



2013-2014 Calendar

October 2013

- 14 Meet the Maestro  
Capitol Lounge of CAC  
5:30 - 7 pm
- 15 WSO *The 3 Giants*  
Community Arts Center  
7:30 pm
- 27 Young Artist Competition  
Mary Lindsay Welch  
Honors Hall, Lycoming  
College  
2:00 pm

November 2013

- 04 Williamsport Symphony  
Youth Orchestra (WSYO)  
Clarke Chapel  
Lycoming College  
7:30 pm
- 09 Williamsport Symphony  
Junior Strings (WSJS)  
First United Methodist  
Church  
Williamsport.  
7:00 pm
- 17 Close Up Concert # 1  
Mary Lindsay Welch  
Honors Hall, Lycoming  
College  
3:00 pm
- 24 Billtown  
Brass Holiday Concert  
Community Arts Center  
7:00 pm

December 2013

- 02 Meet the Maestro  
Capitol Lounge of CAC  
5:30 - 7 pm
- 03 WSO *Time to Rejoice!*

**Conductor's Corner**

Dear Friends,

The summer flew by. Yes indeed - like every year, it leaves us with a taste for more. Nevertheless I had a great time these past three months traveling, making music; and I found the time also to vacation with my family.



My summer started with a visit to Turkey, an exotic and fascinating country. I gave master classes and conducted the orchestra at the Istanbul University and also had enough time to visit incredible historic places. Back home I had another successful Music at Penn's Woods Festival and finally went to the beach in New Jersey with my family to recharge energy for the new season.

It was at the beach that I started thinking also about our exciting upcoming season. There is nothing better for me than waking up in the morning and going to the beach to see the sunrise and listening to the sound of the ocean; what a treat! Our music is in a way like the ocean waves: never the same, always in different colors, sometimes quiet, sometimes full of revolt, sometimes warm, sometimes freezing.

Community Arts Center  
7:30 pm

#### February 2014

- 10 Meet the Maestro  
Capitol Lounge of CAC  
5:30 - 7 pm
- 11 WSO *Fantastic Tales*  
Community Arts Center  
7:30 pm
- 23 Close Up Concert # 2  
Mary Lindsay Welch  
Honors Hall, Lycoming  
College  
3:00 pm
- 24 Williamsport Symphony  
Youth Orchestra (WSYO)  
and Junior Strings (WSJS)  
Community Arts Center  
7:30 pm

#### March 2014

- 09 Close Up Concert # 3  
Mary Lindsay Welch  
Honors Hall, Lycoming  
College  
TBA
- 21 Meet the Maestro  
Capitol Lounge of CAC  
5:30 - 7 pm
- 22 WSO *The Beauty of Song*  
Community Arts Center  
7:30 pm

#### May 2014

- 12 Meet the Maestro  
Capitol Lounge of CAC  
5:30 - 7 pm
- 13 WSO *Variations*  
Community Arts Center  
7:30 pm

Subscribers - don't miss out on this exciting benefit!

Park and dine at the Genetti's 4th Street Grille & Ale House. Bring your Symphony ticket to receive 10% off your meal along with free parking prior to the show.

Special thanks to the sponsors!

Season Sponsor



This season is full of profound and exciting music. The great composers of the so-called first Viennese school will be featured in the October concert. Handel's *Messiah* selections and *The Snowman* will be highlighted in the holiday concert. Music from some fantastic tales like *Scheherazade* together with the well known *Night on Bald Mountain* will delight us in February. Morgan Myles, a local singer/song-writer will be featured in March. In May, we end with a grand finale, Elgar's *Enigma Variations* and a side-by-side piece performed with the Williamsport Symphony Youth Orchestra.

This season will feature several fabulous local soloists including violinists Jeff Thayer and our concertmaster, Max Zorin, the Williamsport High School Choir, Fiona Powell and others. In addition, the Italian pianist, Enrico Elisi will be featured for the opening night.

I guarantee you this season will be the best ever and the orchestra musicians and I are very excited to share our music making with you. Don't miss our concerts. Don't miss the opportunity to hear LIVE our wonderful musicians playing fantastic tales!!! See you at the concerts.

Fondly,

Gerardo Edelstein  
Music Director/Conductor

### **Program notes by Dr. Gary Boerckel**

Bach, Beethoven, and Who?

"The three Bs" - Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms - is an expression known to every lover of classical music and, by no coincidence, the names of the composers included in the opening concert of the Williamsport Symphony Orchestra's 2013-2014 season. But Brahms was still relatively unknown in 1854 when the expression was coined by Peter Cornelius, a German



**Gary Boerckel**

Concert Sponsor



Central PA Trombone Consortium



A new ensemble made an appearance at September's First Friday. Led by Dr. William Ciabattari, the group of about 12 trombonists, played exciting arrangements only professional players could handle.

composer and music critic. The "third B," according to Cornelius, was Hector Berlioz! Decades later Hans von Bulow anointed Brahms as the "third B." Bulow was a brilliant pianist - he gave the first performances of the Liszt sonata and Tchaikovsky's first piano concerto, both fiendishly difficult; Bulow was also one of Europe's greatest conductors. He wrote: "My musical creed is in the key of E-flat major, and contains three flats [written as lower case "b"s] in its key signature: Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms!"

The "Third B"

If Brahms ever commented on his inclusion as the "third B" - chances are he was not pleased. He knew Beethoven's music intimately and found Bach's works - most of which were published for the first time during Brahms's lifetime - to be an inexhaustible source of inspiration. When Brahms was only twenty, Robert Schumann wrote an article predicting a great future for the young composer. It was meant to be a kind gesture, but it came close to destroying Brahms. Suddenly self-conscious, he worked for four years on his composition - first a symphony, then a sonata for two pianos - that ultimately became his *Piano Concerto in D Minor*. His first symphony took Brahms twenty-one years! It is one thing to study the masters, and like Brahms, to follow their lead. But comparisons can be lethal. In Brahms's own words, "You've no conception of what it's like to hear a giant's footsteps marching behind you."

## Meet the Cromleys, Subscribers and Donors

A first date - the WSO concert, December 1998 - led not only to the marriage of Brenda Shirey and Marlin Cromley but also to the "wedding" of the couple to the WSO.

Music was - and remains - an important component in the Cromleys' lives, beginning in their youth. Brenda played the flute during her school years; Marlin became a classical music fan when he took music appreciation classes with Lycoming College Professor, Jim Shaffer. Both attest to the importance of school-age experience with music. And both believe in giving back to their community.



*We believe in volunteerism...giving back is what we do...organizations and causes we believe in, we give back whether it's time, money, or spreading the word.*

As regards the WSO, the Cromleys note: *The musicians "contribute," given the minimal compensation they receive; so it's appropriate that we do also. There need to be sponsors for every musician, for every section.*

The Cromleys contribute to the community in other ways as well. Marlin has been a Little League team host (uncle) for 15 years; this year, he shepherded the Australian team. Brenda - a former member of the WSO board - provides support as she is able, this year, assisting with a birthday party for one of the players. They support the Williamsport City Jazz Orchestra as well; one attendance at a concert drew that support. For the WSO, the section sponsorship resulted from Marlin's having noticed in a concert program that the percussion section lacked a sponsor; a phone call later, the Cromleys filled that slot through their contribution.

There have been favorite symphony moments (beyond that first date): A fan of Smetena's "The Moldau," Marlin had shared that affection with Robin Fountain early on; later to hear the WSO perform it was a gift. Moreover, every WSO concert becomes a "date night"; coming to the CAC reminds the couple not only of that first date at the symphony but also of their wedding reception in the Capitol Lounge. How fitting the attraction to that romantic orchestral piece and to the orchestra itself.

## **Our Congratulations to the Woodcock Foundation for the Appreciation of the Arts!**

A deserved recognition came to the Woodcock Foundation via the Community Arts Center Director Chair Award.

The annual Award spotlights those whose contributions to the CAC are consistent and significant. Lynne Gale, representing the Foundation--which is focused on the arts and education--accepted the award (and the chairs) on behalf of her family. The Foundation has granted funds to the WSO regularly. This year's grant funds support the WSYO, WSJS, and the Youth Outreach activity.



MARK NANCE/Sun-Gazette

Sisters Lynne Gale, left, and Lorrin Watson congratulated by Janet Harris, Executive Director of the Williamsport Symphony Orchestra.

## Up Close and Personal: Michael Gross, violin



**Michael Gross**

Among WSO players, Michael Gross has the most seniority, having joined what was then the Susquehanna Valley Symphony Orchestra (SVSO) in 1980. He was recruited by Kurt Stahel, who drove him to a rehearsal for reassurance, and he's been with the WSO ever since, playing under conductors Dr. Zdinski from Mansfield, Rolf Smedvig, Robin Fountain, Tomasz Golka, and now Gerardo. Here's how it happened.

In 1975, Michael and his wife Rickie moved to this area to be part of a community-owned medical practice in Picture Rocks. Their young family and Michael's medical work demanded much of his time. His music opportunities came in bursts, and it became difficult to get his skills back after the pauses.

Michael's mother died in 1978, and he says that music had been her gift to her children. So when Kurt came knocking, he was ready.

When asked how and when he started the violin, he says he began at Tuscan Elementary School in Maplewood, New Jersey.

*I wanted to play trombone. In middle school I felt embarrassed about being a guy playing violin, dropped out of the school orchestra, and joined the South Orange Community Orchestra, which had a wonderful conductor named Marjorie Bram. It still exists, and the current conductor is Robert Helmancy, whose wife is one of our cellists.*

*I played in the Swarthmore College Orchestra and learned to love chamber music. A poignant memory is the afternoon I started to play with a group after lunch and we emerged late afternoon to find everyone in shock over Kennedy's death.*

*I played in a chamber orchestra at the University of Chicago organized by a graduate student named Leon Botstein, who went on to an astonishing dual career as a noted conductor and college president. While in medical school I was able to take several non-medical university courses, including "Performing Chamber Music" and continued to seek out peers willing to try quartets, etc. with me on second violin. Locally, I've studied with Don Freed, Juanita Serang, and Ken Sarch.*

Around 1998 Michael became interested in early music on authentic instruments at the urging of a college friend, Michael Sand - a violin teacher at the San Francisco early music workshop which Michael attended four times over the next decade. He has a "baroqued" violin, several reproduction bows, and had organized a trio sonata group. Finding people who want to try this style, however, has been difficult. Michael asks that

anyone interested give him a call.

And asked about the future of this orchestra...

*I regard the success of the WSO as a miracle that it exists at all and that I have been made welcome all these years. As much as I prefer rehearsing to performing, if I'm going to perform, I'd rather have a full house. I find it very moving that people want to come out to hear us. I know that being local matters, because every time I miss a concert, people comment that they missed me. And they sure do notice if I yawn, or wear the wrong clothes, etc.*

As for the coming season (# 33 for him, but who's counting?), Michael is looking forward to playing *Scheherazade* and the Bartok violin concerto with Jeff Thayer in February.

## Newest members of the Orchestra

From auditions held on September 8, four new musicians have been added to our roster.

Hyewon Kim replaces David Chavez in the Principal 2<sup>nd</sup> Violin seat (David has moved to Philadelphia). Hyewon now resides in State College, but has degrees from Ewha Womans' University, Seoul, South Korea and Yale School of Music. Currently she is also a candidate of Doctoral Musical Arts at SUNY Stonybrook as well.

In the violin section, we welcome Debbie Trudeau, a local musician who performs as well with the Altoona Symphony, Nittany Valley Symphony, Allegria Ensemble, and Music at Penn's Woods. She will join our First Violin section.



**Debbie Trudeau**

We also welcome Andrew Dunn to our violin section. Andrew has degrees in Violin Performance from SUNY Fredonia and also has performed with symphony orchestras in the southern New York area.



**Karena Creasy**

Our oboe section is now one member fuller, as well, as we welcome Karena Creasy as our 3<sup>rd</sup> Oboe/English Horn. She will be filling in on 2<sup>nd</sup> oboe for the October concert, and we look forward to having her in the ensemble from time to time.

## Williamsport Symphony Youth Orchestra News

Auditions extended through September, bringing the WSYO to 50-musicians strong. Dr. William Ciabattari, the conductor, notes that recruitment has been facilitated by last year's participants, as they speak to the good time they have making music together, encouraging their friends to audition. The students come from throughout the region, extending to Selinsgrove and Danville.



The November 4 concert in Lycoming College's Clarke Chapel will feature an eclectic mix: from Rossini's *Barber of Seville* and Tchaikovsky's "Four Dances" from the *Nutcracker* to the more contemporary Steve Bryant's "Dusk" and "World of Warcraft," arranged by Jerry Brubaker. The concert follows six Sunday afternoon rehearsals.

In addition to this concert, the WSYO will be represented at the Lycoming Mall in December, entertaining shoppers there. Thereafter, they will come to the CAC stage, where they will collaborate with the Junior Strings for the second concert in their series.

## Junior Strings - Year Two

Entering their second season under the direction of Matthew A. Radspinner, the Williamsport Symphony Junior Strings (WSJS), are now 30 string players strong; they range in age from 9 to 14. Last year's group came from six area school districts and included several home-schooled students.



This season will include three performances, one of which is a collaboration with the WSYO. The first performance is scheduled for November 9, 7:00 pm, at the First United Methodist Church. For more information on Junior Strings or to inquire about becoming a member of the group, consult the Junior Strings link from the WSO website.

[www.williamsportsymphony/juniorstrings.org](http://www.williamsportsymphony/juniorstrings.org)

## Billtown Brass - Early Notice of a Sure-To-Be Great Concert

Mark your calendars now for November 24, 7:00 pm, in the CAC. The Billtown Brass is kicking off the holiday with seasonal favorites and with guest

performers, Spencer and the T-Bones, who will be appearing on the CAC stage for the first time. The Brass, the brainchild of Richard Coulter, its conductor, offers its classic brass band sound; its 28 members come from across the region and include several WSO musicians. Among them is Dr. William Ciabattari, whose tuba solo of "Frosty, the Snowman" along with the band's high octane version of "God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen" will energize the audience.



**Billtown Brass**



**Spencer and the T-Bones**

Spencer and the T-Bones will perform Kevin Henry's arrangements of less traditional holiday tunes: "Angels We Have Heard You're Funky" and the "Latin Drummer Boy." Don't know these pieces? Then come to hear them. This group of eight musicians with vocalist Spencer Sweeting also includes WSO and Brass members.

Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for students and can be purchased either by calling the WSO office at 570-322-0227 or at the door.

Watch for more information on this concert as the time approaches, but be sure - now - to keep that date open! <http://www.williamsportsymphony.org/billtownbrass.html>

## Summer Strings Program

Twenty-eight string players, ages 9-17, spent one week refining and expanding their skills with assistance from six "occasional" faculty who joined the four primary faculty members. Melissa Becker, Anna Draper, Gretchen Lee, and Andrew Rammon were the primary faculty; the "occasionals" were William Ciabattari, Jonathan Dexter, Amanda Gunderson, Jason Laczkoski, Pat Thayer, and Jennifer Updegrove.

The students spent each day in string quartet groups as well as sitting as members of a large string orchestra; thus they had the opportunity to study music in a chamber setting. The week culminated with student performances - first, in quartets and finally - with their faculty - as a full string orchestra. That performance occurred at Lycoming College's Clarke Chapel.

String-related displays throughout the week provided the opportunity to expand familiarity with new and rare instruments. Among the students were members of the WSYO and of Junior Strings. Among the faculty were several WSO members.

Sponsorships, solicited by the faculty, supported the noon concerts and provided some scholarship assistance. In addition, Lycoming College provided the venue; Robert M. Sides Family Music Centers, J.R. Judd Violins, and Angela Tupper provided other assistance.

The answer to the question about repeating the program next summer, elicited this response from Anna Draper: "Hopefully - but we will need a lot of community support."

## From the Desk of the ED

At the beginning of this 47<sup>th</sup> season, I want to thank all who make possible the music you'll hear on the CAC stage. The musicians' collaboration is mirrored by the behind-the-scenes collaborators, including those in the seats who listen, enjoy, and respond.



**Janet Harris**

Barb Hudock of Hudock Moyer Wealth Resources summed it up best when she made the following observation at the Community Arts Center's Director's Chair Award dinner: "The arts and music are a moral law. They give soul to the universe, wings to the mind, life to imagination and charm and gaiety to life and everything. Plato would be proud."

We're all looking forward to the delights of a season of ...Tales.

*Let the music play on!*

*Janet Harris*

### Quick Links

Williamsport Symphony Orchestra  
220 West Fourth Street  
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570-322-0227



For information and tickets [Visit our website!](#)

