



California Educational Theatre E-News

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From the President

Happy New Year! I hope everyone's holiday was filled with joy and reflection, and that 2008 has started off with a creative and inspiring bang.

I am still filled with the success of the 2007 CETA Conference and am excited to announce that we are in full swing planning for the 2008 Conference. Co-chairs, Rozan Gautier and Carol Hovey, have found our location in San Francisco. The master class, workshops and guest speakers are already being solicited. Spring Awakening will be in production at that time and is a possible conference event. The state board is excited about some new format ideas and a closing event gala. The newly formulated northern board is meeting as a part of the conference committee. Save the date now for the CETA Conference 2008, October 16-18!

The CETA Position Paper, which was presented at the October CETA Conference, has been received with accolades and appreciation. We hope that this is just the beginning of its ability to reach the masses. You too can pass it on by ordering hard copies or downloading it from the CETA website. Also on the website, you can become a member of the new Middle School User Group (stay tuned for the High School User Group). We believe this will be a valuable networking tool for all CETA members.

Along with the new business, CETA is thrilled to continue the work on the CA Theatre Credential and CA Dance credential along with the CA Alliance and the CDEA (CA Dance Education Association). We are currently setting up meetings with the CTC (CA Commission on Teacher Credentialing). I will keep you posted regarding this process for a much-desired outcome.

As well as our professional work, CETA is proud to sponsor educational theatre events for the CA youth. I just returned from the CETA-South High School Theatre Festival and want to thank CETA-South High School VP Terri Rogelstad for chairing an inspiring and talent-filled showcase. My own students enjoyed seeing four full-length productions, attending workshops and auditioning for scholarships along with 900 other students. Next up is the February 9th CETA Middle Stage Fest in Sacramento hosted-

by Carolyn Elder. On March 25th I hope to see many of you at the 10th Annual CETA CA Youth in Theatre Day in Sacramento. Founder Gai Jones will be receiving a proclamation on the Senate Floor. Congratulations to Gai for this astounding accomplishment.

Thank you for being a theatre educator in the great state of California!

- Amanda Swann

Buzz And Excitement In The Air For CETA-S 2008 High School Theatre Festival



The 37th annual California Educational Theatre Association's, Southern High School Festival was held over the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday weekend at Plummer Auditorium. The beautiful venue was host to 900 theatre students from all over Southern California. The festival was a huge success, starting with Tesoro High School's *The Comedy of Errors* on Friday night and culminating on Sunday with Rancho Buena Vista's *A Shayna Maidel*. Saturday morning opened with Etiwanda High School's *Pound*, an original script by director Christian Kiley, and Saturday evening students were entertained by Rolling Hills Prep's *Don't Drink the Water*. Comedy Sportz ended the evening with an hour full of hilarious, witty and captivating improvisations. On Saturday afternoon, students enjoyed attending workshops and/or auditioning

for scholarships and presenting scenes. This year we had twenty-seven workshops taught by professional teaching artists, with such session as: Acting in Voice Overs, Melodrama: History and Technique, Costume Design, Student Film Making, Afro-Jazz Dance, Tai Chi, Stage Management, Directing, Auditioning for Television, Stage Combat, Shakespeare, Mime, and Cyber-Hyper Theatre to name a few. There was great feed back from the students who attended the workshops. The Festival of Scenes was presented on Sunday afternoon. Two plays from each region were selected to present scenes: St. Francis H S's *Judgment at Nuremberg*, University H. S.'s *Bus Stop*, Mission Viejo H. S.'s *Our Town*, Upland H. S.'s *Dark at the Top of the Stairs*, Los Osos H. S.'s *The Art of Dining*, El Camino H. S.'s *Much Ado About Nothing*, and La Costa Canyon H. S.'s *The Foreigner*.

The festival ended with the Awards Ceremony a very special highlight for the students. Awards went to the following: Vivian Bish Edwards scholarship recipient: Avery Henderson from Rancho Buena Vista H. S. Technical Scholarship Recipients: Ariel Thompke from Upland H. S. and Justin Wilson from Westview H. S. Acting Scholarship Recipients: Natalie Haro from Los Osos H. S., Edwin Martinez from La Quinta H. S., Jake Wells from Huntington Beach H. S., Allison Finn from Westview H. S., John Krause from Palos Verdes H. S., and AbrahamRodriquez from Highland H. S. SceneWorks Award Winners: Best Supporting Actress - Caitlyn Fabrocini from Birmingham H. S., Best Supporting Actor - Sam Bratt from Mt. Carmel H. S., Best Actress - Hollie Stutzman from Mt. Carmel H. S., Best Actor - Chester Lockhart from Lakeside H. S. and Best Ensemble - Mt. Carmel H. S.

The Diviners. CA Youth in Theatre Delegates: Torrey Pines H. S. Marinee Payne, teacher *Julius Caesar* with Tucker Lawrence and

Ricardo Munoz; Lakeside H. S. Scott Karlan, teacher, *Hamlet* with Chester Lockhart and Katie Waisanen; Westview H. S., Doug Smith, teacher with Allison Finn; Upland H. S., Christine Kolb, teacher with Ariel Thompke; Palos Verdes H. S., Kari Hayter, teacher with John Krause. Awards from Festival of Scenes: Cameo Award, *Bus Stop*, University H. S. Ariel Labason, role of Elma; Best Supporting Actor, *Dark at the Top of the Stairs*, Upland H. S. Jason Perez, role of Sammy; Best Supporting Actress *Our Town* Mission Viejo H. S. Elizabeth Hunter, role of Mrs. Webb; Best Actress *Much Ado About Nothing* El Camino H. S. Laurel Burns, role of Leonata; Best Actor *Judgment at Nuremberg* St. Francis H. S. Kevin Rutkowski, role of Ernst Janning; and Best Ensemble *The Crucible* Palos Verdes H. S. Director, Kari Hayter. Awards from Main Stage: Flip Reade Award, Tesoro H. S. *Comedy of Errors* Garrett McAnulla, role of Dromio of Syracuse; Cameo Award *Don't Drink the Water* Rolling Hills Prep School



Michelle Altman, role of Burns; Best Supporting Actor A *Shayna Madel* Rancho Buena Vista H. S. Alex Dressler, role of David Pechenik; Best Supporting Actress

Comedy of Errors Tesoro H. S. Hannah Rash, role of Luciana; Best Actor *Don't Drink the Water*, Rolling Hills Prep School Tamer Aziz, role of Walter Hollander; Best Actress A *Shayna Madel* Rancho Buena Vista H. S. Kaite Nelson, role of Lusía Puchenik, and Best Ensemble *Pound Etiwanda* H. S. Director, Christian Kiley. Special festival acknowledgement to Terri Rogelstad Festival Coordinator, Fullerton Joint Union High School District, Plummer Auditorium, Sunny Hills High School, Mary Krell-Oishi and all the CETA-S theatre teachers and volunteers.



Article by Corky Dominguez



Robin Lithgow,
AACA Representative

Progress and Lack of Progress on the Advanced Placement Theatre Initiative

Last spring a disappointed and angry College Board Academic Advisory Committee members heard the disappointing results of the survey that the Board conducted to establish the viability of Advanced Placement Exams in Theatre and Dance.

The bitterness of the pill was exacerbated by the ebullience we had felt six months earlier, when the Board announced that the survey would be done. They had made this decision as a result of the two Position Papers that had been submitted by the national dance and theatre organizations advocating for “first step” written AP Exams in theatre and dance history and literature, on the model of the AP Art History Exam, which would be less expensive to develop and assess and would help grow the field for later performance-based exams.

At that time we had been told that there were “significant players behind this initiative.” We were also encouraged when the two analysts hired to conduct it determined, after the first few interviews, that what should be surveyed would not be the proposal that the major national players had all signed on to but that we should “go for what we ultimately want,” which, of course, would be at least partly performance-based.

The AACA members felt that the survey asked the wrong questions and asked the wrong people.

To begin with, not one of the numerous names and organizations sent to the analysts, with complete contact information, was actually interviewed. That was a shock. The analysts focused mainly on theatre and dance academics in the colleges and universities that they have the most contact with.

More important, the interview questions only asked about performance-based tests with no preparation or explanation of purpose. It was as though the Position Paper that the American Alliance for Theatre and Education, the Educational Theatre Association and the Association for Theatre in Higher Education all signed and the partner paper presented by the national dance community proposing a first step with written exams on the model of the AP Art History Exam had never even been read. Indeed, when we requested that they return the originals of these papers, they had been lost. The analysts seemed to be completely unaware of the arguments presented.

As a result, the survey came back with a resounding NO as to the possible profitability of exams. There was no new information. They said what we had known all along: colleges and universities, at this time, will not give credit for performance-based exams in sufficient numbers. We were reminded that the College Board is

not a charitable institution, and if the tests would not bring in income fairly quickly, they were far too costly to develop.

To be fair, the current was already running against us. The College Board is currently under scrutiny for offering too many tests, enabling too many students to enter college with a year or more of credit already completed. For obvious reasons, both economic and pedagogic, colleges are not eager to accept students who will complete their credits for graduation in less than four years. Just as we were presenting our Position Papers, the CB was deciding to take a five-year hiatus in the development of new AP exams, no matter how urgent the need.

But the Committee was incensed. There was the immediate suspicion that the survey had intentionally been designed for failure. We agreed unanimously not to accept the results of the survey, and Leonard Lehrer, our articulate and determined president, prepared a response for the Governing Board, which met in July.

Lehrer’s fighting spirit is our best hope right now. His presentation was extremely well received, and Lester Monts, the distinguished President of the Board of Trustees, responded with an impassioned statement about the importance of the arts in education and the need for the College Board to take a leadership role in the resurgence of national interest. He proposed the establishment of a College Board Task Force on the Arts and asked Leonard Lehrer to represent the Advisory Committee on the task force. He then attended the October meeting of the AACA to discuss it with us.

Since then – there’s not much to report. Collaboration over a national agenda moves slowly. The Academic Advisory Committee on the Arts is completing their Framework to be published on line and in booklet form with the Frameworks in six other disciplines. Leonard Lehrer, who is so crucial to this effort, has health issues and is not always able to sustain the fire he genuinely feels for this cause.

But the Task Force has been established, members are being selected, the Framework will give it substance, and slowly, slowly, we will move forward. It may be years before we get actual AP exams, but there are other ways that the College Board can exhibit the leadership that will get us there eventually.





Rozan Gautier, VP Public
Middle Schools

Building a Middle School Drama Program from the Ground Up

By Michelle Roderick

Two years ago I was hired at Crocker Middle School in Hillsborough to be their new drama teacher. I had been an artist-in-residence drama teacher for 14 years and had worked in many different educational settings from elementary schools to college and even jail. But this was my first full time job in ten years. Previous to my hiring, the school had a few drama classes, but a full drama program had not existed for many years. In this article, I will describe the steps I took, and hope it will provide some inspiration to new drama teachers or veterans building a new program.

My first classes included 6th grade drama as well as 7th and 8th Grade Drama. I also lead a lunchtime group at the middle school and taught a 4/5 theatre club after school at each of the three local feeder elementary schools. The first year, the job was 3/4 time and I was not expected to direct a big show. We were in the building phase

The school works on trimesters and an alternating blue/gold day schedule. I only see each group of students maybe 25-28 times a year. I developed a sequential standards based curriculum that introduced the students to the basics of acting: ensemble building, movement, voice, and simple performance. In the lunch time group, I directed an adaptation of a funny children's book and we toured the elementary schools. The second trimester lunch group prepared to attend the CETA Mid Stage Fest in Sacramento. The third trimester lunch group created original scenes based on the experience of middle school aged students. Overall the first year was a success! But I knew there was so much more to do to create a flourishing drama program. I petitioned to convert my beige portable classroom with desks shoved into the corner into a black box theatre; and at the end of the first year my request was granted. The conversion is temporary and could be taken down if the space were needed as a regular classroom in the future.

Over the summer I covered the walls with black fadeless paper, sewed theatre curtains, and my husband and another carpenter built an elevated platform and theatre blocks that were all painted black. The school also purchased theater lights on standing trees. The school paid for materials, but we all donated our time. The entire process took five or six days. But it was worth it! Now when the students walk into my classroom, they instantly recognize that the environment says "Drama!"

The second year I was hired full-time and was asked to direct two shows and collaborate with English and Social Studies teach-

ers. The elementary after school classes started later this year so that I could rehearse after school. The fall play was *The Phantom Tollbooth*, a classic in Middle School literature, and full of puns! I cast approx. 40 students in the show and had a dozen or so on tech crew. Parents volunteered with set and costume design and construction. This was my first big show in many years. I was very pleased with the outcome of the production but realized that big productions take SO MUCH WORK!

As a director, it was very important to stay on top of the many details of the show. I am now directing my third big show and it is still a learning curve. The more systems I put in place, the better. The next big show grew out of a two-trimester class and was my first attempt at a musical. We did *Really Rosie* by Maurice Sendak and Carole King. It is a small cast show, 10 or so parts max, and our rehearsal period lasted from November to May, 45 minutes every other day. This gradual build was a different experience from working on an after school play. Often, I was grateful for the extended time, but it also meant a more creative form of long-term planning. The school brought in a vocal music teacher as a contractor that worked with us for the 2nd trimester of rehearsals as I do not have a music background. This play did involve a few after school rehearsals as we got closer to opening night.

The collaboration with English teachers was really exciting! One teacher in particular worked with me on three separate projects throughout the year. The first was an adaptation of the book *Freak the Mighty*. The collaborating teacher discovered that the author of the book Rodman Philbrick, had written a script of the book, and that if you wrote to him and asked permission to produce it in your class, he usually granted it. There were actually two versions and we chose the shorter one. The entire script consists of scenes between two characters. We divided the class into pairs, and they were able to rehearse and perform the entire show in my classroom. It was a HUGE success! The bringing alive of literature has so much power for the English classroom. Later we did a very similar project with *The Cay* by Theodore Taylor. Finally, we also created performances out of poems with the use of dramatic tableaux.

The elementary feeder program has also helped to grow the program here at Crocker. After two years of this program, it is great to see the happy faces arrive at middle school already passionate about drama. I work with the 4/5 graders to learn some of the basics of acting, a simpler version of my 6th grade curriculum, and then we produce a play to perform for the school and for the parents in the evenings. I have directed *Alice in Wonderland*, *Peter Pan*, *Higglety Pigglety Pop*, and *Stuart Little* at the elementary level. I found the script of *Peter Pan* at the following website: <http://www.childrenstheatreplays.com/pan.htm> They have a good selection of plays for younger performers and the complete package price is very reasonable.

Building any fine arts program takes a tremendous amount of communication with site and district administrators who understand the various funding sources available. I have met with my principal on multiple occasions to discuss program development and plans. Also if building a fine arts program is a priority for the administrators, suggest it is written into the School Site Plan. SIP funds could be used as a source of funding. If your school or dis-

trict has a source of funding through the PTA, then making your needs known to those parents could be a source of financial support. I met with a parent booster group at San Mateo High School to ask about their role in the flourishing theatre arts program and here some great tips: Work with the parents to form a steering committee/support team that both fundraises and works on sets and costumes. The San Mateo group has divided themselves into the following committees: Ticket sales, concessions, costumes, props, publicity, etc... They hold a yearly potluck in the fall and invite all new drama families to come and hear about the program and sign up to get involved. There is also an awards assembly in the spring. They hold fundraisers such as candygrams at Valentines Day, t-shirt sales, approaching local businesses to advertise in the program, and the usual ticket sales and concessions. The best form of public relations, though, is giving parents an opportunity to see their children shine. When that happens, it is much easier to convince the right people why a drama program is worthy of funding.

This fall I am directing Honk! Jr. and it is a very fun but busy project. The student actors are learning to sing and dance! We do not have dance classes or a vocal music program as electives, but the students are taking both skills by storm. I am excited to be part of such a growing program and am sure I will look back in ten years and say, "Wow, so that's how much work you have to do to create a middle school drama program from scratch.

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a way to connect with our colleagues in secondary education as a way of understanding what is happening in the high schools so we know what to expect and how we can integrate new students into college programs. But can there be more than this?

Many University educators are working not only with new students, but also graduate students, whose educational needs and goals are far different than students in high school. Community college faculty are often dealing with adult learners, way beyond the age of a traditional college student. These students also have unique needs and ways of learning. So how do we keep up and stay current?

When it comes to energizing and keeping current in Theatre education, through conferences and events, CETA simply cannot compete with Associations like ATHE (Association of Theatre in Higher Education) for conferences or ACTF (American College Theater Festival) for events. These are national organizations that represent the highest level of educational Theatre. The ATHE annual conference provides the opportunity to attend over a hundred sessions on higher education issues all current and on the cutting edge. Could CETA begin a California based sequence of conference sessions that would bring in college and university faculty? Maybe.

One question to ask might be if is there a need for educators in higher education to have a California based organization? Is there a need for statewide advocacy? Probably not at this time. Theatre programs at colleges and universities certainly have to compete with other programs on campus, but they are not under the direct scrutiny of the government and so a united, unified voice has not been required. Plus public higher education operates under three large and very different umbrellas, each with its specific system of defining education and each with different connections to the public sector. The politics for theatre in higher education is more internal.

Can CETA serve as an informational tool between colleges and universities? It is amazing how many college theatre departments do not talk to each other about what they are doing in the classroom. The California Community Colleges is the largest educational system in the world, and yet the 100 or so theatre departments, even though they follow the exact same state regulations, rarely talk together about improving theatre education. Articulating classes between community colleges, CSU and UC is always an issue, since each system mostly wants to have it their way. Could those theatre departments sit down and iron out some of the issues regarding theatre classes? Probably. CETA has made efforts in the past, but interest quickly waned.

I think it also comes down to need. Right now I do not think the higher education theatre programs need anything enough to get together and begin a dialogue. As time goes, on this could change. If a statewide need arose, then CETA would be the ideal organization to address that need. The opportunity to explore higher education at the conference is there, but it will need to be significant enough to draw more than a handful of participants. One idea might be the focus on how college students learn and applying these ideas to teaching theatre. This is something our K-12 colleagues get to have entire classes on, but those of us in higher education may never have really thought about. Universities are still coming out of the dark ages when it comes to teaching/learning techniques and strategies.



David Hamilton, VP Higher Education

CETA and Higher Education

One of the issues with CETA as an organization has been the role of higher education within the Association. We have always had a handful (around 10-15) college and university members and in years past have even had conference sessions geared toward higher education. However, the focus of CETA has been predominantly K-12 and with good reason, since that area of theatre education has had to fight for legitimacy and equality in our mandated educational system.

The question is what opportunities can CETA provide for members in higher education? Many of us in higher ed. have used CETA as

I'm on a sabbatical this quarter and part of my project will be visiting all of our UC and CSU campuses. One of the things I'm going to be asking is whether there is anything CETA could do to help university theatre. Maybe there will be enough interest to at least start a dialogue

Cemetery Club, *Greater Tuna*, and *Oliver* (currently in production). We've done the major and minor all-female scripts as well, naturally.

We have four beginning drama classes with approximately 25 students in each class. Because our school is small (860 girls), students must choose in their sophomore year to take either a year of art or a year of theatre. Advanced Theatre and Competition is for juniors and seniors and meets at 7:30AM every day! Most of the time, the same theatre students are here after school as well.

We do as many festivals and competitions as we can work into a three show a year schedule. Thespians is our major focus, and we make sure that everyone who wants to attend that festival is able to go. We attend both DTASC festivals, British Arts Awards, New Era Examinations, California Youth in Theatre, and the Cal State Long Beach Theatre Fest. We always have one or two students on the California State Thespians Student Board, and a number of them have filled the office of President through the years.

Our theatre seats about 100 people. We have a very old light board, no flies or wings or dressing room (my classroom), and our sound system is somewhat of a joke. In spite of these deficiencies, we have had a number of graduates go on to major in technical theatre in college. One young woman is in her third year of the graduate tech program at Yale. When she leaves there, she will have an MA and a union card.

With our meager tech program, our emphasis is on acting. As a theatre educator, I make sure that any student who wants to act will be cast in a show at some point in her high school career. Our current show is being directed by a student, and the cast consists of all the girls who have been doing tech for the past two years.

Our biggest problem is one that is common to all theatre programs: getting parents to see theatre as a career choice. Most are not anxious to allow them to major in theatre in college. Many feel that after spending \$8000+ a year on tuition, uniforms, and books that their children need to pursue "safer" careers. This brings up another myth about students who attend private/parochial schools: they are all wealthy! Anyone who thinks this is not in the know. Many of our parents and students work extra jobs to pay for the schooling. They also, of course, pay taxes to support the public school system. Most families send their girls to St. Lucy's because they want them to have a Christian education along with the academics. I'm sure that's the case with any religiously-based school.

This article deals with only one of the many private/parochial schools in California. In the future, I would like to feature other schools outside the public school system that have viable theatre programs. I am certain that we can all learn a great deal from each other.



Theatre in One Private California School

After 32 years teaching Theatre (and English, of course!) in an all-girls' Catholic high school, I have come to the conclusion that the problems I have had to deal with are not so dissimilar to those my colleagues in the public sector have

Kim O'Rourke, VP Parochial and Private Schools

to face. We "parochials" do not have some of the advantages that you "publics" have, however; we do not get any Federal or State or District funding and most of us do not have school buses. We also have a totally different school calendar from most public schools which can be very difficult at times.

At St. Lucy's, I have been fortunate to have an administration that is not only supportive, but often speaks up on the behalf of our play choices when questions occur. When a parent thought that *Titus Andronicus* was not a suitable all-female choice, our principal simply replied "Well, it is Shakespeare and classical literature." End of discussion.

Of course, I am expected to use common sense in choosing shows, and it is assumed that I know my audience. In many respects, it is easier than it might be in a public school to select plays, because I really only have to please one major group and not the variety of philosophical/religious sensibilities that other theatre programs may have to deal with.

In the case of St. Lucy's, the shows I choose are always "light" in the male actor department, for obvious reasons. Some years ago, a group of boys from a neighboring school showed up to audition for *Midsummer*. After very painful readings, the boys left and the girls said "Mrs. O! You are not going to cast them, are you? We'll play all the parts! Please!" In all fairness, these boys had had no theatre training, but I did not have time or energy to teach them how to act, so we produced our first all-female Shakespearean production, and we have been doing it ever since. We have presented, *Midsummer*, *Two Gentlemen Of Verona*, *As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *Macbeth*. Other all-female productions through the years have included *The Importance Of Being Earnest*, *Blithe Spirit*, *Fools*, *The Prisoner Of 2nd Avenue*, *The Odd Couple* (both male and female versions), *Charlie Brown*,⁻⁶⁻



Jana Baumann, President
CETA-N

News Flash! Far Below Basic Students Earn Medals

I am a middle school teacher in Watsonville, a town that prides itself on its home-grown strawberries and Mexican heritage. Unfortunately, Watsonville is also known as home to a preponderance of “failing” schools. So how is it that these “failing,” “far below basic” kids can be so darn happy? They took the trip of their lives last February to Carolyn Elder’s Middle Stage Fest in Sacramento, that’s how.

Of the 11 students who journeyed the 170 miles north, five had never been out of Santa Cruz County. None had ever participated in anything like the festival in any subject area. All had the time of their lives.

It just astounded me how happy they all were to earn bronze medals for their efforts. You and I know that ALL participants earn a medal, but it wouldn’t have dampened their spirits even if they had figured this out. These kids were so proud and excited. It might have been the academy awards.

You’ll be interested to know that Cesar Chavez Middle School offers NO “elective” classes; no music, no art, no theatre. If students want to participate in these “extras,” they must join an after school club. My fledging Drama Club had barely been in existence for a few months when the brochure for the Middle Stage Drama Fest arrived in my box. (Who found me? Whoever you are, thank you so much!)

It took a bit of begging and a chunk of my own cash, but I was determined to make the festival trip happen. Two moms, another teacher, and I drove our own cars. We left at five o’clock in the morning, each vehicle crammed with bleary-eyed girls. It was cold, dark, and raining. I literally did not know one soul when we arrived. Graciously, Carolyn Elder remembered talking to me on the phone and extended a warm hello as we stumbled in late.

When the festival was over, after my students had bravely performed their monologues, duets, and scenes, and received their glorious medals, we loaded up the cars for the long drive home.

Did I mention rain? The torrents and gusts on Highway 5 heading south literally drove us off the road. My fellow drivers revolted and insisted that it was too dangerous to keep going. The mutiny resulted in a flurry of phone calls and a decision to spend the night in a motel. Five rooms in a Best Western, two girls to a bed, four to a room. Can anyone spell s-l-u-m-b-e-r p-a-r-t-y?

There couldn’t have been a more happy bunch of kids on the drive home the next day. Moms and dads picked up their daughters.



Jana’s Students at the end of the Middle Stage Drama Fest

with hugs and smiles as if we’d been gone a month. Each girl had her medal around her neck. That weekend, bronze was gold.

Thank you, CETA. I know no one felt “far below basic” at the Middle Stage Drama Fest.



Gai Jones, VP Membership
and many other things

Stories From the Darkened Stage..

*“It’s only a stage
we’re going
through.”*

When I had my article entitled *Passing the Tape*, a newly retired teacher’s advice to her successors, in *Teaching Theatre*, I realized that the topic is ever-evolving and never ending. I felt others might have valuable stories to share. I contacted teachers in CETA, DTASC, and CA EdTA, with the following statement, “I am writing an article for the CETA online newspaper addressing all of the things...*you learned by teaching theatre* or...*things they didn’t tell you in any theatre ed class*, such as, you will lose your keys at some point, causing the theater to be re keyed. You will have a parent who removes a student from your production because of failing a math test. Please send your life lessons for other teachers.”

These are a few gems from which we hope that the next generation of theatre teachers might learn from our revelations.

Reading submissions from various California theatre education memberships was a joy; contributions made me laugh and realize that only with fellow Theatre educators can we truly vent and share the commonalities that other educators may not understand.

I give a round of applause to those who took time to contribute to this article, *Lessons They Didn’t Cover in Theatre Ed. Class*. Enjoy.

Sharon Deady, John Glenn Middle School
Cyrano and the Firemen

School fire alarms are important to schools. They are the flagships of the safety system in most schools, and we are happy to have them. But can they be used as special effects? Here's something I didn't learn in college and wish to pass on.



The battle scene, the Siege at Arras, Act IV, *Cyrano de Bergerac*. We were making quite a bit of noise ourselves, so it took a while to hear the fire alarms go off in the theatre. The battle scene required the use of a pretty heavy-duty fog machine that pumped out a steady fog through a large dryer hose, directly onto the stage. Consequently, our fog, or our fog machine, set off the fire alarms, which brought firemen to the theatre in record time. We ran around to find someone

to turn off the alarms in the office while the firemen watched the play from the back of the house. They were in their firemen uniforms, boots, jackets and helmets. I don't think the audience noticed the intrusion that much. They rather fit into the ambiance of war torn France on the stage. We quickly exited the firemen to the lobby, where they looked around and ascertained that the smoke wasn't real. Fog machine smoke is not really smoke, however, it sets off the alarms nicely.

Meanwhile, *Cyrano* continued without a dropped line. The actors stayed in character and improvised around the added excitement. Christian died on schedule, and Act IV came to a close while the audience clapped and cheered.

The next night we were very careful with the fog machine.

Roger Graziani Charter Oak H.S.

You learn to have the patience of Job, the wisdom of Solomon and the forgiveness of Jesus. All this needed to deal with sometimes clueless administrators, over-energized students, and demanding parents.

Hillary Pearson, Tri-School Theatre

If you have a turntable, it will at some point break down. Have a back-up plan.

If you hire designers, choreographers, music directors, or an orchestra, they may back out. Have a back-up plan.

If you have an animal onstage, it will not always cooperate. Have a back-up plan.

If you cast a kid who is on academic probation, he or she may be pulled from your show. Cast understudies.

Watching a student who began theatre four years ago as a shy freshman give his inspirational valedictory speech with confidence is a most rewarding experience.

Occasionally casting interested teachers in your productions is great for ticket sales, and, more importantly, a real boost for helping your fellow teachers to understand what it is you do after school.



Scott Karlan, Lakeside H.S.

You'll really sense how long you've been at it when you start repeating shows.

Ellen Yuen, Woodland Hills Academy

When I attended the Neighborhood Playhouse in NY, Sandy Meisner was still teaching. My first year there was Meisner's last year of teaching at the Playhouse. These may not be direct quotes, but certainly could be attributed to him. I'd like to offer three 'Meisnerisms' - "Never underestimate the reality of doing...Don't do anything unless the other person makes you do it...Never sit on an impulse."

Cynthia Crass, Polytechnic School

You will find an error in your program right after you've made 500 copies

You will get sick the day after the production closes.

You will prefer high school theatre to professional theatre.

Someone will eat your food props the afternoon before opening night.

Dan Blackley, El Toro H.S.

Commitment is like a plate of ham and eggs. The chicken contributes, but the pig is committed. Be the pig.



Terri Rogelstad, Rancho Bernardo H.S.

I've learned that you have to be specific when you use the term gesture.

Janet Landon, Orville Wright Middle School

You will lose an actor days before a production, but your replacement will be better.

Gary Fritzen, Thousand Oaks H.S.

There will always be a student that has seen the ghost that lives in your auditorium.

A parent will scold you because their child should have been the star of the show, since they took ballet, singing, acting lessons. Or because they were Homecoming Queen.

Lynn Lanning, Emeritus

Someone will be unable to attend festival because his/her parent is taking the family away that day (shopping, to visit relatives they see all the time) even though the parents already gave permission for the student to attend the festival.

If the auditorium floor is going to be re-tiled, the tiling crew will arrive unannounced the day you have scheduled dress rehearsal, and you will be unable to use the auditorium for two weeks.

Ellis Jordan, Emeritus

Don't be surprised if the custodian starts to sweep the stage as you are having rehearsal-or worse-the Fire Marshall decides to conduct an inspection and walks onto the stage in the middle of a performance for an audience. Also be prepared should an actor faint during a performance.

Jackie Young, Emeritus

You will learn that, although you had to set your calendar one year in advance; some other group was given the date of your production without anyone notifying you of the conflict. Constantly check the calendar of conflicts.

A four year old might see your production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and call out, 'Mommy, the movie's over. Can we come see it again tomorrow?'

Sarah A. M. Bathel, Lompoc H.S.

Your fellow teachers will refer many students to your program because they are 'so dramatic'-but they're not the kind of 'dramatic' that makes good actors.

Billy Houck, Arroyo Grande H.S.

If a student tells you they need to drop the play because they 'need to focus on their studies,' it means they don't like their casting, but they're afraid they won't ever be cast if they just quit.

Students' grades usually get worse if their parent pulls them from a play because of grades.

It is not mathematically possible to cast everyone who tries out in the part they want.

If you cast the best possible actor for the role, you will be accused of playing favorites. If you cast someone who isn't very strong, but has growth potential, you will be accused of playing favorites. If you cast the wrong actor for the role because they deserve a chance, you will be accused of playing favorites.

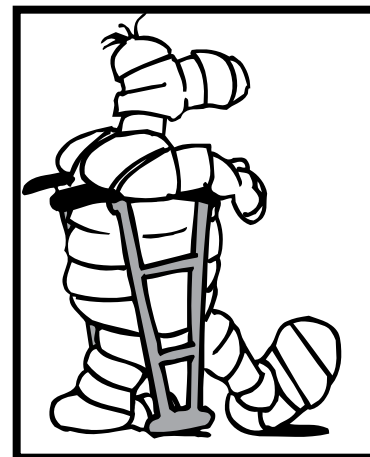
People who say they "wish they could have seen the play but couldn't come because they were too busy and would you please give them a DVD?" never actually watch the DVD. Tell them you were too busy doing the play to make them a copy. They will not get the irony.

On a similar note, videos of a play performance never give a good representation of the performances. Or even adequate. Maybe those people who don't watch the DVD are on to something.

Lois Weiss, Emeritus

Middle-school drama girls will laugh and cry in the same moment.

During the course of rehearsal, at least one student will have a broken limb.



Jeff Bengford, Westmont High School

Every day is an audition.

Stephen Rollman, Buckley School

That someone has never worked on a theater production will design and equip my theater space.

Kari Hayter, Palos Verdes H.S.

I tell students to 'Leave your ego at the door'.

**Robert Rotenberry, Academy for the Performing Arts,
Huntington Beach**

At the first school I taught I had a principal who had a quote of the year. The Five P's was my favorite. Proper Planning Prevents Poor Performance.

We were doing a show that had some dance numbers. The mother of one of my leads had been a dancer and starlet in Hollywood in the sixties. She had performed with Elvis and was a fitting model for Barbara Streisand's gowns in "Funny Girl." She married a minister, and her showgirl days were over, but she choreographed my musical. After one performance, I was informed by parents of a lead girl in the show that she had returned from a party at 6 AM, and they would not allow her to perform remaining shows. My choreographer decided to make her return to the stage to help us. Suddenly that night there was glamour and style on stage that amazed the audience and cast. Her son was mortified, of course, but the show did go on.

Amanda Swann, Birmingham H.S.

You will have to remove the lead from your show the day before opening-for saying they were in a car accident, when they were really at a tanning salon.

You will have to cancel a performance because the football team made it to finals.

You will be blamed when things go wrong in the theater. Often, you will not be recognized when things go right.

Susan Eiden, CA H.S., Whittier

If you replace a retiring longtime drama teacher, you will not be the 'real' one for at least two years.

Not only will a parent pull your star out of the play for failing a math test, but for breaking curfew the night before, because they have to go to a wedding which 'they just found out about,' because the car broke down, or just because they don't feel like driving them to the show.

The parent who works backstage always expects their mousy little tone-deaf daughter who cannot speak about a whisper to star in the musical.

Sharon Crane, Simi Valley H.S.

You will have to explain to an administrator why you cannot rename *The Playboy of the Western World* the night before you open.

A fire alarm has no respect for the arts.



Your black box theater can become a sweat box when the district energy czar won't allow air conditioning after school hours. When you are rushed, it is very possible to mistake black pancake eyeliner for pancake foundation. On the up side, our Tituba didn't need to apply makeup for the next three performances.

Your former students won't know how good you are until they hear their college professors quoting you, (or so they think.)

Finally, when life hits you between the eyes with a traumatic event, the students who daily try your patience will be the same one who hold you up with their heartfelt compassion.

Richard Lavin, Huntington Park H.S.

Counselors love to put discipline cases into electives, like theatre classes.

Tom Fearon, Woodcreek H.S.

They didn't tell me in my technical theatre classes that I would not have the light and sound equipment.

They didn't tell me how to deal with stage moms.

They didn't tell me it was going to be the most fun and rewarding job I would ever do.

Scott Bailey, John Burroughs H.S.

The best actors attending the school can't be in the school play because their agents and managers and stage mothers force them to keep their schedule open so that they can audition for sitcoms starring Billy Ray Cyrus's daughter.

Even if you have separate dressing rooms for girls and boys, they're just going to dress in front of each other anyway.

There is an inverse relationship between how much time a kid will spend playing cards or handheld video games during rehearsal and the amount of lines he will actually know when you go off book.

The girls want to play Rizzo, not Sandy.

Savor the week in which you hold auditions. They will be surprisingly nice to you until the cast list goes up.

If your school is progressive enough to have a Gay-Straight Alliance club, consider it redundant. In you are the Drama teacher, then you are the advisor of the *real* Gay-Straight Alliance club. Your principal and you may have a symbiotically adversarial relationship. He/she will want a good Drama program, but then again, he/she will want to keep the students and the parents calm and free from questioning things too much. You will want a good Drama program, but you will probably want to make the students and parents agitated as they question their firmly held beliefs.

Get a digital camera and take pictures of your play during the final dress rehearsal. Then give the disc of photos to the yearbook staff.

Jennifer Benner, Will Rogers Middle School

You will learn to contend with the rock climb wall that is a permanent fixture adorning the back wall of the stage, compliments of the P.E. Department along with wrestling mats that cannot be removed or hidden due to lack of storage.

**Kathleen Conner,
Administrator and Theatre teacher, Pacific Hills School**

There was the parent that pulled me off the podium while I was accepting my teacher of the year award, because her son hadn't received a theatre award that year.

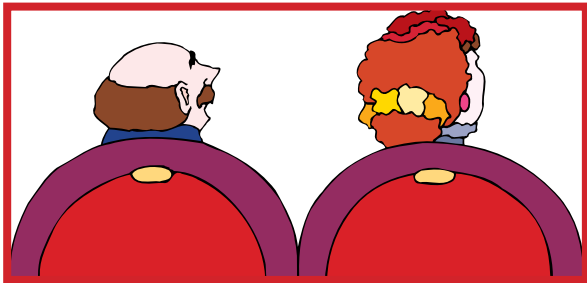
In 1992, My Asst. Headmaster, after I'd done *Skin of Our Teeth*, and was trying to get the rights to *Blithe Spirit* told me that I had to stop doing plays by unknown authors and do something that everyone had heard of, like *Equus*.

Pattie Sexton, Dana Hills H.S.

That a parent will say that her daughter does not need to attend rehearsals, as she is naturally gifted, and you(the teacher) just need to explain things to her before the show.

Mike Wilson, Golden West H.S.

I have learned that no matter how many years I teach theater, there is a parent in the audience who knows more than I do.



I have learned that no monologue, no powerful speech, no incredible dance...*nothing*...is as memorable as an actor with his zipper down.

I have learned that no matter how many costumes we have in a show, there will be one student who ends up looking like a lost troll.

I have learned that whatever can go wrong, and it will all go wrong at the very moment that my leading lady discovers she has explosive diarrhea.

Kathy Harris, Mission Viejo H.S.

You will text message you're A.D. or stage manager during one of their 'real' classes because you can't find your keys.

You will become an expert on types of duct tape and get very excited when there is a sale on duct tape.

You will learn to drive a large truck or bus to get a set, cast or both to a competition.

You will plan large trips with teenagers overseas and enjoy it.

You will send a student home from an overseas trip and enjoy it.

You will plan large banquets for over 200 people so often that planning your wedding seems like just another production.

Robin Edwards-Harvey, Mount Pleasant H.S.

A parent may pull his/her child from your program because your rehearsal interferes with his/her nightly prayers.

Lance Davis, Artistic Director Parson's Nose Productions

You will have an audience member who, after one particularly joyous, fast paced, and exhausting performance of Moliere's *The Miser*, the audience was enthusiastically applauding when one child, obviously used to TV, yelled out, 'It was great! Let's watch it again!'

**Gai Jones, Emeritus, author of *Raising The Curtain*
and along with Diane deJulio,
authors of the soon-to-be published book,
*BREAK A LEG...Tips and Truisms for a Theatre Teacher.***

Everyday in your classroom or theatre, you are molding the future of America and World Theatre.

Theatre students are unique.

Empowering Theatre students is an amazing journey.



*CETA 2008 Conference
BAY AREA BLAST!
The Awakening of Diverse Voices
October 16-October 18, 2008*



The Doubletree Hotel – San Francisco Airport will be the site of our upcoming 2008 CETA Conference. The Doubletree is not only warm, welcoming, comfortable and friendly, but it promises to be a fun and energized venue as well. Located only minutes from SFO and a connecting BART station, with a FREE 24hr hotel-airport shuttle, getting to the conference should be a breeze. Overnight parking for hotel guests is \$8/day and on-site parking for the day is \$5. The spacious, cushy rooms are only \$109/night [plus 11% room tax] until 9/15/08. You must reserve your room before then to get the conference room rate.

The conference program planning committee, chaired by Rozan Gautier, is the newly re-organized and reinvigorated CETA North board. Many, many plans are being made to have workshops focused on multi-cultural theatre and addressing diversity; K-12 curriculum development and teaching to the standards, whether you are a generalist or a theatre arts specialist; playwriting or student-adaptations of copyright-free materials; dramaturgy and artistic vision; doing musical theatre; addressing technical theatre needs, and more!

Register for the CETA Conference and get the all-inclusive full registration package for \$450 > 3 days jam-packed with workshops, FREE breakfast buffet coupon Friday morning, keynote speakers at the luncheons, karaoke, division level get-togethers, networking, open no-host bar night welcoming reception, Master Class Intensives, FREE CETA membership, karaoke, FREE breakfast buffet coupon Saturday morning, guest artists, two nights on the town for theatre, Friday night buffet dinner, vendors with prize drawings and a closing CETA Awards Banquet Saturday night where you can dress up and get down...you didn't forget the karaoke, did you?

If you can only come for 2 days, you get all of the above on either Thursday/Friday or Friday/Saturday for \$350. Can only come on Friday OR Saturday? The price is \$225 all-inclusive. If you can only join us on Thursday, our Master Class Intensives day with a box lunch and FREE membership, is only \$175. If you are a student or Emeritus member, you pay \$50 less for any registration package.

Now, going to a CETA Conference and not seeing theatre would not be right, so CETA is offering group rate tickets to SPRING AWAKENING on Friday night and BEACH BLANKET BABYLON! The details aren't set yet but will be soon. If you are interested in seeing either, or both, could you please email me at carolhovey@yahoo.com so we can determine how many tickets to hold for CETA and whether we can fill a bus to take us into San Francisco to see the shows. You would be buying your ticket/s separately for the show/s. They are not included in the registration fees. Carol Hovey, Conference Site Coordinator



We Are Mourning the Loss of Two Great Theatre Educators



IN MEMORY Of DR. LEE KORF 1917 -2008

By
Maxine Stanoff Lewis

CETA members will long remember our outstanding friend and colleague, Dr. Leonard “Lee” Korf, who passed away on January 4, 2008 in Whittier, California. He was a few weeks shy of his 91st birthday.

Jean Prinz Korf, his dear wife, and Lee were married for 58 years. She was a theatre educator at Rio Hondo College and is also a renowned leader of educational theatre in California and nationally. They were a dynamic team.

Lee grew up in Chicago and Racine, Wisconsin. He worked as a reporter on the Chicago *Herald Examine* and in radio production where he directed and acted in radio shows. He enlisted in the Army during WW II where he was a navigator on B17s. Major Korf was stationed in England and led the 8th Air Force on several of the famous 1,000 plane raids over Germany. A fellow Air Force buddy, actor Clark Gable who served in the same group, referred to him as “Ouija-Board Korf” because of his uncanny navigational skills. Lee received many awards for his Air Corps service including: two Presidential Citations, six Air Medals and three Distinguished Flying Crosses. The last cross was presented by General James Doolittle who said to Lee, “You’re exactly the kind of guy we need here.”

Upon returning from England, Lee was assigned to the Harvard School of Business where he wrote a film titled the “AAF Comes of Age” and was assigned to the Air Force Motion Picture Unit in Culver City. After being discharged from the Air Force, Lee attended UCLA where he earned a BA, MA and PhD in English, Drama, and Theatre History

In the early 1950s Lee taught at Bell Gardens High School and at Fullerton College. He founded the Cerritos Community College theatre department in 1957 where he was a professor of Theatre Arts and Television for more than twenty-five years. He retired in 1982.

Lee earned many honors and made innumerable contributions to local educational theatre organizations. He served as

President of the Southern California Educational Theatre Association and also won their Distinguished Service Award. In 1990 he received CETA’s “Outstanding Theatre Educator Award” and in 2000 earned CETA’s highest award, the Medallion, which “is awarded to a member of the association whose continued service has been distinguished by leadership, loyalty, contribution and support.”

Lee had an outstanding national reputation as a theatre educator as well. He was a founding member of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) and a Fellow of the American Theatre. He was also the recipient of the Amoco Gold Medallion for “Excellence in American Theatre” from the American College Theatre Festival. Very high honors!

Lee had a great way with words and was the founding editor of several publications including the newsletter for the University and College Theatre Association in the 1980s and the American Educational Theatre Association. He was also their Public Relations representative and was listed in “Who’s Who in America.”

In 1952, Lee co-founded and then edited the Educational Theatre News for SCETA. He served as Executive Editor of the ETN until 1993 and continued as California ETN Review Editor for many years. Lee fascinated and enlightened readers about theatre around the world. He used humor and wit and was always on the lookout for experiences to share with teachers and students. The ETN is the forerunner of CETA’s “CETN” electronic newspaper.

When he retired from teaching in 1982 Lee started Korf-tours which took groups to the Edinburgh Festival, Europe and London to see theatre.

Lee is survived by his wife, Jean Prinz Korf; his children, Kerry, Bill and Geoff; and three grandchildren, Leo, Hannah, and Ava. The Korf children are proudly carrying on the tradition of working in theatre. Kerry is a personal manager for actors and is in charge of Priority Services at the Center Theatre Group. Bill is a theatre teacher at Rio Hondo College and Geoff teaches lighting at University of Washington and does free lance light design.

On January 11, 2008, Lee’s funeral was held at Rose Hills Cemetery in Whittier. The Air Force gave him full military honors: eight honor guards, a flag-draped casket, the traditional three-rifle salute, and taps played by a real bugler. The military guard stood holding the folded flag close to his heart through the eulogy. Then Jean received the flag from the guard and 12 doves were released.

A memorial celebration of Lee’s life was held in the Wray Theatre (which he helped design) at Rio Hondo College in Whittier, California on January 19, 2008. More than 200 friends and family members attended. A touching film and slide show of photos were shown depicting Lee’s fascinating life. His Air Force medals, ETNs and other theatre and family memorabilia were on display.

In addition to the invited speakers (including his three children; Hannah, his 10 year old granddaughter; family; friends; former students; and this writer as the CETA connection); many

others shared their experiences and love of the Korfs and their family. It was a touching tribute to a most bright, charming, witty, distinguished theatre educator, husband, father and grandfather. Refreshments were an array of delectable desserts contributed by the guests in honor of Lee's well-known love of sweets.

Donations may be made in his memory to the Lee Korf Institute Scholarship Fund of Cornerstone Theater in Los Angeles. Phone: (213) 613-1700 Ext. 37 or www.cornerstonetheater.org.

An informative website to share personal memories of Lee is: <http://web.mac.com/wmk2>. E-mails are also welcome c/o Bill Korf at wmk2@hotmail.com

Biographical listings have appeared in several publications, most recently the 1989 *Notable Women in the American Theatre*.

Her marriage to Robley D. Evans, a retired Administrative Law Judge, and nephew of Dina Rees Evans, produced one son, David Rees, currently a member of the English Department faculty at Cornell College, Mt. Vernon, Iowa.

Mary Jane Evans, past state president of CETA and one of its pioneers, passed away on November 20, 2007, in Minneapolis, Minnesota

At her investiture in 1977 into the College of Fellows of the American Theatre Association, her colleague and friend Professor Jed Davis presented the following information in his Citation:

As a student in the School of Speech at Northwestern University, Mary Jane Larson Evans became a protege of Winifred Ward, and, on graduation, joined the staff of the children's drama program guided by Dina Rees Evans, founder and director of Cain Park Theatre in Cleveland. That career-launching summer ended with a return to Northwestern for the 1944 convention which gave birth to CTC of AETA. Professional goals later brought her to Michigan State University where, on completion of her M.A., she remained as instructor and director of productions for child audiences. In 1959 she established a program in young people's theatre at California State University, Northridge, which received the CTAA Sara Spencer Artistic Achievement Award in 1981. Her Northridge years included terms as department chair, a position from which she retired as Professor Emeritus in 1985.

Her collaboration with Jed H. Davis began at Michigan State. Their first book, *Children's Theatre: Play Production for the Child Audience*, appeared in 1960, and their second, *Theatre, Children and Youth*, in 1982. Other Evans publications include essays in journals and edited volumes.

Her service to state, regional and national theatre associations in offices, on committees, as convention speaker, as panelist, and as production evaluator, as well as contributions to state department of education publications have been widely recognized. Mrs. Evans received the SCETA Award for Outstanding Contributions to Theatre for young Audiences, the CETA Outstanding Theatre Educator Award and its Medallion recognizing the exemplary service to the Association, and the AATE Campton Bell Award for lifetime achievement in the field.

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