

ON CUE

The *On Cue* editorial staff hopes that you had a wonderful holiday season, and wishes you a 2019 filled with good health, good fortune, great fun, and superb theater!

At right are Sarah Warnecke and Amber Rossi, fresh off the stage at *A Christmas Carol*!



Upcoming Events: March - June

IMPORTANT!	PUT THESE IN YOUR CALENDAR!! RIGHT NOW!!!
March 24 5:00-6:30	Tech Dinner: <i>Twelfth Night</i> Wylly
March 25 11:30-12:30	Meet & Greet: <i>Real Women Have Curves</i> Wylly
April 21 5:00-6:30	Tech Dinner: <i>Real Women Have Curves</i> Kalita Humphreys
TBA	Spring event
May 4 6:30-midnight	CenterStage Gala! AT&T PAC
May 10 11:30-1:30	Meet & Greet: Penny Candy Wylly
TBA 6:00-8:00	Fourth General Meeting Home of JB and Todd Nehlich
June 2 5:00 - 6:30	Tech Dinner: <i>Penny Candy</i>

The February General Meeting!

Written by: Trey Birkhead, April Bosworth, Julie Goldfarb, John Howell, Marla Janco, Martha Jarmon, Vicki Newsom and Don Warnecke

Vice-Presidents - Meetings **Eleanor Casey** and **Suzanne Caruso**, in cahoots with Co-President **April Bosworth**, hit it out of the ballpark again! Actually, they hit it all the way to the western shore of White Rock Lake, where **Carol** and **Dr. Warren Lichliter** enjoy the views from their stunning, spacious contemporary home. Giant Guild thanks go to Carol and Warren for hosting!

Fifty-nine very chatty Guild members and guests enjoyed libations poured by **Robert Howell**, the Guild's sommelier, and a full array of hors d'oeuvres and desserts. It was a happy time!

What's Inside:

- * Third Gen. Meet. – Dallas Theater History
- * Staff Appreciation Lunch
- * Theater Backstage: The Producer
- * Salon Series – *The Wolves*

Don Warnecke, Editor and Writer (Photos by James Prince, Don & Sarah Warnecke)

IMPORTANT ITEM – As the program began, April urged Guild members to attend the Salon Series, which is the Guild’s premier educational and social event. Many Guild members raised their hands to indicate they have attended prior Salons. This March 4 event focuses on the DTC play *The Wolves*, which will run on the Wyly Studio stage March 6 – April 14. This year’s Salon will offer elegant dining at Cityplace and discussion by a panel of experts, including an actor in *The Wolves*. **Kersten Rettig** and **Jasmine Wynton** are leading this event. You **MUST** be there!

The program for the evening featured Dallas historian, author, actor and very entertaining speaker **Dr. Rose-Mary Rumbley**. She is a treasure who shares her humor, perspective and deep well of knowledge in hundreds of speaking engagement each year. Several Guild members commented on enjoying her in many venues over decades. One of her books, *An Unauthorized History of Dallas*, was written for



the City’s 150th birthday (1991).

She initiated the audience’s continual laughter with a verbal illustration of what was taught decades ago in Elocution Class; very clear, authoritative, theatrical speech reminiscent of Kathryn Hepburn or the average queen of England! Rose-Mary recalled practicing this art form as a student teacher under the guidance of **Claire Cunningham**. (Claire and husband Dale were in attendance.) She can fascinate any audience with her wide range of tales of Dallas over the decades. Her focus this evening was of course the Dallas theater scene.

Julie and **Martha** really enjoyed hearing about the Laurel Land Easter plays, which were on the scale of extravaganzas; some were actually performed in the Laurel Land cemetery! When Rose-Mary took over direction of them, she included her students, which was very popular casting. Rose-Mary drilled those students in E-lo-cu-tion (say that convincingly before a mirror)!

Vicki, **John** and everyone else got a big charge from hearing about the MadCap Players. **April** described them - “They were a comedy troupe of six actors who played the roles of a good-looking woman, a good-looking man, a



April Bosworth Carol Lichliter Eleanor Casey

dumb blonde, a clown, an old man and an old woman.” Their routines were, well, mad cap! They did their shows in a tent, until a fire at the Ringling Brothers Circus resulted in tent shows being outlawed. That left Neil Fletcher, one of the actors, with a lot of time on his hands, “so while messing around in his kitchen, he invented the corny dog!” Can you guess which state fair picked up on that idea?

April wrote about the Band Shell at Fair Park where the “Starlight Operettas” were performed (starting in 1941, when ticket prices were as low as 30 cents), prior to the opening of Music Hall. Rose-Mary told an especially funny story about Nanette Fabray running off stage when a June bug went down her décolletage. **Marla** was particularly interested in the stories of Rose-Mary going to college with Tom Hughes and performing at Music Hall in *Oklahoma*, many times as Aunt Eller (with Joel Ferrell performing as a young person alongside her). Rose-Mary also spoke about how Charles Meeker (she called him Charlie) operated Dallas Summer Musicals in a very unorthodox manner - yet it worked very well. Meeker mentored Tom Hughes and Michael Jenkins.

Here is a bit of additional history, sourced from the DSM website. Later in the 1940s Starlight Operettas experienced big successes and big changes. Mary Martin opened the national tour of *Annie Get Your Gun* there and Dallas revived *Pal Joey*, sending it back to Broadway. Air conditioning was installed in Music Hall, so Starlight Operettas moved inside and was rebranded as State Fair Musicals. In the 1950s, operettas started losing ground to headliner shows, like Jack Benny, Carol Burnett, Mitzi Gaynor, Carol Channing and Jim Nabors, and State Fair Musicals engaged them all. In 1962, State Fair Musicals broke away from the State Fair and continued as Dallas Summer Musicals.

April heard Rose-Mary talk about the Majestic Theatre, which started as a vaudeville venue, and gradually transitioned to a movie theater. She also talked about Theatre Three, Dallas Children’s Theater, Kitchen Dog Theater and The Little Theatre of Dallas (where Kalita



Sommelier Robert Howell

Humphreys was once an actress).

And of course Rose-Mary talked about the Dallas Theater Center. **Julie** and **Marla** were interested in Rose-Mary’s conversations with Paul Baker and Frank Lloyd Wright (she probably “advised” him on several topics). **Trey**’s uncle Preston Jones wrote a three play series, *A Texas Trilogy*, which was presented by DTC as a one-evening marathon, running until perhaps 2 AM! Rose-Mary knew all of the directors and many of the actors throughout DTC’s history.

Rose-Mary knew our dear friend **Ken Latimer**. **Martha** commented on her late husband and **Trey** about his mentor. Ken was well known for directing a Guild-sponsored series of play readings done by local actors, and two productions of the zany Guild Players (two plays written by **Don** and together starring over 20 Guild members).

Many in attendance commented on the pleasure this all was, and went home better informed about Dallas and theater in Dallas!



Guild members enjoy conversation and goodies!



Marion Ward-Dunton Marilyn Halla Florence Cox

Hal Schneider Cindy Cummings



Mary Cunningham Rocky Ford Angela & John Howell



Staff Appreciation Lunch!

The Guild recognizes the hard and important work so well done by the DTC staff! So on February 8 we invited them to One Arts Plaza for a sumptuous buffet lunch, organized by DTC Board and Guild Board member **Hamilton Sneed** and Guild Co-President **Lance Hancock**. The buffet invited mass consumption, and most stepped up to that opportunity. Mother-of-the- feast **Ginger Snider** was on hand to pour a few spots of tea!

Thank you DTC Staff!



What is it?

Theater Backstage: The Artistic Producer

Want to see a whirlwind? There is no need to visit some remote desert. DTC has its own on the 8th floor of the Wyly! **Sarahbeth Grossman** joined the DTC staff six months ago, bringing a treasure chest of experience in theater management, and is applying it hourly. And, she has connected with the Guild by attending Meet & Greets and Tech Dinners, and by serving as a very effective moderator at the recent Salon Series event focused on *The Wolves* (see separate article).

It takes a great deal of planning and coordination across practically all functional areas of DTC to assemble a great season of theater and to put it on stage. As Artistic Producer, she applies her knowledge, experience and perspective across the DTC landscape. She works with Kevin Moriarty, Jeff Woodward, Joel Ferrell and others on the DTC artistic, marketing, PR, production, education and community engagement teams on everything from overseeing individual productions, to season selection, to long range planning.

There are many considerations in selecting plays for a season, including:

- A play's alignment with the DTC mission. (Oh, since you asked, here is that mission. "Dallas Theater Center will engage, entertain, and inspire our diverse community by creating experiences that stimulate new ways of thinking and living. We will do this by consistently producing plays, educational programs, and other initiatives that are of the highest quality and that reach the broadest possible constituency.")
- Budgets – a mix of large and small plays to meet our financial goals. (Musicals are more complex and expensive than other forms.)
- Casting for our Brierley Resident Acting Company members, and to make sure we have diverse casting opportunities across our season.
- Attracting diverse and top-notch talent on our creative teams, including writers, directors and designers.
- Welcoming opportunities for co-productions (with other theaters) to both share resources and to have an impact on the national theater landscape.
- Our diverse audience – ensuring we are reflecting and speaking to the broadest and most diverse audience we can within our Dallas community.



Sarahbeth then focuses on planning for individual plays (some require action far in advance, in order to get the right resources). She assures that all teams are focused on the same artistic vision, financial goals and timeline, and are communicating effectively. She plays a central role in managing co-production arrangements, and manages the Brierley Resident Acting Company.

In co-production arrangements, the two (or more) theaters will run the exact same production, using the same cast. DTC has utilized co-productions over the years; *All the Way* was a co-production with the Alley Theatre in Houston. The two companies share the cost of designing and building the show, and each theater pays its own running cost. The companies share revenue from subsequent leasing of the show. Co-production arrangements often provide an even wider pool of artists for us to work with.

She shared other interesting insights. In earlier times, stage and film were distinct career tracks for theater management and certain technical fields, but now there is little separation. However, for actors, stage and film are quite different. In a live stage production, there are no retakes or technical editing, and actors must project emotion across an entire theater.

OK, so you get it that Artistic Producer is a very demanding role. How does one become a producer? Sarahbeth started on the artistic side of things – as a ballerina. She went to UCLA for a theater degree and along the way picked up business skills in various jobs. That led to the Great Fork in the Road and she chose to pursue theater management. To ice her professional cake, she earned an MFA in theater management at Yale, where she was Associate Managing Director for Yale Repertory.

After Yale she worked with the New York Stage and Film Company, interned with Showtime Networks and worked for several years as a marketing executive for The Walt Disney Company and Variety. Upon moving back to NYC and entering the Broadway producing

community, she trained with the Commercial Theater Institute. She has experience with all forms of theater – musicals, comedies, dramas; she particularly enjoys character-driven stories in all forms.

DTC is very fortunate to have enticed her to leave The Big Apple and to land in The Big D!



OK now, what IS this thing?



DTC Staff News! Dear friend of the Guild Robin Rose shows off her engagement ring!! The Guild wishes her a wonderful life!!!

Salon Series: *The Wolves*

The Guild's Salon Series was back for its 9th year, this time focused on DTC's production of *The Wolves*. The Salon Series, based on the model of an 18th century gathering of artisans, intellectuals and theater aficionados, featured a delightful seated dinner and a fascinating panel discussion of topics relevant to *The Wolves*' nine teenage female soccer players – and to relatives of all teenagers. Event chair **Kersten Rettig** collaborated with DTC Director of Education **Morgana Wilborn** in planning the evening and in assembling the panelists.

The Wolves was another successful collaboration of DTC and the Meadows School of the Arts. Six of the nine ladies on *The Wolves* roster are SMU students, and Brierley Resident Acting Company member Ana Hagedorn earned her MFA at SMU. During the panel discussion Ana described the daily regimen for cast members before opening night – three hours of exercises and soccer practice and then the rehearsal! Ana, for one, had never played soccer before.

Kersten took the Guild to Cityplace for the evening. Following the recent Salon model, the group of 130 guests enjoyed beverages, hors d'oeuvres and a full dinner in a reception room and then moved to an auditorium for the panel discussion. The evening's ambiance was the clever work of **April Bosworth, Judy Mathis,** and **JB Nehlich**). April was everywhere, making it all happen. JB was a major force in set-up and take-down.

April described the décor: As they entered the reception room, Guild "athletes" were invited to pose with a ball by a soccer goal backdrop complete with a faux grass field. The reception room was scattered with soccer-themed accents to help "kick off" the event. Fuschia pink, black and white comprised the color palette that set the tone for both linens and funky eclectic pink napkins that graced all the patron tables and the uplighting throughout the room.

STAY TUNED FOR MORE! Kersten arranged for a professional photographer. When those photos are available in a compatible form, a selection of them will be compiled into a separate supplemental issue of *On Cue*.

Two styles of centerpieces were mingled throughout the dining room. A tall centerpiece featured a soccer ball nestled atop green crystal beads, intertwined green LED lights (to mimic grass) and placed inside a large martini-style vase. To finish the look, small white contemporary-style vases were filled with assorted pink and orange Gerber daisies and roses then placed around the base of the martini vases.



The second centerpiece style was a low pave' of brightly colored florals including pink peonies, orange roses, pink tulips and lush varietal greenery with the same green crystal beads. This arrangement was placed on top of a square of grass that was lit with green LED lights. Judy's candy-filled party favors added just a perfect finish to the tables.

Underwriters for the event were incoming DTC Board Chair **Jennifer Altabef** and husband **Peter**, Lisa and Clay Cooley, **Diane and Hal Brierley**, **April Bosworth** and **Kersten**. Table hosts were **Julie Hersh**, **Sarah and Don Warnecke**, **Judy Birchfield**, **April Bosworth**, **Mary and Roger Cunningham**, **Angela and John Howell**, Friends of Kersten Rettig, , **Craig Haynes**, **Karol Omlor**, and **Kersten Rettig**. Mayoral candidate Lynn McBee was named as Honorary Chair of the event.

Others made contributions that were important to the ambiance, fun and success of Salon:

- Judy Birchfield – telephoning for ticket sales
- Amy Lacy (DTC) – graphics
- Vicki Newsom – videography
- James Prince – photography
- Robin Rose (DTC) – check-in
- Karen Zvonecek – check-in
- Sarah Warnecke – telephone sales and reservations

The panel discussion covered a wide range of issues faced by female students and their futures in our changing society. DTC Artistic Producer **Sarahbeth Grossman** was an ideal choice for panel moderator and she did a masterful job! Panelists included Dr. Joci Caldwell-Ryan (Interim Director, Women’s and Gender Studies at SMU); Dr. Rosemary Brock (Educator, literacy advocate and editor of the book *Hope Nation*); Ana Hagedorn (cast member); Maya Budhrani (junior at Irma Rangel Young Women’s Leadership School). A group of students from Irma Rangel attended the discussion and supported Maya.

Sarahbeth initiated a discussion of how the girls in the play create their own culture. There is essentially no adult presence (except for Allison Pistorius’ late appearance as the Soccer Mom). Maya and Ana raised several interesting points about their own lives and parallels to Wolves girls.



The Panelists
(Sarahbeth Grossman at left. Ana Hagedorn at right.
Maya Budhrani 3rd from right.



Delegation from Irma Rangel school

- Ana is in her first year with the Brierley Resident Acting Company. In the play, Ana’s character is new to the school, but as is slowly revealed, she lived, studied, and played soccer internationally. In this aggressive pack, her character remains gracious and open-minded while learning the rules of the pack. In the real-world context of putting on this play, the nine actors needed to develop a culture among themselves. Seven of the nine (including Ana) had their SMU years as a starting point. The daily physical work-outs and rehearsals provided a strong motivation to refine that culture.

- The girls (Wolves) in the play had to develop their own moral code as a component of their culture, and did so in the absence of a clear leader. Maya talked about being on the Irma Rangel debate team and is a highly competitive lacross player inside the welcoming bubble of an all-girls school. She had to develop a different set of relationships and rules for her non-school life. Being a successful competitor helps in relationships with males.
- Maya has never felt that she couldn't do something because of her gender; she wants adults to listen to and respect teenagers. The wolves in the play seemed to operate in the same manner. Joci pointed out that this play could not have been a success 50 years ago because of gender expectations.



OK, it fell from a centerpiece. It's attractive, so I used it as a filler.

The panelists provided valuable insights into the lives of today's high-performing teenagers!