

**The Valdosta Symphony Guild**  
Volume IV



*Thirteenth*  
*Season*  
**2002 - 2003**





Have  
A Ball

# Valdosta Symphony Guild

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\* designates former Presidents of the Valdosta Symphony Guild

have a ball

# String Theory



Contributed photo  
FAMED VIOLINIST ELIOT CHAPO  
is the guest soloist during this  
weekend's Valdosta Symphony  
Orchestra concert.

## Symphony opens with concert dedicated to string sections

By Dean Poling

dean.poling@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA — The Valdosta Symphony Orchestra opened its new season Saturday night with three intricate pieces featuring a battalion of stringed instruments. Violins, violas, cellos, and contrabasses, punctuated by various woodwind and brass instruments, dominated a series of moody, almost ponderous, compositions by composers Thomas Tallis, Max Bruch and Antonin Dvorak.

Evening highlights included guest violinist Eliot Chapo's touching solo work during Bruch's "Scottish Fantasy." Complemented by the orchestra, Chapo, who has accompanied symphonies across the U.S. and was a member of the White House String Quartet during the Johnson and Nixon administrations, performed the work's phrases of melancholy and high spirits exceptionally.

Another high point was the orchestra's powerful rendition of the Finale: Allegro of Dvorak's "Symphony No. 7 in D Minor," with its battle of themes between a turbulent grouping of cellos, clarinets and horns and a more low-key phrasing of strings. The finale is capped by a musical duel between the dominant D minor and the uncertain D major which ends with the more optimistic D major reigning in the composition's final bars. The Valdosta Symphony Orchestra handled the finale's subtlety and power with beauty and vigor. In fact, the entire presentation of Dvorak's "Seventh" was a joy from the dark majesty of the opening Allegro maestro through the somber hush of the Poco Adagio to the Scherzo: Vivace with its compelling blend of a waltz and Dvorak's native Czech influences.

The opening of the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra's 13th season, which also marks Conductor/Music Director James Plonke's 10th season at the VSO's helm, featured the string sections. Each of the four Subscription Series concerts of the 2002-03 season highlights various sections of the symphony. The Valdosta Symphony Orchestra's next performance, "Mozart And More," for example, highlights the symphony's woodwind sections.

VALDOSTA

Strings. Violin, viola, cello, double bass. Fifty-two string players are scheduled to participate in Saturday evening's "Romantic Masterworks" season-opening concert of the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra, "providing a rich foundation of sonorous sound," according to the concert's production notes.

Throughout the orchestra's 13th season, which is being celebrated as the 10th season with James Plonke, VSO's music director and conductor, each concert features a different segment of the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra's dynamic character. "Romantic Masterworks" (see "Concert" box on this page for more performance details) highlights the VSO's splendid string sections through appropriate works by composers Ralph Vaughn Williams, Max Bruch and Antonin Dvorak.

In opening the concert, the orchestra performs Vaughn Williams' "Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis," a work designed especially for a large string orchestra. Vaughn Williams (1872-1958) based this work on a hymn tune by Tallis, a Renaissance composer from the era of England's King Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth I. Highlighted during this work is the VSO's String Quartet featuring Concertmaster Nina Lutz, violin, and orchestra principals Matson Topper, violin, Karin Addis, viola, Steven Taylor, cello.

In keeping with the stringed theme, the concert also features guest soloist Eliot Chapo on violin.

"Mr. Chapo is a special friend of the Valdosta Symphony," Plonke says. "He frequently performs with the VSO in the orchestra's first violin section and adds a tremendous talent, expertise and integrity to the orchestra. He is also a warm, gracious and supportive personality to work with."

A Miami native and graduate of Philadelphia's Curtis Institute, Chapo is the former concertmaster of the New York Philharmonic and a professor of violin at nearby Florida State University. Through the years, he has appeared as violin soloist for many orchestras across the U.S., including the Philadelphia Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, the Dallas Symphony, etc. During the presidential administrations of Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard M. Nixon, while serving in the Marine Corps, Chapo was first violin of the White House's resident string quartet.

"Chapo's performances are renowned for beauty of tone and its brilliant projection," according to concert notes.

With the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra, Chapo is scheduled to perform Bruch's "Scottish Fantasy." German composer Max Bruch (1838-1920) was renowned for his melodies, especially in works for the violin and symphony.

In "Scottish Fantasy," Bruch bases his composition on numerous Scottish folk songs such as "Auld Rob Morris," "Hey, the Dusty Miller," etc., followed by a promised virtuoso performance on variations of numerous themes.

Following an intermission, the orchestra devotes the second half of its concert to Dvorak's "Seventh Symphony in D Minor." Composed in the melancholy D minor, the work is moody and "Dvorak mines from the first subject, a dramatic, brooding theme in violas and cellos that apparently came to him as he watched a train carrying anti-Hapsburg demonstrators pull into Prague," writes Ted Libbey of National Public Radio's "Performance Today."

Dvorak (1841-1904), a Czech composer, composed his "Seventh" for the London Philharmonic from December 1884 to March 1885. Displaying a "wealth of melodic invention and compositional skill in the interplay of melodic lines and colorful harmonies," according to the VSO, Dvorak's "Seventh" is punctuated by a symphonic battle of chords between D minor and D major.

A reception for the orchestra and Eliot Chapo follows the concert when he and Plonke will be available to answer questions and discuss the works.

# 'Some Enchanted EVENING'

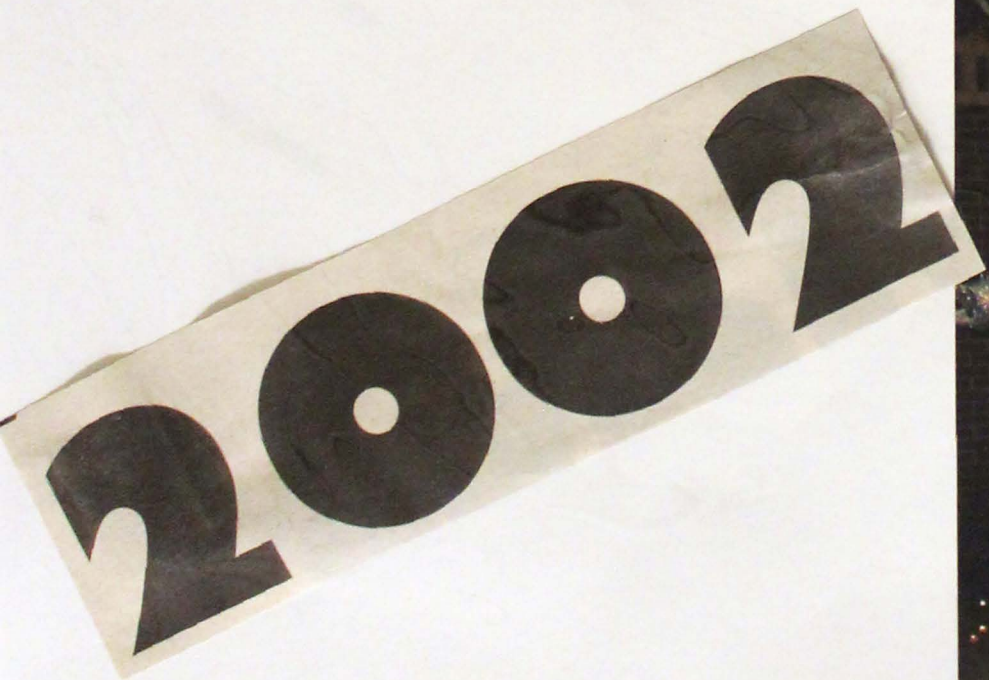
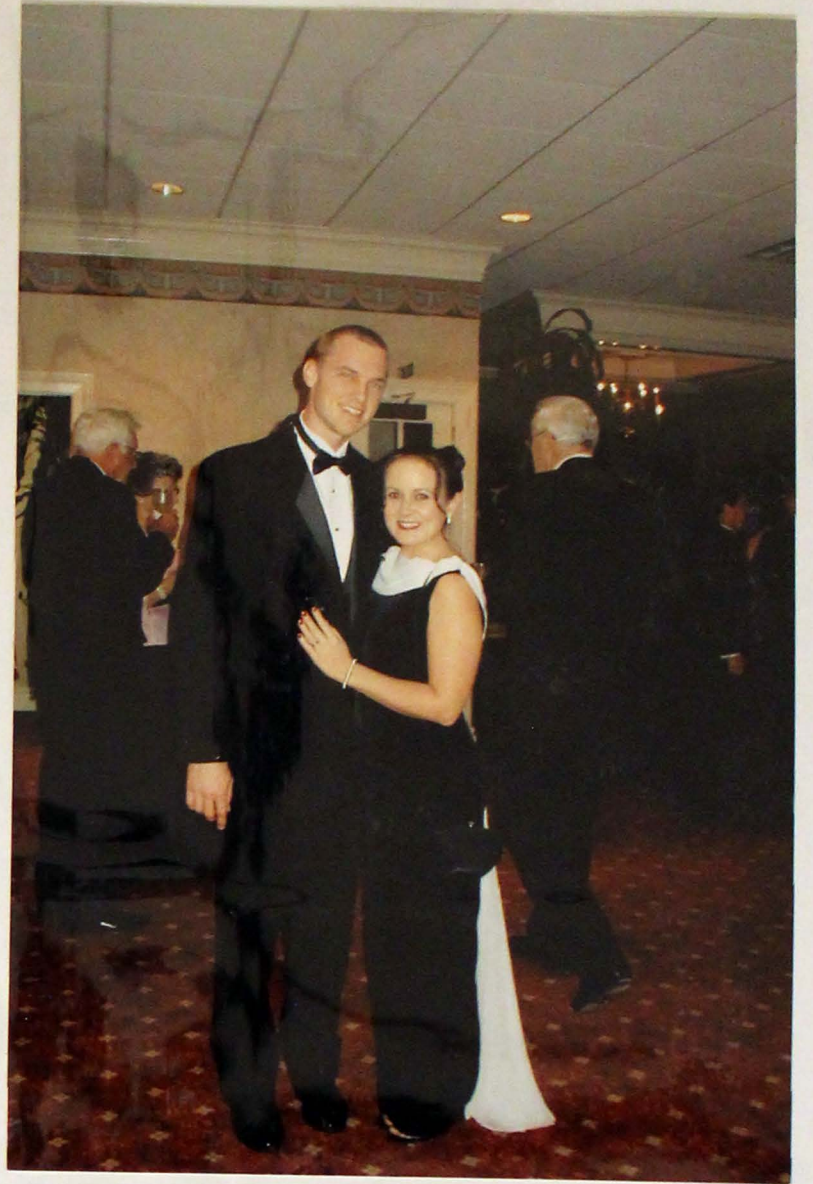
**“**One change we have made this year is that the live auction will be divided into two parts. The first part will be held during the appetizer and salad courses, and the second later over dessert.”



Donald Davis, president of the Huxford Genealogy Society and Library, enjoys the company of Louie White, president of the Valdosta Heritage Foundation and past president of the Valdosta Historical Society.



Valdosta Symphony Guild Ball raises \$ for children's programs



# 'Disney's Beauty and the Beast'

## VSG presents Tunes for Tots program at Whithead

VALDOSTA — The Valdosta Symphony Guild invites young students and their parents to the annual Tunes for Tots on Saturday, Feb. 15, from 10-11:30 a.m. in Whitehead Auditorium, Valdosta State University, Fine Arts Building.

Tunes for Tots is a program conceived especially for children from K-4 through second grade and their parents to introduce them to the instruments of the orchestra and the beautiful sounds that can be made by them.

This year's theme is "Disney's Beauty & The Beast." Students will meet Belle & the Beast while experiencing the enriching sounds of the orchestra.



Submitted photo  
**TUNES FOR TOTS:** VSO player Todd Markey shows his bass to an unidentified Sallas Mahone second-grade student last year.

The children will be allowed to hear, touch and make sounds on the instruments of the orchestra.

Principal players from the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra will demonstrate each instrument for the first part of the program.

The second portion of the program features a 20-minute performance by the Valdosta Symphony Youth Orchestra.

This orchestra is comprised of local middle and high school music students.

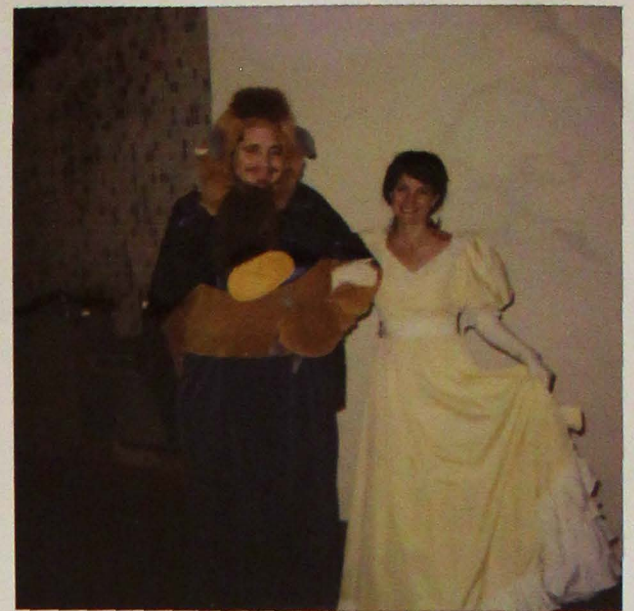
This year's program co-chairpersons are **Deidre Parramore** and **Kathi Clifton**, both members of the Valdosta Symphony Guild.

The program is free.

All children must be accompanied by an adult.

Parking is free and available in the VSU parking lot at the corner of Brookwood & Oak Streets.

For more information, please contact ArtSouth at (229) 333-2150.



**Tunes for Tots 2/15/03**



**Tunes for Tots 2/15/03**

## TARGET AIDS LOCAL ORCHESTRA



Target team members gathered recently in the store's parking lot to show their support for the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra. Target Team Leader Chris Eddy presented a check to Tayloe Harding, executive director for the orchestra. Target is a major sponsor of the Youth Concerts presented for young people in the Valdosta area six times each year.

Contributed photo

# Pop goes the Symphony

Valdosta Symphony Orchestra presents Valentine concert

By Dean Poling

dean.poling@gafnews.com

## VALDOSTA

A "Pops" concert, traditionally, is an occasion when a symphonic orchestra puts aside the more rigorous mantle of "classical" music to perform lighter, often more contemporary, popular fare. In other words, the orchestra usually trades Beethoven for Bernstein or Handel for Hammerstein or Elgar for Ellington.

This coming Friday evening, the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra presents its second "pops" concert of the season, a special performance for Valentine's Day (see "Showtime" box for more details on time, etc.).

"Valentine Pops" presents composers one would expect in a "pops" concert, names such as Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein, Marvin Hamlisch, Stevie Wonder, Duke Ellington, George Gershwin, etc. But the VSO's "Valentine Pops" includes works by composers closely associated with the more classical tradition, such as Gioacchino Rossini and Claude Debussy. And it includes the premiere of a work by local composer Dr. Tayloe Harding, who heads Valdosta State University's Music Department; it is Harding's second premiere composition of the VSO's 2002-03 season.

It is a diverse selection of music, with the majority of the pieces keeping to the evening's theme of love, romance and Valentine's Day. The concert also features the trumpet playing of guest artist John Hagstrom, a member of the legendary trumpet section of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

"The audience will enjoy Hagstrom's golden trumpet and outstanding facility," predicts James Plondke, Valdosta Symphony Orchestra music director and conductor, who in past interviews has credited the Chicago Symphony with his early interest in symphonic music. "The Chicago Symphony has set the standard of brass playing for the world to imitate, and being a member of the trumpet section is as good as it gets."

Hagstrom has been with the Chicago Symphony since 1996, following stints as principal trumpet for the Wichita Symphony Orchestra, and principal and solo trumpet for three out of six years with the famed "The President's Own" Marine Corps Band, which led to numerous White House performances. "Though his schedule with the Chicago Symphony is rigorous and demanding," according to VSO concert notes, "(Hagstrom) finds time to also serve as a professor of trumpet at DePaul University."

This week, he finds time to perform "Carmen Fantasy for Trumpet and Orchestra" with the Valdosta Symphony. Composed by Frank Proto, "Carmen Fantasy" was scored for and premiered by former "Tonight Show" trumpeter Doc Severinson and the Cincinnati "Pops" Orchestra. "The work builds on the familiar theme of (Georges) Bizet's famous opera, 'Carmen,' developing the melodies and Spanish rhythmic flavor of the work," according to the VSO. "Carmen Fantasy" displays the agility, power and tone of the trumpet to great effect. ... The writing for the solo instrument makes great effect of the Spanish and Mexican traditions of trumpet playing as in a 'Mariachi' band during several cadenzas for the solo trumpet."

"It will really show off the trumpet as an instrument and our guest soloist as a player," Plondke says.

But Hagstrom does not stop there. He continues with the VSO, playing trumpet on the familiar aria of "Figaro, Figaro, Figaro" from Rossini's "The Barber of Seville," which is even more famous as the musical backdrop of an operatic cartoon battle between Bugs Bunny and Elmer Fudd in a barber shop. "Il barbiere di Siviglia (The Barber of Seville) was not Rossini's only masterpiece, but it is his best-known work and one of the greatest comic operas ever written," writes Ted Libbey, the long-time music critic who recently departed National Public Radio's classical-music showcase, "Performance Today," continuing that "Barber" contains "a score full of musical riches that remains as fresh today as on the day it was first heard." From Rossini, Hagstrom and the Valdosta Symphony perform composer LeRoy Anderson's "A Trumpeter's Lullaby" written for the Boston "Pops."

Hagstrom's appearance is only a portion of the evening's schedule. The concert opens with "Hello Young Lovers" from the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical "The

Hair." Then it is back to more contemporary sounds — 1928, anyway — with George Gershwin's "An American in Paris." "The work depicts a happy and spritely American tourist enjoying the sights and sounds of Paris," according to the VSO. "Gershwin is renowned for incorporating American jazz elements with a blending of classical music traditions." Ted Libbey writes of "An American in Paris": "Gershwin's second most popular score, (it) is a brilliant orchestral showpiece and a non-stop experience in melodic invention. ... The tone of the score is really more American than French, with allusions to the blues and even the insertion of a Charleston."

From Gershwin's American and Parisian influences, "Valentine Pops" includes "Her Love," a work by Tayloe Harding, VSU's resident composer. The song was composed in honor of State Representative Ron Borders and wife Tammy Borders, who donated money to the orchestra through a bid during the Valdosta Symphony Guild's Symphony Ball Auction last fall. David Lee Johnson adds his rich baritone voice to "Her Love" and is joined by Hagstrom with an obligato trumpet part.

King And I." A selection of 1970s pop love songs include "Snowbird," made famous by the recording of singer Anne Murray; Hamlisch's "What I Did For Love" from the musical "A Chorus Line"; and VSO's principal flutist Elizabeth Goode is featured on Stevie Wonder's "You Are The Sunshine Of My Life."

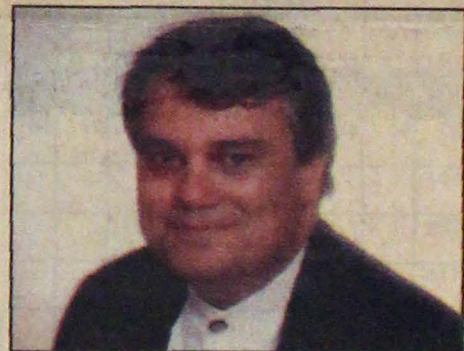
Following intermission, the VSO jazzes things up with a new arrangement of Heymann and Young's "When I Fall In Love." Cary Brague, VSU jazz professor, arranged the jazz-style feel for the Heymann-Young song and he is featured on saxophone. Given Brague's involvement with the university music department's magical evening of Duke Ellington last fall, it is good to know he will be on hand when the VSO plays a medley of Ellington numbers as part of "Valentine Pops." The evening's Ellington songs include "Caravan," "Don't Get Around Much Anymore," "Mood Indigo," "Take The 'A' Train" before visiting Hoagy Carmichael's classic "Stardust," featuring the orchestra's string sections.

And though the name of Debussy is rarely associated with a "pops" concert, the VSO plays the "gentle and reflective prelude" to his "The Girl With The Flaxen

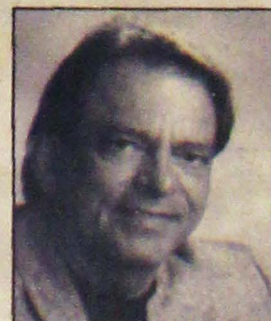
## THE PLAYERS

A look at some of the principals in Friday's VSO concert.

**JOHN HAGSTROM,** guest soloist, trumpet, plays 'Carmen Fantasy,' 'Figaro, Figaro, Figaro,' 'A Trumpeter's Lullaby,' etc.



FROM BOTTOM, CLOCKWISE: David Lee Johnson, Elizabeth Goode, Tayloe Harding.



## SHOWTIME

Valdosta Symphony Orchestra's "Valentine Pops" concert plays 8 p.m. Friday, Whitehead Auditorium, Valdosta State University Fine Arts Building, corner of Oak and Brookwood. Tickets: \$17.50.

**NOTE:** "Valentine Pops" is not included in the orchestra's Subscription Series of concerts. More information: Call ArtSouth, 333-2150.

# BARGANZA



Paul Leavy/The Valdosta Daily Times

Valdosta Symphony Guild President Gail Hobgood, left, looks over a shirt to be sold at Barganza with Eileen Trantham, chair for the event, and Diane Joseph, president-elect of the VSG. The upscale resale event at 2907 N. Patterson St. (old Winn-Dixie center) opens Saturday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. Price of admission is \$3 with proceeds benefiting the symphony's children's programs. This year's sale of quality, gently used items include those for men, women, children and infants; home and garden accessories, furniture, toys, clothing and a gourmet section.

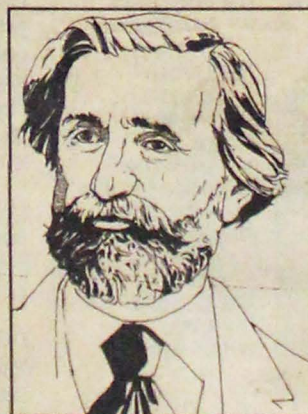


# Viva Italia!



KAORI SATO

## Valdosta Symphony concludes season with operatic tones



FEATURED COMPOSERS (from left): Puccini, Rossini, Verdi.

### VALDOSTA

In its 2002-03 season-closer this weekend, the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra takes an operatic flight to Italy (see "Concert" box on this page for details on time, date, etc.).

The symphony's "Viva Italia" concert features works by Italian composers Giacomo Puccini, Giuseppe Verdi, Gioacchino Rossini, and Ottorino Respighi performed in the original Italian by local and guest voices. Symphony program notes for the concert promise to include English translations for each piece.

"Opera was invented in Italy in the early 17th century, and has been beloved by Italians ever since," says James Plondke, Valdosta Symphony Orchestra musical director and conductor. "So several of the selections on Saturday's concert are taken from the operatic repertoire. Italian tradition and Italians love the human voice. Italians have a long tradition of a style of singing called 'bel canto' or 'beautiful voice.' In bel canto, the singer's voice dominates the music. It is prominent and lyrical with a sustaining power. Several of the works on the concert will feature this style of singing and two outstanding guest artists will be on hand as featured soloists on the program."

In opera's early days, English diarist John Evelyn wrote in 1645 of opera: "Plays are represented in recitative music by the most excellent musicians, vocal and instrumental, with a variety of scenes painted and contrived, with ... machines for flying in the air, and other wonderful notions; taken together, it is one of most magnificent and expensive diversions the wit of man can invent."


For this Saturday's concert, Valdosta Symphony Orchestra concentrates on the operatic music and voices by presenting portions of several works: Puccini's "Madama Butterfly" and "Tosca," Verdi's "La Traviata" and "Nabucco."

Headlining the singers is Kaori Sato, a "rising star in the operatic world," Plondke says. Sato traveled from her native Japan to study at Mannes School of Music, New York. Upon completing her graduate studies, she has entered the professional music world, appearing with several orchestras, as well as in leading operatic roles, throughout the United States and internationally. She has received her best notices for her portrayal of Cio-Cio San in "Madama Butterfly." For the Valdosta Symphony, she re-creates this role, performing portions of the work.

Also joining the concert as a guest performer is Paul Spencer Adkins, a tenor and winner of the first Luciano Pavarotti International Voice Competition, who has appeared on stages throughout the U.S., Canada, and abroad. This is Adkins' second scheduled appearance with the Valdosta Symphony, having performed a solo in the orchestra's "Carmina Burana" in 1999. This visit, he is scheduled to perform "Recondita armonia" from "Tosca" and "Addio fiorita asil" from "Madama Butterfly."

The concert also includes the voices of local artists featuring the Valdosta Symphony Chorus directed by Dr. David Lee Johnson, who also performs, in presenting a scene from "La Traviata." They will be joined by guest artists Kaori Sato and Paul Spencer Adkins with Sato singing "a poignant and lyrical cabaletta ... in one of the most extraordinary and famous passages in all of opera," Plondke says. This work also features soloists Marti Schert, soprano; Brian Bondari, tenor; Keith Tiller, baritone; Jea-Otiss Carter, baritone; Andrew Hill, bass, with the Valdosta Symphony Chorus. The chorus also presents "Va pensiero" from "Nabucco," which is known as "The Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves," and the "Humming Chorus" from "Madama Butterfly."

The concert is scheduled to open with Rossini's Overture to "Semiramide," featuring solo horns, led by VSO's principal hornist Kristen Johns, and conclude with Respighi's "The Pines of Rome," which is a "tour de force for orchestra and features a distinctive coloristic orchestration ... famous for its off-stage brass parts," according to the VSO's program notes.



*Valdosta Symphony Guild Luncheon*

*Wednesday, May 14<sup>th</sup>*

*12 Noon*

*Valdosta Country Club*

*Please Come As Our Guest*

*R.S.V.P. By May 8<sup>th</sup> 333 2150*

**'JOANIE AWARD':** Joan Bailey, left, and Ed Crane, center, both former recipients of the All Boards Award, pose with Gail Hobgood, president, Valdosta Symphony Guild. The Guild was honored with the award at the recent 2003 ArtSouth All Boards Dinner.

## ArtSouth honors Valdosta Symphony Guild

VALDOSTA — The Valdosta Symphony Guild was recently honored for its support of the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra during a recent ArtSouth All Boards dinner. The dinner is held every two years and an individual or group is recognized for supporting the arts at Valdosta State University. At the first dinner, Joan Bailey, VSU's former first lady, received the award and since, the award has been known as the "Joanie Award" in her honor. The recent dinner was attended by a large number of members from ArtSouth's eight supporting VSU arts boards.



Contributed photos

## All Boards Dinner 2003



John & Carolyn Gaston,  
Michele Powers & Allen Ricketts



Kelli & Michael Smith  
and Georgia Thomason



Jack & Jane Hearn,  
Sharon & Glenn Swindle

ArtSouth, the outreach program of the College of the Arts of Valdosta State University, oversees numerous boards that support the arts at VSU. Every other year the members of these boards meet for dinner, and to honor an individual or organization that has made significant contributions to the arts. At the dinner this year at the Valdosta Country Club, the Valdosta Symphony Guild was cited. The first honoree was Mrs. Joan Bailey and since then the award has been known as the "Joanie Award".



Front: Tammy Borders, Gail Hobgood, Martha Gibson,  
Standing: Ken Ricket, Joe Pritchard,  
Ken Garren, Mike Harpe, James Rainwater,  
John Gaston, Ed Crane & Al Turner



Myma Ballard, Jerome Tucker,  
Cristina Rodring, Marsha & Lee  
Knotseng and Monty & Paula Brown



Nell Ricketts and  
Norman & Mary Jane Huggins



Joan Bailey, Ed Crane  
& Gail Hobgood



*Fourteenth  
Season*

**2003 - 2004**





Valdosta Symphony Guild

Please join us for

**WINE AND CHEESE**

and a brief meeting for  
**OUR NEW MEMBERS**

Tuesday, September 9, 2003

5:00

Pottery Bayou

1900-E Baytree Road

Regrets

253-0723

## SYMPHONY GUILD



Contributed photo

Valdosta Symphony Guild's new members recently met at the Pottery Bayou, Valdosta. The VSG supports the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra, which opens its new season with a concert this weekend (see *Valdosta Preview* with Thursday's newspaper for more on this concert). New members: (bottom row, left to right) Lisa Cooke, Anne Conrad, Nancy Phillips; (standing, left to right) Jean Johnson, Marian Belanger, Kay Zaccari, Laura Elliot, Brenda Shiver, Amy Lansburg, Julia Dennard. Not shown: Lisa Agüero, Bonnie Hanson, Marcia Krotseng, Sarah Smart, Elizabeth Whitley.





## THE VALDOSTA SYMPHONY GUILD SUPPORTS

**The Youth Concert Series** provides the symphonic experience to area children and their teachers. Over 33,000 children have heard the VSO through this series.

**Tunes for Tots** introduces the instruments and the orchestra to younger children.

**The Valdosta Symphony String Quartet** performs numerous clinic concerts and concerts in high schools throughout Georgia and north Florida.

**The South Georgia String Project** provides exploratory experience on string instruments to hundreds of children in participating schools. This year there are more than 100 children in Valdosta and the surrounding area in group classes and performance ensembles.

**Summer String Camp** is designed to provide instructional continuity and practice for students.

**The Honor Band Student Program** provides VSO scholarship concert tickets to deserving high school band students in the community.

**Valdosta Symphony Orchestra Scholarships** represent an extensive commitment to attract and retain outstanding college orchestral musicians to VSU and the community.

**VSO Concerto Competition** provides outstanding performers at VSU with audition/competition experience and the opportunity to solo with the VSO.

**Music Major Rush Ticket Program** provides university music majors rush tickets for subscription concerts.

# A Classical Note



## Open Hearts and Open Doors



**Bill and Lou Gabard** welcoming guest performers with the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra into their guest cabin.

Lou and Bill Gabard were the hosts for Giora Schmidt, David Brophy and Finghin Collins when they were in Valdosta recently to perform with the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra.

Lou, who has been a member of the VSO Board since 2002, and Bill have hosted several of the symphony's soloists and have enjoyed getting to know them.

The Gabards open their guesthouse for these visitors, and the soloists thoroughly enjoy the house, which Bill had moved from his ancestral Tennessee farm.

The house was originally built in 1820-1840 of split red cedar logs and was moved to Valdosta and reassembled in the current floor plan of a living room, dining room, kitchen, bedroom, dressing room and one and a half baths. In the rebuilding of the cabin, many boards from the college's old West Hall were used.

Bill and Lou collect southern country furniture and artifacts, much of it from Bill's family in Tennessee. Also,

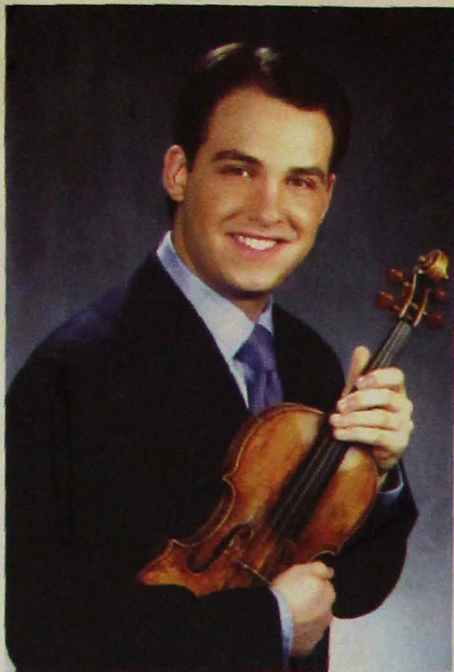
friends have given them interesting pieces to add to their collection.

Among the many intriguing family artifacts are Bill's grandfather's sheepskin Cumberland College diploma, dated 1881, with its tin canister. In New York he found a drawing of a Mexican War battle plan that his great-uncle prepared in 1846. This uncle graduated from West Point in 1838 and also fought in the Civil War.

A beautiful landscape, painted by his grandmother in the 1880's when she was in college, hangs in the living room. Under the painting sits a chest from 1820 that belonged to his great-great-grandfather.

The Gabards have in the guesthouse numerous pieces of miniature antique furniture created by a Tennessee artist/craftsman.

Through the years, Lou and Bill Gabard have entertained many guests, including a number of honeymooners of all ages. Among their most interesting guests are the soloists with the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra.



**Giora Schmidt**, student of Itzhak Perlman and Juilliard School of Music, was guest soloist for the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra season premier. He played a 1742 Guaneri Del Gesu violin.

BY MICHAEL FLOWERS On September 29, 2003, a little bit of heaven was heard in Valdosta. The Valdosta Symphony Orchestra and its special guest soloist, Giora Schmidt, had Whitehead Auditorium resounding with beautiful music and thunderous applause. Mr. Schmidt, at 20 years old, has been a student of Itzhak Perlman and will be graduating from the Juilliard School of Music this year. While fresh from his Chicago Symphony debut, he saw southern hospitality at its best. His performance of the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto in D Major had the audience spellbound and awe struck and he stated that he was moved by his reception in Valdosta.

The VSO returned to the stage for its fourteenth season, showing that the arts are still alive and well in Valdosta. They continued their Beethoven cycle with his Symphony Number 2 in D Major. While this excellent performance was the perfect beginning to the evening, the best was yet to come. Following the intermission was Mr. Schmidt's astounding performance. The VSO rose to the occasion and gave one of the best performances in its history while it accompanied Giora Schmidt and his beautiful instrument, a 1742 Guaneri Del Gesu.

The rapid playing demanded in the Allegro moderato section of the first movement, as well as the movements difficult double-stops, did not phase Mr. Schmidt. In fact he still had time to steal an occasional smile at the audience and the Music Director of the VSO, Dr. James Plondke. Not only was his performance technically perfect, he still provided the difficult melodies with a deep, rich, and beautiful tone. Never before has Valdosta been given the privilege of such beautiful music. After the first movement the audience responded with a rousing ovation, and soon they were on their feet.

After the audience had finally resumed their seats, he continued with the Canzonetta. The andante movement's theme echoed throughout the auditorium, and Mr. Schmidt then continued to amaze the audience with his prodigious playing, by an Allegro vivacissimo which was perfection itself. After the final movement the audience immediately rose to its feet. Mr. Schmidt was forced to return to the stage three times by the still thunderous standing ovation given to him by the Patrons and Subscribers of the VSO. He provided Symphony goers in Valdosta with a night of music they will not soon forget.



**1 Artistry and Tradition**  
**Saturday, September 27, 2003**  
**Giora Schmidt, violin**  
 "Stylish, passionate, technically on-the-mark, and utterly convincing . . . an undoubted talent of major promise"

*San Francisco Classical Voice*

**Beethoven**  
**Symphony No. 2 in D Major\***  
**Tchaikovsky**  
**Violin Concerto**

*The sensational young violinist, Giora Schmidt, protégé of Itzak Perlman and fresh from his Chicago Symphony debut will make his Valdosta debut with the beloved Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto. You will not want to miss this extraordinary evening. The VSO begins its season with another installment on its Beethoven symphony cycle, the spirited and virtuosic 2<sup>nd</sup>!*



## VSO Guest Conductor



**Maestro David Brophy**, Asst. Conductor of the National Orchestra of Ireland served as special guest conductor of the VSO's second performance.

BY KIM JOHNSON The second performance of the VSO season marked something brand new for the orchestra and its patrons and subscribers. For the first time in more than a decade, VSO conductor James Plondke stepped down and passed the baton over to special guest conductor, David Brophy.

Currently the Assistant Conductor of the National Orchestra of Ireland, Brophy has led symphonies in Europe, the United States, Africa and Canada. He is a graduate of Trinity College Dublin and the Dublin Institute of Technology Conservatory of Music and Drama. He also serves as the principal pianist of the NOI.

After corresponding with Plondke for several months, Brophy selected the program. He brought with him pianist Finghin Collins, winner of the Haskil International Piano Competition in Switzerland. Collins is the son of the renowned Irish pianist John Collins who has performed twice before the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra. He

studied with French pianist Dominique Merlet at the Conservatoire de Musique in Geneva, Switzerland.

Brophy and the VSO opened their "Celtic Connection" concert with Mozart's "Overture to Don Giovanni (Don Juan)." Following the feverish operatic overture, Collins joined the orchestra and gave an absolutely flawless performance as featured soloist on Mozart's "Piano Concerto in A Major." Audience members were on their feet at the end of the first half of the concert and knew that they were in for something spectacular after the intermission.

They weren't disappointed. For the second half of the concert, Brophy led the sym-

14<sup>th</sup> Season  
2003-2004



Valdosta Symphony  
Orchestra

Arts Alive

### 2 Celtic Connection

Saturday, November 1, 2003

**David Brophy, guest conductor**

Associate conductor of the National Orchestra of Ireland will grace the Whitehead Stage

#### Program To Be Announced

*Gosh and b'gorry, Irish conductor David Brophy will travel from Dublin to bring a fresh program and challenges to the VSO. Maestro Brophy is selecting the repertoire for this special concert and it is certain to please.*



Symphony Ball  
Symphony Guild  
officers: Pat Cordova,  
Cheryl Oelhafen,  
Gail Hobgood, Diane  
Joseph, Nancy Warren  
and Patricia Vigerdtol ▶



*The  
Valdosta Symphony Guild  
Presents*

*"An Evening in the Tuileries Gardens"*



**Symphony Ball**  
Saturday, November 8, 2003

Sunday, November 9, 2003

**LOCAL**

**VALDOSTA SYMPHONY GUILD HOLDS BALL**



Paul Leavy/The Valdosta Daily Times

**ABOVE:** Bruce Caster and Wanda Causseaux talk with Ken Ricket Saturday before the start of dinner at the Valdosta Symphony Guild's Symphony Ball, held at the Valdosta Country Club. **BELOW:** Lorraine Scott and Donna Farwell look over items with Jim and Eileen Trantham at the Valdosta Symphony Guild's silent auction during the ball. The annual event had more than 200 guests for the ball, which included live and silent auctions to benefit the children's programs of the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra.



Symphony Ball  
Lane Smith and  
friends, two  
"Tennessee  
Vols", Bill  
Gabard and Bo  
Staley ▶



# Come Spend "An Evening in the Tuileries Garden"

The Valdosta Symphony Guild will host its premier fundraiser on Saturday, November 8, 2003, at the Valdosta Country Club. The Club will be overflowing with a myriad of fresh cut flowers and beautiful foliage, and guests are guaranteed to feel as though they have been swept back in time to a lush Victorian garden.

The festivities will begin at 6:30 with cocktail hour, where guests will mingle and have the opportunity to view the items for the silent auction. Some of those items will include weekend getaways, jewelry, home décor, gift baskets, and much more. Dinner will be served promptly at 7:15, and a live auction will follow. Guests will then dance the night away to the sounds of the Ed Barr Orchestra.

The Valdosta Symphony Guild is dedicated to supporting the Arts in the Valdosta and Lowndes County community. Its primary beneficiary is the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra. The Guild is able to support the VSO through the sponsorship of this - its premier fundraiser, one other annual event, and countless volunteer hours. Other Guild projects include Tunes for Tots, VSO Youth Concerts, South Georgia String Project, Valdosta String Quartet, Summer String Camps, Honor Band Student Program, Valdosta Symphony Orchestra Scholarships, VSO Concerto Competition, and the Music Major Rush Ticket Program.

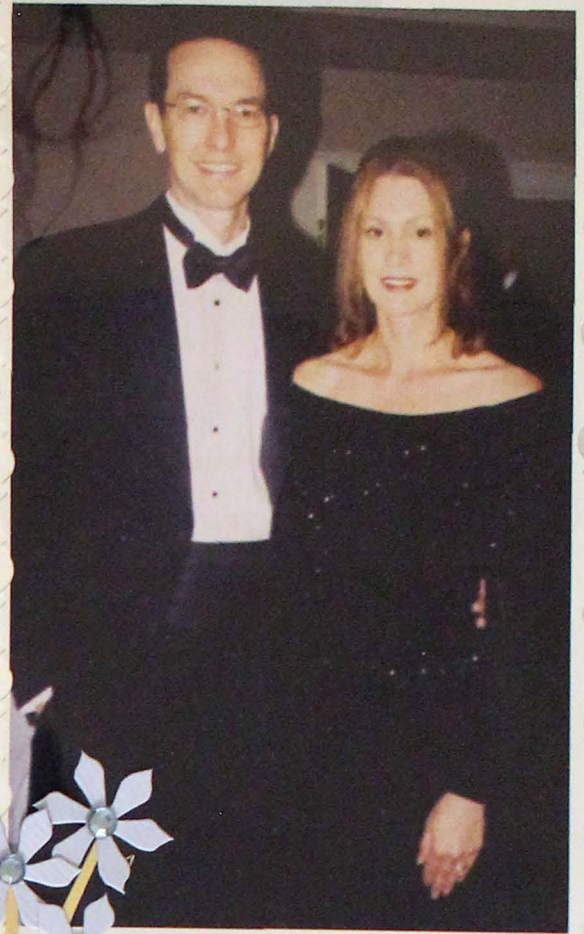
The Valdosta Symphony Orchestra was created in 1990



and is conducted by Dr. James Plondke. It is a unique blend of resident artists, faculty and students from Valdosta State University, and other carefully selected professionals from a five-state region. The VSO also attracts guest soloists of national and international renown to the Valdosta community. It has become an integral part of the cultural life of the entire region. So come out and help support the Arts, and spend a beautiful "Evening in the Tuileries Garden." ❏

Story & Photos by: Kim Johnson

Symphony Ball  
Tom and Nancy Philips ▼



Above: The Valdosta Symphony Guild Symphony Ball Committee: Gail Hobgood, Diane Joseph, Judy Schreiber, Lorraine Scott, Sarah Bartholomew, Gail Green, Pat Cordova and Donna Farwell. Not pictured, Kay Jennett.

## A Dedication to a Midsummer's Dream

BY: DON REBB

Settling back into a plush Whitehead theater seat, I took out a book and paper I would be writing during the few minutes before rehearsal would start for the Governor's Honors Program Orchestra. The stage was totally empty except Mr. Young Kim, who was pushing back risers to make room for some afternoon two days later. Note: this was 30 minutes before the rehearsal was to begin. A young boy was already there, had already uncased his violin; suddenly the auditorium was filled with the lovely notes of a scale sent out one by one as this boy in sneakers and orange T-shirt was on the stage, effortlessly moving his bow along those strings. There was no chair anywhere; he stood; he walked all over that stage back and forth – and into the little offstage room – sending out the scale noted, never stopping. Mr. Kim said, "You'd better rest, you have hours ahead of you." He replied something about the need for practice, walking again into the offstage room, walking, pushing and pulling that bow for 30 minutes until the chairs were there in their neat semicircle, then he sat down. The orange shirt fell over a straight back that never touched the chair's back; one sneakered foot angled back alongside the chair; the orange-shirted scale, constantly up and down, had become by now a series of trills and arpeggios and slides that flowed into the sounds of other high-schoolers now onstage with instruments – practicing.

*"effortlessly moving his bow along those strings"*

Finally there was absolute silence; Mr. Kim's baton went up; as they were to so many times more in rehearsal and on an afternoon of spectacular performance, that orchestra suddenly filled that room with a torrent of sound – the drama and fire and feeling of five rows of violins, four cellos and basses, with flutes and trumpets and kettledrum and snare drums through Von Suppe's "Poet and Peasant Overture." The

violin bows moved in astoundingly precise, crisp, correct, coordinated motion through measures of melodies, then up and up and up into one single second of absolute silence, then at – and not until – Mr. Kim's motion, they grandly swept down into the most exquisite melody that poured out into the room. A single cello moaned another scrumptious tune; the snare drums, the kettledrum, the massed violins really did make Von Suppe's dramatic passages thrillingly fill the whole auditorium.

Then came a brilliantly played medley in tribute to Henry Mancini. The elephants trotted by; the flutes trilled a precisely shadowy pink panther; the five violin rows swept us into soft summer breezes in flower-filled gardens and crystal fountains – the images that flooded the mind in their lush performance of Charades. Then for its final selection, the cellos sounded a low note that filled the whole auditorium with more of a vibration than a note, and the violins played us softly through Bach's piece about death whose chords brought far more thoughts than that to minds lulled into deep reveries; the music even brought to my mind two sentences I could use in the paper I was writing.

The sneakered, orange-shirted boy with the instrument always under his chin typified the dedication of high-schoolers who spend hours so they can produce sounds on that stage that speak of exquisite artistry with strings and brass and drum so spirit may soar in the dramatic fire and magnificent drama of Mr. Kim's orchestral selections, the vibrant beauty of Dr. Johnson's massed choral voices,



the majestic drama of a student's very own arrangement of the Exodus theme music, his fingers pounding a mastery of the keyboard in the one and only performance to receive a standing ovation in one night's entire program – and, yes those clowns and wizards of jazz and percussion with their lighted drumsticks and leaps into the air at their xylophones – all this comes every summer to this campus in orange shirt and sneakers and inseparable violin. To those who miss it, the fates send tears but to those who come and listen, fond memories in days following of the lilt and soar of melody to grace the mind and quicken the heart – and the sharp pangs that come the next day when we know we have heard the last note and it will be another full year before they again fill that stage from one side to the other with dedication and that auditorium from floor to raft with magnificent sound.

**Valdosta**  
MAGAZINE

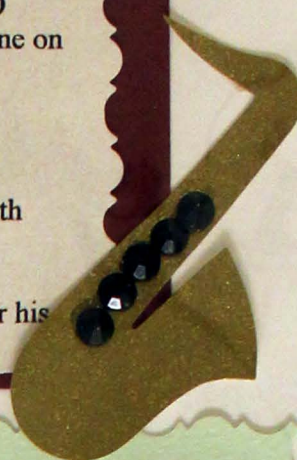


### ♪ Symphony Notes ♪

The Valdosta Symphony Goes Jazz this Saturday Evening in Whitehead Auditorium at 8:00 p.m. This eclectic concert will feature the VSU Jazz Ensemble and soloists Cary Brague—VSU saxophone professor and director of jazz studies,—and Jeffrey Olson—VSO principal clarinet and VSU professor of clarinet. Brague will play both clarinet and saxophone on the program. You won't want to miss this really "special" concert. **Treat your Valentine!**

#### Program Sponsor—IPG

Saturday's "Special" Concert will be once again sponsored by IPG, Ingram Parris Group, Inc. IPG Architects and Planners contribute much to the cultural life of Valdosta both visually and symphonically! Their architectural contributions are apparent and celebrated everywhere! Please visit the new Odum Library Addition on the VSU campus to enjoy and appreciate their design expertise. Also, at Saturday's concert thank Rob Evans, president for his continuing support of the VSO.



### ♪ Symphony Notes ♪

The Valdosta Symphony Orchestra will conclude its Fourteenth Subscription Season with a concert entitled *Russkaya doosha* or the "Russian Spirit" this coming Saturday evening, May 1, 2004 at 8:00 p.m. Three masterworks for large, colorful orchestra by Russian composers will be presented. You'll not want to miss the glorious melodies, colorful orchestrations, and spirited energy of this program!

#### Concert Sponsor—Bank of America

Saturday's concert is being sponsored by the Bank of America. Michael Harpe is the President of Bank of America in Valdosta. He and his staff and employees have been long time supporters of the VSO. The Bank of America has supplied an interesting and eloquent sponsor page for Saturday's program, which you will enjoy reading. Please thank Mr. Harpe on Saturday for Bank of America's sponsorship of the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra.

### ♪ Symphony Notes ♪

Just in time for holy week, the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus present Mendelssohn's *Elijah* this Saturday Evening, March 27, 2004 in Whitehead Auditorium at 8:00 o'clock. The work is one of the most important nineteenth-century oratorios in the repertoire. The Valdosta Symphony Chorus will be 130 voices strong. Subscribers and Patrons will be familiar with several of the choruses and arias, because they are frequently extracted as "anthems" and "offertories" for church services. Saturday's performance will afford the opportunity to hear them in their correct musical, dramatic, and theological context.

*Elijah* is a central work in the choral repertoire, and very demanding for the chorus. It is also demanding for the orchestra, especially the string sections of the orchestra, whose technique must musically portray "flames of fire" and "earthquakes" and the like.

The Valdosta Symphony Chorus will not only be a musical core of the evening, but will also be representative of "Arts Alive" in Valdosta and South Georgia. Chorus members from several South Georgia and North Florida communities will be represented. In fact, an entire division of the chorus has been rehearsing in Thomasville, Georgia under the able direction of William Collins. *Elijah* will also be performed in Thomasville on Sunday, March 28<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m.

#### *Elijah* Soloists

Soloists for *Elijah* have been carefully chosen with respect to the "Arts Alive" theme. They represent a combination of our local expertise and national and even international extension which is part of the character of the VSO. *Elijah* will be sung by Valdostan baritone and VSU Professor David Lee Johnson. The soprano soloist will be Valdosta Symphony Guild member and local resident, Linda Edwards Campbell. At different points in the oratorio, she will sing the role of the Widow, or an Angel, or the *testo* (sacred narrator). Our guest mezzo-soprano will be Monica Zerbe who will travel all the way from Toronto, Canada for this performance. She will sing the roles of Queen Jezebel and an Angel. Tenor Bradley Howard, who splits his professional time equally between Atlanta and New York City, will join the orchestra portraying King Ahab, Obadiah, and a *testo* (sacred narrator in the tradition of the Evangelist) again at various appropriate points in the oratorio.

#### About the Text of *Elijah*

Much has been said and written of the texts in *Elijah*. All the texts are biblically derived, but not all the texts come from the chapters of the *Elijah* story in I and II Kings. Several other books of the Bible furnish text which Mendelssohn and his librettists purposefully chose to become the dialogue and commentary and even theology of the *Elijah* story.

**Yuletide "Pops"**  
Saturday, December 6, 2003 at 8:00 PM  
Family Experience Concert: Sunday, December 7, 2003 at 3:00 PM  
Valdosta Symphony Festival Chorus  
Valdosta Symphony Children's Honor Chorus

Bizet  
L'arlesienne Suite No. 1  
Barber  
Die Natali  
Anderson  
Sleigh Ride  
Traditional/arr. Arthur Harris  
Carols arranged for the Philadelphia Orchestra and Mormon  
Tabernacle Choir and Children's Chorus

*Treat yourself and your family to a Holiday gift of music! This program will present a wide variety of holiday and seasonal favorites. The Valdosta Symphony Children's Honor Chorus will make a concert appearance after a two-year absence. Together with the new Festival Chorus, this concert promises to be an important community event as well as a Yuletide musical experience.*

# People you know

## All that Gary Brague pursues jazz, but his family is his life



### Gary Brague

**Home:** Valdosta.

**Age:** 39.

**Job:** Valdosta State University's director of jazz studies and professor of saxophone.

**Family:** Wife Lynne; two children, son Matthew, 7; daughter Ansley, 3.

**Hobbies:** Music, activities with his family.

**Interesting fact:** In the coming weeks, when Cary Brague and the VSU Music students perform on the Hungarian State Radio, local listeners will have an opportunity to hear them via Internet radio.



Mike Tanner/The Valdosta Daily Times  
Cary Brague, director of Valdosta State University's jazz studies and professor of saxophone, relaxes in his office while playing one of his many instruments.

# JAZZ

By Dean Poling  
dean.poling@gafnews.com

Cary Brague is excited about the opportunity of bringing American jazz to Hungary. This spring, Brague, director of Valdosta State University's jazz studies and professor of saxophone, and several university music students are scheduled to travel to Budapest where they will participate in a cultural-exchange program and perform on Hungarian State Radio.

Though the prospect of traveling to another nation is appealing, Brague is doubly optimistic about the VSU contingent's reception overseas. Why? Because, as impossible as it sounds, most foreign nations are more in tune with American jazz than the United States.

"The European public has a better understanding of American jazz than the American public," Brague says, explaining that many other countries see music, all forms of music, as a communal event rather than a competition of rising to the top of the pop charts. "In Europe, Arabia, Africa, music is a big part of the day-to-day culture. In America, music is often about who is at No. 1. But music should not be a competition. Music isn't competitive. Music is about sharing and understanding. It's about soul and spirit."

This analogy may sound strange coming from the man who, along with VSU's Dr. James Plondke, conceived the recent coupling of the VSU Jazz Ensemble and the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra. Together, Brague's Jazz Ensemble and Plondke's Valdosta Symphony staged what was termed as a dueling concert of the "Peer Gynt Suite." The VSO performed the classical original by composer Edvard Grieg. VSU Jazz Ensemble performed "Duke."

Ellington's jazz adaptation of Grieg's work. Sharing the Whitehead Auditorium stage, the two groups alternated the Grieg and the Ellington works, movement for movement. Still, though the Jazz Ensemble and the Valdosta Symphony imbued the concert with a playful spirit of a duel, the coinciding "Peer Gynt Suites" served a larger purpose. The concert introduced jazz to the symphony's regular audience of classical-music fans and, in turn, Jazz Ensemble followers likely discovered the talents of the locally based orchestra.

"Duke Ellington believed in music without category," Brague says. "To Ellington, there were only two types of music: good or bad. Does the music communicate or not? Is it good or bad? ... In America, if a song doesn't have words, most people don't want to listen to it, but in Europe, the public is educated to appreciate many types of music based on that concept of de-categorizing music. Is it good or bad? Whether it has lyrics or not."

Nonetheless, there are pockets throughout the U.S. that have a strong jazz following. Brague grew up and worked in these regions, which reinforced the musical background he discovered as a youngster. The son of Bob and Ellie Brague, Cary Brague grew up in Palm Beach, Fla. His parents gave him a well-rounded childhood.

"They were just good parents," Brague says of his upbringing. "They encouraged an interest in music and many other things in our lives."

His father often took him to visit the spring-training camps of major-league baseball, but he was also taken to jazz and other music concerts. Bob Brague worked a 9-to-5 corporate job, but he is also a musician, a pianist who still plays regularly in an Atlanta church.

**"For many Americans, music is a visual thing when music is supposed to be a conversation between the musicians and the audience. Music is about listening, not seeing."**

— Cary Brague

Continued on page 6AA



The Valdosta Symphony Orchestra and  
"Tunes for Tots" Program present

# JAZZ for Tots

SATURDAY, JANUARY 24TH, 2004

10:00AM - 11:30AM

FREE ADMISSION

VSU SCIENCE BUILDING AUDITORIUM



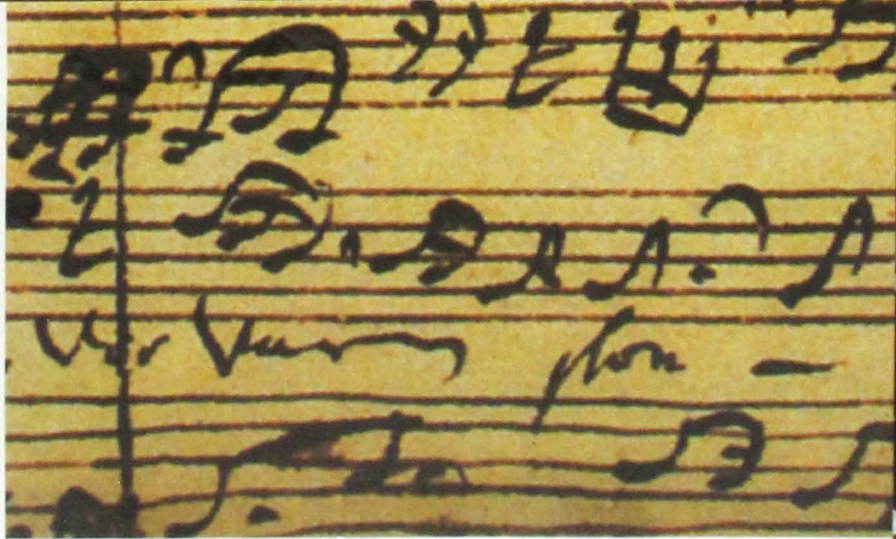
Special Guest...

**JAZZY  
DUCK!**



**Children must be accompanied by an adult!**

*The VSU Science Building is located immediately North of West Hall, 1500 N. Patterson Street.  
FREE PARKING is located at 114 Georgia Avenue next to the Parking & Transportation Office.*



Valdosta Symphony Guild  
*Share the Notes*  
 Raffle to Benefit the Children's Programs  
 of the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra  
**Grand Prize \$10,000**  
 Donation \$100  
 Date of drawing - Saturday, May 1st, 2004  
 Place of drawing - Valdosta Country Club  
 You do not need to be present to win.  
 # 204 of 300



The Valdosta Symphony Guild  
 cordially invites you to a

Champagne Breakfast  
 Immediately following the Concert

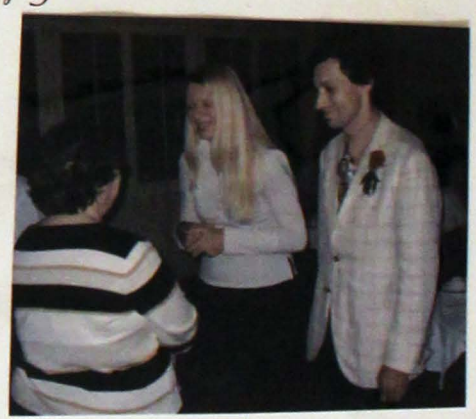


on  
 Saturday, May 1, 2004  
 at  
 the Valdosta Country Club  
 Main Dining Room

For reservations call 229-333-2150 by  
 April 27, 2004  
 \$20 per person  
 Prepaid Reservations Required



Make checks payable to The Valdosta Symphony Guild  
 And return to  
 ArtSouth - VSU  
 1500 N. Patterson Street  
 Valdosta, Georgia 31698





Valdosta Symphony Guild Luncheon  
 honoring  
 New Guild Members and Officers  
 Wednesday, May 19th  
 twelve noon  
 Valdosta Country Club

Reservations Required     \$15.00 per person

R.S.V.P. by May 14

Art South  
 333-2150

