

Preview**CVNP Conservancy offers second round of adult band camps in Peninsula**

by Mike Telin



Now that we are in the middle of our continued coverage of the Kent/Blossom Music School and the important role that it and other summer festivals play in the education of young professional musicians, we find it equally fitting to highlight a summer music camp designed for adults.

“Many people have gone through rigorous musical training at some of the most prestigious conservatories and schools of music, but for one reason or another have chosen not to pursue performing as a career path,” says Jane Berkner, who teaches flute at the University of Akron and heads the Music by Nature programs in Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Beginning this Sunday, July 14, and running through Wednesday, July 17 (there is still time to register!) The Conservancy for the Cuyahoga Valley National Park will host the second annual [Music Camp by Nature Adult Band Camp](#) at the Happy Days Lodge and Hines Hill Center in Peninsula.

Who attends adult music camps? According to Berkner, last summer's participants came from all walks of life including a mechanic for Delta Airlines, school teachers, retirees, church music directors and several people who volunteer regularly for the Conservancy. She goes on to say that many of them regularly play in one or more of the outstanding local community bands and orchestras, adding that there is a very large underground network of people who play in these ensembles including the CEO of the Conservancy, Deborah Yandala, who plays viola in the Cleveland Philharmonic.

Berkner also believes the growing popularity of adult music programs is due in part to the fact that since so many baby-boomers are reaching retirement age they are looking for quality-of-life experiences. “I direct a community flute choir at the University of Akron and I started an adult flute choir at Interlochen where they also have a classical guitar camp as well as other writing programs for adults, so I am very aware that many adults are looking for that kind of experience.”

The idea to create a band camp for adults happened ten years ago when Berkner taught at an adult band camp in Ashland. “That’s where I got the idea, so we tried it last year and it was hugely successful. Everything including the weather cooperated.”

But it's not only the participants who enjoy getting together to make music. "What was interesting to me was to see how much everyone, especially the instructors, enjoyed themselves," Berkner recalls about last summer's camp. "I work with adults all the time and I know how much they appreciate good instruction." This year's faculty includes Robert Jorgensen, Director of Bands at the University of Akron, Robert Esterle, saxophonist with Esto Jazz and music teacher in Plain Local Schools, Tucker Jolly, Professor of Tuba at the University of Akron, Wendy Webb Kumer, Founder and Director of Pittsburgh Flute Academy, Dr. Kristina Belisle Jones, Professor of Clarinet at the University of Akron and Principal Clarinet of the Akron Symphony, and Matt Dudack, percussionist with Akron Symphony and Director of Steel Drum Band at the University of Akron.

In addition to the band, campers may also choose to participate in Flute Ensemble, Clarinet Ensemble, Jazz Band, Brass Ensemble, Sax Ensemble, and Steel Drum Ensemble. "Most people know nothing about the steel drums, they just want to play them." This summer's activities will also include a performance by the Jazz Band on the second night and the camp will again conclude with a community band festival featuring The Camp Band, Cuyahoga Falls Community Band, Celebration Brass Quintet, and Marcus Nyman's Medina Community Band. "Last year's festival drew over 400 people, Berkner remembers, "It was really great to see how band music can bring so many people from so many walks of life together."

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