THERE IS NOTHING MORE IMPORTANT I CAN CONVEY IN THIS MESSAGE THAN THANK YOU. You, our donors and supporters, allow all of us at The Bushnell to do the good, important work we do enriching and enlivening the Central Connecticut community. All businesses, including ours (sometimes especially ours, as a not-for-profit arts institution) face challenges. But this past year, our enormous successes have significantly outweighed those challenges, and this Annual Message is a celebration of everyone who works here, and all of you who support us with your contributions and ticket purchases.

One of the most exciting events of the past year happened last March, when a group of Bushnell donors, Trustees, and employees traveled to the Palace Theatre in New York to see one of the final preview performances of the new musical An American in Paris. The Bushnell, through its partnership in Five Cent Productions and Elephant Eye Theatrical, is one of the producers of the show, which premiered at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, where it enjoyed a sold-out run. The musical, which is based on the classic film, opened in Broadway to rave reviews and went on to receive 12 Tony Award nominations. It won four Tonys and was named Best Musical by the Outer Critics Circle and the Drama League, making it the most awarded new musical of the season.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank our outgoing Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Robert Patricelli, for six years of outstanding leadership. His wisdom and experience have inspired and guided us through a period of enormous growth, and happily we’re not saying goodbye – Bob will continue to serve on the Board as Immediate Past Chair. And I’m exceptionally pleased to welcome Jay Benet as our new Chair. Jay is currently Vice Chairman and Chief Financial Officer of Travelers. He’s served on our Board since 2008 and I look forward to his expanded role leading the Board as we continue to grow The Bushnell’s leadership position in the community. We are proud of the work we do, the entertainment we produce and present, the students we help educate, and of our place in the fabric of central Connecticut. Every season, we have the privilege of enriching the lives of hundreds of thousands of visitors to The Bushnell. And each year we recommit to our core mission, with upgrades to our facilities, the most appealing programming, and expanded community alliances – always in service to our audiences. You’ll read about many of these subjects in this Annual Message. The arts can, and often do, enrich the soul, and function as a way for patrons to make positive differences in their own lives and the lives of their communities. The passion and engagement of the individuals, corporations, foundations, and government agencies that support us every year allow us to continue this worthwhile ideal – and for that we again thank you.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

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FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

AN OPERATING SURPLUS AND INCREASED ANNUAL FUND GIVING and a record-setting fundraising gala were highlights of full year 2015 at The Bushnell.

As Connecticut’s largest arts organization, The Bushnell had earned revenue of $15.5 million in FY2015, and the 2014-2015 season ended with an unaudited operating surplus of nearly $100,000.

Sources of funding have changed throughout The Bushnell’s 85-year history. Over the past 15 years, there has been a notable decline in corporate and foundation support. Additionally, unlike so many similar not-for-profit performing arts centers in the United States, The Bushnell does not regularly receive major city or state government funding. In other states, comparable performing arts centers receive an average annual of $2.6 million in governmental support, which accounts for more than 10% of their budgets. The Bushnell regularly receives less than 1% of its operating budget from these sources.

The support we receive from individuals is vital to our livelihood, and we are thrilled to report that a 5.13% increase in giving to the Annual Fund for a total of $1.3 million from 3,097 generous donors. Total annual giving to The Bushnell was $3.3 million and we are extraordinarily grateful to our corporate, foundation, governmental, and individual donors for their charitable support.

Ovations 2015 was held Saturday, March 28 at The Bushnell, themed Masquerade: There’s So Much More than Meets the Eye, the jam-packed event attracted over 400 arts supporters and raised over $406,000 in support of The Bushnell’s award-winning arts-in-education programs.
THE BUSHNELL IS MORE THAN AN 85-YEAR OLD HISTORIC BUILDING. It is an integral part of the community that surrounds it. The essence of The Bushnell’s mission is achieved from the interaction with our neighbors, our artistic partners, and especially the hundreds of thousands of people who come through our doors every season. We exist to engage and enrich the Greater Hartford region and we thrive and grow by serving as a regional center for performance, education, discourse, and celebration.

The Bushnell is a leader in the community, but we do not do this work alone. As a not-for-profit performing arts center, part of our core mission is to serve as a home for other local arts organizations. This season we formalized a management agreement with one of our longest-standing partners, the Hartford Symphony Orchestra. We are pleased to continue our treasured, mutually beneficial partnerships with the Connecticut Forum, Connecticut Ballet, the Nutmeg Ballet and others. We cherish these alliances and look forward to adding to and expanding them in the years to come.

The Bushnell has an ongoing significant commitment to children’s and family programming. Thanks to our partners at Robinson & Cole, People’s United Bank, and Dominion, we were able to produce and present full seasons of our popular Family Series and Bushnell Children’s Theatre events. Introducing young people to the energizing spirit of live theater is one of the proudest and most important aspects of our mission.

The Bushnell opens its doors to a variety of performances, of course, but we also serve the community as a destination venue for dozens of institutions and individuals. Every year, we play host to dozens of weddings, graduations, and milestone birthday and anniversary parties. The Bushnell is a place where life-long memories are created. A number of national corporations hold their annual meetings at The Bushnell, taking advantage of our flexible spaces and event-planning expertise. Hartford Hospital once again used every square inch of The Bushnell for its annual fundraising gala, The Black and Red Ball, featuring the legendary Blues Brothers as their headliner.

The Bushnell is central to the life of Connecticut, and we’re profoundly grateful for the opportunity to enrich the spirit of the community by sharing our magnificent facility with our artistic partners, visiting artists, and people from around the region and across the country. We could not achieve any of these goals without you. The support of our donors is vital to our continued growth and outreach into the community.
The 2014-2015 school year marked the twenty-second anniversary of The Bushnell’s PARTNERS® program. Each year, The Bushnell’s many Master Teaching & Presenting Artists are deployed to schools throughout Central Connecticut, delivering greatly needed arts-in-education programming to students in schools. In addition, PARTNERS provides access to professional live theatre and family programming throughout the year, helping to reinforce in-classroom work.

The Bushnell’s Education department provided arts education programs in 26 schools and provided access to Bushnell Children’s Theatre productions for an additional 17 schools, serving over 15,000 area children. These programs and other community outreach activities offered a total of 21,580 unique artistic encounters to Connecticut youth.

Talent development

The Bushnell remains committed to providing opportunities for local youth to develop their artistic talents. The Ensign-Darling Vocal Fellowship, Noah Webster Jazzicians, and CT Poetry Slam enjoyed another successful year, working with students in Hartford Public Schools and surrounding towns. In addition, The Bushnell expanded its efforts, exploring and developing new ways to bring the arts to an ever-increasing group of students.

“Working with this program (Bushnell Lyric and Music Production Program) made me realize I can make it very far in life with my music career. All I have to do is keep my head up and follow my dreams.” – Student

New programming this year included a three-day intensive Tap Dance workshop for 150 students. Additionally, Adam Souza, the Musical Director of Kinky Boots, held a vocal master class for a select group of high school vocalists. And, The Bushnell once again hosted the Ellen Joanne Goldfarb Language Arts Festival, welcoming more than 580 students and teachers in celebration of students’ writing and work with PARTNERS® during the school year. Students from Jack Jackter Intermediate School, West Middle Elementary School, the Asian Studies Academy, and Trinity Day School participated in this year’s festival, along with their teachers. Student poets, selected by their teachers, shared the work they developed with The Bushnell’s Master Teaching Artists over the course of the 2014-2015 school year. Students’ readings were accompanied by the Gene Bozzi Trio, providing improvisational music that helped evoke the mood of each poem.

The festival also featured the work of students from West Middle Elementary School, whose creative writing had been submitted to the Child’s Play Touring Theatre of Chicago. The theatre troupe developed the creative writing samples into theatre productions, which were performed as world premieres presentations on the Belding Theater stage. The celebration of student imagination and expressive exploration – major tenets of The Bushnell PARTNERS education programs – concluded with a rousing finale by special guest performers.

Happy faces at The Bushnell’s 2014 Family Fun Day, sponsored by Robinson & Cole
WHY DO YOU COME TO THE BUSHNELL? Chances are, if you’re like most of our guests, you most often come to The Bushnell to be entertained. We are synonymous with Broadway in central Connecticut, and we proudly present the best of current touring productions and occasionally have a hand in producing as well, as highlighted in the President’s Message about the Tony-nominated An American In Paris. Of course, our ability to entertain goes far beyond our Broadway offerings, showcasing a remarkable cross-section of performing arts to delight the wide variety of audiences in the 21st century.

The big crowd pleaser this season was the return of perennial favorite Wicked. No matter how many times we bring it back, audiences just can’t get enough of those witches! We had a number of productions this season that ended up captivating audiences in ways both expected and unexpected. The new stage version of the television classic Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer charmed audiences young and old, and was so successful we’re bringing it back in December 2015. In terms of the Broadway Series, season openers Evita and Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat underperformed a bit at the box office, but were critically successful. Nice Work If You Can Get It and Camelot held their own this winter, but it was the especially strong performances by crowd-pleasers Pippin, Once, and Kinky Boots, shows that all had lofty budget goals, that helped us end the season with a surplus. Thanks to all of you for supporting our Broadway Series with your season ticket subscriptions and single ticket purchases. And a sincere thank you to Farmington Bank and Travelers for once again sponsoring the Broadway Series.

Beyond Broadway, The Bushnell hosted a particularly robust lineup of iconic performers this past season. Johnny Mathis, Jay Leno, Hal Holbrook, The Whispers and The Stylistics, Itzhak Perlman, and the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater all performed to capacity crowds. We also showcasing contemporary performers like Jason Mraz and Raining Jane, Bill Engvall, David Sedaris, John Hodgman, Miranda Sings, Under the Streetlamp, and the return of the hugely popular Mythbusters: Behind the Myth.

Whether you come to The Bushnell as a long-time Broadway season ticket holder, for a one-time comedy show or concert, to listen to the symphony, see a ballet, a movie, or to hear fascinating minds chat with each other, our goal is always to leave you entertained, enlightened, and thoroughly engaged by your time with us.
Farmington Bank and Travelers

BROADWAY SERIES

CAST
Joseph and the Technicolor Dreamcoat
Pippin
Nice Work If You Can Get It
Camelot
Once
Kinky Boots

BROADWAY BONUS
Wicked
Robinson & Cole

FAMILY SERIES
Bushnell Family Fun Day at Envisionfest
The Nutmeg Ballet presents The Nutcracker
Jim Henson’s Dinosaur Train LIVE!
Buddy’s Big Adventure
Wild Kratt’s Live

Robinson & Cole

BUSHNELL CHILDREN’S THEATRE
Bushnell United Bank and Domestic

HARTFORD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CONCERTS
Concerts
Jason Mraz and Raining Jane
Under the Streetlamp
Izhak Perlman in Recital with Pianist Rachel Draz
4 Girls 4: A Christmas Together
Handel’s Messiah
Hartford Chorale Travelers Chorale: World’s Best Summer Concerts at Simsbury Meadows
Defying Gravity: The Music of Stephen Schwartz

THE CONNECTICUT FORUM
Debating our Broken Political System
TV’s Prime Time
Explorers & Adventurers
A Conversation with David McCullough & Stacy Scott
Bring Worthy Journalism: Backstage with the Creators of SERIAL

COMMUNITY EVENTS
Mark My Words 2014: A Wicked Cool Evening
Warren Miller’s No Turning Back
Hartford Hospital’s 24th Annual
Black & Red Gala: The Bros Brothers
Miss India Connecticut: SHAKTI
Strength of a Woman
Born To Lead: Jim Calhoun
100 Men of Color Black Tie Gala and Awards
The Spirit of Ukraine
The Whispers & The Stylistics
Hal Holbrook’s Mark Twain Tonight!
Hot Chocolate Soul
Sufjan Stevens
Connecticut Ballet presents
A Garland of Dances
Hall of Fame Dance Challenge

HARTFORD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA SPECIAL EVENTS
Mozart & Mahler
New England’s Wings: Beethoven, Schubert & Beyond
Copley & Canary Island Toccati Mountain Music Festival
Discovery Series
Symphony in Schools Chamber Programs

2014 | 2015 SEASON
OVATIONS

ON MARCH 28 nearly 400 partygoers celebrated 20 years of The Bushnell’s PARTNERS (Partners in Arts and Education Revitalizing Schools) program. The theme, Masquerade, invited guests to come in their most elegant and mysterious masquerade finery. This year’s event set new records for fundraising with a gross revenue of $406,000. Co-chaired by Tammy and James Ramenda along with Jennifer and Marc DiBella, Ovations 2015 was a tremendous success!
LEADERSHIP GIFT INITIATIVE
We are deeply grateful to those listed here who have contributed to The Bushnell’s $12 million Leadership Gifts Initiative for key programmatic and capital needs.

TRUSTEES, DUESKERS, AND INDIVIDUALS
Eliezer and Jack Barns Teri and Lloyd Trotter
The Barnes Family Estate of Ann M. Curran
Mr. and Mrs. Peter G. Russell
Margaret S. Rochford*
Mr. and Mrs. Richard C. Horn
Charles B. Seaverns
Dr. Alan Schwartz
Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence C. Starr
Mrs. Helen S. Wills*
Mary Jane Willms*
Michael Suisman
Susan and Brian Clemow
Pamela and James Cronin
Ann M. Curran*
Tom and Gwen Marrion
Christine and Richard J. Marcks
Mark and Merrill Mandell
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The Bushnell had a series of interior and exterior upgrades last summer to repair structural wear and tear, increase energy efficiency, and enhance patron comfort and accessibility. Renovations included: a new façade with updated windows to the east and Capitol marquees and the building’s tower. We’ll detail those projects in next year’s annual report. This summer, a number of restoration projects took place at The Bushnell, including renovation of the east and Capitol marquees and the building’s facade. But let’s detail those projects in next year’s annual report.

In the public spaces, the Mortensen elevator’s interior features were refurbished. The new interior features included: an all-new design; commercial-grade finishes; a modern design aesthetic, and new lighting. The elevator’s interior features were upgraded to accommodate taller patrons and those in mobility devices. The elevator was also outfitted with a new high-efficiency elevator drive system, acoustic panels, and LED lighting. The new elevator doors were designed to have a traditional look while providing improved accessibility. The elevator was also equipped with a new, state-of-the-art sound system in the Mortensen Foundation Lobby to provide an improved acoustic environment. On the west side of the building, the Trinity Street walkway has been updated and regraded and landscaped; five new LED lights were installed to provide extra lighting. In the public spaces, the Mortensen elevator’s internal features were renovated, including a modern design aesthetic, new lighting, and commercial-grade finishes. The elevator was also outfitted with a new high-efficiency elevator drive system, acoustic panels, and LED lighting. The new elevator doors were designed to provide improved accessibility, and the elevator was equipped with a new, state-of-the-art sound system in the Mortensen Foundation Lobby to enhance patron comfort and accessibility. The elevator was also equipped with a new high-efficiency elevator drive system, acoustic panels, and LED lighting. The new elevator doors were designed to provide improved accessibility, and the elevator was equipped with a new, state-of-the-art sound system in the Mortensen Foundation Lobby to enhance patron comfort and accessibility.
2015 ANNUAL MESSAGE

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annual city-wide Envisionfest

held in conjunction with Hartford's

More smiles at our Family Fun Day,

The students love the experience and

"Each year, I am so impressed by the

knowledge, and what they have learned."

creative way to express their emotions,

are committed to the learning process

"...love learning a new artistic skill and

their enthusiasm and their talent.

Hartford Performs Schools

Alfred E. Burt Elementary

Asian Studies Academy at Belizzi

Creativity, Innovation and Excellence

the arts bring to our students. They

their enjoyment of learning and their

they love learning a new artistic skill and

We are proud of the artists’ dedication, patience and encouragement

knowledge, and what they have learned."
The "Emerald Elegance" program included the announcement of the formation of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation’s volunteer council. Before his illustrious career in theatre, television, and movies, Reilly, who grew up in Connecticut, was introduced to his audience by Alan Schwartz, a friend of Reilly's, made the announcement.

BUSHNELL  VOLUNTEERS

ON JUNE 2 we celebrated 20 years of outstanding volunteer support to The Bushnell with a gala "Emerald Elegance" party. Over 350 of our invaluable volunteers came out to celebrate two decades of dedication to the institution. During this time, our volunteers have donated over 165,000 hours of their time to more than 4,000 events, representing almost $15 million based on the independent sector’s annual value of volunteer service.

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