



# Sightlines

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USITT's 2010 Annual Conference & Stage Expo, a celebration of the organization's 50 year history and a look toward its future, will be headquartered in the Kansas City Convention & Entertainment Facilities in the heart of Kansas City, Missouri. The facility is so large that it spans several city streets, and has an unusual roofline that includes distinctive support towers. Conference Committee Member Mark Putman captured part of the geometry of the building during a recent Conference Committee planning meeting in the Midwest city. More about planned 2010 activities can be found in this issue.



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USITT's 2010 elections will provide members with the opportunity to choose leaders for the coming decade. Read about the nominations procedure and slate at left.

## Announce 2010 Election Candidates

**Carl Lefko**  
*USITT President*

The USITT Nominations Committee has prepared a slate for the 2010 election cycle. Sylvia Hillyard Pannell, as Immediate Past President, chaired the Nominations Committee that prepared the slate below. She and the committee diligently sought input from the general membership, Commissioners, Regional Sections, Conference Committee, and Directors at Large.

The Nominations Committee presents the following preliminary slate for the 2010 election.

### Vice-President for Communications

Michael Monsos  
Mark Shanda

### Vice-President for Members, Sections & Chapters

Martha Marking  
Stirling Shelton

### Vice-President for Programming

Michael Mehler

### Vice-President for Special Operations

Dan Denhart

### Treasurer

Lea Asbell-Swanger  
David Krajec

*Officers who are elected will serve two-year terms starting July 1,*

2010.

**Directors at Large (*six to be elected*)**

Pan Leung  
Rafael Jaen  
Jack Feivou  
Raymond Kent  
Tony Hardin  
Don Childs  
Debra Garcia Lockwood  
John Prokos  
Emily Gill  
Jill Mauer  
Stephanie Young  
Michael Gros

*Those elected Directors at Large will serve three-year terms beginning July 1, 2010.*

The slate may be amended by following the By-Laws that state: "Additional nominations for each elective office may be presented by petition, supported by no fewer than 50 signatures verified as those of members in good standing in the Corporation. Additional nominations shall be accompanied by written approval of the nominee and a brief biographical description."

Petitions for additional nominations for each elective office may be conducted electronically for candidates who wish to be included on the ballot. To file an e-mail petition:

- Confirm the willingness of the individual to stand for election;
- Collect the names of at least 50 current USITT members who have agreed to support the nomination; and
- Send an e-mail by October 1 to Ms. Pannell as Nominations Committee Chair at [sylvia\\_hillyard\\_pannell@usitt.org](mailto:sylvia_hillyard_pannell@usitt.org).

The e-mail must contain the name and brief biography of the nominee as well as names and e-mail addresses of all of those members who signed the petition in support of the nomination.

Once the electronic petition is received, the membership of those who endorse the nomination will be verified and the support of each signer will be confirmed. If all is in order, the name will be added to the slate.

The Nominations Committee hopes that this option will allow the membership a continued process for participation and involvement. Petitions may still be filed on paper and mailed to Ms. Pannell at USITT, 315 South Crouse Avenue, Suite 200, Syracuse, NY 13210 by October 1.

Voting this year will again use an online system, with its secure electronic process for e-balloting. With the use of e-balloting, USITT has seen numbers of voters increase dramatically over the return of paper ballots. The vast majority of members found the process of voting electronically easy and accessible. Paper ballots

will also be available for members who do not wish to vote electronically.

Any member with questions may e-mail Ms. Pannell at [sylvia\\_hillyard\\_pannell@usitt.org](mailto:sylvia_hillyard_pannell@usitt.org).

USITT's officers and Directors at Large shape the future of the organization; it is very important that all members participate in the election process. By doing so, members invest in the future of the Institute.

Special thanks go to the current Nominations Committee for the conscientious work and many hours devoted to developing the 2010 USITT election slate.

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## Officer Profile: Dave Will

### A Natural Fit for New VP

David W. Will is stepping into the position of Vice-President for Conferences at an exciting time for the organization. He took office July 1, and for Mr. Will, the position is a natural progression in his more than 20 year involvement with USITT. He says he is very honored to have the opportunity of coordinating the organization's upcoming 50th anniversary celebration, and the events which will follow.

Mr. Will says he has always enjoyed, and been able to take advantage of, how USITT allows members to get together with top professionals. USITT has allowed him to stay in contact and network and learn from others throughout his career. "I'm excited about the opportunity to be able to provide that for the Institute and for the members," Mr. Will said, noting that it is very important for students to sit side by side with professionals and expand their horizons.

While his role is new, Mr. Will has been extremely active with the organization for many years. He was a member of the Conference Committee for the 1997 Annual Conference when USITT transitioned to a new way of planning and running its major spring event. He served as Management Commissioner, and was a member of the Commissioners' Steering Committee for six consecutive years, helping guide the scheduling of Conference activities.

Coordinating all the diverse elements that make up a USITT Conference & Stage Expo might seem daunting, but as Manager of Facilities Resources for the College of Arts and Architecture at Penn State University he represents the interests of the college to the offices of physical plant, facilities planning, and safety, overseeing the 16 buildings assigned to the college. Those buildings include five theatres and a recital hall, as well as the programming needed for everything from architecture to visual arts.

Mr. Will received both his bachelor's and master's degrees in theatre from Penn State, and then was asked to be assistant production manager for a new building with a 2,600-seat theatre. He's been a part of Penn State ever since.

"I've worked with many of the greatest artists from around the world, and learned from the work of the greatest lighting designers



David W. Will

and technicians during the course of my career," he said. "It's challenging since we stage over 360 events a year and support production work all over campus."

Among his favorite tasks are planning large events such as a multi-day extravaganza to launch a capital campaign, and the coordination needed for a Governor's Conference that meant working with both the academic and political communities.

His all time favorite, though, is Martha Graham. "I sat in awe as she walked in the door, used her cane as a stick to beat the rhythm, and put her company through its rehearsal paces," he said.

Mr. Will brings all those experiences and more from his almost 35 years at Penn State to the role of VP Conferences. One of his goals is to continue to create the welcoming community of exhibitors, professionals, students, and educators who create a unique atmosphere at USITT's conference every year.

His plans for the future are to expand that reach even further.

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# Fifty Dollars for Fifty Years

## A Special Way to Celebrate USITT's Coming Anniversary

Larry Hill  
*USITT @ 50 Chair*

As the USITT@50 fundraising campaign enters its fifth and final year, a new rallying call was needed that asks individuals to give while recognizing that recent events may have caused economic situations to have changed dramatically. Fifty Dollars for Fifty Years suggests a modest donation level that most members could manage and serves as a reminder that gifts of any size are appreciated.

All members, no matter how long their involvement or their current level of membership, are asked to consider making a special donation toward the future successes of USITT. Members are being asked to make donations before USITT begins its 2010 Annual Conference & Stage Expo and celebration of its 50th year.

Stories in *Sightlines* and advertising in national publications highlight award winners and research grant recipients. Presentations at the Annual Conference grow from the work accomplished with donations that have accumulated over the decades.

Consider the impact of a gift on the next 50 years of the Institute. Consider, too, the value in knowing donations made in 2009 become the principal that will make a continuous impact on countless individual careers in the future.

The Board of Directors understands the value of building these investments and has directed that there be a 50 percent match from USITT's reserves for gifts to the four major funds: Samuel H. Scripps for international activities; Edward Kook for research; New Century for student activities; and USITT for the organization's future.

Participate along with the almost 100 members of USITT who have already acknowledged the value of contributing to the future -- they made a five-year commitment to securing USITT's next 50 years. Join them in the spirit of *Securing our Future* and help us dramatically grow our Honor Roll of Giving for 2010.

There are three easy ways to give. Just check off a box on the membership renewal form (paper or online), when registering for the Annual Conference & Stage Expo, or by visiting the secure online site [www.usitt.org/giving](http://www.usitt.org/giving). Donors can select the fund or funds they wish to support, list the amount (USITT will automatically make the 50 percent match), and fill in the details.

There is one simple caveat to this plea: the Board of Directors has placed a \$200,000 cap on the match. Please help make sure that every dollar possible is matched.

USITT is wrapping up its multiyear effort to build the principal of its four major funds. These funds:

- support members as they pursue research opportunities,
- fund international travel and study,
- recognize excellence in student designers and technicians, and
- ensure the organization will have needed reserves for future special needs.

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## Update Info for *Membership Directory*

During the month of July, USITT will be asking members to review their information in preparation for the 2010 *Membership Directory & Resource Guide*. Members are encouraged to monitor their e-mail and mail boxes in the coming weeks for this important communication. Any changes must be reported by August 1 to be included in the 2010 edition. August 1 is also the last date to renew a lapsed membership or establish a new one to receive a *Directory* listing. To communicate changes, go online at <http://www.usitt.org/membership/AddressUpdate.html> or call Monica in the USITT office at 800-938-7488 ext. 104. To renew or join over the phone, dial ext. 102 to speak with Michelle.

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This month:  
Update your Info

ETCP Tests in Canada

BTS Holiday Cards

## ETCP Offers Computer Testing in Canada

ETCP announced there is a new testing center in Canada. All three certification exams are now available for computer-based testing at Robertson College, 265 Notre Dame Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Individuals must meet eligibility requirements to take the exams, and applications must be turned in to the ETCP office for approval. Once a candidate is approved, a letter with information on scheduling the exam will be sent. The eligibility requirements, candidate handbook, and application materials can be found [here](#). To have a copy mailed, contact Meredith Moseley-Bennett at 212-244-1505 or [certification@esta.org](mailto:certification@esta.org) with a mailing address.

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## Holiday Cards Available

The ESTA Foundation 2009 Behind the Scenes Holiday Cards, created by some of the industry's most talented designers, are now available. Four fabulous designs are offered this year.

Scenic designer Douglas Schmidt has created an elegant stage waiting to be brought to life by dancing snowflakes, while his colleague Beowulf Boritt's card is a challenge for theatre lovers, filled with props to identify from some of the many shows he has designed. Talented young photographer Andrew Hefter is back for a third year with a card featuring the ghostlight as a beacon of hope against a brilliant night sky. Tim Hunter's design uses a large canvas with the Behind the Scenes ghostlight as a reminder that the holidays are the time to care for each other and for those

less fortunate.

There are several ordering options. Meeting the minimum order of just 250 cards, orders can be personalized with a company logo and a custom message. Packages of 10 cards are available with a standard greeting. The third option is an electronic version of any of the cards that can be sent via e-mail in the form of a jpg, gif or pdf.

Orders for holiday cards will be taken until September 30 and will be shipped to arrive in late November. All proceeds will benefit The ESTA Foundation's Behind the Scenes program. [Click here](#) to view the card designs and order online. For more information, contact Ryan Swearingen at 212-244-1421 or [holidaycard09@estafoundation.org](mailto:holidaycard09@estafoundation.org).

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# In Memoriam

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## In Memoriam: Edward Peterson Jr.

**Dr. Joel E. Rubin**

*USITT Co-Founder, Fellow and Past President*

and

**Richard Stephens**

*USITT Archivist*

Edward Peterson Jr., a founding member of USITT and a Fellow of the Institute, died May 21 of complications following surgery. He was 77 and had been living in Los Angeles, California and Las Vegas, Nevada.

Mr. Peterson was born in Forest Hills, New York and grew up in Marblehead, Massachusetts. He graduated cum laude from St. Mark's prep school in Southborough, Massachusetts in 1949 and as a young man was active in various summer stock companies throughout New England.

He graduated from Princeton University with a degree in American Civilization in 1954, where he was a member of the Key and Seal Club and the Triangle Club. He did graduate work in the Yale School of Drama's technical design program and served at the U.S. Army Television Center during the Korean conflict.

Mr. Peterson was involved with USITT from its inception. Dr. Joel E. Rubin remembered, "Shortly after Ed moved to New York City in 1964 to take up employment at Kliegl Bros., he was elected to his first leadership position within the Institute as USITT's Treasurer in 1965. However, as Treasurer Ed was a disaster, fortunately committing to only one term.

"It was not handling the money that was his problem; it was the bookkeeping. We soon realized that Ed had banked more membership dues than we had names of members on the books! We learned early at both USITT and Kliegl that paperwork was not Ed's forte. Fortunately for both organizations, we also learned that Ed possessed other talents. Chief among them were his people skills," Dr. Rubin noted.

It should perhaps be noted in all fairness that when Mr. Peterson took on the position of Treasurer again in 1973 to fill out an unexpired term, he led USITT's response to a somewhat vital but delicate negotiation with the IRS that he managed quite successfully with the help of his people skills.



Edward Peterson Jr.

## Ed Peterson

We come across many people in our lives and those who we know the longest seem to have made an imprint that we can reflect upon and cherish as a gift. Ed Peterson certainly had made an imprint upon me and so many others. Reflecting upon the 40 years of friendship, business experiences, laughter and follies, there are so many stories that can and can't be told.

Nevertheless, Ed was a character who took his place in the theatre and the lighting industry with an outward image that did not reveal his true talent, intellect and accomplishment. Yes, he was a character with heart and determination that touched so many

It was with these talents that he continued to serve the Institute throughout the 1960s and 1970s in a variety of offices including Second Vice-President (1967-68), Special Liaison to the Board of Directors (1968-69), Technical Secretary (1969-70), and Director at Large of the Board of Directors (1968-69, 1971-73, 1975-77).

Mr. Peterson's leadership role at USITT also included serving as Vice-President for Conferences (1981), and Chair of the Awards and Resolutions Committee (1974-79). It was while heading up the Awards and Resolutions Committee that he first advanced the idea that there should be a designated group within the Institute honored for exemplary achievement and service.

This group ultimately became known as the "Fellows of the Institute," and Mr. Peterson was a member of the first class of Fellows inducted in 1977.

But it was in the area of talking people into creating outstanding Conference sessions that was undoubtedly Mr. Peterson's greatest specialty, and both Henry Tharp and David Hale Hand, who succeeded him as Vice-President for Conferences, attribute their own later success in that position to his tutelage.

Confidence-building carried over into Mr. Peterson's work for Kliegl, later for Colortran, and still later as a casino showroom design consultant in Las Vegas. "It was hard to resist purchasing any product or service that Ed was pitching," Dr. Rubin said.

He made his mark on Las Vegas by contributing to the lighting systems for some of the city's biggest attractions including the Mirage, Caesar's Palace, Treasure Island, and the Bellagio. A true innovator in the field of lighting, his day-to-night-to-day sky feature at The Forum at Caesar's was considered by Time magazine to be one of Las Vegas' most unique highlights. For many years Mr. Peterson was the lighting consultant for all of the tradeshow exhibits of IBM.

Dr. Rubin remembered, "Ed always had a smile on his face, a loud guffaw on the ready, and his hand out to both friends and strangers. Remarkably, he seemed never to forget a face or a name. I worked with Ed for over a dozen years at Kliegl Lighting and this knack never failed; you could stand by his side at a conference, and Ed would be ready to introduce a constant stream of people who looked only somewhat familiar to the rest of us with--- 'Joel you remember ---Dr. X from Y University!' Thanks to Ed I was able to meet and greet!"

"I'd get a handwritten list the next morning at breakfast of who had come round to say hello. Ed was simply a people person with an outsized personality. He loved the games of selling, and swapping stories, and jousting with competitors."

He is survived by his wife, Kim White Peterson; son Erik Peterson; and daughters Heather Curtis and Holly Peterson; as well as his five grandchildren, Blynn, Samuel, Molly, Emma, and Sophia.

that touched so many people. In my case, I was introduced to Ed in 1968 when I left the Guthrie Theatre and joined Bolt Beranek and Newman as a very young theatre consultant.

Becoming active in USITT, it was impossible to not to know Ed with his enthusiasm for the Institute, his antics, and his sales skills for Kliegl. I will never forget when the time came for me and my then partner, Vincent Piacentini, to set out on our own in 1972. It was when we moved into our New York office on 59th Street and were moving things in that Ed and Bob Benson arrived with a bottle of champagne to celebrate with us. That seemed to set the tone for many years of celebration as we moved forward with each of our lives. Ed's generosity, I am sure, has been experienced by many who knew him. Ed wore the mantle of a salesman with indefatigable energy and deftly changed hats to that of a lighting designer and consultant.

But it is the imprint of his smile and gravelly voice that I will never forget. He is missed.

**Len Auerbach**

"It was a privilege to know Ed and work with him, and to try to snag onto some of his people skills. He was truly unique and will truly be missed," Dr. Rubin said.

*[This notice was prepared by Joel E. Rubin and Rick Stephens on behalf of the Fellows of USITT with additional research from Barbara E.R. Lucas of the USITT National Office, and with the assistance of the Peterson family.]*

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**Spring Brings Visitors to Syracuse**

Spring has been filled with visitors to the USITT offices in Syracuse, New York.

Two of Wenger's team, Application & Packaging Engineering Manager Steve Ketcham and Product Manager Mark Ingalls, dropped in to the office for an early morning tour. It was delightful to see them, even though their visit was short, and we look forward to a return trip when we can offer refreshments. Their schedule did not permit that luxury during this trip.

USITT's Archives Committee members have already visited the office and we look forward to a return trip. In May, Rick Stephens was on hand to organize more of USITT's history. The intrepid archivist was assisted by Lea Asbell-Swanger and Bill Browning.

We look forward to members of the Transition Advisory Team sub-committees who, along with President Carl Lefko and Past President Sylvia Hillyard Pannell, are scheduled to be in town in late June.

[To Top ↑](#)**Forum Created for Wireless Lighting**

In response to frequent requests for information about wireless dmx and wireless dimming technology, James David Smith, President of RC4 Wireless, will moderate a forum and invites people to visit and [register here](#).

Mr. Smith presents seminars about two or three times a year about wireless dmx and wireless dimming, most notably at the USITT Conference. He also sends out information on a daily basis.

As momentum builds for the forum, others will be invited to moderate as well.

[To Top ↑](#)**Long Reach Long Riders Add Participants**

This month:  
Summer Visitors

Wireless Forum

Long Reach Long Riders

The number of bikes registered to ride in the sixth annual Long Reach Long Rider charity motorcycle ride has reached an all time high. The addition of Randy “Pop-Pop” Whitcomb, Wayne “Razz” Rasmussen, Jim “Con Man” Niesel, and Larry “Pastor Disaster” Jent brings the total number of bikes to 19. This surpasses the 2007 New England ride which had 18 riders.

The Long Reach Long Riders annual charity ride benefits the ESTA Foundation's Behind the Scenes Program and Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. This year's ride begins on July 31 in Richmond, Virginia, and the riders are hoping to push total donations over the \$200,000 mark.

For more information on making a donation, joining the ride, or sponsoring an event along the route, visit the [website](#).

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**Franklin Named to Sales Staff**

**Vincent Lighting Systems** (VLS) appointed Drew Franklin, LC, to outside sales for the Michigan area.

Mr. Franklin's background includes years in the architectural lighting and electrical design arena, as well as specification sales. He has far-ranging talents in project management, load calculations, AutoCad, and sales in the retail, commercial, education, and theatrical industries. He spent seven years teaching AutoCad and architectural lighting design at the university level. He has made presentations at USITT conferences and is a member of the Illumination Engineering Society (IES) and the National Council on Qualifications for the Lighting Professions (NCQLP).



Mr. Franklin can be reached at 734-660-8959 or dfranklin@vls.com.

The Cleveland office has expanded to a new location at 6161 Cochran Road Suite D, Solon, Ohio 44139. The phone, fax, and remittance address remain the same. For more information, log onto [www.vincentlighting.com](http://www.vincentlighting.com).

[To Top ↑](#)**Eos Debuts in Japan**

The first **Electronic Theater Controls** (ETC) Eos lighting control system to be sold in Japan just hit the road with singer-songwriter and pianist Angela Aki. It is the first time an ETC console has been selected as the main console to control moving lights and LED fixtures in Japan.



The rig for the Angela Aki tour, which was supplied by KM Station, includes some 50 moving lights along with 100 conventional fixtures and 52 five-color LED units manufactured by KM Station in Japan.

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This month:  
**Vincent Lighting Systems**

ETC

J.R. Clancy

PRG

## Clancy's PowerLifts Meet Standards

PowerLift, **J. R. Clancy**'s industry-leading automated theatre hoist, officially meets the rigorous CE Mark directives for safety as required by 30 countries in the European Union (EU). PowerLifts will now carry the CE Mark.

This mark signifies that PowerLift conforms with the safety requirements of the EU's Machinery Directive and related safety requirements, indicating to the governments of European countries that PowerLift can be sold legally within the EU and the European Free Trade Area.

To be allowed to use the CE mark, the product must undergo extensive testing: normal operation tests, a strength test, grounding, starting current, temperature, power failure, and short-circuit testing, among others.

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## Bad Boy Joins Trump in Boardroom

**Production Resource Group**, LLC, (PRG) recently supported lighting designer Matt Ford when he lit the live finale of NBC's *Celebrity Apprentice* recently.

PRG provided VX Lighting with the complete lighting package, including the PRG Virtuoso DX2 console for control during the live television event at New York City's American Museum of Natural History. Mr. Ford used the PRG Bad Boy Luminaire to highlight Donald Trump's entrance to the boardroom where he chose his next Celebrity Apprentice.

For more information on PRG, visit [www.prg.com](http://www.prg.com).

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**PNTA Upgrades Membership**

**PNTA** (Pacific Northwest Theatre Associates) recently upgraded from Supporting to Sustaining membership status.

The company is the largest stocking dealer of theatre equipment and supplies in the Northwest. It also manufactures platforms and draperies and provides sales, rental, and service of lighting fixtures, control and dimming, sound, intercom, and SFX. For more information, visit the company's [website](#).

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**Serapid, Inc.**, showcased its award-winning products at ShowTech 2009 Berlin June 16 through 18 at the Berlin Exposition Centre.

A supplier of stage lifts, orchestra pit lifts, and scenery wagon transfer systems for the entertainment industry, Serapid's LinkLift and horizontal motion systems provide simple solutions to many of the common challenges associated with stage engineering. At the heart of all the company's products is the Rigid Chain – a chain capable of pushing, pulling, and lifting with the strength of a steel column.

The LinkLift was recently seen during the 2008 Olympic Opening Ceremonies in Beijing. For more information about Serapid, visit the [website](#).

[To Top ↑](#)**TMB Media Controller at Tribeca Festival**

Spring in New York and Tribeca Film celebrates emerging and returning filmmakers. The Vanity Fair party held April 21 at the historic State Supreme Court building in downtown Manhattan featured a 4 x 41 foot Barco LED wall at the top of the portico steps programmed to resemble a marquee. Controlling the giant LED marquee was a Hippotizer Stage V3 media server manufactured by Green Hippo and distributed by **TMB**.



For more information about Hippotizer, visit the TMB Hippotizer

This month:

**PNTA****Serapid****TMB****Sapsis Rigging Entertainment Services Inc.****TOMCAT****Wybron, Inc.****Ultratec Special Effects Inc.**

[web page](#). Learn more about other innovative products from TMB at [www.tmb.com](http://www.tmb.com).

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### Sapsis Rigging at Manhattan Events

**Sapsis Rigging Entertainment Services Inc.** provided rigging design, equipment, and installation supervision and labor for the New York Park Avenue Armory and artist Ernesto Neto's first commissioned art installation in the 66th St. and Park Avenue venue.

The piece is a 120 by 180 foot canopy suspended from the armory roof structure. Columns of fabric, weighted with spices and sand, descend 60 feet and help define a maze of rooms and passageways.



Sapsis Rigging also provided rigging services for the 23rd Annual Mt. Sinai Crystal Ball. The ball is the New York City hospital's largest fundraiser of the year. The event was moved this year to the Central Park Conservancy tent in Central Park.

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### TOMCAT Launches 'Did You Know' Series

As part of its ongoing education efforts, **TOMCAT** introduces a new video podcast series as an extension of **TOMCAT U**. The "Did You Know" videos are relatively short in length – about two to four minutes each – and will address a variety of topics in rigging, motors, fall protection, and truss.

The first release addresses fall protection harnesses and how to properly inspect them before use. The videos can be viewed and downloaded at the [TOMCAT website](#), on [TOMCAT's Facebook](#) page, or on [TOMCAT's YouTube](#) channel.



Contact a **TOMCAT** sales representative for additional technical information at [sales@tomcatusa.com](mailto:sales@tomcatusa.com).

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### Transition, Autopilot at Texas Church

When Trinity Fellowship Church of Amarillo, Texas set out to design a new 4,000-seat sanctuary, it chose a stage in the round – a unique feature for a house of worship. This creative space called for creative lighting, and **Wybron** played a part with its Autopilot II performer tracking system and Transition fiber-optic illuminator.

The church also utilizes Wybron's Nexera color-mixing luminaires in the children's area of the campus as well as its west sanctuary. The Nexera combines CMY dichroic color mixing with a powerful light fixture available in profile and wash models.



For more information about Wybron, call 719-548-9774, e-mail [info@wybron.com](mailto:info@wybron.com), or visit [www.wybron.com](http://www.wybron.com).

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### New Name, Same Great Products, Service

The London, Ontario company people have relied on for fog, atmospherics, and pyrotechnics (under the Pyropak brand) has a new name, but the business philosophy is the same. **Ultratec Special Effects Inc.** will continue to provide excellent customer service, quality products, on time delivery, and competitive pricing. The company decided to change its name so it could differentiate itself more effectively, especially in global markets.

Adrian Segeren, president, and Marnie Styles, vice-president, continue to lead the same team of dedicated employees customers have come to know and rely upon. Staff phone numbers currently in use will remain the same. For staff e-mail addresses, replace the old company name in the domain portion of the address with the new one (for example, firstname.lastname@ultratecfx.com).

For more information, please visit the company's new web site [ultratecfx.com](http://ultratecfx.com) (visitors to the old site [www.pyropak.com](http://www.pyropak.com) will automatically be redirected to the new pyrotechnics web site). Customers can check the site for the latest on new products, pricing, and training courses.

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# Regional Sections

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**Northern Boundary Sets Fall Workshop**

The Northern Boundary Regional Section will hold a fall workshop September 18 and 19. The two-day event will be hosted by the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. More info about this and other bits of NBS news can be obtained from the May issue of the [online newsletter](#).

[To Top ↑](#)**News From Chesapeake**

The Chesapeake Regional Section Annual Stage Expo and Conference will be held September 19 at the University of Delaware in Newark.

In addition to the usual host of new technology, classes, networking, professional development workshops, and general great time learning about theatre technologies, John McKernon, of Lightwrite fame, will deliver the keynote address and speak about the latest release of the software. A host of new activities are planned to celebrate the end of the Section's 30 years of existence and to kick off, in true Mid-Atlantic fashion, the upcoming 50th anniversary year of USITT.

Chesapeake Section also announced changes in some of the board positions effective May 22. Kacey Fisher has stepped down from her role as Section Chair to focus her energy and talents on her growing company, Fisher Theatrical, and to continue her expanding work with ESTA and its GenESTA programming. She will stay on with the Chesapeake Board for a few more years in the position of Immediate Past Chair. Patrick Wallace, former First Vice-Chair, has taken on the Chair duties. He has been on the Section board for three years. The First Vice-Chair opening has been filled by Christina Smith of Shepherd University and Contemporary American Theater Festival. She has been part of the Section's Publications Committee for the past two years and serves on its' 2009 Conference Committee. Bill Price, who has been serving as Immediate Past Chair, is retiring from the Board to continue his expanding work with ESTA and its training programs.

[To Top ↑](#)**Southeast Master Classes in September**

This month:  
Northern Boundary

Chesapeake

Southeast

Heart of America

Southwest

The Southeast Regional Section's Fall Master Classes will be hosted by the University of North Carolina at Greensboro September 3 to 5. Check the USITT-Southeast [website](#) or contact Chip Haas at [cehaas@uncg.edu](mailto:cehaas@uncg.edu) for more information.

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### **HOA Plans Mini-Expo, Workshops**

Heart of America Regional Section is soliciting recollections of the early days of the Heart of America section for the history timeline for USITT's 50th anniversary celebration in Kansas City, Missouri. Submit recollections via the [Section website](#).

Also reserve September 11 to 13 for a Fall Mini Expo and Workshops at University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas. Use the website for submitting additional workshop ideas.

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### **TechXperience Slated in Oklahoma City**

USITT-SW will be holding its Fall 2009 Labor Day Symposium in Oklahoma City this September 5 and 6. The title is *TechXperience Weekend*. Events will be held at the Stage Center Theatre in the Arts District of downtown Oklahoma City, and at Oklahoma City University. Workshops include: Men's Tailoring with Kristina Hanssen and George Curry; Scene Painting with Jenny Knott and Heidi Hoffer; Theatre Architecture tours with Jack Hagler; Moving Lights & Ion Demos with Eric Marsh; Color Theory and Design by Joe Tawil; Designing for Outdoor Theatre and more. The keynote speaker will be Robert Benedetti, Lighting Designer, Emmy-award winning director, producer, and author; his address will be about the director/designer relationship. There will also be a professional design exhibition that is open to all USITT-SW members.



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### **USITT-SW Turning 40**

As USITT celebrates its 50th anniversary, USITT-SW will be turning 40 years old. The Southwest Section is kicking off its' 40th year with two days of workshops and seminars in Oklahoma City. During the symposium there will also be opportunities to see three local productions: *Death of a Salesman* at the Pollard Theatre, *Twelfth Night* at Oklahoma Shakespeare in the Park, and *Compleat Female* at the Stage Center. Registration is \$5 for students and \$20 for members. For more information, check out [www.usitt-sw.org](http://www.usitt-sw.org).

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This month:  
Mt. Vernon

**2009 Short Reach Short Riders Tricycle Ride****Teenagers! Trikes! Yikes!**

The Mt. Vernon Senior High School Chapter of USITT held its third annual Short Reach Short Riders charity trike ride for Behind the Scenes on Saturday, May 9, 2009. Inspired by Bill Sapsis and the Long Reach Long Riders, 20 Indiana high school-aged riders raised \$1,500 for Behind the Scenes by competing in relays, sprints, and the Enduro (.6 of a mile around the high school).



The winners of the events were:

- **Relay** - Team Vincent (sponsored by Vincent Lighting Systems)
- **Sprint** - Joe Schaefer (sponsored by Barbara Lucas)
- **Enduro** - Jacob Champlain (sponsored by Reid Neslage)

A web video of the 2009 ride can be seen at <http://www.srsr.mirrorz.com/>

Sponsors for the 2009 ride were Adam Hayward, Mt. Vernon Chapter of FFA, Barbara E.R. Lucas, John McGraw and Lori Rubinstein, Mt. Vernon Chapter of USITT, Reid Neslage, Bill Sapsis, and Vincent Lighting Systems.



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A special session to look at how performance spaces have worked, or not worked, is being planned for the 2010 Annual Conference. The study may include such places as Lincoln Center, at right. To assist, contact Martin Moore.

## Seek Assistance for Session Looking at Performance Spaces 50 Years On

**Martin Moore**

*Engineering Commission*

The Engineering Commission will sponsor a session at the 2010 Annual Conference & Stage Expo titled *50 Years On; Theaters That Worked and Those That Didn't*.

A recent *New York Times* article, “[Lincoln Center: Mixed Reviews – Celebrating Its Anniversary, the Cultural Marketplace Hasn't lived Up to Its Promise, but Hope Persists](#)” discusses how well the Center has met its original goals. Some of the Lincoln Center buildings have served their technical purposes well, others have not. Here are some opinions.

- The Met works well as an opera house although its stage machinery did fail at the opening.
- The State (now the David Koch) as conceived by Balanchine for ballet was/is great but no good for opera/operetta mainly due to the swimming pool orchestra pit. There have been some acoustic modifications for opera.
- Avery Fisher was a disaster acoustically when it opened, but the *New York Times* article is probably right that the acoustics have been solved after four attempts. However there's still a Norman Foster plan to completely upgrade it. It has just had a superb major redo by Liz Diller, which is successful for audiences.

- Vivian Beaumont, as conceived by Jo Mielziner, as a combination of a full proscenium stage house and theatre in three-quarter round, never worked ideally, technically, nor artistically in spite of a major refit in 1998.

The idea for this session is to see how successful the design of theatres and auditoria has been during the 50 years of USITT's existence. The article is an example of some of the issues to be covered. Requiring much preparation, the Engineering Commission is looking for volunteers to help organize the session. Contact Martin Moore, e-mail m.moore@att.net or cell 347-249-7656, for information on volunteering.

## A - Survey

Survey all contiguous 48 states' performing arts facilities – schools, colleges, commercial, PACs; and see

- (a) if they were fit for their original purpose
- (b) whether the purpose has changed over the years and if so what has been done about it
- (c) how they are now for their present purpose

## B - Database

The first step will be to set up a database with

- **Place** - Name and Address of facility
- **People** - Names and contact details (phone/email) of facility manager, technical director, artistic director, or their equivalents
- **Designers** - Names and address of firms involved in planning – architect, engineers, acoustician, theatre consultant

### August - September

Looking for USITT membership to build the database of their local areas and need a person/intern to coordinate and direct

## C - Questionnaires (two needed)

- Longitudinal questions to the people of B asking the survey questions of A
- Design questions to the designers of B what the initial program was; was it achieved or was it value-engineered to death, what were the acoustical criteria and were they met, etc.

### August - September

Involve USITT architecture commission, ASTC, AIA, etc.

Looking for smart and simpatico people to help draft questionnaires

## D - Emailing of questionnaire

## **October 5**

- using the database
- then following up for responses – e-mail or phone

## **October -- help needed with reminders**

## **E - Initial analysis and phone clarification**

- Analyze email responses for completeness
- Phone for clarification and completing the response

## **November**

Help needed (a) initial analysis (b) completing survey details

## **F - Analysis and summarizing results of Questionnaire**

## **December - January**

Same people who devised the questionnaire plus some statistical help

## **G - Devising and rehearsing the presentation (February)**

February Panelists

## **H - Showtime March 31**

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*Opportunities in Interactive Design*, a session at the 2009 Annual Conference in Cincinnati, was one of many presented by the Scene Design Commission that explored the theme of technology.

Photo/Casey Kearns

## Technology Themes Recur at Scene Design Sessions

**Kenneth John Verdugo**

*Chair, 2009 Scene Design Commission Session*

Considering the shift from the now maturing Millennial Generation (M-Gens), toward the new crop of inherently wired Next-Gens, it was fitting that technology was the predominant topic during various Scene Design Commission sessions at the 2009 Annual Conference & Stage Expo. As a counterbalance, it was also encouraging and fitting to find interest in traditional, old-school technologies (i.e. painting and drawing specifically) – skill sets associated with the hand. Perhaps the notion of the pencil as a primary tool might seem initially out of sync in the moment; a false notion quickly dispelled by the sheer power and beauty of Paul Short's exquisite sketches, renderings and presentation models. It calls to mind D.S. Goheen's most notable quote: "If you can draw [with a pencil] you can design." That was the bottom line. Despite the fact that Mr. Goheen is primarily a digital designer, his mantra is timely by underscoring a current defining generational quandary.

As Millennials move into the market place and a YouTube Generation steps into the wings, the current discourse and inquiry over the relevance of digital vs. analogue as a competitive training methodology is both essential and critical within an academic community serving the profession. If ever there was a recurring topic or a circling of the wagons revolving around common

themes, this was a most obvious equalizer. Hands on is essential – but a digital agenda has landed. The 2009 sessions provided a forum for diverse and recurring points-of-view.

*Curriculum Development/Teaching Vectorworks*, a Professional Development Workshop on March 17, was an insightful, one-day workshop. Nemetschek's Frank Brault introduced a “run before you can walk” concept arguing designers should start with digital first with a 3-D model as a point-of-entry. He presented methods for simulating traditional analog preliminaries with all electronic assets intact. He also addressed concerns over the limitations of viewing piece-meal minutia on a 20-inch screen saying the cost of a digital projector is approachable and affords a better view.

One noteworthy session, *Teaching the Millennial Generation*, was timely and absolutely on target. As institutions more readily employ the use of blogs and social networking tools as a means to manage productions, efficiency is the endgame. By engaging new or relevant technologies, production teams are speaking a language more comfortable to this generation.

*Teaching Projections for the Theatre* was an attempt to introduce the various facets of projection in an open discussion. It was one of the most engaging exchanges among panelist and attendees in Cincy. The session quickly evolved into an impromptu extended Q&A.

*3-D Animation for Design Communication* followed by *Problem Solving through Digital Storyboarding* were not only representative of the state of the art, but served as a clear indication that methodologies leading to greater efficiency may be the tools that define a generation.

Nevertheless, Thursday's discussion on *Analogue vs. Digital* was a serious philosophical discussion on how to build a balanced curriculum for the next generation. By placing a high value on empirical knowledge, light logic, and traditional motor-skills, panelists Dick Block, Frank Ludwig, and Michael Riha warned against losing sight of essential foundational training.

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## Kansas City 2010

### Helen Willard

*Stage Expo Sales Manager*

Each May, the VP for Programming convenes a meeting of members of the Conference Committee with the Commissioners Steering Committee to schedule program sessions for the following year's conference. During the day-long meeting, every session which has been proposed for the conference is reviewed and scheduled for a particular day and time in a specific room. This year's meeting was held at the Kansas City Marriott Downtown, which will be USITT's headquarters hotel during the 2010 Kansas City Conference & Stage Expo.

The meeting kicked off with a look at the meeting space and ballrooms in the Marriott, a two-tower complex which includes the historic Muehlebach property. Just across Barney Allis Plaza, members toured the Kansas City Convention & Entertainment Facilities' Bartle exhibit halls A, B, & C, plus the 2100 and 2200 meeting rooms directly below, which will be the hub of conference activity. Committee members also checked out the new 46,000 square foot Grand Ballroom with its wall of windows and LED lighting, took a quick look at the 10,000-plus seat arena, and admired the intimate Little Theatre, an octagonal 5,000 square foot marble room.

Afterward many members of the group visited the Power & Light Entertainment district, reminiscent of Louisville's 4th Street Live, and built by the same developer. The 801 Steak and Chop House serves up an a la carte menu of USDA prime aged steaks, chops,

There are more than 200 fountains in and around Kansas City, Missouri, including the one depicted here near the Kansas City Convention & Entertainment Facilities.

Photo/Mark Putman

and roasts with an award-winning wine list. At the Bristol Seafood Grill, the fresh catch is flown in daily from both coasts and the bar features hand-crafted signature cocktails. Beer aficionados rejoiced to find a Flying Saucer Draught Emporium, with 225 hand-crafted, unique, and quality beers from around the world with an eclectic menu of snacks and meals. There is even an upscale market, Cosentino's, which features an 83 foot salad bar, gourmet cheese island, bakery, and sushi bar.

Everyone has their own favorite barbecue joint, whether it be the iconic Arthur Bryant's, where a choice of slow-cooked meat comes piled high on white bread; Gates BBQ, where every customer receives a yelled "May I Help You?" greeting; or the more upscale Fiorella's Jack Stack BBQ, recognized by Zagat's as the country's best BBQ.

A bit further a field, in Kansas City, Kansas, about 20 minutes' drive, is one of the latest outposts of the Yard House, which debuted in Long Beach, California in 1996. Now located in 12 California locales and eight other states, each Yard House location features 100 to 250 taps of beer, modern American cuisine, and classic rock & roll. Going there is like visiting an old friend.

Committee members are already salivating at the prospect of trying more restaurants during the August and January meetings. Plan now to be in Kansas City March 29 through April 3 for the 50th Annual USITT Conference & Stage Expo and sample KCMO for yourself. For information about exhibiting at Stage Expo 2010, contact [hwillard@aol.com](mailto:hwillard@aol.com).

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## Executive Committee

- Carl Lefko, *President*
- Patricia Dennis, *Secretary*
- Travis DeCastro, *Treasurer*
- Kim Williamson, *Vice-President for Commissions*
- Bobbi Owen, *Vice-President for Communications*
- David W. Will, *Vice-President for Conferences*
- Alexandra Bonds, *Vice-President for International Activities*
- Michael Mehler, *Vice-President for Programming*
- Vacant, *Vice-President for Promotions & Development*
- Holly Monsos, *Vice-President for Members, Sections & Chapters*
- Daniel Denhart, *Vice-President for Special Operations*
- Joe Aldridge, *President-Elect*
- Sylvia Hillyard Pannell, *Immediate Past President*

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## Directors at Large

2007-2010

- Lea Asbell-Swanger
- Nadine Charlsen
- Michael Monsos
- Mark Shanda
- Sherry Wagner-Henry
- Craig Wolf

2008-2011

- Dan Culhane
- Mary Heilman
- David Krajec
- Carolyn Satter
- John S. Uthoff
- Monica Weinzapfel

2009-2012

- William Browning
- Jonathan Darling
- Linda Essig
- Mitch Hefter

- Martha Marking
- Kim Scott

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- Cirque du Soleil
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- J.R. Clancy, Inc.
- Clear-Com Communication Systems
- Creative Handbook
- Creative Stage Lighting Co., Inc.
- d&b audiotechnik
- Disney Entertainment Productions
- Electronic Theatre Controls (ETC)
- Electronics Diversified, LLC
- Entertainment Services & Technology Association (ESTA)
- Entertainment Technology
- Future Light
- GAMPRODUCTS, INC.
- H & H Specialties Inc.
- Hall Associates Flying Effects
- InterAmerica Stage, Inc.
- KM Fabrics, Inc.
- Kryolan Corporation
- *Live Design Magazine/LDI Show*
- MDG Fog Generators
- Meyer Sound Laboratories, Inc.
- Morris Architects
- Musson Theatrical, Inc.
- Norcostco, Inc
- PRG
- Production Advantage, Inc.
- Protech Theatrical Services, Inc.
- Rosco Laboratories, Inc.
- Rose Brand Theatrical Fabrics, Fabrications & Supplies
- SeaChanger by Ocean Optics
- SECOA
- Stage Research, Inc.
- StageRight Corporation
- Steeldeck Inc.
- Strand Lighting
- Syracuse Scenery & Stage Lighting Co., Inc.
- Texas Scenic Company

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- Vari\*Lite
- Vincent Lighting Systems
- Vortek, a division of Daktronics
- Walt Disney Entertainment
- Wenger Corporation
- ZFX, Inc.

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- AKT3 Company
- ALPS/Advanced Lighting & Production Services, Inc.
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- A V Pro, Inc.
- Bandit Lites, Inc.
- Ben Nye Makeup
- California Institute of the Arts
- Center Theatre Group
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- Chicago Spotlight, Inc.
- Cobalt Studios
- Colorado Springs Fine Art Center
- Columbus McKinnon Corp.
- Cosler Theatre Design
- The Crosby Group, Inc.
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- Designlab Chicago
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- Gerriets International Inc.
- Grand Stage Company, Inc.
- GRT Genesis
- Harkness Screens (USA) Ltd.
- I. Weiss
- InCord Ltd.
- International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees
- Irwin Seating Company
- Johnson Systems Inc.
- Kenmark, Inc.
- Kirkegaard Associates
- Kupo Industrial Corp.
- LCS Series (Meyer Sound Laboratories, Inc.)
- LEE Filters
- Lehigh Electric Products Co.
- Leprecon

- Leviton/NSI/Colortran
- Lex Products Corp.
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- Limelight Productions, Inc.
- Lite-Trol Service Company, Inc.
- LVH Entertainment Systems
- Lycian Stage Lighting
- The MAGNUM Companies, Ltd.
- Make-Up Designory
- Mehron, Inc.
- University of Missouri-Kansas City
- Mutual Hardware
- NetherCraft
- Niscon Inc.
- University of North Carolina School of the Arts
- On Location Lighting Systems, Inc.
- Ontario Staging Limited
- Orange Events
- OSRAM SYLVANIA
- Pathway Connectivity
- Penn State University
- Period Corsets
- PNTA, Pacific Northwest Theatre Associates
- Prolyte Products Group
- RC4 Wireless/Soundsculpture Inc.
- The Rigging Partnership
- Robert Julian America
- Royal Caribbean International
- Sapsis Rigging Entertainment Services, Inc.
- Schuler Shook
- Sculptural Arts Coating, Inc.
- Selecon
- Serapid, Inc.
- Shanghai American School
- Show Distribution Group Inc.
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- South Dakota State University
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- Theatre Projects Consultants, Inc.

- Thern Inc.
- Thinkwell Design & Production
- James Thomas Engineering
- Tiffin Scenic Studios, Inc.
- TMB
- Tobins Lake Sales
- TOMCAT USA, Inc.
- Topac Inc.
- Turning Star Inc.
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- Wayne State University Dept. of Theatre
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## Swiss Army Personnel

By Bryan H. Ackler

We have all seen it; the mainstay of an organization, the most senior employee, or the person who has “been there forever” decides to retire or finally takes that “too often offered” promotion.

Then, it takes two or three individuals to replace him or her. Well, it really is difficult to hire one-half of a magazine editor or one-quarter of a design engineer or two-thirds of a technical director. Finding someone who fits that organically derived job description for one-fifth box office, two-quarters technical director, one-tenth usher, and three-quarters director just doesn’t appear possible.

We all grow into our jobs. Some of us have collected vast amounts of exposure to the procedures and processes that go on all around us. We have undertaken tasks, and collected experience more often than not, just to make our “real” jobs go more smoothly. So in order to insure smooth operation of customer service, you volunteer to “do the phones” just to get the button features required for effortless operations, but you are now the “phone person.”

Somewhere in this, the old phrase “I have been doing so much with so little for so long, that now I can do anything with nothing” starts to rear its head and you realize that the “side responsibility you undertook for self-protection is a serious component of your

professional life.

Some of us are just curious; we see methods, we ask questions, we see hardware, and we can make a connection between two diverse but confluent items. Some see an obstacle or a challenge to overcome. Some of us say “back in the old days” or “when I was working at...” just a little too often. Synergy is not an ideological concept; it is an unintentional way of life. Nevertheless, times change, technology advances, ideas that were borderline impractical are now convenient solutions. (Yes, the concept of the actual dimmer being mounted in the power connector for the fixture and receiving its control information without a control wire is now practically possible.).

The important technique for Swiss Army Personnel is being able to see where connections can be made between something old, something new, something borrowed, and something created to overcome an obstacle or provide a resourceful solution – flexibility and creativity being the key elements.

The serious academics among us would mumble something about the benefits of the outlook generated by a liberal arts education; others might just consider it getting a job done right by doing it yourself. Whatever the mental logic employed, it seems that the entertainment profession has happily generated a disproportionately large quantity of Swiss Army Personnel.

And the world is a better place for it.

*Mr. Ackler's background includes staffing numerous new or renovated theatres including Virginia's Barter Theater, the Powerhouse at Vassar College, California State University-Bakersfield, University of Maine and Cerritos Center, and work for several manufacturers including Electro-Controls, Colortrans-NI, Strand Lighting, Electronics Diversified, and Genlyte Controls. He attended Virginia Tech and the University of Maine at Orono, and is active with USITT.*

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