



KANKAKEE VALLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

ANNUAL REPORT



OUR 57TH CONCERT SEASON

2024-2025



KANKAKEE VALLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Annual Dinner

JUNE 24, 2025 ■ KANKAKEE COUNTRY CLUB

WELCOME AND INVOCATION

Kate Cloonen - President, KVSO Board of Directors
Yvonne V. Chalfant - KVSO Executive Committee Member

ENTERTAINMENT

Music by Fiona Hunt, KVSO Harpist

2025 DR. JANET V. LEONARD 'CON SPIRITO' AWARD

Presented by Lynn O'Brien-Ahlden, Honoring Dee Pinski

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE KVSO FAMILY

Introduction of New Officers
Introduction of the Board

PREVIEW OF THE COMING SEASON

'Voyages of Discovery' - Dr. Sean Paul Mills



Thank you for your generous support of the KVSO!

2024-2025 SEASON REPORT OF THE

KANKAKEE VALLEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The 2024 – 2025 season started with the traditional and ever-popular July 4th concerts by the Kankakee Valley Youth Symphony Orchestra, the Municipal Band, our own Kankakee Valley Symphony Orchestra, and the City of Kankakee fireworks on the campus of KCC. Huge crowds attended.

The 2024 summer series continued thanks to sponsors and grants from the Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley and the Iroquois Federal Foundation. The Music in the Park series was held at Cobb Park. These concerts featured the KVSO woodwind quintet, the string quartet, or the brass quintet, and were available free of charge to the public so that people of all income levels, all ages, and all ability levels had a chance to experience live orchestral music.

KVSO ensembles also performed at the Rhubarb Festival, the Strawberry Jazz Festival, the Kankakee Farmers' Market, and Oktoberfest. The KVSO mini concerts have come to be a staple as a cultural gem in the Kankakee area.

The Kiwanis Concert in November had over 1,200 students in attendance. Held at Centennial Chapel, area fourth, fifth, and sixth graders learned about symphonic instruments, saw them close-up on the large screen and listened to classical music.

The standard KVSO concert season was entitled "Music Speaks" from Hans Christian Andersen's quote, "Where words fail, music speaks."

The concerts were held at various venues, including Larsen Fine Arts Center, Kankakee High School, and Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church. Under the leadership of Kyle Schrage, the KVSO Chorus performed with the orchestra at three concerts. The musicians performed magnificently as true classical symphonic music was brought to an appreciative audience.

KVSO continues to move in new directions, using social media and engaging new audience members to stay contemporary while presenting music of the greatest composers of all time. This year, multimedia was introduced as an added dimension.

Our successful season was possible only with our donors, concert sponsors, advertisers, concert attendees, music director, orchestra members, the Women's Guild, the Foundation, the Board of Directors, and the KVSYSO. Our deepest gratitude goes to all who helped further the ideals of the Kankakee Valley Symphony Orchestra.

Please join us in the 2025-2026 season as we present "Voyages of Discovery." We look forward to seeing you at the summer performances throughout the area. Check our website kvso.org, our Facebook and Instagram page for updates.



Respectfully submitted,

KATE CLOONEN
President
Board of Directors

2024-2025 SEASON REPORT OF THE KVSO WOMEN'S GUILD

The mission statement of the Women's Guild is to provide financial and organizational support for the KVSOA and to work with the Orchestra in offering cultural and educational activities to our community. We have successfully completed that and are pleased to present the annual report for the 2024-2025 season.

We continue to meet the fourth Monday of the month at the Kankakee Public Library. The year began with a quick recap of the previous year and distribution of member books. This year we welcomed new members: Patti McThenia, Lori LaMore, Jackie Clark, Susan Fields, Gretchen DeMarah and Wendy Sorensen.

In November, several members of the Guild assisted with printing, sorting and delivering of programs for the Kiwanis Symphony Concert held November 4th for area grade school students.

The Symphony of Sweets Dinner and Auction was a grand event under the leadership of Sharon McGuire and her committees. Each year the event follows the KVSO Christmas concert: more than 130 guests attended the evening at the Kankakee Country Club. Several Guild members showed off their culinary skills as the ever-popular live items Hors d'oeuvres Soiree for Twelve and Gourmet Dinner for Eight were auctioned. Collectively, the evening raised over \$16,000.00, boosting the Guild's bankroll.

Guild members generously donated sweets for a dessert reception following the February 15th concert, Music Speaks of Amour, featuring guest violinist, Andrew Sords.

May 15th over 120 guests attended a Fashion Show Luncheon entitled "Let's Celebrate Ageless Style." Our organizer extraordinaire, Dee Pinski, was at the helm for this one. Providing fashions were Dress Well Boutique, e.Kaye designer Emily Sifrit and Emma's Elegance. Various vendors provided shopping before and after the event. The day went off without a hitch, netting a profit of \$3,500.00 for the Guild treasury.

The last event of the season, the Women's Guild Annual Luncheon, chaired by Carol Vallone, took place on May 20th with a great showing of Guild members and KVSOA board members in attendance. 2025-2026 Guild leadership was introduced: Liz Madsen, President; Carol Vallone, Vice-President; Vicky McBurnie, Secretary; and Peggy Strange, Treasurer. Liz Madsen thanked all Guild members who give so generously of their time and talents throughout the year. A job well done, she presented KVSOA President, Kate Cloonen with a check for \$25,500.00.

The KVSO Women's Guild eagerly looks forward to the 2025-2026 concert season and doing our part to keep beautiful music in our community!

Respectfully submitted,



LIZ MADSEN
Guild Chairman



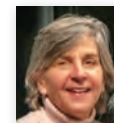
2024-2025 SEASON REPORT OF THE KVYSO

- July 4 – Performance at Kankakee Community College with KVYSO and Friends (including orchestra alumni and community members).
- September 9 – Auditions for 2024-25's season "Silver" were held at Olivet Nazarene University Sept 7. This year's theme honored the 25th Anniversary of the founding of KVYSO. Sunday rehearsals and sectionals for the regular season were held at Larsen Fine Arts Center, ONU, beginning September 8.
- Coaches for this year: Woodwinds– Brianna Harris. Strings–Julie Tomasek. Brass, Percussion and Piano were handled by music director Katrina Cessna.
- November 10 – Fall concert at Kresge Auditorium, Larsen Fine Arts Center, ONU. This concert featured works by Prokofiev, Rossini, Handel and Klaus Badelt. The fall concert was dedicated to George Kwain as official recorder and photographer, librarian, technical & logistical support for the KVYSO since its inception. Barbara Schwark was recognized for 25 years of service with a plaque and bouquet of roses and a recipient of the Dr. Janet V Leonard Con Spirito Award. Special programs with KVYSO pens were handed to patrons and a reception was held after the concert.
- December 8 – KVYSO strings were invited to play on the KVSO Holiday Concert at Maternity BVM Church, Bourbonnais, IL.

- December 12 – KVYSO Chamber Musicians performed a short Holiday program at the Kankakee Winter Market, at the Kankakee Public Library.
- January 19 – "Bring a Friend" Rehearsal and Pizza. Auditions were held before and after rehearsal.
- January 26 – Regular 2nd semester rehearsals began. Auditions were held before and after rehearsal.
- April 27– Spring concert at Kresge Auditorium, Larsen Fine Arts Center, Olivet Nazarene University. KVYSO celebrated with our senior musicians, presented five scholarships from the Dr. Lorne A. Schnell Independent Study Scholarships, presented the 25th Anniversary Music Awards to eight musicians and ended the concert with a grand finale that welcomed KVYSO alumni onstage. The program included works by Don Gillis, Stephen Schwartz, Robert W. Smith and Reinhold Glière. A special reception was held to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the KVYSO with photographs of the past orchestras and photos and memory book of Dr. Lorne and Joanne Schnell.



**BARBARA
SCHWARK**



**JUNELL
HOEKSTRA**
KVYSO Co-Chairs

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR

Sean Paul Mills



No Words...

Following the final concert of our 57th Season, several audience members approached me and said that they “didn’t have words” to express what they just experienced. That wasn’t to say that the performance was sub-par or awful. Quite the contrary. They simply couldn’t find the words, at that moment, to express the range of emotions that were felt during the performance. Our musicians were also deeply moved by their experiences. One wrote, “It is a privilege to be able to play in KVSO. It seems that our musicians are improving and working together incredibly... It was so wonderful to have such a big and appreciative audience! Standing ovations don’t happen often for KVSO, so I noticed!

Your preconcert conversation was lovely, and Jennifer Scavone’s artwork and presentation was a great touch. Audience building and educational ~ you do it with ease. You are putting in a lot of work! Thank you! Thank you for investing in all of us!”

It was at some point during the days after the final concert that I realized that our entire season had been a success! In fact, it even lived up to its theme of “When Words Fail, Music Speaks.” The music truly had spoken in place of words. This season, our audience and musicians were treated to incredible musical experiences that proved the power of music to affect and transport the listener and performer alike.

What a remarkable season it was! We explored the “exuberant” music of Edvard Grieg (Norwegian Dances), Antonin Dvorak (Symphony No. 5), and, with the assistance of French pianist Matthieu Bergheau, Sergei Rachmaninov (Piano Concerto No. 3). This was followed by a deeply passionate & personal program of music by Camille Saint-Saens (Bacchanale), Claude Debussy (Nocturnes - with members of the KVSO Chorus), and Ludwig van Beethoven (“Eroica” Symphony) which unpacked “life.” Shortly after this, the Kiwanis Youth Concert and “A Baroque Christmas” followed. Our own concertmistress, Rebekah Cope-Evers, and flute section of Stephanie Lupo and Clara Capriotti helped us usher in the holiday season with the music of J.S. Bach (Brandenburg Concerto No. 4) alongside Franz Josef Haydn (Symphony No. 96



“Miracle”) and Antonio Vivaldi (Gloria - with the KVSO Chorus), among others. The remainder of the season saw the arrival of violinist Andrew Sords in a program dedicated to “amour” with music of Pyotry Ilyich Tchaikovsky (Violin Concerto), Franz Schubert (Rosamunde Overture), and Robert Schumann (“Spring” Symphony) at front & center. And, of course, we concluded with music depicting the depth & breadth of the human experience in “light” as we beautifully performed Johannes Brahms (Variations on a Theme by Haydn), Elaine Hagenberg (Illuminare - with the KVSO Chorus, tenor soloist Phillip Koerner, and guest artist Jennifer Scavone), and Jean Sibelius (Symphony No. 2).

Scattered throughout the last year have been lovely interactions with community members (including our several post-concert receptions); attendance at the KCC Foundation’s Fundraiser Dinner and the KVSO Women’s Guild’s Annual Luncheon; participation in the KVSO Strategic Planning meetings as well as monthly Executive Committee and Board of Directors meetings; continued meetings with key community members and KVSO supporters; and an appearance on Kankakee Podcast (Episode #191) and several radio programs. All of these have been thoroughly enjoyable experiences

and wonderful opportunities to get a better sense of both the community and the support for the KVSO.

The KVSO would not be able to accomplish what it does in, and for, the communities that it serves were it not for the incredible generosity of time, talent, and treasure of so many volunteers. Thank you to all who have helped support the KVSO through your gift of self.

Our next season is titled “Voyages of Discovery.” The journey is made that much more enjoyable by the companionship of our fellow travelers. It is in the act of sharing the experiences of the journey, both positive and negative, that we truly come to appreciate each and every moment of the voyage. Even though the destination might have been the original motivation for our travels, it is the journey that we are taking together that is the most meaningful and life-changing aspect of our adventure.

I eagerly anticipate the next steps in our musical journey together. I can’t think of better companions to have on this journey.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature of Sean Paul Mills in black ink.

SEAN PAUL MILLS, D.M.A.
KVSO Music Director & Conductor



2024-2025 SEASON REPORT OF THE FOUNDATION

The Symphony, as an organization, has worked to be a good steward of the funds that have been entrusted to us by our donors. Due to this dedication, we have been able to help sustain the Symphony for many years.

The Foundation funds started the fiscal year with \$754,520, as of June 1, 2024. Each year, an amount is transferred to the operating fund of the Symphony based on a formula designed to support the annual operating budget while maintaining the long term viability of the invested funds. Based on that formula, \$30,177 was transferred from the investments to the operating funds of the Kankakee Valley Symphony Orchestra during the 2024-2025 season.

The increase in the value the invested funds resulted in a balance of \$814,640 in investments as of May 31, 2025.

We encourage you to consider the Symphony when you are planning your charitable giving or estate planning. Your generosity will help assure that audiences will have access to the quality of performances that the Symphony provides for years to come. Thank you, to all of our donors.



DALE L. GERRETSE
Foundation Committee

Con Spirito



**CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2025
DR. JANET V. LEONARD
CON SPIRITO AWARD RECIPIENT
DEE PINSKI**

Previous Recipients – Yvonne V. Chalfant, Barbara Schwark, Jane Veers, Lynn O'Brien-Ahlden, David Jaffe, Dr. and Mrs. John Bowling, George Kwain, Peter and Chris Crego, Bruce Payne, Dr. Kay Green, Paul Germano, Waltraud Schuller, Mary Maddox, Ovid Young, Harlow Hopkins, Ken Bade, Shannon Moore and Janet V. Leonard

2024-2025 LEADERSHIP

KVSO BOARD

Sean Paul Mills, D.M.A.
**MUSIC DIRECTOR
& CONDUCTOR**

Kate Cloonen
PRESIDENT

Lynn Ahlden
PAST PRESIDENT

David Jaffe
VICE PRESIDENT

Chris Bohlen
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Marcie Kolberg
TREASURER

Liz Madsen
WOMEN'S GUILD

Junell Hoekstra
KVYSO

Barbara Schwark
KVYSO

DIRECTORS
Bill Buck
Yvonne Chalfant
Jan Glazar
Don Reddick
Rebecca Schiltz
Michael Snyder
Maurice Sullivan
Jane Turrill
Barbi Brewer-Watson



KVYSO

Katrina Cessna
**MUSIC DIRECTOR
& CONDUCTOR**

**Barbara Schwark and
Junell Hoekstra**
CO-CHAIRS

Julie Bell
**ADMINISTRATIVE
COORDINATOR**

Cassandra McCullough
SECRETARY

Rich Schiltz
TREASURER

George Kwain
MUSIC LIBRARIAN

Committee Members
Robert Jensen
Rebecca Doran

WOMEN'S GUILD

Liz Madsen
PRESIDENT

Carol Vallone
VICE PRESIDENT

Peggy Strange
TREASURER

Vickie McBurnie
SECRETARY

**Dee Pinski and
Patti McThenie**
SYMPHONY OF FASHION

**Liz Madsen and
Carol Vallone**
SYMPHONY OF SWEETS

Liz Madsen
ANNUAL MEETING

Sharon Ouwenga
HISTORIAN

Carol Vallone
MEMBERSHIP

Sharon Ouwenga
PUBLICITY

CASH RECEIPTS

	2024-2025	2023-2024	Annual Budget
Subscriptions	13,000	10,870	10,700
Ticket sales	9,381	4,815	4,500
Concert/season sponsorships	3,500	0	2,500
Kiwanis children's concert	3,000	2,775	3,000
Fourth of July sponsor	5,000	5,000	5,000
Program ads	11,350	10,598	10,000
Donations	24,017	17,856	18,200
Transfer from women's board	25,500	24,000	22,500
Transfer from foundation funds	30,177	29,505	30,177
Charlton Family Foundation support	0	6,000	-
Grant revenues	6,000	17,800	5,000
Fourth of July admission fees	11,660	8,420	8,000
Other	5,095	2,640	2,800
Total cash receipts	147,680	140,279	122,377

CASH DISBURSEMENTS

	2024-2025	2023-2024	Annual Budget
Staff	13,000.00	12,430	12,600
Musician costs for concerts	90,429.00	70,090	89,010
Kiwanis youth concert	3,130	2,775	3,000
Musicians for fourth of July	9,008	8,818	9,100
Other fourth of July expenses	6,775	5,572	6,000
Mini concert expenses	2,550	3,621	3,800
Music and licensing	2,364	1,276	1,925
Insurance	2,475	2,705	3,000
Venue expense	300	1,855	3,000
Professional fees	150	2,150	2,200
Advertising	3,892	4,005	3,000
Printing and postage	2,280	2,810	3,000
Graphic design	7,860	6,661	7,000
Other expenses	20,068	7,983	17,050
Transfer to youth symphony	3,783	3,533	3,500
Total disbursements	168,064	136,284	167,185
Receipts in excess of expenditures	(20,384)	3,995	(44,808)
Cash at beginning of year	161,747	157,751	
Cash at end of period	141,363	161,747	

CORPORATE & COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Arends Hogan Walker, LLC
 Barmann, Bohlen & Scott PC
 Chris Bohlen & Rosemary Pistorius
 John and Jil Bowling
 Gary and Kate Cloonen
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 Kankakee River Valley
 Bob de Oliveira
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 Don and Dena Reddick
 Riverside Medical Center
 Marjorie Schrock
 Norman Strasma
 TCMT Assembly & Packing
 Tholen's Landscape and Garden Center





WELCOME TO OUR 2025-2026 SEASON

VOYAGES OF DISCOVERY



Please visit kvso.org for more information about our upcoming season

THE JOURNEY BEGINS

Saturday, Sept. 13, 2025 - 7 PM

Asbury United Methodist Church, Kankakee

BOHEMIAN ADVENTURES

Saturday, Oct. 25, 2025 - 7 PM

Asbury United Methodist Church, Kankakee

A BAROQUE CHRISTMAS

WITH THE KVSO CHORUS

Sunday, Dec. 7, 2025 - 4 PM

Asbury United Methodist Church, Kankakee

THE BRITISH ISLES

Saturday, Feb. 28, 2026 - 7 PM

Asbury United Methodist Church, Kankakee

FAVORITE ADVENTURES

Saturday, April 18, 2026 - 7 PM

Asbury United Methodist Church, Kankakee

Our Youth Symphony

FALL CONCERT

Sunday, Nov. 23, 2025 - 3 PM

Kresge Auditorium,
Olivet Nazarene University,
Bourbonnais



KANKAKEE
VALLEY
YOUTH
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

SPRING CONCERT

Sunday, April 26, 2025 - 3 PM

Kresge Auditorium,
Olivet Nazarene University,
Bourbonnais

A BAROQUE CHRISTMAS

WITH THE KVSO

Sunday, Dec. 7, 2025 - 4 PM

Asbury United Methodist Church,
Kankakee