

**AYCO Board Conference Call  
June 22, 2008  
Minutes**

4:00pm pacific 6:00pm central 7:00pm eastern

Facilitator: David / Secretary: Kevin / Timekeeper: Jackie / Minutes  
*Present: Jackie, David, Rick, Kevin, John?, Donna, GERALYN*  
*Not Present: Warren, Peggy*

**4:00 pm Personal Highlights**

**4:15 pm Board Guidelines / Happy thoughts / Focal points**

Listen with Heart and Eyes; Take Risks; Don't Blame; Don't tell someone how THEY are feeling; Reflect/Confirm what's said without having to agree or disagree; Stay on point; Respect each other, even if we do not agree on statement/issue; Take turns, Give turns; Have Accountability (Follow through); Communicate outcomes: How? Why? Amplify; Don't interrupt; Don't negate; Don't block; Be part of the Solution; Delegate; Gather ALL opinions before deciding; Don't Pounce/Reflect; Give benefit of the doubt: Ask Questions / Not Attacking; Engage in Non-violent Communication; Email correspondence should be limited as much as possible to information/facts; The only dumb question is the one you don't ask.

**4:20 pm Reports and Updates**

- **Finance Report – KG**

\$9460.70. Plus \$300 in the mail. Donna & Peggy made contributions, plus \$2,500 from Cirque.

- **AYCO Store – JW**

There's \$3,000. Slow business. Carrie's book is moving. John's time has been taken up at school; is eager now to work with Rick to upgrade in time for the educator's conference.

- **Website + Communications- RD**

We got the AYCOgram ready to go out... is waiting for feedback. Wants to include College Conference people on list. Working on postcard for Ed Con. Work in progress, will keep comments in mind. Needs right photo with right resolution...

David has a little write up for Criss Cross circus, and College Con. Will send.

- **OTHER??**

**4:35 pm Accomplishments / Successes**

- Social Circus Task Force Members Assembled!

All those who were asked to serve agreed!!

- Sarasota Interested in Hosting AYCO '09!

SC really wants this!

- EdCon '08 expecting good attendance!

Looks like good attendance, even some international participation.

**DISCUSSION**

**4:40 pm EdCon '08 Boulder, CO**

- ★ Revised Budget
- ★ Board fiscal participation discussion
- ★ \$300 each board member?

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- ☆ Programming update
- ☆ Discussion
- ☆ Airline tickets and Housing Accommodations
- ☆ GET YOUR TICKETS ASAP!

DH: I didn't get the revised budget out, sorry – will do.

Last meeting we tabled the discussion about \$300 contributions from board. Can we commit to this, or find a different amount that people can hold to? I'd like to encourage \$300.

KG: Given tough economic times, rather than a minimum, people should give what they can. I can commit to \$300 but not sure about everyone.

RD: I think we can set a suggested donation, and \$300 is the precedent. In addition we can be realistic and not make it required. If you can't we won't kick you off the board.

KG: This time we won't put it in the budget, so if it comes in, great.

DWB: We need to send something so we can show 100% board commitment for grant writing.

JW: Is this the annual giving?

DH: This is the annual donation, and it ends up supporting the conferences.

KG: Typically we set this \$ aside for scholarships. We don't have to always do that, but we can make a motion to earmark a portion to scholarships, or just put it in our account.

DWB: I'd vote to put it where it's needed, when it's needed, not restrict it.

DH: Programming: going along, but we're still looking for more presenters. Who do you know that might be coming? Nudge them along... drop a line to participate. Need: Coaching coaches, acrobatic, aerial spotting, act development, on the ground. Other areas of expertise are welcome. The more commitment we get to programming, the more people will want to attend.

KG: I don't have the list in front of me, the topics that are booked, so I don't know what I'd ask.

JD: I just know the movement education people... not the circus people, so I'm shy to offer.

DWB: We would welcome movement that contributes to circus – choreography, yoga, etc.

RD: I would give a workshop about discipline, closure of classroom time – classroom management. The content would be my experience and what worked for me, some exercises for experience, but leave it open to others' success stories for classroom management. I'll submit the form!

DWB: I've done multiple intelligences workshops... We'll see if it's needed.

DH: NO Deadline. There was one already... but it doesn't work in the AYCO community. People wait because they might get a gig. And there's a value question. How do we assess the community needs for this kind of thing? Show people it's valuable to come out? That's a different discussion.

Reminder: Airfare is going up rapidly. Make your transportation plans NOW. Send the receipt for reimbursement. Don't wait. You have to fly to Denver – try to work together to share rides.

Hotels: the idea would be to get reimbursed. Go ahead and reserve.

**5:10 pm**

**Social Circus Task Force – DH + DWB**

- ☆ Status Report / Update
- ☆ Proposed meeting proceeding EdCon
- ☆ \$ support from Cirque for TF Document Creation

DWB: We have assembled TF: Donna, David, Jackie, Paul Miller, Jessica, Carrie Heller, Nick Taylor (who hired Donna for her first Cirque du Monde, has a PhD in social work and does Cirque du Monde in LA.) 7 people. We've sent out inquiries about first phone conference, w/ 2 weeks. David and I put together a timeline and needs of social circus, so we'll be starting our meetings with a plan. Exciting! Positive response from members and from Gil and Michel.

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DH: Exciting, feels action-oriented. Cirque — Gil said “What is this going to cost you to follow through? Maybe we can help.” They are open to a proposal.

RD: The purpose of the meeting is to set a direction for the future?

DWB: TF purpose is to create a vision about what a U.S. arm would look like for Social Circus. Realistic vision, a budget, and that’s what we’ll present to Cirque for a social circus network. To create the vision, the action plan, and the budget. Hours worked, in addition to support for travel for TF members, office supplies, cost of the meeting in Boulder, food. We’ll see how receptive they are to that. They want hours and manpower — they’re ready to move on this, as we are.

DH: We’ll keep people updated. I’m excited that Jackie is still involved even as she transitions off the board. The people on the TF have such a varied background, it’s a good mix of experiences.

**5:25 pm Festival ’09 Planning**

- ★ Sarasota interested in Hosting
- ★ Discussion
- ★ Committee Assemblage
- ★ What will it take for us to move on this?

DH: Spoke to Peggy in Sarasota. They haven’t broken ground yet. The dream to have air conditioned stadium for AYCO isn’t going to happen. How possible? We talked dates: The kids in Sarasota go back to school in 2<sup>nd</sup> week of August. It’s usually the 3<sup>rd</sup> week Aug. That could work, the kids come after school, and then the weekend. So that didn’t vex her. That could be an asset in terms of creating a buzz in the community. The biggest issue is going to be air conditioning. Let’s open up discussion.

JD: I’d say Sailor in ’11! We cannot ask people to go to another venue that is not air conditioned after last year — that was the single greatest comment on the feedback.

GB: I agree. I couldn’t ask people to do that — people will stop coming.

RD: What about the old Ringling facility in Venice?

DWB: We need a supportive host group.

DH: Considering weather/temperature, where can we do a festival that won’t be hot? That leaves us with San Francisco or St. Paul—

KG: It’s about air conditioning, not location.

DWB: What’s happening with Chuck?

DH: They don’t have the facility.

RD: Another possibility is the Peru circus festival. They’ve acquired the building next door, will be renovating it. They have a base of support, they’ve expressed interest in the past. And perhaps another time of year? Columbus day weekend? Especially if we didn’t have a Gala and all that. We could put the festival into 3 days rather than 4.

DWB: Redlands is limited by sharing their space with the Y.

JW: We need to do one more regional there, then we could explore the intentions they had 4 years ago for hosting. A little more time. It’s air conditioned.

DWB: They have to keep other programming going bc it’s a YMCA.

JW: Sonja Rozzi has opened up a restaurant venture and might be aware of other venue possibilities.

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RD: What about NYC? Big Apple circus tent? Partner with them somehow? Amazing Grace, I circus school nearby. There's big time media there, get a tipping point there.

DWB: What about circus camps? Winnarainbow? Hole in the Wall? Might be a week at the end of the summer. French Woods.

DH: The downside are the housing accommodations, proximity to major transportation. Same problems, a lot take place outside and things are weather dependent.

KG: Any Cirque facilities in Los Vegas?

DH: Working outside a youth circus area comes with problems... Lack of support base.

JD: NYC is the home of the Russian American Circus Kids...

RD: What about a phone call to Hovey Burgess, Bond Street, about logistics and housing? It might be worth a few phone calls.

JW: I'd be willing to make a call to the IJA coordinators. They're on the lookout every year for a brand new place. They might have a recollection of something from the past that would be near what we'd need. That's something worth exhausting.

DWB: Contacts with Peru.

JD: We might be freer ... gala/support base

DH: Circus is about Show. We call ourselves a national youth circus org. We bring kids from all over to show what they know. SO I agree that a paradigm shift is needed concerning the money, but performance is important.

KG: Spending all the money on lights etc., I can't support that at all. But we can still do performances.

DH: We are learning to rally the troops. We can bring in a team, allocate contacts to these potential posts. Reach out to Peru re: summer '09 schedule, would they be open? Circus Center is going through transition. Acro sport could. Check in with Juventas.

JW: This next regional at Redlands could be a trial balloon for a national later. They might be interested, this could be a template for something bigger. We could determine now for potential for '09. Dates of Redlands regional will be around November 1.

GB: 2 brainstorms: Smirkus travels all summer, but end MidAugust. Hampshire college is looking to circus resurgence. Linking up Smirkus with their tent, with the college... Also, doesn't the Big Apple circus put their show together in the summer? Could we hook up with them in '09 with the festival, where we could tap into them for coaches etc., with them putting together their show.

RD: They put together their show north of NYC in some building.

JD: Adding NECCA to that New England mix.

RD: Smirkus doesn't have a large youth circus base. Tent is not air conditioned, is expensive to move the tent. We would have to bear that expense. No major airport.

DWB: It'd be worth a phone call to find out if they're interested and to see what they think they could contribute, rather than second guessing them.

RD: The host needs a youth circus base, to actually have youth! It's not only important to have them for the gala, but for conference registrations... that's where we've made most of our registrations, from the local yc community. One more idea about NYC and possible partnership with Big Apple: BA is hugely connected with corporate funding that far surpasses other groups like Juventas and Circus Harmony. Karen McCarty is the BA connection.

DH: She's out of town, I called her this week about BA funding. We've never explored that relationship. If we were ever able to partner with BA, my gut tells me that that would take years... they're pretty big, by our standards and experience. It takes a lot more than 14 months. But it's exciting and promising to think about it. What about Ringling?

DWB: BA has a youth circus outreach program/educational program.

RD: I was just this week talking with Deborah Kauffman from Clown Care. ALSO — What about connection with the CFA convention?

JD: Circus4Youth is interested in working with us somehow... Stay tuned. When I leave the board Jim Cole wants a contact.

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DH: I'm interested in determining what they do and how it dovetails with what we do. They're more current with updates and shows. We're doing things more broadly, offering programs themselves.  
JD: This is a great time to find out what it means to be working together.

DH: How can we move on starting to get momentum on the next festival even if we don't have a location. We've had false starts ...

DWB: I think we tabled it because we didn't know where it would be. It's hard to ask people to do something without being specific. We need to issue tasks.

GB: We at least need a date!

KG: I'll follow up on the Circus Center.

**5:50 pm**

**Fundraising**

- ★ Follow up Reports
- ★ Circus Fans Grant update?
- ★ Ringling?
- ★ Spectacle?
- ★ Big Apple
- ★ Individual Donations

JD: Haven't heard from CFA grant proposal. Nothing.

RD: I didn't contact Scott O'Donnell until we had more specific activities — but will contact Ringling.

DH: I'm disappointed bc I sent a formal corporate request... got no response, even Kevin O'Keefe followed up.

KG: KOK said he'd bug them one more time and if we didn't hear back, to just drop it.

RD: Scott's at the talent end of it, not the money end. Also, Spectacle didn't respond (re: free advertising, not direct money donation.) Needs follow up phone call (not email.)

DWB: At least get the word out about the Ed Con. We've had 2 conversations through email, about low wire and about funding.

RD: Forums vs. Email. There are links on every web page, it's woefully underused. But when it is used, everyone on the list gets the post. Forums have things permanently posted and people can find the records. Shows activity on the website. The drawback is that a beginning of a forum, only 2 or 3 posts... so they don't use it. It would help if everyone on the board put a post on there! Join the Festival '09 conversation! Trying to encourage traffic.

DH: Can we cut and paste the low wire conversation onto the web site?

DWB: Let's inform the directors on the email list that we want to post this on the web.

RD: The main thing is to populate the forum to get people interested in using the forum. Stories, insight, a tip, a question.

JD: Wouldn't the question of the '09 festival site be appropriate for the forum? Or maybe the email list of AYCO advisors?

DWB: The AYCO Advisors list people should be encouraged to join the AYCOTeachers list... I'm willing to send out a thing to those people to do that.

RD: I need clarification. AYCOBoard email list; AYCOCORE email list; AYCOTeachers email list; AYCOYouth email list, and the Forum. AYCOAdvisors is a Jackie list. All the others are Yahoo.

DH: Rick, you do what seems right, as the person in charge of communications. I was encouraging for the forum, it's more public and tells people who we are and the kinds of conversations that we have. Then they can immediately participate right off the website. That's why I feel like we should just have something off the website rather than all these email groups. Then, meanwhile, I'm also hearing that people don't want these threads to be out there but more internal. SO go with more of what makes people comfortable.

DWB: If there's nothing going on in the forums, people won't return that often.

RD : I know the benefits of email groups and of forum. Perhaps we can keep the forum page live, but have it unlinked from our website for the time being. Encourage all the people from these

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different links saying We're building this content, so use it between now and the Ed Con. Then when it has life and body, then link it to the website and the world.

DH: Why pull it off the website?

RD: Anybody in the world can click on it and look at it — it's only good if there's life. So people are seeing an empty house, oh, I'm not going to come back. So we want to privately fill the house with our core people, so it has body, and then link it to the wider world, they'll see there's something in there.

DH: The same thing could happen when it's linked.

RD: I just brought the page up — and when I recently updated the page I used the old page... so right now there is no link to the forums, by accident.

DWB: I like having both, so you can choose to make it private or public.

RD: The side bar is pretty crowded! I almost think we should have one or the other. But I can do both.

DH: Yes, do both for now. To be continued.

**6:10 pm Board Changes / Development**

DH: If you have not sent RD a bio about yourself as a board member, or if you need to update one, do that by the end of the month. A paragraph.

DH: Not sure what the process is for officially removing board members, and for adding them.

RD: Will cut and paste the bilaws to everyone.

DH: We need a secretary.

DWB: I'd be happy to help but I take horrible notes!

DH: Let's brainstorm about this. Follow up on tasks.

JD to attend one more meeting before stepping off the board...

**6:25pm Review Tasks and Timelines, Next Meeting**

**7:30pm Meeting Adjourned**

**Reminders**

Review Task Timeline regularly to complete tasks.

**Tasks & Timeline**

Who	Task	Timeline (deadline)	✓
David	Complete 2 write ups for AYCOGram TONIGHT	Now!	
David	Contact Al Light re: 2007 festival debrief	May 1st	
David	Contact Jim Cole to discuss AYCO's connection with Circus4Youth	June 30	

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David	Contact Juventas about future hosting	July 5	
David	Contact Karen McCarty at Big Apple	?	
David	Phone conference with Jackie and Rick regarding college outreach		
David or Donna?	Draft email to invitees stating the plan and purpose of the Social Circus Task Force and inviting their participation. Send to the board for review and editing		X
David or Donna?	Letter to Cirque to inviting the Cirque du Monde teachers to attend Ed Con; tell them about the task force		X
David & Rick	Develop committee lists for '09 Festival by next board meeting and propose committee chairmen	TBD	
David	Ask Karen McCarty from the Big Apple for a \$2,000.00 donation	TBD	
David	Send Rick information about the First Aid course		X
Rick	Write lady from Ireland (?) with invitation letter for Ed Con	This week	
Rick	Contact Deborah Kauffman about presenting at the Ed Con	This week	
Rick	Apply for Ed Con workshop presentation	ASAP	
Rick	Contact Bill Anderson about possible '09 festival site... and to say Hello and how your season going? Present at the Ed Con?	July 4	
Rick	Followup phone call to Spectacle magazine	?	
Rick	Ask AYCO Advisors for permission to post low wire email conversation on the website		
Rick	Invite AYCO "core" to participate on forum feedback	?	
Rick	Forward the document on the Youth Board Member to everyone	?	
Rick & David	Develop committee lists for '09 Festival by next board meeting and propose committee chairmen	TBD	

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Rick	Contact Spectacle Magazine for free Ed Con advertising; Call Peggy ___?___ to identify people for sponsorship	?	
Rick	Ask Scott O'Donnell for a \$500 donation for Ed Con	?	
Kevin	Contact Circus Center		
Kevin	Bio to Rick for website	asap	
Jackie	Review the board's chaperone protocol for festival participation by college students	?	
John	Bio to Rick about board – add more	End of June	
John	Submit a paragraph about the AYCO Store to Rick for the next AYCOgram	?	
Donna	Send bio to Rick	asap	
Donna	Send message to AYCO Advisors encouraging them to join the AYCOTeachers list	?	
Donna or David ?	Draft email to invitees stating the plan and purpose of the Social Circus Task Force and inviting their participation. Send to the board for review and editing.		X
David or Donna?	Draft a letter to Cirque to inviting the Cirque du Monde teachers to attend Ed Con tell them about the task force		X
EVERYONE	Explore the new forum on the website; spend 3 minutes – tops! Give feedback on first minute on each forum	now	

**Former Tasks:**

David	Flesh out internship ideas; email to board	ongoing	
David	Contract with Boulder Circus Center	current	
David	DH to forward site criteria to Jackie Davis All board to review draft	3/16	

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David	Contact Rick	now	
David	Get Chicago Ed Con contacts to Geralyn	?	
David	Contact Cindy and Carter about local sugar daddies.	TBD	
Rick	Contact Scott O'Donnell, Baraboo — preliminary way. Re: Festival hosting	?	
Jackie	Review and edit David's Site Criteria document for Board review	ongoing	
Jackie	Apply for Circus Fans grant	May 1	X
Geralyn	I agree to take the list from the community meeting and merge it with the evaluation form of people willing to volunteer. Will divide it up geographically per board members... so they can make personal contact with these people to see if there's interest in the 09 festival.	March 23	
General	Create Exit Document/Evaluation Template for festival Host post-fest Create pre-nuptial agreement btwn AYCO and Host for pre-fest	allocate	
EVERYONE	<b>Board bios need updating. Re-do yours by Christmas.</b>	URGENT	
John & Kevin	Create Ad Hoc Vendor Committee to draft vendor policy for future festivals. Present to Board for approval.	?	