

## **BRAVA Update on the Bowie Center for the Performing Arts**

### **Joint Use Agreement & Governance Board**

We are eagerly awaiting the last signature upon the Joint Use Agreement at which time the remaining Phase 4 construction funding will be available. The signing of the JUA will also allow the Governance Board to begin the task of hiring the BCPA's staff and scheduling full time operation of the facility. The Governance Board will consist of representatives from the City of Bowie, Prince George's County Public School System, Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission, Bowie High School Principal, City of Bowie Arts Committee, the Greater Bowie Chamber of Commerce, and BRAVA.

### **Construction Update**

Phase 3 construction was completed in April 2004 allowing the BCPA to be occupied and initial testing to occur. This testing has been through "Test Events" which are real events used to test the BCPA's systems under actual event conditions. As each test event completes, issues are either resolved prior to the next test event or deferred for Phase 4 or later. To date, there have been few issues to deal with of any consequence and all test events have gone well. This testing phase concluded at the end of May 2005.

Phase 4 construction includes the installation of the over-stage fly system and the remaining theatrical lighting. Phase 4 also includes major equipment items including the band shell and completion of the furnishing of the BCPA with pianos, orchestra chairs, music stands, auxiliary sound equipment, folding tables, portable risers, etc. Phase 4 testing will use the same test event format as Phase 3 followed thereafter by regular operations.

### **Board of Directors Election**

The members of the 2005 Board of Directors are:

Al Golato - President	Margaret Herman
Mary Nusser - Vice President	Maria Killian-Clement
Tom Desiderio - Treasurer	David Matthews *
Kelly Pierce - Corresponding Secretary	Denise Patterson McKenney *
Donna Sturgill - Recording Secretary	Gerald Muller
Victoria Bergmann	Hugh Reams
Nancy Enright	Gordon Stewart - President Emeritus
Sylma Gottlieb	Shelia Craig Whiteman
Milly Hall	*new board members

BRAVA thanks Gordon Stewart for his many years as BRAVA's president. The Board voted to recognize his service by naming him President Emeritus as he continues to serve on the Board of Directors.

BRAVA also wishes to thank former BRAVA Board Members for their past service on the Board of Directors. The BCPA could not have been built without the strong support of the State of Maryland, Prince George's County, Prince George's County Public Schools, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, City of Bowie, the federal government, local businesses, independent foundations, and donations from countless citizens. We especially acknowledge the generous private-sector gifts represented by the permanent Naming Opportunities designated throughout the BCPA.

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## Gala Week

A Gala Week Celebration of the arts was held August 14 through 21, 2004 to dedicate the new Bowie Center for the Performing Arts. Fourteen events were held and thousands of patrons came to the BCPA:

Official Ribbon Cutting Ceremony  
(free)  
Taste of Bowie Luncheon  
(\$10)  
Taste of Bowie Show  
(free)  
A Classical Evening  
(\$50)  
Celebrate America (2 performances)  
(\$10)  
Reception for active & retired servicemen and women  
(free)  
The Art of Dance  
(\$20)  
The Power of Voice and Music  
(\$10 and \$5)  
SHILOH, live concert  
(\$15 and \$10)  
Star Studded Gala Evening hosted by Kathie Lee Gifford, featuring Leslie Uggams  
(\$100)  
Children's Theater  
(\$10 and \$5)  
Week-long events included:  
Children's Art Camp  
(\$150 for week of day-long activity and lunch)  
Two Art Shows and Receptions  
(free)

Direct expenses for Gala Week were \$131,350; ticket sales, sponsorships and donations were \$117,500; leading to a final Gala Week net cost of \$13,850. We were pleased to hear from professionals in the business who stated that our expenses were astonishingly low for the quality and quantity of programming that was presented. This is consistent with the record that BRAVA has maintained for over ten years.

When planning began in fall 2003 for the Gala Week, it was anticipated that previously-awarded funding would be disbursed in time to complete the remaining construction and equipment purchasing. However, this did not occur, so instead of using equipment owned by the Center, there was an expense of \$47,500 to rent similar equipment to support the Gala Week events.

The high level of success of Gala Week was made possible only through the amazing talent and support of so many Bowie and area volunteers. These 585 Gala Week volunteers made these events some of the best in Bowie's history.

Many of the events were free or low cost to the public to allow everyone to experience a diverse sampling of the various arts that will be available in the future. There were thousands of patrons attending these fourteen events, celebrating the many of the finest talents of Bowie, Prince George's County, the State of Maryland and beyond.

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## Test Events

In the past, before construction funding was in hand, BRAVA stayed busy conducting research and holding community events. 2005 was no different. As we awaited the signatures on the JUA and receipt of the final funds, BRAVA was busy with BCPA test events which greatly assisted us in ensuring operational readiness.

Approximately 5,000 patrons attended the various test events in 2004. Approximately 7,500 patrons attended the various test events in 2005. Thus the BCPA is already having a positive impact on the Bowie-area economy and specifically on Bowie's Main Street businesses.

### **Saturday, February 12**

### **Real Estate Seminar**

This event had to be postponed as the organizing group could not provide the necessary insurance certificates.

### **Sunday, February 13**

### **Tsunami Benefit Concert**

Organized by the City of Bowie, community residents and volunteers from BRAVA. Held in the Main Performance Hall and the Bowie High School cafeteria. All of Bowie came together for a concert benefit and dinner for the victims of the December 26, 2004 tsunami in Asia. 58 performers and 94 volunteers organized "Heart to Heart" and raised nearly \$8,000. The Guild of Bowie Artists held an Art Show through mid-May 2005 and donated a portion of their sales. Sponsors helped offset the required costs of the event. BRAVA volunteers coordinated the behind-the-scenes efforts and managed the show.

### **Wednesday March 16**

### **Women's History Celebration**

Presented by the Soroptimist International of Bowie-Crofton, the American Association of University Women, and the Laurel Business and Professional Women. Held in the Bowie Blade-News Recital Hall, a reception was followed by a show featuring the well-known actress Kate Campbell Stevenson, who specializes in live educational theatre about historical female role models.

### **Saturday April 9**

### **"Life in Those Roarin' Twenties"**

Presented by the Bowie Knights of Harmony. This group of energetic performers signed up three years ago to hold their annual musical show at the BCPA. This year everyone was thrilled to see their show at the BCPA. Two shows were held on one day which brought over 1,200 patrons to the BCPA and Bowie. Many traveled from Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, Boston, Virginia, West Virginia, the Naval Academy, etc. They reported many area sponsors; all area hotels were booked. BRAVA appreciated the kind words about the BCPA and its volunteers from these long-time music specialists.

### **Thursday, April 7**

### **Choir Concert**

Presented by Bowie High School's Choral Music Department. The evening performance was well attended.

### **Wednesday, April 13**

### **Tri-M Honor Society Concert and Induction**

Presented by the Tri-M Music Honor Society, Bowie Chapter. Varied performance pieces were held in the Bowie Blade-News Recital Hall followed by their annual induction and reception.

### **Saturday April 16**

### **Classical Evening II**

Presented by the Maryland Opera Society and BRAVA. Audience members included many Bowie, Mitchellville and Crofton residents, as well as dozens who traveled from Annapolis, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., Lanham, Edgewater and Greenbelt. Residents of a Solomon's Island retirement facility traveled by chartered bus to hear the award-winning performers. There was broad advertising in

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Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia. Orchestra Conductor Dr. Richard Fazio and Producer/Conductor Dr. Gerald Muller offered high praise for the BCPA's facilities and capabilities.

**Thursday, April 21**

**Special Surprise Student Assembly**

Presented by Lt. Governor Michael Steele and the Prince George's County Board of Education. This was the only non-public presentation for the exclusive benefit of the underclassmen of Bowie High School. The message to stay in school, get an education, take financial responsibility, and find what you love to do was the theme of this assembly. Surprise guest celebrities included: multi-millionaire Hip Hop Music Executive Russell Simmons, who founded Def Jam Records and Phat Farm clothing lines; Reverend Run, formerly of RUN-DMC; and music executives Kevin Liles and Tony Austin. These entrepreneurs engaged the students with their stories of their backgrounds, their education and their work ethic on the way to their success stories. Surprised, stunned and excited students were very appreciative. This event brought positive attention to Bowie.

**Thursday, April 21- 24**

**POPS Concert**

Presented by the Bowie High Choral Music Department. Disney-theme concert held in the Main Performance Hall. As usual, this annual show attracted close to 2,000 patrons, many from outside the Bowie High School community. In particular, one retired woman reported that she lived in Virginia but heard about the show through her granddaughter (who lives in Crofton) and saw it on the marquee. Many cast, crew and audience members reported pre- and post-show trips to our local restaurants.

**Tuesday, May 3**

**Band Concert**

Presented by the Bowie High School Instrumental Music Department. The public was welcome to attend. The concert was held in the Main Hall.

**Wednesday, May 18**

**Awards Presentation**

Presented by Bowie High School. The public was welcome to attend.

**Wednesday, May 18-21**

**Art Show**

Presented by Bowie High School and the Graphic Arts students. This event was previously held at City Hall but now reached a wider audience from those attending the Awards Presentation and the final weekend performances of Little Shop of Horrors. The public was welcome to attend and many Guild of Bowie Artist members attended.

**Friday, May 6 through Saturday May 21**

**"Little Shop of Horrors" Musical**

Presented by the Bowie High School Music Department. Ten years ago, music teacher Eleanor Minor presented the East Coast, Pre-Broadway Premier of "Metropolis" in the school cafeteria. At that final show, an announcement was made which started the journey that culminated in this presentation of their first musical production in the BCPA's Main Hall. It was very well received by the public.

**Note:**

All events were coordinated and supported by unpaid BRAVA volunteers. For many of these events, daily Box Office hours were required. Events also required rehearsals, set and lighting changes. In addition to benefiting the many community members and schoolchildren, there were fund raising opportunities for the many local groups who provide meaningful service and diversity to our community.

Unfortunately, BRAVA was forced to decline a number of test events because the requested dates were already booked. All test event requests were honored on a first-come, first-served basis.

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BRAVA deeply appreciates the support of our all partners and the community throughout the decade-long process of construction, testing of facilities and upcoming transfer of governance of the Bowie Center for the Performing Arts.

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