



IMPRESSIONS OF A NEW DELEGATE: THE 2019 IATSE DISTRICT 2 CONVENTION



In his 1986 kinda-sorta cover of Joe Hill's 1913 song, Billy Bragg sings "There is power in a union." Going to the 2019 IATSE District 2 Convention as a TAG Delegate really made me feel that.

I've been in and (honorably) out of the union for many years now, but only recently did I start to get a little more involved. Initially attending Guild meetings prior to the contract negotiations last year, I started to sit in on individual craft committee meetings, and eventually, started my own with two other artists. When the topic of nominating Delegates came up, it seemed like a good opportunity to really see how things operate outside of Local 839 and how we contribute to that, and to maybe connect a little more with 839 members of different crafts.

Upon arriving on Friday, June 7, the Delegates registered and were given our committee assignments. Afterwards, the new Delegates had an orientation, which basically got us up to speed about the procedures and

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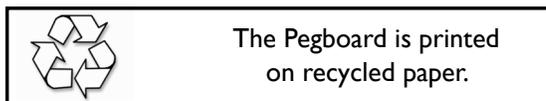
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IATSE LOCAL 839

schedule of the convention – what to expect when you don't know what you are expecting, and all that.

The first half of day one started with a really great traditional Hawaiian invocation and was spent giving the Delegates updates about IATSE membership numbers and goings-on that affect the unions. President Matthew Loeb gave a rousing speech on the state of the IATSE and the current battles being fought that really pumped up the energy of the room. With everyone feeling empowered, and ready to get down to business, Vice President Mike Miller went over the 13 resolutions that had come from all across the district. Local 839 presented two resolutions (the first two in our history, might I add!) written by Kristen Donner and Kyle Neswald regarding health insurance coverage and inclusion. Additional resolutions covered topics such as retirement, solidarity, and support for the LGBTQIA+ community.

At this point, Vice President Miller assigned each committee topics to discuss and we broke out into separate corners of the room and into other smaller rooms. I was on the Constitution and Bylaws committee along with Lee Crowe. Being on this committee, my expectation was that we



Members of the Local 839 Delegation get ready for day one of the District 2 Convention in Honolulu, Hawai'i. On the agenda: an inspiring Hawaiian invocation, a speech by IATSE President Matt Loeb, a review of resolutions to be considered, breaking into committees, committee reports and resolution votes.

would comb through the IATSE Constitution and make sure the language was all clear. I was ready for a long and detailed process. I was very wrong. Our committee had two topics to cover: one of the resolutions presented to the convention, and one specific detail in the Constitution. Our resolution involved hiring a dedicated Director of Political Affairs for each of the four states in District 2. We had an engaging discussion about the resolution and ultimately decided that, though the intention was admirable and worth supporting, we needed to hear a more concrete financial plan. The Constitution issue was pretty quickly resolved, voted on and unanimously decided.

This is where Billy Bragg's song came into mind. The first part of the day, I felt like I was a passive spectator, just taking notes and listening to speeches. But once we broke out into committees and had our assignments, I saw that WE were shaping the direction of the union, WE were making the decisions, WE were indeed the union. This was the most empowering part of the weekend.

Following lunch, we quickly heard from each committee and the entire Delegation voted yay or nay on each report. Things were pretty universally approved, with an occasional nay to be heard, usually when something would have a financial impact.



At the end of the first day of the convention, Hawai'i Local 665 hosted a reception at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel's Coconut Grove. TAG Delegates slipped away at sunset to hang loose with a show of solidarity on Waikiki Beach.

The second day was much shorter. We had an IATSE PAC presentation by Legislative/Political Director Erika Dinkel-Smith, and then an educational component about communication styles and resolving conflict, which was great and applicable to many aspects of life. We had a wrap up and Vice President Miller called out Local 839 for our strong presence, which was great, as we can sometimes feel like the red-headed stepchild of the IA!

The weekend was not just for the conference though. Like some of the other Hollywood Locals, 839 represents many different crafts. We have animators, designers, pre-viz, storyboard artists, a thousand different types of directors, and sometimes there can be a lack of unity. It's easy to become consumed with the issues that challenge your own craft, and sometimes the issues of other crafts fall by the wayside. Being at the convention, more so than at a regular Guild meeting, really helped all types of artists come together and see that we are all in this together. There's something about being away from home, at an event, with a certain empowering energy that really makes you feel connected to the people around you. Tui Scanlan of our host Local 665 really emphasized this with a traditional Hawaiian saying that translated to, "Turn the hands down, live. Turn the hands up, die." We cannot thrive if we don't want to put our hands down into the soil and do the work. We cannot be unified if we put our hands up to receive and only think of ourselves. We are all in this together, and together is how we'll get important work done.

The weekend was definitely an eye opener. It's easy to just sit back in anger and not get involved and stew in our own ideas about how unions should operate and what fights are worth fighting, but the truth is that things are not so black and white, and seeing the bigger picture, the reality of the nature of the beast and the involvement on all levels really really drives that point home. We each need to be the catalyst for the changes we want to see.

And hey, being in Hawai'i was pretty cool too, I guess.

– By Tom Riffel, Local 839 Delegate

FROM THE BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE JASON MACLEOD



BOX RENTAL:

What's in Your Deal Memo Matters!

If you are performing covered services away from your employer's location, and are providing your own tools and equipment, you should be compensated for any/all costs associated with doing so.

In production deal memos, this is often called "box rental" - and this is an important item to bring up in every negotiation where you believe you may be working away from your employer's place of business.

Providing hardware, software, and technical support to keep the first two in working order is not free. Computers age and need to be upgraded and replaced to keep performance at the level needed for today's productions. Software licenses are often an annual cost for renewal - or in some cases a monthly subscription fee. And, whose time is being spent to upgrade, troubleshoot, or otherwise keep a production rig in good condition? If it's you, you should be compensated for that time. If you are working in-house under a union agreement, your employer is expected to provide all of these for you (per Article 4H of the TAG Master Agreement, for example). Your employer is covering these necessary costs of doing business.

However, if you are working from locations other than your employer's location, it may be a different story. If you are providing tools and materials yourself, and are not properly billing your employer for the costs associated with maintaining a working production environment, you are providing those resources to your employer for free. And guess what, those things aren't free - equipment, software, and maintenance costs for production-grade setups can easily add up to thousands of dollars annually. Don't take on a business cost that your employer should be paying for - put "box rental" as a line item in your next deal memo.

Here's what a sample paragraph in your deal memo could contain to memorialize this:

XX. Box Rental	
Rental Items: _____	
Employer agrees to pay box rental of \$ _____ on a Daily/Weekly basis.	
Rental will commence on _____ and continue until _____ OR end of assignment.	
ACCEPTED AND AGREED TO:	
Date: _____	Date: _____
Owner/Lessor: _____	Production: _____

The following worksheet illustrates one way to estimate your tools and materials costs:

Estimating Box Rental Expenses -- Cost-based Worksheet				
Item	Notes	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
Annual Hardware Costs	Production-level computer hardware often costs more than consumer-level equipment. Don't forget the need to upgrade and replace periodically to maintain the performance level needed.	\$2000.00	\$166.67	\$38.46
Annual Software Costs	ToonBoom SBP, Maya, Adobe CC, Final Draft - license costs add up.	\$1000.00	\$83.33	\$19.23
Annual Maintenance Costs	Time spent upgrading, maintaining, installing, troubleshooting, etc.	\$1000.00	\$83.33	\$19.23
Annual Total		\$4000.00	\$333.33	\$76.92

The above table is a worksheet that looks at your estimated actual costs. Of course, you would need to replace the example amounts above with information from your own records. While this is a good way to estimate, another valid approach is to call around to a few local rental

houses and ask for their rental rates for providing the equipment that would be needed to perform the work you are doing.

In a short amount of time searching the internet for “cintiq rental weekly,” I found MacHollywood, AVA live, and The3DShop.com as rental companies to contact. What would it cost you to rent comparable equipment (to what you’re providing) from these sources? These additional real-world data points can inform your discussions with a potential employer about box rental.

Box rental is a negotiated item that should be included in every deal memo you write for out-of-house work where you will be providing the tools and materials. It’s a business cost that your employer should be covering - but if you don’t ask, your employer may not offer it. Don’t work for free, and don’t provide tools and materials for free. Remember to bring up box rental in your next deal memo discussion.

Yours in solidarity,

Jason



VSP Vision Benefits Update



Every calendar year, participants and their eligible dependents may receive either contact lenses, a fitting and evaluation at an allowance of \$105, or single vision, lined bifocal, and trifocal spectacle lenses for their existing frames. Their contact lens fitting and evaluation is also discounted at 15%. They are eligible for frames every other year regardless of whether or not they chose

to receive contact lenses or spectacle lenses the year prior. Participants and their dependents have an allowance of \$145 every other year on a wide selection of frames. For the frame, they will also receive an additional 20% discount on any amounts exceeding those allowances.



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ART BY APRIL ZHANG

ELEVATING YOUR PRESENCE

On June 28th, the Animation Guild hosted a seminar presented by executive coach and leadership development consultant Debby Seltzer Cummins called “Elevating Your Presence.” Debby took the group through several scenarios and exercises to facilitate self-assessment of our communication styles, approaches to interaction, listening skills and ability to engage others – from individuals to groups.

Volunteers played various parts as Debby explained concepts such as Making an Impression vs. Having Presence, Being Assertive Rather Than Aggressive, and Crafting Your Message To Make an Impact. Attendees broke into smaller groups to work through exercises that were eye-opening and informative. And at the end of the evening, we all got to know ourselves and each other a little better.

Member Carole Holliday put her experience like this: “I hadn’t really thought much about the difference between an impression and presence. I used to think that I can’t control what people think about me, but now I know that I can help manage the impression I make by having presence, which is the first step to having a good relationship with anyone.”

Executive Board member Ashley Long took the initiative to bring the idea for this event to the Board. Through the following Q&A, she explained her purpose in having Debby Seltzer Cummins share her wisdom with the members who signed up for this seminar.



Ashley, why did you think Debby’s seminar – Elevating Your Presence – was a topic that might intrigue our members?

I wanted to bring in speakers who could teach our members self-advocacy, not just as it relates to my goals for the Anti-Harassment committee, but in a way that can be useful to the broader membership. We have members of all disciplines and ages asking how they can better negotiate their own deals, resolve conflicts with coworkers or supervisors, get considered for promotion, or simply be able to say “no” to OT they don’t want to do. Perceived confidence, flexible listening and speaking style, and assertiveness are key to getting what you want in all of these scenarios. This stuff doesn’t come easy to everyone and I have so many colleagues who consider themselves averse to confrontation. I thought Debby’s workshop would give our members some solid starter techniques for dealing with others and vocalizing a need or a want; things that can be worked into a conversation naturally and made into a habit over time. We were also given a checklist and asked to take inventory of our own personality traits as they relate to having “presence”. Having an honest idea of what parts you’re awesome at and what parts you could work on seemed to be an eye opener that was helpful.

We had more than the planned number of attendees sign up for this seminar; are you happy with the turnout?

Wow! Yes! I knew going into this that an event called “Elevating your Presence” might get construed as awfully new age-y sounding. I prepared myself to hear “What does presence actually mean? What are we going to do here? Is some lady going to try and sell me healing crystals?!” I knew the material in the workshop was going to be great and just hoped people would give it a chance. I was blown away when I asked how many people were coming and we had totally blown by our original attendance cap!

Any remarkable responses from attendees at the seminar?

What I thought was great was how many new faces attended. There were a lot of people I didn’t recognize from our regular meetings. Everyone was also really amazing about participating in Debby’s exercises, which involved a lot of moving around, speaking in front of a group, and talking with strangers. I had warned Debby she might be dealing with a lot of introverts and not to make anything too awkward. She was

very cool about respecting individuals' comfort level but didn't need my warning at all – attendees were really eager to get involved and seemed refreshed by doing something in a group. We work alone so much and we forget that. I also thought it was a very positive sign that members seemed to want to talk with Debby afterward. That's the sign of a speaker who got your attention.



Did you learn anything new that you'll take with you to work?

One of the most helpful takeaways was the defining the differences between an “aggressive” approach and an “assertive” approach . I knew the difference but had never seen it so clearly and directly compared in words before. Being aggressive is when one tries to convey and win a point through intimidation, humiliation, and criticism. You're talking to the other person as though they are inferior, and thus they should agree with you. Being assertive still demonstrates strength and command, but doesn't rely on making one party inferior to the other. Assertion is making your point while still treating the other person as equally intelligent and powerful in the situation. This is something I think a lot of people lose sight of in the workplace, and definitely on social media threads.

I recently helped negotiate a pay raise for my board artists and directors. We were in the middle of a 20-episode order and people were exhausted. The shows had been large and the team had delivered above and beyond. They deserved a show of appreciation and motivation to keep it up. Through assertive – not aggressive – conversations with my producer, the studio, and my show runners, we were able to reach a solution that got my people their pay bump. It was all about making a strong case and knowing our worth as artists while also keeping the conversation balanced and respectful. That's how you get results.

Any ideas for other seminar offerings?

Yes! We've already had attendee feedback asking to see more of Debby, so at some point we will do that. Based on some of the questions members raised during this workshop, she suggested a program she has called "Mastering Tough Conversations." It sounds like a good way to dive deeper into the issues that brought members to the first session. I'm also in the early stages of corresponding with Time's Up, and hope to partner with them on some exciting things in the future.

TAG leadership and engaged members are working on other great ideas like this event for the coming months. Lunch & Learns make it possible to tackle specific topics over the course of a meal, craft discussion groups bring us together with others working in similar roles, and guest speakers can bring new perspectives to help us all to be our own super heroes. We all need to keep learning about ourselves, our tools and our industry if we want to succeed in our careers. So watch your e-mail for news and consider attending a future event at the Animation Guild to up your game at work!

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Nominations for Guild Officer positions will be made at the General Membership Meeting on September 30th, and the election will take place the next month. If you're in good standing at the Guild and ready to take your union activism to the next level, consider a run for one of the following offices: President, Vice-President, Business Representative, Recording Secretary, Sergeant-At-Arms, or eleven Executive Board positions.

SAVE THE DATE
for a
SUMMER
MEMBER
MIXER

Tuesday,
August 13th
at Idle Hour!



Watch your e-mail
for reservation
information!

Open Enrollment Period To Be Held July 1-20

Each year, the Motion Picture Industry Health Plan (MPIHP) holds an Open Enrollment period when a participant can change his or her medical and/or dental plan election. If you are a COBRA participant, you may add or remove dependents or switch between Core and Non-Core coverage during the Open Enrollment period.



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE CHANGES TO YOUR HEALTH COVERAGE

If you would like to make changes to your health coverage, please download the required enrollment forms by visiting MPIHP's website at www.mpiphp.org and clicking on the Open Enrollment link.

You may also request Open Enrollment information and forms be sent to you by emailing service@mpiphp.org or by calling (855) 275-4674.

Please complete and submit all of your Open Enrollment materials to MPIHP by July 20, 2019.

Your new plan selection will be effective August 1, 2019.

However, if you are in the Retiree Health Plan, are Medicare eligible and choose to enroll in an HMO plan, you will have a later effective date.

IF YOU DO NOT NEED TO MAKE CHANGES TO YOUR HEALTH COVERAGE

If you are not planning to make changes to your health coverage then you do not need to take action. You do not need to complete any forms - your current coverage with MPIHP will remain in effect.

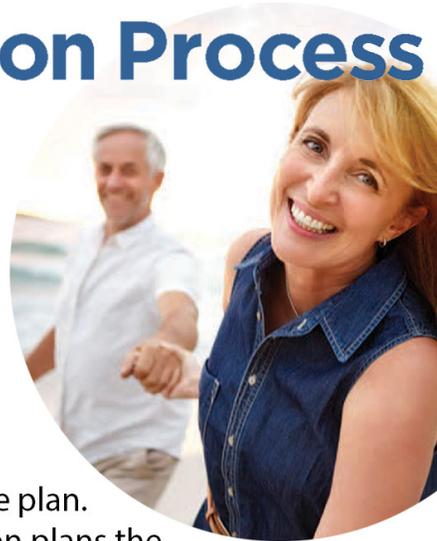
PENSION PLAN:

Announcing a New Benefit Verification Process

The Motion Picture Industry Pension Plan (MPIPP) has implemented a Pension Benefit Verification Process (PBVP) to ensure pension recipients are properly collecting pension benefits on a monthly basis.

More specifically, PBVP is an additional step that MPIPP takes to make sure that it is paying benefits to correct individuals and that they are collecting benefits according to the terms of the plan.

PBVP is an industry standard process for pension plans the size and scale of MPIPP. This process helps protect MPIPP against willful or negligent abuse by survivors or beneficiaries, and the potential for fraud by unauthorized individuals.



The PBVP process consists of the following steps:

- ▶ Letters, including follow-up letters, are sent to pension recipients 90 days, 60 days and 30 days prior to the anniversary date of their benefit commencement every other year.
- ▶ The mailing includes a form that requires a signature confirmation back from the individual receiving the pension that they are still indeed receiving their pension payments (i.e., that they have control over their bank accounts and finances, and are able to access their funds.). This signature confirmation must be notarized or certified at the MPIPP offices in Studio City, CA or New York, NY.
- ▶ After the original letter and follow-ups, if a signed confirmation is not received from the individual receiving the pension as requested, future pension payments will be suspended starting in the month following the month the third follow-up letter is sent.
- ▶ Any suspended payments will be resumed and retroactively refunded once the required signature proof is received by MPIPP.
- ▶ MPIPP will send an acknowledgment of receipt once a pension recipient's signed confirmation is received at MPIPP. After a confirmation is received and recorded at MPIPP, monthly pension payments will continue normally without any interruptions. A new PBVP confirmation request will be sent once again after 24 months.

TAG ZINEFEST!

TAG members set up shop at Hulett Hall on June 28th for the first TAG ZineFest. Hundreds of locals came to browse and buy!



Don't miss out on Animation Guild events! Keep your contact information up-to-date and sign up for our e-mail list at <https://animationguild.org/about-the-guild/change-address/>. You can GO GREEN – and save the Guild printing and mailing costs – by choosing to view our TAG publications digitally rather than receiving a hard copy in the mail. Visit <https://animationguild.org/about-the-guild/publication-preferences/>.



**WHAT'S NEW?
PICK UP A TAG PRIDE PIN
AT THE GUILD OFFICE!**

TAG Tuesday!

LAST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH

**Wear your TAG logo shirt, take a photo,
and post to social media with:**

#tagtuesday • #tag839 • #animationguild



the animation guild



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Join us at TAG Gallery for a celebration of the late great Local 839 studio Filmmation, which produced hundreds of popular cartoons for TV and Film throughout the 60s, 70s, and 80s. This group show will feature fine art by the following former Filmmation employees:

***Rich Arons • Lee Crowe
Kent Culotta • Margie Daniels
Cristi Lyon • Celia Mercer
Robert Tyler • Dave Woodman***

Reception and Filmmation 30-year reunion,
Friday, August 2nd, 6 - 9 pm.
The exhibit will be up through the month of August.

UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE ANIMATION GUILD

July 21st – MPIPHP Open Enrollment ends (*July 1st through 21st*)

July 30th – TAG Tuesday – Wear your TAG T-shirt to work!

July 30th – General Membership Meeting
(*Refreshments at 6:30, meeting starts at 7 pm*)

August 2nd – Gallery 839 New Show Opening 6-9 pm

August 6th – Lunch & Learn with Gnomon:
Keeping Up with the Digital Toolset
(*12 to 2 pm – reserve your spot: rsvp@tag839.org*)

August 13th – Summertime Member Mixer at the Idle Hour
(*Watch for a TAG e-mail with RSVP details*)

August 27th – TAG Tuesday – Wear your TAG T-shirt to work!



LATSE District 2 represents 45,000 members in 49 local unions in Arizona, California, Nevada and Hawaii. TAG brought the largest delegation to the convention this year!

**The Animation Guild Local 839 IATSE
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