



LOTS GOING ON AT TAG



Here we are again – another month, another union newsletter. This issue is late again . . . did you notice? You might not have realized that The Pegboard hadn't arrived as scheduled in your mailbox because you're too busy trying to juggle a workload that hasn't lightened now that you're working from home. You might not have time to read anything anyway beyond an increased number of work emails and notices from your kids' school or daycare explaining new protocols as the school year starts. And you might not have had a moment between Zoom meetings for work and (hopefully) for your union to make time for a little light and informative reading about inter-Local solidarity, planning for contract negotiations, managing your MPI benefits while working remotely, maintaining a spirit of community even though we're apart, making sure you're still on track for a retirement that doesn't

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IATSE LOCAL 839

seem to be within sight, and continuing to respect, care for and honor others when it seems so hard these days to just remember to take time for yourself. My occasional Zoom Happy Hours seem to be a faint memory now that every evening for the past two weeks has been spent with a rotating group of Animation Guild leaders and activists as we meet with engaged members to start a new cycle of planning for negotiations that are coming next year. And that's not to mention the upcoming elections that will put in place the local, state and national leaders who will be making policy that will affect all of us.

There's a lot going on in each of our lives, and there's a lot going on at the Animation Guild. When we're all so busy trying to balance work and life, it's easy to lose sight of what's happening outside of our own homes . . . even when it's happening on our computer screen at another virtual meeting. So let me spend the rest of the page telling you about some of the things that are going on at your labor union these days.

Craft Meetings are happening! This month has been filled with nightly meetings to bring people together in various craft and peer groups to find out from members what their concerns are so we can plan for negotiations with the employers that will take place next year. Next steps: training for collective bargaining, forming a Negotiations Committee, starting research and drafting proposals to get what our members need in the next contract cycle and beyond.

Committees continue their work to improve members' lives, and new committees are forming! The FAM Committee created virtual family and autism support groups. The Writers Committee has posted a virtual panel series. The Testing Committee opened a new portal for members to submit tests for evaluation. The Political Action League created postcards for labor-friendly candidates' GOTV Campaigns and kicked off another Post-It Note Show fundraiser for the IATSE PAC. QueerTAG and the Young Workers Committee are holding virtual events. To find out more, explore the Guild's website: animationguild.org.

Hey! I'm out of room and I barely got started! If I didn't mention something that you want to see in The Pegboard, please write to me at editor@tag839.org and let me know what I missed or what's important to you. I'd love to hear from you and I might just hit you up to write an article to share your news or opinion in the next issue!

— **Paula Spence**, *Pegboard Editor*

FROM THE PRESIDENT JEANETTE MORENO KING

5 LONG MONTHS



Once a month (and sometimes twice), the Presidents of the IATSE Hollywood Locals meet up to connect and casually chat. These meetings started as a way for us to get to know each other, as we are all usually focused on the needs of our own Locals, with little interaction between groups. I had assumed since Local 839 covers animation workers that we were isolated and had nothing in common with the concerns and needs of our live action sister Locals. What a surprise to learn that every President felt the same way about their own situation! There is a real hunger for sharing knowledge between Locals. I feel we gain by learning strategies to address common issues, and it turns out we have quite a few. One of the first questions the other Presidents asked me was how we were able to have such an active, engaged membership. This surprised me because while engagement is at a high at the Animation Guild, I assumed that the live action Locals were more successful at motivating their members. I shared with them some of our effective strategies and, in turn, have been able to apply some advice from my fellow Presidents on how to let members be heard while still running an efficient meeting.

I've enjoyed getting to know the other Presidents and learning from such a motivated and smart group of leaders. It's been beneficial to ask specific questions about our responsibilities as Presidents, to compare notes on the best way to run meetings, communicate with members, and respond to ever changing crisis situations.

When the pandemic lockdown happened in mid-March, we continued our meetings through Zoom—it's a tiny bit of normalcy in a world turned upside down. At the beginning, the vast majority of live action entertainment workers were instantly out of work and I saw the leaders of the other Hollywood Locals struggling to answer member questions and assist by waiving dues, but there was an optimism that this pandemic could be brought under control and everything would get back to normal soon. To work in this industry is to understand that you must be prepared for unexpected downturns. We should all save our money to ride these times

out, but this particular downturn has lasted longer than initially expected. The Presidents have focused on running our Locals in as normal a way as possible. We wondered how to run our meetings virtually but effectively. Would our respective Constitutions even allow for virtual meetings? How about voting rules mandated by the IA? We compared notes and muddled through together.

As the months have worn on, I see weariness taking a toll. The other IA Locals and their members, our union kin, have been suffering with no work for 5 long months and no clear end in sight. People are leaving the industry, selling houses, and moving out of state. Leaders are struggling to keep their offices open to address member needs, but with no dues coming in many are now forced to lay off staff and put in more volunteer hours themselves. Meanwhile, they are sitting in long meetings with the studios to hash out exactly what returning to work will look like and when it could safely happen. Each Local has its own safety requirements: a prop master's COVID protocol will look quite different from that of the makeup artist whose job requires close proximity to the actor. And what about craft services? Will they even have a job to get back to?

These are heavy times.

At our latest Presidents meeting, all I could do was listen. As challenging as it has been to juggle work, family, and for me personally, an existential angst, I realize that we are so lucky to be working. We need to be there for our sister Locals and their members, to bolster them in any way we can. The Animation Guild has donated \$200,000 to the MPTF's IATSE COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund, where vulnerable members can get help. Members of Local 839 have also volunteered at the IA's West Coast Office Drive-Through Food Banks. As we head into negotiations, we need to use our leverage and new found profile to broadcast the needs of our sister Locals. We need to stay strong for our union kin and hope that one day soon they can all get back to work.

In unity,

Jeanette Moreno King

President

The Animation Guild, IATSE Local 839

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FROM THE BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE STEVE KAPLAN



The three “above the line” entertainment unions have each completed their negotiations with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP). Those negotiations have established a pattern of adjustments to the union agreements in the industry, and have also shown how that pattern can be modified to address specific needs of each union.

Typically, the IATSE negotiates the Producer-IATSE Basic Agreement in April, and our negotiations follow shortly after. In order to prepare for the negotiations, we hold craft meetings so members can voice their opinions and concerns over the current state of the agreement. Jason MacLeod established six craft meetings before the 2018 negotiations which we will be using again this year. It was through these meetings that the 2018 negotiation proposals began to be formed. These meetings are the best way for members to raise any concerns or share any information they have about the current state of working conditions that should be addressed with the employers.

Since the last round of negotiations, the membership committees have seen incredible growth. Members have actively engaged with the union to form committees for crafts and for official recognition and support. The work being done in those committees is fantastic, and I will also be reaching out to the chairpeople of each of the Guild’s committees to ask to attend a meeting to have the same discussions with those groups. If you are not part of one of these committees but would like to participate in those discussions, please reach out to the committee chairperson and ask to be included. You can find information on committees and contact information on the Guild’s website: <https://animationguild.org/committees/>.

Part of the discussions with these groups will be encouraging people to participate in the negotiations as part of the negotiations committee. The negotiations committee is formed once every three years, and is the team of TAG members who support the bargaining of our successor agreement. This committee must be a proper representation of the membership by having representation from the diversity of the membership, as well as representatives from each of the crafts and committees proposing changes.

Any member interested in participating in the negotiations should engage with one of the committees or groups and then attend the September General Membership meeting where the call for the committee will be made.

In Solidarity,

Steve Kaplan

Business Representative

The Animation Guild, IATSE Local 839

steve.kaplan@tag839.org



On August 2, we entered the third period of our Master Agreement and the wage minimums increased by 3%.

If you have been working for the minimum rate, check your paystub and make sure that your rate has been increased.



<https://animationguild.org/third-period-wage-increases-begin-on-aug-3/>

WFH: CAN I WORK OUTSIDE LA COUNTY?

The pandemic has shown that TAG members are not only talented, but they are nimble and can transition to working effectively from home. This ability to quickly adapt to a new situation has helped sustain the animation industry when much of live-action entertainment has halted. Of course, the new situation has changed the landscape of working in this industry and by doing so more and more members have questions about the viability of continuing to work from home. Here, we endeavor to answer some of your most commonly asked questions. As always, if you have any questions or would like to follow up on a specific issue email membership@tag839.org.

I would like to continue working from home. Are there any provisions under the CBA for working from home?

The [*Collective Bargaining Agreement*](#) does not stipulate whether an employee must work in the office or from home, and many Guild members have already negotiated more flexible schedules that allow them to work at home. On the other hand, the Agreement does not require an employer to permit employees to work at home if she or he so desires. The Animation Guild supports flexible schedules to address a myriad of employment needs. Studies show that flexible schedules lead to greater employee satisfaction, higher productivity levels, less turnover, reduced absenteeism and increased work-life balance.

Aren't the terms working remotely or from home the same?

No. Working remotely has connotations of a temporary time that an employee is working out of the office. An example is when your employer sends you to a conference or vendor studio for a finite period of time. Working from home means working from a dedicated office at home. The expectation is to work a full day and have the equipment and software you need to do your job effectively. Working from home should provide you with an opportunity for more flexibility in your schedule while still meeting productivity expectations.

Cost of living in Los Angeles is high and I am considering moving outside the state so I can afford to buy a house and working from home. Will I lose my TAG benefits?

Article 3 of our [*Master Agreement*](#) states that if someone is hired in LA County to work in LA County, or hired in LA County to work outside of LA County, the terms and conditions will apply. The article has been interpreted to mean that anyone working for a studio signed to our agreement will be covered by the agreement and will have to join the Local. MPI's Trust Agreement is written a bit differently, but says essentially the same thing.

However, under the MPI Trust Agreement, the term "Employee" is defined to exclude those employees who do not meet the following criteria:

(A) the employee's principal employment with the Employer satisfies both of the following requirements: (i) the employee is in the labor pool in the Los Ange-

les area, and (ii) the employee is hired (1) by the Employer in the Los Angeles area to perform services in the Los Angeles area in the Industry, or (2) by the Employer in the Los Angeles area to perform temporary services outside the Los Angeles area in connection with motion picture (including theatrical, television, music video and commercial) productions.

Following the current language in the MPI Trust Agreement, MPI has determined that anyone not living in LA County (excluding those on temporary assignment elsewhere) cannot be defined as a part of the “Los Angeles labor pool.” Therefore, for employees residing permanently outside of the Los Angeles area and working permanently from outside the Los Angeles area, this is a serious issue. The only way to assure that your MPI benefits will be maintained is to work under the terms of the agreement. Once one establishes residence outside of Los Angeles County on a permanent basis, there is no guarantee that the studios will continue your benefits under the terms of the agreement.

It says that someone can live outside of the state to perform temporary services. What does temporary mean?

It means that any work performed outside Los Angeles County is expected to be temporary and that the member participating in MPI would be returning to Los Angeles. This could be substantiated by the member maintaining a local address in Los Angeles.

Is there anything we can do to maintain our TAG benefits so we can live outside of Los Angeles?

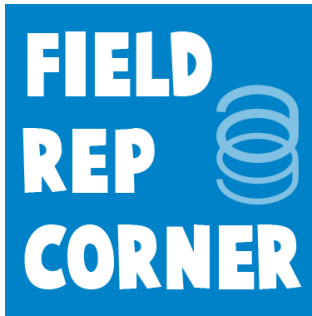
The restrictions on working in the County were written at a time before working remotely and far from the studio had become a genuine reality. It is now necessary for us to expand the “scope” language in bargaining. This will require Animation Guild members to come together in solidarity during the next negotiations in 2021 and make this a priority.

I’m worried! My studio has already started hiring non-union artists to work remotely from other parts of the country and the world? What can we do to stop this from happening?

In order to restrict the studio’s ability to hire outside a geographic area, we would have to write that language into our agreement and demand that the employers accept it during negotiations. However, as technology and the cost of living in Los Angeles have created this situation, and as we believe all of the animation industry deserves to be represented by our Union, it would make more sense to expand our agreement to cover all of the industry across the country, and then continue our efforts to cover that work under a union agreement.

— *Alexandra Drosu, Director of Communications and Content*

Reprinted from the Animation Guild Website



UNITY IS OUR STRENGTH

“Strength in Numbers” “An injury to one is an injury to all.” “Si, se peude!” “When we fight, we win!”

These union slogans are more than just words. They have actual meaning. They’re what gives union members power. They’re what unites us.

It’s important to remember these unions phrases and many others now more than ever, not only as we work from home, but as Animation Guild members embark on a year of meetings and planning for the 2021 negotiations.

They’re important for when the union is organizing productions, studios and workers; when workers - who may have nothing to do with the animation or entertainment industry - need our support; when November is coming and the decisions made at the ballot box, from municipal water district elections to President, have repercussions on us and labor.

As union members, you’re part of a larger family than the Animation Guild or the IATSE. You’re part of a movement that people have literally given their lives for in the name of fair wages and working conditions. Your union membership is not just so you have health and pension benefits, it brings a voice to the voiceless – like game workers or even those in your ranks.

I write all of this as a reminder that the union is only as strong as its members. How?

- 1) **Strength in numbers!** This union has grown exponentially, even during my short time here. And with the pandemic, the studios know that YOU are the backbone because you’ve continued to generate the money-making content they need to survive. Don’t forget that.
- 2) **An injury to one, is an injury to all!** When one member is misclassified and doesn’t speak up about it; when one member works overtime but doesn’t report it or get paid for it; when one member works on a Saturday without getting paid; when one member does something or allows the studio to do something that goes against the contract – these are all injuries to every TAG member.

These scenarios – and many more – set unspoken standards and it tells the studio that the TAG contract, a living document that has been negotiated to improve wages and working conditions for decades – means nothing. Does it?

Outside the union, when workers need our support, we should be there. Grocery workers, port truck drivers, musicians, hotel workers. When the union asks members to support other workers, you're supporting the labor movement and all workers. Activism is what makes a union strong and the labor movement as a whole.

- 3) **Si, se puede!** This is the United Farm Workers motto, created by the legendary Dolores Huerta. Yes, we can! “Can we?” “What can we do?” “We’re just artists.” NO! You’re union members! You’re part of something bigger. You have clout. You have the ability to change circumstances. How do you do that? Attend the Craft Committee meetings for negotiations – or better yet, volunteer to be on the 2021 Negotiations Committee. Or, be a member of one of the many committees formed to advance TAG and its mission. You have a voice in this union.
- 4) **When we fight, we win!** What are you willing to do to make real change to the TAG contract? Are you willing to participate in lunchtime demonstrations? Wear your TAG shirt every day? Talk to your colleagues about negotiations and the issues the union faces? If you want to change something, you have to participate. Not sit by the sidelines. Comment on Discord or Facebook doesn’t change anything. Step up! Be a steward. Be a craft rep! This is where you can help in the fight for a better contract and a better future.

Last slogan: **“Union starts with U.” You are the union!**

In solidarity,

Leslie Simmons

Field Representative/Political Coordinator

The Animation Guild, IATSE Local 839

leslie.simmons@tag839.org

Call or text: 747.238.0287

FAQS ABOUT THE 401(K) PLAN: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW!

The Animation Guild offers an optional employee/member funded 401(k) Plan for those who would like to set aside extra funds for retirement, in addition to the two employer funded MPI Pension Plans that are part of the benefits package bargained for in the Basic Agreement. It pays to know how to set aside and monitor your retirement funds and we encourage all members to consider participation in the TAG 401(k) Plan and to do occasional checks on their accounts.

I'd like to start a 401(k) plan. I've never enrolled before – what can I do?

The best way to get started is to go to the 401(k) Quickstart page on the [Animation Guild website](#). Follow the instructions there and complete and return a form. The fastest way to submit a completed form is to scan and email to 401k@tag839.org.

I think I'm already enrolled, but I would like to re-start contributions, or make another change.

For changes to paycheck deferrals, or restarting contributions if you have switched seasons, switched shows, or switched employers, please use the [Enrollment/Change form](#) available on our website.

How can I get access to the TAG 401(k) Plan at Vanguard's website?

If you are already enrolled, access your 401k account at Vanguard using the following instructions.

Online: To sign up for online account access, visit vanguard.com/register and follow the prompts. You'll need your plan number: 094523. If any of your personal information on file at Vanguard is not correct and you have difficulty setting up a log-in, we can correct those issues (contact the office at 401k@tag839.org). Once registered, you can log on to your account at vanguard.com/retirementplans.

By phone: Call Vanguard Participant Services at 800-523-1188. Associates are available Monday through Friday from 5:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. (PST). (Special Note: If you also have private accounts with Vanguard you will need to get special instructions from Vanguard to log in. Call Vanguard to begin the conversation.)

I'm looking for a specific form – where can I find 401(k) forms?

All 401(k) forms are available on our website [HERE](#).

The most commonly used forms are:

Easy Enrollment Form: A simple form that will enroll an eligible participant in the TAG 401(k) Plan. Deferrals will be pre-tax, and deferrals will be invested in the Vanguard Target Date fund that has a target date closest to when you turn age 65.

Long-Form Enrollment/Change Form: A longer form offering more enrollment options, including Roth and 50+ Catch-Up contributions. Enrollees should choose how they want funds to be invested, and can choose a Target date fund or any of the other funds. All Allocation percentages need to add up to 100%. All fields on the first page inside “Payroll Directions” must be completed!

The Enrollment/Change form should also be used for re-starting contributions after a change in employer.

There has been money deducted from my paycheck, but I’m not seeing it appear in my Vanguard account yet. What’s going on?

When funds are deducted from your paycheck, it can take up to two to three weeks for the funds to be properly transferred to Vanguard, processed, checked, and then become visible in your account. If you are seeing a delay longer than two to three weeks for contributions to appear, send an email with your name, the studio you are working for, the production and, if applicable, the season you are on to 401k@tag839.org. Someone from the union office will respond and look into the situation.

Something has happened with my 401(k) contributions that I don’t understand, and I would like some help figuring out what’s going on.

Please send an email with your name, the studio you are working for, the production and, if applicable, the season you are on to 401k@tag839.org. Someone from the union office will respond and assist you.

What are the limits for 401(k) contributions for 2020?

The IRS has set the following limits for 401(k) contributions. Generally, the total limit on all contributions is \$19,500 for calendar year 2020. If an individual will be age 50 or older during the calendar year 2020, they may additionally make up to \$6,500 in catch-up contributions. (Members who wish to participate in the 50+ Catch-Up program must elect to do so using the Long Form Enrollment/Change form.)

I’m going through a divorce or other situation, and need help with a Qualified Domestic Relations Order (QDRO).

To begin this process, please send an email with your name, the studio you are working for, the production and, if applicable, the season you are on to 401k@tag839.org. Someone from the union office will respond and assist you.

What else should I keep in mind?

Have you designated a beneficiary for your 401(k) plan or recently checked to make sure your beneficiary is correct? Log on to vanguard.com/retirementplans to review your account, click on My Profile, or call Vanguard Participant Services at 800-523-1188.

As a union member, you have a right to union representation at certain meetings.

Think you might be called into a meeting where you may be disciplined, or some investigative questioning may take place? This may apply to performance reviews, especially if you have recently been given verbal or written warnings about your performance. Would you like your union rep to be present? Email Business Representative Steve Kaplan at steve.kaplan@tag839.org.

WEINGARTEN RIGHTS



IATSE LOCAL 839

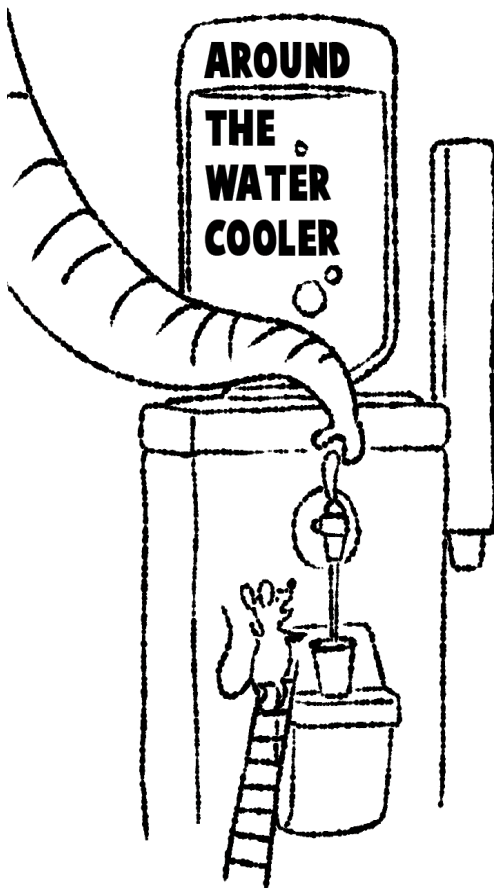


"If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I request that my steward or union officer be present at the meeting. Without representation, I choose not to answer any questions."

(If you are called to a meeting with an employer, read the above or present this card when the meeting begins.)

Download your Weingarten Rights Card:

https://animationguild.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Weingar_v2.pdf



FAM Committee Chairs Kristin Donner and Kyle Neswald took part in Cartoon Network's First Look video, featuring a diverse group of talent from various areas of cartoon production. Check it out:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kr8ZxHELGoY&feature=emb_title.

The Writers Committee posted a virtual panel series on their craft:

<https://animationguild.org/committees/writers-craft-virtual-panel-series/>.

THE
STORYBOARD CRAFT
REPRESENTATIVE PROGRAM
IS
EXTENDING
TO ALL UNION SHOPS!!

Count me in!



APPLY TODAY!

<https://animationguild.org/craftrepapp/>



In a time when celebrating milestones can be challenging, MPTF recently offered an inspiring opportunity. Long time resident Ruthie Thompson turned 110 years old on July 22nd, and MPTF raised \$110K to name the Post-Production Suite in the MPTF Studios in her honor.

Ruthie started working for The Walt Disney Company with a personal invitation from Walt at the very beginning of the empire. In her 40+ years of service, she shattered many barriers and also has a treasure chest of fascinating stories to tell! To kick off the fundraising campaign, MPTF employees came together with funds they donate from their paychecks, just as Mary Pickford advocated nearly 100 years ago, and pledged \$10,000 of that money in Ruthie's honor. Disney joined the MPTF employees in the Leadership Circle with a gift of \$10,000, and soon Pixar Animation Studios and other generous donors followed suit.

The Animation Guild played their part, too, with a gift of \$10,000. We hope you are inspired by the donors who honored the amazing Ruthie Thompson and who continue to make a difference in the lives of those in the entertainment industry who need it most. You can learn more about Ruthie's story – and become a donor yourself – by visiting <https://mptf.com/ruthie/>.



TESTING FOR A SHOW?

THE TAG TESTING COMMITTEE WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU!

The TAG Testing Committee is gathering research about tests for the 2021 Contract Negotiations. We want to know:

- What the test entails.
- How much time you were given to complete the test.
- How long it took you to complete the test.
- Send us your testing material through the TAG website:

animationguild.org/committees/testing-is-a-choice

Sharing this information helps all members in our fight against abusive testing!



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

Dominic Orlando died on May 14, 2020. He worked as a Xerox Processor at Hanna-Barbera and Ruby-Spears and then moved into storyboarding at Nickelodeon on *Rugrats*, *Dora the Explorer*, *CatDog* and *The Fairly OddParents*.

Animator and Director ***Kelly Asbury*** died at the age of 60 on June 26, 2020 after a long battle with abdominal cancer. The Texas native started his career at Walt Disney Feature Animation in 1983, and directed five animated feature films during his career, including *Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron*, *Gnomeo & Juliet* and *Ugly Dolls*.

Joan Orloff passed away on July 16, 2020. She worked as an Inker, Cell Painter and Ink & Paint Supervisor at Disney Feature Animation and Filmfair, among other studios.

William “Bill” Knoll died July 22, 2020. Bill worked as an Assistant Animation, Timing Director and Animation Director at Hanna-Barbera, Marvel, Disney TV, Warner Bros and other studios on shows such as *G.I. Joe*, *The Transformers*, *The Real Ghostbusters* and *Animaniacs*.



UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE ANIMATION GUILD

EVERY FRIDAY, Noon to 12:30 p.m.

TAG Office Hours via Zoom Video Conference

Reserve your spot: RSVP@tag839.org

AUGUST

August 25th

TAG Tuesday

Wear your TAG T-shirt and share your solidarity
on social media while we work at a distance!

SEPTEMBER

September 7th

Contract Holiday: Labor Day

September 29th

TAG Tuesday

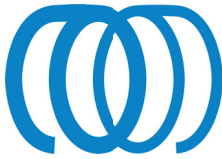
Wear your TAG T-shirt and share your solidarity on social media
while we work at a distance!

September 29th, 7 p.m. via Zoom Webinar

Virtual General Membership Meeting

Call for Negotiations Committee volunteers!

Register ahead of time to save your spot and receive a meeting link;
watch your email account for details and instructions.



The Animation Guild, IATSE Local 839
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