

A Note from Joe—Holiday Greetings!

As one year ends and a new year begins, I tend to become overly reflective. Drives to just about any destination are filled with thoughts of what has transpired and what the next year has in store for me, my family and friends, my theatre and, of course, OCTA. I know I will not be in the minority when I say, good riddance to 2020! The pandemic has cost us many lives, our ability to congregate and the loss of community theatre as we have enjoyed it for many, many years.

As I reflect on 2020, there are also many things I am grateful for including learning new ways to communicate via Zoom meetings for our OCTA Board, learning how to “put on a show” using safety measures allowed by state and local health authorities and learning how to use “down time” I so rarely have when theatre is in full swing. I was also heartened by the fact that so many community theatres learned new ways to do theatre via an outdoor performance, online monologues, streaming productions online and a myriad of other ways to produce a show and stay as active as possible during the pandemic.



As the vaccine rolls out, please know that OCTA is already looking into ways of having regionals safely (possibly virtually) as well as having our State Conference in person at the Cherry Valley Hotel in Newark, September 3-6, 2021. What a glorious day it will be to see our fellow OCTA friends and family in 2021! Conference Co-Chairs Aara Wise and Gladys Haney have already started the ball rolling with their theme **OCTA Spectacular: Our Greatest Shows!** Their Conference Committee has been meeting virtually to plan an extravaganza for all of us to enjoy and I, for one, cannot wait!

I want to take a moment, though, to thank each and every one of our member theatres for their continued support of OCTA. I know many theatres have had financial difficulties due to the pandemic and a few, unfortunately, have had to close their doors permanently. For those that will remain members, thank you for your continued membership in OCTA. For those not able to re-join or who have closed, thank you for your participation in OCTA.

Likewise, I would like to take a moment to recognize our State Board Members, Regional Reps and our Theatre Delegates. It is because of this strong body of individuals that OCTA has stayed relevant and strong. I would personally like to thank our Administrative Assistant Aara Wise for her hard work, dedication and communication throughout the past year. And, as an admitted digital →

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immigrant, I am eternally thankful for Jesse Bernal and his skill at organizing each of our Zoom meetings. Finally, a HUGE thank you to Executive Committee (Jesse, Susan, Mendell, Ray, and Aara) for their work “outside” of the normal meetings. I could not be more grateful for a more dedicated Executive Board, State Board, and our outstanding Regional Reps.

As this year comes to a close, I would be remiss if I did not stop and take a moment to remember all of our theatre friends and family who passed away this past year. Whether it was a short amount of time or years of dedicated service, I speak for the entire Board when I say “Thank You for your contribution to community theatre.” I hope this Holiday Season has brought you joy and happiness and that you will be able to continue those glad tidings into 2021. From my heart to all of you, Happy Holidays!

Warm regards,

Joe Barton

OCTA President

Conference 2021

OCTA SPECTACULAR - OUR GREATEST SHOWS

We hope you were able to join us on October 17th for the Reveal Watch Party. If not, you can go to our Facebook page to check it out.

We asked you to guess what you thought the theme might be. Sue Rapier and Jai Furlong-Pierce are now registered for a free conference registration drawing.

But you can still register for the drawing even though the theme has been announced. How can you get registered? In each *Cuelines* newsletter, published from now until May, there will be additional clues. These clues will be part of OCTA’s Greatest Shows from the many years of excerpts. So, put on your thinking caps and send your answers to: octaconference2021@gmail.com to get registered. You can register as many times as you like, but only correct answers will be registered. Good Luck!

Thank you to an Allstate volunteer for empowering people and our community. Sue Snyder gave her time and helped us to receive a \$500 Allstate Foundation Helping Hands Grant. The Allstate Foundation supports the causes that Allstate agency owners, financial specialists, and employees care about most by providing Allstate Foundation Helping Hands Grants to non-profits where they volunteer their time to help communities thrive.

Cuelines

2020 NEWSLETTER AWARDS

Shirley Nebergall, editor

Fort Findlay Playhouse's *The Fortell*

Outstanding in Writing & Overall Quality
Outstanding in Masthead Design & Layout
Outstanding in Use of Graphics & Photography
Excellence in OCTA News

Michael Ritzert & KG Farthing

Carnation City Players' *CC People*

Excellence in Overall Quality
Excellence in Layout and Writing
Merit in Use of Graphics & Photography
Merit in Masthead Design



Amanda Emmons Shumate, editor

The Footlighters, Inc.'s *Libretto*

Excellence in Special Information "Member Spotlight," "Membership News,"
"A Note from our President," "Birthdays." and "ACT Info"
Excellence in OCTA News and Use of Graphics
Merit in Layout, Writing, and Overall Quality

Suzanne Walker, editor & Jeff Walker, assistant editor

Mid-Ohio Valley Players' *Entr' Acte*

Excellence in Use of Graphics and Photography
Merit in Overall Quality

Millie Butts, editor

Playmakers Civic Theatre's *Theatre Talk*

Excellence in Overall Quality
Excellence in Use of Graphics, and OCTA News
Merit in Useful Theatre Information

Cathie Melvin, editor

Troy Civic Theatre's *Stagecoach*

Excellence in Use of Graphics and Layout
Excellence in Special information for "Birthdays" and "In Memory of"

Mark Your Calendars

January 16, 2021 - Board Meeting via Zoom
March 20, 2021 - Board Meeting
May 15, 2021 - Board Meeting
July 17, 2021 - Board Meeting
September 3-6, 2021 - Annual Conference

2020 BROCHURE AWARDS

Outstanding in Brochure Design

Carnation City Players
Fort Findlay Playhouse
Troy Civic Theatre
Van Wert Civic Theatre

Excellence in Brochure Design

Beechmont Players, Inc.
Mid-Ohio Valley Players



OCTA Board News

Congratulations to Frances Gibser (Southeast Region) who received the Dick Beal Outstanding Regional Rep Award for 2020. The Patron Program Leader Award was presented to the Southwest Region this year with Lead Regional Rep Kevin Noll accepting the award.

The old OCTA stage being stored in Ft. Jennings has been sold. With some research, it was decided that in the future it would be less expensive to rent a stage, if necessary, than to transport that stage to Conferences. BIG thanks to Randy Wieging for help with this decision.

The 2020 Hall of Fame Honorees were named. They are Stagecrafters from Milford, Ohio in the Southwest Region; Toledo Repertoire Theatre from the Northwest Region, and Madge Levinson from the Northwest Region. Kevin Noll accepted the plaque for the Stagecrafters; and the Toledo Repertoire Theatre and Madge Levinson will be presented their awards in the Northwest area by Bob Welly and Joe Barton at a later date.

Division Reports:

The **Administrative Division** met on September 12, 2020 via ZOOM with 8 of 9 members present. Since there were several new members of our division, job assignments were adjusted. Bob Welly is the Policies Chair, Dan Maloney is the Conference Site Selection Committee Chair, Niccole Amersdorfer is the Regional Rep Coordinator and the Hall of Fame Chair, Kathie Brennan is the Nominations Chair and the Spirit of Community Theater Co-Chair, Amy Sullivan is the Spirit of Community Theater Co-Chair, Billie Harmon and Millie Butts are the Delegate Coordinator Co-Chairs, Donna Jean Evans is the Advocacy Chair and the Community Theatre Month in Ohio Chair, Susan Barzda is the Admin Division Chair and Secretary, Aara Wise remains the Historian, and all members of the division will work on the Long-Range Goals and the division's job descriptions. We discussed the regional rep training and Kathie Brennan will pass on training materials to Niccole to use at board retreat. Niccole will plan to train the reps at the October Board Retreat if enough reps are present. If not, she will look into developing a training to be done via Zoom at a later date. We discussed the presentation of the Hall of Fame Awards and decided to award two of the awards in person to two of the inductees and arrange for publicity if possible. The third award will be presented at the 2021 State Conference. The Division will focus on getting long-range

goals up-to-date this year. Assignments were reviewed briefly by members in the division. —*Susan Barzda, Admin Division Chair and Secretary*

MM/PR: Our division will be helping Aara with Conference next Labor Day along with the Script Library and Website. Conference registration - Janis, Frances and Christy R. will be in conversation with Aara concerning how to get registration done at state conference. They will also handle scheduling the rest of us for shifts at the table when the time comes.

Friday night shenanigans - Christi T. will handle coordination with the Friday night festivities at state conference. For those who haven't experienced it - Friday night at state conference is a time to reunite with everyone and have a good time. Aara has said she's interested in a Midway theme, and people from each region will be responsible for a game and prizes. Think in terms of drunk Midway games.

Website - Carissa has agreed to be the social media watchdog. Thanks in advance for being the sounding board for all of us who get annoyed with bad grammar, bad punctuation, and bad spelling.

Script library - Christy R. is working with Aara to bring this resource up to current technology. It's exciting to think that something that was burdensome and slightly costly can evolve into something instant and free to the members.

Long range planning - we'll have an email conversation about this with the intent of having something to present to the membership at the January meeting. A separate email was sent to you on Friday which will serve as a starting spot for us. If you didn't get it please let me know.

Conference band - Please start listening to stuff and help me with a play list for the Sunday night party at conference. —*Mendell Hibbard, 2nd Vice-President*

Regional Reports:

East Region: Christy sent a survey to theatres in the East Region. She received 5 responses from the 7 theatres indicating they planned to renew their memberships. One theatre will not renew due to funding problems of the theatre. Theatres want advice on dealing with the pandemic. Two theatres have shows in rehearsal. -*Christy Rahrig, East Regional Rep*

North: The delegates were emailed an inquiry about holding a meeting; no one responded. Later, by email, the delegates were given three options: Maintain the three current Regional Reps – Donna Jean Evans, Jason Chandler, and Deb Wentz; keep the current three and add more Regional Reps; or replace the current Regional Reps. The three current Regional Reps were retained by a majority vote. There were 7 votes for retaining the current reps. Three theatres did not respond. There is nothing additional to report. —*Deb Wentz, Regional Rep*

Northeast Region: The Regional Reps all plan to continue and plan to all be at the board retreat. They met on August 12, 2020. Hudson and Stow theatres remain down for the season. -*Dawna Kornick, board member reporting for Northeast Regional Reps*

Northwest Region: Four of the Northwest Regional Reps will continue. They are Inge Klopping, Jeffrey Albright, Brittany Kupresanin, and Rebecca Schmidt. They are trying to get a few more reps. -*Inge Klopping, Northwest Regional Rep*

Southeast—Delegates met on September 16. Six out of eight theater delegates were in attendance. All regional reps were asked to stay on for 2020/2021. All delegates told us they will renew their membership for next year. Jackson County Players from Ripley, WV who joined us as a trial, will join next year. They all believe the \$65 dues was reasonable and shared some of the reasons they thought their theater was getting "their monies worth." Our Regional OCTAFest will be held on June 12, 2021 at the Blakeslee Center in Middleport, Ohio. —*Frances Gibser, Southeast Rep*

Southwest Region: The Southwest Region delegates will meet on November 24, 2020. There is nothing new to report. -*Kevin Noll, Lead Southwest Regional Rep*

National AACT 2021...

from Christi Thomas

I received an email from AACT on November 23 to let everyone know that the national festival in Louisville was canceled. HOWEVER, AACT is still going to hold a virtual theater festival. Those theaters who submitted an application before November 1 will now be asked to submit a 30-minute excerpt and the Committee will narrow those down to twelve. AACT will then contract with a professional production crew to film a 60-minute excerpt, with the same crew video taping all excerpts for a level playing field.



If you are one of the 12, I am sure you have been or will be notified with instructions for the next step.

Maybe a new era for theater festivals (although we will miss physically seeing our friends and colleagues). If you had already registered and want a refund, contact AACT: Karen@aact.org. I will print more information as it becomes available. Break legs to all who are participating!

OCTA Conference 2021 clues. Name these shows:

1. He could give you cavities.
2. An evacuated bird's home.
3. Practical, clerical, skeptical...
4. She was on the radio in 1957.
5. A name for a red buck at night.



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