

## Ken the Builder

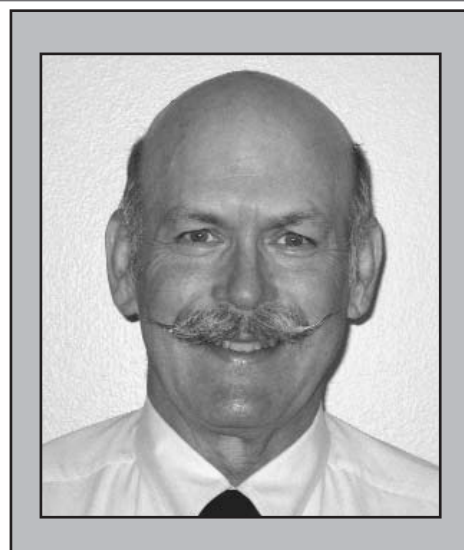
by Marjorie Taylor

At the website of Bob the Builder, a popular children's television character, Bob is characterized as "ready to tackle any project. He hammers out the solutions that lead to a job well done." Luckily for First Church, we have our own resident "Ken the Builder", who has been hammering out solutions for First Church carpentry problems for the past 35 years!

Our good fortune began back in the early seventies when Ken's family moved to Dallas from San Antonio. Ken joined the Singl-aires Sunday School class and was immediately mesmerized by a beautiful brown-haired girl who always left Sunday School early before Ken had a chance to really get a conversation going. He realized he would have to join the choir so he could leave class alongside Phyllis Anne Carden! Since Ken has a lovely tenor voice and had experience leading the tenor section in his San Antonio church, this move aided our choir as well as furthering Ken's romance. From the way the pair's eyes sparkle as they recount their courting days, the choir's reputation for match-making is well deserved! The two married in September 1972 and have remained mainstays of the choir as well as the church.

The choir didn't just benefit from Ken's vocal abilities, though! A master cabinetmaker who owned a cabinetry business with his dad, Ken furnished the choir room with a number of amenities. He's built bulletin boards, two seating chart tagboards, two music supply tables for holding Sunday's music supplies, and four music folder cabinets. These are small potatoes, though, to the enormous projects he's undertaken to help our large-scale music productions.

When we need seating for a large scale orchestra such as the one we used in the choir's recent Brahms's *Requiem* performance, an extended stage area is required. When a stage production such as last winter's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* or this summer's production of *Annie* is mounted in the sanctuary, there is always the problem of making the set look a little less like a sanctuary and a little more like a stage. Ken designed the system of supports for the staging that goes in to extend the stage area and to cover the choir seats. He has directed the installation and the strike of this staging innumerable times over the years. He inserted the stage inside the chancel rails and put in new supports for that stage. He designed a way to use our previous choir loft stages in Wesley Hall to create a rehearsal space for the Variations fundraiser and stages for programs in that venue. He's built a series of rolling stair units that are used not only for musical productions, but for weddings and fundraisers and maintains upkeep on all of these units.



Ken Cummins

In addition to all of his carpentry expertise, Ken, along with wife Phyllis, are founding members and frequent officers of the Koinonia Sunday School class. In fact, the first meeting of the class was held in their home. Ken has often served as Chancel Choir treasurer and the couple's two children, Alden and Della, have been actively involved in church service projects as well. Ken is currently working with Alden as a home remodeler and enjoying granddaughter Caroline, who just like her grandma, has grabbed Ken's heart and refuses to let go!

When a carpentry need arises, you often hear the words, "Let's talk to Ken." Ken the Builder has enriched all of us by "tackling projects and hammering out solutions"! Thanks, Ken!



Dana Effler

## *Annie* brings Christmas in July

Set during the years of the great depression when folks were out of work living in Hooverville shanty towns across the USA, Daddy Warbucks was a rare find indeed. However with a little luck and a heart full of hope, Annie leaves the orphanage behind and lands in the lap of luxury just in time for Christmas! Our production of *Annie* on July 17, 18 and 19 will undoubtedly bring many smiles, and we hope you'll join us!

As you may know, the Rotunda Board has dedicated our summer musicals to raising money in support of missions both in our city and in other cities throughout the US and Mexico. In 2005, we raised \$12,500 for Crossroads Community Services with our production of *Hello, Dolly!*. In 2007 we raised \$14,000 to support youth mission projects to restore homes for the victims of hurricane Katrina and to build homes for people in Mexico who are the victims of abject poverty. As we were examining our fundraising options, we discovered that Music and Arts funds were running low, so the Rotunda Board decided to dedicate this summer's production of *Annie* to help raise funds for our very own Music and Arts Ministry here at First Church that offers wonderful musicals like *Annie* and many other programs in drama, dance, music, and visual art for all ages all year long. In these tough economic times we see that school districts are cutting staff, funding and programs at an alarming rate. Here at First Church, we want to make sure that no child will ever be turned away due to a lack of funding. Our arts ministry changes lives, lifts spirits and builds confidence one child at a time. With your help and financial support, we will make sure it remains strong "tomorrow" and for many tomorrows to come. We hope that you will support us when we pass the hat at intermission making Christmas come in July.

## Music and Arts Calendar

### JULY

**Goodrich Gallery Exhibit: Carol Cook - Mixed Media**  
Reception: Sunday, July 5: 12:00 - 2:00 p.m.  
In the gallery

**Rotunda Theatre: *Annie* by Strouse, Charnin, and Meehan**  
July 17, 18, 19: 7:30 p.m.  
Sanctuary  
Beth Wortley, director  
Tim Effler, music director  
*Free admission! Free childcare on July 19!*

### AUGUST

**Goodrich Gallery Exhibit: Merry Fuhrer - mixed media**  
Reception: Sunday, August 2: 12:00 - 2:00 p.m.  
In the gallery

**Rotunda Auditions for *Quilters*** by Molly Newman and Barbara Damashek  
Jane Farris, director  
August 17 and 18: 7:00 p.m.  
Wortey-Peabody Theatre

### SEPTEMBER

**Goodrich Gallery Exhibit: Stewpot Artists - Mixed Media**  
Reception: Sunday, September 6: 12:00 - 2:00 p.m.  
In the gallery

**Children's Choir Kickoff**  
Sunday, September 13  
Janet Slaughter, Children's Choir Coordinator  
For children in Kindergarten - 6th Grade

**Chancel Choir Kickoff**  
Wednesday, September 30: 6:30 p.m.  
Crossroads Center  
*Chancel Choir welcomes Dana and Tim Effler home from the study leave and regular weekly rehearsals resume.*

*First Arts is a quarterly publication of the Music and Arts Department of First United Methodist Church, Dallas.*

*Editors: Dana Effler and Tim Effler*

*Layout: Phyllis Cummins*

*Photographs: Abel Sanchez and Melissa Sobotka*

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Winner of the Tony Award for Best Musical  
2,377 performances on Broadway!

# Annie

Music by Charles Strouse Lyrics by Martin Charnin Book by Thomas Meehan



Book  
Thomas Meehan

Music  
Charles Strouse

Lyrics  
Martin Charnin

Beth Wortley,  
director

Tim Effler,  
music director

**July 17, 18, 19 7:30 pm Sanctuary**

*Free Admission! Free Parking Available!*

*Free childcare on Sunday, July 19*

*Annie is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI, 421 West 54th Street, New York, NY 10019 Tel. (212) 541-4684 Fax: (212) 397-4684 www.MTIShows.com*

## OPEN AUDITIONS

**No Appointment Necessary**

# Quilters

by

Molly Newman and Barbara Damashek

Jane Farris, director

**August 17 and 18**

**7:00 p.m. -- Wortley-Peabody Theatre**

Roles for 7 Women

*This production will be presented on  
October 2, 3, 8, 9, 10  
at 7:30 p.m. in the Wortley-Peabody Theatre.*

*Contact Music and Arts, 214-220-2727,  
ext. 218 for more information.*



The children's choir musical program on May 3 featured Counterpoint and Cantate Choirs in a performance of *Are We There Yet? The Story of Moses and the Exodus*. Carol Choir (top left) opened the program. A new choir year for all children in Kindergarten through 6th grade kicks off on Sunday, September 13.



**Register for Children's Choirs Online!**

[http://www.firstchurchdallas.org/childrens\\_choir\\_registration.php](http://www.firstchurchdallas.org/childrens_choir_registration.php)



Variations' 5-day tour of Washington, DC included performances at the Capitol, the Lincoln Memorial, the Old Post Office Pavillion and Metropolitan Memorial UMC. The photograph captures the Variations outside the Capitol with Congressman Pete Sessions, whose office played an important role in making arrangements for the choir's tour of the Capitol building and the Library of Congress. Variations begins a new year with a new rehearsal schedule on Sunday, October 4. Register for Variations, Carillon and Tower Ringers ONLINE now!

[http://www.firstchurchdallas.org/youth\\_choir\\_registration.php](http://www.firstchurchdallas.org/youth_choir_registration.php)



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