

Carolina CALL BOARD



2011 Founders Award Issue

Newsletter of the South Carolina Theatre Association

MARCH 2011

FOUNDERS AWARD



The SCTA Founders Award is the most prestigious honor the South Carolina Theatre Association can bestow. It is given to recognize the individual or organization that has made the most significant contribution to theatre in South Carolina during the year most recently completed. This year's award is for contributions made between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011.

SCTA is now accepting nominations for this most honorable award.

Each year SCTA calls for nominations to recognize a person OR organization that has contributed significantly to South Carolina theatre during the past year. Please help to perpetuate the positive. Many people in South Carolina are doing great things for theatre. You know who they are. Won't you help to recognize them? Nominate someone you know today! A nomination form may be found on page three of this newsletter.

Nominations should be mailed to:

SCTA Founders Award Nominations
 PMB 350
 100 Old Cherokee Rd., Suite F
 Lexington, SC 29072

E-Mail: scta@collabefforts.com

Nominations must be received by June 30, 2011.

Features ...

<i>Founders Award Information</i>	Cover
<i>President's Message</i>	Cover
<i>Founders Award Nomination Form</i>	3
<i>Secondary Stages</i>	4
<i>Professional Division</i>	4
<i>Theatre for Youth Division</i>	5
<i>Community Theatre Division</i>	5
<i>College & University Division</i>	6
<i>SETC Report</i>	7
<i>2011 SCTA Convention Plans</i>	7
<i>Spotlight on ...</i>	8
<i>Happenings at ...</i>	8

President's Message

I am one of those who love the cool weather and hope to see more snow, even into the month of April! In fact, I'm excited that I might see snow one last time this winter during my upcoming trip to New York City. However, for all you warm weather-lovers, don't despair... higher temperatures are right around the corner. Drat!

state and region as we met to discuss the future and vision of the South Carolina Theatre Association. In addition to the business agenda, we also took time to learn more about each other, sharing stories of our beginnings in theatre. It was amazing to hear that most of us were strongly influenced by an educator who helped us develop a plan for pursuing a career in



*Rich Robinson
SCTA President*

We had a great board meeting in January. I was both proud and humbled to become acquainted with some of the foremost theatre professionals in the

(Continued on page 2)

SCTA

Executive Board

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College/University *Keith Best*

Community *Susan Smith*

Secondary *Carol Sutton*

Professional *Jean Dancy Jones*

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(Continued from page 1)

theatre. This was clear evidence of the importance of, and the need to, support education in the arts.

It was my pleasure to attend the SETC annual convention in Atlanta during the first weekend of March, and I was proud to see how involved people from South Carolina are in leadership and attendance. At one of the workshops, I enjoyed seeing 100 high school students, particularly students from Byrnes High School (Moore, SC), participate in theatre games. The students were energetic and enthusiastic, which was exciting to see. I also attended an amazing one-woman show, performed by Mary Beth Holloway from USC Lancaster. But the highlight of my three days was watching students from Rock Hill perform *Children of a Lesser God* under the direction of Stephanie Daniels. I was very proud of those students (cast and crew) and want to thank Stephanie for her leadership. They are a credit to our state.

Division News

The board of directors would like to publish the 2011- 2012 performance seasons for high school, college/university, community and professional theatres, so that all association members will be aware of state events and will have the opportunity to support one another. We are asking you to send a list of your season's productions for the next year so we can publish it on our website. There will be more to report after our March meeting.

We are looking forward to the first high school improvisation festival being held in April in Charleston under the leadership of George Younts (Charleston County School of the Arts) and Greg Tavares (Theatre 99).

With the continuing support from the professional theatres in the state, we are growing in our involvement with the professional division with five organizational members representing the Professional Division.

The SETC screening auditions were

well-attended this year, with 149 participants meeting at the end of October in Columbia at the Trustus Theatre. Since relocating the screening auditions to a central location within the state, we had hoped for more involvement, and it happened!

We are looking forward to, and already planning, the state convention this year at Winthrop University in Rock Hill in November. Vice-President in charge of planning is Annette Grevious from Claflin College. We are also hoping to offer workshops at the screening auditions; participants can attend some informative sessions while waiting to audition. We also plan to offer more master classes and workshops at this year's convention.

Remember to nominate an individual or an organization for this year's Founders Award. It is important to take the time to nominate those who make major contributions to the promotion of theatre within our state. The form is located on page three of this newsletter.

We are looking forward to any feedback and suggestions you have as we move forward in our pursuit of "excellence" in theatre in South Carolina, and hope we see you at one of our meetings or at the convention in Rock Hill this coming November. It is an exciting time to see theatre grow in South Carolina.

See you at a play,

Rich

Rich Robinson
 President of SCTA
 Associate Professor
 University of South Carolina Upstate
robinsont@uscupstate.edu
 864-503-5621



2010-11 Founders Award Nomination Form

This form must be received no later than June 30, 2011.

My nomination for the 2010-11 Founders Award is:

NAME: _____
Name of individual or organization you wish to nominate

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ FAX _____ E-MAIL _____

Description of significant contribution made between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011 *(use additional paper if necessary)*:

Individual submitting nomination:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ FAX _____ E-MAIL _____

Nominations should be sent to:
SCTA Founders Award Nominations
PMB 350
100 Old Cherokee Rd., Suite F
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Fax: 803-359-1921
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Secondary Stages

By Kelly Melton

The Secondary division has had a busy schedule for the past couple of months with the Palmetto Dramatics Association's One-Act Play Festival combined with the SC Thespian Festival in February, and the Southeastern Theatre Conference in March. The adjudicators were impressed at the quality of the performances at PDA and a good time was had by all.

At SETC earlier this month, two secondary school performances represented our state proudly, Rock Hill School District 3, with "Children of a Lesser God" and Wando High School with "The Real Teens." The production of "Children of a Lesser God" won three All Star cast awards! The awards went to:

Keanu Thompson of Northwestern High, Zac Latham of Rock Hill High, and Mona Bailey of South Pointe High.

Congratulations!!

On a personal note, while there without students, I was able to relax and take in all of the workshops and shows at will. A fun and educational experience.

Our 2011 convention in November will be held in Rock Hill at Winthrop University, and though it is still far away it will creep up on us before we know it. So if there are any suggestions or questions concerning the Secondary School Festival at the

2011 convention, feel free to drop me a line at meltonk@sumter17.k12.sc.us.



All Star cast winners with director, Stephanie Daniels.

Professional Division

By Jean Dancy Jones



My head is still reeling from all the theatre stimulation buzzing about at SETC in Atlanta March 2nd-6th. One speaker in particular, Ben Cameron, had some great insights. Ben is the Program Director for the Arts at the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation in New York. There he supervises a \$13 million grants program aimed at the theatre, contemporary dance, jazz and presenting fields. He is also a member of the American Theatre Wing's Tony nominating committee. He is a tireless arts advocate. I have paraphrased and quoted below some of his points. In speaking of the shrinking audiences, decline in membership, the shift of the theatre audience to more last-minute decisions to attend a performance, and of course, decline in arts funding, Mr. Cameron looks to two unlikely sources for inspiration:

I take to heart the words of two very different thinkers. Abraham Lincoln, who said, "The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy

present. As our case is new, so must we think anew and act anew."

And, Wayne Gretzky (and when was the last time you heard Abe Lincoln and Wayne Gretzky quoted in the same speech) who, when asked why he was such a great hockey player, said, "I skate to where the puck will be."

Regardless of the stress of the present, regardless of the uncertainties, how can we—individually and as a community—shift from the reactive to the proactive? How can we skate, as it were, to where the puck will be? We must begin by asking, why must we exist today? Because we have a building is not enough. Because we have a history and awards and a reputation is not enough. What is it in the world—in an external world—that mandates the flourishing of the arts in our communities today?

On the one hand, this invites groups to be value specific about what we

do. Indeed, every arts organization needs to be able to answer three questions:

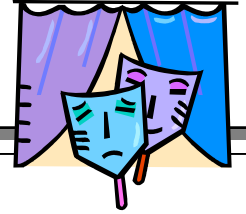
- *What is the value my organization brings to my community?*
- *Harder: What is the value my organization alone brings or brings better than anyone else? Second rate or duplicated value will not stand for long in this economy.*
- *Hardest: How would my community be damaged if we closed our doors and went away tomorrow?*

Even these questions can be a trap, filtering our communities through our organizations. Too often we try to serve orchestras and forget that we are really called to serve symphonic music; we try to fix theatre companies without the larger lens of exam-

(Continued on page 8)

Theatre for Youth Division

By Shannon Horn



2011 Youth Theatre Festival

On Saturday, March 19th ten middle schools from across South Carolina traveled to Pleasant Hill Middle School in Lexington to compete in the South Carolina Speech and Theatre Association's Middle School/Youth Festival. Although it was a competition, the day saw students supporting their fellow thespians and showing enthusiasm for the theatre arts. Our high schools and colleges should be thrilled with all the talent that will be coming their way in the future. Kudos to all the middle school teachers for sharing their passion for educational theatre! Also, a big thank you to Lori McKelvey and Jessica Castle for hosting!

Below are the results for the day:

Original Monologue – Comedic

- 1st Place – Rachael Fridh - Pinewood Preparatory School
- 2nd Place – Emilee Martinchenko - Pinewood Preparatory School
- 3rd Place – Thomas Cunningham – Fairforest Middle School

Original Monologue – Dramatic

- 1st Place – Megan Cox – ACTS Magnet
- 2nd Place – Kelly Munn – Rollings Middle School of the Arts
- 3rd Place – Jabbarrrius Ervin – ACTS Magnet

Ensemble Acting –

- 1st Place – *The Lemon Sisters* – Brewer Middle School
- 2nd Place – *Fiddler on the Roof* – Pleasant Hill Middle School
- 3rd Place – *Beauty and the Beast Jr.* - Pinewood Preparatory School

Group Acting –

- 1st Place – *Juvie* – Rollings Middle School of the Arts
- 2nd Place – *Miss Nelson is Missing* – Carolina Springs Middle School
- 3rd Place – *Check, Please* - Pinewood Preparatory School

Duet Acting

- 1st Place – *Trapped* – League Academy
- 2nd Place – *Girls in Uniform* – Rollings Middle School of the Arts
- 3rd Place – *Steel Magnolias* – Fairforest Middle School

Solo Acting

- 1st Place – Tanner Mills – Fairforest Middle School
- 2nd Place – Brianna Seawright – Fairforest Middle School
- 3rd Place – Quinn Jones – League Academy

Costume Design

- 1st Place – Sylvie Robinson – Rollings School of the Arts
- 2nd Place – Hannah Freeman – Rollings School of the Arts
- 3rd Place – Grace Bailey - Pinewood Preparatory School

Makeup Design

- 1st Place – Hannah Freeman – Rollings School of the Arts
- 2nd Place – Charlie Shanko – Rollings School of the Arts
- 3rd Place – Annalee Lethco – ACTS Magnet

Storytelling

- 1st Place – Damondre Green – Rollings School of the Arts
- 2nd Place – Paige Burgon – Fairforest Middle School
- 3rd Place – Hudson Perrine – Rollings School of the Arts

Reader's Theatre

- 1st Place – *Poe Dunced* – Fairforest Middle School
- 2nd Place – *A Man Called Santa Clause* – Rollings School of the Arts



Community Theatre Division

By Susan L.D. Smith

South Carolina shined at the Southeastern Theatre Conference held in Atlanta on March 2-6.

Having previously won the S.C. Theatre Association's award for Outstanding Production, Sumter Little Theatre's "The Harry and Sam Dialogues" was one of 12 entries in the Community Theatre Festival at Spellman College. "We had a great show,

and that's what we were looking to accomplish," said director Jean Dancy Jones.

The judges thought so too, as they gave Sumter's Kelly Melton an Award of Excellence for Acting, and Kevin Jarvis, who composed and recorded special music used in the production, received an Award of Excellence for Original Music. The adjudicators were impressed with the comic timing of Melton (Harry) and Braden

Bunch (Sam), and were charmed by Heather Turner's vaudevillian turn as "Card Girl" in her special appearance.

"Second Samuel" from the Wetumpka Depot Players (Wetumpka, AL) and "Sunday in the Park with George" from the Manatee Players (Bradenton, FL) both gained a berth to the National AACT (American Association of Community Theatre) Festival being held in June in Rochester, NY.

College and University Division

By Keith Best



For the first time in several years, I was unable to attend the Southeastern Theatre Conference. Through the benefit of a grant, though, we were able to send a handful of our theatre majors at very little cost to them. They returned with a little more knowledge and a renewed enthusiasm for theatre and performance. I was reminded of the role SETC had played in my own development as a theatre artist.

Growing up and attending college in south Georgia, my experience with theatre had been limited to educational and community venues. Even then, my high school had no drama program, and the community theatre had been defunct for several years. The program at Valdosta State University was the only theatre available in Valdosta with the exception of the occasional small touring group. Thanks to some great professors (Randy and Jacque Wheeler*, Eric Nielsen), the importance of attending SETC was instilled in us

from the first day of class each year. We were told that it was essential that we attend if we were serious about working in theatre or in attending graduate school. The importance of summer stock employment was echoed in every class they taught. And, of course, the upperclassmen were full of stories about previous conventions and summer jobs.

That first year of college I attended the Georgia Theatre Conference and made it through screening auditions. I was nervous at the state level, but I was very excited about auditioning at SETC. The conference was in Arlington, VA, that year, and a few of us loaded into a van and drove about thirteen hours.

I was overwhelmed by the city and the hotel before we even registered. The sheer number of people, most my own age, was more than I had anticipated. By the time I had gone through mandatory meetings and heard the level of talent auditioning with me, I was a little frightened. More than a little, actually. It was the most scared I

had been ever. Nevertheless, I got through it and did what I can only term as “okay.”

I got a few callbacks, was offered a job at Tecumseh as an actor/tech, and made it home in one piece. The job at Tecumseh fell through, but by some stroke of fortune I ended up stepping in for someone at Unto These Hills at the last moment that summer.

That summer is one of the most defining moments of my life. I ended up spending a total of fourteen summers over twenty years at Unto These Hills. Some of my fondest memories and best friends were made in those mountains.

I ended up working in theatre, and I'm very happy with what I do. I am reminded each year when I attend SETC, though, that a lot of those enthusiastic, talented, starry-eyed youngsters will end up leaving theatre behind. A couple of

years ago, when I made this observation to my former professor, Jacque Wheeler, she noted that, yes, they might not be working in theatre, but that theatre would always be a huge part of their lives.

That is why I am so happy that I do what I do, even when things don't turn out the way I would like for some students. I have changed their lives, and I, supported by organizations like SCTA and SETC, feel very fortunate to have done so.

**After writing this article, I found out that Jacque Wheeler, Professor of Theatre at Valdosta State University, Valdosta GA, was the recipient of a well-deserved Sondheim Inspirational Teacher Award this year. Celebrating the significant role of teachers in society, The Kennedy Center/Stephen Sondheim Inspirational Teacher Awards spotlight some of the country's most inspirational teachers and recognize them for their contributions.*

... the importance of attending SETC was instilled in us from the first day of class each year.

SETC Atlanta, GA March 2 - 6, 2011



South Carolina had a great showing at SETC this year. At the secondary festival, our 1st place winner, the Rock Hill School District entry of *Children of a Lesser God*, won three All Star Cast awards. The students who received the awards are Zac Latham, Mona Bailey and Keanu Thompson. Our 2nd place winner, Wando High School, also got an All Star cast award for Grace Fennell's performance. Additionally, our community theatre entry was recognized with an Excellence in Acting award for SCTA board member and Secondary Division Chair Kelly Melton's awesome performance. Congratulations ... I was very proud of all of our theatres this year!!

The conference once again had record attendance with a little over 4,000 registering. The keynote speakers were entertaining, enlightening and informative. Auditions continue to be huge. One new item which you may consider small, but I LOVE, is that there were new t-shirt designs this year. I bought two t-shirts and a mouse pad!!

A note for next year: Program proposal forms for the 2012 SETC conference will be available online at www.setc.org April 14th! The deadline to return them is September 14th.

Anyway, I am continuing to enjoy being your state rep to the SETC board; but, I want to give everyone a heads up that next year's SETC conference will be my last as your state rep. If you are interested in the position or know someone who might, please feel free to email me to find out more about what the job entails. My email is LGDeilinger@aol.com.

Submitted by Leslie Dellinger



SCTA CONVENTION 2011

November 11-13, 2011

Winthrop University

Rock Hill, South Carolina

*Annette Grevious
SCTA Vice-President & Program Chair
Claflin College, Orangeburg, SC*

Greetings fellow members and colleagues. It is my extreme honor and pleasure to serve as your SCTA Vice President for 2011. I accept this position with the intentions to serve and plan an outstanding convention that is representative of the excellence and quality theatre offered in South Carolina. While I am still in the initial planning stages for the convention, I certainly welcome your input regarding any suggestions for keynote presenters and speakers, and I certainly encourage your participation in terms of workshop presentation as well as participation. Last year, we saw an increase in the number of workshops offered as well as the number of participants. It is my hope to continue that growth, and surpass those numbers this year. With your assistance, an excellent location, and a dynamic convention, I know we can.

On another note, I have been doing some serious pondering on the impact of our convention in regards to our members and theatres in South Carolina. SCTA strives to offer quality programming and maximize its benefits of membership. With that in mind, President Rich Robinson appointed a task force to examine the necessity of the convention and possible change. As a delegate of the task force, I envision little change to the competitions and festivals already being offered, but rather developing more signature events for each division and an annual premiere event in which all members can come together, network, and celebrate our work. Again, this is a matter that is still in the early stages of discussion, but if you have comments and/or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me at agrevious@claflin.edu or 803-535-5897. I welcome your input because I truly believe SCTA is only as good as WE make it.

Again, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve, and I look forward to an amazing year!



SPOTLIGHT ON ...

Stephanie Daniels



On Saturday, March 26th, the Rock Hill NAACP Youth Council honored Rock Hill High School theatre teacher and SCTA board Secretary, Stephanie Daniels, during their Second Annual Luncheon for Youth Leaders. This year the youth selected Stephanie for the Theatre Director - Dramatics Award.

Congratulations, Stephanie, on being an inspiring role model for our young people!

(Continued from page 4)

ining the connection between dramatic art and our communities. Perhaps the better sequence of questions—and the scarier set—would be:

- *What is the value of [theatre] for my community?*
- *What is the value dance alone has or that [theatre] fulfills better than anything else?*
- *How would my community be damaged if it were abandoned by [theatre] tomorrow?*
- *And how might my organization be optimally structured, poised and focused to be my community's best conduit to [theatre]?—a question that invites us not to jettison all we do, but to keep what is most central and viable, to expand to embrace the new possibilities we may not have seen, and to discard past behaviors that do not and will not serve us in the future.*

For many, this work has already begun. Steppenwolf Theatre in Chicago has reoriented itself from its actor-ensemble roots, driven by collective desire of which roles they would like to undertake, to a new driving purpose, seeing themselves as a center for ongoing civic dialogue. The Nashville Symphony is ... shifting from a concert orientation to a desire to be the primary conduit of symphonic music that occasionally manifests itself in the concert format. And in the most visible example of all, the Metropolitan Opera is now broadcasting live performance into movie theatres across the nation—and soon around the world—a shift in multi-platform broadcasting that keeps at the core the best asset the Met has always had: live production of big scale opera with big star names. The core assets of the company are not changing: the delivery mechanism, however, is undergoing

significant change that reverberates across the organization, ...taking a risk-averse culture to a risk-receptive one—and increasingly using the artist—whether through open rehearsal, artist blog or using Renee Fleming herself to conduct interviews during the intermission features—as the primary bridge, holding the door open to an audience anxious to engage. The artist is perhaps our most critical and under-utilized ambassador.

So the reality then becomes, not that the arts are no longer wanted or needed, but they must embrace the present and reevaluate past behaviors to remain relevant. This is a scary enterprise to be sure, and not without risk. But without risk, there can be no growth. And without growth, there will be no pinnacle of achievement, only mediocre competence. This is true for business, marriage, partnership, as well as the actor. Great performances involve the risk of failure. There is brightness, however. Fast Company co-founder and marketing expert Bill Breen, among other marketing gurus, describe consumer desire as increasingly linked to: a sense of place, a strong point of view, the service of a larger purpose and integrity. If the arts cannot capitalize on this, then they do not deserve to survive.

Jean



Heather Turner (right) and Jean Jones (left) attend the SETC gala.

Happenings at ... Trustus Theatre - changes in the 2010-11 season

- ❖ *Assassins* through April 16
- ❖ *Jewtopia* May 6 – 28
- ❖ *Smokey Joe's Café* June 17 – July 23
- ❖ *Swing '39* August 12-20 Winner of the Trustus Playwrights' Festival

Carolina CALL BOARD



Carolina Call Board is the official newsletter of the South Carolina Theatre Association and is published four times per year in the months of March, July, October and December. Submission of articles and information from SCTA members is encouraged. Deadline for submission is March 1, July 1, September 1 and December 1. Please forward information to the SCTA office by mail or by e-mail at the address below:

*SC Theatre Association
PMB 350
100 Old Cherokee Rd., Ste. F
Lexington, SC 29072*

SCTA@collabefforts.com

MEMBERSHIP

Organizational dues are \$50 and Individual dues are \$20. For high school and college students, dues are \$10. Renewal notices for the 2010-11 year have been mailed.

www.southcarolinatheatre.com

It is not too early to think about whom you would like to honor for SCTA's awards at November's conference.

Please go to the SCTA website, www.southcarolinatheatre.com, for details on the various awards and how to nominate someone.



SCTA CONVENTION 2011

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