

"Do what you do so well
that they will want
to see it again and bring
their friends."
—Walt Disney

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Your Income Tax

That's Entertainment! — Or Is It?

By Sandra Karas
Director, VITA Program

You review the show biz expenses you've incurred over the past year and you can hardly believe how much you've spent! There were the new head shots (four looks at least, right?), getting back into tap classes (gotta be ready for the next version of *Anything Goes*), your new phone and another tablet (because your nephew stepped on the one you



bought a few months ago), train fare to Connecticut to audition – again! The list goes on and on, right? Oh, hello! - You have all of these bar tabs with your industry peeps and you know they're deductible because you heard it in the green room (or was that on the bus to Boise?). We get so many questions – and many of the members provide the answers, too – except the answers they "know" are not always correct. Let's review.

Q: OK, so I went out with the cast after the show, several times, actually. How much of that may I deduct?

A: None of it, actually. You see, the test for deducting bar tabs, dinner bills and any other

business entertainment that you may incur is that the purpose of the cost is in furtherance of your income. The cost has to have a direct relation to seeking (and one hopes, eventually obtaining) gainful employment.

Q: OK, so we're all talking about the business and we help each other further our careers, right? So, isn't that deductible?

A: No, and before you get frustrated with my answer, let me say that the business people who put the squeeze on this deduction were the corporate types who favored the "three-martini lunches" and the office "happy hours" back in the day. They'd trade off on who was picking up the tab and then deduct lunch and bar bills, dinner, golf games – whatever, until the IRS caught on that this was simply personal entertainment and office camaraderie and didn't qualify as business entertainment in furtherance of income production.

Q: I get that, but we're always looking for work. Wouldn't ours be an exception?

A: They felt the same way. They were discussing their business strategies, clients, sales approaches, prospective customers and how to increase their work. The point is that socializing with your work colleagues is so common and work is usually discussed because that's what you all share. If every person had lunch or a beer with someone from the workplace and suggested that the income improved as a result, no one would pay any tax because virtually every drink or meal with a colleague would be deductible. So the IRS put some restrictions around what constitutes deductible business entertainment.

Q: What do I need to justify a deduction for business entertainment?

A: The documentation must include the following: Who? What? Where? When? and How much?

The "Who" must be someone who can get or connect you to future income sources, be it a job, an employer referral, an interview or audition, etc. The individual you treat must have a real potential to lead you to enhancing your income. Some examples might be: 1) You want to meet the company manager or casting office on a show you want to audition for, 2) You meet with a director in the hopes you

Reminder

Annual Membership Meeting is Friday, April 11, 2014 in All Regions

The Eastern, Central and Western Regions will be connected by telephonic hook-up for the April 11th Annual Meeting so that members in all Regions may be able to hear statements of candidates running for Council. The national portion of the meeting will begin at 2:30pm (Eastern Time), 1:30pm

(Central Time) and 11:30am (Pacific Time).

The **Eastern Regional Meeting** convenes at 2:00pm (Eastern Time) in the Murray Hill Suite on the 2nd Floor of the Hilton Midtown, 1335 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY.

The **Central Regional Meeting** begins at 1:00pm

(Central Time) in the Member Center on the 1st Floor of the Equity Building, 557 West Randolph Street, Chicago, IL.

The **Western Regional Meeting** starts at 11:00am (Pacific Time) in the Bellamy Board Room on the 5th Floor of the Equity Office, 6755 Hollywood Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA.

How to Vote in Council Election

AEA's 2014 Election is about to get underway. On Monday, April 14, ballots will be distributed by Election Services Solutions to all paid-up members.

There are three ways to vote:

- 1. Paper Ballot:** Paper ballots will be mailed out on April 14. Fill out your paper ballot and return it per the instructions provided. If you vote by mail, you *must* tear off the top portion of the ballot.
- 2. Paperless Balloting:** If you registered for E-Voting prior to March 21, at approximately 11:59pm Eastern Time on April

14, you will receive an email from Election Services Solutions with instructions for voting online. Make sure this message doesn't get caught in your spam filter. The email will come from actorsequityhelp@electionservicescorp.com. You will *not*

receive a paper ballot.

3. Online Voting: Even if you did not pre-register for E-Voting, you can still vote online. When you receive your paper ballot, go to <https://www.esc-vote.com/ae2014> and find the link for online voting. Enter your personal internet log-in number (from your paper ballot) and your Member ID# (printed on the front of your membership card) and follow online voting instructions.

NOTE: All ballots must be received by 5pm (Eastern Time) on Wednesday, May 21, 2014.

Statements from Candidates for Election (see page 4)

can get on her radar for her next show or be considered for replacements on the current one. 3) You want to get in with the AD on a series that shoots here and hope that your photo and resume will get to the right people through him.

The "What" must indicate what kind of job or referral you sought, how it relates to your industry or is appropriate for your job skills. Some examples are: 1) A workshop is being put together and you want to be in as it's being developed, 2) The casting director you are buying the drinks for casts a lot of regional theatre, series, films, commercials...pick one, 3) This musical director works all the time and has influence with a number of casting houses.

The "Where," "When," and "How much" are easy – they should all be on the check and easy to document. Did I say get good receipts for everything? Don't rely on your cocktail napkins or your credit card statements – they won't fly in an audit.

Q: How about communal cast parties or celebrations?

A: They are deemed personal entertainment, not business entertainment. Bear in mind,

thousands of people from thousands of offices all over the country socialize together, celebrate birthdays, holidays and any number of other personal events. They can't deduct these costs, irrespective of the presence of work colleagues at the events. If you were employing everyone and threw the party, that would be another story.

Q: OK. What about expenses theatre professionals have to pay for that most people don't – like staying fit with a gym membership?

A: Sorry, but that one's not deductible for anyone, regardless of career or profession. If it helps, police officers and fire fighters don't get to deduct the cost of their gyms either. In rare circumstances, we've heard of actors who were required – in the contract – to maintain a particular physical condition for the job and spent their own money to do so. Most of you won't be in that situation because anything that specific is usually provided by the employer. Physical training is considered part of personal fitness, unless your employer requires you to do something special and does not provide the means to get it done. Because police and fire

personnel (among others) can and do train at their jobs, they can't deduct their personal gyms.

Q: What about physical therapy?

A: PT, Occupational Therapy, Rehab and the like are all deductible as medical expenses, provided they are prescribed by your medical care provider. They are not business expenses – although many of us need those professionals to continue to work! The threshold for deducting medical costs has risen this year and your total medical expenses must exceed 10% (7.5% if you're 65 or older) of your total income in order to be deductible. That's a pretty high bar for most people, so save those out-of-pocket receipts and pay for things before year-end if you have some medical costs

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Area Liaison Hotline system

Call 877-AEA-1913

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

(1) Dial 877-AEA-1913

(2) Dial your city extension:

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

Your Income Tax

continued from page 1

coming up and you might benefit from the deduction. This might be the year to get that orthodonture, new glasses, Lasik surgery, that bunion fixed... And it includes medical insurance if you're paying your own premiums.

Q: Yes, but what about keeping expenses the same as last year, so we won't raise any flags? Wouldn't a large expense like that trigger an audit?

A: Your questions touch on two different issues: 1) Consistency of items reported on your tax returns from year to year, and 2) Expenses that might encourage the IRS to take a closer look.

To the first, don't worry about who's comparing your returns from one year to the next because no one is! When you file a return, it is compared to itself, not to the one you filed last year or in an earlier year. Your income and expenses are looked at in relation to one another. Is all of the income reported as it should be? Are the expenses typical of this kind of income and profession? Do they exceed the average taxpayer expenses? Are the deductions more than 25% of the taxpayer's gross income? The answers to these questions may lead to your second concern.

What triggers an audit can be one of many, varied components – or a combination of them. The fact that performers are audited more than some other professionals owes largely to the fact that they have lots of business expenses deducted on their returns. And it's almost axiomatic that, the more you are looking for work, the more you tend to spend in its pursuit.

Those with fixed, annual salaries and regular commutes rarely spend much on pursuing further work or maintaining their job skills. The employers usually take care of equipment, continuing education, insurance, sometimes even carfare. But in our industry, we spend money just walking out the door because we have to seek employment, continue training and provide our own



equipment to do all of this, among other things.

Q: Speaking of equipment, what is the allowance for actors for computers, tablets, phones and stuff we use for both personal and business purposes?

A: There is no "actor allowance," as you call it. In fact, the only rule I can give you is that the amount allowed for any expense is the amount you actually spend, provided the expense is ordinary and necessary for your profession. I assisted a member with an audit who did not have receipts for the computer purchased and was on the road with it. The examiner wanted to disallow all of it because of the lack of receipts, but finally acquiesced to the credit card charge that suggested something was purchased in an electronics store. There was no contemporaneous log or business tracking of the time the computer was used in

conducting business (yes, they ask that kind of stuff), so the auditor thought 25% would be the most she could allow this member. It's your responsibility to be able to support whatever percentage of use you want to claim for business, unless you have more than one computer, tablet, phone, etc., in which case, you can claim 100% of the one you assign just for business. But even the IRS knows that you use your equipment for personal purposes and will insist on a reasonable apportionment. The phone is easy to track by looking at your itemized bills. Just compare your business minutes to personal ones and you have a business percentage. We also suggest that if you have a data package, you can justify it for business as you are on the go and must be in email or text contact with your agents, casting sites, etc. Your computer is trickier to justify and we suggest you keep a log for a week each quarter of time you spend on the computer, comparing when you're on for business versus personal use. Then review the four quarters and take an average. It will serve as a business log and support any claim you have in an audit.

Q: Can taxpayers still deduct \$75 without receipts?

A: Not in our experience, especially with business entertainment. The "\$75 Rule" is invoked in some examinations where items like cab fare, a trade publication and similar items aren't usually receipted and, if documented as cash paid in your calendar, can be included as deductions. In audits, I have found that, if a receipt is available, it is generally required. Ironically, the age of the computer has made on-line

purchases, subscriptions, cab receipts and many other formerly cash-only expenses traceable to the internet and, therefore, subject to a receipt as proof of purchase. They know you go on-line to read Backstage and use your credit card in the cab, so they want to see those receipts if you claim those deductions.

Reminder - Your Forms Are Online!

This season, we've had great success with the on-line forms and worksheets. Members are better prepared and have saved a trip or two to the office. Just go to members.actorsequity.org/login, sign on and click on the VITA link. You'll see instructions and the worksheets for the 2013 returns. Whether you have had your taxes done at VITA or elsewhere, these can be helpful now and in the coming months when you begin organizing for next year! If you have questions, just call the office 212-921-2548 during our operating hours and we'll be happy to help.

For more information about these or other tax matters, stop in your nearest VITA office. The New York office is located on the 14th Floor of the Equity Building, 165 West 46th Street (temporary entrance at 1560 Broadway). Hours are 10:30am-4:00pm, Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays (no Tuesdays). Telephone: 212-921-2548. Other VITA Programs are in Orlando at the Equity office and in Los Angeles at The Actors Fund.

Sandra Karas is Director of the VITA Program, Secretary-Treasurer of Equity and a NY Local Board member of SAG-AFTRA. She also saves lots of receipts!



ACTORS'
EQUITY
ASSOCIATION 1913

EQUITY NEWS

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A LOOK BACK

75 Years Ago April, 1939

• An editorial in the *Equity* magazine notes: "...there is no problem, no difficulty now before Equity, or which can be reasonably foreseen, which cannot better be met by a united and harmonious front than by a divided and disorganized Association... The signals appear to be set for peace and harmony. Equity appeals to all members to take advantage of [this] and to permit the administration to turn its best efforts to the solution of the essential problems which confront us as an organization, unhampered by internal strife or dissension."

• Council approves basic salaries and conditions for work at the World's Fair. Among the terms are the following: All employment is predicated on a 44-hour week and for six days

per week. Minimum weekly salary for actors is \$50, for chorus is \$45. No salary is paid for performances lost on account of rain. Rehearsal expense money is \$20 per week.

• Equity supports the Spellman Bill in hearings before the New York City Council. The bill, introduced by Councilman Howard Spellman of Manhattan, would make it a misdemeanor for anyone to resell theatre tickets at more than 75 cents above the box office price for orchestra seats or 50 cents above the box office price for balcony seats.

• Equity opens new offices in Los Angeles at 6331 Hollywood Boulevard.

50 Years Ago April 1964

• Outgoing President Ralph Bellamy reflects on his four terms (12 years) as

2014 Annual Election Calendar

Friday, April 11, 2014

Annual National Membership Meeting (all Regions via teleconference)
Candidate speeches

Monday, April 14, 2014

Distribution of ballots (from balloting company)

Tuesday, May 13, 2014

Deadline to request replacement paper ballot from balloting company

Wednesday, May 21, 2014

Deadline for receipt of ballots

Thursday, May 22, 2014

Tabulation Day

Thursday, June 5, 2014

Deadline to submit election protests

Equity president which saw a merger with Chorus Equity (1952), the creation of a Pension and Welfare Fund (1960), an increase in Production minimum salary from \$55 per week to \$117.50 and a stock minimum increase from \$55 weekly to minimums ranging from \$72.50 to \$92.50.

• The Equity magazine lists more than 150 Equity-bonded summer stock theatres.

25 Years Ago April 1989

• The Equity magazine lists 260 Equity Franchised Agents, including one in Missouri and one in Tennessee.

10 Years Ago April 2004

• Council establishes a Special Hearing Committee to hear charges against members working in non-union tours.

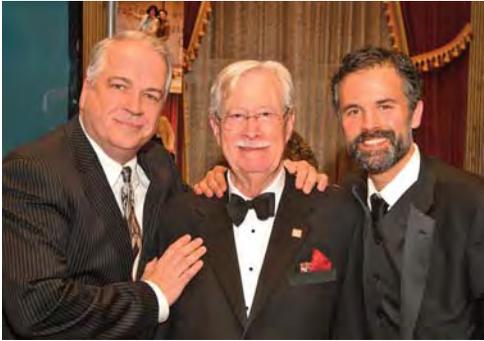
“Play It Again, Sam” Honors Sam (The Gamm) Babbitt

Sam Babbitt joined Equity on February 3, 2009 at the age of 80 and he's been working steadily as an actor ever since. His remarkable life and accomplishments were celebrated on January 27, 2014 at a fundraiser, “Play It Again, Sam,” at the Sandra Feinstein-Gamm Theatre in Pawtucket Rhode Island, Sam's home for more than three decades, even before joining Equity.

“The Gamm will be

Sam will say, ‘Did I ever tell you about the time...’ and that tantalizing query has finished with variously, ‘when I met General Ridgeway’ or ‘I shook hands with LBJ...’ or ‘when I was working with Bill Moyers at the Peace Corps...’ and my personal favorite, ‘when I was hired by a certain secretive government agency to go undercover as a journalist covering a yodeling festival in Switzerland.’”

How could he hope to top



Gamm Resident Actor Emeritus Sam Babbitt is flanked by (l) Gamm Resident Director Fred Sullivan, Jr. and Gamm Artistic Director Tony Estrella. (Photo: Peter Goldberg)

celebrating its 30th year in operation in 2014. Sam has been the MVP for more than 20 of those, and it has been his leadership both off the stage as a long-time board president and on the boards as an actor of extraordinary range and ability that has transformed the theatre to a fully professional regional company and recognized leader in the Rhode Island arts community,” said Gamm Artistic Director Tony Estrella, who served as Master of Ceremonies of the event.

Founded in 1984 as Alias Stage, the non-profit Gamm Theatre produces under Equity's New England Area Theatre (NEAT) agreement.

Sam joined Equity when he appeared in Clifford Odets' *Awake and Sing!*, a production that won that year's Elliot Norton Award from the Boston Theatre Critics Association for “Outstanding Production by a Small Theatre.”

Before The Gamm, Sam had a life worthy of a movie or HBO miniseries: Yale graduate (BA, MA, Ph.D.); Korean War veteran; Assistant Dean at Yale; Dean of Men at Vanderbilt University; Director, College and University Liaison, Office of Public Affairs, US Peace Corps; Assistant Dean, Yale University Graduate School; President, Kirkland College (Clinton, NY); Vice President for Planning and Resources, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center; Vice President for Development, Brown University—and spy. “Yes, spy,” recalls Tony Estrella. “Every once in a while, we'll be talking about something and

any of that? By joining Equity, of course, and taking on even more extraordinary roles: Polonius, King Lear, Big Daddy, Prospero, Malvolio, Tom Wingfield, John Barrymore, and others.

At the Gala, Sam reprised an excerpt from his 2004 tour de force performance of William Luce's *Barrymore*. Leon C. Boghossian III, Gamm Theatre board chair, announced that the Gamm's Legacy Society has been renamed for Sam and his wife, children's author Natalie Babbitt, in honor of their generous support. David Hitchcock, Sam's friend since kindergarten, spoke about their childhood and early theatrical endeavors. Lt. Governor Elizabeth Roberts talked of Sam's contributions to the cultural life of Rhode Island and read a proclamation from Governor Lincoln Chafee. A proclamation was also received from Senator Sheldon Whitehouse.

Sam then returned to the stage. He thanked everyone and spoke about how the best thing about his retirement two decades ago was that it gave him the opportunity to get more involved with the Gamm. “It gave me the time and the place to follow my bliss. Believe me, the Gamm has given me far, far more than we could ever give to it. I'm the one who needs to say “Thanks, and thanks, and ever thanks.””

The evening raised more than \$88,000 to support The Gamm's productions and educational programs.

By Nick Wyman

In spring, a young person's thoughts turn to love. Or getting a summer stock job. Not being a particularly young person, my thoughts normally turn to fantasy baseball. This year my thoughts have turned to those even less-young than I, partially due to a couple of New Yorker pieces by Roger Angell and Roz Chast and to a conversation about end-of-life choices with my stepmother and my 92-year-old Dad (who actually belongs to a lunch club with the 93-year-old Mr. Angell).

Preparing for the future, and old age in particular, is important. I have written before (“Three Requests”) about pensions and planning for the future. In the space of a couple of weeks, I have met with the Executive Council of the AFL-CIO, a group of a dozen NY members-at-large hoping to encourage union participation and activism, and the Labor Committee of the Broadway League; and these meetings

From the
PRESIDENT

Springtime for Equity

have prompted me to think about the future of another not-so-young entity: Actors' Equity Association.

What will happen to AEA? Unionism — as was clear from the AFL-CIO meeting — is on the decline and under unprecedented attack both from conservative politicians and from employers and business groups. We need to make the case to employers, to future members and to the public-at-large that we are the good guys, as I did in an address to the IATSE national convention last year (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZqAIQf-SZe8>).

Few industries and few employers are as union-friendly as Broadway and the Broadway League: almost every employee in a Broadway theatre is on a union contract. The profits of a Broadway mega-hit may make these labor costs relatively palatable, but the financial difficulties of the Road and particularly of the not-for-profit LORT and SPT

contract theatres make those employers eager to reduce their labor costs. In the face of employer efforts to hire fewer or cheaper workers, the eternal question at AEA — More Jobs or More Compensation? — remains at the forefront of every Councilor's conscience.

The dozen grassroots activists are a good sign. I, too, want the membership of AEA to participate more in their union. I don't want (and we don't need) 50,000 members to run for Council, but I do want 50,000 members to educate themselves about the business, about the issues, about the candidates and then to vote next month. Around the age of 100, humans like Roger Angell and my Dad are pretty frail; but I don't think 100 years puts AEA into our dotage. I think we are in our prime. I am looking to you — particularly our younger members — to learn, to participate and to vote and to carry us forward into an ever more vigorous and glorious next 100 years.



How I Got My Equity Card

Nora Cole



By Nora Cole

In the spring of 1978, I was taking three courses at Borough of Manhattan Community College. The course credits were to be transferred back to the Goodman School of Drama at the Art Institute of Chicago. I had earned a certificate in the three-year Acting Program there two years earlier and needed the remaining nine credit hours to satisfy the academic requirements to combine with my certificate to complete my BFA.

Vinnette Carroll had been a guest artist my last year at Goodman. “Come to New York when you graduate,” she told me. And I did. Within two weeks of my arrival in the fall of '76, I became a full time, unsalaried company member of Vinnette Carroll's Urban Arts Corps where I would rehearse and perform solely

for almost two years. I was among the last batch of Corps Kids, as we were affectionately called. Under Vinnette's direction, we birthed dynamic and inspiring performances out of blood, sweat and tears. One of our productions was *Alice*, with music and lyrics by Micki Grant and choreography by Talley Beatty.

In the spring of 1978, *Alice* was picked up by Mike Nichols and Lewis Allen. While some original cast members and dancers maintained their roles, I and other original cast, understudied the roles we had created (the Duchess in my case) and sang background offstage in a makeshift sound booth.

We rehearsed in the new Minskoff Studios and headed for the Forrest Theatre in Philadelphia for our out-of-town tryout. I was a tiny cog in a big Broadway-bound musical

machine. The show closed before coming to Broadway, but I got my Equity card. I also got my BFA and even went on for the final three performances in the role I had originated.

Nora Cole continued to work with Vinnette Carroll for more than 15 years in NYC and in her repertory company in Ft. Lauderdale. Credits include the title role of Medea, the Broadway production with Patti LaBelle and Al Green; a ten-week engagement in Paris of Your Arms Too Short to Box with God and the Broadway-bound, When Hell Freezes Over I'll Skate at the Kennedy Center. Other career highlights include: Jelly's Last Jam, Broadway and National Tour; Caroline or Change, Royal National Theatre; On The Town, Broadway; And God Created Great Whales; Doubt, Milwaukee Rep; Fences, Geva; Joe Turner's Come and Gone, Studio Arena, and productions at Second Stage, Manhattan Theatre Club, NEC, Primary Stages, McCarter, Baltimore Center Stage, A.R.T., Hartford Stage, Santa Fe Stages, and more. Currently, Nora is a 2012 TCG/Fox Foundation Resident Actor Fellow of Distinguished Achievement hosted by Geva Theatre Center in Rochester, New York.

Candidates for National Election Submit Statements

EASTERN REGION

Principal Four-Year Term

(Vote for no more than three)



AARON RAMEY

(Residence: New York, NY)

Contracts worked: Production (Broadway and Tiered Tours), LORT, COST, WCLO, LOA, NYMF, Showcase

I have been a member of Actors' Equity since 1999 and I am currently a member of the Media & New Technology committee. I feel it is finally time to step up and help make a difference for my fellow members rather than sitting on the sidelines complaining about our lot. I have worked many of our contracts in theaters across the country to bring a solid breadth of experience to the table. The issues I am most concerned about for Equity at this time include: strengthening our touring agreements from salaries and Golden Days to easier access to preventative physical therapy across all contracts; modernizing Equity communications with membership through mobile technologies - everything from dues payments to the ECC/EPA process and membership surveys to find out which issues are most important to working members; taking a long look at the current state of the show development cycle to ensure that members are getting not only a decent wage for their pivotal work on early drafts, but that their future artistic AND financial involvement are strengthened; improving our outreach efforts both to upcoming young theater professionals and touring audiences; continuing to explore methods to strengthen our relationships with our sister unions - SDC, AFM and IATSE in efforts to secure more Equity workweeks when the product is supposed to be reflective of "Broadway." I look forward to the opportunity to tackle these and many other issues with my fellow members and would very much appreciate your vote.



JENNIFER SWIDERSKI

(Residence: New York, NY)

Contracts worked: Production (League), Production (Tier C Tour), SETA, LORT, LOA, CORST, COST, Dinner Theatre, SPT, Guest Artist, Staged Reading, Showcase

My goal has always been to make a living as a union actor. Since 2000, I've been able to do that, booking work from open calls, being completely dependent on contract minimums. Lately, that's been getting harder and harder. I believe that it's possible, even in this economic climate, to secure better contracts for our entire membership.

AEA has faced incredible challenges lately, fighting to recapture the road. I directly benefited from those efforts - living 2 years on the controversial SETA as well as a Tier C Production. That strategy served a purpose, however now I think it's time to reevaluate. It seems I'm not alone. During this recent wave of membership involvement, I've been inspired, frustrated, and humbled- propelling me to step up and run for Council.

What sets me apart as a candidate? I've been in the trenches working a variety of contracts all over the regions. This affords me a unique perspective on ways we can improve these, as well as others like them, while strengthening our union overall.

This requires a group effort, and by utilizing the latest technology to improve union communication, I'm confident we can move forward from a place of informed empowerment.

So I'm asking for your vote to put me in a position to represent you as a fresh new voice. With a passion for collaboration and innovation, I'm ready to work hard toward a stronger union that serves all its members in the best way possible.



SCOTT MCGOWAN

(Residence: Maplewood, NJ)

Contracts worked: LORT, COST, CORST, Dinner Theatre, Guest Artist, Cabaret, TYA, SPT, LOA, Special Appearance

I became a member of AEA over 25 years ago, and have been a Councillor for numerous years. Over the years, the climate has changed in our theatre world, as well as in my own personal life.

Keeping pace with technology and using social media to remain relevant and accessible is key to our future. As a father and home-owner, I have grown even more aware of the need for such basics as fair wages, health insurance and pension, things people in other professions take for granted.

I have been the chair of the TYA committee, and vice chair of the Developing Theatres, Cabaret, Guest Artist and Membership Education committees. I care deeply about finding ways to support smaller theatres in building relationships with AEA, which is vital to our efforts to find jobs for our members not living in the three major office cities. As an active member of the New Jersey theatre scene, I'm familiar with issues that arise in smaller regions and with developing theatres across the country. Membership Education is designed to help younger members learn about our union, grow in our craft and get connected to valuable resources. My belief in the importance of these areas is what first prompted me to join Council. I will continue to advance these agendas so that all members can feel confident and proud of the union that represents us.

Please allow me to fight for what I believe is best for our future. Don't forget the Shoe Fund.



CHRISTOPHER GURR

(Residence: New York, NY)

Contracts worked: LOA, SPT, Special Appearance, Workshop, Staged Reading, NYMF, LORT, SETA, Production; Tour and Broadway

I joined Equity in 1994 in Sacramento, CA under a LOA and have lived and worked in all three Regions—Western, Central, and Eastern—under a wide range of contracts. I have served as deputy under LORT and SET agreements. I am a 15-year member of SDC and a 4-year member of SAG-AFTRA.

The annual elections are the union saying, "There is work to be done here. Hard work. Many are already shouldering the burden of this work, but there are positions open. Are you willing to step up and work hard for the benefit of your union brothers and sisters all across this country? Are you willing to share in the responsibility for the long-term health and vitality of American theatre, in both the commercial and not-for-profit sectors, and all those who labor in it?"

I am willing.

My goals:

- communication between the two main bodies of AEA, the association and the membership, that is two-way, clear, immediate, and readily actionable

- member participation in elections, surveys, and contract ratifications that equals participation in employment and pursuit of employment under Equity jurisdiction

- codes and contracts that are genuine representations of an informed and involved membership's best response to current, realistic, and honest market and cultural forces

- relationships with other unions (SDC, IATSE, AFM, USA, ATPAM) that support mutual, sustainable, long-term success industry-wide

Support me in this election and I promise to support you—all of you—in your work as a theatre professional.

More at www.christophergurr.com.

**BUZZ RODDY***(Residence: Bronx, NY)***Contracts worked: Off-Broadway, LOA, LORT, COST, CORST, URTA, SPT, Guest Artist, Dinner Theatre, Special Appearance, TYA**

I served on Council once before. Before and since my term, I've shown up and done the work. I helped establish media packages in our contracts

that are the industry standard and provide additional monies to members. We are saving thousands of dues dollars with our Green Elections Initiative and are on the road to making AEA elections meaningful to you. I have personally lobbied both State and Federal electeds as Equity's representative. As Equity's delegate to the NYC Labor Council and the AFL-CIO convention, I worked to bolster our relevance and power as a union. People are getting more jobs from EPA/ECCs than ever. I'm going to keep that movement going. I serve on committees at SAG-AFTRA too, and for years have been helping to bridge that gap. Touring contracts are going through their uncomfortable adolescence and I intend to wrest them into adulthood so that The Road may ever be union and with market salaries. Negotiating and enforcing strong contracts is only possible if we have an informed membership – that's what brought me to union service; trying to make life better for Actors and Stage Managers. Theatres outside office cities must recognize the talent and professionalism in their own back yards. Actors on stage and Stage Managers in the booth should look like America. Most in our profession have little concept of our power –individually or collectively. I would be honored to serve you. We still have a lot to do. Questions? Comments? Email me:

buzzforcouncil@gmail.com & www.showbizbuzz.info

**JOANNE BORTS***(Residence: New York, NY)***Contracts worked: Production, Tours: Tier C, National, Bus & Truck, LORT, CORST, SPT, Guest Artist, Special Agreement/MTM, Dinner Theatre, Special Agreement, LOA-NYC, Staged Reading, LOA/COST, Off-Broadway, Business Theatre**

I believe that Partnerships are what make the Arts industry function and thrive. As the onstage work force, *Equity Actors prove that we are every show's most valuable asset.* Our union protects not only Artists, but also Presenters and audiences – ensuring that Live Theatre across the country is worthy of their investment.

There are no simple solutions to the current touring issues, but it's clear that solidarity is key. Equity productions can be successful and profitable for both Producers and Actors, and I will continue to *advocate for stronger salaries, conditions and terms.*

In this recovering economy – when high-tech media could easily replace jobs and minimums are often construed as 'maximums' – protecting Supporting Players, and Chorus is crucial. We can also *create work opportunities* throughout the Regions by targeting *organizing efforts* and increasing *diversity in casting.*

Safeguarding our hard-fought member benefits must remain a top priority. Until the nationwide healthcare debate is truly resolved, Equity must ensure that members continue to have *access to high-quality, affordable healthcare.*

I'm a professional Actor, trying to nurture a career and earn a decent living. I'm out there cobbling together health weeks, pension credits, paying my rent and raising a family. Like you, I need a strong, effective union behind me.

It is a great privilege to serve my union and the membership. With *your invaluable input and support,* I will continue to listen, speak candidly and bring experience to every deliberation. Persistence, commitment and unity will put our goals within reach.

www.JoanneBorts.com

**STEPHEN BOGARDUS***(Residence: New York, NY)***Contracts worked: LORT, Production, ANTC, Off-Broadway, MSUA, Workshop, LOA, Guest Artist, SPT, Special Production, RMTA, Special Agreement, Broadway Alliance, Staged Reading Code**

I consider myself a 'working actor' and am grateful for every job I get. I have a considerable

amount of 'experience' and, as a Councillor, have drawn on it over the past 5 years to help protect and improve work opportunities and conditions for all our members. I know how to listen/advocate. I 'sit' on these committees: Production, LORT, House Affairs, International Actors, Show Development. Separate from Equity, I am an observer on the Equity-League Health and Pension Caucus. I've been on the Production Contract negotiating team the past 3 negotiations and the 2013 LORT team. Collective bargaining is a sometimes delicate, sometimes contentious debate. Committee work helps lay the groundwork for strategic, successful negotiations. When populated by a volunteer force of dedicated members and aided by our extraordinary staff, we've achieved substantive results (eg. The Production and LORT salary increases we achieved in the last cycle). There are frustrations, too: producers opting to use the SET Agreement rather than Production/Tiers contracts and the resulting 'quality of life' sacrifices our members are making on the road. This winter many Eastern members rallied to decry this trend. I urge members in all our Regions to add your passion and voice by joining committees and sharing your experience and insights in our caucuses and 'across the table' with our employers. In tandem, Equity must accelerate its embrace of 21st Century technology to add speed and transparency to our communications with membership. The better informed we are, the stronger we are.

**JOHN CHRISTOPHER JONES***(Residence: New York, NY)*

I joined Equity as a founding member of Shakespeare & Co. in 1973. I have performed on Broadway (about a dozen times), most notably *Hurlyburly* and the revival of *The Iceman Cometh* (Jason Robards) I have served on the LORT, Off-Broadway, and International Actors Committees.

And here's what I would like to do for you if I get elected to Council. I would like to see the Producers give all Equity members a break on ticket prices to their shows. Say, the equivalent of a student rush ticket I don't know about you, but I can't afford to see most shows in New York. With all the readings and workshops we do, and all the contracts we work under for less than a livable wage we subsidize the theater in this town. An Equity card would be a little more special to membership if it guaranteed a subsidy on ticket prices. One other thing. I was diagnosed with Parkinson's ten years ago. I continue to perform but less often. About one show a year. As a result, I have more time to devote towards Equity business. I'm sure I thank you for your support.

**NICOLE FLENDER***(Residence: New York, NY)***Contracts worked: Production, LORT, Cabaret, Dinner Theatre, COST, CORST, MSUA, LOA**

Incumbent. Committees: Young Performers (Chair), Equity News, National Public Policy, Media-New Technology, Parents, Agency.

Member of Equity since 1983 and mother of 18-year-old member since 2011, having worked under *Principal, Chorus and Stage Manager contracts,* I am confident that I know and can serve the needs of *all the members:* the seasoned performer as well as the young, new union member. I understand the *history* of our current, *contractual tiered touring agreements* while *hearing loud and clear the concerns of our rank and file members* who are currently working under these contracts. We won the road back a decade ago. Now we *must improve the quality* of those agreements.

I am passionate about *increasing work weeks* and subsequent *health and pension contributions* for all. I've advised countless members to keep track of their pension weeks and I've been instrumental in facilitating several members' access to their pensions.

As Chair of the Young Performers Committee, I traveled to Albany, *successfully lobbying* for New York's Child Performer Education and Trust Act; *(statement continued on page 6)*

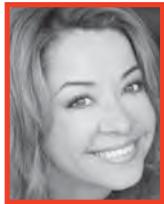
the law reflects principles embodied in California's Coogan Law and I increased Equity's visibility in the State Legislature.

I'm a frequent contributor to the *Equity News*, writing about varied interests: regional theaters, legacy performers, parenting and performing, and Equity's visibility and service to members. I welcome your suggestions.

I applaud increasing members' income through *New Media provisions* in all contracts.

Finally, I am a *Yale graduate* and a *working mother* committed to improving *salaries* and *working conditions* for all members.

Chorus Four-Year Term (Vote for no more than four)



JENNIFER CODY

(Residence: New York, NY)

Contracts worked: Production, Production (Disney), LORT, LORT-Non Rep, COST, CORST, WCLO, RMTA, TYA, Workshop, SETA, Stock, Dinner Theatre, LOA-NYC, MSUA, Off-Broadway, Showcase, SPT

Who better to represent our union? I am a gypsy. I perform in NYC and across the country. I am a principal actor and an ensemble actor. I do musicals and plays. I am passionate about every role; especially that of Councillor. I've served two terms and have had served on many committees. I think my experience on many different contracts has been helpful to the Council and while I am proud of the work we've done, I have future goals to achieve as well.

Provide confidence to actors/stage managers who work in an increasingly dangerous environment by re evaluating safety rules that were established before the high tech demands that have shifted many of the running responsibilities to computers.

To establish guidelines to make sure that we, as actors, are compensated as part of the creative collaboration. The new ways to develop shows (labs, festivals, readings) have replaced the workshop and has allowed AEA creators to be left out of future earnings.

To stay ahead of the ever-changing technical world by using the internet to create a desire to see live theatre all over the world and use this to excite the audiences around our country and re-ignite the road.

Find a way to combine information so that health coverage is based on all work in whatever medium/union jurisdiction that work falls. Acting is acting and you should be covered regardless of what union it falls under.

I would love to continue to represent you FULL OUT.



JEFF APPLGATE

(Residence: Cranbury, NJ)

Contracts worked: LORT, COST, SPT, Business Theatre, URTA, SETA, Staged Reading, Showcase

What a year! Barely a year ago, I'd come from serving as Chorus Deputy on a SETA tour, to serving on the SETA re-negotiation team, to running for Council. I opted for a one-year term: to see if the position would be a good fit, what I might contribute, and how I'd weather the commitment while trying to live up to my own expectations.

Some lessons I've learned so far:

- Nothing is ever as simple or easy as it might seem.
- It's entirely possible for differing opinions to all have merit. (It's also usually possible to find common ground among opposing viewpoints.)
- Compromise is frequently necessary. Capitulation is not, unless you've seriously misplayed your hand.
- Experience and perspective are critical to good policy. So are a willingness to question, listen, learn, communicate, and think outside the box while working within the team.
- Serving can be as fulfilling as it can be frustrating.

I believe I have more to learn... and more to offer. On policy issues like helping rediscover the role and potential of the Equity Deputy; optimizing the touring paradigm so every show goes out on the best possible union contract; maximizing access to work for all our members; utilizing digital technology to improve everything from outreach to audition signups. But also simply in building a better organization, facilitating communication, and finding common ground that leads to constructive paths forward.

It's been quite a year. I ask for your vote to keep working for you for four more.



STAŚ KMIEC

(Residence: New York, NY)

Contracts worked: Production, COST, MSUA, Dinner Theatre, LOA, Special Agreement

I'm honored to have *formerly* twice served on Council. My passion and commitment were clear inasmuch as I attended every meeting, supported communications efforts, boosted *Broadway Cares/EFA*, and sought new ways to better represent and engage members. I was charged to do the best for AEA, and now more than ever there is energy in our membership to be stronger with contracts.

AEA Members Want To Work – Salary and Health Rate are crucial. We are a cherished profession – serving as Councillor is an opportunity to ensure that we're viewed as a national treasure, not as a commodity. I represent all members and all issues – I listen and take account of all information before I vote.

I offer experience, commitment and perspective

Perspective:

- Gain appreciation of performers as a respected and valued asset
- Open new job opportunities in Theater Development and through strong, protective contracts
- Strengthen union voice through unification of Western, Central, and Eastern regions
- Increase diversity and non-traditional prospects
- Enhance membership engagement through increased communications procedures

Experience:

- Actively serve on *11 Committees* since 1997
 - Deputy, Dance Captain, Swing, Fight Captain
 - Member 1987; Experience in four unions: *AEA, AGMA, SAG-AFTRA, SDC*
 - *AGMA* Board of Governors (former), Negotiating Committee – *Metropolitan Opera Dancers*
 - *COST* Negotiating Team
 - Public Relations and Strategic Communications credentials
 - Commitment:
 - Eastern Regional Board, National Council, Plenary/National Conference, special, emergency and, long range planning meetings
 - Interaction one-on-one with members, attend membership meetings, as well as *AEA* events and awards, and *Gypsy Robe* ceremonies
- Please vote! I appreciate your support!



DEREK HANSON

(Residence: New York, NY)

Contracts worked: Production, LORT, SETA, COST, MSUA, Business Theatre

Theater requires only two elements, one actor to perform and someone to observe. I am tired of seeing Actors marginalized to subsidize other aspects of production. Originally from Missoula Montana, I am running to represent all members, both stage managers and actors, who understand the necessity for an upgraded Equity.

On a national scale, we are currently losing our competitive edge in the business of live entertainment. Our employers have said they can't afford to go Union, we need to show them why they can't afford not to. Educating theater patrons, across the country, of the value of Equity members is imperative for us to win back the support of ticket buyers and strengthen our negotiating power.

We live in the information age and the entertainment industry is at the forefront. As a union which represents artistic and innovative individuals, Equity should be blazing a trail into the future of information exchange.

In any business, success relies on communication. The leaders of our union, both elected and appointed, can only protect the current interests of those they represent if they know what those interests are. This can only be accomplished when an open, healthy, and easy line of communication exist between all parties involved.

We need a new and fresh way of thinking. We need to replace the "tried it" mentality with a "let's make it happen" mentality. We need a reinvigorated sense of Union pride. EQUITY, we are in the business of facilitating careers, let's make it happen!

**MATTHEW J. KILGORE***(Residence: New York, NY)***Contracts worked: Production, Production Tier C, Special Agreement, LORT, MSUA, WCLO, COST, RMTA, Dinner Theatre**

I joined AEA in 2001, shortly after moving to NYC. I chose to join because I believe in the benefits and protections that membership provides.

Over time, I have witnessed the waning desire to join Equity as nonAEA employment opportunities have grown, especially on the road. I firmly believe we need to take steps to restore the honor and pride associated with being an Equity Actor.

If elected, I will work to:

- Encourage greater participation and involvement from all members of AEA
- Educate future members about the benefits and protections offered by AEA
- Advocate on behalf of ALL members from every region
- Develop a stronger social media presence to engage membership
- Streamline access to information via our website
- Support the rollout of online audition sign-up that takes into account all members' technological access
- Aggressively maintain and grow the *quantity* of AEA contracts on the road and in all regions
- Focus on improving the *quality* of touring contracts during the next round of negotiations
- Find new methods to make our brand more recognizable and appealing to audiences across America

I have served as a deputy and dance captain many times throughout my career, and I am currently in the process of joining the ACCA and the Media and New Technology committees. If elected as your Chorus Councillor, I will be honored to serve as a conduit between membership and our great Union. In solidarity, I thank you for your consideration.

www.matthewkilgore.net/aea

@Kilgore4Council

**JONATHAN BRODY***(Residence: New York, NY)***Contracts worked: Production (Broadway & Tours), Special Production, Off-Broadway, LORT, Dinner Theatre, CAT, Workshop, Business Theatre, COST, CORST, Guest Artist, LOA, SPT, Cabaret**

We all want to work. To create art, express ourselves and entertain. We also want to earn a

living, have health insurance, proper housing and a safe work environment. These desires aren't antithetical but it takes understanding and negotiation.

As your representative I'll work to find the delicate balance that will benefit the most members, examine each situation individually, listen, question then weigh the facts and decide what makes the most sense. There's no boilerplate response, no rubber stamp decisions.

I understand that the issues members face in NYC or Chicago can differ from Houston or Atlanta, and the challenges differ still in Sacramento and Buffalo. I'm willing to spend the time to find the right solution that keeps members working and Equity theatres open.

I manage to support myself as an actor, to cobble together a career. Principal, Chorus, dancer, singer, musicals, plays. Live in NYC, work regionally. Have an agent, but get work from EPA's and ECC's. Performing is all I know how to do. Protecting jobs in live theatre is crucial to me.

Some complain that Equity is weak. "THEY" give in and give up too much. They're upset about something "THEY" at Equity did. The decisions that affect us, are made by members in committees and those we elect to Council. "THEY" is WE.

I urge you to get involved and if nothing else, vote in this election. Have a say in who represents your interests. Feel free to contact me with questions or concerns: JBrodyCouncil@aol.com

**CURTIS SCHROEGER***(Residence: New York, NY)***Contracts worked: Production, LORT, MSUA, COST, Dinner Theatre, Special Agreement**

Follow @Curtis4Council: Facebook, Twitter, Youtube.

An Eagle Scout from a family of educators in Merriam Kansas, I escaped to Florida State to study Musical Theatre. At seventeen, Mom asked, "Why acting, when you could be anything?" I told her "I want to make people happy." I sold my car, French horn, and ex's surfboard to get to NYC. I earned Equity's asterisk beside my name in 2007; after seven years of feast and famine, its significance is clear. Humbly, I ask for the opportunity to serve my brothers and sisters who are the heart of this industry.

Today, Equity faces many unique challenges beyond communication, consumer branding, touring contract qualifications, and relationships with sister Unions. All solutions rest in the hands of our incredible Membership, who require present day User Friendly access. The national trend of increased corporate profit and decreased salaries for labor is unsustainable in our highly competitive industry that requires vast and proficient skill sets. Who will be able to remain Equity while salaries continue to decline in an attempt to compete with the Non-Union sector?

From day one, new Members should encounter a nurturing Equity culture that encourages regular informed participation, guides members through their concerns, and values their contributions. Equity will be strongest when the culture shifts from 'me' to 'we', and returns to the ideals that founded our century-old Union. As a founder of @ACT4AEA, I am standing up to advance this shift in Equity's culture. Advocate Communicate Thrive VOTE @Curtis4Council www.actogether.info #yourfutureisnow

**BEN LIEBERT***(Residence: New York, NY)***Contracts worked: Production (Broadway & Tour), LORT, COST, LOA, ANTC, SPT, Showcase**

Committees: ACCA, Production, LORT, Stock, Media, Entry to Equity. Negotiating Teams: LORT, CORST.

I am a Union-loving member of the younger generation who has been actively taking Equity into our next 100 years, a generation that is under-represented on Council. I've logged hours in committee, fixing problems before they become problems. I've sat across the table from LORT Producers and told them "No. You cannot get rid of Union Chorus". Armed with the experience and knowledge of how Equity's system works, I am ready to do more:

- Fight for Chorus members, my constituency and peers, who have to settle for minimum. Every Understudy, Swing, Dance Captain and Parts payment helps pay the bills.
- Passionately take on Touring. I will be there with constructive fixes when it's time to face the Producers again: closing loopholes, raising guarantees, tying minimum salaries to Star salaries, etc.
- Through technology, improve the way the Union connects with and educates our Membership: online forums, videos, and apps.
- Use the internet to brand Equity and educate Audiences about the difference between Union and non-union talent. They will demand higher quality, Equity Actors and Stage Managers, and the jobs will follow.

I've worked across this country and know that there are different priorities in every region. I will make change by taking the Membership's priorities and good ideas into the Council room.

I'm not just grandiose statements. I've got ideas and I'm not afraid to make my voice heard. Find out at www.benliebert.com/Equity/html

Stage Manager Four-Year Term (Vote for no more than two)



ARTHUR A. ATKINSON

(Residence: New York, NY)

Contracts worked: Production, Off-Broadway, ANTC, LOA, LOA-NYC, Stock Jobbing, Stock Unit, Showcase, Staged Reading

Committees: Production, Off-Broadway, Stage Managers, EPA

Negotiating Teams: Off-Broadway, ANTC

Other Union Affiliations: SAG-AFTRA

I have been a proud AEA member since 1994, as an actor for fifteen years and a stage manager for the past five, and I have a unique perspective on both roles. I've toured nationally, served as deputy, and have been active in committee work. I was a member of the 2012 Off-Broadway negotiating team that obtained the largest salary increase for our members in over a decade and strengthened working conditions for both actors and stage managers. I will continue to fight for these in the future.

If elected, one of my areas of focus will be working to improve our healthcare benefits with the Equity League, including lobbying for a more reasonably priced dental plan and more affordable spousal and dependent coverage.

I will also advocate for better communication between AEA and its membership. I've seen our Union's staff and leadership do amazing work through committee meetings and contract negotiations. I feel AEA *must* do more to inform us of these accomplishments which in turn will inspire our members to stay involved, thus keeping our union strong. It was a thrill to see such a strong turnout at both the Eastern Regional Membership and Town Hall meetings in January. I encourage all members to stay engaged.

I bring passion, enthusiasm, and creative problem-solving skills to the table. I will be an energetic voice on the Council. I thank you for your support.



DAN ZITTEL

(Residence: New York, NY)

Contracts worked: Production, Off-Broadway, Mini, LORT, COST, MSUA, Dinner Theatre, URTA, Guest Artist, LOA, TYA, SPT, Showcase, Staged Reading

Actors' Equity Association is at the forefront in my life. I became a member in 1976. My first contract was a TYA Christmas tour. My recent contract was a Production Tier D tour of WHITE CHRISTMAS. In between, I worked under a variety of contracts throughout the regions and gained a broader perspective of the concerns of our members and my foundation at being a union Stage Manager.

Starting this process, I asked a question heard thousands of times in rehearsal, "What's my motivation?" My answer came back, "service." AEA was always there and one way I'm currently giving back is by serving on three committees - Off-Broadway, Stage Managers and Stock. Committees are the stepping-stones to serving on Council. With all the accomplishments we gained as a union, I want to avoid complacency from our membership and employers. We struggle constantly with economics. I believe we can find creative ways to increase our workweeks with newer agreements and keep what we have gained with sincere on going conversations with everyone. Our membership is our greatest strength and our agreements our greatest assets. It is better to have a contract than nothing by finding better ways for creative compromise.

As a union, we have an obligation to our community, and audiences, to move our profession forward, continue to create, present and survive. As an active member on Council, I will do my best to preserve that we have gained and will gain.



JEFF DAVOLT

(Residence: New York, NY)

Contracts worked: Off-Broadway, ANTC, LOA-NYC, Off-Broadway Periodic Performance, Dinner Theatre, TYA, Staged Reading, Showcase

I have been a proud Actors' Equity Association member since 1997. I've worked both principal and stage management contracts (the past 14 years exclusively as a Stage Manager).

I currently serve on the Off-Broadway, Stage Management, and TYA Committees. I've also served on the Eastern Regional Nominating Committee, the Off-Broadway Periodic Performance sub-committee, and both the TYA and Off-Broadway Proposal Selection Committees. I was a TYA Negotiating Team member in 2008.

I believe that understanding Equity rules and their application is an integral part of our union's strength and solidarity. I'm committed to helping all of our members understand their rights and responsibilities under every contract.

It is of upmost importance, both locally and nationally, to improve the salaries and working conditions on every contract. All contracts deserve equal representation and consideration at the national level.

I'm also interested in developing unified relationships with the other theatrical unions. In 2010, IATSE entered into a Mutual Assistance Pact with The Teamsters, officially associating the two groups. I believe creating such a pact between AEA and IATSE would help us gain back some lost touring ground, increase salaries, and decrease/eliminate non-AEA commercial tours.

My work on committees/negotiations over the past seven years has been a valuable training ground, fostering an intense interest in the governance of our union. As a member of Council, I will pledge to work with the foundations previously achieved, honor the collective wishes of our membership, and help move our union toward a stronger and brighter tomorrow.



MARJORIE HORNE

(Residence: New York, NY)

Contracts worked: Production, Off-Broadway, Special Production, LORT, TYA, Stock, Business Theatre, Cabaret, LOA, LOA-NYC, SPT, Memorandum of Understanding

Member since 1967; Committees since 1982, Councillor since 1994

As an incumbent Councillor I was very concerned and energized by the recent discussion within the Union about our Touring contracts. It made me even more aware just how important it is to make sure that communications with members is at the top of our agenda. Our members need to know what the union does for them and what it can do for them.

Our contracts are the lifeblood of the union. We can stay strong and keep our jobs. Wages are an important part of the contract but there are many other elements that the union negotiates for within the contract; health care, pensions, media rights, safe and sanitary places to work. Over the years I have participated on many contract negotiating teams. But, AEA also fights for quality of life issues; arts funding which creates jobs, tax fairness, health care, affordable housing. As Co-Chair of the National Public Policy Committee I have taken a strong stand to make sure that our voices are also heard outside of contract negotiations. We have appeared before many federal, state and city government panels to push our agenda forward.

It is imperative that we all understand what the union does for its members but, just as important to understand what our members can do for the union. I will work very hard to find ways to make sure that all of our members know what is going on at the union and I

BERNITA ROBINSON*(Residence: New York, NY)***Contracts worked: Production, Off-Broadway, ANTC, LOA-NYC, LOA, LORT, SPT, NOLA, TYA**

Committees: Production, Off-Broadway, LORT, Stage Managers, EEO
 Contract Negotiation Team: Production, Off-Broadway, LORT

One would say I am a very proud and loyal member of AEA. I have felt it an honor to serve on the above mentioned committees and negotiation teams, but now is the time to do more.

The time has come for AEA to become Proactive and not just Reactive. We need to be on the front line, setting the bar. We are the oldest performing arts union, now let's become the strongest.

This requires a leap of faith in our Council of which I hope to be a member. It means getting information out to you the members; making sure you know exactly what's in your contract AND listening to you. We are only strong if we are open to hearing you and doing what is best for the union, which means it is best for you.

I pledge to do just that, listen and act fully for your benefit, our benefit. Yes, there is strength in numbers but only if those numbers are truly being heard. Let's use that strength to say that Actors' Equity is truly the union of PROFESSIONAL Actors and Stage Managers.

An informed member is a powerful member, and with that power we can move mountains (or stages)!

CENTRAL REGION**Principal Four-Year Term****(Vote for no more than one)****MADELEINE FALLON***(Residence: Chicago, IL)***Contracts worked: CAT, Stock, Dinner Theatre, TYA, LOA/PP**

Here are some things I like:

I like challenges. I like to know *why* things are the way they are. I like to learn from the past to effectively plan for the future.

Here is what I love:

I love the theatre. I love who we are and what we do and I love serving the members of Actors' Equity Association.

It takes a lot of time and energy to be an effective Councillor. Anyone who knows me knows that I have taken it seriously. I show up. I roll up my sleeves. I add value. But I also know that I don't have all the answers. So a key part of my job is to listen, to acquire new information and to collaborate.

The governing body of our union needs to be aware of the economic, political and social forces that impact our industry. We need to be faster, smarter and more creative in our responses to those forces. The sum total of my experiences to date have given me skills that I gladly use on your behalf. My committee work includes Organizing (1st vice-chair), House Affairs (budget), Entry To Equity, Auditions and Outreach &

Education. I have served on many negotiating teams. I have lobbied Congress. I have worked and traveled and met with actors across the country. I have walked my share of picket lines.

I said I like challenges. I like solutions even better. If re-elected I will continue to find them.

**WYDETTA CARTER***(Residence: Chicago, IL)***Contracts worked: Production (National Tours), LORT, CAT, Special Agreement/MTM, SPT, Dinner Theatre, TYA**

Committees: CRB, Vice-Chair; CAT, Member Education, Nat'l Organizing Committee, EEO, Audition, MTM, SET, Dinner Theatre

When I received my Equity card 24 yrs ago, I decided that if I was going to be an Equity member, I was going to be an active one. Those who know me are very aware of my passion to achieve the best for Equity members during negotiations and, as Deputy for a production, I've done my utmost to be positive and address any and all concerns of my fellow Actors.

It's been an honor being a voice in our union by serving on the CRB and, being a member of several negotiating teams. I welcome the opportunity to share my strengths while addressing the concerns and progress regarding the direction of our union, as a member of Council. My goals include promoting education and knowledge of our Agreements, exploring ways to negotiate your own contract and, the importance of being proactive in our union.

I invite you to contact me with your concerns, ideas, questions but, most of all, I invite you to attend membership meetings and get involved. Please exert your own power and voice by voting.

Respectively,

A very proud member of Actors' Equity

WESTERN REGION

The following candidates were nominated with no opposition and, pursuant to Rule VI(E)6 of the Nominations and Election Policy, they have been deemed elected.

Principal Four-Year Term

Greg North
 Joshua M. Bott
 Kelly Ground
 Kevin McMahon

Principal One-Year Term

Barbara N. Roberts

Chorus Four-Year Term

Kim Arnett

(Placement of candidates' names on ballot, within each category, was determined by lottery.)





NATIONAL NEWS



Atlanta EMCs Meet and Mix

The Liaison Committee and other local members met with Equity Membership Candidates (EMC) on March 3, 2014 for the annual "mixer," where the EMCs heard about the Union and the local theatre scene. The event was a dynamic way to bring the community together.



Washington, D.C. "Dinner" Signed Posters Sell Like Hotcakes for BC/EFA

The company of *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* at Washington's Arena Stage joined together to raise \$21,823 for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS in only five days. The company, led by Malcolm-Jamal Warner and Lynda Gravatt, sold signed posters for \$15 each in addition to collecting with the red buckets. "We started with only 100 posters," said Lynda, "and they sold like hotcakes. By the last day of fundraising we had only a few left. Malcolm jumped right in and signed programs for more donations. He was incredibly generous with his time." "I was happy to be a part of it all," said Warner. "We wanted to raise as much as we could but were stunned when we

sold out of posters so quickly. Signed programs were a no-brainer and I was glad to have the chance to meet audiences in the lobby." "People were amazingly generous," adds Gravatt. "Before the holidays you figure people will be more willing to give," she remembered, "but we did this in the New Year when people are reeling from all the money they spent." It didn't matter. They just gave and gave very generously." In 2013 BC/EFA awarded over \$200,000 to 13 social service and advocacy policy agencies in Washington, DC including Food & Friends, National Minority AIDS Council, The Women's Collective and Whitman-Walker Clinic.

Lenox, MA Shakespeare & Company Makes "A Wonderful Life" for BC/EFA



The cast and crew of Shakespeare & Company's *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play* in Lenox, MA took to the stage once again in an annual appeal with local audiences for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. Equity member Ryan Winkles led a cast of five that helped raise more than \$5,000. "I'd done it before in previous seasons," said Ryan. "I have such respect for BC/EFA and the work that they do. It's an honor to be a part of it." Audience members showed how much they care as well. "In the winter months our appeal really makes an impression on the Lenox community. I think the cold reminds us all of what it must feel like to be in need. I emphasize that the money raised comes back to the community through the grants BC/EFA makes to regional charities, over \$100,000 to a dozen agencies in Massachusetts alone. It makes a difference to our audiences knowing the money they join us in raising helps someone at home."



Debra Monk accompanies herself on the drums.

New York

Tony Recipient Debra Monk Celebrates Her 65th Birthday With Benefit Concert for BC/EFA

Equity member Debra Monk turned her 65th birthday into an all-star party with her closest friends on February 24, 2014, delivering a non-stop evening of rock, pop and laughter that benefited Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS.

Debra Monk Birthday Bash, billed as "Totally Hot and a Little Dirty," raised \$140,355.

Special guests included Equity members Charlotte d'Amboise, Brandon Victor Dixon, Scott Ellis, Victor Garber, Andrea Martin, Jim Newman and Ron Rifkin, a surprise appearance by David Hyde Pierce and backup by "The Totally Hots," Joe Grandy, Chuck Ragsdale and Julius Thomas III.

Throughout the high-energy concert, performed at the Gerald W. Lynch Theater at John Jay College, Monk took the audience on a musical journey through her favorite songs—from Van Morrison, Bonnie Raitt and Prince, Elton John to Freddie Mercury, and, of course, Kander and Ebb. She seamlessly and successfully pulled off a performance that combined rock 'n' roll, classic church hymns, accompanying herself on the drums, the theme

from *Exodus*, and humor more likely heard over a couple of beers than a glass of white wine.

Monk, who's been nominated four times for the Tony Award and won for Featured Actress in a Play for *Redwood Curtain*, conceived and wrote the 90-minute show that was directed and choreographed by Equity member JoAnn M. Hunter with music direction by Mary-Mitchell Campbell and David Gardos.

At a reception after the concert, Monk was surprised with an elaborate four-tier birthday cake decorated with logos of the Broadway and Off-Broadway shows in which she's appeared.

"I wanted to make my 65th birthday something truly special and a benefit for Broadway Cares/Equity Fight AIDS was the perfect answer," Monk said. "By singing some great songs, sharing a few jokes and having fun with my closest friends, I hope I at least helped make a small difference for an organization so near and dear to my heart."

For a full story, photos and video, visit broadwaycares.org/debramonk.



Helping at the Food Bank are: (front, l to r) Mary Baird, Marissa Keltie, EMC Sharon Huff, Aaron Wilton; (standing) Robert Sicular, Tiiu Rebane, Julian Lopez Morillas, Jack Powell, Jessica Powell, Colin Thomson.

San Francisco Bay Area

Members Volunteer at Alameda Food Bank

By Colin Thomson

Equity members continued a tradition of giving back to their community by volunteering at the Alameda County Community Food Bank (ACCFB) on Monday, February 3, 2014. Members Jessica Powell and Michael Patrick Gaffney organized the effort, and while Gaffney could not attend the event, Jessica Powell, EMC Sharon Huff Robinson, Aaron Wilton, Jack Powell, Tiiu Eva Rebane, Julian Lopez-Morillas, Mary Baird, Robert Sicular, Marissa Keltie

and Colin Thomson pitched in bagging apples. The ACCFB is the central supplier for over 200 local nonprofits serving Alameda County's and Contra Costa County's food-insecure population. The group's participation contributed to a total effort, along with other volunteers, of preparing five tons of produce for distribution that day. SF Bay members regularly help out at the ACCFB, serving their community while raising awareness of the union and having a great time doing both.

New York, Los Angeles

Revlon Run/Walk for Women Kicks Off on Both Coasts

Members on the East and West Coasts will have the opportunity to join in the fight against women's cancers by signing up with The Actors Fund's team in the annual Revlon Run/Walk for Women. The New York event takes place on Saturday, May 3, 2014 and in Los Angeles, the marathon will take place on Saturday, May 10. In addition to funding the fight

against women's cancers, women and men who participate as runners, walkers or volunteers will help support the Phyllis Newman Women's Health Initiative (PNWHI) created to address the many other concerns women face when dealing with a serious medical condition. Check out The Actors Fund's website, www.actorsfund.org, for more details.

Chicago

Diversity Celebrated; "Kathy" Award Presented

The Central Region's annual "Spirit, A Celebration of Diversity" event was hosted—in grand style—by the renowned Chicago Shakespeare Theatre on March 10 at Navy Pier. The annual Kathryn V. Lamkey Award ("The Kathy"), which honors two area members for their dedication and

commitment to furthering the union's goals for social change and inclusion, was presented to longtime members E. Faye Butler and Tom Joyce. Butler, a Central Regional Board Member, is also the Central Region Equal Employment Opportunity Committee Chair. Joyce, recently retired from

Equity's Council and the Central Regional Board, continues to hold a seat as a Trustee on the Equity-League Pension and Health Trust Fund. On hand to present Butler and Joyce with their honors was Central Regional Vice President Dev Kennedy and Central Regional Director Sean F. Taylor.



Kathy Award recipients E. Faye Butler and Tom Joyce with (l) Central Regional Vice President Dev Kennedy and Central Regional Director Sean F. Taylor.
(Photo: Paul Peterson)

Chicago

Stage Manager Event Changes Location

The networking/speed interview event for stage managers scheduled for Monday, April 14, 2014 has changed location. The new venue is Steppenwolf Yondorf Rehearsal Hall, 2nd Floor, 758 West North Avenue in Chicago. Hours are 9am-12pm. RSVPs are required. Call 312-641-0406 from 9:30am-12:30pm and again from 3pm-4:30pm only.

Call Me Ms.

By Jim Bernhard

Across

- 1 Ms. Dennis
- 5 Ms. Elliott, or maybe Ms. Doolittle
- 9 Ms. Minola
- 13 Supreme Norse deity
- 14 Anouilh's "Poor _____"
- 15 Polish-German border river
- 16 Eject, as from office
- 17 Three-time Wimbledon singles winner
- 18 Franco or Peter
- 19 Deals in used merchandise
- 21 Composer Richard or Mary
- 23 French king
- 24 "_____ Jud is Daid"
- 25 Deli bread choice
- 26 Bigger than Med.
- 29 Ms. McEntire
- 31 Jaffe or Waterston
- 33 Ms. Chanel
- 35 Ms. Charles
- 37 Ms. Charles or Ms. Helmer
- 40 Arlene or Roald
- 41 Modern message
- 43 Anouilh's "_____ The
- 45 Ms. Lane
- 47 Ms. Everage (before she was damed)
- 48 Ms. St. Regis or Ms. Wong
- 49 Egg _____
- 51 Sound designer Munderloh
- 53 Wynken, Blynken and _____
- 54 Unspoken language (abbr.)
- 57 Linen source
- 59 Uncle in Uruguay
- 61 Radio no-no
- 63 Lubricant containers
- 67 Dalai or Panchen
- 68 "Bye Bye Bye" singing group
- 70 Coagulate
- 71 James Bond's alma mater
- 72 Lorna _____
- 73 Inter _____ (among others)
- 74 Ms. Novick
- 75 Ms. Leonowens or Ms.

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74					75					76			

- Christie
- 76 Ms. McKellaway or Ms. Richards
- Down**
- 1 Othello, for one
- 2 Together, in music
- 3 Saigon or Liberty
- 4 Actor's direction
- 5 Ullmann and others
- 6 Suffix akin to ian
- 7 Masked avenger of California

- 8 Mary and John Jacob
- 9 King _____
- 10 "Doe, _____"
- 11 Ellen of British theatre
- 12 Uneven
- 14 "I _____ in You" (song from "How to Succeed...")
- 20 Denise of the old Garry Moore Show
- 22 Stockwell or Jones
- 24 Seeming contradiction
- 26 How numbers are shown in an electronic clock (abbr.)
- 27 Target

- 28 One who loved Narcissus
- 30 "Let It _____" (pop song of the 1960s)
- 32 Ms. Flanders
- 34 Ken or Lena
- 36 "_____ Misbehavin'"
- 38 Play about Sadie Thompson
- 39 A Guthrie
- 42 Trellis
- 44 Thomas of "The Spanish Tragedy"
- 46 Davenport
- 50 Good witch in Oz
- 52 Part of R.S.V.P.

- 54 Bruce, Larry or Luther
- 55 Onetime Asian pact
- 56 Director Mark
- 58 Crime of ignition
- 60 William of _____ (14th century philosopher)
- 62 Hamlet or Victor Borge
- 63 Choreographer White
- 64 Nazimova
- 65 Film _____
- 66 Command to Nana, perhaps
- 69 Hither, thither and _____

Answer on page 12



South Florida

Members Meet & Greet

By Irene Adjan

South Florida Area Liaison

The Eastern Regional Vice President, Melissa Robinette, along with the National Director, Organizing & Special Projects, Flora Stamatziades, and Business Representative Kathleen Munroe left the cold of New York for the warmth of Florida.

The three women attended the South Florida General Membership Meeting on February 20, 2014 at the Actors' Playhouse in Coral Gables. A lively discussion with area members followed a meet-and-greet in the lobby of the playhouse.

A wide range of topics was discussed during the meeting, including the recent touring issues, the Staged Reading Guidelines, renovation of the Equity Building in New York, 401(k) contributions and the practice of video auditions. Stamatziades spoke of something not many people knew about, but which was received with great interest: the Memorandum of Understanding, a Business Theatre Agreement which allows members to become their own producer and hire themselves on an Equity contract to work in the corporate/business world (stage managing or personal appearances, for example) with union benefits and protection.

(Editor's note: For more information on this, contact Maria Cameron at the New York office, 212-869-8530, ext. 350, Alison Harma at the Los Angeles office,

323-978-8080, ext. 107 or David Kolen at the Chicago office, 312-641-0393, ext. 236.)

Also at the meeting, committee member Wayne LeGette announced that he had decided not to continue on the Liaison

Committee, and Renata Eastlick had moved out of the South Florida area, so there were two seats to fill. Both Barbara Sloan (who had previously served on the committee) and Suzanne Clement Jones threw their hats into the ring and they, along with the members whose terms were expiring, were selected to serve on the committee.

South Florida

Business Rep Visits Theatres, Members In South Florida

Just as the curtain to Stephen Sondheim's *Assassins* fell at Zoetic Stage in Florida, AEA Business Representative Kathleen Munroe was walking in the door.

Irene Adjan, the South Florida Area Liaison who happened to be part of the cast in the musical, made arrangements for Munroe to meet with the Zoetic artistic staff right after that night's performance.

In town for the annual South Florida General Membership Meeting, which was on February 20, Munroe got an overwhelming treat as she met with, toured and discussed part of the region's theatrical scene.

Munroe said that after she met with the Zoetic staff, the crew took her on a walk-through of the "beautiful" Carnival Studio Theatre, located at the Adrienne Arshst Center for the Performing Arts in

Miami. The following day, Adjan had arranged for Munroe to meet with Actors' Playhouse Artistic Director David Arisco, where the two discussed the theatre's history and goals, which was followed by an in-depth tour of the space.

Later that night, the membership meeting took place at the Playhouse, where Munroe was able to meet many of the region's members for the first time.

"I was delighted by the strong turnout for the membership meeting," Munroe said. "This was my first chance to meet the South Florida region and hear their concerns and comments first hand. The lively and productive conversation impressed upon me the strong sense of community and togetherness within the membership."

Women Have Led the Way at Two Boston Theatres

By Donna Sorbello
New England Area Liaison Committee

Two women, who have been powerful forces in the Boston theatre community, are stepping down. Fortunately, the duo is leaving behind two healthy and thriving award-winning organizations.



Jane Staab
(Photo: Andrea Genser, 1997)



Mary C. Huntington
(Photo: Kippy Goldfarb)

Both Jane Staab, business manager, casting director and then co-artistic director of Wheelock Family Theatre, and Mary C. Huntington, artistic director of the Nora Theatre Company, have influenced Boston theatre for a little more than three decades. Both theatres started, as many successful enterprises do, with a vision. And, both women have seen their ideas come to fruition in ways greater than they had originally dreamed.

Staab, who is leaving her post in June, began her AEA life as an apprentice at the Harwich Junior Theatre. Along with Harwich vets Susan Kosoff and Tony Hancock, she soon was running a winter theatre in the Harwich Theatre space. The trio immediately began to do what they did best: everything. Staab was responsible for writing scripts, directing and acting, as well as coaching the young actors in shows. From the start, the group was determined to have an all-inclusive theatre — a term that was meant to apply to both sides of the proscenium. The troupe adhered to this mission so strongly that in 2000, the theatre, which is on an Equity Letter of Agreement referenced to LORT, received Equity's Rosetta LeNoire Award for its color-blind casting and the casting of physically-challenged actors.

The impact of the Wheelock has always been to "tell a good story with a significant message imbedded within it, whether it's friendship, or tolerance or sacrifice," Staab said. This, too, has been realized. The Wheelock, Staab noted, has always been about people, each working with their strengths. "It's been about making work that is beautiful, meaningful, thoughtful and exciting," she said.

Mary C. (Mimi) Huntington was a

theatre graduate student at Brandeis University when she met Eric Engel, a Brandeis directing major, and Francine Ferraro, who was interested in the business side of things. The theatre name was inspired by the iconic Nora in Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* (Nora is a woman who refuses to have her life choices dictated to her), by actor Eleanora Duse and an inspiring teacher named Nola (close enough). An AEA member, from the start Huntington wanted her theatre to offer Equity contracts. And, it does, as a signatory to AEA's New England Area Theatre (NEAT) agreement.

The Nora was born in a loft on Charles Street in Boston and then spent seven years in a dance space in the Harvard Freshman Union before Huntington realized her need for a more permanent home. A serendipitous meeting with Debra Wise, founder of the Underground Railway Theater, revealed that she was also looking for a theatrical home. The two found property owned by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in Central Square and combined forces to get a new venue.

Over the 26 years of the Nora Theatre's existence, Huntington has drawn from the New England AEA community when staffing actors and technicians. She has also aimed to shed light on new or rarely produced works — with an eye to "revealing our common humanity."

To that end, along with the new pieces and science-themed plays (which have proved popular with MIT subscribers), she was not afraid to take on the modern classics, like Anton Chekhov and Harold Pinter, and other works that speak with a feminine voice on human concerns and endeavors. Huntington said that being an artistic director has been rewarding and exciting, and that she has always looked for work in which the audience can become a "thoughtful and emotional" partner. Though she retired in February, Huntington remains on the Nora board.

One legacy that both Staab and Huntington will pass on, is having a strong female at the helm of the theatre each is leaving behind. Wendy Lement, a playwright, instructor, director and founder of her own theatre group, is the new producer at the Wheelock Family Theatre. Lee Mikeska-Gardner, an actor and director with management skills honed at several other theatre companies, is the new artistic director at the Nora.

Answer to puzzle on page 11.



Letters to The Editor

Letters received from paid-up members on subjects of concern to Equity members will be considered for publication in Equity News, provided that they are no greater than 175 words in length. Letters selected for publication may be edited for space requirements. Actors' Equity Association reserves the right to decline to publish letters at its sole discretion. When multiple letters on the same topic are submitted, the Editor may decide to select a smaller number of representative letters for publication. Letters must be signed and must provide preferred contact information for verification purposes, but names may be withheld from publication in certain limited circumstances, at a member's request. Opinions expressed in Letters to the Editor are not necessarily those of Actors' Equity Association.

from the audience, or from his many appearances on *The Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson.

His career started at The People's Theatre in the Bowery, and he was on stage at The Republic the night Mayor LaGuardia shut down burlesque in New York City. He worked in vaudeville and legit, and in World War II he toured with the USO

making our troops laugh. Benson worked in musicals nationwide, but settled in Las Vegas until he retired in 1992. An award-winning documentary, *The Last First Comic*, has been made about his life. Today, Benson is as funny as ever and lives in Long Island surrounded by his family, and Lillian, his wife of 78 years. Happy 100th, Irving.

Bart Williams



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Dear Editor:
Our fellow Equity member Irving Benson turned 100 years old in January. A true national treasure, Benson is "the last leaf on the tree" of American burlesque comedy—there are no other living comedians from the golden age of burlesque. Most people remember him as "Sidney Spritzer," heckler to Milton Berle