

# Milton Theatre Volunteer Manual

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# Welcome from our Director!

Dear Volunteer, I am thrilled that you have chosen to volunteer at the Milton Theatre. I hope that you find the duties of your particular volunteer opportunity to be fulfilling and that your volunteer experience with us is rewarding and positive. The following information package includes details about our organization and the responsibilities of our volunteers. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your volunteer coordinator at katelyn@miltontheatre.com or (302) 684-3038. Once again, welcome and thank you!

Sincerely, Fred Munzert Executive Director

# Organization's Mission

The mission of the Milton Theatre is to create a "Must Go To" destination for residents and summer visitors alike, in a welcoming environment for our patrons and artists.

The Calliope Project is the nonprofit organization that represents the Milton Theatre. Its Board of Directors recognizes this cherished landmark's cultural and historical importance to the town of Milton and its surrounding communities. More than just a historical treasure, the Milton Theatre serves as a vibrant hub for the arts, offering unique performance opportunities for local talent and year-round classes that inspire, educate, and enrich the spirit of our community.

# Brief History of the Milton Theatre

The Milton Theatre, located in historic downtown Milton Delaware, has had an illustrious history in its more than 100 year existence. Our theatre was opened circa 1914 and originally named the Fox Theatre. It was owned and operated by one of the first female theatre managers in the US, Ida Fox. In 1939, it had a seating capacity of 434, and it was considered far superior to many larger theaters acoustically and visually. However, it included a segregated balcony.

The Great Storm of 1962 hit the coast on Ash Wednesday and blanketed the sleepy town of Milton with 3 feet of water. The Scott family took over the theatre after the flood. It was named Roxie's, after Mr. Scott's mother. The theatre was still on the right side, while the restaurant was on the left where the box office and lobby stand today.

The Theatre would reopen as a a nonprofit organization in the early 2000's before its tenure ended in foreclosure. The company had taken down the balcony and the only portion of the theatre to remain intact was the stage and the murals surrounding it.

In 2014, production company owner and experienced theatre manager, Fred Munzert, breathed life back into the Milton Theatre beginning with 75 shows that calendar year. Under his leadership, the Theatre has made numerous upgrades which include modern amenities such as a large bar, box office, newly rebuilt balcony, and upgraded sound system.

# Volunteers' Code of Conduct

As a representative of the theatre, we ask that all volunteers uphold the highest standards of professionalism and hospitality. Please keep the following expectations in mind during every shift:

#### Professionalism

Always treat patrons, performers, staff, and fellow volunteers with courtesy, respect, and a positive attitude. Your demeanor reflects directly on the theatre.

### Communication

Speak clearly, calmly, and kindly when giving directions or assisting guests. If you're unsure of how to respond to a situation, seek help from the shift lead or theatre staff.

### Dependability

Arrive on time for your shift, dressed appropriately, and ready to serve.

#### Focus on the Patron Experience

Your primary role is to ensure the safety, comfort, and enjoyment of all patrons. Be attentive, proactive, and ready to assist.

#### Discretion and Boundaries

Respect the privacy of patrons, performers, and staff. Do not share personal or sensitive information you may overhear or observe. Volunteers should not promote personal businesses, causes, or opinions while on duty.

By following these guidelines, you help create a welcoming, safe, and professional environment for everyone who walks through the theatre's doors. Thank you for your dedication and support!

# **Customer Service Goal**

The Milton Theatre is committed to delivering outstanding, guest-focused service in every interaction by staying ahead of the evolving needs of both artists and patrons. Even during busy or challenging moments, patrons are always treated with courtesy and respect. Likewise, the Theatre expects all staff and volunteers to uphold a culture of mutual respect in their interactions with one another.

How you can embody the Milton Theatre's Customer Service Goal:

- Use welcoming body language by smiling, standing up straight, and making eye contact.
- Use positive language.
- Keep your personal opinions to yourself.
- Avoid confrontation. Never argue or confront a guest. Get a staff member when needed.
- A little goes a long way! Always keep a positive attitude and a friendly smile.

# Enrollment in the Volunteer Program

Volunteering at the Milton Theatre is both a privilege and a responsibility, and we hold our volunteers to high standards of professionalism and reliability. Our volunteer program is

designed to support and empower participants by aligning their interests with the theatre's needs. To that end, we offer a variety of opportunities for volunteers to get involved and make meaningful contributions. See "Volunteer Positions" for more information on current opportunities to get involved.

Volunteer Qualifications:

- Must be 13-years of age or older
- Be comfortable speaking with and engaging with theatre patrons
- Have the ability to work as part of a team

# **Physical Demands**

While volunteering, volunteers must be able to stand and walk for up to one hour. To be a balcony usher, volunteers must be able to climb stairs comfortably. To be a special event volunteer, volunteers must be able to stand or walk for longer periods including carrying items. Reasonable accommodations can be made for volunteers with disabilities if notified prior to shift start time.

# Scheduling & Commitment

Every volunteer is expected to report for his/her shift on time and stay for the duration of the time scheduled. We count on you as much as we do our paid staff.

- Unsatisfactory attendance, including reporting late to your volunteer assignment, quitting early, or an excessive number of absences, is not acceptable.
- We ask that volunteers give us at least 24 hours notice if you cannot come in for your volunteer shift. Volunteers should remove themselves from the volunteer shift online to open the spot to new sign-ups as soon as possible.
- We understand that emergencies arise, but we depend upon our volunteers for certain projects and times. Knowing about absences ahead of time allows us to find substitutes when possible. In an emergency situation, you must notify us as soon as possible.

Volunteer positions listed on SignUp.com will list the start and end time of the position.

- Volunteer usher positions begin 30 minutes prior to doors opening until 30 minutes after the show's conclusion.
- Special Event volunteer opportunities throughout the year will have different hours. Special events may include: Quayside @ Nite, Milton Christmas Parade, St. Patrick's Day, ZombieFest, and Milton Pride.

# Dress

- Standard Usher/Greeter dress should be business casual with closed-toed shoes.
- For outdoor events, dress may vary but should be weather-appropriate with closed-toed shoes.

• For special events, dress may vary.

## **Benefits!**

The benefits of being a Milton Theatre volunteer are endless!

- The feeling of a job well done.
- Enjoying the performance for free (indoor events)
- A free snack and drink during your volunteer shift\*

\*Please wait until after peak customer service times to redeem. Typically, this means waiting until the show has started to visit the concession stand.

# Dismissal

Volunteering at the Milton Theatre is a privilege that comes with high expectations of professionalism. We value the hard work our volunteers do as we do our paid staff. Likewise, any issues with volunteers are handled in the same way that we handle issues with our staff. Any incident of a volunteer not adhering to Milton Theatre policies or volunteer responsibilities (including missing shifts or reporting late) will be handled as follows:

- 1. A verbal warning will be issued by the shift lead.
- 2. If the issue persists, a written warning will be provided by the volunteer coordinator.
- 3. Continued behavior may result in a temporary restriction from signing up for future volunteer shifts until one-on-one training is completed with a staff member.
- 4. If, after these steps and additional training, the behavior does not improve, the volunteer will be dismissed from the program.

Although not foreseen, immediate dismissal for the night could be given after multiple violations in one evening. A meeting with the volunteer coordinator will be scheduled for further training or action such as permanent dismissal to be discussed.

# Policies & Procedures

Below are a few policies and procedures of which you should be aware while volunteering at the Milton Theatre. If any of the following policies are not adhered to, inform a box office staff member immediately.

# No Smoking

The Milton Theatre is a non-smoking facility. Any use of cigarettes, cigars, e-cigarettes, or vape pens are strictly prohibited indoors. Any indoor smoking should be reported to the shift lead immediately. The designated smoking area is located out of the front lobby doors.

# **Prohibited Items**

- Guests are NOT permitted to bring outside food or drink into the theatre. All outside food and drink must be disposed of immediately. The only exception to this rule is milk for babies and toddlers.
- Guests are NOT permitted to bring weapons or firearms into the theatre for any reason.
- Guests are NOT permitted to bring large bags into the theatre. Large bags pose a hazard to other guests. Backpacks and other large bags should be returned to the guests vehicle. Diaper bags can be searched for prohibited items before being allowed into the theatre.

# **Ticket & Seating Issues**

All guests must have a ticket to enter the theatre. Guests must sit in their assigned seats unless given permission by the box office staff. Additionally, guests must have a ticket that clearly displays the section as BALCONY to sit in the Balcony.

In the event that there seems to be a duplicate ticketing situation, read all tickets separately; check the date, time, performance name, seat section, and seat numbers. Remember, all rows are Lettered and seats are Numbered. This is the most common ticketing mistake. The Milton Theatre's ticketing system does not allow for the sale of duplicate seats; any conflict is likely due to a misunderstanding.

If you are unable to resolve the issue at the seats, take one ticket from each party and return to the Box Office, where staff will assist in resolving the situation.

# Threatening, Abusive, or Vulgar Language

The Milton Theatre expects volunteers to treat everyone with respect, and any threatening, abusive, and vulgar language will not be tolerated. If you encounter any of the above language from patrons, fellow volunteers, or a Milton Theatre staff member, report the language to the shift lead who will work to dissipate the situation. If you ever feel threatened or unsafe, please find the shift lead immediately and let them work to resolve the situation. The shift lead is typically found at the box office during the event.

# Photographs and Videotaping

Photography and video recording by patrons are generally welcome during most performances. However, they are not permitted during Mainstage Musical productions or any performance where otherwise indicated.

If a patron is seen taking photos or recording during a restricted performance, volunteers should issue a polite first warning, asking the individual to put the device away. If the behavior continues—particularly within the same row—please notify the shift lead.

On occasion, professional photographers or videographers may be present with prior authorization by the Front of House staff.

# Backstage/Onstage

Ushers and patrons are not permitted backstage or onstage unless explicitly invited by theatre staff or the performer. If a guest enters the stage during a performance without invitation, the volunteer should promptly alert the shift lead in the lobby.

## **Cell Phones**

We request our volunteers to refrain from cell phone use while volunteering. We request that you silence and stow your devices before your shift starts.

### Aisles & Stairs

All aisles, stairs, and landings must be kept clear as per Fire Regulations and Codes. Patrons are NOT allowed to stand or sit in these areas.

Guests are permitted to dance, but they should be courteous while doing so. They are NOT permitted to dance in the aisles or in front of the stage due to fire regulations (except at events with a dance floor at the front of the room). Alert staff of any potential issues.

# **Emergency Procedures**

While emergencies are rare, it is important that we have a plan in place.

Where emergency supplies are located:

- First Aid kit is located at the bar.
- Phone is located at the Box Office.
- Fire Extinguishers are located:
  - $\circ$  in the rear of the theatre
  - o at the top of the balcony stairs
  - $\circ$   $\;$  in the lobby at the theatre door nearest to the bathrooms
  - by the front lobby door

### Medical Emergency

If a patron falls or is otherwise having a medical emergency, one Volunteer will stay by the patron, observing and reassuring, and one will go to the lobby and notify them that there is an emergency and that the shift lead is needed. Staff will take it from there. Volunteers may be asked to help keep other audience members away from the area.

# Evacuation

Emergency exits are to the left of the stage (where the Exit sign is posted), the rear of the theatre, and the front and rear of the lobby. In the event of an evacuation, individuals with accessibility needs may need additional assistance.

## Severe Weather

The production will pause while the shift lead addresses the entire house. Volunteers are responsible for assisting patrons in following the shift lead's instructions, which may include evacuation procedures or shelter-in-place protocols.

# **Power Outage**

In the event of a power outage, emergency lighting will activate. The volunteer should instruct patrons to remain seated and use your flashlight to illuminate stairs and other potential hazards. The shift lead will provide further instructions to staff, volunteers, and patrons. For day-time performances, exterior doors may be opened to allow natural light into the space.

# Accessibility

The Milton Theatre believes theatre should be for everyone, and we're proud to offer a variety of accessibility options to ensure all guests can enjoy the experience.

# Wheelchair Accessibility

The Milton Theatre is fully accessible on the Main Floor. Currently, our Balcony is not accessible for individuals unable to walk up and down the stairs.

Individuals unable to use the steps can request to use the Stair Lift located in the lobby. Individuals in wheelchairs can remain in their wheelchair during the performance if they are seated on an aisle. Simply lift the theatre seat and unhook it from the chair beside it. Remove the seat to the back of the theatre until the end of the performance.

# Assisted Listening Devices

For guests who are hard of hearing, we offer Assisted Listening Devices to enhance your theatre experience. These easy-to-use, wireless headsets amplify on-stage dialogue and sound effects, delivering clear audio directly to your ears.

Devices are available free of charge at the box office. Direct guests requesting assisted listening devices to the box office for further assistance.

# Working with People Who Have Different Needs

- **Put the person before the disability.** When speaking to individuals speak to them not to their disability. Rather than saying "the blind patron to the right of the front door" say "the patron standing to the right of the front door who is blind."
- Interact with the patron who has a disability. Never assume that just because someone has a disability (physical, mental, emotional), that they cannot appreciate your attention. Ask the patron questions and give them the same quality experience you would afford any other patron.

- Speak directly to the visitor with a disability, not to their companion. If a visitor with a disability is visiting the Milton Theatre with a companion, never speak "through" the companion. Asking questions of the companion such as, "Do you think she might want to sit further to the left" alienates and objectifies the patron with a disability. Ask the patron directly if they would like to move.
- Ask if you may offer assistance, but never force your help. Many patrons with disabilities make their way around without assistance. Never assume anyone needs your help. When helping patrons down the steps, offer your arm but never grab the patron's arm. Allow them to choose if they want your help.

# **Volunteer Positions**

Visit SignUp.com/Group/306604310077/ to sign up for active volunteer positions.

- Indoor Events
  - Usher
  - Balcony Usher
  - Greeter
  - Raffle Attendant
- Special Events
  - Gate Attendant
  - Bar/Concession Server
  - Merchandise Seller
  - Set Up/Clean Up Crew
- Green Thumb Players
- Mainstage Show Volunteers
- Kids Events
  - Indoor Kids Events
  - Summer Camp

### Indoor Events

Volunteers at our indoor events receive a Shift List to help guide and track their responsibilities throughout the event. View the <u>Volunteer Shift List</u>.

### Usher

Every show may be different in what it requires for setup and clean up. For indoor shows, a typical event will flow as follows:

Pre-Show/Start of Volunteer Shift for Milton Theatre Show

- 5. Check-in with Box Office and receive your name tag, flashlight, and shift list.
- 6. Assist with getting theatre "show ready"
  - Turn on candles

- Set Tables
- Brush lint off chairs
- Straighten aisles
- Update table identification cards as needed

### Doors Open

- Greet guests and assist with finding seats as needed
- Hand out programs and marketing materials
- Ensure exterior doors remain closed
- Alert staff of any issues inside the theatre

### During Show

Volunteers are encouraged to enjoy the show but are expected to remain vigilant throughout the event. Volunteers are our "eyes and ears" inside the theatre.

- During the show remain in the back of the room in the designated volunteer area not obstructing the view of guests behind you
- Ensure that the rear black doors to the theatre remain closed as guests go out. These doors are NOT an entrance.
- Continue to assist guests during the show as needed
- Alert staff of any issues inside the theatre (e.g. Guests being rowdy, guests talking too loud, guests needing medical assistance, guests violating security by going backstage or on stage)
- Enjoy the show :)

Intermission

- Remove trash from theatre trash cans/replace trash bag as necessary
- Collect empty glassware and return to the bar for washing
- Assist guests as needed
- Ensure exterior doors remain closed
- Sweep/mop any large messes

### After Show

- Farewell to guests and hand out marketing materials
- Once guests are all clear, clean up/reset the house
  - Pick trash up from theatre
  - Return glassware to the bar for washing
  - Wipe down tables
  - Turn off candles
  - Straighten rows of seats
  - Sweep floors
- Turn in your name tag, flashlight, and signed shift list to the shift lead.

### Balcony Usher

Every show may be different in what it requires for setup and clean up. For indoor shows, a typical event will flow as follows:

Pre-Show/Start of Volunteer Shift for Milton Theatre Show

- Check-in with Box Office and receive your name tag, flashlight, and shift list.
- Assist with getting theatre "show ready"
  - Restock flyers in the balcony
  - Turn on Main floor candles
  - Set Tables on the Main Floor
  - Break down cardboard

#### Doors Open

Remain at the top of the Balcony steps. Do not come down unless absolutely necessary.

- Greet guests and assist with finding seats as needed
- Hand out programs and marketing materials
- Alert staff of any issues inside the theatre

### **During Show**

Volunteers are encouraged to enjoy the show but are expected to remain vigilant throughout the event. Volunteers are our "eyes and ears" inside the theatre.

- During the show, remain in the designated volunteer seating area.
- Continue to assist guests during the show as needed
- Alert staff of any issues inside the theatre (e.g. Guests being rowdy, guests talking too loud, guests needing medical assistance, guests violating security by going backstage or on stage)
- Enjoy the show :)

### Intermission

- Collect trash in the Balcony and deposit in trash cans.
- Collect empty glassware and return to the bar for washing
- Assist guests as needed
- Sweep/mop any large messes

### After Show

- Farewell to guests and hand out marketing materials
- Once guests are all clear, clean up/reset the house
  - Pick trash up from balcony
  - Return glassware to the bar for washing
  - Wipe down surfaces
  - Sweep floors
- Turn in your name tag, flashlight, and signed shift list to the shift lead.

### Greeter

For indoor shows, a typical event will flow as follows:

Pre-Show/Start of Volunteer Shift for Milton Theatre Show

- Check-in with Box Office and receive your name tag, flashlight, and shift list.
- Restock flyers in the lobby and seat back pockets of the Mainf loor chairs
- Assist with getting the High Top area of the theatre "show ready"
  - Turn on candles
  - Set Tables
  - Update table identification cards as needed

### Doors Open

- Greet guests and scan tickets
- Verbally inform customer of their seat number and provide directions
- Assist customers with locating their tickets or assist them with getting additional assistance
- Alert staff of any issues inside the theatre

### During Show

Volunteers are encouraged to enjoy the show but are expected to remain vigilant throughout the event. Volunteers are our "eyes and ears" inside the theatre.

- During the show remain in the back of the room in the designated volunteer area not obstructing view for guests
- Ensure that doors to theatre remain closed as guests go in and out
- Continue to assist guests during the show as needed
- Alert staff of any issues inside the theatre (e.g. Guests being rowdy, guests talking too loud, guests needing medical assistance, guests violating security by going backstage or on stage)
- Enjoy the show :)

Intermission

- Collect trash from the High Top area
- Collect glassware from the High Top area and return to bar for washing
- Sweep/mop any large messes
- Direct guests to the box office for more information as needed

After Show

- Farewell to guests at doors and hand out a single hershey kiss to guests as they exit
- Once guests are all clear, clean up/reset the High Top area
  - Pick trash up from the High Top tables
  - Return glassware to the bar for washing

- Wipe down tables
- Turn off candles
- Straighten tables and push in high top stools
- Sweep High Top area floors
- Turn in your name tag, flashlight, and signed shift list to the shift lead.

### **Special Events**

Special events are events that deviate from our typical process. Special events typically take place outdoors or at other locations. Special Events include events such as Quayside @ Nite, Zombie Fest, Milton Pride, Milton Christmas Parade, and Irish Eyes St. Patrick's Day Parade.

The roles our volunteers can sign up for will vary including but not limited to the ones listed below. Special event roles are always described in the SignUp.com link where the volunteer signs up for the spot.

### Gate Attendant

This role will vary depending on the type of event. Typically this role includes:

Set Up

- Setting up table/tent at the gate.
- Cleaning off outdoor furniture (grass clippings, bird droppings, collected pollen, etc.)
- Ensuring seat and table numbers are present and readable.

### During the Event

- Checking in guests using paper guest list or digital guest list.
- Registering Free tickets using Etix system.
- Putting wristbands on customers.
- Ensuring outside food/drink do not come into the event space.
- Handing out marketing materials and answering customer questions.

### Clean Up

- Cleaning off tables and stowing them.
- Taking down tents and stowing them.
- Returning equipment to storage.
- Cleaning up the event space including throwing away trash.

### **Bar/Concession Server**

This role will vary depending on the type of event. Typically this role includes:

Set Up

- Set up of tents and tables for the outdoor bar.
- Stocking coolers, filling them with ice, and transporting them to the outdoor bar.

- Setting up other stock and menu signs.
- Brewing coffee or hot chocolate for events during colder months.
- Popping popcorn.

### During the Event

- Serving customers using Square POS system.
- Filling and delivering orders to customers.
- Restocking as needed.
- Checking ID of customers to ensure they are of legal drinking age.
- Handing out marketing materials and answering customer questions.

### Clean Up

- Returning excess stock to storage.
- Taking down and storing equipment, menu signs, etc.
- Cleaning off tables and stowing them.
- Taking down tents and stowing them.

### Merchandise Seller

This role will vary depending on the type of event. Typically this role includes: Set Up

- Set up of tents and tables for the merchandise station.
- Stocking merchandise displays.
- Setting up menu signs.

### During the Event

- Serving customers using Square POS system.
- Filling and delivering orders to customers.
- Restocking as needed.
- Handing out marketing materials and answering customer questions.

### Clean Up

- Returning excess stock to storage.
- Taking down and storing equipment, menu signs, etc.
- Cleaning off tables and stowing them.
- Taking down tents and stowing them.

### Green Thumb Players

Come Play in the Dirt! Green Thumb Players is our volunteer gardening group who help keep the Milton Theatre grounds looking their best! Join us from April to October as we dig in, clean up, and add a little charm to the two historic theatre houses.

No green thumb required—just a willingness to get your hands a little dirty and have some fun outdoors. Whether you're a seasoned gardener or just looking to lend a hand, everyone is welcome.

**To get involved: email** <u>boxofficeassistant@miltontheatre.com</u> for more information. Feel free to stop by anytime and pitch in with a few quick tasks:

- 1. Clear out dead leaves under the crepe myrtle tree (on the left-hand side when facing the house).
- 2. Use the paper yard waste bags located on the porch for debris.
- 3. Water any thirsty plants—a watering can is available on the porch.

Every little bit helps, and together we can keep the theatre grounds vibrant and welcoming for all!

### Mainstage Show Volunteers

Love the magic that happens offstage? Join our Backstage Volunteer Team and help bring productions to life from behind the curtain! We're looking for creative, detail-oriented, and hands-on volunteers to assist with costumes, props, set dressing, and other special projects that make our shows shine.

Tasks may include:

- Organizing and repairing costume pieces
- Sourcing or crafting props
- Helping with costume fittings or backstage quick changes
- Painting or prepping small set pieces
- Assisting with theatre storage and organization

No prior theatre experience is required—just a willingness to learn, collaborate, and have fun in a creative environment. Whether you're a crafty DIY-er, a thrifting pro, or just someone who loves helping behind the scenes, there's a spot for you on our crew.

Flexible scheduling and tons of appreciation included!

### For more information, email toni@miltontheatre.com

### Kids Events

We have several kid-focused events throughout the year. There are special responsibilities related to kids events.

### Indoor Kids Events

At several events throughout the year, our youngest guests are the focus of the event. At events such as our Tea parties, kids movie screenings, and other youth events, we prepare the theatre in different ways.

- Remove candles from all the tables to reduce breakage. Replace these candles at the end of the event.
- Hand out coloring pages & crayons to keep kids engaged during waiting periods. Return the crayons to storage at the end of the event.
- Assist kids with completing crafts.
- Assist kids with obtaining special or free snacks/drinks such as Hot Chocolate Bar at winter movie screenings.

### Summer Camp Lunch Prep

Be part of the behind-the-scenes crew that keeps our campers smiling and satisfied! The Summer Camp Lunch Prep Crew plays a key role in our theatre summer camp, handling the preparation and service of daily lunches for campers and staff.

All meals are heat-and-serve, with simple instructions provided—no chopping, slicing, or culinary expertise required. Volunteers follow easy prep steps and keep lunch service running smoothly and on schedule.

This is a fun, collaborative role perfect for anyone who enjoys being part of a supportive team, keeping things organized, and helping create a great camp experience. Bonus: you'll get to know some wonderful people while making a real difference behind the scenes!

# **Closing Remarks**

Once again, we truly appreciate your willingness to volunteer at the Milton Theatre! For questions or more information on this handbook, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Katelyn Gebbia at katelyn@miltontheatre.com.