

Stafford Dinner Theatre 2006-2007 Season Announced

Columbus Historical Preservation Trust announces that the 2006-07 Dinner Theatre Season at the historical 1886 Stafford Opera House will open October 14 with *Tintypes: A Nostalgic Musical Revue* performed by OnStage Theatre Company and introducing the Violet Crown Players to theatre patrons in Columbus.

What better backdrop for this nostalgic musical revue, that uses enlarged tintypes of characters, than the 1886 Stafford Opera House.

It is the perfect setting for some of the most amazing music ever produced by music greats such as Scott Joplin, John Philip Sousa, and George M. Cohan.

And, that is just the beginning.

On November 11 Jeryl Hoover and the Fredericksburg Theater Company will chill you and thrill you with *Dracula: The Musical*. Hoover says, "It's not a play. It's not a standard musical."

It's not an opera. It's a fractured retelling of the legend of the Vampire Count who has a hankering for the necks of pasty-faced females whose mothers never told them to beware of men with oversized canine teeth. It's riotous, silly, fun for the whole family."

On Christmas on the Colorado weekend, December 2, OnStage and Violet Crown Players will be back with *A Christmas Surprise!* It might be a musical. It might be a comedy. It might be both. What

is it? Well, we can't tell you. It's a surprise!

January 13, 2007 Damian Gillen and The COMPANY will present an extra-added attraction to give everyone a treat after the hustle and bustle of the holidays.

If you saw *The Foreigner* last May at the opera house, then you will remember how it "brought the house down" with its craziness and fun. As one member of the audience said, "I laughed until my face hurt."

This time Gillen brings *The Foreigner* with Larry Shue who also wrote *The Foreigner*.

This production is not part of the season ticket package but you will definitely not want to miss

this one.

OnStage Theatre Company will perform *Butterflies Are Free* on February 10. This comedy/drama is a story of growing up and what it really means to be free.

If you remember the movie with Goldie Hawn, then you know that this production is not only funny at times, but also has some heart-warming scenes.

The Art Park Players return to the opera house on March 10 with their production of *Suburbs*. Susan Mele, Artistic Director of Art Park Players, says, "Stop watering the grass, take the burnt burgers off the grill and get ready for a surefire night of entertainment, where you can take a moment to laugh at yourselves with some time mixed in to reflect on the good things in life."

Jeryl Hoover and the Fredericksburg Theater Company are back on April 14 with *Broadway Springs Into Song*.

Enjoy another encore performance by Hoover as his mellow voice blends with his talented and glamorous singers and instrumentalists as they bring the best of Broadway to Columbus.

On May 19 Damian Gillen and The COMPANY return with the comedy *Art*.

Gillen says, "If a rich yet unpretentious collector friend pays a fortune for a white-on-white canvas that the experts have dubbed art, who's to argue? Well, his two best friends, for a start." Art tests and frays the fifteen-year friendship of three old friends. And, as one critic analyzes, "The play asks philosophical questions... Are you who you are or are you who

your friends think you are?"

The Art Park Players bring a fitting end to the season with *Armenic and Old Lace* on June 9.

It's a comedy to die for! With two sweet adorable aunts who populate their cellar with the remains of lonely elderly gentlemen they invite to dinner then poison with elderberry wine, Mortimer Brewster struggles to maintain his sanity amongst a family of lunatics.

It's anyone's guess whether Mortimer will make it through the night.

Get your friends and neighbors together and enjoy professional theatre and a night out of good food and good entertainment.

Tickets are available at the Stafford Opera House, 425 Spring Street in Columbus or call 979-732-5135 or 877-444-7339. Tickets are \$30 per person per production. Season tickets are \$210 for 8 shows.

Consider being a season ticket holder. Season ticket holders get one production free, get preferred seating and are treated to a Sip Champagne With The Stars reception. This year the reception will be with Jeryl Hoover and the cast of *Dracula: The Musical*.

It is going to be another exciting dinner theatre season at the historic opera house with music, comedy, a little drama and a few surprises.

THC Authors Win Book Award

James E. Bruseth and Toni S. Turner were recently awarded the 2006 Society for American Archaeology (SAA) Book Award in recognition of their work on *From a Watery Grave: The Discovery and Excavation of La Salle's Shipwreck, La Belle*. The SAA is an international organization dedicated to the research, interpretation and protection of the archaeological heritage of the Americas.

The book, published by Texas A&M University Press, focuses on the dramatic efforts made to resurrect the ship that once belonged to famed French explorer Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle.

In 1995, 300 years after its demise in Matagorda Bay, the Belle was discovered by Texas Historical Commission (THC) archaeologists, who initiated a massive undertaking to excavate the lost ship.

Cutting-edge technology and scientific innovations were used

to extract and salvage more than one million artifacts from the shipwreck. Some of the recovered items included bronze cannons, muskets, trade beads, axes, rings, bells, dishes and medicines. All of these items would have served in La Salle's dream of establishing a 17th-century European colony in the New World.

Utilizing vibrant photographs and engaging descriptions, Bruseth and Turner emphasize the aura of excitement that emerged as they pieced together both the ship and its tragic history. "From a Watery Grave represents a solid and lasting triumph of nautical archaeology," said Robert S. Weddle, author of *The Wreck of the Belle, the Ruin of La Salle and winner of the 2001 T.R. Fehrenbach Book Award* administered by the THC.

"Truly an astounding analysis of the rarest finds."

Bruseth is the director of the archaeology division at the THC

and served as the principal investigator of the Belle excavation. Turner is a freelance writer and development officer for the THC.

She was instrumental in various aspects of the recovery of the shipwreck. The project led to the excavation of La Salle's colony at Fort St. Louis in the coastal region of Texas.

Although the dig has temporarily stalled, many of the recovered items are now on display at a series of coastal museums, as part of the *La Salle Odyssey*.

The SAA Book Award honors recently published books that have or are expected to have a major impact on the direction and character of archaeological research.

For more information regarding *From a Watery Grave*, and the Belle excavation, visit the THC web site at www.thc.state.tx.us or the Texas A&M University Press web site at www.tamu.edu/upress.

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New Arrivals



Kannon Grace Satsky
Wade and Kristin Satsky of Austin are pleased to announce

the birth of their first child, a daughter, born July 20 at 6:52 p.m. at Seton Southwest Hospital in Austin.

Kannon Grace weighed seven pounds, three ounces and measured 21 inches at birth.

Maternal grandparents are Leonard and Patty Holder of New Braunfels.

Paternal grandparents are Edward and Judy Satsky of Eagle Lake.

Paternal great-grandmother is Lillie Satsky of Hallettsville.

Darian De'Saun Johnson

Kenneth Johnson and Brittany Ruiz of Eagle Lake are pleased to announce the birth of their son, born August 11, at 11:51 p.m. at Rice Medical Center in Eagle Lake.

Darian De'Saun weighed six pounds, nine ounces and measured 20 inches at birth.

Maternal grandparents are Gilbert and Cynthia Ruiz of Eagle Lake.

Paternal grandparents are Kenneth and Pamela Johnson of Eagle Lake.

Great-grandparents are Joe and Henna Ruiz, and Mary Soliz all of Eagle Lake.

Views Around The Lake

by Cindy Klopsteck

Since I'm the primary caretaker of my yard, I have certain super powers when it comes to understanding it.

Just last week, after days of sporadic heated afternoon showers, I was able to complete the whole mission - mowing, weed eating, raking, etc. Sitting back on the patio, sipping an iced tea, watching the drizzle of yet another early evening shower, I looked out over that freshly-mown sea of green when I nervously recognized it.

I knew immediately the cause of my abrupt anxiety. Here I had just completed my sweaty task, was enjoying a cooler moment before I'd go in and shower off the dirt, grass and sweat when I realized I could hear that verdant grass actually growing again in nature's next round of refreshing rain.

It was one of my Zen moments. I could see, hear and feel that grass growing again...because it was something happening that I did NOT want to accept.

What's a Zen moment when it comes to the auditory senses? You have to listen beyond the everyday noises of the world.

In Eagle Lake that would mean drowning out the wailing blare of the train whistles and diesel-powered surge of the 18-wheelers. Life definitely tends to dull one's extrasensory perceptions.

Years ago, while in a rather chaotic state and seeking tranquility, I strongly related to some Zen writing and even created a Zen sitting room in my home.

From a Zen book entitled "Journeys on Mind Mountain" came the words, "Just by listening with your eyes you can fold back on yourself and merge...only

then will you know what point to live from." I'm still not sure what point I'm living from, but since reading this, I often think about the senses.

Days ago I was trying to work in one more half mile to complete a muggy, hot two mile walk. I needed a breeze - ANY bit of slight air motion - to get me through the next bend in the road.

I looked up to the trees in hopes of catching the slightest indication of a rustle in the leaves that were shading my next few yards of roadway.

Barely making a sound, there was just a faint flutter of leaves from the very top limb.

More sight than sound from the leaves, but the single drop of sweat rolling from my cheek and traveling the long straight path slowly down to the pavement seemed to cause a singular splash that was deafening.

What could we hear if our deaf ears were fully tuned to the soft sounds of life that sometimes unconsciously lull us into not hearing at all?

It must have been a Zen master who questioned whether that tree falling alone in the woods made a sound if no one was there to hear it.

Rob Chambers, president of training and education at Chicago's Second City Training Center, states that most information people get in a meeting is non-verbal.

He and his staff teach participants to read a room and pick up signals people are giving out, whether "verbal, physical, emotional or psychological." We must listen with our eyes.

When I drove by an Eagle Lake gas station at the end of a long financially frustrating week recently, I swear I could hear the

price of gas going up.

However, when I spied the lighted sign posting prices, I started planning my gas purchase for the return route back to the office.

Forget the hearing. My eyes could see the gas prices had dropped significantly since the day before.

At my destination, the post office, I shared my news with Jim and John, who corrected me in the error of my ways. (I've noticed lately they enjoy doing this.)

As a writer, when I need general reference and information I search Google on the internet.

When I need local reference and information I consult my local, hometown contacts, and two were gleefully standing before me now.

They informed me that most people had already noticed that a couple of lights were out on that particular sign, making a number 9 look like a number 5. The price of gas was NOT down.

I rubbed my eyes in disbelief to hear better. They politely smiled at their knowledge as they suggested, "Read the numbers from the other side." Does that mean I'll have to see with my ears?

Totally in a state of unZenlike, misplaced peace, I drove by the station and found their words to be correct. I bought gas anyway since I was close to empty - in the gas tank and my pocket - and watched the numbers flying furiously on the pump meter.

It's then that I could see and hear prices climbing.

By the time I drove home, I was nursing a headache. Zen moments can provide peaceful fulfillment in today's world, but listening with the eyes and seeing with the ears is exhausting.

2006 Property Tax Rates in Rice Hospital District

This notice concerns 2006 property tax rates for Rice Hospital District. It presents information about three tax rates. Last year's tax rate is the actual rate the taxing unit used to determine property taxes last year. This year's effective tax rate would impose the same total taxes as last year if you compare properties taxed in both years. This year's rollback tax rate is the highest tax rate the taxing unit can set before taxpayers can start tax rollback procedures. In each case these rates are found by dividing the total amount of taxes by the tax base (the total value of taxable property) with adjustments as required by state law. The rates are given per \$100 of property value.

Last year's tax rate:	
Last year's operating taxes	\$ 731,943.00
Last year's debt taxes	\$ 0.00
Last year's total taxes	\$ 731,943.00
Last year's tax base	\$ 493,555,879.00
Last year's total tax rate	\$ 0.14830 /\$100

This year's effective tax rate:	
Last year's adjusted taxes (after subtracting taxes on lost property)	\$ 735,292.00
+ This year's adjusted tax base (after subtracting value of new property)	\$ 579,969,340.00
= This year's effective tax rate	\$ 0.12678 /\$100

(Maximum rate unless unit publishes notices and holds hearings.)

This year's rollback tax rate:	
Last year's adjusted operating taxes (after subtracting taxes on lost property and adjusting for any transferred function, tax increment financing, state criminal justice mandate, and/or enhanced indigent health care expenditures)	\$ 926,903.00
+ This year's adjusted tax base	\$ 579,969,340.00
= This year's effective operating rate	\$ 0.15981 /\$100
x 1.08 = this year's maximum operating rate	\$ 0.17259 /\$100
+ This year's debt rate	\$ 0.00000 /\$100
= This year's total rollback rate	\$ 0.17259 /\$100

A hospital district or city that collects the additional sales tax to reduce property taxes, including one that collects the tax for the first time this year, must insert the following lines:

- Sales tax adjustment rate	\$ 0.02845 /\$100
= Rollback tax rate	\$ 0.14414 /\$100

50-172 (Rev. 05-06/2)

Statement of Increase/Decrease

If Rice Hospital District adopts a 2006 tax rate equal to the effective tax rate of \$.12678 per \$100 of value, taxes would increase compared to 2005 taxes by \$ 674.

Schedule A - Unencumbered Fund Balances	
The following estimated balances will be left in the unit's property tax accounts at the end of the fiscal year. These balances are not encumbered by a corresponding debt obligation.	
Type of Property Tax Fund	Balance
Maintenance & Operations	\$.00
Interest & Sinking	\$.00

Schedule B - 2006 Debt Service

The unit plans to pay the following amounts for long-term debts that are secured by property taxes. These amounts will be paid from property tax revenues (or additional sales tax revenues, if applicable).

Description of Debt	Principal or Contract Payment to be Paid from Property Taxes	Interest to Be Paid from Property Taxes	Other Amounts to be Paid	Total Payment
	\$	\$	\$	\$.00
<i>(expand as needed)</i>				
Total required for 2006 debt service		\$ 0		
- Amount (if any) paid from funds listed in Schedule A		\$ 0		
- Amount (if any) paid from other resources		\$ 0		
- Excess collections last year		\$ 0		
= Total to be paid from taxes in 2006		\$ 0		
Amount added in anticipation that the unit will collect only % of its taxes in 2006		\$ 0		
= Total Debt Levy		\$ 0		

Schedule C - Expected Revenue from Additional Sales Tax

(For hospital districts, cities and counties with additional sales tax to reduce property taxes) In calculating its effective and rollback tax rates, the unit estimated that it will receive \$ 165,936.28 in additional sales and use tax revenues. For County: The county has excluded any amount that is or will be distributed for economic development grants from this amount of expected sales tax revenue.

This notice contains a summary of actual effective and rollback tax rates' calculations. You can inspect a copy of the full calculations at Colorado County CAD 106 Cardinal Lane Columbus, Texas 78934.

Name of person preparing this notice Billy Youens
 Title Chief Appraiser
 Date prepared August 2, 2006