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April 2021

Dear Friends,

Last year at this time, life in America was altered drastically by the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. The curtain came down on the local arts scene and its venues, including Portsmouth Community Concerts and its live performances held at Churchland and I.C. Norcom High Schools. Our concert series for the spring and fall of 2020 was affected.

We continued to keep you – our valued sponsors, donors, and supporters -- updated as we evaluated all available options in carrying out our mission of promoting appreciation for the performing arts by presenting a series of diverse concerts by professional artists from the nation and the world and by providing educational opportunities to students. Our hope was to resume a concert season this March, April and May featuring the cappella group ReVoiced, the rock band Vinyl Radio, and the Northern Virginia military vocal quartet Voices of Service. With safety foremost, performances once again were canceled with schools and venues still closed and with restrictions by the government.

Due to the availability of COVID vaccines this year and with restrictions slowly easing, our hope is that a “new normal” concert experience will be part of the culture of our city and that we can welcome a 2021-2022 concert season in a safe environment featuring a diverse lineup of performing artists ready to entertain.

Portsmouth Community Concerts has faced many challenges during the pandemic. We waived our Annual Meeting and Silent Auction fundraiser last July in keeping with CDC guidelines and will have to do so this year. In preparing for a fall opening for our 83rd year, now would be the time for selling subscriptions and securing revenue with advertising and sponsorships for a program book. We were financially challenged, yet we ended 2020 on a positive note and with a concert mindset as we presented a special streamed family presentation, “At Home for the Holidays” -- our way of saying ‘thank-you’ to friends and patrons of Portsmouth Community Concerts who stood by us. We applied for and obtained grants to date from the Virginia Commission for the Arts/CARES Act, Hampton Roads Community Foundation COVID-19 Recovery Grant, and Portsmouth Museum and Fine Arts Commission/City of Portsmouth. We continue to explore other grant opportunities and corporate fundraising.

We also are proud of our continued partnership with Portsmouth Public Schools headed by Division Superintendent Dr. Elie Bracy, III, in utilizing the arts as an innovative teaching tool in reaching the Pre-K-12 student population.

Thank you for your support of Portsmouth Community Concerts and its mission. We will keep you informed as decisions are made.

Susan Kalan
President
Portsmouth Community Concerts, Inc.