



## President's Message

This spring ACTRA held its meeting of National Councilors in Vancouver. Our National Councilor, Shannon Jardine was doing a play at the Globe and was not able to attend so I went in her place. It had been a long time since I was at a National Councilors' meeting. When I was last there it was in early 90's during the time that ACTRA faced very serious problems. The existence of the organization was in peril. One of the outcomes of that period was the emergence of the Union of B C Performers. During the intervening years ACTRA and the UBCP have worked in tandem with each other and it was at the meeting this spring that there was a final healing of the wound when Alvin Sanders of the Executive Council of UBCP was elected to the position of National Vice President.

The second reason for the holding of the Council meeting in Vancouver was that the conference of the Canadian Labour Congress was taking place, at which ACTRA made an impressive showing. Because of the nature of our work we are independent contractors. Increasingly other areas of labour are being confronted with similar arrangements regarding their relationship to their employers. Our experience in that area is a valuable resource for other unions and our president Ferne Downey was elected to the National Executive of the CLC. You can see her speech at the conference at the CLC web site under conferences.

Later in the spring Mike and I had the opportunity to meet with Ferne in Regina and talk about some of the problems we face in Saskatchewan (that is Ferne and myself in the picture).

Which brings me to the final point. While there has been an improvement in the work picture recently we still see room for much improvement on the part of support from our provincial film agency and to that end continue our work with other parties involved in the film business. Given the craziness in the financial markets and the evaporation of many US state film initiatives it is very important that our province is ready to capitalize on that situation.

Alan Bratt



## Regina area Actor's Studio

Some of us who are members of ACTRA are starting an informal group that will mostly be about working on scenes either in preparation for auditions or just as explorations. This is a peer based group and is concerned with the simple dog work of bringing text out of the book and into the room. We will assume a level of experience on the part of the participants that makes long sessions on relaxation and other aspects of preparation better done at home or prior to the meetings. The objective here is to lay what you want to do out there and to see if it works. Then you can rebuild your approach if you are having difficulty. We don't intend to break down or rebuild any one. This is playing to your peers without the public.

If it is successful we might expand the scope of the sessions to have various other members of the film community come and tell us what they do and how we as actors can help them and in turn make our time more effective. We might even have a session on how not to be a jerk on set or at least have an idea of some of the protocol.

Unfortunately this is limited to participants in the Regina area (unless you happen to be in town from S'toon or elsewhere). We are also limiting it to ACTRA members, both full and apprenticing. For the sessions to be effective the groups must be small, of no more than twelve persons. Because we all live lives of varying degrees of chaos the sessions will be scheduled on an ad hoc basis though we want to achieve some frequency with them to make people feel they have a home. People who are interested may register with Rachel Cantin at [lexie\\_1020@hotmail.com](mailto:lexie_1020@hotmail.com)

Alan Bratt



## National Councilors Report

It wasn't that long ago we were gathered at the ACTRA Annual General Meeting in Regina discussing the depressing state of our film industry. We were coming up with strategies on what we could do to help bring film work here. And then suddenly, we had a booming film industry again this summer! What a wonderful summer it has been for many local actors, crew and producers. To make summer even busier I got married on August 6 in Torch River, Saskatchewan. It was an amazing fairytale like day! In some ways the wedding had elements of a film set – actors and crew stood up for us and were part of the proceedings. We had professional hair and make up crew from the industry getting us pretty before the big event. And we even had film set walkies while crew drove guests in golf carts to the location. So you can get a sense of the amazing location where I grew up (4 hours North of Regina) I have included a wedding photo here. This is the same location where DUST UP, the History Television documentary series I co-created and Executive Produced was filmed. It has been a wild ride for my hometown and the pilots. My dad and brother who are cropdusting pilots that the doc series follows have been getting asked to sign autographs across the province and it has brought national interest to our hometown and farming area.

I have been happy to see so many local ACTRA members on commercials airing all summer and excited to hear many voices I recognize on radio commercials. To kick start the summer in the best possible way Jen Lynch came back to Regina to direct her feature film RABBIT produced by Rhonda Baker. It was so wonderful to work with this amazing director again who Saskatchewan has come to know and love! Many local actors got to be in some wickedly gruesome scenes and work with prosthetics with Emersen Ziffle. Daniel Ford Beavis was the Stunt Coordinator who did some amazing work on the film.

The CBC Television Series InSecurity came back to Saskatchewan again for a 2nd season! Here's hoping they get great ratings and come back for a 3rd. ACTRA member Daniel Ford Beavis was the stunt coordinator both seasons.

Trilight Entertainment brought the film VAMPIRE DOG to Regina and provided a wonderful opportunity for so many of our local actors as the majority of the film was made up of Sask. actors! Lead roles went to our Saskatchewan ACTRA Councilors Amy Matysio and Jodi Sadowsky! And several local actors got great roles including: Kim Elek, Lauren Laschuk, Dylan Sthamann, Mark Claxton, Alan Bratt, Darla Biccum, Myeva Surjik, Margo Regan, Cavan Cunningham, Dan Willows, Louise Handford and William Gardiner. The Stunt Coordinator was TJ Bews.

Up next is MY LUPINE LIFE, a web series out of Saskatoon produced by Karma Film Inc. which held auditions in both Saskatoon and Regina. After that we can look forward to the Minds Eye Entertainment Feature Film 13 EERIE filming this fall.

At the National level, ACTRA staff and members have been working hard this summer negotiating contracts with the NFB, CBC, CTV and the NCA (National Commercial Agreement). They have also been involved in important cases in front of the CRTC. ACTRA was the only organization to speak out against a variety of requests by specialty channels to change their conditions of licence and ACTRA won almost all of them. For instance, Showcase requested to air more US Programming in their prime time and it was rejected by the CRTC.

ACTRA has also been busy fighting for government policies and regulations to help our industry. ACTRA filed a submission to the Finance Committee with three recommendations: 1) Increase the value of the Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit (CFVPTC) and the Production Services Tax Credit (PSTC), 2) Make taxes more equitable for self-employed creative entrepreneurs by reintroducing income averaging and exempting revenues earned on copyright and residual payments, 3) Support content creation with increased, long-term funding for the CBC, Telefilm, CMF and NFB.

I will be attending National Executive meetings in Toronto in early November and then I will head to Ottawa to lobby government on behalf of ACTRA.

Another reason to celebrate this season is Trilight Entertainment's feature film HARD CORE LOGO 2 will be playing at the Toronto International Film Festival! Danceland and Manitou Beach will be on display to all who watch Bruce McDonald's beautiful film! Films like these really help deliver the message "keep coming back to our incredible province as we are always open for business!"



Photo by Melissa Chapman



## 'Lullaby for Pi' Premiere and Party



'Lullaby for Pi' party at the Soundstage...President Bratt hob nobs with the best of them



Congratulltions to Bill Gardner, who had a nice role in Pi



Shannon Jardine, Janet and Bill Gardner and Alan Bratt

## Los Angles Marketing Trip



Vanessa Bonk, Debra Sawarin, Tobi Lampard, Mike Burns in La LA Land

In June I went to Los Angeles as a part of a SaskArts Board funded marketing trip organized by SMPIA. The group included Lars Murrans (DGC), Debra Sawarin (IATSE), Vanessa Bonk (SMPIA), Suzanne Bell and Tobi Lampard (SaskFilm). We split into two groups and took meetings all over town for five days. The meetings were an opportunity for the Saskatchewan Film Industry to put some friendly and helpful faces in

front of Hollywood producers. It was a pleasure to be a part of group that represented labour, Government and industry and it was not lost upon the many producers we met with. Our job was to help put Saskatchewan on the map for producers who may not have known we existed. We did that and we are making plans to do it again.

Mike Burns



Jean Freeman, Alan Bratt, Carol Gay Bell, Mike Burns and Shannon Jardine

social. This year we were pleased to have time membership to Carol Gay Bell. Alan talked about the impressive achievements of Carol and other local women members who had to overcome so much to succeed in the small and chauvinistic broadcast industry that existed in Saskatchewan of the 1960-70's. Carol was eloquent in her acceptance and shared some anecdotes with the group.

It was a fun and informative afternoon.



## ACTRA AGM and Social

Our annual AGM was a well attended event with plenty of lively discussion of the issues our branch has been dealing with. Many thanks to all the members who took the time to attend and to share their thoughts with the group...there is no Union without you!

After the meeting we adjourned to the Freehouse for our AGM President Alan Bratt present a life-



ACTRA Saskatchewan AGM (above)

<ACTRA Saskatchewan AGM Social