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## **Curtains for Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra?**

CATHY ALEX - CBC Radio Arts

**THUNDER BAY** - It may be curtains for Thunder Bay's Symphony Orchestra. The orchestra must raise \$150,000 in the next 30 days, or it could fold. The crisis is the result of funding cut-backs, an accumulated debt, and a lost tax appeal with Revenue Canada.

Volunteers and board members are now calling on the community to save the symphony. One thing they're stressing is the role the symphony plays in the community.

Nancy Creighton manages Development Thunder Bay. It's an organization that brings new business to the city. Creighton says the symphony is a valuable part of the cultural package her group advertises:

"It's a kind of a benchmark," she says. "If a community has a symphony located in it, then that's an indicator that there is some value given to musical culture in the community... and it would be indicative that there are a number of other things that are going on there too that are being supported by the community."

The symphony, in turn, supports the community says Aris Carastathis. He chairs the Department of Music at Lakehead University. Carastathis says the symphony provides teachers not only for his students, but for many children learning to play instruments like piano, violin or cello.

"What is important there to recognize," he says, "is that we have to see this symphony orchestra as an actual investment in the future of young people, and I think it's an investment that is not unreasonable... The same way we invest in library resources, the public school education, in other forms of arts."

Some people are already heeding Carastathis message. A group of city businesses have donated \$5,000 to the Save our Symphony campaign.