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Press Release

Cooper's GDPinc. raises \$5,000+ for SMYOrchestra

2014 Go-DIVA! SWAN Event establishes S. Wayne Cooper Go-DIVA! Youth Music Award

(Solomons: Apr 4, 2014) Southern Maryland Music Presenter, **Go-DIVA! Productions, Inc.** raised more than \$5,000 for the **Southern Maryland Youth Orchestra** as a result of its first fundraising event, "Go-DIVA!" Act III: The Swan Takes Flight", held March 29-30 at Grace Lutheran Family Life Center in LaPlata, MD, and featured as the cover story in the SOMD Weekender on March 28. The event, sponsored by Rotary Club of LaPlata, Agape Auto, Lord George Robinson, Robert E. Plant of Blue Wind Gourmet, and several other private donors, featured performances by Jennifer Cooper, Abbe Levin, GrooveSpan, Kathy Keough, Cheri Monk, plus youth musicians, Jonah Yeh, Bethany Yeh, and members of SMYOrch, Samantha Naluai, Sophie Dittmar, and Mariah Peissner. Attendees enjoyed an extensive silent auction, sweets and savories by Blue Wind Gourmet, and a full length multi-genre, multi-media cabaret – from Opera to Ooh-La-La - poignantly scripted by Artistic Producer and playwright, LB Hamilton.

Jane Flack of Virginia, who also saw Cooper's original "Go-DIVA! – of Song, Silence & the Abuse of Chocolate" pronounced the event a rousing success. "Hamilton's captivating sequel was a thoroughly enjoyable Swan Tale," she claims, "I loved the extraordinary talent onstage and equally enjoyed the pre-show harp/flute duo and intermission serenade by members of SMYOrch. Having live music throughout the entire event enhanced the focus on performing arts and created a touch of elegance." Christine Moats traveled from Pennsylvania with her two children to see the performance. "The kids and I were amazed by the variety of music," said Moats, adding "we heard Opera, Broadway, Jazz, Blues, Country, and even some Rock! Jennifer's passion for this cause really shined through and her establishment of the youth music award is truly inspirational."

Dozens of local women artists and businesses were featured in the silent auction, highlighting the significance of SWAN Day (Support Women Artists Now) and adding to ticket proceeds to benefit SMYOrch. "The event was a labor of love and presented some challenges," said Executive Producer and GDPinc's President, Jennifer Cooper, "but the end result was well worth the dream come true... to celebrate and bring awareness to the arts, and establish the **S. Wayne Cooper Go-DIVA! Youth Music Award to support deserving, talented youth musicians in our area.**" Cooper adds, "These students are so gifted and dedicated, and led by a wonderful music director – AnneMarie Kambach – who inspires excellence through very challenging repertoire. Now the fun really begins!.. dispersing funds for music lessons, instrument rental and tuition to SMYOrch members who might otherwise have been forced to walk away from their musical pursuits. **You just never know when a small boost like this might change someone's path forever.**" Although GDPinc. often donates entertainment for other fundraisers, this was its first self-produced fundraising event. The newly incorporated company is inspired by this overwhelming success to produce more events like it in the future.

Cooper, who began her musical studies on flute, and has since graced national stages, giving voice to multiple styles, believes **SMYOrch is an excellent example of, and model for, Community Arts Programming for**

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Tri-County youth. SMYOrch president, Julia Nichols, was delighted to partner with GDPinc for this endeavor. “It’s such a pleasure to work with someone who has very clear goals, combined with passionate determination and necessary skills to see them through”, said Nichols of Cooper. The two met six months ago and quickly realized they shared a common desire to support and expand sustainable, quality youth music education and programs in the community.

In addition to writing the script, Artistic Producer, LB Hamilton, shared many preparatory responsibilities with Cooper, including sponsorship coordination, marketing and promotion, etc. “The result of this fundraiser might be considered modest by some”, said Hamilton, “however, for a first time out, we consider this a huge success. **We now know that there are supporters of community and educational arts programs for youth in the Tri-County area who are willing to step up and dig deep to make sure the younger generation has access to all-important creative pursuits, that we used to take for granted, but are now harder and harder to find.**”

Southern Maryland Youth Orchestra is a non-profit organization committed to nurturing and developing young, talented musicians in a quality orchestral program. Its calendar year runs August-May, with concerts offered in November and May. Any musician entering grades 6-12 with at least one year of musical study may audition. Contact Julia Nichols at 301-997-0079, SMYOrchestra@gmail.com, or visit www.smyorchestra.org. Go-DIVA! Productions, Inc. provides entertainment for public and private events, ranging from concerts that feature jazz, blues, pop, rock, opera and musical theater, to original showcases that highlight specific artists, eras or themes. Its core mission is to continue to advocate for the growth and support of the arts, especially among talented women and youth. Visit www.go-diva.webs.com or write to godivaproductions@gmail.com. **(end)**