

around town: EVENTS

## WHATEVER Happened To...

*International Piano Competition celebrates  
10-year anniversary*

In exploring a number of approaches to celebrating the upcoming 10th year of the **Hilton Head International Piano Competition**, a committee of Hilton Head Orchestra members decided that answering the question, "Whatever happened to...?" about each of its first prize winners was a great idea. There is an abiding interest in these talented young pianists who quickly became part of their hosts' families and close friends of the staff and volunteers of the competition.

Given the fact that these winners are now all over the world, there were lots of questions to be answered. Where are they now? Who knows how to contact them? What has happened with their careers? Are they concertizing? Are they recording? Are they still in school? Are they teaching? What's their personal situation? How do they remember their Hilton Head experience? Do they have any messages for their Hilton Head friends? What do they sound like today?

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A medium was needed to document and report this information to the many fans of the competition and the Hilton Head Orchestra under whose auspices the HHIPC operates.

The challenge of identifying how to accomplish this task was put to loyal HHIPC supporters Ken and Phyllis Anderson. The Andersons enthusiastically agreed to tackle the project and quickly identified how they would meet that challenge. Their concept was to produce a commemorative two-CD album, housed in a DVD box, that would include a booklet with updates about each first-prize winner plus a brief history of the competition.

Ken Anderson said, "The goal of the album was that it be more than a collection of piano selections. The goal was for it to be a tribute to the winners and the quality of the competition, an album that can be shared with pride by patrons of the Hilton Head International Piano Competition and the Hilton Head Orchestra, their families and friends. We wanted this project to say a lot about the quality of life and the arts on Hilton Head. We wanted a tangible product that we could share with other musical organizations to build the prestige and reputation of our competition. We wanted something that our public officials would proudly share with their peers. We wanted an attractive keepsake and



PHOTO BY BARRY KAUFMAN

souvenir for the many visitors to our island. We wanted all of this, but our overriding objective was to celebrate the successful evolution of the Hilton Head International Piano Competition into one of the leading piano competitions in the U.S. with a worldwide reputation."

To achieve this goal, the Andersons decided to contact all of the former winners to tell them about the project. They asked that each submit current recordings that showcase performance, a recent photograph and a completed questionnaire.

The challenge of finding each of the eleven winners (three tied for first prize in 1998) proved to be an easy task because of the long-term rela-

tionships established with host families and the committee and because, wherever in the world they were, they all had email addresses.

When the Andersons contacted the winners and outlined their requests, everybody quickly agreed to participate. As a result, via email and regular mail coming from as far away as Taiwan and Greece, the Andersons soon assembled and began to edit 11 very different responses to their query. After many corrections, backs and forths and with current photos in-hand, the Andersons enlisted Christy Kendrick of Insty-Prints to create the album's artistic design and layout for printing.

The next, and more important challenge was to reproduce two CDs with approximately 14 minutes of performance by each of the winning artists. The Andersons utilized the competition's sound engineer, Leonard Gibbs, for this task. Gibbs was charged with editing and merging all of the submitted music, balancing the sound levels, removing noise and applause, and producing two high-quality CDs showcasing all the winners' performances.

Ken and Phyllis Anderson agree that the most heartwarming benefit of working on this project was learning about the many achievements of the former winners, hearing their virtuosity at the piano and their continued enthusiasm for the time they were on Hilton Head Island partic-