

Friends

July 2007
Summer

Tom Ezell Completes Four Years As FCFA President

At the May meeting of the Friends of the Center for the Arts (FCFA) Board, Tom Ezell stepped down as president after four highly successful years of service. He will remain on the Board, but his responsibilities have been passed on to his well-qualified successor, Ida Portland, former Vice President for Programs. In honor of his service to the organization, we look back on these past four years to note many advances that have been implemented under his guidance.

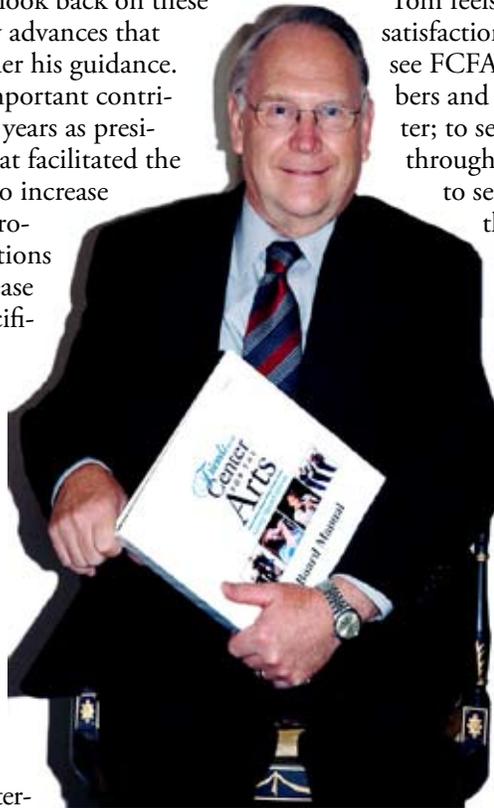
Tom considers his most important contributions to FCFA during his years as president to be his "leadership that facilitated the work of the vice presidents to increase membership, improve our programs, improve communications with our members and increase the visibility of FCFA." Specifically, the committee system was strengthened, allowing the programs, membership, and communications functions to accomplish their missions successfully without having the board as a whole becoming involved in day-to-day operational decisions.

Under his leadership, our newsletter was launched; the FCFA recruitment video began running before performances and during inter-

missions to encourage performance attendees to join the Friends; and most importantly, a budget process was implemented, focusing attention on "the costs of our programs, membership, and communications activities, so that we [were] able to minimize expenses and return the maximum amount possible of membership revenue to the Center."

Tom feels that his greatest personal satisfaction from his presidency was "to see FCFA continue to grow in members and in money raised for the Center; to see fiscal discipline take hold through the budget process; and to see our programs, including the discussion series, become more successful each year."

Tom has every right to take pride in those accomplishments. Under his leadership, membership increased from 150 households to 550 and membership income from \$23,400 to \$101,000. Tom modestly notes that "of course, all of this would not have been possible without the support and hard work of the officers and members of the board during my tenure and the generosity of all of our members as well."



Tom Ezell

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How our contributions to the Center are used:

From FY2003 through 2007, FCFA members donated approximately \$150,000 to the Center for the Arts. Friends' contributions have been used toward the funding of the following:

- Steinway grand piano for the Concert Hall
- Customized music stands, chairs, and podium for orchestra members and conductors
- Concert Hall folding chairs used at pre-performance discussions and other events
- Life/fire safety and structural improvements
- Replacement of Concert Hall lobby carpeting
- Pre-performance discussions.

Thelma Weiner Recognized for Eight Years of Board Service

At its May 16 meeting, members of the FCFA Board honored Thelma Weiner,

a member of the board for the past eight years and a frequent participant during those years in the “Meet and Greet” volunteer effort at Center performances.

Thelma has brought to the Board a unique perspective. In addition to being a patron of the arts and an ardent supporter of the Center, she is a retired professional singer and performer. Thelma attended Julliard as a voice major and, prior to her marriage, enjoyed a successful stage career in New York. After she and her late husband moved to Fairfax to join their grown sons, she resumed her acting career, appearing in commercials, movies, and television.

Thelma was introduced to

the Center through friends and before long was asked to join the FCFA Board. She enthusiastically agreed, commenting, “As soon as you come in to the Center, you feel like you belong. You are part of a community of friends who share a common interest in the performing arts. Everybody can find something they like here.”

Known for her recruiting efforts, Thelma’s influence even extended into her immediate family. Her son Ed sits on the Arts at Mason Board and leads the Center’s popular *Jazz for Justice* event.

The good news is that Thelma will remain an active member of the Friends’ group and will continue her outreach to prospective members.



Tom Ezell thanks Thelma Weiner for her years of service on the FCFA board.

Carole Scanlon, Founding Member, Honored for Service

The FCFA Board recently presented founding member

President, noted that Carole’s efforts laid the foundation for the organization we have today.

Carole and her husband Joseph Adams were among the first patrons of the Center for the Arts when it opened in September 1990. Carole, a business development and marketing consultant, immediately recognized the potential for the Center’s presence in Fairfax. Working with staff, she contacted subscribers and brought together a volunteer group committed to offer community support. In August 1991, the Arts Center Associates, a forerunner of FCFA, was formed and Carole was its first President.

Carole currently serves on the Arts at Mason Board and is a member of the *ARTS by George!* steering committee. Her commitment is to the “triple tier of talent” at Mason: the Center that showcases a wide diversity of exciting professional performers; the College of Visual and Performing Arts (CVPA) where an outstanding faculty works to create a new generation of performers; and the students themselves who benefit both from faculty instruction and from exposure to the Center’s professional artists, who often share their knowledge with students in Master Classes.



Carole Scanlon receives a plaque from Tom Ezell designating her as Director Emeritus.

Carole Scanlon with a plaque designating her as Director Emeritus. Tom Ezell, FCFA’s

Pianist Jeffrey Siegel Begins the 2007 Season



Jeffrey Siegel

is a highly popular series at the Center, so come and experience what all the talk is about!

Keyboard Conversations® is made possible, in part, through the generous support of Jordan Kitt's Music, Inc.

Join your fellow Friends for the start of the 2007 season of the Great Performances at Mason on Sunday, Sept. 23, featuring Keyboard Conversations® with Jeffrey Siegel: *America the Beautiful*. The internationally acclaimed pianist is returning for his fifteenth season at the Center with four separate performances featuring music of renowned composers from four different countries, including France, Russia and Austria-Hungary. Mr. Siegel is noted for his entertaining and educational “concerts with commentary” that include full performances of piano masterpieces intermixed with remarks to the audience about the music and the composer, and an audience question and answer session after the performance. He specifically designs his programs to enrich the musical experience for the concertgoer. This

Broadway Legend Barbara Cook to Perform

Save the date! On Sunday, Sept. 29, legendary Broadway lyric soprano Barbara Cook will be performing at the Concert Hall. Ms. Cook has won renown for her magnificent voice as well as her interpretive skills in song performance. Her lengthy career on Broadway includes shows such as *Candide*, *Carousel*, *The King and I*, and *Showboat*, and she has garnered worldwide acclaim as a preeminent Sondheim interpreter. Her performance caps off the second annual ARTS by George! benefit that supports student scholarships in the College of Visual and Performing Arts at George Mason University. For more information on the benefit, contact Kathy Beyer (kbeyer2@gmu.edu, 703-993-4188). Tickets to the concert only may be purchased starting Aug. 1 by calling 888-945-2468.



Barbara Cook

News Update on Volunteering

As new or renewing Friends members, you may not realize that there are several ways in which you can become a volunteer if you want to get involved in the organization's work beyond attending the Great Performances series. The following are some volunteer options for you to consider:

- Hosting the “Meet and Greet” lobby table to provide information about the current season. Free concert tickets to a performance will be available for two volunteers. Contact Susanne Zumbro (szumbro@rocketmail.com).
- Special pre and post performance receptions during the season. Contact Judy Weltz (jolegp@msn.com) for help with planning and/or assisting during an event. See the Friends brochure for dates and related performances.
- Performance discussion series in homes – These events combine a light supper with conversations about current productions and take place in members' homes. Offer your home or volunteer to help with the evening's activities. Contact Judy Weltz (jolegp@msn.com).
- Volunteer or paid ushering at Center performances – There are two different ways to usher, but both involve some training and commitment. For more details, contact Carol Shumate, Front of House Manager and Volunteer Coordinator, 703-993-8829.
- Quarterly Friends Newsletter – Volunteers with strong writing backgrounds are needed to help write articles for this publication. Contact Jane Tombes (atombes@cox.net).

While not all Friends members become active volunteers, there are other effective ways to become involved. You can attend the pre-performance or intermission coffees, join the popular discussion series held in members' homes, attend pre and post-performance receptions listed in the brochure, and talk to friends and co-workers about the Center and the Friends. Your participation is welcomed...and will make your Friends membership more enjoyable.

For more information, contact Kathy Beyer at 703-993-4188 or kbeyer2@gmu.edu.

Remember...there are so many ways you can make a difference in promoting the arts in our community.

Become active in the Friends of the Center for the Arts today and make your contributions count.

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please call
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or visit

<http://www.gmu.edu/cfa/friends/>

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President
- ♦ **Judy Weltz,**
Vice President
for Programs
- ♦ **Robin Auger,**
Vice President
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- ♦ **Jane Tombes,**
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Secretary
- ♦ **A.J. Driscoll,**
Budget Officer

**FCFA newsletter
committee**

- John Nash
- Jane Tombes
- Gordon Canyock
- Eileen Duggan
- Robin Auger
- Bob Warakomsky

How You Can Promote the Friends

With the new season rapidly approaching, we have a great opportunity to expand our membership. "Every member recruits a new member" is our goal. Talk with your friends and neighbors, particularly those who are new to the area and who enjoy the performing arts. Also, make sure you have extra brochures on hand in case you need them.



Here are some "talking points" you can use to promote FCFA:

- FCFA directs its efforts towards the Center for the Arts by providing financial support for the Center's programming and supplying the Center with state of the art equipment. (See box on page 1 for past gifts made by the Friends.)
 - Members can achieve significant personal satisfaction through volunteer efforts (see article on page 3 about volunteering).
 - Parking garage conveniences are available depending upon membership level.
 - Enjoy complimentary refreshments prior to each performance and during intermissions.
 - Receive an exclusive invitation to the Season Preview event where Friends are the first to learn about the next season.
 - Receive exclusive invitations to attend the highly successful Discussion Series hosted by Friends members.
 - Attend special receptions held to celebrate important events and performances. These typically have motifs that correspond with the theme of that performance.
- Talk FCFA up with your neighbors and friends, and let's double our membership during the upcoming season!

**GEORGE
MASON
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<http://fcfa.gmu.edu>