



**Riverside Symphonia  
PO Box 650  
Lambertville, NJ 08530  
609-397-7300  
[www.riversidesymphonia.org](http://www.riversidesymphonia.org)**

**Contact: Coline Ebeling**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Of Bass Drums and Bees**

By Coline Nitzsche Ebeling

What do Bees and Bass drums have in common? Not too much it seems, but to a group of Delaware Township School students the two came together on Wednesday, January 24<sup>th</sup>. Percussion students from the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades were treated to a master class sponsored by the Delaware Township Community Education Foundation. Taught by Greg Giannascoli, principal percussionist for the Riverside Symphonia, the class began with Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's classic piece *Flight of the Bumblebee* played by Greg on the marimba and accompanied by pianist Steve Ryan. The students learned how hard mallets playing the right instrument can mimic the soft sounds of bumblebees. They also learned that beeswax can help aid their percussion playing by acting as an agent used to smooth a tambourine making it easier to play, and how a card placed on a snare drum can alter its sound to make it better. Efficient as a bee Greg kept the class apace moving from instrument to instrument and providing his captive audience with insightful tips into how to produce the best sounds from the snare to the bass drum to the cymbals, tambourine and even triangle.

To the untrained eye and ear percussion playing may seem like a rather simple undertaking, but after today's lesson these students have a greater appreciation for the subtleties and intricacies involved in producing the myriad sounds that support their bands and orchestras. And... as Greg pointed out – those other musicians ...they have it easy, they play one instrument throughout the whole concert, but percussionists they play as many as fifteen – flitting around like bumblebees in the background and providing the audience with so much of the emotion of the music heard – never missing a beat and always on cue.

The Riverside Symphonia will hold its next performance "Strings through the Ages" on February 9 & 10, 8pm at the Church of St. John the Evangelist, 44 Bridge Street, Lambertville. The concert will feature pianist Antonio di Cristofano playing F. Chopin's Piano Concerto No.2 in F-minor arranged for piano and strings. Other works to be performed are W.A. Mozart's Divertimento K 136 in D – Major, A. Panufnik's Renaissance Dances and D. Shostakovich's String Quartet No. 8 arranged for chamber orchestra.

For ticket information or more information on master classes please contact the Riverside Symphonia by calling (609) 397-7300 or visiting their website [www.riversidesymphonia.org](http://www.riversidesymphonia.org).