

THE COMMUNITY BAND EXPERIENCE

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

For so many people the participation in community bands is immensely rewarding and meaningful. In this issue, we profile a long-time member of ACB, the First Coast Wind Ensemble. What's Your Story? Please submit your story to: editor@acbands.org

~ Publications Coordinator

First Coast Wind Symphony 2017 Tour to Austria!

In June of 2017, the First Coast Wind Symphony will visit both Salzburg and Vienna, Austria, the cities of Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven, and perform three concerts while there. This is an amazing opportunity to visit the musical, historical and cultural sites of Austria. Vienna is a UNESCO heritage city and the historical center of the musical world.



Artie Clifton, conductor of the FCWS, announced, "We are very excited about the First Coast Wind Symphony's first international tour in June to Salzburg and Vienna, Austria! This is a great opportunity to visit the musical and cultural sites of Austria and to perform

in two cities that are jewels of the musical world. We look forward to connecting with other Austrian community bands and performing together. This fall, on October 24, we will host the Philharmonistes des Pays de Vaucluse, a community band visiting us from France. Both groups will perform together in a partner concert at Jacksonville University. These kinds of shared experiences with like-minded musicians remind us of the power of music to promote cultural understanding and brotherhood."

The tour is planned as a family event, including members of the FCWS, their friends and family, reserve and alumni members, and other performers who are interested in travelling and performing.

The First Coast Wind Symphony is selling raffle tickets to help defray the expenses of our trip to Vienna, Austria where we will be performing 3 concerts, learning about our musical heritage by visiting the historic sites associated with Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven, and attending other musical performances. Please support our efforts as Musical Ambassadors from Jacksonville, Florida.

What composers are saying about the First Coast Wind Symphony

"Guest conducting the First Coast Wind Symphony was such a genuine pleasure. This group of fine musicians are as warm and

friendly as they are musically talented. I truly hope I have another chance to share the stage with them!"

– Samuel Hazo, Feb. 2016

"My sincere thanks to Artie Clifton and the First Coast Wind Symphony for inviting me to share a concert with them in a performance of my music. As a composer, it is always gratifying to be asked to conduct my own works with a Wind Symphony, but to hear such an outstanding group of musicians performing at such a high level of musical integrity was a special treat. What a fantastic wind symphony! Their professionalism, artistry and energy certainly make this one of the premiere community bands in the country, and certainly one of the musical crown jewels of Florida. Best wishes for continued success!"

– Robert Sheldon, Feb 2013



The First Coast Wind Symphony, based in Jacksonville, Florida

"What a pleasure and thrill it was for me to work with the First Coast Wind Symphony! The group is comprised of highly motivated and talented musicians who share a passion for music and performance. It was an honor to conduct and compose for the group. I look forward to returning at the first opportunity! Sincere thanks and best wishes to all!"

– Robert W. Smith, Feb 2015

"An amazing musical experience...guest conducting the First Coast Wind Symphony, under the expert direction of a masterful musician like Artie Clifton, was a delightful pleasure. Conducting musicians who enjoy each other both



February 25, 2017 concert: Mark Camphouse conducting

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musically and socially creates a wonderful atmosphere for excellent music making. You are FANTASTIC! Thank you!"

– James Curnow, Feb 2014

"Guest Conducting the First Coast Wind Symphony will go down as one of my fondest memories as a conductor, music educator and composer! The quality by which this professional sounding Symphony promotes the arts through concerts and outreach programs makes them one of the most influential and relevant wind symphonies of our time!"

– Richard L. Saucedo, Feb 2012

"The First Coast Wind Symphony is a hidden gem on the verge of greatness! Marvelous musicians under marvelous leadership! Wind and Percussion fans take note. These are concerts you will NOT want to miss!"

– David Holsinger, Feb 2011



Samuel Hazo with the band, rehearsing his work, "Voices of the Sky"

History of the First Coast Wind Symphony

The First Coast Wind Symphony is an all-volunteer community music organization located in Jacksonville, Florida. The title "First Coast" refers to Northeast Florida, where early French and Spanish explorers settled, and home to St. Augustine, America's oldest city. The group was founded in 1990 as the First Coast Wind Ensemble and is registered as a 501c3 nonprofit organization. It is a member of the Association of Concert Bands, a national organization of community bands, and the Cultural Council of Jacksonville.

The mission of the First Coast Wind Symphony is to:

- ~ Serve as a cultural resource by providing outstanding performances of quality wind music.
- ~ Provide an opportunity for its volunteer members to participate in a cultural service organization.
- ~ Provide an opportunity for musical expression and growth among musicians of advanced proficiency.
- ~ Continue the community concert band tradition as an important part of America's musical heritage.

First Coast Wind Symphony membership is open to any musician who completes a successful audition and agrees to the conditions

of membership as stated in the bylaws. The membership consists of approximately 80 woodwind, brass and percussion instrumentalists who represent a number of different occupations, including professional musicians. The ensemble regularly performs with 50 players. Programs range from classical to popular band music, marches, chamber music and new works.

The First Coast Wind Symphony gives several concerts a year in Northeast Florida, all open to the public at no charge. It serves as an important cultural resource, dedicated to providing outstanding performances of quality wind music. The ensemble achieved national recognition after acclaimed performances in 1995 and in 2003 at the National Conventions of the Association of Concert Bands. A highlight of the 1997-98 concert season was a performance at the Southern Division College Band Directors National Association.

The group's continuing support for music education includes projects such as partner concerts with local high school bands and choruses, the sponsorship of nationally-known composers, including David Holsinger, Richard Saucedo, Robert Sheldon, James Curnow, Robert W. Smith, Ralph Ford and Samuel Hazo, family concerts featuring music for all ages, and the annual Concerto Competition for High School and Collegiate Musicians, an event open to all Florida students.

The First Coast Wind Symphony has recorded three compact discs. The first CD, titled *Prevailing Winds*, was produced in 2001 and featured the music of Gustav Holst, Ralph Vaughan Williams, George Gershwin, and other composers. The second disc, *A Christmas Celebration*, was recorded in 2007. The third CD, *Symphonic Spirit*, celebrates the group's 20th year. In 2012, a DVD titled *Sounds of the First Coast* was released that included live concert performances. For the group's 25th anniversary season, Robert W. Smith was commissioned to write a new dedicatory work, "Postcards from the First Coast," which was premiered on February 21, 2015 at Jacksonville University, conducted by the composer.

For more information about the First Coast Wind Symphony, please contact Music Director Artie Clifton at aclifton@ju.edu

~ Submitted by Patrick Hennessey



The First Coast Wind Symphony performs in Terry Concert Hall at Jacksonville University