



Annual Meeting
October 23, 2019
5:00-6:00
Gather Restaurant
Westin Hotel, Tarpon Point Marina
Cape Coral

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**Annual Meeting
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Cape Coral**

Agenda

Welcome and Call to Order	Tom Uhler
Approval of 2017 Annual Meeting Minutes	Tom Uhler
Financial Report	Ann Satterly
Endowment Foundation Report	Corey Vertich
Executive Director's Report	Amy Ginsburg
New Staff Introductions	Amy Ginsburg
Board Chair's Report	Tom Uhler
Adjournment	Tom Uhler



**The mission of the Southwest
Florida Symphony Orchestra
is to present outstanding music for
the entertainment, enrichment and
education of the broadest
possible public.**

Board of Trustees

2018 - 2019

Tom Uhler
President

Jeff Cull
Vice President

Reina Schlager
Secretary

Steve Brettholtz
Treasurer

Alan Evans
Orchestra Representative

Tom Kracmer
Musician Board Representative

Ellen Clifford
Symphony Society Representative

Nancy McPartlin Gardella
Youth Orchestra Representative

Jovana Batkovic
Alexandra Bremner
Joseph Broughton
Dick Devlin
Rob Diefenbach
Liz Marnul
Dorothy Munsch
Stephen Qua
Anne Wardlow

Board Chair's Report for Annual Meeting

Tom Uhler

I've been in the audience for about half of our orchestra's existence. Sure, memory isn't as good as it was, but still, the difference is dramatic.

We had a big jump in quality when we went fully professional, then with each of our Music Directors, the sound got even better. Maestro Kabaretti has taken our musicians to a new level and combined that with brilliant programming and stunning soloists.

As Maestro Nir begins his final season with us, we need to express our appreciation to him for where he's brought us. Not only musically but with community perception and his delightful preconcert lectures.

We've grown as a community and an audience, too. Our hardworking staff has brought us Small Stage Symphonies and Brave New Music. And you, our dedicated patrons and supporters, have embraced our efforts.

As we enter this transition year, let's recognize the challenges we face – increased competition for audience, constant fundraising requirement, and the need to stay competitive in our staff recruitment. But also remember the successes of 2018-19, when we saw the audience jump to its feet multiple times and to soloists who brought us to tears. Let's also remember a real renaissance in our educational programs, which provides immeasurable benefit to our youth.

Our 59th season promises to be exciting; I'm glad we're all in it together!

ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

OCTOBER 10, 2018 5:10pm

The GATHER RESTAURANT, CAPE CORAL

Present: Jovana Batkovic, Steve Brettholtz, Joseph Broughton, Dick Devlin, Liz Marnul, Reina Schlager, Tom Uhler, Alan Evans, Tom Kracmer, Anne Wardlow, Pam Simon, Stephen Qua, and members of the public represented on the Annual Meeting sign-in sheet, attached.

President Uhler called the meeting to order at 5:10pm.

Tom asked for approval of the Minutes of the Annual Meeting dated November 3, 2017. Liz Marnul made the MOTION and Dick Devlin seconded. MOTION carried. Tom congratulated Symphony management for the informative and colorful 2017/18 Annual Report of the Southwest Florida Symphony made available to all in attendance.

The 2017/18 Annual Report is attached to these minutes.

FINANCE REPORT

Our Treasurer, Steve Brettholtz, presented the Finance Report. Highlighting the year was the result of the Annual Audit. This year makes four consecutive years of a clean opinion. Steve read the opinion paragraph for all to hear. The attached Annual Report includes the report of Assets & Liabilities, Actual Income and Actual Expense. The Audit Report is available online and upon request. The Budget for this year has a shortfall of \$250,000. However, this shortfall was presented as a moment of Great Opportunity to meet this challenge. The Symphony has new staff on Board and being fully complemented in all areas of Development, Marketing and Administration at such a quality level is expected to help us meet our challenges.

REPORT OF THE ENDOWMENT

Corey Vertich provided an update to the June 30, 2018 figures in the attached Annual Report with September 30 amounts. Total assets at September 30, 2018 were \$2,343,146 including \$170,370 in the Van Sickle fund. The Endowment's goal remains to be \$5,000,000, and emphasis was on increasing participation in the Legacy Society. There were four new members in the past year. Corey described the distribution of funds to the Symphony by the Endowment runs 4-5% annually, which was just over \$100,000.

Because of strong investment performance, we were able to withdraw funds that were needed and still not fall below our beginning balance for fiscal year 2017/2018.

Additionally, one-half of the Development Director's Salary is paid for by the Endowment (which is less than half of 1%) as that position, from past experience, has had a positive direct impact on the growth of the Endowment.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Amy Ginsburg was happy to open her report announcing Tom, who had been a finalist, had won the Cape Coral Community Foundation's ENPY Award, Board Leader of the Year. Huge congratulations! Amy continued with a statement that no single individual can run our Symphony and with the recent completion of staffing of positions, it was felt that we now have the RIGHT mix of people. She thanked the board, staff, and all Symphony supporters for bringing us to where we

Minutes of the Annual Meeting 2018

Page 2, continued.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, continued...

are right now. Each staff position was announced and those employees stood and were introduced to those in attendance.

REMARKS OF THE MAESTRO

Maestro Kabaretti commented on our legacy of 58 years and also complimented the Board on seeing the importance of fully staffing all the necessary positions for a strong symphony organization. He elaborated on our showcase performance of Verdi's Requiem in the upcoming season and the logistics of every detail with managing over two hundred people on stage. He complimented our beautiful programs and wished all a wonderful upcoming season for "Our Orchestra".

CLOSING COMMENTS BY THE BOARD CHAIR

We are off to a strong start in ticket sales for the coming season. We have the right staffing. Tom introduced two new members to the Symphony Board, Alexandra Bremner and Reina Schlager. Alex has volunteered to take on the position of Chair of the Education Committee. Reina Schlager is the new Secretary.

Challenges continue in two critical areas: Venue and Income. Big Arts has had a remodel that was a difficult obstacle, yet staff accomplished a "work-around" solution that will accomplish the needs of the performances. Ticket sales make up 40% of our revenues when the national average is closer to 35%. There is a continuing need for sponsorship and donations, especially as certain prior year sponsors have been hit hard environmentally from the Red Tide and Green/Blue Algae – to the point that businesses have been severely impacted financially, as well.

In examining our By-laws, there has existed the allowance for the creation of an Advisory Board. To date, there has not been an Advisory Board established. Tom invited Pamela Simpson to please come up and join him. He thanked Pamela for all her years of service and for her work as Secretary of the Symphony – from which she would be stepping down. She was presented a unique piece of jewelry designed by Mark Loren. There are only two pins of this design, and Pamela graciously accepted the gift. Pamela has agreed to take on the Chair of the Advisory Board and the task of its creation.

As the meeting wound down, Tom invited questions from the floor. There being none, he closed the meeting mentioning everyone can help our current momentum to continue by spreading the word of our great Symphony. Tom asked for increased Legacy Group participation and mentioned that joining the Legacy Group will also include being invited to an upcoming reception to be held January 12th, 2019 to thank all those who have made commitments and are Legacy Group members.

There being no other comments, Tom thanked all those present for attending. The meeting adjourned at 6:25pm.

Respectfully submitted, REINA SCHLAGER, Secretary

Fiscal Y/E Financial Report

Southwest Florida Symphony Orchestra and Chorus Association Inc.

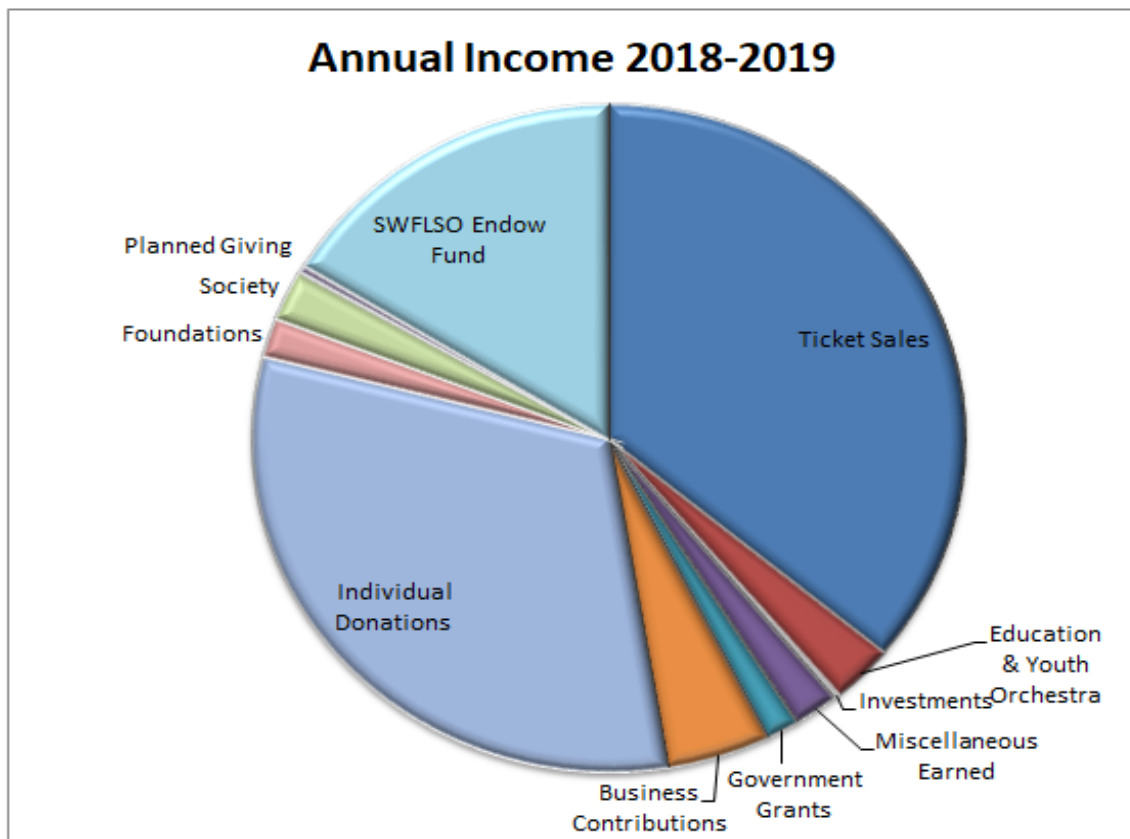
Statement of Financial Position Summary

Three Year Comparison

	As of June 30,		
	2019	2018	2017
Assets			
Checking/Savings	48,513	150,703	248,234
Cash Reserves (Bidwell \$)	-	-	82,402
Fixed Assets	12,302	14,851	19,244
Accounts Receivable	12,310	23,448	7,755
Other Assets	15,780	23,898	9,154
Community Foundation	212,462	368,656	432,203
Total Assets	301,367	581,556	798,992
Liabilities & Equity			
Liabilities			
Accounts Payable	12,775	4,375	8,450
Current Liabilities	5,544	789	8,409
Deferred Program Revenue	186,887	239,666	241,341
Notes Payable	-	-	-
Equity	96,161	336,726	540,792
Total Liabilities & Equity	301,367	581,556	798,992

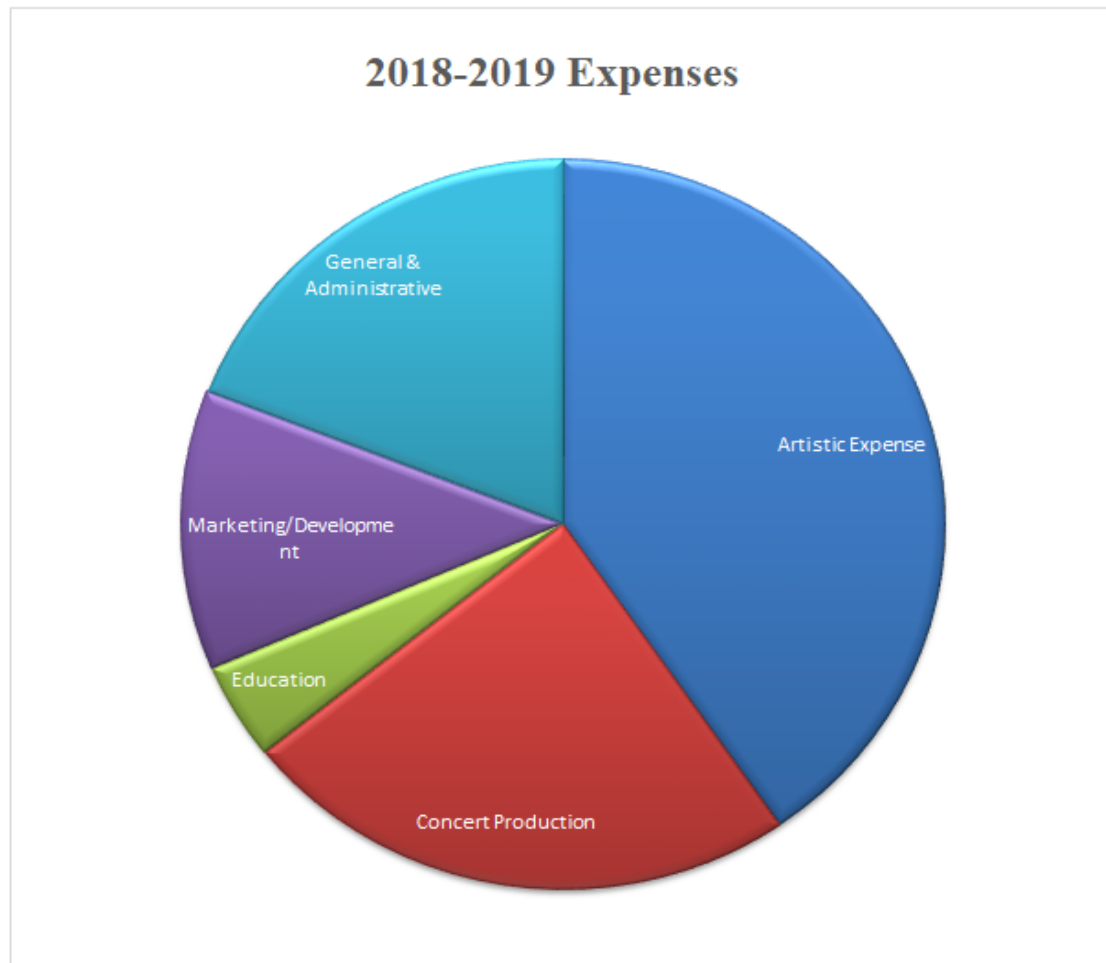
ACTUAL INCOME 2018-2019

Ticket Sales	540,801	36%
Education & Youth Orchestra	42,854	3%
Investments	3,667	0%
Miscellaneous Earned	30,464	2%
Government Grants	22,467	1%
Business Contributions	70,772	5%
Individual Donations	474,367	32%
Foundations	28,574	2%
Society	36,639	2%
Planned Giving	5,505	0%
SWFLSO Endow Fund	<u>245,000</u>	<u>16%</u>
Total Income	<u><u>1,501,110</u></u>	100%



ACTUAL EXPENSES 2018-2019

Artistic Expense	682,996	40%
Concert Production	404,085	24%
Education	72,446	4%
Marketing/Development	209,179	12%
General & Administrative	<u>322,787</u>	<u>19%</u>
Total Expense	<u><u>1,691,493</u></u>	100%





**Southwest Florida Symphony
Endowment Foundation**
7500 College Parkway
Fort Myers, Florida 33907
239-210-2345
dhall@sancapbank.com

**Annual Report
June 30, 2019**

The Southwest Florida Symphony Endowment Foundation ended fiscal year 2019 with a market value of \$2,443,624, including \$2,268,401 in the General Fund (unrestricted) and \$175,223 in the Van Sickle Fund. The General Fund included \$23,966 for the John Hudson Fund.

During the fiscal year ended June 30, 2019, the Endowment Foundation shared the symphony's development director who expanded the members of our Legacy Society. We successfully added two new members. The total estate commitment is approximately \$4 million to \$4.5 million.

During the year ended June 30, 2019, the Endowment Foundation had the following cash flow:

Total Assets as of June 30, 2018	\$2,563,925
Grants Paid to the Symphony	(245,000)
Grants Paid by the Van Sickle Fund	(11,000)
Grant Paid by the Hudson Fund	(1,000)
Operating Expenses (including \$31,200 for marketing reimbursement)	(35,431)
Donations Received	2,100
Investment Results:	
Interest, Dividends	50,970
Realized Net Gains due to repositioning portfolio	92,376
Unrealized Net Increases in Investment Values	<u>26,684</u> <u>170,030</u>

Total Assets as of June 30, 2019	<u>\$2,443,624</u>
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During the last fiscal year, the Endowment Foundation made a grant to the Symphony of \$120,000. The \$120,000 grant represented 5.02% of the general fund at the beginning of the year and was at the top end of the 4% to 5% range that the Endowment Foundation set as a target grant amount. As the last fiscal year progressed, the Symphony had a financial need and the Endowment's financial results were strong, so the Endowment Foundation granted an additional \$125,000 to the Symphony. During the current fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, the Endowment Foundation committed to granting \$115,000, or 5.07% of the general fund as of June 30, 2019. This was paid in July 2019.

During the fiscal year ended June 30, 2019, the Van Sickle Fund made \$11,000 of grants to college students who are music majors. The Van Sickle Fund is currently supporting four college students with grants. We thank the Symphony Society for holding the vocal Competition and selecting the recipients.

The Endowment Foundation continues to be managed by volunteers. David Hall is President. Thomas Kracmer is Vice President. Scott Gregory is Secretary. Corey Vertich is Treasurer and Chairman of our Investment Committee. Also on the Board are Christina Boyhan (the Symphony's Treasurer), Katherine Caldwell, Cynthia Duff, and Robert Diefenbach.

Because we are a volunteer organization, our operating expenses are minimal at less than 2% of assets. Expenses predominantly include: (1) the cost to prepare and file our tax return; (2) the cost of the music competitions to select the grant recipients; and (3) the reimbursement to the Symphony for shared marketing costs.

Our return on assets (interest, dividends and net realized and unrealized gains on sales) was 6.96%. The market value of the investments continued to increase during the first quarter of the current fiscal year.

Endowment assets are currently invested in a widely diversified portfolio of both Exchanged Traded Funds (ETFs) and Open-End Mutual Funds. The portfolio is monitored quarterly and performance is measured against customized benchmarks.

If you would like to talk with someone about including the Endowment Foundation in your estate plans, or another long-term donation, please call David Hall at 239-210-2345.

Executive Director's Message

The only thing in life that we can count on to be constant is change and there has been no shortage of it with the Southwest Florida Symphony during its 58th season. Though there are growing pains sometimes associated with change, the result of the evolution we experience is wondrous.

During our 58th season, we successfully opened the minds of concertgoers with more contemporary composition and innovative ways to listen to familiar works. We owe our Music Director, Nir Kabaretti, eternal thanks for insisting that we culturally stretch ourselves beyond Beethoven and Mozart. Last season, we were dazzled with works by Toru Takemitsu and Ernst von Dohnanyi through his introduction and we were artistically acquainted with Noam Sheriff who Nir studied with in Israel. We finally found the Education and Community Outreach Director who fits our “glass slipper.” As a result, our education department has experienced a remarkable renaissance. Our Youth Orchestra has grown by leaps and bounds and in spring of 2020, we'll present a Carnegie Hall created Young People's Concert thanks to Kara Griffith. We saw firsthand how much more successful our development efforts are when they're shared among passionate, enthusiastic staff members and led by someone who is fearless, creative, inspiring and smart. Though Jessica Stanfield has moved on to another professional opportunity, we are so grateful for the time she spent as the orchestra's Development Director. She led an annual fund campaign that brought us \$64,617 closer to closing our budget gap. We have a better handle on our financial status and can offer more transparency than ever since the arrival of our Finance Director, Ann Satterly. She insisted that our entire senior staff take part in budget construction for the coming season. Through her leadership and encouragement, we worked together to craft a budget that we're comfortable owning. Ann has also provided an abundance of human resources wisdom through her experience in that role with other institutions and has generously recruited the volunteerism of her family to help in the office and at the concert hall. Every artistic and production detail is meticulously attended to with the highest level of professionalism through Susan Anderson's experience and leadership. The number of stars the artistic and production department must will into alignment in order to execute a concert season are astonishing, yet Susan and her team make it look natural and effortless on concert nights. She has also introduced a budget building and tracking tool that will make monitoring our artistic expenses much easier for all of us. The most remarkable part of this story is that these folks are all “freshman” with our institution. We found exceptional talent to help us run this orchestra. We continue to work toward building a better, stronger administrative team, but the moral and financial support of our board and stakeholders is imperative if we are to continue to attract great people and accomplish that objective. Administrative talent retention must be a major priority for all of us if we're to continue to grow.

If I'm honest, we must acknowledge that have a lot of work to do to be the best Southwest Florida Symphony we can be, but I'm regularly reminded by a respected friend and colleague that it's important to peek over one's shoulder every once in awhile to remember how far we've come. Nir Kabaretti has led us lightyears in a positive direction. Though this is his final year with us, he has fostered artistic growth, strong community relationships and primed us to take our next giant leap forward in seasons to come.

Onward...

DEVELOPMENT REPORT

The Big Picture

We end the 2018-2019 fiscal year completely debt free, and in good financial standing with vendors. Though we have continued to operate at a deficit during the past 6 years, we are able to balance our bottom line with planned gifts not specifically earmarked for the Endowment, and are further advancing the groundwork to a balanced budget. This season's deficit of \$255,300 was reduced by \$64,617.

We saw great success and re-energized development endeavors under Jessica Stanfield, our most recent Development Director. During her tenure with us, she created, from scratch, an annual development plan that can be used in perpetuity and laid the groundwork for new and increased donations and sponsorships from individual donors and corporate partners alike. While she greatly enjoyed her time with the Symphony, she departed from the organization on October 11th, 2019 to pursue an Executive Directorship with the Guardian ad Litem Foundation of Southwest Florida.

Individual Donations and Sponsorships

Our Chair Sponsor Benefit proved to be a wildly successful event again, raising a pledged \$145,000 this past season. This initiative has truly become a cornerstone of the season, and something our patrons and major supporters look forward to year after year. New this past season was the addition of an interactive experience for our patrons. As opposed to just watching performances from Symphony musicians, they were invited to actually sit in the orchestra during rehearsal and experience first-hand what a rehearsal feels like (how many can say they've seen Nir's face while watching a performance?). It was incredibly well received and the current structure of the event will continue at the 2020 Chair Sponsor Benefit, which will be held at the orchestra's long-standing rehearsal venue, Riverside Community Center. Unfortunately, two donors rescinded their pledges (totaling \$13,000) months after the event, impacting the amount raised. A longtime Symphony donor also made a significant pledge at 2018's event. Unfortunately, he passed away before this pledge could be fulfilled. This greatly impacts our budget as we do not plan for rescinded pledges. This is the second consecutive year where pledges have not materialized, so we have learned to be cautious about recognizing pledges vs. actual income in the future. Moving forward, we will consider adding a budget line item for unrealized pledges as a precaution.

Conductor's Circle Club membership dropped slightly (76 members during the 18-19 season from 89 members during the 17-18 season). Dues for Conductor's Circle remained at \$2,000 for the 18-19 season, with renewals holding steady.

We again saw a great deal of individual concert sponsorship from significant supporters of the Symphony, with many concert offerings sponsored completely or in part by individual sponsors.

The 18-19 season brought the continuation of our newest, all-encompassing giving initiative – Sustaining Partnership. In addition to Conductor's Circle Club and Ambassador Party access, Sustaining Partners facilitate Majors for Minors programs in the schools of their choice. Partners underwrite tickets for young families, individuals with special needs, and those who may not otherwise have access to professional symphonic music, an experience they all recognize as truly life changing. Finally, they support the Symphony Society, participate in Legacy Giving activities, get to know our island community

through Friends of the Symphony on Sanibel membership, sponsor a musician's chair and best of all, are invited to experience firsthand the multitude of offerings and experiences their generosity made possible. We welcomed renewals from 7 partners to the program during the 18-19 season, and had our 8th member join just a few weeks ago in August.

During the 18-19 season, individual giving increased by 41%.

Corporate Sponsorship and Support

The 18-19 season brought many returning corporate sponsors, as well as increased opportunities for support. The presentation of Steve Hackman's Beethoven v. Coldplay concert this past May, provided attracted an abundance of corporate sponsorship, including the fiscal support of new a new corporate partner, Seminole Casino Hotel. They will sponsor the Symphony again during the 19-20 season both fiscally and with in-kind donations.

We continued to see strong support from both Fort Myers and Sanibel businesses, receiving both fiscal and in-kind sponsorship. Gather, Nice Guys Pizza, Mastello Ristorante, Bailey's General Store, Azure, Nevermind and Point 57 all provided culinary donations valued at more than \$8,000 for the Conductor's Circle Club. We feel very fortunate to live in an area where local businesses and restaurants demonstrate their commitment to sustaining a professional orchestra in our community through their generosity. Florida Weekly continued to be pivotal to the media representation of the Symphony, providing reduced cost and free pick-up ads, as well as strong and effective editorial coverage in its many publications throughout the state.

While we don't host an overabundance of big businesses in Lee and Collier Counties, the Symphony continues to foster healthy and impactful relationships with many of community pillars. During the 18-19 season, the Symphony received fiscal and in-kind sponsorships from the following businesses:

- IBERIA Bank
- Bailey's General Store
- Burgess Brant Consulting Engineers
- Enterprise Rent-A-Car
- Uhler & Vertich Financial Planners
- Sanibel Captiva Community Bank
- Florida Weekly
- Henderson Franklin Attorneys at Law
- Myers, Brettholtz & Company, PA
- Cadence Music
- Stroemer and Company, LLC
- Cape Coral Community Foundation
- WGCU
- Edison National Bank
- Galloway Ford and Lincoln
- The Jewish Federation of Lee and Charlotte Counties
- Toti Media
- Seminole Casino Hotel
- HGH Restaurant Group/Gather Restaurant

- Waterman Broadcasting
- Viking Cruises

Grants and Foundations

Grants and foundation funding saw a decrease compared to the 17-18 season. Funding from the State of Florida decreased from \$47,456 to \$9,467, a trend that was seen across the board by other arts and culture organizations.

The Visitors' Convention Bureau continued its support with an \$8,000 award, down from a \$12,500 award from the 17-18 season. The Foulds Foundation generously provided the Symphony with enough funding to purchase percussion instruments, greatly reducing the Symphony's annual instrument rental expenses. Small awards from the Suncoast Credit Union, Sanibel Kiwanis and the City of Fort Myers remained consistent with seasons past.

Events and Appeals

While our primary events season to season are of course, our concerts offerings, we implement small scale appeals to the community at-large. While each comes with its share of accomplishments and challenges, we continue to present them and strive for the highest level of success. Smaller scale donations continued their large impact on the Symphony. It is truly a demonstration of the power of the support of many and a testament to every single dollar making a difference.

Community Support Month grew significantly during the 18-19 season, raising \$41,136 compared to \$8,850 during the 17-18 season (an overall increase of 78.49%). This was due in large part to securing a partnership with Viking Cruises, allowing us the opportunity to give away a Viking Cruise to one lucky donor. We also gave custom Norman Love Chocolate boxes to individuals who donated \$58 or more. Additionally, we were incredibly fortunate to have two generous matching donors challenge us to raise \$15,000 which they matched. We were thrilled not only meet that goal, but significantly exceed it by the time the campaign came to an end.

We continued to utilize DipJar devices at our concerts and events, helping to grow our annual campaign. DipJar is a clever wireless internet device that instantly accepts credit card donations, and provides the supporter with an "electronic celebration" after they make a gift, sporting video-game like lights and sounds upon swiping their card. It's a fun and unique experience for event-based donors!

This year, #GivingTuesday also saw incredible success, raising \$20,023 in just 24 hours through the hard work of a few staff members and the generosity of a matching donor who truly leveraged our institution. We plan to use this tactic again this year to see increased results on #GivingTuesday 2019.

The Symphony Society continued to fiscally support the Symphony, pledging \$50,000 for the 18-19 season, and delivering \$36,639 in actual support. The Society has committed a pledge of \$40,000 in support for the 19-20 season.

MARKETING REPORT

Strategic Marketing

In consulting with other local arts and entertainment businesses, we learned that television and internet advertising have proven to be most effective in our market. which has factored in to our decision to redirect our marketing dollars to maximize results. In addition, building relationships with local businesses that promote the Symphony's activities has been met with positive results. With adequate staff support, opportunities to take advantage of local bars, restaurants and retail establishments as satellite box offices are endless. All we need is the enthusiastic manpower.

Other creative efforts like the Welcome to the Neighborhood mail campaign, which was suggested by a former board member, and providing local businesses with vouchers redeemable for concert tickets through winning games and contests (like trivia nights and drawings) have yielded positive results as well.

Print

We continued to enjoy extensive print media coverage during the 2017-18 season. Overall, we averaged 2-4 features weekly for the season and once again, took the cover of The News-Press's weekly arts & entertainment magazine insert, Gulf Coasting, for its annual arts & culture overview. Many local publications in addition to The News-Press provided us with editorial coverage: Florida Weekly, Happenings Magazine, Island Sun, The River and The Breeze.

Radio

We continued our relationship with WGCU, as the exclusive sponsor of their online streaming classical broadcast. Along with continuous advertising on traditional WGCU radio, we were able to reach our target audience, as well as classical music listeners. WGCU hosted a lengthy interview with Amy Ginsburg and Steve Hackman to promote Beethoven v. Coldplay, once again resulting in a number of tickets purchased by residents from Charlotte and Collier counties. In addition, WGCU featured Maestro Kabaretti as one of its Three Song Stories guests. Three Song Stories is a radio show and podcast that focuses on three songs that are particularly meaningful to the interviewee. This was a fantastic opportunity to more personally connect Maestro Kabaretti and our community.

As media consumption changes, so do our advertising plans. While we continue to draw audiences from maintaining a public radio presence, commercial radio has shown virtually no return on investment during the past two seasons. We experimented with advertising three concerts on iHeart Media stations during the 2018-2019 season with no demonstrable results. The ability to connect internet radio, Spotify and Pandora to car audio and home speakers like Alexa and Google Home through computers and smartphones has significantly reduced broadcast commercial radio consumption. We have redirected most of our radio spend to Waterman Broadcasting television stations (both broadcast and streaming) WBBH – Channel 2 and WEVU – Channel 7 for the 2019-2020 season.

Television

We were able to take advantage of a generous in-kind sponsorship with Waterman Broadcasting Stations during our 58th season for our final concert of the year, Beethoven v. Coldplay. We saw a significant jump in ticket sales for this concert once our TV ad hit their airwaves. For the coming season, we have redirected portions of our radio and print advertising budgets to television. Advertising will appear on both traditional broadcast TV and Waterman's online streaming channels.

Internet

We continue to see positive results from e-blasts that are distributed from our office through Constant Contact and through sources like Barbara B. Mann Hall and other venues at which we perform that offer e-blast advertising. Additionally, several friends of the symphony worked with us to arrange co-marketing initiatives through e-blast coupled with postcard campaigns. Efforts like these offer a quick, inexpensive way to expand our reach to unique audiences.

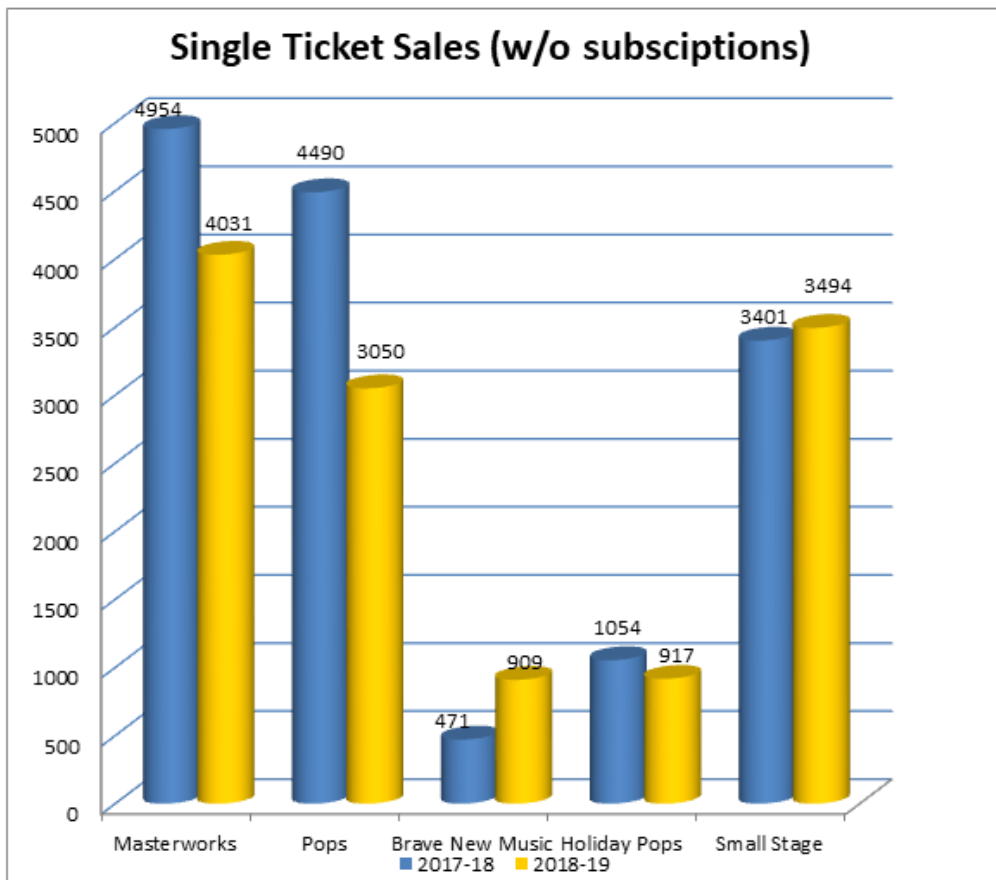
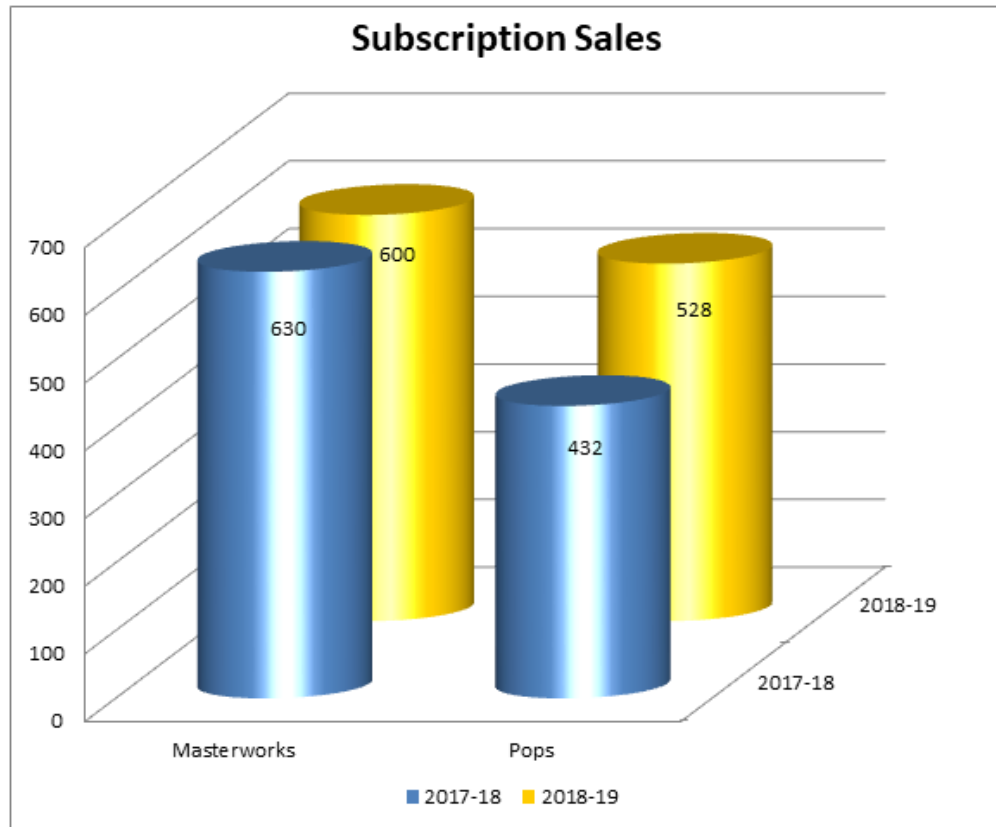
Our open rates for e-blast advertising continued to average 23%, but open rates for emails containing post-concert surveys had open rate averages of 55% and click-through rates of 38%. The data we collected through the surveys we distributed (post-Masterworks, Pops and Brave New Music) contained overwhelmingly positive feedback...and again contained requests for more opera-centric programs on our Masterworks Series, which Nir included in our coming season.

Miscellaneous

We continue to enjoy strong relationships with small businesses and some Chambers of Commerce throughout Lee County that have a vested interest in raising our profile. Our ongoing challenge is retaining enough staff support to circulate materials (and reminders) to the businesses and Chambers that have offered to support us. This season, we're working on volunteer recruitment through high schools since students who engage in community service hours are eligible for Bright Futures Scholarships through the State of Florida.

Ticket Sales Summary

Masterworks • Pops • Holiday Pops • Small Stage SymphoniesSM



Small Stage at Moorings was a contracted service

17-18 Pops—4 concerts (2 Harry Potter concerts) 18-19 Pops concerts—3 concerts

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: May 8, 2018

Contact: (239) 418-0996

E-mail: Beth Phillips, Marketing Department: bphillips@swflso.org

Media contact: Amy Ginsburg, Executive Director: aginsburg@swflso.org

The Southwest Florida Symphony Announces its 58th Concert Season

The Southwest Florida Symphony, the only professional orchestra in Lee County, is excited to announce the concert schedule for its 2018-2019 season.

The Symphony's 2018-2019 season combines superb symphonic music with a broad variety of programming and an array of guest artists that are sought after by some of the world's . The Masterworks Classical Concert Series features pieces by Rachmaninoff, Beethoven, Verdi, and Debussy, with performances on November 10, 2018, January 12, 2019, February 2, 2019, March 2, 2019, and April 27, 2019. The Pops Series concerts, with music made famous by Frankie Valli, Neil Diamond, and Frank Sinatra, are January 19, 2019, February 16, 2019, and March 16, 2019. All Masterworks and Pops performances take place at the Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall at FSW. A Holiday Pops concert, "Christmas in Paradise", is on December 6-7-8, at several venues within Lee County. Additionally, the symphony presents its' Small Stage Symphonies Series on February 6-7-8, 2019, March 20-21-22, 2019, and April 5-6-7, 2019, performed at venues throughout Lee County.

Further details on season 58 are available by calling (239) 418-1500, or online, www.swflso.org. Season subscriptions are currently on sale, with single ticket sales beginning June 1, 2018.

The Symphony made its debut as a community orchestra on April 15, 1961, playing in schools and community centers, with a roster of just 24 musicians. Today, the symphony has a roster of 65 world-class musicians, and is Lee County's premiere symphonic ensemble. The Southwest Florida Symphony's 58th year continues the orchestra's tradition of artistic excellence as internationally renowned Maestro Nir Kabaretti leads another exciting season of spectacular performances. Maestro Kabaretti, the fifth music director in the organization's history, led critically acclaimed performances throughout his first four seasons with the Southwest Florida Symphony, and in 2017, he extended his contract as Music Director through the 2019–2020 season.

Maestro Nir Kabaretti Bio

Nir Kabaretti comes to Southwest Florida from the Santa Barbara Symphony in California, where he also serves as music and artistic director. He enters his eleventh season with Santa Barbara and his fourth with the Southwest Florida Symphony. He is described as, "a conductor with immense musicality and warm personality" by Maestro **Zubin Mehta**. Kabaretti has earned an impressive reputation across several continents for his command of a vast symphonic and operatic repertoire.

Upon graduation from the prestigious **University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna**, Kabaretti began working as coach and Chorus Master at the **Vienna State Opera and the Salzburg Festival**. He later advanced to positions as Assistant to the Music Director at the Teatro Real in Madrid and Personal Assistant to Maestro **Zubin Mehta at Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino** in Florence, Italy.

Nir Kabaretti has worked with some of the world's most sought-after musicians, such as **Lang Lang, Plácido Domingo, Itzhak Perlman**, and **Hélène Grimaud**. His guest conducting appearances include: the **Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestra del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, Orquesta Filarmonica de Buenos Aires, Orquestre National du Théâtre du Capitole de Toulouse, Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne, Orchestra del Teatro dell'Opera di Roma, Orchestra del Teatro Petruzzelli di Bari, Orchestra del Teatro Carlo Felice di Genova, Orchestra Sinfonica Giuseppe Verdi di Milano, Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, Israel Chamber Orchestra, Haifa Symphony Orchestra, Vienna Chamber Orchestra, La Orquesta Sinfonica de Madrid, Real Orquesta Sinfónica de Sevilla, La Orquesta Filarmonica de Gran Canaria and the Bochumer Symphoniker**. He was appointed Principal Conductor of the **Raanana Symphonette Orchestra** in Israel in 2002, and later, their Music Director until 2008.

Kabaretti's operatic experience includes productions at the **Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Teatro Real** in Madrid, **The Israeli Opera, Opéra de Lausanne, Avenches Opera Festival** in Switzerland, **Tokyo New National Theatre** and **Opera Santa Barbara**.

He conducted *The Diary of Anne Frank*, a guest production of the **Vienna State Opera** performed at both the Bregenz Festival and Expo 2000 in Hanover. In 2005, Kabaretti led **Teatro San Carlo di Napoli** on its first tour to Japan, conducting *Il Trovatore*, both in Kyoto and Tokyo.

During the 2004-05 season, he made his debut at **Teatro alla Scala di Milano**. In 2007, and for the second time, he conducted the ballet production of Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (broadcast by Italian television RAI, and released as a commercial DVD).

Maestro Kabaretti received the **America-Israel Cultural Foundation** Grant for Young Conductors. In 1993, he won **the Forum Junger Künstler Conducting Competition** in Vienna. In 1994, he was among the finalists in the International Competition for Conductors in Douai, France.

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SOUTHWEST FLORIDA SYMPHONY SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT

2018-2019

The mission of the Southwest Florida Symphony Society is to support the Southwest Florida Symphony Orchestra through volunteering, fund raising, community engagement, and education. Our generous membership give freely of their time and treasure to help us achieve those goals.

SUPPORT SERVICES

During the 2018–2019 season, the Society presented nineteen fund raising events. Three were major events advertised to the community; the other, smaller, events were hosted by individual Society members. An additional post-season event at Nervermind Bar and Grill was generously donated by Michael and Varena Schneider-Christians. We also raised money through the Key Signatures program and the annual Bridge Marathon. Through the unstinting hard work of our membership, we were able to present the orchestra with \$36,639.00 for the 2018-2019 season.

We increased the visibility of the Society and Orchestra through the tireless publicity campaign waged by our 2nd Vice President, Ellen Schneider. Ellen's efforts, began during the 2017-2018 season, gained us articles and pictures in several Southwest Florida publications during 2018-2019.

EDUCATION

The Society furthers the musical education of young artists in our area by awarding various scholarships. Our membership generously donated to a scholarship fund to benefit the Youth Orchestra. The Society donated \$1,000.00 to defray the registration fees of students in the greater Fort Myers Area who would not otherwise be able to enjoy the benefits of Youth Orchestra participation.

In addition, the Society organizes and conducts music scholarship competitions for two privately funded scholarship funds. The Marilyn Van Sickle Voice Competition, held in February, awarded a \$3,000.00 per year scholarship for a four-year period to the winner and a \$2,000.00 per year four-year scholarship to the runner up. The Jillian Prescott Music Awards Competition, held in April, 2019, awarded \$1,800.00 to the winner, along with a chance to perform with the orchestra during the 2019-2020 season.

ADDITIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

An important goal of the 2018-2019 season was to continue the progress made during the 2017-20018 season of strengthening the relationship between the Society and the Symphony and to chip away at a notion of "separateness" between the two organizations. The adoption of the Symphony logo as our own during 2017-2018 was an important step. During 2018-2019 we took another long overdue step of eliminating the term "bylaws" from our documentation and substituting the term "operating procedures". Said procedures are under extensive revision with the goal of facilitating the cooperation of Society and Symphony.

Another significant accomplishment in 2018-2019 was to address the problem of lack of continuity at the executive level. Because our organization only has an eight-month season, much of an executive officer's term is spent climbing the learning curve. Accordingly, all of the members of the Executive Committee for 2018-2019 have agreed to serve in the same positions for 2019-2020.

The Symphony Society looks forward to providing meaningful and growing to the Southwest Florida Symphony in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen W. Clifford, President, Southwest Florida Symphony Society, 2018-2019.

2019 ANNUAL MEETING

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

The goal of the Southwest Florida Symphony Education Program is to offer music education and enrichment opportunities to Lee County students through maintaining and increasing our existing programs and the development of new ones. Monthly Education Committee meetings (12 members) have resumed again, with optimal support and results.

Our Education Programs include the following:

MAJORS FOR MINORS: This program is offered to certain elementary schools and features a Symphony Ensemble in a 50-minute program of musical elements, composers, music history Q&A, and other areas of music. Between February and May 2019, a string quartet from the orchestra performed at 9 schools: Hector Cafferata, Heights Elementary, James Stevens Academy, Cape Elementary, River Hall, Gulf Elementary, Sanibel School, Orangewood, and Quality Life Center (a Dunbar area after-school center), reaching a total of 1311 students. Their presentation included excerpts from 15 or so pieces performed chronologically with a slideshow of each composer, to provide knowledge of historical and global connections through music. Each Majors for Minors appearance was funded by a Sustaining Partner who was encouraged to select their school location, and who was also invited to attend. Goals for this program would include acquiring more Sustaining Partners which would then open up the opportunity to more schools, and to increase the number of viable ensembles available to send to schools to include brass and woodwind representation as well.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERTS: These concerts are presented annually to Lee County students. The concerts feature our professional musicians performing pieces like "Peter and the Wolf" and themed programs like "A Tribute to Nature". The audience is comprised of primarily students, though teachers, and guests attend as well. In the past, the concert has been held at Barbara B Mann Hall and has reached as many as 2500 students. This past season, a YPC date and location had not been secured by my predecessor when I assumed Education Director responsibilities in March 2019. Therefore, I arranged to hold a YPC at the beginning of this season, August 26, at North Fort Myers High School. This achieved several goals: to not skip a year presenting a YPC, to meet a September 1 \$5000 grant sponsor (Suncoast) deadline; and to benefit from the cost savings of a free high school vs. the \$5000 cost associated with presenting it at Barbara B Mann. We were pleased to present "Carnival of the Animals" complete with an animated narrator to 803 students, plus invited guests. We had 950 students and guests scheduled, but unfortunately, two schools backed out at the last minute, without enough time for the waiting list school to arrange to attend.

In addition, I attended a YPC Link Up conference at Carnegie Hall in May, and am delighted to be bringing this concert opportunity to Lee County students as well this season. Link Up is an amazingly-designed curriculum/performance which plants our symphonic music into elementary classrooms all year. Teachers who sign up attend a Link Up seminar where they are taught all of the Link Up pieces, which they in turn take back to their classrooms. The students work for weeks learning the rhythms, lyrics, dance steps, and even how to perform the same pieces on

their violins or recorders with the symphony at the culminating concert, making them hands-on participants instead of silent observers. I have been working closely with Dr. Doug Santini of the Lee County Schools Fine and Performing Arts Office to register schools, promote the teacher seminars, and to secure the host high schools. Our first annual Link Up is tentatively scheduled for March 31 at Fort Myers High School Auditorium, which seats 925. In the future, my goal is to continue to offer the Link Up Curriculum (there are 4 different choices) eventually back at the BB Mann Hall which seats 1874, and perhaps even offer two seatings where we could reach 3600 students!

YOUTH ORCHESTRA PROGRAMS: This program provides young musicians with the opportunity to play in the Sinfonietta or Youth Orchestra and a few in the YO Ensembles. Historically, at least three concerts are presented each year for the community. Midway through last season, we brought on woodwind coach Angela Massey to step in as Youth Orchestra manager, and she has done a wonderful job organizing, recruiting and motivating the students, parents, coaches, and conductors. The YO and Sinfonietta have 5 scheduled concerts this year: October 6, November 3, December 8, February 23, and May 31. The Education Committee and I held an annual fundraiser (based on information from fall 2018). We just held this year's fundraiser on October 6, 2019 at Heritage Palms Country Club in Fort Myers. We had 88 guests in attendance, 19 baskets, 4 live auction items, and a whiteboard for pledges and were able to raise around \$6644.

DISCOVERY CLUB: This offers the opportunity for students K-12, for a one-time fee of \$15, to attend the Symphony concerts (up to 3 tickets for \$5 each) and rehearsals to have more exposure and up-close-and-personal experiences with our music and musicians. Discovery Club membership has remained level or slightly lower than previous seasons, as we currently serve 201 students. This program will also be refreshed in order to entice students and families to join and participate. There is a Discovery Club *Meet the Guest Artist* with trombonist Alexis Smith scheduled for our first Masterworks November 9, with the goal to offer a Discovery Club event at every concert scheduled for Barbara B Mann Hall. I attended and handed out Discovery Club applications at the elementary, middle and high school music teacher in service meetings in order to increase interest and exposure. Additionally, the Education Committee decided to offer a free DC membership to this year's current Youth Orchestra members as a perk to them, and an incentive for them to attend more symphony concerts. 161 tickets were bought using the Discovery Club advantage last season. Our goal here would be to recruit through other means (social media, recommendation) in order to increase awareness and students served.

STUDENT RUSH: Communication and information has recently been provided to FGCU, FSW, Hodges and Keiser Universities via posters, email and social media to promote the Symphony Orchestra concerts and events. 49 students took advantage of rush tickets this past year. The goal here would be to increase the number of Student Rush guests through more active and ongoing advertising.

MUSIC FOR LIFE: This is a partnership with other community non-profit organizations that address the underserved or those in need in Lee County to provide complimentary tickets to groups, families, and individuals to attend the Symphony Concerts. This year, we served 215 individuals representing 20 organizations like Big Brothers Big Sisters, Goodwill, and PACE Center for Girls through this program. This number is slightly down from the previous year, and we will continue to promote and encourage greater participation in the upcoming season.

SOUND LAB: The SWFLSO offers a travelling set of hands-on string, brass, and woodwind instruments to be taken to and shared with community families through invitations to fairs, art shows, markets, etc. The instruments were generously restored by funds raised at the 2019 Chair Sponsorship benefit, and are now in perfect working order to best represent the orchestra after being serviced by Cadence Music. The Sound Lab made a very well-received appearance at WGPU's "*Be My Neighbor Day*" at the FGCU campus in March, where our table was inundated by curious young musicians non-stop from 9:00 until 1:00!

MASTER CLASSES: These classes, which usually feature guest soloists performing with our Symphony Orchestra, in the past have been given to the Youth Orchestra students or other area students. There were no scheduled Masterclasses during the 18-19 season, and the goal here would be to reinstate some of these wonderful education and connection opportunities between the SWFLSO and the music community. I am initiating conversations between myself, Susan Anderson, and artists' representatives to see if we can add a few of these to this year's schedule.

FUTURE GOALS:

- Increase grant and foundation support- Carrie Grant has done a wonderful job guiding us through applications to almost 30 grants, almost double the 15 from last season.
- Increase individual support, particularly through Sustaining Partnership, to include a minimum of 12 Sustaining Partners (currently 7)
- Present a Majors for Minors program in at least 12 elementary schools (previously 9)
- Restore the YPC to a regularly scheduled event, and attempt to increase student/guest audience (currently 950) and impact through the use of the highly acclaimed Carnegie Hall Link Up interactive curriculum
- Stabilize the YO program after a volatile and inconsistent year through adding a youth orchestra manager position
- Reinstate one or two master classes offered by our visiting guest artists
- Increase participation in Discovery Club and Student Rush opportunities by better information- sharing and marketing, and by offering increased and interesting member-only activities to Discovery Club during each of the Barbara B Mann concerts.

I am very grateful to the Education Committee, the parents, the conductors, the staff and all the volunteers who help to make our programs successful. Thank you for your support and we hope that it will continue and grow so that the Symphony Education programs continue to serve our youth. These young musicians and concert-goers are not only our future orchestra members who will ensure that professional and inspirational music continues in our community, they are also our future doctors, engineers, teachers, world leaders, arts lovers and visionaries who will reach their full potential because we enhanced their lives through music.

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