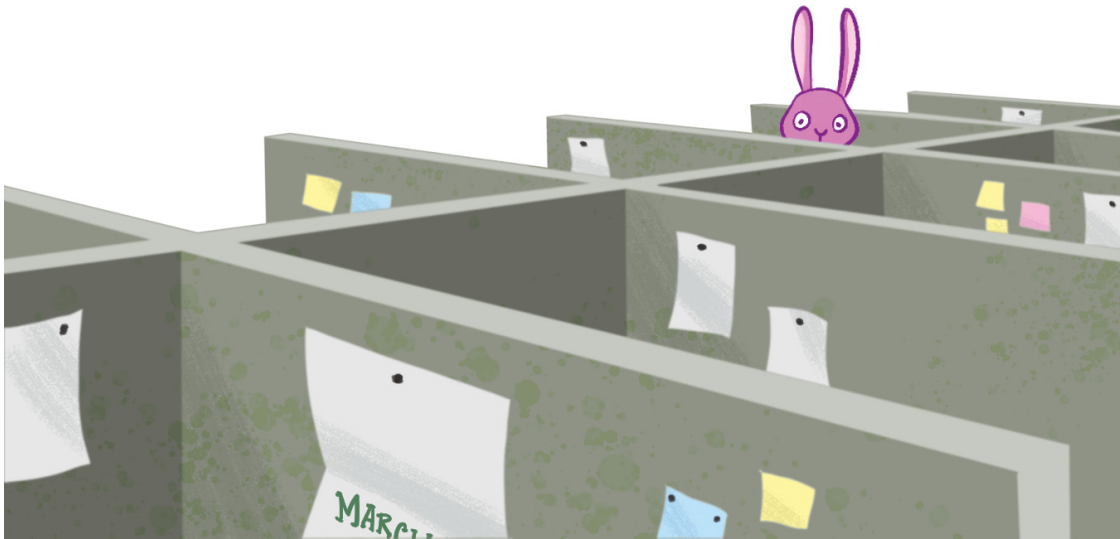




ANIMATION IN THE TIME OF CORONAVIRUS



It's not always easy to know what to put on the cover of *The Pegboard*. As an Executive Board member (and thus a default Shop Steward), Recording Secretary and member of several TAG committees, I've got a decent idea of what's going on at our union. And while I'm not on social media myself, others at the Guild keep me posted on the latest conversations so I know what members are talking about online. My usual plan for the front page piece is to touch on something we'd like the members to think about, and this month's original article focused on showing solidarity at work by wearing TAG T-shirts and lapel pins. Things changed quickly, though, as news about the coronavirus and COVID-19 started to dominate the airwaves and our collective attention.

At this point, many, if not most, of our active members working on staff at signatory studios have been told to work at home if they are able to do so. That means if you have the equipment at home that you need to do your daily work, you should make arrangements with your production staff to access the files you need, go home, and work there until you're

ANIMATION IN THE TIME OF CORONAVIRUS (continued on page 3)

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the
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IATSE LOCAL 839

called back to the office. Your studio may have a plan in place and know when they're going to reopen for business as usual, or they may be playing it by ear and looking to local, state and national leaders and scientific experts in order to make the decision on when to call workers back to their workplaces. If your studio has not enacted Work From Home provisions or has ended your employment due to concerns over the virus, please reach out to Steve to let him know.

What about those who don't have the equipment at home? Some studios are offering the use of workplace equipment, some are providing the software that workers need installed on their home computers and laptops, and some are setting up virtual private networks (VPNs) to allow remote access. Others are offering some of that but keeping studios open, clean and secure for those who aren't able to work at home. If that's the case for you, then you can enjoy the temporary reduction in street and freeway traffic that comes with a large part of the Los Angeles workforce staying home over the coming weeks.

In this issue, our Business Representative, Steve Kaplan, has shared some thoughts on the coronavirus and the effect it's having on our industry and others. You can also find information in this issue from a recent TAG email blast that includes some questions and answers pertaining to our animation community's part in the current situation, and links to resources for in-depth info and updates; this is also available on our website:

<https://animationguild.org/coronavirus-updates-from-the-animation-guild/>.

It's inevitable that members of our union will be touched by the novel coronavirus, but the current understanding of the virus is that most suffer only minor symptoms such as a fever and cough. The important thing to know and remember is that the point of staying home, practicing social distancing and avoiding crowds and travel is to slow the spread of this highly contagious virus. If we take precautions like washing hands, keeping our distance and working from home, we can do our part in making sure that as few people as possible get sick and the most vulnerable among us are able to get the care that they need.

We all need to be flexible in the coming weeks and months. If you've been sent home to work remotely, go home and get your work done. If you're still going in to work at a studio, follow recommended practices to protect yourself and others. And if you're sick, stay home, isolate yourself and ask for help.

— *Paula Spence, Pegboard Editor*

FROM THE BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE STEVE KAPLAN



The spread of COVID-19 has thrown the world into turmoil. Among the many changes that we're experiencing due to this pandemic, at the time this article is written, most of the animation studios have asked people not to come to work and are working out how to continue production with their entire staff out of their facilities. There are a few items I wanted to bring to your attention:

WORKING FROM HOME

A member came to my office expressing concern over co-workers who were reporting to work and showing signs of being sick. This prompted me to write a memorandum to all of our signatory studios (<http://animationguild.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/LTR-Animation-Guild-to-Studios-COVID-19.pdf>) urging them to provide the ability for members to work from home. Some studios responded to me with details on how they are doing just that. I will be contacting the remaining studios next week to determine what new policies and procedures they have implemented to keep members working and away from the studio.

I expect that our contracted employers are struggling to develop tools and policies that will keep the wheels of production turning while addressing the concerns over the spread of this virus. As this situation is developing, I would appreciate your feedback on how your studio has addressed this concern. Please email me at steve.kaplan@tag839.org or call me at the Guild office at (818) 845-7500 during business hours.

APPOINTED TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF MPI

IATSE President Loeb has appointed me to an open seat on the Board of Directors to the Motion Picture Industry Pension and Health Plan. I sit on two committees: Administrative and Benefits and Appeals. I am honored to be able to represent the concerns and needs of Animation Guild with our Health and Pension Plan.

As is expected, the outbreak and spread of COVID-19 has been at the forefront of all of the Benefits and Appeals Committee meetings I've

attended this month. The Plans are working to address increasing needs based on the pandemic. Recently, MPI shared that any COVID-19 tests that are ordered by an in-network doctor and performed at an in-network facility will be fully funded by the plan and not have copays applied.

There are other relief efforts in the works that I should be able to share soon. Please be assured that the Directors of the Plans are monitoring the changes that are taking place and taking steps to address them in a meaningful and beneficial way for you.

GUILD OFFICE

I am attempting to provide as safe and productive a workplace in the Guild office as possible. Access to the Guild office is restricted and visitation of staff will only be premitted under specific circumstances. Please consider using email (<https://animationguild.org/about-the-guild/contact/>) or the telephone to contact the Guild until the concern of infection has abated.

The member party scheduled to take place in the spring has been cancelled. The March General Membership Meeting has been cancelled to avoid asking members to congregate in our meeting hall. The March meeting was going to include the election of delegates for the 2020 District 2 Convention currently scheduled to be held in San Francisco in June. The Executive Board has approved a email election scheme that will be messaged out soon.

The American Animation Institute classes are either being cancelled or moving to an online classroom for the remainder of the winter term. We are strongly leaning towards mandating an online classroom model for the summer term, which would likely mean a limited availability of classes as most teachers are trying to implement ways to teach via the internet.

Please prioritize your safety and health at this time. Please let me know if there are ways I can assist and support.

In solidarity,

Steve Kaplan

Business Representative

steve.kaplan@tag839.org

CORONAVIRUS

UPDATES FROM THE ANIMATION GUILD

The safety and wellbeing of the animation community is a top priority. We have been actively reviewing California state, federal and global recommendations as we navigate this unprecedented situation. We recognize that many members may have questions and concerns and we'd like to address some of the most pressing issues.

What will happen if someone at my workplace tests positive for COVID-19?

This situation is fluid and news is prompting new discussions and changes every day—many studios are already moving to Work From Home scenarios. The Animation Guild leadership is drafting a letter to all union employers strongly urging them to move towards allowing employees to work remotely. It is best to direct any questions regarding policies at your workplace directly to your employer. Please keep in mind that everyone plays a part in maintaining a healthy work environment. Check out the CDC's flyer on "[*Stop the Spread of Germs*](#)" to be reminded of best practices. If you are experiencing any [*symptoms*](#), please consider staying home and call your doctor to assess your condition.

California is providing enhanced benefits. What are they?

The California Employee Development Department (EDD) is encouraging individuals who are unable to work due to exposure to COVID-19 to file a [*Disability Insurance claim*](#). DI provides short-term benefit payments to eligible workers who have a full or partial loss of wages due to a non-work-related illness, injury, or pregnancy. Benefit amounts are approximately 60-70 percent of wages (depending on income) and range from \$50-\$1,300 a week.

If you're unable to work because you are caring for an ill or quarantined family member with COVID-19 (certified by a medical professional), you can [*file a Paid Family Leave \(PFL\) claim*](#). PFL provides up to six weeks of benefit payments to eligible workers who have a full or partial loss of wages because they need time off work to care for a seri-

ously ill family member or to bond with a new child. Benefit amounts are approximately 60-70 percent of wages (depending on income) and range from \$50-\$1,300 a week.

Events and gatherings are being cancelled, is the General Membership Meeting still happening on March 31?

In an abundance of caution, leadership is considering the cancellation of the March 31 General Membership Meeting to avoid possible transmission of the coronavirus in our community. However, we are constitutionally compelled to nominate delegates for the D2 Convention to be held in June. As of today, the convention has not been cancelled and we will need to proceed with the nomination process via email. Please look for more information through email in the near future.

What about Committees? Are they still meeting?

Each committee is evaluating their unique circumstances to determine whether or not to hold in-person meetings or events. Some groups are opting for video conferencing solutions, others are still holding regular events while adhering to CDC protocols. Please reach out to the chairs of the committee for further details. Contact information is available on the [Committee page](#).

Is the annual party still taking place in April?

Governor Newsom has advised the cancellation or postponement of all gatherings over 250 people. In light of this recommendation and the unpredictable nature of the situation, we have decided to cancel the party.

What about the Animation Guild office – are you planning any closures?

As we are seeing that the studios are keeping production active, we will continue to work to support the membership. However, we want to keep the staff who have chosen to continue to work from the office as safe as possible. Please consider contacting the officethroughouremail addresses (<https://animationguild.org/about-the-guild/contact/>) or by call-ing during business hours (818-845-7500). Visitors to the building will not be allowed inside the business office. Themembershipwillbe duly notifiedofanyschedulechangesorclosures.

Don't people take classes at the Animation Guild? Are classes being suspended?

The American Animation Institute has cancelled most of its classes for this term. As there is no certainty of the ability to gather in groups during the summer, The American Animation Institute will be closed for the summer term as well. We will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation and determine if we can open for the fall semester.

Resources

[California Employment Development Department](#)

[California Department of Public Health](#)

[World Health Organization](#)

[Center for Disease Control](#)

[Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#)

[California Labor Federation](#)

GRIEVANCE BASICS

At most labor unions, the word “grievance” gets bandied about quite a bit, but do you know what the word means?

The grievance process that is defined in Article 15 of our collective bargaining agreement provides a method for both the Union and employers to address differences in the interpretation of the agreement.

We all have problems at work, at least occasionally. While not every problem at work would be classified as a grievance, it may be worth talking to someone at the Guild to find out if you can get help to correct a bad situation. If your issue rises to the level of a contract violation, then it’s appropriate to start the grievance process, which has up to four basic steps.

STEP ONE

The Business Representative – that’s Steve Kaplan – brings the matter to the employer and tries to settle the problem.

If the Union and the employer can’t make a satisfactory deal in STEP ONE, then the complaint goes to the next step.

STEP TWO

The Business Representative communicates the details of the specific section of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) that has been violated, the date(s), details of the actions that violated the agreement, and the remedy the Union wants to see implemented.

Concerns have been raised about the need to identify members affected by a grievable situation. There are times when specific members must be named when addressing violations of the agreement in a grievance. It can be scary to speak up about a problem at work, alone or in a group, but if the contract is being violated or you are being abused – such as being pressured to work free overtime – it’s important to let someone at the Guild know. It’s the only way we can address violations of the agreement. It’s likely that you are not the only one who is suffering this violation and we can work with everyone to correct the problem.

If a mutual agreement is not secured in STEP TWO, then the grievance goes to the next step.

STEP THREE

The Animation Guild and the employer meet for an informal conciliatory meeting to attempt to avoid an arbitration settlement on the matter. In this meeting, an International Representative of the IATSE representing the Union's interests and a CSATF employee representing the employer's interests are present. The Animation Guild and the employer discuss the matter, and the two new representatives attempt to help reach a mutual agreement to settle the dispute.

If there is still no agreement on a settlement, or if one of the parties doesn't agree to submit to the assigned STEP THREE arbitrators, then the grievance proceeds to the next step.

STEP FOUR

Both the Guild and the employer agree to an arbitration hearing with an agreed-upon Arbitrator to resolve the matter. The arbitration is limited to the items in the letter submitted in STEP TWO. The Arbitrator may only interpret the CBA, and cannot amend, modify or change anything in it. The decision of the Arbitrator is binding on all parties.

EXPEDITED ARBITRATION

In cases involving seniority or discipline and discharge, the grieving party may choose to proceed directly from STEP ONE and STEP TWO to an EXPEDITED ARBITRATION. The Expedited Arbitration is meant to quickly resolve specific matters and is not applicable in all circumstances.

This is a somewhat less formal hearing than a Regular Arbitration. The Arbitrator may give their decision orally at the conclusion of the hearing and then confirm it in writing in 3 days, or they can just issue it in writing in the 3 days. The decision of the Arbitrator is final and binding on all parties. The Arbitrator has the power to award wage payments, adjustments and/or damages not to exceed \$15,000. The decision of the Arbitrator is non-precedential, meaning it can't be offered or admitted as evidence in any other proceeding.

There are time limits to remedies to contract violations according to the nature of the violation, and those limits can be quite short for specific complaints. Time is of the essence, so if your rights have been violated

and you're ready to speak up about it and have the Guild stand up with you to right the situation, then reach out to the Business Representative or a Field Representative. A Shop Steward or phone call to the Animation Guild office can put you in touch so we can solve the problem together.

If you need help with a workplace issue, please get in touch:

Steve Kaplan

Business Representative

steve.kaplan@tag839.org

Leslie Simmons

Field Representative

leslie.simmons@tag839.org

Animation Guild Office

(818) 845-7500

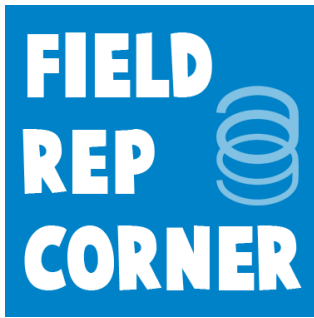
membership@tag839.org



The Screen Cartoonists'
Golf Classic Tournament
will take place on

**GOLF TOURNAMENT
CANCELLED
UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

Entrance fee of \$80 will include:
The round of golf in a golf cart, a small bucket of
range balls, tee gifts and cash prizes in six categories.



WHAT IS A SHOP STEWARD?

You may have heard the term “Shop Steward” but don’t really understand what that means – or more importantly, who that is in your workplace.

Shop Stewards play a vital role in the union and are key to building a strong labor movement. In many unions, they are elected by their fellow union members in their workplace and handle the first few steps of a grievance.

In the Animation Guild, Shop Stewards are volunteers. Among the many roles a TAG steward plays are being the eyes and ears for the union. Because we have so many locations and productions, we cannot possibly be everywhere at once. This is where Shop Stewards come into play. They are there to protect the working conditions of their colleagues and help build members’ understanding of the contract, the union and its relationship with the studios.

They are our “boots on the ground” by policing the contract, watching for any violations and reporting them to the union. Shop Stewards are there to support their fellow TAG members and help when needed. They attend union meetings and events and encourage their fellow members to attend as well.

Since starting with TAG almost a year ago, I was asked to review the union’s Shop Steward program. I was coming to TAG with previous experience directing a public sector union’s field program that was on life support and worked over the years I was there to grow that program and identify workplace leaders. I recruited those leaders, provided training for them and in turn they played an incredibly important role in campaigns revolving around contract negotiations with Los Angeles County.

I’m proud of the program I built there and I’m excited to help TAG build on its Shop Steward program. To that end, we’ve recruited several new TAG Shop Stewards and continue to look for more. Executive Board members by default are stewards, but this program is also for the “rank and file” members. We need you!

As we begin to prepare for contract negotiations next year, we need a strong, healthy Shop Steward program in place. And I've put together a training program to help educate, engage, inform and activate our Shop Stewards – and in turn the membership. The first training is this month and I'm excited to see where this will take our stewards and the union.

If you do not know who your steward is, you can find the list of stewards on the TAG website here: <https://animationguild.org/about-the-guild/>.

Ideally, we should have stewards at all union worksites. For studios with a lot of members, we need more than just one. If you're at a studio like the Empire location for Disney TV Animation, where there are multiple floors with multiple projects, having one steward per floor is ideal.

If you are interested in volunteering to be a Shop Steward, contact me at leslie.simmons@tag839.org!

Being a TAG Shop Steward is a commitment and isn't for everyone. But the reward in volunteering is in knowing you are connecting members to the union and its officers and helping build a strong membership for the years to come.

In solidarity,

Leslie Simmons

Field Representative/Political Coordinator

leslie.simmons@tag839.org

Call or text: 747.238.0287

The FAM Committee made a meaningful connection with other IATSE Locals when they hosted their Autism Support Lunch & Learn in 2019. Jen Winslow from IATSE Local 695 was so inspired that she plans to form a Family And Membership Committee at her own union, and recently wrote a recap article for the Autism Support event for Local 695's quarterly magazine Production Sound & Video: <https://magazine.local695.com/magazine/winter-2020/news-announcements>.



The Animation Guild's Queer TAG Committee wants to know what we can do for you! We want to know what you want from us and the union.

All the members of the QT Committee will have access to the survey results. Analyzed data including anecdotal responses may be shared publicly.

<https://forms.gle/izQXwTEasKG1rsd29>
(Also available on the QueerTAG Facebook Group.)

*THIS IS FOR TAG839 LGBTQIAA+ UNION MEMBERS ONLY.
Please only take this survey once.*

Please take our Survey!

Queer TAG Committee



TAG 839 FREE PORTFOLIO REVIEW DAY

Sunday, May 31, 1-5 PM
The Animation Guild, Hulett Hall



**Interested in volunteering? Email
tagportfolioreview@gmail.com**



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/>.

IN MEMORIAM

Denise Blakely Fuller passed away on January 5, 2020 at the age of 52. She began her career in layout, matte painting and visual development at Disney Feature Animation, and also worked at Sony Imageworks, Rhythm and Hues, Pixar, EA Games, and Warner Bros. Animation.

Lisa Poitevint passed away on January 15, 2020. She worked as an animation checker at Disney Feature Animation on films such as *The Little Mermaid*, *Oliver & Company* and *The Black Cauldron*.

Herbert Stott passed away on February 8, 2020. He began his career as an assistant animator at Disney Animation Studios, and advanced to animator there and at freelance gigs around town before co-founding and managing The Spunbuggy Works in 1963. Herb was honored with the Animation Guild's Golden Award in 2005.

Maureen Mlynarczyk passed away on February 16, 2020 at the age of 47, after a two-year battle with cancer. She worked as an animation timer for over 20 years on *The Cleveland Show*, *The Simpsons Movie*, *Steven Universe* and *Disenchantment*, among others, and won an Emmy for her work on *Adventure Time*.





**Reese's
pieces**
Family Sweets

**THE APRIL GALLERY SHOW
HAS BEEN POSTPONED
UNTIL NOVEMBER 2020.**

PLEASE NOTE: NO OPENING RECEPTION

Regular Gallery Hours: Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Please call ahead to arrange viewing.

for more info: 818 653 2374

jerryrees.com • rebeccareesart.com
wilderrees.com • ianreesmusic.com

UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE ANIMATION GUILD

March 31st – TAG Tuesday – Wear your TAG T-shirt and share your solidarity on social media while we work at a distance!

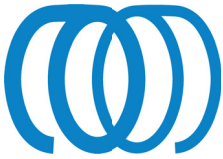
March 31st – *The General Membership Meeting has been CANCELLED; Delegate nominations will be made via email.*

April 10th – Contract Holiday: Good Friday
(except at DreamWorks and Nickelodeon)

April 28th – TAG Tuesday – Wear your TAG T-shirt!



The FAM Committee hosted an Autism Support Lunch & Learn in October 2019. The discussion was moderated by Committee Chair Kristin Donner, and was open to members of other IATSE Locals. See page 14 to link to a recap of the event shared by Local 695.



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