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Pensacola Opera Looks to Next 25 Years

Pensacola Opera is busy preparing for its 2009 Season, "The Next 25 Years." The season will look back at the Opera's roots with a brand-new production of Mozart's *Così fan tutte* at the University of West Florida in January, and celebrate how far it has come in May with Verdi's *Aida*, returning to the renovated Saenger Theatre. Season and single tickets are currently on sale for all performances – call (850) 433-6737 or visit www.pensacolaopera.com for more information.

Kyle Marrero has assumed all management duties of the Opera while continuing to serve as Artistic Director. Under his leadership are Erin Kelley, Development and Marketing Coordinator, Timothy Kennedy, Director of Education and Outreach, Geoffrey Bleeker, Patron Services Manager, Athena Bonds, Office Manager, and Judy Robinson, Accountant.

Pensacola Opera's Board of Trustees is led by Dr. Ruth Orth, Chair. Officers are Fred Carmody, Vice Chair, and Lisa Minshew, Secretary. Trustees are Nigel Allen, Frank Cutrone, Evelyn Davis, Pandora de Balthazar, Christina Doss, Mary Hoxeng, Jeff Lewis, Francesca Maxime, Sydney McAbee, Nell Potter, Mary Riesberg, Betty Roberts, Greg Sexton, Ben Strong, Gene Valentino, Roger Webb, Patricia Buchanan-Wright. Jan Miller and Don Partington serve as Trustees Emeritus. Rachel Jones serves as a teen member of the Board through a partnership with Chain Reaction.

The artistic and educational programming of Pensacola Opera is supported by its volunteer fund- and friend-raising group, the Opera Guild. Led by Betty Roberts, Dave Sibley, Eleanor Aspliden, Sandee Houston, and Kathleen McBride, the Guild organizes monthly socials to raise awareness about the Opera's programs and plans the Opera's signature fundraisers – the Jukebox Gala, Diva's Closet Sale, and Operazzi Ball. This year's Jukebox Gala was the most successful yet, raising over \$24,000 for the Opera's programs.

Pensacola Opera has come a long way from its first production of *Così fan tutte* in 1983. It has grown from an all-volunteer chamber opera company to a thriving, professional company bringing world-class singers to Pensacola. With its 2009 Season, the Opera looks to its roots and reaches for the stars. The entire staff and volunteer leadership invite anyone who has not yet been to one of the Opera's productions to come and see what they've been missing.