

“Amateurs hope,  
professionals  
work.”  
— Garson Kanin

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## New York Audition Center to be Relocated, Renovated

Plans are underway to give the Audition Center, located in Equity's New York home in the heart of Times Square, a new look and more modern space. The Audition Center will be moved to another floor in 165 West 46th Street, the current home of the Audition Center and the National and Eastern Region Equity offices. The relocation will provide much-needed upgrades and improvements to the Audition Center and is sure to receive rave reviews when it's completed in 2013. Until then, the Audition Center will remain open in its

current location.

The announcement comes as a new agreement is inked between Equity and Newmark & Company, the property landlord of the 165 West 46th Street building (known universally as the "Equity Building"), for renovations and relocation of the Audition Center and some of Equity's National and Eastern Region offices.

Primary to the agreement is the relocation of the Audition Center to another floor. The overall design aesthetics for the new Audition Center will be

(continued on page 3)

## Equity-League Reach Tentative Agreement

### Increments Raised for First Time in 28 Years; Compensation Up; Extraordinary Risk Addressed

In early October, Equity and the Broadway League reached a tentative agreement for a new, four-year Production Contract running through September, 2015. Achieved in just 20 sessions, the new agreement includes improvements in compensation for the greatest number of Equity members, changes to Stage Manager work rules and important changes to safety and extraordinary risk.

Council, at its October meeting, reviewed the agreement and unanimously voted Yes to recommend ratification. At press time, the agreement has been sent to those Equity members who have worked on the contract during the last eight (8) years for ratification. Results are expected in early December. If ratified, the contract will be retroactive to September 25, 2011.

"Our Negotiating Team followed the 'focused and disciplined' strategy we had developed in preparation for the bargaining sessions and the result is

a strong contract that gained improvements in areas that hadn't been changed in decades," said Mary McColl, Equity's Executive Director and the Chief Negotiator for the contract. "We also achieved a very good compensation package for our members and addressed extraordinary risk language – two areas of significant importance. Overall, the contract is a win for our members, for the League and for the theatregoing public."

For the Negotiating Team, compensation was one of the top priorities. In a climate of economic uncertainty, this new agreement provides a 3% salary increase in each year of the contract. In addition, the Team achieved increases to the six month Chorus rider, which hadn't increased since 1983. For a Chorus Actor working a typical scenario (six month rider, one Principal understudy increment, a Chorus part, extraordinary risk and a media payment), these improvements translate into a 13.69%

salary increase over the life of the contract.

In addition, Per Diem will increase on full production and Tiered tours. Based on member input and careful consideration, the Team determined the money should go toward Per Diem for Tiered tours, and so negotiated a wage freeze in the first year with an increase of \$42 per week for Per Diem. For Tiered tours, Per Diems will continue to increase by \$7 per week the second year, \$14 per week the third year and \$7 per week the fourth year. For full Production Contract tours, Per Diems will increase by \$14 per week in each year of the contract.

Another economic achievement is the Principal term increment will be raised for the first time since 1989 and there will be an increase in the cap for sick leave. Stage Managers who are required to rehearse more than 12 hours a week will receive overtime payment, and the 2nd

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### Dues May Be Paid Online

**Reminder:** Equity continues to offer an option for online payment of basic dues and initiation fees. To make payments online, visit the Equity website, [www.actorsequity.org](http://www.actorsequity.org), then (1) log on to Members Only, (2) go to the "My Profile" link in the left menu, and (3) go to "Financials." You can also click

on the Pay Dues icon. If you are not already registered with Members Only, you must do so first by following the instructions on the screen. Once the electronic transaction is processed and credited to your account, a new Equity card will be promptly mailed to you by the Membership Department.

## New Hampshire + Iowa = The 2012 Nominating Committee

By Brian Myers Cooper  
Chair, Election Procedures Committee

We're already knee-deep in the process of picking candi-

dates for the highest office in the land, and I don't mean the White House! In 2012 all the AEA National and Regional Officers plus 17 Council seats will be up for grabs, and the Nominating Committee has the first say in who runs. It's sort of like the New Hampshire caucus in that they help shape the slate of candidates. The best news is that you can serve on the Nom Com (as it's affectionately known) in your region, and maybe the National Joint Officers Nominating Committee (or JONC, for short), too.

The Nom Com and the JONC act as filters to help inform the election process. The Committees interview prospective candidates and select a slate of nominees for the various Council and Officer seats available in this year's election. Serving on the Nom Com is a great way to delve into the inner workings of Equity's leadership and hear firsthand from the people who want to lead Equity for the next three or five years.

The Nom Com consists of Councillors in each Region, and approximately two to three times as many members-at-large, and

the JONC comprises Nom Com members from all three Regions. These members-at-large are selected at the January 2012 Membership Meetings: Eastern—January 6; Central and Western—January 9. To serve, you need to be paid up and eligible under one of the three employment categories: Principal, Chorus or Stage Manager. You don't have to be at the Membership Meeting if you send a letter or email of acceptance to the Committee/Board Secretary in your Region's office city before the meeting and have someone nominate you from the floor. You don't even have to live in an office city because you can serve via teleconference!

The time commitment is short—just a few weeks of interviews and deliberations from late January through late February, so Nom Com is great for smart, politically inclined members who can't commit long term but who still want to get involved and make their mark on the future of Equity. Contact your Regional Office if you have any questions about the Nom Com or JONC.

## Urban Broadway Series Goes Legit

### Equity Inks Deal With David E. Talbert

Equity and David E. Talbert Presents (David E. Talbert, producer) have successfully negotiated the groundbreaking Urban Broadway Series Contract. This contract will be used for Talbert-produced tours on what is considered the urban circuit and is the first contract of its kind to embrace this important, influential and growing theatre market.

Based on Equity's Short Engagement Touring Agreement, the Urban Broadway Contract acknowledges the unique aspects of the urban circuit, which includes one night and split week performance schedules, substantially lower ticket prices and a different guarantee package than other tours. The contract offers competitive salaries, health and pension benefits and work rules for the actors and stage managers in these productions. While Mr. Talbert, who also writes and directs his productions, has always provided similar employment packages, the signing of this agreement with Equity formalizes the

business model and is an important first step in bringing shows that play the circuit under the imprimatur of the Union. The first Talbert production to utilize the Urban Broadway Contract is *What My Husband Doesn't Know*, and it will tour to more than 20 cities through November.

In signing the agreement, Mr. Talbert said, "I've always wanted to create an opportunity in which I could work with so many wonderful Equity performers and still recognize the importance of the circuit and the audiences who see my shows. By acknowledging the varied aspects of our touring business

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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

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814 Buffalo/Rochester  
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816 Cincinnati/Louisville  
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839 Washington DC/Baltimore

## Urban Broadway

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and the caliber of our performers, this contract bridges the best of both worlds. And happily, we will continue to make the kind of theatre that mirrors and celebrates the lives of everyday people."

"This first agreement between Equity and David E. Talbert will hopefully set a standard for contracts in Urban Broadway productions, just as David's shows set a standard of quality," said Flora Stamatiadis, Equity's National Director, Organizing and Special Projects.

"We are excited to have these new opportunities available for our members, and hope that other producers will follow David's lead."

David E. Talbert wrote and staged his first play *Tellin It Like It Tiz* in 1991. In the 20 years since he burst onto the theatre scene, Mr. Talbert has continued to write, direct and produce 13 works for the stage under the auspices of his company, David E. Talbert Presents. Taking his vision and his company beyond the theatre, Mr. Talbert has written and directed for film and television and starred in his own reality television series *Stage*

*Black* on TV One, providing a behind-the-scenes look into the world of touring theatre as contestants sang, danced and acted in hopes of starring in a David E. Talbert Presents production. Adding to his impressive resume, Mr. Talbert has also authored several novels. In addition, he is a five-time NAACP award-winning playwright and in 2009 received the prestigious NAACP Trailblazer award for his groundbreaking accomplishments in theatre.

The urban circuit originally began in the early 1900s when African American performers

were barred from working at white theatres, staying at white hotels and eating at white restaurants. A touring circuit sprang up, taking black performers across the country and launching careers of artists such as Ethel Waters, Ma Rainey and Sammy Davis Jr. The popularity of the circuit faded in the 1960s and saw a rebirth in the 1980s with plays like *Mama I Want to Sing*. Today, plays and musicals on the urban circuit reach more than 1.5 million theatregoers annually and play some of the biggest and most popular theatres across the country.



By John Sovec, MA, LMFT

"You have to have a life to bring your best to the table as an actor." These words were, surprisingly enough, from my agent when I was talking to him about turning down a job because I was burned out and run down. Although his percentage as my agent was on the line as well, he emphasized how vital it was for actors to get out and live a full life as an important facet of being a fully realized performer.

As kids, we tend to be more open to the idea of learning just for the fun of learning, but as adults the cues aren't as clear

## Learning for Life

and we often lose our inspiration to learn new things amid various commitments and responsibilities that demand our attention and time. When we do make time to learn a new skill it is often related to career advancement, with the learning seen as a means to an end, not an end in itself.

Perhaps, just like kids returning to school, we can find methods of inspiring our adult selves to learn something new in an area that interests us and brings us enjoyment, just for the sake of learning.

Some of the ways that we can inspire and motivate that learning process is to view learning as a constant process of refining, and polishing ourselves. Just as we eat well, exercise and get our rest, learning is a way to stimulate our minds and feed our spirits and keep us active and

engaged in life.

It is easy to come up with reasons not to take a class, workshop, or online course including lack of time, money, confidence, or interest, and lack of information about opportunities to learn. But in reality, we all know these are just excuses.

If we can overcome our own internal resistance, entering into a learning environment can open the doors to making new friends, boosting self-esteem, cultivating hidden talents and discovering new aspects of ourselves.

Learning is an ongoing experience where we can commit to the growth of ourselves not just as actors but also as people. Seeking knowledge satisfies an inquiring mind and stimulates us to take risks and chances, giving us a welcome break from the routine of work and home that can become a source of resentment if we're not careful.

So take a chance and put some energy into learning something new. Seek out local

colleges, community centers, online courses, books, yoga studios, meditation centers, cooking classes. Ask friends about any cool courses that they are taking not directly related to acting. Use these classes to re-energize and invigorate yourself. It's a good bet that these classes will open up your creative side and allow you to bring even more to the table for your next performance job.

Dare yourself to step outside your comfort zone and learn something new just for the fun of learning.

(John Sovec, an Equity member for many years, is now a psychotherapist in Los Angeles. John works with artists to uncover their blocks to success and creativity in order to connect into a renewed sense of artistic discovery and passion.)

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## Tentative Agreement

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ASM on Tiered tours will receive an additional increase in the weekly salary minimum. Stage Managers on short term assignments will begin earning health benefit payments earlier.

The strategy employed by the Negotiating Team yielded a win in extraordinary risk language for performance on a raked stage. In all cases, there will be an extraordinary risk classification for Actors who are required to perform on a raked stage, making them eligible for Supplemental Workers Compensation. Actors who dance on a raked stage will also receive the risk increment payment. Actors in "preview" will receive overtime on the day after the day off following the use of all ten out of twelve and seven out of eight and a half rehearsal weeks.

Based on the changes in ticket buying habits, increased competition for ticket dollars and the audience saturation of Friday through Sunday performances, flexibility in scheduling performances was an important issue for the League. In this new

agreement. In exchange for more flexibility, and the ability during 12 weeks of the year to schedule six performances over three days, Equity negotiated protections for the Actors that include additional days off and restrictions on rehearsals in any week that this schedule is used.

Equity and the League agreed to create a Labor Management Committee comprising an equal number of members of both sides. Two key elements to the formation of this Committee are to strengthen the relationship between Equity and the League, and to address workplace issues that occur during the contract cycle in "real time." The Committee will meet quarterly.

The Negotiating Team was co-chaired by First Vice President Paige Price and Third Vice President Ira Mont. In addition to Ms. McColl and second chair Senior Business Rep Kimberly Rimbold, the staff included Senior Business Reps Russell Lehrer, Lawrence Lorcak and Christine Provost; Business Reps Louise Foisy, Walt Kiskaddon, Keith Sklar, Alice Smith, Frank Stancati and David Westphal.



ACTORS'  
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## Credit Union Corner

### Credit Union Trims Loan Rates

Actors Federal Credit Union has initiated major rate reductions in some of its most popular loans.

Auto loans are now available for as low as 2.49% for a three-year loan. Personal loans have been lowered by a full 3.00%, with rates as low as 5.9%. Mortgages, an area where ActorsFCU has always been competitive, remains so with rates starting at 2.50% for a one year ARM.

"On a daily basis we continually review our loan rates from credit cards and auto loans to mortgages and personal loans. We're always looking to ensure

that our rates are the *best* that we can offer," said ActorsFCU president Jeff Rodman.

To learn more about Credit Union membership and its benefits, visit the recently updated website at [actorsfcu.com](http://actorsfcu.com).

#### On the Web:

[www.actorsequity.org](http://www.actorsequity.org)

- Barrymore Awards Honor Top Philly Actors
- NYC Agents Q&A
- Touring 102 – President Nick Wyman
- Actors United to End Alzheimer's Teams Raise \$18.5K

# Actors' Equity is Officially "Marvtastic"

By Luther Goins  
National EEO Coordinator  
& Central Region Business Representative

August 2011 marked and celebrated the eleventh biennial National Black Theatre Festival (NBTF). Nationally accepted as the Black Theatre Holy Ground, Winston-Salem, NC hosts this highly acclaimed week-long festival, which attracts over 65,000 people.

In 1989, Larry Leon Hamlin, founder of the North Carolina Black Repertory Company had a dream. He wanted a national festival that would acknowledge both the power of black theatre and the amazing abilities and talents of black theatre professionals. Twenty-two years later, his dream has become a highly anticipated (and treasured) reality. Mr. Hamlin passed away in 2007. The terms "Black Theatre

and I attended the 2009 NBTF. After a great deal of thought and discussion, Council had approved the Larry Leon Hamlin / Actors' Equity Code. Designed to support and guarantee festival participation for our members, the Code also presents numerous opportunities for minority-based theatre companies from across the country to discuss the possibilities of working with Equity Actors and contracts during their regular seasons.

Along with the creation of the Larry Leon Hamlin / Actors' Equity Code, two highly successful Equity Workshops were presented at this year's festival. They included; "Celebrity Talk" and "The Truth and Nothing But the Truth." "Celebrity Talk," facilitated by our own Julia Breanetta Simpson, gave festival celebrities the chance to discuss their careers and their personal journeys to becoming Equity



Central Regional Director Kathryn V. Lamkey, National EEO Coordinator Luther Goins and Councillor and Eastern Regional EEO Co-Chair Julia Breanetta Simpson present the Larry Leon Hamlin/Actors' Equity Code to National Black Theatre Festival producer Sylvia Sprinkle-Hamlin.

Holy Ground" and "Marvtastic" come directly from Mr. Hamlin and lovingly describe his dream and this amazing festival.

Now recognized as an International Celebration and Reunion of Spirit, this amazing event opens (in the heart of downtown Winston-Salem) with a star-studded Gala and a not to be missed Celebrity Award Presentation at the M.C. Benton, Jr. Convention Center. The rest of the fully charged week consists of celebrity press events, re-mounts of exceptional productions from across the country, a new play reading series, dance workshops and seminars, national networking opportunities via auditions for actors, midnight poetry jams, talent showcases for children, youth-targeted plays and projects, storytelling festivals, all types of performance-based workshops, and the outstanding Larry Leon Hamlin Solo Performance Series.

Charged with the assignment to explore and discover ways for Actors' Equity to become a more supportive part of this festival, Councillor and Eastern EEO Co-Chair Julia Breanetta Simpson

members. Participating were: Mariann Aalda, Trezana Beverley, André De Shields, Starletta DuPois, Jeffrey Anderson-Gunter, Fay Hauser, Ebony Jo-Ann, Ted Lange, Hal Williams, and Hattie Winston.

"The Truth and Nothing But the Truth" was designed to allow for open discussion about when and how to join the union. It also gave us an opportunity to address many negative myths about working and living as a union member and about Actors' Equity as an organization.

2011 Celebrity Awards were presented to the following members: Glynn Turman received the Sidney Poitier Lifelong Achievement Award; Yvonne Farrow and Yvette Heyliger received Emerging Producer Awards; Chuck Smith received the Lloyd Richards Director's Award; Trezana Beverley, Marquerite Ray, and Tonea Stewart received Living Legend Awards; Count Stovall received the Special Recognition Award; and the late Barbara Ann Teer received the Theatre Longevity Award.

All in all...it was simply a "marvtastic" week!

## From the PRESIDENT

# Touring 101 or How I Spent My Summer Vacation

By Nick Wyman

All summer long as I helped negotiate the Production Contract, people approached me with one question: "Nick, will the Presidency interfere with managing your fantasy baseball team?" Well, that and "How come Equity is allowing all these national tours to go out on such low salaries?" So let's start a conversation about touring. Touring has changed a lot since I joined this Union over 35 years ago on a national tour contract. At the time, there were LORT tours and stock tours, but all Production Contract tours had the same pay scale. My national tour was a nine-week bus-and-truck tour with split weeks and one-nighters.

Over the years, the economics of split weeks and one-nighters with their near-constant load-ins, load-outs, and travel gradually killed off bus-and-truck tours. Despite all sorts of concessions granted by the Production Contract Committee and special rules for "Low-Guarantee Tours" and "One-Night Tours," more and more shows were going out non-Equity.

So in 2004, AEA took the bold step of instituting a tiered system of compensation based upon the level of a producer's guarantee and a few other factors. Health contributions

were subsidized and minimum salaries were significantly reduced in exchange for actors' participation in the producer's share of the "overage" should the show be successful. In 2008, we spun off the lower end of the Production Contract tiers to create a new contract called the Short Engagement Touring Agreement – SETA – for those under 5'6". (No, not really – just seeing if you were paying attention.)

These measures have been significantly productive. We had lost 40% of the road by 2004, but touring workweeks rose by 25% in the first four years on the tiers and rose by another 20% in the first two years that SETA was available. Although we have gained a sizeable number of touring workweeks, the number of touring workweeks on the full Production Contract has declined precipitously. To help understand why, I have posted a look at the business model of touring on our website (touring 102), complete with enough numbers and charts to make Ross Perot happy. (You can understand why my fantasy baseball team is called The Rain Men.)

In today's recession economy, the presenters – often local arts foundations – have fewer subscribers, a lot fewer donors and no local government funding. They

usually can't afford to pay the guarantees that a producer needs in order to do a show on a full Production Contract. People gripe, "Why does our Union let them do these shows on the SETA or the Tiers?" The answer is because if we insisted the Producers use the Production Contract, they would not produce the show: they couldn't afford to. They would instead license it to a non-Equity producer. **These Tier tours and SETA jobs are not taking the place of full Production Contract jobs; they are taking the place of non-Equity jobs.**

When you are cast in a "National Tour" and your head is filled with visions of a nice four-figure weekly after-tax salary, it is more than a little dispiriting to realize your salary is \$800 before taxes. Believe me: We want as many full Production Contract jobs as possible; but if a producer can't afford the full Production Contract – and can demonstrate that – we have created two models that allow him to use our members and allow our members to make more money when the show makes money. These models are responsible for a significant increase in touring workweeks – and that's a good thing.

Oh, and my fantasy baseball team won our league championship.

## Audition Center

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modern, clean and welcoming. It will boast sound proof/sound attenuated rooms, and a room with a sprung floor for dance auditions. Designs are under discussion and it is anticipated that plans will include a variety of space types and facilities to enhance the audition experience and preparation, paying special attention to the unique needs and requirements of our members as they audition for new roles.

The agreement with Newmark also includes an evaluation of the office space currently occupied by Equity's National and Eastern Region offices. The findings of the evaluation will determine optimum office space configuration and may result in the relocation of some offices to current or newly acquired space. Any moves and upgrades that occur as a result of the Audition Center move will be at no additional cost to

Equity. In addition, a study is underway to identify the foot traffic patterns and elevator usage to Equity offices and the Audition Center.

According to Steve DiPaola, Equity's Assistant Executive Director of Finance and Administration, "This is an unprecedented agreement that

### Plans are underway to give the Audition Center... a new look and more modern space.

will result in a brand new Audition Center and newly renovated office space without cost to the Association and its members. We are in the initial stages of this project but the result will be a wonderful new Audition Center and office space."

Equity President Nick Wyman said: "As we were grappling with the necessity of a six-figure renovation of our currently-shabby Audition Center, along comes our

landlord with the offer of a no-cost new Audition Center and an increased income stream from our rent-roll participation. Even our cautious Council only needed an hour of looking in this gift horse's mouth before deciding it was a Derby winner."

All of this occurs against the backdrop of an anticipated expansion of retail space in the Equity Building. The lucrative Times Square market has become a mecca for retail stores because of the large number of Broadway theatregoers and the international and domestic tourist trade. Since Equity owns the land on which the building sits, as part of its long-term agreement with Newmark, Equity will share in the monetary benefit of additional retail space that will eventually occupy space in the building. In the end, the renovations and relocation of the Audition Center and the offices will provide a new revenue stream for the Union.



## Central Region

# City Rep Celebrates Ten Years

By Pam Dougherty

Looking back on the past decade at Oklahoma City Repertory Theatre, AEA members Michael Jones and Don Jordan tell the story of New Year's Day back in 1998, when several old chums from college got together for a holiday brunch. The group celebrated years of friendship, shared career "war stories" and happy memories of their time at



**Donald Jordan, Founding Artistic Director of City Rep shows off the Equity proclamation flanked by (l) Michael Jones, Artistic Associate and Steve Emerson, Production Stage Manager.**

Oklahoma City University (other notable alums include Kristin Chenoweth, Kelli O'Hara, Lara Teeter, Teri Bibb and Ron Raines). But in the process they found themselves bemoaning the fact that 20 years had passed and Oklahoma still had no year-round professional Equity region-

al theatre.

While Oklahoma City has had a long and rich history of educational, community and musical theatre, they felt the city lagged behind most other major American cities in developing a diverse professional theatre environment. It was time for a change, they felt, so Jordan passed around a sheet of paper, called it a "contact sheet," and

thus the earliest foundations of Oklahoma City Repertory Theatre were laid.

Don says, "We wanted OKC to have a professional Equity regional theatre where respected artists from across the country could work with the best Oklahoma talent, linking us to the national regional theatre scene.

"While we were all proud to have worked for the wonderful Lyric Theatre, and are indebted to that trailblazing company, we were hungry for a professional theatre that would offer the full spectrum of theatrical experiences: a diverse and eclectic season of dramas, comedies,

classics and musicals, new works and old, covering a wide range for theatre patrons and theatre artists alike.

"Another aspect of our vision was to create a theatre where talented young Oklahoma artists could begin their careers, being mentored by professional American theatre artists and establishing themselves through the Equity Membership Candidate Program. To that end, we have worked with several of our outstanding local educational institutions – OCU, of course, but also The University of Central Oklahoma, Oklahoma City Community College, and this season, with The University of Oklahoma (OU).

"But perhaps our most important goal was to make a space for professional Equity actors and stage managers to work, and receive not only a great artistic experience, but the full range of union benefits, health insurance and pension. We were committed to that goal from the beginning, and we are proud to say that with careful stewardship of our funding and great support from our Board of Directors, we've closed every season 'in the black' from our first season in 2002-2003."

And City Rep is proud to be

the first theatre in Oklahoma history to receive honors from AEA, when the union issued a proclamation in recognition of City Rep's "hard work and dedication to producing excellent and professional theatre in Oklahoma City."

Stacey Logan (original Broadway cast, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Crazy For You*, *Sweet Smell of Success*) congratulated City Rep on opening its tenth season: "After many years in New York, I still consider myself an Okie at heart. I learned my craft in Oklahoma and feel so fortunate to be able to come back home and perform at City Rep. I believe this company is showing Oklahoma the value of the actor as a professional, and particularly as a union member."

One unique characteristic of City Rep's AEA core artist group is that many of them travel from other states, even other regions, to work there. The production stage manager commutes from Kansas City, while many of City Rep's regular actors and directors, including Producing Artistic Director Jordan, happily make the weekly trip from Dallas.

Linda Leonard, Dallas-based AEA actress and director of City Rep's inaugural production, *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*, commented, "I believe City Rep has successfully established a creative, professional standard of excellence in the OKC community by integrating Equity members from across the country and collaborating with the educational and local profes-

sional talent to produce brilliant, moving and inspiring theatre."

Jonathan Beck Reed, another co-founder of the company, remarked on the journey, "To reflect back on City Rep's humble beginnings is a source of great pride and accomplishment for all of us who have been a part of its growth. And we would not exist without the dogged determination of our Artistic Director and visionary leader, Donald Jordan. His absolute devotion to making quality professional theatre here in Oklahoma, along with his pride in Actors' Equity, has made him the driving force behind City Rep. He is a consummate, committed professional, and it is that personal mandate that has guided all of us to cultivate the quality you see show after show on the City Rep stage."

Perhaps Steve Emerson, City Rep's Kansas City-based Production Stage Manager said it best when he quipped, "When my old friend, Don Jordan, told me he was planning to establish a new theatre in Oklahoma City, I told him it would kill him. But he has persevered and created a theatre gem out of a diamond in the rough. Now, I can't imagine calling another theatre home, nor would I want to."

(Pam Dougherty served on Council from 1994-2003, is currently the Dallas/Fort Worth Liaison Committee Chair, and most recently played *Violet Weston* in City Rep's award-winning production of *August: Osage County*.)

## Western Region

# Professional Theatre Comes to Pike's Peak

THEATREWORKS recently became the seventh Colorado theatre company to sign a contract with Equity (an SPT Transitional contract)—and the first in the Pike's Peak region.

"This is definitely a step up, an upgrade, a toehold for us," THEATREWORKS Artistic Director Murray Ross told the *Denver Post*. "If this were baseball, it's as if we've gone from Double-A to Triple-A in terms of our ability to hire professional actors. A necessary bar has been raised."

The theatre was founded in 1975 as a central outreach program of the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. Over the years, it has broadened its horizons and today is a professional theatre connected to the university, "but is not simply of, by and for it," says Mr. Ross. This means that they don't just use undergraduate actors and don't just play for the university community. Rather, according to the theatre's mission statement, it is "dedicated to creating challenging and innovative productions of classic and contemporary theatre for the enjoyment, education and stimulation of our community, including the Pike's Peak Re-

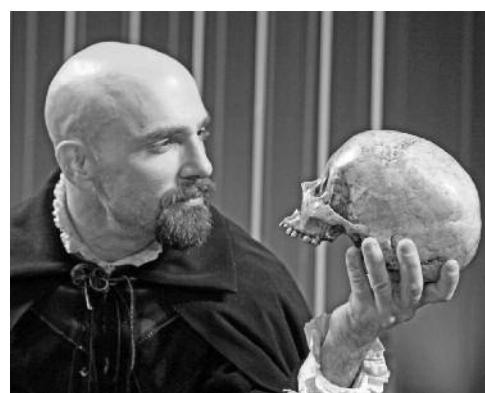
gion, the University of Colorado, and, on occasion, the larger world." For nine months of the year, the company performs in the Dusty Loo Bon Vivant Theater, a 250 seat flexible black box space on the university campus. In the summer, the company presents Shakespeare in a custom-made tent that seats 160 at Rock Ledge Ranch, an historic property in a green meadow with a pond nestled at the base of the Garden of the Gods. It doesn't get any better than that.

Equity member Tracy Hostmyer agrees. "My first job as an American Equity member was back in 2001 (I started in British Equity and moved back to the U.S. in 2000) and I've worked there twice more since then. Each time I have been embraced by the theatre community there and I have had a challenging and inspiring creative experience. I always leave THEATREWORKS a better actor than I was on my arrival. Murray Ross is a brilliant man and one of the best directors I've worked with. He always gets a performance out of me that far surpasses my own expectations. Working with him is exciting and fun and empower-

ing. I highly recommend it. Oh, and they also have that fantastic backdrop of the Rocky Mountains, which is a very nice perk."

Equity member Michael Cobb is another Equity member happy to talk about the richness of his experience at THEATREWORKS "I'd almost given up on ever finding work as an Equity actor in Colorado after having moved here six years ago from Boston to work at the National Theatre Conservatory. Artistic Director Murray Ross first hired me to play the villain in the almost never produced *Antonio's Revenge* by Elizabethan John Marston, a play which Murray described as Hamlet's 'twisted little sister.' That kind of adventurousness and risk-taking in programming and casting, and an audience of all ages ready to go along for the ride, exemplifies the special alchemy at THEATREWORKS. A vital relationship with the university and its theatre department, serves to both underpin and complement this true jewel of a theatre in Colorado Springs."

"THEATREWORKS is to me a creative Shangri-La, a place where artistic principle and love of story are king," says Equity member Khris Lewin. "I've shared the stage there with astounding artists from New York, Los Angeles, Toronto (not to



**Equity member Khris Lewin in a THEATREWORKS production of *Hamlet*.**

mention Colorado Springs itself) and count my times on the boards there as some of the best theatrical experiences of my life. In the past several years, I've been especially impressed as Artistic Director Murray Ross and

the creative team have been determined, during an economic downturn when most theatres are paring down their seasons, or even closing, to really push the envelope. They continue to give their audiences an ever increasing menu of theatrical offerings, challenging the community with shows that run

the gamut in style and perspective, and (of special importance to me as an Equity actor) continuing to expand their relationship with AEA. I congratulate them on their good work and achievements."

## University of Missouri Conducting Injury Survey

Clinical researchers in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the University of Missouri are currently conducting a study investigating ways to prevent overuse injuries in professional stage performers. Although it has been well-established that overuse injuries commonly occur, there has been little research regarding the

prevention of such injuries. Interested members are asked to participate in this online performing arts medicine research project. It is anonymous and will take about five minutes to complete. The survey may be accessed at [www.surveymonkey.com/s/mizzouperformingartsmed](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/mizzouperformingartsmed). For more information, contact: Jarron I. Tilghman, MD at [Jarrontilghmanmd1906@gmail.com](mailto:Jarrontilghmanmd1906@gmail.com)

## Pension & Health

# November is Open Enrollment Month for Health Fund

The Annual Open Enrollment Period for the Equity-League Health Fund is November 2011. During this time, you can change your benefit options, such as dependent and dental coverage, and switch from an available HMO to the CIGNA plan, or vice versa.

If you do not have any changes to your present coverage, you needn't do anything during the open enrollment period.

But, if you want to make a change, enrollment forms and full payment for the coverage being elected must be received by the Fund Office by November 30. After this date, you will lose the opportunity to make a change for one year, until the

following November. **All changes take effect on January 1, 2012.**

**Note:** In an effort to be green, the Fund Office no longer automatically mails paper enrollment packages to eligible participants. All of the necessary forms are available online at [www.equityleague.org/health/index](http://www.equityleague.org/health/index). However, if you call the Fund Office, 212-869-9380 or 800-355-5220, you may request a paper kit.

### December 1 is Due Date for \$100 Quarterly Premium

The \$100 Premium Payment for all Health Plan participants for coverage to be effective on January 1, 2012 is December 1, 2011. The last date to assure timely coverage is December

15, 2011; the last date for penalty avoidance is December 31, 2011 and the last date for coverage to be activated with a major penalty is January 31, 2012. Additional deadlines for quarterly payments are March 1, 2012; June 1, 2012 and September 1, 2012. For further information call the Fund office, 212-869-9380, 800-355-5220 or visit the website, [www.equityleague.org](http://www.equityleague.org).

For other important information on your Pension & Health benefits, be sure to read the Fund's newsletter, *Now Playing*, which is sent to all participants, or is available at the Fund Office, 165 West 46th Street, 14th Floor, New York, NY 10036.

## Equity's Paul Robeson Award Goes to James Earl Jones

Equity's 2011 Paul Robeson Award has gone to James Earl Jones. Created in 1971, the Award recognizes a person who best exemplifies the principles by which Mr. Robeson lived.

The Award was presented by Paul Robeson Citation Award Committee Chair Julia Breanetta Simpson at the Eastern Regional Membership Meeting on October 14, 2011. Mr. Jones, who is currently starring in *Driving Miss Daisy* in London's West End, was unable to attend, but sent the following letter, read by Ms. Simpson.

"I met Paul Robeson three times in my life through my father, Robert Earl Jones. Each encounter was far too brief, but on one of them I had the great pleasure to hear Mr. Robeson sing. I was standing in the back of the concert hall and can describe the experience best by saying it was as if my soul was being rocked. It was the first time I understood what human magnetism was. Mr. Robeson was blessed with many endowments—among them the scholarship and athleticism of his youth, and the activist commitment that followed his fame as a performer. Perhaps he reached the most souls (including mine) as a singer and artist in the performing arts, and in doing so, he mightily elevated the importance of art to humanity. My father and I always felt honored to be counted among the community of actors that he so well embellished. I cannot attend the dedication today because I am happily employed on the London stage, but in the name of myself and my father, I gratefully thank you, the Citation Award Committee, for this Paul Robeson Award for

2011."

Mr. Jones joined Equity in 1955 and made his Broadway debut in 1958 in *Sunrise at Campobello*, which starred Ralph Bellamy, then Equity's



**Paul Robeson Citation Award Committee Chair Julia Breanetta Simpson (r) and Committee member Joan Valentina with the citation presented to James Earl Jones.**

Photo: Stephanie Masucci

President. In his more than 55-year career, Mr. Jones has received two Tony Awards (*The Great White Hope*, 1969 and *Fences*, 1987), four Emmys, a Golden Globe, two Cable ACEs, two OBIEs, five Drama Desk Awards and a Grammy. He was also honored with the National Medal of Arts in 1992 and a Kennedy Center Honor in 2002. He received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Screen Actors Guild in 2009 and next month, The Board of Governors of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences will present Mr. Jones with an Honorary Oscar in recognition of his long and

distinguished career.

Mr. Jones has been recognized for his contributions to humanity by the NAACP and he is the recipient of the Toussaint Medallion given by the Office of Black Ministries.

Among the many charities he supports are the African Caribbean Leukemia Trust, Bid 2 Beat AIDS, UNICEF, Make a Wish Foundation, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and the American Foundation for AIDS Research.

Paul Robeson (1898-1976) epitomized the 20th Century Renaissance man. An actor, singer, scholar, athlete and author, Mr. Robeson was also a political activist who spoke out against racism

and strove to guarantee the civil rights for all people of color. He strongly believed in the artist's responsibility to society, the freedom of conscience and of expression and was dedicated to the universal brotherhood of all mankind. To honor the man and his ideals, Equity created the Paul Robeson Award in 1971 and made the first presentation in 1974 to Mr. Robeson himself. Past recipients also include Maya Angelou, Harry Belafonte, Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee, Athol Fugard, Micki Grant, Carl Harms, Judith Jamison, Sidney Poitier and Lloyd Richards.

## Are You Entitled to An Equity Pension?

The following members of Actors' Equity Association may be entitled to a pension benefit under the Equity-League Pension Trust Fund. For additional information, please contact the Retirement Services Department at the Equity-League Fund Office at 212-869-9380 or toll free at 800-355-5220 and a customer service representative can assist you.

John Aman	Sherman Hemsley	Warren Peace
Alan Arkin	Jeanne Hepple	Brian Petchey
Darrell Askey	Jered Holmes	Ralph Purdum
Maureen Bailey	Roderick Horn	Judd Reilly
Rilla Bergman	Scott Hunter	Ray Roberts
Betty Lee Bogue	John Irving	John Rose
Hal Bokar	Dean Jacque	Patricia Rouleau
James Booth	John Karlen	Gene Ruyle
Booker T. Bradshaw	Thomas Keena	Shyrl Ryanhart
Bree	Toni Lamond	Peter Sansone
Johngardner Brent	Ric Lavin	Anna Shaler
Peter Bromilow	Tony Lincoln	Jeannette Siebert
Peter Browne	Kristin Linklater	Maggie Smith
Allen Case	Robert Lussier	Anton Sparr
Shirley Cox	Marc MacCrarry	Elaine Sulka
Karen Cross	Arthur Matthews	George
Frances Cuka	Fred Michaels	Vandenhouten
Joseph Davies	Charles Miller	Joe Whiteaker
David Dwight	Judy Milner	Ian Wilder
Mamoru Fujioka	Vance Mizelle	Nicol Williamson
Liam Gannon	Jan Moerel	Toodie Wittmer
Ben Gillespie	Dale Moreda	Meg Wynn-Owen
James Glass	Jack Murray	
Maurice Good	George Ormiston	

## Complainers vs Doers: VOTE

By Brian Myers Cooper  
Chair, Election  
Procedures Committee

So, which are you? A Complainer or a Doer? Complaining is easy, but not very effective. Luckily, there's something you can all do to make a difference: VOTE in the 2012 AEA election! This is a big year as we head into the AEA Centennial Celebration, with all the Regional and National Offices, plus 17 Council seats up for election. Don't miss out on this chance to have your say on how we begin our next hundred years. Plus, if you don't vote, you can't really complain, now can you?

To make voting even easier, be sure to register for online eVoting. Why? Because it's greener, it saves

on postage, and it's the fastest way for members working away from home to get their ballots and cast their votes! Last year we *doubled* the number of registered eVoters, and we can do that again!

Join all these eVoters and make a difference with a click! Go to the Equity website ([www.actorsequity.org](http://www.actorsequity.org)), log on to Members Only, and click on the Vote 2012 icon to register. Remember: If you got a paper ballot in the last election and then voted online, you'll still continue to get a paper ballot unless you register for eVoting before March 22, 2012. You only have to register once, so if you registered to eVote before, you'll stay registered until you choose to change.

## Terms Expiring

The following **Officer terms** expire in 2012: President, Nick Wyman; 1st Vice President, Paige Price; 2nd Vice President, Rebecca Kim Jordan; 3rd Vice President, Ira Mont; Secretary/Treasurer, Sandra Karas.

The following **Council terms** expire in 2012:

### Eastern Region:

Eastern Regional Vice President, Kate Shindle.

Principals: Paul V. Ames, Ira Denmark, Tom Helmer, Christine Toy Johnson, Margot Moreland, James Moye.

Chorus: Stas' Kmiec', Roger Preston Smith.

Stage Manager: Lisa J. Snodgrass.

### Central Region:

Central Regional Vice President, Dev Kennedy.

Principal: David Girolmo.

### Western Region:

Western Regional Vice President, Doug Carfrae.

Principals: Kate Burton, Michele Lee, Barbara N. Roberts, Joseph Ruskin, Vernon Willet.

Chorus: Michael Dotson.

## Notice to Performers Hired to Work Under Collective Bargaining Agreements

1. In most states, unions are permitted to enter into collective bargaining agreements with employers that require employees, as a condition of employment, either to join the union (and thereby enjoy the full rights and benefits of membership) or to pay fees to the union (and thereby satisfy a financial obligation to the union without enjoying the full rights and benefits of membership). This requirement, set forth in a union security clause, serves the legitimate purpose of ensuring that such employees who benefit from union representation pay a fair share of the cost of that representation. The goal of a union security provision is to eliminate "free riders" who benefit from the Equity contract without contributing to Equity's costs of negotiating, administering and enforcing the contract. If you are working under an Equity contract that contains a union security clause, you have the right to join and support Actors' Equity Association. You also have the right to choose not to become a member of the union.

2. Actors' Equity Association, in its role as a collective bargaining agent, has negotiated many hundreds of agreements since 1913 with theatrical employers on behalf of professional performers and stage managers. Equity has worked hard and successfully to negotiate improved minimum salaries and progressively more favorable wages and other terms and conditions of employment such as health insurance, pension benefits, overtime pay, vacation time and programs to insure a safe workplace. These contractual benefits are enjoyed by all performers covered by an Equity contract. Your membership strengthens Equity and helps the union achieve better results in its negotiations with theatrical employers.

3. Members of Actors' Equity enjoy valuable rights and benefits flowing from membership (as distinguished from the employment rights under collective bargaining agreements). Among the many rights only available to members are the right to attend Equity membership meetings; to speak freely and openly; debate issues affecting all members; to participate in formulating Equity policies; to influence the nature of Equity's activities and the direction of its future; to nominate and vote for candidates for office in Equity; to run for office; to fully participate in development of contract negotiating proposals; to

vote to accept or reject proposed contracts—thereby ensuring your active participation on issues central to your life as a working member of the theatrical profession. In addition, only members have the right to audition at Equity Auditions.

4. Under the law, you also have the right to choose not to be a member of Actors' Equity. In that circumstance, you will not enjoy the rights and benefits of membership described in the previous paragraph. In addition, while you will be fairly represented with respect to your employment rights under an Equity contract, you may not participate in or enjoy the benefits of certain social programs and organizations around the country that are supported by Equity for the benefit of its members and others in the theatrical profession including the Actors Federal Credit Union, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and the Union Plus programs, including college scholarships. You also will have no right to attend membership meetings, to audition at Equity Auditions, to run for office, to vote in union elections, to participate in the formulation of bargaining proposals, or to ratify contracts.

5. In 1988, the Supreme Court held that a non-member has the right to object to paying any portion of union dues or fees that will be expended on activities unrelated to collective bargaining, contract administration, or grievance adjustment. Consistent with our firm belief that membership in Equity is, in fact, a privilege—not lightly granted—our current policy is not to accept any dues or fees from those who choose to be non-members.

6. Equity will treat a request for "financial core" status as a request to resign from, or remain a non-member of, Actors' Equity Association. Upon such a request, you will have no membership rights in Actors' Equity. If you elect to be a non-member, and subsequently decide that you wish to join (or re-join) Actors' Equity Association, you will be required to apply for membership. Actors' Equity, however, retains the sole discretion to determine whether or not you will be admitted into its membership. Should such a membership application be approved, you will be required to pay an initiation fee at the then current rate and union dues uniformly imposed on all members. (In so-called "right-to-work states," employers and unions may not enter into contracts containing union security clauses. As such, this notice is not applicable to performers who are not required to pay union fees under a collective bargaining agreement.)

7. Equity reserves the right, upon appropriate notice, to change the policy set forth above.

## Over The Tavern, Behind The Scenes

By Susan Ware

*Earlier this year, Geva Theatre Center in Rochester, NY, produced Over The Tavern, by Tom Dudzick, directed by Skip Greer. Susan Ware was the assistant director. For the first time nationally on a professional stage, Andrew Rondeau, 17, a young actor with Down Syndrome, was cast as Georgie Pazinski, a 13-year-old with Down Syndrome. Andrew worked with an Equity contract. Susan Ware has worked with Geva for 13 years, and for 25 years she has taught dance and theatre to adults and children with developmental disabilities.*

Andrew had been in the bathroom outside the rehearsal hall a long time. We could hear him banging around and talking to himself. Finally, the stage manager asked me to intervene.

I knocked on the bathroom door. "Andrew, you ready, buddy?" "Almost, Susan." "We're waiting for you." "OK." The door opened, and Andrew, looking a bit disgruntled, stepped out. "I washed my hands." "Good job, buddy." "Susan, would you please tell Skip to stop bossing me around?"

Suppressing a smile, I answered directly, "I won't do that, Andrew. Skip is the director and that makes him the boss." (Not to mention that Skip is one of the least bossy, most humane people I know.) "My mom is my boss at home." "That's fine Andrew. Skip is your boss here." "OK." "Ready to go back into rehearsal?" "You bet!" And back in we went.

The decision to cast an actor with Down Syndrome in *Over*

*The Tavern* was a careful, multi-stage process, beginning with the decision not to hold open auditions. Instead, I spoke with colleagues at schools and agencies, who made knowledgeable suggestions about possible actors for the role of Georgie. We were then able to audition a manageable number of actors, using an early scene from the play.

Since we were walking an uncharted artistic path, we began with questions. Would an actor with Down Syndrome have the stamina to perform eight shows a week for five weeks? (Yes.) Would he have the cognitive ability to learn both lines and numerous cues? (Yes.) While on stage, would he have the ability to listen actively and respond to the action happening all around him? (Absolutely.) Would his presence affect the dynamic of the acting company? (Yes—in the best of ways.)

On the first day of rehearsal, Andrew made an announcement. "I just want everyone to know that I have two families now, my real family at home and now, my pretend family at Geva. But you're my second real family in my heart." "Well, isn't *this* just the best first day ever!," commented one of the other actors. And Andrew's relationships with his fellow company members simply blossomed from there. He was welcomed graciously, and brought with him a direct, open nature, a life without ulterior motives and a natural embrace of creativity.

Andrew displayed more concrete thinking during the early rehearsals, requiring clear, simple direction. Soon, however, we witnessed an evolution in An-

drew's complex thought processes, as he came to understand the Pazinski family dynamics, and his character's importance to the play.

Andrew attended all note sessions, although I kept a record of all his notes and met privately with him and his mother to go over them. His parents worked with him at home, seeing to it that he was prepared for rehearsal. Because both Andrew's parents work full-time, I picked him up at school and drove him to rehearsal. His parents took him home after rehearsal. Together, Andrew, his director, assistant director, company members, crew and parents, created something new, not just for Andrew, but for the larger world. In return, Andrew gave us the gift of his talent and his heart. Fair trade, I'd say.

My final thought is this: Don't be afraid to cast an actor with special needs in future projects. Consider consulting with an expert in theatre and developmental disabilities who understands both fields and can help you create the support services you'll need. At Geva, we discovered that, when the show opened, Andrew, supported by his company members and ASMs, earned the trust of all around him. He never missed a performance; he never missed a beat. He did, however, bring the house down every night.

*(Editor's note: Although this article would be an important addition to Equity News at any time, it is especially meaningful in this issue as October is International PWD Employment Awareness Month.)*

## Brief Notes

- New York's **Theatre Development Fund** is among the recipients of the 2011 Mayor's Award for Arts and Culture. The Awards acknowledge and celebrate the role individual artists, arts educators, cultural organizations, corporations and philanthropists play in the public-private partnerships that sustain the City's creative vitality and economic well-being. **Stephen Sondheim** is receiving the 2011 NYC Handel Medallion, the highest award given by the City for contributions to its artistic and intellectual life.

- The **American Blues Theatre** in Chicago honored Equity on September 18, 2011 during its run of Clifford Odets' *Waiting for Lefty*. Because of the importance of a union within the play, the theatre honored a specific union during each of its performances.

- **Palm Beach Dramaworks** in West Palm Beach, Florida has received a gift of \$2 million from Donald and Ann Brown. In honor of the contribution, the single

largest contribution in the history of the organization, the theatre company's new facility, located on Clematis Street in downtown West Palm Beach, has been named the Donald and Ann Brown Theatre.

- A new free service has been launched by *broadwayworld.com*. Broadway-World DB Pro-BETA has been added to allow participants to be included on the BWW International Theatre Database, add/update credits and bio, post photos and videos, promote events, list management information, and more.

- **Chicago** became the longest-running American musical in Broadway history on August 27, 2011 when it surpassed *A Chorus Line* with its 6,138th performance. It also became the fourth longest-running show in Broadway history, following the British imports: *The Phantom of the Opera* (9,810), *Cats* (7,485) and *Les Misérables* (6,680).

- The Houston theatre community is mourning the passing on September 30, 2011 of **Betty Fitzpatrick**, 79, the area's

acknowledged First Lady of Theatre. Ms. Fitzpatrick retired in the Spring of 2010 after 53 years as a member of Houston's Alley Theatre company as both Actor and Stage Manager.

- An historic building at the site of the **Weathervane Theatre** in Whitefield, New Hampshire was destroyed by fire on October 10, 2011. The structure was the original theatre that opened nearly 50 years ago, but after a new theatre was built next door, the original site was used mostly for dressing rooms, storage and the Scene Shop. Fortunately, firefighters were able to save some historic artifacts, including the original weathervane.

- **Peter Neufeld**, a mainstay on Broadway with his partner Tyler Gatchell in the 1970s and '80s, has written a memoir, *For the Good of the Show*. Gatchell and Neufeld were General Managers for many successful shows, including *No, No, Nanette*; *Jesus Christ Superstar*; *Evita*, *Cats* and *Annie*. The book is available at Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS and at *Amazon.com*.

# NATIONAL NEWS

## Labor Day Roundup

### Kansas City

Kansas City area actors kicked off Labor Day weekend with a staged reading of selections from Studs Terkel's *Working*, held at the headquarters of the Mid-America Arts Alliance. This event was the brainchild of Christine Dotterweich-Bial, an AEA stage manager, secretary of the Liaison Committee, and the curator of performing arts for Mid-America Arts Alliance. The reading was directed by Doug Weaver, who has directed for KC's EARTH project reading series, and stage managed by Rae Portwine, an Equity Membership Candidate. All of the participants in the reading were members of one or more performing arts union. They were: Gary Neal Johnson, Kip Niven, Christine

Colby-Jacques, Larry Greer, William Grey Warren, Nedra Dixon, Brad Shaw and Licia Watson. The project was a reminder of how powerful it can be to give physical voice to a writer's words.

At the invitation of Vicky Tarpoley of the AFL-CIO, local AEA members also participated in

the Labor Day Parade and Picnic and an encore performance of the staged reading was presented in the theatre at the Liberty Memorial across from Union Station. Participation was small but mighty, and much was learned about how this event is organized and plans are already being made to increase visibility in next year's event.

(Submitted by Licia Watson, Kansas City Area Liaison Chair)



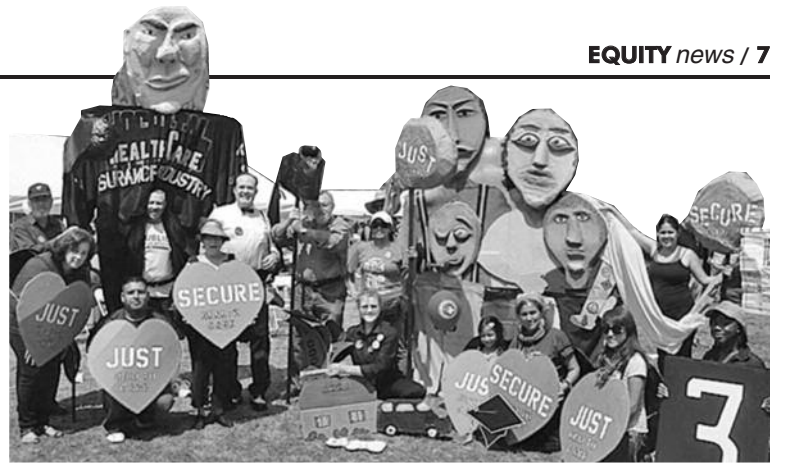
### Buffalo

The Buffalo AFL-CIO Labor Day Parade & Picnic took place on September 5 and IATSE once again designed the float (this year a covered wagon). IATSE and AEA members arrived as the "Poloncarz Posse," supporting the parade's Grand Marshall Mark Poloncarz

(Erie County Comptroller and staunch arts advocate). Some rode the float, others walked alongside, but all tossed candy to the young "deputies" along the route. As always, there was a huge picnic immediately following where all participants and their families were invited to attend.

### Milwaukee

Equity members of MASH (Musicians, Actors, Stagehands), including Dan Mooney, Lisa Sottile and Angela Iannone, participated in Milwaukee's Labor Day Parade. MASH has been part of Milwaukee's parade, providing music and entertainment (and throwing candy to parade watchers), since 2002.



### Los Angeles

AEA members joined "Labor United for Universal Healthcare" in a skit to raise awareness about healthcare and CA

Senate Bill 810 at the 2011 Labor Day Parade and Rally in Los Angeles. SB 810, if passed in 2012 when it is next up for a vote, would give health coverage to all Californians.



(Photo: Stephanie Masucci)

### New York

On Saturday, September 20, more than 50 AEA members, with family and friends, participated in the annual NYC Labor Day Parade up Fifth Avenue. Contingents from AFTRA and SAG merged with the group on 44th Street, joined by AEA President Nick Wyman, 2nd VP Rebecca Kim Jordan, AFTRA National President Roberta Reardon and SAG-NY

President Mike Hodges. The planned post-parade tri-union picnic, which had to be cancelled due to a permit issue, will be rescheduled next year. Mark your calendars: Saturday, September 8, 2012. Special thanks to staff members David Lotz, Karen Master, Stephanie Masucci, Karen Nothmann and Flora Stamatiades for the parade prep—and a shout-out to Norton, the Parade Mascot.



### Philadelphia

A hearty group of AEA, AFTRA and SAG members participated in the 2011 Labor Day Parade in Philadelphia. A march from the Sheet Metal Workers' Union Hall on Columbus Blvd. to the Great Plaza at Penn's Landing was followed by a family celebration with food and live music provided by the Philadel-

phia Council of the AFL-CIO. The Liaison Committee gathered 2011-2012 seasonal brochures from AEA theatres throughout the Delaware Valley and encouraged fellow union members to support the Philadelphia AEA talent pool by attending professional theatre. Liaison Chair Tom Helmer helped give out the brochures

NOVEMBER 20 through NOVEMBER 27, 2011

## The 24th Annual BROADWAY CARES/EQUITY FIGHTS AIDS WEEK



Your fundraising efforts mean more than ever before. By joining us in this year's appeals you make possible:

- Renewed support for **The HIV/AIDS Initiative of The Actors Fund**
- Increased support for **The Phyllis Newman Women's Health Initiative, The Al Hirschfeld Free Health Clinic, The Dancers Resource** and a host of invaluable social services and emergency assistance. For information, visit [actorsfund.org](http://actorsfund.org)
- Continued support for **AIDS and family service organizations nationwide**

In 2011, BC/EFA provided \$4 million in support to The Actors Fund and another \$4.8 million to nearly 500 AIDS and family service organizations in 48 states, Washington DC and Puerto Rico.

Your generous efforts make this "safety net" of social services possible.

Never before has your participation meant so much!!

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT

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

or contact Joe Norton at (212) 840-0770 x 227 [norton@broadwaycares.org](mailto:norton@broadwaycares.org)

Please, Join Us!



## Vermont

### Tropical Storm Irene Floods Vermont's Weston Playhouse



Behind the Weston Playhouse during the flood.

#### By Malcolm Ewen Central Regional Councillor

The end of August was shaping up to be a good finale for the 75th Anniversary Season at Vermont's Weston Playhouse. Two shows were running: the world premiere of *Saint-Ex* (about *Little Prince* author Antoine de Saint-Exupéry) and the final weekend of *The Aliens*, by Annie Baker. But Tropical Storm Irene changed that as it approached. Irene caused the cancellation of all performances on Sunday, August 28.

I have worked at the Playhouse for many years, principally as a director. During that time there have been a couple of minor floods as the West River runs directly behind the Playhouse. Normally this makes for a beautiful view, but that Sunday was different. Heavy

rain started overnight and it kept raining for 14-15 hours. When I first saw the river on Sunday morning, I knew we were in trouble. It had already risen about halfway up the bank – about four or five feet.

At about 10:15 am, the Weston Volunteer Fire Department arrived at the Playhouse to tell us to evacuate. In the next 30 to 45 minutes the water surged over the banks and started coming into the Playhouse fast. By 11 am most of the basement was flooded. The good news was that the flooding never reached the auditorium or stage.

The basement of the Playhouse has two levels. On the upper level is a restaurant (run by others), a cabaret, bathrooms, green room, wardrobe and prop office. The lower level, about three to four feet lower, contains

dressings rooms, orchestra pit and prop shop. At the height of the flood, almost nine feet of muddy floodwater was in the lower level. Sadly, the theatre had just spent \$700,000 to create two new dressing rooms and the orchestra pit. That made it especially hard to watch the water rising up. We all felt completely helpless. At one point I looked down through the orchestra pit opening in the house and saw that the baby grand piano was not only under water but had somehow flipped over.

The severity of the flood clearly caught us, and much of Vermont, off guard. We had prepared for a minor flood by getting everything off of the floor but we were not ready for floodwater to reach the basement ceiling in places. Almost all the *Saint-Ex* show props, costumes and wigs were completely submerged.

That's the basic story, but the most heartening things were about to happen. Every company member I saw on Sunday, from Equity actor to production intern, wanted to know what time they should come to the Playhouse on Monday to start cleaning up. Alumni and friends filled the company's Facebook page with love and we all started getting a

lot of supportive messages/calls.

On Monday, the Playhouse management decided that *Saint-Ex* would reopen in a modified version on Friday night - only four and a half days away. Those next few days were a blur of activity as the Equity actors, Equity stage

prepared. Amazingly, *Saint-Ex* reopened on Friday to a rousing welcome from the audience.

The greatest lesson that I have taken from all of this is that live theatre can matter even in the digital age. Community members made lunch for the



Looking down into the orchestra pit seeing a baby grand piano under water.

managers, musicians, box office staff, production staff, administrative staff and close to 100 community volunteers shoveled mud, ripped out soaked carpeting, discarded trash, mopped floors and tried to salvage all they could. Everything that was in the basement was brought out into the sun to dry. The wardrobe staff took on the giant task of hand washing all the muddy costumes before they were sent to the dry cleaner. Wigs were washed three or four times and then restyled. Props were salvaged or replaced. Makeshift dressing rooms were

company every day that week; the Fire Department came back and pumped thousands of gallons of water out of the building; townspeople came in to help; local electricians replaced hundreds of circuit breakers; several grand pianos were offered as a replacement for the ruined one; Boston's Huntington Theatre solicited their audiences to help us; Playhouse alums organized a NYC benefit; donors just started sending checks without being solicited. The outpouring of generosity from people all over the country was, and still is, overwhelming to me.

## Los Angeles

### L. Scott Caldwell Welcomes New Members

#### By Maggie McColleston, Co-2nd Vice Chair, Western Membership Education Committee

Tony Award winner L. Scott Caldwell welcomed and inspired our newest colleagues on October 5, 2011 at the Los Angeles



New members with their Equity gifts.

New Member Reception. As the event's guest speaker, Ms. Caldwell shared her journey from being a girl with a dream in a still-segregated Chicago to being a woman with a Tony Award for her portrayal of Bertha Holly in *Joe Turner's Come And Gone*. Today, most people know her for playing Rose on the television show *Lost*.

Growing up, she had fallen in love with acting while watching movies daily after school, but re-

members not seeing people who looked like her on the screen. Regardless, she nurtured her dream of acting by practicing her craft in her high school drama club, later at Northwestern University and Loyola University, and eventually by teaching acting at a performing arts high

school. This is when she realized that her own dream had "bubbled up" again.

She formed a plan after seeing Uta Hagen speak about acting on a TV talk show. She would go to New York to audition for her school. While there, by happenstance, she also had the opportunity to audition for the Negro Ensemble Company (NEC), an opportunity that might not have happened if she hadn't learned to stand up for her talent. When denied an appointment time because she was told she needed more experience on her resume, she asked "How do you know what I can do by a piece of paper?" She earned an audition and as a result, both the school and the company invited her to join them.

It was a difficult decision to

move to NYC, but one that led to the working actor's lifestyle she had dreamed of. Ms. Caldwell graciously brought her Tony Award with her so the new members could hold it in their own hands, nurturing their own dreams. Stand up for your talent.

She reminded the new members of three things to remember in this profession—dream, faith and practice. "Keep your dream alive, allow yourself to sit and dream of the life you desire. Keep the faith and know that there is a community of others like you that you are a part of. And if you want to play Lady Macbeth, you can do that at home, practice her at home. Create a vehicle for yourself if no one's giving it to you."

Other guest speakers included Tina Hookum of The Actors Fund, the safety net providing training and employment programs, as well as social and health care services for those who are in need, crisis or transition.

Membership Associate Doug Dixon answered frequently-asked questions regarding dues, and reminded the members that dues can be paid online.

Business Representative Patrick Lee stressed that no question is too simple, that the Business Reps are always happy to help you get the answers



Guest speaker L. Scott Caldwell (II) with Western Councillors Michael Dotson and Michele Lee.

you need. As an example, he explained the term "most favored nations" and how it can apply to any benefit category listed on your contract.

Western Councillor Michael Dotson went through the ins and

outs of Equity auditions, the role monitors play, and all the fun committees that members can be involved in. He also urged members to sign up for e-voting to save paper and postage.

Also in attendance was Western Councillor Michele Lee who shared that she wished she had gotten involved in all that Equity has to offer when she first joined. "I didn't know about all these

things. I've learned so much being involved. Take advantage of it all."

Equity's Ivan Rivas hosted the event and held raffles for Equity merchandise.

## New York

### Free Health Fair is November 8

A free Health Fair including free flu vaccinations will be held on Tuesday, November 8, 2011 from 10 am to 3 pm in the Audition Center on the 2nd floor at the Equity offices, 165 West 46th Street. The event is sponsored by Better Wellness and You (BWAY) and The Actors Fund.

There will be screenings, bodywork, nutrition discussion, health information and free mammograms (by appointment). All union members are requested to present their union

cards when signing in at the Fair. Reservations are not required, but some services may be offered on a limited basis so you are urged to arrive early enough to participate. Participants for flu shots must be signed in and registered by 2:30 pm.

Mammograms are provided by the Project Renewal Scan Van Program to uninsured women age 40 and older. Space is limited. To make an appointment, call 800-564-6868.

Programs and services are subject to change.



**New York**

# Broadway Flea Market Raises \$547,658; Extends Into Times Square

Theatre fans opened their hearts and wallets on September 25, 2011 at the 25th Annual Broadway Flea Market & Grand Auction, as this unrivaled outdoor event raised \$547,658 for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS.

For the first time, the event extended beyond West 44th Street and included the Times Square pedestrian plaza between 43rd and 44th Streets. It was such a success, the new configuration is now the map for future editions.



**1** \$7,697 and *War Horse*/Lincoln Center Theater with \$7,217  
In all, 63 tables raised

theatrical community. Once again, **(#5)** Equity, which holds the distinction of the Flea

\$273,886 and represented nearly every show on Broadway, including **(#1)** *Billy Elliot* **(#2)** *Spider-Man*, **(#3)** *Wicked* and **(#4)** *Follies*,



Market's "longest running table," and the Stage Managers Association were there.

Star power is always a big draw and this year more than 60 Equity actors generously donated their time to sign autographs and pose for pictures including *Anything Goes*' Sutton Foster and Joel Grey; **(#6)** Judith Light and

plus several Off-Broadway shows, as well many organizations within the



The top Broadway show tables this year were: *Wicked* with \$15,367; *Follies*, \$14,819; *The Phantom of the Opera*, \$9,313; *The Book of Mormon*, \$9,229; *How to Succeed in Business without Really Trying*, \$9,192; *Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark*,



Thomas Sadoski from *Other Desert Cities*; *The Book of Mormon*'s Josh Gad, Nikki M. James, Rory O'Malley and Andrew Rannells; *Spring Awakening* and *Glee* star Jonathan Groff; *Sister Act*'s Patina Miller; Tony Sheldon and Nick Adams from *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*; **(#7)** Lindsay Mendez and Hunter Parrish from *Godspell*, and many more.

Unique backstage and on-stage experiences continued to prove popular in the Live Auction, which raised \$201,000. The top-selling lot was a day at *The Phantom of the Opera*,

including a walk-on role with special costumes and make-up, which went for \$10,500 to two bidders, raising \$21,000.

The Broadway Flea Market was born in the autumn of 1987 when the company of *A Chorus Line* sold items left in the dressing rooms on two tables set up outside their stage door in Shubert Alley to benefit Equity Fights AIDS. They made about \$12,000 for the fledgling



charity that day. Since then the Broadway Flea Market & Grand Auction has raised more than \$9.2 million dollars for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS and become a cherished tradition of the Broadway theatre community each September.



AIDS and become a cherished tradition of the Broadway theatre community each September.



(Photos: Peter James Zielfinski)

**New York**

# Love What You Do and Do What You Love, MacIntyre Dixon Advises New AEA Members

He's done 15 Broadway shows, many others Off-Broadway (including *The Fantasticks*, in which he's currently appearing as "The Old Actor"), since joining Equity in 1960 (for an initiation fee of \$125).

He's MacIntyre Dixon and he was the guest speaker at the Eastern Region New Member Reception on September 19, 2011. He was introduced by Councillor Bill Bateman, with whom he is sharing a dressing room at *The Fantasticks*.

Mr. Dixon began by telling a story about an old actor who, when microphones first came in, declined to use one, saying, "The day I have to use a machine to be heard I no longer want to appear." And someone in the back of the house shouted out, "Louder, please."

That story set the tone for an interesting, funny and totally enjoyable experience for a full house of new Equity members.

The story of how he joined Equity is one of great good luck. He and two college friends (one was Richard Libertini) had put together a revue called *Stewed Prunes*, which was playing in the coffeehouses in Greenwich Village. They were appearing on Bleecker Street in 1960 and playing to five or six people a night when a critic from The New York Times decided to go down to the

Village to do a story about the coffeehouses and the beatnik period, and he wandered into their show. "He ended up writing the whole article about us and our show and the next night there was a line waiting to get in. That was fantastic, because otherwise we would have performed and died within a week or so and that would have been the end of it. Because of that story we moved up to the Circle-in-the-Square Off-Broadway and that's when we joined Equity. And I mention this because every job for the next ten or 15 years sort of sprung from that one show. One thing led to another and it was just a tremendous happenstance that that event happened. I'm forever grateful that we had that and it made my life, my career, as an actor." He noted that when he joined Equity in 1960 there were no programs for new members and he thought that these were "a wonderful thing."

Asked if he would do anything differently in his career, Mr. Dixon said that "as far as career is concerned, everything worked so well for me." But, he added, he

might have liked to have found something creative to do when he wasn't acting. "The hardest part of being an actor is when you're not acting." He also regretted that he was always reluctant to go out of town, afraid he might lose a New York job.

However, he said he felt "very lucky" about his career "because one of the things I wanted to do as an actor was variety and I really

had a lot of that and I'm very grateful. I got to do comedy and drama; I got to do musicals and Shakespeare."

Mr. Bateman asked if there was one role or kind of theatre that he would love to have done. Mr. Dixon responded that he "always had that fantasy idea of playing the title role of *Hamlet*," but there was never much chance of him ever doing that, although he did play the Gravedigger in a production of *Hamlet*.

"There are two things that I discovered that were the greatest things about acting, besides performing on stage," he said. One was "the experience of traveling to places that I would never have gotten to, and to be able to

do it with my family," like Japan and Malta and England. "Those are some of the greatest memories for me, one of the great things about acting. The other was being able to spend as much time with my son as I was able to spend, because an ordinary working person doesn't have that opportunity, but when we're unfortunately out of work, we do have that time and that was one of the great things, too."

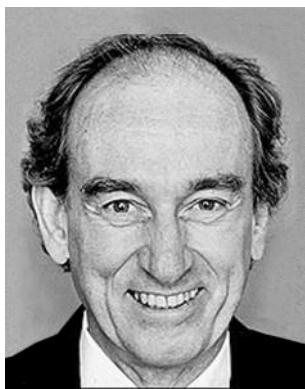
When the floor was opened for a Q&A, a new member asked "How do you keep reinventing yourself as an artist?" Answer: "I like to think that you're kind of forced into it, because you don't know what roles are going to be coming. I had some wonderful surprises, some things that I never thought I'd be doing, and I always tried to approach them creatively, trying to be as free as possible and growing into the part."

His advice to newcomers would be "to love what you're doing and do what you love. And always go for what you love, don't do something for love or money, but hopefully for both, but never for neither. And to do it with all your heart." He also said it was important to always "keep your creative juices going. That will do amazing things for your spirit." He said for years he resented going to auditions. "But I always

feel great afterward, even if I didn't do well, because I feel like I'm an actor again."

Final question of the afternoon: Do you have any advice about how we should handle our millions when they start coming in?

Answer: I like the way you think.



MacIntyre Dixon.

**New York**

# Seniors in Hell's Kitchen Urged to Respond to Fund Senior Survey

**Reminder:** Are you 60 years of age or older and live in NYC's Clinton/Hell's Kitchen or Chelsea neighborhoods? The Actors Fund is interested in your point of VIEW (Vision, Insight, Experience, Wisdom) to better understand the quality of life of older New Yorkers. The findings will help provide information on needs, identify gaps in services and help The Actors Fund organize and further develop services for seniors in the performing arts community.

To take the anonymous survey, visit [www.SeniorsCommunitySurvey.org](http://www.SeniorsCommunitySurvey.org) through December 31, 2011. No Internet access? Call 212-221-7301 ext. 277.

**Denver****Annual Fall Gathering is a Crowd Favorite**

By Shelly Gaza, Chair  
Denver Area Liaison  
Committee

The Denver Area Liaison Committee hosted its annual Fall Gathering on Monday, September 19, 2011. Racines Restaurant, a Denver theatre community favorite, served up free appetizers and provided a cash bar for the crowd, which

included about 30 Equity Actors, Stage Managers, Membership Candidates, and a handful of friends and family. A new treat this year was a door prize raffle, and no one went home empty handed. Local theatres, businesses and artists donated the prizes as a way of expressing their appreciation for the work and talents of Denver's Equity community.



Members get together in Denver.

**Los Angeles****Members Unite to End Alzheimer's**

In Los Angeles on Sunday, October 9, 2011, Equity members, along with members of SAG and AFTRA, participated in a National Walk to End Alzheimer's sponsored by the Alzheimer's Association. SAG President Ken Howard and AEA/SAG/AFTRA member Alfred Molina were on hand and asked to be in the team picture, taken just before the start of the 5K Walk.

"It was glorious, truly glorious," said Nancy Daly, who spearheaded the team, which raised over \$18.5K for the cause. "We began the Walk with about 40 actors and as we walked other actors saw our signs, the SAG logo and 'Actors' Equity Rocks,' and asked to join us. We ended up with over 50 actors walking together," reports Ms. Daly. She goes on to say, "Each one of us knew what it is like to have a mom or dad living with this heartbreaking disease. Two

members of our team carried pictures of their mom and their dad who had passed away from Alzheimer's. Everyone said, 'I am so glad you did this. I am so glad you created this team.' It was enthralling, joyous and heartbreaking at the same time. We cried, but they were happy tears and we shared them together."

The next day, *broadwayworld.com* posted an article about the team and other actors around the country responded, said Ms. Daly. "My dream is that next year, we will have even more teams of actors in more cities on our team, 'Actors United to End Alzheimer's.' I created this team so that actors across the country would be able to join together and support each other."

Walks were also held in New York on October 23 and in Washington, DC and Hollywood, FL on November 5.

It's not too late to make a donation. Go to [www.alz.org/walk](http://www.alz.org/walk) and click on the State of your choice and look for the actors' team, "We Take Care of Our Own."



SAG President Ken Howard and AEA/SAG/AFTRA member Alfred Molina join marchers in the Walk to End Alzheimer's in Los Angeles.

**San Francisco****What Is The BAAC?  
Who Are The Members?  
What Do They Do?**

BAAC—The Bay Area Advisory Committee—comprises 14 members (12 full members and two alternates) from the nine Bay Area counties in Northern California, including the cities of San Francisco, Oakland and San Jose. The BAAC works on behalf of the San Francisco Bay Area AEA membership as well as the surrounding membership in the Sacramento, Santa Cruz and Mendocino areas.

The members advise the Western Regional Board on issues concerning local Letters of Agreement (LOA) and the Bay Area Project Policy (BAPP). All members of BAAC also serve on the Bay Area Theatre (BAT) Contract Committee as well as other Regional and National contract committees.

BAAC also has the following local subcommittees and is actively looking for members interested in working together on events and opportunities for the local membership. Contact Kelly Ground at [kground@gmail.com](mailto:kground@gmail.com) or any of the Committee members to find out more and to get involved.

The local subcommittees are: Outreach, Stage Managers, Education, Developing Theatres, Hospitality, EEO (Women,

Subcommittee; **Marie Shell** (Actor, Stage Manager) is Chair of the Education Subcommittee; **Heath Belden** (Stage Manager) is Chair of the Stage Managers' Subcommittee; **Jessica Powell** (Actor) is Vice Chair of the



Participants in the CPR/OSHA First Aid Training class are: (l to r) Bert van Alsberg, Dalia Vidor (EMC), Jonathan Templeton, Instructor Chris Schlesinger, Danielle Callaghan, Joan Summerfield, Peter Royston and Les Reinhardt.

Hospitality Subcommittee; **Ray Renati** (Actor) and **Bert van Aalsburg** (Stage Manager) are on the Recruitment Subcommittee; Alternate **Rod Gnapp** (Actor) is on the Recruitment Subcommittee; and Alternate **Cassidy Brown** (Actor) is Vice Chair of the Media Subcommittee.

**Activities**

The BAAC is developing an event to celebrate Black History Month in February, 2012.

Preliminary planning has begun and the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, now a BAT Seasonal Company, has graciously offered to host the event at its wonderful new venue (aka Post Street Theatre). Interested members may contact Kelly Ground for more information.



Volunteers at the KQED FM Radio Pledge Drive are: (front, l to r) Phoebe Moyer, Susan Soriano, Les Reinhardt; (rear) Michael Patrick Gaffney, Jessica Powell, Teresa Byrne.

Members of Color), and Recruitment.

**Kelly Ground** (Actor) is Chair of the BAAC as well as a member of Council from the Western Region. She also serves as Chair of the Equal Employment Opportunities Subcommittee (Women, Members of Color, Mature and Members with Disabilities).

**Stephen Pawley** (Actor) is 1st Vice Chair of BAAC and Chair of the Developing Theatres Subcommittee; **Brian Herndon** (Actor) is 2nd Vice Chair of BAAC and Chair of the Media Subcommittee; **Les Reinhardt** (Stage Manager) is Vice Chair of the Stage Management Subcommittee; **Michael Patrick Gaffney** (Actor) is Chair of the Hospitality Subcommittee; **Lauren Bloom** (Actor) is Chair of the Women's EEO

certification in Heartsaver First Aid CPR AED from the American Heart Association. Thanks to TheatreWorks and Marin Theater Company for making it possible for four of their staff (including their AEA Stage Manager) to attend.

Future events include Stage Manager Speed Dating and a Resume/Cover Letter Workshop.

Phoebe Moyer reports that AEA members from the San Francisco Bay Area volunteered

for the KQED Fall Membership Pledge Drive on Monday, September 19 sporting their AEA T-shirts. BAAC is a regular volunteer for KQED pledge drives, hoping to raise public awareness of the regional AEA membership. It's always a fun experience with good company, delicious food and plenty of coverage for AEA on the airwaves. AEA member Teresa Byrne posted her experience on Facebook: "Manned the phones at KQED-FM yesterday. Took a call from an elderly woman on limited income who regularly sends money and only listens to KQED. She wanted to know if it was okay to mail her check after her Social Security payment came, and if we'd still get the credit for the matching corporate pledge. I almost cried."

**New York****Free Flu Shots Still Available**

Free flu shots are still available for all members of the theatre community in the Audition Center at the Equity office, 165 West 46th Street, from Dr. Barry Kohn of Physician Volunteers for the Arts on Thursday, November 17, 2011 from 10 am to 3 pm.

In addition, The Actors Fund will be offering free flu shots at the Al Hirschfeld Free Health Clinic at the Dorothy Ross Friedman Residence (formerly The Aurora), 475 West 57th Street, on Thursday, November 17 from 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm; Wednesday, December 7, 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm; Tuesday, December 20 from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm, and Thursday, January 5, 2012 from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. Dates and times are subject to change so for the latest information on Actors Fund flu shot days, call 212-489-1939 and at the start of the recording, press option 3.

**New York****Seniors Celebrated**

Equity has nearly 8,000 members over the age of 60 and more than 1,300 who have been Equity members for 50 years or more. To celebrate the contribution of Equity's Senior Members and in honor of the United Nations' International Day of Older Persons on October 1, the Eastern Equal Employment Opportunity Committee's Senior Performers Subcommittee, chaired by Councillor Kristine Nevins, hosted a Peer-to-Peer



(Photo: Stephanie Masucci)

Networking Event and Reception following the October 14 Eastern Membership Meeting in New York. Among those attending

were: (l to r) Mel Silverman, James Yoham, Nesbitt Blaisdell, Elaine LeGaro, Tom Ligon, Sandra M. Bloom and Richard Lederer.

**San Diego****Panel Discusses "Being Equity"**

The San Diego theatrical community gathered at the North Coast Repertory Theatre on September 19, 2011 for a panel Q & A discussion about how Equity membership impacts actors in the San Diego market.

The session, organized by the San Diego Area Liaison Committee, was an opportunity to discuss and demystify Actors'

number of sister union members, producers and casting directors.

The evening began with a wine and cheese mixer, followed by a panel discussion featuring San Diego theatre professionals and Equity Western Business Representative Ivan Rivas. The panel was moderated by Deborah B. Pettry, Ph.D.,

members spoke about being part of the theatre community, and how the Equity connection makes them a part of a national theatre movement. One member spoke passionately about joining Equity and carrying on the family tradition of union membership. A non-Equity colleague reminded everyone of the challenges of just starting a career, struggling to build a resume, hustling for work, meeting directors and networking – networking – networking. A non-Equity producer spoke about the financial struggles of running a small theatre and how, when able to, they hire Equity actors on contract. The topic of casting was discussed. San Diego has a strong local talent pool. Frustrations were expressed that while some local theatres cast locally, some still travel to New York for casting.

Rounding out the evening was a lively networking reception with refreshments.

Abner Genece, San Diego Liaison Committee Vice-Chair, said of the evening "It was a huge success, and represents a significant step toward strengthening the feeling of community in this area - not only among performers - but among directors, producers and other theatre professionals as well. A lot of goodwill and deeper understanding came out of this evening. We thank the Equity staff and specifically Ivan Rivas for their help, and look forward to building more opportunities for our members and our region."



**AEA member Janene Possell Shepherd and Western Region Councillor John Herzog.**

Equity and to talk about what Equity membership means. The gathering also provided a chance for the local theatre community to mingle and network in an informal and collegial setting. While the event's focus was on those currently considering membership, it was open to all in the performing arts community. The strong turnout included Equity members, Membership Candidates, non-members, a

President of Associates for Creative Leadership, Inc.

Questions directed to Equity members concerned personal career choices, when and how they joined AEA and the circumstances that led them to membership. Local performing opportunities were discussed, both Equity and non-Equity, along with the pride attendees felt in the community and the outstanding quality of performances in the area. Equity

**New York****AEA Wins BSL Championship**

Congratulations to AEA's softball team for winning the 2011 Broadway Show League Championship trophy. It was presented at the Eastern Regional Board meeting on October 18. Shown here are (front, l to r) Joanne Borts and Angel Wuellner; (standing) Dick Connors, Fran Levitt, Sam Robards, Brooke Martino, Greg Salata, Kim Travis, Dave Shaerf (aka Coppola), Jennifer Mara and Kitty Crowley. (Not pictured: Suzy Campanaro, Justine

Salata, Erin Daugherty, Rebecca Stavis, James Schram, Markus Potter, Peter Daddabbo, Jamie Rejent, Janet Shefts, Jimmy Burke, Andy Breving, Jenn Dumas, Tom Wiggin, Chris Nass, Ian Kahn, Rick Tabor, Larry Edwards, Peter Vanderhurst, Cathy Tomlin, Ross Knorr, Chris Williams, Courtney Scott, Courtney Godan, Clandra Hackney, Don Burroughs, B.J. Johnson and Female MVP Juana Okyama.



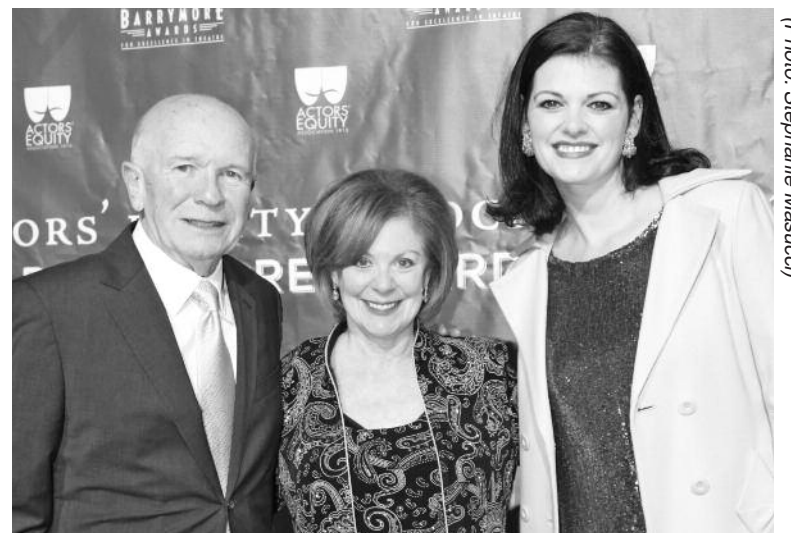
(Photo: Tripp Chamberlain)

**Philadelphia****Equity Attends Barrymore Awards**

The 17th Annual Barrymore Awards were presented on October 3, 2011 at the Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia. Pictured are Sara Garonzik (c) Producing Artistic Director of Philadelphia Theatre Company, AEA Eastern Region Vice President and Red Carpet host Kate Shindle and playwright

Terrence McNally. Mr. McNally received the Distinguished Artist Award, "recognizing theatre artists of national and international renown who choose to bring their talents to Philadelphia."

Read more about the Barrymore Awards online at [www.actorsequity.org](http://www.actorsequity.org).



(Photo: Stephanie Masucci)

**New York****Volunteers are the Backbone of the Falat Basket Project**

Greg Kayne (left), who has been a volunteer with Equity's Stephen J. Falat Holiday Basket Project for the past 18 years, calls this experience "the best thing I do every year." An Equity member since 1957, Mr. Kayne began volunteering with Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS before becoming involved with the Basket Project. "It's very exciting to be a part of this and I am pleased for the opportunity," he adds.

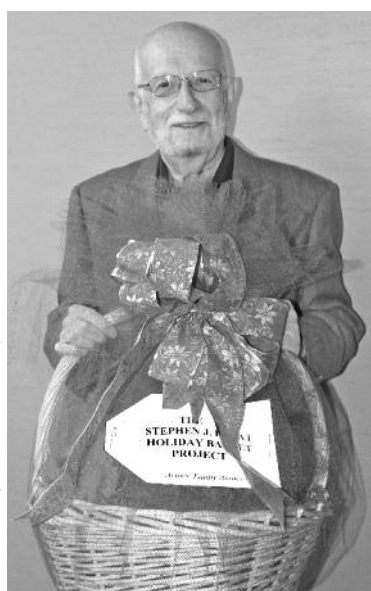
Each year, merchandise (clothing, CDs, candy, toiletries, books and more) donated by corporations and individuals is gathered, packed into more than 3,500 colorful bags and delivered to over 20 hospitals, AIDS hospices, pediatric AIDS centers and HIV community services in the New York area for the holidays. "Greg is invaluable to this project. We couldn't do it without him and our army of

volunteers," says Arne Gundersen, Chair of the Basket Project Committee.

If you would like to help by making a donation, filling the bags or delivering them, contact Anne Fortuno, Project Coordinator, at Equity, 212-869-8530, ext. 409. Contributions may be sent to Equity, 165 West 46th Street, New York, NY 10036, Attention: Falat Basket Project.

**Office Closing**

All Equity offices will be closed on Thursday, November 24 and Friday, November 25, 2011 for Thanksgiving. Offices will also close early on Wednesday, November 23 for the holiday. Check your local office for the exact time of closing.



(Photo: Stephanie Masucci)

# A Look Back @ Equity Milestones

## 75 Years Ago October/November 1936

• An editorial in the October issue of Equity (Magazine) deals with the practice of unscrupulous Managers who take advantage of Equity members by making “sub rosa arrangements with actors by which they appear under a change of name,” along with “the practice of hiring actors for nothing...or even worse, making them pay to play roles.” Therefore, Council resolves that the names of Managers and employers who fail to obey Equity rules and/or induce Equity members in breaches of the rules will be posted on a list of Managers guilty of unfair practices to be kept by Equity and members may not work with such Managers without the written consent of Equity.

• An editorial in the November issue of Equity urges “Big Business” to recognize the value of theatre to New York City’s economy and to become “theatre conscious.” It is noted that recent

figures show the legitimate theatre brings \$331 million into the city.

• Equity protests an order issued by Germany’s Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels requiring “the police to demand that all actors show their membership cards in the Reich Theatre Chamber, a branch of the Chamber of Culture from which all non-Aryan actors are carefully barred.”

## 50 Years Ago October/November 1961

• A clause, mutually agreed to by the League and Equity, is inserted into the Rule Book “to protect feminine members from potential encroachments upon their privacy when Equity productions are booked into clubs.” The rule states: “Mixing with or circulating among the customers of the club is not a condition of employment and under no circumstances and at no times shall the Actor be required to engage in such activity.”

• The New York State AFL-CIO “endorses and commends the position taken by Actors’ Equity Association that its members will not perform in any theatre or other place where segregation, either against performer or patron, exists.”

## 25 Years Ago October/November 1986

• An Equity-sponsored industry-wide symposium on non-traditional casting is held. The symposium is recommended by the Ethnic Minorities Committee, and approved unanimously by the Council as well as the Western and Midwest Advisory Boards. Eighteen scenes featuring 53 actors are presented, along with four panel discussions addressing the problem and the concept.

• President Ronald Reagan signs the Tax Reform Act of 1986, which recognizes the special needs of performers, especially those who work as

freelance employees for multiple employers. Equity hails this as a “major victory.” (Today, Equity, SAG and AFTRA are joining again in an effort to update the income figures for qualifying performing artists. The unions are collectively working with a lobbying firm in DC to have the legislation reflect current annual adjusted incomes, index them for inflation going forward and recognize deductions unique to the entertainment industry.)

• Members attending a special Health Insurance Conference in New York urge “amalgamation with SAG and AFTRA” for health insurance.

## 10 Years Ago October/November 2001

• Equity mounts a boycott of the non-Equity National Tour of *The Music Man*.

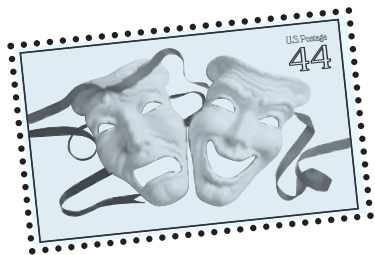
• Equity and Canadian Equity agree to pension reciprocity.

• A National Council Plenary bringing more than 80 Councillors, Regional Board members and staff to New York, discusses non-Equity touring, organizing, the use of non-pros and tiered salaries.

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Steve DiPaolo, Administrator



## 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 175 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.

### REMEMBERING ANNETTE CARDONA (ANNETTE CHARLES)

Dear Editor:

Annette Cardona, who passed away August 3, 2011 is best remembered as Cha-Cha diGregorio in the film version of *Grease*, but that was far from her only accomplishment. Annette originated the role of the Acid Queen in *Tommy* and starred on Broadway as Alonza/Dulcinea in *Man of La Mancha*, as Anthony Quinn’s daughter in Williams’ *Red Devil Battery Sign*, and appeared in *Sweet Charity*, *Coco*, *Promises Promises*, and *1491*. She also starred in the Haskell Wexler/George Lucas movie *Latino*, among many film and TV appearances.

Annette, who earned degrees in Theatre and Psychology and a Masters from NYU School of Social Work, became a professor at CSUN and was about to begin teaching in September alongside yours truly at New York Film Academy’s west coast Universal Studios-Hollywood campus. As I join her loving family and steadfast friends mourning her, I keep thinking of those students—how they have been robbed of an amazing learning experience, being taught by someone with the unstoppable spirit of Annette. It would have

been a gift they would have never forgotten.

Travis Michael Holder  
(Editor’s note: An expanded version of this tribute is on Equity’s website: [www.actorsequity.org](http://www.actorsequity.org))

### SURVEY FOR STAGE MANAGERS

Dear Editor:

The stage management program at the University of Iowa, with support from the Stage Managers’ Association, is conducting a survey of professional stage managers. The survey will track trends in how stage managers call shows, set up prompt books and prepare for new projects. When we conducted a similar survey in 2006, we received responses from 283 stage managers.

Anyone who has stage managed at least one theatre production in the United States (or a tour that originates in the U.S.) is encouraged to participate. There will be separate lines of questions for veteran stage managers and people who are just starting their careers. This online survey should take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. There are also opportunities to provide feedback on any of the major questions.

To participate, visit <http://smsurvey.info>. The survey

runs November 2-30, 2011. The results will be published in January.

David McGraw, PSM  
University of Iowa

### AN OLD-TIMER’S PHILOSOPHY

Dear Editor:

I just read Equity News, and feel rejuvenated returning to the dream I hold most dear.

I received my Equity card in the 1963 production of *The Deputy* with David Carradine. Years have passed, with some Broadway work, TV, films, cabaret and community theatre productions.

I also received the gift of a wonderful husband, Steve Mills. He was a burlesque top banana, and we played in a show called *This Was Burlesque* for a long time. He did the show 1956-1977, when he had a stroke and lost his speech, not a terrific thing for a funny, loquacious comedian. His last Broadway appearance was in the original production of *70 Girls 70*.

He was the ultimate old-time performer, who loved to perform for the sake of entertaining. And that’s the way he saw auditions: “a chance to perform,” no judgment, no nervousness, no qualms about whether or not he’d be hired—just “a chance to perform.”

What if every young person

just starting out had that philosophy? Just get out there and perform. Period.

Roberta Lean

### IN MEMORIAM

Dear Editor:

Prolific writer/actor/composer/teacher/director Michael A. Sartor passed away at home in Studio City, CA on September 9, 2011. He coached many artists to successful careers. His spread of laughter, wit, teaching, music composing, were his deepest gifts. From Sandusky, OH, as a performer he worked at Kings Island, OH; Cedar Point, OH; Kenley Players, OH. At Cedar Point he was creative musical director of live shows, 1976-1982. He acquired his Equity card at Kenley Players and wrote music for some of the original summer shows.

In NYC he began his association with American Musical and Dramatic Academy. Michael coached privately, helping hundreds of performers to successful careers on Broadway. In LA, he helped set up the opening of AMDA West and headed the Musical Theatre Department. He wrote shows for Walt Disney World and the theme song for the Disney Cruise Line, “Discover the Magic.” He had a passion and love for life (as well as puns).

A “Celebration of Life” was held at the Norris Theatre in Palos Verdes, CA.

Kristopher Kyer

Dear Editor:

The passing of Philip Davidson on September 14, 2011 left a void in the lives of

those who knew and loved him. A gifted actor, Phil spent nearly a quarter of a century at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, as well as many years at theatres in Seattle, Texas and North Carolina.

He appeared in more than 60 roles at Ashland, including: a searing Drummond in *Inherit the Wind*, a powerful Brutus in *Julius Caesar*, a hard-nosed Sidney Black in *Light Up the Sky*, a kinky Dr. Prentice in *What the Butler Saw*, and dozens more.

An avid reader, he could quote from works ranging from the Bible to Shel Silverstein to Thurber. He was politically active and didn’t suffer fools, political or otherwise. His politics were, as he liked to say, just to the left of socialist Eugene V. Debs and how we would smile whenever he went on one of his famous rants.

A class act to the end, we will miss his talents, generosity, biting wit and his humanity.

Richard Elmore