



**Westhampton
Beach Performing
Arts Center
Volunteer
Orientation Packet**



Westhampton Beach Performing Arts Center Volunteer Program

WELCOME!

Welcome to the Westhampton Beach Performing Arts Center, a not-for-profit arts organization established to create a thriving cultural entertainment center on Main Street in the seaside community of Westhampton Beach.

The WHBPAC opened in 1932 as Prudential's Westhampton Theater with well known stage talent from New York City performing. It was later purchased by United Artists and transformed into a single screen movie theater. In the mid 1990's the theater was deemed an unprofitable venue and set to be demolished.

In the course of only a year volunteers banded together to purchase the former United Artist Theater. They organized an impressive first season of live performances and film and raised 60 percent of the \$2.8 million needed to renovate the building. Thanks to these volunteers efforts the theater is now a vibrant venue for theater, music, dance and film serving patrons across Long Island.

Volunteers play an essential role at the Westhampton Beach Performing Arts Center. They support us in many different areas such as ushers, concession sellers, merchandise sellers and other capacities. Our volunteers act as ambassadors for the theater and are often the first contact our patrons have with the theater. Therefore, your courteous, upbeat attitude; your warm smile; your helpfulness and dedication are extremely valuable to us. We want our patrons to have a fantastic experience every time they come to the theater. As a volunteer, you make the difference!

We ask our volunteers to honor our policies. These policies were established to assure the proud reputation of the theater as well as the comfort, enjoyment and safety of our patrons. We ask that all of our volunteers help us to uphold our reputation and see that our patrons' experience will keep them coming back for years to come.

Welcome to our volunteer team. Your support and dedication is greatly appreciated!

RESPONSIBILITIES

Attire

To insure that our patrons can identify our volunteers in case they need assistance, we require our volunteers to wear the following when volunteering for any event:

- Black and white clothing
- Appropriate, comfortable shoes (no open toe)
- Volunteer badge
- Solid black or white sweater (optional)
- Solid black or white vest or blazer (optional)

Promptness

- Please arrive 45 minutes before curtain time for all live performances.
- If scheduled for a film please arrive 35 minutes before the film is scheduled to start.
- If you will be delayed please call the box office at 288-1500; if it is not during box office hours call the administrative offices at 288-2350 and ask them to give your message to the House Manager, Greg Minasian.
- You are expected to stay for the entire event. **If you need to leave early for any reason, inform the House Manager at the time of your arrival.**

It is critical that you arrive on time, stay throughout and are properly dressed.

At Arrival

- Please enter through main lobby doors.
- Sign in at desk in front office and get your assignment.
- Once you have signed in assemble in the Inner Lobby for pre-show meeting with House Manager. Please do not loiter in the Box Office.
- Store personal belongings in bottom draw of filing cabinet in Box Office.
- If ushering please take a flashlight into the auditorium with you.
- If taking tickets 2 “fanny packs” are available for you to wear to store your collected tickets stubs if you choose. They are kept in the bottom draw of the filing cabinet.

Volunteer Performance Viewing

- Viewing a performance is a benefit as a volunteer. Please keep in mind the viewing pleasure of our patrons comes first.
- Please get permission from House Manager before taking a seat and let him know where you will be seated.
- Remember you are still on duty. You may only sit in the **last 3 rows** of the orchestra or balcony on an **aisle** so it is easier for you to spot any problems and assist patrons. If there are no seats available on an aisle in the rear of your assigned section you unfortunately, won't be able to sit for the performance.
- For each performance at least one volunteer will be assigned to remain in the rear of the auditorium to assist patrons and deal with later comers.
- Once the show has begun please keep your voices down while assisting patrons and ask our patrons to do the same.
- Do not stand in front of the line of the curtain railing in the rear of the auditorium.
- If a performance is sold out and seats are not available for you to sit in please stand in the rear of the auditorium (behind the curtain line) or balcony. Sitting on the staircase is not permitted (Fire Marshall Mandate).

Probation/Dismissal

Rarely do we need to dismiss an usher or place them on probation. Behaviors leading to dismissal or probation include (but are not limited to):

- Repeated no shows, tardiness, early departure or inappropriate attire
- Neglecting duties
- Rudeness to patrons, fellow volunteers or staff
- Intoxication

Rewards

After each six assignments volunteers will receive two complimentary movie passes. An annual reception and tickets to a select show will be held for all active volunteers and a guest. Other perks will be offered throughout the season. Please note tardiness, improper dress, last minute cancellations and early departure will affect volunteer rewards.

*****Please do not come to volunteer while under the influence of alcohol, we count on you to be a responsible representative for the theatre. On this note alcoholic beverages will not be served to our volunteers.** Gum chewing is also not permitted.***

REGULAR PERFORMANCES

Ticket Taker Duties

- Since ticket takers are often the first to greet our patrons it is essential that they have a positive attitude and serve patrons courteously and quickly as they enter the auditorium.
- Monitor the doors before house opens. Answer patron questions; direct them to Bar/Lounge, Will Call or restrooms as needed.
- When house opens welcome the patrons, tear their ticket stubs and instruct them as to which aisle or balcony staircase to use.
- No social chatter please. It is your job to safely and efficiently get patrons into the auditorium.
- Observe patrons to insure that **no food or beverages** (other than bottled water) enter the auditorium.
- If a patron returns unused tickets to you, turn them in to them to the box office or the nearest staff member as soon as possible.
- Ticket stubs should be turned into the Box Office staff and “fanny packs” returned to the filing cabinet draw.

Usher Duties

- Ushers must remain in their assigned positions at all times to insure the safety and enjoyment of our patrons.
- Wait at curtain line for patrons. Be sure you are facing the Lobby Door to greet the patrons. Please do not stand so your back is to approaching patrons.
- Welcome patrons as they enter, ask for their ticket stubs, show them to their seats and hand them a playbill.
- Monitor patrons for food, beverages, recording devices and cameras.
- If a patron returns unused tickets to you, turn them in to them to the Box Office or the nearest staff member as soon as possible.
- If an issue comes up with a patron once the performance has began take the patron into the lobby so you will not disturb other patrons. Do not have a discussion in the rear of the auditorium.

Concession and Merchandise Sales

- On occasion you may be asked to sell artist merchandise or beverages at the bar.
- You should be willing, comfortable with and capable of handling cash. If you would be uncomfortable with this assignment please notify Cheryl Wheeler.
- The House Manager will provide a starter bank for you and all money will be returned to the House Manager to reconcile.
- You must remain on duty as requested by the House Manager. This may mean working before the show, during intermission and after the show.

Before/After Show Receptions

If a reception is scheduled before or after a show you may be asked to:

- Check guests in. A list of invited guests will be given to you.
- Man doors from Inner Lobby to Bar/Lounge. Guests must go through Check-In Door for admittance.
- Man outer Bar/Lounge doors
- Please do not leave your assigned area until the House Manager has told you to.

FILM SCREENINGS

- You are responsible for opening the door to the auditorium 30 minutes before the screening. Please arrive a minimum of 35 minutes prior to the screening. Check with the Box Office when you arrive to make sure it is OK to open the house.
- Since films are general seating, patrons will seat themselves; you are responsible for ripping their tickets.
- Move the rope stanchions clearly out of the way, behind the door would be best. Open one side of lobby doors.
- Greet the patrons and rip their tickets as they enter the auditorium.
- Remain in the outer lobby until thru the trailers. Check with the Box Office before leaving the Lobby.
- At the end of the trailers close lobby doors and hand your ticket stubs into the box office.
- You may take a seat in the rear of the auditorium or balcony on an aisle. Please take a flashlight with you. When two or more volunteers are on duty one must sit upstairs and one downstairs.
- Be ready to assist patrons in locating the restrooms or seats.

- At the start of the film credits, open the lobby doors. Please stay in the lobby until all patrons depart.

SCHOOL DAY PERFORMANCES

- School Day Performances are not ticketed events. Classes are seated according to assigned seating charts.
- See the House Manager for your assignment.
- If there is a seating problems see the House Manager.
- After the performance remain in position to help with the dismissal procedure.
- If there is a problem with a child please bring it to the attention of a staff member. It is not appropriate for a Volunteer to reprimand a child or comment on negative behaviors.

PROCEDURES

Ticket Issues

- If a seating issue occurs, please first double check the ticket date, time and seat location.
- Contact the House Manager if you are unable to resolve the problem.
- A seating change can only occur with approval from the House Manager and the Box Office. Please do not move patrons' seats without approval.

Cameras, Recording Devices and Phones

- At the start of performances an announcement is made stating cameras and recording devices are not allowed in the auditorium. On occasion special permission may be granted allowing photos to be taken.
- Contact the House Manager if you see anyone taking a picture or recording an event.
- Cell phones and beepers must have their ringers turned off.

Food and Drink

- Food and drink are prohibited inside the auditorium with the exception of bottled water.
- Please monitor patrons when they enter the auditorium at the beginning of a show and after intermission to ensure that they do not enter the auditorium with food or drinks.

Backstage Access

- Patrons are not allowed in the backstage area unless granted permission by WHBPAC staff.
- Individuals seeking admittance backstage should be directed to the House Manager.
- Any notes or flowers for performers should be given to the House Manager.

Late Seating

- Patrons arriving late will be seated at the discretion of the House Manager.
- We reserve the right to seat latecomers in the most convenient seats available until intermission.
- No one is permitted to stand or sit in the aisles at any time.

Handicapped Seating

- Wheelchair accommodations are available in the first row and last row of the auditorium on the right and left side (not in the center).
- In the case of a patron attending in a wheelchair, the seats will be removed prior to the opening of the house to allow room for the wheelchair.
- Occasionally patrons arriving in wheelchairs will transfer themselves into a regular seat. If they opt to do so, please do not attempt to physically assist them in moving from their wheelchair to the seat. The wheelchair will be kept in the rear of the auditorium or lounge area.

Hearing Impaired Devices

- Hearing enhancements are available to our patrons at the Box Office. They will be asked to leave a photo ID until the unit is returned.

Smoking

- Smoking is prohibited anywhere in the theater.
- Patrons may smoke outside. On evenings of live events ashtrays are placed outside.

Telephones

- We do not have a public phone. A public phone is located across the street.
- If a patron needs to place an **emergency call**, direct him/her to the House Manager.

Accidents and Injuries

Please inform the House Manager or other staff member of any accidents or injuries affecting other volunteers or patrons.

A First Aid kit with band aids, etc. is available in the Box Office on the top shelf of the shelving unit.

PLEASE BE AWARE OF THE LOCATION OF THE FOLLOWING:

Emergency Exits

Emergency exits are marked by illuminated “EXIT” signs.

In the event of an emergency, direct patrons to the nearest accessible exit.

First Aid Kits

A first aid kit is located in the Box Office, the Production Office and upstairs in the rehearsal room.

Fire Extinguishers

The most accessible Fire Extinguishers are available in the front section of the box office, the rear of the auditorium near the box office door, in the lounge mounted in the wall and past the bar on the left wall just before the door leading backstage.

Restrooms

Restrooms are located on the balcony level at the top of each staircase.

Handicapped Bathroom and key

The locked handicapped bathroom is located downstairs past the bar on the right. The key is located behind the bar. Please be sure to know the exact location of the handicapped bathroom key.

Water Fountains

The water fountain downstairs is located past the bar to the right of the door leading to the production hall. There is also a water fountain upstairs in the administrative offices hallway.

Elevator

On the ground floor the elevator is located past the bar to the right of the production hall door. On the second floor the elevator is located in the administration office hallway.

Each volunteer will be taken on a tour of the theatre to locate the above sites.

WE WELCOME YOUR SUGGESTIONS AT ANY TIME!

Please contact Cheryl Wheeler with any suggestions, questions, comments or concerns at 288-2350, ext. 102.

And again Welcome & Thank You!