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The Spotlight

on Hancher Guild

A word from the President ...

Rives Bird

And the building has begun. It's really exciting to see this finally starting to take shape. I want to discuss this more, but first I would like to discuss performing arts in general.

You are all incredibly fortunately to live in an area where the performing arts thrive and are accessible. I've lived in many places, and I cannot say I've ever had the kind of access to such a wide variety of performances as we have in Iowa City.

This recently became even more apparent to me. For those of you who do not know, I have taken up residence in Dallas and commute back and forth to Iowa City to be with my family. It is more difficult now, due to scheduling, to see as



**2013-2014 Hancher Guild President
Rives Bird**

many Hancher performances as I would like.

That being said, I do continue to support the arts in my new home. I can walk to the symphony, the opera house, and dozens of other venues. The arts are important enough that I want to be close to them and not miss going to great performances.

In a big city it's too easy to not make an effort to go to a show because access is much more difficult. Hancher and Iowa City gave me an appreciation for how important access is to the arts.

Now, let's get back to this wonderful new building that is in process. We've waited a long time, and the anticipation is certainly growing, as this will mark in a way a

new beginning for Hancher. Hancher has survived, even thrived, without a building, but we can only imagine how impactful it will be once it has a new home.

Not only will Hancher's home be new, so will the Guild. We have coordinated a small group of people to redefine the Guild. The group is made up of all ages from university students to Miriam and Art Canter.

Miriam wrote the first bylaws of the Guild, and she is enthusiastic about being a part of this new group. One of our goals for the new Guild is to embrace the youth in our community and bring them in as a part of serving the performing arts.

Another is to better communicate the Guild's mission. Even the name "Hancher Guild" is likely to change. If you wish to share your ideas, make comments, or ask questions, please do not hesitate to e-mail me at rivesbird@gmail.com.

I'm looking forward to a great second half of the year. I hope you all will attend many of the accessible and excellent performances Hancher has to offer.

Guild gains two new members

Hancher Guild has gained two new members since the last publication of *The Spotlight*.

The newest members are: Ann Leefers of Solon and Robert Wongkamalasai of Iowa City.

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Things are looking up as construction begins, new ideas for the Guild are discussed

Chuck Swanson,
Hancher Executive Director

We often speak of the Guild and Hancher staff as the Hancher family. The past few years have been a bit more challenging for our family, but things are looking up as construction for the new building is going very well and progress is being made.

The site looks extremely different with the original building gone and the concrete walls starting to form the new building. Steel is now being erected and the building will be taking shape. By this time next year the building will be enclosed, and we will all have a sense of what the new Hancher will look like.

The Hancher Guild continues to support our Hancher activities even during this time without a home. Jane Downer sells Showcase items and generates a stream of revenue to the Showcase account. Jean Hood is focusing her efforts on operational plans for the new Showcase.

Marilyn Wirtz and Sandy Lawrence stay on top of scheduling Guild members to hand out playbills at all of our shows, and Linda Fincham and Fran Gruenhaupt continue to organize merchandise sales at performances.

Dick Johns keeps us informed through the newsletter, and Rives Bird continues to lead as our president. The staff is grateful for the Guild support and appreciates their loyalty and love of Hancher.

The process of designing the new Hancher and now the construction of the building have been very time consuming, demanding, but also very exciting. Several months ago I decided it was time for us to begin thinking

about the operations of the new building, now that construction is well underway.

This also seems like a perfect time to re-examine and re-energize the Guild, with a focus on efforts to recruit younger people to be a part of the organization. We certainly want the Guild to be what it was—but even more so—as we prepare for the new building. We have recruited a group of people to help with ideas and plans for re-envisioning the Guild. We had our first meeting in October and another meeting in January.

The committee includes a mix of long-time Guild members, along with students from the University of Iowa, and some young, new Guild members. The committee includes Miriam Canter, Art Canter, Mary Wall, George Grilley, Fran Gruenhaupt, Anne Matthes, Joe Troness, Eric Livingston, Justin Gingerich, Bobby Wongkamalasai, Rives Bird, Kim Swanson, and me.

The October meeting began with Art, Miriam, and Mary sharing the history of the Guild and wonderful Hancher Guild stories. I loved hearing the three of them reminisce about the past and the impact the Guild has had on Hancher.

Then Bobby and Justin talked about why they were interested in being a part of the committee and their ideas on how to recruit young Guild members. Their passion for wanting to make a difference was exciting and encouraging, and I do believe they will be of great help.

If you have any ideas or if you want to be a part of this committee please feel free to send me an email or give me a call.

This is a very special time for Hancher as we come close to kicking off the second half of our 41st season. In December, we had two nearly sold-out performances by *Wynton Marsalis and Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra*. The audiences were full of jazz students from local high schools, and Wynton and the other musicians totally inspired these young musicians.

Watching young people interact and experience Hancher artists is one of the great rewards of working at Hancher. The Guild has always been a part of this due to their commitment and support of arts education for our youth.

With the new building on the horizon and a fresh approach to our Hancher Guild, we have great opportunities ahead of us to make a difference in the lives of generations of young Hancher audiences. Thanks to all of you for being a part of the Hancher family!

Members assist with special sales

Linda Fincham, Co-Chair
Fran Gruenhaupt, Co-Chair

Two Hancher events were worked by Hancher Guild members in helping with special sales for the performing artists during the fall semester of the 2013-2014 season.

Following are the volunteers and the performances.

Nancy and Dick Johns
Natalie MacMaster and Donnell Leahy performance at the Englert Theatre on Nov. 12.

Wanda Wilker and Chris Schlotfeld
Jerusalem Quartet performance at Riverside Recital Hall on Oct. 10.

Guild members enjoy special gathering Sept. 5

Hancher Guild members enjoyed a special gathering at the home of Rives and Amber Bird on Sept. 5.

A variety of hors d'oeuvres and desserts were provided and approximately 50 members

visited with one another and sampled the food.

Rives Bird and Chuck Swanson shared information about survey results regarding Hancher Guild and what impact this would have as we envision

the makeup and new efforts of the Guild.

This is a special opportunity as we look forward to enjoying performances and providing new and continued services in the new Hancher Auditorium.

Chuck Swanson talks about the survey results and their impact on the future of the Guild.



Relaxing and catching up with Guild members was a delightful part of the Sept. 5 gathering.



Conversation, delicious food and new ideas were shared by Guild members during the evening.



Guild members enjoy visiting on the screened porch.

The Spotlight is published each year for Hancher Guild members. PRODUCTION/CIRCULATION: Tim Meier (335-1130). Comments and suggestions are welcomed. Send to: Editor, Hancher Guild, 317 Seashore Hall West, Iowa City, IA 52242-1401.

23 Guild members greet, hand out playbills

*Sandra Lawrence, Chair
Marilyn Wirtz, Assistant Chair
Performance Greeters/Playbills*

Twenty-three Hancher Guild members served as greeters and handed out playbills for 15 performances at the various venues during the fall semester.

Following are the volunteers.

**Pat and Laird Addis
Kitty Buckwalter
Miriam Canter
Janice Carpenter**

**Jan and Carl Christensen
Lee and Fran Gruenhaupt
Benny Hawkins
Candice Kaelber
Marilyn Kratchmer
Sandy Lawrence
Naomi Novick
Theola Rarick
Gary Rose
Lynn Sidwell
Anna Stranieri
Mel and Diane Sunshine
Nancy and Keith Thayer
Pat Wells**

***Kenneth R. Schumacher
May 1, 1949 -- Feb. 14, 2014***

Ken Schumacher, Hancher's production manager for nine years, was a dear colleague, friend, husband, and father.

Ken passed away on Feb. 14 from complications to H1N1 and cancer. His family wrote eloquently that Ken "was released from a body that could no longer support his spirit."

His dedication to excellence in the performing arts and his wit will be greatly missed. The Guild offers its condolences to Ken's family and the Hancher staff.