

Show will not go on

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"Dr. Michaels is a world-class health and safety expert, and his input has been invaluable during this time," AEA Executive Director Mary McColl wrote in a letter announcing the decision May 26.

Michaels' work helped the union establish four considerations that must be addressed "before we believe it will be safe for you to go back to work," McColl wrote.

— The epidemic must be under control, with effective testing, few new cases in the area and contact tracing.

— Individuals who may be infectious can be readily identified and isolated, with frequent, regular and accurate testing with speedy results.

— The way we audition, rehearse, perform and stage manage may need to change and the venues we work in

may need to undergo changes in order to reduce the risk.

— Efforts to control COVID-19 exposure must be collaborative, involving Equity members, employers, the union and all others involved in the production of theatre. There must be collective buy-in and ongoing evaluation and improvement of health and safety practices.

"We retained Dr. Michaels to give the industry the foundation for building a safe reopening. Today we are sharing these four principles to provide the foundation. Ultimately, we all need to do that together. These initial principles are the ground floor," McColl wrote. "Right now, it is clear that these four considerations have not been met in any part of the country. As things change, we'll approach the return to work on a place-by-place basis. Some parts of the country

may be at a lower risk level for you to go back to work before others.

"I think we have just one chance to get it right when it comes to reopening. That means letting the science guide us. If we don't do that, the entire industry will suffer. I'm grateful for Dr. Michaels' advice so that we can be sure that when you do return to work, we have taken the proper steps to ensure you can be safe and healthy."

Many theaters have started using Zoom for live readings online. Zoom is a web-based video conference app that many theaters have used to perform staged readings.

Cape May Stage has used it already with the reading of a new play based in the times of COVID-19 called "Gravediggers." People as far away as London enjoyed the reading.

East Lynne will be offering patrons a chance to see the popular "Tales of the Victorians" series on its website under the heading "Other Events."

"We have been doing this series for 30 years, usually on porches of bed and breakfasts, shops and tearooms,"

Stahlhuth said. "They will appear one a week; they feature myself, Lee O'Connor and James Rana. It's not the same as performing live, but it will keep you entertained and involved until we can get together again."

Stahlhuth also is considering holding "Tales of the Victorians" in her backyard at 4 p.m. Thursdays for 10 people, while practicing social distancing, for a small fee.

She said she hopes to be able to resume the season in September but is not very optimistic.

"I know about half of the professional theaters in New Jersey would like to pick up in September, too, but personally I give this about a 50/50 chance," she said.

In the meantime, she is making plans for other types of productions.

"I'm back once again working with contracts with Equity. This time, it's for Zoomed or filmed performances that would only be available for a short amount of time, and a small ticket price will be asked for the viewing pleasure," Stahlhuth said. "I've got several shows in mind. One involves 'Historical Spout Offs,' researched and

compiled by Tom Byrn based on complaints registered in local Cape May newspapers a century ago. Another is a one-man show based on actual Temperance lectures and music, also a century ago."

Steinberg said Cape May Stage has postponed its next two shows — "Last of the Red Hot Lovers" and "Guilty Pleasures" — after having previously postponed "Adopt a Sailor." The theater still hopes to present "Shirley Valentine," which would open Oct. 1. However, to do so would require state restrictions to end and the AEA to again provide on-stage talent by the end of August, Steinberg said, noting they have the summer to decide whether they can do anything in the fall.

Finally, Cape May Stage hopes to present a holiday edition of "Adopt a Sailor" with some Christmas elements added to make it seasonally relevant.

"We are in a wait-and-see pattern," Steinberg said. "We understand the concerns and want to protect all actors and stage managers as well as the audience."

Steinberg said he is op-

timistic but "to be frank, unless there is a vaccine or new medicine on the market that would lessen the effects, I don't think people will be comfortable coming to the theater."

In the meantime, Cape May Stage is offering free readings and lectures on its Facebook page.

"We are using this time to engage with the audience and give them a window into the process," Steinberg said.

Offerings include play readings and lectures on topics such as directing, casting and production. The next presentations are a reading of "American Dreamers" scheduled for 7 p.m. Thursday, June 4, and a lecture from a designer who will talk about how he creates set design and costume design Wednesday, June 10.

"I'm an optimist and we will come out the other side," Steinberg said. "It may not be this year but I'm hoping for the best. Eventually we will be back."

As plans are constantly evolving, the most up-to-date information will be available at each company's website, capemaystage.org and east-lynnetheater.org.



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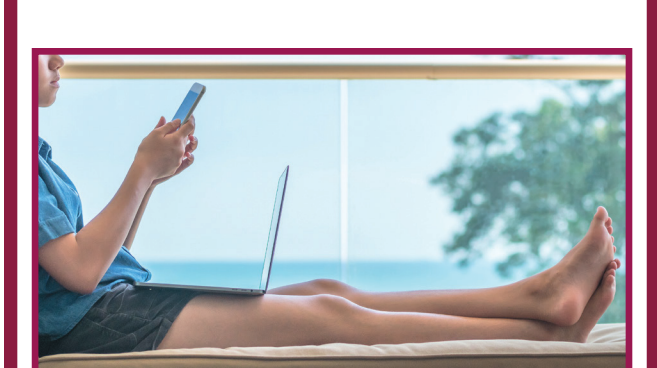
TIDES : June 3-10, 2020

DATE	HIGH		LOW	
	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
3	6:28	7:02	12:13	12:24
4	7:23	7:52	1:10	1:14
5	8:17	8:42	2:04	2:04
6	9:08	9:30	2:56	2:53
7	9:59	10:18	3:47	3:43
8	10:50	11:06	4:38	4:32
9	11:41	11:55	5:28	5:23
10		12:34	6:18	6:16

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also saw many cancellations. "We do not see the demand; we see local people who now want to move around out of their houses," he said.

Conversely, Delvescio said campground reservations were outpacing cancellations and the recreational vehicle rental market was very strong.

"There's about 19,000 campsites in the shore area of New Jersey," she said.

The panel fielded questions from participants. Asked whether a rental property owner should assume cleaning company personnel are aware of the best methods of cleaning a property or if should they be given a list of sanitizing activities to

perform, Dechert advised providing a list. He said his correspondence with cleaning companies included providing Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines.

"Develop a strong relationship with your cleaner this summer," Dechert said.

Chheda said he also owns rental properties and purchased the preferred cleaning agent for COVID-19-SARS disinfecting. He said he was providing that to his cleaners.

At his hotels, shields have been placed at the front desk along with hand-sanitizing stations for both guests and staff, he said. Signs have been placed in hotel rooms reminding guests to frequently wash their hands, wear a mask when outside

the room and stay 6 feet away from other guests.

Delvescio said campgrounds have been following the American Hotel and Lodging Association guidelines for sanitizing.

Cleaning and safety are the top priorities, Chheda said.

For best practices for owners of rental properties, Dechert said check-in has been pushed two hours later to 3 p.m.

"It's going to give the cleaners five hours to really get in and prepare the properties, which we think we need to do," he said. "We've also asked our owners to remove all bedding from their bedrooms, remove the pillows, the blankets ... traditionally the tenants supply the sheets and linens."

Owners are being advised to encapsulate mattresses in plastic so they can be cleaned and sanitized. It has also been suggested owners install hand sanitizers by the front door and in the kitchen, Dechert said.

"Our first advisement to all the tenants is 'the summer of 2020 ain't going to be like the summer of 2019,'" he said.

Dechert said check-ins are being conducted outdoors and payments are not being accepted at check-in to avoid exchange of currency. Renters are also being advised to provide their own paper products due to high demand for toilet paper and paper towels.

Cleaning is less of an issue at campgrounds since most guests arrive in their own self-contained units, Delvescio said. For cabin and other campground rental units, the trend is to leave them empty for 24 hours between guests, she said.

Check-ins are being handled online. Campgrounds will offer fewer activities and have events such as virtual scavenger hunts, and instead of gathering for arts and crafts, the art supplies will be delivered to campsites,

Delvescio said.

Gov. Phil Murphy has not ruled on opening swimming pools at hotels or campgrounds. Chheda said indoor pools at his properties have remained closed due to inadequate deck space to allow social distancing and allowing monitoring of guest access. He said Murphy needs to provide direction on the opening of hotel and campground pools.

Chheda said he is keeping lobbies and breakfast spaces empty at his hotels.

"There are no public gathering areas anywhere within our hotels currently," he said.

Picnic areas and pavilions are closed at campgrounds, according to Delvescio.

"There's going to be things that are going to be in the campground that are going to be off-limits right now until we're able to get some further guidance from the state," she said.

A participant asked where to purchase professional-strength cleaning products that are not available from cleaning supply stores. Delvescio said the products are available online and the American Hotel and Lodging Association has links to suppliers on its website.

"Please make sure the products you buy are properly EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) registered and labeled for the purpose you are buying them for," Chheda said.

Siekerka asked if hold-harmless agreements are being used for house and condominium rentals to shift the burden to tenants. Dechert said it would be difficult for someone to prove they caught coronavirus from the house they rented when they were visiting a number of businesses while on vacation.

"We haven't done anything with that," he said. "We did when this whole pandemic first started, we changed some wording in our lease, put a COVID-19 clause in there which works to protect both the owners and the tenants to a degree."

Chheda said signs at his hotels state guests are entering at their own risk.

Enforcing social distancing at a hotel or condominium can be difficult. Chheda said because a guest is paying to stay at a property, they may feel they have the right to do as they please. He said if someone enters one of his hotels without a mask, they are asked "gently" if they would like to have a mask, which the hotel will provide.

Siekerka asked if campgrounds considered the use of safety officers. Delvescio said most campgrounds are gated and arrivals are monitored.

Fitness centers are closed in Chheda's hotels and complimentary breakfasts are shut down. He said a pre-packaged breakfast bag may be offered to guests.

"Let's keep this simple; our focus this year is safe and cleaning. We don't need to offer extra amenities, extra wow factors to the guests," he said.

Coffeemakers have been removed from hotel rooms because they are difficult to clean, Chheda said.

He said the accommodations industry needs to build confidence in its customers and make sure they feel safe and comfortable.

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