



## Get Ready for another Blockbuster Season in 2010

Can you keep a secret?

Listen: the 2009 Pops season was so incredible that we implored Artistic Director William Scheible to give us a sneak peek at his plans for next year.

And from this distance, it looks like we're going to enjoy another blockbuster season. But the Maestro emphasizes that everything is tentative. Nothing has been cast in concrete or signed on the dotted line. It's still early.

But, if you can keep it within our family--the Friends of the Ocean City Pops family—I'll share a few of the possible showstoppers with the Ocean City Pops in 2010.

Let's start by giving regards to Broadway.



One offering will be *Oklahoma!*, the first musical collaboration between composer Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein. This smash hit

opened on March 31, 1943, and ran for 2,212 performances. The story of cowboy Curly McLain and farm girl Laurey Williams is still one of America's most beloved musicals.

Also on the planned playbill for next season is *Peter Pan* and *Chicago*, the show with great songs and even greater dancing.

Popular music will be part of the Pops repertoire as well. You



may have the opportunity to see and hear a Big Band Show with **Debbie Gravitte**, an incredibly talented woman whose "varied career spans the Broadway stage to the symphony hall and points in between."

She won a Tony Award for Best Featured Actress in *A Musical for Jerome Robbins's Broadway*. Recently she finished her latest CD, "Defying Gravity," a follow-up to the MGM album, "Part of Your World." Debbie has taken her nightclub act

throughout the world, and she has sung with the National Symphony, Boston Pops, Atlanta Symphony, Munich Philharmonic, and many others.

Also on the list of possibilities is singer **Steve Lippia**, whose natural sound and style has been compared with "a younger Sinatra, combined, perhaps, with that of Harry Connick, Jr., and Bobby Darin." His show with the Pops will be a tribute to the Chairman of the Board.

Classical music has always been a mainstay of a Pops season, and one of the great performances next year will be of Mozart's last composition, the haunting **Requiem Mass in D Minor, K.626**, featuring the Brandywine Singers. Although it was completed by Franz Xaver Sussmayer and possibly others after Mozart's death in 1791, the Requiem is one of the monuments of the Classical Era. Based in West Chester, PA, the 17-year-old Brandywine Singers ensemble is under the leadership of **Jonathan Kreamer**.

As we said, this is just a peek at next season. There'll be much more--so take our advice and get your season tickets now.

In the meantime, let's keep this among ourselves.

## **FOCP Elects Local Women as New Board Members starting in January**

Two area music lovers with deep roots in the Jersey shore will join the Board of the Friends of the Ocean City Pops, Inc., in January. The newcomers, who were elected to four-year terms at last September's Board meeting, are the following:

--**Amelia Batastini**, a semi-retired pharmacist and president of the South Jersey Opera Association of the Academy of Vocal Arts; and

--**Melinda Mayne**, a retired social worker and cognitive therapist who has been attending concerts as the Music Pier since she was eight years old.

A resident of Margate and Cherry Hill, Batastini has been involved with the Academy of Vocal Arts (AVA) in Philadelphia for 15 years. For the past three years, she has served as president of the South Jersey Opera Association of the AVA. She is a graduate of Temple University's School of Pharmacy, and worked as a pharmacist at Rite-Aid for 25 years. Amelia is also a trustee of the New Jersey Board of Pharmacy. She and her orthodontist husband, Dr. Paul Batastini, are avid travelers. They have five children—all with professional degrees in such fields as law, dentistry, and pharmacy—and 12 grandchildren.

Mayne received the bachelor of Social Work and a master's degree in Education from Temple University. She has been a social worker for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the School District of Philadelphia, and has been a teacher in Philadelphia and at the European School in Vicenza, Italy, and El Centro Community College in Dallas, Texas. "Ocean City has been my second home since I was four years old, and happily it has now been my permanent home for the past four years," said Mayne, who is active in many church and civic activities at the resort.

Batastini and Mayne were recommended to the Board by the FOCP nominating committee chaired by Herbert Herman. In addition to the new trustees, the Board elected Ocean City resident **George Ingram** as a member of the FOCP's Advisory Council. The retired Temple University associate vice president for University Relations serves as editor of the Friends of the Ocean City Pops' newsletter.



Amelia Batastini



Melinda Mayne

## **Quartet of Pops' Musicians to be showcased at Restaurant Gala**

Four members of the Ocean City Pops have been invited to perform at the Atlantic Cape Community College's Restaurant Gala—the region's premier black-tie fundraising event—on March 11, 2010, at Bally's Atlantic City Hotel and Casino.

Celebrating its 27<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Restaurant Gala will feature a Moroccan-inspired theme. Nearly 1,000 people are expected to the Gala, which features hors d'oeuvres prepared by students in the College's Academy of Culinary Arts as well as specialties from 40 of the area's best restaurants.

There will also be a "Dessert Extravaganza" coordinated by Master Chef Eugene Ess, Executive Pastry Chef of the Trump Taj Mahal.

This is the first time that Pops' musicians will have performed at the Gala. Since 1984, the event has raised more than \$2 million for student scholarships at the Academy of Culinary Arts at Atlantic Cape Community College. FOCP trustee Dave Coombs serves on the Gala Steering Committee.

For more information about the Restaurant Gala, contact Sean Fischer at 609.463.4672 or visit [www.atlantic.edu/gala](http://www.atlantic.edu/gala). The site also has a link to the Pops under the Entertainment tab.



## **After a Great Year, Challenges Lie Ahead for Pops and FOCF**

Of the Pops' many seasons, 2009 has to be the most impressive, with its fantastic variety of new and professional talent, memorable shows, and an orchestra that should be the envy of all. Can we match or surpass this track record of excellence next year? Because of the sterling leadership of Artistic Director **William Scheible**, the answer must be an emphatic "Yes!"

Yet 2009 has not been an easy year. The recession had an impact. Season ticket sales and overall concert attendance dipped, but the spirit and enthusiasm of our patrons, volunteers, and all who support the Friends of the Pops was uplifting.

Let the record show that we had successful fundraisers. The first one—The Friends Annual Opening Night Gala at Greate Bay Country Club in Somers Point—took place June 19<sup>th</sup>, one week before the season started.

The Friends sponsored three Music Pier concerts this year. On July 1<sup>st</sup>, Maestro Scheible was one of four featured performers along with **Steve Heitzer**, the Pops' trumpet player, in the Fairmount Brass Ensemble. Our highlight concert brought together tenor **Stephen Costello** and his bride, soprano **Ailyn Perez**, on July 19<sup>th</sup>. It was an almost standing-room-only show that we wish could be repeated every year. But the future of these internationally recognized stars now belongs to the world. It was a truly remarkable experience to hear these extraordinary performers while reminiscing about their first appearances with the Ocean City Pops years ago.

After the performance, there was a well-attended champagne reception at the Flanders Hotel. Our final fundraising concert featured the Barbone Street Jazz Band on August



**Barbara O. Fasy, Chairperson**

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Did you attend the Annual Friends Luncheon on August 20<sup>th</sup> at Greate Bay Country Club? There were many great door prizes, a Chinese auction and chance prizes, delicious food, and wonderful table mates. **Judy Perkins, Marie Knight, and Gail Damone** worked so well together that they have "volunteered" to host next year's luncheon. So inscribe August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010, on your calendar now because this exciting event sells out quickly, and you won't want to miss it.

The Friends received grants this year from the Ocean City Home Charitable Foundation, enabling us to provide Pops' musicians for student outreach programs in area elementary schools. Another grant from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts (administered by the Cape May County Division of Culture & Heritage) supported the acclaimed Costello-Perez concert.

Unfortunately, the economic downturn affected the number of new members of the Ruggieri Society. This worthwhile extension of the Friends generates monies that fund two extra musicians for the summer season, student outreach programs, and funds for music and extra rehearsals. The annual dinner

for Ruggieri members, on September 21<sup>st</sup> at Greate Bay Country Club, attracted the largest attendance ever. We would like to invite even more members next year, so hopefully we will welcome new subscribers to this important program. Information about the Ruggieri Society is on our Website; or you may contact **Dr. Edna H. Cellucci**, the Ruggieri Chair.

Next year will be my second as your President, and I assure you that we have already started planning for the upcoming season, including new fundraising ideas and ways to reach more concertgoers. One of the first things we did this past year was to revamp our Website, thanks to **Don Smedley**. We are very pleased with the results. You can visit us at **OceanCityPops.org**. It's an ongoing effort to keep you up-to-date on the Pops. In addition, you can sign up and get updates automatically just by entering your email address. Try it, you'll like it.

Finally, I want to thank everyone—the Friends Board members for their tireless work and commitment, our volunteers for their loyal assistance, and all who are reading this newsletter. The Friends could not provide the funds to improve and maintain the quality of our outstanding Pops Orchestra programs without the support of every one of you!

—**Barbara O. Fasy**

Support the Friends

[www.oceancitypops.org](http://www.oceancitypops.org)

Click **Support Us** and use  
Visa, MasterCard, Discover,  
American Express or PayPal

*Pictures from another Memorable Ocean City Pops Season*





## ***On a Magical Night in July, Stephen Costello and Ailyn Perez Transformed the Music Pier into an International Opera House***

It was July 19, 2009, and two young people well-known to Pops audiences—tenor **Stephen Costello** and his wife, soprano **Ailyn Perez**—were showing a nearly sold-out audience why they are destined for international stardom.

It was a magical recital, overflowing with great music and imbuing us with a sense that history was being made. Accompanied by pianist **David Lofton**, Stephen and Ailyn sang arias, scenes, and duets from works by Puccini, Gounod, Bizet, Lehar, Verdi, Mascagni, and Bernstein.

The recital, sponsored by the Friends of the Ocean City Pops and engendered by Pops maestro William Scheible, reprised a concert the pair had performed earlier in London.

After an extraordinary evening, the performers joined more than 100 people for a dessert and Champagne reception at The Flanders, where they signed autographs, stood patiently for a plethora of snapshots, and answered questions late into the night.

Before this Music Pier appearance, both singers had already been booked for busy schedules in the coming year: Ailyn would open the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin's 2009-2010 season by making her debut as Violetta in *La Traviata*. Stephen would launch the 2009-2010 season at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and then accept the coveted Richard Tucker Award.

The whole world was waiting for them. But for one very special evening in July, they belonged just to us. **G.I.**

## FRIENDS PEOPLE: *A Few of the Many Individuals Who Make a Difference*



**Block Party:** Joyce Woods, of Springfield, Delaware County, PA, gets information about the Pops during the Oct. 10 Block Party. Staffing the Friends table at 9<sup>th</sup> and Asbury are Chairperson Barbara O. Fasy and Trustee Dave Coombs. Other volunteers at the event were Ralph Cooper, Jean Jacobson, Sylva Bertini, and Doris McHugh. (Photo by George Ingram.)



**Drumming:** Paige Propp, the 13-year-old musician in the middle of this photo, played the steel drum to entertain FOCP officers and some 40 volunteers during the annual Volunteers Party at the Bay Colony Condominiums on Sept.10. From left are Herbert Herman, Barbara Fasy, Bill Sundermeir, and Ginny Coco.(Photo courtesy of Cathy Finnegan/Ocean City Gazette.)

### ***Be a Volunteer***

If you treasure the Ocean City Pops Orchestra, become a volunteer to help continue a proud tradition of great music.

You can assist in many ways. Our dedicated volunteers staff events, help with promotion, organize special activities, and distribute materials each season.

Every volunteer comes to realize that his or her service translates into growth and success for the Orchestra. Being a volunteer with the Friends of the Ocean City Pops is truly a rewarding and enjoyable experience.

To get started, contact Ginny Coco, volunteer coordinator, at 609-399-4027 or email at [coco6970@comcast.net](mailto:coco6970@comcast.net)

We hope you'll join us in supporting our great Ocean City Pops Orchestra.

## Our 'Most Valuable Asset'

### **Now is the Time to Become a Part of the Friends of The Ocean City Pops**

Some people may think that the Friends of the Ocean City Pops, Inc. is an arm of Ocean City. But the fact is that the Friends is a separate and distinct New Jersey corporation, devoted since its founding in 1993 to only one mission--the enhancement of the Ocean City Pops Orchestra.

The Friends is a qualified IRC Section 501(c)(3) public charity which permits donations to be deducted to the highest extent allowed by law.

The Friends' most valuable asset is its cadre of officers, trustees, and supporting volunteers. They are the lifeblood of this organization's ability to consistently raise significant funds annually for the orchestra and its supporting requirements. The Friends has never had a paid employee. Ninety five cents of every donated dollar goes directly to its mission. Major expenditures are for soloists, musicians, enlarged orchestra performances and two musicians for the entire summer, music library, student outreach, master classes, lodging for performers, annual brochure, concert programs, and so on.

Each volunteer earns the satisfaction of knowing that this involvement contributes to the culture of Ocean City. An added benefit is the sheer enjoyment of working with a great group of like-minded individuals.

All organizations look to grow and increase their effectiveness. The Friends can only accomplish this by attracting new volunteers, at all levels, who not only have skills to contribute, but who will enjoy volunteer work in a most friendly and cohesive team environment.

We encourage you to contact The Friends for further information by going to our web site, [OceanCityPops.org](http://OceanCityPops.org); by calling 609.602.4492; or by writing to PO Box 931, Ocean City, NJ 08226.

--Herbert Herman, Treasurer

### **Members of the Frank Ruggieri Society Benefit the OC Pops in Many Ways**

You have an opportunity to join a very special group of people whose generosity helps to enhance the Ocean City Pops and its performances. The Frank Ruggieri Society, named in honor of the Pops' famed Conductor Emeritus, makes possible a number of important activities and programs. These include:

- the addition of at least two orchestra members selected by the Artistic Director;
- special free concerts and master classes for young people in the area;
- contributions to the Friends' endowment fund; and
- purchase of additional music for the music library and providing expanded rehearsal time for the orchestra.

Members of the Ruggieri Society pledge \$2,000 a year for three years. They are also encouraged to continue contributing after the three years. It is fully tax deductible. The names of Society members are inscribed on a plaque in the Music Pier and recognized in the Orchestra's program books.

If you or your friends and relatives are interested in joining the Society, contact Dr. Edna Cellucci at 610.644/1489. Or write to her in care of Friends of the Ocean City Pops, Inc., P.O. Box 931, Ocean City, NJ 08226.



Dr. Edna Celluci and husband John Celluci who organized the Ruggieri Society luncheon

*Here's an answer that Alex Trebek might pose for "Jeopardy" contestants: **OceanCityPops.org***

*And the correct question is, "What is the best way to stay up-to-date with the Pops and the Friends?"*

*Logging onto the redesigned, user-friendly Pops website opens a quick path to information and news about the Pops and the FOCP.*

*Also, click on "Email Sign Up" and get timely newsletters and updates.*

*Stay in the know with **OceanCityPops.org**.*

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***Celebrate the Christmas Season with the Ocean City Pops***  
***Saturday, December 19, 2009 7:30 p.m. Ocean City Tabernacle***



Don't miss "Joy to the World," an orchestral and choral celebration of the glorious sounds of Christmas.

Heraldic trumpets... Dazzling bells... Triumphant Choirs... and the wonderful Pops Orchestra.

For tickets and more information:

Call 609.525.9300 or visit [www.oceancitypops.org](http://www.oceancitypops.org)

And don't forget that Ocean City Pops Summer Season Ticket Gift Cards are available now. Call Barb Fasy at 609.602.4492 for more information.

**Surprise your loved ones with  
2010 Season Tickets!**