



Issue No. 72 - Fall 2021

BIRCH NOTES

REOPENING

Birch Creek Music Performance Center | Egg Harbor | Door County | Wisconsin



HEALING As the sun lowers in the summer sky, Symphony session Guest Conductor **Ben Firer** (behind Gazebo) conducts the **Birch Creek Symphony Orchestra** in Stravinsky's *Pulcinella: Suite* on Friday, July 9. Shade sails, an outdoor stage, string lights, and a new sound board made live performances a reality.

THE SUMMER OF 2021

How many words describe your experience of our 2021 reopening? For most of us, joy, relief, healing and reward begin to capture what this 2021 season means to us.



JOY Percussion Faculty Artist **Tony Di Sanza** is never at a loss for a smile as shown during a pre-concert performance on June 19.



REWARD **Matthew Thomas**, tenor saxophone (standing, front row), performs a solo improvisation on July 16 with the **Jazz I Student Big Band**, under the direction of **Gil Wukitsch**, with cornfields providing a green and golden backdrop.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MONA CHRISTENSEN

"After the difficulty of the last two years, performing live music has been essential." ~ 2021 Jazz II Student



In this reopening season, our greatest reward is YOU

Music was in the air again from morning until late at night. Audiences applauded once more for Birch Creek students and faculty. A new outdoor performing area became the stage and under colorful, festive shade sails, music floated through the air to create a unique experience for patrons, students, faculty, volunteers and staff. What was a devastating impossibility last summer wouldn't be in 2021 if we could manage to reopen. But how could we make reopening happen?

We made 2021's reopening possible by holding outdoor concerts where audiences were safely distanced on our trademark benches. We offered bring-your-own lawn chair seating as well, and the beloved Dutton Concert Barn served as a backdrop for performance as well as a rain site. Patrons and academy members felt comfortable as they re-entered the new world of live music.

Oh, the hurdles that we overcame! With the expert support and resilience of our staff, Board of Trustees, our three program directors and willing volunteers, we forged ahead with new operational responsibilities as we created opportunities where none existed. With students and faculty from 17 states, we integrated health and safety protocols for a live venue, a music school and a summer camp. We are happy to report that there were no COVID outbreaks at Birch Creek! We are grateful for the attention and diligence given to our protocols by staff, students, faculty artists and audiences.

After a year of uncertainty and now, successful reopening, our greatest reward is sharing its success with all of you. We are grateful. We are humbled. We are so appreciative of your support. Whether you bought a ticket, sent in a donation, sent a note of encouragement, volunteered to prepare the campus or hung out with the popcorn crew, we are so proud of you. We did it, together!

We hope you enjoy this newsletter that celebrates the highlights of this season. We look forward to hearing from you very soon.

Musically yours,



Executive Director, *The Steve and Jackie Kane Chair*



Blue sails and beautiful Door County skies announce Birch Creek's reopening!

HOW WE DID IT: When Planning Becomes Leading

Emerging from an exciting – but physically distant – summer of Zoom classes and YouTube videos in September 2020, Birch Creek leaders and Program directors were determined to make in-person learning and concerts a reality for 2021. Our plans included writing new policies, reducing enrollment to promote social distancing, installing shade sails for outdoor concerts, painting benches, and having a nurse on campus every weekday. It was a summer of new challenges, followed by enormous successes.



From left, Program Directors **Jeff Campbell** (Jazz), **Ricardo Castañeda** (Symphony) and **Dan Moore** (Percussion & Steel Band) met on June 25 at Birch Creek after meeting bi-weekly on Zoom since October 2020 to plan face-to-face instruction and concerts.



Shade sails were installed and Birch Creek's familiar benches received a fresh coat of paint in time for Opening Night on June 17. On stormy nights, **summer interns** lowered the sails and concerts moved inside the Dutton Concert Barn.



And you came! Audiences joined us for every concert, topping 300 for *America the Beautiful* on July 3 for our Independence Day celebration. Symphony's patriotic concert included a surprise treat: free ice cream!

We are thankful for the generosity of scholarship donors and grantors whose gifts provide endless opportunities. They include:

Nancy Andriacci Named Scholarship was awarded to **Hayden Malawey**, guitar, Jazz II.

Stephen Gloyd, trombone, Jazz II was the recipient of an endowed scholarship established by an **Anonymous Donor**.

Birch Creek Associates scholarships were awarded to **Jacob Hennager**, guitar, Jazz I; **Hudson Lybarger**, tenor saxophone, Jazz II; and **Sean Price**, Percussion & Steel Band.

Birch Creek Associates Scholarship named for Joan Guasta was awarded to **Elizabeth Wallace**, oboe, Symphony.

The **Birch Creek Concerto Competition** awards come with the honor of performing as a featured soloist with the Birch Creek Symphony Orchestra in the following year. **Bea Sjostrom**, violin and **William Lewis**, trumpet were 2021 winners.

The Dwight & Linda Davis Foundation awarded Birch Creek a grant to support installation of a new ventilation system in the West Student Dorm.

The James Dutton Memorial Scholarship for artistic excellence went to **Jozelle Filippi**, Jazz II, drums.

A **Les Paul Foundation** grant continued its support of jazz guitar instruction, for a total of nine years of continuous support.

Named Scholarships in memory of **Beverly Patzer** were awarded to **Eric Hackett**, trumpet, Jazz I; and **Philip Hanifin**, percussion, Symphony.

John and Carolyn Peterson Charitable Foundation, Inc. of Brookfield, WI has underwritten Named Scholarships since 2006. Scholars for 2021 were **Jacob Hanekamp**, Percussion & Steel Band; **Adrian Anderson**, trombone, Jazz I; and **Anastasia Rockman**, flute, Symphony.

Ralph Pratt Memorial endowed scholarship was awarded to **Ethan Davila**, bass, Jazz I.

Raibrook Foundation Named Scholarships for Door County students were awarded to **Luke Selle**, Percussion & Steel Band; and **Friederike Buergin-Witt**, cello, Symphony. Both live in Sturgeon Bay.

Robert & Joan Schaupp Named Scholarship recipients were **Hudson Jones**, piano, Jazz I; Jazz II students **Thomas Andersen**, piano; **Melanie Ketelsen**, baritone saxophone; **Arjun Palaniappan**, drums; **Jabari Smith**, drums; **Casey Stern**, alto saxophone; **Kentrell (KJ) Strong Jr**, guitar; and Symphony student **William Lewis**, trumpet.

Gebhardt Named Scholarships were awarded to (pictured from left to right):

Tierney Aldrich-Stanek, Percussion & Steel Band; Jazz I students **Nora Campbell**, trumpet, **Seamus Moore**, tenor saxophone, and **Phillip Perea**, drums; Jazz II student **Joshua Frank**, piano; and **Dylan Rhodes**, clarinet, Symphony.



Greater Milwaukee Foundation Family Fund awarded Birch Creek a grant to underwrite the cost of shade sails, an outdoor stage canopy, and a new sound board. (See front page)

The **Brian T. Hynes & Barry J. Hynes** Memorial endowed scholarship was awarded to **Kaitlyn Sisney**, French horn, Symphony.

The second scholarship from the **Phyllis C. Ingwersen** Memorial endowment, established in 2018, was awarded to **Samantha Marr**, Percussion & Steel Band.

Herb Kohl Philanthropies provided grants for two scholarships for Wisconsin students. Recipients were **Danica Fe Rebudiao**, bass, Jazz I; and **Jenna Ainsworth**, alto saxophone, Jazz II.

Anthony & Judith Licata Named Scholarship was awarded to **Franklin Herschberg**, piano, Jazz I.

Two scholarships named for **Jim Friel and Karen Mehigan** were awarded in 2021. Recipients were Jazz II trumpet students **James (Mac) Olson** and **Philip Pistone**.

MMG Foundation underwrote a scholarship honoring *Margaret Miller Gilson*, awarded to **Nathaniel Christensen**, Percussion & Steel Band. Named for *Cynthia Stiehl* were awards to Symphony students **Catie Brenmark**, bassoon; **Jasper Chambreau**, bass; **Audrey Ringle**, trombone; **Jack Thompson**, oboe; and violin students **Jane Story** and **Caroline Witowski**. Receiving a scholarship named for the *MMG Foundation* was **Joshua Thrush**, bass, Symphony.

The family of **Bertha Schenker** awarded two Named Scholarships in her memory in recognition of her love for youth and her gifts to music education. Recipients were **Calista Kopulos**, cello and **Edward Brenmark**, percussion. Both attended the Symphony session.

The **Town of Egg Harbor** sponsored four free family/community matinee concerts at Birch Creek and provided additional funding to underwrite the 2021 free Opening Night concert. In a season where indoor audience seating was limited, these free concerts nonetheless entertained more than 500 concertgoers without cost to them.

Roger & Lynn Van Vreede scholarships were awarded to Jazz I students **Matteo Bennardo**, tenor saxophone and **Oliva Flood**, drums; Jazz II students **Theo Mazza**, trumpet and **Anthony Severson**, bass; and Symphony students **Ben Hommowun**, French horn and **Tessa Hazlett**, flute.

The **Wisconsin Arts Board**, with funds from the **State of Wisconsin** and the **National Endowment for the Arts**, awarded Birch Creek a grant for operational support through the Creation and Presentation program, which recognizes programming that makes a significant impact on the cultural life of Wisconsin.

Stanley R & Robert E Wright Foundation for the Arts endowed scholarship recognizes a senior-level student pursuing music studies in college. The recipient for 2021 was **Elliot Lydon**, piano, Jazz I.



GRATEFUL



The success of the summer of 2021 depended on our **counselors and interns**. They readied our campus for performances, rehearsals and dorm living, implemented new health policies and guided students. Tech Intern **Phil Bueche**, takes a break before the evening concert for a little afternoon drumming.

Upcoming Performances

in Juniper Hall

Saturday, September 11 7:00 PM
CLASSICAL FAVORITES WITH JODIE DESALVO

Saturday, September 18 7:00 PM
LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY JAZZ QUINTET

Saturday, October 9
MARDRA & REGGIE THOMAS IN CONCERT WITH JEFF CAMPBELL AND RICK HAYDON
5:30 Social | 6:00 Reception | 7:00 Concert

Saturday, December 4
Christmas at Birch Creek
Matinee 2:30 PM | Evening Concert 7:00 PM

Order tickets: (920) 868-3763 or birchcreek.org/tickets

PLAY IT FORWARD ANNUAL FUND



The Play It Forward Annual Fund is used for operational expenses and is the fund that bridges the gap between tuition paid by families and the true cost of program delivery.

Did you know that every student automatically receives **\$2,760** in reduced tuition because of your support to this annual fund?

Total Program Cost:	\$4,860
Play It Forward - Your Support:	<u>(\$2,760)</u>
Student/Family Tuition Fee:	\$2,100

To ensure our tuition is affordable to most families, we cover the gap between the total cost of educating a Birch Creek student and the family's out-of-pocket costs through your contributions.

Will you help us close the gap by giving to Play It Forward?

Community Outreach: **Jazz I Ambassadors**, directed by **Katie Ernst**, perform a free concert at Noble Square in downtown Fish Creek on July 13, 2021 sponsored by the Fish Creek Civic Association.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2021 CONCERT SPONSORS

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Roger & Lynn Van Vreede
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Wisconsin Public Radio



Donna Koehler and son **David Koehler**

ADULT MUSIC PROGRAMS



Adult music students arrive on campus soon after the academy students complete their summer sessions. 2021 was the fourth successful year for **Adult Band Camp** (far left), and the second year for **Chamber Music Retreat**.

MUSIC IN THE AIR



On June 25, the **Percussion & Steel Band Student Ensemble** performed Maracuta led by **Tony Di Sanza** under the blue and white shade sails.



When weather moved us inside, we were still thrilled to play for live audiences as shown by **Jazz II Student Band Director Phil Crews**. Photo by Heidi Hodges Photography.



Katherine Kohler, Symphony clarinet faculty, gave a stunning performance of Weber's Clarinet Concerto No. 1 in F minor on July 2.



Percussion & Steel Band Program Director, **Dan Moore**, (left) leads students and faculty in concert on June 25. Right, **Arjun Palaniappan** performs with the Jazz II Ambassadors at an outreach concert.



On July 8, **Sonia Mantell** performed Graciela Y Buenos Aires by Jose Bragato in a memorial concert for her late father, **Matthew Mantell**, who passed away in 2019. Matt was Birch Creek viola faculty for 28 years and Symphony Program Director during the 1990s.

Birch Creek's mission is to provide intensive, performance-based instruction to promising young musicians by immersing them in a professional, mentoring environment.

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Percussion & Steel Band – Dan Moore
Symphony – Ricardo Castañeda
Jazz I and II – Jeff Campbell

FALL/WINTER OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday | 9am to 4pm
Friday | 9am to 2pm
Closed holidays and Dec. 25 - Jan. 1

(920) 868-3763

www.birchcreek.org



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PASSING TONES

Measures of influence

William Klug, 92, of Ellison Bay and Fort Meyers, FL, passed away April 29, 2021, after bravely fighting an 18-month battle with cancer. Birch Creek lost a truly gentle man who served on the Birch Creek Board of Trustees (2005-2011), guiding marketing and fundraising committees during those years. Bill's natural ability to inspire others was essential to the success of the Capital Campaign of 2008.



Bill Klug in 2010 at the "Treasures" fundraiser he planned and hosted for Birch Creek.



Dutton Concert Barn stage under construction, 1977.

Bill Guenzel, philanthropist, humorist, artisan, historian, and appreciator of the full worth of the Door County community died May 7 at the age of 74. For many years, Bill, with his wife, Jo, underwrote *Artists in the Schools*, Birch Creek's outreach clinic held each year for Door County music students. Long before that time, Bill was a member of a group of tradesmen that formed Great Northern Construction, the company that laid the groundwork for remodeling the Tischler farmstead to serve as home for Birch Creek Music Performance Center. His kindness, curiosity, and humble spirit remain at Birch Creek alongside the stage's timbers and among the students performing there 46 years after.

OFF TO COLLEGE

Jazz I Session

Shannon Lyons (alto saxophone 2019 and 2021) University of the Pacific, Stockton, California; music therapy major and French minor.



Shannon Lyons is studying at University of the Pacific

Jazz II Session

Melanie Ketelsen (baritone saxophone 2019 and 2021) University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, Minneapolis, MN; graphic design major and French minor.

Philip Pistone (trumpet 2019, 2020 virtual, 2021) Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL; jazz studies (performance) and music education.

Percussion & Steel Band Session

Nathaniel Christensen (2020 virtual, 2021) Ball State University, Muncie, IN; music education and percussion.



Nathaniel Christensen is attending Ball State University

Jacob Hanekamp (2021) Lawrence University, Appleton, WI; music education and percussion performance.

Symphony Session

Friederike Buergin-Witt (2020 virtual, 2021) Hamline University, Saint Paul, MN; criminal justice and sociology.

Sophie Griffith-Oh (French horn, 2018, 2019 and 2021) Oberlin College and Conservatory, Oberlin, OH; horn performance and biology.

Anastasia Rockman (flute, 2021) Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL; music education and flute performance.

Elyssa Peters (viola, 2018, 19 & 21) Trinity Christian College, Palos Heights, IL; dual major—music and psychology.



Sophie Griffith-Oh is attending Oberlin College and Conservatory

Kaitlyn Sisney (French horn, 2019 and 2021) University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, Minneapolis, MN; global studies, environmental science, policy & management, and deaf studies.