Connor, in turn, said she was lucky to have lasted and survived in this business, but still



**Clarence Derwent Award recipients Santino Fontana and Tracee Chimo.** (Photo: John Quilty)

had much to learn.

Director Evan Cabnet presented Reed Birney with his Seff Award for his performances in *A Small Fire* at Playwrights Horizons and *Tigers Be Still*, part of Roundabout’s Underground series. He called Mr. Birney “humble” and “thorough,” saying he “sets the bar so high” and “strives always to be better.”

Mr. Birney thanked everyone for “letting me be the guy I came to New York to be.”

**Kansas City**

**Veterans Sought**

Attention all Kansas City-area Equity members and Membership Candidates: If you have ever served in the United States military—any branch, active duty, reserve, or National Guard—EARTH (Equity Actors’ Readers’ Theatre) wants to know if you would be interested in being a part of an upcoming script-in-hand, concert style stage reading of Thomas Heggen and Joshua Logan’s *Mr. Roberts*—honoring veterans of all service branches and experiences. We are committed to casting as many AEA members and EMCs as possible—who are also service veterans—for the reading.

The reading, scheduled just after Veterans’ Day will require a two-day commitment. We’ll rehearse (Table Work and

Positioning Rehearsal) from 4-10 p.m. on Sunday, November 13. Then on Monday, November 14, we’ll have a Tech/Dress starting at 3 p.m., followed by a brief dinner break before the 7 p.m. Half Hour, and the 7:30 curtain. All rehearsals and the performance will be in the Theatre/Auditorium of the Music & Arts Building on the campus of St. Teresa’s Academy, 5601 Wyandotte (between 55th & 57th, between Wornall and Brookside Boulevard). The reading will be presented, in association with Kansas City Young Audiences, under the jurisdiction of the AEA Members’ Project Code and with the overview of Equity’s Kansas City Area Liaison Committee.

If you’d like to help EARTH honor those who have given so much for us—by joining in this celebration of Veterans’ Day—contact Kip Niven: [kipniven@g-mail.com](mailto:kipniven@g-mail.com) or 816.289.3859 (cell).

**New York**

**AEA Members Attend Q&A With Eileen Fulton**



**A Q&A with Eileen Fulton draws a crowd.**

A Q&A *Conversation* with AEA member Eileen Fulton on June 16, 2011, sponsored by the Screen Actors Guild Foundation and

Women in the Arts & Media Coalition (WAM), drew members of Equity, AFTRA and SAG. Speaking to a full house in SAG’s

Leon Janney Board Room, Ms. Fulton spoke on topics ranging from auditioning for theatre and film to the art of perseverance and maintaining career longevity. The event was moderated by AEA member and past President of WAM Coalition, Leslie Shreve.

*Conversations* is an ongoing event of the Screen Actors Guild Foundation where high-profile actors share career and industry experiences with audiences of union members.

## Letters to The Editor

Letters received from paid up members on subjects of concern to Equity members will be considered and published as soon as possible. The Editor reserves the right to limit letters to 150 words and to select one or two representative letters when many similar letters are received. Letters must be signed, but names will be withheld on request for those letters which may affect members' employment. Signatures will not be withheld on letters antagonistic or accusatory, either implied or expressed, against other members. Opinions expressed in Letters to the Editor are not necessarily those of Actors' Equity Association.



### AN APOLOGY

Dear Equity:

This letter is being sent to you to clear up an issue I have recently settled with Actors' Equity, the professional Actors' Union. In our recent production of *Inherit the Wind*, co-produced with Subversive Theatre Company, my company, The New Phoenix Theatre on the Park, presented myself and 22 other actors for a limited run. I worked in the production without an Equity contract. My belief was that I did not need to write myself a contract because the building we performed in was owned outright by myself and the company as of December 2010.

In the past, it was presumed that if I were to produce a play, I wouldn't need a contract because producers in Buffalo could work for their own company without one. This, as it was later explained to me, was not the case. A member of Actors' Equity *must always* obtain an Equity contract to perform on any stage.

After a meeting held in New York on May 20, 2011, it was agreed that I would write this letter to you and to the Equity News, outlining the situation as a benefit to other union members that may be confused about their obligations to the union.

I am sorry for any and all confusion on my part to the union and all others affected. I know that my membership in the Union is important to me, and from this point on, an Equity contract will be obtained for any and all future productions, be it within my company, or as a guest on any other stage.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to apologize for my mistake.

Richard Lambert  
New Phoenix Theatre,  
Buffalo, NY

### HUGE STEP FORWARD

Dear Editor:

On June 24, 2011, the NY State Senate took an historic vote in support of marriage equality. With no residency requirements, any couple, gay or straight, will be able to get legally married in New York State, beginning in late July.

I watched live coverage of the vote on TV, crying like a baby. This is a huge step towards full citizenship for gays and lesbians. With a similar bill failing by 14 votes in NY just

two years ago, it was difficult to imagine that it could pass now.

But Actors' Equity knew that it could. Two years ago, Equity Council unanimously voted up a resolution in support of marriage equality, with many Councillors speaking beautifully about equality and fairness. Equity has taken moral policy positions before—on segregation, on the blacklist, on equal employment opportunity. It was an honor for me to cast my vote in honor of my relationship with my partner of over 20 years.

Thank you, Equity, for being on the side of the angels.

Francis Jue

### FOR MARRIAGE EQUALITY

Dear Editor:

On May 1, 2009 my partner of 13 years Scott Emanuel and I decided to get legally married in the state of Iowa. Living in the Midwest, we felt making the four hour drive to Iowa would mean something more than flying to Massachusetts, Connecticut or Vermont. We both realized that returning home to St. Louis, our marriage license would not be recognized by the state of Missouri due to a state constitutional amendment passed in 2004. However, that didn't stop us, nor did it stop the other 16 couples that also joined us on that historic day.

Marriage equality is and has always been about social and economic justice. And even though states may not officially recognize our Iowa Civil Marriage license, hundreds of unions, businesses, associations and corporations do recognize our legal relationship. This is what will change public opinion over time, sharing and living our stories about love, openly and equally.

Ed Reggi  
Proud Equity member  
since 2003

Member of the  
St. Louis Liaison Committee

### INFORMATION, PLEASE

Dear Editor:

For a documentary film about the making of the 1937-1940 ILGWU play *Pins and Needles*, the producers Leslie Berman and Barbara Toennies would like to hear from anyone with recordings or photographs, programs, reminiscences, information, opinions and commentary, and/or leads to others,

including anyone with a connection to the performances in New York or on the road who may have relevant materials. Please reach *Pins and Needles Documentary* by email – [leslie@leslieberman.com](mailto:leslie@leslieberman.com); by phone – (516) 492-5116; or by regular mail - P.O. Box 630, Woodmere, NY 11598

Leslie Berman

### GOOD NEWS

Dear Editor:

It's good news that Leonard Garbin, who works in Equity's VITA office, has been awarded Honorary Life Membership in our Union. Mr. Garbin, a "good-deed-doer," serves our artistic community most significantly by the model of his character: a gentleman of exemplary grace.

Kathleen McKiernan

### IN MEMORIAM

Dear Editor:

When I read the letter in Equity News, "Remembering Crandall Diehl," I was shaken, weeping.

When we were very young, Crandall and I toured the USA with Claire Tree Major Children's Theatre. Crandall warmed up with me every morning and learned a bit of Hanya Holm's technique since I had been in her Concert Company. When the tour ended, I introduced him to Hanya and later, he became her assistant on *My Fair Lady*.

From there, he was a major success, doing *My Fair Lady* for Hanya all over the world. Years later, we met and started our friendship all over again. I would go into NYC every spring, see theatre and connect with him. It was wonderful to talk about years gone by and people we knew and loved. So it was my great grief to see "Remembering Crandall Diehl." And I'm thrilled that we had those times together.

Keep dancing up there in the sky, Crandall Diehl, and choreograph and sing and be your very happy elegant self. I'll always remember you.

Ellen Albertini Dow

### IN MEMORIAM

Dear Editor:

I am deeply saddened to announce that Scott Robinson, founder and artistic director of Out of the Box Theatre Company, died on Sunday, April 24, 2011. Scott was diagnosed last autumn with cancer and was in St. Louis with friends and family while

## Musical Quiz

Summertime is often "Too Darn Hot," but there's something about warm weather that makes for good musicals. See what you know about these tunes and shows taken from *The Musical Quiz Book* by Laura Frankos, published by Applause Theatre & Cinema Books and reprinted with permission.

- Every character in the park scene painted by Georges Seurat (*Sunday in the Park with George*) complains about the heat. What, in particular, is vexing the soldier?
  - he's not in the shade
  - his helmet
  - that monkey
  - he's not in proportion
  - his companion's a bore
- Marge and Gower Champion, in a 1950s dance revue, once performed a number celebrating summer in what scenic spot?
  - Paris
  - Tahiti
  - Santa Monica
  - Cucamonga
  - Fairview Falls
- All true Broadway buffs know

that the members of the Continental Congress argued over the flies and the stifling heat in foul Philly. Which Founding Father actually did keep the Congress' weather records, a fact author Peter Stone worked into the libretto [of 1776]?

- John Adams
  - Ben Franklin
  - Thomas Jefferson
  - Richard Henry Lee
  - Stephen Hopkins
- Where did Irving Berlin's "Heat Wave" originate?
    - Martinique
    - Haiti
    - Cuba
    - Puerto Rico
    - Jamaica
  - You may think the livin' is easy, but this question isn't. What black spiritual did Dubose Heyward adapt for the lyrics of "Summertime" in *Porgy and Bess*?
    - "Go Down, Moses"
    - "Lonesome Road"
    - "Deep River"
    - "All My Trials"
    - "Motherless Child"

Answers on page 5

undergoing chemotherapy. On his fourth round, weakened by the disease and treatment, he had a devastating fall causing severe head injury followed by organ failure.

Despite cancer and the effects of chemo, Scott remained optimistic about his recovery and continued to work on his fall season. The company will tentatively proceed with his plans to produce a show in October, 2011.

I met Scott doing *Gypsy* in 1972. He was my dear friend and a wonderful "Uncle Scott" to my little boy, now 15. With a BFA from Webster College and an MFA from Brooklyn College, Scott was a Renaissance man, producing, directing, acting, running a catering company and developing an NYC Parks Department theatre program for kids. I celebrate his life as he would have wished.

Sharon Talbot, New York  
Dear Editor:

The last week of April saw the passing of fellow actor and director, Scott Robinson. Scott's love for music and theatre was a moving force for him throughout his career. After his major work as an actor, he became Executive Producer of the Lake Area Performing Arts Guild in Lake Ozark, MO. In 2007, he founded the Out of the Box Theatre Company in New York where older classics were reworked to a fresh new concept and older actors get the chance to play the roles they always wanted to do.

Scott never lost his passion for theatre. He adored the creativity involved in launching a show and every aspect in

between—from designing and building the sets, sewing the costumes, to directing and casting the actors. His ability to inspire and spread his love and enthusiasm for theatre was amazing. We all got swept up in his creative vision, got involved and excited by his projects and had our own love of the theatre renewed through him. We will miss him.

Connie Day

### Chicago

## Non-Councillors Fill Seven Seats on CRB

The following non-Councillors have been elected to two-year terms on the Central Regional Board: Principals: E. Faye Butler (incumbent), Diane Dorsey (incumbent), Karl Hamilton, Jesse Merz (incumbent), Michael Weber (incumbent); Chorus: Richard Strimer (incumbent), and Stage Manager: Kathi Karol Koenig (incumbent). They will be seated at the CRB meeting scheduled for September 12, 2011.

### Office Closing

All Equity offices will be closed on Monday, September 5, 2011 in observance of Labor Day. In addition, all offices will close early on Friday, September 2. (Check with your local office for the early closing time.)