CLIBURN: What is your connection to classical music?

SUE & JOHN: Sue studied piano for nine years through high school, and also played the flute for many years in the high school orchestra. John Allen began music lessons from 5 years of age that continued into college, playing the trumpet.

CLIBURN: What is it you enjoy most about classical music performances?

SUE & JOHN: Sue says, “It just feeds my soul.” We enjoy learning more of the history of composers and compositions as well as the demonstrated skill levels of Cliburn performers.

CLIBURN: Do you have a favorite memory of Van Cliburn?

SUE & JOHN: Van has many special memories, but one not related to music occurred at a black tie dinner in Fort Worth. Sue has many special memories, but one not related to music occurred at a black tie dinner in Fort Worth.

SUE: Sue says that as a young pianist near Van’s age she followed the news stories regarding his Tchaikovsky Competition victory in 1958. “I read with great interest about the beginning of the Cliburn Competition and then followed news stories when the competition would occur. Never dreaming I would ever live in Fort Worth, I thought it would be fabulous to attend a competition ‘sometime.’ When we moved to Fort Worth I immediately wanted to get involved with the Cliburn. I became a volunteer for the competition, and John Allen and I enjoyed attending and listening to the competitors.” The competition brings very positive world-wide recognition to Fort Worth. To produce this world class event requires lots of financial support and enormous amounts of personal time and effort from the Cliburn staff and volunteers.

CLIBURN: Why do you feel endowments are important?

SUE & JOHN: Endowments encourage and protect legacies related to music and the Cliburn 180° and Cliburn Social. Not only are we enjoying your energy and ambassadorship, you and all our new investors and subscribers and volunteers. Watching you watching us, and seeing you slugged it out of the park: SMU, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, the Junior League of Dallas, the new friends in Dallas, who took a leap of faith and helped bring together the 2019 Junior Competition, the first major international event ever produced by the Cliburn outside of Fort Worth, you slugged it out of the park: SMU, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, the Junior League of Dallas, and all our new investors and subscribers and volunteers. Watching you watching us, and seeing the wonder and excitement in your eyes was worth every sleepless night on this side of the tropic. Thank you, we will be back.

To our corporate and community partners, you know better than anybody that our city proudly offers a widely diverse and unique lifestyle, embracing the future while remaining respectful of our heritage. Thank you.

To our young professionals—rising stars and civic leaders—thank you for your enthusiastic embrace of Cliburn 180° and Cliburn Social. Not only are we enjoying your energy and ambassadorship, you are our lifeline and we look to you for our very future. Thank you.

To our volunteer leadership, our Board of Directors and the Van Cliburn Advisory Council, your wisdom and guidance ensures that our future is limitless. Thank you.

And finally, Van. You were humble greatness personified. Your vision could only have come from a heart as big as Texas. And I am confident that today you would not believe your eyes. For the depth of your generosity, your talent, and your grace, we wish to express our deepest gratitude and love. Always.

Congratulations go to Marianne Pohle, the Cliburn’s director of development, who recently received her professional designation as a Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy® and a Certified Fund Raising Executive®.

For any questions about your giving, such as those regarding non-cash assets or IRA Qualified Charitable Distributions, please contact her at mpohle@cliburn.org or 817-738-6536.

Jeff King
Chairman of the Board

One of the most compelling features about the Cliburn culture is a laser-like focus on the future. This vibrant organization bursts with imagination and innovation. The sheer volume of upcoming competitions, concerts, festivals, school performances, and celebrations seems endless and it’s all thrilling and inspiring. Everybody is excited about everything all the time.

To be honest, while it’s exhilarating it can also be exhausting. So for just a moment, let’s allow ourselves the luxury of a little bit of reflection and gratitude.

First of all, to our amazing staff, thank you. Your passion is infectious, your energy is boundless, and your capacity for hard work is a wonder to behold.

To our volunteers, you make us unique. There is no comparable model in our business. Your commitment to a superior and consistent experience for our artists, competitors, students, and supporters is what sets us apart from every other arts organization in the world. Thank you.

To our subscribers, your support for Cliburn Concerts and for our competitions not only provides confidence in our fiscal planning, but you have become a part of our family. Thank you.

To our new friends in Dallas, who took a leap of faith and helped bring together the 2019 Junior Competition, the first major international event ever produced by the Cliburn outside of Fort Worth, you slugged it out of the park: SMU, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, the Junior League of Dallas, and all our new investors and subscribers and volunteers. Watching you watching us, and seeing the wonder and excitement in your eyes was worth every sleepless night on this side of the tropic. Thank you, we will be back.

To our corporate and community partners, you know better than anybody that our city proudly offers a widely diverse and unique lifestyle, embracing the future while remaining respectful of our heritage.

And the Cliburn plays a critical role in placing Fort Worth firmly on the world stage. Thank you.

Thank you, we will be back.

And finally, Van. You were humble greatness personified. Your vision could only have come from a heart as big as Texas. And I am confident that today you would not believe your eyes. For the depth of your generosity, your talent, and your grace, we wish to express our deepest gratitude and love. Always.