



FATE E-LETTER

Volume One, Number Three

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Save \$\$\$ -- Register for Conference '04 Now

A "special" early bird registration fee for Conference '04 was introduced at State this year, and offers members an opportunity to save as much as \$35 of their expenses for the October meeting. *To take advantage of the special low rate, your registration form and check must be postmarked by June 1.*

Scheduled for October 14-16 in Clearwater Beach, this year's gathering will celebrate the 25th anniversary of FATE's founding, and Gary Graff and Debra Barnum are planning a don't-miss celebration. The site of the conference is the newly

refurbished Marriott Suites Clearwater Beach Hotel on Sand Key.

The special Conference '04 registration form is available at the web site: www.fatefirst.org Have yours postmarked by June 1. After that date, the fee will go to an early bird special of \$160, and in September it will be the full \$180 registration fee.

For the first time, you can charge your conference fees through PayPal. If you do, be sure to include the transaction number on your conference registration form when you send it in.

From the President

Hang in There! It's Almost Over!

Congratulations to all for completing another school year! I know you are all extremely busy as we wind down with exams, awards and graduations. Hang in there!

Here's a reminder to all FATE Committee Chairs to communicate with your members and wrap up

presented at our June 17 Executive Committee meeting and send it to Murray Mintz.

Please continue to communicate with your parents, administrators, school board members and legislators. Do whatever you can to help us save arts education in Florida. We have had some success with legislators recently regarding the proposed PE bill. We must continue to work together – every letter and phone call counts.

Best wishes for a restful summer.

Calendar

- June 1** Postmark Deadline for special Conference '04 Registration Fee
- June 17** FATE Executive Committee meets in Clearwater
- June 18-20** State ACE meeting in Sarasota

your specific charges. Please prepare a report to be

State Thespians Honor Two FATE Board Members

FATE Board members **Don E. Jones** and **Dr. Robert Strickland** were honored at the recent Florida State Thespian Conference held in Tampa.

Currently FATE's secretary, Don received the Thespians' newly created Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his "passionate commitment" to theatre and theatre education.

Long a strong voice for the student, Don has been called the godfather of the State Thespian Festival. Since his retirement from teaching at St. Petersburg's Northeast High School, the Yale alumnus has been dedicated to the Thespians, serving on the State Board, on the mainstage screening committee and as program chair.

The Executive Director of Life Skills and Special Projects for the Miami-Dade public schools, Bob was named the Thespians' 2004 Administrator of the Year. He is past president of FATE and has been a powerful and respected advocate for theatre education throughout the state.

Bob continued his advocacy when he spoke to the 4,000-plus students at the Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center the night he accepted the award. Excerpts of his address appear on this page, and reflect something every theatre teacher would like to be able to say to students.

In Memoriam

Joan Imms, the mother of Board member **Christine Chavers**, passed away Thursday, April 22 in Virginia. Christine's home address is
13432 SW 102 Lane
Miami, FL 33186

Excerpts from Bob Strickland's Remarks to Florida's Thespians

"I wish that every student sitting here today will remember the experience that Thespians and theatre education have provided them. Remember when you are older and help assure these same opportunities are available for future generations.

"Remember every time you speak to a politician or an administrator, and ask that they support the arts and arts education.

"Remember every time you vote. Consider the power that you have. If every person who has attended the State Thespian Festival for the last ten years voted as a block to support the arts and arts education, there would be nearly 50,000 pro-arts votes, and politicians in the state of Florida would have to listen.

"I ask you to please remember."

Conference '04: FATE is YOUR Silver Lining

October 14 – 16 at Clearwater Beach Marriott Suites

Register Now and Save!!

Registration form on the web site: www.fatefirst.org

From the Executive Director

Your Calls and E-mails Worked

The legislative session is over, and a budget has been passed (though not yet signed), and the arts won some and took some hits again this year.

If you are ever in doubt about the effectiveness of advocacy, you have only to look at this year's Florida legislators and what became of the proposed "PE Bill."

The State Senate was considering a bill that would have increased Physical Education requirements substantially at all levels, K through 12. Thanks to an alert that originated with the music educators' organization, arts teachers throughout the state flooded legislators with phone calls and emails. The chairman of the committee considering the bill acknowledged receiving over a thousand calls.

As a result of all this effort, the bill was rewritten to require that the Department of Education complete a study of the state of PE in the schools,

and make recommendations to the governor next year.

The state's arts funding was not restored to the levels we requested, but is somewhat higher than it was this past year.

Much credit for any success, and for the avoidance of major disasters, must go to the Florida Cultural Alliance, the strongest advocate for the arts in the state. FATE is proud to be a partner in this alliance. The rest of the credit goes to all of you who responded to alerts with phone calls, email and letters. Be sure to thank your legislators for their support. Advocacy works!

Advocacy works. But we also have to be careful of how and where we advocate. It would be counter-productive to take an adversarial position against PE teachers. Instead, our message should be one of cooperation to assure a balanced curriculum.

Good for You

Amber Amerson left last year's FATE conference convinced of the importance of "getting out there." She decided she needed to reach out more to the academic, administrative and surrounding community.

This year at LaVilla Middle School of the Arts in Jacksonville, Amber has "jumped into the mix full throttle." She is the Standards Liaison between the arts and academic curricula, as well as uses the arts to help alleviate problems with school discipline and character education. Her theatre department even helped the math department organize math marathon day!

Amber says it's been a little overwhelming, but well worth the new reception of the theatre and the recognition of its benefits.

FATE president Beverly Blanchette has made communication the keynote of her presidency, and Amber's experience at LaVilla is a testimony to its effectiveness.

The Southeast Theatre Conference has announced a new playwriting contest for high school students. The winning student playwright will receive a \$250 prize and an invitation to attend the SETC 2005 convention in Greensboro. The winning script will be presented in a staged reading, with a response from a panel of critics.

The script should be an original one-act play that hasn't been published or professionally produced, and should be submitted between October 1 and December 1, 2004.

For more information and entry forms, your students can go to the SETC's web site: www.setc.org or can email the central office at setc@setconline.net.

Membership Committee Seeks Undergrad Students

Katie Lebhar and the Membership Committee want to encourage undergraduate theatre or theatre education majors to join FATE and become active participants.

Any current ('04-'05) undergraduate who wants to attend Conference '04 may pay the special \$145 registration fee at any time, and their membership dues will be waived.

At the same time, Katie and the Conference chairs are discussing a package of special workshops that would be geared for newer (1-4 years) theatre teachers, and for undergraduates planning to teach.

If you know of any undergraduate who would be a good prospect, send the information to FATE's Executive Director at murray_mintz@msn.com.

Jack Mazzano, who was recently named the 2004 Theatre Arts Educator of the Year by the Dade Association for Theatre Education.

A teacher at G. Holmes Braddock Senior High, Jack has over 275 dramatic and musical productions to his directing and conducting credit, and has served on the faculties of Arizona State University and the University of Miami.

Jeff Grove, whose new one-act play "The Readiness Is All" has been published by Playscripts, Inc. This is the second script by Jeff and his co-author, Chris Sheppard, to be published by Playscripts.

"The Readiness Is All" is largely an ensemble piece, with roles for 15-20 actors, depending on doubling. Jeff says it's "G rated" material suitable for schools, and has been successful in District competitions.

Their first published play, "At the Punch Bowl" calls for 9 females and one male (or 10 females). This play is about prejudice and conflict, and does contain some rough language. Jeff would rate it PG-13. It, too has won District competitions when presented.

Anyone interested in either play can go to the Playscripts home page at www.playscripts.com and search by title or author. Playscripts lets you read all but the last two or three pages of any script on line.

Check out the FATE web site

www.fatefirst.com

