

Friends

July 2006
Summer

Thanks for a Wonderful Year

What a great year it has been for the Friends of the Center for the Arts! As we celebrated our tenth anniversary, you really stepped up to the challenge and helped to make the year a very successful one.

A special thanks to all of you who recently increased your contributions, resulting in over \$10,000 more this year than last. For the 2005-06 season, gifts topped 112 percent of the previous year. With 573 households contributing, our final total for the year was \$91,040.52.

And finally, as of the last of June, 365 households have renewed for the new season. If you haven't yet sent in your renewal, we hope to hear from you very soon! We hope to surpass this year's total in memberships and contributions, and we count on you to help us reach that goal.

Remember that you can e-mail fcfa@gmu.edu or call 703-993-4188 if you have any questions about renewals. ■

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FCFA Liaisons: Goodbye to Megan and Hello to Kathy

This fall, Megan Thornton will be moving to a new job as the Director of Development at Walsingham Academy, a private K-12 school in Williamsburg. She joined the staff three years ago as a Development Associate and was promoted last summer to Assistant Director of Development. While working with the Center for the Arts and providing enthusiastic, efficient, and much appreciated support to the FCFA, she also completed three years of part-time study at Mason and received an MPA with a specialty in nonprofit management this spring. We all wish her well in her new position.

While Megan will be very much missed, many of you already know her very capable replacement, Kathy Beyer. Kathy joined the CFA team as a development intern in early 2005 as part of her studies leading

toward a Master's degree in Arts Management, becoming a full-time Development Associate in September 2005.

As the new Assistant Director of Development, Kathy will be the liaison to the FCFA, supporting board members and other volunteers with recruiting, programming and communications. She will also pursue corporate sponsorships for the CFA, oversee grant progress, and manage student scholarship endowments.

Kathy's first career was as a ballet dancer. She started lessons at age 6, danced in high school and then professionally with the Boston Ballet for seven years. She then taught ballet at the Boston Ballet School, Ballet West, Louisville Ballet, and the Classical Ballet Academy of Northern Virginia. Born and raised in Houston, she lived in several American cities and overseas in Shanghai, China, before settling in Northern Virginia.

We welcome Kathy and look forward to working with her. ■



Kathy Beyer and Megan Thornton

Friends' Support Helps Plan Great Programs



Rick Davis

Thank you all for your enthusiastic support of the Center for the Arts last season. As you know, we count on our Friends to help make up the difference between actual expenses and the revenue - including ticket income - that is generated each year.

Knowing that the support of the community is there - as manifested primarily through the Friends of

the Center for the Arts - we are able to plan seasons well in advance and take risks in programming that otherwise wouldn't be possible. Major orchestras, dance companies and even acrobatic artists are expensive to present, and your support helps make this happen!

This year we are especially thankful that your contributions are helping us not only to move our program forward artistically but also to make some very important physical improvements for

the health and safety of our performers, crews, and audiences prior to the September opening of the 2006-07 season. So your generosity will be seen and felt on both sides of the footlights this coming year. Or it would be, if we ever actually used footlights!

I look forward to seeing you in the fall! Enjoy your summer! ■

Rick Davis, Artistic Director, Center for the Arts, and Associate Dean, College of Visual and Performing Arts

Cabot Cheese Sweepstakes Winners



Phyllis and Richard Duesing

Many of you who attended Center events last season completed raffle tickets to enter the Best of Vermont Sweepstakes, courtesy of the Center for the Arts and Cabot Cheese. The tickets were free, and most of us filled them out at the information desk in the lobby and promptly forgot about them. Our ever-vigilant Center staff, however, carefully collected the tickets over the season and held a drawing at the season's close. They recently informed three lucky individuals of their prizes.

Melissa Topscher, a June Mason graduate, received the first prize, an opal and diamond ring valued at over \$10,000. **Phyllis and Richard Duesing** collected the second, a romantic getaway for two at Stowe Mountain Resort & Spa in Stowe, VT. Finally, **Steven and Carol Banks** pocketed the third, a \$100 gift certificate for Cabot Cheese. The Duesings, members of Friends for three years, said that they were looking forward to their first trip to Vermont and their first spa experience. They spoke highly of their involvement at the Center, stating that they have enjoyed the Center productions and appreciate the warmth and friendliness of the staff.



Melissa Topscher

In addition to the Sweepstakes, the Center held a number of complimentary Cabot cheese tasting receptions over the past season. They have promised that they will continue to host wine and cheese receptions before each of Virginia Opera's Friday performances in 2006/2007 and will offer another Best of Vermont Sweepstakes featuring similar prizes. Don't forget to stop by the information desk next season and fill out those raffle tickets! ■

FCFA Announces New Board Members



Robin Auger has had a lifelong interest in the arts and is an accomplished musician. She has been a member of the FCFA for several years and believes that the Center plays an important role within the larger metropolitan DC-area arts community. She especially appreciates the diversity and high quality of small ensembles as well as large production groups that perform at the Center each season. Robin has volunteer experience with a variety of fraternal, technical, and community organizations. She received a Ph.D. from Mason and is a professional in the areas of science and technology policy and innovation and research management.

Mariann Baker is currently a piano teacher and accompanist for two vocal groups in the Northern Virginia area. She has been a proud supporter of events at the Center for the Arts since celebrating the opening night of the Concert Hall almost sixteen years ago. Mariann enjoys bringing her friends to performances not only to share in the wonderful arts experiences but also to introduce them to Mason. She and her husband Frank have been members of the FCFA for many years and value the Friends gatherings. Recently they served as hosts of one of the FCFA dinner and discussion series events.



Frank Presta, a lawyer and a partner in an intellectual property firm in Northern Virginia, served on the Friends' Board of Directors in its earliest years and welcomes the opportunity to serve the organization again. In addition to supporting the arts, Frank has been an active board member of his homeowners and church associations and has held several leadership positions with the Lions Club. He received a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York and a JD degree from the Georgetown University Law Center.



Weltz Elected Vice President for Programs

Judith (Judy) Weltz, a current FCFA board member, has been elected as the new Vice President for Programs, succeeding Ida Portland. Judy has been working closely with Ida over the past two years, particularly on the successful discussion series, and she is excited at the opportunity to lead in planning the special events that enhance the Friends experience. In addition to serving on the FCFA board of directors, Judy volunteers for several other area arts organizations, including the National Symphony Orchestra and the Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts. Judy and her husband Allen moved to Northern Virginia in 2003 from Newton, Massachusetts, where they were leaders in the local arts community.

Other Friends officers elected are Tom Ezell, President; Jane Tombes, Vice President for Membership; John Nash, Vice President for Communications; Charlie Lawson, Secretary; and A.J. Driscoll, Budget Officer. ■

A note from Ida Portland

During my past four years as Vice President for Programs, so many of you have helped to make our special events wonderful opportunities to bring the Friends together as a community. Whether you have chaired an event, worked at the check-in table, assisted with invitations or decorations, contributed ideas or simply attended an event; your participation has been greatly appreciated. You have all made my past four years exhilarating and exciting. Space does not permit me to list all of you individually; however, I want to say a special thank you to Judy Weltz for her hard work and creative contributions and to wish her well as she takes on the Vice Presidency. I know that she will depend on many of you to help her in this endeavor next season.

And thanks again for the support you have given to me and to the Friends events at the Center for the Arts.



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For more information,
please call
703-993-4188
or visit
<http://fcfa.gmu.edu>

2006-2007 FCFA Officers

- ♦ Tom Ezell,
President
- ♦ Judy Weltz,
Vice President
for Programs
- ♦ Jane Tombes,
Vice President
for Membership
- ♦ John Nash,
Vice President for
Communications
- ♦ Charlie Lawson,
Secretary
- ♦ A.J. Driscoll,
Budget Officer

FCFA newsletter committee

- John Nash
- Jane Tombes
- Gordon Canyock
- Eileen Duggan
- Robin Auger
- Megan Thornton

FCFA Special Events for the 2006-2007 Season

The Programs Committee is excited to announce that events will be held in conjunction with the following performances. Mark your calendars now! We hope to see you there!

Saturday Nov. 4, 2006
Bo Diddly & Friends -
Explore the roots of
Rock 'n Roll with "The
Originator."

Sunday, Dec. 10, 2006
GMU Music Holiday
Concert - Celebrate the
holiday season.

Saturday, Feb. 3, 2007 (2pm
performance)
Cirque Eloize - A delight
for the entire family.

Saturday, March 3, 2007
Gewandhaus Orchestra
of Leipzig - A special
event with one of the
world's great orchestras.

Saturday, March 31, 2007
Virginia Opera *Cavalleria
Rusticana/Il Pagliacci* -
Our popular behind-the-
scenes tour and brunch
is back again!

Thursday, April 5, 2007
The 2007-2008 Season
Preview - Be the first
to hear about the new
season at the Center!

Saturday, April 28, 2007
Susan Shields Ballet
Cocktail - Enjoy con-
temporary dance from
acclaimed regional com-
panies.