

Rockford Symphony Orchestra/Rock Valley College Concerto Competition

The RSO/RVC Concerto Competition is held at Rock Valley College the last Saturday in October. The winner receives a cash prize and the opportunity to perform on the spring concert of the RSYO. Information and applications are available on the RSO website at www.rockfordsymphony.com.

Attending RSO Concerts

RSYO members are entitled to a complimentary ticket for all Rockford Symphony Orchestra Classics Series concerts. To request a ticket, call the RSO box office at (815) 965-0049 by 4 p.m. on the Friday before a performance. RSO performances are held at the Coronado Performing Arts Centre (CPAC), and begin at 7:30 p.m. One hour before each concert, RSO Music Director Steven Larsen gives a talk about the music to be performed.

Member volunteer opportunities

Community service hours may be earned in exchange for volunteering with the RSYO. Here are some examples of ways to help:

Blog/ newsletter writer- tell the story of the RSYO experience by writing articles or blog entries for the RSO website, Facebook page, or newsletter.

Outreach performances- perform in schools, demonstrate instrument at "petting zoo" presentations, etc.

Office work- assist the RSO staff with mailings, photocopying, etc.

Special talents: If you have skills in any area which you think could be of help to the RSYO, please contact Lorie Langan at (815) 972-2939 to find out how to contribute.



Handbook for Members 2009-2010 Season Revised

The mission of the Rockford Symphony Youth Orchestra is to provide quality, full symphony orchestra education and performance opportunities to regional students.

Dear RSYO musicians and parents,

As the new conductor of the Rockford Symphony Youth Orchestra, it is my honor and pleasure to welcome you to our 44th season!

The experience of playing in a youth orchestra when I was a teenager was one of the greatest in my life, and besides helping to put me on the path to a musical career, it helped shape the very essence of my personality and character. My goal as the conductor of the RSYO is to create a similar experience of the highest caliber for you. We are aiming to provide not only an elite musical and artistic experience, but one which will build friendships and character and bring our musical community closer together— something for everyone to remember fondly later in life, whether continuing with a musical career or not.

In the past several years, the RSYO has continued to pursue a professional standard of repertoire. This year, we are going one step further by introducing the Chamber Orchestra, a select group of the RSYO's most advanced musicians, which we hope will grow and prosper in the coming years. We will also be forming a Brass Choir, and making a number of other exciting additions.

As we begin this yearlong musical journey together, I am so glad that you will be a part of this experience. Let us look forward to making wonderful music together!



Daniel Black
Conductor, Rockford Symphony Youth Orchestra

Education section at www.rockfordsymphony.com, or contact Lorie Langan.

Fundraising

The true cost of participation in the RSYO is well over \$500 per member. To make up the difference, fundraising activities are essential. In addition to providing needed income, fundraising allows the RSYO to expand support within the community and to generate greater awareness of the RSYO's activities.

Fundraising activities vary with each season and goals are set with concert venue and production expenses in mind. If goals are not reached, additional fundraising activities may be necessary to balance the budget. **It is expected that each family participate in fundraising.**

Participation in other musical activities

The RSYO strongly encourages members to participate in other musical activities outside of the orchestra. Here are the most basic expectations:

Participate in a band or orchestra program at school, or if home-schooled, in another music education program.

Receive private instruction on the instrument they are playing in the orchestra.

Listen to classical music and attend concerts of all kinds. The Rockford Area Arts Council offers students a limited number of tickets for \$1 (Project Full House) to concerts in the area. (See "Attending RSO Concerts" below)

Performance Opportunities

Honors String Quartet- the concertmaster, principal second violin, principal viola, and principal cello comprise the Honors String Quartet, and serve as ambassadors for the RSYO through performances in the Rockford community. Membership in the Honors String Quartet includes a scholarship.

RSYO musicians are occasionally asked to perform for Rockford Symphony Orchestra events such as the Black Magic Ball. The Honors String Quartet and Brass Choir can expect to have several performance engagements at important RSO events throughout the year.

preparation. At the conclusion of each semester, folders must be returned in good condition to the librarian; however, the members may keep the photocopied music.

Attendance

The following attendance policy REPLACES the previous policy.

Each member will be allowed TWO excused absences per semester, for any reason. Please notify the conductor as far in advance as possible if you know you will not be able to make a rehearsal.

Members missing more than two rehearsals, regardless of the reason, will be asked not to play the concert.

Absence from the dress rehearsal will only be excused under extreme circumstances, and must be discussed with the conductor. Unexcused absence at the dress rehearsal will result in the member being asked not to play the concert.

Members are expected to be on time (meaning EARLY) to all rehearsals and concerts. Excessive/ chronic tardiness may result in the member being asked not to play the concert.

Tuition

Tuition is due at the first rehearsal of each semester. This fee covers over 50% of orchestra expenses including the conductor, music, CDs, sectional rehearsals, and the librarian. Prompt payment of tuition is vital to the smooth function of the RSYO. Non-payment may result in members being asked not to play the concert.

Multiple-payment arrangements are possible. However, these arrangements must be made in advance by contacting Lorie Langan at (815) 972-2939.

Tuition Reduction

Starting this season, a one-time \$50 rebate (\$25 per semester) can be earned for referring a musician who successfully auditions for the RSYO and who has not participated during the previous season.

A limited number of scholarships are available. To inquire about scholarships, download the form from the RSO website in the

About this Handbook

The RSYO Members Handbook is the basic guide for orchestra membership, and should be the first place to look in case questions arise during the course of the season.

Please carefully read the sections of the Handbook pertaining to rehearsals, attendance, and conduct, as these have been updated since earlier this summer!

New for 2009-2010

This fall we welcome a new conductor, Daniel Black. Mr. Black is a conductor and composer with degrees in conducting from the Eastman School of Music and the St. Petersburg Conservatory in Russia. He is a candidate for a doctorate in orchestral conducting at Northwestern University. Mr. Black has also been a finalist of international competitions, both as a composer and a conductor.

Brass Choir- starting in the fall, a brass choir, coached jointly by RSO members Mark Baldin, Tom Asher, and Rebecca Asher, will be a regular part of the RSYO experience. If you play a brass instrument, participation in this ensemble is required. Brass Choir rehearsals will overlap part of the main orchestra rehearsal. At the conclusion of Brass Choir rehearsal, members will have a 15 minute break, and will then be expected to quietly join the main orchestra rehearsal. Further details will be provided after the first rehearsal.

Chamber Orchestra- this fall we will be starting a chamber orchestra, which will be a subset of the RSYO intended to provide an elite performance outlet for the RSYO's most advanced members. Rehearsals will last approximately ½ hour and will take place immediately after the general orchestra rehearsal. Membership in the Chamber Orchestra will be at the personal invitation of the conductor, based on musical maturity, dedication, and the instrumental needs of the Chamber Orchestra's repertoire. More information to follow after the first rehearsal.

Chamber Music- the RSYO would like to expand the opportunities for chamber music participation, coaching, and performance. If you have an existing chamber music group within the orchestra, or would like to form one, please contact Mr. Black or Lorie Langan.

Contact Information

Questions, comments or concerns may be directed to the following personnel:

- Daniel Black, Conductor: cell- (847) 924-0604
- Lorie Langan, RSO Director of Education: office- (9 a.m.- 5 p.m. M-F) (815) 972-2939; home (815) 262-2427.
- Rebecca Asher, Librarian/ Brass Choir co-coach: (815) 229-0963
- Mark Baldin, Brass Choir co-coach: (815) 758-2123
RSO Office: (815) 965-0049

RSO Website: www.rockfordsymphony.com

If a member is unable to attend a rehearsal, or becomes ill on the day of the performance it is the member's responsibility to notify the conductor personally and as soon as possible!

Code of Conduct

Members of the RSYO are representatives of the organization, and the behavior of each individual reflects upon the whole. At all RSYO events, including rehearsals and sectionals, members will be expected to act in a professional manner and to show respect and consideration for others.

Rehearsals

The general orchestra rehearsal begins promptly at 2:00 p.m. **Members are expected to be warmed up and ready to play five minutes before the start of rehearsal.** If participating in Brass Choir or the Chamber Orchestra (which may have different start times), members are responsible for knowing and adhering to their additional rehearsal commitments.

It is the members' responsibility to bring music to every rehearsal, and to come prepared to work. This means: a) having practiced and listened to recordings of the repertoire, b) having a pencil in hand, and c) arriving at rehearsal with a fresh mind and a good attitude.

Cell phones and/or pagers should be turned off during rehearsal. (No texting, internet, etc.)

Food or gum in rehearsal is prohibited. Water bottles are OK.

More detailed information on the rehearsal schedule will be distributed separately.

Rehearsal Location

All rehearsals are held at Christian Life High School located at 5950 Spring Creek Rd. The Band Room is in the back of the building, on the northwest side.

Performances

The RSYO performs at a variety of concert venues. Directions and details will be given well in advance of each concert event.

RSYO musicians are expected to attend a dress rehearsal at the concert venue before the concert. CALL TIMES will be distributed in advance. RSYO members are expected to be warmed up and prepared to play at the time specified as CALL. Please check directions to the performance venue and plan your travel time accordingly.

Audio recording of concerts is not allowed. Professional recordings are available for purchase after concerts.

Concert Dress

Personal appearance should be neat and professional.

Young men are expected to wear: black slacks (with a belt), black suit jacket, black calf-length socks, black shoes, white shirt and long dark tie.

Young women are expected to wear: full-length black dress; or knee-length skirt (no mini-skirts), or dress slacks, with a black top. Tank tops, halters, camisoles, and spaghetti straps are NOT appropriate. Legs should not be bare; dark hosiery is requested and black shoes are required. Use discretion with jewelry and make-up.

Music

Music folders with photocopied parts are distributed at the beginning of each semester by the RSO librarian. Members are responsible for bringing this music to each rehearsal, sectional, and performance. In addition, the RSYO provides a CD with recordings of the semester's repertoire to each member. The purpose of the CD is to aid in individual practice and