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## Family concerts designed to get kids jazzed about classics

By Mark Marymont  
Special to news-press.com  
Originally posted on May 18, 2007

A carnival of animals, a cheerful tuba and a big bad wolf will be among the featured musical creatures in Sunday's "Magic Carpet Family Concert," sponsored by the Galloway Ford Family of Dealerships.

The free concert will be held at Galloway Ford, 1800 Boy Scout Drive, south Fort Myers.

"The 'Magic Carpet Concerts' are geared specifically to younger children, say, around the age of 10," says symphony founder and music director Andrew Kurtz. "I may make comments to kids slightly older at times, but we try and keep the music accessible to the kids. And, we always have a unifying theme."

This year's program features narration by soprano Janelle McCoy and will include Sergei Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf," Camille Saint-Saen's "Carnival of the Animals," Maurice Ravel's "Mother Goose Suite" and George Kleinsinger's lighthearted "Tubby The Tuba."

"We try not to make these concerts any more than an hour long, and maybe even shorter," says Kurtz. "Usually, a piece is no more than 8 or 9 minutes. That keeps the kids with us."

The kids also get a chance to check out the musician's gear at what is billed as an instrument petting zoo.

"We have members from every musical family, the strings, brass, all the rest, to visit with the kids and let them look at, or even handle, the various instruments," says Kurtz. "It's an interactive way for them to get a sense of the orchestra. We do it a half-hour before and after the concert."

The Gulf Coast Symphony does a variety of concerts, from the "Magic Carpet" family programs and an outdoor pops concert in Estero to, in South Fort Myers, "ACCESS Classical" concerts at Bishop Verot's Anderson Theater and the "Symphonic Sensations Concert Series" at the Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall.

While the symphony usually has about 80 performers — who come from an area from Naples to Port Charlotte — Kurtz says Sunday's program features about half as many players, "and that's because some are snowbirds who have already gone back home and some have family commitments for graduation and things like that. But, we'll still have a full sound."

Kurtz says there's a simple reason for the family-oriented programs.

"We really want children to get a feel for the world of symphonic music. But these are family concerts and not kids' concerts. A child can't choose to come to the concert but a parent can and we really want to reach both groups and instill a life-long appreciation for the arts."

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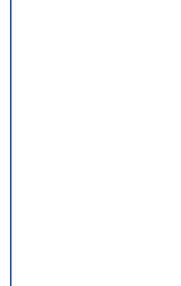
- What: Galloway Magic Carpet Family Concert
- What: Light classical works by Prokofiev, Saint-Saens and others
- When: 4 p.m., Sunday
- Where: Galloway Ford, 1800 Boy Scout Drive (In a large tent on the parking lot)
- Admission: Free, no ticket required
- Information: 489-1800

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