HINTS ON ATTRACTING SAINTS VOLUNTEERS

Give as much lead time as possible. Most good Saints are fully booked a month or more in advance.

While several saints have long-term, on-going relationships with a particular theater on their own, most Saints prefer volunteer duties that require a commitment of only one afternoon or evening.

More than half of our membership work. If possible, be flexible about the time period for your volunteer needs. Many performing arts organizations have been disappointed by the lack of volunteers for mailings during the day, and Saints are just as disappointed that they are unable to help you. Consider not only daytime tasks, but evening and weekends as well.

Be as specific as possible. People are sometimes reluctant to volunteer unless they know what is expected of them, what time frame is involved, and the location – particularly parking arrangements and/or nearness to public transportation.

Finally, keep the volunteer in mind when you frame your request. What would convince you to spend time doing something for free? Perks, in the form of refreshments and/or complimentary tickets, are always appreciated.

A sincere and warm **thank you** is appreciated.

the Saints
Volunteers for the Performing Arts

TO CONTACT US

Call or write the Saints Office:

The Saints
2936 N. Southport, Suite 203
Chicago, Illinois 60657

TEL: (773) 529-5510
FAX: (773) 529-5512

E-MAIL: office@saintschicago.org

WEBSITE: www.saintschicago.org

To inquire regarding services of The Saints, please call The Saints' Office or send e-mail (as above) addressed to the President in your Subject Line. The President will respond.

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GUIDELINES FOR PERFORMING ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

WHO ARE THE SAINTS?

The Saints is a volunteer organization - now more than 1,700 members strong - which serves theaters and other performing arts organizations throughout the Chicago metropolitan area and surrounding communities. We were the first and are the premier organization in the country and have been copied by other cities.

Our primary mission is to assist the smaller, not-for-profit performing arts organizations. However, we will also help larger theaters, particularly if doing so allows our members access to shows they would not otherwise see.

WHAT WILL THE SAINTS DO FOR YOUR PERFORMING ARTS ORGANIZATION?

USHERING

The main service we provide is ushering. Our volunteers are well aware of your patrons' needs and how to make them feel welcome. Our ushers provide many services. They will:

- arrive one hour before the performance or function.
- be dressed in a professional black & white, or more formal attire if requested.
- have a flashlight and badge.
- prepare programs.
- usher, take tickets, work concessions, greet patrons, direct patrons at intermission.
- watch for patrons entering the house with food, drink and electronics.
- watch in the house for emergencies and notify house management.
- provide parking assistance if needed.
- pick up programs, tickets and stuffers from the floor after the performance.
- check for lost items and give them to house management.
- provide assistance at benefits when requested.
- provide other skills when requested.
- assist in mailings and postering.

The ushers provide all above at no expense to you.

COORDINATOR

Each venue has a Saint appointed Coordinator. The Coordinator relieves the theater from usher assignments. They will schedule your required ushers throughout your season. Long running plays, however, may have to be adjusted. They will:

- publicize each show in our monthly SPOTLIGHT newsletter that is sent to each member.
- contact our members through our e-mail and Hotline for changes.
- alert members on ushering emergencies, last-minute mailings, additions, cancellations, show extensions, free tickets, papering the house, etc.

The above services are at the expense of the coordinator.

The Saints Board provides the SPOTLIGHT, *e-mail and Hotline services.*

DETERMINING YOUR NEEDS

The Saints' President will determine the need of a coordinator for your performing arts organization. You will be contacted by our Coordinator Liaison to help in the selection of a coordinator for your venue and determine any special needs in accordance with Saints' rules for theaters.

E-MAIL: office@saintschicago.org
WEBSITE: www.saintschicago.org

WHAT WILL THE SAINTS COST MY THEATER?

FOR USHERS: As a reward, ushers are to be seated at the performance. For safety reasons, ushers are to be seated before the house lights go down and before the performance starts. Prearranged seating is preferred but may not be possible due to constrictions of the theater arrangement and the number of ushers.

If the house is completely filled and, there are no empty seats, ushers may accept a complimentary ticket for a future performance date of their choice for the same show. However, this is not preferred.

If you wish the ushers to pick up other than the aforementioned items from the floor, please provide plastic gloves and boxes or bags for disposal.

FOR MAILINGS, POSTERING: Complimentary ticket(s). If you are asking for volunteers for a mailing, or postering, it is imperative that you stipulate in advance that a certain number of hours of work are required to earn a complimentary ticket.

FOR COORDINATOR: Because your Coordinator is assigning the ushers, **they need a full commitment from your staff to keep them informed** of each season's productions, changes, extensions, and especially last minute cancellations of performances on a timely basis. They must have time to alert ushers. They must also have time to submit information to the editor of the SPOTLIGHT, and inform the President about this information for distribution to our members on the membership e-mail and Hotline. **The Coordinator also needs feedback** as to the conduct of ushers. The Saints have strict rules and must be informed of violations. These include no shows, late arrivals, improper dress, not picking up after show, etc. **THIS IS IMPERATIVE.**

FURTHER ASSISTANCE: Another way you can assist the Saints is to offer your theater for one or more of our monthly meetings and by providing program speakers. A listing of your Coordinator and Saints' Ushers as Volunteers printed in your programs would be much appreciated.