



Newsletter

September 2012- Vol 5, Issue 2

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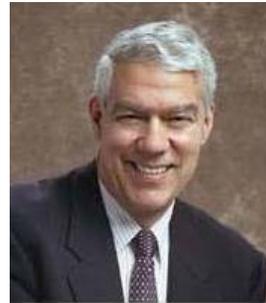
Tip for Theatres

Is it easy for your website visitors to find your theatre's street address or GPS coordinates? As more and more drivers rely on their GPS devices, it's an idea whose time has come. Our informal survey of member websites shows a fairly small percentage of sites who make it simple for the directionally challenged in this way.

Tourism Cares Grants

Tourism Cares is an organization which promotes and supports tourism. Information about their grants programs can be found at <http://www.tourismcares.org/grants>. Their website has details on past grants which range from

From the Director



Dear Members:

In this my first summer as your director, I journeyed on my maiden (I won't say virgin) tour of as many of our member theatres as time would allow: sixteen in all. Susan took in another seven, and we were both deeply impressed again and again at the spirit and dedication of our members. Only one of the shows was cancelled entirely for rain, with one other not quite finishing its second act. Although there were a couple of other close calls, including a scary pre-show wind storm in Prestonsburg Kentucky, everyone else played a full evening. Pretty remarkable, I thought, given the atrocious heat that so many of you faced this summer during the hottest July in US history. Our business is not for the faint of heart!

In addition to this reaffirmation of the energy and talent of our member theatres, I was struck by two things:

First, the rich variety of the productions on offer. History,

programmatic support to bricks and mortar.

Information for the Newsletter

Do you have something you want to share with the IOD membership in the next newsletter? Just send us an email at hardym@ecu.edu and we will try to include it in the next newsletter.

IOD Contact Information

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Shakespeare, contemporary farce, musicals, fresh scripts and new productions in addition to the loving recreations of the Kings and Queens of our industry. (Anniversaries this year included 61, 63, 75 and 89! There will be a test at the conference.)

The second very strong impression I got was how extremely useful it would be if more of our members could break away from their own seasons long enough to see a couple of other shows. I know how difficult that is to do, but I do believe it could be well worth the effort for all of us. It's impossible not to get new ideas or, at the very least, to come away feeling better about your own work! And, sad to say, video doesn't cut it: you need to have the full audience experience. Plus, if our experience is any gauge, you will be warmly welcomed by your fellow members eager to show you around, compare notes and exchange delicious horror stories. Believe me: it can be therapeutic-most of us necessarily are the only games in our towns and no one understands what we deal with better than our peers.

From here at the IOD, we hear that some of you have had very rough seasons while others have shattered past attendance records. To all of you: congratulations on your work and we hope to see you next month in Lake George.

Michael Hardy
Director

2012 IOD Conference: Lake George, NY October 14-17



Set in the beautiful Adirondack mountains of upstate New York at the height of the Fall color season, this year's Annual Conference of the Institute will focus on that indispensable commodity: our audiences. How can we serve them better and how are the most successful theatres and tourist businesses upping their game? Our sessions will be led by a combination of guest speakers and members as well as the most successful local business leaders from the Lake George region. Go online today to register at <http://outdoordrama.unc.edu/conference>.

Website Re-Design and New Members

The Institute has just signed a contract with Venture Industries Online to re-design our website for the first time in five years. It doesn't seem like such a long time except when you realize that was when the initial product launch for the iphone happened! Our goal, besides making a more attractive and functional site, is to create a more interactive site for our members, provide more

information and services, and position the Institute for international expansion. When the site launches later this fall, we will begin to promote membership in the IOD to the very extensive lists of outdoor theatres around the world which we have been developing with the assistance of our research assistant. We'll be in touch with all members as that starts to roll out.

2013 IOD Auditions in Asheville, NC

This year our winter auditions will be the very first auditions for the 2013 summer season. Scheduled to take place in Asheville, NC on Saturday, January 19, 2013 our auditions come 3 weeks before UPTA and 7 weeks before SETC. We are adding several components to the auditions to make them more attractive to the performers: a mixer party on Saturday night after the auditions and a career development session with a guest speaker on Sunday morning. Theatre students will not yet be in rehearsals for their winter productions and this is a three day weekend because of Martin Luther King day, so we expect a record turnout. Our hotel is the [Renaissance Asheville Hotel](#), a beautiful property offering us a nightly rate of \$99. Reservations must be made by December 18, 2012. Members wishing to sign up to attend the auditions should contact Susan in the IOD office.

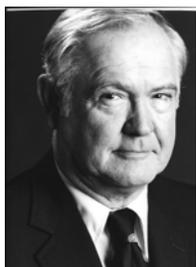
2012 Attendance Reports Now Due!

Now that the 2012 outdoor drama season is coming to an end, the Institute of Outdoor Drama is once again collecting nationwide attendance, marketing and financial data. The Institute serves as the national clearinghouse for information regarding promotion, and management practices in the our industry, and we are the only source for this information. Producers, managers and artistic directors often contact us for this information when making important decisions; and tourism departments, journalists and communities considering new dramas ask for it as well. It is probably the most valuable data we collect.

We have been collecting attendance data since 1965-for 47 years! Every theatre, large or small, makes an important contribution by participating in this survey. The attendance numbers from each theatre raises the overall totals and makes the final numbers more accurate and meaningful. All of this is to say that our timely receipt of the data from our member theatres is very important!

This year we have worked to make the process easier for our members by providing a form which will handle the various calculations from our members' raw data. All theatres should receive this by email within two weeks of closing, and questions can be directed to Susan at 252-328-5363. PLEASE TURN THIS AROUND QUICKLY!

Mark R. Sumner Award - QUICK DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 7!



The Institute is now accepting nominations for the 2012 Mark R. Sumner Award. Established in 1990 by the Institute, the Sumner Award honors the lifetime contribution of Director Emeritus, Mark R. Sumner. Recipients have played a major role in the production of a specific outdoor drama or they have made a noteworthy impact on the movement as a whole. Past recipients include playwrights, choreographers, directors, actors, and designers, as well as producers and scholars. The Sumner Award is a national award and exemplifies the highest standards of American outdoor drama.

The award will be presented at the 2012 conference in Lake George, NY.

The 2011 Award recipient was Scott J. Parker, Director Emeritus of the Institute of Outdoor Drama. To see a complete list of past Sumner Award winners go to <http://outdoordrama.unc.edu/conference/mark-r-sumner-award>.

To offer a nomination for the prestigious Sumner Award, go to <http://outdoordrama.unc.edu/conference/2012-sumner-award-nom-form>; please submit the on-line nomination form no later than Friday, September 7, 2012.

Member News

Jenny Wiley Theatre, Kentucky

Marty Childers

Jenny Wiley Drama Association, which governs Jenny Wiley Theatre, and the City of Pikeville have signed an agreement that allows the theatre to expand its year round offerings and bring professional theatre to downtown Pikeville. A new, designated indoor theatre space will be constructed beginning in 2012 to provide Jenny Wiley Theatre with a permanent indoor theatre and to continue the expansion of cultural arts offerings in the City of Pikeville.



Serenbe Playhouse, Georgia

Brian Clowdus

After record breaking audience attendance and fantastic critical success, Serenbe Playhouse concluded its third season, Season of Dreams, on August 18, 2012. Regional World Premiere Musical *Time Between Us*, along with a new adaptation of *Alice in Wonderland* and a re-imagined *Midsummer Night's Dream* rounded out the dreamy season, marking Serenbe Playhouse's most successful season to date and further establishing The Playhouse as a staple in the Atlanta theatre scene!



Time Between Us Photo by BreeAnne Clowdus

Utah Shakespeare Festival: Held Over

The Utah Shakespeare Festival has announced that it is extending its current season due to the overwhelming interest from Festival guests and fans in the fall plays. *Les Misérables*, *Hamlet* and *Stones in His Pockets* will run one additional week, through October 27. In addition, the

Festival has added new Monday evening performances of *Les Misérables* on October 1, 8, and 15. According to Marketing Director Kami Terry Paul, this has been one of the most popular Festival seasons in history with over thirty-five consecutive sold out performances of *Les Misérables* this summer. "We are right on track to have a record breaking year in ticket sales, and we haven't even opened *Hamlet* or *Stones in His Pockets* yet," said Paul.

NB: Former IOD Director Scott Parker saw *Les Miz* in August and proclaimed it the "finest production of that play" he had ever seen.



Theatre in the Park, Illinois

Kari Catton reports that her theatre in New Salem debuted a new dramatic and musical production, *Civil War Journeys*, this season after a two year development period with playwright-director John Woodruff. The script is available for other theatres who may wish to produce it, and interested theatres can contact Mr. Woodruff at Gruncle1@yahoo.com.

Canadian Badlands Passion Play, Alberta

Vance Neudorf reports that the Passion Play has embarked on a building program utilizing construction techniques from the time of Christ: "We have discovered that our local concrete company makes 5000 pound "lego" blocs from recycled concrete. These blocks are incredibly similar to the Ashlar stones that Herod the great used in his construction of the temple in Jerusalem. Buy taking 1.5 million pounds of these blocks and stacking them up we were able to create a new theatre space on our site that will seat 300 people and allow us to run smaller shows and host outside events. The new area also became part of our stage and was used for the trial of Jesus before Annas. We were also able to stack up a long row of these blocks and triple the size of our stage. The new area is complete with overpasses to allow our actors and horses to access the stage while other actors moved into position below them. The changes revolutionized our presentation of the Gospel of John and as a result the 800 people who responded to our annual survey told us that 98% of them would recommend our play to friends and family."



Montford Park Players, North Carolina

Although the season is not yet over, John Russell reports a rather astounding 46.35% increase in attendance compared to last year, with a corresponding revenue increase for the free Shakespeare in the park of 50.12%! He attributes some of this to the popular repertoire of *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and also a special tourism grant that helped to market the performance experience. Together with plans for significant new facility improvements and expansion, the Asheville theatre's future looks very bright.



In Memoriam, Pioneer Playhouse, Kentucky



Holly Henson 1960-2012

by Heather Henson

Pioneer Playhouse was started in 1950 by my father, Colonel Eben C. Henson. It has been a labor of love (and possibly a sign of insanity) for my family for over six decades. When "the Colonel" died eight years ago, the Hensons all rallied in order to keep his dream of "theatre under the stars" alive. My mother, Charlotte, continued on in her role as Co-Producer, which basically meant she continued to be the backbone of the Playhouse. My brother, Robby, returned from LA to direct the plays. And my sister, Holly Henson, took the helm as Artistic Director.

"We lost Holly to breast cancer on May 27, 2012, just two weeks before this season began. Holly died where she lived - in her home not a stone's throw from the Playhouse stage. She died as the new company was assembling, old and familiar friends among the troupe, but also fresh young faces, actors who had been hired by a vibrant, healthy, and optimistic Holly only a few short months before.

IOD Director's Note: *Pioneer Playhouse was one of the theatres I visited this summer, and I arrived one evening to learn of Holly's death for the first time, having worked out the details of my impending visit with her only a few weeks earlier. All of the Henson family were most welcoming, and I was treated to a truly hilarious production of Picasso at the Lapin Agile which had been moved indoors to escape the brutal heat that so many of our member theatres experienced this season.*

The Institute of Outdoor Drama (IOD) is a program of the College of Fine Arts and Communication at East Carolina University in Greenville, NC. Since its inception in 1963, the Institute's scope has grown to provide services to a wide variety of theatrical organizations around the world who perform in outdoor settings including historical dramas, Shakespeare festivals, religious dramas, renaissance festivals, and musical theatre. These organizations are united by their common challenges in producing theatre in outdoor settings and their unique roles in providing exceptional tourism value for their region. For membership information please visit our website at <http://outdoordrama.unc.edu/> or email us at outdoor@ecu.edu.

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