



As negotiations began for the IATSE Basic Agreement, we didn't predict that it would eventually lead to a strike authorization vote. But that is what happened—and one of the results of this extremely complex and difficult situation has been a productive silver lining.

## **TAG to TAG**

*TAG members are engaging with and mobilizing one another like never before.*

Ignited by the need for one-on-one member conversations, a new Tactical Action Group—yes, TAG TAG—has been created. Led by TAG Organizer Ben Speight, TAG TAG has close to 300 members at this time of writing. It allows members to connect and talk about important issues at a very personal level—not only focusing on mobilizing members during this critical time, but also creating opportunities for members to stay engaged in the long run. We now have a powerful group of engaged members we can activate when the time comes to address issues like organizing efforts outside L.A. County, helping with our upcoming negotiations in early 2022, or focusing on any other issue that arises. Interested in volunteering for this group? Email [mobilize@tag839.org](mailto:mobilize@tag839.org).

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THE PEGBOARD is published monthly by The Animation Guild, IATSE Local 839  
1105 N. Hollywood Way, Burbank, CA 91505 • (818) 845-7500  
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		<b>the animation guild</b> IATSE LOCAL 839	<div>The Pegboard is printed on recycled Paper.</div> 

## **Expanded Reach**

*Stronger channels have been implemented for more immediate communication.*

We have adopted programs like ThruText and ThruTalk. These allow us to correspond with members through peer-to-peer texting and also facilitate phone banking when there are important issues that need to be shared or discussed with members.

If you would like to opt-in for texts from TAG, please sign up here: <https://animationguild.org/text-opt-in/>

## **What You Want**

*Increased communication has uncovered overlooked needs of TAG members.*

During these past weeks, we've reached out to and heard from TAG members, and through these conversations we've learned of needs not receiving the attention they deserve. For example, there is a great need among TAG's visa-holding and expat community to connect with one another to discuss the unique challenges they face and what can be done to support the needs of that community. Once any need is identified, it can be addressed—our newly expanded interpersonal conversations can enable that.

## **Great Things in Small Packages**

*Getting involved doesn't have to mean a major commitment.*

We've recently held two town halls with thousands of members in attendance. People who haven't been engaged before want to be, but not everyone has hours to spare, and members are saying, "I don't have a lot of time, so what can I do?" We want to underscore that there is something everyone can do—we've had members offer to donate cardboard for sign-making, or spend 30 minutes of their time to create a small graphic. You should never feel that if you can't dedicate hours, you're not welcome.

To volunteer in this capacity, send us an email at [getinvolved@tag839.org](mailto:getinvolved@tag839.org)

When it comes to organizing and keeping our membership engaged in an ongoing, sustainable way, there's room for contributions from every member at every level.

# **FROM THE PRESIDENT JEANETTE MORENO KING**



## **THE POWER OF PERSONAL CONNECTION**

This pandemic has shown that even the most introverted among us needs to feel connected to the people around them. We are a social species, and those connections are good for our health and well-being. Our Union can help facilitate some of these connections.

When I was appointed to The Animation Guild's Executive Board, I made it my mission to create more opportunities for members to interact with each other outside of work. Who other than your fellow Union members understand the issues that affect us as animation professionals? The Executive Board approved resources for mixers, training, and various social events to encourage members to show up (pre-pandemic), get to know each other, and build networks.

We encourage our various committees to plan events for even more member engagement. We have hired more staff at the Guild office to support this effort, like Alexi Drosu, our Communications and Content Director, and Jackie Huang, our new Member Programs Coordinator. We also have Leslie Simmons, our Field Representative, who has shepherded our shop steward program, so that every studio and production can have a fellow TAG member on hand who can answer questions or provide information about upcoming Union meetings and events. Plus, more administrative staff to support this effort.

Now that we've been in the thick of the most contentious Basic Agreement Contract negotiations in IATSE's recent history, we need our animation community more than ever. Not every member of our Union stays informed about the Union and what is happening. It is my hope that the community building we've been engaged in for the past few years will make conversation easier and more accessible between members about Union news and activities.

If you are reading this, I imagine that you are more informed than someone who doesn't read *The Pegboard*. I am personally asking you to speak to the Union members around you. Learn more about what work priorities they may have for the union and where your interests align. Guide them to join a committee or join one yourself. Getting involved now will pay dividends as we get ready for negotiations early next year.

There are so many ways you can help! Email [mobilize@tag839.org](mailto:mobilize@tag839.org) and meet fellow members who care as much as you do!

In solidarity,

**Jeanette Moreno King**

***President***

*The Animation Guild, IATSE Local 839*

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*Field Rep Leslie Simmons and TAG TAG mobilizers Erica Smith, Meghan Boehman and Mary Nash showed their support for their IATSE kin at a car painting event this month.*

# **FROM THE BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE STEVE KAPLAN**



## **STRIKE AUTHORIZATION VOTE AND NEGOTIATIONS**

Three years ago, the Basic Agreement negotiations also stretched into months of meetings due to the employers' refusal to address priority concerns. This pattern of attacks on the basic workplace conditions are getting worse, and the fact that the employers are no longer just "film studios" is the cause. The studios are now part of multi-national entertainment conglomerates that don't view those who create their wealth as people. Instead, we are expenses to be managed and costs to be cut.

Between October 1 and 3, 60,000 IATSE members made history, showing that they refused to be considered a line item on a budget sheet by voting to give President Loeb the authority to call a strike to achieve better conditions in the live-action agreements. The fight was about more than just holding the studios to their commitment to improve the working conditions for streaming shows to the levels for productions delivered in traditional ways now that "New Media" isn't new anymore. It was also about including language in the agreements that provides more time to rest and improves the safety of entertainment workers. It's appalling to think that such a basic need would receive resistance, but humanity is often overlooked when reviewing numbers on a spreadsheet.

On Wednesday, October 13, President Loeb shared that the negotiations both before and after the strike authorization vote showed that the employers refused to recognize the mandate from the membership, and so he set Monday, October 18, as the first day of the first-ever IATSE strike against the AMPTP.

Thankfully, the studios saw the importance of reaching an agreement with the IATSE, and moved to address the concerns that were presented to them countless times over the course of the negotiations. On the evening of Saturday, October 16, the IATSE announced that a tentative agreement had been reached, and that the nationwide strike was averted. Information about the tentative agreement is forthcoming as both sides



work to not only craft a Memorandum of Agreement that the Locals will share with their members, but also begin negotiations for the Area Standards Agreement.

The Animation Guild can now focus on reviewing the gains that were achieved in the Basic Agreement negotiations to finalize proposals we have crafted for our own negotiations. We do not have negotiation dates yet, but expect those to be set soon.

We will continue to reach out and mobilize the membership to make them aware of our negotiation priorities, and ask that members be ready to vote in our contract ratification when the time comes. Thanks to the stalwart efforts of Field Representative Leslie Simmons and Organizer Ben Speight, we have a robust mobilization program in place and have engaged hundreds of TAG members who have been undertaking phone and text outreach to members to keep them informed and aware of how the Basic Agreement negotiations were unfolding. That engagement will be crucial for us to achieve the best agreement possible in our negotiations.

The Basic Agreement negotiations concluded with unprecedented changes that were only possible through the unified will of the members to see those changes achieved. I am proud that our members are coming together in the same way, and feel energized to bring their proposed changes to the studios and negotiate a new and strong successor to TAG's collective agreement.

In Solidarity,

**Steve Kaplan**

***Business Representative***

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## HOW DOES THE LABOR MOVEMENT FIT WITH TAG?

A lot of members are new to labor unions and what it all means. They may think that The Animation Guild is out there in the ether, alone and not part of a larger movement. But that's not the case at all!

TAG is Local 839 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, better known as the I.A.T.S.E. There are some folks who like to call it I-AWT-SEE, the folks at the organization itself usually suggest spelling out the acronym: I-A-T-S-E.

The IATSE is one of the oldest existing entertainment unions, forming in July 1893. The union's full name is a mouthful: The International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts of the United States, Its Territories and Canada, and it has a storied history that a short article in this publication can't begin to tell. (You can read more about the IATSE's history at [www.iatse.net](http://www.iatse.net).)

The IATSE represents more than 150,000 professionals working across various industries including live theater, motion picture and television production (including animation), trade shows and exhibitions, television broadcasting, and concerts, as well as the equipment and construction shops that support all these areas of the entertainment industry. There are currently 366 Locals of the IATSE in the U.S. and Canada, including one of the newest, the Canadian Animation Guild, Local 938!

What is a Local? A Local is basically a chapter or branch of a larger national or international union. These Locals are organized to represent the union's members in a particular geographic area, company, or business sector. Locals are quasi-autonomous, meaning they have their own governing bodies representing the interests of their Local members, as well as the interests of the national or international union.

For TAG Local 839, your Local represents members working in a particular industry—animation. Your Local is governed by an Executive Board democratically elected by the membership, and the executive running the Local, currently Business Representative Steve Kaplan, is an elected position. Some unions have executive staff who are not members but hired by the union or Local. For example, SAG-AFTRA's National Executive



Director position is a hired staff member position. The NED is not a member of SAG-AFTRA. The same goes for their Locals and executive directors of their local. The structure and leadership of a Local and a union varies and is usually guided by its Constitution and Bylaws. TAG has a Constitution and Bylaws, but also is guided by the IATSE's Constitution and Bylaws.

To create more solidarity among unions and to grow the labor movement and fight for workers' rights, most unions also affiliate with the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations, better known as the AFL-CIO. The IATSE is one of those unions.

The AFL-CIO ([www.aflcio.org](http://www.aflcio.org)) is a democratic, voluntary federation of 57 national and international labor unions that represent 12.5 million working men and women, including IATSE members. There are also state and local branches of the AFL-CIO. In California, the state branch is the California Labor Federation ([www.calaborfed.org](http://www.calaborfed.org)), and the local branch in Los Angeles is the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, commonly called The LA Fed. ([www.thelafed.org](http://www.thelafed.org))

The LA Fed's members includes 300 various union locals and labor organizations representing more than 800,000 members, including TAG members! Some of the many and varied labor organizations that are part of The LA Fed include the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LAACLA) and the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW). (IATSE International Vice President Joanne Sanders is also Executive Vice President of the national CLUW!) The goal of the AFL-CIO and it's councils is to protect the rights of all working people and improve the lives of families and communities.

TAG is very involved in the local and state AFL-CIO councils. We currently have nine delegates to The LA Fed's House of Labor—which meets monthly to provide reports on local union issues and activities and to build solidarity among the various unions. The LA Fed is also run by an executive board, and currently Rebecca Rhine, the Executive Director for the Cinematographers Guild, IATSE Local 600, sits on The LA Fed's Executive Board.

Unions with labor-management issues often come to The LA Fed to garner support from all of its members. I often post on the TAG Discord and encourage members to participate in activities related to worker issues, such as grocery worker picket lines, rallies for state propositions, as well as community outreach such as Labor Community Services food distributions.

The LA Fed and Cal Labor also endorse candidates running for various offices, from local water boards and city councils to state and federal representatives. This is done through a process known as COPE—the Coun-

cil on Political Endorsements. As Political Coordinator for TAG, I attend these endorsement meetings where I have the ability to vote whether or not to endorse a candidate—or abstain. Both the national AFL-CIO and its state and local branches endorse candidates who are pro-union and for working people.

In addition to participation in COPE, the IATSE has a vibrant political program on the national level through its Political/Legislative Department led by Director Tyler McIntosh and Assistant Director Jackson Rees, who are based in Washington, D.C. Tyler and Jackson are registered lobbyists and work tirelessly to ensure the interests of the IATSE and its members are represented in the nation's capital. Recently, the letter from more than 100 Members of Congress voicing support for the IATSE in its negotiations shows the power of the IATSE Political Action Committee and the union's Political and Legislative Department's work.

At such an historical moment in the IATSE's history, as well as our own Local's, it's important to understand that we are not alone. We are part of a large labor movement across the country. There is power in a union, and it's important to show solidarity with those facing labor unrest, breakdowns in negotiations, and more. Many of our TAG members showed this union solidarity over the last several weeks in supporting our IATSE kin in their negotiations with the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers by attending rallies, painting cars, and phone banking. Participating in these actions are not only good for supporting our Union kin, but it shows our strength to the studios and the public.

If you want to keep up to date on various labor union issues, I encourage you to visit the websites I've provided here for AFL-CIO, California Labor Federation, and The LA Fed, and sign up to receive alerts from them.

In solidarity,

**Leslie Simmons**

***Field Representative/Political Coordinator***

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Call or text: (747) 238-0287

# WISHING A FOND FAREWELL TO OFFICE MANAGER LYN MANTTA



Have you heard? The Animation Guild's beloved Office Manager, Lyn Manta, is retiring after 43 years with us! She's handled countless phone calls, emails, letters, and in-person meetings over the years, and chances are that you've interacted with Lyn at some point in your animation career, whether you're a Golden Award recipient or are just now joining the Local. We've only got her until the end of October, so now is your chance to wish her a fond farewell.

If you know Lyn, you know she doesn't like a fuss . . . but we think it would be pretty great if all the folks she's helped over the years sent her off with good wishes. Email [lyn@animationguild.org](mailto:lyn@animationguild.org) or call her one last time at the Guild office: (818) 845-7500.

# POWER COMES FROM THE BOTTOM UP

*By Ben Speight*

**Wherever a TAG member is working, at home or in a studio, that's where Local 839 is located.**

Search for The Animation Guild online and you will see that “the Union” is physically located on Hollywood Way in Burbank. But your Union isn’t a building. It isn’t elected officers or staff who serve in official leadership roles. No, like every strong and vibrant organization, TAG is nothing less than the membership acting collectively for their common interests. Your Union is an independent, democratic source of collective power on and off the job. That collective part makes all the difference because it encompasses our diversity and is designed to get as many people involved as possible.

TAG isn’t fixed and monolithic. It’s diverse, dynamic, and evolving with the membership. Your Union isn’t just a service that sets wage minimums and provides health care and benefits—some faceless bureaucracy that manages your affairs on your behalf. It’s a way of collective self-governance on your job. Your Union is about ordinary working people taking agency over our lives and deciding what we want and what we deserve from our labor.

Especially in moments like this, at this critical juncture in IATSE’s history, with the possibility of a national strike in live action (at the time of this writing) the Union’s greatest strength can be found in fully maximizing the power of the membership. This long-established, bottom-up approach, often called the “Organizing Model,” is a series of methods or best practices for building union power. TAG is well underway in unleashing these tools among the membership, showing immediate results.

Over recent weeks, TAG member activists and stewards have formed studio-based mobilization committees around solidarity with IATSE live-action kin and in support of TAG’s own strike authorization process. They are having one-on-one conversations with dozens of members every day, expanding TAG’s membership engagement throughout every signatory studio.

## Organizing for Power in Good Times and in Bad

The Organizing Model is versatile—it can be used to organize non-union studios far from union strongholds, and it can be deployed to mobilize existing union workplaces around key fights. Some unions have called such an internal mobilizing structure a “Communication Action Network,” or what we are now calling within Local 839 a “Tactical Action Group.” These workplace committees are set up to be a representative coalition of workplace leaders consisting of around 10% of the bargaining unit. These member leaders are responsible for engaging every co-worker in the bargaining unit around their priorities on the job. That would mean out of 6,000 TAG members, 600 would be part of such an expanding, inclusive, and fluid core of rank-and-file member leaders across the Union.

This high-participation, bottom-up approach relies on an active, engaged, expanding network of member leaders that functions in crisis moments *and* in periods of “labor peace”:

- In times of crisis (such as preparing for a mass work stoppage), mobilization may need to occur very quickly—having that infrastructure in place already will accelerate member participation when the Union needs it most.
- After a contract is ratified, it still must be vigilantly enforced. Staff representatives cannot police the contract alone. The Organizing Model ensures members are prepared to collectively enforce their agreement at all times. This way there will be **an immediate** communication access point on every studio, show, and in all classifications for members who have questions or issues that need to be addressed.

Of course, these are optimal objectives to seek for any union. Without a goal of sustainable leadership density across the Union, we go into periods of crisis at a significant tactical disadvantage. Instead, we can construct a process of member involvement now where we demonstrate, even to the most cynical co-worker and most disengaged member, that everyone can resolve their own individual issues best by connecting them to collective priorities that are enforced through collective action.

## Get Everyone Involved by Recruiting the Right Leaders

Leaders should not just be recruited among the most motivated, proactive members. Sometimes the person who raises their hand first isn't always the best for a leadership role. It's not that the most motivated activists aren't effective leaders in their own right—they are an essential part of the organization. Any organization needs very committed people to do a lot of the heavy lifting. Still, we can't rely on a self-selecting process of recruitment to build a strong union.

The Organizing Model seeks to identify and engage the right leaders in **every** classification, job title, race, gender, age group, ability, years of service, and all other identities in proportion to their presence at work—building a truly “wall-to-wall” union at every studio.

To identify these natural leaders or “organic organizers” at your studio, look for people who:

- are excellent communicators and are viewed with respect.
- have strong social relationships among their co-workers.
- are trusted to help resolve job-related issues.
- coordinate non-work-related social gatherings.

Identifying these respected fellow members takes place in the one-on-one organizing conversation described in my [previous column](#) from last month's *The Pegboard*. To summarize, all members need to be asked:

- Who do you go to when you have problems on the job?
- Who are some of your most trusted co-workers?

This form of informal polling identifies not only potential new union leaders, but it can also shed light on where the least represented areas within the bargaining unit exist. For example, if a studio has every type of animation classification and job title, but its TAG-TAG/Communication Action Network only includes a few core activists in a single department, then people in the missing classifications must be drawn in to build a truly sustainable internal organization. Only in this way can each member actually feel invested and represented. The change becomes tangible in more ways than one. Soon, members will start referring to “our Union,” not “the Union”. Words in a union matter.

## TAG Belongs to the Members

*Your* Union isn't for some, it is for all. Like the labor movement as a whole, TAG's membership reflects all possible identities, backgrounds, and cultures. A union in the workplace can be one of the greatest tools for addressing forms of division that bosses foster around our individual differences. When we do it right, a union can cut across this division of labor by addressing long-standing disparities and inequalities within workplaces and communities. By including all fellow workers and mobilizing maximum participation, members' investment in their union gets reflected in stronger contracts and more compliant employers. It also creates a more equal, democratic, and just world.

TAG has approximately 6,000 members. Imagine the power that could be generated with just 600 motivated activists and natural leaders distributed throughout each studio—regularly participating, engaging with their immediate co-workers, building ongoing plans so everyone feels represented, and continually recruiting to reflect the ever-evolving nature of animation jobs and the changes in the workplaces of signatory studios.

If you believe in the power of a fully active and engaged membership and want to get involved, contact [mobilize@tag839.org](mailto:mobilize@tag839.org) with your name, current or most recent studio, and your non-work email address. As the proverb says: “Many hands make light work.” Let's make sure the work is as light as possible for everyone.

The work has already begun—let's keep it going!

Together, TAG has power.





# APPROVAL PROCESS FOR GRAPHICS/CONTENT

We love having members volunteer to create graphics and content to share important Animation Guild information! In order to streamline the approval process, we offer the following guidelines:

- Email Alexi Drosu, Director of Communications, at [editor@tag839.org](mailto:editor@tag839.org), and identify what you are interested in doing and for what purpose.
- We advise you to share content before beginning to work on artwork. For example, share video scripts for approval and fact checking before working on animation. Share meme concepts or comic ideas before designing the graphics.
- Please indicate when you would like to post the materials (a general estimate is ok if you don't have a precise date) and on what social media channels you plan on posting the material.
- Once you submit a final graphic to [editor@tag839.org](mailto:editor@tag839.org), you will receive a response within 72 hours of submitting the content.
- When requesting that the Guild boost the content on the official social media channels, please note any credits for artwork and include social media handles.
- Please do not use any copyrighted images.
- Please include URLs for additional information or contact emails if appropriate to the content, i.e. committee email addresses, the TAG website, etc.
- Consider using the following hashtags in your post: #WeAre839, #NewDeal4Animation, #WePowerAnimation
- "The" should always be capitalized when writing "The Animation Guild"



— MPTF & IATSE PRESENT —

# DAY AT THE RANCH

— FAMILY PICNIC AT CALAMIGOS RANCH —

— MPTF  —

**Sunday, November 14**  
**11:00am - 3:00pm**  
**Lunch from 12:00 - 2:00 pm**

Join us for a fun family picnic as  
we raise funds and celebrate  
MPTF's 100 years of service!

All tickets include admission, parking, a great  
lunch buffet, opportunity to participate in our  
auction & raffle, and lots of fun outdoor  
activities for the whole family.

**Visit [MPTF.com/DayAtTheRanch](https://mptf.com/DayAtTheRanch)  
for tickets and sponsorship information**

Contact [events@mptf.com](mailto:events@mptf.com)  
with any questions or for more information

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Don't miss out on Animation Guild events! Keep your contact information up to date and sign up for our email 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

***Kathleen Quaife-Hodge*** d. 10/7/2021 – Effects Artist and Animator Kathleen Quaife-Hodge worked at Hanna-Barbera, Walt Disney, Universal, Kurtz & Friends, and Warner Bros. during her decades-long career. Her numerous TV shows and film credits include *SpongeBob SquarePants*, *The Proud Family*, *James and the Giant Peach*, *FernGully: The Last Rainforest*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, and *Hercules*. She was 64.

***Ruthie Tompson*** d. 10/10/21 – Animation legend Ruthie Tompson spent nearly four decades at Walt Disney Studio. She began her career in Ink & Paint on *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves*. Moving up to Supervisor of the scene-planning department, she worked on *Fantasia*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *The Jungle Book*, and nearly every other Disney film made during her tenure. In 2000, she was named an official Disney Legend. She was 111.



# UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE ANIMATION GUILD

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

**TAG Office Hours via Zoom** – Reserve your spot: [RSVP@tag839.org](mailto:RSVP@tag839.org)

## OCTOBER

**October 26th**

**TAG Tuesday**

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

## NOVEMBER

**November 25th & 26th**

**Contract Holidays: THANKSGIVING**

Wear your TAG T-shirt and share your solidarity on social media while we work at a distance—there is strength in numbers!

**November 30th**

**TAG Tuesday**

Wear your TAG T-shirt and share your solidarity on social media while we work at a distance—there is strength in numbers!

**November 30th**, 7 p.m. via Zoom Webinar

**Virtual General Membership Meeting**

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

Check the full TAG calendar, including special events and committee meetings, at: <https://animationguild.org/about-the-guild/calendar/>



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