

ENTERTAINMENT

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Save the Music 2016

Numbers-themed concerts raise support for music education in public schools

Regina Young

Thirteen is the number of years Central Bucks School District music educators have been putting on concerts to “save the music,” and three are the number of chances you’ll have to catch them on stage next week.

Covering seven decades of popular music, this year’s Save the Music concerts are all about numbers — lots of numbers. Like ‘64,’ the age on Paul McCartney’s mind as he sings, “Will you still love me?” Or “one,” as in the one and only person Rydell High good-girl Sandy Olsson wants.

But there’s also a six-digit integer figuring prominently in this year’s equation — the fundraising sum organizers hope to eclipse by weekend’s end.

“We’ve donated \$76,000 to date to the VHI Save the Music Foundation and we’re hoping that we can hit that magical \$100,000 mark this year,” said Holicong Middle School Band Director Joel Chodoroff, one of four Central Bucks music educators who produce the concert spectacular every year.

“Music by Number” is the theme of the 2016 Save the Music concerts, which take place 7:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 29, and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 30, with a 3 p.m. concert also on Saturday. Held in the Holicong Middle School auditorium, 2900 Holicong Road, Doylestown, the shows will feature a wide variety of numerical-themed songs from multiple musical genres.

“The goal of the concert is to



The annual Save the Music concerts, hosted by Holicong Middle School and featuring performances by Central Bucks School District music educators, staff and friends, and select student groups, take place Jan. 29 and 30. “Music by Number” is this year’s theme.

give people a ‘rock concert’ experience in a scholastic setting, but it’s appropriate for people of all ages,” Chodoroff explained. “We’re doing some ‘Schoolhouse Rock’ stuff — we’re having an elementary choir sing with us — so there’s stuff for the younger kids and there’s the stuff for the ‘older kids’ — the grandparents.”

The set list includes: “When I’m 64” by the Beatles, “You’re the One that I Want” from the film “Grease,” “867-5309 (Jenny)” by Tommy Tutone, “One” by Metallica and “Land of a Thousand

Dances” by Wilson Pickett.

In a departure from the standard school concert, the main acts in these shows are adults: Central

Bucks music faculty, staff, alumni and friends. Each concert, however, will include performances by student groups from several schools in the district.

In addition to Chodoroff, concert organizers include Jen DiVaso, Holicong Middle School and Central Bucks High School East orchestra director; Jim Glaser, Holicong Middle School choir director; and Ian Sanchez, Tamamend Middle School choir director.

What started as a singular concert — raising about \$700 to \$900 in its inaugural year — has become increasingly popular over time, with 2015’s Save the Music concert weekend supporting music

education in public schools to the tune of \$19,000.

“This is the 13th [annual] concert we’ve done and each one has gotten larger in scope and the amount of performances, and in the amount of extras we throw in there,” Chodoroff said.

With skits and costumes in the mix, the concerts are especially fun for students, who get a kick out of seeing their teachers — both past and present — let loose on stage.

“They look forward to and enjoy the fact that they see their teachers in a different light, so to speak,” Chodoroff added.

Baskets of goods — donated by local families and businesses — will

be raffled at the concerts, in addition to two autographed guitars (last year’s instruments were signed by Gavin DeGraw and Sam Smith). The guitars are being donated by the VHI Save the Music Foundation, a nonprofit organization whose mission, as outlined on its website, is to raise music education awareness and build sustainable instrumental music programs by providing grants of new instruments to public elementary and middle schools.

“We are fortunate to be in a district where the arts do have support, and unfortunately if you look across the country, whether it’s more urban areas or even more rural areas or smaller school districts, there are music programs that are struggling to exist on a day-to-day basis,” Chodoroff said, adding that the Central Bucks faculty regularly encourage their students to recognize the value music and music education bring to their lives.

“We think it’s important that the kids realize, yes, you are fortunate,” he added. “But it’s also important to give back and help music education whenever we can.”

Concert admission is \$7 for students (high school or younger) and \$13 for adults, with all proceeds benefiting the Save the Music Foundation.

For tickets and information, including postponement dates in the event of inclement weather, visit vh12016.brownpaperickets.com.

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Bach Festival, Zimmermann’s Cafe offer performance opportunities

Melinda Rizzo

From Bach’s soaring “Mass in B minor” to live Baroque entertainment alongside casual light fare, the 109th annual Bach Festival offers lectures and intimate performances in historic settings.

Bach Festival performances and events are held in and around downtown Bethlehem and provide audiences a chance to enjoy world-class musicians alongside young budding talent.

Auditions will be held for the

second annual Zimmermann’s Café series, where young performers from the Lehigh and Delaware valleys have an opportunity to be part of the 109th Bethlehem Bach Festival in May.

Zimmermann’s Café coffee-house evenings aim to re-create the casual, relaxed atmosphere of the original Leipzig coffee houses of Johann Sebastian Bach’s time, where standard and experimental Bach compositions were often “test driven” to enthusiastic audiences.

Zimmermann’s Café will be held



The Moravian College Baroque Ensemble performs at Zimmermann’s Cafe coffeehouse.

from 8:30 to 10:30 p.m. May 14 and 21, in Peter Hall on the campus of Moravian College, said Larry Lipkis, composer-in-residence and professor of music at Moravian College. Lipkis is also a member of the internationally acclaimed early music ensemble, The Baltimore Consort.

Lipkis said the coffee house evenings are a “showcase of local young talent. We are hoping for more singers this year, as the original Zimmermann’s coffee house in Leipzig had many singers.”

Zimmermann’s performances offer a way for those traveling to Bethlehem for the larger Bach Festival to enjoy an evening of social time while listening to accomplished young performers in a casual atmosphere, much in the tradi-

tion of Bach’s time.

Young people interested in performing at Zimmermann’s Café evenings must audition a Baroque piece. Solo vocalists and instrumentalists and small ensembles are eligible to audition.

Auditions will be held from 1 to 5:30 p.m. Feb. 5, at the Bach Choir of Bethlehem office, at Heckewelder Place, Bethlehem.

In addition to Zimmermann’s Café concerts, the ninth biennial Bach Competition for American singers with a special interest in Bach’s vocal repertoire will be held, the Bach Choir website stated. Ten finalists will audition before a judging panel on May 22; first prize is \$3,000 and a solo performance with The Bach Choir of Bethlehem

under the direction of Greg Funfgeld, artistic director and conductor, according to the website.

Application and audition details are available at <https://app.getacptd.com/bachvoacalcompetition>

If you go:

Zimmermann’s Café auditions for youngsters from middle school through college will be held from 1 to 5:30 p.m., Friday, Feb. 5, and may be scheduled by e-mailing Karen Glose at Bach Choir of Bethlehem at kglose@bach.org.

The 109th Bethlehem Bach Festival, “the Heart of our Season,” runs May 13 to 15, and May 20 to 22.

Day and evening shows; performance times vary.

Cost: Some free, ticketed pay events noted.

Zimmermann’s Café events cost \$15, pre-registration required with limited seating. Light fare and drink available for purchase.

Performances will be held at various Bethlehem locations.

Information: 610-866-4382, bach.org.



A close-up of the choir.

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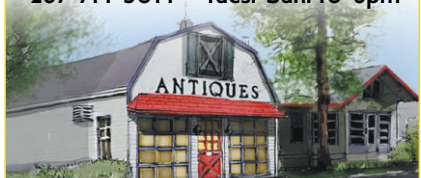
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Riverside symphonia receives \$3,500

The Riverside Symphonia, based in Lambertville, N.J., has received donations of \$3,500 to help underwrite the 2016 Caprio Young Artists Competition.

The funds will be used to sponsor the three prizes that will be awarded to young musicians at the live competition taking place at 2 p.m. Saturday, March 19, at Thompson Memorial Presbyterian Church, 1680 Aquetong Road,

New Hope.

The sponsors are The Arts & Letters Foundation of New York, the Ruth and Hans Cahmann Memorial Fund of New York; and Barbara and Jay Belding of Bucks County.

The Caprio Young Artists Competition is a regional music competition to encourage and support the development of classical music students ages 22 and under who reside

or study in Pennsylvania, New Jersey or New York.

Since 1998, the competition has awarded more than \$29,000 to promising students to continue their education. The competition honors the life and legacy of John-Michael Caprio, founding music director and conductor of the Riverside Symphonia.

Learn more at riversidesymphonia.org.

Pennsbury symphony performs in Yardley

Pennsbury High School Symphony Orchestra performs at 7:30 p.m. Feb. 6, at the Yardley Community Centre, 64 S. Main St., Yardley.

The Symphony Orchestra is an integral part of the Pennsbury Instrumental Music Program. The orchestra has performed on the main stages of the Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall.

Guest soloists have included Ovidiu Marinescu, Sylvia Ahranjian, Elizabeth Pitcairn,

Anthony Perollo, Luigi Mazzocchi, Robert Kesselman, Peter Paulsen and Emily Threlina. The orchestra directors, Felicia Reilly and Frank Mazzeo, led the ensemble.

The featured Yardley restaurant for the evening is the Canal Street Grille at 27 East Afton Ave. Bring your ticket stub for a free dessert after your meal.

Advance sales are \$20 for adults, \$15 for seniors and \$10 for students, except for the Lynn Trefzger family program, which is \$10 gen-

eral admission.

Visit bcpac.org or mail a check to BCPAC, 1140 Edgewood Road, Yardley, Pa. 19067, with a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Tickets will be mailed if time allows; otherwise they will be held at the door.

Tickets bought on concert night, or held at the door without advance payment, will be \$25 for adults, \$18 for seniors and \$10 for students; the family program remains at \$10. All tickets are non-refundable.

Pure Pleasure plays at Puck

Pure Pleasure performs at Puck, 1 Printer’s Alley, Doylestown, at 8 p.m. Jan. 30.

The band was started by Earl Scooter (aka Stephen Scheifer), vocalist and songwriter, and Court-

ney Colletti, a singer-songwriter and guitar player, and one of the original members of Johnny’s Dance Band.

Steve Burke plays bass and sings, Steve Mosley plays drums

and sings, and Ralph Liberto “doubles” on sax, flute and keyboard.

Doors open at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$15. Advance tickets are available at 215-348-9000 or on the Puck Live website.