

# The Guild

Houston Baptist University

2017 • VOL. II

## Greetings from the PRESIDENT



We, The Guild, are so blessed each and every day as we wake up to be a part of a university where Jesus Christ is the basis of everything. Supporting a university that changes lives forever is so satisfying. Dr. Sloan's vision for a higher education in America is only one of his Ten Pillars that The Guild supports.

In the past months The Guild has worked hard at expanding our membership and securing donations for our scholarships. Last year we changed the lives of 33 students by giving them scholarships for their continuing education. This year we believe that number will increase due to the efforts and generosity of our members. How wonderfully proud we all should be!

I want to personally thank each one of you for the love and time that you put into supporting The Guild. I know you could be doing many other worthwhile things with your time, yet you have chosen to be an active part of an organization that cherishes Christian higher education. The success of The Guild has always been the godly women that support it.

We are blessed, and with that blessing, we are asked to be a blessing to others. Each day let us all pray that our time and effort will be used in a way that exposes the love of Christ and that our lives will impact the community around us. I am so proud to serve as your president.

*Psalm 33:12 "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people he chose for his inheritance."*

For His Glory,

Ruth Alford

## THANK YOU!

The Guild wants to express a sincere thank you for the very generous gift Mary Ann Belin has given to support the Silver Tea and scholarships.

At a very young age, Mary Ann knew she wanted to make a difference in people's lives. She wasn't sure how, but she was all about "go and do" and her life gives testimony to her commitment to do just that.

We are blessed to have Mary Ann share her love for The Guild. When asked what has made The Guild special to her, she did not hesitate to respond, "It's the friendships and helping others."

She was 14 years old when she first saw Bruce Belin driving his mother's green Cadillac on his way to pick up a friend. It was four years after returning from the Navy when they finally met, dated a short while, and then married. They raised a son and daughter, and today they celebrate nine great grandchildren! Together for 63 years, Bruce and Mary Ann set about making a difference in Houston.

Mary Ann utilized her varied and many talents to touch lives in different ways. Her strong sense of design and good taste allowed her to bring beauty into many Houston homes as she owned and operated two different home décor stores, and her kind and caring nature allowed her to teach a bible study class for several years. Longtime friend Morna Wall recalls spending many hours driving the countryside as she and Mary Ann worked tirelessly to help build Pecan Grove Baptist Church of which the Belins were one of four founding families. Morna describes her friend as kind, good and generous. Madeline Collier said it all when she said, "Mary Ann is a woman I admire for her strength of character, strong faith, generosity and a great sense of style."

Again, we thank you Mary Ann for loving The Guild and for showing us how to think beyond ourselves. Your dedication and commitment to making a difference is to be honored. You have come a long way from that young woman who aspired to be the drum major and twirler so many years ago!



# Sue Sloan to be Honored at the 2017 Silver Tea



Sue Sloan is our Silver Tea honoree this year. Diminutive in scale but super-sized with enthusiasm and passion for the things she holds most dear, Sue is caring and approachable. With an ever-ready smile and generous heart it is easy to see why she is loved by so many.

Often one of the first things people learn about her, aside from being married to the University president, is together they have raised seven children

and currently are loving on 20 grandchildren! She is thrilled that all but one live within Texas at this time. Son Michael and his family live in Winston-Salem where he is on faculty at Wake Forest. When asked if they wear name tags at Christmas, she giggled and replied “no.” She did confess that on occasion, while her family was growing up, she did wonder, “whose child are you?” and “where did you come from?”

Sue grew up in the West Texas town of Cisco, once a thriving community of 4500 during the oil boon, has now dwindled down to about 3800 people. Hers was a Baylor family and it was there, while taking theology courses, she and Robert met. Her goal of continuing on to seminary was sidelined as they married and she became active in raising their large family. Those sons and daughters are all grown now with families of their own, but her busy schedule remains. When she does have some free time, Sue enjoys The Guild and her daughters for special “girlie activities.” We might also find her working in a flower bed or reading a good book, and she has a special heart that allows her to spiritually mentor several young women.

Four years ago Sue had the idea to invite several student leadership organizations to the President’s home for a “meet and greet” opportunity. Approximately 40-100 students attended. It was easy to see the need for The Guild committee - First Lady’s Special Events!

Our volunteers help in many ways to facilitate these events, sometimes by bringing food, but more often by simply helping to greet and to engage in conversation with the students and help them feel welcomed and comfortable. This is a wonderful first step in helping to build a strong alumni and future support for HBU’s continued success.

One of these events is the Magnolia Tea scheduled for April 29. The president from each women’s group will honor graduating seniors while also recognizing their special accomplishments and leadership skills. The Magnolia Tea is becoming a campus tradition. The name was chosen because of the Magnolia trees that bloom so beautifully around graduation time and are a symbol of friendship. Many of the existing Magnolia trees on campus were nurtured by early faculty and staff. (A more detailed

story can be found in the book *An Act of Providence* written by Don Looser. It tells the story of HBU’s first 50 years).

When asked to describe the current student body, Sue quickly said it reflects the face of Houston as it has become a very diverse campus. Not only has she observed the growth of the University with its addition of many graduate classes, but also the maturing of the students in preparing for their future. Due to the professional success of HBU graduates, current and future students now have a higher level of expectation as to what is attainable.

We all know behind a successful man stands a strong woman. She is strong, yet sensitive enough to view someone sitting alone in a crowded room and in need of a kind word. We are fortunate to have Sue Sloan as our University’s First Lady and Guild member.

## FIRST LADY’S SPECIAL EVENTS

This committee is responsible for assisting in hosting Mrs. Sloan’s student leadership gatherings at the President’s home. This year there will be four gatherings during the year, including the **Magnolia Tea for graduating senior women on April 29.**

Members of the committee attend the events to help with name tags, greeting, and to help keep the event flowing within the one hour time frame. Occasionally the committee will provide food. The most recent event occurred on February 7 when all students who have served in the military were honored.

At these events Guild ladies enjoy the opportunity to meet some of the fine young men and women who attend the University.

Committee co-chairs: Pat Ingram & Dana Grigsby

~ SAVE *the* DATES ~

### SILVER TEA

April 6, 2017

Sue Sloan, *Honoree*



### BOARD INSTALLATION

May 17, 2017

President’s Home

## IN MEMORIAM



**Sharon Corry**

Sharon Corry served as Guild President 2010-2011. Sharon chaired numerous Guild activities including the Christmas Luncheon and the Installation Coffee. She never knew the word "no" when it came to using her creativity and energy to further the mission of HBU. She was an outstanding leader who blessed our organization with her many talents, her dedication and a love of our Lord who called her home on January 10, 2017.

After her husband Todd retired, they travelled extensively. They enjoyed a riverboat trip in Germany, explored the mountains of Colorado, and spent summers in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. They especially loved their time spent touring the Holy Land. Sharon was a marvelous cook and hostess. Her holiday tables were works of art, and she loved to open her home to friends from all over the country. She was a caring and loyal friend, a loving mother and grandmother, and a faithful and devoted wife. We were blessed to know this lovely godly woman whose strength and selflessness were immensely evident during her most challenging time. Hers was a life well-lived, and she will be missed by many.

Van Penrod

Van Penrod, husband of Guild member **Ruth Penrod** and father of Guild member **Linda Brock**, went to be with the Lord on November 17, 2016. As Ruth wrote, "Van went to bed to sleep and woke up in Heaven. No pain, no stress, he just went to sleep. We are so thankful." Van served as a deacon at Second Baptist Church and had a very special interest in missions. He and Ruth ministered throughout the world, most recently at the West Houston Assistance Ministry.

Vernon Tyger, III

Vernon Howard Tyger, III, husband of Guild board member **Lynn Tyger**, passed away on January 13, 2017. Vernon received a Master's degree from HBU and was involved with the Development Council in the HBU Dunham College of Business. Vernon's passion was sharing his heart and talents by serving others, clearly demonstrated by his active involvement in countless ministries as a member of Houston's First Baptist Church.

### SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

The Scholarship Committee is scheduled to meet in April, and we are very excited to receive the list of candidates provided to us by the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences and the School of Christian Thought. This IS what the Guild is ALL about, and it is an honor to be part of this committee that works to help change lives. Assisting me in this endeavor are committee members Ruth Alford, Linda Higginbotham, Lynn Tyger, Ruth Ann Williamson, Donna Goeser and Sharon Saunders.

To God Be the Glory,  
Jan Witham

# A Special Welcome



NANCY PENNEY lives every day with purpose and a mission in mind. Her many talents and pro-active nature allow her to live a life full of variety. She was born in Tennessee and marriage moved her to New Jersey. Nancy and David arrived in Texas in 1989; in the Houston area in 1995. They raised six children and will soon welcome grandchildren numbers 7 and 8!

Professionally, Nancy works part-time as a hospital chaplain and volunteers in many different venues. She teaches conversational English to immigrants and uses the book of Luke as her text. Besides bible study, she loves to sew costumes – supporting many of her kids who were involved with theatre in their youth. One year, during Dickens OnThe Strand, their family won “most authentic” costume recognition.

Since Nancy’s youngest son is currently a music student at HBU, she volunteers to help the music department in any way possible. She has helped with costumes for productions and has pulled together the last two fundraising dinners. Nancy sometimes has filled in as “mom” for students whose families live far away. She wants Guild members to know that HBU has many volunteer opportunities available! Jobs might include Homecoming, Welcome Week, or perhaps helping with the growing Parent and Family Association.

If Nancy ever has free time, she would like to work on writing a book to inspire readers towards daily bible reading. Another book possibility might be about how to embrace scripture as living daily part of life. She feels her most recent health challenge was God’s way of saying “spend some time with Me now.” Six weeks later, Nancy is up and running again! She is very appreciative to all Guild members for prayers on her behalf.



KATIE HARRISON enjoys a close family rich with Greek heritage. After a long line of priests, her father was the first to not follow those footsteps. The family immigrated through Ellis Island but unfortunately, he died very shortly after their arrival. Settling in Arkansas, they made a living running a restaurant for many years. (Wouldn’t you love to know some of those favorite family recipes?!) While growing up Katie remembers fondly Christmas as a time the house was filled with family, friends of family and anyone else that wanted to come. Sometimes as many as 60 people! Her brother played the piano while she played her guitar to create many happy memories.

She finished college in Mississippi, married and moved to Houston in 1978. They raised three children, two sons and one daughter. Life is not always picture perfect and Katie has suffered difficult days. Tragically, her 30 year old son did not survive a terrible car accident in 2015. She credits God, her first love for sustaining her through those dark days. He allows her not only to survive, but thrive. Her first order of business when arriving in heaven will be to thank David for writing the book of Psalms.

You will recognize Katie by her big heart and ready smile. She loves to serve and to make a difference in whatever she is involved with. Good friend Ruth Alford says “Katie is dependable and multi-talented. She can put together a party in 10 minutes and is a very gracious hostess.”

She looks forward to playing more tennis and also hopes to pick up her guitar again. She thinks her friends might be surprised to know she would love to have been on Broadway. Let’s continue to welcome and get to know our new friend.



GAY KEYS, originally from West Monroe, Louisiana, is a good example of the adage, “If you want to get something done, give it to a busy person!” As a new member this year, she has already worked with the Fall Coffee committee and also helped with the Christmas luncheon centerpieces.

Professionally, she is a realtor and mortgage loan officer. She also worked at Exxon as a paralegal. Currently she serves on the HOA board in her community of First Colony, Sugar Land. She has one son who has added three terrific grandchildren for her to love and adore.

Special interests for any free time she might have would include bible study, the garden club, hiking and running marathons. People might be surprised to know she has always wanted to be a CIA agent. She is a cancer survivor, so that should tell us how strong and focused she really is.

Gay appreciates her warm welcome by The Guild and likes the direction HBU is heading. We look forward to making memories with our new friend.



CRISTIE JO JOHNSTON became part of the HBU staff in October 2014. She serves in the Communication area as producer and screenwriter, as well as in the School of Christian Thought as a professor of Theology. She and her husband Jerry, VP of Innovation and Strategic Marketing at HBU, have enjoyed a fruitful

38-year career in full-time evangelic crusade ministry, church planting and media. Within the media area of their ministry, they have co-produced 17 documentaries on subjects ranging from cultural and teenage issues to ministry and church life. They are currently focusing on rising trends within the NONES (religiously unaffiliated), the fastest-growing sociological trend unique to America.

Cristie and her husband are also colleagues with their son, Jeremiah Johnston, Ph.D. whose ministry, Christian Thinker's Society (CTS), is a resident institute of HBU with his special focus in Apologetics. It's great to personally experience the multigenerational passion for Christian Thought continuing on at HBU.

Cristie rarely has free time, but when she does she loves to be with family. She loves dating her husband every chance she is able. Cristie absolutely adores her

grandchildren and doesn't think their "quiver" will ever be full enough. She loves a great book, is a hopeless romantic, loves cooking German-inspired cuisine for family, and loves riding her new bicycle, a first since she was 11.

Cristie encourages ladies to pursue their education. Like many mothers, she put her studies on hold until her children were raised, but went back to school and completed her BA in Biblical Studies, M.Div. in Christian Education, and finally, a Doctorate in Ministry. Her passion is raising up leaders and laity to embrace their God-given talents and gifts and utilize them for an impactful, Kingdom-driven purpose.

She was raised in a loving Christian home just outside Grand Rapids, Michigan. Her father escaped to West Germany from communist Czechoslovakia in 1949 at 19-years-of-age. Her Mother experienced the brutality of WWII and was shipped on trains under the reign of Adolf Hitler. After converting to Christ through a missionary couple, Cristie's parents immigrated to America in 1954 with one suitcase and two children in tow.

Christie and Jerry enjoy three children and nine grandchildren, with triplet boys among the number.



We welcome DIANN WHISENNAND to the Guild this year. She is busy living a full and productive life in her new home located in SweetGrass. She is mother of three and now enjoys the blessings of six grandchildren with a second great grandchild on the way! She is thrilled all families live relatively close, either in Katy or Cypress.

Two things she is most proud of are her family and her nursing career. Diann was part of the first graduating class of the School of Nursing in 1972. She was an early scholarship recipient and is very appreciative of the help that allowed her to attend school. In 2012 she retired from Baylor College of Medicine where she had been Nurse Manager of the out-patient clinic. She adds, "Nursing is the greatest thing in life!" Even today she utilizes her nursing experience as a facilitator for an Alzheimer caregivers' group and is a Stephen minister at her church.

Diann's HBU ties run even deeper as her daughter Cindy Weaver graduated from HBU and is now working as a CPA. Her interest in The Guild peaked as she travelled with our group last year to visit The Bryan Museum in Galveston. We know the Guild ladies will enjoy getting to know this lovely energetic new member. Back surgery is in her near future, so let's cover her with prayers for a safe and speedy recovery.

*We look forward to introducing more 2016-2017 new members in our summer newsletter.*

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*Newsletter Editor: Jan Rule*



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## Special Event “Over the Top”

Quoting attendees for the Special Event - one said it was “knocked out of the park;” another wrote, “what a magnificent event!” Celebrating our Texas Independence Day was beautifully done by our own Nina Hendee who has a passion about our Texas history like no other. She weaved

so many stories of the personalities involved in our history and created “a big picture” of our great Lone Star State!

Most historians agree that while 189 rebel Texians died courageously fighting at the siege of the Alamo, 1,500 of the 6,000 attacking Mexicans led by the cruel General Santa Anna were killed or fatally wounded. The 13-day siege at the Alamo mission inspired many volunteers to join in what would be the final decisive battle at San Jacinto; that battle was led by General Sam Houston and lasted only 18 minutes.

We, Texians, need to remember that 181 years ago The Republic of Texas was officially declared independent from Mexico. We became The Republic of Texas March 2, 1836, nine years before being annexed into the USA. We are still the Republic of Texas!

The Taste of Texas restaurant menu gave us a number of wonderful choices, i.e., grilled tenderloin salad, grilled chicken salad, and of course, their amazing salad bar with soup and breads baked daily.

The Guild’s Special Event was indeed an “event!” The Taste of Texas and Nina Hendee were phenomenal!



*Peggy Hicks, Nina Hendee, Shirley Asel*

