

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF THE PASADENA PLAYHOUSE

PASADENA
PLAYHOUSE

STATE
THEATRE

OF
CALIFORNIA

FOUNDED 1917

THE Offstage

NEWSLETTER

CALENDAR

March

- 6 Volunteer Recognition Luncheon
- 14 Friends Board Meeting- 3rd Floor Conference Room
- 15 Casa Valentina Opens
- 26 Lunch at El Portal

April

Watch for notification on dates of Showcase House Training

- 10 Casa Valentina Closes
- 11 Friends Board Meeting- 3rd Floor Conference Room
- 16 Garage Sale at Lenore Almanzar's Home
- 17 Showcase House opens
- 16 Lunch at El Portal
- 30 Playhouse Gala

Offstage is published by and for The Friends of the Pasadena Playhouse. Published six times a year, its sole purpose is to keep members informed of events and happenings around the Pasadena Playhouse. Share your comments, photos and information by email to: offstage@pasadenaplayhouse.org

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THE *Offstage*
NEWSLETTER



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CAROLYN DI PANE

In March, CAVORT (Conference About Volunteers of Regional Theatre) will be held in Louisville, KY, in conjunction with the Humana Festival of New American Plays. The Friends will be well represented ... 17 members are planning to attend this conference. It is a wonderful way to see other theatres, and participate in informative workshops and roundtable discussions.

The Friends have two major fundraisers coming up in April and May. April 16, is our Garage Sale...you should have already received an earlier email about this, and a notice is also included with this issue of our newsletter. The next day is the opening of Showcase House which will close on May 15. Check your calendar and sign up to assist with these two fun and profitable events...they help us help The Playhouse.



DOWN MEMORY LANE

One Friday evening during the run of FLY, an audience member, Ann Freeman came out during the show to stretch her legs. I complimented her on her beautiful jacket and she blushed and said she hadn't worn it in 21 years. Her husband bought it for her to wear at their son's wedding, and this was the first time she had put it on again. She then told me that her husband was there celebrating his 80th birthday... he was born on February 12th. Her husband, son, daughter-in-law and grandson were in the audience that night too. She said, "The Pasadena Playhouse was special to her. On her first date with her husband, in 1956, they came to see Romeo and Juliet starring Margaret O'Brien and John Barrymore, Jr..."it was such a wonderful evening." They were married the following year, and they still come often to see plays here. She was so sad when The Playhouse closed down, but when it reopened, she and her husband promised to keep coming back. This was a lovely story from a lovely lady.....on a wonderful evening at The Playhouse.



WE HEAR FROM FAR AWAY FRIENDS

From Rose Lynn Jarrett who now lives in Greenwich, CT.

Dear Friends,

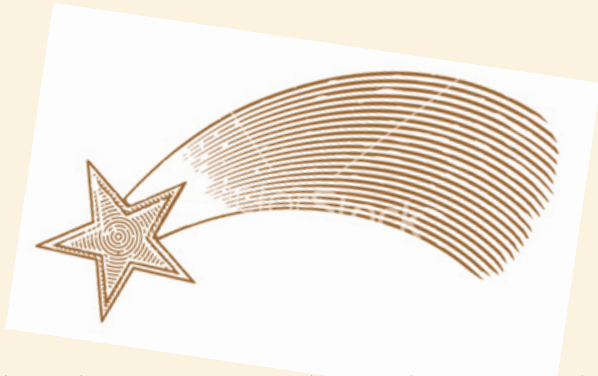
Hi! How are you all doing? We are busy as ever, with Estelle in High School and Elizabeth at NYU Theatre Arts, Tisch School of the Arts. We are recuperating from the blizzard. Tom is busy with lots of research and students to guide. He will be in the states in March for Easter. We hope to take a trip to see everyone sometime this year or next. Can't wait. We miss you all very much!

Love Always



FLASHLIGHTS FOR USHERS

It would help if we each brought our own flashlight when we usher. Time and effort on the House Manager's part would be saved, and you would not have to sign out, and remember to return it when you leave. Make a flashlight a part of your "usher outfit", (like your badge), when you get ready to come to The Playhouse, it will be a big help.



WHAT OUR STARS ARE DOING

***Carole Cook:** * *The Lion in Winter*, *Steel Magnolias* in Palm Springs joining in the celebration for Carol Channing's 95th birthday

***Mary Bridget Davies:** * *One Night With Janis Joplin*, *A Night With Janis Joplin*, *Kacey Clanton: Breaking Through*, *A Night With Janis Joplin*, and *Hethry "Red" Verhoef*: Stage Manager, on tour with *A Night With Janis Joplin*

Jay Donnell: *Kiss Me, Kate*, *Sleepless in Seattle - the Musical* will play the lead in *Ragtime*, in San Diego at the Spreckles Theatre

***Kevin Earley,** * *Can-Can* and *Fatima El-Bashir: Breaking Through* appearing in *Empire* at La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts

Jordan Fisher: *Aladdin and His Winter Wish* in the role of "Doody" on Fox TV's "Grease: Live"

Taraji P. Henson: *Above the Fold*, star of "Empire"- Golden Globe winner for Best Actress in a TV Drama. She will also play mathematics genius Katherine Johnson in "Hidden Figures" for Fox 2000. Johnson, along with Dorothy Vaughn and Mary Jackson, were instrumental in the success of astronaut John Glenn's space mission.

Mireya (Murry) Hepner: formerly with *Parson's Nose* is the producer at Mainstreet Theatre Company

Velina Hasu Houston: Director of *Ikebana* had an internal and informal reading in the *Carrie Hamilton*, of the latest *Ozomalti* script. She was also appointed as a USC "Distinguished Professor" by USC President, C.L. Max Nikias. Of the 23 Distinguished Professors, only two are female; the other is violinist Midori Goto. This is the first time someone from the dramatic arts has entered that circle.

***Sharon Lawrence:** *A Song at Twilight*, *Orson's Shadow*, *It's a Wonderful Life* at the Mark Taper in *The Mystery of Love & Sex* and on NBC TV in "Game of Silence," April 7
Marin Mazzie: * *110 in the Shade* was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in May, 2015. After fighting for her life through 24 grueling weeks of chemo and major surgery, she has already headlined at 54Below on New Year's Eve, traveled to San Francisco to play to a sold out crowd at the Venetian Room in our cabaret concert, flew to the Czech Republic and Slovakia to perform with the Czech Philharmonic and NOW is returning to Broadway as the star of the Tony Award winning revival of *The King and I* (From Jason Daniele: **110 in the Shade*....)

Brian Stokes Mitchell: *Mail*, on TV's "In Performance at the White House"

Iona Morris: *Cuttin' Up*, *As Bees in Honey Drown* is the Dialogue Coach on TV's "Blackish", at Disney ABC television Group

***Michael O'Keefe:** * Art on TV's "Blue Bloods"

John Randall: FRED Award Musical Director, performing on the cruise ship, *Aegean Odyssey*

***Damaso Rodriguez:** * *The Heiress*, **The Little Foxes*, at *A Noise Within*, directing *Romeo and Juliet*. Damaso is a co-founder of *Furious Theatre Company*, and is currently the Artistic Director of *Artists Repertory Theatre* in Portland, Oregon

***Peter Schneider:** * *Sister Act*, *the Musical* in Romania directing *Julius Caesar* in Romania which he adapted along with Patrick Pacheco

WHAT OUR FRIENDS ARE DOING

Cheryl Taylor: A seventeen-year cancer survivor, and a 2012 bone-marrow transplant recipient, was the City of Hope's spokesperson on New Year's Day. After a TV interview by Duarte Mayor, Samuel Kang, Cheryl received VIP tickets to the Rose Parade, a tailgate party, and 50-yard line tickets to the Rose Bowl game. These were all gifts to the Mayor, from the Tournament of Roses, so that a City of Hope patient could enjoy the Pasadena New Year's Day experience.

WHAT OUR STAFF IS DOING

Julie Ouellette: Front Office Manager is the Production Stage Manager for *Colony Collapse* at Boston Court.

A Note from the House Managers to the Friends:

Dear Friends,

Recently your House Managers were honored with a Playhouse trophy for "Carrying Extra Weight on their Shoulders" and carry it they did....brilliantly.

This extra weight was the demanding "Panto," the additional shows, the full houses it brought and the tight schedules.

Now we didn't do it alone, we had the help of all who ushered as well as the perfect box office team. It was truly a team effort and you all really made us shine. Together we RULED!

We will have our magnificent trophy on display in the lobby for a few more weeks. After that, it will be presented to the next well deserved employee or department that needs to be recognized for all their effort. Thank you to everyone for always being there for us. You are truly appreciated.

SEEN AT OUR THEATRE

Angela Bassett: **Fences*

Amanda Carlin: *Stop Kiss, Equus, The Dining Room*

Kacee Clanton: *Breaking Through, A Night With Janis Joplin*

Sharleen Cooper Cohen: *Playwright, Stormy Weather*

Santana Dempsey: *Real Women Have Curves*

Alaman Diadhiou: **Twist*

Jordan Fisher: *Aladdin and His Winter Wish*

Marita Geraghty: *The Good Doctor*

Ben Giroux: *Sleeping Beauty and Her Winter Knight, Aladdin and His Winter Wish*

David Kirk Grant: *Kiss Me, Kate*

Stu James: *Smokey Joe's Cafe*

Kristy Johnson: *Above the Fold, Intimate Apparel, Jitney*

Loren Lester: **Fallen Angels*

***Dawnn Lewis:** *Intimate Apparel, *Sister Act, the Musical*

Kris Lythgoe: *Peter Pan and Tinker Bell, A Pirates Christmas, Sleeping Beauty and Her Winter Knight, Aladdin and His Winter Wish, A Snow White Christmas*

***Art Manke:** *A Song at Twilight, *Fallen Angels, The Constant Wife, Private Lives, Star Quality*

Vanessa Williams: *Intimate Apparel*

OTHER GUESTS AT OUR THEATRE

Chris Holden: California State Assemblyman

Norman Lear: TV writer and producer, including "All in the Family", "Sanford and Son"

Kate Linder: Esther Valentine on TV's "The Young & The Restless"

Adam Sandler: TV and film actor, comedian

Terry Tornek: Pasadena Mayor

Beverly White: NBC TV News

*Denotes FRED Award winner

Office Help Is Kept Busy

This year started off with a busy schedule for our Office Help volunteers. They had a full day preparing "Treats in the Seats" for The Playhouse. That was followed by two days at Boston Court Theatre working on two of their mailings; they completed over 7,000 pieces of mail on each day. Although this may sound daunting, the volunteers are very efficient and fulfill the job quickly. Not only do they work hard; but, if you ever are around this happy group, it is non-stop talking and laughing. When you have an email blast asking for help, jump right in. What a great way to meet friends and socialize.

Dear Friends,

We are saddened to report that long-time Friend of The Pasadena Playhouse, Joanne Small, passed away the week of February 7.

Born in Iowa and raised in Michigan and Wisconsin she was from a military family and traveled a great deal. While she was involved in theater most of her life - dancing while in High School and later costuming for local theater groups, Joanne's profession was nursing. She was named Friend of the Month for September-October 1977 for her work on the Hospitality Committee, serving up great meals to the cast and crew on Saturdays. She was devoted to the Friends and The Playhouse and will be greatly missed.

Joanne's niche-side services and internment have been confirmed for Saturday March 5th at 2pm at the Mountain View Cemetery in Altadena, Ca.

The Cemetery address is as follows:

Mountain View
2400 North Fair Oaks Ave,
Altadena, Ca. 91001
Phone: 626-794-7133



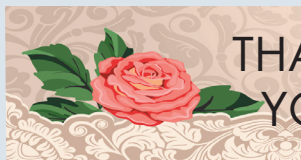
Friends of the Pasadena Playhouse Board 1st Vice President, Sue Haynie-Horn celebrates her 80th birthday at the February Board Meeting, cheered on by Lillias Krezel on left and Shirley Miller on the right.

APPLAUSE APPLAUSE

- Annelies Kischkel donated flashlights and some items for Hospitality.
- Debbie Rogers donated new scissors.
- Doris Arima donated a supply of new pens for the House Managers.
- Regina Robinson gave the House Managers clear file folders to use in their Usher Book.
- While Jayne Thomas was recuperating from her fall, Betty Parnell took over the job of distributing the Elf Project toys. Patrick Oliva and Carolyn Di Pane picked up two new tables and delivered them to Lenore Almanzar's house to use for the April 16, Garage Sale.
- Patti La Marr, with in-put from Beverly Meissner and Betty Parnell, designed and arranged for a new Merchandise Cart to be built by our talented stage crew. It is going to make it so much easier for those selling.
- Once again, Sharon Zaslav took on the big job of scheduling for Showcase House. She keeps track so that we get as many spots as possible.
- Renewals and new members are an important part of our organization. Patrick Oliva keeps track of them and makes sure they are reported to the chairs of the different Friends' events.

READERS

- During the Panto, we had several wonderful volunteers who read to the children before the show. Thanks to Judi Stephenson, Patti La Marr, Will Diaz, Patricia Bell, Kirsten Karlsrud, Jill McDowell, and Karen Prather.



THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU

First, a big thank you to Patti La Marr for all of her efforts to get our new cart designed and built. It would not have happened otherwise.

Next, thanks to my co-chair Betty Parnell for all she does on the cart, both creatively and by her work on it. Third, thanks to Mariann Vancura who is out working on the cart for every 4 pm Saturday show, rain or shine. And last but not least thanks to all of the volunteers that staff the Merchandise Cart, even once or twice, and make me look good. I appreciate you all as we go into our new season.

Beverly Meissner

Co-Chair Merchandise Cart

NEW MERCHANDISE CART IN THE WORKS

Many years ago, after using tables to sell our merchandise, the Friends decided a cart was needed to better display and store our many items. Doug Hodgdon created a wonderful, whimsical cart and Peggy Ebright drew up some designs and painted it. What a joy it has been to see it on the patio before the shows and at intermission. Out volunteers were able to display things and make more sales. Unfortunately, our trustworthy Merchandise Cart was beginning to show its age. After being pushed in and out of the theatre, up and down stairs, and getting lots of use, it was requiring more repairs and TLC. It was decided the time had come for a replacement and Patti La Marr took over the job of designing it. She had lots of input from our volunteers who worked on the cart for ways to improve it. Brad Enlow, our Technical Director, found some time and man power to build the new cart. We were fortunate that Johnny LeBlanc, who spends many hours painting sets, was willing to do the painting. We hope to have the cart in service by *Casa Valentina*.



Doug Hagdon, builder and Peggy Ebright, painter-decorator pose with the retiring cart. Watch this space for the new and improved version.



EL Portal Luncheon for March

Mark your calendar for our luncheon date in March. It will be at 11:00 on Saturday, March 26th at El Portal Restaurant in Pasadena. We'll have fun reporting to you about the CAVORT conference in Louisville where 18 of the Friends will represent the Playhouse. Look for an email blast reminder so you can sign up to join us. We also can tell you then about our recent trip down to Laguna Beach to see the musical *Louis and Keely*. There will be lots to report about and our members always have a good time socializing and eating lunch together. We hope to have some information at that time regarding summer ARTS events in the area in which the Friends are planning to obtain group tickets. See you then!

TUSKEGEE AIRMEN HONORED AT OPENING OF FLY



The cast, (back row) flanked by Sheldon Eps on the left and the writers Trey Ellis & Ricardo Khan on the right, welcome the veterans of the Tuskegee Airmen, their wives, widows and families to the gala opening of FLY.

OUR FRIENDS GREET THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN

On Opening Night several of the original Tuskegee Airmen and their families attended the show. To help honor these gentlemen and provide assistance, if needed, a group of our volunteers was assembled. Thanks to Allen Brune, Bruce Bumble, Bob DeWees, John Watkins and Steve West for making sure these very special guests were welcomed and helped to the party before the show, and then to their seats.



After a recent show, some of the cast members of Fly enjoy meeting two former WWII airmen, director producer, Norman Lear and 96 years old Lt. Col. Robert Friend who is believed to be the only surviving Tuskegee pilot



Seen left to right: Mariann Vancura, Liz Chan, Bobbi Yost, Airman Abe Alkana, Lenore Almanzar, Mary Walsten and Carolyn Di Payne.



FRIENDS ARE APPRECIATED. . .

Thank you everyone for all your help with the Airmen. Here is a thank you from the PR team. They had a great night and your help was so valuable. Dr. Ballou, their president thanked me several times for taking such great care of them.

TUSKEGEE AIRMEN INC.
LOS ANGELES CHAPTER

To: Group Sales Manager, Susan Van Tress
Pasadena Playhouse

Dear Ms. Van Tress,

The Los Angeles Chapter of Tuskegee Airmen Inc. would like to thank you and The Pasadena playhouse for honoring us at the Opening Reception and play "FLY". Everyone had a very enjoyable evening.

Your organized and thoughtful planning made the transition to other areas of the playhouse very helpful. Please give our thanks to all your staff and volunteers also.

Regards,

Simeon Ginyard, LACTAI Public Relations Chair

Joycelin Tomlin, Co-Chair



PLUS A NOTE FROM GENEVIEVE OSTRANDER

Hi Lenore,

I Wanted to thank you and the Friends again for helping out with the Airmen on Sunday.

Especially with the rain, those men were SO INCREDIBLY HELPFUL!

I hope everyone enjoyed the show.

Have a wonderful day,

Genevieve

(Genevieve is the Special Events Administrator for The Pasadena Playhouse.)

MAYOR HONORS TUSKEGEE AIRMEN AND THE PLAYHOUSE

City of Pasadena Proclamation

Whereas: The Pasadena Playhouse is committed to telling great stories and engaging its audiences to create an evocative, informative, uplifting and inspiring experience; and

Whereas: FLY, presented by The Pasadena Playhouse, in association with Crossroads Theatre Company, will usher in the celebration of Black History Month at the Pasadena Playhouse and tells the story of the first African American Army Air Corp fighters known as the Tuskegee Airmen, who flew over the skies of Europe and North Africa during World War II; and

Whereas: hundreds of underserved students will experience this Off-Broadway Bound production, which honors the Tuskegee Airmen for their outstanding work and extraordinary excellence on behalf of our nation, and for inspiring FLY playwrights, Trey Ellis and Ricardo Kahn, to write a dynamic theatrical piece to commemorate the history of the Tuskegee Airmen; and

Whereas as: The Pasadena Playhouse approaches its Centennial with nearly 100 years of storytelling, it continues its mission to achieve excellence through high quality work on stage and in the community;

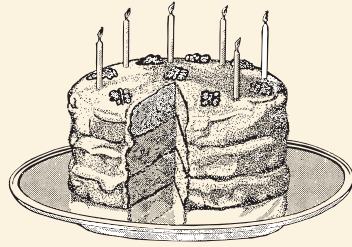
Now Therefore: I Terry Tornek, Mayor of the City of Pasadena, on behalf of the City Council, do hereby proclaim January 31, 2016 as:

*FLY at The Pasadena Playhouse - Soaring to
Excellence with the Tuskegee Airman Day*



96 year old bomber pilot Abe Alkana who was escorted into battle by the Tuskegee Airmen in WWII bombing raids over Germany posed with three of the cast members when he attended a performance.

March



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

April

FRIEND OF THE MONTH MARCH-APRIL



Joan Zimmerman

Two years ago, after crossing the country to visit her son and his family, Joan Zimmerman made the decision to relocate to Southern California. Joan is a New York Native from the Bronx, now living in a cottage in La Cañada. While in the East, Joan lived in Great Neck, New York, commuting into the city where she worked as a Customer Service Representative for a dentistry supply company. When she arrived in California, Joan looked for volunteer opportunities. Fortunately for us, she emailed Patrick Oliva, enquiring what she might do. He promptly signed her up and she has since become a prominent member of the Friends of The Pasadena Playhouse. Her first job was putting stickers on programs, graduating to ushering, working on the Merchandise Cart and most recently has joined The Playhouse Tours as a companion.

In addition to her many roles for the Friends, Joan also explored volunteer opportunities in her neighborhood. Close to her home she discovered the Lanterman House, built 100 years ago by Frank Lanterman, it is a unique home - one of the first built of poured concrete. Given to the City of La Cañada by the Lanterman family, it is now open to the public. Joan is a docent, giving tours to visitors. She is also an active member of the local YMCA. At the Y she enjoys pool exercise and helps with special programs. Joan is an avid walker and enjoys exploring her neighborhood.

Enthusiastic about all The Playhouse productions, Joan particularly enjoyed Waterfall. A generous volunteer as you can see, She says: "No job is too big or too little."

She thanks the Friends for this honor, saying: "It's nice to be recognized." In turn, the Friends of the Pasadena Playhouse thank Joan Zimmerman for her continuing dedication and are pleased to recognize her as the March-April Friend of the Month.





ABOUT DONATIONS

We usually graciously accept any and all donations but this year we do have a 'no thank you' item: Books – they are much too heavy for us to work with and take up too much space for the small amount of money they bring in, please give them to your local libraries.

Also. . .

We plan to concentrate on jewelry, wall art, furniture and household goods. We have a large, 'overlooked' bag of jewelry from our Bazaar sale so we will dedicate a large space to display all of it and all other jewelry donations that come in.

We would also like to liquidate all remaining furniture, art and collectables in our inventory.

Household goods and clothing are garage sale favorites.

Please start collecting your donations. We are aiming for an April 4 deadline. That will give us time to get everything priced (an enormous task) and ready to sell for April 16.

To arrange for pickup of your donations Call or email

Linda Barbosa

One more thing! – *Closer to April we will start signing up helpers. It is a lot of work but even more fun for all who work. No, really – it is fun!

To schedule times to help on Friday, April 15, and/or Saturday April 16, call or email

Bonnie Davis