

# On Cue

Remember this bold color scheme from last year? The Guild is attempting to keep up with the artistry that is now enlivening Dallas Theater Center publications. OK, here we go!

Hello All,

Dallas Theater Center is back on the big stage with drama, comedy, music and excitement! And the DTC Guild is back on your screen with information, entertainment and pizzazz!! Yes, the famous Guild newsletter, operating under the oh so theatrical moniker of *On Cue*, will inform you and assault your sensibilities (the editor grew up on *Mad* magazine). If you think you can handle it, sit back with a libation (white or red?) and enjoy!

Let's start with the important stuff – members!

## YEARBOOK

For all of you VIPs, there is a VID (very important document) – the Yearbook. This spiral-bound document with six tabs is being delivered to all members starting in the week of November 8, so watch for it! The 2021-2022 edition has a gray cover.

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Sarah Warnecke and John Howell have invested many hours organizing these Yearbook sections.

- DTC Information – includes **descriptions and dates of the season's plays**.
- Guild General Information – Guild mission, vision, benefits and Board members.
- Guild Activities – **scheduled meetings and other activities**
- Membership – **contact information for all members**
- Bylaws of the Guild
- Guild Endowment – an opportunity to support DTC with donations to a ongoing fund that generates income and contributes to DTC operations.

Make sure that you can find your copy when you want to update your calendar or contact a member.

**PLEASE REVIEW YOUR LISTING TO ASSURE THAT ALL IS CORRECT, INCLUDING YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS.** If any error please contact Sarah Warnecke on 972.333.6659.

What's inside!

Membership News  
General Meeting  
The Year Ahead

Surviving the Pandemic at DTC  
Performing Plays "in rep"

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

The magnetic Dallas Theater Center Guild emerges from the pandemic with a strong membership! VP – Membership Robert Howell reports that the Guild now has **212 members** representing **145 households, and continues to grow!** And VERY importantly, there are **17 new members**, thanks in large part to **JB Nehlich!** That could be a new record!! Thank you Madam Co-President!!! Vicki Newsom provided this new member roster:

- Tina Marie Baalman
- Anna Cabeca, MD
- Jennifer & Hal Elrod
- Brian Evans
- Joey Folsom
- Stephany Fraser & Jay Bradford
- Andrew Gray
- Sarah Howell
- Kathryn Howlett
- Storm Lineberger
- Jean Lyons
- Kristina Russell
- Anna Sanders & David Hall
- Victoria Tucker

Their contact information is in the Guild “Yearbook” being distributed to all members in the week of November 8. **Please send greetings to them by email or phone call!**

Here are brief biographies of four new members. Don wrote **Jean Lyons’** bio based on a phone conversation with her. **Dr. Anna Cabeca, David Hall** and **Anna Sanders** drafted their own (Don did a wee bit of editing for compatibility with *On Cue* style). More new member biographies may be available during the year.

**Jean Lyons** loves live theater and is excited about joining the Guild! Her friend and Guild member **Martha Jarmon** enticed her with a performance of *Little Women* just before the pandemic shut us down, and she is ready for more.

**Jean** moved to Dallas from Austin about ten years ago to be near family, which now includes four grandchildren!

She is a clinical social worker and in particular a mindfulness therapist. She first used her Bachelors and Masters degrees as a therapist in Abilene – and utilized theater in her practice. Ask her about finding a troupe of actors to dramatize child sexual abuse – and about the curious audience members who lined up after that performance!

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### **Dr. Anna Cabeca**

Dr. Anna is the first call for the woman who has questions she would ask only her best girlfriend. And for a great reason – Dr. Anna is a triple-certified OB-GYN! She has equipped thousands of women with information, insights, products and programs that empower them to live happier, healthier lives.

Throughout her decades-long career she has supported and treated women so that they can thrive physically, emotionally, sexually and even spiritually as they move through the natural, inevitable, beautiful shift to menopause.

## GENERAL MEETING – OCTOBER 21



### Anna Sanders and Chef David Hall

Anna is a native Texas girl and proud of it. Her family moved from Houston to DFW when she was young and she continued on through high school and college. She loves being creative as a Redkin Master Hairstylist. She enjoys arts, music, theater and creating and testing new bourbons! The Guild stands ready to enjoy those liquid creations!

David has been a restaurateur for over 40 years. He was born in Fall River MA and grew up in Rhode Island. His cooking has been shaped by his Portuguese heritage and his Nana's coaching. He was also influenced by Chef Emeril Lagasse.

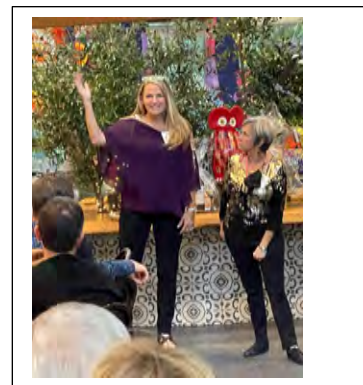
Chef David moved to DFW in 1989 and has two grown children. He has been executive chef with Macaroni Grill, Saddle Sore Brewing Company, Mustang Café, and FLIK. He enjoys catering private parties, and will demonstrate his expertise at Guild meetings this year!

It finally happened! We had a Guild General Meeting, on October 21!! It was the first since January 13, 2020, before the Bad Bug Bit and we learned what a pandemic is. A total of 49 Guild members were eager to reunite, and brought pent-up appetites for talk and dining to **San Martin, a restaurant and bakery in Uptown.**



San Martin provided a very tasty buffet of pizza, sandwiches, hors d'oeuvres, pastries and cookies, along with beverages. The bakery is highly alluring; this weak-willed editor bought bagfuls of goodies!

This joyous event was planned by Guild Co-President **JB Nehlich**. She and Co-President **Marla Janco** welcomed all to the festivities including the new members present.



In addition to this year's new members, we all were happy to welcome **Ebony Davis**, a new member last year.

Whether seated or strolling around, members were excited to reconnect!

# THESE BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE ENJOYED THE GENERAL MEETING!

(\*\* Photo by Kathryn Howlett)



\*\*Elegant ladies Kathryn Howlett, Gwendolyn Lawe, Florence Cox, Julie Goldfarb



John, Angela, Sarah Howell (What offensive remark caused the ladies to constrain John's mouth?)



Guild Money-man Roger Cunningham and Mary



\*\* Jeff Woodward (center, speaking); Dorothy & Steve Davis in foreground



DTC Playwright-in-Residence Jonathan Norton



New members Victoria Tucker and Ebony Davis – ready for their Hollywood debut!



Pat Pace, Hal Schneider, Rodolfo Salas



Ireta & Harrell Ellis, Sharman Vesecky



Kay Weathers, Judy Mathis, Trey Birkhead



## THE YEAR AHEAD!

OK, you have had a looooooog deprivation from Guild activities – so get ready for a BIG ramp-up! Co-Presidents **JB Nehlich** and **Marla Janco** were joined by former President and long-time Board member **John Howell** to provide this outlook of the Guild year ahead. There is a lot cooking!

You liked that first General Meeting at San Martin, so get your mind – and taste buds – ready for these events! (Advice – **put them in your calendar NOW – even before you read the next page!**)

- General Meeting – **December 2** at the **Kalita Humphreys Theater!**
- General Meeting – **March 3** at the **Museum of Biblical Arts**
- The **Salon Event!** (*The Sound of Music*) in **March**
- General Meeting – **April 10** at **Bella Luna**
- Guild outing at a local theater
- **Guild & Guitar** – June
- **A pop-up event** – TBD

Wow! This is starting to look like what we so enjoyed before the pandemic!

## SURVIVING THE PANDEMIC AT DTC

### An Interview with Jeff Woodward, DTC Managing Director

Do you remember an old movie line, “They’re baaaaack”? Here in Dallas it was not weird critters of film but live theater on the Wyly stage with the return of some of our favorite actors! **Liz Mikel** and **Sally Nystuen Vahle** in *Cake Ladies* showed us how theater is done and **Christie Vela** as “Sugar”, the all-purpose advisor, knocked our sox off in the very creative *Tiny Beautiful Things*. Three actors played over 50 letter-writers seeking advice on their urgent issues – some intense, some goofy, some we all could relate to.

This didn’t just happen all of a sudden. The dynamic, skilled and powerful **Brierley Resident Acting Company** and the **entire DTC staff have stayed together** and have worked toward this reemergence through the MANY months to date of the pandemic. Right, no one left the organization, and they all are continuing to do what they can to maintain theatrical momentum and to aid the community.

**DTC Managing Director Jeff Woodward** gave his perspective on how this happened. On the inside, it was the incredible **can-do spirit of the company, crew and staff**. Despite all of the compounding confusion and myriad uncertainties of Covid they found ways to maintain skills and spirit, to affect and involve the community where and when safe, and to look ahead to delivering live theater. Even though they were operating on about half normal budget, they continued to look and move ahead.

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The **entire company and staff were vaccinated** and actors were put on the DTC health plan. All continue to be tested twice weekly. The ATT Performing Arts Center (ATTPAC) did its part by cleaning deeply and installing high performance air filters at the Wyly and Kalita.

**Leaders of 27 local arts organizations**, including all in the Arts District coordinated in weekly information sharing and problem solving meetings. Advisors participated as appropriate. Relationships were built that may be long-lasting.

Regarding the could-be killer issue – **MONEY**. **Wow, the Feds, season subscribers and donors stepped up big time!** Despite the cancellation of performances in 2020 and most of 2021, very few subscribers requested refunds, and subscription renewals continued at a healthy pace. Donors large and small continued to donate, some at increased levels (think six figures before the decimal point)! The **Bounce Back Fund** was the structure for obtaining many of those contributions and is still open, eager to receive yours.

The **Federal government offered three programs**: the Paycheck Protection Program, the Employee Retention Tax Credit (for most organizations), and the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (for performing arts organizations). They are aimed at keeping people on the payroll. DTC received several million dollars from these programs, helping to close a major budget gap! On a country-wide basis these were the **largest Federal programs since the Great Depression**.

Jeff represents DTC in a coalition of about 70 theaters that is continuing to seek and manage government support for the arts. The coalition has been communicating weekly and is utilizing a Washington law firm (Arnold & Porter) to help with advocacy and lobbying at the Federal level.

One surprise: the Actors' Equity Association (AEA, the actors' union) and the League of Regional Theaters (LORT) are in business to provide advocacy and support for organizations like the DTC and its cast and crew. AEA required elaborate and continually evolving safety protocols that limited actors' work time and flexibility. They and theater companies have now agreed on a set of standards that are less obtrusive. LORT was generally not active in resolving issues.

While the theaters were dark the **company, crew and staff were shining bright**, behind their masks! First, they stayed safe. Work continued on a new version of *A Christmas Carol* and on the first two shows of the season (see article about doing shows "in rep"). Project Discovery sent videos of past shows to area schools. The Costume Department built thousands of masks that were given to certain healthcare organizations. The office staff continued their jobs by working remotely using Zoom.

Jeff is reminding us to see ***The Supreme Leader*, on stage October 28 – November 21**, and confirmed that North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un was actually a student at a Swiss boarding school.

Across the planet there are probably hundreds of playwrights and composers developing stories of pandemic survival, triumph and demise!

**IMPORTANT POINT!** As you ask yourself what you can do in the face of all this opportunity –

**GET A SEASON SUBSCRIPTION!**

**BUY INDIVIDUAL TICKETS!**

**SHOW UP!**

**ENJOY THE ARTS!**

## **DOUBLE DUTY ON STAGE**

**An interview with Sarahbeth Grossman  
DTC Artistic Producer**

DTC's 2021 – 2022 season got off to a BIG start with *Cake Ladies* and *Tiny Beautiful Things* running on alternative days on the Wyly stage! **Liz Mikel** and **Sally Nystuen Vahle** were the cake ladies in this premiere of **Playwright-in-Residence Jonathan Norton's** comedy, directed by Kevin Moriarty. **Joel Ferrell** directed the very clever *Tiny Beautiful Things* starring **Christie Vela**.

In theater parlance this arrangement of running two plays in the same time period is called **running the plays "in rep"** – presenting two plays in rotation. *On Cue* editor Don Warnecke talked with DTC **Artistic Producer Sarahbeth Grossman** about this process of running playing in rep.

The term "in rep" came from of an older practice of running a series of related plays in a repertoire. In this case *Cake Ladies* and *Tiny Beautiful Things*, which are unrelated in any way, were selected before the Covid pandemic, with an expectation of running them separately in a sequence. As one action in recovering from all of the Covid distortions of the arts world, DTC chose a practical scheduling alternative of running them in rep in this time slot. Another great decision!

Running two plays in rep may offer cost savings through sharing of resources: stage crews and equipment rentals; perhaps cast members and parts of sets; perhaps some props and lighting and sound designs. Scheduling of rehearsals within the constraints of union contracts can be more efficient and more convenient to cast and crew. Artists usually enjoy this arrangement since it can present interesting relationships and challenges, and can better utilize their time. Space utilization in the Covid era can be more efficient. That's a lot of goodness!

Good candidates for running in rep are plays that are thematically linked, addressing similar or complementary topics. That relationship could even bring together a drama and a comedy! . An ideal arrangement would have one cast that is a good fit for performing both plays.

Running in rep takes a great deal of planning. The DTC leadership team puts many hours into resolving a production calendar that takes advantage of resource availability and weaves through the many contractual and physical constraints. That overall calendar is then driven down into the schedules of people, production and performance space, physical components, and theater services. One interesting asset that can enable plays in rep is the **Kalita's turntable**.

Mix all that together ("stirred, not shaken"), add a dash of salsa, and KA-POW – more magic made on stage! You'll marvel at more of it in this new season!