

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It must be Spring, since this is the Election issue. Every year brave souls offer themselves up for service to the Puppeteers of America and our advancement of Puppetry. We have some good candidates; please take them time to look over their responses in this Playboard, and check out their biographical information in the recent *Puppetry Journal*, too.

These volunteers deserve our thanks for putting themselves forward to serve you and your organization. Those Trustees, Appointed Officers, and Regional Directors (not to mention committees, festival staff, guild leaders, and others who make the PofA go) should not be forgotten either. Collectively, the many hours they put forward on your behalf create the vital "stew" which nourishes our community as we seek to further our art.

For your part, consider, vote, and then volunteer. This has been our organization for over 70 years. But it is only as strong as the effort we ALL put into it.

Wayne Krefting - President

### NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee, led by **Steven Widerman**, Chair, with **Valerie Nelson**, **Joanne Schroeder** and **Lisa Sturz** has presented a slate of four excellent candidates to fill three Trustee positions on the Board. Thanks to ALL for a job well done.

# P.L.A.Y.B.O.A.R.D

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PUPPETEERS OF AMERICA

• March - April, 2008 •

Editor: Fred Thompson • 26 Pleasant Avenue • New Haven, CT • (860) 9-2909

## 2008 ELECTION ISSUE

Biographies and photos of the candidates can be found in the latest *Puppetry Journal*, and their responses to specific questions will be found in this issue of *Playboard*.

Please study the responses and then vote. Voting is easy.

Make your choices for the Board and mark the BALLOT.

Cut out the BALLOT and place it in an envelope.

Place a First Class stamp on the envelope.

Address the envelope using the mailing information below.

**Puppeteers of America Elections  
PO Box 176  
Cedar Mountain, NC 28718**

**IMPORTANT!!!!** Write your name and membership number on the envelope. They will be used to validate your ballot. Envelopes without member's names or numbers cannot be counted. Your membership number can be found on the mailing label of any PofA publication.

**Email Ballots will be accepted.**

**Email to:**

**elections@puppeteers.org**

Put BALLOT in the SUBJECT line.

List three candidates of your choice in the body. You must include your name and membership number in the email.

**BALLOTS MUST BE POSTMARKED BY MAY 15, 2008**

All regular members - Class A, B, and U, and Special members Class L and M get to cast one Ballot.

Couples, Class C, and Family Class F, with two adults get to cast two Ballots.

Any reasonable copy of the Ballot is acceptable for the second vote and can be included in the same envelope.

Please note that ALL ballots are removed from the envelopes before counting. The names or numbers on the envelopes are used ONLY to verify that your membership is current

### Puppeteers of America, Inc. Board of Trustees BALLOT - 2008

You may vote for up to **three** candidates.

STEVEN MELTZER

JIM ROSE

JOHN SCOLLON

PETER ZAPLETAL

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Cedar Mountain, NC 28718

Email Ballots will be accepted.  
Email to: elections@puppeteers.org  
Put BALLOT in the SUBJECT line.  
List three candidates of your choice in the body.

**You must include your name and membership number on the envelope or in the email. Thank You.**

## **STEVE MELTZER - Santa Monica, California**

### **1. What do you think is the most important issue facing Puppeteers of America right now?**

STEVE MELTZER: Our most important issue is strengthening our position as a national organization. At a time when our relatively rare art form is more popular than ever we are seeing a decline in membership. The challenge is unifying our many diverse members to this singular purpose.

### **2. Which of PofA's procedures or services needs to be improved or changed?**

STEVE MELTZER: In the areas of festivals, resources and publication I think we do very well. I see the need to concentrate our efforts in two areas, a) Raising of our profile with the general public. B) Continued development of on-line resources.

### **3. What specific new projects might the P of A pursue, or which on-going projects need more emphasis?**

STEVE MELTZER: a) National Festivals should make performances more accessible to the general public and local guilds should be encouraged to sponsor performances of touring and local puppet artists. b) An online resource similar to Wikipedia or the Internet Movie Data Base (Imdb.com) should be an ongoing project benefiting our members and helping to raise the public presence of the POA. c) We should explore the goal of wider distribution of the Puppetry Journal in selected bookstores as well as mail order of back issues

### **4. What special abilities or skill are you able to bring to the job of Trustee?**

STEVE MELTZER: Puppetry and puppeteers represent a broad range of styles, goals and aesthetic standards. Imagine an organization of dancers that tried to embrace ballet and hip-hop simultaneously and you get an idea of the ongoing challenge faced by the POA. My interest and work with a wide variety of puppets and the related tasks of presentation coupled with my ability to work well as part of a team is what I would like to offer as my service as a trustee.

### **5. In the next few years, which is the single most important service the P of A needs to provide for puppeteers?**

STEVE MELTZER: In addition to what I have stated above we must continue to develop and support the many excellent services already offered by the POA. Ultimately the most important service is to provide a stronger organization. I am often asked if there is any union or club for puppeteers. I want to reduce the frequency of that question.

## **JIM ROSE - Yellow Springs, Ohio**

### **1. What do you think is the most important issue facing Puppeteers of America right now?**

JIM ROSE: The promotion and maintenance of high standards of artistry in puppetry. This includes the mentoring of new puppeteers by qualified artists.

### **2. Which of PofA's procedures or services needs to be improved or changed?**

JIM ROSE: I don't have any changes to recommend in terms of procedures or services at this time. It continues to be important, however, that public access to information about puppetry be insured. The services provided by our archives and by our consultants are crucial.

### **3. What specific new projects might the P of A pursue, or which on-going projects need more emphasis?**

JIM ROSE: It seems to me that the P of A should form a central, organized repository of information regarding professional and college-level instruction in the art and history of puppetry.

### **4. What special abilities or skill are you able to bring to the job of Trustee?**

JIM ROSE: I'm a crummy administrator, but I have a passion for teaching what I know about puppetry.

### **5. In the next few years, which is the single most important service the P of A needs to provide for puppeteers?**

JIM ROSE: I believe that the single most important service the P of A can offer puppeteers is a constant and up-to-date exposure to the best in modern puppet performance. When we are able to see the best in the field we are able to judge our own work realistically and not fall into the temptation of believing only the nice things our families may tell us. The fellowship of puppeteers should also be supported across the many fields in which it has a place. All persons who devote serious effort toward maintaining and improving high standards in puppetry should be made to feel at home in the P of A.

## **JOHN SCOLLON - Columbia, South Carolina**

### **1. What do you think is the most important issue facing Puppeteers of America right now?**

JOHN SCOLLON: Membership Involvement. My story is a good example. I had been going to festivals for years and never gave much thought to how much work went into them. I finally realized that if I didn't get involved, there was a very real threat of these wonderful events becoming a thing of the past. Now that I'm a Trustee, I like to think that I'm making a difference. A small one, perhaps... but I'm thrilled to have found a way to help.

### **2. Which of PofA's procedures or services needs to be improved or changed?**

JOHN SCOLLON: Communication has always been tricky, considering our membership is spread across the continent. Now that almost everyone is online, we have an infinite number of ways to stay in touch with each other. Finding the most efficient and cost-effective methods of communication is an on-going task that takes a great deal of time and energy.

### **3. What specific new projects might the P of A pursue, or which on-going projects need more emphasis?**

JOHN SCOLLON: It's getting about time to recruit a fresh batch of energetic souls to start thinking about and planning the next wave of future festivals, both regional and national.

### **4. What special abilities or skill are you able to bring to the job of Trustee?**

JOHN SCOLLON: Like most puppeteers, I am a fast learner with an open mind, active imagination, and a knack for dealing with unforeseen hassles. Creative input is not a problem for me.

### **5. In the next few years, which is the single most important service the P of A needs to provide for puppeteers?**

JOHN SCOLLON: Quite simply, to keep our "family" together. Puppeteers are a wonderfully rare breed, often isolated geographically from each other. PofA festivals are often compared to family reunions, and I couldn't agree more. Many of my favorite human beings are "festival buddies" that I never see elsewhere. I want to do everything I can to ensure that our national and regional festivals continue to bring us all together for many years to come.

## **PETER ZAPLETAL - Jackson, Mississippi**

### **1. What do you think is the most important issue facing Puppeteers of America right now?**

PETER ZAPLETAL: Our membership is getting older. The younger generation is not entering the field of puppetry in large enough numbers to replace those who left us. We used to be an organization that had a membership base around 2,500, and attendance at the festival averaged 800+. We need to reach out more to colleges and universities to include puppetry as part of their theatre training.

### **2. Which of P of A's procedures or services needs to be improved or changed?**

PETER ZAPLETAL: Definitely our by-laws that are in some places contradictory and need to be thoroughly cleaned. We need more visibility of our store and also of A/V library.

### **3. What specific new projects might the P of A pursue, or which on-going projects need more emphasis?**

PETER ZAPLETAL: Look at the possibility of a permanent site for puppetry training during summer months that would appeal to high school and college age generation, possibly connected with either regional or national festivals.

### **4. What special abilities or skill are you able to bring to the job of Trustee?**

PETER ZAPLETAL: I served on the Board of Trustees in the past and also was a festival director a few times, so I have the insight and also the institutional memory. As a former executive producer and production manager at Mississippi Educational Television, I have proved myself as a leader and organizer.

### **5. In the next few years, which is the single most important service the P of A needs to provide for puppeteers?**

PETER ZAPLETAL: Festivals are the life line and the blood of our organization. They need to be showcases of excellence and workshop responsive to the needs of membership. This is not to say that the festivals in the past were not up to snuff, but to keep the importance of quality in mind for the futures. A long term planning is an absolute must.

**IMPORTANT MEMBERSHIP CHANGE**

The Board of Trustees of the Puppeteers of America wishes to announce  
**A CHANGE in the PofA MEMBERSHIP YEAR.**

**The membership year will now begin SEPTEMBER 15th, 2008**

The membership year will end SEPTEMBER 14th of the following year.

*(Currently, the membership year begins on June 1st and ends May 31st.)*

**All memberships for 2007-2008 will be extended through September 14th, 2008**

3 extra months of membership and the Summer 2008 issue  
of *Puppetry Journal* are yours to enjoy, free.

**YOU WILL NOT HAVE TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP UNTIL AUGUST.**

Renewal notices will be sent out on August 1