

Wild winds

A new CD by the KU Wind Ensemble, recorded at the Lied Center on west campus, showcases the group's performance of five new compositions, but that's not all. It also gives fans a way to help KU bands as they add to their music collections.

The record label, Naxos, will donate \$1 to the Band Scholarship Fund at KU Endowment for every copy of the CD bought online from the label's website.

The disk, called "Wild Nights!" after one of the tracks, is part of the Naxos Wind Band Classics series. It features Vince Gnojek, professor of music, as soloist on John Mackey's five-part suite "Concerto for Soprano Saxophone." The album also includes works by Frank Ticheli, David Dzubay, Steven



Scott Weiss, KU's director of bands, conducts the KU Wind Ensemble. Purchases of the group's latest Naxos CD support KU band scholarships.

Bryant and Roshanne Etezady. It's fresh music — all written after 2003.

Wind Ensemble, conducted by Scott Weiss, director of bands, is KU's top wind band. It regularly commissions and records new works. It recorded the first release in the Wind Band Classics series, "Redline Tango," in 2006.

To get your copy of "Wild Nights" — and send a dollar to the Band Scholarship Fund — visit kuendowment.org/wildnights/. This will take you directly to the Naxos sales page for the CD. To give directly to the Band Scholarship Fund, visit kuendowment.org/winds/.

— Charles Higginson

Starry skies



The Mount Laguna Observatory will enable KU astronomy students to record images of objects like this star cluster, NGC 6791, 13,300 light years away in the constellation Lyra.

An observatory on your own roof might seem like a great idea. But the KU Department of Physics and Astronomy has an even better one: using the Mount Laguna Observatory, halfway across the country at San Diego State University.

Why would KU astronomers want access to a telescope so far from home? The answers are observational quality and high-speed networks. The observatory is 45 miles east of San Diego, surrounded by state and national parks — which means velvety dark, star-filled skies. Mount Laguna also benefits from smooth air flow off the Pacific Ocean, which brings steady atmospheric conditions.

Most observatories are operated at a distance. They are built to stabilize the telescope by separating it from heat-generating elements such as control rooms, computers and human operators. KU students in Malott Hall send instructions and collect data over Internet II, a high-speed

network reserved for research and scholarship — communicating instantly with the Mount Laguna telescope 1,600 miles away.

KU and San Diego State are working together to install a new 1.25-meter mirror in a telescope at Mount Laguna. The telescope also will be upgraded to include an imaging system with four times the area of the current camera.

The "125 in 125" fundraising campaign refers to the plan for a fully operational 125cm telescope by 2011, as well as the 125th anniversary of observational astronomy at KU. San Diego State has funding in hand to cover its share of the cost of the project. KU's share is \$450,000, and half must come from donations or grants.

To find out more or to support "125 in 125," contact Brandie Stormes, 785-832-7465 or bstormes@kuendowment.org, or visit kuendowment.org/telescope/.

— Charles Higginson