



Expanding the future of Opera  
through development, mentoring and advancement of volunteer service



www.OperaVolunteers.org

## The Opera Volunteer Voice

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newsletter of  
Opera Volunteers  
International  
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facebook.com/OperaVolunteers

### Do You Like to Travel? Do You Like Opera?

**O**ne of the perks for OVI members is travel. This is great for those who like seeing opera and enjoy meeting other opera lovers from around the country. Of course you must have the time and the means, but for those who do, it is really worthwhile. And keep in mind that it is possible that OVI may just come to your town or to a place near you. Last month at our **Knoxville** meeting, several guild members from Chattanooga, **Nashville** and other nearby places either came for a day or stayed over for a night.

Each fall OVI has its annual Focus Meeting and each spring along with **OPERA America** we attend the annual conference of opera companies and musical artists. These events generally have at least one opera that we can attend. We get the group discount on the conference, the special hotel rate and there is a reduced 2 day conference rate for OVI members who don't want to stay for the full conference.

In recent years OVI has visited **New Orleans, Austin, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Salt Lake City, Omaha, Vancouver and Montreal**. This spring we will be getting together in Dallas where we can see operas in both **Dallas** and in **Fort Worth**.

For Verdi's birthday OVI hosted a wonderful trip to Italy for the celebration, and we are considering future trips. Part of the trip cost is a contribution which helps sustain our Grants Program.

This spring we have been invited to team up with **Kansas City Lyric Opera Guild** for their weekend in **New York** where we can see two or three operas at the **Metropolitan Opera** and also enjoy some fine dining.

OVI's next Fall Focus will be in **Tucson** and the spring 2018 OPERA America conference will be in centrally located St. Louis. Hope we see you around the country!

*Page 8 and 9 have details on the New York trip which has a January 1st deadline.*

### Upcoming Travel Opportunities with OVI:

- May 5 - 8, 2017 Opera Conference 2017, Dallas, Texas  
*Creating Collaborative Change*
- April 17 - 21, 2017 New York Trip to Metropolitan Opera
- October 2017 OVI Fall Focus Meeting in Tucson
- June 20 - 23 2018 Opera Conference in St. Louis, MO



Find us on the internet at [OperaVolunteers.org](http://OperaVolunteers.org)

**OVI President's Message**



Rhonda Sweeney

How appropriate that we began our 46<sup>th</sup> year in the VOLUNTEER state of Tennessee! On a gorgeous autumn weekend mid-October, we celebrated opera volunteerism at our annual Fall Focus meeting in Knoxville, in the midst of the city's 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration! OVI Secretary **Phyllis Driver**, past President of **Knoxville Opera Guild**, hosted over 30 OVI members and guests for a delightful weekend that kicked off at a very special cocktail party at the home of **Dorothy and Caesar Stair** overlooking the Tennessee River! Gilbert and Sullivan's *Pirates of Penzance* was the opera performed in the historic **Tennessee Theater**, preceded by dinner with members of the **Knoxville Opera Board and Guild Board** in the **East Tennessee Historical Society**.

The weekend ended with a visit to the Smithsonian affiliate **Museum of Appalachia**, representing the history of East Tennessee, showing how people lived, worked, and played, and enjoyed some bluegrass music!

One of the joys of being an OVI member is traveling across North America to experience opera in theaters small and large, and meeting local volunteers. We increased our own knowledge and effectiveness during a session on Social Media (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube) – what it is and how to use it – for spreading the word about OVI or our local opera volunteer work to others. We hope to put our new learnings into practice, so please visit and “Like” our **Opera Volunteers International Facebook** page, then you will be able to see photos from our meetings and conferences, as well as see what's happening around the world of opera. You can also follow us on Twitter @OperaVolunteer.

We are thankful to all our members, for your support of our organization and for your volunteering in support of opera locally. **National Opera Week** was in full swing **October 28 – November 6**, and I hope you made plans to see an opera, bring a friend, and participate as a volunteer to spread the word about this great art form! It was exciting to spend time with opera volunteers from Portland, Tucson, Chicago, Ogden, Minneapolis, Omaha, Kansas City, Cincinnati, Nashville, Chattanooga, Knoxville, and Houston at our meeting to hear what's happening in their world of opera!

As we head into the very busy holiday season between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, we encourage our Group Members to think ahead to the **February 1 deadline** for **Matching Grant applications**, as well as nominations for their **Projects of Special Merit** or **Partners in Excellence**. All applications and nomination forms, as well as past awardees, can be found on our OVI website [www.OperaVolunteers.org](http://www.OperaVolunteers.org). On behalf of our entire Board, we wish you all the best in 2017 and invite you to join us in “Big D, Little A, Double L, A, S (That spells Dallas!) **May 4-6** for OVI's weekend at **Opera Conference 2017!** And if you are an advance planner, save the date for our **2017 Fall Focus meeting** in **Tucson, Arizona October 13-15**.

*Rhonda*

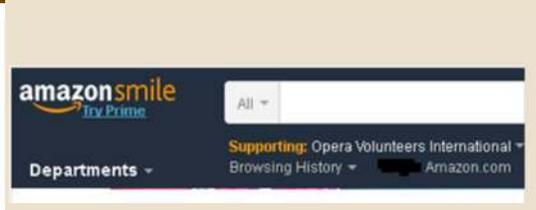
Rhonda Sweeney, President



Chris Milligan Managing Director of Cincinnati Opera, Sarajane King Guild President, Marilyn Ott 2016 Partners in Excellence award recipient, Kemper Florin, Outbound Manager and Patty Beggs, Cincinnati Opera General Director



Libby Siskron presents Partner in Excellence Award to Delton Harrison, Jr. at the Shreveport Opera Board Meeting.



**You can help OVI when you shop on Amazon by choosing Opera Volunteers International as your designated charity**

## How Was Your *National Opera Week*? Oct 28 - Nov 6, 2016

Did you attend an opera or concert event? Did you bring a friend? Did your local opera company or volunteer group hold a celebration or public event? Or did you, like me, miss the boat?

Many opera companies and opera support groups celebrated National Opera Week 2016 in a very public way. You can go to the National Opera Week page on OPERA America's website to see what some of the groups did this year. There are also some posts on Facebook. But it seems to me that National Opera Week with just a little volunteer help could be ever so much bigger.

Among the more prominent participants, once more, was **Celebrate National Opera Week** in the Buffalo area of New York which is sponsored by **Erwin H. Johnson Memorial Fund, Inc.** (an OVI member group). Check out the CNOW Facebook Page and website dedicated to National Opera Week.

So did you miss out on National Opera Week this year? Not to worry. We can now look forward to National Opera Week 2017 and we have a whole year to plan.



Members of Lyric Opera of Chicago's Young Professionals erase stuffy opera stereotypes in the Civic Opera House Grand Foyer

*Wouldn't it be great if every OVI group worked together to plan a National Opera Week 2017 celebration? .... Stay tuned for more ...*

### New Deadlines Approaching!

**February 1** is our new deadline for **Matching Grants**, **Projects of Special Merit**, and for your **Partners in Excellence** nominations. Criteria and application information can be found on the OVI website.

**Matching Grants** - Group members of Opera Volunteers International can apply for a matching grant of up to \$2,000. Projects that incorporate volunteerism to stimulate interest in opera and its growth in their community may be candidates for such a grant. If your member opera support group has a great project ready to go, but needs additional funds to make it happen, OVI might be able to help.

**Projects of Special Merit** - Help other OVI group members by letting us know about especially novel or successful projects that your volunteer group has initiated. This could be something entirely new or an annual event.

**Partners in Excellence** - What better way to honor and recognize your most valued volunteers or to recognize your group for a significant achievement or anniversary.

**NEW OVI APPLICATION DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 1 OF EACH YEAR**



### Have You Renewed Your OVI Membership?

It is easy to do on our website. Has your organization renewed their group membership? To be listed in our annual membership book and to be eligible for grants and recognition awards it is important to remain in good standing.

Any questions can be sent to: [membership@operavolunteers.org](mailto:membership@operavolunteers.org)

Find us on the internet at [www.OperaVolunteers.org](http://www.OperaVolunteers.org)

### OVI Focus Meeting in Knoxville, Tennessee

Several OVI members and board members met in Knoxville last month for our annual focus meeting, board meeting and some very pleasurable meals, sightseeing and special outings. We had an opportunity to meet members of the Knoxville Opera Guild and to reunite with fellow board members who we only know from our monthly tele-meetings. One of the highlights was attending a rousing production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Pirates of Penzance*. Thank you Phyllis Driver for coordinating a wonderful weekend, to our hosts, Caesar and Dorothy Stair, and to the Knoxville Opera Guild. Here are a few pictures You can see more on Facebook:





## OVI Focus Meeting in Knoxville, Tennessee



**W**e came for a business meeting but found plenty of time for pleasure, enjoying bluegrass, barbecue, and baritone - Bob Orth as a zany *Major General Stanley*. We learned about the Eastern Cherokee and the creative people of Appalachia. Beautiful Knoxville was dressed in its best fall colors.

Thank you to Greg Maciolek for giving us a nuts and bolts crash course on social media.

Thank you's are also in order to **Wendy Wuestenberg** from the **Twin Cities Opera Guild** who showed us what they achieved with their OVI grant in July. They collaborated with an outside production team to create an innovative opera immersion experience for local schoolchildren staged in a classic Victorian mansion. We will be preparing a more extensive report in a future newsletter.

### Get the word out!

**OVI is accepting ads in our next issue:**

Deadline for the next newsletter will be December 31st and the issue will come out around January 20.

Rates*	1 insertion	4 insertions	Savings
Business Card	\$45	\$165	\$15
Quarter Page	\$80	\$300	\$20
Half Page	\$130	\$500	\$20
Full Page	\$250	\$850	\$150

\*Prices are for camera ready copy or computer graphics in JPG format

**J**oin opera volunteers across North America at the annual OPERA America Opera Conference. Our OVI weekend will kickoff Thursday evening, May 4 with a Grantor reception and will conclude on Saturday night with our Awards dinner. Our conference hotel in Dallas, the Sheraton Dallas Hotel, is right in the heart of the AT&T Arts District, proximate to the Winspear Opera House, home to The Dallas Opera. Conference rate is \$179/night.

There will be various opera performance opportunities at both The Dallas Opera as well as Fort Worth Opera during the Conference, and attendees may wish to stay over through Sunday evening to take in the matinee performance at The Dallas Opera of Bellini's Norma. Details and registration, which will begin in December, can be found on the OPERA America website:

<http://conference.operaamerica.org/>

Stay tuned!



THE NATIONAL OPERA CENTER  
and AMERICA  
Opera Volunteers Internationa

2017  
OPERA CONFERENCE

**Creating Collaborative Change**

**Hosted by The Dallas Opera**  
DALLAS, TX | MAY 5–8, 2017

*Registration opens in early December*



# Travel with the Lyric Opera Guild to New York to See the Stars Come Out!

KANSAS CITY  
**LYRIC  
OPERA  
GUILD**

Renée Fleming ♪ Elina Garanca ♪ Anna Netrebko ♪ Dmitri Hvorostovsky  
Olga Peretyatko ♪ Joseph Calleja ♪ Latonia Moore ♪ James Morris

**April 17-21, 2017**  
Deadline: January 1, 2017

The Lyric Opera Guild has identified a few days in April where the Metropolitan Opera is featuring a whole group of outstanding singers...and we want you to enjoy it with us! You will be able to see many of today's greatest stars, including sopranos **Renée Fleming, Anna Netrebko, Latonia Moore** and **Olga Peretyatko**, along with mezzo soprano **Elina Garanca**, tenor **Joseph Calleja**, baritone **Dmitri Hvorostovsky** and bass **James Morris**.

Here is our itinerary:

**Monday, April 17.** We leave for New York, and upon arrival we check in at the Empire Hotel just across the street from Lincoln Center. That night we enjoy a dinner at our favorite Lincoln Center area restaurant, Gabriel's, and have an *optional* performance at the Metropolitan Opera of Richard Strauss' romantic comedy **Der Rosenkavalier**, with Renée



Renée Fleming and Elina Garanca star in the Met's *Der Rosenkavalier*.

Fleming and Elina Garanca. Also in the cast are Matthew Polenzani and bass Günther Groissböck. Some may prefer just to rest after the trip.

**Tuesday, April 18.** This day is free for you to enjoy New York. In the evening we will hear Tchaikovsky's masterpiece, *Eugene Onegin*, starring Anna Netrebko and Dmitri Hvorostovsky, making a triumphant return to the stage after a frightening bout with cancer.



Anna Netrebko stars as Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin*. Dmitri Hvorostovsky (below) sings the title role.



**Wednesday, April 19.** You can explore New York or do some shopping, before joining us at the Metropolitan Opera that night for the famous glitzy "Las Vegas" production of Verdi's *Rigoletto*, featuring the ringing voice of tenor Joseph Calleja and the latest Russian coloratura sensation, Olga Peretyatko. Baritone Željko Lučić takes on the title role.

**Thursday, April 20.** We will meet for a

(continued on reverse side)



## RESERVATIONS - New York Trip -April 2017 (please print legibly)

Full Names (as on driver's licenses): \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

[check one]  Single Room  Double Room, sharing with \_\_\_\_\_

Any special dietary restrictions? \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I choose the optional *Der Rosenkavalier* at \$200 extra.  How many tickets? \_\_\_\_\_

To reserve your spot on this trip, please send this form and a deposit of **\$1,000 per person** by **January 1, 2017**. The remainder of your payment will be due on **February 1, 2017**. Please make your check payable to **Lyric Opera Guild Trips** and mail it to Wilma Wilcox, 16314 W. Saddletree Lane, Olathe, Kansas 66062. If you wish to make your own air and/or hotel arrangements, let us know and deduct the air fare and/or hotel cost from your final payment (see trip cost summary on reverse side).

pre-opera reception at the Phillips Club near Lincoln Center, then walk to the Met for the famous Franco Zeffirelli no-holds-barred production of Verdi's *Aida*, with the sensational young American soprano **Latonia Moore** in the lead, also starring veteran bass **James Morris**. Violetta Urmana is Amneris and tenor Riccardo Massi is Radames.

**Friday, April 21.** We return to Kansas City with the music of Verdi, Tchaikovsky and Strauss ringing in our ears.

April in New York should be lovely. We hope that you can join us!



Above: A scene from the Metropolitan Opera's colorful "Las Vegas" production of *Rigoletto*. Below: The brilliant young American soprano Latonia Moore appears in the title role of *Aida*, having made a sensational debut in the role at the Met a couple of years ago.




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**Tour Cost:**

Land Arrangements .....	\$1,975
Airfare from and to Kansas City .....	\$400
Total .....	\$2,375
Added single supplement (if you want a single room at the hotel).....	\$500

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If you have any questions please e-mail (preferred) or call our tour guide, Wilma Wilcox, at wilmawilcox@yahoo.com or at 913-302-9789.

Thanks!

**Cancellation Policy**

Your deposit and reservation constitute a contract for you to go on this trip. Upon receiving your deposit we will expend substantial sums to pay for your costs of this trip. If you must cancel, you will still owe the balance of the trip charge, but we will return whatever portion of your trip costs we are able to recover. *We strongly recommend trip cancellation insurance to protect your investment in this trip.* Please call your travel agent or check with trip insurance providers online.

**Change Policy**

We are happy to accommodate any changes you want to make for this trip, but all change requests must be made in writing at the time of the reservation and are subject to availability and price adjustments. The tour leader must acknowledge all changes in writing for the requested changes to be confirmed.

*This trip includes:*

- ♪ Round trip air fare between Kansas City and New York.
- ♪ Bus transportation to and from the airport and the Empire Hotel.
- ♪ Accommodations at the Empire Hotel for four nights.
- ♪ Orchestra section seats to *Eugene Onegin*, *Rigoletto* and *Aida* at the Metropolitan Opera.
- ♪ Group meal at Gabriel's Restaurant and a *hors d'oeuvres* reception at the Phillips Club.
- ♪ All baggage and portorage fees, except for any baggage fees the airline charges, which you must pay on your own.
- ♪ Tax deductible contribution to the Kansas City Lyric Opera Guild.