Expansion Gift Doubles Chautauqua Chamber Music Programming

During the 2018 Season, the number of chamber music performances offered at Chautauqua will double, thanks to a generous gift from Sarah Hagen McWilliams and Bruce McWilliams. The overall program will also carry a new name — Chautauqua Chamber Music — and will feature not only the Guest Artist Series on Mondays (formerly known as the Logan Chamber Music Series) but will add a Resident Artist Series on Saturdays, fulfilling the longtime wish of many music faculty from Chautauqua’s Schools of Performing and Visual Arts and musicians from the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra (CSO) to share their gifts in chamber performance during the summer.

A Perfect Vehicle
“Sarah, who worked with us to plan the theme week featuring Wynton Marsalis and Jazz at Lincoln Center in 2016, was excited by the idea of raising the profile of Chautauqua’s distinctive work in chamber music,” Vice President of Performing and Visual Arts (PAVA) Deborah Sonya Moore explained. “We are putting the Chautauqua name first. Adding the Saturday performances under that general brand also achieves three goals. It offers a more fulsome arts experience for Chautauquans on Saturdays. It gives our music students a chance to witness the performing talents of their instructors and the special kinds of collaboration that happen through chamber music. And, perhaps most importantly, it means that our some of our CSO musicians, our internationally acclaimed artists-in-residence, and our gifted faculty in the Music School Festival Orchestra (MSFO) will have a chance to collaborate with each other and perform for fans of chamber music to build interest in this musical form.”
“Our instructors are astonishing musicians who come to Chautauqua and dedicate themselves to a whole summer of teaching. Now, they don’t have to give up the kind of performing they do the rest of the year and will have the opportunity to collaborate with their fine colleagues,” Moore said. “This is a perfect vehicle for them to demonstrate their talents and contribute further to our community.”

School of Music Artistic Director and MSFO Music Director Timothy Muffitt agreed. “This new structure gives us a real opportunity to spotlight the extraordinary artistry that is present on the grounds each season,” he said. “We also want to create an environment that will attract and retain top faculty. The people who come to teach here are great performers who need and want such an outlet, so this is very good for the Institution, too.”

To accommodate the addition of the Resident Artist Series, the Chautauqua Women’s Club (CWC) has agreed to move their Saturday Contemporary Issues Forum from 3 p.m. to 2 p.m., mirroring the afternoon weekday lecture schedule to which Chautauquans are accustomed. The Resident Artist Series will be presented each week in Elizabeth S. Lenna Hall at 4 p.m. Saturdays, giving Chautauquans adequate time to attend both the CWC lecture and the chamber concert, plus a Chautauqua Theater Company show in the early evening, if they wish. As an added benefit, Chautauqua’s art galleries will also now be open on Saturdays. “This combination of options means that our weekend warriors — those family members who can only make it to the grounds on Saturday and Sunday — can build a Chautauqua weekend with much more to choose from,” Moore said.

Opportunity for Innovation and Collaboration

Muffitt and Moore believe that Chautauqua is an ideal place to nurture new chamber works, try our different combinations of performers, and provide a platform for experimentation in the genre. Moore thinks Chautauqua Chamber Music could also become another small-scale vehicle for inter-arts collaborations. “Of all the summer music festivals in the country,” she said, “it makes sense that Chautauqua would excel in this interaction as part of their Chautauqua experience.”

“We have already seen a remarkable diversity in the proposals for the Resident Artist Series,” Muffitt revealed. “We are so grateful that Sarah and Bruce are making this visionary investment in the future. It will create a new dimension for Chautauqua.” Appropriately, Muffitt will serve as the artistic advisor for the Resident Artist Series. In addition to compensating resident musicians for their performance work in the series, the program funding will also cover the expense of bringing to the grounds one or more players to join in a particular concert. “We’ve never had the budget for any of this,” Moore said.

Though the Logan Chamber Music Series — named for the late Kay Logan, beloved flutist and longtime chamber music advocate and supporter — will change names, the Guest Artist Series will benefit from a more diversified funding base. “Friends of Kay,” a group that formed after Logan’s passing last year, is already hard at work fundraising to financially support at least one concert in the series in her name. Other individual concerts in the Guest Artist Series will be named as naming opportunities or to honor an individual, family or organization. As in years past, the Guest Artist Series will continue to bring in world-class, full-time chamber ensembles from around the globe.

“Music Among Friends”

Chamber music has been defined as music among friends, music performed in a small room, music in which each player has their own individual part, music performed without a conductor, and music composed for the home instead of a church or theater. “Today, the intimacy of the experience — for both musicians and audiences — is perhaps the most common thread, but contemporary instrumentation and the types of music played in the ‘chamber’ are quite diverse today and include everything from traditional string quartets to jazz and experimental music. Ensemble performance demands much of the musicians in both individual and collective rehearsals. ‘Musicians who specialize in chamber music, by definition, come to know the music and their collaborators so intimately,’ Moore said. ‘And it is so great for our students to see this interaction as part of their Chautauqua experience.’

On June 30, three of Chautauqua’s most distinguished music faculty will kick off the inaugural 2018 Resident Artist Series: Chautauqua Piano Program Artistic Advisor and Artist-in-Residence Alexander Gavrylyuk, cellist and MSFO Chamber Music Chair Arie Lipsky, and MSFO Strings Chair and University of Michigan violin professor Aaron Berofsky will perform at Lenna Hall. The Saturday concert will also be streamed live at chq.org.

INNOVATIONS from p. 1

“Musicians who specialize in chamber music, by definition, come to know the music and their collaborators so intimately, and it is so great for our students to see this interaction as part of their Chautauqua experience.”

— Deborah Sonya Moore

Timothy Muffitt

Inaugural 2018 Resident Artist Series: Concert will feature Alexander Gavrylyuk (piano), Arie Lipsky (cello) and Aaron Benofsky (violin).
A Sense of Achievement and Appreciation

For the second year in a row we’ve seen a significant increase in the number of donors who have given to the Chautauqua Fund. We met our ambitious $4 million goal at the end of the year — a remarkable achievement that every single donor can claim, with special thanks, of course, to Cathy Nowosielski and Jeff Lutz, co-chairs of the 2017 Chautauqua Fund, and to trustee Larry Thompson and Brenda Thompson whose generous gift inspired the Leadership Challenge and motivated other donations that collectively moved the needle.

As has occurred every year since 1992, the Chautauqua Fund in 2017 provided greater support year-over-year since the inception of Chautauqua’s most generous regular donors and other special circumstances this past year, hitting the $4 million goal actually required nearly $400,000 in additional gifts to the Chautauqua Fund. Surpassing the goal by $70,000 demonstrated confidence by you, our most generous donors, in the work the Institution is curating.

I believe that the opening of the new Amphitheater and the sense of achievement we all shared at the conclusion of the Promise Campaign helped contribute to this success. In addition, Chautauquans experienced a variety of refreshments and innovations in programming this year that contributed to a positive atmosphere throughout the past season. Some examples: New scheduling by Chautauqua Theater Company made it possible for theater-goers to see the two New Play Workshops in repertory during Chautauqua’s week on “Comedy and the Human Condition”; the CSO brought us a film screening of “Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone” along with their lively performance of John Williams’ dynamic score; pop-up opera performances surprised and delighted audiences around the grounds; and the food festival programming created a robust Week Nine and attracted many first-time Chautauquans. These improvements align with our historical mission and they represent ideas gleaned from many Chautauquans as they have shared their thoughts in open community forums on how best to keep the Institution relevant for audiences, thriving in its mix of offerings, and engaging for all ages.

I also sense that the relentless national cacophony beyond these gates has helped us to realize even more what an important resource Chautauqua is in our lives — both as individuals and as a community. As we are pummeled by controversy and negativity in the daily news, we also experience the arts that are training and nurturing the next generation of artists in an era in which arts funding is being ever challenged. We believe in and demonstrate — to our students and the larger community — that music, dance, theater, opera, the visual arts and the written word all mean something to us that we are not willing to do without.

In this issue of PILLARS, we detail several other program enhancements for 2018, including doubling of our Chautauqua Chamber Music Series (Page 1), thanks to a generous donor, and an update on the search for VACI’s next artistic director (Page 5). We introduce you to several new, energetic and visionary leaders in our recreation program (Pages 8–9), and we profile the inaugural Winter Village at CHQ (Pages 10–11), a unique event hosted over five weekends for the regional community and in support of local tourism and economic development.

Also in this issue, we write about the strategic planning exercise (Page 1) that is commencing soon. This process will engage Chautauquans in thinking about capital needs, program directions and future investments. Naturally, these will identify new philanthropic objectives about which the Foundation will hope to engage you in conversation. In the meantime, we have resources yet to raise for the Amphitheater’s endowment, revamping Bellinger Hall, and the restoration and preservation of Miller Edison Cottage (Pages 6–7). Scholarship support for our amazing students is an evergreen goal (Pages 8–9). Thank you for your participation as a citizen and stakeholder in Chautauqua Institution. I, our volunteers and my colleagues look forward to welcoming you back to Chautauqua shortly and discussing with you how the Institution continues to change each of us and our respective communities.

Thank you for your participation as a citizen and stakeholder in Chautauqua Institution. I, our volunteers and my colleagues look forward to welcoming you back to Chautauqua shortly and discussing with you how the Institution continues to change each of us and our respective communities.

“Thank you for your participation as a citizen and stakeholder in Chautauqua Institution. I, our volunteers and my colleagues look forward to welcoming you back to Chautauqua shortly and discussing with you how the Institution continues to change each of us and our respective communities.”

You and your family can be part of this important moment in Chautauqua’s history.

Individuals or families who make a gift of $15,000 or more to the Amphitheater endowment will be recognized with a custom, engraved plaque to be installed on a bench in the Amp. This initiative will provide the resources to ensure the Amp remains an “as new” facility, featuring modern equipment and technology, maintained in pristine condition.

Join the 250 families who have made similar commitments since the 2nd Century Campaign and who are now permanently recognized for their engagement in Chautauqua. Your gift may be paid over the course of three years.

For more information or to make a gift to the Amphitheater endowment: 716.357.6404 • foundation@chq.org • giving.chq.org

STAND UP AND BE SEATED

Demonstrate your support: Announcing an opportunity to provide future care of our new Amphitheater.

For more information or to make a gift to the Amphitheater endowment: 716.357.6404 • foundation@chq.org • giving.chq.org

CHAUTAUQUA FOUNDATION • CHAUTAUQUAFoundation.ORG
commenced as President Hill travels in the region and around the country conducting listening sessions with Chautauquans in their hometowns. “We are asking folks to reflect on the essence of Chautauqua, who we are and where we are going — big-picture thinking,” Hill said. “It is a real blessing that our fundamentals as an institution are so strong and that our buildings and grounds are in such good shape now. There’s a sense that Chautauqua has an opportunity to have a vital impact on the nation through the strategic choices we will make as a community going forward.”

Currie agreed. She said that by having already addressed sizeable investments over the course of the Promise Campaign — such as the Amphitheater project, Hagen-Wensley House, and recent innovations in Chautauqua’s performing and visual arts programs — the Institution is now in a position to explore new ways in which “we can honor our past while turning outward … to influence improvements in the immediate region of western New York and to conduct meaningful dialogue in the country at large.”

Currie noted that Chautauqua’s founders aimed for national influence from the very beginning in 1874. “The Institution was founded on the idea of giving people an experience here that they could take back and apply in their home communities. Chautauqua also had something of a global influence back in the 1980s when we did our exchange work with the Soviet Union. The question now is how to build greater visibility and impact across the nation and the globe in our era and beyond.”

A National Yearning for Face-to-Face Dialogue

Currie posits that despite the ubiquitous presence of digital communication devices, “we are not communicating very well with each other in this country. In fact, our communication skills have gotten worse. I believe that people are yearning for the kind of face-to-face dialogue that Chautauqua offers, and we are uniquely positioned to provide it. I hope we will also examine ways in which we can build more partnerships to extend our reach year-round.”

In his first season as president, Hill repeatedly emphasized the need for the Institution to look at itself in the frame of society and the present environment of division. “How does Chautauqua serve as an antidote to our current climate, and how do we position ourselves among the array of national thought leaders, summer programs, and other institutions with whom we collaborate and compete?” he asked.

Rather than developing a wish list of new projects inside a strategic plan, the Institution and Working Group initially will be working with a consulting firm to design a process in which the first phase, as Hill said, “will capture our core philosophical values and examine how Chautauqua wants to show up in the world. Then, we can determine how these core values can serve as a litmus test for what we elevate in our work going forward and what we might need to diminish or sunset. We are not looking at business as usual,” he said emphatically, “but at a ‘reset’ on how Chautauqua does business so that we can thrive for another 150 years.”

STRA TEGIC PLAN from p. 1

A Deeper Dive into Market Research

With the support of Vice President of Marketing and Communications Emily Morris and her staff, the Working Group will have access to marketing data and analysis that the team has developed to better understand Chautauqua’s competitive environment as well as its target markets and key differentiators. “We continue to rely heavily on referrals — Chautauquans introducing Chautauqua to friends and family — as a key driver of growth,” Morris said. “At the same time, in order to respond to our aspirations to diversify our guest profile and to reach more new guests from geographic areas such as Cleveland and Pittsburgh, we will be conducting additional positioning research to guide our strategies moving forward.”

As part of this work, Hill has charged the Working Group with exploring how the Institution needs to change in order to meet to the needs and preferences of a greater range of families and individuals who more fully represent the demographics of the nation.

Weekly Input Sessions

While the Hultquist porch chats with senior staff on various aspects of Chautauqua’s current programming will continue on a weekly basis during the 2018 season, listening sessions specifically designed to elicit input for strategic planning purposes from Chautauquans on the grounds will also be held. Pardo said he also expects that there may be some additional gathering of input using technology to reach those not on the grounds this summer.

“We are now mature enough as an organization that we can gather information electronically, especially from those who are not able to be with us in person during the summer,” he said. “We had a great experience collecting input in this way about what the community was looking for in a new president.”

Well before the input sessions commence on the grounds, several events are being hosted to offer Chautauquans a chance to express their dreams for the future. The Working Group had its first meeting in mid-March and will oversee and compile the ideas generated before and during the 2018 season. The group will then synthesize the quantitative and qualitative data to create a draft plan that they will present to the Board of Trustees in late 2018 and again in early 2019. Final approval of the plan is expected by May 2019.
New Leadership Coming to VACI

At the end of November 2017, Chautauquans learned that VACI Artistic Director Don Kimes and Managing Director Lois Jubeck will step down from their posts at the end of 2018. Kimes has led Chautauqua Institution’s visual arts program since 1986; Jubeck joined him officially in 1989. This announcement marks another leadership transition led by Vice President of Performing and Visual Arts Deborah Sunya Moore.

Over the last three years, Moore has successfully overseen the appointments of Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra Music Director Rossen Milanov, Chautauqua Opera General and Artistic Director Steven Osgood, Chautauqua Theater Company Artistic Director Andrew Borba, Artistic Advisor and Artist-in-Residence Alexander Gavrylyuk in the Piano Program, and the expansion of dance to include acclaimed Charlotte Ballet as well as additional companies in residence at Chautauqua, offering a diverse spectrum of dance traditions and innovation.

Moore has been working with a search committee made up of representatives of the Institution and Foundation boards of directors, VACI Partners and community members (see box below) who began collecting resumes in January for review in February. Moore has also tapped a group of professional advisors in the visual arts from across the country to make recommendations and help guide the search. Along with the search committee and national advisors, Moore has also received input from current VACI stakeholders such as staff and VACI Partner board members.

Rearcuting Vision

“We have benefited from three decades of leadership from Don and Lois, who have carried the program to new heights of excellence in both the school and the exhibitions we are able to bring to our galleries,” Moore said. “We want to find someone who has respect for these achievements and who will also bring their own vision to the program. As with all of the arts at Chautauqua, we will be working to rearticulate VACI’s vision and look to bring a balance between tradition and innovation just as we have done with our other arts programs.”

In particular, Moore notes that this hire provides an opportunity to examine how the visual arts at Chautauqua can become more of a year-round program that is also engaged more deeply in visual arts education in the region. For the first time in 2018, arts education beyond the nine-week season is a funded line item in Moore’s budget. “Following on the goals of our new president,” she says, “we will be open to new proposals for how VACI can do more outside the gates, outside of the nine-week season, and how we can be more of a national voice in the dialogue around visual art.” She says the new leader will likely be someone who is already seen as a national thought leader in the visual arts and immersed in the contemporary conversation.

Filling Big Shoes

Once a small pool of candidates is identified, they will be brought to the grounds during the summer. Representatives from VACI Partners and the visual arts staff, as well as the committee, will interact with each candidate individually and hear a presentation from each person. A final decision is anticipated in September. The new artistic director will then lead the search for Jubeck’s replacement as managing director.

For her part, Judy Barie, the Susan and Jack Turben Director of VACI Galleries, is looking forward to working with a new partner to generate fresh ideas for the future of VACI. “The person we hire definitely has big shoes to fill,” she said. “Don’s heart was in Chautauqua and he worked hard to create a nationally recognized program over the past 30-plus years. VACI would not be what it is today without his efforts.”

Barie noted that the strength and popularity of Chautauqua’s ceramics program, the outstanding gallery spaces that have been built, and emerging developments in digital arts will contribute to the appeal of this position.

Kimes and Jubeck will depart Chautauqua for Umbria, Italy, to work with the Pieve International Center for Studies and the Foundation’s ceramics program for students from all over the world in art and a variety of other disciplines. This summer, however, they will be on the grounds and Kimes will be curating an exhibition of work by one of his early teachers, the late Gretta Campbell. The exhibition will then travel beyond the Institution — the first time that an exhibit originating at Chautauqua has then been scheduled for additional showings around the country.

SEARCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS INCLUDE:

- Wendy Cohen
- Lauren Rich Fine, Foundation Director
- Mimi Gallo
- Chip Gamble, Foundation Director
- Anita Lin, Institution Trustee
- Marnette Perry, Institution Trustee
- Betsy Vance, VACI Partners President

National advisors in the field, VACI stakeholders and Search Committee members inform the process led by Moore.

SEARCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS INCLUDE:

- Wendy Cohen
- Lauren Rich Fine, Foundation Director
- Mimi Gallo
- Chip Gamble, Foundation Director
- Anita Lin, Institution Trustee
- Marnette Perry, Institution Trustee
- Betsy Vance, VACI Partners President

Strohl Art Center

Arts Quad and faculty studios

“Don’s heart was in Chautauqua and he worked hard to create a nationally recognized program over the past 30-plus years. VACI would not be what it is today without his efforts.”

— Judy Barie

Filling Big Shoes

Once a small pool of candidates is identified, they will be brought to the grounds during the summer. Representatives from VACI Partners and the visual arts staff, as well as the committee, will interact with each candidate individually and hear a presentation from each person. A final decision is anticipated in September. The new artistic director will then lead the search for Jubeck’s replacement as managing director.

For her part, Judy Barie, the Susan and Jack Turben Director of VACI Galleries, is looking forward to working with a new partner to generate fresh ideas for the future of VACI. “The person we hire definitely has big shoes to fill,” she said. “Don’s heart was in Chautauqua and he worked hard to create a nationally recognized program over the past 30-plus years. VACI would not be what it is today without his efforts.”

Barie noted that the strength and popularity of Chautauqua’s ceramics program, the outstanding gallery spaces that have been built, and emerging developments in digital arts will contribute to the appeal of this position.

Kimes and Jubeck will depart Chautauqua for Umbria, Italy, to work with the Pieve International Center for Studies and the Foundation’s ceramics program for students from all over the world in art and a variety of other disciplines. This summer, however, they will be on the grounds and Kimes will be curating an exhibition of work by one of his early teachers, the late Gretta Campbell. The exhibition will then travel beyond the Institution — the first time that an exhibit originating at Chautauqua has then been scheduled for additional showings around the country.

SEARCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS INCLUDE:

- Wendy Cohen
- Lauren Rich Fine, Foundation Director
- Mimi Gallo
- Chip Gamble, Foundation Director
- Anita Lin, Institution Trustee
- Marnette Perry, Institution Trustee
- Betsy Vance, VACI Partners President

National advisors in the field, VACI stakeholders and Search Committee members inform the process led by Moore.

SEARCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS INCLUDE:

- Wendy Cohen
- Lauren Rich Fine, Foundation Director
- Mimi Gallo
- Chip Gamble, Foundation Director
- Anita Lin, Institution Trustee
- Marnette Perry, Institution Trustee
- Betsy Vance, VACI Partners President

Strohl Art Center

Arts Quad and faculty studios

“Don’s heart was in Chautauqua and he worked hard to create a nationally recognized program over the past 30-plus years. VACI would not be what it is today without his efforts.”

— Judy Barie

Filling Big Shoes

Once a small pool of candidates is identified, they will be brought to the grounds during the summer. Representatives from VACI Partners and the visual arts staff, as well as the committee, will interact with each candidate individually and hear a presentation from each person. A final decision is anticipated in September. The new artistic director will then lead the search for Jubeck’s replacement as managing director.

For her part, Judy Barie, the Susan and Jack Turben Director of VACI Galleries, is looking forward to working with a new partner to generate fresh ideas for the future of VACI. “The person we hire definitely has big shoes to fill,” she said. “Don’s heart was in Chautauqua and he worked hard to create a nationally recognized program over the past 30-plus years. VACI would not be what it is today without his efforts.”

Barie noted that the strength and popularity of Chautauqua’s ceramics program, the outstanding gallery spaces that have been built, and emerging developments in digital arts will contribute to the appeal of this position.

Kimes and Jubeck will depart Chautauqua for Umbria, Italy, to work with the Pieve International Center for Studies and the Foundation’s ceramics program for students from all over the world in art and a variety of other disciplines. This summer, however, they will be on the grounds and Kimes will be curating an exhibition of work by one of his early teachers, the late Gretta Campbell. The exhibition will then travel beyond the Institution — the first time that an exhibit originating at Chautauqua has then been scheduled for additional showings around the country.
Mary Lou Williamson’s mother, Helen Mathews Miller, planted the bright orange tiger lilies that continue to bloom each summer in the backyard of the Miller Edison Cottage at Chautauqua. Williamson’s father was the grandson and namesake of Institution founder Lewis Miller. Her grandmother, Mrs. Robert A. Miller (Louise Igoe Miller), was the first president of the Bird, Tree & Garden Club when it was founded in 1913. Williamson’s interest in horticulture, therefore, comes naturally. “Much as I love to come to Chautauqua for the lectures,” she said, “what I love best is walking around and seeing all the gardens here. I think the harsh winters make the gardens more lovely here than back home.” Of her favorite plantings at Chautauqua she is most fond of the Annabelle hydrangeas that can produce flower heads a foot wide. Williamson, who celebrated her 80th birthday in August, is the former editor of the weekly newspaper in Greenbelt, Maryland, a planned community built during the New Deal era. In January, she stepped down from more than 45 years as editor. Both the newspaper and the town also celebrated their 80th anniversaries this past fall.

Most recently at Chautauqua, Williamson has been involved in discussions about the planned renovations to the historic gardens around the Miller Edison Cottage. The original landscape plans, created in exacting detail by the distinguished garden designer Ellen Biddle Shipman, have been preserved. Mina Miller Edison, who was Lewis Miller’s daughter and the wife of Thomas Edison, hired Shipman in the early 1920s. Shipman’s original layout, which needs refreshing, calls for many native plants, which fit well with the new standards for landscaping overseen by Betsy Burgeson, Chautauqua’s supervisor of gardens and landscapes. The historic gardens were the setting for many social gatherings hosted at the cottage, including a visit from Henry Ford. In one photo, Thomas Edison and Ford sit side by side on a wrought iron bench, which is still among the patio furniture today.

Beginning in the 2018 season, the Miller Edison Cottage will become the summer quarters for Chautauqua Vice President of Religion and Senior Pastor Gene Robinson. The downstairs portion of the house — including the kitchen, living room, and the garden — will also be used for institutional functions from time to time. In addition to her involvement with the Miller Edison garden improvements, Williamson has been engaged in the care of the Discovery Garden that Burgeson has been developing on the north side of the Main Gate where Massey meets Ramble Avenue. The garden, which surrounds a white gazebo, is divided into four quadrants of landscaped trees and shrubs that symbolize the four pillars of Chautauqua’s programs: Education, Religion, Recreation and Art. A plaque honoring the Bird, Tree & Garden Club and its early leader, Louise Igoe Miller, is part of the landscaping there.

Williamson also contributed toward the purchase of a dedicated watering truck to address the monumental task of keeping the dozens of flowerbeds and public park areas across the Institution grounds thriving during the growing season. “I got goosebumps when Mary Lou said she would help us get that water truck,” Burgeson said. During the 2016 season, Burgeson’s crew could hardly keep pace with a very hot and dry August that particularly threatened the new trees and shrubs that had been planted earlier in the year to fill in where diseased plants and trees and invasive non-natives had been removed. To get water to critical areas and keep the upright plantings alive, the crew had to tow an enormous trailer with a water tank to various strategic locations throughout the grounds. By

**Blueprints**

On July 19, community members are invited to participate in a celebration of the Miller Edison Cottage, the only building at the Institution that, on its own, was designated as a National Historic Landmark by the National Park Service on July 4, 1966.

The 1875 cottage — built by Institution co-founder Lewis Miller and later occupied by his daughter, Mina, and her husband, the inventor Thomas Edison — now belongs to the Institution, thanks to the careful preservation of the Miller, Edison and Arnn families and the recent philanthropy of long-time Chautauquan Tom Hagen. Hagen donated the funds for Chautauqua to purchase the property from the Arnn family in 2015, and initiated a challenge grant of $150,000 to be matched by Chautauquans for a maintenance endowment for the cottage. The match was met by generous contributions, yet there are structural, safety and accessibility concerns that must be addressed in the immediate future through significant capital investment. Karen Goodell, who serves on the Chautauqua Foundation board, is partnering with the Foundation and a committee of volunteers to design a fundraising event that she said “will give Chautauquans an opportunity to restore this landmark and express our commitment as a community to responsible preservation.” While the cottage is in relatively good shape, thanks to years of careful maintenance by family members, the Institution commissioned a thorough structural evaluation by the historic preservation architect Jeff Kidder, AIA, a partner at Kidder Wachter Architecture & Design in Erie, Pennsylvania. The report revealed a number of small structural issues that are being addressed in priority order.
In addition to issues with the roof, we need electrical upgrades, window preservation, and heating and cooling improvements,” said John Shedd, Chautauqua’s vice president of campus planning and operations. The architectural firm is also working with the Institution to explore plans for a handicap accessible bathroom that will not compromise the historic status of the building and will increase opportunities for public use.

At the same time, Chautauqua’s maintenance supervisor of gardens and landscapes, Betsy Burgeson, is developing an outline for renovations to the once-extravagant gardens surrounding the cottage for which Mina Edison hired the legendary landscape designer Ellen Biddle Shipman in 1920s. “The garden renovations will be entirely dependent on philanthropy,” Shedd said.

“We will be asking Chautauquans to invest in these gardens,” Goodell added. “We need funds for the hardscape — to restore the magnificent stone walls and the fountain on the property — and we also want to work with the community to refresh and restore many of the plantings that Shipman specified in her original design.”

The garden work and the plant selection will revive the character of its visionary design while comporting with current New York State regulations about the planting of native, rather than invasive, non-native perennials, shrubs, and trees. “We aim to honor what Mina Edison had in mind, and we believe the final product will be something Ellen Biddle Shipman would also be proud of,” Goodell said.

“There are a lot of lessons for us to learn as Chautauquans who care about place. This project represents Chautauqua philanthropy at its best — we will invest in a historic home that has been maintained in near-original condition. We will celebrate the endowment pledge from Tom Hagen, and we will raise funds for the capital improvements and green space restoration, each doing our part to preserve this landmark and express our commitment to responsible preservation,” Goodell said.

An online platform for donations will be developed so that Chautauquans who are not on the grounds on July 19 for the fundraiser event taking place in Miller Park can consider the various needs in the project — both house and gardens — and make gifts according to their interests and abilities. “The community can invest even before the July event,” Goodell explained. She thinks of the July event as something akin to an Amish barn raising. “Tom Hagen gave our community an important gift, and now we can come together and say, let’s do this! We’ll have a chance to roll up our sleeves and get everyone involved. It’s a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!”

## MILLER EDISON FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE:

- Ted Arnn
- Wendy Berensfeld
- Christine Bruenschke
- Lauren Fine
- Ellen Fultz
- Karen Goodell, Chair
- Bob Jeffrey
- Liz Keogh
- Nancy Kyler
- Cindy Pelton
- Anne Hoyt Scavone
- Linda Steckley
New Recreation and Fitness Staff: BRING FRESH ENERGY AND IDEAS

Chautauqua Director of Recreation/Fitness Center Manager Meg Pickard finished her first two years on the job and then made some important hires in preparation for the 2017 season. The new personnel are “passionate people,” she said, “who all had prior relationships to Chautauqua, but came into their positions with fresh eyes.” New leaders — Sports Club Director Deb Lyons, Old First Night Run/Walk Coordinator Dana Lyons and Tennis Center Director James Getty — began work this past season. In addition, area swim coach Glen Shoup came on board as assistant fitness center manager toward the end of the 2017 summer season.

Last October, former beach director Stuart Gates was appointed as the full-time, year-round recreation facilities coordinator. Gates is charged with providing preventative maintenance on fitness equipment, serving as one of three Certified Pool Operators employed by Chautauqua, assisting in preparing all recreation areas for the season, and overseeing beach operations.

Pickard hopes the Institution will soon find the funding to revamp some anomalies in the Turner Community Center facility, including air conditioning for the gymnasium, locker room renovations, resurfacing the gym floor, creating a drop basin in the free weights area, and repairing the filtration system for the swimming pool. “The Heinz Beach location could use a paved walkway to the handicap ramp,” she added, referring to Chautauqua’s smaller summer exercise facility on the lakeshore. Other projects ahead include a new irrigation system for the Hill Course at the Chautauqua Golf Club and some large kitchen equipment in the clubhouse that needs replacing. In fall 2017, golf staff began working with a consultant to discuss a process for creating a new master plan for the golf club. “This plan won’t happen without donor support,” she said.

With well-being as the primary goal for all Chautauquans, Pickard’s shop operates much like a university athletics program, with revenue and non-revenue sports. Relatively speaking, the Chautauqua Golf Club and the fitness center have profit potential, while other activities primarily serve to fulfill the recreational mission of the Institution without generating significant revenue. However, as Pickard explained, “to attract the high quality of instruction and coaching that Chautauquans value, you have to hire the best possible people.” PILLARS visited with three of Pickard’s new colleagues in August 2017 to check in on their respective areas of recreation.

Encouraging Family Friendly Competition

Vivid evidence from Chautauqua’s first-ever “Color Run” was still on the grounds for a while after the Aug. 10 event. The inaugural beach-to-beach race, which was not timed, involved participants of all fitness levels who were doused in colorful, non-toxic Holi powder paint at stations along the route. The idea was pure fun, with no trophies, and brought out 235 people to enjoy the festivities.

“We expected about 50 participants,” said Deb Lyons, the new Sports Club director. Her husband, Dana, coordinated the event. He is a professional coach who trains tri-athletes and runners in The Woodlands, Texas, but will now be spending 10 weeks each summer at Chautauqua to help his wife in the same way that she helps him back home with his coaching business. The Lyonses were hired following the retirement of former director Richard “Uke” Ulasewicz and his late wife, Peg, who together managed the Sports Club for 28 seasons.

Shorwin-Williams and Walmart were in-kind sponsors of the Color Run. Participants received free hats to help protect their faces from the clouds of paint that bystanders tossed gleefully in the air above them along the race course. Less than two weeks before this event, Dana and a large group of volunteers also pulled off a memorable Old First Night Run/Walk. More than 700 people from on and off the grounds finished the OFN event while being serenaded at points by Chautauqua Opera Company General/Artistic Director Steven Osgood, who used a portable keyboard to accompany students from the company’s Young Artist Program who sang their hearts out for the crowd.

Deb, a longtime Chautauquan originally from Bemus Point, New York, and Dana, an Erie, Pennsylvania, native and former chemical engineer turned coach and Ironman competitor, were married in the Hall of Philosophy in the 1980s. Deb’s father, Dick Marks, was the financial manager of the Boys’ and Girls’ Club for three decades. The Lyonses’ daughters, Margo and Anna, went through Club as children.

Now with a full season behind them, Deb and Dana are looking to raise awareness and increase the options for family-friendly recreation through the Sports Club, which already offers rental kayaks, paddle

Hamilton Cast Member Cherishes His Training at Chautauqua’s School of Dance in 2018. The opportunity to teach dance in one of the nation’s best regarded, intimate summer programs is especially gratifying right now. Battaglia’s former student Neil Haskell has been performing on Broadway for more than two years in the Pulitzer Prize- and Tony Award-winning hit Hamilton. As a member of the ensemble in this strenuous musical, Haskell is on stage through most of the show. When the production opened on Broadway in the summer of 2015, Haskell began his tenure in the cast as a “swing” — learning to cover for six parts in the ensemble — before he transitioned into the role of Charles Lee. Now, he also occasionally plays the part of King George.

“It’s the most amazing musical I have ever seen,” Battaglia said, adding that young Neil — the ballet student she knew at Chautauqua when he was only 15 — is still a “down-to-earth, real person” at age 30, despite his meteoric success. He has a “certain magnetism about him,” as Battaglia explained it, especially when he is on stage.

Haskell was raised in Clarence Center, New York, where Battaglia is the founder and director of the American Academy of Ballet in nearby Williamsville. He started dancing at the age of 5 at the David DeMarie Dance Studios located down the road in Clarence, New York, under the direction of Leonard Castellone. Haskell then spent three summers at Chautauqua studying classical ballet in the program led by Artistic Director Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux.

He remembers his first audition for Chautauqua faculty member Michael Vernon, held at the American Academy of Ballet. Battaglia was also present at the audition. Haskell said he believes that “Grama Maris,” as he now calls her, helped Vernon to notice him. He was accepted into the Chautauqua School of Dance and it was that summer that Maris first took him under her wing.

SCHOLARSHIP
“I felt like she saw potential in me as a dancer and a performer. She has always had a special eye for talent, and with love and guidance she not only taught us technique, but so much more.”

In addition to small parts in some films as a teenager, Haskell’s Broadway career began just as he was about to return for his sophomore year at Point Park University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. A call came inviting him to join the cast of Twyla Tharp’s The Times They Are a-Changin’; with music by Bob Dylan, which he accepted after making sure he had his parents’ blessing. Haskell has since appeared on Broadway in the musicals 9 to 5, Bring It On, Cinderella, and Tuck Everlasting. He also competed during season three on the popular television program “So You Think You Can Dance” and later returned for three seasons as an All Star on the program.

Thanks to the inspiration from students such as Haskell, Battaglia helped launch the Chautauqua Dance Circle, a group that raises funds every year for student scholarships. Since its founding in 2006, more than $50,000 in scholarship support has been raised through the Dance Circle’s efforts. Battaglia has also generously funded scholarships with her personal gifts to the Chautauqua Fund. In 2017, the Institution awarded more than $732,000 in scholarships across Chautauqua’s schools, against an overall need of $1.4 million.

“I always hear from parents how much they love Chautauqua’s dance program, how safe they feel leaving their kids on these grounds, where they can dance all day and go jump in the lake to take a break,” Battaglia said. For her, Chautauqua is a summer refuge. “I always tell people that I come here to get my sanity back. In addition to having such wonderful students, I can sit on my porch, read a book, and go to the Amp when I want to.”

As it is with so many Chautauquans, the relationships built here during the summers tend to continue throughout the years. Battaglia’s husband has an apartment in New York City and when the couple travels to Manhattan, Haskell often comes over to hang out and visit with her mentor. Battaglia hopes she can also bring Haskell back to Chautauqua to teach a master class someday.

Haskell said his favorite summers were spent at Chautauqua. “I looked forward to it every year. It was a life-changing opportunity for me. Just being on the grounds was amazing. There was a special vibe and the people were special, too. We shared dorms with musicians, artists, dancers, sculptors and opera singers — all these creative artists in one building! It was such a supportive artistic environment and an unforgettable experience.”
Santa received eager visitors in the lobby of the St. Elmo. Children pulled their sleds up the groomed hills to Bestor Plaza while their parents huddled around fire pits blazing near the Colonnade building. The Chautauqua Bookstore and a pop-up candy store buzzed with holiday shoppers. On the steps of the Colonnade, steaming cups of mulled wine, cocoa and hot cider were going fast from the food carts as the scent of roasting chestnuts filled the air. This was the Winter Village at CHQ, five weekends of family fun for the local community, year-round Chautauquans and those visiting over the holidays who filled Bestor Plaza in a steady stream, beginning the Friday after Thanksgiving.

As part of President Michael Hill’s vision to offer more activities on the grounds beyond the summer season and welcome local residents inside the gates, this year’s inaugural Winter Village was a resounding success. BioDome of Jamestown, a locally owned art gallery, artisans’ market, and indoor gardening experiment, set up shop in the Colonnade and several other regular Chautauqua businesses — the Chautauqua Wearhouse, GG My Love, Vincenza Salon, St. Elmo Spa, Gretchen’s Gallery, and On the Plaza Antiques — were open with extended schedules for customers. La Familia Restaurant, 2 Ames and Full Moon Rising Bakery, which occupied the Afterwords Café, provided lunch, dinner and snacks. Institution staff volunteered many extra weekend hours to help to make the festivities go smoothly. Vanessa Weinert, director of marketing and analytics, proclaimed Emily Morris, vice president of marketing and communications/chief brand officer, mayor of the Winter Village.

“Going into this experiment,” Weinert said, “we had no idea how much we would have to put into it, but there was no shortage of great ideas including from on- and off-grounds shop and restaurant owners whose enthusiasm and contributions truly brought the festival to life.” In addition to reaching out to local businesses to participate, the Institution sponsored a number of special events as part of the weekend festivities, including a holiday story time for children at Smith Memorial Library, a treasure hunt with maps.
for children to follow, a “reindog” parade with festively dressed pooches, horse-drawn carriage rides, a Christmas tea for women, and a special men’s shopping night. Exclusive culinary events hosted at Hultquist Center featuring food and wine pairings from Heirloom Restaurant in the Athenaeum Hotel and other nearby restaurants and vendors — The White Carrot, La Familia, 2 Ames, Bag & String Wine Merchants, and Reverie Creamery & Artisan Market — sold out quickly. Guests coming from off the grounds could park for free in the South Lot, and shuttles ran to and from Bestor Plaza to accommodate visitors. The Spencer Hotel & Spa and the Maple Inn also provided overnight accommodations for folks traveling in from a distance. The condo association at the St. Elmo readily agreed to host Santa in their spacious lobby.

The Chautauqua Bookstore reported a boost in revenue over prior Decembers. Preliminary data from the Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau also showed an uptick in business over the five weekends, which in effect, extended the region’s tourism season.

“We hope the Winter Village will become a family tradition for the county in the same way that the regular season is a family tradition for Chautauquans,” said Jordan Steves, director of strategic communications and community relations for the Institution.

“The experience really was like a love letter to our local community, as Michael Hill said up front when we began planning the Winter Village,” Weinert added. “That was the ethos we had going into it, and if you look at the pictures posted on Facebook, you can tell people had a great time. Chautauqua became this quaint little Victorian village in the snow and all lit up for the holidays. It was charming, and it was especially exciting for us, as a staff, to see Bestor Plaza so full of local kids, making snowmen and having snowball fights.”

The marketing staff will be evaluating the event in the months to come and look to partner with more local businesses to deliver programming and festivities that might become self-sustaining around the end-of-year holidays.
Arguably, the distinguished journalist Bill Moyers was always a Chautauquan at heart, but it wasn’t until his retirement in 2015 from full-time television production that he and his wife of more than 60 years, Judith Davidson Moyers, had a chance to spend some significant time on the grounds. “Most of our production work was done in the months of the year with the best weather, which coincides with the Chautauqua season,” Moyers said. Though he had befriended former Chautauqua presidents Dan Bratton and Tom Becker (who had surely issued various invitations to speak at the Institution over the years), it wasn’t until 2016 — when Moyers came for a full week and gave a lecture in the Hall of Philosophy — that he had a chance to fully experience the place his mother-in-law had spoken of to her daughter for many years, after her own visit in the early 1900s.

“As a young lady in her late teens, my wife’s mother, Eula Dendy, was driven with her foster father, the Rev. P.C. Scott, all the way from Wilmer, Texas, to Chautauqua. She never forgot it,” Moyers explained. “For me, coming to Chautauqua was like going home to a place you’ve never left and a place you’ve never been. It is a banquet for the mind and a picnic for the body. It is also a place that’s quite humble and gentle, a respite from the noise, clatter and chatter. To come to Chautauqua is to enter into an ongoing conversation. We especially enjoyed those chance encounters with like-minded folks that seemed to happen everywhere we went.”

As a young man, Moyers worked in the Kennedy administration helping Sargent Shriver launch the Peace Corps; in 1963, he became deputy director of the program. This past summer, he ran into an early Peace Corps volunteer he had known back then. “Meeting at Chautauqua again after 60 years was thrilling,” Moyers said.

Over the 2017 season, the Moyerses were on the grounds for three weeks, with Bill taking on a major role during Week Three, conducting a public dialogue with a different guest each day in the Hall of Philosophy at the Interfaith Lectures hosted by the Department of Religion. Moyers closed out the week’s theme, “A Crisis of Faith,” with his own lecture on Friday.

Though he is best known as a political commentator and documentary filmmaker, Moyers was ordained as a minister in his twenties after earning a Bachelor of Divinity degree at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Those who have watched his programs on public television know that he has always approached his work in the public sphere with a moral and theological lens. Moyers was a firm proponent of the civil rights movement in the 1960s and was one of the key architects of Lyndon Johnson’s “War on Poverty” in the same era. As he told his Hall of Philosophy audience in 2016, “Almost every great social movement in America has contained a flame of faith at its core.”

With this focus, Moyers expressed his view of Chautauqua in its current transition to new leadership. “I was impressed with Michael Hill this summer,” he said. “I saw him everywhere on the grounds trying to make contact with individuals and groups. There are so many organizations here to honor. And we also know that going forward, conversations at Chautauqua must grow wider to embrace more and different people.”

Moyers noted how the beauty and isolation of the Institution has allowed Chautauqua to “grow its own character,” as he put it. “Chautauqua must retain its deep roots, but it cannot function effectively today in the powerful stream of American life without becoming multicultural in every dimension. The question is how to honor your roots without bronzing them, while at the same time introducing additional, concentric circles of Chautauquans who are newcomers to this place.”

“We especially enjoyed those chance encounters with like-minded folks that seemed to happen everywhere we went.”

“Chautauqua must retain its deep roots, but it cannot function effectively today in the powerful stream of American life without becoming multicultural in every dimension. The question is how to honor your roots without bronzing them, while at the same time introducing additional, concentric circles of Chautauquans who are newcomers to this place.”

— Bill Moyers

At the end of his visit, Moyers said that his time at Chautauqua provided him with a notebook of ideas for stories he wanted to follow as the managing editor of billmoyers.com. However, on Dec. 15, 2017, Moyers, at age 83, announced that he was ending his role as a journalist on the site. His website now serves as an impressive archive of his 44 years of work in journalism. Stepping away from creating any new content, Moyers gave his followers this farewell message: “Please remain vigilant and engaged as citizens in the civic and political life of your community and our country. Democracy is fragile, and no one can say with certainty that it can withstand the manifold risks to which it is now exposed.” We can only hope that Bill Moyers will return to Chautauqua to participate in the practice of democracy and dialogue.