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CONTACT: Don Buxton  
410 819-0380

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or Amy Steward  
410 829-0436

### Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival Musicians Arrival Brings Traditions

There are many traditions among the musicians who come to Easton each June for the annual Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival. One of their favorite events is the initial dinner prepared by local families to welcome their arrival.

This year was no exception as 9 of the 17 musicians gathered at the home of Kathy and Bill Bernard in Easton for a relaxing meal, to catch up on the year's events, and to rekindle friendships. According to cellist and artistic co-director of the Festival Marcy Rosen of Englewood, NJ, "In the early years of the Festival we stayed at homes in Martingham near St. Michaels. We had a cook for the week, Lillian Stanley, who made us traditional Eastern Shore meals, including crab cakes and fried chicken – I remember those as being fabulous meals."

As time progressed, the musicians began to be housed in people's homes throughout Talbot County and meals were often with the families who hosted them. Over 15 years ago, a group of young moms decided to volunteer to make the evening meals for the musicians. The original group included Kathy Bernard of Easton, Suzie Deel of Trappe, Nancy Fox of Trappe, Chris Duncan of Easton, and Katherine DiNapoli of Easton. Mayra Garcia of St. Michaels joined the group a few years ago.

Nancy Fox comments, "Initially, we made the musician meals for six evenings throughout the Festival rotating hosting in our homes, but as time went on the musicians made plans to eat out together and to visit friends they had made in the area. We kept the tradition of the first night meal as a way for them to casually get together and reconnect as they arrived. They still look forward to gathering for this tradition."

For first time participant Kim Kashkashian, who plays the viola and teaches at the New England Conservatory of Music, the dinner tradition holds special meaning. She comments, "This type of gathering gives you the feeling that the community is part of the Festival."

Another tradition at the meal includes distributing goodie bags to each musician. The bags, put together by Festival volunteer Ella Bracy of Trappe, include various helpful gadgets and treats to help the musicians during their two-week stay. The musicians look forward each year to finding out what treasures will be in the bags.

The 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival is underwritten by PNC Wealth Management, with additional generous support from Benson and Mangold, the Talbot County Arts Council and the Maryland State Arts Council. The Festival continues through June 19, 2011. To view upcoming dates for the Festival, visit [ChesapeakeChamberMusic.org](http://ChesapeakeChamberMusic.org) or call the CCM office at 410-819-0380.

**CUTLINES:**

**Photo #1: Pictured front row, left to right are Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival musicians and their families: Marcy Rosen, cello and artistic co-director of the Festival; Todd Phillips, violin; Brandon Phillips; Catherine Cho, violin and viola; Yura Lee, violin and viola; Ieva Jokubaviciute, piano; and J. Lawrie Bloom, clarinet and artistic co-director of the Festival. Pictured back row, left to right, are Kendra Colton; Kim Kashkashian viola; and Robert McDonald, piano. The musicians were given goodie bags from Festival volunteers at their initial dinner to kick off the two-week event.**

**Photo #2: Pictured left to right are Chesapeake Chamber Music dinner hosts Mayra Garcia of St. Michaels, Nancy Fox of Trappe, with Lawrie Bloom, artistic co-director of the Festival, Suzie Deel of Trappe, and Kathy Bernard of Easton.**

