

## Roles of the Producer – Notes from Amy Gillan

Some of the jobs I've listed below may fall more sensibly under the roles of the President, Publicity Committee Chair, Theatrical Committee Chair, etc. Most of the times that I have served as producer, I was also one or more of the above and therefore, some of the jobs I did were done not because I was producer, but because I also served in other board capacities. I am going to mention all that I did though, because as producer, one of your roles is to remind the proper people to complete their tasks.

In rough chronological order:

(Theatrical chair or Pres.) Order scripts for show. Must be delivered to their home address as UPS cannot deliver to the theatre.

(Pres.) Type up contract for director, director of music, and choreographer. Three copies each. Must be signed by the Sugar Creek Players president.

Get key from the President and ask director to sign key check-out log before you give him/her their key. The key must be returned at strike.

(Treas.) Ask bookkeeper (Shirley Ross of Checks and Balances) to write the first check for the director. He/she will receive that check when he/she signs the contract. (\$200/musical, \$100/play)            2-2-6   1-1-3

Place audition ads in Journal Review and The Weekly. Post audition notice on our marquee as soon as previous show is struck, but not prior to strike. If this is for our youth production, send fliers to all county schools as well as St. Bernards, the homeschooler group, and the private Christian schools.

Attend auditions. Have handouts ready. I got so I combined the bio form, Audition form, and harassment form all in one big handout at auditions. That way, there is no hassle in trying to get all those forms turned in once the show is cast. There is no need to stay for the entire audition time unless the director has not enlisted enough help and needs you to stay.

Attend the first read through rehearsal of the show. At the beginning of the Rehearsal, welcome the cast and crew, invite them to become Sugar Creek Players, remind them that they must have a signed harassment form on file, talk about the rules of housekeeping at the theatre, and encourage them to bring their concerns to you. Also, this might be the best time to ask if they want to purchase a t-shirt and let them know when you'll begin taking orders. There is no need to stay for the read through unless the director needs you for some odd reason. Scripts must be signed out.

A production meeting should occur as soon as the show is cast, if not before. The producer *helps* the director enlist people to serve on the production staff (costume coordinator, light/sound board person, technical designer, set construction, prop coordinator, stage crew, stage manager, choreographer, orchestra members, set painter, etc.) The producer *helps* the director find these people – he/she is not the sole person responsible for finding all this crew help. It should be a shared effort to ensure a staff that will work well together.

Check to make sure the corporate sponsor has been billed by our bookkeeper. Or, if we have no sponsor for the show, try to get one. Musicals: \$1000, plays: \$500. All ads/marquee/program etc. must say "So and so presents...."

Also, along those same lines, check with the info that arrives with the scripts to see what all we need to say in the print ads concerning the author and the leasing company and when scripts are due back.

Once rehearsals start, there is no need for the producer to attend and remain through all the rehearsals. You should check in 15-30 minutes prior to the beginning of rehearsals as often as possible to see how things are going, chat with the cast/crew, ask the director for updates and needs, etc. Try to be a familiar face at the theatre for the cast/crew. Do not delay the start time of a rehearsal by engaging the director/cast members in conversation.

Get the show budget from the treasurer. Remind director and cast/crew that all purchases must be approved by you and they must turn a receipt in if they wish to be reimbursed for the approved expenses.

Place show ads in the Journal Review and The Weekly. FAX the Indianapolis Star and place notice in the Sunday Entertainment section (What's On Stage). The display ads in the JR are very expensive, so keep them to a minimum. Sarah Harmon is our contact person for the display ads. She'll advise you as to what is customary for the Vanity shows.

Arrange for ads on local radio station, WCVL. We usually have a credit for tickets we have donated for their Listener Appreciation Sale several times a year. Count on about ten 30 second ads. Jill Purcell is our current contact person.

Check on prop list. What still needs to be located. Help to find those items.

Check to make sure box office committee has ushers and cookie boothers lined up.

Plan a special time that the box office employee can attend a rehearsal to sell tickets to the cast and their families prior to the box office opening to the public.

We usually sell those early tickets at a bit of a discount, say a dollar off. Check with box office chairperson about that...

Order tshirts and distribute when they arrive. Collect money with orders.

Arni's has been donating 10 large pizzas for each show's cast party. Check with board members to see if this has been arranged again for this season.

Order show posters at RPM. We usually order 50. We are supposed to hand them out to our program advertisers before we post them elsewhere. When you pick the up, ask them to send the bill to our bookkeeper, Shirley Ross.

Make sure the person compiling the programs has all the info they need including cast bios, cast/crew list, director's notes, any special thank-yous, etc. We have been ordering the programs from Staples. Give them AT LEAST a week to print, fold, and staple for us. Since we have a Staples Business Rewards card, check with the President for coupons he/she should have received in the mail that give us a sizable credit for our next printing job (we're talking over \$100 in credit so don't overlook this!) Use the not-for-profit Staples card, business rewards card, and our Staples credit card when purchasing the programs. It may be easiest to just ask the President to go pay for them.

Check with publicity chairperson to see that the ETC. article is written and pictures scheduled to be taken for the ETC. article in the Journal Review that will appear on the Saturday just prior to the show opening.

Also check with publicity to make sure the newsletter has been sent out to the membership advertising the show among other things. Offer to help with the stapling, stamping, addressing, folding, etc. of the newsletter or enlist some cast/crew people to help during their offstage time in rehearsal. Our box office employee might also help with this sizable chore.

The box office should be open Monday thru Saturday afternoons for the two weeks prior to the two weekends of the show. Check to see how ticket sales are going.

After the final downtown movie night prior to the show opens, take the movie night info off the marquee and post the show info.

Help with set construction if you can.

Remind President about what additions you might have for the curtain speech. The president may want to give the speech or he/she may ask someone else to do it for them. Speech should be short and welcoming.

Check with box office committee to make sure cleaning person is scheduled to clean just prior to the show opening.

Obtain remaining checks from the bookkeeper.

On opening night, give the musical director their second check (\$200) or the play director their second check (\$100), pay the director of music their entire check (\$500), and pay the choreographer their entire check (\$250).

Make sure box office has someone re-stocking the cookie booth with pop/napkins/water, etc. and that housekeeping has a good supply of paper towels and t.p. available.

Enjoy the show!

Collect scripts prior to the final weekend of the show. Music will be collected following the final show. We get charged a huge amount for late/missing scripts, so this is very important. Mail them back to the address indicated on the lease agreement immediately after the strike.

At strike, make sure everyone knows what needs to be done and jobs are assigned. Make sure children do not have jobs that will put them in any kind of danger such as taking down the sets.

Hand out cast/crew evaluation forms. Tell cast/crew they are to be turned in to you, the president, or the suggestion box in the lobby. They do not have to sign them.

Once you receive the director's written evaluation report and the strike is completed satisfactorily, you are to give the director their final check and collect their key. Sign the key back in on the key log and give the key back to the President.

See that the marquee gets changed to announce the auditions for the next show or downtown movie night, whichever is next.

Get reacquainted with your family.