

OREGON EAST SYMPHONY 2022-23 SEASON

Stars align for symphony season opener

By TAMMY MALGESINI
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The Oregon East Symphony is preparing to blast into its 2022-23 season with a solid concert lineup.

The symphony, under the direction of Beau Benson, OES artistic director and conductor, opens the symphony season with “Space Jam!” on Nov. 6, at the Vert Auditorium, Pendleton. It will feature John Williams’s “Star Wars Suite,” with music from the familiar film series. Also, complimenting the program is Gustav Holst’s tone poem, “The Planets,” a work that heavily inspired Williams’s score for “Star Wars.”

Reserved season tickets are now on sale. However, an exciting option this season, said J.D. Kindle, OES executive director, is the opportunity for people to attend symphonic concerts free of charge. Thanks to generous sponsorship from the Pendleton Foundation Trust and other supporters, Kindle

FIVE CONCERTS, FROM STAR WARS TO STRAUSS

“**Space Jam!**” (Nov. 6, 2:30 p.m.) OES artistic director and conductor Beau Benson: John Williams’s “Star Wars Suite” and Gustav Holst’s “The Planets.” (“Intrada” by Adolphus Hailstork). **Holiday Music Festival** (Dec. 11, 2:30 p.m.) An ecumenical celebration of the season. In addition to a performance by the symphony — under the direction of Assistant Conductor Zach Banks, the program includes the Pendleton Brass Quintet, Our Songs Are Alive from the Umatilla Indian Reservation and Christmas carol singalongs by Adam Lange. **“Some Like It Scot!”** (March 11, 2023, 2:30 p.m.) Benson will conduct Felix Mendelssohn’s “Symphony No. 3 in A minor, Op. 56.” (“Strum” by Jessie Montgomery). **Chamber Music Festival** (April 22, 2023, 6:30 p.m.) in the Vert Club Room, 345 S.W. Fourth St., Pendleton. In addition to a variety of small ensembles performing chamber works, the

evening features a generous spread of hors d’oeuvres and beverages provided by the symphony’s board of directors. This concert is an optional add-on (\$20) to season ticket packages.

“**A Hero’s Life**” (June 10, 2023, 7:30 p.m.) For the season finale, Benson will conduct Richard Strauss’ “Ein Heldenleben.” (“Immerse” by Quinn Mason). Unless otherwise noted, the concerts are in the Vert Auditorium, 480 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. Featured works noted in parenthesis are by contemporary African American composers. Season ticket packages (\$80/adult, \$60/senior, \$45/student, \$240/family) are available for purchase via www.oregoneastsymphony.org or the symphony office, 345 S.W. Fourth St., Pendleton. For questions, call 541-276-0320.

said OES is offering complimentary general admission tickets to each of the season’s symphonic concerts.

The tickets are good for any unreserved floor-level seat and can be picked up from partnering businesses and organizations, which will be published on the OES website a month prior to each concert.

Benson said it’s an incredible opportunity for people. He promises that those who come won’t regret it.

Season-opener sends conductor into orbit

The season’s concerts, Kindle said, are determined by Benson in collaboration with the OES Artistic Advisory Committee, which includes board members who are also performing members of the symphony and/or chorale, as well as other key artistic staff. The stars aligned this season, as Benson has wanted to feature Holst’s “The Planets” for quite some time.

Benson described it as an orchestral suite with each movement devoted to a planet in our solar system. He said the orchestration is very large and will require an extension to the Vert stage in order to fit all the musicians.

Concert season includes diversity

In continuing the organization’s commitment to diversity, OES is programming works by contemporary African American

composers during its three symphonic concerts this season. Benson said including the works provides “wonderful pieces of music” that the audience will enjoy hearing.

The fall concert features Adolphus Hailstork’s fanfare, “Intrada.” The short piece, which will open the concert, the conductor said, is a great fit to get everyone primed for the rest of the program. sini@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4532.

Symphony harmonizes with commuting conductor

Beau Benson travels from Texas

By TAMMY MALGESINI
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Beau Benson travels more than 1,800 miles each way several times a year to serve as artistic director and conductor of the Oregon East Symphony. A routine that began during the symphony’s 2013-14 season, Benson said he enjoys the arrangement.

“Even after all this time, the commute still makes each visit feel a little like an adventure,” he said. “But more than that, the opportunity to perform great music with a wonderful orchestra makes the many hours of travel worth it.”

OES Executive Director J.D. Kindle said Benson travels from his home in Waco, Texas, a week or two before symphony concerts. The maestro, he said, makes public appearances, visits music classes, works with youth ensembles and conducts rehearsals and the concert. He also attends board and committee meetings through conference calls or via Zoom.

A visiting conductor for a 2010 concert, Benson initially agreed to take the baton for the 2013-14 season when Anthony Spain announced his departure. Since then, he has continued in the role.

“Standing in front of a full symphony orchestra is an experience like none other,” Benson said. “And I have enjoyed more than my fair share of transformative moments on stage at the Vert Auditorium that have shaped who I am as a musician and as a person.”

Playing through a pandemic

At the onset of the pandemic, the symphony canceled the latter half of its 2019-20 season, with the exception of a virtual Spring Chamber Music concert.

Oregon East Symphony was creative, flexible and safety conscious through its 2020-21 season. Plans to open with a drive-in concert were postponed because smoke from wildfires resulted in hazardous air quality. And with freezing temperatures and precipitation, Mother Nature put a damper on the rescheduled drive-in event, although, the show went on virtually.

The annual Holiday Music Festival was presented via a prerecorded community radio program and a three-part Winter Chamber Music Series was livestreamed. The season finale featured a pair of sold-out

limited capacity symphony concerts, which included masked participants and audience members. The performance was later available on YouTube.

The 2021-22 season opener marked the return of the complete symphony orchestra under Benson’s baton. Kindle said bringing people together was important after the alienation and divisiveness many experienced because of the pandemic.

As a celebration of its full return to the stage, OES offered free general admission. Provided through a partnership with Pendleton Foundation Trust, the arrangement continues for the 2022-23 symphonic concerts.

For more information, contact 541-276-0320, info@oregoneastsymphony.org or visit www.oregoneastsymphony.org.



Beau Benson, Oregon East Symphony conductor and artistic director, leads a concert on Oct. 11, 2014, at the Vert Auditorium, Pendleton. “Space Jam!” the 2022-23 season opener, is Nov. 6, 2022, at the Vert.

VISIT US ON THE WEB AT:

www.EastOregonian.com



Kenneth Wayne McNair

November 4, 1931 - August 19, 2022



Kenneth Wayne McNair, age 90, passed away at his home in Hermiston, Oregon, on Aug. 19, 2022.

He was born on Nov. 4, 1931, in Myrtle Point, Oregon, to Leland Ross McNair and Marie Barzee McNair.

He attended grade school at Myrtle Point. His family moved to Ontario, Oregon where he graduated from Ontario High. Ken was a veteran and served in the Army for two years, 1955-1957, at Fort Rich in Anchorage, Alaska, as a mechanic.

On April 7, 1957, he married Bonnie Jean Berry and they lived in Hermiston for two years, then moved to Springfield, Oregon, where Ken worked for Dow Corning until his retirement in 1988. They sold their home and traveled full-time for the next six years throughout the lower 48 states and then settled in Echo, Oregon, for the next 28 years. They had just returned to Hermiston, three months prior to his passing.

Ken enjoyed fishing, camping, woodworking and traveling but his greatest enjoyment was when he was flying in his Cessna, 9 77 Tango.

He was a member of the Hermiston Assembly of God for 28 years and enjoyed working on projects, especially at Cornerstone Preschool with Miss Sandra.

He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Bonnie Jean; daughters, Deborah McNair of Hermiston, Susan Lo; son, Kevin (Tricia) McNair; six grandchildren, Stephen, T.J., Andrew, Matthew, Serena and Shanna; six great-grandchildren, Drake, Seth, Kiara, Issac, Atilla and Abigail; one great-great-grandson, Ian; all of Minnesota; sisters, June Jones of Pendleton, Katherine Lorange of Pasadena, California; brother, Robert (Nancy) Henry of Hermiston; and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, brother Bruce Henry; stepfathers, Bruce Henry and Wilson Beshears; great-granddaughters, Sofia and Jasmine McNair.

A funeral service will be held at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Aug. 27, 2022, at the Burns Mortuary Chapel. A private burial will be in the Hermiston Cemetery. Burns Mortuary of Hermiston is in care of arrangements.

To leave an online condolence for the family, please go to www.burnsmortuaryhermiston.com. Memorial contributions can be made to Vange John Memorial Hospice.



Apolonia Torres

April 10, 1935 - August 17, 2022

Apolonia Torres, 87, of Pendleton, Oregon, passed away into the arms of our Lord on Aug. 17, 2022, with her loving family by her side. Apolonia Torres was born on April 10, 1935, in Ahuijullo Jalisco, Mexico, the daughter of Augustine and Maria (Larios) Delgado.

Born and raised in Mexico, she learned the virtues of courage, strength, faith, and genuine love for family. It was her determination to provide a better future for her family that prompted her to make the sacrifice and migrate to the United States in 1974. This sacrifice was not without risk, yet the knowledge that God would provide safety, comfort, and opportunities for her children motivated her to embrace change.

She had the ability to make life beautiful no matter the circumstances. Apolonia believed that no matter what life threw at you, we all have the choice to appreciate who we have around us and not what we have. Apolonia created a family that loves unconditionally through the toughest and best of times. She gave her family and friends unforgettable memories, touched our hearts and truly blessed us all.

Among her favorite things to do was bring her family together at the table to enjoy a traditional Mexican meal. The sound of laughter, tears, and pure joy would fill her house. She would create masterful dishes from her garden and orchard. She found great joy in her gardening creating a colorful, luscious, and vibrant botanical oasis. Apolonia also enjoyed raising her chickens, she loved them as her “chiquitos” pets. Apolonia’s dedication to her family, garden, and work was obvious to all those around her.

She found employment at Lamb Weston in Connell, Washington, for the first six years and then transitioned to Simplot for 24 years, leading to her retirement in 2001. Throughout her retirement, she enjoyed traveling to see her family in Mexico and her family in the U.S. In 2005, she became a U.S. citizen; this was one of her proudest accomplishments.

Apolonia was preceded in death by her parents, Augustine and Maria Delgado; son, Miguel Torres; daughter, Rosa “Lily” Torres; granddaughter, Sandra “Sunni” Torres Godinez; sister, Guadalupe Gutierrez and brother, Silvano Delgado.

She is survived by her children, Guadalupe (Abraham) Contreras, Baltazar Torres, Adalberto (Elena) Torres, Roselia (Richard) Bishop, Arsario (Dennis) Mason, Apolinar Torres, Lorenzo (Carmen) Torres, Candi (Brad) Adams, Demetrio (Desiree) Torres; 32 grandchildren and 37 great-grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held at Our Lady of Angles Catholic Church, 565 Hermiston Ave., Hermiston, Oregon, on Aug. 26, 2022. The rosary service will be held on Friday, Aug. 26, 2022, at Our Lady of Angles Catholic Church, Hermiston, Oregon, at 10 a.m. followed by the funeral mass at 10:30 a.m.

A committal service will be held on Saturday, Aug. 27, 2022, at 11 a.m. at Riverview Cemetery in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho.

Apolonia’s family would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to her wonderful medical team, Good Shepherd Health Care System, Vange John Memorial Hospice, and our family and friends for all the love and support throughout this journey.

Apolonia’s advice to her loving family, “Pues mira, tu Nino solia ir a la basura en busca de guaraches viejos para darme. Era con todo su amor que me los daba. Los tome sin importarme de donde venian porque sabia que venian con todo su amor.” “Look, your Nino would search for shoes in the garbage to provide for me. It was with great love that he would give them to me. I received them regardless of where they came from because I knew that he was gifting them with all his love.”

Please share memories of Apolonia with her family at www.burnsmortuaryhermiston.com.

Burns Mortuary of Hermiston, Oregon, is in care of arrangements.

COMMUNITY BRIEFING

Library friends resume annual book sale

PENDLETON — Just a reminder that the member preview sale gets underway Thursday, Aug. 25 for the Pendleton Friends of the Library’s annual book sale. Held at the Pendleton Convention Center, 1601 Westgate, it’s open to the general public beginning Friday, Aug. 26.

To take advantage of the first selection, people can register as a member at the door or in advance via www.pendletonfriendsofthelibrary.wordpress.com. The nonprofit organization’s largest fundraiser, it features more than 50,000 books and media available for purchase.

The sale hours are:
• Thursday, Aug. 25, 7-9 p.m. (members only).
• Friday, Aug. 26, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
• Saturday, Aug. 27, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
• Saturday, Aug. 27, 3-5 p.m. (\$1 bag sale)

For more information, email pendletonfriendsofthelibrary@gmail.com or search www.facebook.com/pendletonfriendsofthelibrary.

IMAC serves up hearty breakfast

IRRIGON — The monthly Irrigon Multicultural Arts Center fundraising breakfast features hotcakes, ham or sausage patties, eggs, hash browns and biscuits with country gravy.

The meal is served Saturday, Aug. 27, 7:30-10:30 a.m. at Stokes Landing Senior Center, 150 Columbia Lane, Irrigon. The cost is \$5 per person.

The group is dedicated to preserving Irrigon’s 1921 school building and developing a regional art venue. For more information, call Donna Eppenbach at 541-922-3197.

— EO Media Group