
Rappahannock Youth Symphony

Monthly Newsletter

September 2009

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Welcome New & Returning Members
- 1 Introducing Ms. Megan Bevill, Executive Director
- 2 Introducing Mrs. Veronica Johnson
- 2 Orchestra Name Changes
- 3 Committee Needs / Schedule
- 3 Contact Information

Welcome New and Returning Members

By Thomas Holland, RYS President

From its beginnings in 1996, the Rappahannock Youth Symphony has striven to give the opportunities to young advanced musicians to grow through the discipline of musical performance. The RYS Board of Directors has had a very busy summer. In addition to new staff interviews, hiring, and preparing for the upcoming season, we have been examining the status of the RYS in order to lay the groundwork for its transition to the region's preeminent non-profit youth orchestra it was intended to be. The Board has been meeting weekly in working groups to make this transition a reality and to make this season the best yet. For instance, if you haven't noticed, the website has changed from a dot-com to a dot-org to better reflect our non-profit structure. Information is being updated constantly – but be patient as it is still under construction! This year we have added two new staff members: we bade farewell to Ms. Ryan Nobles who has moved on to graduate school and welcome Ms. Megan Bevill as the Executive Director of RYS. We are also excited to be adding Ms. Veronica Johnson to our staff of conductors, and welcome back Mr. Brandon Bangle and Dr. Kevin Bartram. But RYS could not exist without the

commitment, dedication, and efforts of its members and volunteers. Growth can be challenging but I know you will sense the excitement as we move forward into the 2009-2010 RYS season, the best RYS season yet!

Introducing Ms. Megan Bevill, Executive Director

Megan Bevill is a native of Columbia, MD and has recently completed her studies in violin performance on scholarship at the University of Mary Washington, where she graduated magna cum laude. There she studied under Edwin Johonnott, former violinist of the National Symphony



Orchestra, and Johanna Beaver, principal violist of the Charlottesville and University Symphony Orchestra. Ms. Bevill was also an active member of Phi Beta Kappa and Mu Phi Epsilon.

She is currently serving her fifth year as Concertmaster of the University of Mary Washington Community Symphony Orchestra and is also the founder and first violinist of L'Esprit String Quartet. The Quartet has been together for six years and frequently performs in venues both on campus and in the local Fredericksburg region. In addition, Megan has performed with the Stafford Regional Choral Society, the Columbia Orchestra, the Oratorio Society of Charlottesville-Albemarle, and University of Virginia Singers.

Ms. Bevill brings her 17 years experience in concert/chamber music and teaching to the area, where she is available for private instruction in both violin and viola with students at the adult and youth levels. She specializes in classical training.

Introducing Mrs. Veronica Johnson

After graduating from W. G. Enloe High School (Raleigh, North Carolina) in 1985, Mrs. Johnson studied violin at the University of Miami (Coral Gables) with Dr. Marla Meutschler (Paul Rolland protégé) and Dr. Earl Sanders at North Carolina Central University (NCCU).



After graduating summa cum laude from NCCU, she began teaching orchestra in Wake County Schools on the elementary, middle and high schools in Raleigh, North Carolina. Mrs. Johnson moved to Richmond in 1994 and began teaching in Henrico County, where she currently works at Byrd Middle School and Godwin High School. In Henrico County, she coordinated the Strings Discovery Program designed to introduce stringed instruments to rising 6th graders. Mrs. Johnson's orchestras are known for outstanding performances throughout the county. Recently, her high school orchestras performed at the Virginia Music Educators' State Convention in Norfolk, VA. The orchestras have also received superior ratings in national competitions in Chicago, New York, Toronto, and Boston. Locally, Mrs. Johnson's middle and high school orchestras consistently receive superior and excellent ratings in District Orchestra Festivals. Mrs. Johnson's students have received numerous individual awards and recognition for their performances. Mrs. Johnson has also participated in several conducting workshops with such names as Dr. William Jones of Iowa State University, Dr. Anthony Maiello of George Mason University, and Dr. Marvin Rabin. She has served as guest conductor and clinician for the Virginia's Central Regional Orchestra Event, North Central Regional Orchestra Event, Southeastern Regional Orchestra Event, JMU's Spring String Thing, Chesterfield County Schools All-County Orchestra, Richmond City Schools All-City

Orchestra for three years, Newport News City Schools All-City Orchestra, Fauquier County Schools, Norfolk City Schools, and Spotsylvania County Schools All County Orchestra. She serves as the orchestra director for the Sinfonia Orchestra at Shenandoah Performing Arts Camp at Shenandoah University in Winchester, VA. Mrs. Johnson has served as guest clinician and conductor for the Pitt County All County Fifth Grade Orchestra in North Carolina for three years. Mrs. Johnson also served three years as conductor for Richmond Symphony's Youth Concert Orchestra, an intermediate full orchestra. Mrs. Johnson has judged several district orchestra festivals in North Carolina and throughout Virginia.

Other affiliations include membership and past president of the Virginia Chapter of the American String Teachers' Association, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Music Educators' National Conference, and active membership at Saint Paul's Baptist Church in Richmond, Virginia.

Mrs. Johnson is lovingly supported by the love of her life Tony Johnson, and her two gems, Camille and Phillip.

Orchestra Name Changes

Although still a three-tiered program the names have changed to better distinguish the orchestras. The new names and descriptions are:

Primo Orchestra

Conducted by Ms. Veronica Johnson, the Primo Orchestra is a beginning to intermediate level string orchestra open to all students through a simple audition.

Repertory Orchestra

Conducted by Mr. Brandon Bangle, the Repertory Orchestra is an intermediate level string ensemble that is designed to improve skills through chamber music experience. In addition to challenging musical pieces, this group offers students a unique experience to develop leadership skills necessary to move to advanced levels.

Symphony Orchestra

Conducted by Dr. Kevin Bartram, the Symphony Orchestra is an advanced full orchestra (strings, winds, and percussion) for the area's best young musicians. This

ensemble is the only youth orchestra in Virginia conducted by a university level director.

Committee Needs

The work of RYS beyond that of the Conductors and Executive Director is accomplished by the dedicated efforts of volunteers. The RYS requests that each member family volunteer to support and assist in promoting activities that benefit the organization. Our standing committees include:

- Membership
- Fundraising
- Property & Music Library
- Historian
- Programs & Publicity
- Planning
- Painted Violin Project
- Symphony & Tea

We currently are seeking committee chairs for

- Fundraising
- Programs & Publicity
- Planning

If you can help with any of the committees or would like to fill a needed chair position, please contact either Megan Bevill or Thomas Holland.

Schedule

Rehearsals are Monday evening beginning at 7:00 p.m. for Primo and 6:30 p.m. for Repertory and Symphony. It is essential that members arrive 15 minutes in advance for check-in and be seated and ready to rehearse before their rehearsal time.

Here is the schedule through October.

- September 21 –First rehearsal / Parent Info
- September 28 - rehearsal
- October 5- rehearsal /Board meeting
- October 12 - off Columbus Day
- October 19 - rehearsal
- October 26 – rehearsal - Italian Dinner/Painted Violin 1st showing

Contact Information

Rappahannock Youth Symphony
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Join the **Rappahannock Youth Symphony** group on Facebook!

Professional Staff

Ms. Megan Bevill, Executive Director
Dr. Kevin P. Bartram Conductor, Symphony Orchestra
Mr. Brandon Bangle, Conductor, Repertory Orchestra
Mrs. Veronica Johnson, Conductor, Primo Orchestra

RYS Executive Board

Mr. Thomas Holland, President
Mrs. Rosemary Hendley, Vice President
Mrs. Julie McAdam, Treasurer
Mrs. Vicky Hepperle, Secretary

Board Members/Committees

Mr. Steve Marple, Property Manager
Mrs. Theresa Halliburton, Grant Writing
Fundraising
Historian
Set-up/Breakdown

Special Committees

Mrs. Michele Coffman, Chair, Painted Violin Project
Mrs. Vicki Ashby, Chair, Symphony and Tea



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