



ANIMATION
GUILD AND
AFFILIATED
OPTICAL
ELECTRONIC AND
GRAPHIC ARTS,
LOCAL 839
I.A.T.S.E.

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Disney lays off veterans

On April 10, the *Hollywood Reporter* confirmed what had been rumored for a while:

As Disney's stock was touching another all-time high on Wednesday, about 150 employees at the conglomerate's filmed entertainment segment were getting word that their services were no longer needed.

The pink slips, insiders say, weren't unexpected, as published reports that began to surface last week indicated they were coming, and because word was out that CEO Robert Iger was looking for efficiencies and cost-cutting measures in areas where digital technologies were reshaping businesses, such as in home entertainment. ...

So who, exactly, is being slipped the axe? We got some specifics from Disney Labor Relations. Walt Disney Animation Studios will be laying off nine veteran animators/artists, some of whom have been at the House of Mouse for decades.

I haven't yet talked to the artists getting pink slips, but this layoff has got to be wrenching. To be separated from a studio where you've spent a huge part of your working life is never easy. The questions "*Will I find new work? Will other studios be interested in what I have to offer?*" will be hanging there like thunderheads as they walk out the studio gates.

One consoling thought: **There is life after Disney.** Other artists have found this to be a fact; it will be true for this talented group as well. (Just ask John Lasseter.)

— Steve Hulett

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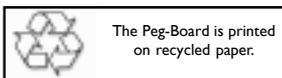
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5 pm and pick up current or recent back copies of *The Peg-Board*, free of charge.



IATSE LOCAL 839



From the President

The Ballad Of John Henry

(With apologies to Pete Seeger)

John Henry was about three days old
Sittin' on his pappy's knee
He picked up a pencil and a piece of paper

Said, "Animatin' gonna be the death of me, Lord, Lord.
Animatin' gonna be the death of me.

Producer said to John Henry,
"Gonna bring that 'puter round.
Gonna plug that 'puter into your cube
Gonna load that program down, Lord, Lord.
Gonna load that Flash app down."

John Henry said to his producer,
"Producer, why ain't I dead?
I'm crankin' fifty feet a day from my wrist on down.
Just look at all that pencil lead. Lord, Lord.
Just look at all that lead."

The man who invented the Flash app
Thought he be really slick.
When John Henry cranked out sixty feet,
The Flash app called in sick. Lord, Lord.
The 'puter called in sick.

John Henry cranked in the mountains.
John Henry cranked at the shore.
He cranked in the forest, he cranked in the park,
He cranked in the kitchen, he cranked at the store. Lord, Lord.
He cranked in the kitchen and the store.

His pencil was burning fire one night
When he pushed back his chair and turned off the light.
He'd worked so hard that he'd broke his poor wrist
So he laid down his pencil and died. Lord, Lord.
He laid down his pencil and died.

Now, John Henry had a little baby
Who held pencil stubs in the palm of his hand.
The first words I heard that poor boy say,
"My daddy was a pencil-pushin' man. Lord, Lord.
I want to be a pencil-pushin man."



From the Business Representative

Offense and defense

Early this month, word came down that Disney was laying off nine of its most respected and senior animators. As the word got out on the TAG Blog, a reader asked me:

But Steve, how do people get assigned (marginalized) to be part of the “hand-drawn staff”? Especially animators like Nik Ranieri, Brian Ferguson, Ruben Aquino, and James Lopez who have experience doing CG animation on features? Those guys have dual skills to do both CG and Hand-drawn. No one (especially the UNION) wants to broach the subject of age discrimination? ...

It’s not just an issue of young vs. old. There’s this iron reality known as studio politics. It’s always there, to a greater or lesser degree. It’s about people fighting over turf. I encountered this reality at Disney in the seventies and eighties. I’ve encountered it (as an outside observer) in the 1990s and 2000s.

Nine years ago, Joe Grant (no stranger to studio politics himself) said to me:

All the maneuvering and infighting that went on back at Hyperion? I see the same kind of stuff going on around here now. The people are different and the building is different, but the politics? Pretty much the same.” ...

Which brings me back to the question above.

Today I ran into a (former) Disney animator who arrived at the Mouse House as a young, starry-eyed recruit in the early nineties, and left a year and a half ago. He’s still fairly young, and he related:

I made the switch from hand-drawn to CG a few years ago. I didn’t have much time to learn Maya, but I managed what I could, and got tossed into production pretty fast. And I got my share of scenes, but the young CG animators resented that I could draw better than

they could, and I got push back. After the picture finished, I decided the politics were too nasty, and I left ...

I've talked to other artists who've told me much the same thing. There's a divide between many of the hand-drawn veterans and the CG artists; the CG artists have more leverage and clout than the animators who mainly draw (the studio is, after all, focused on CG animated features); a number of the paper-and-pencil veterans make no bones about the fact they prefer doing hand-drawn features.

So you've got different groups playing offense and defense. CG animators defending their perceived territory. Hand-drawn animators trying to protect their small patch of ground. And up above, studio management looking at grosses and making its decisions based on profits, losses and the current price of Disney stock. It's always been this way.

In the late fifties, many heads rolled when *Sleeping Beauty* didn't make its production and marketing costs back. In the seventies, there was simmering resentment by some Feature Animation veterans against the upstarts coming in from the California Institute of the Arts (and points east.) Some of the newbies — Brad Bird and John Lasseter among them — got tossed out.

And in the last half of the 1990s, there was fear, resentment and lousy morale when the grosses of hand-drawn features went south and the studio sloughed off long-time staff to go chasing after CGI's magical brass ring.

All I can tell you is, it's not simply a matter of who has what skills, or who has the most time in as an animator, layout artist, or designer. Age discrimination has only a little to do with it. Mostly it's about who's perceived by management to have the strongest chops.

Those are the folks who have the most leverage with company executives. And those are the folks who will remain Walt Disney Animation employees when the Chief Executive Officer sends out orders to cull the herd.

It's lousy, but the way it's almost always been.

— Steve Hulett

Events calendar

Contact Jeff Massie at jeffm@animationguild.org if you have listings for the Events Calendar.

❖ Mondays, April 29, May 6, May 13 or May 20; 1-2:30 pm

ACTORS FUND WORK PROGRAM

ORIENTATION

The Actors Fund, 5757 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 400, Los Angeles

An introduction to all Actors Fund Work Program (AWP) services, including group and individual career counseling, job training and education, financial assistance, and job placement services. This event is open to all entertainment professionals. Orientation is held every Monday except for legal holidays. No reservation or pre-registration required.

❖ Thursday, May 2; 1-3 pm

BUDGETING – NUTS AND BOLTS

The Actors Fund, 5757 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 400, Los Angeles

We simply cannot expect to reach our financial goals if we don't know exactly where we are starting from.

This monthly drop-in workshop focuses on helping you start tracking your income and expenses in a way that makes sense for artists and creative professionals who don't always earn and spend the same way each month. You will learn how to stop guessing and really get specific about the ways in which money moves in and out of your life.

The workshop is free, confidential and open to all professionals in performing arts and entertainment. Please RSVP to medoga@actorsfund.org if interested in attending this workshop.

Parking will be validated at S.C. Prestige Parking located at 5657 Wilshire Boulevard. Please note the entrance to the lot is on Hauser on the west side of the street, ½ block north from the corner of Wilshire and in the building next door to the IHOP outdoor parking lot.

❖ Tuesday, May 14; 7-9 pm:

THE NEXT MOVE FOR YOUR NECK AND BACK PAIN

**Toluca Lake Health Center, 4323 Riverside Drive,
Burbank**

Nearly everyone at some point has back or neck pain that interferes with work, routine daily activities, or recreation. But is your neck causing your back pain or your back causing your neck pain? Learn the cause and effect of the two most vulnerable areas of the spine and more importantly using the Feldenkrais Method®, give you gentle, easy movement strategies to relieve your pain, reduce your stress, and get you 'back' to your life!

Contact the MPI Wellness Program at (800) 654-9355 for further details.

❖ Saturday, May 18, 10 am-noon:

INTUITIVE EATING: LOSING WEIGHT WITHOUT LOSING YOUR MIND

**Santa Clarita Health Center, 25751 McBean Parkway,
#210, Valencia**

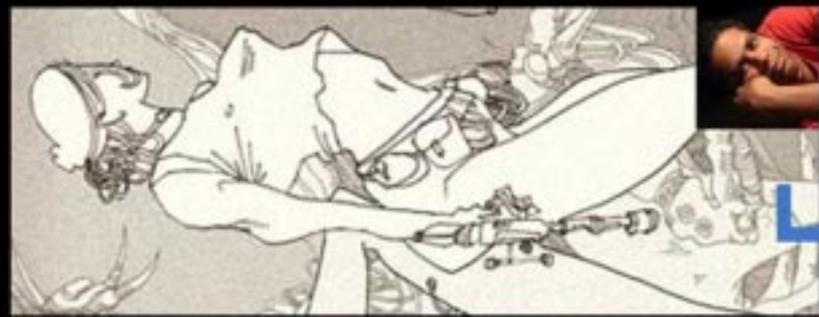
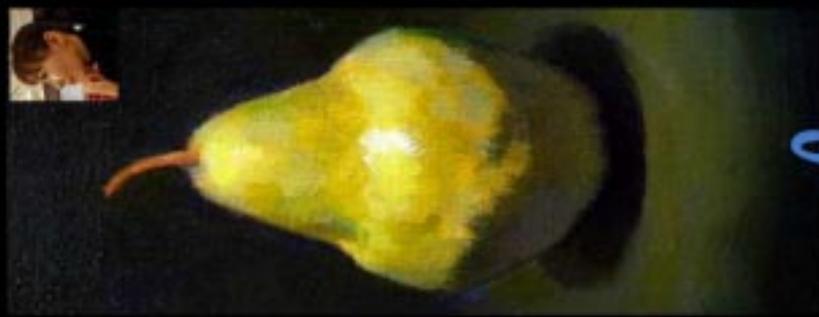


When it comes to eating, wouldn't you like to learn how to listen to your inner cues and not react to the outer ones? Come learn how to be moderate in your portions and food choices, while enjoying each and every bite. Learn how to appreciate and respond to your body's wisdom, by choosing foods that

sate and nourish. Also learn new tools rather than following old rules to best support a healthy way to lose weight. Intuitive Eating is a pathway to a healthy body weight, freedom from dieting and peace with both food and oneself!

Contact the MPI Wellness Program at (800) 654-9355 for further details.

(see EVENTS CALENDAR, page 12)



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Gallery 839

Presents

H A L F O f X

exhibited artists

Caroline K. Cheng

Kathiucia Dias

John Mahoney

Yumi Overson

Cyndi Tang

MAY 1st - MAY 28th, 2013

Reception: Friday, May 3rd, 2013, 6 pm - 9pm

Gallery location: 1105 N. Hollywood Way, Burbank, CA 91505 / www.animationguild.org / 818-845-7500

All about 2012 vacation and holiday pay

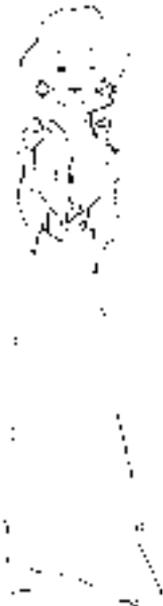
If you were employed as a weekly employee by a union animation studio in 2012 for which you are no longer working, you may be owed some unpaid vacation and holiday pay. Here's how to figure out what you are owed and how to collect it.

Q: How does vacation pay work?

A: If you worked for less than twelve months for the same employer, or if you worked over twelve months and did not take a paid vacation, you are owed vacation pay equal to 4% of your straight-time earnings.

If you are currently employed and have worked less than a year for the same employer, you will not be entitled to take a paid vacation until you have worked more than twelve months.

If you are currently employed and are entitled to vacation time, the employer has the right to require you to take the vacation in order to be paid for it. However, if the employer has not let you take a vacation he must pay you for it.



Vacations must be taken at a mutually agreeable time. Your employer cannot force you to take vacation at a time of his preference, and you cannot take vacation without his permission.

Q: How does holiday pay work?

A: If you worked less than the full year of 2012 for the same employer, you may be entitled to unpaid holiday pay. The amount you are owed is equal to the difference between 3.719% of your straight-time earnings and the amount you were paid on your weekly paycheck for holidays in which you did not work.

Q: How do I calculate my unpaid vacation and holiday pay?

A: Let's say you worked twenty-seven weeks in 2012 for the same employer, at \$1,800 per week.

You did not work on three holidays (Good Friday, Memorial Day and Independence Day), but you were paid for those holidays on your weekly check. Since your layoff you have not gone back to work for the same company.

Here's how you would calculate your unpaid vacation pay:

Total straight-time earnings ($\$1,800 \times 27$) = \$48,600.00

Vacation pay owed (4% of above) = \$1,944.00

And here's how you would calculate your unpaid holiday pay:

3.719% of straight-time earnings = \$1,807.43

Minus pay for holidays not worked* = \$1,080.00

Holiday pay owed = \$727.43

*If this amount is the same or more than 3.719% of straight-time, you are not owed any 2012 holiday pay.

Q: How do I claim my unpaid vacation and holiday pay?

A: Before you go any further, check your pay stubs to make sure your employer did not already pay you your vacation and holiday pay when you were laid off. Also be sure that you were not employed as a "daily" employee, in which case you should have received v&h pay on your regular paycheck, and you would not be entitled to additional pay.

Studios have varying policies for handling holiday and vacation pay requests. Many larger studios have voicemail numbers to request unpaid pay; however, the union contract allows employers to require that the pay be requested in writing. Contact the payroll or human resources department of your former employer for further information.

As a rule, these procedures are to be followed only if you are no longer working for the same employer. If you are still employed at the same company, you should request vacations through your department supervisor.

EVENTS CALENDAR

(continued from page 7)

❖ Tuesday, May 29; pizza and refreshments, 6:30 pm; meeting, 7 pm

ANIMATION GUILD GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

1105 N. Hollywood Way, Burbank

Membership meetings are your opportunity to reconnect with the Guild, interact with the Executive Board, raise concerns and hear about the state of the industry. While not mandatory, your attendance and participation are key factors in keeping TAG abreast of matters in the workplace.

The membership decides how and when the union can act. Participation on your part is the foundation to the strength our contract and policies hold. Come and be a part of the process of keeping our leverage focused and strong.

On the agenda for this meeting is a panel discussion about personal financial planning, featuring **TIM CRONIN** and **TIM METCALF** of Wells Fargo Advisors.

❖ Saturday, June 8:

ANIMATION INVITATIONAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

Elkins Ranch Golf Course, 1386 Chambersburg Road, Fillmore

Mark your calendars ... and don't miss The Animation Invitational!

Everyone involved with the Animation Community is invited to play, as well as family and friends. There are prizes for Animation Community members and for guests, both for Gross scores and Net scores.

Cost for this tournament is \$100 per golfer, which includes the round of golf, cart and a Bar-B-Que following the tournament.

For further information contact Lyn Mantta at (818) 845-7500 or lyn@animationguild.org.

Motion Picture and Television Fund Health Center locations

The clinics listed below are administered by the Motion Picture and Television Fund (MPTF). They offer services with little or no deductibles to Health Plan participants enrolled through Blue Cross. For further details, contact the MPTF at (800) 876-8320 or the individual health center listed.

BOB HOPE HEALTH CENTER

335 N. La Brea Ave.
Los Angeles 90036
(323) 634-3850

GLENDALE HEALTH CENTER

800 S. Central Ave. #305
Glendale 91204
(818) 876-4790

JACK H. SKIRBALL HEALTH CENTER

23388 Mulholland Drive
Woodland Hills 91364
(818) 876-1050

SANTA CLARITA HEALTH CENTER

25751 McBean Parkway #210
Valencia 91355
(661) 284-3100

TOLUCA LAKE HEALTH CENTER

4323 Riverside Dr.
Burbank 91501
(818) 556-2700

WESTSIDE HEALTH CENTER

1950 Sawtelle Blvd. #130
Los Angeles 90025
(310) 996-9355



Save your pay stubs!

New health and pension phone numbers

The Motion Picture Industry Pension and Health Plan (MPIPHP) has a new toll-free Participant Services number:

(855) ASK-4MPI

(855-275-4674)

The new number has a simpler menu with fewer extensions:

Eligibility

Reported hours ext. 1

Pre-authorization

Claims status

General health benefits questions ext. 2

Retirement benefits

Pension

Individual Account Plan (IAP) ext. 3

Active health premiums ext. 4

Providers and employers should call the old numbers (818-769-0007 or 310-769-0007), which still use the old phone menu.

Here are numbers for various health services, HMOs and options associated with the Health Plan:

ASHN (<i>chiropractic</i>)	(800) 678-9133
Delta Care USA	(800) 422-4234
Delta/Health Plan	(800) 765-6003
ExpressScripts (<i>prescriptions</i>)	(800) 987-5247
Health Net	(800) 522-0088
Health Net Seniority Plus	(800) 935-6565
Kaiser Permanente	(800) 464-4000
Kaiser Permanente Senior Advantage	(800) 443-0815
MPTF Wellness Program	(800) 654-WELL (9355)
OptumHealth Behavioral Solutions (<i>mental health</i>)	(888) 661-9141
Oxford Health Plan	(800) 444-6222
Vision Service Plan (VSP)	(800) 877-7195

In memoriam

Storyboard artist **ARMEN MIRZAIAN** died on February 21. Since 2007 he worked for Cartoon Network, Disney, Hasbro and Marvel.



Cel painter **MITZI MUCERINO** died on January 26 at the age of ninety-one. She worked for Hanna-Barbera and Filmation from 1973 until 1987.



Xerox processor and cel painter **LOIS RYKER**, who worked for Disney from 1975 until 1986, died on December 19, 2012 at the age of eighty-eight.

If the unemployment office says “Thank you”, hang up

You can apply online for California unemployment insurance by going to www.edd.ca.gov, or you can call them at (800) 300-5616. If you have questions this is just about the only way to get them answered promptly, but it means you have to deal with the EDD’s phone system from beyond hell.

Callers will get one of several voice recordings when they call the 800 number but only one will allow you to file a claim or speak directly to an EDD rep about a specific problem.

If the recording begins, “**Thank you ...**” then hang up.

If the recording begins, “**Due to the number of callers...**” then hang up.

Only if the prompt begins, “**Welcome ...**” should you stay on the line. Once you hear this prompt, if you would like to apply for unemployment insurance, dial the number 12117 and begin. If you would like to follow up on a claim you have already filed, dial the number 1242.

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