

California Assembly Committee Votes "Yes" for Single Payer Plan

On June 29, 2010 by a "super majority" vote, the 19-member California Assembly Health Committee delivered 13 "Yes" votes versus six "No" votes to pass Senator Mark Leno's Senate Bill 810. The full passage of SB 810 would mean the establishment of a Single Payer health care system in the State of California. This landmark health care reform legislation, twice vetoed by Governor Schwarzenegger, now proceeds to the Assembly Appropriations Committee for a hearing and vote. Pending a successful Appropriations Committee vote, the bill will be heard by the full Assembly and, if approved, will

once again go to the Governor for signature. Stay tuned. Earlier in the month, the Western Regional Board heard an extensive report, including an in-depth PowerPoint presentation created by Jennie Ford, from members of the Health Care Committee about SB 810. The Board unanimously recommended that the National Council support and endorse SB 810. At its meeting on June 15, 2010, Council was given the same presentation and approved the endorsement of SB 810, the Single Payer health plan that was endorsed by the AFL-CIO, AFTRA and the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor.

FIA Endorses PWD Tri-Union Campaign

The International Federation of Actors, also known as FIA, has endorsed the I AM PWD Campaign of Equity, AFTRA and SAG.

Inclusion in the Arts & Media of People with Disabilities (I AM PWD) is a global outreach and human rights campaign led by performers with disabilities to give a voice in entertainment and media to people with disabilities who often go unseen and unheard. The FIA resolution achieved the support of the Canadian actors' union, Alliance

of Cinema, Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA), as the first international co-sponsor of the campaign, and was approved by the full FIA Executive Meeting at its June 26-27, 2010 session in Copenhagen, Denmark. (See AEA's website, www.actorsequity.org, for the complete resolution.)

AFTRA President Roberta Reardon, AEA Second Vice President Rebecca Kim Jordan and Screen Actors Guild President Ken Howard were joined by ACTRA President Ferne Downey and Canadian AEA Vice President Kerry Davidson in sponsoring the resolution, which states: "Unions affiliated with FIA are urged to bargain to ensure that performers with disabilities can request reasonable accommodations without the fear of losing their jobs; to free people with disabilities from real and virtual discrimination; and to allow people with disabilities to compete equally for job opportunities without facing bias or exclusionary practices."

"People with disabilities have an enormous contribution to make to our lives and to our understanding of the human condition," said AEA President Nick Wyman. "We are delighted at FIA's support of our joint effort with SAG and AFTRA to lower and remove the barriers to those contributions, and we welcome our ACTRA brothers and sisters as our first international partner in our I AM PWD campaign."

Equity's New Home in Chicago Prepares for Grand Opening

By Pam Spitzner
Member Services
Coordinator, Central Region

"Have you moved yet?" That's the question Chicago Equity members keep asking the Central Regional staff, as excitement about our new home in Chicago continues to build.

The answer, for the moment, is "Not yet—but soon!"

The four-story building at 557 West Randolph in the burgeoning West Loop area, purchased last year, is in the closing stages of its rehab and refurbishment and its future shape is apparent. Equity will occupy two and one-half floors of the building:

- The first floor will house an enlarged and soundproofed Audition/Member Center, including a sprung floor in the room itself, an enlarged waiting area which will also house the Lonergan Library, two soundproofed warm-up rooms, and a special area to display a Gypsy Robe. The rest of the first floor is scheduled to house a branch of the Actors Federal Credit Union (including an ATM!)

and building management.

- The second floor will be rented out in its entirety to one or more occupants "to be named later."

- The third floor will be Equity's public area, with Reception, Membership and Member Services offices, and meeting rooms. Areas of varying sizes will comfortably accommodate everything from large committees and group meetings to a one-on-one between a member and a staffer. It will also house the Office Manager, Bonding Director, Mailroom, and an expanded IT server area.

- The fourth floor will be home to the Central Regional Director, and all the Business Reps and Contract Associates, as well as a file area.

- There is also a large basement that will be used for archival storage and is being considered as the home for archival material now occupying rented space in New York.

Green practices are being used whenever and wherever possible. New windows are

being "punched" into the building to admit more natural light, and an exciting architectural feature will be multiple skylights and a "light shaft" between the third and fourth floors. Furniture from the current office will be re-used with some new additions and replacements. Unfortunately, this means that the actual move will require closing the Chicago office for a few days as phones, computers, etc. are relocated. Ample notice will be given to our Members so they are inconvenienced as little as possible. We promise to keep the service interruption as short as we possibly can, and are comfortable knowing that if we need them to, the New York and Los Angeles offices will "cover" for us during that time.

Watch for the announcement of our "Members Only Sneak Preview" on October 11 and our Grand Opening on November 1, 2010! (Dates may change due to factors beyond our control...but we sure hope not!)

The New Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

By Rachel Laforest
Public Policy Director

The April health care article painted a broad-stroked picture of what Equity members can expect from our new health care system. This article contains an in-depth analysis of one component of the new act that may affect you: the individual mandate and subsidies. (Note: The Equity-League Health Fund Trustees are monitoring the possible impacts that the new Affordable Care Act could have on our plan.)

Individual Mandate and Subsidies

(All information gathered from www.healthcare.gov and voices.washingtonpost.com/ezra.../how_does_the_individual_mandat.html)

The Affordable Care Act will require most individuals who can afford it to obtain basic health insurance coverage or pay a fee to help offset the costs of caring for uninsured Americans. Subsidies will be offered to assist with compliance. If affordable



coverage is not available to an individual, he or she will be eligible for an exemption.

The individual mandate will require most Americans to have a minimum level of health insurance or else pay a penalty.

- In 2014 the penalty will be \$95 a year or 1 percent of the household income, whichever is greater.

- In 2015, at least \$325 or 2% of the household income, whichever is greater.

- In 2016, at least \$695 or 2.5% of the household income, whichever is greater (with a maximum penalty of \$2,085 per family).

After 2016, dollar amounts will increase by the annual cost of living adjustment.

Exemptions

The following people are exempt from the individual mandate requirements:

- People with low incomes who are not required to file taxes;
- Members of certain religions who are exempt for religious reasons;
- People who are incarcerated;
- People who are not legal residents;
- Members of an American Indian or Alaskan Native tribe;
- People who go without coverage for less than three

(continued on page 3)

Index

Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act	1
FIA endorses PWD campaign.....	1
Letters.....	2
From the President.....	3
Summer Stock theatres celebrate milestones	6
Postcards from the Regions	8



Letters to The Editor

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



FORGING NEW PATHS

Dear Editor:

Thank you so very much for the inspiring piece about the Ivoryton Playhouse (Equity News, March, 2010). I reside in Connecticut and am sorry I missed the opportunity to see this wonderful production. Because I live out of NYC parameters, finances frequently prohibit my journeys to Manhattan, both for auditions as well as for attending theatre. It is then quite a thrill to not only read about CT professional theatre thriving, but to know it is being identified and acknowledged in Equity News for its role in forging new paths for actors of all denominations and talents. Thank you all. And now, Mr. Papp, I look forward to Connecticut being a forerunner in non-traditional professional casting as well.

Ellee Rose
Middletown, CT

HOPING FOR CHANGE

Dear Editor:

It has been a year since my actress friend and fellow member, Kate Webster, passed away here in New York City. She turned in fine performances over the years, with a special gift for drawing-room comedy, but she simply couldn't earn a living with this talent, even partially. She was good. And

she didn't give up; she gave out. She is missed, her situation mourned.

On the eve of this year's Tonys, thinking of Kate made me look again at practicing the art of theatre, its need and joy, yet its primary contradiction. Why, when production companies are healthier than ever (even in this recession) and output really large and varied, is it still so hard for the majority of theatre artists to just work? Can we ever change that?

Name Withheld Upon
Request

ALIVE AND WELL

Dear Editor:

I just received Equity News and saw that I passed away. Well, it was not me. I am Dennis Cole, Dance Choreographer, Director and Producer. I am in Provincetown and living. It was a bit of a shock to see my name on the Final Curtain list. Also, my partner is receiving condolence cards from several associates in the business. The Dennis Cole that passed away was the Actor. I was the first Dennis Cole in AEA and have been a member since 1962. This is a warning to protect your name since AEA let him keep his and said he was a star. Well, I am a star and living and still kicking my heels.

Dennis Cole

REMEMBERING LYNN REDGRAVE

Dear Editor:

Many may not be aware that Lynn Redgrave held free Master Classes in the performing of Shakespeare during the run of *Shakespeare For My Father* in Los Angeles in 1993, and then later at the Louis B. Mayer Theatre in Woodland Hills. The door was closed to no one and by word of mouth once a week a couple of hundred nervous and expectant actors would arrive. What Lynn imparted was profound—so intimately connected was she to all of Shakespeare's works. Ever encouraging, ever graceful and, at the end of each class she herself performing, perhaps a little Juliet or Lady M or a sonnet. How fortunate we were. How we cherished these hours. She has left us way too soon. Condolences to her children, to Vanessa, to her large extended family. RIP bright angel.

Mary Hamill, New York

IN MEMORIAM

Dear Editor:

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of our dear friend Larry French on May 28, 2010 of a massive heart attack.

He was 58.

A graduate of Howard Paine University, Larry first came to New York City in 1978 from Dallas, Texas to pursue a career in acting, and shortly thereafter in the Carleton Davis tour of *Camelot* met his wife of 30 years, longtime Equity Councillor Jeanne Lehman French.

Larry appeared on Broadway in *Brigadoon* and *The Pirates of Penzance* and in the National Tours of *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Evita* and the 1999 revival of *The Sound of Music*, one of many appearances he made with his wife. A member of the 2001 Acting Company of the Stratford Shakespeare Festival in Canada, Larry also appeared with Jeanne there in *The Sound of Music*, and in *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Seagull* and *Master Class*.

An active supporter of Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, he most recently appeared in the 2010 Easter Bonnet Competition, singing on the stage at the Minskoff Theatre.

Larry was a brilliantly funny and gifted performer, devoted husband to Jeanne, and cherished friend to so many of us. Memories of the countless times he made us laugh and touched us with his incredible tenor voice will live on forever.

Christine Toy Johnson
New York

Dear Editor:

It is with deep sadness that I write of my friend James Mitchell's passing on Friday, January 22, 2010, just one month and several days short of his 90th birthday.

Our long friendship began when we worked together in Jerome Robbins' American Theatre Lab company.

Jim was elegant, charming, kind, generous, talented and handsome. He began his career as Agnes De Mille's lead dancer, assistant, and professional confidante and for the past 30 years was known mostly for his role as Palmer Cortlandt on *All My Children*.

Broadway audiences saw him as Harry Beaton in the original production of *Brigadoon*, and in leading roles in *Carnival*, *Mack and Mabel*, *First Impressions*, and *The Deputy*. On film, he appeared as the Dance Curley in *Oklahoma!*, *The Prodigal*, *The Bandwagon*, as Cyd Charisse's dance partner in *Deep in My Heart*, and *The Turning Point*.

I'll miss the fun times and laughter that we shared. "Good night, sweet prince; And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest."

My condolences and deepest sympathy go to his family, friends and longtime partner and companion Albert Wolsky.

James Dybas

Dear Editor:

Allen Swift died on April 18, 2010 and Equity lost a very special fellow member.

I first met Allen 50 years ago when he hired me as one of the seven actors who would help him launch a shaving product he and his brother Cal had been able to gain the rights to. It was a most ingenious strategy: to use actors who would go to drugstores in Manhattan and gradually reveal more and more information about the new product known as "Countdown." Each of us would trickle out one more piece of information about the extraordinary quality of this new product until finally the druggist, who at first never heard of it and never saw it, craved it. Moreover, even when the druggists found out how to contact the company and practically begged to get "the product that everyone was asking for"—even then Allen and Cal would make it still seem totally unattainable. They claimed the company was just setting up in New York and hadn't the facility to ship the requested cartons or handle the intricate finances involved in selling it. Cash in hand, the druggists volunteered to come themselves or send someone from their staff to go to the address where the product was stored. We actors, following Allen's direction to the letter, were able to work up such a demand for "Countdown" that it was surely going to rival that other had-to-get product of that time—Wilkinson Sword Blades. Unfortunately, the product disappeared prematurely due to the procrastination of financiers and others. Nevertheless, it was a genius concept.

Allen continued to do what he was most in demand for—voiceovers. He was the voice of many of the characters on the *Howdy Doody Show* plus tons of commercials, including *The Herring Maven*. When I was producing commercials at Young & Rubicam, I hired Allen to do the voiceover for a Tiparillo Cigar commercial. His hilarious voiceover was, I maintain, the reason the spot won a Clio. Newsweek did a profile on him and told about the long search for the voice of the Eberhard #2 Pencil for its animated commercials. Many actors auditioned for the role and none fulfilled that company president's expectations. Finally, Allen, who was known as "The Man of a Thousand Voices," was called in. By then, the overwrought president challenged Allen with, "They tell me you are one of the best voiceover guys in the business. Do you think you have it to be the voice of our pencil?" Allen's response was, "I don't know—

does this pencil have an eraser?"

Allen was a standup comic, a magician, a playwright (he starred on Broadway in his own play, *Checking Out*, in 1977). I became his agent during his later years and experienced that special joy agents feel when covering their client's good work. Producers and directors thanked me many times for suggesting Allen for their productions. To see him as "Solomon" in Arthur Miller's *The Price*, or "Willie" in Neil Simon's *The Sunshine Boys*, or "Firs" in Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*, was to bear witness to a brilliant artist performing impeccably truthful, hysterically funny and deeply touching. His characterizations were pure master lessons in the art of acting.

Our profession will miss this most original and gifted human being. While we grieve and celebrate our dear friend and fellow member, know this, God, you are in for a treat.

Marvin Starkman, New York

AEA Launches National Area Liaison Hotline System

Call 877-AEA-1913

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

(1) Dial 877-AEA-1913

(2) Dial your city extension:

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



ACTORS'
EQUITY
ASSOCIATION 1913

EQUITYNEWS

Editor: **DICK MOORE**

Associate Editor: **HELAIN FELDMAN**

Equity News Advisory Committee

Christine Toy Johnson, Chair
(Eastern)

Nancy Daly (Western)

Diane Dorsey (Central)

Nicole Flender (Eastern)

Bruce Alan Johnson (Eastern)

Kevin McMahon (Western)

Tom Murray (Central)

Liz Pazik (Central)

Barbara Roberts (Western)

EQUITY NEWS (ISSN: 00924520) is published monthly except for combined issues in Jan./Feb., July/Aug., Oct./Nov., by Actors' Equity Association, 165 West 46th Street, New York, NY 10036. Telephone: (212) 869-8530. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Copyright 2003, Actors' Equity Association. Subscription price for non-members of Actors' Equity Association: \$25 per year. Postmaster: Send address changes to Equity News, 165 West 46th St., New York, NY 10036.

Affordable Care Act

continued from page 1

months;

People who do not have an affordable offer of coverage, either through the planned insurance exchanges or through their employer (coverage is considered “affordable” if the monthly premium does not consume more than 8% of a family’s gross income in 2014. This will be indexed in later years to account for both premium and wage increases).

In addition, anyone who would face hardship if they purchased coverage may file for an exemption from the individual mandate requirements. There will be no criminal penalties for failing to meet the individual mandate requirements.

Individual Subsidies

The federal government will provide tax credits to low and middle-income people, those

earning between 133% and 400% of the poverty level, to help them buy health insurance from marketplaces called “exchanges,” where they can compare prices and benefits.

For a detailed chart on income qualifications, premium limits and cost sharing assistance (tax credits) see www.actorsequity.org.

Role of AEA

Equity staff and members of the Health Care Committee have attended several forums, seminars and teach-ins on the new Affordable Care Act. These sessions have increased our understanding of how things are rolling out. While the rules and regulations for each component of the bill continue to be forged, we will continue to monitor the process, weigh-in when necessary and report the details to the membership.

Things to Know About Equity Principal Auditions

By Keith Howard
Director of Auditions

Negotiated in Equity agreements (e.g. Production, LORT, etc), and written into promulgated agreements, are requirements that employers hold auditions for Equity members. Recently, some members have asked why audition notices on the NYC Audition Center bulletin board and in some trade publications do not state whether an Equity Principal Audition (EPA) is “required.”

When we ask members why they want to know this, the responses have been, “I don’t want to waste time/money auditioning at required EPAs; no one gets cast from them,” or, “Everything is already cast anyway, so why bother going to required EPAs?”

These are urban myths, and from a career standpoint, unproductive, because they could rob a member of important job opportunities.

Let’s look at the “no one gets cast from EPAs” myth first. In the average year, the Eastern Region Auditions Department posts casting notices for nearly 1,400 required auditions, approximately 1,100 of which are EPAs. We hear what casting personnel say “behind the scenes,” so we know the truth: Most *do* use required EPAs as an essential element of their casting process, calling actors back, and casting them when appropriate.

We hear quite frequently of members being cast as a result of auditioning at EPAs. In fact, it is not unusual for EPA-going members to book LORT, Off-Broadway and even Broadway shows.

Calls we list as “Open” (as opposed to EPAs or Equity Chorus Calls-ECCs) are non-

required. Members may attend these, but should be aware that no Equity monitor will be present and that members may have to compete with non-Equity performers for appointments.

If you would like to know which calls are “required,” just look at the top of each audition notice on “Casting Call” on Equity’s website (www.actorsequity.org).

Now to the mistaken assumption that “everything is already cast” before EPAs are held.

In some instances, producers do cast some roles before auditions are held. Because this practice is not against any Equity agreement rule, it’s important for members to know that producers have no incentive to be anything other than honest about which roles are available and which are cast.

Over the last few years, you have undoubtedly seen many EPA notices that list most roles as available, and a few roles as cast. This is because the Auditions Department double-checks with casting personnel to ensure that all roles listed as available on EPA notices are indeed open (please note: For EPA purposes, roles are considered cast only when they have been offered *and* accepted).

For nearly 50 years, Equity members and staff have worked hard to ensure that all members have the chance to be seen fairly at EPAs. The system has worked for countless members across the nation – but it only works if you use it, and use it wisely.

So don’t listen to misinformed rumors. Don’t cheat yourself. Read casting notices carefully, decide if you’re right for the part, prepare professionally and AUDITION!

From the PRESIDENT

By Nick Wyman

I ran into one of my fellow tall, blonde *Die Hard* thugs last week; and in an exchange of “How ya doin’?”s, he rather shamefacedly admitted that not only had he not done any more big-budget feature films, he’d just been doing a little of this, a little of that. “Hey, it’s a mosaic,” I said. Mosaic is my second-favorite metaphor for our theatrical life. As an actor, our professional lives are far from the 50-years-and-a-gold-watch sort of single employer career (although the fellow who replaced me in *Phantom* – I can’t reveal his name, but his initials are George Lee Andrews – is at 22 years and counting.) The good news/bad news of our vocation choice is that no one job lasts too long. We need to put together a mosaic of jobs to create a livelihood.

Some of the pieces in our mosaic are big and bright: national tours, classy LORT productions; and some are smaller: readings, waiver productions. Some pieces are from the domains of our sister

Life is a Mosaic

unions: television, radio, film, audiobooks, opera. Some pieces are from yet-to-be-organized arenas: cruises, European tours. And some pieces are from our non-acting work: waiting tables, word-processing, bartending.

A buddy of mine with whom I have shared a NYC stage responded to my website column (check it out: www.actorsequity.org) on voting by admitting that he hadn’t voted. He’s worked on Broadway, and he’s done leads in LORT, but he’s only worked seven weeks in the last year and a half, and he feels “disconnected” from the Union and the business.

The Union is not a snooty club for the constantly working; it is an Association constituted “to advance, promote, foster and benefit all those connected with the art of the theatre.” We all have a stake in the business, an equitable stake. We’re all in this together; sometimes we’re working, sometimes we’re not. Since there are more good stage actors than good stage

jobs, for most of us the non-working times outnumber the working times. To fill out our livelihood mosaic, we need to look for non-stage work and non-acting work. This is par for the course and no reason to feel disconnected or distant from AEA. And, indeed, our livelihood mosaic is just part of our life mosaic, fitted among the pieces for family, friends, hobbies, exercise, service, religion, community.

The beauty or value of your life’s mosaic has nothing to do with the size or number of the Equity pieces; they are just part of a much bigger picture. Know, however, that your elected leadership and your Union staff are working to develop as many new mosaic pieces as they can and to make existing ones larger (i.e., more remunerative) and that you, whether you have been working a lot or a little, are part of Equity’s mosaic. You are Family – and that’s my favorite metaphor for our theatrical life.

Contact President Nick Wyman at president@actorsequity.org



“Were I to die and go to heaven and find it populated by actors, I would not be unhappy.”

—Playwright Ben Hecht

Betsy Allen
Katie Anders
Val Avery
Leta Bonyng
Brienin Bryant
Judy Burns
Paul Butler
George T. Callahan
Mitchell Carrey
Claiborne L. Cary
Judy Cassmore
Jeannine Ann Cole
Rik Colitti
Bill Collins
Dodie Cunningham
Michael Currie
Joyce Dahl
Lynn Delaney
Michael Philip DelRio
Robert E. Dixon
Muriel Dolan
Donal Donnelly
James Douglas
Stephanie Elliot
Andrea Espe
William Falkner
Timothy Flannery

John Franklyn-Robbin
Gary Gage
Patricia Gage
Ella Gerber
June Gibbons
Roy Gioconda
Douglas Gordon
Beverly Grant
Peter Graves
Sam Gray
Kathryn Grayson
Michael Barry Greer
Bradley Hamilton
June Havoc
Marc Hertsens
Robert Hirschfeld
James Huston
Jerry Jaffe
Taylor John
Charlie Kashi
Bernard Kates
Betty Lou Keim
Mesrop Kesdekian
David F. Kleist
Karol Kostka
Jeanne Mitchell Lange
Ruth Livingston

Sandra MacDonald
Bill McIntyre
Ed McMahon
Caroline M. McWilliams
George Robert Merritt
James H. Mitchell
Jeffrey Nash
Marjorie Nelson
Charles M. Nolte
Pierre Olaf
Garwood Perkins
Joseph Pinckney
Carol A. Provonsha
Frances Reid
Pernell E. Roberts
Rowena Rollins
Zelda Rubinstein
Stephen Rust
Mimi Norton Salamanca
Ron Samuel
David Semonin
Madge Sinclair
Richard W. Sollenbergerer
Kenneth P. Strong
James Patrick Sullivan
Paul Szigety
Mark Anthony Taylor
Richard G. Thayer
Clarence Thomas
John B. Thomas
Angela Thornton
Dorothy L. Tompkins
William Verderber
Mark Volland
John F. Weeks
Mildred Weitz
Collin Wilcox
Robert Wilder
Bill Wildin
Newton Winters
Michael W. Wood
Conrad Yama
Bruce Peter Yarnell

Brian Myers Cooper is P&H Trustee

Brian Myers Cooper, an Equity Principal Councillor since 2004, has been named a Trustee of the Equity-League Pension & Health Fund. The announcement came from Madeleine Fallon, Chair of the Equity portion of the Fund Trustees, who said, "Brian is a fast learner and is working hard to learn the complexities of Taft-

Hartley Multi-Employer Benefit Funds." Mr. Cooper joins Ms. Fallon as well as Jeanna Belkin, Doug Carfrae, Alan Hall, Tom Joyce, Kathryn Lamkey, Ira Mont, Carol Waaser and Nick Wyman on the Board.

(Editor's note: Actors' Equity Association and the Equity-League Pension, Health and 401k Funds are separate organizations.)

New Broadway Diversity Initiative in Place

A Self-Identification Questionnaire will be handed out at all first rehearsals of Broadway shows opening during the 2010-2011 season.

The vitality of the American theatre depends on the inclusion of people of every background, thereby achieving an accurate reflection of the widely diverse American society. To this end, and so that Equity will have an accurate representation of diversity on Broadway, a *confidential and anonymous questionnaire* has been developed. It will take only moments to fill out and will simply ask how you self-identify in the areas of gender, race/ethnicity, and disability. Self-identification is the preferred method of collecting this information, and your participation is extremely important to our gain-

ing accurate statistics. The information will be collected and compiled by Equity on a show-by-show basis. It will be used solely for internal statistical analysis, affording Equity the ability to analyze employment opportunities, formulate statistical records about casting on Broadway, and monitor diversity and inclusion in the industry. Again, the questionnaire is confidential and data will be anonymous and untraceable.

If you have any questions about the Self-Identification Questionnaire, contact Eastern Senior Business Representative Kimberly Rimbold at krimbold@actorsequity.org or (212) 869-8530, ext. 331 or Eastern Equal Employment Opportunity Business Representative Pearl Brady at pbrady@actorsequity.org or (212) 869-8530, ext. 346.

AEA/Eisenberg Scholarship Goes to Kent Overshown

Kent Overshown, University of Michigan Class of 2010 and a member of Equity, has received the AEA/Alan Eisenberg Award Scholarship. He is the fourth graduating student to receive the award, which was created by former Equity Executive Director Alan Eisenberg, an alumnus of the school. The award, in the amount of \$5,000, is given to a graduating senior in the University's Musical Theatre Program.

"It's an honor and deeply humbling to receive the Eisenberg Award," said Mr. Overshown. An inner city kid

from Oakland, California, he added, "The opportunity to attend the University of Michigan changed my life. It is a blessing to be a part of the University's musical theatre program because it is a supportive, challenging and creative atmosphere. It was one of the best decisions of my life."

Kent joined Equity in 2007 while appearing in *The Pajama Game* at The Muni in St. Louis. Other Muni productions include *The Music Man*, *Annie*, *Miss Saigon*, *My Fair Lady*, and *Les Miserables*. This summer he performs there in *Titanic*, *The Sound of Music* and *Show Boat*.



Kent Overshown (c) with Alan Eisenberg and AEA Secretary/Treasurer Sandra Karas.

Membership Candidates Receive Sturtevant Award

Jessica Taige and Isaac Benelli are the recipients of Equity's sixth annual Roger Sturtevant Musical Theatre Award, named for the beloved casting director who died in 2003. The award, a certificate and a \$1,000 check, is given to Equity Membership Candidates (EMCs) who demonstrate outstanding abilities in the field of musical theatre.

"Musical theatre is my passion and I am always striving to better myself and continue to grow in my craft. This award is a confirmation that all my hard work is not in vain. It makes me want to keep working and learning to see how much more I can grow and how much further I can go," said Jessica.

Jessica plans to audition and participate in dance, acting and voice classes/workshops until her next contract at the Merry-Go-Round Theatre in upstate



Isaac Benelli.

New York in October.

Isaac Benelli's introduction to musical theatre came four years ago at San Francisco State University. A friend convinced him to audition for *West Side Story* although he "had never seen a musical let alone auditioned for one." He sang "Maria" despite having never heard the song before, landed the role of Tony and "fell in love with theatre."

"I had a very late start in theatre, but once I found it, I



Jessica Taige.

knew this was what I was supposed to do. My wife and I both work full time and we have a three year old son. It has been difficult trying to balance pursuing theatre and being a good husband and father. Receiving this award has been such a validation of all of the hard work and sacrifices she and I have made. It has given me a fresh hope and drive to pursue my dreams to one day make a living and provide for my family doing what I love."

Two Equity Members Earn Union Plus Scholarships

Two Equity members are among 121 students representing 42 unions who have received 2010 Union Plus Scholarships.

Matthew Farver, an Equity member since 1999, has received a \$4,000 scholarship, and Amy Tribbey, an Equity member since 1992, received a \$750 grant.

"During these challenging economic times, with college tuition rising and many working families struggling just to get by, we're pleased to be helping some of the labor movement's most promising students achieve their college dreams," said Leslie Tolf, president of Union Privilege, the organization that provides an array of Union Plus benefit programs for union families, including the scholarship program.

Matthew Farver achieved his acting dream with a role on Broadway in *Mamma Mia!* and also served as a Deputy of the show. When he survived a bout with cancer—he's a three-year survivor with a positive long-term prognosis—he became an activist and leader in the cancer survivors' community. Now he plans for an MBA degree, with the goal of starting a cause-related marketing company. "I aim to give back while offering value to my clients—quantifying the idealistic doctrine of 'doing well by doing good,'" he says.

Amy Tribbey has performed in the theatre, movies and on TV. "The unions give us dignity in a profession where we are often viewed as a dime a dozen," she says. "I have been a happy union member for 19

years." (She also belongs to SAG and AFTRA.) With a need to supplement her acting income, Amy is training to become a dog groomer, a profession she believes will allow her to continue with her first love. "If I had to give up acting entirely," she says, "that would break my heart." With the help of her Union Plus Scholarship, she won't have to.

Union Plus Scholarships are granted to students attending a two-year college, four-year college, graduate school or a recognized technical or trade school. Recipients are selected based on academic ability, social awareness, financial need and appreciation of labor. This is the sixth consecutive year that Equity members have been recipients of the annual Union Plus Scholarship Awards.

Reunion Reminder

The 40th anniversary of the first rehearsal of the Broadway company of *No, No, Nanette* will be celebrated at an afternoon tea dance from 1-5 p.m. on Sunday, September 19, 2010 at Swing 46, Jazz & Supper Club, 349 West 46th Street in New York. The cost is \$40 per person and checks or money orders should be made out to LaBuca Restaurant and sent to Kathy Conry at her new address: 400 West 43rd Street, XX, New York, NY 10036. Kathy's new email address for information is: conrykathleen@yahoo.com.

Coming soon... Communications Survey

Starting in August 2010, AEA's Communications Department will launch a series of surveys focusing on improving communications between the Union and the membership. The surveys will delve into a variety of areas, including Equity News, bulk email, AEA's website, social networking and other communications modalities.

"Our goal is improve the quality of our communications to make them more informative, useful and a 'must read'," said National Communications

Director David Lotz. "New technology has enabled us to reach members faster and more efficiently than ever before. We want to know how members are getting their news, what other information they want to have, and how they want Equity to connect with them in the future."

Look for your Communications survey online (www.actorsequity.org) in the coming weeks. If you don't have computer access, contact the Communications Department (212-869-8530 x 330) and a survey will be mailed to you.

Labor Day: 2010

Philadelphia

On Monday, September 6, 2010, the AEA Liaison Committee is joining with SAG and AFTRA to celebrate Labor Day. There will be a parade starting at 8 am at the Sheet Metal Workers' Local 19 Union Hall, Columbus Boulevard and Washington Avenue, and ending at Penn's Landing Great Plaza where there will be a family celebration with food, refreshments, kids' activities, make and take crafts and music. The event is sponsored by the Philadelphia Council, AFCL-CIO and the Tri-State Labor Day Parade Committee. Liaison Committee Chair Tom Helmer also reports that AEA, AFTRA and SAG will have a booth at Penn's Landing and the Committee will be distributing brochures and information on Philadelphia AEA area theatres' upcoming seasons.

Buffalo/Rochester

AEA and IATSE members will once again sponsor a float in the 2010 Labor Day Parade on September 6. The parade starts at the Buffalo Irish Center on Abbott Road near Stevenson Street and continues into Buffalo's Cazenovia Park. Friends and family are invited to the AFL-CIO picnic afterwards for hot dogs, burgers and Equity t-shirts. For further information, contact Parade Committee Chair Debra Cole (colebuffalo@aol.com) or (716) 713-2649.

Kansas City

The Kansas City performing arts community is holding its first ever "Labor-Palooza" on September 6 starting at 3 pm. Festivities will be held at the Sunnyside Park in the Waldo area, at 84th and Summit, one block north and one block west of 85th and Wornall in Kansas City, MO. All members of AEA, AFTRA, SAG, AGMA and AGVA are invited to bring their own food and drink, along with recreational equipment, families and pets for an afternoon of fun and fellowship. For more information, contact Kip Niven (kipniven@hotmail.com).

Milwaukee

The Labor Day Parade on September 6 kicks off at 11 am, goes down Wisconsin Avenue and ends up at Henry Maier Festival Park for all-day festivities, including food, music, union industry displays, sports and children's activities. Park at the Summerfest Grounds and take the free shuttle to 4th and Michigan and jump on the MASH float. Family and friends are welcome. Check the Milwaukee AEA hotline for more information.

Chicago

The Chicago Federation of Labor presents *Labor Day at Millennium Park* from 10:30 am to 2 pm on Labor Day, September 6 at the Pritzker Pavilion and Great Lawn. There will be food, music, entertainment and attractions. For more information, call (312) 222-1000.

Scene Around



Los Angeles

Western Members Watch the Tonys

Fifty Equity members, Membership Candidates, friends and families filled Hollywood Boulevard's Pig 'n' Whistle restaurant for the 64th Annual Tony Awards on June 13, 2010. Food, fun, and Tony-themed prizes were enjoyed by all as the Tony show was shown on seven large TV screens.

Chicago

Central Members Show Their Pride



Weston, VT

People and Puppets Help BC/EFA

The *Avenue Q* company at the Weston Playhouse, including Councillors Christine Toy Johnson and Malcolm Ewen (one of the Producing Directors of the theatre), helped raise money for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS by having a photo opportunity with the puppets. Humans shown here are (l to r) Zonya Love, Ms. Johnson, Mr. Ewen and Steven Booth.



New York

New Members Meet

Here are some of the newest—and youngest—Equity members who attended a recent New Member Reception in New York. They are: (l to r) Eden Duncan-Smith, age 11, *Fences*; Mary Stewart Sullivan, age 9, *Error*; and Katherine McNamara, age 15, *A Little Night Music*.

Equity was represented in Chicago's June Pride Month parade on June 27, 2010 by (l to r) friend of Equity Lindsay Bundesman; Equity's Pride Coordinator, Contract Associate Lacey Holmes; Contract Associate Courtney Bundesman; friend of Equity Miguel Cortes; Members Services Coordinator Pam Spitzner; and Central Regional Director Kathryn V. Lamkey. The theme of this year's event was: "One Heart, One World, One Pride."



How I Got My Equity Card

Dominic Chianese



By Dominic Chianese

Reading an old New York City newspaper back in the early 1950s, I looked in the Help Wanted section under Singers.

There it was: an advertisement for young singers to try out for the American Savoyards, a Gilbert and Sullivan troupe, stationed at the Jan Hus Playhouse, 351 East 74th Street in New York (now a Senior Center).

I was hired as a chorus singer and Dorothy Raedler, our Artistic Director, took us all down to the Equity office and officially made us Chorus Equity members of the Actors' Union. Little did we know that a short time after this, the Chorus singers would be allowed into Actors' Equity itself, and I found myself with an Actors' Equity

card. This was in 1952.

We toured about 14 states, bus and truck, and played in many theatres, starting with the old Erlanger in Springfield, Massachusetts, performing *The Mikado* and *Patience*.

Then in 1957, I decided to start over again and really earn my Actors' Equity card by enlisting as an apprentice with Donald Swann's Hilltop Theatre in Baltimore. For the summer, I helped build the theatre, carry refrigerators, make flats, sweep floors, paint, and all the things necessary for what was then called *Summer Stock*. The New York Equity actors would do about five or six plays and musicals for the summer months, putting one up every couple of weeks. I worked all that summer, and would be an extra in the plays, making quick

entrances and quick exits, speaking hardly any "lines." The second season promised a role after a certain number of shows and I was assigned roles.

Dominic Chianese is probably best known for his role as Uncle Junior in the HBO hit series, *The Sopranos*, which ran from 1999 to 2007 and brought him an Emmy nomination as outstanding supporting actor in a drama series in 2001.

Born in the Bronx, he graduated from the Bronx High School of Science and Brooklyn College before beginning his career on stage in 1952. He appeared on and Off Broadway and in regional theatre for more than 45 years before creating his famous role on *The*

Sopranos. His first Broadway show was *Oliver!* in 1965. Most recently, he appeared in Arthur Miller's *The Price* at the Old Globe in San Diego and in *Still Life* at MCC Theatre in New York. A singer and musician, Mr. Chianese has worked in clubs and for the Drug Commission of New York State as a recreational worker in a rehab center, teaching guitar to women who were serving time for drug-related crimes.

While continuing to appear in films and on stage, he has recently formed a non-profit foundation, Joy through Art Foundation, Inc., to bring entertainment to Senior Citizen facilities.

Corrections

In the story on South Florida's Carbonell Awards in the June issue of Equity News, it was reported that after receiving numerous nominations over the years, Barbara Bradshaw received the Best Actress Award. This was, in fact, Ms. Bradshaw's third Carbonell Award. She has also received 16 nominations.

In a report on the Helen Hayes Awards in the May issue of Equity News, Eric Hissom's name was misspelled. Mr. Hissom received the Outstanding Supporting Actor award.



Totem Pole Playhouse.

Eastern Region

Totem Pole Playhouse is 60

Totem Pole Playhouse is celebrating its 60th Anniversary in 2010, producing six shows for a total of 99 performances from May 29-August 22. This season Totem Pole Playhouse, operating under a CORST Z agreement, will employ 28 Equity Actors and Stage Managers for almost 150 AEA workweeks.

It all began in 1950, when leaseholders of Pennsylvania state forest land were looking for ways to ensure that the cabins so many loved and enjoyed would not become property of the government at the end of their current leases. At the same time, the people of the Michaux State Forest Association wanted to find something to promote community spirit. The group received permission to build a community hall approximately 32' x 60' and Association member Samuel C. Houston suggested turning the building into a summer theatre. Thus, The Michaux Community Theatre, which would become Totem Pole Playhouse two years later, was born.

For the first season in 1951, Managing Director of the Harrisburg Community Theatre, Karl Genus, brought a group of actors to the Michaux Forest, and he was named Artistic Director. Six plays were produced that first summer. In the second season, the troupe moved to a dance pavilion in the Caledonia State Park. Following the 1953 season, Karl Genus retired.

In 1954, an actor and theatre arts instructor at the Pittsburgh Playhouse, William H. Putch, took over as Producer/Director and remained so until his death in 1983. Totem Pole Playhouse prospered under Putch's guidance and by 1963, attendance was booming. Notable talent the Playhouse attracted included Sada Thompson, Lee Meriwether, John Ritter and Putch's wife, Jean Stapleton. Totem Pole Playhouse

soon acquired the reputation as "The Cadillac of Summer Theatre" among New York actors.

Following a fire in 1967 that damaged the old dancehall-turned theatre, a new playhouse opened in the Caledonia State Park where productions continue to be staged.

After Putch's death in 1983, Actors/Directors Carl Schurr and Wil Love joined forces with Putch's daughter, Pamela, to produce the 1984 season. In 1985, Schurr and Love assumed the leadership as Producing Artistic Director and Associate Artistic Director until 2008.

In 1994, Schurr established a not-for-profit organization, Caledonia Theatre Company, that would support the operation of the theatre. Schurr and Love retired in 2008, and Washington, DC actor, and former Equity Liaison, Ray Ficca, assumed the role of Artistic Director.

"I shall forever be proud of the 25 families of artists and technicians we created every summer, well over 150 memorable productions and the fact that in all those years an actor never missed a performance," said Equity member Carl Schurr. "A pre-season highlight for me was working with the Equity Audition Center to schedule the annual EPAs. Of course, it was impossible to hire all the talented men and women who crossed the threshold, but we happily hired many fine actors as a result of the open call."

Production Stage Manager and Equity member Paul Mills Holms says: "I started here in 1971 and am finishing up my 35th season. The work that we have done here under the auspices of Bill Putch, Carl Schurr and Wil Love and now Ray Ficca is as good as anything I have done anywhere. This theatre embodies completely why I am in this business, and being able to help nurture young theatre professionals in to the business is an amazing reward."

Equity Members Summer in New Hampshire

Weathervane Theatre in Whitefield, New Hampshire is presenting its 45th season of alternating rotating repertory. Equity members appear under a Letter of Agreement referenced to the LORT contract. Gibbs Murray has been the producer for all 45 years, while also designing the posters, sets and handling publicity.



The Equity Resident Company at Weathervane Theatre: Standing (l to r) Chelsea Lovett, Robert Fowler, Cassandra McConnell, Simon Fortin, Francis Kelly, Ashley Blanchet, Matt Gibson, Mollie Vogt-Welch, Jacques Stewart; (Seated, l to r) Derrick Trumbly, Deborah Jean Templin. (Not shown: Stage Managers Aimee Born and Kathleen Monroe.)

Other Eastern Anniversaries

Wheelock Family Theatre (LOA/LORT), Boston, MA – 30th Anniversary.

Theaterworks (SPT), Hartford, CT – 25th Anniversary

Shakespeare on the Sound (LOA/LORT), Rowayton and Greenwich, CT – 15th Anniversary.

Northampton, MA

New Century Summer Theatre Celebrates 20 Years at Smith College

By Donna Sorbello Greater Boston Liaison Committee.

New Century is celebrating 20 years as a summer theatre by remounting the top four "audience-favorites" from past seasons. The summer opened with *Noises Off*, their first production in the larger, state-of-the-art theatre space in Mendenhall Center for the Performing Arts on the campus of Smith College, which they moved into ten years ago.

Sam Rush, Production Coordinator at Smith College (along with other university instructorships), and Jack Neary, playwright, founded New Century Summer Theatre in 1991. Mr. Neary departed after five years to become Artistic Director of Mount Holyoke Summer Theatre, leaving the job as Producing Director to his partner Sam Rush. Jack Neary returns each season to direct a play. In 2000, the theatre, always in residence at Mendenhall, moved from its original, smaller, Halle Flannigan Studio Theatre.

From the outset, students primarily from New England's Five-College Community, (Smith, Mt. Holyoke, Hampshire, University of Massachusetts, and Amherst), have benefited through theatre



The production of *Noises Off* at New Century included (l to r) Molly Haas-Hooven, James Emery, Lisa Abend, Phil Kilbourne, Sara Whitcomb; (above) Cate Damon and Councillor Buzz Roddy.

training and experience as interns and assistants, and also, for the past seven years, as designers, stage managers and actors of the Paint Box Children's Theatre company, under the direction of Tom McCabe. Many have returned when hired as artists for New Century seasons and have gone on to other companies in the AEA theatre community.

One would have to attribute much of the success of this long-running theatre to the ever-boyish Sam Rush, who moves easily from producer, director to actor in any given season. Mr. Rush feels that by

surrounding himself with talented artists, he guarantees the quality of the work. New Century does, in fact, have a core of primarily, though not limited to, New England artists, who return often. Perhaps, this trust is why he seems remarkably relaxed while wearing so many hats and sharing family duties with his wife, Kate Damon, who also performs at the theatre.

"I always look for a diverse season with genuine quality in the writing. I look for what will excite us, what we're excited to work on," says Sam.

es Observe Milestones

Central Region

Peninsula Players Celebrates 75 Years

The Peninsula Players Theatre in Fish Creek, Wisconsin, one of the oldest professional resident summer theatre companies in America, and operating under an Equity CORST contract, is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. Countless actors have been involved in the more than 500 plays presented at the theatre.

It began on July 25, 1935 on the slope of the lawn

behind what is now Fish Creek Park when the brother-sister team of Richard and Caroline Fisher presented Peninsula Players' first play—*Hay Fever* by Noel Coward.

By 1937, Richard and Caroline, along with their parents ("Mama" who designed and made

costumes in between preparing meals for the company, and C.R., "Poppa," the general handyman) realized that the ensemble had outgrown the site so they purchased the 22-acre Wildwood Boys Camp, the present location of the theatre. They built a stage house for the plays, but the 100 or so audience seats were canvas captain's chairs out in the open.

By 1946, the size of the audience had grown to over 300, so a canopy suspended by cables was designed and installed, protecting the

audience from rain. In 1957, Caroline's dream of a permanent pavilion came true. It was a structure with almost perfect acoustics, including a permanent roof, but with open sides.

Nevertheless, this structure lasted until 2005 when it was demolished to make way for the current theatre—a 621-seat state-of-the-art theatre opened in the Spring of 2006. It captures the feel of the old facility, including the ability to

theatre's mission remains the same: "to support, without reservation, the most exciting theatre company possible; to preserve the Theatre-in-a Garden's natural beauty; to provide artists the freedom, tools and facilities they require to entertain, uplift and inform the audiences; to foster future generations of theatre professionals; and to maintain fiscal policies that ensure the future security of the theatre."

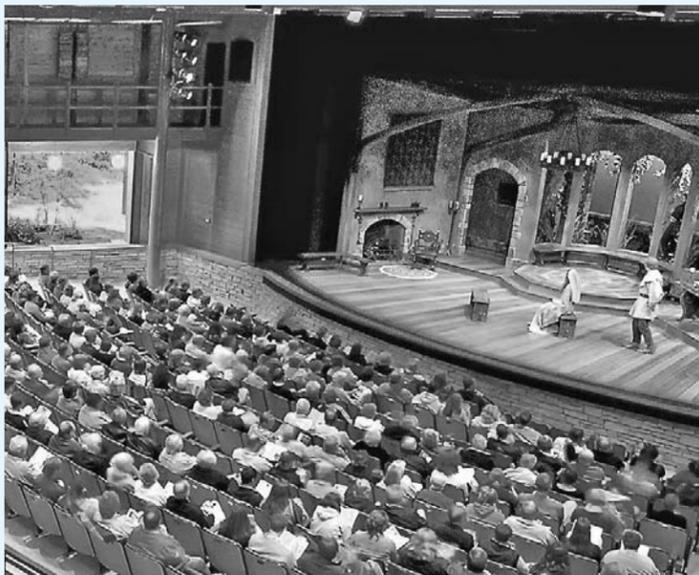
"Peninsula Players is a huge part of my life," says Equity member Sean Fortunato. "My wife Linda started working here in 1996 and I've been performing here since 1998—our first summer together. We got engaged here, and now we get to share it with our two-year old son,

Asher. There's an amazing community up here at the Players. Also, since they do such a wide variety of shows, I've been given opportunities to really stretch myself as an actor, getting to play such roles as the Emcee in *Cabaret* and Father Flynn in *Doubt*. I feel like I can take risks here because I'm surrounded by people whose work I've admired for years and I respect them as artists and friends. Plus, you get to perform in idyllic surroundings."

raise the sides, but has radiant in-floor heat for chilly autumn evenings.

In 1960, after 25 years of involvement, the Fishers sold the theatre at public auction. As a result, the Peninsula Players Theatre Foundation, Inc. was formed and continues to operate the theatre. James B. McKenzie was one of the organizers of the foundation and was its executive producer for many years, simultaneously serving as executive producer of the Westport Country Playhouse in Westport, Connecticut.

After 75 years, the



The Lady's Not for Burning (2008) at Peninsula Players. The photograph was taken by Len Villano from the balcony of the new 621-seat theatre built in 2006.



Performing "Always Look on the Bright Side of Life" from Spamalot at the California Musical Theatre are (l to r) Aaron Lloyd Pomeroy, Michael Dotson and Jeff Kuhr.

(Photo: Charr Crail)

Western Region:

California Musical Theatre Marks 60 Years in Sacramento

California Musical Theatre (once known as Sacramento Light Opera Association) is the Capital Region's oldest professional performing arts organization and California's largest non-profit musical theatre company.

In 1949, a new theatrical trend was spreading across the country—the "music circus." The first of these in-the-round venues was established in New Jersey. It combined the informality of the circus, the arena layout that afforded everyone a good seat, a summer camp ambiance and musical theatre. It took the popularity of this new concept did not go unnoticed in California. Broadway and national tour producers Russell Lewis and Howard Young were watching closely. And, in 1951 they founded the Sacramento Music Circus, the first new "tune-tent" west of the Mississippi and the fourth in the entire country. It was an instant success due in no small measure to predictable summer weather and appreciative audiences.

Under Lewis and Young's direction, Sacramento Music Circus formally incorporated as the Sacramento Light Opera Association in 1953 and quickly began attracting professional actors working under Equity's RMTA (Resident Musical Theatre Association) agreement. "There's something about the tent and the courtyard. There's something about people strolling in the half-light to their seats. It's a lovely, quiet thing to do," said Lewis about their new venture.

Lewis and Young died in the early 1990s and were succeeded by Producing Director Leland Ball, who expanded the theatre and its Broadway Series, which had

been introduced in 1989 as a wintertime companion to Music Circus. Today, CMT is led by Executive Producer Richard Lewis.

After 50 years as an open-air canvas tent, CMT opened a new permanent Music Circus tent in 2003 on the site of the original canvas big top. The new theatre—the Wells Fargo Pavilion—provides greater audience comfort along with many artistic improvements, but remains true to the tradition of theatre-in-the-round. CMT is the largest, continually operating musical theatre-in-the-round in the country.

Spamalot opened the anniversary season on July 9, 2010 and was the 500th opening night for the theatre.

"I have been privileged to work with Music Circus for over ten years and have progressed immeasurably as an actor by being part of this company," said Equity Councillor Michael Dotson, who has appeared in over 30 Music Circus productions. "It is such a well-oiled machine. Even through several regime changes, the process of putting up professional theatre has always been consistent and at an incredibly high level. They hire teams of people (production as well as on stage) that are easily talented enough to be performing on any Broadway stage. Thus the productions that the Sacramento audiences get to see every summer are some of the very best you will see anywhere in the country. Summer stock never looked so good. As a child, my grandparents would take me to see shows here at Music Circus when I would come to visit during summers. It is such a great full circle moment to be able to perform on this stage."

More Midwest Milestones

Arrow Rock Lyceum Theatre (LOA), Arrow Rock, MO – 50th Anniversary - Quin Gresham, Artistic Director; Steve Bertani, Managing Director.

Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park (LORT), Cincinnati, OH – 50th Anniversary - Edward Stern, Producing Artistic

Director; Michael Evan Haney, Associate Artistic Director; Buzz Ward, Executive Director.

Oak Park Festival Theatre (CAT), Oak Park, IL – 35th Anniversary - Jack Hickey, Artistic Director; Galen Gockel, Managing Director.

Chicago Dramatists (CAT), Chicago, IL – 30th Anniversary - Russ Tutterow, Artistic Director; Brian Loevner, Managing Director.

Great Plains Theatre Festival (SPT), Abilene, KS – 15th Anniversary - Marc Liby, Artistic/Executive Director.



POSTCARDS from the Regions

New York

Significant Improvements Highlight New Non-Profit Theatre Agreement

Significant salary increases and other improvements highlight the new three-year Association of Non-Profit Theatre Companies (ANTC) Contract approved by the Eastern Regional Board on July 13, 2010. The previous contract expired on August 1.

The new agreement includes minimum salary increases of 4% in the first year, 4% in the second year, and 3% in the third year. Additionally, Stage Manager minimum salaries increase to 20% above Actors' minimums and Assistant Stage Manager minimum salaries increase to 10% above the Actors' minimums. A Stage Manager with no Assistant Stage Manager receives 10% above the Stage Manager salary. Dance Captain increments increase to 18%.

There were also other improvements in Stage Manager rules along with changes in rules covering clothes and make-up; publicity; rehearsals;

televising, recording and motion pictures; transfers of Equity contract productions; and understudies.

Theatres producing under the ANTC agreement are Classic Stage Company, MCC Theater, The New Group, Primary Stages, The Vineyard Theatre, The Women's Project and Productions, and The York Theatre Company. There were approximately 8,000 workweeks under the expiring agreement.

Equity's Negotiating Team was Bill Bateman, Chair; John Atherlay, Brian Myers Cooper, Ira Denmark, Rosie Goldman, Greg Hirsch, John Christopher Jones, Brian Rardin and Melissa Robinette. Also participating were Second Vice President Rebecca Kim Jordan and Allyson Tucker. Staff was led by Lawrence Lorczak, Chief Negotiator, assisted by Michelle Kelts, Maria Cameron, Joe Erdey, Frank Stancati and David Westphal.

Phoenix/Tucson

Judy Rollings Receives Arizona Theatre Service Award

Long-time Equity member Judy Rollings has received the Phoenix/Tucson Equity Liaison Committee's 2010 Arizona Theatre Service Award. The presentation came at a reception prior to the Equity Spring General Meeting at Phoenix Theatre on June 21, 2010.

The Theatre Service Award is presented annually by Arizona's Equity members to recognize significant contribution and service to the Arizona theatre community. "Judy was selected this year because of her many years of promoting professional theatre in Phoenix, as well as her part in establishing one of the most critically acclaimed theatres in the state," said Tony Hodges, Chair of the Liaison Committee. "A great many of the state's actors—Equity and non-Equity—have worked with Judy at one time or another during their careers," he added, "and she continues to serve as a mentor, supporter and inspiration to Arizona's theatre community."

During the presentation, Ms.

Rollings said, "It has always been a gift and a privilege to work in theatre in our town, and whatever I have been able to do to further our 'cause' has more than repaid me artistically,



Judy Rollings (c) with Phoenix/Tucson Liaison Committee members Elaine "E.E." Moe, Maren MacLean, Tony Hodges, Charles St. Clair and Larry Soller. (Photo: Laura Durant, Durant Communications)

emotionally and spiritually. I have been fortunate indeed."

Ms. Rollings began her career in theatre as an actress, but has extensive directing credits as well. She was a founding member of Actors Theatre of

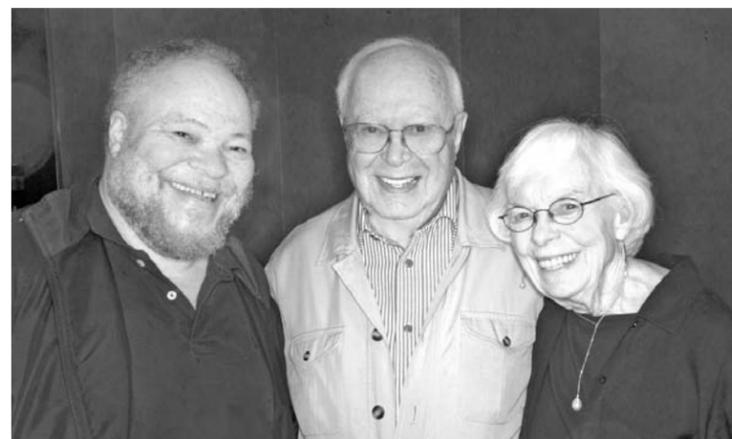
New York

Acting Awards Presented at Eastern Board Meeting

Friends, family and colleagues packed the Council Room on June 8, 2010 for the presentation of Equity's annual Clarence Derwent and Richard Seff Awards. It was an emotional, funny and heartwarming event, with recipients all talking about the joy of being part of the theatre "family" and "community," a sentiment echoed less than a week later at the Tony Awards presentation when many recipients, some new to Broadway, also said they were honored and proud to be a part of the theatre community.

The Derwent Award, honoring "promising" performers was first, and the female recipient, Nina Arianda, more than met the criterion. A newcomer with only a few professional stage credits, the 25-year old recently received an MFA in Acting from NYU's graduate acting program. She was honored for her performance in the Off Broadway two-hander, *Venus in Fur*. The award was presented by her manager, Paul Young, who saw her in the play and thought her performance so good that he came from Los Angeles to New York to work with her. Nina thanked the judges for this "amazing award" in an "incredible year."

Bill Heck, who received the Derwent Award for his performance in multiple roles in Horton Foote's *The Orphans' Home Cycle*, was unable to attend, but his cousin, Kate Goetzinger, an Equity member, accepted on his behalf. She read Heck's acceptance speech, in which he called this show "the best damn job I've ever had" and



Richard Seff is flanked by Seff Award recipients Stephen McKinley Henderson and Helen Stenborg.

thanked voters for "sitting through nine hours of theatre."

The Seff Awards, honoring veteran character actors were next. Acclaimed director Doug Hughes was on hand to introduce his mother, Helen Stenborg, honored for her performance in the Off-Broadway two-hander, *Vigil*.

"About 70 years ago, as a junior at West High in Minneapolis, my mother got it into her head that she was an actress and that she was going to go to New York and enter the profession." She lived at the Barbizon Hotel for Women, took elocution classes and "established her credentials as the worst waitress in the entire history of the Schraft's Restaurant chain. It's worth noting," he added, "that she has now outlasted the Schraft's Restaurant chain. After a summary dismissal from the restaurant, her luck improved. She went out on two first class national tours before she turned 20.

"She has worked on Broadway and off, in summer stock and on

the road, on television and on film. She's been nominated for the Tony and won Obie and Drama Desk Awards... She went into this business to make an honest offering to her partners onstage and to the people out front. She has done so." (Editor's note: Mr. Hughes' father, and Ms. Stenborg's husband, Barnard Hughes, received Equity's St. Clair Bayfield Award in 1973.)

When called to the podium, Ms. Stenborg acknowledged that she was "a nervous wreck," but that the judges had made this "octogenarian very happy."

Keith Randolph Smith, standby for Denzel Washington in the Broadway revival of August Wilson's *Fences*, filled in for Woodie King, Jr. to present the Seff Award to fellow cast member Stephen McKinley Henderson. Mr. Henderson accepted, saying his "cup runneth over;" he loved being an actor, called it "an honorable profession," and said he was "humbled and proud."

Professional Theatre. Judy is also a recipient of the Phoenix Gazette's award for Best Director of a Drama. She is presently the Performance Outreach Director for the Herberger Theater Center where she is the Director of the Lunch Time Theatre Program. In 1995 Judy received a Lifetime Award for Outstanding Contribution to Theater in Phoenix from the metropolitan Phoenix theatre awards, the "ariZonis."

Past recipients of the Arizona Theatre Service Award include former critic Max McQueen, university professors/actors/directors David Vining (ASU) and Harold Dixon (UA), actor Benjamin Stewart, and former head of the Arizona Commission on the Arts, Shelly Cohn.

Washington/Baltimore Meeting/Picnic is August 23

Combining fun, food and fraternity, a Summer Membership Meeting/Picnic for the DC/Baltimore Area will be held on Monday, August 23, 2010 from 5-10 p.m. at the home of Liaison Committee member Bill Largess, 4018 Argyle Terrace, Washington, DC 20011. Eastern Regional Director Rick Berg will be in attendance. Special guest will be AEA President Nick Wyman. For information contact Liaison Committee Co-Chairs Carl Randolph (CarlRandolph.actor@gmail.com) or Jess W. Speaker III (jspeaker@hotmail.com).

South Florida

Members Participate in Great American Bake Sale

**By Irene Adjan
South Florida Equity
Liaison**

Equity members in South Florida participated in Share Our Strength's Great American Bake Sale on Saturday, June 19 and Sunday, June 20, 2010. Share Our Strength is an organization dedicated to fighting childhood hunger in America. They raise money so they can offer grants to help provide meals for children in low income families as well as provide communities the means to fund summer meal sites at schools, apartment complexes and high school sports camps. The grants also fund many other programs that help to feed children in families that are struggling.

On Saturday, Elizabeth Dimon, John Lariviere, and I worked the bake sale at Florida

Stage in Manalapan. Along with what we had brought, we had baked goods from Laura Turnbull, Margery Lowe, Suzanne Clement Jones, Heidi Harris, and Florida Stage Sound Designer, Matt Kelly. We had a

great display of things to sell, along with signs for Actors' Equity and information about Share Our Strength. We didn't set prices for each item; instead telling our customers that it was

a fundraising event and to give what they were comfortable giving. This turned out to be a good plan, as most people gave more than they would have if we had set prices. We sold cookies, cupcakes, brownies, cakes, pies, fudge, gingerbread, small loaf breads, and Rice Krispie



GableStage bake sale: Patti Gardner (l) and Amy London.



Florida Stage bake sale: (l to r) John Lariviere, Irene Adjan, Elizabeth Dimon.

treats before and after the matinee and evening performances of *When The Sun Shone Brighter*. Thanks to wonderful curtain speeches by both Stage Managers, Suzanne Jones and Jimmy Danford, people were very generous. At the end of the day, we had \$488 to show for our efforts.

The next day, I went down to GableStage in Coral Gables with what we had left over, along with contributions from Amy London, Patti Gardner, and Musical Director Caryl Fantel. Amy and I set up and followed the same procedure from the day before. We sold items before and after the matinee of *Speech and Debate*, and managed to add \$140 to our

total. When we told Artistic Director Joe Adler that, combined with our online donations, we were \$124 short of \$1,000, he immediately pledged a donation from GableStage for \$150.

A big thank you to all who baked, as well as those who made on-line donations. Thanks, too, to everyone at Florida Stage for their cooperation. All the ladies in the box office, and Anita, the house manager, were greatly supportive and did all they could to get customers to our booth! Also, deep appreciation to Joe Adler for letting us set up at GableStage, for mentioning our efforts in his curtain speech, and for making the donation that put us over the top.

Buffalo/Rochester

Members Selected for Liaison Committee

Tom Owen, Ellen Horst, Ed Simone and Sheila McCarthy were selected by acclamation of members at the May 24, 2010 Membership Meeting to serve two-year terms on the Area Liaison Committee. Don Gervasi, Susan Forbes and Anne Reid continue on the Committee through 2011 and were elected as Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary, respectively.

Eastern Regional Director Rick Berg attended the meeting and reported on the Developing Theatre Committee's proposed changes to the Buffalo/Rochester Special Appearance Agreement, including the addition of a new entry-level category. Members passed a resolution recommending changes to that proposal. (The agreement expires on August 4, 2010.)

Save the date. The Liaison Committee will be co-sponsoring, with IATSE Local 10, a float in the Labor Day Parade. Members who would like to join the Labor Day Float Committee or ride the float to Cazenovia Park, should contact Don Gervasi at dongervasi@aol.com.

The Buffalo/Rochester Annual Meeting will be held on September 13 in Buffalo. To submit agenda items for discussion, contact Don Gervasi.

Houston

Bettye Fitzpatrick Ends 53-Year Run at Alley Theatre

By Jim Bernhard

Long runs are the stuff of most actors' dreams—but one of 53 years must be some kind of record. That's how long Equity member Bettye Fitzpatrick, who retired this spring, was a member of Houston's Alley Theatre company, as Actor and Stage Manager.

During that time she appeared in more than 150 productions and stage managed about the same number. For some 30 years Bettye also filled the position of the Alley's production manager and later was director of interns.

Among her remarkable array of leading parts have been Blanche in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Madame St. Pé in *Waltz of the Toreadors*, Ouiser in *Steel Magnolias*, Juno in *Juno and the Paycock*, and the Stage Manager in *Our Town*—the last under the direction of the fabled José Quintero. Among her favorite memories are 20 holiday seasons as Cousin Sook in Truman Capote's *A Christmas Memory* and multiple characters in *Angels in America*. Her first Alley acting assignment was in 1957 in *Will Success Spoil Rock Hunter?* and her swan song (at least for the time being) was the Ghost of Christmas Past in *A Christmas Carol*.

Bettye is a native Texan, from



Bettye Fitzpatrick.

Decatur, and planned to major in math at North Texas State University.

"But then I ran into calculus," she says. "We didn't get along, so I started thinking about what else I might do." She tried out for a college play—and got the part, as well as a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree.

"Myrtle Hardy, Chair of the drama department, taught me to respect the theatre: never be late and always come prepared," recalls Bettye.

Other mentors were actor Ed Begley and the Alley's founder, Nina Vance. "Ed Begley taught me to listen—and to answer," Bettye recalls. "And Miss Vance taught me everything else I needed to know—including how to be a stage manager."

After college and a brief stint as an accountant, Bettye auditioned to be a jack-of-all-

trades apprentice at the Alley. "Years later," she says, "I found my audition card, on which Miss Vance had written only one thing: 'She has a car.'"

By September 1957 Bettye was working in the box office, and by November, she was cast in her first onstage role. She joined Equity in 1958.

When people ask why she stayed so long with one theatre, instead of trying her luck in other places, Bettye replies:

"Where else would I have the chance to work with any better directors and playwrights?" And she reels off the names of José Quintero, Alan Schneider, Edward Albee, Robert Wilson, Arthur Laurents, Anne Bogart, Alan Ayckbourn, and Horton Foote. "I've worked with marvelous actors, too, people like Ed Begley, Eva Le Gallienne, Ruth Nelson, Corin Redgrave, and Vanessa Redgrave."

With friend Beth Sanford, a director and drama teacher, Bettye has visited 86 countries, and she has her eye on a few others now that there's more time for travel. But don't count her out as an actor—if the right part comes her way, she just might try to extend that 53-year run a little longer.

Jim Bernhard, an Equity member for 30 years, did his first show with Bettye Fitzpatrick

in 1958 at the Alley Theatre. He returned to the company in the 1980s and worked frequently with her. Mr. Bernhard is also an author and crossword puzzle constructor. His puzzles have appeared in The New York Times and in Equity News, and his new book, Words Gone Wild, will be published shortly.

New York

Actors Fund Seminars, Groups Meet Regularly

A **Housing Seminar** has been scheduled by The Actors Fund for September 20 from 5:30-7 pm at the Fund's office on the 10th floor at 729 Seventh Avenue. For information call (212) 221-7300, ext. 119 or email kborg@actorsfund.org.

A seminar, **Making Volunteering Work For You**, will be held on Wednesday, August 18, 2010 from 5:30-7 pm in the 14th Floor Council Room at the Equity office, 165 West 46th Street. For information, email blevinson@actorsfund.org.

In addition, The Fund holds **Actors Work Program** orientation sessions every Monday from 12-2:30 pm; **Network Now** groups every Monday from 2:30-4:30 pm; seminars on **Job Search and Interview Skills** every Wednesday from 12 Noon to

2:30 pm; **Resume Writing** on the third and fourth Thursday of every month from 12-2 pm; **Getting and Keeping Health Insurance**, every Thursday from 12:30-1:30 pm; **Alcoholics Anonymous** meetings every Wednesday from 5:30-6:30 pm and **Debtors Anonymous** meetings every Thursday from 6:15-7:45 pm. For information, call The Fund at (212) 221-7300 or visit www.actorsfund.org.

Checks Waiting

Members Diane Fratantoni and Kenneth Ard have cast album royalty monies waiting for them from *Cats*. They should contact Business Representative Dwane Upp in Equity's New York office or call (212) 869-8530, ext. 341.

New York**Equity Member Takes Part in Literacy Event in Queens**

Betsy Aidem reads to a 5th grade class at P.S. 16 in Corona, Queens. (Photo: Sarah Zucker)

Equity member Betsy Aidem has been writing to a 5th grade student at P.S. 16 in Corona,

to inspire children in the areas of reading and writing. P.S. 16 is a Title I school with an 80%

Queens during the school year as part of the PencilPALS program (Performing Artists for Literacy in Schools), a collaboration between the Writers Guild East Foundation and the SAG Foundation BookPALS program. BookPALS is a nationwide effort designed

Hispanic population. On May 21, 2010, Betsy and a group of actors and writers of film, TV and theatre visited the school to meet their 5th grade letter-writing correspondents. "The idea of promoting literacy was an instant incentive to take part," said Betsy. She enjoyed learning how her student PencilPAL Vicky likes to swim because you can't feel sweat in the water and how she thinks she is allergic to crayons.

To learn more about how to apply to be a PencilPAL, email Equity member and NY BookPALS director Maria Cabezas at nybookpals@aol.com. For more information, visit www.bookpals.net.

Philadelphia**An Equity Social in the City of Brotherly Love**

The Philadelphia AEA Liaison Committee hosted an Equity Social at Coco's Restaurant & Bar in Philadelphia on June 22, 2010. The entire evening was a great success. Over 55 attendees included Philadelphia and New

York actors and stage managers from the Walnut Street Theater, Wilma Theatre, Arden Theatre, McCarter Theatre, Interact Theatre, Theatre Exile, and many other local companies. A special welcome was extended to Equity Membership Candidates who were thrilled to be invited to a union event.

Mark Jacoby was seen at the bar checking out the Yankees'

score as he stroked the beard he needs for his role as Tevye in the Walnut's *Fiddler on the Roof*. Another leading man, Jeff Coon, who had been playing Georges Seurat at the Arden was enjoying refreshments. Stage manager Cheryl Mintz of the McCarter introduced two young colleagues to many luminaries of the Philly

theatre community. Matt Steffens who recently joined the cast of *Promises, Promises* on Broadway said, "I loved my time in Philly and this social was the perfect cap to my run at the Walnut."

The atmosphere was one of

event were Pat Adams, who served as one of the greeters; Chris Sapienza who was a greeter and photographer, and Tom Helmer and Paul Nolan who offered counsel and support. A big thanks to Equity member Fran



Enjoying the Philadelphia social are (from top l, clockwise) Chris Williams, Kevin Bergen, Rita Markova, Julie Czarnecki, Chad Parsons (EMC), Joey Abramowicz; Julie Czarnecki, Mark Jacoby; Tom Helmer, Dan Olmstead, Chris Sapienza; (bottom) Alison Cote, unknown woman, Jordi Wallen (EMC), Danny Marcheski (EMC), Mike O'Brien, Rita Markova, Chris Williams, Chad Parsons (EMC), Joey Abramowicz, Anthony O. Bullock (EMC) and Julie Czarnecki. (Photo: Christopher Sapienza)

solidarity and happy camaraderie. Attendees were treated to hot hors d'oeuvres and amazing drink specials followed by homemade desserts generously provided by Liaison Committee members Lori Aghazarian, Julie Czarnecki and Chris Sapienza.

The evening was organized by Julie Czarnecki. Other Committee members who facilitated the

Prisco who helped with the planning.

It is believed that the choice of venue and time (post-evening performances) proved to be the perfect way for artists to get together. Given the overwhelming success of this year's event, several Equity members were overheard asking: "How can we top it next time?"

Cleveland, Las Vegas**Dancers Plan Fall Programs**

Career Transition For Dancers is taking its programs and services on the road in the fall.

On Saturday, September 11, 2010, a free Career Development Workshop, part of CTFD's National Outreach Project, will be held in Cleveland, Ohio, at the Idea Center at Playhouse Square, 1375

Euclid Avenue. The workshop will be held from 1-3 p.m. for all pre-professional dancers as well as current and former professional dancers in the area. From 3:30-6:30 p.m., participants may register for a free one-on-one career counseling appointment. For more information, and to

RSVP, contact Kaylen Ratto at (212) 764-0172, ext. 232 or nationaloutreach@careertransition.org

On Sunday, September 26, 2010, a similar program will be held from 12 Noon to 3 p.m. in Las Vegas, Nevada, hosted by Nevada Ballet Theatre. For information and to RSVP, contact Joanne or Sonja at (323) 549-6660 or jdivito@sag.org.

New Orleans**A Big Time in The Big Easy**

NOLA Liaison Party Committee (l to r) Jessie Terrebonne, Edward R Cox, Meredith Long, John Bostic, Artemis Preeshl, Cathie Choppin, Leslie Castay, Janet Shea, Carol Sutton and Lady BJ Crosby. (Photo: Edward R Cox)

On Sunday night, June 13, 2010, 60 members, producers and guests gathered at Le Petit Theatre in New Orleans' French Quarter for a night of food, fun and Tonys. The evening was sponsored by Equity's new New Orleans Liaison Committee. "We wanted to do something fun to bring the membership together in an upbeat atmosphere to foster conversation and goodwill in our theatre community," said Liaison Chair John Bostic. "We have a lot of new members and young producers who we felt needed to be welcomed and we wanted to start off our new era as a Liaison City with something positive which we could point to when asked what we do for the members."

The evening started with a full-course buffet, catered by New Orleans member and 1995 Tony nominee Lady BJ Crosby and member Carol Sutton, currently seen on *Treme*. The meal, including ten dozen handmade AEA cookies as novelties, was supplied by the ladies, with

additions from several of the Committee members. Cash bar and facilities, including the cabaret theatre with seating for 100 and full stage projection of the Tony Award ceremony, was provided by The Solomon Group, managers of Le Petit.

NOLA Tropical Wineries provided a free wine tasting, which was conducted by Equity Membership Candidate Vatican Lokey, while several local businesses and individuals donated prizes for a raffle.

"I believe this is the largest AEA event New Orleans has had. We had members from as far away as Baton Rouge come in for it. The Times Picayune society editor was here and it was listed in events for the weekend and on local TV," said party chair Meredith Long. "We even had a step and repeat banner made so we could have a red carpet entry with pictures of everyone who attended. It was a lot of work but also a lot of fun. And, no one throws a party like New Orleans."

Westport, CT**Equity Members Receive Critics Circle Awards**

Brian Charles Rooney (Best Actor in a Musical), Jenn Gambatese (Best Actress in a Musical), Bill Heck (Best Actor in a Play) and Nilaja Sun (Best Actress in a Play) received top acting honors at the 20th annual Connecticut Critics Awards in a ceremony held on June 14, 2010 at the Westport Country Playhouse, hosted by Fairfield actors Mia Dillon and Keir Dullea.

Mr. Rooney won for his role in *POP!* at the Yale Repertory Theatre. *POP!* also received Best Musical honors. Ms. Gambatese was recognized for her role in *Annie Get Your Gun* at Goodspeed Musicals, while Ms. Sun was cited for the array of characters she portrayed in her own one-woman *No Child* at Long Wharf Theatre. Mr. Heck was recognized for his work in Horton Foote's *The Orphan's*

Home Cycle, a performance for which he also received Equity's Clarence Derwent Award. Best Ensemble Award went to Tamela Aldridge, Teagle F. Bougere, Miche Braden and Kimberly Hébert Gregory in *Gee's Bend* at Hartford Stage. Jenilee Simons Marques, who is deaf, was cited for her debut performance as Helen Keller in *The Miracle Worker* at the Ivoryton Playhouse. (For more on this production, see the article, *The Miracle at Ivoryton*, in the March issue of Equity News or on the Equity website, www.actorsequity.org.)

Connecticut Critics Circle is an organization of professional critics who review Equity productions in newspapers and blogs, as well as on radio. For a complete list of winners visit www.ctcritics.org.

New York

Broadway Bares XX: "Strip-opoly" Passes Go And Collects More Than \$1 Million for BC/EFA

Broadway Bares XX: *Strip-opoly* was a landmark success, breaking all previous fundraising records, filling Roseland Ballroom with nearly 6,000 ticket buyers and raising \$1,015,985.

Presented by Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, this 20th edition of *Broadway Bares* featured 216 dancers performing in more than a dozen numbers by 15 choreographers. Created and executive produced by Tony Award-winner Jerry



The "Go to Jail" number from *Broadway Bares XX: Strip-opoly*.



Mitchell, this year's Monopoly-inspired *Strip-opoly* edition was conceived and directed by Equity members Josh Rhodes and associate director Lee Wilkins. A cavalcade of Broadway stars including Kristin Chenoweth, Alan Cumming, Katie Finneran, Jackie Hoffman, Cheyenne Jackson, Lucy Liu, Lillias White and Vanessa Williams participated in the show.

Vanessa Williams (l) and Kristin Chenoweth.

Austin/San Antonio

Critics Cite AEA Members

The Austin Critics Table Awards for the 2009-2010 season have gone to Equity members Pamela Christian (Actress in a Leading Role, *Mary Stuart*, Austin Shakespeare) and Michael Amendola (Actor in a Supporting Role, *Our Town*, Zach Theatre). Jose Villareal, an Equity Membership Candidate (EMC), also was cited as Actor in a Supporting Role for *The 25th Annual Putnam County*

Spelling Bee at the Zach Theatre. The award for Best Ensemble Performance went to *bobrauschenbergamerica* at the Mary Moody Northern Theatre, an Equity URTA (University Resident Theatre Association) theatre. The W.H. "Deacon" Crain Award for Outstanding Student Work went to Jacob Trussell, an EMC, at St. Edward's University, an Equity URTA theatre.



At the Diversity on Broadway Award presentation are (l to r) President Nick Wyman, producer Tom Hulce, producer Ira Pittelman and Councillor and EEO Co-Chair Christine Toy Johnson. (Photo: Stephanie Masucci)

New York

"American Idiot" Receives AEA's Diversity Award

Green Day's *American Idiot* received Equity's Extraordinary Excellence in Diversity on Broadway Award for the 2009-2010 season at a reception in the Equity office in New York on June 15, 2010.

Created in 2007, the Award is presented by the Eastern Region Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Committee. Co-Chairs Christine Toy Johnson and Julia Breanetta Simpson said the Award "honors and encourages those

who actively promote our mutual goals of diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity for all who work in the theatre in ways that are viewed by the Committee as 'outside of the box.'"

Producers Tom Hulce and Ira Pittelman gratefully accepted the Award, but said they didn't cast the show with diversity in mind, but to find extraordinary actors. It's completely about talent, the quality of work and thinking in broad terms, they said.

Los Angeles

Membership Education Committee Sponsors Musical Theatre Workshop

The Western Membership Education Committee hosted a free Musical Theatre Workshop on June 28, 2010 and 56 Los Angeles area members attended.

Dan Callaway and Heather Provost from "Our Learning Spot" were the featured guests. Heather is a Tony and Drama Desk-nominated Broadway producer; Dan is a working



Heather Provost and Dan Callaway lead the Musical Theatre Workshop in Los Angeles.

the members were able to get up and perform their audition songs a few times. Dan and Heather gave them personal feedback to improve their

chances of getting hired at their next audition.

One useful general tip they shared was for members to cultivate a full life outside of the industry for balance. Dan recommended writing five things down

on an index card that members could do if they didn't get the job. That way, focus would be on positive aspects of life rather than waiting for the phone to ring for one job.

Visit www.ourlearningspot.com for more information and tips.

Los Angeles

Actors Fund Has Year-Round Groups

The Actors Fund will hold a seminar on **Money and the Performing Artist** on Thursdays from August 19-September 23, 2010 from 2:30-4 pm at its offices in Suite 400 at 5757 Wilshire Boulevard.

For information call (323) 933-9244, ext. 16 or email jvanderagaag@actorsfund.org.

In addition, The Actors Fund has a full roster of regularly scheduled seminars conducted at its office. For a full list of services and information about all Actors Fund programs, call (323) 933-9244 or visit actorsfund.org.

The **Actors Fund Work Program** holds orientation meetings every Monday from 1-2:30 pm. Seminars on **Advanced Interview Technique** are held every second Tuesday and third Thursday of the month from 10:30 am-1 pm; **Resume Workshop**, every first, second, third (and fifth) Tuesday of the month, 10:30 am-12:30 pm;

Chicago

Non-Councillors Elected to CRB

No petitions for candidacy for any available position were filed, therefore, per the Equity By-Laws, candidates slated by the Central Region Nominating Committee for non-Council CRB terms of office are considered elected. They will be officially seated at the CRB

meeting scheduled for August 30, 2010.

The following have been elected to two-year terms (2010-2012: Principals: Wydetta Carter, Liz Pazik, Richard Shavzin, Peggy Thorp; Chorus: Dina DiCostanzo; Stage Manager: Ron Keaton.

Getting and Keeping Health Insurance, first Wednesday of every month, 1:30-3 pm; **Job Seeking Skills and the Internet**, every first, second, fourth (and fifth) Thursday of the month, 10:30 am-12:30 pm; **Alcoholics Anonymous** – The Green Room, every Friday, 12:30-1:30 pm; **Underearners Anonymous** – The Green

Room, every Thursday, 11 am. – 12:30 pm; **Interview TV**, every Friday, 2-4 pm In addition, the **Performing Artists' Medical Clinic** sees patients on the first and third Tuesday of every month, 6-9 pm at the Venice Family Clinic. For information, call (323) 933-9244, ext. 32 or email dkitowski@actorsfund.org.

Buffalo/Rochester**Annual Artvoice Awards Presented**

By Don Gervasi
Area Liaison

The 20th Annual Artvoice Theatre Awards were presented at the Town Ballroom in Buffalo, NY on June 7, 2010. The "Arties," started in 1991 by Anthony Chase, Theatre Editor of Artvoice, a free weekly newspaper dedicated to the arts in Western New York, honored local productions from the 2009-2010 season. All proceeds from the evening,



"Artie" nominees John Fredo and Maggie Zindle in *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?* (Photo courtesy Magezi Photography 2010)

along with proceeds from area theatres' sale of Red Ribbons, went to Benedict House, which provides non-discriminatory residential housing opportunities and supportive services for persons living with AIDS. As always, the evening was emceed by Mr. Chase, Lisa Ludwig, Doug Weyand and AEA member Norm Sham with musical direction by Michael Hake.

The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?, produced by Road Less Traveled Productions and

starring AEA members John Fredo and Maggie Zindle, received the Artie for Outstanding Production of a Play, while *Evil Dead: The Musical*, produced by ALT

Theatre, was cited as Outstanding Production of a Musical.

Equity member Ian Lithgow was named Outstanding Actor in a Play for his portrayal of William Shumway in Kavinoky Theatre's production of *Secret Order*.

Recipients of the Katharine Cornell Award

for Visiting Artists were AEA members Jeffrey Rockwell (*Two Pianos, Four Hands*, MusicalFare Theatre); Mary Stout (*Fiddler on the Roof*, National Tour, Shea's PAC) and producer Albert Nocciolino.

The Career Achievement Award was presented to AEA member Vincent O'Neill, Irish Classical Theatre Company's co-founder and Artistic Director.

More than \$10,000 was raised for Benedict House, with more than 500 people in attendance.

New York**Equity to Rededicate Philip Loeb Room, Co-Sponsor Loeb Event at Jewish Museum****Actor/Activist, Former AEA Councillor was Tragic Victim of the Blacklist**

On September 1, 2010, Equity will rededicate the Philip Loeb Room at the New York office and at 6:30 p.m. that evening will co-sponsor *An Evening in Honor of Actor Philip Loeb* at the Museum of Jewish Heritage (36 Battery Place). These events coincide with the 55th anniversary of Loeb's suicide.

The museum event is open to the public and is free with suggested donation. Panelists include: Aviva Kempner, director, *Yoo-Hoo, Mrs. Goldberg*; Anna Berger, actress on *The Goldbergs*; Peter Friedman, actor who is writing a play about Loeb; Dr. Steve Loeb, grand-nephew; Dr. Glenn Smith, Loeb biographer and author of *Something On My Own: Gertrude Berg and American Broadcasting*, plus other special guests.

Philip Loeb, an accomplished actor, teacher and union activist, served on AEA's Council from 1934 to 1950. He joined the Union during the Great Strike of 1919.

Among numerous theatrical credits, he appeared in the original Broadway productions of *June Moon*, *Flying Colors*, *Let 'Em Eat Cake*, and *Room Service*, and worked with such luminaries as Alfred Lunt and Lynne Fontanne, George Abbott, Lee Strasberg, Harold Clurman, the Astaires, Harold Rome, Elia Kazan and Morris Carnovsky.

At the height of his career in 1950, Loeb was blacklisted for his union activities as he was playing Jake Goldberg on the popular TV show, *The Goldbergs*. Producer and co-star Gertrude Berg (Molly Goldberg) fought in vain to keep him on the show by attempting to get new sponsors. The demise of his career is featured in the 2009 documentary film *Yoo-Hoo, Mrs. Goldberg*, excerpts of which will be shown along with other clips related to Loeb's career. Discounted DVDs will be available to AEA members.

For more information, visit www.mjhnyc.org.

San Francisco**Equity Members Dominate Bay Area Critics Awards**

By Kelly Ground
BAAC Chair

Equity members and contract theatres received an impressive lion's share of awards on May 3, 2010 at the 34th Annual Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards ceremony held at the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco. This was the second year in which Equity participated as a proud sponsor. The event was held in the spacious and historic lobby of the Palace, designed by Bernard Maybeck and one of the few remaining structures from the 1915 Panama Pacific Exposition.

The Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards go to both dramatic and musical presentations in three categories of theatres.

Judy Kaye received the Principal Performance, Female award in the drama over 300 seats category for *Souvenir* at the American Conservatory Theater; Danny Schele received the Principal Performance, Male award in that category for *You, Nero* at the Berkeley Repertory Theatre; Supporting Performance, Female went to Catherine Castellanos for *Romeo and Juliet* at the California Shakespeare Theater, and Adam Farabee was cited for Supporting Performance, Male for *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* at Berkeley Rep.

In the musical category at theatres over 300 seats, Principal Performance, Female went to C. Kelly Wright for *It Ain't Nothin' but the Blues* at TheatreWorks; Ryan Drummond, Principal Performance, Male for *The Producers* at Diablo Theatre Company; Allison Brinter, Supporting Performance, Female and James Moye, Supporting Performance, Male for *Tinyard Hill* at TheatreWorks.

In theatres between 100 and 300 seats, drama awards went to Jud Williford, Principal Performance, Male for *Fat Pig* at Aurora Theatre Company and Rod Gnapp received Supporting Performance, Male for *Mauritius* at Magic Theatre.

In the musical category, Principal Performance, Male went to David Sattler for *All Shook Up* at Center Repertory Company.

In the drama category at theatres under 99 seats, Abigail Van Allyn and Ken Ruta received Performance, Female and Male, respectively, for *The Unexpected Man* at Spare Stage.



Back row (from l) Josh Blye, Kenneth Kantor, Paul A. Schaefer, Scott Mikita, Jessica Radotsky, Craig Jacobs, Frank Mastrone, Chris Bohannon, Jim Weitzer, Mykal D. Laury II, Kris Koop; (center) Mary Illes, Kara Klein, Julie Hanson, Jessy Hendrickson, Richard Poole, Bethe Ward, Andrew Glant-Linden; (front) Kimilee Bryant, Laurie V. Langdon, Kfir and Michele McConnell of *Phantom*.

New York**Phantom of the Opera Continues to Break Fundraising Records**

In May, 2010, Broadway's longest-running show celebrated another milestone as *The Phantom of the Opera* surpassed the \$4 million mark in fundraising for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, with efforts dating back to 1988, the earliest days of both *Phantom* and what was then Equity Fights AIDS.

The sale of merchandise items—like a cookbook created by longtime cast member Kris Koop, a special CD featuring favorite songs sung by the many actors who have played the Phantom and the perennially-popular signed *Phantom* poster—has given the show's

fundraising a boost. But the key to *Phantom's* 22 years of extraordinary success is the commitment of its cast, crew, a troupe of loyal volunteers, and Cameron Mackintosh and The Really Useful Theatre Company, the show's producers. Says longtime Production Stage Manager Craig Jacobs: "Our philosophy has always been that at each performance we aim to raise \$1 for every seat. And I think it's worked." At the recent Easter Bonnet Competition, *Phantom* raised \$153,444, winning first runner-up for fundraising and doubling the \$1 a seat goal over the six weeks of audience appeals.

BRIEF NOTES

- Ten Chimneys, the National Historic Landmark estate of Broadway legends Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne in Genesee Depot, Wisconsin, hosted the second year of the **Lunt-Fontanne Fellowship Program** in July 2010. This is the only program for training mid-career actors who make up the backbone of American theatre. Lunt-Fontanne Fellows work as artists, mentors, teachers and leaders in their communities.

- Equity Member **Michele Pawk** has joined the faculty of the Wagner College Theatre Department. She will teach classes in advanced acting, directing and the history of American film as well as direct the Staten Island college's Main Stage production of *Seussical*.

- Member **Joe Mantello** has been named 2010-2011 Artist-in-Residence at New York's New School for Drama.

- Congratulations to **Doug Beebe**, National Director of Equity's IT Department and a member, and Tara Mora, formerly an Equity employee. The two met at Equity's New York office and were married at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden on June 20, 2010.

- **Theatre Development Fund's** program which provides same-day discount tickets in

New York, turned 37 on June 25, 2010. The program has been responsible for over 53.7 million admissions, representing more than \$1.47 billion in revenue for thousands of stage productions. Equity members are eligible to become TDF members and benefit from deep discounts on Broadway, Off Broadway, music and dance tickets. Visit the TDF website, www.tdf.org, 24/7 to buy tickets to dozens of productions.

- Equity mourns the passing of Associated Press writer and theatre critic **Michael Kuchwara** who died on May 22, 2010 of idiopathic ischemic lung disease at the age of 63. Mr. Kuchwara reviewed as many as 200 productions a year while also contributing news articles about theatre. His work was circulated around the world by the Associated Press. For many years, Mr. Kuchwara also served as a Judge for Equity's Clarence Derwent, Richard Seff, Joe A. Callaway and St. Clair Bayfield awards.

Office Closing

All Equity offices will be closed on Monday, September 6, 2010 in observance of Labor Day. All offices will also close early on Friday, September 3 for the holiday.