

# Stratford Tribune

NEWSLETTER OF THE TEXAS SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL GUILD

FALL 2021

## Looking Forward

### A Word from the Guild—Karen Peters

I am delighted to be your new president, and I'm looking forward to another stellar season for the Texas Shakespeare Festival. The 36th Season of TSF was very successful, despite having to observe several COVID protocols.

Thank you for joining the Guild for next year. Your dues go toward "Feeding the Company"—three lunches each week, breakfast six days a week, and "change-over" meals for the crew that takes down and rebuilds the sets between performances.

We look forward to seeing you at the theater for the 37th Season of the Texas Shakespeare Festival, summer 2022!

## Texas Shakespeare Festival 2022 Season

Here is a preview of the shows chosen for the upcoming season. Get ready for old favorites and new experiences!

**The Taming of the Shrew**—Directed by Matthew Simpson  
"I see a woman may be made a fool, / If she had not a spirit to resist."

When William Shakespeare wrote *The Taming of the Shrew*, he created one of his most infamous sets of lovers: Kate and Petruchio. Equal parts stubborn and fierce, these two take each other on an explosive journey to discover the love that they both deserve. A romantic comedy and classic battle of the sexes, *The Taming of the Shrew* will have you laughing and cheering in the name of love.

**Nell Gwynn**—Directed by Sasha Hildebrand

Rising from her roots in the London slums, Nell Gwynn becomes the 17th century's most celebrated actress by singing and acting her way into the heart of fellow actor

Charles Hart as well as King Charles II. However, her rapid rise to fame comes with its own dangers. With her family and friends at risk, Nell must decide where her future lies... on the stage or in the palace. Commissioned by the Royal Shakespeare Company and based on the true life of Nell Gwynn, this unbelievable story is not to be missed.

**The Tempest**—Directed by Rebekah Scallet  
"We are such stuff as dreams are made on, / and our little life is rounded with a sleep."

Magic, betrayal, love, and forgiveness: this clever romance by William Shakespeare tells the story of the magical Prospero and his daughter Miranda, who are shipwrecked on an island. In a reckless rage, Prospero conjures a tempest that inadvertently sends their lives into chaos. To restore peace to his world, Prospero must choose between revenge and forgiveness. One of Shakespeare's final plays, *The Tempest* is a stunning story of love and redemption.

**The Music Man**—Directed by Whitney Branam

There's trouble in River City! When smooth-talking con man Harold Hill arrives in a small Iowa town, he expects to dupe its residents with his elaborate moneymaking scheme: convince everyone that he's a brilliant bandleader and recruit all the boys to join his band, pocketing the cash for instruments and uniforms. The problem? Some of the citizens, especially the skeptical librarian, Marian Paroo, don't quite buy Harold's story. As

See Season, page 2

### Updated Info. Needed

Guild members, please update your telephone contact info. Some folks' info contains phone numbers no longer in use. Send your updated number to Lois Knouse, at [lekhouse2020@outlook.com](mailto:lekhouse2020@outlook.com) AND let us know your preferred way of contact: mail, call, text.



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### FOLLOW THE GUILD



The TSF Guild is now officially social—on two platforms. Follow the Guild on

**Facebook:** [TexasShakesGuild](https://www.facebook.com/TexasShakesGuild)  
or on

**Twitter:** [@TxShakesGuild](https://twitter.com/TxShakesGuild)

We'll be sharing news, photos, and interesting facts that inquiring Festival fans and Guild members might want to know. Follow your Guild today!

## Looking Back—Festival 2021

In Year 2 of COVID Times, the Festival returned with in-person performances—and a full auditorium for so many of them. The joy of attending live theatre with our favorite troupe was sharpened by the loss of the 2020 season. Although we really needed no reminder of the value of this East Texas treasure, a lost season perhaps brought greater reflection and appreciation of what we have just down the road in Kilgore during the month of July each year.

A highlight was the chance to honor Raymond in a manner befitting his contribution to this endeavor. Many thanks to all who made such a wonderful celebration possible, and to the Foundation for establishing an endowment fund named in Raymond's honor. (You can make a contribution now and be a charter member of this!)

Thanks to our volunteers who came to serve as greeters at performances, provide food for Lunch Bunch, sell tickets for the Foundation drawing, purchase flowers for the lobby,

sponsor interns, or fulfill any other of the many needs that are always met by our Guild members.

Rising community spread of COVID raised caution as the season ended, so we had to forgo one of our favorite traditions, the bittersweet goodbye gathering of the Strike Day dinner. All members of the Company were able to go home safely and with our greatest love and appreciation for all they gave us during the season.

Flexibility and innovation continue to be watchwords for everyone as we navigate our current times. With these elements, we can be assured that we can handle more seasons to come. Thanks to everybody for volunteering when you could, attending the performances, buying tickets to shows or the drawing, telling your friends and family about the Festival, and sending your prayers and good wishes for the whole operation. Ready to go for next year!

*Season, cont. from page 1*

All-American as apple pie and as charming as can be, The Music Man is a crowd-pleasing show that's perfect for the whole family.

*The Hog Princess*—Written by Grace Abele and DJ Canaday. Directed by DJ Canaday

Enchantments gone haywire. A kingdom in peril. A prophecy foretold... Audiences of all ages will go hog wild as Paisley and Myrtle, two "she-roes" of unique design, are forced to

take matters into their own hands in order to save the day. This original fractured fairy tale adventure will leave you squealing for more as the unlikely duo embarks on an unexpected odyssey amidst bridge trolls, hobgoblins, a dude in distress, and one very hungry mosquito. It's snort to be missed!

## TSF Is Hitting the Road

Once again, we have a new troupe of actors joining us for the TSF Roadshow.

The company will perform Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, directed by Matthew Simpson, and

*Twelfth Night*, directed by Meaghan Simpson. TSF alums Travis Ascione and Jo Garcia-Reger will be in the company, along with Olivia Tippett serving as the Tour Manager. Newcomers are Laura Brennan, Raven Jeannette, Darius Deon, Alex Gossard, and Jesse McFarland. The company will tour East Texas for three weeks; a week-long residency will follow at the Globe of the Great Southwest in Odessa, Texas.



## TSF Roadshow FREE Guild Performance

Join us for TSF Roadshow performances of *Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It* on Saturday, October 30th, at 2:00 p.m. in the Van Cliburn Auditorium. This performance is FREE as a thank-you to current Guild members. Each production is approximately 60 minutes, and there will be a short break between the two shows with a talk-back discussion to follow. Tickets are free, but donations are welcome. To reserve your seat, visit [teaxasshakespeare.tix.com](http://teaxasshakespeare.tix.com)

## Rallying Repasts for the Roadshow

Once again the TSF Roadshow company has arrived to begin rehearsal for the community performances, but COVID has prevented the usual Welcome Dinner. The TSF Guild Company Events committee is preparing special Monday meals to help the company feel welcome, and perhaps a little bit pampered! The same protocols are being used that were used in the summer: meals are prepared in single portions and picked up by the company



to eat off site or outdoors. We are delighted that these energetic young professionals are here!

## Another Enthusiastic Parking Lot Party

These years of COVID have sharpened many of our innovative skills and enabled a new but equally welcoming approach to the arrival of TSF company members. On Oct. 4 at 12:30, TSF Guild Board members prepared to “honk, hoot, and holler” as they staged a small surprise gathering with signs, balloons, and such to greet the newly-arrived members of this year’s Roadshow company. Box

lunches were provided for the Roadshow members to grab and go. So glad to have you here, Roadshow actors / friends!

See additional photos in the Green Group Edition of this newsletter.



*“Frame your mind to MIRTH and MERRIMENT, which bars a thousand harms and lengthens life.”*

-William Shakespeare

The TSF staff is thrilled to bring back the annual tradition of a holiday production after two long years away. Featuring readings from classic authors and poets, Mirth & Merriment is a nostalgic holiday treat starring TSF alums sharing Christmas tales, songs, and poems in an unforgettable and entertaining event fit for the entire family. Performances will take place in the Van Cliburn Auditorium December 10th-12th. Cast members include DJ Canady, Jo Garcia-Ruger, Micah Gooding, Rick Higgenbotham, Jonathan Kaan, Joseph Kaan, and Lauren Ufkes.

**To purchase tickets, visit [texasshakespeare.tix.com](http://texasshakespeare.tix.com).**

## Make a Difference for the Festival

As the holiday season approaches, give a gift that will have a lasting impact! Make a donation to The



Raymond Caldwell Endowment Fund and/or become a member of the TSF Prospero Society (Supporters who have provided for Texas Shakespeare Festival Foundation in their estate plans.)

**Information is on the website: [www.texasshakespeare.com](http://www.texasshakespeare.com)**

**Look for the Donate tab.)**

## Thank You from Raymond Caldwell

To the TSF Foundation Board, every member of the Guild, all former colleagues, TSF Company members, and beloved Festival patrons:

I am not Shakespeare, so I lack the skill and creativity to adequately express my deep gratitude for the warm and generous reception you offered my wife Anna and me last June/July when you invited us back to Kilgore for opening nights, the public announcement of the TSF Endowment Fund, and the incredible reception in recognition of my retirement. I am still overwhelmed by the events of that visit, not knowing how to word my thoughts or to whom they should be addressed.

The past year has been an emotional one filled with difficult adjustments and daily deluges of wonderful memories of my 46 years in Kilgore. My heart will always remain there. Kilgore is my home in every important way—creatively, socially, professionally, and spiritually. From the day I drove into town in the summer of 1965 as a new college graduate to begin teaching at Kilgore High School, the kind citizens of Kilgore and East Texas welcomed me into their world and inspired me to participate in their efforts to celebrate Kilgore’s unique history. I can think of no other place where I would rather have spent those 46 years. But how does one say thank you for something as big as a lifetime career?

Thirty-five of those years were dedicated to the creation and development of the Texas Shakespeare Festival, as you know. Those three-and-a-half decades became the most beautiful, defining years of my entire life, filled with gifts and blessings I could never deserve. Kilgore College and the thousands of artists and Festival patrons who supported the Festival (particularly those who joined the Guild, served as officers, and those who created the Foundation and volunteered on its Board) gave me a life no poor boy from Arkansas could ever dream of having. Thanks to all of you, I was given a chance to do something quite rare – to make a living doing the one thing I enjoyed the most. How many people are so fortunate? How many people can truthfully say they never dreaded going to work? How many can say they never watched the clock, just waiting for the end of the workday; never worked through the week, waiting for the weekend; never checked the calendar, waiting for vacation; and never counted the years, waiting for retirement? I can. What a gift!

I thank God, and I thank YOU for that incredible (and undeserved) gift.

It was a great honor to live among you, work with you, learn from you, and to experience such a wealth of beautiful, artistic, creative moments with you. Those are the daily memories I live with, and I treasure all of them. A flood of kind faces – your faces – fill my days and nights now. I live in a parallel world of daily routines and incredible fantasies, and I am forever grateful to each of you for those colorful and delightful moments that sustain me every day.

My heart is always there with you and with the Festival, which is in capable and caring hands. Every day, without fail, I pause a moment to pray for the continued success of Meaghan, Matthew, John, and of each Guild officer and each member of the Foundation Board – and for Kilgore College too, of course.

I look forward to seeing all of you again next summer, but until then, every single day, with all my heart, I thank you for every kind gesture through the years, especially for the glorious loved-filled events during opening week last summer. As Emily Dickinson put it: “I don’t know what to do with my heart!”

*Raymond Caldwell*

## Join the Green Group—for Three Reasons

If you have not yet joined the “Green Group” by signing up to receive *The Stratford Tribune* newsletter via email rather than through regular postal service, please consider doing it today for three reasons:

- (1) it saves the Guild substantial cost in printing and postage;
- (2) it allows you to receive a greatly enhanced version of the newsletter, including full-color pictures; and
- (3) it includes you on the Festival’s email list, which lets you receive more timely notifications of many TSF activities.

And there is a fourth reason, too: it saves trees!

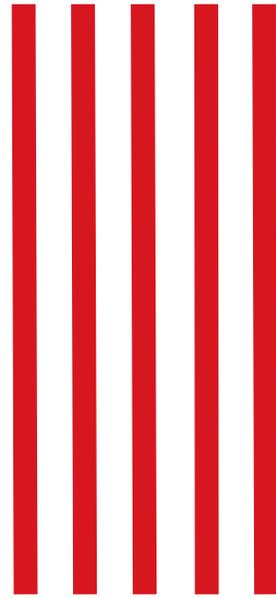
• **Green Group** —You will receive the TSF newsletters via email and occasional correspondence about Festival activities. Examples of these might be information about the Lunch Bunch, TSF Foundation, raffles, and special TSF events. These emails might be informative or request help with events, etc. and will not be excessive. *We do not share your email address with other entities.*

To join the Green Group, send an email to [LEKhouse2020@outlook.com](mailto:LEKhouse2020@outlook.com). Please be sure to include your name. Sometimes it is difficult to identify you by your email address.



## 2021—2022 Executive Board

<b>President</b>	<i>Karen Peters</i>
<b>President—Elect</b>	<i>Linda Crabtree</i>
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	<i>Sharon Noblitt</i>
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	<i>Lois Knouse</i>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<i>Louise Cochran</i>
<b>Past President</b>	<i>Gem Meacham</i>
<b>VP—Guild Events</b>	<i>Kimberly Macedo</i>
<b>Co-VPs—Company Events</b>	<i>Eileen Kosnik</i> <i>Claudia Morgan-Gray</i>
<b>Co-VPs—House Events</b>	<i>Melinda Johnson</i> <i>Martha Rutherford</i>
<b>Co-VPs—Communications</b>	<i>Martha Dalby</i> <i>Kate Wells</i> <i>Lynn Wells, Graphic Design</i>
<b>TSF Artistic Director</b>	<i>Meaghan Simpson</i>
<b>TSF Managing Director</b>	<i>John Dodd</i>
<b>TSF Associate Artistic Director/ Director of Development</b>	<i>Matthew Simpson</i>



Rick Higginbotham



DJ Canaday



Lauren Ufkes



Joseph Kaan



Micah Goodding



Jo Garcia-Reger



Jonathan Kaan

# TSF Roadshow Welcome

## THE COMPANY



Travis Ascione  
Acting Company



Laura Brennan  
Acting Company



Raven Jeannette Cotton  
Acting Company



Darius Deon  
Acting Company



Jo Garcia Reger  
Acting Company



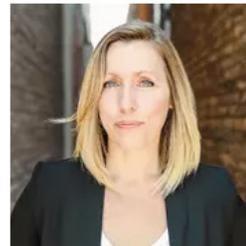
Alex Gossard  
Acting Company



Jesse McFarland  
Acting Company



Matthew Simpson  
Director



Meaghan Simpson  
Director



Olivia Tippett  
Tour Manager



# TSF Roadshow Welcome

