



# Focus

## Tennessee Theatre Association Newsletter

Focus

Winter  
2009



TENNESSEE ARTS COMMISSION

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## CONFERENCE 2009: ONE OF THE BEST YET!

With ten stage presentations each with a large attendance, dozens of workshops, the regular Business Luncheon and Awards Ceremony, plus a very special guest, film and television star David Keith, Conference 2009 had something for everyone!

We had four productions over two days in the Community

Theatre Festival and six performances in the Secondary School Festival (Look for full reports on these events inside this issue.) We also had Secondary School Scholarship auditions, the SETC Preliminary Auditions which had a full 200 students auditioning for an opportunity to go to SETC to audition for summer work.

We had a lively series of workshops, some of which packed in as many as thirty participants, so it was a very busy and highly entertaining conference. We hope you didn't miss it but if you did we hope you will mark your calendars for October 21-24, 2010 when we'll be back in Cookeville for an even bigger and better Conference 2010!

## SPECIAL GUEST DAVID KEITH

Conference 2009 featured a very special guest, Mr. David Keith. David is a Knoxville actor who has made quite a career in films and television starring in such films as *Firestarter*, *The Lords of Discipline*, *Heartbreak Hotel*, and *The Indian In the Cupboard* and having featured roles in *An Officer and a Gentleman*, *The Rose*, *The Great Santini*, *Brubaker*, *Behind Enemy Lines*, and *The Two Jakes* performing

with Gene Hackman, Jack Nicholson, Robert Redford, and Drew Barrymore.

David spent over an hour with the High School Festival participants talking with an eager crowd about working in film, stage, and television, and he was the featured guest at our Business Lunch where he spoke before an even more eager crowd of conference attendees, not only about his work in film, television, and onstage, but about his current

work with a program called Protect—seeking to keep young children safe from predators.

David was the recipient of the 2009 Distinguished Achievement Award from the Tennessee Theatre Association and a much deserving recipient indeed.



## State News from the Community Theatre Division ... Convention Awards

The Community Theatre Festival was held at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Tennessee Theatre Association conference in Cookeville, TN on October 23-24, 2009. The following competition awards were given out at the Awards Banquet on Saturday night the 24th.

- The **Mass Congeniality Award** for “exceptional professionalism and cooperativeness” went to the Chattanooga Theatre Centre.
- The **Excellence in Technical Theatre Award** and \$100.00 gift certificate from Mainstage Theatrical Supply was presented to the Chattanooga Theatre Centre for their production of “Yellow Boat”.
- The **Best Actress Award** went to Lillian Crouse from “Suicide in Bb,” Backstage Series at Cookeville Performing Arts Center.
- The **Best Actor Award** went to Charles Long from “The Actor’s Nightmare,” Tennessee Tech Wesley Foundation Arena Theatre.
- The **Best Director Award** went to David Davidson for “Suicide in Bb,” Backstage Series at Cookeville Performing Arts Center.
- The **Best Production Award** went to “Suicide in Bb,” Backstage Series at Cookeville Performing Arts Center. It will represent the state of Tennessee at the Southeastern Theatre Conference (SETC) Community Theatre competition in Lexington in March, 2010. “Suicide in Bb” by Sam Shepard is an absurdist look at crime solving as two bumbling gumshoes attempt to determine who murdered a famous jazz musician.

Other productions in this year’s festival were:

- “The Actor’s Nightmare,” Christopher Durang’s hilarious look at what every actor fears, performed by Tennessee Tech Wesley Foundation
- “Albert Schweitzer: Memoirs of Africa,” an original one-man show written by Thurston Moore with The Tennessee Players
- “Yellow Boat,” by David Saar was the uplifting story of a young child’s struggle with illness and where to find hope, performed by Chattanooga Theatre Centre.

Thanks go out to our adjudicators, Ms. April J Callahan Marshall from SETC and Mr. Greg Donner of Halifax, VA.

Now is the time to start preparing for the 2010 competition in Cookeville, TN, Oct. 21 – 23. 2010 is an AACTFest year which means winning companies have the opportunity to advance to national and international competitions beyond SETC. Competition slots are available for up to eight theatres and are filled on a first-come, first-serve basis. For more information contact Community Theatre Division Chair Barry Wallace: [barrywallace@yahoo.com](mailto:barrywallace@yahoo.com)

## WORKSHOPS OF INTEREST

Your suggestions needed

One of the greatest aspects of the TTA Annual Conference is the chance to get together with peers and experts to learn more about our art-form.

Workshops will be available every day of the 2010 Conference, and we want them to be as valuable as possible.

So, we need your help.

What kind of workshops do you like best? What topics are hot right now? What issues should we be addressing?

In the past workshops have included such things as:

- Masks, their history and use, and how to make them
- Directing Round Tables
- Movement for Auditions
- Headshots and Resumes
- Stage Combat
- Scene Painting
- Lighting
- Five Steps To A Winning Grant Proposal
- Cast party Food

If you have suggestions for a workshop you would like to take or a workshop you would like to present at the 2010 Conference, Oct. 22 – 24 in Cookeville, please contact our President-elect, Melissa Shafer at [mshafer@tn-theatre.com](mailto:mshafer@tn-theatre.com).

## State News from the Secondary Division...Convention Awards

Scholarship Winner:	Kelly Tsaltas	Farragut High School
Scholarship Runner-up:	Cody Beyer	Donelson Christian Academy
Technical Excellence Award:	<i>Doubt</i>	Cordova High School
All-Star Cast:	Zach Royster	Farragut High School
	Michael Wollam	Jackson Northside high School
	Thomas Ogg	Cordova High School
	Diana Hopper	Cordova High School
	Gintare Milaseviciute	Cordova High School
	Marlee Simmons	Knoxville West High School
	Jamin Craig	David Lipscomb High School
	Shelby Smith	David Lipscomb High School
Best Actress	Elise Biancon	Knoxville West High School
Best Actor	Will Mianne	Donelson Christian Academy
Festival Runner-Up	<i>Flowers for Algernon</i>	Donelson Christian Academy
Festival Winner	<i>Doubt, a parable</i>	Cordova High School

**Book your calendars...and pick your One-Acts:** 2010 Secondary School Festival will be October 22 in Cookeville, TN.

Note: There will be no Preliminary Regional Competitions in 2010. Registrations for the Festival and Competition at TTA will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis. For secondary school information contact Chris Luter at [cluter@tn-theatre.com](mailto:cluter@tn-theatre.com)

## 2010 CONFERENCE RETURNS TO COOKEVILLE

The 2010 Tennessee Theatre Association Conference will return to Cookeville, also the site of this year's conference.

We are actually working towards establishing a permanent mid-state site to see if stabilizing the location makes it easier for our participating organizations and individuals. We have an established date – the fourth weekend in October – and we have seen other states which have established a permanent location see

a benefit from their members knowing exactly where and when the conference will be each year.

Our idea is to schedule perhaps five years at a single site to see how that impacts the Conference and to give our members a chance to evaluate the idea. We are discussing this with the Renaissance Center in Dickson, TN, which was the site of our 2008 Conference.

The Center seems ideal for our needs and we are looking at going back to Dickson and

scheduling perhaps as many as five years there beginning in 2011.

Beginning in Dickson in 2011 left us in need of a 2010 site and after discussing several potential sites we chose to return to Cookeville. Cookeville has always been a popular site for TTA and we are happy to make one last visit there before we try a permanent move to the Renaissance Center in Dickson.



Cookeville Performing Arts Center




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