



Community Theatre Letter

August 2026

Hello Community Theatre!

Have you had a banner year of productions? Is your work top-notch and the contributions of your Officers, Board and volunteers a positive influence in your community? Then bring that to the annual MTA Theatre Festival, January 14-17, 2027, in Meridian. The Festival brings community theatres together for an opportunity to see a wide variety of productions, to network, to learn from one another, and to renew old friendships and start new ones. If you haven't been to the Festival in recent years or never been, we hope that you will join us this year if only to watch productions and network with your peers from around the state. You will be able to see community theatre and high school productions, staged readings, participate in Individual Events Festival (aka Mississippi's Got Talent) and participate in socials and workshops. There is something for everyone. MTA's Community Theatre Division has made a name for itself in regional and national festivals over the years, and we want to encourage all theatres in the State of Mississippi to support your state theatre organization by sending representatives to the festival regardless of whether your theatre is competing.

The 2027 Festival will take place at the MSU Riley Center in beautiful downtown Meridian, Jan. 14-17. Registration opens for community theatres on December 1 and the deadline will be December 15, 2026. The tech specifications and a list of festival hotels will be posted to the MTA website by December 2026.

We encourage you to participate in the Festival! This is an exciting way to present your work, have it adjudicated by three out-of-state judges, and have the chance to receive

recognition and awards for your work. The Southeastern Theatre Conference (SETC) is planning to have a community theatre competition in 2027, and the top 1 - 2 community theatre productions will have the opportunity to advance to the SETC in Lexington, KY in March.

The MTA registration and other forms will be available on December 1, 2026.

Remember: the deadline to register is December 15, 2026 and we have limited slots, so you need to register ASAP. A complete registration is required for MTA to hold a slot for your theatre. A complete registration means you have completed the MTA forms and submitted your theatre and cast/crew festival fees.

Visit the [Mississippi Theatre Association website](#) to download the festival rules, forms, registration, and for more information on the festival venues. Please note the newly added Community Theatre Code of Conduct on the Community Theatre page under MTA Annual Festival.

AND if you have someone in your theatre that you want to recognize on the state level, nominate them for the [Outstanding Contributions to Theatre](#).

If you do not plan to compete in the 2026 Festival, please renew your [MTA Membership Dues](#) for both organizations and individuals. Please make sure that MTA has your most up-to-date information and that you are a current member.

Finally, we ask that you share this information with your members and encourage them to become members of MTA and to attend the festival! We look forward to seeing you in Meridian in January. If you need assistance with the registration process, please do not hesitate to contact me!

[Sherri Marengo](#)

Chair, Community Theatre Division