



In the saddle at the Autry

Over 1,200 celebrate at our annual party



January 7, 2011 was a clear day, if a bit cold, and a perfect backdrop for what pretty much everyone agreed was the Animation Guild's most successful celebration in eighteen years.

As we explained in the December *Peg-Board*, the membership agreed in

March 2010 to hold the next party at the Autry National Center of the American West in Griffith Park in January 2011. There was some concern that this change would affect attendance, but those fears proved groundless as it became obvious this was going to be a *huge* party.

An Executive Board committee headed by **KAREN CARNEGIE JOHNSON** had recommended the Autry Center for our party locale with Cheers Catering handling the food and drinks, and the choices proved to be exceptionally fortunate. Upon arrival, veterans of past parties realized how much easier the parking was going to be in the huge but well-designed and convenient Los Angeles Zoo lot.

Inside the museum, the guests were greeted with a huge bar at the information desk, one of several well-stocked and well-managed watering holes throughout the public spaces. Although the throng proved especially dense at certain times of the evening (as has always been the case at our parties), the fact that the guests were spread out among two levels and several rooms helped prevent overcrowding and claustrophobia. Further, the Autry's many galleries and exhibits

(see PARTY AT THE AUTRY, page 8)

.....
Thanks to **ED WEXLER** for our 2011 logo!



From the Business Representative

Rigging

I'm not talking about building the controls on CG characters, but something else. From the Wall Street Journal, December 21, 2010 (tinyurl.com/46scxfv):

Justice Department Reaches Settlement With Lucasfilm In Hiring Probe

Lucasfilm Ltd. agreed Tuesday to settle civil charges that it and Pixar Animation agreed to limit competition for each other's digital-animation workers, the U.S. Justice Department announced.

The settlement is the latest development in the department's ongoing probe of hiring practices in the technology sector. Pixar, a unit of Walt Disney Co. (DIS), was not named in Tuesday's legal complaint because it was one of six companies that settled similar charges in September, the department said.

The department's antitrust regulators alleged that Lucasfilm and Pixar, rival animation studios, had agreed not to cold-call each other's employees, and further agreed to notify each other when making an offer to an employee of the other company. The department also said the companies had agreed, when offering a job to a rival's employee, not to counteroffer with compensation above the initial offer ...

Hard to fathom, isn't it? Entertainment companies trying to keep wages down by rigging the system. Almost makes you suspect that our benevolent corporate masters might not be looking out for employees' best interests after all.

VFX Soldier (vfxsoldier.wordpress.com/2010/12/21/collusion) has his own take on the settlement deal:

The settlement was laughable as the punishment for the crime wasn't even a slap on the wrist. The

companies basically had to agree not to break the law for the next 5 years!

For VFX artists the settlement provides more questions than answers. What happens after 5 years? Can they just go back to colluding again? What about those up north that have been screwed out of opportunity costs for better wages?

What about companies like Sony, Digital Domain, R+H, DreamWorks, Disney etc? How do we find out if they have secret agreements like ILM and Pixar?

A couple of weeks after the *WSJ* article, I got a call from a vfx employee at one of our fine, larger effects houses. (Non-union, of course, like most of them.) His project was wrapping up and he was getting laid off, so he was sniffing around for other work. And he told me the following:

I sent my demo reels to a couple of different studios who're hiring, Studio A and Studio B. Both seemed interested. Studio A made me an offer, so I told Studio B I'd gotten an salary proposal, and told them from who.

Studio B stopped talking to me, like instantly. I've e-mailed them and called them, but I've gotten no

(see *FROM THE BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE*, page 4)

IN THIS ISSUE:

Our great party at the Autry	1
From the Business Representative: Rigging, by Steve Hulett	2
Chroniques des studios sardoniques, by Bob Foster	5
Announcing our new website	6
Gallery 839's first 2011 show	7
Notes from the Organizer: Persuasion and intimidation, by Steve Kaplan	10
Correction	14
In memoriam: Tom Bird and Chris Jenkyns	14
General membership meeting: January 25, 7 pm	15
.....

ARTISTS IN THIS ISSUE:

ED WEXLER, page 1 * **IVAN CAMILLI**, pages 1 and 9
ROGERIO NOGUEIRA, page 2 * **BOB FOSTER**, page 5
JOEY MASON, page 7 * **ANONYMOUS**, page 15

FROM THE BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE

(continued From page 3)

response. A week ago they were acting as though they wanted me. Now, nothing. But they're still advertising for people in my classification. You think they're colluding with Studio A?

I told him I was of the opinion that they were. I also said that, sadly, there was probably no direct hard evidence to prove collusion, but there appeared to be circumstantial evidence. (On the other hand, maybe I'm just an overly suspicious guy. Because I'm also of the opinion that bears make a mess in the woods and seasoned cement is hard when you fall on it.)

I've toiled in the studio and union vineyards for a few years now, and like I've said before, I've witnessed lying, cheating, and browbeating of employees by managers. I've read studio-drafted contracts that prohibited employees from exercising legal rights. (And when that failed, I've watched the good old standby of intimidation get practiced.) So I'm not under any illusions about the ethics of large corporations.

They don't have any.

If you've been paying attention, you've figured out that the basic rule in 21st century America is "Whatever works for us, we'll do. And if we get caught, we'll deal with it. Probably cheaper in the long run anyway." Which is why I long ago abandoned the concepts of "fair" and "unfair." Maybe those words have meaning and weight in heaven, but they're mostly parrot talk down here on the temporal plane. It really boils down to these two basic tenets:

- ◆ Almost everything is arbitrary ... and everything is temporary.
- ◆ You end up getting what you have the leverage to get.

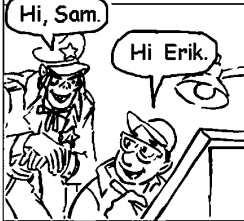
I told the guy that there was no easy way to nail Studio B unless a stoolie came forward. ("Yes, your honor. We've had a 'gentlemen's agreement' against poaching with Pixar for years. Here's hard-copies of all the e-mails" ... Yeah, like that's going to happen.)

But I'm telling you ... Bears *do* defecate in the woods.

— Steve Hulett

BOB FOSTER'S CHRONIQUES DES STUDIOS SARDONIQUES

ERIK, former Phantom of Soundstage #4, has become head of Night-time Security, weekend and holiday division. It's 10 pm as we find him making his rounds...



It's ten o'clock on a Saturday night. You still working?

I'm making up some time.



Really? Yeah, I took a long lunch last Sunday.



And why were you working last Sunday?



Why were you...?



Your wife and kids are here to see you.



I brought you a sandwich.



Hi, dad. Hi, dad. Hi, kids.



I think it's great how jobs bring families together.



© Bob Foster

Announcing TAG's new website

We're very proud to announce that the Animation Guild has completely redesigned our website from the ground up, and the result is now online at www.animationguild.org.

The new site was designed by OPM Design Group under the supervision of a committee of TAG Board members. It features all the information that was available on the old site: studio lists, contracts, wage minimum and survey information, *Peg-Boards*, benefit information and links, etc. Information is easier to find and print out. The members-only section has been eliminated and all its information is now public except for the job listing archive which is available for members through the e-mail list. There's also a new section of Gallery 839 artwork past and present.

Take a look and let us know what you think. If you find any problems, please drop an e-mail to Steve Kaplan at skaplan@animationguild.org.

THE PEG-BOARD is published monthly by The Animation Guild and Affiliated Optical Electronic and Graphic Arts Local 839 IATSE,
1105 N. Hollywood Way, Burbank, CA 91505-2528
phone (818) 845-7500 ♦ fax (818) 843-0300
info@animationguild.org ♦ www.animationguild.org

PRESIDENT

Bob Foster

BUSINESS

REPRESENTATIVE

Steve Hulett

VICE-PRESIDENT

Earl Kress

**RECORDING
SECRETARY**

Jeff Massie

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

Jan Browning

PEG-BOARD EDITOR

Jeff Massie

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Bronwen Barry ♦ John Cataldi ♦ Nicole Dubuc ♦ Janette Hulett
Karen Carnegie Johnson ♦ Cathy Jones ♦ Gordon Kent ♦ Nathan Loofbourrow
Mike Roth ♦ Chris Simmons ♦ Jack Thomas

TRUSTEES: Bronwen Barry ♦ Nicole Dubuc ♦ Karen Carnegie Johnson

All contents © 2011 by TAG Local 839 IATSE. All rights reserved. ISSN 1523-9365.
Publications of bona fide labor organizations may reprint articles from this newsletter so long as attribution is given. You can stop by the Animation Guild office weekdays between 8:30 am and 5 pm and pick up current or recent back copies of The Peg-Board, free of charge.



The Peg-Board is printed on recycled paper.

PEG-BOARD SUBSCRIPTION POLICY: Active members automatically receive *The Peg-Board* free of charge. Members on honorable withdrawal may continue to receive the newsletter without charge by sending an annual written request on or before the expiration date on the mailing label. The subscription rate for suspended members and non-members is \$10.00 per year (\$15.00 foreign, check in U. S. funds), checks made out to the Animation Guild and sent to 1105 N. Hollywood Way, Burbank, CA 91505-2528, U.S.A.



Don't miss Gallery 839's first 2011 show!

Featuring the artwork of twelve Guild
members:

- ❖ Lee Crowe
- ❖ Frank Forte
- ❖ Bob Foster
- ❖ Brigitte Franzka-Fritz
- ❖ Yelena Geodakyan
- ❖ Peter Gullerud
- ❖ Alex Kube
- ❖ Ashley Long
- ❖ Christine Mallouf
- ❖ Joey Mason (*above*)
- ❖ Marc Perry
- ❖ Toni Vian

Opens Friday, February 4
6-9 pm

At Gallery 839
1105 N. Hollywood Way in Burbank



Left: **ART LEONARDI**. Right: **ROMAN ARAMBULA** (Board member emeritus) and President **BOB FOSTER**.

PARTY AT THE AUTRY

(continued from front page)

kept the guests' interest piqued and also diverted them from the main halls, further cutting down on crowding.

And then there was the food – a popular buffet with three different kinds of chili and salad that didn't run out until after eleven o'clock, keeping the guests well-fed throughout the evening. The membership had voted to have a cash bar, and the Executive Board had eliminated the gifts we've given away in past years, but neither was very much missed due to the party's success.

Neither the Executive Board nor the membership have made any decisions about our next bash, but it seems likely we'll be staying with what works. So if you missed this year's get-together, never fear – we'll probably be back in the saddle again at the Autry!



Top right: Board member **BRONNIE BARRY** and **BRUCE WOODSIDE**. *Top left:* **DAN MILLS** and **DORA YAKUTIS**. *Middle left:* **TIM** and **BONNIE CALLAHAN**. *Above:* **STEVE** and **ILONA MULLER**. *Right:* **JANETTE** and **ALEX HULETT**®.





Notes from the Organizer

Persuasion and intimidation

On the organizing front, I'd be remiss in my duties if I didn't have a couple of "irons in the fire" going. At a local animation studio, TAG has been collecting representation cards, and the artists recently received a letter from the company's management. We thought it would be good to share that letter ... and our response.

Dear Employees,

We have been told that a union representative is trying to organize the artists of *[company name removed]*. If that is the case, I believe this is a good opportunity to explain to you what you can expect to hear from the union representatives.

First of all, in the event a union organizer (or fellow employee) hands you a union authorization card, we suggest you consider it carefully before signing it. Authorization cards are legal documents, and if you sign a card, you give the union the right to use it for two purposes:

If the union gets cards from over 50% of the employees, it may use them to try and demand to be recognized as the employees' representative without there being a free, secret ballot election.

If the union gets cards from 30% of the employees, it can petition the National Labor Relations Board for an election

If you look closely at the cards, you will see that they are the same as signing over your rights like a legal "power of attorney". We suggest you give careful thought to the importance of an authorization card before you sign one and turn over your personal rights to the union.

Union organizers may use every trick in the book to get you to sign. They may say such things as - the Company is going union; that you are obligated to sign by contract; that everyone else has signed, so get on the bandwagon; that your signature means you have only talked to the union. They may even promise you better wages, a pension, health benefits, or a regular, full time position if you sign the card. None of these claims are true, so don't let the union organizers mislead you. Keep in mind — the union cannot guarantee any changes in your wages, benefits or workplace policies. The union can only guarantee your handing over your money to them in monthly union dues.

In making your decision, it is important to remember what you have already without paying monthly union dues and running the risk of being ordered to strike. Also, at *[the company]*, employees do not need a union to speak for them. We have an open door policy that gives you the ability to address your concerns one-on-one with management.

The decision you make may be the single most important decision you are asked to make concerning your employments with *[the company]*. We are confident that once you know the facts about unions, you will agree that unions are not in the best interest of *[the company's]* employees and will therefore not sign an authorization card.

If you have any questions feel free to talk with *[names removed]* or any member of management or your supervisor.

Sincerely,

And here is our response:

It's come to our attention that a *[manager of the company]* has distributed a letter to you regarding signing representation cards and what we'll be telling you. After reading the letter, we're surprised to find that *[the manager]* has accused us of using tricks when

(see *FNOTES FROM THE ORGANIZER*, page 12)

NOTES FROM THE ORGANIZER

(continued from page 11)

the letter [*the manager*] sent to you is filled with distortions and half-truths.

Representation cards are vehicles TAG uses to gauge the level of support we have in organizing studios. As we stated [*previously*], once we receive a majority of cards based on the amount of artists in the unit, we'll approach [*the company*] to negotiate a contract on your behalf without an NLRB election. However, [*the company*] is the deciding factor in that decision. If they don't recognize the Animation Guild as your bargaining agent, we'll approach the NLRB to be named the agent by earning a majority of your secret ballots.

Have we stated, "the Company is going union, so sign now and get on board?" Or that you have any obligation to sign a representation card? Nope. It's our hope and intention to provide the strength of a collectively bargained contract, but giving us the right to represent [*the company's*] employees is up to you. (That's the law) Any contract would be based on our current contract, but it could be different. That would depend on the negotiation process, as well as input from you.

[*The company*] is fighting against your right to make decisions about *your* working conditions. In our contract, we have overtime hours, holidays, wage minimums and more. Why would that be something they wouldn't want you to have input on?

Lastly:

- ❖ Our contract has a No-Strike / No Lockout clause that says while the contract is in place, a strike can not take place
- ❖ The union cannot order a strike, only you can. If **YOU** want to strike, **YOU** have to vote on and approve it.

- ❖ If we reach agreement with [the company] on a contract, you will pay no initiation fees, only dues (\$28-36/month.) If we don't reach a contract, you will pay neither initiation fees or dues. Simple.

While the letter states that one of the benefits of employment at [the company] is the ability to have one-on-one conversations with management, we feel the strength of the collective voice to be much more effective.

While we expect animation and effects studios to push back against organization efforts, fear mongering of this nature needs to be made public. Its important for everyone to understand the lengths that some companies will go to when attempting to protect the imbalance of power they hold in the workplace.

— Steve Kaplan

Nobody should get the idea that this company's response to our organizing is unusual.

*They know they can't say: "**Sign one of those g.d. cards and you're fired!**" so they don't. They know they can't say: "**You vote to go union and we'll close the place down!**", and they're careful not to. But they are certainly free to imply, to elliptically threaten, to wring their hands and whine: "**We just don't know HOW we'll be able to keep the doors open with all the extra UNION costs!**"*

The name of the game is to get employees to vote NO in a NLRB election. Employers can't threaten to shut the workplace down, since that's prohibited under Federal law. But employers are certainly at liberty to use the various other tricks, one of which is on view in this letter.

*In the unending struggle to bring non-union facilities under contract, it's all about which entity has the momentum, hearts and minds, and ultimately the **juice**.*

— Steve Hulett

Correction

The third paragraph of the “Who are we?” article in the December *Peg-Board* stated that “we have the Individual Account Plan (IAP) that essentially collects and sets aside a percentage of earnings from re-runs and productions repackaged and sold in other formats”.

In fact, the residual monies that are collected under our contract are paid into our Health Plan. As a result of this, despite economic downturns and rising costs, ours continues to be the best health coverage in the entertainment industry.

We regret the error.

In memoriam

Layout artist, designer and animator **TOM BIRD** passed away on December 12. From 1977 until 2001 he worked for Disney, Hanna-Barbera, Filmation, Marvel, Universal and Warner Bros. Bird served on Local 839’s Executive Board from 1986 to 1989.

The family has asked that contributions in his name be made to the American Cancer Society.



Writer and story artist **CHRIS JENKYNS** died on January 3 at the age of eighty-six.

He was on of the original story people for *Rocky and Bullwinkle* at Jay Ward Studios in the early 1960s. Until his retirement in 1992 he worked for Krantz, Hanna-Barbera, DePatie-Freleng, France Animation, TMS, Fine Arts Films, Marvel, Filmation, Amblin, Film Roman and Klasky-Csupo.



The family of the late **ANN OLIPHANT** has asked that contributions in her name be made to Guide Dogs of America, 13445 Glenoaks Blvd., Sylmar, CA 91342; (818) 362-5834; www.guidedogsofamerica.org.



GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

**TUESDAY,
JANUARY 25, 2011**

**PIZZA & REFRESHMENTS,
6:30 PM
MEETING, 7 PM**

**1105 N. HOLLYWOOD WAY,
BURBANK**

Between Chandler and Magnolia
tinyurl.com/new-tag-hq

**The Animation Guild Local 839 IATSE
1105 N. Hollywood Way
Burbank, CA 91505-2528**

**First Class Mail
U. S. Postage Paid
Permit 25
North Hollywood, CA**