

CHANDLER CENTER FOR THE ARTS

STARBURST

NEWSLETTER FOR OUR VOLUNTEERS

WINTER 2019



Dear Friends,

'Tis the season to spread some cheer! This reminds me of the little birds in my garden. I am always amazed how birds seem to tell each other what is going on. Recently, I took a decorative hanging bird bath they were completely disinterested in and changed it to a bird feeder with a variety of seeds that only birds would find delicious. I did not change its location, I simply changed its contents. Well what do you know - within a day the birds discovered the seed and

soon chatted the news to their friends! By the next day there were lots of the singing, winged creatures flying in and out to enjoy the feast! Oh, there is the occasional bird who wants to be selfish. But, for the most part they all share the bounty with each other, even kicking some of the treasures onto the ground so those below can join in.

At Chandler Center we like to spread the cheer too! We have added 46 new ushers in 2019, of whom 30 are already actively participating in our event schedule. We even have one new volunteer who has contributed more than 100 hours in her first year! This is in large part because YOU have made them feel welcome and have "spread the cheer" about how much fun it is to be a Friend. By helping new volunteers settle in, answering their questions and sharing the great events with them, you are facilitating their positive experience at CCA. It makes me happy to see both new and "seasoned" volunteers having such a great time here. We need all of you to keep the party going – THANK YOU!

Keep spreading the cheer,

Sharon LaRue
House Manager



FRIENDS' SUGGESTIONS: UPDATE

Thank you for the suggestions you have contributed to the Steering Committee. We hear you! Here are the suggestions or questions we have received and a status update for each one:

- **Present the history & background of the Center to volunteers.** This is always included at Orientation/ Refresher Training, which all volunteers are required to attend once each year. And, if you need a refresher, check out the history section on chandlercenter.org.
- **Assign a mentor to new volunteers to help them learn.** The House Manager does this whenever possible, when we have enough ushers to “double up” a specific position. It is not possible to assign the same mentor and new volunteer each time they work, as they may not both sign up for the same events every time.
- **Define “Foundation” shows and identify them in Volgistics or on the website.** Shows presented by the Chandler Cultural Foundation can be found in the season brochure or on the CCA website. These are now being noted on the Work Opportunities list you receive each quarter. At this time, they will not be noted on the Volgistics assignments, due to software constraints. To distinguish between Foundation shows and rentals online, look for the shows that are designated as 30th anniversary season.
- **Remind volunteers it is greatly appreciated when they sign up for events they are not interested in.** Staff is considering offering an extra incentive to volunteers who sign up for these events.
- **May we wear blouses without a collar?** Yes! We have just changed this in the Usher Handbook. It still needs to be a dress blouse, not a t-shirt or polo.
- **May we wear the new CCA polo shirt or a vest instead of a jacket in the summer months?** At this time, the CCA polo shirt is for staff only. Jackets are not required during the summer, except for Foundation events. We will address this with staff to determine if there could be another option in lieu of jackets.
- **What is the policy for volunteers wearing/carrying purses while working?** Large bags must be stored in the file cabinet behind the FOH desk or locked in your vehicle. You may wear a small sling/theater-style bag if it is black - no other colors.
- **Could concessions staff demonstrate the different beverage containers for alcohol vs. soda? This relates to “no alcohol” outside the lobby.** Rob will share this at the December Quarterly Meeting! And concessions staff is always happy to share that information - just ask!
- **Briefing Map is not entirely accurate for some of the rows/seats.** We are working on new briefing map templates that better coordinate with Box Office and the actual layout of the rows and seats.
- **Include in Briefing if there will be an encore.** You will know, if we know! We are not always provided a set list, and artists often add an encore “on the fly.”
- **Can we have Evacuation Training on a Saturday for volunteers who work during the week?** These dates are coordinated with CCA Management and the City of Chandler safety manager. We will discuss this to determine if it is a viable option.

- **Can we mark the edges of stairs at the Portals for patrons' safety?** Management is aware of this and has already added it to the "punch list" for renovation items that need to be corrected.
- **Can a small handrail be added inside balconies where currently there is a "gap" between the existing handrails?** We will bring this to Management as a safety concern to determine if it is possible.
- **Can Row letters be added to the seat footings so volunteers can easily see the Row in the dark with flashlights pointed at the floor?** We will bring this to Management to determine if it is possible.
- **Include a staff interview in the quarterly newsletter so volunteers know about the wider CCA staff.** We will consider adding this beginning in 2020!
- **Ask the announcer to "thank" volunteers at the beginning of each show.** This already happens occasionally at the discretion of Management. We hope you already know how much you are appreciated, even when not acknowledged from the stage!
- **Ask other venues how they recruit and ask volunteers for recruiting suggestions.** We do both! Recruiting new volunteers is always ongoing and we are always open to your suggestions.
- **How are free tickets (vouchers) awarded?** Every volunteer who has worked a minimum of 4 events in the year, receives a voucher good for 2 tickets to select shows in the upcoming season. The vouchers are distributed at the Friends Appreciation Dinner in April. The General Manager provides a list (typically in September) of the select shows from which you may choose.
- **How are invitations to the banquet (Friends Appreciation Dinner) determined?** Active volunteers who have worked a minimum of 4 events between March and February will be invited to the dinner for the following April.
- **Can the lobby monitor be upgraded to a larger size with better sound for patrons who remain in the lobby? Can seats be placed in the lobby so patrons and volunteers can sit and watch the event?** The events are designed to be watched from inside the house, not from the lobby. Volunteers who want to watch a specific show, may purchase tickets rather than ushering to be sure they can watch from inside the house. FOH will

make a case-by-case decision as to whether seats will be set up for free events that attract more than our maximum seating capacity. The number of seats we can set up is determined by Fire & Safety regulations. We will bring this to Management to determine if it is possible to include an upgraded monitor in a future renovation.

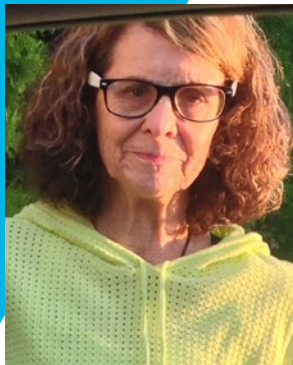
- **Can we place a cover over the Bogle "NO FOOD OR DRINK ALLOWED" sign when it IS allowed?** Marketing and Management are working on replacing all the signage for Bogle and Recital Hall, as part of the new logo/ rebranding project. This is still a work in progress.
- **When will the CCA website be updated with new photos showing the Center with the new logo?** Most of the photos have already been updated. Marketing is aware of the few photos that need to be updated. Aerial photographs are provided by the City and will be taken soon.
- **When will the details of the renovation be fixed, such as the carpeting transition at Portal B stairs?** Management is aware of these items and has already added them to the "punch list" for renovation items that need to be corrected. No specific date has been provided.
- **Refresher Training of volunteer instructions is needed regarding: usher requirements at each post, uniforms, signing in & out of Volgistics, arrival time for briefing.** ALL VOLUNTEERS ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND AN ORIENTATION/ REFRESHER TRAINING ONCE EACH YEAR. Ushers who comply with this requirement, do get reminded of these "volunteer basics." We are also working on implementing these reminders during the event briefing and will be asking for volunteer participation to see who really knows the correct answers!

Please keep sharing your ideas. The yellow suggestion forms are available at the Front of House desk - **JUST ASK!**



FRIENDS' FOCUS

*Thank you -
We could not
do this without
you!*



Vicki Buckman

Vicki Buckman has lived in the East Valley since 1978, and in Chandler since 1982. She was raised in Minneapolis, MN, and her family was in the medical

field. Vicki has been married to Bob for 52 years! They have a son and a daughter, and four wonderful grandchildren. They have all grown up in the Kyrene School District.

Vicki has more than 40 years' experience as a Cosmetologist. She and her husband had a 'mom and pop' landscape maintenance company for 30 years. They also owned a small home for five years in Green Valley - where she took up the sport of pickleball, a game she plays regularly. Vicki also plays piano and enjoys almost anything with family and friends.

She has done other volunteer work over the years, but this is the first time Vicki has worked in the arts industry. She has been at Chandler Center for the Arts for more than two years. She loves the flexibility and the wonderful people she assists and volunteers with. It is like another family.

Vicki says, "Thank you, Chandler Center for the Arts for the opportunity to volunteer!"



Julie Santamaria

Julie Santamaria was born and raised in Syracuse, NY, snow capital of the U.S.!!! She worked as a secretary for a state psychiatric hospital for six years, and got tired of shoveling her car out

one too many times in the winter of 1977. She put an ad in a horse magazine: "horse needs a ride to Arizona." A girl moving from New York to Los Angeles picked up Julie and her horse in April of 1978, and dropped them off in Flagstaff, AZ, on her way to L.A. They stayed in horse motels on the trip! She has lived in several other places including Laughlin and Alaska.

Julie's work background was as an administrative assistant for several American corporations, including Intel and Microchip in Chandler. She has been an Arizona licensed massage therapist for the past 30 years. She was a secretary/steno in the US Army Reserves and National Guard. Presently she also enjoys pet-sitting for people. A little known fact is that she can tape and mud sheet rock, and she still has her tools to do this work!

Julie graduated from University of Phoenix in 1999, with a Bachelors in Business Management. She enjoys traveling and photography - animals and landscapes are her favorite. Ask Julie the story about her wedding pictures with a box camera and a 90-year-old photographer!

Julie is divorced and chose to have no children. She began ushering at Chandler Center in 2014 because she missed being around people. You may notice a small box around Julie's neck when she volunteers. It is an amplifier for her hearing aids.

As well as volunteering at CCA, Julie does volunteer massage for combat veterans who are part of the Betty Merritt Center program in Payson, AZ. Julie is a dedicated volunteer!



GarWen Jackson

GarWen was born in Florence Union Highland Cemetery, Fremont County, CO, in a little house where her family lived. GarWen says she was born with a sense of humor! She lived in Montrose, CO, where she raised her two daughters. They brought her to Arizona in 2003 so she

could participate in raising her granddaughter, Em.

GarWen retired in 1999 after twenty-five years as Court Clerk for Montrose County Combined Courts, 7th Judicial District in Colorado. She worked closely with the judges and court reporters. There was never a dull moment there. The happiest moments were adoptions and the day new citizens of the USA were certified. The other court matters could be a challenge for grace. But GarWen loved her career.

GarWen is a family name. GarWen re-named herself after her daughters, Garci and Wendi. They may have rolled their eyes at the idea, but they were silent. It was an easy legal procedure for her. However, changing her name on all of the applicable documents was a really big headache! When you see her, ask her for the full story of why she changed her name!

GarWen likes reading mysteries. She finds them a way to escape to another venue. She plays bridge which has been a source of pleasure and frustration for her for 45 years. She refers to it as a social event! Currently, GarWen paints rocks with either funny or lovely pictures or wise sayings as her Zen-time. Then she leaves them in parks or elsewhere for children and adults to find, creating happiness or amusement based on their find. She likes seeing them posted on Facebook as a, "Look what I found!"

GarWen's passion is volunteering. She lives in a 55+ community where she can participate in many activities. She volunteers in the small library there and participates in Kare Bears, an organization where they raise money for charities in Chandler.

GarWen believes the theatre is important, both live and cinema. She began her journey at CCA as an usher in late 2004 without an explicit goal in mind. But this year, as she neared 2,000 hours of volunteering, it became her goal to accomplish it by the end of the year. And, she has! Besides enjoying the events, volunteering with the Friends is highly satisfying, entertaining and well worth the time. GarWen's motto is, "In a world where you can be anything, BE KIND."



Liz Smith

Liz Smith was born in Brooklyn, NY, and moved to Hawaii when she was 6 months old. At the age of 6, she moved back to New York until she was 13, then her family moved to Arizona. She went to college in Boston and met

her husband there. They moved to Arizona and have lived here for 30 years. In the summer they try to spend time at Cape Cod with family and friends, when they are not traveling elsewhere.

Liz has done a myriad of interesting jobs, beginning when she got her first job in Paradise Valley mucking out horse stalls in exchange for horse time. At 16, she got a job with TGI Fridays, working her way up from bussing tables to bartender to opening stores. She got this job while she was also doing cake decorating at Smitty's grocery store.

Liz and her husband made the choice for her to be a stay-at-home mom with their children, doing all the PTO, fundraising and charity work at the same time. When her oldest child turned 16, Liz became a flight attendant with Southwest Air and then a Park Ranger at Rio Salado and South Mountain. She was able to introduce arm chair birding while a park ranger and now this training for bird-watching is used widely throughout the park system.

Liz loves to travel, read and hike. In addition to volunteering at Chandler Center for the Arts, which began 2 years ago in April, she volunteers at so many other places. At the library she pulls books that people reserve online and participates in the "Read to Succeed" program with first graders. She also volunteers at church and helps out with her dad.

Liz has a great attitude of "Be kind to people, think kind things and be a positive influence." Her future goals are to travel, and have a full life when not traveling. Next summer her entire family will be traveling to Amsterdam for an adventure of biking and hiking.



**CHANDLER
CENTER**
FOR THE ARTS

ChandlerCenter.org | 480.782.2680



Happy Birthday!

JANUARY

Carol Butler 1/1
Fern Kutok 1/1
Brenda Franklin 1/3
Karlene Garn 1/6
Linda Savage 1/8
Jay Gorham 1/12
Hiwot Endeshaw 1/13
Mark Olson 1/14
Dusty Kim 1/15
Zeyna Kirdar 1/19
Christine Dearing 1/20

(JANUARY, CONT'D)

GarWen Jackson 1/21
Beverly Freet 1/26
Colleen Grady 1/27
Elsie Garland 1/27

FEBRUARY

Cheryl Kampe 2/5
Victor Jimenez 2/6
Adriene Carter 2/9
Sandra Hudgens 2/9
Julie Santamaria 2/21

MARCH

Kathy Raab 3/3
Steve Selover 3/3
Dianna Weida 3/7
Allen Pickering 3/15
Jim Hecker 3/18
Margie Carstens 3/20
Molly Solares 3/21
Patricia Painter 3/26



IMPORTANT FRIENDS' DATES

Winter 2019/2020

Quarterly Meeting & Potluck

Tuesday, December 10th

5:00-7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, March 10th

5:00-7:00pm

Orientation Training

Saturday, January 11th

9:00-11:30 a.m.

MOLLY'S MUSINGS

Usher Tips & Hints

HOW TO STAY HEALTHIER AND KEEP YOUR MIND SHARP

Volunteering at CCA can help your body and mind be active. Studies show that people with healthier hearts score higher on mental tests, so habits that help your heart also help your brain. Good sleep, a healthy, balanced diet, and exercise are all brain boosters, even as your mind matures.

Challenging your brain with new skills keeps it firing on all cylinders for longer. And a group of good friends is not only good company, it can help you live longer and remember more.

Volunteering at CCA is a great source for new friends.

Wearable activity trackers are a reliable measure of physical activity and provide key predictors of mortality. Physical activity—or lack thereof—between noon and 2pm was the highest predictor of mortality risk, especially in 50 to 84-year-olds. Encourage your friends and relatives to volunteer and live longer!

Motto: Volunteer at CCA, make friends, use the assignments to increase your activity, be healthier and live longer. Aisle ushers can easily walk 3 miles - greet the patrons at the portal, walk down the steps to take them to their seats, then back up the steps to greet the next patron. Put in extra steps by meeting patrons where they are instead of waiting for them to reach you. Extra benefit tip: Be sure to work the morning and early afternoon concerts!

