

U.S. Variety Newsletter: Winter 2006

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Stan Reynolds, Carol Jurgens and Ric Jurgens of Hy-vee Supermarkets



Lana Jones, Tom Fenno, Sandy Pape, ANLC 2005

Winter 2006 Letter from the National Executive Director

Welcome to the Winter 2006 edition of the U.S. Variety newsletter! I'd like to start off with some wonderful news. We have secured the National Mobility Program's first national sponsor: Fred Astaire Dance Studios! This is the first time that the company has chosen to work with a charity on the national level. Pahjmon Lipsey, regional developer and owner of the Houston-Kingwood Fred Astaire Dance Studio in Texas, worked with our Wisconsin chapter and soon brought Variety to the attention of Fred Astaire president Jack Rothweiler. The sponsorship was finalized in October. Please see the article in this newsletter for more information about the sponsorship, and look for letters in the mail to find out how you can expand upon this opportunity at the local level through other fundraisers. We are very excited by this sponsorship and look forward to a long relationship with Fred Astaire.

Variety's national partnership with Cadillac has also been confirmed! The Cadillac Invitational Golf Tournament (*con't on pg.2*)

Impressions from Iowa

U.S. Variety's second annual National Leadership Conference in Des Moines was a tremendous success. Outside speakers came in to lecture on how we can increase leadership and our accomplishments in Variety across the board. Dinners were sponsored by the Reynolds, Rosalie Gallagher and Sony Studios – a big thanks to all of you! The continued support of our national and regional sponsors was felt throughout by speakers and visits from the President of HyVee and other prominent leaders from Iowa. Drew McLellan, who has joined the USV Board of Directors, spoke about our future marketing vision. There was overwhelming unity and partnership exhibited by (*con't on pg.3*)

National Executive Director *(con't)*

will provide local golf outings, with one grand prize given away at each outing: the opportunity to play at the finals in Pebble Beach each January of the following year as well as many other prizes and goodies for your golfers. We are thrilled by this opportunity to increase membership and gain new sponsors at the local level and expand the reach of Variety. For more information on the Cadillac Invitational Golf Tournament, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Marketing expert Drew McLellan and I will be conducting board retreats to encourage board development, branding and fundraising on a local level. As facilitators, we will travel throughout the country to participating chapters and help build relationships between board members, clarify goals and begin strategic planning for the future. I gained a wealth of insight to Variety's needs and goals after making personal visits to 13 tents last year, and I look forward to passing along what I've learned to strengthen your organization.

In October, we presented our 2005 Report to International at the mid-winter board meeting. We discussed the importance of promoting unity through the use of logo and style guidelines, and would like to set up a message board or list-serve for the executive directors to better communicate with one another. We're looking to expand the Variety family by starting new tents in Washington, D.C. and Ohio. We will keep you posted on our progress.

Finally, we hope you enjoy the updates and stories in the pages that follow. If your own tent has a story that you'd like to share in the next newsletter, please do not hesitate to contact me at the U.S. Office.

Warm regards,

Ana LaDou

National Executive Director

U.S. Variety Updates

The U.S. Variety Web site has been updated. Click on "Chapter Resources" for more content on the National Mobility Program, financial reporting, Human Resources policies and the 2005 report to Variety International. Also, a 'Donate Now!' feature has been added to the site to accept online donations. **Please e-mail info@usvariety.com to receive this newsletter online.**

Local Chapter News

Congratulations to **Variety of Southern California** for a phenomenal Variety's Kids eBay auction! The shirts worn by Heath Ledger and Jake Gyllenhaal in the Oscar-nominated film **Brokeback Mountain** earned a staggering \$101,100.51.



Fans caught wind of the chance to bid on the paired shirts through People, E! Online, local news sources and even U.K. media outlets. U.S. Variety Vice President Jack Foley, President of Focus Features, donated the shirts for

this fundraiser. We appreciate the work Mr. Foley has put into serving USV as a board member and thank him for his consistent and unflagging efforts for Variety's kids. February's fundraiser comes on the heels of Tent 25's last auction, which garnered \$24,002 for the Herbie car from the 2005 film "Herbie: Fully Loaded." This extraordinary fundraiser has increased Variety's exposure across the country. If you would like to see additional items they are auctioning off, please visit their eBay site: <http://ebay.com/varietykids>.

On December 10, **Variety of Georgia** sponsored a **Special Holiday Shopping Spree** for 30 handicapped and needy children from the Atlanta area. The children and their families spent three hours shopping for \$75.00 worth of toys, books and educational items at local stores. Following the shopping spree, everyone enjoyed lunch and the opportunity to take a picture with Santa.

Variety of Iowa's 21st Annual Black Tie Dinner was held January 5th at the West Des Moines Sheraton. This fun evening of drinks, good food, door prizes and entertainment featured Jamie Pollard, Iowa State Athletic Director, as the guest speaker. The final door prize given away was a vehicle from Dewey Ford, KCCI-TV, KDSM-TV, KPWB-TV, Mediacom, and WOI-TV.



Tim Maurer, Ed Jablonski,
Ana LaDou



Stan Reynolds, Jack Gilliam



Michael Reilly, Joe Natoli,
Jody Reynolds

Don Pitchford, Rosalie
Gallagher, Diana Pollak,
ANLC 2005



Impressions from Iowa (con't)

all chapters in attendance... an amazing twenty-two! We hope that more will come next year; even our Canadian friends enjoyed their time with us and felt that the conference was informative and bridge-building. The positive momentum of the USV chapters is a testament to the entire U.S. organization from the local level on up.

2006 International Convention

will take place in Las Vegas starting Sunday, May 28, 2006. To register for the convention, please visit www.varietychildrenscharity.org. While you're there, also see the new message from Variety International President Michael R. Forman. Variety of Southern Nevada is proud to announce a very exciting way to kick off your Las Vegas experience before the international convention. The **2006 ATV Adventure** will be held on Friday, May 26 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Experience the thrill of an exciting guided ride through the Valley of Fire on a four-wheel All Terrain Vehicle! To register or receive more information, contact Executive Director Jason Smith at 702.383.8466.



Dena Pinsker, Emily Wagner,
Nancy Klueter, Maria Schmidt,
ANLC 2005

Thanks to **Coca-Cola** and **Blockbuster**

AMC Theatres began selling \$2 Gold Heart Pins at locations across the country in January. Thanks to a partnership with Blockbuster, Inc. and Coca-Cola, each Gold Heart Pin purchase will be accompanied by a coupon for a free movie rental from Blockbuster.



AMC
THEATRES

“Read It And See It” Program A Big Hit for Variety of Eastern Tennessee

Variety of Eastern Tennessee sponsored a “Read It and See It” program in December, rewarding more than 2,400 students from Knox County schools for reading the first novel in



C.S. Lewis’ series “The Chronicles of Narnia.” The fifth- through eighth-graders who completed an essay or other writing assignment on the book earned the right to attend a screening of “The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe” the day before its official opening. The books were distributed to students in targeted low-income Knox County schools

where reading problems had been identified.

“Many of these children do not have access to their own books at home,” said Executive Director Dena Pinsker. “The teachers said some of the low readers who they didn’t think would finish the book were so inspired because they had a book of their own that they told their grandparents, ‘Don’t give me toys this year. I want the boxed set of “Narnia” books.’”



FRED ASTAIRE
FRANCHISED DANCE STUDIOS

Our New **National Mobility Sponsor**

Fred Astaire Dance Studios has signed on as the National Mobility Program’s first sponsor. To initiate this new sponsorship, Fred Astaire Dance Studios all over the nation will sell a special edition \$10 logo pin co-designed by Variety and Fred Astaire. Also, all proceeds from the “Mix and Match” portion of Fred Astaire’s national and regional dance competitions will be donated to support our new program. In addition to these national initiatives, please contact the studio nearest you to discuss other fundraising ideas (e.g., a dinner dance) to raise money on a local level. With more than 110 Fred Astaire Dance Studios in the United States, this is a fantastic opportunity to raise funds and expand our charity’s brand. Feel free to contact the U.S. office with questions.

New Faces of Variety

Kat Quast joins us as the Executive Director at Variety of Orlando. After serving as general manager of Enzian Theater for seven years, Kat brings her enthusiasm and extensive local relationships to her new role at Variety. You may reach her at 407.422.KIDS.

Judy Vecchione, new Executive Director of Variety of New York, has been in the not-for-profit world within NYC for more than the past ten years, most recently with the American Diabetes Association and prior with the American Cancer Society. She is an experienced fundraiser with strengths in organizing and running special events, management, operations and sales and marketing. You may contact Judy at 212.760.2777.

Erica Lopez, graduate of the public relations program at the University of Southern California, is the new communications coordinator at the U.S. office. You may reach her at 323.954.0820 or by e-mail at erica@usvariety.org.

Variety Radiothon Success!

Tents across the country have been having great success with Radiothons this year. In some cities the amount raised has doubled from the previous year. Most recently our first ever Radiothon in Wilmington, Delaware raised more than \$60,000 selling 309 Buddy Bears. Iowa's Radiothon grossed \$80,136, selling 350 Buddy Bears. Variety of Pittsburgh sold 509 Buddy Bears, bringing in \$104,000! For more information about approaching your local radio station to arrange a Radiothon in your market please feel free to contact our office.



Little Girl with her Buddy Bear, Iowa Radiothon



Zach (age 11), Pittsburgh Tent #1



President Chris Kobus, Zach, Paul Mitsch, Pittsburgh Tent #1



Celia Hindes, Jessie (age 21), Pittsburgh Tent #1



99.5 WJBR-FM DJ's with a very happy Dylan Brown, Wilmington Radiothon

Adriana: US Variety Story Winter 2006



Adriana and the Aquayo family at Disneyland

On September 13, 2005, Adriana Aquayo, her mother Columba and her 10-year-old sister Alejandra came to Variety of Southern California on Adriana's 3rd birthday. At two months of age, Adriana was diagnosed with a very rare disorder known as Aicardi Syndrome, which causes seizures, severe mental retardation and blindness.

When Adriana became too heavy to carry, we received a heartwarming letter from her mother describing Adriana's condition and how hard it is for the family to meet all of their daughter's special needs. Although the father works very hard for his family, there are some things they just cannot afford. Rather than keep Adriana home-bound, Columba requested Variety's help to purchase a specially equipped stroller so that they can take their little girl on walks and family outings.

Variety's board of directors quickly granted the request to help Adriana become mobile, and today Variety was blessed with a visit from Adriana in her custom stroller. One of the first family outings was, of course, to the happiest place on Earth--Disneyland. On behalf of the entire Aquayo family, they extend their heartfelt THANK YOU for helping Adriana.



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