



Progress Report

May 2021

The Red Barn Productions Progress Report

The **RBP Progress Report** is a new means of communicating with all Dickens Fair participants and is intended for the 2019 booth owners, directors, contracted performers, groups, production and operations crews, and Living History Centre volunteers. The recipient list will be updated beginning with our next live event to include all registered participants. The RBP Progress Report is and will have information that pertains to all parts of the company. The excellent Dickens Fair Missive, curated by Cat Taylor, will continue to be a key source of show information and peer-to-peer communication. We are also looking into other options and would appreciate specific suggestions and your experience with those platforms. *(We are not posting the Progress Report on Facebook according to our policy of not managing via social media and out of fairness to the majority of participants who do not use that platform.)*

New Team Positions

Due to COVID19-related financial considerations (no income since 2019 and continued uncertainty about 2021), we have been unable to consider any new hires or to rehire staff except on a limited hourly basis. However, issues requiring specific expertise need immediate action. We are therefore working toward finding qualified candidates at least as on-demand consultants for each of these roles:

1. **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Consultant:** It is our intention to bring in a highly qualified DEI professional for immediate consultation and mediation, and to assist in the creation and implementation of a DEI Plan for all future events (see DEI section below). We are actively gathering recommendations and will involve affinity groups in suggesting necessary qualifications and interviewing candidates. If you have a qualified recommendation, please ask them to send a letter of introduction to kevin@redbarnproductions.com.
2. **Human Resources (HR) Consultant:** We will be hiring a Human Resources person to provide support to show/group directors and cast and other participants and crew, receive feedback and concerns from participants, manage incident reports, assist with our existing sensitivity and anti-harassment training program, and help maintain all company staffing records during operations. We are hoping to have this position filled by September if we are having a live event in 2021.

- LHC Volunteer Coordinator:** We are requesting that the Living History Centre provide a Volunteer Coordinator to assist Robert Young as the LHC Workshop Director. This new position will be the point person for all Living History Centre volunteers participating in the Dickens Christmas Fair.

DEI Initiative & Affinity Groups

The new DEI Consultant (in consultation with interested affinity groups) will work with us to finalize and implement our new DEI Plan. This process takes time but it is moving forward. We are also engaging this consultant to help us see our blind spots and unconscious bias in hiring, casting, performing, managing, and all other aspects of our operations. This is essential to further the company's desire to foster an environment that is caring, safe, compassionate, diverse, equitable, and inclusive. We have received a very informative anti-racism initiative from one of our affinity groups, the Londoners of the African Diaspora (LoAD). We sincerely appreciate the huge amount of work and passion they put into this document. The Red Barn DEI Consultant will work with management, LoAD, and the other affinity groups to incorporate these ideas into our DEI Plan going forward.

We are glad to see the formation of several more affinity groups as well. Representatives of these groups will be asked to form a DEI Council. This Council will be extremely helpful in providing management with the information necessary to complete a meaningful DEI Plan and ongoing feedback for improvements. If you are the representative of an affinity group, please email kevin@redbarnproductions.com with your contact information and a brief introduction. Thank you.

2021 Casting Policy

Living history practices, including those at Red Barn Productions, have historically included some type of 'portrait test' casting especially for lead roles. This was open for discussion for the Dickens Fair lead roles in 2021 and discussed at our April 14th directors meeting, but not made policy. With strong and clear feedback from our directors and participant community, 'portrait test' casting will not be part of our process going forward. As we do every season, we will update and revise all our policies, including casting policies, in the Participant Policy Handbook with the advice of our attorneys, our HR consultants, and moving forward, also with our DEI Consultant with input from the new DEI Council mentioned above.

Show and Group Entertainment Proposal Form

Just as vendors are required to submit a new application for each and every event, beginning in 2021 we are requesting the same for each performance group and show. The first draft of the proposal form was discussed with the 2019 directors in their April 14th meeting. We will be continuing to develop the form in the next 2 weeks with the feedback from the directors and will send out the final form on May 14th. Proposals will be due back to RBP on June 31st.

2021 Live Production at the Cow Palace

We would dearly love to have a Fair in 2021, for all the joy it brings, for the jobs it creates, and for the critical income it provides to all the small businesses at the Dickens Christmas Fair who depend on it. We hope to be able to make a decision by the end of June. If we are not able to produce a Fair in 2021 we will continue to do what all small businesses do: assess the environment, make adjustments, and find ways to improve and survive.

COVID Planning for In-Person Events

Regardless of when our next event is, there will have to be changes to our events in the post-COVID reality. Subject to changes in best practices, State and County requirements, and CDC recommendations, here are the steps that we are taking to plan for our next live event:

1. Working with The Cow Palace Arena and Event Center to continue to upgrade the ventilation systems in the exhibition halls. We've already had productive meetings with the management team of the Cow Palace and they are in the process of reviewing bids for the upgrades.
2. Our Operations team has been building a plan that may include, but is not limited to: a) Upgrading our facilities cleaning plan with additional personnel and protocols; b) Masks will be encouraged for all customers and offered for free to any customers who forget to bring their own; c) Temperature checks at the front gate.
3. Consultations with and inspections by the Health and Human Services Department of San Mateo.
4. Conversations with city and state Compliance Officers and consultants.
5. Working towards a GBAC Star certification (Global Biorisk Advisory Council).
6. We will be capping attendance each day of the event.
7. All ticket sales will be advance purchase only (no box office) so we can control the headcount in the building.
8. Proof of Vaccinations and Testing - November is a long time from now, and the pandemic landscape is changing daily. We have not made a decision about requiring proof of vaccination or testing for either participants or customers. This will be a large consideration for our reopening decision, and we understand that participation in the event may depend on this decision as well.

Social Media Comment Management

Our social media policy as stated in the Dickens Fair Cast & Crew Group will be updated to include: *This is a private Dickens Christmas Fair group for in-house discussions related to our love of history, theatre, and the Fair. We do not make announcements or respond to significant management concerns on Facebook. Our policy as an organization is to communicate via email. There are two important reasons for this. Firstly, only a small percentage of our participants use this platform and it is not an equitable means of communication. Secondly, we do not believe our Facebook page is the place to manage sensitive, complex, and sometimes traumatizing issues. This is a participant group for creative, constructive, and educational communication about The Great Dickens Christmas Fair, theatre arts, and the Victorian era. Please be aware that while administrators are responsible for moderating the page, we cannot*

immediately review every comment posted on this page. Opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of the Dickens Christmas Fair or Red Barn Productions and we cannot guarantee the accuracy of these posts. We do not discriminate against any views; however, administrators of this page reserve the right to delete or to block users who post the following:

- *Obscenity, nudity, defamation, or hate speech (speech that targets people or groups based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or any other protected status).*
- *Comments/posts that threaten to harm individuals, groups, or organizations.*
- *Commercial advertisements or solicitations of funds.*
- *Endorsement or encouragement of illegal activities.*
- *Multiple off-topic posts or repetitive posts that are copied and pasted.*
- *Personal information including but not limited to e-mail addresses, telephone numbers, or mailing addresses.*

Current and evolving Communications Plan - for comments, complaints, collaboration, and suggestions

Good communication is a priority for us. Based on valuable participant feedback, we are expanding accessibility and creating new opportunities for dialogue and information flow. We want everyone to feel they are heard, and we invite you to be part of the conversation. We want your input. In this spirit, we are clarifying our communications plan. **See the contact list below for individual contact information.**

Communications to Red Barn:

1. Pertaining to your show/group - Please contact your Director.
2. Pertaining to Entertainment - Cat Taylor and Robert Young comprise our superb Entertainment team. If you have any questions/concerns/feedback pertaining to Entertainment or can't get ahold of your Director, please do not hesitate to contact Cat or Robert directly.
3. Pertaining to DEI issues - While we work towards hiring a DEI consultant, in the interim please contact Kevin directly.
4. Pertaining to sexual harassment issues - While we work towards getting an HR consultant on board, in the interim please contact Cat or Kevin directly. Our harassment workshop leader and consultant, Dr. Tara Rech, is available with management approval.
5. As we gather the contact information from the various affinity groups, we look forward to working with the DEI Consultant to create a DEI Council to discuss ideas and views and collect important issues and concerns for management to address.
6. Direct feedback for management - Please contact Kevin.

Communications from Red Barn:

1. **The Missive** - This will continue to provide entertainment, operations, and community-based information. The Missive also has a regular section dedicated to DEI resources, and we encourage your participation. Please let us know if you have useful and inspiring resources to share.
2. **Directors' Meetings** - These are another opportunity to bring comments, concerns, etc., to the producers and the Entertainment department. These meetings are intended to be two-way communication, not just dissemination of information from management. The Directors are a fantastic resource for their casts and should be seen as a conduit to communicate to the larger Entertainment group. If you have questions/concerns, please talk with your directors (some may not be available in the off season). In order to allow participants to gather questions/concerns, the dates for these Director meetings will be shared in advance.
3. **Participant Survey** - We will be initiating an annual participant satisfaction survey. Opportunity to share suggestions, report on the overall success of initiatives, what issues are of the most importance, etc. We're targeting June for the initial survey.
4. **The Red Barn Progress Report** - For all company-wide information, news, and communications.
5. **Upper management** - Red Barn maintains an 'open door' policy for communication for all participants. If for any reason you wish to reach out to the producers directly, please feel free to give us a call or send us an email.

Contact Information

Email is the preferred initial communication. Phone calls and Zoom meetings are available upon request.

Year-Round Staff

Kevin Patterson - Producer & CEO: kevin@redbarnproductions.com

Leslie Patterson - Producer & Vendor Coord. & CFO: leslie.dickensfair@gmail.com

Andrew Patterson - Producer & Production Manager: drew@redbarnproductions.com

Seasonal and part-time Participant Management staff and consultants

Cat Taylor, Entertainment Director: dickensfair@cattaylor.com

Robert Young, Street Theatre Director: robertyoung.redbarn@gmail.com

Robert Young, Living History Centre Education Dir.: robert@livinghistorycentre.org

Mark Solum, Operations & Security: mark@praetorianusa.com

Shannon Damnavits, Communications & Marketing Director: e4shannon@gmail.com

Ed Hery, Archivist: edphemra@pacbell.net

Liz Martin, Costume Design: pinkdepforddoll@gmail.com

Laura Brueckner, Dramaturg: dramaturgy.redbarn@gmail.com

Dr. Tara Rech & Dr. Michi Fu, HR Workshop Trainers & Consultants (Playing It Safe Workshop, etc.): minddoc123@gmail.com

Human Relations, TBD:

DEI consultant, TBD:

Who We Are and What We Believe

Please visit our Red Barn Productions website to gain an overview of our company history and philosophy. In the near future, this page will contain a link to bios on key members of our team. <https://redbarnproductions.com/>

To review the 2019 Red Barn Productions Participant Handbook:

https://cattaylor.com/RBP_Participant%20Handbook_2019_online_110119.pdf

To sign up for future Missives, please go to:

<https://cattaylor.com/dickens-fair-participants/>

Thank You!

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