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## Audio and OSHA Highlight Stevens Point, WI Program & Exciting Upcoming Events

By Shane Kelly, Vice-Chair of Programming, USITT Midwest Section,

The Midwest Section held a very successful event at University of Wisconsin Stevens Point on November 14th in the beautiful Noel Fine Arts Center. Our gracious host, Gary Olsen, Chairperson of the Department of Theatre and Dance led us around the various spaces that the Fine Arts Center houses including our second purple “Black Box” theatre of the year. The building has done a great job of combining the original Fine Arts Center with a recent addition to create a seamless space for their student artists to do their work. It also includes a fan favorite, a costume shop with windows to the outside.

Our workshops began with a presentation by Leonard Miller of Vari\*Lite of the various features of several Vari\*Lite fixtures including the VL3500 Spot, VLX LED fixture, VL2500 Wash, and VL1000. Leonard showed the group different uses for their fixtures including LED color correction to Tungsten temperatures, four blade shutter mechanism, and zoomable optics. The morning finished with some time programming and trying tricks as well as opening the fixtures to see what makes them tick, or rather tick quietly.

The first half of our OSHA doubleheader began with David Glowacki from Michigan who came to prove that OSHA is not a town in Wisconsin. David is actually an Authorized OSHA Outreach Trainer and he shared with the group the latest information from OSHA for recordkeeping, inspections, and working with consultants. Given David’s day job as a Production and Building Manager at Michigan Tech, he knows very well how to relate the OSHA information to everyday activities in a theatrical environment. For the second half of the day, Richard Lentz and Dona Haag from WisCon and the Occupational Health and Safety Division at University of Wisconsin brought to the group the latest in Fall Protection information for everything from ladders, to scaffolds, to man lifts. Its always good to start off the afternoon with a demonstration of what happens when a melon falls from a ladder. To put the regulations into reality, David Krajec from Mainstage Theatrical Supply brought a wide selection of fall protection harnesses

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AT RIGHT: Leonard Miller from Vari\*Lite discussing the fixtures with the event’s participants.



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and devices that many of the participants tried on for size.

Down the hall in the afternoon, Eric Reese from Sennheiser USA presented a wide selection of microphones and demonstrated their uses in various theatrical applications. Eric moved the group through a wide-ranging discussion of the physics of sound and why its important to microphone selection. The group had an extensive discourse on the proper set-up, coordination, and optimization of wireless systems in the current "RF landscape" in order to avoid wireless interference. Bryan Baumgardner from Clearwing Productions shared how he used a variety of microphone tricks to have an effective production of *RENT* at UW-Stevens Point.

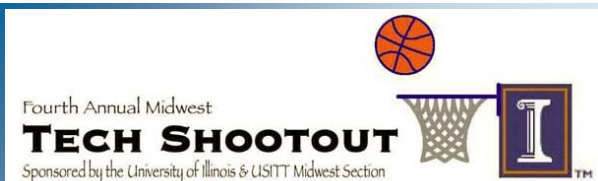
The Midwest Section will again convene on February 27 at The Theatre School at DePaul University in Chicago. The membership will have the opportunity to work hands-on in a casting and mold making workshop using plaster, two-part urethane plastic, two-part silicone rubber and other materials. If someone is more inclined towards computers, they can partake in a workshop on CNC router software programming and operation. And for those looking for style, the curator of the Costume, Textiles and Personal Artifacts Collection at the Evanston History Center will walk the group through the current collection of clothing from 1900-1910. The afternoon will focus on a Chicago Playworks production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Historic Merle Reskin Theatre, which will be followed by a tour of the nearly 100 year old building. And if the programming at DePaul isn't enough for you to join us, come for the cake! The Midwest Section will be celebrating USITT's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with cake and photos.

Following close on the heels of the event in Chicago, will be an event of varied topics in Grand Rapids, Michigan at the Grand Rapids Civic Theatre. The March 6<sup>th</sup> event will include workshops on Make-up for Theatre, Film, Television, and Photos, the way you can use nearly any commonly used lighting console with moving lights and LEDs, the differences between using an analog or digital sound console, and tips, tricks and techniques for using Styrofoam in scenic construction. Those who want, can also stay for the evening performance of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* at GRCT.

If you want more information on any of the programming in the USITT Midwest Section, please visit [www.usittmidwest.org](http://www.usittmidwest.org) or email Shane Kelly, Vice-Chair of Programming at [skelly19@depaul.edu](mailto:skelly19@depaul.edu).



David Krajec from Mainstage Theatrical Supply helping Mick Alderson adjust his fall arrest harness



## Tech Shootout

This year's project is mini-basketball shooters. Go for the most accurate by making the most baskets from a set free-throw line or longest shot by making your machine adjustable enough to hit free-throws from increasingly greater distances. To win it all, adjustability is key.

This year's competition will take place on the east terrace of the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Illinois on Saturday, May 1, 2010. Design judging begins at 9 am. We aim to start the shootout at 10.

Spectators are welcome!

This year's project is a Contact Beth Martell, [bmartell@illinois.edu](mailto:bmartell@illinois.edu) for answers to your questions.



## Tech Olympics Report

By Ellen White, Steve Jacobs & Ken Frazza

Our Section continues to promote and sponsor Tech Olympics at the state theatre festivals in each state of our section. In addition to Section members who donate their time and energies to run the Olympics, the Section purchases T-shirts as swag for competitors. Here in summary are some of the highlights:

### 2009 Wisconsin High School Theatre Festival Tech Olympics enjoys another banner year

Nearly fifty Wisconsin high school students converged on the campus of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater for the 2009 Wisconsin High School Theatre Festival Tech Olympics. Seven teams competed in six events throughout the day, culminating with an awards ceremony later that evening in the Young Auditorium.

Students vied in timed events such as annual favorites Knot Tying (sponsored by Mainstage Theatrical of Milwaukee, WI), Wire a Connector (sponsored by Designlab Chicago) as well as Lighting a Fixture, Prop Shift, and Sewing a Button (all sponsored by ETC). A brand new Rigging competition, sponsored by Milwaukee based Acme Corp was especially well received.

“The students were very excited and enthusiastic about the new rigging competition,” said Tech Olympics Coordinator and ETC Hospitality Coordinator Rick Wolff, adding, “Setting up a truss and chain rigging it played a significant role in the outcome of the final standings, making things that much more intriguing”.

ETC’s Kirk Starks (Technical Support Specialist) judged the ever popular Lighting a Fixture competition and had similar sentiments. “It was great to see enthusiasm and competitive spirit in lighting. If only show focus could go that fast...”

Each event had individual first, second, and third-place winners who all received extensive gifts of tools, theater gadgets, and of course, cool swag, including wildly popular USITT Midwest Tech Olympics t-shirts. The best times of each of the six events from every squad were recorded and tabulated for the Team Competition. The 2009 Champion was Neenah High School, which took the event by storm in their first appearance at the Tech Olympics taking home the trophy and a brand new Source Four® fixture. Kettle

Moraine High School placed second also earning a shiny new Source Four Par, followed by the third place winner Dominican High School “Green Team” earning a trophy and Source Four 26 degree lens tube.

“Once again it was a phenomenal event and the enthusiasm was contagious and refreshing,” added Wolff. “The sponsorship of the Tech Olympics by ETC, the USITT Midwest Section and the local dealers is a great way to encourage the future of the industry.”



### META (Michigan)Tech Olympics Continue to Grow

Despite a snowy slippery drive for many to East Lansing and Michigan State University, the Michigan Educational Theatre Association (META) Festival was again a great success. On Friday afternoon December 4th, 2009, two workshop sessions were dedicated to the Tech Olympics. This year’s events were: Hang and Focus a Light, Prop Shift, Costume Change, Sound Setup and Knot Tying.

Still in its infancy, this being only the second year of the event at META, 26 students from 12 different high schools participated in the Tech Olympics. Primarily organized by Western Michigan University’s Patrick Niemi and Matt Knewton, with the assistance of USITT Midwest and ETC, the students had fun, learned lots, and took away some swag and prizes. One young freshman who was fairly new to being a “tech”, took each event in stride, tried her best and walked away saying, “At least I know what I’m getting into now.” She was indeed grinning from ear to ear.

As all of the events are set up as individual events, an Overall Master Technician Award is presented each year to the student who excels in all five





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events. Derek Arnold, a student at Wylie E. Groves High School from Beverly Hills, Michigan garnered the award this year. It just so happens that his school also won the First Place Team award. Congratulations to all the students who participated.



### Illinois High School Theatre Festival Olympics Completes 8th Year

“It was a hard sell back in 2003 the first two years of the Tech Olympics at the Theatre Festival” according to Steve Jacobs, who began the Tech Olympics at the Illinois High School Theatre Festival. “The Theatre Festival committee said that since this was a festival and not competitive, the Olympics would not be appropriate as a competition. After some effort to make the Olympics appear less competitive, the committee slowly bought into the concept.

Now that the festival has completely embraced the Olympics, we have no trouble with it being a competition! It is most rewarding to see that each year we no longer have to ask to be included. We have the same day, time and venue each year and now hear ‘You will be doing this again next year, won’t you?’ Students now look forward to the event each year!”

Illinois’ events included: wiring a plug, Nicopress, light focus, prop change, costume quick change, knot tying, sound system set-up and flat construction. Seventeen different schools were represented with a total of 79 students competing. For a second year in a row, the first and second place team prize of a Source Four went to Naperville Central and University High School, respectively. A big thanks goes out to the many high school teachers and Midwest Section members who helped, and of course to ETC for their gener-

ous donation of Source Fours as prizes and the many vendors who supplied swag for the competitors!

In Illinois, the winners must stop by the Midwest Section table in the Exhibit Hall to learn about the Section, find out the results of the Tech Olympics, collect their swag, and in the case of the winning team, have their picture taken! Note the new Section display (created by M.C. Friedrich) behind the Naperville Central High School team.



### Results from the Indiana Thespian Conference

The 2010 Indiana State Thespian Conference was held the weekend of January 22-24, 2010 on the campus of Vincennes University in the brand new Red Skelton Theatre. This was the first time Vincennes had hosted the Conference and the Tech Olympics (called the Tech Challenge) at their campus.

In past years there have been about 450 student delegates, sponsors and chaperones to the state conference. This year there was a dramatic increase to 600 delegates. Following that trend, the Tech Olympics had a similar increase. In the past six years we’ve averaged 30 students at each conference. This year it jumped up to 44 competitors! This caused Indianapolis Stage Sales and Rental to scramble to create a lot more “swag bags” than in the past! Ellen White with ETC also contributed more items for those “goody bags” as well as her generous donations of an ETC Source Four PAR and a Source Four ellipsoid for the top two teams!

Students competed in these five events: Lighting a Geometric Shape, Sound System Set-Up,



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Props Quick Change, Basic Knots Tying and Folding a Backdrop as a team event.

This year Richard Wood (the Red Skelton Theater's T.D.) and Michael Legate (the theater department's T.D.) supplied undergraduate students as judges for most events. The lighting station was judged by David Del Coletti (recently retired from the Indiana State University Theater Department). Randy Riggs, the Sales Manager from Indianapolis Stage developed an Excel spreadsheet for scoring. This was its trial run and except for a couple of minor glitches it worked well and saved a lot of time in the tabulation of results!

The winners of the teams awards this year were:

- 1st Place – Warren Central High School (Indianapolis area) ETC Source Four ellipsoid
- 2nd Place – Carmel High School (Carmel) – ETC Source Four PAR
- 3rd Place – Reitz Memorial High School (Evansville)
- 4th Place – Logansport High School (Logansport)

Anyone in the Section who is interested in helping with any of the Tech Olympics should contact any one of us! It is truly a fun time to see all of the novice, and experienced, technicians!

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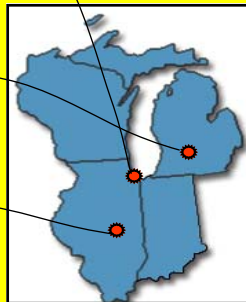


## Upcoming Events

DePaul University  
Saturday, February 27th  
- CNC Routers  
- Mold making  
- Costumes 1900-10

Grand Rapids  
Civic Theatre  
Saturday, March 6th

Tech Shootout,  
Univ. of Illinois  
Saturday, May 1st



## Information for Upcoming Events

Visit [www.usittmidwest.com](http://www.usittmidwest.com)

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## KC/ACTF Regional Winners Announced

By Kathleen Donnelly, Chair, USITT Midwest Section,  
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The Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival Region III was held in Saginaw, Michigan at Saginaw Valley State University January 6 – 9th. The number of students who participated in the Design and Tech expo events exceeded last year's numbers, despite the reconfiguration of the region which no longer includes Ohio.

USITT Midwest Section congratulates the Regional III winners who will be participating at the Kennedy Center Festival in Washington DC this April. These students are receiving \$100 awards from the Midwest Section to assist them in their travel to the Kennedy Center.



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Join us for the USITT Annual Conference & Stage Expo, in Kansas City, Missouri, March 31-April 3. The National Institute will be celebrating 50 years!



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### KC/ACTF Winners

Barbizon Award for Theatrical Design Excellence:  
Scenery Recipient: Joshua D. Reid,  
Western Michigan University,  
Production: *Picnic*

Barbizon Award for Theatrical Design Excellence:  
Costumes Recipient: Cole McCarty,  
University of Evansville  
Production: *As It Is In Heaven*

Barbizon Award for Theatrical Design Excellence:  
Lighting Recipient: Austin Bransgrove,  
University of Evansville  
Production: *Parade*

KCACTF Award for Sound Design  
Recipient: Steven Yaussi,  
University of Evansville  
Production: *House of Blue Leaves*

Alcone Company Makeup Design Award  
Recipient: Kyungjin Kim,  
University of Evansville  
Production: *Henry IV, Part 1*

Recipient of the National Stage Management  
Fellowship, Michael Ward,  
University of Evansville  
Production: *Parade*

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