



The mission of Rogue Valley Chorale is to inspire and enrich our communities through great choral music performed by choruses of all ages.

Rogue Valley Chorale Association Newsletter



Ethereal Moments

March 23, 7:30 pm, Collier Center
 March 24, 3:00 pm, Collier Center
 March 30, 7:00 pm, Burns Paiute Reservation

Featuring the world premiere of *The Origin of The Songs (Cuicapeuhcayotl)* by renowned film and television composer Joseph Julian Gonzalez. Join the Chorale for this auditory and visual extravaganza. There will be a complimentary pre-concert presentation by Composer Joseph Julian Gonzalez, March 23, 6:30 PM and March 24, 2:00 PM. All are welcome to attend.

COLE! The Music of Broadway Icon Cole Porter

May 4, 7:30 pm, Collier Center
 May 5, 3:00 pm, Collier Center

Put on the bling and loosen up your vocal cords. It is time for the music of Cole Porter! Join us for a full evening of "Delovely Entertainment."



Disney Magic

May 4, 3:00 pm
 North Medford High School

Rogue Valley Youth Choruses celebrate the music of Disney in this family friendly and highly entertaining concert.



Upcoming Concerts

Ethereal Moments, March 23 and 24, 2019

This concert features the world premiere of the RVC commissioned work *The Origin of the Songs (Cuicapeuhcayotl)* by renowned film and television composer Joseph Julian Gonzalez. The title of the concert was coined by Artistic Director Michael Morris after several insightful discussions he had with Mr. Gonzalez about the nature of the work and its source materials.

The text is based on the first stanza of the work known as *Cantares Mexicanos*, an epic poem that many scholars believe is the basis for the spiritual beliefs of the Aztecs. The stanza of the poem introduces the character known as "The Singer," who is searching for the entrance to the Flower World, a reference to the spirit world in the Aztec belief system. The music that composer Gonzalez has created is ethereal in nature, with stunning auditory images of the Flower World, humming birds, and a sense of the spiritual. "The Singer" will be portrayed by the exceptionally talented mezzo-soprano Shelly Cox-Thornhill.



The complementary repertoire for this concert explores those ethereal moments that we all experience, whether it is walking in the woods, singing, dancing, dreaming, or praying. The music is gorgeous, lush and rich. You don't want to miss this world premiere of the ***Origin of the Songs***.

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To order Rogue Valley Chorale Tickets contact the Craterian Theater at the Collier Center for the Performing Arts, (541) 779-3000, or visit the box office at 16 S. Bartlett Street in Medford. Tickets are also available on-line at www.craterian.org. Rogue Valley Youth Choruses tickets are available at the door.

Reflections from the Artistic Director

The Joy of Diverse Programming

By Michael Morris



In the world of performing arts, there are two basic types of performers. One type is the specialist, who concentrates their talents on one specific style, repertoire, or historic period. For example, a dancer might concentrate all

of her efforts to develop her skills to dance ballet. The other type of performer seeks to develop skills in many diverse styles. That same dancer might instead choose to develop skills in tap, modern dance, and Broadway in order to be a well-rounded entertainer.

Those who practice the choral arts must eventually make the decision whether to be specialists or entertainers. Sometimes the decision is made at the formation of the ensemble, such as the pop-acapella groups Pentatonix or Manhattan Transfer. More often, however, choral ensembles develop their identity over time, through experimentation in concept, repertoire, and performance practice. The Rogue Valley Chorale has developed over time as a well-rounded choral ensemble that performs diverse repertoire.

When Director Emeritus Lynn Sjolund began directing the newly formed Chorale in 1973, the mandate presented was to perform the major choral works from such composers as Mozart, Beethoven, and Haydn. The very first concert presentation of the newly formed Rogue Valley Chorale was the iconic German Requiem by Johannes Brahms. However, Maestro Sjolund and the Chorale soon discovered that they would need more types of repertoire than major works to develop a full 3-concert season. Broadway music became a favorite offering, and presentations of traditional choral works and new works have played an important part of the Chorale's diverse offerings as well. The current 2018-2019 season honors this diverse repertoire by programming a major work for the December 2018 concert (Bach's Magnificat with a chamber orchestra), the March 2019 concert based on independent choral works and a featured commissioned work, and the final concert theme is pure Broadway. The Rogue Valley Chorale has found its formula for success by offering diverse, skilled, and entertaining presentations that appeal to a knowledgeable patronage. A little something for everyone. It really doesn't get much better than that!

Reflections from the Board President

Achieving Academic Success Through Music

By Donna Barrett



American education is in perpetual crisis. Our students are falling further behind their peers in the rest of the world. Learning disabilities have reached epidemic proportions, affecting as many as one in five of our children.

Many solutions have been tried, but few have succeeded. So I propose a different approach: music training. A growing body of evidence suggests that music could be more effective than more expensive attempts to boost academic performance.

Plenty of outstanding achievers have attributed at least some of their success to music study. Stanford University's Thomas Sudhof, who won the Nobel Prize in medicine last year, gave credit to his bassoon teacher. Albert Einstein, who began playing the violin at age 6, said his discovery of the theory of relativity was "the result of musical perception."

Until recently, though, it has been a chicken-and-egg question: Are smart, ambitious people naturally attracted to music? Or does music make them smart and ambitious? There is compelling evidence that music boosts academic performance in children.

Music raises your IQ.

E. Glenn Schellenberg, a University of Toronto psychology professor, devised a study to assess music's impact on IQ scores. He randomly assigned 132 first-graders to music lessons, or no lessons at all. The IQ scores of the music students increased significantly more than those of the other groups.

Another Canadian study conducted by Sylvain Moreno at the University of Toronto found that verbal IQ increased in preschool children after only 20 days of music training. In fact, the increase was five times that of a control group of preschoolers. He found that music training enhanced the brains' ability to plan, organize, strategize and solve problems. And he found the effect in 90% of the children, an unusually high rate.

Music training can reduce the academic gap between rich and poor districts.

The Harmony Project in Los Angeles gives free instrument lessons to children in impoverished neighborhoods. Margaret Martin, who founded the program in 2001, noticed that the program's students not only did better in school but also were more likely to graduate and to attend college

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Jim Collier, Season Sponsor and Friend

By Laura Rich



James Morrison Collier is sponsoring the Rogue Valley Chorale Association's 2018-2019 concert season, which marks the first with incoming conductor Michael Morris. The season includes five significant presentations by the Rogue Valley Chorale and the Rogue Valley Youth Chorus. Because of Jim Collier's support the concerts are able to include guest soloists, orchestration and combo instrumentation.

Many Rogue Valley arts groups are grateful recipients of Mr. Collier's generosity, but few know who this amazing philanthropist is and what makes him "tick."

Jim Collier was born in Iowa in 1938. He was raised on a farm and had a sheltered, but happy childhood. He was exposed to music as a young boy, although his musical endeavors usually resulted in him getting politely asked to leave singing to those that had a decent voice, or, in some instances, getting kicked out entirely. He took piano lessons, but during his first recital, Jim pretended to be sick. His savvy mother didn't buy it and made him perform. Jim reports that no one was sorry to see him give up the piano after his "less than perfect" performance. Jim, always a good sport, accepted his personal artistic limitations, while celebrating the achievements of others. Jim says, "I am a much better patron of the arts than a performer. I'll leave that to others."

Jim graduated high school in 1956. He attended the University of Iowa and graduated with a BA in English. He received his master's degree from Drake University in English Literature with an emphasis on Shakespeare. Jim joined the army following college and served for three years in Germany. He saw the tougher side of life while in the service, but was simultaneously smitten by the beauty and culture in Europe.

After being discharged from military service, Jim began teaching. He was a passionate teacher and went above and beyond to expose his students to culture. He led bicycle trips to Europe where he exposed the students to opera and theater, and even took them to Stratford to see *Julius Caesar*. For three decades Jim visited Ashland to participate in teaching seminars on Shakespeare at Southern Oregon University. While teaching in Delano, California, Jim took many trips to Ashland to see plays at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

His dream was to move to Ashland one day, a dream that came true in 2003 after receiving an inheritance from his step-father, a product developer of livestock feed, as well

as a savvy business man. The inheritance enabled Jim to become a generous patron of the performing arts. Jim supports 17 non-profit organizations, 16 arts groups and the Children's Advocacy Center. Sometimes Jim engages in other philanthropic ventures, such as the *Rogue Valley Manor Hog Calling Contest*, for which he supplied the prize money. The event was heavily attended by farm folk currently living at the Manor. First prize went to Doris Sjolund, former Chorale singer and founding director of the Rogue Valley Youth Chorus, and wife of Rogue Valley Chorale Conductor Emeritus Lynn Sjolund.

The legacy Jim hopes to leave is one of cultural enrichment in the areas of theater, vocal performance and instrumental music. His passion for the arts is one he wants to share with his community. Jim understands that he has the ability to effect real change, and by enriching his community he hopes to positively impact the lives of Rogue Valley residents. Jim is fully aware of and grateful for his good fortune. He is especially thankful that he can share his inheritance with others by bettering the community in which we all live. Jim says, "I hope that when I am gone someone else will carry on. I love the arts. I hope others will continue to support the performing arts when I am no longer here to do so."

The term "arts in Southern Oregon" has become synonymous with the name Jim Collier. Our community is richer because of this dedicated philanthropist. Because of his generosity, our community will forever remember the name James Collier when current and future generations *Celebrate the Joy of Singing*.

Upcoming Concerts (Continued from page 1)

**COLE! The Music of Broadway Icon Cole Porter
May 4 and 5, 2019
Craterian Theater at the Collier Center**



Cole Albert Porter is one of the greatest composers in Broadway history, having written over 30 musicals for stage and film, including such iconic works as *Anything Goes*, *High Society*, and *Kiss me Kate*. Porter's songs are well known for their witty lyrics, beautiful tunes, and

comic flair.

COLE! The Music of Broadway Icon Cole Porter will feature solos, duets, and trios of talented soloists from within the Chorale, as well as the lush sounds of the Chorale itself.

The Chorale will be joined by a small combo of piano, guitar, bass, and drums. Join us for an evening of song, dance, humor, and love lost as we celebrate the music of Cole Porter!

RVCA Welcomes Cantare Director Shayne Flock



Shayne Flock joined Rogue Valley Chorale Association's Youth Choruses as the interim director of the Cantare Chorus, the junior high school group of talented young singers. Shayne grew up singing with Youth Choruses, starting with Discovery Chorus, and continuing through high school with Youth Ensemble.

Shayne hails from a musical family and does not recall a time when there was no music in his life. Both of his parents are Youth Choruses staff members; Gerry Flock as director of Children's Chorus, and September Flock as the group's chorus manager. During his senior year in high school he performed with both the Chorale and Youth Ensemble and sang Bach's *St. Matthews Passion*, as well as Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Sixteen Going on Seventeen* from *The Sound of Music* in which he sang the solo.

Group singing shaped a sense of identity and belonging for Shayne. He reports that he didn't connect with people outside of music because singing expressed who he was. While other students his age were engaged in sports, Shayne longed to be creating art by making music with others. Music has always been his passion.

Shayne says, "We are losing out by not teaching kids to sing. Once upon a time singing was a part of standard curriculum. Music enhances brain activity by the brain communicating multilaterally. The brain can only function multilaterally when the whole brain is engaged at the same time, which is achieved through singing. Music allows the brain to work in ways that stimulate creativity, problem solving and analytical thought processes. In the absence of music, children leave school lacking important analytic and creative thinking skills."

Music is not Shayne's only endeavor. He is married to Vanessa Flock and has 2 children; three-year old Annalynn Michelle, and 2-month old Keneniah Earl. He also loves to fish and recalls many trips doing so with his father. During college he learned to fly fish, eventually spending his summers as a guide. He is looking forward to the day when his children are old enough to learn to fish.

Shayne majored in music during college at Oregon State University where he received his bachelors degree. He went on to earn a masters degree in music from Corban University. Shayne currently teaches music at Crater High School and Scenic Middle School in Central Point.

The Rogue Valley Chorale Association is thrilled to welcome Shayne Flock as the incoming Cantare Director.

Achieving Academic Success Through Music

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Music training does more than sports, theater or dance to improve key academic skills.

The German Institute for Economic Research compared music training with sports, theater and dance in a study of 17-year-olds. The research, based on a survey of more than 3,000 teens, found that those who had taken music lessons outside of school scored significantly higher in terms of cognitive skills, had better grades and were more conscientious and ambitious than their peers. The impact of music was more than twice that of the other activities—and held true regardless of the students' socioeconomic background.

Music literally expands your brain.

In a 2009 study in the Journal of Neuroscience, researchers used an MRI to study the brains of 31 six year-old children, before and after they took lessons on a musical instrument for 15 months. They found that the music students' brains grew larger in the areas that control fine motor skills and hearing—and that students' abilities in both those areas also improved. The corpus callosum, which connects the left and right sides of the brain, grew as well.

Scientists continually discover new ways the arts impact the lives of children and adults. Music is an essential component of curriculums that build academic development. Disregarding the importance of the arts in schools is a lost opportunity to increase success among students.

Thank you Donors and Supporters!

We are grateful to our many supporters who make it possible for us to celebrate the joy of singing with our community.



Jackson County Cultural Coalition of the Oregon Cultural Trust



James F. & Marion L. Miller Foundation

Joseph Julian Gonzalez to Visit Medford, OR



Joseph Julian Gonzalez, internationally acclaimed film and television composer, will provide Southern Oregon residents with a free lecture/discussion prior to the Rogue Valley Chorale's *Ethereal Moments* concerts on March 23 and 24. The Chorale commissioned a composition from Mr. Gonzalez entitled *Origin of the Songs*, which will be

premiered at the concerts.

This collaborative outreach activity, funded by the Miller Foundation, Oregon Community Foundation, Carpenter Foundation and James Collier, includes a performance on the Paiute Reservation in Burns, Oregon on March 30, 2019. The Chorale selected the Paiute Reservation for the project due to the connection between Nahuatl (the language used in the *Origin of the Songs* composition) and the Paiute who descend from Nahuatl (Aztec) lineage.

Mr. Gonzalez studied classical guitar with Theodore Norman, and composition for motion picture and television from famed film composer David Raksin (*Laura*, *Forever Amber*) at UCLA. After touring with several groups, Joseph started off his career by becoming music director of Luis Valdez's much heralded theater company *El Teatro Campesino* (*La Bamba*, *Zoot Suit*). There he composed the music score for *La Pastorela*, a PBS Great Performances Christmas special, launching a career composing pieces performed by such artists as Los Lobos, Jose Feliciano, Kronos String Quartet, and Linda Rondstadt, as well as working and collaborating with Quentin Tarantino and Slash from Guns 'n Roses.

Gonzalez has composed a multitude of musical scores for film and TV including the Academy Award-nominated documentary *Colors Straight Up*, the Emmy Award-winning *Made In LA*, and Showtime's longest running Latino series *Resurrection Blvd*. His project, the 6-part miniseries *Latino Americans*, won the 2014 Peabody award. Mr. Gonzalez' *Misa Azteca*, an 8 movement musical composition, has been performed to acclaim world-wide. The work combines Spanish and Latin texts of the Roman Catholic liturgy with songs from the *Cantares Mexicanos*, the largest collection of pre-Columbian Nahuatl songs or poems to have been recorded.

In addition to the commissioned piece, *Origin of the Songs*, and a selection of other works, the Rogue Valley Chorale will perform three movements from *Misa Azteca* during its March 23rd and 24th concerts at the Collier Center's Craterian Theater. For tickets visit craterian.org or call the Craterian Box Office at 541-779-3000.

Reflections From the Executive Director

Expanding Borders

By Laura Rich



When Michael Morris accepted the position of Artistic Director of the Rogue Valley Chorale Association, he spoke to me about his concept of expanding borders. My initial understanding was that he wanted to see the Chorale perform in venues beyond the Craterian stage. But after several lengthy

conversations I began to understand the vision. The idea of "borders" is purely conceptual, rather than a tangible location. As our season has progressed, I have witnessed the actualization of Michael's vision in various manifestations. Michael wants to reach out, to touch the lives of those who have never experienced the beauty and transformative power of music. He wants to climb out of the box and explore possibilities, challenge the status quo and break down barriers. The project with Joseph Julian Gonzalez and the Paiute Reservation is perhaps the greatest example of expanding borders.

In 2015, the Rogue Valley Chorale performed Joseph Julian Gonzalez' *Misa Azteca*. We loved the oratorio and began discussing the possibility of commissioning a work from Mr. Gonzalez. The composition would be written in the Nahuatl (Aztec) language. During the composition process, Mr. Gonzalez brought to our attention the connection between the Aztec people and Oregon's Paiute nation. The Paiute trace their ancestry to the Aztec of Central Mexico, and, in fact, are descendants of the Nahuatl language family. Curiosity about the language family connection led us to the Burns Paiute Department of Culture and Heritage. Multiple discussions with Jo Delarosa, head of the Tribal Council, resulted in a collaborative project that will take place on March 30-31 at The Gathering Center on the Burns Paiute Reservation.

The Rogue Valley Chorale will travel to the reservation with Joseph Julian Gonzalez to perform our commissioned composition, *Origin of the Songs* (*Cuicapeuhcayotl*). The project is much more than a concert, however. In the true spirit of Michael's vision of expanding borders, we will engage in cultural sharing that includes the Paiute children sharing the stage with us to perform traditional drumming and dancing, a tribal elder introducing the evening with a Paiute blessing, and three young members of the tribe reading poetry. Joseph will speak to the audience about the composition process and his inspiration for *Origin of the Songs*. We will share a meal with the Tribal Council, during which gift exchanges will take place and expressions of gratitude for our mutual appreciation of and love for our Oregon home will be expressed.

The project has received support from the Carpenter Foundation, Miller Foundation, Oregon Community

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Abigail Fowler
Rogue Valley Youth Ensemble and Chorale Singer
 By Lisa Medway



Thanks to Abigail Fowler and her family, the hills hugging The Rogue Valley are alive with the Sound of Music. 2019 is already Abigail's busiest year, ever. She has joined her mom and dad,

Paula and Dan, as a soprano member of the Chorale.

In addition to school, sports, and her vibrant social life, Abigail continues to sing in our Youth Choruses, her high school choir and... in the car – where Abigail's family likes to sing *Bohemian Rhapsody* (cars can have great acoustics)!

The Fowlers should have their own Youtube channel! With two parents who have two degrees in music, Abigail's life has been steeped in song: everything from Opera and Bach to The Beatles and, of course, QUEEN.

Abigail is a big musical theater fan, too. Some of her favorite Broadway shows are *Company*, *Les Miz*, *Next To Normal* and *Chicago*. She's been singing since before she can remember and was pressed to confess that the *best* singer in the family is... Dad!

When she moved here, two years ago, she felt she'd found a second family in the Rogue Valley Youth Ensemble. "I met an amazing group of singers led by the equally amazing Pam and Pete Norquist."

The Chorale's March 2019 concert, *Ethereal Moments*, has special meaning for Abigail. She's excited to reprise the work of Aaron Copland. One of the numbers the Chorale will perform is *Stomp Your Foot* from Copland's 1954 opera, *The Tender Land*. When she was seven years old, Abigail appeared in it with her father and friends. Rehearsing it at her current age reminds her of the joy she felt when rehearsing and performing it as a little girl.

"I love singing with my parents. I'm creating family memories and learning a lot from 130 experienced singers. Music allows me to express myself and be a part of a group of talented people who are creating something special for our community."

Abigail's impressive resume includes The Fort Bragg High School Choirs, and The California State Honor Choirs Women's Ensemble. She has also studied voice with professional coaches like Michelle Cipollone, who made an indelible imprint on her.

One singer tip that stuck whenever she performs: Abigail mischievously recalled Michelle joking that, "singing is all in the eyebrows, because a singer needs to *feel* and *show* emotion -- not look like a bored robot!"

Whatever the genre, music provides the soundtrack of her life. Abigail loves to perform – with her family and now, lucky us, with the Rogue Valley Chorale.

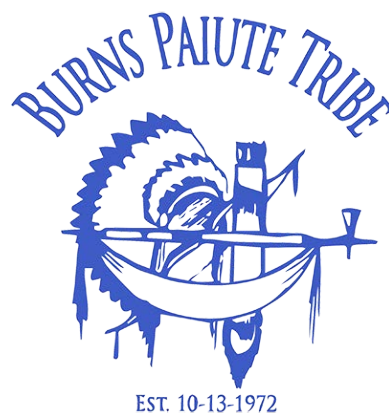
Expanding Borders (Continued from Page 5)

Foundation, and from our dear friend James Morrison Collier. Funds have made it possible to transport our singers to Burns via motor coach, and to provide food and lodging during this weekend of cultural sharing.

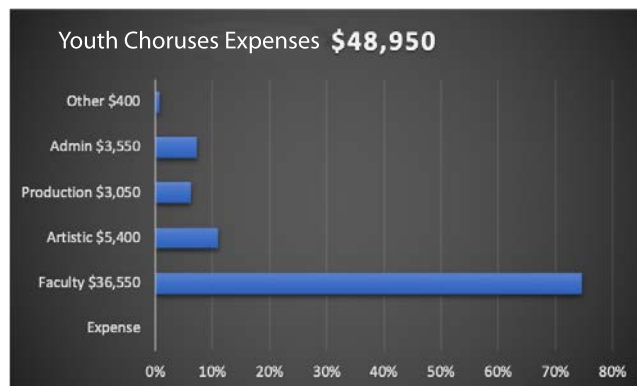
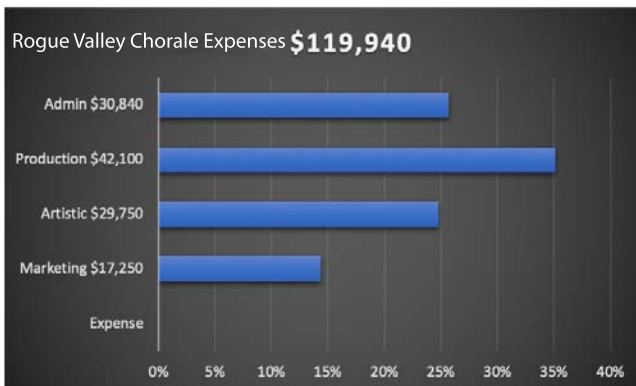
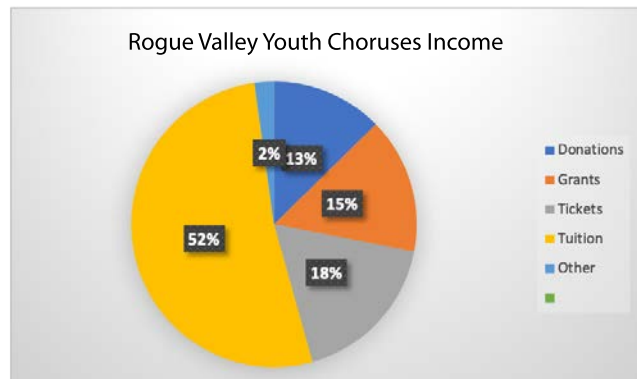
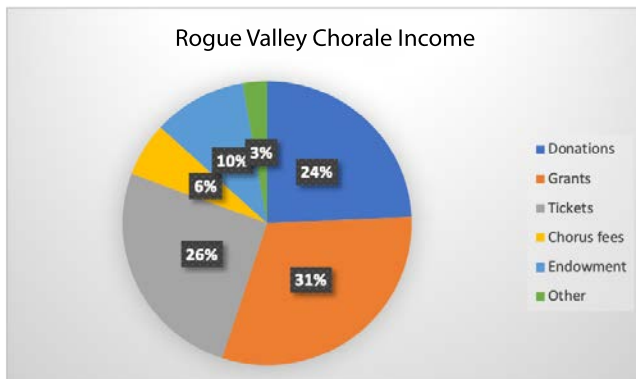
The project exemplifies Michael Morris' vision of expanding borders in myriad ways, and will probably reveal unanticipated benefits as the project progresses. As someone who has been intimately involved in the implementation of the project from its conception, my excitement is palpable as I see its approaching culmination.

Come to the *Ethereal Moments* concert on March 23 and 24 at the Collier Center. Joseph Julian Gonzalez will be there one hour before curtain to talk about the project in more detail, including the connection between the Aztec people and our Paiute neighbors in Eastern Oregon.

"To advance a credible message of love for all people in an increasingly diverse society, we must move ourselves entirely out of our small orbits. We must adjust to a new reality that includes communication and sharing. Only then will we truly understand." ~ Mark DeYmaz



Here is how your donation dollars help support the Rogue Valley Chorale Association.



We welcome your support. Here are ways to give:

General Support – The Rogue Valley Chorale Association requires general support to assist in funding our concerts and operations. Feel free to earmark your giving to a part of our organization that resonates with you: concerts, sponsorships, Youth Choruses, guest artists, or wherever there is need. Contact us for help finding a match for your giving interests.

Endowment Fund - The Endowment Fund provides the Chorale with long term, steady income and growth.

Bequests - Making a gift to the Rogue Valley Chorale through your will or revocable living trust is a simple way to support the Chorale.

Honor Gifts - An Honor Gift is a wonderful way to celebrate the special people and events in your life and simultaneously support choral music in our community.

Memorial Gifts - A Memorial Gift is a beautiful testimony to the life of a beloved person who has passed on. It can be just the right touch for expressing compassion to someone who has experienced a loss.



For 46 years the Rogue Valley Chorale has enjoyed partnering with our community to entertain and enrich the lives of Rogue Valley audiences.

Would you like to make a donation to the Rogue Valley Chorale? To make a charitable contribution visit our website at www.roguevalleychorale.org and click on **Donate**. You can also mail your donation to Rogue Valley Chorale, 724 South Central Ave., Suite 102, Medford, OR 97501. We thank you for your support.

For more information on making a gift to the Rogue Valley Chorale Association contact Executive Director Laura Rich at info@roguevalleychorale.org



RVCA
Rogue Valley

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To contact the Rogue Valley Chorale Association:
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