

NEWSLETTER VANGUARD - ALBANY SYMPHONY, INC. NOVEMBER 2020, NO. 167

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT


What an unusual year this has been!

Work had begun on another Showhouse to have been on Starbuck Island with four condo units in a lovely setting. A contract was in place, designers had been assigned units, the café was set and the fourth condo unit dedicated to an art gallery, but that obviously had to be cancelled due to the pandemic.

With the inability to meet physically, we needed to transition to a format that would allow us to be in contact with each other. We began having our meetings via Zoom, a platform that allows us to “gather” and keep in touch as a group. Our concern over the loss of income from the Showhouse led to discussions centered around what we might be able to do. Kathy DeWeese brought the idea of a virtual fundraising event forth. And what an idea it was!! It was met with much enthusiasm from the Board so a committee was formed, many Zoom meetings took place and the result was phenomenal—check out Kathy and Julia’s report.

As we go forth, please know that we welcome any of your ideas and would look forward to hearing from you. Help us to be creative in navigating these uncharted waters! We look forward to being able to host those travel trips, luncheons and fashion shows, volunteering at the symphony, etc. in the future but until that is possible, let’s come up with new ideas! Hope to hear from you!

Judy Ciccio



The ASO is live streaming its concerts through June 2021; however live concerts will resume in January 2021, subject to regulations, with venues to be announced. When attending a virtual concert, you will receive an email (and a post card) with a password to get into the concert as it is being live streamed. If you do not have a ticket to a specific concert, you can get individual tickets through the box office.

IN MEMORIUM

It is with sadness that we report the death of Pat Fallek (3/20), Suzanne Waltz (4/20), both who were Past Presidents, John Ablett (2/20), Pat Carroll (3/20), Gloria Rossi (4/20), Mary Alice Caldes’ husband, John (5/20), Rosemary Brown’s husband, Neil (8/20) who was a great friend of Vanguard performing on his keyboard at many events and David L. Smith (9/20), life partner of Shirley Hunter.

MEMBERSHIP

At this writing in mid-October, members are responding fairly steadily to the dues renewal notices that were mailed at the beginning of the month. If they continue at this rate, the Directory will be in the early draft stages at the beginning of November!

This year, in view of the drastic negative effect that COVID has had on musicians’ performance opportunities and, therefore on their incomes, the Board decided that extra funds donated by members would go to a ‘Musicians Support Fund’ instead of the traditional “Musicians Scholarship Fund” as in the past. This money would aid our wonderful ASO performers during what is a very tough time for most.

It pleases me no end to say that member contributions to the Musicians Support Fund have been both wide and generous so far.

So if your membership renewal is still on your Round Tuit list, please go to the Vanguard website, or dig out your paper form and send a check to Susan Jacobsen. Call 518-439-0459 or go to destinythr@aol.com for questions.

Lavender Locks Online Fundraiser In Memory of Suzanne Waltz

The drawing for Vanguard's first ever online fundraiser was held in the lobby of the Palace Theatre on Saturday, October 3. It was a small gathering due to distancing guidelines. In attendance were David Alan Miller, Anna Kuwabura, Craig Waltz, son of Suzanne, Paul Tonko and Vanguard members Kathy DeWeese, Marilyn Hunter, Mary Kay Sawyer and Julia Smart. Kathy made us all lavender masks to wear. The event was live streamed on Facebook thanks to our intrepid committee member Amanda Irwin, who also works for the ASO. We hope you were able to virtually attend!

David Alan Miller, Paul Tonko and Craig Waltz addressed the gathering and the camera, speaking about Suzy, the importance of the arts and the important role that the Albany Symphony Orchestra plays in our community. Congressman Tonko pulled the first name to begin the drawing.

There were many terrific items in the drawing ranging from beautiful pieces of framed art to restaurant gift certificates. Many thanks to individuals: Steve and Lisa Acquario, Charlotte Anderson, Louis Bannister, the Bray family, Mike Beiter, Jeanne Bourke, Judith Ciccio, Diane Davison, the DeWeese family, the Hunter family, Susan Jacobsen, Mary LaFleur, Steve Lobel, Ursula MacAffer, Anne Older, Jill Rifkin, the Smart family, Lorraine Chirico Smith and Gloria VanDerpoel for donating items to the drawing. Thanks also to the following local businesses and establishments for generously supporting the fundraiser: The Albany Symphony Orchestra, Annick Designs, the Apple Barrel, Choices Hair Studio, Delmar Marketplace, the Enchanted Florist, Hudson-Chatham Winery, Mary Sipp Green, J&S Watkins, Morningside Gallery, New World Bistro, Nine Pin Cider Works, Sam's Italian Restaurant, Shogun Restaurant, T&J Soaps and the Woman's Club of Albany.

The lucky winners were Louis Bannister, Julie Button, Judith Ciccio, Rosemary Contompasis, Patricia Corbett, Donald Csaposs, Julie DeLisle, Nicole DeMouth, Joan Dennehey, Kathleen DeWeese, Jean Fogarty, Alayna Frey, Maureen Geis, Jerry Golub, Carol Hayden, Carmela Hicks, Susan Hollander, Marilyn Hunter, Susan Jacobsen, Anna Kuwabara, Charles Manning, Tracy Pitcher, Jill Rifkin, Reese Satin, Mary Skidmore, William Smart, Susan Stenson, Marie Sturges, Mary Thackeray, Craig Waltz, Linda Weisel, Lorraine Weiss, Carol Whittaker and Anne Young. Congratulations!

The fundraiser exceeded expectations, raising \$5,000 towards Vanguard's annual contribution to the Symphony. This was due to the exceptional support of Vanguard members, the Albany Symphony, local businesses and folks who purchased tickets. Kudos also to an absolutely great committee who put this fundraiser together through meetings on Zoom. Thank you everyone!

Kathy DeWeese and Julia Smart, Co-Chairs

At last, joyful musical news from the **Musical Instruments for the Students program!** After a lengthy pause due largely to pandemic fears and schools' uncertain educational structure, our program will start again effective immediately, utilizing strict safety precautions. Vanguard will once again collect no longer played musical instruments in very good condition from generous community members, which will be donated to Capital District public school districts that direly need them, beginning with the Albany public schools. Wind, string and brass instruments, electronic keyboards and hand and African drums are especially desired. Donations are tax-deductible. Music classes will be available for all students, whether virtual or in-person, with different offerings for various grades. Many schools have woefully insufficient instruments for all the students who yearn to play them, but whose parents cannot afford the rental or purchase costs. Numerous studies indicate that students' grades, attendance, life skills and self-confidence rise as they gain mastery of their instruments.

Over 255 instruments have been collected to date, brightening the lives of many disadvantaged, music-loving children. The need is great but publicity is a huge problem at this time, with people spending so much time indoors. If you're willing to pass out or put up even a few flyers at the stores, schools, doctor's offices, restaurants, etc. that you patronize, please contact Jill Rifkin, Chair, Vanguard's Musical Instruments for the Students Program at (518)439-1843 or jrif@aol.com. Grateful thanks to Vanguard, this remarkable organization we all belong to, whose dedicated members work so hard to support our beloved orchestra and to foster the love and joy of music in our community.

