The 16th Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards, honoring the outstanding performances from 2009 in five film and eight television categories, is moving to Saturday night this year!

Whether you’re staying home or stepping out to watch with your Branch or Division, check out the results of your voting as TNT and TBS simulcast the honors on Saturday, January 23 at 8 p.m. Eastern, 7 p.m. Central and 6 p.m. Mountain from the Shrine Exposition Center in Los Angeles. (Check your local listings if you’re watching via satellite or in HD.)

This year’s awards show promises to be another great celebration of acting and actors. The SAG Awards’ traditions of saluting the many talents of the Guild’s membership and paying tribute to the members we have lost this year will continue. Another highlight of the evening will be the presentation of Screen Actors Guild’s 46th Life Achievement Award to Betty White.

The SAG Awards was the first televised awards show devised by a union to acknowledge the work of our profession. Of all the top industry honors presented to performers, only the Screen Actors Guild Awards features voting exclusively by fellow actors. The large national voting body of approximately 100,000 eligible SAG members is one of the reasons the SAG Awards is so widely respected by the industry, the media and the millions of viewers of the awards telecast. They and SAG members know that only actors fully understand the hard work and mutual collaboration it takes for a talented actor, cast or ensemble to create a great performance. Only actors can fully appreciate the years of study and months of preparation that go into the moments on the screen that truly move us.

By casting your ballot, you can share in the emotion of your fellow actors as they ascend to the stage to accept their Actor statuettes. Ballots were to be mailed on Tuesday, December 29, 2009, to all active SAG members in good standing who paid their November dues by December 15. Your completed ballot is due to the SAG Awards elections firm by noon on Thursday, January 21, 2010.

As actors step onto the red carpet that leads into the Shrine Exposition Center and the 16th Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards, all of the magic will be broadcast live on television. For the first time in the history of the SAG Awards, TNT and People present The Screen Actors Guild Awards® Red Carpet Show, premiering on TNT and online at tnt.tv and tbs.com on Saturday, Jan. 23, 2010, at 7:30 p.m. (ET). Check local listings if viewing on satellite or in HD. Then stick around: Immediately following this special will be the start of the live awards telecast!
The actors honored with a Screen Actors Guild Award establish a benchmark of excellence. In 2009, those honored for outstanding performances included (clockwise from top left) Kate Winslet (The Reader) and Sally Field (Brothers & Sisters); Meryl Streep (Doubt); Laura Linney (John Adams) and Sean Penn (Milk); the cast of Slumdog Millionaire; James Earl Jones for Life Achievement; and the cast of 30 Rock.

**Detroit Branch**
When: 7–10 p.m.
Where: Pappino’s Downtown Grille & Pizzeria Sports Lounge
130 Ionia Ave. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
(616) 456-8444
Cost: Free
Other Details: No host bar. Appetizers will be provided. You also will have the opportunity to purchase dinner. To RSVP or for more information, e-mail marcia.fishman@sag.org.

**Hollywood Division**
When: 4 p.m. red carpet arrivals program; 4:45 p.m. doors close to watch the show.
Where: James Cagney Board Room
Cost: Free, but RSVP is essential.
Other Details: RSVPs will be accepted beginning at 8 a.m. on Monday January 11 by calling (323) 549-6443. No guests, members only. Due to a smaller venue, this event will fill up quickly. Parking will be validated. Note that popcorn, candy, water and sodas will be served. Check the Hollywood events page of SAG.org for more details.

**New Mexico Branch**
When: 5 p.m. pre-show party and industry mixer; 6-8 p.m. awards viewing and door prizes.
Where: Uptown Sports Bar
6601 Uptown Blvd.
Albuquerque, NM 87110
(505) 884-4714
Cost: Free
Other Details: Complimentary admission to all members of the New Mexico film industry and their guests. Cash bar and food available for purchase. Stick around for post-awards karaoke.

**Philadelphia Branch**
Two parties will be held in Pennsylvania:
When: 8-10 p.m.
26 East Oregon ave.
Philadelphia, PA 19148
Cost: Free
Other Details: Soft drinks and snacks provided. RSVP by January 18 to rmckiddy@sag.org.

As new parties and details may be added, we encourage you to contact your Branch and check SAG.org for further details, including updates regarding reservations.
THEATRICAL MOTION PICTURES

Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor in a Leading Role
- JEFF BRIDGES / Bad Blake - Crazy Heart (Fox Searchlight Pictures)
- GEORGE CLOONEY / Ryan Bingham - Up In the Air (Paramount Pictures)
- COLIN FIRTH / George Falconer - A Single Man (The Weinstein Company)
- MORGAN FREEMAN / Nelson Mandela - Invictus (Warner Bros. Pictures)
- JEREMY RENNER / Staff Sgt. William James - The Hurt Locker (Summit Entertainment)

Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Leading Role
- SANDRA BULLOCK / Leigh Anne Tuohy - The Blind Side (Warner Bros. Pictures)
- HELEN MIRREN / Sofya - The Last Station (Sony Pictures Classics)
- CAREY MULLIGAN / Jenny - An Education (Sony Pictures Classics)
- GABOUREY SIDIBE / Precious - Precious: Based on the Novel ‘Push’ by Sapphire (Lionsgate)
- MERYL STREEP / Julia Child - Julie & Julia (Columbia Pictures)

Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor in a Supporting Role
- MATT DAMON / Francois Pienaar - Invictus (Warner Bros. Pictures)
- WOODY HARRELSON / Captain Tony Stone - The Messenger (Oscilloscope Laboratories)
- CHRISTOPHER PLUMMER / Tolsay - The Last Station (Sony Pictures Classics)
- STANLEY TUCCI / George Harvey - The Lovely Bones (Paramount Pictures)
- CHRISTOPH WALTZ / Col. Hans Landa - Inglourious Basterds (The Weinstein Company/Universal Pictures)

Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Supporting Role
- PENÉLOPE CRUZ / Carla - Nine (The Weinstein Company)
- VERA FARMIGA / Alex Goran - Up In the Air (Paramount Pictures)

Outstanding Performance by a Cast in a Motion Picture

Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor in a Television Movie or Miniseries
- KEVIN BACON / Lt. Col. Michael R. Strobl - Taking Chance (HBO)
- CUBA GOODING, JR. / Ben Carson - Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story (TNT)
- JEREMY IRONS / Alfred Stieglitz - Georgia O’Keeffe (Lifetime)
- KEVIN KLINE / Cyrano de Bergerac - Great Performances: Cyrano de Bergerac (PBS)
- TOM WILKINSON / Salter - A Number (HBO)

Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Television Movie or Miniseries
- JOAN ALLEN / Georgia O’Keeffe - Georgia O’Keeffe (Lifetime)
- DREW BARRYMORE / Little Edie - Grey Gardens (HBO)
- RUBY DEE / Mrs. Harper - America (Lifetime)
- JESSICA LANGE / Big Edie - Grey Gardens (HBO)
- SIGOURNEY WEAVER / Mary Griffith - Prayers for Bobby (Lifetime)

PRIMETIME TELEVISION

Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor in a Television Movie or Miniseries
- KEVIN BACON / Lt. Col. Michael R. Strobl - Taking Chance (HBO)
- CUBA GOODING, JR. / Ben Carson - Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story (TNT)
- JEREMY IRONS / Alfred Stieglitz - Georgia O’Keeffe (Lifetime)
- KEVIN KLINE / Cyrano de Bergerac - Great Performances: Cyrano de Bergerac (PBS)
- TOM WILKINSON / Salter - A Number (HBO)

Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Television Movie or Miniseries
- JOAN ALLEN / Georgia O’Keeffe - Georgia O’Keeffe (Lifetime)
- DREW BARRYMORE / Little Edie - Grey Gardens (HBO)
- RUBY DEE / Mrs. Harper - America (Lifetime)
- JESSICA LANGE / Big Edie - Grey Gardens (HBO)
- SIGOURNEY WEAVER / Mary Griffith - Prayers for Bobby (Lifetime)
Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor in a Drama Series
- SIMON BAKER / Patrick Jane - The Mentalist (CBS)
- BRYAN CRANSTON / Walter White - Breaking Bad (AMC)
- MICHAEL C. HALL / Dexter Morgan - Dexter (Showtime)
- JON HAMM / Don Draper - Mad Men (AMC)
- HUGH LAURIE / House - House (FOX)
- TINA FEY / Liz Lemon - 30 Rock (NBC)
- JULIA LOUIS-DREYFUS / Christine Campbell - The New Adventures of Old Christine (CBS)

Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Drama Series
- The Closer (TNT)
- Dexter (Showtime)
- The Good Wife (CBS)
- Mad Men (AMC)
- True Blood (HBO)

Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Comedy Series
- 30 Rock (NBC)
- Curb Your Enthusiasm (HBO)
- Glee (FOX)
- Modern Family (ABC)
- The Office (NBC)

SAG HONORS FOR STUNT ENSEMBLES
Outstanding Performance by a Stunt Ensemble in a Motion Picture
- Public Enemies (Universal Pictures)
- Star Trek (Paramount Pictures)
- Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen (Paramount Pictures)

Outstanding Performance by a Stunt Ensemble in a Television Series
- 24 (FOX)
- The Closer (TNT)
- Dexter (Showtime)
- Heroes (NBC)
- The Unit (CBS)

46th ANNUAL LIFE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
- Betty White

For a complete nominees list, which includes ensemble members, go to sagawards.org/nominations.

This is not an official ballot for voting.

Ballots were mailed to eligible voting members.
Her quick wit and humanity have moved us, so much so that the simplistic label “comedienne” somehow seems ill-fitting. For whole generations of Americans, she holds an unofficial place in the matriarchal structure of their families. She’s the charming—sometimes cheeky—mother, aunt or grandmother we all wish we had. Betty White gives us comfort.

White’s own family moved to Southern California in 1924 when she was 2 years old. The relocation was providential, although it may not have seemed so at the time. Father Horace, an electrical engineer, was in need of work and mother Tess, a homemaker, was busy looking after their only child, whom they often affectionately referred to as “Bets.”

To make ends meet between jobs, White’s dad often constructed radios for barter. Sometimes that resulted in a necessity being filled. And for the pet-loving family, that sometimes meant happily getting a dog in the trade.

White, who went on to attend Beverly Hills High School, thought she might pursue a career as a writer. But after she penned a school play in which she cast herself as a lead, the audience responded enthusiastically to her character and she “caught the bug.”

She made her professional debut at the Bliss Hayden Little Theatre and in the 1940s landed parts in such popular radio shows as Blondie, The Great Gildersleeve and This Is Your FBI.

Finding paying radio work wasn’t easy, however. Her strategy to break in was simply to keep returning to the casting office and “they’d think they’d hired me.” She got her first union card due to that persistence, and a producer’s pity, she says.

“He said, ‘I’ll tell you what, if you don’t really ruin me, I’ll give you one word on a commercial. It will pay your – well, it won’t even pay your entry into the union – but it will get you into the union.’

White’s talent and charisma got her noticed. Her first radio program, The Betty White Show (a title that would be recycled in the future), was a minor success. But her big break came in 1949 when she joined Al Jarvis’ five-and-a-half-hour, six-days-a-week live KLAC-TV variety show Hollywood on Television.

White sharpened her improvisation skills in order to help creatively fill air time on the new medium. She inherited the show’s hosting duties for two more years when Jarvis left in 1952. That same year, she formed Bandy Productions with producer Don Fedderson and writer George Tibbles. Spinning off characters from a Hollywood on Television sketch, they created the domestic comedy Life with Elizabeth, for which White received her first of what would be six career Emmys (to date). The series, syndicated nationally through the mid-1950s, made White one of only a few women with creative control both in front of and behind the camera.

Her slyly ribald humor ensured attention during other time slots as well. On the late-night talk show circuit, she matched wits with Jack Paar, Merv Griffin and Johnny Carson, eventually subbing for all three as guest host. Her clever spontaneity also earned her spots on numerous popular game shows, including Password, whose host, Allen Ludden, would become her future husband.

As a producer, White also found time to pursue her own “pet” projects. She has said her syndicated television show The Pet Set (1970-71), in which she interviewed celebrity animal-lovers, is her favorite among her body of work.

By this point, White had become a beloved television personality, better known for her talk show one-liners or color commentary as a long-serving Tournament of Roses Parade announcer than as an actor. That all would change in 1973, with a guest shot on The Mary Tyler Moore Show.

White portrayed the catty, man-hungry homemaker Sue Ann Nivens on the show. Her scene-stealing first appearance cemented her place in one of television’s most iconic ensembles.

The role earned her back-to-back supporting actress Emmys. Co-star Ed Asner, who would go on to become a Screen Actors Guild national president, presented White with the first of the two awards.

Yet her best work was arguably still to come. In 1985, she returned to series television with the sweetly naive character Rose Nylund on NBC’s The Golden Girls. The then 63-year-old White, along with co-stars Beatrice Arthur, Estelle Getty and Rue McClanahan, proved that great comedy transcends age.

White won a first-year lead actress Emmy for her work on the show and received six subsequent Emmy nominations, along with two Golden Globe nominations. She was to reprise the role of Rose on three other series: Empty Nest (1989, 1992), Nurses (1991) and The Golden Palace (1992–93).

Her noted film and television work continued through the ’90s, and White showed no signs of slowing down in this decade, either. Her guest turn as blackmailer Catherine Piper on The Practice led not only to another Emmy nomination, but also to recurring appearances in the same role on Boston Legal (2005–2008). White’s well-received work in popular feature films has included roles in Bringing Down the House (2003) with Steve Martin and Queen Latifah and The Proposal (2009) with Sandra Bullock and Ryan Reynolds.

Off camera, White not surprisingly spends much of her time focused on the betterment of animal welfare. She is president emeritus of the Morris Animal Foundation and has been a trustee since 1971. She received the American Veterinary Medical Association’s Humane Award in 1987. A member of the board of the Greater Los Angeles Zoo Association since 1974, she served as a zoo commissioner for eight years.

So if you’re a producer looking to cast Betty White in your next production, don’t even think about giving her a script that involves real or implied animal cruelty! (She’s turned down major roles because of it.)

Screen Actors Guild National President Ken Howard sat down with White in his office at headquarters to talk about her love of all things four-legged and furry, her enviable career (which, of course, has included some classic television moments), and pretty much anything else to spring into the mind of our most recent Life Achievement Award honoree....
SAG National President Ken Howard sits down with Betty White to talk about her remarkable life and career.

KEN HOWARD: Betty, I'm just tickled to be able to interview you formally. We've had lunch together, we've had wonderful times out together, so I have a little bit of an edge. I even have some questions in my mind to ask you because I know some of the answers. Thank you so much for joining us and ahead of time congratulations on your Life Achievement Award from SAG.

BETTY WHITE: Well, darling...I shouldn't call you darling...thank you so much. I am in awe of you, Mr. President. I'm so proud of you and so thrilled, and we are so lucky to have you.

KH: Thank you. I have a series of questions for you and the second to the last question is where I want to start because I want to talk about your involvement with animals, and the protection of animals, and what an important part of your life that is. Because I think it has a great deal to do with you and how you work and your artistry and the whole thing that you bring to the work place.

BW: Oh Ken, bless your heart. I'm the luckiest old broad on two feet because my life is divided absolutely in half; half animal work, and half show business. The two things I love the most and to still be able to work at them. A lifetime with animals and 61 years in show business. How lucky can you get at this late date in your life?

I'm not into animal rights and activism, I'm into animal health and welfare. I've been with the Morris Animal Foundation for 43 years now. We're a health organization. We fund humane research into special health problems of dogs, cats, horses, and zoo [animals] and wildlife. We helped develop the feline leukemia vaccine and the parvovirus vaccine. And I've been with the Los Angeles Zoo for that long. It's a different zoo than it was 43 years ago.

KH: We were out years ago and I asked you what the first time was that you were on television, and your answer just caught me by surprise. It was way earlier than one might expect.

BW: I was a student at Beverly Hills High School. They were doing an experimental TV thing and it was 1939. The audience walked around among the Packard cars down in the showroom and we were up on the fifth floor in this little hot room doing The Merry Widow, the senior class president and I. I wore my graduation dress and we sang this wonderful [Franz] Lehár music. It got so hot. We had brown makeup on. And it got so hot, we were trying to be so romantic and our makeup was running. We didn't have television out here then. That was just an experimental feed from New York.

KH: I think that it's only right that not only were you a pioneer in television but that you were on television before anyone knew there was television.

BW: Literally, nobody knew that there was.
**KH:** And when you did start in television, from very early on you were in control, you were a part of producing and ownership.

**BW:** I was very lucky. Al Jarvis had a five-and-a-half-hour-a-day, six-day-a-week show. No script, just all ad lib. But that wasn’t enough for Al, he also wanted an hour variety show in the evening. So I’d sing a couple of songs and then we’d have amateur singers come on and whoever won from the amateurs, the prize was singing on our show the next week. For my songs, we’d do a little husband and wife sketch and the payoff, the joke line, would be the title of a song I would go into. Well Don Fedderson called us into the office one day and said, “Could you make that into a situation comedy, you know just the husband and wife thing?” And in my wisdom I said, “A half hour?” An anecdote is one thing but no joke will hold up for a half hour. You can’t do a half hour situation comedy, that’s how smart I was. Brilliant! I said it just won’t work, but I said we could do three of them: Maybe incident number one, incident number two, incident number three. That was my first series, *Life with Elizabeth.*

**KH:** And a wonderfully successful one it was.

**BW:** I was so smart saying you can’t do a half hour comedy.

**KH:** My sense of you from early on… when I first really got to know you… was your wit on the various panel shows on television, and how fast and funny and terrific you are. This was before Sue Ann on *Mary Tyler Moore.* It really was America’s first knowledge of you and they really knew you. I told friends once that the problem for comedy writers with Betty is that their writing has to at least be as funny as she is.

**BW:** There was no straight man in our family. I was an only child and my mother, dad and I would have Sunday breakfast, and we’d have driving vacations and dinners together. We’d have wonderful conversations but we were always kidding and teasing each other. Dad was a salesman and he’d bring jokes home. They would never explain them to me, and if I got them fine, but if I didn’t that was fine too. He’d say, “Honey you can take that one to school, but I wouldn’t take that one to school.” The game shows were wonderful because they were doing the same kind of kidding with the other game players. It really was like going to television college. It was great.

**KH:** I’d love to hear you talk about the impact of that kind of experience on then acting in sitcoms. That had to have been a great training ground.

**BW:** You had to think on your feet in the game, and the beauty of it is that you get so involved in playing the game that you don’t get self-conscious of your image. That’s why I enjoyed watching celebrity game shows; people got so involved playing the game that they were themselves.

**KH:** I know you did stage work…

**BW:** Summer stock, never Broadway...

**KH:** But I wondered even there, because of your facility, I would think you would like the change in television rather than the same show night after night.

**BW:** I know theater people get upset when you say that, and they say, “But it’s a different experience every night.” But you’re still saying the same lines every night. I’m just not a theater person. Theater people look down on movie people and movie people look down on television people. Well I’ve been in television all of my life, so I was at the bottom of the barrel. (laughs)

**KH:** There are going to be young people who want to know the special thing you can share from your own experience.

**BW:** I get that question a lot from young people and I would say, don’t come on to the set with an attitude. And don’t pick out the people you like and the ones you don’t like ahead of time. Be prepared to like everybody. I don’t mean be a goody two-shoes. I’m saying don’t start with a negative. Negatives breed and if you bring something negative on to the set, it’s there and you can’t sweep it under the carpet.

And I say always come in prepared. Don’t say, “I didn’t get a chance to look at the script,” “I like the illusion of the first time so I didn’t learn my lines.” Know your lines!

**KH:** Coming from you that’s great. Let’s talk about how great you are at playing naughty. Everyone loves the way you can come in with that sweet smile but then be so naughty.

**BW:** Sue Ann Nivens was such fun. She was the neighborhood nymphomaniac. She thought she was the most gorgeous, glamorous wonderful person in the world. Nobody else thought that about Sue Ann except Sue Ann. She went to Chicago once on a convention and she couldn’t wait to call up all the men she knew there, but...
BW: Bless your heart. I just did another Disney movie with Jamie Lee Curtis and Sigourney Weaver where I’m Grandma Bunny. I’m always Grandma Something.

KH: Tell me about do-overs. I don’t mean regrets, but if you had something you could do over, or a choice you could make differently.

BW: In all honesty, Ken, I’m sure I could say I could make better choices, but I don’t think I’d ever want to do over something. I never tried to cheat or sneak, and those are things you’d want to do over. I’ve been so lucky and so much has come to me out of sheer blind luck, that I’m just so grateful at this point in time to still be working. In January I’m going to be 88 years old and I’m still working, and I’m still enjoying and still having fun. And I’m blessed with good health.

It’s not a do-over that I could do, but losing Allen [in 1981] was a tough one. I’d do anything [to have him back]. I think I first fell in love with Allen Ludden for his enthusiasm. He was interested in everything. He was always, “Yeah, tell me about it.” That’s fun to live with.

KH: You were both inquisitive and had bright minds and I love the idea of the combination of you two. You told me some wonderful stories of how much fun the two of you had just talking the hours away into the night.

BW: He would call me up when we’d be working in separate places and say, “How about a date tonight? Want to go out to dinner?” Well going out to dinner meant he would stop on the way home and pick up a chicken and we’d throw it on the barbecue, and then we’d put on some records, have our chicken and dance. It’s silly maybe to the rest of the world but it was fun for us.

KH: Sounds wonderfully romantic. I’m dealing with more and more young performers because of this job. A question I get asked a lot is what is the image you had in your mind when you started. I remember being so excited the first time I got a job on summer stock. I’m not sure I had a big overwhelming picture other than wondering if I could make a living at this. I wonder if you had an image you remember all the way back to The Merry Widow days?

BW: I wouldn’t be in show business if it weren’t for Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy. I saw Naughty Marietta 48 times. I could have put myself through college for what I spent seeing Naughty Marietta. I was about 13 or 14 at the time and I didn’t just like Jeanette McDonald, I was Jeanette McDonald. And of course I was in love with Nelson Eddy, and I thought he needed a much younger woman, much younger woman.

KH: That’s great. Thank you. Just your spirit and your goodwill and what you represent is this union over quite a long remarkable period of time and career, going back to the very beginning of television and the business as we know it. You’re a force of nature and we love you and love that we can honor you.

Editor’s Note: You can watch the entire interview at SAG.org and sagawards.org.
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