

peninsula music festival

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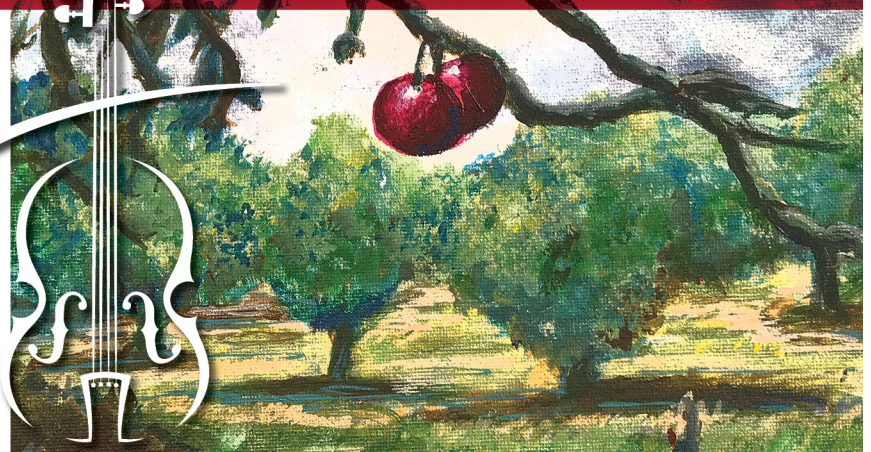
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Christoph Ptack, Executive Director



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CONTACT:

Peninsula Music Festival

PENINSULA MUSIC FESTIVAL'S COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP RECEIVES GENEROUS GIFT & NEW NAME

The Peninsula Music Festival announced Monday it has received a generous gift made to the Thor Johnson Endowment Trust by the Estate of long-time Peninsula Music Festival patron and supporter, George Verheyden. The gift's mission is to assist in sustaining funds for this established educational initiative, which will now bear his name and be called the George Verheyden Memorial Scholarship. The award is given each spring to a graduating senior who resides in Door County, demonstrates great ability as a performer, shows dedication and a sustained interest in music related activities, and desires to further their musical studies by pursuing an undergraduate major or minor in music.

George Verheyden was born to George W. Verheyden and Vena Clemetson Verheyden in Green Bay, WI. He had three older sisters, and lived in the family home from the age of 2 until age 90. George served as a Corporal in the US Army from 1943-1946, and spent much of that time in the South Pacific, the Philippines, and was a part of the occupation force in Tokyo, Japan, where he was assigned to guard Prime Minister Hideki Tojo.

After World War II he went to the Corcoran School of Art in Washington DC, where he lived with his sister, Gerene, who was a Lieutenant Commander in the Navy. In 1947 he returned to Green Bay to run his father's business, Verheyden's Sausage Shop, with his sister, Andrae Verheyden. Among other great products, they made wonderful bratwurst and the best smoked wieners in the world! After selling the Sausage Shop he worked in Real Estate and as a State meat inspector. Although he wanted to help make our food safe, he did not enjoy visiting the slaughterhouses.

George loved singing, drawing, painting, boating and watching his team, the Green Bay Packers. His father was the first manager of the Packers. George had decades of fun summers in his favorite playground, Door County, Wisconsin. He enjoyed classes at the Peninsula Art School. He loved going to the Peninsula Music Festival every summer.

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George owned several boats over his lifetime, including "The Westmon" named after his great-grandfather. He enjoyed cruising with his boating friends. George fished and had great perch fries on the dock in Fish Creek, Wis. In the winters he enjoyed snowmobiling in Door County.

He also enjoyed singing Karaoke - especially Frank Sinatra songs. "I Did It My Way" became his theme song. He became interested in singing early while listening to his sister, Dorothy, vocalizing for her singing lessons. As a little boy, he once played the part of an altar boy in an opera. He scratched an itch during the performance and the audience roared with laughter-loving the comic relief! He was hooked right then and there on singing and the theater. He sang in the Green Bay Concert Choir for many years and was the set designer for Operettas and plays. He sang in the Moravian Church Choirs in Green Bay and Ephraim for 61 years. He recently helped the Westside Moravian Church purchase a new organ. All of his life George would break into fun songs anywhere and anytime- some lyrics explained why he didn't have a wife and other life messages that were funny. He was a member of the American Legion, Green Bay Yacht Club, Ephraim Moravian Church, and Green Bay East and Westside Moravian Churches.

George was preceded in death by his parents, one brother (who died at age 4 before George was born) named Sonny, and three sisters, Gerene Torres, Dorothy Nielsen, and Andrae Verheyden. George had a great zest for life, was a great friend and a wonderful Uncle. He was generous with his family, friends and favorite charities which included The Moravian Church, Peninsula School of Art, The Clearing in Door County, The Moravian Camp Morris, and The Peninsula Music Festival.



George Verheyden
July 16, 1924 - June 28, 2015

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