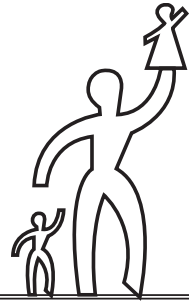


# Puppeteers of America

## Board of Trustees

### ELECTION ISSUE

# 2010



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 ELECTION ISSUE.

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 to:

**Puppeteers of America Elections**  
**PO Box 128**  
**Cedar Mountain, NC 28718 -0128**

**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 or in the NEW Membership Directory.

Email Ballots will be accepted.

Email to:

**elections@puppeteers.org**

Type 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.**

#### NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee, led by **Valerie Nelson**, Chair, with **Wayne Krefting** and **Tom Tucker** has presented a slate of five outstanding candidates to fill three Trustee positions on the Board.

Thanks to ALL for a job well done.

#### BALLOTS MUST BE POSTMARKED BY MAY 15, 2010

All regular members - Adult (A), Company (B), College Students (U), and Special Life and Charter members (L & M), get to cast ONE Ballot.

Couples (C), Senior Couples, and Family (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 or in a single email.

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 - 2010**  
You may vote for up to **three** candidates.

**NANCY ALDRICH**

**DON KRUSZKA**

**MONICA LEO**

**KAT PLEVIAK**

**PIX SMITH**

Mail BALLOT to:

**Puppeteers of America Elections**  
**PO Box 128**  
**Cedar Mountain, NC 28718 - 0128**

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.**

Your membership number can be found on the mailing label of any PofA publication or in the Membership Directory.

## **NANCY ALDRICH - Portland, Oregon**

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

Membership. I think that we can do more to increase membership, by encouraging young people, those new to the field, artists, educators, and others with interests in puppetry in all its applications, to join. As an organization devoted to broadening the appreciation of puppetry to a wider public, I think that we can do more to identify, enhance and promote the benefits of membership.

### **Which of PofA's procedures need to be improved or changed?**

The administration of the organization relies on so many people, in so many parts of the continent, that it is difficult for the organization to be proactive. The field of puppetry has grown tremendously since the creation of P of A, and this organization has done its best to remain a resource to all. I believe that with our current leadership, we are in a good position to set clear goals to improve communication within the organization and visibility to the general public.

### **What specific new projects might the PofA pursue, or which on-going projects need more emphasis?**

The P of A could become a more active promotional organization for its members. I also believe that encouraging attendance at festivals to the general public, for performances and workshops, would increase awareness of the art and educational benefits of puppetry.

### **What special abilities or skills are you able to bring to the job of trustee?**

I have been a puppeteer for nearly 30 years, and in that time, I have worked almost exclusively in the non-profit arena. I have worked within established companies, as well as developing my own non-profit organization. I understand the pains of establishing and maintaining an organization which hopes to promote the art of puppetry to the community at large. Because I believe it is a varied and diverse form of art, our task is in educating audiences to the myriad potentials puppetry in the realm of performing arts.

### **In the next few years, which is the single most important service the PofA needs to provide for puppeteers?**

As a non-profit organization, we need to fulfill our mission, which is to "provide information, encourage performances, and build a community of people who love puppet theatre," and to "share the enchantment of puppetry with professional puppeteers, puppet builders, teachers, librarians, therapists, youth leaders, hobbyists and audience members who are enthusiastic about puppetry." Membership must have its benefits, yet developing the audience for puppetry as a whole can also prove beneficial.

## **DON KRUSZKA - Bakersfield, California**

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

Membership. The P of A needs to constantly be looking for ways to recruit and keep new and old members alike.

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

Good communication is something you can't stress enough. We have a number of new guild presidents and regional directors on board. We need to let them know they are not just drifting out there, and that we can put them in touch with people who can help them with any concerns they have. The P of A website is constantly undergoing changes to make the organization more accessible and improve how we communicate with our members. We need to keep going in that direction.

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

I think the P of A needs to work to be more publicly visible. At my shows, there's always a teacher or young kid who wants to know how they can learn about building or using puppets for what they want to do, and many people have never heard of us. Maybe this means more public performances at festivals, like the very successful open day at the 2007 Minneapolis festival. We also need to look at keeping local guilds active and interested and examining the roles of Regional Directors and what they mean to their respective territories.

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

I bring the experience of having spent the past three years on the board. I have served on the staff of the Puppetry Store and as Stage Manager of the 2004 Pacific Southwest Regional Festival. My wife, Kamala, has served as Pacific Southwest Regional Director and chairs the Scholarship Committee, so I'm plugged in a bit on how things work. I bring a willingness to listen fairly to the issues and do what it takes to strengthen the organization.

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

The P of A offers some very important services to its membership – insurance, marketing assistance, consultants – and we need to always remind them that these resources exist. They pay good money, and the organization offers quite a bit back. We should also be aware of possible new services to add, and members are encouraged to come to us with ideas. The membership has a voice, and the Board tries to listen and do what it can to answer.

## **MONICA LEO - West Liberty, Iowa**

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

We're living in an era of extraordinary change, much like the Industrial Revolution. I think our biggest issue is figuring out how to embrace change, work effectively with it, and remain not only relevant but useful to our members. I think this is absolutely essential if we are to remain viable, which we can only achieve by engaging the upcoming generation.

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

Our Regional and National Festivals are some of our greatest assets. I think we need to continue to evaluate them critically and use international models and developing technology to make them better and more accessible to all of our members and to use them as a vehicle to educate and enthuse the public about the art of puppetry.

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

In addition to the Youth Scholarships, I think we need to find new ways to engage and involve the upcoming generation. I'd be interested in exploring the idea of promoting performing venues and/or competitions for young puppeteers.

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

I've made my living as a puppeteer for over thirty years. To be successful, I've had to be practical and resourceful. I think these qualities, in addition to my knowledge of the educational system and how to incorporate puppetry into education, are my most valuable skills.

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

Puppeteers of America provides important services to its members. I would like to help update existing services and communicate with the membership to find out which new services are most needed.

## **KAT PLEVIK - Chicago, Illinois**

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

I think we need to put energy into promoting the organization to the general public outside the puppetry community. Making our presence known will help us to expand our membership base and spread awareness of our art from.

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

At the end of our past conference in Atlanta, the PofA made it's debut on facebook. I think the facebook pages have been very successful and that we need to continue exploring how facebook and other new trends in technological communication can be beneficial. We also need to find ways to make these tools accessible to everyone in our organization.

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

I think we should create a program that sponsors puppeteers to go into their local high schools and colleges with the intent of promoting the PofA and sparking interest in puppet related careers and educational tracks. We could create a standard format for a presentation that includes room for the presenting artist to share their own puppetry expertise. This will promote our national organization through direct contact with a local member of the community.

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

I am full of energy and am a very good problem solver. My strong people skills allow me to function well in a group. I have a lot of ideas and am able to lead projects but am very willing to support others to help bring large ideas to fruition. I care about the PofA and want to see it continue to grow and be successful.

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

I think the most important service the PofA offers its members are the festivals. They are an amazing tool for networking, education, and providing an opportunity to see the works of others.

## PIX SMITH - Dallas, Texas

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

Keeping members and making the organization relevant to puppeteers of today, who feel less of a need to join "real" organizations when so many ad hoc ones are available online. At the same time, we need to keep in mind that a great deal of the knowledge in our art form rests in the minds and memories of people who may not participate in those fora, and as a result, the Puppeteers of America has a vast, in some ways, untapped resource for all of the new puppeteers as well. Bringing the two together is the purpose of membership, and is the most important

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

Lots of people have worked very hard toward aligning all of the procedures and the code, and the Board has worked very hard to make things easier in this area in the future. I think that communication with the guilds and making a less restrictive and more supportive guild structure would benefit us all. I am happy to see the progress with the store, and I look forward to their being even busier in the coming years. We are blessed to have a great crew running things there, and I'd urge anyone to go take a look at the store now. I mean now. Go do it!

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

I think our online presence and web site are moving along nicely, and I feel that it is one of the most important things we can do. I would like to see us develop a way to keep both this program and our more traditional ways of communicating alive. Most important, I would like to see more visibility for the history and traditions of the art form and the organization, and I think that we have some great plans in place to move that forward.

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

I try to work toward consensus and always hope that any issues can be resolved amicably and without animosity. There are lots of different egos and personalities involved in any art form, and I try to understand the point of view of dissension in order to solve whatever real problem might exist.

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

I think our greatest need is to continue to serve both the internet and traditional generations of puppeteers by providing information on both the latest techniques and venues as well as keeping sight of the long history and tradition of our art and of the organization. I would like to see more mentoring and intergenerational exchanges as we progress and grow as an organization.

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