

## LANE SERIES USHER GUIDELINES

Lane Series ushers are an integral part of the organization's operations. As a Lane Series usher, you are a visible and important link to the patrons attending shows. Your primary responsibility as a Lane Series usher is to assure the enjoyment, comfort, and safety of our patrons. Treat every patron as a valued customer. If you see something that needs attention that you cannot address yourself, alert the House Captain.

Lane Series Ushers report to the House Captain assigned to a given performance. The House Captain serves as a liaison between the Ushers and the Lane Series staff which allows the staff to concentrate on the task at hand for the evening, which is to successfully present a performance to a paid audience. It is important that ushers bring any questions, concerns, or suggestions to the House Captain rather than to the staff. Your comments and suggestions are always welcome, but please direct them to the House Captain or to the staff via email or phone.

### Usher Cancellation

If you are unable to usher for a scheduled event, or if you will be unavoidably delayed in arriving:

- ❖ Contact Freda Farrell on her office phone at 802-656-4487 as soon as you know of a scheduling conflict.
- ❖ **If you need to cancel on the performance day**, please call Freda Farrell on her cell at 802-777-0818. For events at the Flynn call: 652-4525 and leave a message for the Lane Series House captain. Please store these phone numbers in your cell phone directory or purse/wallet.
- ❖ Regarding illness, we strongly encourage anyone who is not feeling well to cancel and stay home in order to avoid the risk of transmitting illness to a large group of people.

### Event Cancellation

If a scheduled performance is canceled due to weather or other circumstances, the Lane Series will notify ushers by email and phone. Please be sure to check your phone messages and email the day of an event that you are ushering. Please note that email is the primary correspondence method for Usher correspondence. Checking your email messages and retaining the information there within is considered to be essential to your duties as an Usher.

## I. GENERAL PROCEDURES

### Dress Code

- ❖ Wear white shirt or blouse and black skirt or pants. White sweaters are permitted. The dress code is enforced.
- ❖ No hats may be worn.
- ❖ We ask that ushers keep perfume/body fragrance use to a minimum in an effort to avoid potential allergy issues for patrons and others.

### Name Tags and Flashlights

- ❖ New ushers receive a name tag at the start of the season. It is your responsibility to bring your name tag to each show or return your name tag to the usher box following each show.
- ❖ It is your responsibility to have and wear your name tag at each performance.
- ❖ Lane Series will provide flashlights, which can be found in the usher box. Each usher must have a flashlight and return it to the usher box at the end of the performance.

### Arrival

- ❖ Weekly "assignment reminders" will be sent out via email by the Lane Series.
- ❖ All ushers are required to arrive on time for every event. Arrival times are as follows:
  - Flynn Theatre and FlynnSpace– 1 hour & 15 minutes prior to event start time.
  - Recital Hall – 1 hour prior to event start time.
- ❖ Parking options are as follows:

- Recital Hall: Gutterson Garage via East Avenue, any of the faculty/staff lots accessible via Redstone Circle, South Prospect Street.
- ❖ Upon arrival, check in first with the Lane Series House Captain and receive your assignment.
- ❖ Stuff playbills and complete other special tasks as needed. Playbill stuffing should be initiated by a House Captain and/or a Pre-Concert Usher and be under their direction so as to maintain quality control of the process and to assure that all stuffers have been approved by Lane staff and match the sample. If for some reason the House Captain has been delayed and is not there by the scheduled arrival time, ushers may begin stuffing the playbills following the example of the sample.
- ❖ Familiarize yourself with the locations of rest rooms, fire exits, fire extinguisher, fire alarms, and seating layout.
- ❖ Attend the ushers' meeting before each performance. The House Captain will explain details for the performance: late seating policy, length of performance, special arrangements for handicapped patrons, and any special aspects about this performance such as variances to the photography policy, or special effects, etc.
- ❖ Be ready to assume duties 30 minutes before the show begins.

### **Before and During the Show**

- ❖ Keep noises and annoyances to a minimum.
- ❖ Focus on your responsibilities
- ❖ Please NO socializing.
- ❖ Turn off your own cell phone or pager!
- ❖ Enforce the late seating policy.
- ❖ At intermission, resume your assigned position.
- ❖ Notify the House Captain immediately regarding ANY photographing or sound recording of any kind. This includes non-flash photography and audio/visual recording via cell phones. This policy is effect unless announced otherwise at the usher meeting
- ❖ Keep your own personal conversations to a minimum in the concert hall.
- ❖ Stay at your assigned position for the entire show.
- ❖ Bring any problems or questions to the attention of the House Captain.

### **End of Show**

- ❖ Pick up playbills and any remaining items left in the hall.
- ❖ Recycle tired-looking programs playbills and all program inserts.
- ❖ If a playbill is in GOOD condition, remove the insert and place it back in the box along with new playbills.
- ❖ Bring any clothing or personal materials left by patrons to the House Captain or staff.
- ❖ Return your flashlight (and Usher pin if you choose) to the Usher Box.
- ❖ Check with the House Captain to be sure all tasks are completed before leaving.

### **Description of Assignments**

#### **Pre-Concert Talk Usher**

- ❖ Arrive at 6:00pm
- ❖ Stuff 50 playbills for Pre-Concert Talk attendees. Playbill stuffing should match the sample on the House Captain clipboard.
- ❖ Review Pre-Concert Talk Checklist and Notes from Lane Staff on lobby table
- ❖ Remain in the lobby for the duration of the talk: take tickets, distribute playbills and monitor traffic in and out of the hall until 7:00pm
- ❖ Join the other ushers at 7:00pm when the talk is complete
- ❖ Check-in with the House Captain to receive any updates from the Usher's Meeting

#### **Post-Concert Talk Usher**

- ❖ Pick up playbills and any remaining items left in the hall.
- ❖ Recycle tired-looking programs playbills and all program inserts.

- ❖ If a playbill is in GOOD condition, remove the insert and place it back in the box along with new playbills.
- ❖ Bring any clothing or personal materials left by patrons to the House Captain or staff.
- ❖ Return your flashlight (and Usher pin if you choose) to the Usher Box.

### **Lobby Duty Usher**

- ❖ Lobby duty requires you to be in the lobby for an entire performance, so sign up to do lobby duty for a show you don't wish to see! You are expected to arrive at the performance at the same time that the general ushers arrive.
- ❖ Your primary responsibility in lobby duty is to help keep the lobby quiet and to assist the House Captain or Lane Staff with any special duties.
- ❖ While patrons are arriving at the Recital Hall, post yourself at the North entrance (near the side parking lot) to assist patrons at that entrance.
- ❖ Assist late arriving patrons: take their tickets, provide them with playbills, direct them to the appropriate door for late arrivals, give them guidance as to how long their wait might be and stand ready to assist with getting them into the auditorium quickly and quietly.
- ❖ If you bring a book or reading material, your primary responsibility is to keep your attention on the lobby, handle all assignments, and deal with any problems. (Read ONLY when lobby is completely empty and no one is entering or leaving.)
- ❖ Two complimentary Lane Series tickets will be available for each completed lobby duty and pre or post-concert assignment – certain events are excluded from this offer. Please contact Freda Farrell at 802-656-4487 or [freda.farrell@uvm.edu](mailto:freda.farrell@uvm.edu) to reserve your complimentary tickets.
- ❖ If a lobby duty person is not available for a given performance, all Lane Series ushers will rotate handling lobby duty for a 15-minute block of time.

### **Ticket Usher -checks each ticket as patrons enter.**

- ❖ Since you serve as the first contact with patrons, your efficiency and courtesy are essential.
- ❖ Check each ticket to confirm performance information and collect ticket stubs. Stubs should be deposited in the small boxes beside each of the entry doors to the house.
- ❖ If a bottleneck develops and you need extra assistance, let the House Captain know.
- ❖ Return to your position at INTERMISSION and keep people from bringing in food and drinks.

### **Programs / Door Duty Usher - stands just inside the auditorium and distributes playbills.**

- ❖ Do not block patrons entering the doors.
- ❖ Place boxes with extra programs playbills nearby, but not obstructing the flow of traffic.
- ❖ If someone asks you to help them find their seat, direct that person to an usher.
- ❖ During the performance, position yourself near the door. You are the point person to assist any latecomers and anyone exiting and entering the hall during the performance to eliminate door slamming.
- ❖ During INTERMISSION, go to the Lobby and assist people in finding the restrooms. When lights flash, return to your auditorium entrance position and keep people from bringing in food and drinks.

### **Emergency Door Usher - helps patrons find their seats. [Not applicable for the Flynn Theater]**

- ❖ When the doors are opened, you should be positioned toward the front of the aisle.
- ❖ Be especially familiar with the house seating arrangements.
- ❖ Be alert and assist patrons who need help with the stairs.
- ❖ At full or near-full houses, be aware of open seats and pro-active in guiding those searching for seats to those locations.
- ❖ Just prior to the start of the performance assume your assigned emergency door position.
- ❖ At INTERMISSION, Stage Left usher should move to the lobby and guide patrons to upstairs restrooms in the music building. Stage Right usher stays at emergency exit to assist patrons using that door during intermission.

## **II. SPECIAL NOTES FOR FLYNN SHOWS**

#### ❖ **PARKING AT THE FLYNN**

- Parking is no longer available in the TD Bank lot. Ushers dressed in black and white may park in the Corporate Garage on St Paul Street (across from Vt Pub and Brewery) for a discounted rate of \$3.00. The Flynn House Manager will offer reimbursement, with proof of receipt, to anyone who is interested. Information on parking changes for Flynn patrons may be found at [www.flynncenter.org/about/thearea.shtml#parking](http://www.flynncenter.org/about/thearea.shtml#parking)

#### ❖ **SEATING AT THE FLYNN**

- Stand at the back of the hall for 30 minutes before taking a seat near the back of the hall. Benches are available in the very back of the hall – take turns sitting on the benches –sitting upstairs in the balcony is another option.
- After 30 minutes conclude and ushers are ready to sit, if seats are all taken at the back of the hall, ushers need to stand for an entire performance.
- When performing lobby duty, you may read, BUT you must monitor and pay attention to what is going on at all times from your station in the middle of lobby. You are responsible for the security of the lobby during the show.

#### ❖ **INTERMISSION AT THE FLYNN:**

- Program Persons -- Return to your position at intermission and keep people from bringing in food and drinks.
- Be sure you know and enforce the policy for allowing food and drink into the hall: only bottled water is allowed – if candy is in a person's pocket, let them go and remind them that no eating is allowed.
- Ticket Takers – Return to the lobby and 1) keep people who have purchased alcoholic beverages from LEAVING the building; 2) any people who have left the building MUST have tickets to return (as people leave, remind them they must have their tickets in hand to return).

- ❖ **AFTER THE SHOW AT THE FLYNN:** Pick up all playbills left by patrons after the show and place in recycling containers.

### **III. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

As an usher, your presence in the theater is critically important during an emergency. Patrons will look to you for instruction and expect you to guide them quickly and safely out of the theater. It is imperative that you know the procedures to follow during an emergency.

#### **Flynn Theatre**

- ❖ Lane ticket takers and lobby duty person should go to the lobby and assist patrons leaving the theater.
- ❖ Ushers assigned to hand out playbills will assist with the lower lobby evacuation.

#### **UVM Recital Hall**

- ❖ The Music Building keys will be kept by Stage Manager Sarah Sherill before, during and after the show.
- ❖ Should an emergency arise, notify the House Captain or Lane Series staff immediately – they will call for help as appropriate. If an emergency arises and a staff member cannot be found in due time, please call 911 from a cell phone and say "Emergency at UVM Music Building."
- ❖ In the event of an emergency, Lane Series staff will be the point person for all emergency communications. Staff will inform the House Captain and audience, and the House Captain will inform the ushers.
- ❖ Some emergencies may result in the need for an evacuation, in which case all ushers should immediately return to or move to your emergency positions and calmly assist patrons out of the building.
- ❖ In the event of a fire, once the location of the fire is determined, patrons should be directed to a door or emergency exit away from the fire. Ushers should:
  - Assess if the fire is nearby the exit you are monitoring.
  - If so, you should block the door and direct patrons to other theater exits.
  - Use your flashlight to provide light for patrons to exit the theater.