

# CUELINES



December 2021

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Newsletter of the Ohio Community Theatre Association  
www.ohiocommunitytheatre.org

## A Note from Jesse

Well, we made it through 2021! Now that we are all starting to focus on re-opening our theaters, I hope you have not forgotten about OCTA. 2022 will be the year of re-opening for all of us, OCTAFest will be back including OCTA Jr. Our 2022 Conference will be in Newark, Ohio at the Cherry Valley Hotel. To book your reservation for Labor Day, call 740-788-1200 or try this link: [https://app.thebookingbutton.com/properties/cherryvalleyhotel?promotion\\_code=OCTA](https://app.thebookingbutton.com/properties/cherryvalleyhotel?promotion_code=OCTA). If you are unaware of the 2022 Conference theme, it is *OCTA Spectacular, our greatest shows*. We hope everyone is ready to come back and have a great experience.

To start off 2022, OCTA will be focusing on cleaning up policies and getting ready for our first year of eight regions. We will have some weekends where we will have more than one OCTAFest in June and July so you have to make some choices of where to go and see some great theater. Please keep your eyes open for final dates and locations as we try to get back in the swing of things. I would start to think about all the fun you missed out on the last few years and look forward to 2022 being the year we had the most excerpts ever!

Please remember that Aara Wise is a volunteer now and filling in as many duties as possible for OCTA, but we do not have a paid administrative assistant any longer. If you do not get emails or calls back as fast as in the past, know that you can always reach out to others on the board and regional reps for information about OCTA.

I look forward to seeing what the new year will bring and wish all of you the best in 2022.

Warm regards,  
*Jesse Bernal*  
OCTA President

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### DATES TO REMEMBER

January 15, 2022 - Board Meeting  
March 19, 2022 - Board Meeting  
May 21, 2022 - Board Meeting  
July 16, 2022 - Board Meeting  
August 6, 2022—OCTA, Jr.  
September 2-5, 2022 - Annual Conference

**aact**  
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION  
OF COMMUNITY THEATRE

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## Conference 2022

What is happening at Conference 2022?

Join us Friday night "On the Midway." Each of our eight regions are planning a spectacular opening night of fun, games, prizes, food, and a few surprises. You will be able to enjoy both modern day and past memories of fun when going to your favorite fair or circus. The Midway opens at 8:30 pm and lasts until 11 pm. The regions are planning now so we will be announcing more details in future issues of *Cuelines*. Contact Christi for more information or some ideas for your Friday night event.

We know it has been a challenging last two years. So, we are trying to make a bad situation fun. Our Sunday night Awards dinner is titled *Mysterio Elegante*. Translation: Elegant Masks. Bring your beautifully decorated masks to enter in the costume contest. As creative as everyone is, we are sure this will be a "Spectacular" event.

And, of course, 2022 is an AACT year, do choose your excerpt wisely because you could go to Wisconsin and Kentucky.

Let us introduce you to the steering committee assisting Co-Conference Chairs Gladys Haney and Aara Wise with Conference 2022:

Jason Neymeiyer  
Dawna Kornick  
Glen Garcia  
Jane Mancini  
Thom Ogilvie

Amy Sullivan  
Christi Thomas  
Lisa Napier-Garcia  
Kathy Hyland  
Alexis McCullough  
Eugene Haney



## **October Division Reports**

**Administrative Division** – The division divided up assignments and reviewed all administrative policies. They also met with members of the fundraising division to review policies -- *Niccole Amersdorfer, Secretary and Admin Division Chair*

**Fundraising Division**– The division brainstormed ideas to raise money for OCTA and met with the administrative division to review policies. —*Jason Neymeiyer, 3rd Vice President and Fundraising Division Chair*

**MMPR Division**– The division discussed job assignments and the new OCTA Brochure. —*Mendell Hibbard, 2nd Vice-President, MMPR Division Chair*

**Programming Division**– The division discussed assignments and Regional Responders' compensation, and reviewed programming policies and the Regional festival schedule. —*Wayne Kirsch, 1st Vice-President, Program Division Chair*

## **October Board Retreat**

Board members voted on several policy changes at the meeting including Board Meeting Schedule, Attendance Policy, and Conference Site Selection. There was also a vote on a change for the College Scholarship policy and Patron Program from the Fundraising Division.

Meeting schedule: December, January, and March meetings will be virtual and we're looking for space for the May and July meetings.

## **December Division Reports**

**Administrative Division**—Voted on a few changes to the Bereavement Policy, Budget Policy, Regional Rep Elections, and Visitor Policy. —*Niccole Amersdorfer, Secretary and Admin Division Chair*

**Fundraising Division**—Reviewed the roles for the members of the division and looked at potential new logo items. —*Jason Neymeiyer, 3rd Vice-President, Fundraising Chair.*

**MM/PR Division**—Job assignments were completed. New topics included the OCTA Jr. logo to be updated and what to do about individual memberships. —*Mendell Hibbard, 2nd Vice-President, MM/PR Chair*

**Programming Division**—Updated jobs and forms; publicity and judging of competitions were reviewed with possible changes considered. Need to appoint a chair for OCTA Jr. and find a venue. —*Wayne Kirsch, 1st Vice-President, Program Division Chair*

## **Board Report**

- The Board approved the 2022 Budget proposed at the December meeting.
- The 2022 Board Retreat will be held October 15-16 at a place TBA.
- The 2025 Conference location was approved for the Crown Plaza North unless another site is found.
- The 2022 membership dues will be mailed out soon and are due by January 15.

## October Regional Reports

**Central Region**—Sue Rapier and Donnie Lockwood will meet soon to divide up the theatres and regional responsibilities. The Regional festival is TBA and the next delegates meeting is scheduled for November 20—*Sue Rapier*

**East Region**—The regional is set for June 12 at Coshocton Footlight Players. —*Christy Rahrig*

**North Region**—The Region has not held an in-person meeting. Through email, Deb Wentz, Donna Jean Evans, and Jason Chandler were all re-elected as Regional Reps. Unfortunately Jason has since had to resign due to time commitments and scheduling conflicts. The Regional Festival is set for July 9 at Bucyrus Little Theatre. —*Deb Wentz*

**Northeast Region**—Although there were no Regional Reps present, it was reported that the regional is tentative for June 18 at Hudson Players. The Reps have not met yet.

**Northwest Region**—There were no Regional Reps present and they have not held a meeting and do not have one scheduled. The Regional Festival is tentative for June 25 with a location TBA.

**Southeast Region**—Frances Gibser is helping the reps, however a meeting has not yet been set. River City Players is hosting the regional festival on June 11 in Middleport, Ohio. Billie Harmon fell and broke her leg. Aara will send out her address for those who would like to send a card. —*Janis Carnahan*

**Southwest Region**—The Southwest Regional is set for June 16-18 at Miami University in Hamilton. The region met on September 28 with the next meeting on October 26. —*Kevin Noll*

**West Region**—The West Region will hold their first meeting on November 20. Michelle and Christi have divided up the theaters and the 2022 festival is planned for July 9 in Troy. —*Christi Thomas*

## December Regional Reports

**Central Region**—The Region met and reviewed the theatres' seasons. There is still no date or location for the festival. We do have a new Rep: Jill Henwood.—*Sue Rapier*

**East Region**—The region met in November via Zoom. They confirmed their regional date and location. —*Christy Rahrig*

**North Region**—There was no report. —*Deb Wentz*

**Northeast Region**—Dawna Kornick reported there are potentially two returning theatres, but no paperwork yet.

**Northwest Region**—Joe Barton has contacted several theaters and all are booked for June 25. He also talked with The Village Players and believes they will be able to host the festival. New Reps will be voted on at the December 11 meeting: Evan James Copeland, Rose Roberts, and possibly Wayne Weber. Jeffrey Tonjes has resigned. They will also vote on the Lead Rep. —*Jesse Bernal*

**Southeast Region**—They have not had a meeting.—*Janis Carnahan*

**Southwest Region**—They held meetings on October 26 and November 23. The next meeting will be January 25.—*Kevin Noll*

**West Region**—The West Region held their first meeting on November 20 at Troy Civic Theatre. It's not too early to start thinking about competitions, scholarships, Hall of Fame, and Spirit of Community Theatre. Michelle and Niccole will be keeping

Facebook updated. Christi encouraged everyone to use the Guide/Respondent Program and talked about ways to encourage theaters to excerpt as 2022 is an AACT year with the 2023 Region III Festival to be in Wisconsin. Our regional festival will be held July 9 in Troy. The Friday night Midway activities were discussed for the 2022 Conference. Next meeting will be March 26 at Brookville Community Theatre. —Christi Thomas

## **AACT National Festival Online**

**by Christi Thomas**

I was a little bit skeptical about the National AACTFest last June. I had been excited that this festival was to be held in Louisville and so close for all of us. However, the online version was simply WONDERFUL.

For those of us who paid, we downloaded WHOVA and were able to watch all the excerpts and do workshops and a few get-togethers. The annual AACT Board meeting was held via Zoom.

I took a vacation week as I would've had we gone to Kentucky and I didn't have to leave my home (and it was a lot cheaper).

Most all the excerpts were preceded with a Keynote speech. Starting on Monday, there was a "Chat with Ken Davenport," Broadway Producer followed by a social hour and then a Keynote Address by Jeff Calhoun. Jeff is a Tony nominee for Disney's *Newsies* and Deaf West Theater's *Big River*. He received a Tony nomination for Best Choreography for *Grease* on Broadway. He did a lot of name dropping which was fun to listen to and was also one of the Adjudicators for the week.

The other Adjudicators were Allen Ebert (Madison Wisconsin, Region III) and Amy Wratchford, Managing Director at American Shakespeare Center (Staunton, Virginia).

Tuesday had lots of workshops and started with "A Chat with Tim Pettolina," House Manager at the Richard Rodgers Theatre which is the venue for Broadway's *Hamilton*. He said that he started in community theatre when he was in high school. He noted that *Hamilton* is sold out all the time and would be starting back up on September 14, so he had to return to work three weeks before the production, but the actors had to return four weeks prior. He was so interesting to listen to discussing celebrities who want tickets at the last minute and all the bills he has to pay for the theater.

The Keynote Address that evening was by Kristofer Geddie. He is Director of Diversity and General Manager at Venice Theatre in Venice, Florida. He had previously performed on stages around the world and now serves on the AACT Board. He too was wonderful to listen to.

That evening, Cincinnati's INNOVatheatre performed their excerpt of *Ordinary Days* receiving Outstanding Achievement in a Supporting Role for Bonnie Emmer and Outstanding Achievement in Musical Direction for Matthew Nassida.

Wednesday morning started with "A Chat with Letia Clouston." She has directed a few Hallmark Movies and some off-Broadway shows; as well as working on "West Wing" for four years. She had tried different roles in community theatre: backstage, stage manager, costuming, set, etc. Her advice was to be reliable—always on time. If you're not early, you're late. There were more excellent workshops prior to Stage Left Theater Association's excerpt of *Lonely Planet* (Spokane, Washington) and Theatre Tuscaloosa's (Alabama) *Love and Cheese Toast*. The Wednesday Keynote Address was Rob McClure who had portrayed *Mrs. Doubtfire* in the Broadway show. Some familiar Broadway

credits are Adam Maitland in *Beetlejuice*, Nick Bottom in *Something Rotten!* and the roles of Princeton and Rod in *Avenue Q*. His television credits include *Person of Interest*, *Elementary*, and *The Good Fight*.

Thursday morning had “A Chat with Wesley Whatley,” Creative Director of Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade. The evening started with a Keynote Address from Chilina Kennedy followed by Artists Collaborative Theatre’s (Elkhorn City, Kentucky) excerpt of *Blood Song*, *The Story of the Hatfields and the McCoys*; SHAPE Players’ *Holy Days* (Mons, Belgium); and Players de Noc’s *Jerry’s Brain* (Escanaba, Michigan). Chilina’s Broadway credits include Carole King in *Beautiful* for over 1200 performances and Mary Magdalene in *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

Friday’s workshops were, again, some of the best I’ve seen offered and led to the Keynote Address by Mandy Moore. Mandy is a 2017, 2018, and 2020 Emmy Award winner, eight-time Emmy nominee, and a world-class director, choreographer, and dancer. She’s best known for her work as a producer and choreographer on *So You Think You Can Dance*. She also choreographed *La La Land* and is the producer and choreographer for NBC’s *Zoey’s Extraordinary Playlist*.

The evening excerpts were *How to Be a Good Son*, presented by Windham Actors Guild from New Hampshire; *Hillary and Clinton* by The Studio Theatre of Little Rock, Arkansas; and *A Doll’s House, Part 2* done by Shawnee Little Theatre of Shawnee, Oklahoma.

Saturday’s Keynote Address was from Frank Galati who was nominated for a Tony for directing *Ragtime*. This was followed by *Collected Stories* by South City Theatre (Pelham, Alabama), *The Harry and Sam Dialogues* by Bellingham Theatre Guild (Bellingham, Washington), and *The Mountaintop* by The Lexington Players (Windsor, Connecticut).

Sunday’s Keynote Speaker was Philip Hernandez who is the only actor in Broadway history to have played both Jean Valjean and Inspector Javert in *Les Misérables*. He made his Broadway debut in the original cast of *Kiss of the Spider Woman*.

The Outstanding Overall Festival Production was *The Mountaintop* which also received Outstanding Achievement in Costume Design; Outstanding Achievement in a Leading Role for Dominic Carter and Jes Washington (both main roles); and Outstanding Achievement in Direction for Sal Jones. The play is a fictional depiction of events the night before the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King.

All the Keynote Speakers and other personalities were sponsored by various companies and with the reduced costs (they were all via Zoom), it was one of the best theater-related Conferences I have ever attended, albeit on my laptop in my bedroom.

The next AACTFest National Festival will be held June 12-17, 2023 in Louisville, Kentucky.



*Cuelines* is published online five times per year as the official newsletter of the Ohio Community Theatre Association. Material for publication should be submitted by the third Monday of January, March, May, and October, and by December 10, and will be printed as space permits. Send Callboard listings to both the Newsletter Editor and Webmaster. Submissions without names will not be published.