

# Franc D'Ambrosio's Christmas In New York

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## TUSCARAWAS PHILHARMONIC

### A "Humble" Tradition

New York during the holiday season is filled with iconic images, but none are quite as immediately recognizable as the tree at Rockefeller Center, even for those of us who have never seen it in person.

Each year, the Center installs a massive tree and lights it in a public ceremony with the mayor "flipping the switch." Then for about two months, half a million visitors make a point of stopping by to admire the tree.

It's almost always a Norway spruce that is hand-selected by the Center's head gardener, Eric Pauze. This year's tree, grown by State College, Pennsylvania, resident Jason Perrin, is 80 years old, stands 75 feet tall, and weighs 12 tons.

As is customary, the tree is donated for the occasion, the grower receiving simply pride in knowing his or her tree will bring joy to so many.

After the tree is removed on January 6, the wood is milled and treated and then donated to Habitat for Humanity to be used in home

building. Of course, it isn't enough to build an entire house, but it will provide a few windows and doors, and each piece of wood is stamped with the Rockefeller logo and date.

So, what is so humble about this tradition? While this tree display officially began in 1933 and has become ostentatious by most standards, it began unofficially in 1931 while Rockefeller Center was under construction.

The Depression-Era workers pooled their money that year to buy a simple tree for themselves. They displayed it on the job site, decorating it with strings of cranberries, paper garland, and some tin cans.

Their modest effort was the root of what has become a grand gesture, an indispensable part of Christmas in New York.

Roasted Chestnuts for Your Holiday Feast



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# Roasted Chestnuts

*Create the taste  
of New York at Christmas*

## INGREDIENTS

2 pounds fresh unshelled chestnuts  
2-3 sprigs rosemary  
1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted  
2 teaspoons (or more) kosher salt  
Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg  
Freshly ground black pepper

## PREPARATION

Preheat oven to 425°F. Place a large sheet of foil on a rimmed baking sheet. Place chestnuts, flat side down, on a work surface. Using a utility knife or a sharp paring knife, carefully cut through the shell on the rounded side of each chestnut to score

an X. Soak in a bowl of hot water for 1 minute (this helps them steam while roasting).

Drain chestnuts and pat dry; place in a medium bowl. Add rosemary, butter, 2 teaspoons salt, and nutmeg. Season with pepper and toss to thoroughly coat. Arrange chestnuts in a single layer in center of foil (a few might overlap) and gather up edges of foil around chestnuts, leaving a large opening on top.

Roast until the peel begins to curl up and chestnuts are cooked through, 30-45 minutes, depending on size and age of nuts.

Transfer chestnuts to a platter, scraping in any butter and spices with them, and toss to coat. Season with more salt, if desired. Serve hot or warm.

For years, buying roasted chestnuts from a street vendor in New York City was a holiday tradition even the locals enjoyed, taking in the aromatic delight of the nuts once plentiful in the U. S. Now, after a blight destroyed domestic trees, chestnuts are mostly imported, and food trends have changed as they do from time to time, but you can still find the occasional vendor selling the delicious seasonal treats and keeping the beloved tradition alive.



## A Not-So-Humble Tree Topper

*The tree at Rockefeller Center is topped with a massive star made by Swarovski. Here are just a few facts about the not-so-humble topper:*

The star...

- is 9.5 feet in diameter
- weighs 550 pounds
- contains 25,000 Swarovski crystals
- is made of 1 million facets
- contains 720 LED lights
- is powered by solar panels

TUSCARAWAS PHILHARMONIC

Children's Chorus



# Winter Concert

JOIN THE CHORUS FOR A SPECIAL HOLIDAY PERFORMANCE

Sunday • December 3 • 3:00 p.m. • FREE

Dover First United Methodist Church  
1725 North Wooster Avenue

Sponsored by Progressive Foam,  
Dover Chemical Corporation, Barbour Publishing,  
ProVia, The Doris and Floyd Kimble Foundation



## The Philharmonic Hires Personnel Manager/Librarian

We are pleased to announce the hiring of Jayne Naragon as personnel manager and librarian effective November 1, 2017. Jayne's association with the Philharmonic spans two decades in her capacity as second clarinetist. She also plays bass and E-flat clarinet and saxophone. A graduate of Kent State University, she holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Clarinet Performance and studied with Daniel Roberdeau, Dr. Dennis Nygren, and Franklin Cohen. In addition to the Philharmonic, Jayne performs with the Ashland Symphony, Canton Player's Guild Theatre, Canton Concert Band, and is active as a free-lance musician.

Jayne has taught for Massillon City, Green Local, and Medina City schools, served as Adjunct Instructor of Clarinet at University of Mount Union, and is currently on staff at Kent State University Stark Campus. She also serves as Lesson Studio Director for Pellegrino Music Center in Canton and is president of the Canton Concert Band board of directors.

The joint positions of personnel manager and librarian became vacant when Barb Moore departed after serving in this role since 1996. Moore was also a member of the violin section for 30 years, and the Board of Trustees is grateful for her years of service.

## New Keyboard in Memory of Beloved Pianists— Sherri Weidman and Robert Vandall

We have purchased a new keyboard using funds given in memory of Sherri Weidman and Robert Vandall. Sherri and Robert were beloved members of the community as well as within the Philharmonic orchestra and chorus. A commemorative plaque will be placed on the keyboard as a way to remember our departed friends.



To contribute to these and other Philharmonic programs, visit our website for quick and secure online donations— [www.TuscarawasPhilharmonic.org](http://www.TuscarawasPhilharmonic.org)

# Musician Spotlight



## DAN CONWELL—PRINCIPAL BASS

The most frequent question a double bass player gets is, “Don’t you wish you played a smaller instrument?” It’s an understandable query, but I always have to answer “no.” Bassist Ray Brown used to say that his job was to make the soloist sound good, and that supportive roll of the bass fits my personality. And, I love that growly sound; I think a good bass sounds a little like a 1950s Austin Healy sports car. On top of that, the bass has been around a long time, and I wanted access to all that literature going back to the 1500s!

I play in the orchestras in Wooster and Ashland on occasion, but my main musical job is with the Tuscarawas Philharmonic. The Philharmonic is full of fine players who are great people, and the energy that Eric puts into the music inspires us to play at our best. I have especially enjoyed playing Vaughn-Williams

and Mozart’s *Requiem*.

Outside of the orchestra, my musical taste runs from Appalachian fiddle music to opera to Bach. This fall, my wife, Tabitha, and I made a trip to Leipzig, where Bach lived and worked. We attended two services at St. Thomaskirche featuring his music and heard the Gewandhaus Orchestra of Leipzig. After Germany, we heard music by Vivaldi at St. Martins-in-the-Field in London and jazz at the Jazz Dock in Prague. Back home in Ohio we enjoy the Wooster Chamber Music Series, and of course, the Cleveland Orchestra.

During the week I work at the J. M. Smucker Company supporting the R&D group. My product line responsibilities include Pillsbury frostings and mixes as well as our fruit spreads. My work is in the pilot plants where we make batches larger than benchtop but smaller than the factory.

Playing with the Philharmonic has been a goal of mine since I started subbing back in the Dover High School days, and I want to say thank you to my fine section mates and all of the many people who make this orchestra a reality.

*(for Dan’s full profile, see the blog on our website)*



# CARNIVALE!

FEBRUARY 10, 2018 • 7:30 P.M.

Featuring our own steel drum ensemble, *PanHarmonic*, in a program that will include the pulse-quickening “Carnival Overture” by Antonin Dvorak, along with a symphonic samba and music for solo cello and orchestra.

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- [www.TuscarawasPhilharmonic.org](http://www.TuscarawasPhilharmonic.org) • *State of the Art* editor: Robyn Martins
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