



Symphony League Spotlight: Maestro Daniel Stewart

By Betty Dodd, League Member

"Danny" was born in the Potrero Hill area of San Francisco and grew up in Rohnert Park. His Mom was an English teacher, and Dad's hobby was singing in a barbershop quartet. The family listened to the popular San Francisco classical music radio station KDFC. As a child of 4-5, Danny took lessons in the famous Suzuki violin method of teaching very young children to play what some might consider a rather difficult instrument. He progressed to playing the viola and as a teenager joined the San Francisco Youth Symphony and performed in Davies Symphony Hall.

He considered the sport of baseball, or possibly computer design, but eventually decided to focus on music as a career and his parents supported him. He earned a degree in Music and Performance from Indiana University School of Music and spent 6 consecutive summers playing viola in Switzerland including extensive international touring and playing in many of the Great Halls of the world.

Eventually he was drawn to conducting, and went to the New World Symphony in Miami, founded by Elmer Bernstein. There he played principal viola, studied conducting with Michael Tilson Thomas, and met his wife In Sun Jang, a violinist who was also studying there. In Sun won a position with the San Francisco Symphony, and Danny went to the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia, then to the Metropolitan Opera in New York as its conductor for several years. Their home base was in San Francisco so there were lots of red eye flights. But there were some bright spots, for instance, a serendipitous meeting with YoYo Ma on one flight gave them 5 hours to sit and chat about their many shared interests and experiences. Wonderful!

By chance, Danny saw an advertisement that Santa Cruz California was looking for a music director for its Symphony. That was 12 years ago, and the rest is history! Although he has had offers from other prestigious companies, it has been our good fortune that he decided to stay in Santa Cruz.

Danny has become a loved and respected member of our community and has brought the Symphony new energy and creative programming. With a varied mix of classics, pops, Shakespeare Santa Cruz collaborations, local musicians and performers and some of his own compositions, each concert brings something new and stimulating.

Danny has traveled to over 40 countries performing and conducting. If he hadn't chosen Music as a career, Danny says he might have gone into film making or been a DJ.

Danny never seems to be outwardly stressed and is known for his good nature and pleasant down-to-earth personality. At the concert after-parties he comes exhilarated from the performance and always has time to sit and visit with musicians, donors, volunteers and concert attendees.

Thanks Danny, for providing us with so much glorious music. We are happy and grateful that you are part of our world here in Santa Cruz and Watsonville!

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Spotlight on League President: Anna Hackenbracht

By Betty Dodd, League Member

“I love the Symphony and I love the Community it brings together to support it.”

Those were Anna’s words spoken in conversation recently. All of us who know Anna will attest that she has been an important part of this community since she joined the League as a member and now president.

Anna grew up in Concord California and learned to love classical music by hearing it played in the background on radio and recordings in the family home. As a child, music lessons were encouraged and “expected” and she learned piano at age 5 and flute at age 9.

As a political science major at Pomona College in Southern California, she interned with soon to be Senator Paul Tsongas and helped work on his campaign. After graduating, Anna became involved in a number of national and progressive organizations advocating and lobbying for legislation to address issues facing low income families, small scale farmers, and associated environmental issues. While working in Sacramento she led a successful effort to waive regulations that restricted farmers markets. Although we see these markets everywhere now and take them for granted, at that time there were only a few in the entire country.

Anna continued her education by completing a doctoral program at Johns Hopkins University in the Department of Geography and Environmental Engineering in Washington DC. Her thesis focused on Water distribution, a very important issue in the Western United States.

Husband David Koo had a postdoctoral position in Astronomy at several institutions. Eventually in 1988, Anna and David returned to California and settled in Santa Cruz, where David had a tenured position in the Astronomy Department at UCSC. Anna’s excellent background and qualifications led her to a 27 year career with the EPA regional office in San Francisco. Although this was a long commute, she loved partnering with States and Tribes on environmental priorities and one of her favorites was Hawaii, with its unique environmental challenges. Through traveling to Astronomy and EPA conferences worldwide, David and Anna have developed friendships in many different countries and continents, and David still maintains ties with family living in China. In early 2000, they adopted two wonderful children from China, Miranda and Qun.

Anna had always loved the Symphony, and after going to some previews with former League members Sheila and Clyde Vaughan she eventually joined the League in 2019. She soon became co-president with Mary Ann Orr, and when Mary Ann stepped aside, Anna took over as president. With her organizational skills and background in conducting meetings she is able to keep us all focused on the goals and aims of the League.

Another love is Theater, and as a close friend of Audrey Stanley (founding Artistic Director of Shakespeare Santa Cruz), Anna became involved with that company and serves on the Board. It has been especially gratifying to see the Symphony now collaborating with SSC and continuing Theater with the Symphony, a natural partnership. That was a big success last season, and we will see it continued this year in the upcoming Symphony production of Amadeus.

In her spare time, Anna can’t stop organizing, but now it’s book club, the League and Santa Cruz Shakespeare, She enjoys reading nonfiction, learning to cook new cuisines (currently trying to master Chinese Dim Sum), singing in the Cabrillo Symphonic Chorus, enjoying the Golden State Warriors, and planning trips to see family and friends. Some favorite restaurants are Jack O’Neill’s for visitors, the latest Chinese restaurant recommended by David’s Chinese postdocs, Mobo Sushi, and Pete’s Fish House.

And so, we at the League, are happy that a gal with her feet on the ground and a guy with his head in the stars (and Galaxies) decided to include us in their orbit for more journeys around the sun !



From The President



As we start a new Symphony season, I would like to take a moment to reflect on all the wonderful accomplishments from the past year. Our League is thriving and delivers tremendous value to the Santa Cruz community while creating a lot of joy, camaraderie and friendship amongst us. Our year has included many achievements, some of which I will mention here:

- *Our Musical Notes is reaching all our members and is a wonderful vehicle for dissemination of information.*
- *Our Membership and Appreciation programs are doing well. The program is expanding and exciting plans are in the works.*
- *We have had numerous, successful fundraising events, including our Spirits and Sparkles Holiday dinner, our elegant Country By Candlelight Gala, our fabulous Home and Garden Tour, and our over-the-top Luau party. We also enjoyed exciting Preview Luncheons, the Twilight Picnic, and many other events in which we gathered and enjoyed each other's company.*
- *We are building a great partnership with Santa Cruz Shakespeare, and enjoyed a collaborative event with them.*
- *We gave the Symphony the largest check to date! \$120,000.00*

Now, let's continue to build on the momentum we are building, and let's all enjoy the brilliant music the Santa Cruz Symphony brings to our community.

Anna

Symphony League Mission Statement

The League is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with tax-exempt status. The purpose of the League is to provide financial assistance to the Santa Cruz County Symphony Association and its various programs. The League will conduct events and activities, raise funds, promote classical music education, and increase public awareness of classical music.





Sheherazade! Magic! Mystery! Music!



The opening concert for the Symphony season 20225-26 begins with the moving Cava hislleria Rusticana, followed by Elgar's great Cello Concerto in E minor, his emotionally charged lament, featuring Jonah Kim as soloist in this technically complicated and powerful number. Prior to the concert, the audience is invited to participate in costume (or not) in a street fair outside the Civic Auditorium. Think seven veils? Belly dancing? Persian nobleman? Everything will have a middle Eastern theme in preparation for the Rimsky-Korsakov musical depiction of Scheherazade and her legendary stories, which comprise the classic "Arabian Nights."

Scheherazade, a beautiful and clever woman, was able to save her own life and that of many women in her country by telling suspenseful and imaginative tales to a King who was convinced that all women were unfaithful. By saving the ending of the story until the next day, Scheherazade escaped her fate and told the King another story the next night, using the same ploy to trick him into sparing her for another day. According to the mythology, this went on for 1001 nights, hence the title "1001 Nights" or Arabian Nights.

Our own wonderful Nancy Zhou on her violin brings us the voice of Scheherazade as the stories we all know from childhood come alive in music..... Aladdin and the magic lamp... Sinbad the Sailor, flying carpets.... Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves and so many others. Think of all these tales of magic and wonder while listening to this fascinating music.

The Planets

Mythology and Science meet in Music

Interview with Garth Illingworth

By Betty Dodd

From flying carpets to spaceships, our next concert of Holst' composition combines Mythology with Science. The ancient Roman astronomers named the planets for their gods. For example, Mars is the god of war, and Venus is the goddess of love and peace. By giving the Planets personalities and human forms that people could relate to, it transformed scientific objects into subjects for creative storytelling that people loved.

Imagine your ship soaring through outer space, encountering different planets who have the characteristics of these various gods. Mars in his rages, then on to Jupiter, known for frivolity; it gradually meets Venus the goddess of love and Saturn who personifies old age, as your ship glides through the planets and galaxies.

According to League member and astronomer Garth Illingworth, this connection between Science and Mythology and the visual impact of seeing the planets from the Hubble and Webb telescopes is so awe inspiring that it engenders emotions in us humans that must be expressed, and what better way than through music? Although composer Holst would not have had access to the advanced technology of today's telescopes, which are orbiting and can actually see the individual planets, the Mystery continues as human culture loves to imagine what might exist in other galaxies...life on other planets? little green men? Star Wars?

As the scientists continue their search, humans pause to dream; so while you listen to the music, close your eyes and

Dream On! (but don't fall asleep)



Recent Events

Second Annual Chambers-Bray Fundraiser: Luau



60 guests joined us for the SECOND annual Chambers- Bray, fundraising event for the Santa Cruz Symphony League. This year's theme was a traditional Hawaiian luau. The evening began in a magnificent garden setting with perfect weather. An Aloha greeting with a live Hawaiian lei , signature cocktails, wonderful Island music, and a breath taking fire dancer , are just some of the amazing memories made that night! The Chambers-Bray fundraising events have ' Transported ' guests through fabulous dinners and exceptional entertainment - To Spain, and to the Hawaiian islands.



Where will next year's Chambers -Bray event take us! Paris? Greece? Stay tuned!



"Best Ever" Home and Garden Tour 2025

Many tour go-ers told us that last year's Home & Garden tour was "the best ever". The completely reimagined West Cliff cottage was a huge hit with tour goers. The homeowners kindly arranged for the architect, interior designers and builder to be on site to answer questions. The architect was also on site at the modern, ocean-side home near East Cliff. League members loved the Entertainer's Paradise home near the UCSC campus so much that we will host the season's first Preview there. People loved purchasing art at the modern home in Aptos. The dreamy Mediterranean Revival estate in Aptos hosted a wine tasting in their barn as a first for the Home & Garden tour. Over 400 people toured these five beautiful properties. Now it's on to the next!





2025-2026 Events Schedule

Preview Luncheons:

October 3, 2025: *Scheherazade*

October 31, 2025: *The Planets*

March 27, 2026: *Amadeus*

May 1, 2026: *Beethoven Symphony No. 9*



Second Annual Sparkles and Spirits Soiree

Calvary Church
December 13, 2025
5:00 - 7:00 p.m.
\$75.00 Per Person

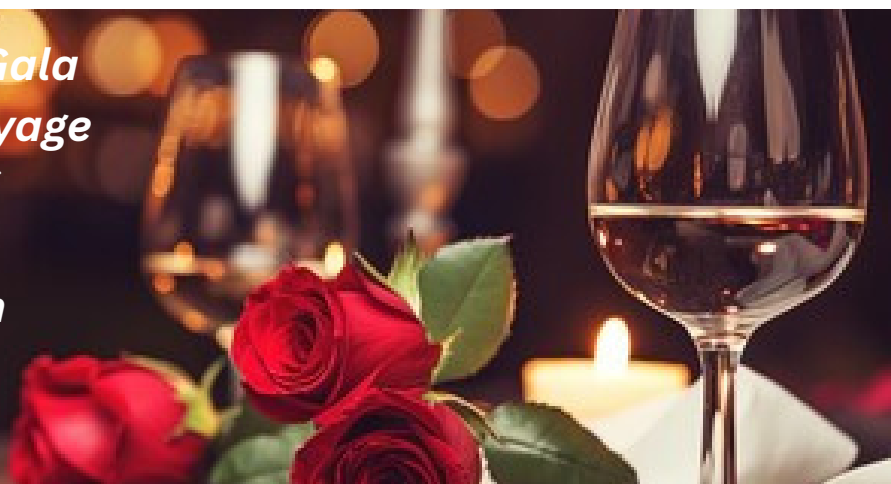


SAVE THE DATE!
3rd Annual
Chambers-Bray Elegant Soiree
May 16, 2026

Home & Garden Tour
June 6-7, 2026



Annual Fundraising Gala
Valentine Venetian Voyage
February 14, 2026
5:00 p.m.
Holy Cross Church
\$150.00



Tickets: <https://www.santacruzsymphonyleague.org/events/2025>



Membership



The new season is underway and exciting additions are magically, or not so magically appearing. First, we wish to thank Dan Rutan for a super-productive 2024-25 transition season with the membership committee. He provided immense wisdom and guidance as we embarked on a year of looking within to determine how we can continue to thoughtfully grow and improve membership. As a result, we are making even more magic than ever before. We are building on what makes the League so amazing – lifelong friendships and successful collaborative relationships. Behind the curtain is our all-volunteer magic-

making machine--- and you can count on even more fun and engaging activities this season. We are implementing a new pre-concert activity: HIGH TEA. Arrive early for the concert and join us at the lobby entrance for a special members' tea. This is a chance for members to gather and greet other attendees and friends with a bit of glitz and glam. This is a new and special members benefit. However, we encourage you to invite your friends to join us. The more the merrier!

Adding to the fun, the Twilight Picnic October 10, 2025 at Paradise Park is going to be a very interactive event. Magic will happen all evening as we greet and mingle with current and prospective members as they learn about the League. We will be focusing on a carnival theme with chances to win Symphony and League focused gifts. We will be discussing and showcasing what the League is all about by creating a carnival theme with chances to win Symphony and League focused gifts. Want to win a ticket to the home tour? Or some Symphony swag? These are just some of the many prizes up for grabs. Remember it's an event that rewards members for inviting friends along. Bring a friend and its free for both you and your guest.

Membership is everything when you think of the Symphony League... and Members make the Magic! Please complete the membership application and lets make this season a season to remember...

Kellie Allyn, Membership Chair, (831)227-7187



SANTA CRUZ
SYMPHONY LEAGUE

Membership Application

We invite you to join us. The Membership Levels are listed below, and on the back side of this form is the address where you can mail your application. Additionally, you can go to our website:

www.symphonyleague.com/membership and join online. We provide funding for the symphony through events and activities all while developing lifelong friendships. Some members support a single passion, others jump from one fun event to another, while a third subset are supporting members, and may or may not provide any personal time.

Membership Levels:

Individual: \$40. This level is for the active members who participates and attends League events.

Family: \$70. This level is perfect for two members of the same household to join. One or both members actively participate and attend events throughout the season.

Friend of the League: \$250. This level is ideal for the member who is less active in the production of events throughout the season but wants to maintain a meaningful contribution.



In Memoriam: Helen Jones



The Santa Cruz Symphony, the League, and the community overall, recently lost an amazing and gracious woman: Helen Jones. She died shortly after celebrating her 90th birthday. Helen was a beautiful woman who spoke volumes through her smile and subtle cues. She loved all the League events, particularly the Preview Luncheons.

Helen was a longtime supporter of our Symphony, President of the Symphony League in 2015 to 2017, and a treasured member of the Santa Cruz community. She often described a water-skiing accident that confined her to a wheelchair when she was twenty years old as an opportunity for a more interesting and full life.

While raising her two daughters, Helen started one of the first departments for the disabled at De Anza College, and she brought the same determination and joy to her work in support of our Symphony. She was a wife, mother, grandmother, friend, colleague, and an example to us all for how to live your best life.

Plans for a memorial service are pending. For now, let's all raise a toast for dear Helen.



SANTA CRUZ
SYMPHONY LEAGUE

Membership Application

___\$40 Individual

___\$70 Family

___ \$250 Friend

Name: _____

Family/Spouse: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Land/Cell

Phone: (____) _____ Land/Cell

E-Mail: _____

Mail Application to:
Santa Cruz Symphony League
Attn: Membership
307 Church Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

You can also join or renew
your membership at
SantacruzSymphonyLeague.org/join



Symphony League Support Rehearsal Refreshments

For nearly 20 years, the Symphony League has provided food for the orchestra at their Saturday rehearsal. The musicians are so appreciative! Many musicians tell us they come to play whenever there's an opening because of the food. This is the only symphonic orchestra in California where this happens. You can be a part of this. Volunteers are asked to make sandwiches or order them from a grocery deli, provide fruit or something sweet (cookies, brownies, etc.). If you are unable to provide food, donations are appreciated and enable us to buy what is needed. The more volunteers who participate, the less frequently you will be called on. With seven concerts a year (Family concert included), it's a lot of food! We invite you to be a part of our team. Please call Dan or Vickie Rutan at 831-475-4939 or email Dan at rutandan@comcast.net to volunteer. If you signed up at the Annual Meeting, please sign up again as the sign-up sheets disappeared. It takes a village to continue providing our musicians with this wonderful gift! Thank You to all who have helped over the years and Thank You, in advance, to those who are new.

Host a Musician

Want to show your love for Santa Cruz Symphony? Host a musician on concert weekend!

Each season, more than 30 people volunteer to host our out-of-town musicians. These visiting musicians are part of what is known as the "Freeway Philharmonic" because they drive all over the Bay Area to perform with various orchestras. Hotels can eat up a good chunk of their paychecks, so we give extra thanks to anyone who can offer a guest room to one of these fine musicians.

Musicians require only a few nights for each concert. You can host for one concert, or more – it's up to you! You'll get to know our orchestra members, maybe hear them practice, and perhaps even make lifelong friends! To learn more about hosting opportunities and sign up to become a host, call the Symphony office at 831-462-0553 x 10 or email Julia at scsymphonyhousing@gmail.com. Thank you for being a part of what makes Santa Cruz Symphony thrive.

Symphony League Opportunities

The Symphony League is not just the fund-raising arm of the Santa Cruz Symphony. We are also a support system that helps bring the concerts to life and bring music to our community. As such, it takes many hands and a lot of skill to keep the organization running smoothly. Currently, we are looking for help in a few areas as mentioned above. In addition, we are in need of specialized support. Right now, we need someone to assist our Director of Communications. Anyone with graphics design or web content management skills is needed. You will be doing a great service by helping keep information fresh and available to our community. If you can give some time, please contact Anna Hackenbracht.



2025 - 2026 Santa Cruz Symphony Concert Season

Scheherazade

October 4-5, 2025

Rimsky-korsakov Scheherezade
and Edgar Cello Concerto,
featuring Jonah Kim



The Planets

November 1-2, 2025

Holst The Planets, Hindemith
Viola Concerto, and a World
Premiere by Benjamin Goodwin



Holiday Pops Concert

December 13-14, 2025

A jolly holiday celebration with
Your Symphony!



Family Concert

March 1, 2026

LinkUp: The Orchestra Swings!
and Carnival of the Animals by
Saint-Saens

Special Surprise Event

March 28-29, 2026

Watch for our announcement of
details closer to the date!



Beethoven Symphony No. 9

May 2-3, 2026

Beethoven Symphony No. 9, Dvorak
Carnival Overture, and a World Premiere
by Jaron Lanier



Spring Pops Concert

June 13, 2026

Favorites from popular music's evolving
songbook



Tickets at:

Santa Cruz Symphony .org