

WINTER 2026

*Official Newsletter of the
Santa Cruz Symphony League*

Musical Notes

To inform and educate



Holy Cross Hall, Santa Cruz

5:00 p.m.

Embark on a Venetian Journey !

Join us for an enchanting evening. Experience the magic of Venice through music, fine dining, and festive celebrations — featuring a sumptuous dinner, cocktails, live and silent auctions, and dancing under the stars.

All proceeds support the Santa Cruz Symphony and its inspiring programs.

Reserve your spot today! Bring your friends and celebrate the event of the year with joy, music, and community!

\$150 / Person

Tickets at: santacruzsymphonyleague.org/news/

*Venetian Voyage
Page 1*

*President's Message
Page 2*

*Spotlight
Page 3*

*League Information
Page 4*

*Recent Events
Page 5*

*Upcoming Events
Page 6*

*Membership
Page 7-8*

*Symphony League
Support
Page 9*

*Blockbuster
Page 10*

*Concert Season
Page 11*



From The President



Dear Friends of the League,

Winter is a time of many things - celebrations, reflections, community. At the League, I see that last aspect, community, in different ways. I think about Vickie and Dan Rutan who organize League members to provide rehearsal refreshments for the musicians. At first blush, it doesn't seem like a big deal. But if you talk to the musicians they absolutely enjoy and appreciate the food and gesture. Mingling with them in conversation is a special time. I also think about the Preview Luncheons that Anne Hayden organizes. On the one hand they are a beautiful time to hear Danny talk about the program and showcase the soloists. But it's also a time to socialize, meet the musicians, and welcome them to Santa Cruz. And our fundraising events are amazing. Through them, we raise money for the Symphony but they are also a time for the League to gather, have fun, and engage. So bottom line is David and I so enjoy our amazing Symphony but what got us hooked was the League and the invitation to become part of the Symphony community.

And speaking of community, I am so proud that the League is officially a Certified Green Business. Rachel Sabajo and I worked with the City of Santa Cruz to obtain our certification. What does this mean? We commit to ensuring that our events use green products whenever possible, recycle event materials, steer away from single-use water bottles, etc. These are all good stewardship approaches. The City congratulated us for already being "green". The certification welcomes us into a network of other green businesses and nonprofits which will expand our community.

So with that, see you at Sparkles and Spirits and thank you for all you do for the League.

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.



Spotlight: Meet The Team

A few years ago my friend and League member Dianne Overbo invited me for a meal at a Twilight picnic in Paradise Park put on by the Symphony League. Since I like picnics, free meals and Symphonic music, I accepted the invitation, and ended up joining the League. I began attending some of the Preview Luncheons and going to the Symphony concerts more regularly.



When our League president, Anna, was reviving the League Newsletter she asked me if I could write any articles. Having had a career in Healthcare all my life, I wasn't sure how I would go about that. In high school, I had a history of paying my brother to write compositions for me, and journalism wasn't something I had pursued in any way. Once I started interviewing people and writing Spotlight articles about them, the stories just kind of fell into place. The interviewees e.g. Danny, Cheryl Anderson, Charles Pasternak were so interesting, it was a pleasure writing about them, as they provided all the information needed to create an article.

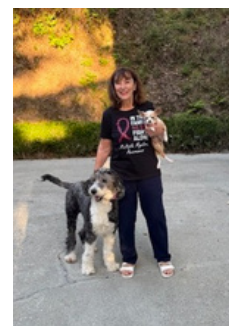
By volunteering at the various fundraising events, home tours and musician support activities I've been able to experience the Symphony so much more than just going to the actual concert. The music itself is wonderful, but meeting the musicians and joining the Community of volunteers in the League has brought extra enjoyment to the whole experience. Betty



Last year, wonderful Cheryl Hammond reminded me that we needed to resurrect our League newsletter, Musical Notes. I reached out to Sophie, Betty, and Dan and voila it came about. In the past, Musical Notes was an online piece for League members. It was resurrected to include a print version that we distribute at Preview Luncheons, the League table at concerts and recitals, fundraising events, and wherever else we can reach to possible new members. It has become an incredible outreach tool to let people in the community know what we do. And a special aspect for me is we learn tidbits about Danny Stewart, Nancy Zhou, Gary Reece, Charles Pasternak, and others. Anna



I hadn't been in the League for long when Anna asked me to take over Musical Notes. At the time, I didn't know much about it, only that I had big shoes to fill. The first issue was a real trial by fire but it came out with the help of others and I began to see how I could really have fun with it. My background is in high tech and technical marketing, so I started thinking about how to make Musical Notes more engaging and read-worthy. Combining graphics, photos of people, people stories and working with a team of dedicated and interesting League Members has made the job a lot of fun. Seeing Musical Notes grow into an integral part of communications has been very rewarding. I have met wonderful people and have made new friends. I love music and am so thrilled that our small town has such a world-class Symphony. Thank you all for your support, and I hope you all have a wonderful holiday filled with love. Sophie



Music has always been a central part of my life. I played saxophone in my high school marching band, the orchestra, and sang in our school choir. Supporting our wonderful orchestra feels entirely natural to me. Musical Notes has a rich history, and it is truly a pleasure to be part of the team who brings you, the reader, news about the League, its members, and its history. Serving on the Board for many years has allowed me to experience the joy of being part of this League family, all dedicated to supporting our symphony.

Contributing to Musical Notes is a delightful experience. Our team is committed to keeping you informed about League and Symphony events, sharing news about membership, providing articles highlighting members, and sharing the vibrant history of our organization. We sincerely hope you enjoy this publication as much as we enjoy creating it for you. If you have suggestions for articles, please share them with us — your input inspires our creativity and curiosity. Happy reading - May your holidays be filled with peace, friendship, and warmth. Dan
Musical Notes



Happy Holidays

At this time of year, as we pause to reflect on a year completed, and a new one on the horizon, the team of Musical Notes wishes you all a joyous, healthy and happy holiday season. We look forward to bringing you news and stories about the League throughout 2026. May the new year bring us happiness, good health, and a continued commitment to our community and each other.



*Betty Dodd, Spotlight, Writer, Editor
Dan Rutan, Writer, Feature Articles
Sophie Polyhronakis, Writer, Editor*



Volunteer Highlight

Somebody has to do it!

The main Symphony Program book for the season is filled with wonderful information about the musical selections, history, list of orchestra members, and short biographies of many of the performers. However, in addition to that, there is an insert that goes into the book before each concert which explains the music in more detail, who the sponsors are and more in-depth information regarding the soloists or composers.

In order to put these extra documents into all the program books, a team of volunteers, headed by League member Kathy Hatfield, gathers and slips the inserts into each book. This unseen effort by Symphony loving volunteers is another example of how the League assists the Symphony during the season.

Coming in 2026!

In 2026, we will add a couple new sections to Musical Notes. The first section will be about the history of the Santa Cruz Symphony League. In this section, we want to highlight and honor the people who started the League, their contributions, and how the League has evolved to it's present-day organization. If you have historical information, or would like to contribute to this column, please contact Dan Rutan who will be leading this reporting.

The second section will involve outreach to our senior citizens. We have many members who would like to attend events but are unable to do so for a variety of reasons, including transportation or mobility. We want to explore needs and options to better serve all of our members. Again, if you have any questions or information or would like to participate in this cause, Dan is your man!



Recent Events



Gala Ticket winner



Game Host

The Symphony League's annual Membership Twilight picnic was so much fun with games, a magician, prizes, and wonderful food. We are delighted you all joined us and we look forward to doing it again next year.



Thank you all for joining us at the 40/40 Oktoberfest. The Symphony League wants to thank and acknowledge the following companies and people who made this event possible:

- Lilley's Santa Cruz Sourdough Bakery
- Fruition Brewing Company and Tallula Preston for donating the beer
- Dan Peterson at Corralitos Meat Market for donating the sausage
- Mark Dybdahl for cooking and bar tending

Preview Luncheon and Reception for "The Planets" Symphony





2025-2026 Events Schedule



***Second Annual Sparkles
and Spirits Soiree
Calvary Church
December 13, 2025
5:00 - 7:00 p.m.
\$75.00 Per Person***

SOLD OUT



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



***3rd Annual Mark Chambers-Bray
Extravaganza
May 16, 2026
Private Estate
Limited Seating
\$300. per person***

Tickets: <https://www.santacruzsymphonyleague.org/news/>



Membership

A Promising Year Ahead for the Symphony League

The Symphony League is stepping into the new year with remarkable momentum, thanks to an impressive roster of both returning and newly joined members. This diverse and dedicated membership has already begun making meaningful strides toward our goals for the year, setting a strong foundation for continued growth and community engagement.

As we welcome fresh faces into the League, we are excited to announce a special New Member Event designed to help newcomers discover their niche within the organization. This gathering will offer an opportunity to meet fellow members, learn about volunteer avenues, and explore ways to contribute to the League's mission of supporting the symphony. We believe this event will be an inspiring starting point for many long-lasting connections.

A heartfelt thank-you goes to Sophie Polyhronakis for her outstanding dedication and hard work. We are thrilled to share that the newest League directory has officially gone to print and will be distributed later this month. This resource will serve as a valuable tool for staying informed, connected, and engaged throughout the year.

Now is the perfect time to visit our website at www.santacruzsymphonyleague.org to register, update your calendar, and explore the exciting lineup of upcoming events. Staying connected ensures you won't miss out on opportunities to participate, contribute, and enjoy the vibrant community we are building together.

We are also grateful to Rachel Sabajo who is seeking volunteers to help make this year's events truly exceptional. Volunteering is not only essential to our success—it is one of the most rewarding ways to become part of the Symphony League's community spirit.

Join us as we support the Symphony, build lasting friendships, and continue the meaningful work that makes our League such a special and impactful organization.



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 participate and attend 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.



Membership

Membership Activities



*Enjoying The Planets with
World-Famous Astronomer
Garth Illingsworth*



*Having Fun at
Sheherazade*



Sharing Tea at Sheherazade



SANTA CRUZ
SYMPHONY LEAGUE

Membership Application

Date: _____

___New

___Renewal

___\$40 Individual

___\$70 Family

___ \$250 Friend

Name: _____

Family/Spouse: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Land/Cell

Phone: (____) _____ Land/Cell

E-Mail: _____

Credit/Debit card: _____ Exp: _____ CV Code _____

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

Popular Symphony League Activity



On Saturday afternoon prior to the evening concert at the Civic, the Musicians rehearse for their performance. In compliance with Union rules, they must have a break after playing for 2 hours, as is common in other workplaces.

Our League team, spearheaded by Vickie and Dan Rutan, organizes refreshments for them. As might be imagined, this is a very welcome and popular part of playing with the Santa Cruz Symphony. The musicians in our affectionately known "Freeway Philharmonic" come from many different locations up and down the peninsula. Some come from as far as Sacramento or Santa Rosa, and each concert may include guest musicians from other states. While noshing on the goodies, they have a chance to socialize with each other. They are most grateful to the League and it gives us the opportunity to show

our appreciation of their talent and hard work.

Depending on the makeup of the concert, there could be between 40 to 100 musicians and singers. Earlier in the week, Vickie sends out a list of the quantity of food needed. League members bring dozens of cookies, chips, drinks, and platters of sandwiches. Some members give a check to donate towards the sandwich platters.

If you would like to get involved with us in this fun event where we get to meet and chat with the musicians, please call Vickie or Dan at (831) 475-4939 or email Vickie at vicksterlaud@gmail.com or Dan at rutandan@comcast.net





Blockbuster Season Ahead!

By Betty Dodd



The first part of our season has been amazing, with the mystery and excitement of the Scheherazade and the Planets concerts. In the holiday season League members and guests enjoy the Sparkles and Spirits Dinner followed by the Christmas concert with a singalong, always fun and light-hearted for everyone.

Now comes the second part of the season...so prepare yourself for thrills and goosebumps when we are presented with some of the most iconic music ever written.

First is the Amadeus concert, with a collaboration pairing the Symphony with Charles Pasternak and his Shakespeare Santa Cruz actors. If you haven't seen the movie Amadeus recently, I would recommend streaming or even buying it if you still have a dvd player (yes, some of us still have one!). It won 8 Academy Awards including best picture, in 1984. This will help you understand the sequence of the music and how it creates the Mozart story as the movie tells it. I'm sure it inspired many people who weren't aware of the genius of Mozart to listen to this dynamic music. I can't wait to hear what Charles and Daniel have created for us.

The second great offering in the season is Beethoven's 9th symphony which is known as one of the most beautiful pieces of music ever written, and is performed with the Cabrillo Symphonic Chorus. Parts of this are so well known, such as the "Ode to Joy" section, that you will leave the concert humming this familiar tune.

Ironically, both of these pieces were not well received by the critics at the time they were presented during the composers' lives. A couple of centuries later we are still performing this glorious music and experiencing its power and intensity.

I would encourage you to review the Symphony program book where the music and composers are analyzed in much greater detail. The articles written by Don Adkins and Donna Maurillo are really interesting.

On a lighter 'note', the Family Concert "Carnival of the Animals" and Movie Night always sell out early so don't wait to get your tickets... it's interesting to see how many of the younger musicians get started exploring music of different genres, and hopefully become future Symphony goers or even amateur or professional musicians.

It's also a way to see how the funds we raise help promote classical music in schools and introduce children to the great music they might not hear otherwise.

See you at the Symphony !



2025 - 2026 Santa Cruz Symphony Concert Season

Holiday Concert Including Leroy Anderson and Sing Along

December 13-14, 2025

Saturday, December 13 7:30 p.m.

Civic Auditorium

Sunday, December 14, 2:00 p.m.

Mello Center



CARNIVAL of the Animals Family Concert

Young Performers

March 1, 2026

Sunday, 2:00 p.m.

Civic Auditorium



Amadeus

Featuring Charles Pasternak

Artistic Director

Shakespeare Santa Cruz

March 28-29, 2026

Saturday, March 28, 2026 7:30 p.m.

Civic Auditorium

Sunday, May 29, 2026, 2:00 p.m.

Mello Center

Beethoven Symphony No. 9

May 2-3, 2026

Beethoven Symphony No. 9,

Dvorak Carnival Overture

and

World Premiere by **Jaron Lanier**

Cabrillo Symphonic Chorus

Soloists from the Metropolitan Opera

Saturday, May 2, 2026 7:30 p.m.

Civic Auditorium

Sunday, May 3, 2026, 2:00 p.m.

Mello Center



Spring Pops Concert

June 13, 2026

Favorites from popular music's

evolving songbook

Saturday, June 26, 2026

7:30 p.m.

Civic Auditorium

Tickets at: Santacruzsymphony.org