

On Cue

Here is an icon of the times for many of us, as we finally take time to part with priceless archives and long-hidden troves. The next generations will be thankful!

What was that stuff? NO – don't pull that paper out for a second look!



Hello All,

Welcome to the first issue of *On Cue* in Guild year 2020 – 2021! If you are a new Guild member, a double welcome to you. We are very excited that you joined! The Guild is dedicated to having fun together while staying very safe.

I am Don Warnecke, editor of *On Cue* and a Guild member since my wife Sarah launched the organization in 1991. Readers beware! My editorial perspective draws on my pre-teen experience as a voracious consumer of *Mad* magazine!

Issues of this newsletter are typically festooned with photos of Guild events, but since coronavirus has spoiled the party for most of the year to date, please enjoy the text. And stay tuned for future issues in less constrained times.

On Cue is experimenting with new formats and new colors (like DTC's new colors). Expect changes in what you will see during the year.

Your input is essential to this experimentation. Please provide a lot of it at dwtown2@aol.com or 214.632.6750.

This space for rent.

Guild and Guitar

It was July 26, a Sunday afternoon that could have looked like so many we have experienced during pandemic isolation with a tad of boredom. But this one was **energized by a unique experience!** Guild Co-President **Craig Haynes** treated us to **Guild and Guitar #4**. A group called the **Rave-Ons** Zoomed into our homes from a barn in upstate New York! To jog your memories, Craig produced the first three annual Guild and Guitar shows in Dallas locations. They featured soloists Dave Nachmanoff, Van Darien, and Kindle Hunt.

The Rave-Ons are a versatile quartet (two guitars, bass, percussion) in the New York/New Jersey area who are usually found in casinos and cruise ships. Band leader and lead vocalist Todd Meredith started his career as an actor and has appeared as Buddy Holly in national touring productions of **The Buddy Holly Story**. He has also played Carl Perkins and Johnny Cash in national touring productions of the Million Dollar Quartet. Wow, that is a lot heavy-duty experience! Craig said that he became friends with Todd and talked him into doing a virtual Guild and Guitar. They got a friend in upstate NY to loan them a barn where they could play and get good acoustics for the show. Here is how it looked.



Rave-On got a charge out of doing this gig after so many others were canceled due to Covid-19. The video of their performance is posted on their Facebook page and has received over 1,500 views.

The viewing audience of Guild members and Craig's friends and colleagues voluntarily contributed **\$335**.

A "Guild with Gusto" giant thanks to Craig for a summertime musical treat!

Co-Presidents' Message

In a lively mid-September conference call, Guild Co-Presidents Marla Janco and Craig Haynes shared their thoughts with *On Cue* on three topics:

- Experience with theater and other art forms
- The Guild in its 2020-2021 year
- Personal activities during the pandemic

Here is a summary of our discussion.

Experience with Theater and Other Art Forms

Yes, our Guild leaders are really into the arts! Both Marla and Craig have had long time personal involvement in theater and other arts. In Lubbock, Craig's dad took his kids to theater often. The bug did bite, and at age 13 Craig played the role of a person possessed by the devil in a community theater production of *The Exorcist*. Wow, that must have been intense!

Marla's first experience with theater was during elementary school years, going to classes at DTC and seeing plays. Her direct participation in theater was as an actress with the Dallas-based Harlequin Players (no connection to Dallas' definitely non-artistic Harlequins rugby team).



Marla is also a dancer. Her favorite form is tap, with it's high-energy routines. She continued with an adult group called Dallas On Tap (meaning dancing; but could it include dispensing beer?).

When asked what about theater turns them on, Marla said it can really take you away. While watching a play she likes to think of herself in one of the roles, guessing what the actor will do, and then seeing what actually happens to her character. Could be scary, could be fun! Craig also likes to dive deep, getting lost in the story and enjoying most those plays that he finds emotionally moving. Both enjoy dramas and musicals.

Marla and Craig also enjoy high quality visual arts: Renoir, Degas, but light on abstract fare. Craig's acid test – if he could do it himself It's not art!



Degas' *A Cotton Office in New Orleans* 1873

Music is also a shared interest, with different preferences. Marla has enjoyed the Dallas Symphony Orchestra for many years. Craig is into contemporary music. He recently taught himself piano and guitar.

Craig's DTC favorites: *Fly By Night*, *Moonshine*, *Fly*, *Oedipus el Rey*, *Frankenstein*, *In the Heights* and two that are also on Marla's list of favorites: *Cabaret* and *Electra*. Marla also likes the big shows: *Les Miserables*, *Colossal*, and *Hair*. Several of these are probably on your list of favorites as well!

The Guild in its 2020-2021 Year

Some of what the Guild does each year is linked to what's happening at DTC. Recently Jeff Woodward met (by Zoom) with some DTC Benefactors and outlined the then current DTC plan. Assuming the Covid-19 situation is under control , it includes seven performances by Brierley Resident Acting Company members, all directed by Kevin, plus a scaled down version of *A Christmas Carol*. There will be no Meet & Greets, but there may be a version of Tech Dinners in which the Guild will provide boxed meals. Actors' participation in Guild activities will be limited by provisions of their equity contracts.

The Guild plan includes four general meetings and a Salon. This year's Membership Development team may be offering other activities for all Guild members. Responsibility for each of these events has been assigned in the Guild organization.

Marla and Craig are planning a digital meeting of Guild officers in the near future to discuss the year's activities. There may also be a digital meeting open to all Guild members to gather input on interests and concerns.

Personal Activities During the Pandemic

Craig had a unique adventure on a cruise ship off the coast of Chile! When the news and the restrictions hit in various countries there was great uncertainty about when and where the ship could dock and how passengers would get home. Stressful! However, the wonderful food and the high-energy entertainment continued for 31 days before the ship docked in the US! Craig is back on the job and is staying in shape with video workouts. He has also been playing tennis, an automatically socially-distanced sport.

Marla lost her Dad earlier this year, so she is taking care of her Mom, which has turned into a great deal of fun with the family playing many rounds of *Rummy Cue* and *Cover Your Assets* (a card game). She has given substantial time to a project sponsored by the Southwest Jewish Congress. The "Building Bridges: Feeding Heroes" initiative has fed over 3600 people. She also devotes some time to the Great American Reorg (what we are all doing – reorganizing and slimming down the decades of accumulated stuff). She is happy to report steady and important progress.

Marla and Craig are eager to reconnect with Guild members for a virtual drink and a real laugh!

Playtime During the Pandemic

On Cue asked several members about their activities, looking for fresh ideas on what to do. It started with the Editor.

Sarah & Don Warnecke narrowly escaped exposure to the coronavirus each step of the way while traveling in Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos and Thailand during January and February. Unbeknownst to them, they boarded a flight to start this adventure on the day that Xi Jinping announced the problem to the Chinese population!

But little of that showed up in the news at the time. Actually we had a little buffer before facing the full risk by spending a few days in Doha (capital of Qatar). No self-respecting virus would cross the Persian Gulf or many square kilometers of desert to get there.

In Asia masks were distributed on each third day starting when we entered Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), but there was little news and little emphasis on the danger until the last two days in Hanoi. There citizens who were zooming around on tens of thousands of motor scooters generally wore masks, but we figured that was to avoid heavy air pollution and billions of airborne insects.



Then some museum visits were canceled, masks were worn, and we enjoyed alternative plans. The whole matter was treated very casually in Laos and Thailand. We survived all of that with nary a cough!

Once back in Dallas we very carefully confronted the coronavirus and began a massive home decluttering effort. Many delightful items are being rediscovered!

Martha Jarmon continued to deliver patient care using telehealth technology. It worked out fairly well, but she is eager to return to in-person visits. She is into crafting, and over years has accumulated supplies and started projects. During the pandemic she has been moving ahead on many UFOs (unfinished objects).

Trey Birkhead gave us this important and heartfelt personal update.

I'm a teacher in Dallas ISD, and on the last day before Spring Break, we heard that we might not be returning to our classrooms. Ever since then, I have been learning many new skills, not only technology skills that help me teach my gifted/talented students remotely, but also skills at home while in quarantine; skills like cooking for my pescatarian diet and learning to cut my own hair.

Because I am a leukemia patient (currently being treated), I have a compromised immune system. And any of you who know me know that I am a pretty social guy. Well, that changed thanks to COVID-19 as I have pretty much become a hermit. I really miss live theater performances and going out to dinner with friends. Seeing my family in Houston has also been a challenge, but my mother was able to come stay with me from July 1 to August 16. Mom lives with my sister and her family in Houston, and my sister needed these weeks to take care of some things. Mom can't be alone.

What are the advantages that have come out of all of this? I've saved money eating at home and not needing gas for my car. I've paid off my debt! My evening bike rides have gotten me out of my apartment to get some daily exercise in North Oak Lawn. I do say hello to just about everyone I pass because, heck, I need some in-person human interaction. I have also been more in-tune with nature to enjoy the big Texas sky, the trees, and animals.

Another advantage is I have found more time to do some singing. Last weekend, I sang two songs for the Grace United Methodist Church on-line service as all of their members watched safely from their homes. I was also asked to sing two songs for the on-line weekly show, Mama's Party on Facebook LIVE. I just sang into my computer for all of those who tuned in. It was fun!

Anyway, I count my blessings each and every day as gratitude gets me through. I know many of you may be in much more difficult situations than I am, but I hope we can all see each another soon. I'm sending you my best.