

2017 Partners in Excellence

Dr. Dennis Banks



Dr. Banks is on the board and has been in the Guild for over 20 years. Each year he gives over 100 hours of volunteer work to Glimmerglass and ushers for about 80 hours. Dr. Banks is active on the Hospitality and Education Committees and is a past President of the guild. Dr. Banks established the Gala and produces it each year. Last year it raised over \$23,000.

Patricia and Jess Carnes

Pat and Jess have held a multitude of positions in the Guild, most notably being co-presidents twice. The spirit of volunteerism is always the focal point of everything they do.



Among their many endeavors, they have been chief hosts for the hospitality teams, coordinated transportation for artists to and from the airport, headed up cast parties, hosted visiting artists and played a major role in setting up and updating the guild website.

Children's Traveling Opera Volunteer Team

The Children's Traveling Opera Volunteers of the Opera Guild of Dayton faced finding an alternative to their opera for students, *Carmen*. School educators objected to the violence



in the story, so the CTO volunteers researched, adapted, sewed costumes and arranged for sets. The volunteers wrote a grant proposal which the Rotary Club of Dayton funded. The eight members of the committee, working on their own, presented 14 performances of *Pirates of Penzance*, with more to come.

Beverly Plank

Beverly is the President of the Board of Trustees of Amarillo Opera where her determination and optimism are serving the company in a challenging economy.



She has also served in many Guild offices. Her continuing work on Fol-de-Rol, which she started, has produced greater financial success than any other arts organization's events. She is characterized as a visionary with energy, enthusiasm and motivation.

Mary Poland

Mary has served in leadership positions on the board of the San Francisco Opera Guild for over 30 years. Mary has been an outstanding fundraiser, not only for the guild but also assisting San Francisco Opera's development efforts with corporate partners on occasion. As a member of the guild she was Vice President of Development, Treasurer, Co-chair of the Wine and Travel Auction, Co-chair of the Opera Ball, and Vice-president of Administration.



Mary has been responsible for raising over 2 million dollars over the years

Mary Robbins

Mary Robbins is the ultimate opera lover, supporter, and volunteer. Mary has served on the board of the Barrington Chapter of Lyric Opera of Chicago for over 20 years and as its president for six of those years. During her entire tenure, she has also served on the Program Committee working tirelessly to bring varied and interesting programs to those in the northwest suburbs of Chicago.



As volunteer leader of the Education Department of Lyric for over 20 years, Mary identified and recruited passionate opera lovers for the Lecture Corps, as docents for Opera in the Classroom and guides for Student Backstage Tours. She coached lecturers, scheduled their lectures and advocated for their training and recognition. The list of Mary's volunteer efforts is longer still and has earned admiration and gratitude of the Lyric family.

Dr. Robert Robinson



Dr. Robinson has been instrumental in the success of the Shreveport Opera, serving in several capacities including president on its board of directors. He provides housing for singers in the Shreveport Opera Xpress program for young artists, making it possible for them to participate in the 9-month program that provides high quality programming for 40,000 youth in rural Louisiana.

Dr. Robinson's service was also pivotal to the company erasing years of accumulated debt and leading to a balanced budget.

Dr. Esther Swink

Esther Swink is a tireless volunteer for the Nashville Opera Guild, serving in many roles and now as its president. She has worked on many projects, most prominently co-chairing La Bella Notte, the guild's primary fundraiser. Her efforts succeeded in getting the auction part of the fundraiser on line and leading to the guild being able to make its largest contribution ever to the opera company.



Wendy Wustenberg

In 2015, Wendy assumed the chairmanship of a committee of Twin Cities Opera Guild that in partnership with Angels & Demons Entertainment would produce *The Marriage of Figaro* in the historic James Hill House. Ultimately the guild was not only the educational partner but did all the ticketing, publicity, training of volunteers, and coordinating with the production company. Not only did Wendy arrange and oversee all this, but after 4 sold out performances produced a four-page insert about the project for the TCOG newsletter.

