

AFTRAwords

The Official Publication of AFTRA, Tri-State Local

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President Report

By Denise Jaeckel



This newsletter includes a gift for every member. Some tools to help you focus when feeling overwhelmed, one for Broadcasters and one for Freelancers. You'll know it when you see it. Cut it out and keep it with you.

To the left you'll see a list of your Tri-State Board members. Our job is to educate ourselves about your concerns and make decisions that benefit us all. Obviously, communication is important. How else will we know what you need, or you know what we're doing? Questions, concerns, and any ideas you have **please** share them. To help organize things, we've created committees. The more input we have from you, the more the Committees can work for you.

Broadcast Steering Committee - a forum for Broadcasters to define issues, discuss industry trends, questions, ideas and develop solutions to problems.

Freelance Steering Committee - a forum for Freelancers to define issues, discuss industry trends, questions, ideas and develop solutions to problems.

Agents Committee - a forum for Freelancers to discuss issues and develop ideas for better working relationships with their talent agents.

Conservatory Committee - organize workshops for members to gain knowledge and develop their craft.

This newsletter updates what has been happening in Tri-State, but it doesn't give a clear picture of how hard our staff has been working for us. Unless you talk to them on a regular basis, like I do, you have no idea how dedicated Kim, Tim, Chris and John are to helping every member. It's important to me that you know. Union work seldom has glamorous victories. It consists mostly of individual battles against constant attempts to undermine our working conditions. Our staff fights these battles for us daily. We help them, and ultimately ourselves, by learning our contracts, never undercutting our minimums, and encouraging each other. We are all in this together.

GOOD FOR BIG MEDIA...BAD FOR THE COUNTRY

Bargaining with the TV and Radio Stations this year is markedly different. It's never easy, but suddenly it's not all gloom and doom from the Company like in 2008-2009. The economy is inching back, even if the "jobless recovery" only benefits very few. The banks were bailed out and didn't crash. The auto industry (with crucial help from labor and government) reinvented itself; folks are buying cars again. Indeed, 3rd quarter 2010 ad revenues were up more than 20% over 2009. After a recession-fueled plunge, the profit line for big media--indelibly tied to ad sales-- is heading north again.

No doubt the 2010 election cycle, in which, astoundingly, an estimated \$4 billion plus was spent, fueled the turnaround in media, mostly television. Several stations in our battleground swing states reported political buys so high that normal ad inventory sat idle until post-election.

In Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and West Virginia, the public was subjected to so many packaged candidate and issue spots that one could easily equate Election Day with Black Friday, the polling place with Mall of America: "Buy Our Guy—he'll lower your taxes and save you money!"

Political spending has been trending up for decades, but this year saw a huge jump. Most commentators attribute the vast change in available political money to *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, a January, 2010 Supreme Court decision that struck down a decades-old ban on independent expenditures by corporations to influence federal elections.

For the first time, corporations could spend their own treasury funds on ads expressly advocating the election or defeat of a candidate. (Unions could, too, but they couldn't begin to match the resources of big business.) Firms could give directly to a campaign, or choose to give to an outside (not candidate or party) group such as a tax-exempt organization. Moreover, new rulings in campaign finance regulation enabled large contributors to outside groups to remain anonymous! Usually risk-adverse CEO's could now hide from critical stockholders and consumers. As a result, in 2010, there was a 40% increase in political spending by outside groups.

Do you believe as I do that the recent election



was marked by an unprecedented level of rants, fear-mongering and cynicism? How could anybody get a steady diet of those vicious opponent-bashing spots and not lose respect for our political process? Sure, an anti-incumbent fervor inflamed the country. But how much of it was fueled by a simple disgust that our candidates and campaigns are bought and sold like Charmin?

I guess that's why it really stuck with me when-- no lie-- from across the bargaining table last month, as we batted around the Company's huge political ad revenues this

year, the corporate attorney made a wry aside about *Citizens United*: "Good for the Company, bad for the country."

I thought, "Jeez, I guess so." Then—I admit it—"But maybe now we can get some of those media profits for AFTRA members."

Was my relief over these tainted revenues "bad for the country"? Yes, I confess to a certain moral relativism here. Bargaining a decent raise isn't ever easy, even when the Company is flush. Really, for our members, it's mostly about stopping wage cuts and an ever-expanding work day. So I have no regrets. The overall deterioration of our country's political climate isn't caused by collective bargaining with Big Media.

On the contrary, I'm proud to assert that AFTRA and other media unions are a major force in defending standards for quality journalism, a hallmark of any democratic society. While events are always subject to interpretation, we defend the rights of our members to report what they see and hear, no matter who buys the commercials that frame the newscasts.

As our employers attempt to discard jobs through combining technical and reporting roles, we are demanding that our journalistic judgment on the scene of the news must be honored. As digital and mobile platforms for media proliferate, we insist that journalistic standards and fair work practices prevail for all content providers.

In the short and long term, at our best, our unions help democracy grow and thrive.

So next time at the table, I'll be waiting for the best moment to make this comment supporting AFTRA's proposals: "Good for the Union members... Good for the Country!"

CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING AT WORK

- TIM WILLIAMS -

Recently, some of our broadcast members in New York City experienced a safety hazard that posed a very serious threat. We think it is important to share that experience with broadcasters in our local, to assure that you do not fall victim to the same danger.

Several reporters at WNYW-TV suffered carbon monoxide poisoning while working in the live trucks. Each of the instances occurred while reporters worked in the live trucks over a period of time (always at least 60 minutes), while the truck engine was off, but the generator was on. The New York local raised the issue with the company and the station took steps to prevent a repeat of the problem.



Carbon monoxide is a natural by-product of incomplete combustion from fuel burning sources. It is a colorless, odorless, tasteless, non-irritating toxic gas. It is absorbed into the body through the lungs where it is transferred to the blood and displaces the oxygen in the blood stream where continued exposure can asphyxiate the individual. Put bluntly, carbon monoxide poisoning disrupts the blood's ability to transport oxygen to the body.

Without very specialized equipment, carbon monoxide is virtually undetectable. It is important to recognize the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning and its progression.

The following are the symptoms at the initial stage of the poisoning:

- Headache
- Nausea
- Confusion
- Fatigue
- Dizziness
- Irritability

These initial symptoms are also attributable to things as varied as missing a meal to eating something bad, or some other illness. That's why we must at the very least, have knowledge of carbon monoxide poisoning, because its symptoms get worse.

As the symptoms progress, they can include:

- Vomiting
- Loss of consciousness
- Drowsiness

The final symptoms include:

- Seizures
- Permanent brain damage
- Coma
- Death

The results of exposure to carbon monoxide and the length of that exposure, present a variety of potential problems. It is imperative that when working on live trucks, that we now include this in our memory banks, as a potential health hazard when any of the initial symptoms occur.

Fortunately, we have not seen this at any of the stations in our local. If however, these symptoms have been experienced in live trucks in the past and you attributed it to something else, you might want to factor this into the equation as well. If at any point in the future this does become a concern, don't hesitate to take the immediate steps to assure your safety, then contact your local AFTRA office.

Freelance Matters

By Kim Davis & Chris Lacey



Kim Davis



Chris Lacey

Agent Updates:

We are sad to report that Ashley Talent is no longer franchised by AFTRA. Please call the office at 513.579.8668 with any questions.

We are pleased to announce that PC Goenner has been granted a one-year franchise by AFTRA. PC Goenner has offices in Cincinnati, Columbus & Dayton.

DID YOU KNOW?

Dare To Dream Casting has established a website to benefit talent as well as their agents (and even those talent with no representation). It will allow Dare To Dream Casting's clients (ad agencies & production companies) to fine tune their selection process when casting for their projects. Talent registered on www.thetalentmarket.com will have priority over time slots at auditions. The majority of timeslots will be given to those talent registered that fit the qualifications of the character specs delivered by the client. All bookings & scheduling will still be handled by the talent agencies. Dare To Dream Casting and thetalentmarket.com receive no commission.

There is a special yearly registration fee that is being offered at a 25% refundable discount to all AFTRA members in good standing. Talent must simply register with www.thetalentmarket.com and follow up with a phone call to Dare To Dream Casting. Give talent name & AFTRA Performer ID and they will verify that talent is in good standing with the Tri-State Local and reimburse talent with a \$25.00 refund check.

This website is a tool helping Dare To Dream Casting branch out to ad agencies & production companies all over the Midwest.... www.thetalentmarket.com will be a resource for many new & exciting clients as well as the existing ones! Register now and expand your visibility!

Additionally, you qualify for lots of discounts on cell phone service, travel, prescriptions, legal services to name a few? GO to unionplus.com find AFTRA in the union locator and GO!

The screenshot shows the Union Plus website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for CONTACT US, ABOUT UNION PLUS, FAQs, CUSTOMER SERVICE, RSS FEED, and SITE MAP. Below this is the Union Plus logo and a search bar. The main content area is titled "Union Plus Benefits for AFTRA members" and lists various benefits such as Free Prescription Discount Card, AT&T Wireless, Travel Center, Entertainment, ConsumerReports.org, Health Club, Flowers, and Union-Made Clothing. There is also a "Most Popular Discounts" section. The page includes social media links for Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, and YouTube, and a section for AFTRA members to update their status.

Haer To Retire in May

John Haer, Local Executive Director, will retire from employment with AFTRA this coming May. He will be 65 in February. "I love my job," he told the Tri-State Board members last month, "but after 34 continuous years (10 with AFTRA) of trade union organizing, administration and bargaining, I'm ready to unwind a bit."

Job posting and advertising for applicants for the position has begun. The search and hiring process is headed by National Executive Director Kim Roberts Hedgpath. Hedgpath, together with Board Officers

of the Pittsburgh and Tri State Locals, expect to have screened, interviewed and selected a new executive director by March.

"I'm pleased that our National Executive Director has approved a period when I can work together with my successor to assist in orientation and introductions to members and employers," Haer commented. "In the meantime, it's job priority number one to reach agreement on any and all open broadcast contracts. I told the employers that I'm not leaving until they settle."

2011 NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to the Tri-State Local of AFTRA!

LoraBeth Barr

Christine Brunner

Kate Daugherty

Trevor Day

Franklin Grace III

Angenette Levy – WKRC

Shanelle Marie

David Mingo

Nathan Neorr

Perry Schaible – WKRC

Taylor Scruggs

Stephen Shore

Parker Smith

STATION EMPLOYEES:

Your Weingarten Rights as an AFTRA Member

(If called into a meeting with management, read the following to management or present this slip before the meeting starts)

If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined, or affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that my AFTRA Representative be present at this meeting. Without representation being present, I choose not to participate in the discussion.

National Board Report

Denise Dal Vera



Exhibit A- Thumbs up!
AFTRA and Screen Actors Guild seek ratification from members after approving Agreement with AMPTP on new Television and Feature Film Contracts.

The American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA, AFL-CIO) and Screen Actors Guild and have reached a tentative agreement with the Alliance of

Producers (AMPTP) on successor agreements to the Exhibit A of the AFTRA National Code of Fair Practice for Network Television Broadcasting (covering scripted network primetime and pay television programs), The CW Supplement and the Producers-Screen Actors Guild Codified Basic Agreement for feature motion pictures, scripted network primetime television and pay television programs.

The new three-year agreement was approved by the Joint National Board of AFTRA and Screen Actors Guild on Dec. 4th and ratification by the unions' memberships is 93.52%. The current contracts expire on June 30, 2011, and the new three-year agreement will be effective from July 1, 2011, through June 30, 2014.

Nuts and Bolts of the new contract:

- A 6% wage increase over the term of the agreement with 2% in each of the three years, effective July 1, 2011, 2012 and 2013.
- A 10% increase in the current rate of employer contributions paid to the AFTRA Health & Retirement Funds, Screen Actors Guild Pension & Health Plans, bringing the total contribution rate to 16.5% effective July 1, 2011. This represents the largest dollar value increase to the plans, under these contracts, since the plans were founded and is the largest percentage increase to the plans in more than two decades.
- Two additional background positions in theatrical and one additional background position in television in the Western Zones.
- An expansion of major role provisions to apply to new pay television series commencing in their second season.

- Expanded union coverage over made for new media productions.
- Increases in the area of money and schedule breaks.
- Improved contract language to increase equal employment opportunities for union performers.
- The unions also agreed to modifications in the travel provisions of the contracts.

The work by our leadership and committees was impressive and inspiring. I am always in awe of the knowledge and cool headed thinking of our negotiators, their skill and time and dedication to getting the best deal they can for all of us.

What's in it for you? S.3804

On Nov. 18th, the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee recommended S.3804, the Combating Online Infringement and Counterfeits Act, for consideration and passage by the full Senate.

Protecting the films, television shows, sound recordings and other content made by members of AFTRA, DGA, IATSE and SAG (more than 300,000 members) and enjoyed by audiences around the world is all the more urgent given the monumental and unchecked growth of Internet theft in recent years. The forsaken jobs and looted revenues that are so casually disregarded by both the operators of rogue sites and those who seek to protect their illegal activity reflect real wages, residuals, benefits and opportunities lost to our members forever thanks to those who knowingly and purposely traffic in Internet theft.

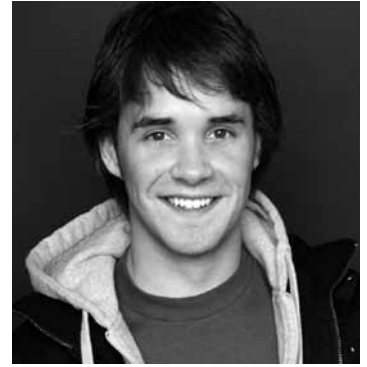
Now members need to contact their Senators to pass S.3804 to protect their earnings and their entire industry's future earnings from theft. Please make the call or write the letter and send the message loud and clear.

Prepping for Non Broadcast Contract

After three extensions, technological advancements and a changing industry landscape, long awaited rolling up of the sleeves is underway regarding AFTRA's Non Broadcast Wages and Working Condition Committee (W&W). Both locally and Nationally, feedback from members, employers and staff is result in a new look and discussion about new media and the **Non-Broadcast/Industrial** contract which expires April 30, 2011. Please email Denise @ dmdalvera@gmail.com with your ideas.

Conservatory Update

- Kristopher Dean -



As your Conservatory Committee Chair, I am ready to assist in creating workshop offerings that are going to be the most beneficial for you in the area of freelance. Chicago Detroit and Pittsburgh locals have great workshops (monthly if not weekly) in different areas that build collective skills and strengths. It's what unions do: help members get the edge.

Perhaps some ideas could be:

- Talk back forums with local producers/directors
- Advanced on-camera auditioning techniques
- Web and on-line shortcuts for marketing
- Voiceover classes in a real studio with producers
- Scene study
- Improv
- EarPrompter/Teleprompter
- Home Studio and auditioning from Home
- How to build a website or improve on the one you have.
- How to turn a job union and talk about rates and paperwork.
- Negotiating tips and landmines.
- How to Agent your Agent
- Understanding you Health and Retirement

It would be great to include SAG and AEA members as well for some of these.

So my question for you, is how can the conservatory better serve you, its membership, and what can you offer in terms of time and energy to get this off the ground? I'm the new guy and can't do it alone.

Please send me your ideas at deankdd@gmail.com

With your input, I can't wait to get started. It's what WE make it.



by Denise Dal Vera

AFTRA and the classroom?

University Professors may be thinking about recording parts of their university curriculum but decide not to because of a lack of information. More and more class lectures and instruction can be utilized by way of cell, MP3, or download.

Could there be professors who dismiss the idea out of hand because they're too busy to add it to all that they are already doing? Or if they are taking advantage of technology currently, are they using their own students to make low quality recordings for free? Could cost issues or assumptions about cost simply stop this idea from taking hold for some?

The University of Cincinnati Professor's union, American Association of University Professors (AAUP) is hopefully about to find out. Their leadership, (in an upcoming January newsletter), will ask their membership this question by running an article about who AFTRA Tri-State is and what our members can do for their members. Using professional AFTRA voices to record supplemental instruction material can enhance the teaching and show union solidarity at the same time. It is everyone's hope that UC Professors will provide feedback and thoughts about what they think of the idea after reading about it in January with the opportunity to contact Kim Davis for further targeted discussions. Our Non Broadcast Wages & Working condition talks will be underway the first part of the year and this information could have an impact.

Could this idea result in a possible waiver to our local non-broadcast / educational contract for AAUP members with a low budget? Could it become a candidate for a pilot program for the rest of the Country's University Professors who are union members?

Before we get ahead of ourselves, one thing is for certain, in order to create a waiver to bring in new work, we must all try to determine first if there is even a need. Stay tuned as we all try to learn more together to see what is possible.

Denise Dal Vera
AFTRA Joint National Non-Broadcast
Steering Committee Co-Chair

INFORMATION NEEDED FOR EVERY RECORDED JOB

Copy this and make sure you have answers to these questions BEFORE accepting a job.

EMPLOYER: _____

Usually the production company or advertiser, but NEVER the talent agent.

WHAT WILL I BE HIRED TO DO?

Voiceover

On-Camera (actor, dancer, extra, specialty act, spokesperson, stunts)

WHAT IS THIS FOR?

A commercial to sell something

An industrial to educate

A website to do both

WHO WILL SEE/HEAR IT?

Only the company's employees

The general public

HOW WILL IT BE USED?

Radio Network TV Cable Web/Banner Ad

HOW LONG WILL IT BE USED?

You can't work for a competitor while it runs due to conflict of interest.

1 week 4 weeks 13 weeks 1 year 5 years

WHAT MARKETS WILL IT AIR IN? _____

U.S. cities or International countries

DATES I WILL BE NEEDED? _____

Higher fees for Sat, Sun or Holidays

HOW LONG WILL I BE NEEDED EACH DAY?

1 hour 2 hours 1/2 day full day overtime

WHERE WILL I BE WORKING? _____

If more than 25 miles from where I live I may get: mileage travel time travel day hotel

WILL I BE SUPPLYING MY OWN WARDROBE?

Yes - What I must bring _____

No If a fitting is needed, I must be paid for my time.

Information determines the minimum the job should pay.

For help, call Kim Davis at AFTRA (513)579-8668.

**THIS WILL
NOT
BE MY
LAST JOB!**

Organizing Report

Cincinnati:

Our committee Act Now has not met since the Spring. We have been in a holding pattern in order to coordinate and get specific direction from National's Organizing initiatives. We have partnered with other locals who have shared their ideas and insights. Cincinnati continues to look to outside for inspiration and opportunities.

Casinos in Ohio will need actors, voices, training media and advertisements estimated at nearly 1 million in revenue for CPT in Columbus, Cincinnati and Cleveland. The commitment from the owners of the casino to hire local and hire union is now in a wait and see mode. The first official step of the construction process is underway. Soon we will know the facility brand, the operation's general manager, and the final design of the development. Cincinnati's Casino is scheduled to be open for business in late 2012. We look to our staff to have discussions soon to capitalize on the work already done behind the scenes.

The Cincinnati casino is already making an impact on the local business community. And, like the video's featured business and community leaders, we are all eager to see what the future brings.

The video was produced by local Director Zo Wesson and Barking Fish Lounge.
Video: http://barkingfishlounge.com/bfl/client_info/cincy_casino/

CCM drama students are eager to learn about how to protect the career they are beginning to build. We are offering outreach and information to the dedicated freshman, sophomore, junior and senior classes of CCM Drama. October's full day Saturday master class was mandatory and garnered over 70 new Pre-union and some union members in attendance.

The next ACT NOW meeting will be a big one as we have some making up to do, but we hope you can come, listen to the ideas, throw in your own and take away a cool T-shirt!

Denise Dal Vera
Cincinnati Organizing Chair

AFTRA, Tri-State Local
1056 Delta Ave., #4,
Cincinnati, OH 45208



SAVE THE DATE!

AFTRA Tri-State will hold its City Meetings March 21st-24th, 2011.
All meetings will be from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Please contact Kim Davis at kdavis@aftra.com or 513.579.8668
to confirm your attendance!

March 21st – Louisville

The Walden Theatre
1123 Payne Street – 40204
502.589.0084

March 22nd – Indianapolis

The Elbow Room
605 N Pennsylvania Street – 46204
317-635-3354

March 23rd – Cincinnati

AFTRA Tri-State Office
1056 Delta Ave. – 45208
513.579.8668

March 24th – Columbus

Rooster's Restaurant
3370 Olentangy River Road – 43202
614.262.3185