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2024-25 PRINCIPAL SERIES

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS



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WELCOME



Welcome, welcome, welcome to “Home for the Holidays” with the Firelands Symphony Orchestra and Chorale! We are so happy that you were able to take time out of your busy schedule to share an afternoon of merriment with us.

We have an exciting and entertaining concert planned and are so very happy to welcome back our friend, Sandusky’s own Lynne Wintersteller, to share the stage once again with us. Lynne has created so many wonderful memories with the orchestra in the past, and once again will have us at the edge of our seat.

What holiday concert would be complete without having the Firelands Symphony Orchestra Chorale, under the direction of Michael Shirtz, entertaining us with their merry jingles. Thanks to Lynne and the Chorale for helping make our holiday concert something to look forward to every year! Also, if you haven’t already, be sure to see Mr. and Mrs. Claus to get a holiday treat.

Our next concert will be on February 15, 2025 and have a Valentine’s Day theme. It’s the perfect concert to ask your valentine out to dinner, and then enjoy our live music. If you don’t have a date yet, you have 69 days from today to get up the nerve and ask them out! We’ll see you there!

The holidays are a time for gathering with friends and family and we are delighted that you are gathering with us this afternoon. From all of the musicians, staff, and Board of Directors of the Firelands Symphony Orchestra and Chorale, we wish you a joyous holiday season! Enjoy the show!

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Ron Brooker, FSO Executive Director

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CARL TOPILOW



During Carl Topilow's tenure as the Firelands Symphony Orchestra's Music Director and Conductor, the orchestra has seen a dramatic improvement in the orchestra's quality, a significant rise in subscriptions and the appearance of world class soloists to our stage.

In addition to his work with the FSO, Topilow is Founding Conductor of the Cleveland Pops Orchestra, Conductor Laureate of the National Repertory Orchestra, a summer festival in Breckenridge, Colorado, and was named Faculty Emeritus at the Cleveland Institute of Music. He has served as principal pops conductor of the Toledo Symphony Orchestra, the Southwest Florida Symphony Orchestra, and the Mansfield Symphony Orchestra.

Topilow has performed as guest conductor with 132 different orchestras in 37 states and 12 foreign countries. This year, he will be hosting his fourth conducting workshop in Cleveland.

Topilow's wife Shirley is President and CEO of the Cleveland Pops Orchestra. Their daughter Emily is a marketing associate with the Cleveland Clinic, and their daughter Jenny is a violinist with the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra.

Carl's book, *The Orchestral Conductor's Career Handbook* published by Rowman and Littlefield, is now available through www.carltopilow.com and www.rowman.com.

PODIUM NOTES



We are thrilled to welcome back Sandusky's own Lynne Wintersteller! Lynne's career as an actress and vocalist has taken her to countless venues throughout the United States, and it's a privilege for all of us to perform with her in her hometown.

She will be singing the traditional – *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas*; the jazzy – *Cool Yule*, *Merry Christmas Baby*, and *Everybody's Waiting for the Man with the Bag*; the nostalgic – *The Gift*, *Christmas in My Hometown*; and narrating *T'was the Night Before Christmas* with her own special twist to the poem.

The chorale, under the expert direction of Michael Shirtz, has prepared a variety of selections, from the uplifting *Gloria* by Randoll Bass to *Sparklejollytwinklejingley* (not a misprint) from the delightful Broadway show *Elf*.

The orchestra will be playing some new selections, the young American composer Quinn Mason's vibrant *Christmas Eve Festivities* and orchestral highlights from John Williams' colorful score to *Home Alone*.

I'm looking forward to a reprise of my performance as clarinetist from a few years ago with Lynne of the upbeat *Everybody's Waiting for the Man with the Bag*. Also on the program is my brand-new Latino influenced arrangement of traditional Hanukkah music, called *A Hanukkah Conga*.

Our audience will also have a chance to sing along with the orchestra for our traditional sing-along and *White Christmas*.

The entire Fireland Symphony Orchestra family – orchestra, Board of Directors, staff - would like to wish you all a happy and festive holiday season!

Carl Topilow, Music Director and Conductor

MICHAEL SHIRTZ



Michael Shirtz is a performer, educator, composer, and conductor, known for his versatility with jazz, contemporary, and classical music. Credited as a "songsmith," his vocals and arrangements feature jazz and singer-songwriter styles into his performances as both a solo artist and with his group, the Michael Shirtz Quartet. He has worked with such artists as Melissa Manchester, Evelyn Wright, and as music director for Maureen McGovern, among others. As an artist Shirtz is

affiliated with the Prima Music Foundation and the Musical Theatre Project. His shows include tributes to legendary artists in "As We've Learned It," "In Finding Faith," and his "Blue Skies" show and album released in 2018.

With a passion for fostering creativity and collaboration, Shirtz has emerged as a respected figure in both the jazz and choral communities as a conductor and educator. Shirtz has directed educational, theatre, masterworks, and pops music productions for choral, symphonic, and festival organizations. As a producer he has served with Tri-C JazzFest Cleveland, Jazz@8 Series, Jazz Education Network, and jazz in schools initiative. Shirtz is a music director for Lakeside Chautauqua and conductor of the Symphony Chorale with the Firelands Symphony Orchestra. He has written compositions for jazz, choir, theater, and extended works such as the cantata *The Solemn Blessings*, the musical *Headliner*, and *To Rise Above: A Journey of a Tuskegee Airman*.

Shirtz currently serves on faculty with The Ohio State University School of Music where he teaches applied and jazz voice. He has served on the faculties of Capital University, Heidelberg University, director-in-residence at Pellissippi State-Knoxville, and Terra State Community College where he held the positions of lead faculty and dean. Shirtz is a member of ASCAP, American Choral Directors Association, African American Jazz Caucus, and the National Association of Teachers of Singing. Shirtz received a Bachelor of Music in Jazz Studies from Capital University and Master of Music in Conducting from California State University, Los Angeles.



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GUEST VOCALIST

LYNNE WINTERSTELLER

Born and raised in Sandusky, Lynne Wintersteller got her start on the stage while attending Sandusky High School, performing at Cedar Point, Huron Playhouse, Norwalk Playhouse and Harlequins Children's Theatre (can't leave out 1972 Erie County Fair Queen). After earning her BA in Theatre Arts from the University of Maryland and one year towards her MFA at Ohio State, Lynne embarked on a professional diverse performance career that has spanned four decades.



Lynne starred on Broadway in the Tony-nominated Rogers & Hammerstein revue A GRAND NIGHT FOR SINGING and garnered the prestigious NY Drama Desk Nomination (Best Actress in a Musical) for her work in the Maltby/Shire Off-Broadway cult hit CLOSER THAN EVER – featured on both original Broadway cast albums and continuously played on Sirius XM Broadway Channel today. She got glorious reviews playing Mother Superior on the National Tour of SISTER ACT (thank you St. Mary's Grade School Notre Dame Nuns), and playing the karate-loving couple opposite her husband on the National Tour of COMPANY. But the role that opened doors and brought her to New York, was Grace Farrell in ANNIE. Forever grateful, Lynne has performed Grace on Broadway and the First & Fourth National Tours.

Equally at home on a concert stage or in a recording studio, Lynne has sung with some of the country's most distinguished symphonies – including Carl Topilow's Cleveland Pops Orchestra; debuted with Academy Award composer David Shire's Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra and was a featured guest soloist in the premier THE REAL LOVE with the Los Angeles Symphony. She has recorded various vocal tracks for television & radio: Disney's feature LIFE WITH MIKEY; CAPTAIN KANGAROO; children's book FIREFLIES AND SHOOTING STARS and featured solo artist on CLOSER THAN EVER (RCA-BMG label) and Varese Sarabande label recordings of A GRAND NIGHT FOR SINGING, BROADWAY SINGS CHRISTMAS; UNSUNG MUSICALS II and LOST IN BOSTON III (People Magazine's Picks and Pans "Pink Taffeta Sample"). Current Project: New musical BRUSH STROKES opposite her favorite leading man, husband Mark McGrath (in development – hopefully coming to a regional theatre near you). <http://www.lynnwintersteller.com>

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CONCERT PROGRAM



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FIRELANDS
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CHORALE

MICHAEL SHIRTZ, DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR

Home for the Holidays | December 8, 2024 at 4 p.m.

Guest Artist: Lynne Wintersteller, vocalist

Silent Night

Traditional

The Firelands Symphony Choral

The Most Wonderful Time of the Year

Edward Pola & George Wyler, arr. Jim Kessler

The Firelands Symphony Choral

Gloria

Randol Bass

The Firelands Symphony Choral

Christmas in My Hometown

Dan May, arr. Brian Gaber

The Firelands Symphony Choral | Lynne Wintersteller, vocalist

Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas

Hugh Martin & Ralph Blane, arr. Lanny Meyers

Lynne Wintersteller, vocalist

Selections from Home Alone

John Williams, arr. Johnnie Vinson

Hanukkah Conga

Traditional, arr. Carl Topilow

Carl Topilow, clarinet

Merry Christmas Baby

Lou Baxter & Johnny Moore, arr. Paul Ferguson

Lynne Wintersteller, vocalist

CONCERT PROGRAM

'Twas the Night Before Christmas

Randol Bass

Lynne Wintersteller, narrator

-- INTERMISSION --

The Work of Christmas

Dan Forrest & Howard Thurman

The Firelands Symphony Chorale

Amani (Peace)

Audrey Snyder

The Firelands Symphony Chorale

Sparklejollytwinklejingley from Elf

Matthew Sklar

The Firelands Symphony Chorale

Christmas Eve Festivities

Quinn Mason

Cool Yule

John Williams, arr. Johnnie Vinson

Sleigh Ride

Leroy Anderson

Everybody's Waiting for the Man with the Bag

Irving Taylor, Dudley Brooks, & Hal Stanley, arr. David Shire

Lynne Wintersteller, vocalist | Carl Topilow, clarinet

The Gift

Dan May, arr. Brian Gaber

The Firelands Symphony Chorale | Lynne Wintersteller, vocalist

A Holly and Jolly Sing Along

arr. Jim Stephenson

The Firelands Symphony Chorale | Lynne Wintersteller, vocalist

White Christmas

Irving Berlin, arr. Robert Russell Bennett

SING ALONG

DECK THE HALL

Deck the hall with boughs of holly
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la
'Tis the season to be jolly
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la
Don we now our gay apparel
Fa-la-la, la-la-la, la-la-la
Troll the ancient Yule-tide carol
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la
See the blazing Yule before us
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la
Strike the harp and join the chorus
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la
Follow me in merry measure
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la
While I tell of Yule-tide treasure
Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la

JINGLE BELLS

Dashing through the snow
In a one horse open sleigh
O'er the fields we go
Laughing all the way
Bells on bob tail ring
Making spirits bright
What fun it is to laugh and sing
A sleighing song tonight

Oh, jingle bells, jingle bells
Jingle all the way
Oh, what fun it is to ride
In a one horse open sleigh
Jingle bells, jingle bells
Jingle all the way
Oh, what fun it is to ride
In a one horse open sleigh

FROSTY THE SNOWMAN

Frosty the Snowman
Was a jolly happy soul
With a corn cob pipe
And a button nose
And two eyes made out of coal
Frosty the Snowman
Is a fairytale they say
He was made of snow
But the children know
How he came to life one day
There must have been some
magic
In that old silk hat they found
For when they placed it on his
head
He began to dance around
Oh, Frosty the Snowman
Had to hurry on his way
But he waved goodbye
Saying don't you cry
I'll be back again some day
Thumpety thump thump
Thumpety thump thump
Look at Frosty go
Thumpety thump thump
Thumpety thump thump
Over the hills of snow

RUDOLPH, THE RED-NOSED REINDEER

Rudolph, the red-nosed reindeer
Had a very shiny nose
And if you ever saw him
You would even say it glows
All of the other reindeer
Used to laugh and call him names
They never let poor Rudolph
Join in any reindeer games.
Then one foggy Christmas Eve
Santa came to say:
"Rudolph with your nose so bright,
won't you guide my sleigh tonight?"
Then all the reindeer loved him
As they shouted out with glee
Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer
You'll go down in history

JOY TO THE WORLD!

Joy to the world, the Lord is come
Let earth receive her King
Let every heart prepare him room
And heaven and nature sing
And heaven and nature sing
And heaven, and heaven, and nature
sing
Joy to the Earth, the Saviour reigns
Let men their songs employ
While fields and floods, rocks, hills,
and plains
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy



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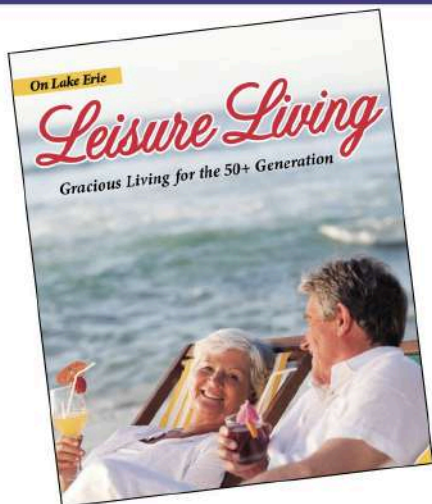
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 Don and Christin Westmann Charitable Fund

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 Michael Kelly Dunn
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Richard Keiser

Sari Kelley

Timothy Kiedrowski

Donald and Jeri Klopfenstein - In

honor of Sari Kelley

Larry and Loretta Koeppe



Sonata, cont. (up to \$149)

David and Cheryl Kriska
Melissa Kuns
Dan and Phyl Lachowyn
Kenneth Landon
Kenneth Landon
Allan and Susan Lesch - In honor of
Mrs. Chaffee
Dean and Jane Lucal
Lura Magi
David and Joan Mayo
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Beverly Mendoza
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Jim and Lois Myers
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Nancy Oppen

Gail Parker - In honor of Nick &
Margaret Obrenovich
Anthony and Dolores Pomerson
Chuck and Mary Reiter
Bob and Brenda Rice
Ned and Gail Riedy
Thomas O. and Kathleen Roberts
Neal and Nancy Sabino
Martha E. Sawicki
Dawn Schlessman - In memory of
Larry Schlessman
Kathleen Sedalia
Tina Showalter
Randy Simmons
James and Judy Smith - In honor of
Nike Mendenhall

Robert and Martha Speers
Michael and Joann Spisak
James and Reta Stark
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Rick Voigt
Shirley Waldock
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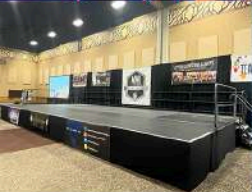
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
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**Faure
RÉQUIEM**

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4 P.M.

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SPACE & TIME**

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Connor Bogart O'Brien, vocalist

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**MADE IN
AMERICA**

Orchestra Concert
Andres Cardenas, violin

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