

Vote in AEA's 2015 Election

Ballots for Equity's 2015 Council election were distributed on April 13, 2015. Members who have registered for a paperless ballot received an email from actorsequityhelp@electionservicescorp.com with directions on how to vote online. All other members have been sent a paper ballot (but still have the option to vote online).

After receiving a paper ballot, if members wish to vote online, they should go to <https://www.esc-vote.com/ae2015/> and enter

their unique login number (from the paper ballot) and Member ID number (printed on the front of their Equity membership card, minus the leading zeroes) and follow online voting instructions.

Deadline for receipt of ballots is May 20, 2015. All ballots must be received by the balloting company by 10 a.m. EST.*

*Please note, as a correction to the time listed in the April edition of *Equity News*, all ballots must be received by the balloting company by 10 a.m. EST.

Equity on the Hill for Arts Advocacy Day

Equity Councillors, board members and staff attended the 2015 National Arts Advocacy Day to strengthen support for the arts.

At this year's annual Americans for the Arts' National Arts Advocacy Day on March 23-24, 2015, representatives from Actors' Equity Association stood with over 85 organizations and more than 550 advocates with one goal: to fight for the arts.

Arts Advocacy Day, which is meant to provide an opportunity to receive advocacy training from experts and then put that training into practice, has been an important AEA mission. Equity, once again, is a co-sponsor of the event and representatives go to learn about and fight for issues important to members.

Representing AEA were Eastern Regional Vice President Melissa Robinette, Chorus Councillor Allyson Tucker, CRB non-Councillor Peggy Thorp and Senior Business Representative Larry Lorczak.

First-timers to Advocacy Day have the opportunity to network with other more experienced advocates have lobbied and spoke with members of Congress. The first day consists of training, where attendees are briefed on issues and then do mock-meetings to help reinforce their stance on arts issues, and ends with the Nancy Hanks



CRB non-Councillor Peggy Thorp, Eastern Regional Vice President Melissa Robinette, Senior Business Representative Larry Lorczak and Chorus Councillor Allyson Tucker at the Americans for the Arts' National Arts Advocacy Day.

Lecture.

Equity representatives pushed for more funding for the National Endowment for the Arts, as increased funds will lead to jobs for Equity members across the country.

During the two-day event, a record-breaking 134 House members banded together to sign a bipartisan letter requesting \$154.466 million

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Ask If It's Equity Has Arrived

Equity launches its national campaign in seven key markets to assist the union in taking back the road.

After the overwhelming success of the pilot campaign in Chicago last fall, *Ask If It's Equity* – the digital advertising and social media campaign to raise awareness among audiences about the importance of Equity contract protections for its touring members and transparency when people pay for "Broadway" – has gone national. *Ask If It's Equity* is part of the union's ongoing efforts to take back control of the road



targeting seven Equity liaison-area cities through a mix of digital ads in online arts sections and local theater websites, as well as promoted content on Facebook and

Twitter. The city targets are Boston, Cincinnati/Louisville, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Orlando, San Francisco, Seattle and Washington, D.C./Baltimore.

Each city that was selected for the campaign was chosen based on its strong touring market offering a mix of Equity shows and non-Equity

tours that are branded as "Broadway." Two-fold, this campaign will challenge road presenters and producers of non-Equity touring productions to offer consumer transparency when people pay premium "Broadway" ticket prices and

educate audiences to accept nothing less than an Equity tour with actors and stage managers who are part of the company.

Featuring artwork by Equity member Justin "Squigs" Robertson, the *Ask If It's Equity* website allows visitors to learn about the rights and protections Equity affords its members, to read testimonials from members on tour and to see a schedule of Equity touring productions around the country.

Member involvement is crucial to spreading the word about *Ask If It's Equity*. Visit askifitsequity.com for easy ways to share the campaign on Facebook and follow @AskIfItsEquity on Twitter. Members in current touring productions are encouraged to share their own tour life and backstage photos and can contact Equity directly through the website to add personal quotes to the featured testimonials.



and strengthen conditions for actors and stage managers on tour.

Ask If It's Equity is designed to meet audiences online. Now, with its own dedicated, interactive website and Twitter account, the campaign, launched April 1, began

Executive Director Addresses Members at Annual Meeting

Here is a reprint of the speech given by Executive Director Mary McColl at the Annual Membership Meeting on April 10, 2015.

Your elected Council and the staff of the union have been very busy this year and much good work has been done on behalf of the membership. Building on the infrastructure work that was reported out last year, we have continued to move forward in our core mission: negotiating to improve working conditions for actors and stage managers, while continuing to increase the efficiency of the business that supports that core mission. That business is the administration of contracts, incoming and outgoing communications, collection of dues, expanded opportunities for member participation, expanded opportunities to learn about the broader industry. All of these areas have been touched

upon this year.

Communications:

We have hired an in-house editor who has worked with the Equity News Committee to refresh the content and design of *Equity News*. The committee has also developed features that allow us to pull in visual elements that tell stories from our members' perspectives. We frequently ask members across the country to share their stories about being an Equity member. For the most recent issue, we asked the question "what female Equity member has inspired your career?" The responses we received were published in *Equity News*, but also were linked to Twitter and posted on Facebook, where other members helped share that good news by posting on their own social media platforms.

Not only do the #EquityWorks items show up in our Twitter

feed, but articles have appeared in each issue published of *Equity News* since last April. (Did you know that through contract enforcement, staff in the Central Region recovered \$41,408 for members in 2014? #EquityWorks.)

Since April 2014, we have grown our Facebook followers from 44 to 55 thousand (adding over 600 page likes monthly), our Twitter followers from 28 thousand to 35 thousand (adding over 550 followers monthly) and doubled our Instagram followers to 1,839.

This year, we launched over *(continued on page 3)*

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Area Liaison Hotline system

Call 877-AEA-1913

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

(1) Dial 877-AEA-1913

(2) Dial your city extension:

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

Equity's Council Decides upon New Membership Rules and Agreements for L.A. Theater

After receiving and considering months of feedback from members on all sides of the debate on intimate theater in Los Angeles, Equity's Council, on April 21, 2015, has taken several important steps to address many of the concerns expressed by members in L.A. They have acted in a manner consistent with Equity's long history of advocating for wages, working conditions, collaboration, fairness and respect for professional actors and stage managers. Their actions have national implications, impacting all 50,000 Equity members – in L.A. and around the country.

The Council voted to make substantial changes to the 99-Seat Theatre Plan that will eliminate the availability of the Plan. They have adopted new, internal union membership rules that contain several important changes to the original proposal – including a Showcase Code and changes to the Los Angeles Membership Company Rule. They have allowed for the use of the Small Professional Theater Agreement, which up until this point has not been available in Los Angeles, and they have provided for a 13-month

implementation period so that theaters have time to adjust.

This broad set of options is a nuanced, tiered approach in response to the serious concerns expressed by members about the particular needs of the L.A. theater community.

Equity will make available for members and producers in L.A. County the following stepping stones:

• **Los Angeles Transitional 99-Seat Code.** This code, with many of the same terms as the existing 99-Seat Theatre Plan, will be in effect from April 22, 2015 to May 31, 2016, and will be available to existing 99-Seat Theatre Plan producers, so they may have time to transition to the newly-available options.

• **Los Angeles Self-Produced Project Code.** This is an internal union membership rule allowing Equity members to collaborate as a group to self-produce theater without the requirement of an Equity contract.

• **NEW Los Angeles 50-Seat Showcase Code.** The Council has adopted an internal union membership rule, which allows members to work without the requirement of an Equity contract

in theaters with 50 seats or fewer, where the budget for the production does not exceed \$20,000, for up to 16 performances. For use up to three times per season, this Code puts L.A. in alignment with other areas of the country. The Showcase Code provides for reimbursement of actual expenses, favored nations compensation, and future rights for actors in subsequent productions.

• **NEW Los Angeles Membership Company Rule.** In the Council's original proposal, membership companies would have been limited to their current membership. Council amended this new internal union membership rule to allow any Equity member to participate with any membership company as long as that company was in existence prior to Feb. 6, 2015, had registered their company by April 1, 2015, and had previously produced under the prior 99-Seat Theatre Plan. This new internal union membership rule allows Equity members to participate in their membership companies without the requirement of an Equity contract. Members may negotiate their own

compensation, expense reimbursement and other working conditions.

• **Los Angeles 99-Seat Agreement.** A collective bargaining agreement to be negotiated with producers for productions in theaters of 99 seats or fewer. The Agreement provides no restrictions on budget, length of the rehearsal period, ticket price, or the length of the performance run. The Agreement would provide for salary payments based on the legally-mandated minimum wage in Los Angeles County (currently \$9 per hour) with minimum call requirements, but with no pension or health benefit payments required. The Agreement would require future

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Equity's Bonding Policy and How it Works

One of the most important provisions of an Equity contract, the bonding policy was established decades ago in order to protect union members when working under contract.

This policy helps ensure that you receive the minimum guarantee of contractual salary and benefits (including pension and health credits) in a timely manner should an employer default on its obligations to you or Equity. However, it's important to note that filing your contract once it is signed – no later than the first rehearsal – helps Equity guarantee the agreement is properly bonded.

Here's how it works: The bond is simply determined by how many contracts are needed for the agreement. For productions that are individually produced by one or more producers ("single unit" productions), it's especially important that the union receives your contract in a timely manner.

It's also important that we have your contract in timely manner for seasonal theaters. For seasonal theater, such as Stock, LORT and Letters of Agreement, to name a few, the bond is based on the highest number of active contracts in a

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CRB to Fill Nine Non-Councillor Seats

As per the By-Laws of Actors' Equity Association, the Central Region will be electing nine non-Councillor seats for the Central Regional Board for the 2015 Election. Only members living in the Central Region are eligible to run and to vote for these positions.

The following 2-year seats are available: five principal, one chorus, and one stage manager. A 1-year principal seat and a 1-year stage manager seat are also available.

All candidates must meet the same eligibility requirements in their category as Councillors in their category. If you wish to be considered for any of the above seats, please submit your candidacy according to the following schedule:

Tuesday, May 26, 2015	Candidate packets available by contacting the Central Regional Office
Wednesday, July 8, 2015	Deadline for nominations by independent petition. Petition and administrative forms due in the Chicago office by 3 p.m. CST
Monday, July 13, 2015	Deadline for all Candidates Statements and photos to be received in the Chicago office is 3 p.m. CST
Monday, August 3, 2015	Deadline for mailing of ballots*
Tuesday, September 1, 2015	Deadline for return of ballots to the Chicago office is 2:30 p.m. CST
Wednesday, September 2, 2015 or Friday, September 4, 2015	Tellers' Committee picks up ballots and tabulates results
Tuesday, September 8, 2015	Report of Tellers' Committee to the Central Regional Board and Seating of New Board Members

*In accordance with the Equity By Laws, should there be no contest among candidates for listed seats the nominee(s) shall be deemed elected without need for a ballot.

For a CRB non-Councillor candidate packet, contact Emanuel Rios at erios@actorsequity.org or 312-641-0393 ext. 240.



EQUITYNEWS

Editor: JOSH AUSTIN

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On opening night, what is one ritual you do in order to help you prepare for the show?



TERRY LAVELL

On opening night of any show that I do, I always make sure I lead the cast in a prayer circle, thanking God for the cast, crew, musicians and creative team to bless the run of show. And, I always take a deep breath in and then exhale.

LYNDSY KAIL

On opening nights I like to sneak into the theater before the house opens and sit in the audience and imagine the show. Then I pop onstage and take in the empty seats and say a little prayer of gratitude.



Annual Meeting

(continued from page 1)

230 distinct bulk email campaigns to 884,000 recipients, with an open rate of 55%. (Epsilon, a web intelligence service, reports a national average open rate of 28.5%.) Email campaigns vary in content, ranging from membership meeting notifications to invitations to events such as CTI's "The Business of Show Business Seminar," from notifications of free flu shots to paperless billing for dues payments and from new member receptions to health surveys from The Actors Fund. In each case, we are communicating directly with members. With all of those emails sent, only 145 members unsubscribed from receiving emails from us. We believe this tells us that members want to hear from their union.

Ask If It's Equity:

After a successful run in Chicago, we have taken *Ask If It's Equity* national. If you are buying tickets to a Broadway Tour, make sure to *Ask If It's Equity*.

This campaign, which shines a spotlight on Equity members on tour, and the importance of Equity contract protections while on the road, is a digital campaign directed at the ticket-buying public. *Ask If It's Equity* has its own dedicated website and Twitter feed. Launched on Wednesday, April 1, 2015, here are the results so far:

- The website has received over 11,000 visits
- The campaign has been mentioned over 725 times on social media (Facebook/Twitter)
- The @AskIfItsEquity handle on Twitter now has 725 followers
- @AskIfItsEquity tweets have reached over 457,000 people

This concept is currently being used for touring, but can easily be re-worked for other organizing campaigns. So, why not tell your family and friends to get in the habit now and always *Ask If It's Equity* when buying a ticket. Please visit the website, AskIfItsEquity.com, to learn more about the campaign – and please share the information through social media, emailing and by telling everyone you know. You can help your brothers and sisters on the road

by spreading the word.

Advocacy:

Social Justice

As you know, the governors of Indiana and Arkansas have signed the Religious Freedom Restoration Acts into law, allowing any business owner to deny service based on their personal religious beliefs. Both bills have undergone changes meant to "fix" them. Although these are meant to be steps in the right direction, we believe the "fixes" in both of these bills falls short of providing full protection for anyone who may be the target of discrimination.

The Council of Actors' Equity is on record in support of the Federal Employment Non-Discrimination Act and similar legislative efforts to end discrimination against LGBT citizens. A petition has been circulated, asking Equity to pull all tours out of their bookings in Indiana. While language in our collective bargaining agreements prevents us from requiring producers to cancel their bookings, Equity's staff has already reached out to producers to tell them that we are closely monitoring the situation to ensure the safety and well-being of our members touring into these states. In addition, we have reached out to touring companies that are scheduled to travel to Indiana and Arkansas to discuss any concerns and how we may be of help. Our Central Regional Director is reaching out to our members who reside in these states and will also reach out to those members who are working in regional theater. Further, we are examining how your union can join the fight against these so-called "religious freedom" bills when they crop up in other states.

Arts Funding

For more than a decade, Equity has been a co-sponsor of Americans for the Arts' National Arts Advocacy Day in Washington, D.C. This year, Eastern Regional Vice President Melissa Robinette, Councillor Allyson Tucker, Central Regional Board member Peggy Thorpe and staff member, Senior Business Representative Larry Lorcak attended meetings with congressional representatives to talk about the importance of funding for the National Endowment for the Arts and the arts in general. We continue to seek opportunities where we can share that important message

with elected officials and other decision makers and funders.

Diversity

We recently participated in a panel about diversity at the Congo Square Theatre Company in Chicago. Central Regional Director Sean Taylor was among an impressive group of speakers, including Michelle Boone, Commissioner – City of Chicago, Department of Cultural Affairs; Ben Cameron of the Doris Duke Foundation and Teresa Eyring from the Theatre Communications Group. This panel was one of a series called "Owning Our Worth."

Systems:

Building on the success of our upgraded Member Portal, and working on the promise to make it easier to participate in and communicate with the union, we have created an online Deputy Portal and support center, replacing the paper and snail mail version of the deputy packet and report. Deputies may now sign on to the Member Portal, where the Deputy Portal is located, and make reports about issues large and small. Those reports are immediately forwarded to the Business Rep working that particular show so he or she can take action. A record of the issue will also be made in our system. For instance: If deputies on tour make reports about a particular theater in St. Paul, MN (they can even take a quick picture of that mold/faulty plumbing/dirty bathroom with their phone and upload the picture with their report), that helps create a record to be used in labor management meetings and eventually in negotiations. Since the portal was launched, there have been 165 support cases submitted online by deputies.

We have added new technology that allows for us to conduct cloud-based video conferencing, which we have successfully used to conference with touring casts as well as stage managers from across the country.

We intend to make further use of this technology, as we implement new strategies to build member involvement. If you have an idea that you think would make good use of this new technology, email me at executive@actorsequity.org. We know that not everyone can or wants to join a committee. This is your chance to tell us how you would like to participate.

There are currently nearly 40,000 active members registered for the Member Portal.

Since last April we have collected over \$3 million in dues and initiation fees online. More than 10,000 members have signed up for paperless billing. If you haven't done so yet, please consider signing up. It is easy, saves paper and saves your union money. And, I would be remiss if I didn't remind you to make sure that your address and other contact information is updated in the Member Portal.

New Work/New Employers/More Contracts:

Staff has been very busy working on existing relationships with employers and building new relationships, resulting in an additional 7,708 paid work weeks added for Equity members across the country.

National Organizing:

Troika will be touring a production of the new musical *Around the World in 80 Days* on a Special Agreement. This tour will not perform in a theater, but in a specially created venue and will play in major markets across the country. The tour is an Equity tour. Terms are comparable to the SET Agreement, including overage participation.

We will be entering into negotiations with BASE Entertainment for an agreement that will cover all of their productions in Las Vegas. This relationship is responsive to our members in Las Vegas, who are asking for more union work.

We have reached an agreement with Norwegian Cruise Lines for B-roll usage for two shows for which our members will be paid. This agreement comes with language that says "both parties are desiring to start exploratory conversations with each other." This is the first door to crack open after years of work attempting to organize performers and stage managers on cruise ships.

Sharing Good News by Region:

The **Western Region** had 2,166 new work weeks, plus 63 new companies that used Special Appearance and Guest Artist Agreements. These 63 companies had never hired Equity members before. Eight Western Region theaters have transitioned to SPTs in the last year, and four Western region theaters have moved from an

LOA to full LORT Agreements. The staff has negotiated 88 LOAs and 20 SPTs.

The **Central Region** had 2,609 new work weeks, plus 18 new and/or returning theaters added this year. The staff negotiated 20 LOAs and 57 SPTs and eight larger, individual producer/multi-employer agreements (with wage increase results averaging from 2.7% to 3.3% per year).

The **Eastern Region** had 2,933 new work weeks, plus 22 new or returning theater companies added this year (including the Allenberry Playhouse returning to a full Equity agreement after 10 years of producing non-Equity). There are 16 new single production producers, five new Business Theatre Agreements, and staff negotiated 152 Media Agreements, with a doubling of broadcast agreements over a 12-month period.

Arts Advocacy Day

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(about a \$9 million increase) for the NEA for the 2016 fiscal year. The letter stated, "Few other federal investments have such a widespread impact and magnifying effect across the entire nation as does the Arts Endowment. According to the NEA, for every one dollar we spend on federal arts initiatives we see nine non-federal dollars leveraged, generating over \$600 million in matching support while at the same time enriching our children and communities with access to the arts they might not otherwise have."

"I believe it is vital for Actors' Equity to be a part of Arts Advocacy," Thorp said. "We are 'in the trenches,' so to speak, and can tell stories from our personal experience as to the value of the arts in everyone's life."

Equity representatives also talked about increasing the number of jobs, white space with wireless mics issues, 401K funding through the arts, and arts education.

"As a member of Equity," said Thorp, "I was able to reiterate the value of the arts (and live theater in particular) in enriching the cultural life of our community and how theater artists have helped enrich the education of our youth through programs in schools and special showings of regular productions."

On opening night, what is one ritual you do in order to help you prepare for the show?



JASON NALL

During the day of opening, I get a haircut and shave (I've usually been growing my beard out since the week before tech for luck), and that night, I arrive and sit quietly in the booth alone for a few minutes. Right before places I spend a few seconds with each actor to connect and say "Toi Toi Toi" — a holdover from my opera days — before heading to the console!

REBECCA E. COVINGTON

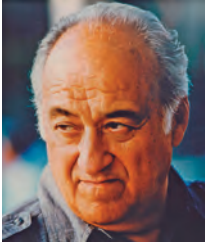


On opening night, I love to dive into the show by spending the entire day listening to music inside the world of whatever production I'm doing. A little pre-show dance party never hurt anyone!

At 86, Jerry Adler has barely even begun his acting career

Jerry Adler, age 86, has donned many theatrical hats during his almost 65-year career. Currently appearing on Broadway in Larry David's comedy *Fish in the Dark*, Adler has 53 Broadway credits to his name, but the role of stage "actor" isn't necessarily what's kept him busy on the main street for more than half a century.

Officially the third-oldest working Equity member (Mike Nussbaum at 91 holds the number one spot while Angela



Jerry Adler

Lansbury, 89 is ranked number two), Adler talked to *Equity News* about earning his card, working eight shows a week and that one time he helped deliver a baby out in the house. (Yes, you read that correctly.)

Equity News: Jerry, in your own words, tell us, "How I Got My Equity Card."

Jerry Adler: I got hired on Labor Day 1950 to be the second assistant stage manager on *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* with Carol Channing. I was still up in Syracuse at the time. I got the job because my father was the company manager, so I am the product of nepotism. That was my first job; it was great. I was gaga-eyed because there was Carol Channing and there were a lot of stars in it and it was a big, hit show.

EN: How did it feel to finally get the card?

Adler: I hadn't thought much about getting my Equity card so soon because I was still in school. It was a big surprise, and, of course, great. Then, because I had the card, I got a job right away after *Blondes* closed. I became a stage manager on a show called *Seventeen*, which was a musical, produced by Milton Berle at the time. *Fish in the Dark* is the 53rd Broadway show that I am associated with, having been either a director, stage manager, producer, actor.

EN: When did you decide to make the leap from behind-the-scenes to the stage?

Adler: Acting came when I was getting ready to retire. When I was 65 years old, a friend of mine who is a casting director called me (at the time I was directing a soap opera in California), and she said, "The director of this movie, when he describes who he wants, describes you, would you come and meet him?" I never acted before. So I met this guy and he did a big take when I walked in the room. Later on I asked him, "Why did you do that take when I walked in the room?" He said, "Because I said to myself, 'Oh my God I hope he can act.'" So I got this job in a movie.

EN: And it stuck.

Adler: Well, Woody Allen saw the movie and cast me in *Manhattan Murder Mystery* and acting started.

EN: What is your daily routine for performing eight shows a week?

Adler: This is the perfect show for me because I never touch the floor. I'm in a bed the whole time. They roll me on and they roll me off. So, it's the perfect role. In between my stint on stage and the curtain call I



Jerry Adler, center, along with the cast of *Fish in the Dark*. Photo by Joan Marcus

read and I listen to the laughter out front, which is great. If you listen to laughs all day long, it makes your life a little happier.

EN: Over your expansive career, what has been the one memory that hasn't left?

Adler: Backstage in New Haven, during the run – a week after opening – of *My Fair Lady*, I helped a woman in the audience give birth to a baby. The show had ended and I was packing up, we were at the Shubert Theatre in New Haven, and I hear this moaning. I looked out on the stage, and stage left in one of the boxes – there was a floor box – there was this woman lying there and I ran out to see. She was giving birth. Her husband had run out to get a cab or the doctor or whatever. I took off my jacket and the baby came. [Laughs.]

EN: How has Broadway

changed since 1951?

Adler: Monetarily, it's changed tremendously. When *My Fair Lady* opened, we opened with a price of \$7.50 (a

ticket) and then we raised it to \$8.05. It made a headline in the *New York Times* that *My Fair Lady* had broken the \$8 barrier. You look around now and seats are \$499; it's unbelievable. Also, it's much more digitized. I would never be able to be a stage manager now because I'm not technically savvy. [Laughs.] I'm just learning how to use the Internet. I would never be able to figure out what the hell they're doing backstage now. Everything is so automated it's amazing. Thank god I'm an actor, or I'd be out of work. The stage managers today are really extraordinary.

EN: Out of all the roles you've played either on stage, or backstage (actor, stage manager, director, etc...), what's been your favorite thus far?

Adler: Well, I use to enjoy doing understudy rehearsals in *My Fair Lady* because I could play all the roles. I could play Higgins, I could play Doolittle – I could have a lot of fun doing that. That was fun to do. This is my second acting job on Broadway, so I don't have any favorite acting jobs yet. I'm still working on it.

EN: What has been a moment that has made you proud to be a union member?

Adler: Equity helped me a great deal when I first got out of the army in 1952. I got a loan from them, which really helped me get started because I was looking around for work and it was hard getting started again when you got out of the army. This was the Korean War. And in that time Equity gave me a hell of a boost. And of course the health plan was great in those days; it was such a new thing. When I got married and had a baby, it really was great.

EN: What's after *Fish in the Dark*?

Adler: Oh my god, I have no idea. Well, I'm still doing *The Good Wife* on television and I'm just waiting to see. Hopefully I'll get another job where I'm lying down. Walking around is tough.

AEA Veteran Mary Lou Westerfield garners the 2014 Lucy Jordan Award

Mary Lou Westerfield always wanted to be in the theater, but she never planned to dedicate her life to the industry. For the former Equity Western Regional Director/Assistant Executive Director, it just kind of happened. Of course, for her, with not one regret.

"I just wanted to work," she said, "and I knew that meant I needed to be a member of Actors' Equity. While working on various Equity contracts, I shared the stage with Councillors and with then-Equity president Theo Bikel. I was encouraged to join committees and run for Council. One year followed another; I kept putting one foot in front of another – I was a dancer after all – and the rest just happened."

It's Westerfield's dedication, service, loyal nature and the admiration for her from her

colleagues and peers that garnered her the 2014 Lucy Jordan Award.

The Award was started in 1992 to honor the legacy of Lucy Finney Jordan, a former ballerina and chorus "gypsy" who, for many years, was the "face" of Actors' Equity in the Western Region as the union's outside field rep. The award is given to those who demonstrate "a lifetime commitment to the theater and especially, helping other theater artists."

Westerfield's résumé at Equity, and otherwise, is impressive. Serving AEA members in capacities that spanned from Chorus Councillor to Second Vice President and then from National Director, Policy to the National Executive Team to Western Regional Director, Westerfield has been an Equity mainstay since 1973 when

she proudly received her Equity card.

"Since becoming a member, she has been a workhorse – trustworthy and loyal – doing things that make a difference, often going above the jobs on Council and staff," said Equity Councillor, James T. McDermott. "Mary Lou has supported all individuals within the arts industry to champion fairness in contractual coverage and benefits for all members of all performing arts unions, not just AEA. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, she has made herself available 24/7 to anyone who needs her or her advice – much like they did with Lucy Jordan."

In addition to the time she put in with Equity, which includes serving as an original VITA volunteer in New York City and helping begin the VITA program

at The Actors Fund in L.A., Westerfield has served as a board member and the 2nd Vice President of Screen Actors Guild in New York; 2nd Vice President of Theatre Authority, Inc.; founding board member of Career Transition for Dancers; International Executive Secretary of the 4As and member of the Western Council of The Actors Fund. She was also instrumental in creating affordable housing for performing artists. Longtime chair of the policy committee for Manhattan Plaza, she negotiated a 20-year agreement with the new owners to maintain that housing for performing artists.

"Lucy was a great person," said Westerfield, "and as a staff member, she was loved and appreciated by members and producers alike. It's truly an honor to get 'her' award. As a member of Equity, it makes me feel grateful to be honored this way. As a staff member, it makes me feel humble that members think I followed in Lucy's footsteps and followed her example."

On opening night, what is one ritual you do in order to help you prepare for the show?



NICK BRANDON

Every opening night I do a little chant with my crew called "All that is Good." It goes, "All that is good. And accomplished in this world. Takes work! Takes work! Takes HAAAAARRD WORK! And everything else? I said EVERYTHING else? Is jive!" It gets us focused and ready to put on an awesome show!

ANNIE BELLINGER

Before the house opens, but once everyone is off the stage, I stand at center stage and take a deep breath to release tech and transition into show mode.





Looking toward the future with the Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park

We asked the staff at Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park to tell us about the theater; this is what they had to say:

The Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park may be one of the country's oldest regional theaters, but that doesn't mean the organization is happy to rest on past successes. Wrapping up his third season as the Playhouse's new artistic director, Blake

history of nurturing new works, while expanding the theater's commitment to culturally diverse and multi-generational plays and ramping up the company's community engagement efforts.

Today's Cincinnati Playhouse is the product of a rich history. It began in 1959 with the dream of a young college student, Gerald Covell, who combined his artistic vision for a professional theater in Cincinnati with the commitment of several of the

city's arts, business and political leaders. The original Playhouse was confined to a park shelterhouse. Scheduled for demolition, the building offered the perfect setting: great

theater performed in the beautiful surroundings of Cincinnati's Eden Park. On Oct. 10, 1960, Meyer Levin's

Compulsion celebrated the opening night of both play and Playhouse. Just eight years later, with sold-out houses becoming the norm in the intimate Thompson Shelterhouse, the larger Robert S. Marx Theatre was added.

Although productions have been presented first and foremost for the Tristate area, the Playhouse always has contributed to the national stage. More than 70 plays have received their world premieres on one of the Playhouse's two stages over the course of the theater's 55-year history, a prestigious list that includes several Steinberg Award finalists, a Pulitzer Prize nominee and works that have seen subsequent life both on and off-Broadway. This focus on new work continues in the current Playhouse season, which saw the premiere of Keith Josef Adkins' *Safe House*, and in the recently announced 2015-16 season, which will include world premiere plays by two of the country's most exciting and prolific female playwrights: *The Revolutionists* by Lauren



Leroy James McClain, Stephanie Berry and Shane Taylor in the Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park's 2014 world premiere production of *Safe House*. Photo by Sandy Underwood

Gunderson and *Native Gardens* by Karen Zacarias.

"The creation of new plays is an important part of our mission and essential for keeping theater timely and vital in today's world," says Robison. "Most new plays get their start, of course, not in New York but in regional theaters like the Playhouse." This legacy contributed to the Playhouse receiving the Regional Theatre Tony Award in 2004. In 2007, the

theater received its second Tony Award when John Doyle's actor/musical production of Stephen Sondheim's *Company*, which premiered at the Playhouse the previous year, was named the Best Revival of a Musical.

Diversifying Playhouse programming is also one of Robison's key goals. To this end, he reconceived the theater's artistic model to include four associate artists — Timothy Douglas, Michael Evan Haney, KJ Sanchez and Eric Ting. "This is a unique, new paradigm for engaging artists in the life of our institution," Robison said. "Together, they participate in season planning and form the backbone of our directing corps. They bring a diversity of backgrounds, experiences and viewpoints to the Playhouse. It's an inclusive, forward-looking model that excites me very much."

The Cincinnati Playhouse has been an Equity theater since its inception, and its partnership with Actors' Equity has been a key to its ongoing success. According to Robison, "We are proud to work with a robust community of local members, as well as Equity artists from New York and across the country."



The cast of the Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park's 2006 production of *Company*. Photo by Sandy Underwood

Robison has been busy making his mark at the theater by building on the Playhouse's reputation for excellence and

Vermont's Weston Playhouse Theatre Company earns the 2015 Rosetta LeNoire Award

Nestled in the rural mountains of Vermont — and in a town boasting a population just shy of 600 — the Weston Playhouse Theatre Company has dedicated itself to diversity on its stage. That's why the Playhouse has been named the proud recipient of Equity's 2015 Rosetta LeNoire Award. The Playhouse's Producing Artistic Director, Steve Stettler, accepted the award on April 10, 2015, during Equity's Annual Membership Meeting in New York City.

The award, established in 1988, recognizes outstanding artistic contributions to the universality of the human experience in American Theater. The award is given to an individual, theater or producing organization with an exemplary record in the hiring or promotion



(L-R) Equity member Marcus Neville; Christine Toy Johnson, National Equal Employment Opportunity Committee Chair; Weston Playhouse's Producing Artistic Director Steve Stettler; and Playhouse board member Anthony Wood. Photo by Stephanie Masucci

of ethnic minorities, female actors and actors with disabilities through multi-racial and/or non-traditional casting.

"Through diverse programming, inclusive casting and development of new works, the Weston Playhouse consistently demonstrates a

the Weston Playhouse has created has organically become a community of artists of the diverse world in which we live — because of the world view that its producers have and are committed to upholding."

Since taking over the reins of

the playhouse in 1988 and becoming a nonprofit Equity house, Stettler, along with its founding directors, have made their mission to keep their stages diverse.

"We believe that theater should explore the human condition and that diversity is of the essence in doing so," said Stettler. "Particularly because we produce in one of the least ethnically diverse states in the country, we place a priority on diverse programming, casting and hiring. We are constantly working to see that our company and community are inclusive and welcoming, and that the work on our stages reflects a broader world and world view."

The oldest professional theater in the state, the company is now an award-winning theater with summer

festivals, along with new works and education programs, including a middle and high school playwright residency program and a young adult Broadway Boot Camp.

Currently in the throes of a campaign to improve the Weston Playhouse, which includes an effort to raise funds for a state-of-the-art studio theater as well as general renovations, the Playhouse is striving to dig deeper into Vermont's soil while creating a national theatrical impact and maintain its professionalism and value toward diversity.

"Weston is deeply honored to be recognized in the company of the remarkable artists, theaters and organizations who have won the Rosetta LeNoire Award," Stettler said. "We are proud of our long-standing relationship with Actors' Equity and our dedication to diversity and theatrical excellence. This award further inspires us to continue to set an example in the field."

On opening night, what is one ritual you do in order to help you prepare for the show?



TINA M. JACH

I page through my prompt book to make sure all is in order and go through any multi-cue sequences. Then I go to the stage and walk around to make sure all is good for the company and I soak in the quiet.

I'm usually pretty quiet and focused, speeding through my lines in my head before putting on my mic. And for my nerves, I'll sing one vocal siren before walking on for the first time, just to make sure my voice is still there.

JAY PARANADA





NATIONAL NEWS



Members and Central Regional staff attend the 2015 Big Easy Awards.

New Orleans, Louisiana

NOLA Hosts Membership Meeting & Members Attend Big Easy Awards

By Meredith Long, 1st Vice Chair, New Orleans Liaison Committee

New Orleans is full of parades, parties, festivals and it's rich in culture, food and the arts. After 2005's Hurricane Katrina, it seemed impossible that New Orleans would have the strength in its theater community that it has now – let alone the possibility of Equity contracts. With the staff's work, New Orleans and Baton Rouge have at least seven bonded theaters and average around 400 work weeks for union actors on the NOLA Contract alone.

On Sunday March 29, 2015, Chicago AEA staff (Sean Taylor, Central Regional Director/Assistant Executive Director; Christian Hains, Senior Business Representative; and Luther Goins, Business Representative), met with the NOLA Liaison Committee members and discussed the

committee's past efforts, which included work on the NOLA Contract and EMC events as well as the 2014 NOLA Tony Party.

The evening, led by Liaison Chair John Bostic, included an update on contracts and organizing activities in the Central Region over the last year. Member discussion began with concern that the Broadway Across America Series included non-union tours. Members expressed their opinions of the situation, hoping that AEA will do everything possible to change this situation. [See "Ask If It's Equity has Arrived" on page 1.]

Then there was a discussion of issues related to the increase in film activity in the area. Producers have expressed problems with members' MREs. Casting agents have repeatedly asked members not to do theater. The lack of understudies and low pay of theater contracts add to the problems. Other points of discussion included the

lack of spaces for productions, a list of current bonded producers, and upcoming NOLA Equity events, such as the EMC Celebration on June 12, 2015, at New Orleans Shakespeare Festival at Tulane.

Members Leslie Castay, Edward R. Cox, Meredith Long, Katherine McClain and Janet B. Shea were selected for three-year terms on the Liaison Committee. In addition, member Sean Patterson was selected to replace an out-going member in their second year on the committee.

The evening ended with a few moments to remember NOLA singer/actress and Tony nominee, B.J. Crosby, who recently passed away.

The visit was topped off on Monday night when the staff attended the annual Big Easy Awards Ceremony at Harrah's Theatre. AEA was one of the major sponsors for the event. Such stars as Bryan Batt, Jeffery Roberson (or Varla Jean Merman) and Michael Cerveris have hosted this important local event in the past. Members celebrated in typical New Orleans fashion, showing the Chicago guests what an amazing theater town New Orleans has become – and why local members consider themselves lucky to call it home.

Best Actress in a Comedy award winner and Equity member Liann Pattison said, "I am thankful to be a proud member of Actors' Equity. They have done so much for me, and for all of you in this room, whether you are a member or not. I hope you realize that. I am also looking forward to my pension."



Members of the Atlanta Liaison Committee with Jean Goffaux (far left) from Open Hand with the certificate and plaque.

Atlanta, Georgia

Members in Atlanta Raise Impressive Funds for Open Hand Atlanta

For the fourth consecutive year, the Atlanta Area Liaison Committee sponsored and organized the annual fund drive for Open Hand Atlanta, an organization now in its 25th year, that has delivered homemade meals to terminally and chronically ill patients and homebound seniors all across the city of Atlanta and northern Georgia at no cost.

This year there were 14 Equity affiliated theaters participating. Following performances all over the Atlanta area, cast and crew members, as well as

volunteers, stood in lobbies and collected donations from generous patrons. This year's total, to date, has reached a record \$39,344, bringing the four-year total to just over \$98,500 – every penny going straight to Open Hand.

At the March committee meeting, Jean Goffaux from Open Hand presented the Liaison Committee with a certificate, accompanied with a copper and glass plaque. The committee and the Atlanta membership will now have a fourth brick placed in the sidewalk at the Open Hand office.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

2015 Philadelphia "FringeArts Festival" Reminder

This is a reminder that if theaters or producing organizations are interested in hiring you for theater productions in "FringeArts," they must sign you to an appropriate AEA agreement (LOA, SPT, Guest Artist, Special Appearance, etc.).

AEA members who are interested in self-producing their own projects under the Philadelphia AEA FRINGEARTS Code should get in touch as soon as possible with the Philadelphia AEA Liaison Committee. The

committee encourages members to ask questions early in the process. Please do not wait until this summer or when the project is already in rehearsal. For further information, please contact the committee at phlliaisoncommittee@yahoo.com or call 1-877-232-1913, ext. 832.

As of mid-April, the application process for the 2015 Philadelphia "FringeArts" Festival is in process. For more information, visit <http://fringearts.com/about/for-artists/>.

On opening night, what is one ritual you do in order to help you prepare for the show?



ALYSSA K. HOWARD

perhaps some centering quiet time.

I have none! Whatever the particular show is, I remind myself to do whatever it takes to balance it: a somber show might get a one-person dance party, a madcap show

I try to eat as much sugar as humanly possible and remind myself that tomorrow there's no rehearsal, so I get to sleep way in. I'm pretty professional.

ALEJANDRA ESCALANTE





Chicago

Members Helping Members... Chicago Style!

Body and Soul: *Understanding the Emotional Realities of the Theatre Artist*, the first in a series of career empowerment workshops, took place on Saturday, April 11, 2015, at Chicago's Greenhouse Theater.

This highly anticipated workshop, which was presented by Actors' Equity and the Central Regional members of the National Equal Employment Opportunity Committee (EEO), explored the emotional journeys that actors and stage managers experience on a daily basis. The workshop, which allowed

for an open, honest and frank discussion about rejection, insecurities and fears, also presented realistic ideas and methods for the actor to examine their image versus their talent and abilities.

The professional panel included Equity Members Wydetta Carter, Diane Dorsey and Julie Proudfoot; Steven M. Haught, the Director of Social Services in the Central Region for the Actors Fund; Phyllis Joseph, a licensed social worker; Cree Rankin, Casting Director for Chicago's Court Theatre; and Courtney Rioux, a Chicago-area life coach.

Kansas City, Kansas

On Saturday, March 28, 2015, the Kansas City membership held its annual meeting at the Unicorn Theatre. Licia Watson, Kansas City Area Liaison Chair, welcomed guests Sean Taylor, Central Regional Director/Assistant Executive Director; Christian Hains, Senior Business Representative; and David Kolen, Business Representative. Brief presentations were given by the Chicago staff to enable ample time for discussion and questions. Attendees were gratified to hear that the union has been focused on increasing work opportunities for existing membership.

Additional topics of interest included the recent revision of the Member's Project Code and clarification of its use. After the slate of committee members was approved (including two new additions for Council's approval), members brought up a host of topics, including questions regarding electronic deputy reports, rule book education (especially for transitioning theaters and new stage managers) and policies regarding members who give up their cards.

Before adjourning, members were encouraged to put Monday, September 7, 2015, on their calendars to participate in the annual Labor Day Parade.



Members of the Cincinnati/Louisville Area Liaison Committee gather for its annual meeting.

Cincinnati/Louisville

Cincinnati/Louisville Members meet for Annual Membership Meeting

The Cincinnati/Louisville Area Liaison Committee met for its Annual Membership Meeting on April 12, 2015, at the Stage One Rehearsal Studio.

The meeting began with opening remarks from Liaison Chair Clara Harris, who expressed a desire to know how the members in the area can affect organizing of local theaters and member communication.

Joined by Central Regional Director/Assistant Executive Director Sean Taylor, Senior Business Representative Christian Hains and Business Representative Brittany Steiger, the committee learned about the

Ask If It's Equity campaign and how it can be actively involved with its success. The staff also discussed work weeks and organizing efforts throughout the Central Region.

Additionally, the committee held a Q&A, where members asked about state tax credits for film and how those credits can have a positive effect on new theaters in the area; the possibility of a committee sponsored unified audition or seminar for area theaters and producers; housing versus travel stipends in the region where actors have access to local housing; among other topics.



Members of the South Florida Liaison Committee along with Carbonell winner Nicholas Richberg (back right) and Eastern Regional Vice President Melissa Robinette (front right).

South Florida

Honoring Equity members at the Carbonell Awards

By Irene Adjan, South Florida Equity Liaison

The 39th Annual Carbonell Awards Ceremony was held in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts, honoring local productions, as well as Equity

and non-Equity actors, from the 2014 theater season.

The Carbonell Award was designed to foster the artistic growth of professional theater in South Florida by celebrating the diversity of theater artists, providing educational

scholarships and building audience appreciation and civic pride by highlighting achievements within the theater community, according to its website.

Once again, Actors' Equity Association sponsored one of the awards, and this year it was Best Actor in a Play, which went to Nicholas Richberg for his performance as Black Stache in *Peter and the Starcatcher*, a joint production between the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts and the University of Miami. Eastern Regional Vice President Melissa Robinette presented the award.

Handing out around 20 awards, over 25 professional theater companies in Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties, along with numerous Equity actors, participate in the awards process every year.



Los Angeles

Equity's office in North Hollywood has been nominated by the Southern California Chapter of the International Interior Design Association for a 2015 Calibre Award. Nominated in the "Workplace Small" category, Equity worked alongside OKB Architecture, Denham Wolf, Mata Construction and Unisource Solutions.

According to the

Organization's website, "The Calibre Awards recognize and honor the excellent work of project teams that have exceeded the expectations of our profession to bring interior design to life. The Calibre Awards honor the true meaning of collaboration for projects that exhibit a high level of teamwork and stunning design."

As of press time, winners haven't been announced. The 27th Calibre Awards Gala is on May 1, 2015.

On opening night, what is one ritual you do in order to help you prepare for the show?



JOE LA FORTE

By nature, I'm not a superstitious person, so I try not to get hooked on rituals. However, I do make it a point to take a moment, before the curtain rises, to take a deep breath and remind myself to enjoy this day, this performance, because before you know it, it will be in the past — all the fun, hard work and enjoyment.

I say a little prayer so that I can put myself aside and just become His vessel and let His glory shine through.

MOMOKO TANNO



Equity Stands Against Discrimination

Actors' Equity Association has a long and proud history of standing up against discrimination – striking against the National Theatre's policy of segregation, opposing the infamous Blacklist and has been one of first unions to publicly support marriage equality.

In addition to provisions in Equity contracts protecting members from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity or expression, the union has taken a strong policy position in support of any legislation that would provide non-discrimination protections for LGBT persons.

Last spring, during Equity's first annual National Public Policy Committee Summit, the committee put forward, and the Council approved, a resolution to go on record in support of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA)—federal legislation that would provide protections for LGBT citizens.

Recently, members contacted Equity with concerns that they might not be protected in states that passed laws referred to as the "Religious Freedom

Restoration Act" (RFRA).

Though versions of a bill protecting the exercise of religion have been passed in many states, the legislation that was initially passed by the legislatures of Indiana and Arkansas are very different, in that they are sweeping measures that would allow individuals and businesses to use religion as a justification to discriminate against LGBT people and other minorities.

Versions of the RFRA that have been passed in other states differ from the Indiana and Arkansas laws in a few key respects:

- **In other states, religious freedom laws do not trump non-discrimination protections.** States like Illinois have statewide laws protecting LGBT citizens from discrimination. Indiana and Arkansas do not have any such statewide protections.

- **The Indiana and Arkansas legislation expressly applies to corporations.** Versions in other states only apply to people. This means that businesses can implement "religious" policies, which may be discriminatory.

- **The Indiana and Arkansas laws apply to private disputes.**

Other states' laws provide that the government can't restrict an individual's right to exercise his or her religion, but the Indiana and Arkansas versions apply to disputes between two private citizens, or between an individual and a business.

The amended version of the laws, which were later put forward in both states in response to protests, only address the first problem, and only in a limited way. The new versions of the law now provide that the laws cannot be used to override existing discrimination protections. The problem is, these amendments fall far short of providing a full solution, because neither Indiana nor Arkansas have a statewide anti-discrimination law that protects LGBT people.

Equity will continue to work toward getting full equality for its members. In the meantime, the union is prepared to assist members in any way that it can, when members are traveling to states that may not have strong protections in place. If you are working in a place where you may not be fully protected by the law, please don't hesitate to call your union if we can be of assistance.

Rules and Agreements for L.A. Theater

(Continued from page 2)

rights based on the terms of the subsequent Equity collective bargaining agreement and would also require basic workplace standards.

- **NEW Small Professional Theatre Agreement ("SPT").** The SPT Agreement, which has long been available in other parts of the country, would now be permitted for productions in Los Angeles County in venues with a capacity up to 349 seats. There is no budget cap per production, no limitation on the length of the rehearsal period, and no restriction on the length of the performance run. The Agreement provides for salary payments ranging from \$229 to \$664 per week, based on the maximum number of weekly performances, with pension and health contributions required. The Agreement requires future rights based on the producer's future involvement with any subsequent production and would also require basic

workplace standards.

- **Hollywood Area Theatre Agreement ("HAT").** The HAT is an existing collective bargaining agreement for use in Los Angeles Theatres of 349-499 seats. There is no budget cap per production, and no restriction on the length of a performance run. Productions may rehearse for no fewer than 2 ½ weeks. The Agreement provides for salaries between \$229 to \$582 per week and based on a 5-performance week (up to three additional performances may be purchased), with salary increases every 20th week of employment. The Agreement requires pension and health benefit payments, future rights based on the producer's future involvement with any subsequent production and would also require basic workplace standards. The HAT Agreement is an all-Equity agreement.

Equity's Council believes that these rules and agreements balance concerns raised by L.A. members about the original proposals, while doing what's

Bonding Policy

(continued from page 2)

two-week period. If Equity receives more contracts than the bond protects, the union will immediately demand additional bond be posted. If, for some reason, the producer fails to increase the bond, actors will have the option to cancel their contract without any further obligation to the employer.

If a seasonal theater does default, you may only receive the guaranteed portion of your contract from the available bond. But know that Equity will do everything it can to legally pursue a defaulting employer in an effort to secure the full obligations due to members.

The Equity bond is just another example of how the union is standing up for its members. #EquityWorks

needed to represent the interests of the membership in L.A. and around the country.

"We are proud of our members who shared their insightful views and spoke with passion about the importance of intimate theater," said Mary McColl, Equity's Executive Director. "The National Council's decision today is responsive to that feedback and we look forward to working together to build a foundation for the growth and sustainability of intimate theater in L.A."

Office Closing

All Equity offices will be closed on Monday, May 25, 2015, in observation of Memorial Day. In addition, all offices will close early on Friday, May 22, 2015. (Check with your local office for the early closing time.)



IN MEMORIAM

My late friend and Equity member Don Stoltz was constantly reminding me of my "gift," and that I "should be on stage using it." Don did good work – most anonymously – and was considerate of those who needed his support, whether



How I Got My Equity Card

Zurrat Ann Kadwani



I was 24, had just finished an internship at a talent agency and my friend told me she was a temp in a big bank. I got a job there, which was perfect because I had flexibility with auditions and gigs.

A breakthrough came out for a play at Theatretworks in Palo Alto, Calif.; it was *Baby Taj* by Tanya Shaffer and there was a role for an Indian woman in her 30s living in India. I went to the audition with Indian clothes and my hair in a braid. The sides were wonderful — I went in for a

callback and then I didn't hear anything...for a while.

Finally, my agent told me they were auditioning on the West Coast and I got so nervous. A week later, I found out I got the role and would be staying in an executive apartment with my own car. Not only would I have my own car, but there was a gym, pool, hot tub and a few grills on the property. This was such an amazing way to get my Equity card and I will never forget the great year that I had in the San Francisco Bay Area.

A LOOK BACK

75 Years Ago May 1940

After two months of negotiations and one week of "warlike activity," the 4As, on behalf of Equity and other performing-centric unions, works out a deal with the New York World's Fair, garnering generous wages, especially as the Fair's production, *American Jubilee*, was on the brink of cancellation, potentially leaving hundreds of Equity members and members of other unions out of work.

Governor Herbert H. Lehman signs the Mitchell Bill, making it a misdemeanor to sell theater tickets for more than 75 cents above the face value of the ticket. This is a bill for which Equity has been pressing the governor to sign.

50 Years Ago May 1965

The New York State Arts Council is made a permanent agency after Governor Rockefeller established it in 1960 as a temporary

commission. Members of the committee include AEA Executive Director Angus Duncan, along with Helen Hayes, Richard Rodgers and August Heckscher.

25 Years Ago May 1990

Performers working at Walt Disney World in Orlando overwhelmingly vote for Equity representation. The organizing effort, which began in 1989, was met with a letter from Tyne Daly asking Disney performers to vote for the union's protection, writing, "I know how difficult it is for a performer to negotiate for him or herself. That is why I joined Actors' Equity..."

10 Years Ago May 2005

California Congressman Brad Sherman reads into the Congressional Record of Tribute, calling former AEA President Theodore Bikel "a renaissance man who has made his mark as an accomplished musician, actor, author, lecturer and activist" after he was honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Letters to The Editor

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

financial or moral.

During the past 50 years, I've gone back to the Old Log Theater (Don was a prior owner) in Minnesota to do shows, attend funerals and to visit Don and his wife, Joan, also my friend, in their beautiful home on Lake Minnetonka.

It's hard for me to imagine that I won't be receiving a call from Don asking if I'm acting and if not, "WHY NOT?" I loved him for the things he taught me, for the fun we had, for being my friend. "I will miss him" doesn't even come close. Words fail.

— Cleo Holladay