

PUPPETRY ARTS INSTITUTE



Volume 19, No. 2

Founded 2001

Fall 2019 Edition

Our Board President Retiring

In the short space available here I want to thank all those who have contributed their time, talents and gifts to supporting PAI while I've been president of the board. I believe it is time for me to step aside and retire in order for fresh new eyes and ideas to take hold. Kathy Vest, our treasurer and grant writer has been a blessing, even through the illness and death of her husband Randy. I want everyone to continue supporting her and the rest of the staff. I am especially grateful to Leslie Hagensen who has kept us all up to date, and laid out our newsletters, Facebook pages, website, and programs. Thank you to Anitra Steele for updating our schedules and keeping us synchronized with kindergarten school district and preschool visits. She is our official secretary and records our important business matters. I will still be volunteering and will see you often at PAI opportunities and events!—Ann Ragan



Ann Ragan with PAI's Harry Truman marionette, taken during a program at the Chicago Alton depot in Independence, Mo. The puppet was created by Robert LeRoy Smith.

Appreciation for Ann Ragan

On behalf of the Board of Directors we wish to express our appreciation to Ann Ragan for her excellent service as President. Ann served as Board President from 2014 to 2019. Her architect/business background, leadership skills, artistic talents and charming personality were major assets for our organization. She learned how to perform with marionettes for some of our shows, a difficult skill to master. Her creativity and accomplished writing skills were evidenced in the many newsletters she designed. Her husband, Dave, also provided excellent advice and helped with many workshops. We are so thankful that she has agreed to stay on the board. —Kathy Vest



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Puppeteers of America 2019 National Puppetry Festival by Nancy Clark



Nancy Clark with fellow attendees at the Puppeteers of America 2019 National Puppetry Festival in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

On July 16 – 21 at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, 375 participants attended this festival. Approximately 100 artists performed puppet shows in mainstage performances, fringe presentations, the National Puppetry Slam, free outdoor community shows, and the Potpourri. On the mainstage, 20 national puppeteer companies and two international companies performed. Fifty-two workshops were offered plus three two-day intensive workshops and the Professional Day for Teaching Artists and Therapists. The workshops covered Building Techniques and Materials, Business and Marketing, Education – Teachers, Hands-On, Kid Appropriate, Making a Show (writing, directing, staging), Movement and Manipulation, Performance Techniques, and Technology. Also, there was a Festival Exhibit featuring select items from lifetime collector, Gary Busk. His collection is one of the largest-known private puppet collections in the United States. Thirty-four short puppet films had showings on various days. Needless to say, the Festival was jam packed with things to do. It is also a wonderful time to reunite with puppetry friends from far and wide. The Puppeteers of America National Festivals are held every other year, so the next one will be in 2021. Regional festivals are held in between, so look for them in 2020. I have had the privilege of attending multiple National and Regional Festivals and find it a highlight each time. Such puppet fun!

Performance Schedule

The Wizard of Oz

Friday-Saturday,
November 29-30

11 a.m. & 2 p.m.

Kraig Kensinger,
puppeteer

Sponsored by Missouri

Arts Council and Lysle & Carolyn
Weeks

Free book to each child attending to
take home



Coming Up Christmas

Saturday, Dec 7

Saturday, Dec 14

Kraig Kensinger,
puppeteer



Performance times 11 a.m. & 2 p.m.
both days

Sponsored by The Park Foundation

A Pig, A Princess, and a Wild Woozlebird Egg

Anitra Steele, puppeteer

Saturday, January 18

Monday, January 20

Performance times

11 a.m. & 2 p.m. both days

Sponsored by

The Woman's Civic Club

The Three Little Kittens

Nancy Clark, puppeteer

Saturday, February 15 and

Monday, February 17

Performance times

11 a.m. & 2 p.m. both days

Sponsored by Arts KC

*Please call 816-833-9777 to confirm
shows, dates and times, as they are
subject to change. Reservations are
suggested.*

Sponsors and Donors

IN APPRECIATION OF THEIR GENEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS:

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Randy Thatcher, in memory of Debbie Thatcher
Kathy Vest
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**In Memory of Randy Vest*

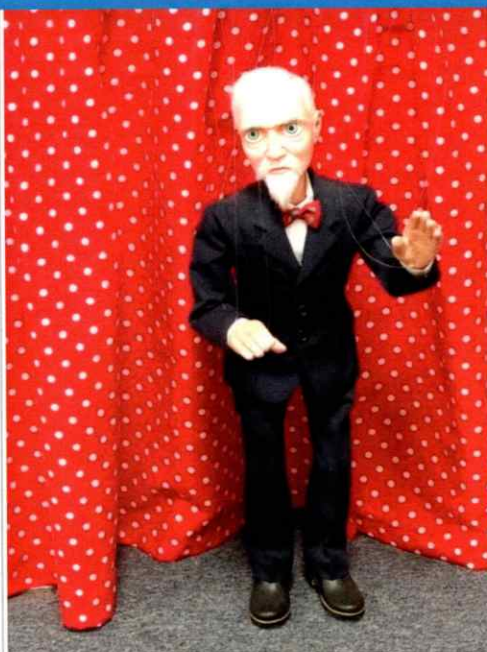
SPECIAL THANKS TO THESE ORGANIZATIONS FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT

Arts KC
The Flarsheim Foundation
Missouri Arts Council
Missouri Humanities Council
Muriel McBrien Kauffman Foundation
The Francis Family Foundation
The Park Foundation
Truman Heartland Community Foundation,
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Connie Mayta, HMF Beaudoin Family Foundation,
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The Woman's Civic Club

IN KIND DONATIONS

Doris Jensen
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Mary Jo Watkins

Drumm Farm Century Celebration *by Kraig Kensinger*

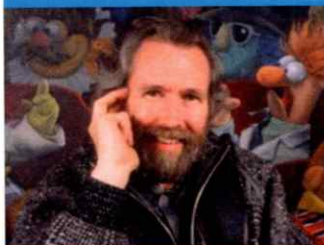


Marionette of Andrew Drumm created by Robert Leroy Smith (Puppetry Arts Institute collection)

PAI is winding down a year long collaboration with Drumm Farm Center for Children in Independence, Missouri. Andrew Drumm, a Kansas City businessman, opened a home for impoverished boys in 1919. The center has expanded over the years to provide extensive foster care and support services for families. As part of their "Century Celebration", PAI received a generous grant from the Beaudoin Family Foundation to offer puppetry arts events to the families and youth on campus.

Kraig Kensinger provided several lively marionette shows and demo workshops for monthly combined family dinner events. As part of their summer education program, PAI puppeteers shared presentations on puppets from around the world. Ann Ragan entertained with cowboy and Native American puppets as part of North America Day. As part of South America Day, Kathy Vest informed with puppets from Honduras, Spain and Mexico. For Africa Day, Anitra Steele charmed with animal puppet folk tales from Africa. The big finale was Drumm Farm's huge "Hoedown Festival" on Saturday October 12, 2019. PAI offered ongoing shows featuring country marionettes and a recital performed by an Andrew Drumm marionette made by the late Robert LeRoy Smith. This puppet was featured in a photo opt for the new Andrew Drumm biography book.

Quote from a Master Puppeteer



Life's like a movie, write your own ending. Keep believing, keep pretending.

— Jim Henson —

If you would like to help us grow, we are a 501(c)3 organization, and donations can be sent to us at: Puppetry Arts Institute, 11025 E. Winner Rd, Independence, MO 64052, (816) 833-9777. Email: pai@att.net.



Kathleen Vest Now Executive Director

Following Ann Ragan's retirement as President of the Board of Directors, the PAI board voted to return to an Executive Director format with Kathleen Vest assuming that position. This format was used years ago when Nancy Clark had that position and Diane Houk was Board president. As Executive Director, Vest will work on a volunteer basis and continue her work on grants and funding, while also promoting and representing PAI within the community. New officers of the board will be: Paul Bond, President; Kathy Rohr, treasurer; and Anitra Steele, secretary. Directors are: Ann Ragan, Joyce Stone, Ann De Young, and Teri Hare. Kraig Kensinger serves as Artistic Director, and Leslie Hagensen is our Administrative Assistant. We are fortunate to have such talented generous members on our all-volunteer board. We are currently seeking additional board members and volunteers.—Reported by Anitra Steele, Secretary, Board of Directors



Each year PAI has provided a special workshop for guest teachers from Honduras, through the Friends United organization. This photo was taken during their September 13, 2019 visit to PAI.

