

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

ROGUE VALLEY CHORALE ASSOCIATION 2019-2020 CONCERT SEASON



HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019, 7:30 pm Sunday, Dec. 8, 2019, 3:00 pm Craterian Theater at the Collier Center for the Performing Arts

Concert Sponsor, James Collier Orchestra Sponsored, Joani Bristol

The Rogue Valley Chorale will be joined

by the Cantare Chorus to present a variety of holiday homecoming music featuring Ralph Vaughan Williams' Fantasia on Carols with guest artist baritone Chris Thompson, Klezmer music, favorite carols, and some holiday surprises, accompanied by the Rogue Valley Chorale Chamber Ensemble. This performance honors those who protect our country as we welcome our service men and women Home for the Holidays.

We are immensely grateful to James Collier, whose generous donation funds the Rogue Vailey Chorale's holiday concert in perpetuity.

ROGUE VALLEY YOUTH CHORUSES FALL CONCERT

Dec. 14, 2019, 3:00 pm North Medford High School

Come hear these exceptional young singers as they celebrate the joy of singing together. Witnessing the outstanding Rogue Valley Youth Choruses is an experience no one should miss.





REQUIEM IN D MINOR

Saturday, March 7, 2020, 7:30 pm Sunday, March 8, 2020, 3:00 pm Craterian Theater at the Collier Center for the Performing Arts

Concert Sponsors, Chris Cauble and Barbara Johnson

The Rogue Valley Chorale, Rogue

Valley Youth Ensemble, and the South Medford High School Concert Choir present the hauntingly beautiful Requiem by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart accompanied by the RVC Chamber Ensemble.

ROGUE VALLEY YOUTH CHORUSES SPRING CONCERT

Saturday, May 16, 2020, 3:00 pm North Medford High School

The three Rogue Valley Youth Choruses come together to present an afternoon of uplifting music performed by this inspiring group of singers.





ALL THAT JAZZ

Saturday, May 30, 2020, 7:30 pm Sunday, May 31, 2020, 3:00 pm Craterian Theater at the Collier Center for the Performing Arts

Concert Sponsor, Southern Oregon Subaru

The Rogue Valley Chorale is proud to join vocal forces with Kirby Shaw and the

Jefferson State Choral Coalition in a concert featuring Shaw's musical arrangements and compositions. The concert is accompanied by a jazz combo.

CONCERT TICKET SALES

Rogue Valley Chorale concerts take place at the Collier Center's Craterian Theater.

For tickets call 541-779-3000 or visit craterian.org

- Adults \$23 (\$5 off up to two weeks before the concert)
 and \$16
- Students and children \$5
- Group sales and season passes, call the box office

Rogue Valley Youth Choruses concerts take place at North Medford High School in the Sjolund Auditorium. Tickets are available at the door.

- Adults \$10
- Children \$5
- Family rate \$25 (immediate family only, please)

Celebrating the Rogue Valley Chorale Association Michael Morris, Artistic Director



It is difficult to believe that I am starting my second season as the Artistic Director of the Rogue Valley Chorale. My first season with the Chorale taught me so much about this iconic organization; the deep talent that produces ethereal music, the immense volunteerism, the many different committees that keep everything running well, the hard-

working Board of Directors, our awesome Executive Director Laura Rich, and the faithful patrons. Near the beginning of my infant tenure, I noticed an important word after 'Rogue Valley Chorale', and I had to inquire why the word 'Association' was part of the group's name. Usually, when using the word association, it indicates a group or company with more than one part, and indeed, the Rogue Valley Chorale Association was formed to include the marvelous youth choirs: the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade *Children's Chorus*, directed by Gerry Flock; the 6th, 7th, 8th grade *Cantare*, directed by Shayne Flock; and the high school choir, *Youth Ensemble*, directed by Pam Nordquist.

As I began to grasp the enormous scope of The Rogue Valley Chorale Association that offers the opportunity for some 300 singers, ranging in age from 8 to 80 (and beyond), to develop musically, to train their voices, and to perform beautiful choral repertoire within and without the greater Southern Oregon region, I was in awe. I also knew that I had to find ways to celebrate this auspicious organization and its many attributes. And so, 2019-2020 is the Season of Collaboration in which the Rogue Valley Chorale will perform with the youth choirs to celebrate this amazing Association.

We start our collaborative spirit during the biennial fundraiser, Soirée & Song on November 2, 2019, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. at the Inn at the Commons in Medford. The Children's Chorus, Youth Ensemble, and the Chorale will perform several numbers individually and in a grand combined finale.

The December 7 & 8 concert, *Home for the Holidays*, is a tribute to the men and women of the armed services. This concert will feature the Rogue Valley Chorale Association's middle school choir, Cantare, that will sing several works with the Chorale and several works independently such as *Let It Snow* and *Ose Shalom*. In addition, the Chorale is proud to announce that baritone Chris Thompson will be the featured soloist for Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on Christmas Carols*. The concert will be accompanied by the Rogue Valley Chorale Chamber Ensemble.

On March 7 and 8, 2020, the RVC will team up with the Youth Ensemble and the South Medford High School Concert Choir. The combined choirs of some 200 singers will perform the iconic choral masterpiece Requiem in D by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. The work will be accompanied by the 21-piece Rogue Valley Chorale Chamber Ensemble. This is a concert that you do NOT want to miss!

I am extremely fortunate to serve as the Artistic Director for this amazing association that serves so many so well. It is also an honor to work with the talented and dedicated directors for Youth Choruses. The Rogue Valley Chorale Association, with its many choirs, directors, accompanists, and volunteers is a unique organization that not only serves many talented singers, but the general public, as well. How fortunate the Rogue Valley is to have this amazing Association in its own backyard!

Chris Thompson, Baritone Home for the Holidays Guest Soloist



Described as a "supremely nuanced" (Gramophone) and a "remarkable baritone" (Opera News), Chris Thompson is an international artist noted for compelling performances on stage and in the concert hall. He has performed leading lyric baritone roles ranging from Figaro in Il Barbiere di Siviglia to the title role in Elijah to Carl Magnus in A Little Night Music. Chris returns to the Rogue Valley after

previous performances with the Rogue Valley Chorale (Handel's Messiah and Mendelssohn's Elijah) and Rogue Valley Opera (The Barber of Seville, Don Pasquale, and The Merry Widow).

A strong advocate of new music, Chris made his Carnegie Hall debut singing *Posh*, a song cycle by composer Mohammed Fairouz and played Daniel Keane in the Off-Broadway musical *Fermat's Last Tango* at NYC's York Theatre. His performances have been featured on recording labels such as: Naxos, Original Cast Recordings, Albany Records, Koch-Schwann, and Novana Records.

Chris is a graduate of the University of Kansas, the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, Loyola University in New Orleans (where he was RVC's Founding Director Lynn Sjolund's graduate assistant), and Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas. Chris is a devoted teacher with successful singers winning competitions, singing at major summer programs, and performing leading roles as young professionals. He serves as Professor of Music (Voice) at Missouri State University.



Singing For a Lifetime Donna Barrett, President

While reading the Chorus America VOICE magazine I came upon the following Choral impact Study and found the findings fascinating. I share them with you in the hopes that you will also find the results as interesting as I did.

- Over half of all choral singers started in elementary school.
- More than 1 in 6 Americans over the age of 18 sing in a chorus.
- Choral singers credit singing in a chorus with making them more optimistic, mindful, and resilient. 80% of singers expect more good things than bad things to happen to them, while only 55% of the general public say the same thing.
- Singers volunteer more frequently than the general public in a wider range of areas of need, both inside and outside of the arts.
- Singers think singing helps them be better collaborators, team players, and listeners.
- Chorus members are more adaptable and tolerant of others than the general population.
- Nearly 8 out of 10 older singers credit being in a chorus with helping to keep their minds sharper.
- Singers who are 65+ have fewer physical limitations than the general public this same age.
- Older singers report that being part of a chorus helps them feel less lonely.

And so, WE KEEP SINGING, and, WE LOVE IT! Thank you Rogue Valley Chorale Association!



The Singing Brain Lisa Medway

In the beginning was... The Voice. Voice is the audible sign of Life. The human voice is the original musical instrument. There is no culture, no matter how remote or isolated that doesn't sing. Music is encoded in the

human genome. As our species was evolving over millennia the primal, reptilian brain was s-I-o-w-I-y becoming more complex. It would be thousands of centuries before our ancient postprimate ancestors were able to create vocal sounds.

The Cro-Magnon (who showed-up after the last Ice Age ca. 40,000 years ago) songbook was limited to grunts, hoots and "Yoo Hoo." Early humans sang their feelings long before they were able to speak their thoughts. Malcolm Gladwell said, "we think with our eyes, but feel with our ears."

Early humans used a collection of hand signals and gestures scientists call "symbolic communication." Singing was the prelude to language. In the beginning, singing was mimicry. Early man and woman imitated the sounds heard in nature: birds, animals, weather; the sweet cooing of a baby, the sonorous roar of thunder or an earthquake, the moan of pain or hunger, cries of death; buzz of bees, hissing of a snake. Yodeling is believed to be the imitation of a coyote.

Renowned linguist and cognitive scientist Noam Chomsky created the acronym, LAD – shorthand for "Language Acquisition Device." By assigning specific sounds to identify animals, danger, weather, predators, water, and more - would be, over time, adopted by the tribe. Still – no words. Only sounds. Percussive shouts, legate wails and emotional whispers became a group activity: "The First Chorus."

There is scientific evidence that primitive man invented "pitch matching" along with "chironomy," the infancy of what is now conducting. Starting in the 7th century, with the advent of Gregorian Chant, chironomy became an artform.

Creating music and group singing evolved as the path to social living. Tribes sang and danced together to build loyalty, ward-off enemies, and create ritual and celebratory customs. Did our brains evolve because we sang? Or was singing the activity that created the neurons that would light-up and nourish early man's small brain and make it grow, become more complex in its repertoire of functions and cause our species to become more intelligent and awesome?

In our distant past, our tiny reptilian brains consisted of one structure: the brain stem. Early man was capable of only four functions for survival: Fight, Flight, Feed and Reproduce. It would take millennia for our cramped craniums to increase in size to accommodate the evolution that was taking place between our ears until the adult human brain weighed what it weighs today: ca. 3 pounds.

During this metamorphosis something weird happened – or, didn't happen. We were getting smarter, even intelligent, but our primal reptilian brain patterns remained intact. We still have a lizard brain: fight, flight, feed, reproduce. As we evolved, new add-ons and downloads resulted in "The Modern Brain," or what neuroscientist Paul MacLean calls "The Triune Brain," because north of the brain stem it's comprised of three parts.

The three main structures of The Triune Brain are: the basal ganglia, tucked deep within the center of the brain, the limbic system: hippocampus and amygdala – the efficient "iCloud" for our memories. Good and happy memories are deposited in the hippocampus; bad and/or traumatic memories are imprisoned in the lockbox of the amygdala. The neocortex, or prefrontal cortex is located in the front row balcony of our heads. It's the brain's motherboard or "executive function" - the umbrella term for all neurologically based skills.

The brain's left hemisphere categorizes, organizes and cherrypicks everything that's happening in the here and now. Its circuitry surpasses any computer that will ever be artificially replicated. The right hemisphere is where the imagination lives and magic happens. It's why we think in pictures, can interpret sound, process sensory experiences (sight, sound, smell, touch, taste), and how and why we make art.

Singing is one of only a few activities that requires both hemispheres to work in unison. The neuroscience of singing shows that when we sing, our neurotransmitters connect in new and different ways. The temporal lobe lights-up and releases endorphins – a flood of hormones that makes us smarter, healthier and more creative.

When we sing, oxytocin, the bonding hormone, marinates our brain cells in goodness. Serotonin is the brain chemical called "The Happy Hormone." It relays signals between nerve cells (neurons) and regulates their intensity.

When we sing in a group a tsunami of these three hormones is amplified. Not only are we fully present: thinking, listening, creating sounds, reading music, analyzing notations, pronouncing lyrics, watching the conductor, aware of our bodies and posture, and breathing; we are accessing our emotions and triggering memories, while simultaneously reacting to the music we're making; generating more memories to file-away in our hippocampus. We are firing on all cylinders of brain function! Bravi tutti!

Singing changes the brain by moving musical vibrations through the body and delivering enriched, oxygenated blood to the brain. Mindful, deliberate breathing puts us in a dynamic meditative state where the muscles of the face, neck and shoulders relax. Our consciously controlled breathing expands the lungs, exercises the diaphragm, abs, and intercostal muscles between the ribs.

The release of the triad of good hormones automatically suppresses Evil Cortisol – the demon stress hormone. It's neurologically impossible to be DWS – "Depressed While Singing." A few of us will be relieved to know that singing has nothing to do with talent. Like storytelling, singing is instinctual and vital to our existence.

At last, the day/age arrived (a measly 100,000 years ago), and there was... LANGUAGE! Homo sapiens could SPEAK! FINALLY! As Man/Woman migrated to Europe and Asia languages evolved – based on geography, climate, cultures, belief systems. The varieties of size, height, weight and width of human anatomy dictated the tone and timbre of the sounds that they produced, sang and spoke.

Scholars recognize Hebrew, Aramaic and Koine Greek as the original biblical languages. The earliest archaeological discovery of melodies was discovered in the Judaic culture ca. 500 BC. Tunes were composed for "Psalms of David" and "The Song of Solomon."

At last, the brilliant, 16th century Italians would create Bel Canto ("Beautiful Music"), the polyphonic (multi-part) harmonies that would later become opera and change the course of choral music forever.

A Harvard-Yale study determined that singing promotes healthy minds and hearts, which increases life expectancy, decreases depression, improves memory and boosts the immune system. Singing was the first known form of psychotherapy because emitting protracted vocal tones allowed our pea-brained, hearty, brave, ancient ancestors to access their emotions: fear, joy, sorrow, jubilation - with their glorious primal, pre-language gibberish; moans, hisses, wails, yodels and hoots.

Lisa Medway sings (Alto 1) in the Roque Valley Chorale. She was on the faculty of The Writers' Program at UCLA Extension for 24 years, and has been a comedy writer and performer for 40 years.

2019 Soirée & Song Is Here!

The 2019 biennial fundraising event entitled Soirée & Song will take place on November 2, 2019, 7:00 pm at Inn at the Commons in Medford. There is no fee to attend, and our community is welcome to attend until the seats run out.

Every two years the Rogue Valley Chorale Association invites its Chorale family of donors, patrons and singers to celebrate the joy of singing with our Youth Choruses and adult singers, learn what is in store in the organization's future, take part in a lively and entertaining live auction conducted by the fabulous Ron Burgess, and indulge in a selection of delicious desserts.

The auction is among the evening's highlights and offers our guests the opportunity to bid on a variety of items including a vacation package to the Saguaro region of Southern Arizona near Tucson, an Upper Rogue wine tour, a murder mystery dinner party, restaurant and entertainment packages, a fly-fishing trip, and, of course, season tickets to the Rogue Valley Chorale Association concerts. For those of you with an adventurous spirit, there are ski lift tickets, a raft trip down the Rogue River, a catered West African feast with a drumming workshop included, and even a chance to conduct a song at the Chorale's holiday concert.

For those of you who heard Terry Faulkner sing Music of the Night a few years ago, he will be giving a repeat performance. He knocked everyone's socks off the last time, and I have no doubt he will do so again. What a voice he has! Our Youth Choruses singers will perform, and will join with the adults to sing as well.

Funds generated from the purchase of auction items and donations received are used to support the Rogue Valley Chorale Association's programming, youth and adult scholarships and operations. We never turn any singer away due to an inability to pay tuition or dues, making the Soiree an essential fiscal component of our ability to serve our community.

So mark your calendars and come celebrate the joy of singing with us. Reservations are required and can be made by emailing office@roquevalleychorale.org or by calling 818-239-9878.

See you at the Soirée!



If you cannot attend but want to make a tax-deductible donation to support our mission, you can do so by sending a check to: RVCA, 724 S. Central Ave. Suite 102, Medford, OR 97501, or by visiting: roguevalleychorale.org/donate

A Year of Collaboration

By Laura Rich

The Rogue Valley Chorale Association, by its very composition, is ripe for engaging in musical collaborations. The organization consists of four choruses that include both youth and adults. We look for opportunities to sing together, and many choral works are perfect for multi-generational singing with parts for children and more mature voices. The act of collaboration with our Youth Choruses singers provides mentorship opportunities and teachable moments for our adult singers, and instills the idea in our young singers that choral participation is a life-long activity, one that can parallel whatever career choices one makes, and one that requires nothing more than a voice and a desire to sing.

During the Chorale Association's 2019-2020 season we will be collaborating with Cantare Chorus during our Home for the Holidays concert, and with Youth Ensemble for Mozart's Requiem. The youthful purity of young voices will add a beauty and innocence to the music that will uplift and inspire our audience members.

Oregon's Rogue Valley is an artistically rich community that offers our residents a broad menu of performance options. We are fortunate to share our region with several choral groups, each with its own flavor and style. This year we are excited to share the concert stage with Jefferson State Choral Coalition under the direction of the renowned composer Kirby Shaw. Kirby has nearly 3000 choral compositions and arrangements in print, and his music is sung around the world, having sold over 20 million copies. He has many commissioned pieces to his credit, including one for The Mormon Tabernacle Choir. The concert will present an exciting opportunity to expand our borders and embrace the broader arts community.

Artistic Director Michael Morris looks for opportunities to collaborate in order to present the choral arts in new and exciting ways to our audience members. With such a vibrant arts community there will be opportunities in abundance in the years to come.

A Bit of Humor...

Q: Why is it a good idea to include chickpeas to be part of the Chorale?

A: They could hummus a song!

Do you know where I can rent a church singing group?

Sir, do you mean a choir?

Fine, yes, do you know where I can aquire a church singing group?

I recently got into choral singing after I broke my knee, or more specifically, apatella.

Singing in a Choir Can Boost Your Mindfulness By Tom Jacobs

Tom Jacobs is a senior staff writer at Pacific Standard, where he specializes in social science, culture, and learning. He is a veteran journalist and former staff writer for the Los Angeles Daily News and the Santa Barbara News-Press.

The physical and psychological benefits of choral singing have become crystal clear in recent years. Less certain is precisely why joining voices in song is so powerful. Is it connection with a like-minded community? A sense of shared purpose? The thrill of creative expression?

While all of those surely play a role, new research from Ireland points to a different health-promoting factor. It finds choral singing boosts mindfulness.

The 83 participants (18 men and 65 women) were all members of one of two community choirs in urban Ireland. Prior to the start of a rehearsal, and again immediately after, all filled out two questionnaires designed to measure their state of mindfulness—the much-lauded ability to stay fully present in the current moment.



They assessed the degree to which a series of statements applied to them, using a scale of one to 10. These included "I am aware of my feelings without getting lost in them," "I am finding it easy to concentrate on what I am doing," and "I am daydreaming, worrying, or otherwise distracted."

Later that same week, participants filled out the same questionnaires immediately before and after listening to a 30-minute-long piece of choral music—excerpts from Gabriel Fauré's

Requiem. This allowed the researchers to determine whether the effects were specifically stimulated by singing, as opposed to simply hearing the music.

They report that listening to that soothing work did significantly increase the participants' mindfulness level. But the group singing did so to a far greater extent. This suggests listening to music can help us focus on the present moment, but singing it does so much more effectively.

This makes intuitive sense, given that group singing requires "focused concentration," which precludes "preoccupation with sources of worry," the researchers write. "The call for attention to numerous details such as watching the conductor, listening to the other voices in harmony, reading the music and/or remembering the words all contribute to reaching this attentive, aware, and accepting state."

Lynch and Wilson note that, while evidence on the positive effects of mindfulness has been mounting steadily, not everyone is willing or able to engage in quiet contemplation on a regular basis. Choral singing, they argue, could be a way to incorporate mindfulness into one's regular routine, while also engaging in a social activity.

"It is high time that the realm of social, emotional, and psychological benefits reaped from choir singing is recognized, and thoroughly incorporated into the promotion of mental health worldwide," they conclude. "Choirs are an extraordinary way of maintaining social and emotional well-being, and they deserve to be recognized as such."

Choral Singing Boosts Immune System Activity By Tom Jacobs

Many studies have shown that struggling with a stressful situation lowers one's immune response, be it illness, death of a loved one, job loss, or other painful life events. The inclination may be to stay home and nurse one's troubles in private. But newly published research points to a far better choice: Head out to choir practice.

A British study of cancer patients and caregivers found a mere 70 minutes of singing not only lifted people's moods, but also produced positive changes in their immune systems.

"We have been building a body of evidence over the past six years to show that singing in a choir can have a range of social, emotional, and psychological benefits," says co-author Dr. Ian Lewis, director of research and policy at Tenovus Cancer Care. "Now we can see it has biological effects too." Choral singing can be an effective mood enhancer that helps to strengthen the body's natural defenses.

This study, published in the open-access journal ecancermedicalscience, featured 55 patients whose cancers were in remission; 72 people currently caring for cancer patients; and 66 people who were caregivers to a nowdeceased cancer patient. All 193 were members of one of five choirs in South Wales.

Before and after a single, 70-minute-long choir rehearsal (which included warm-up exercises, learning new material, and singing songs already in the group's repertoire), participants filled out questionnaires designed to measure their mood and state of well-being. They also provided samples of their saliva for laboratory testing.

"Aggregate mood was found to improve across the choir session, and aggregate stress was found to decrease," the researchers report. In tandem with this, saliva samples revealed the rehearsal produced a decrease in the stress-induced hormone cortisol, and "a generalized down-regulation of stress response."

"This is the first time it's been demonstrated that the immune system can be effected by singing," Lewis said in a media release.



What's more, the impact appears to be greatest among those who need it most.

"Among both patients and care-givers, those with the lowest levels of mental well-being and highest levels of

depression experienced the greatest short-term improvement in mood across the singing session," the researchers add. "These larger mood changes were associated with lower levels of inflammation."

This was a preliminary study, and limited to people who already sang in choirs. Whether taking up the practice has the same impact remains to be studied.

Nevertheless, it suggests that, for those who love it, choral singing can be an effective mood enhancer that helps to strengthen the body's natural defenses. And that news should surely inspire a chorus of *Ode to Joy*.

Reflections on Repertoire By Larry Beal



I recently auditioned and gladly accepted membership in this full bodied (125+) group of singers. Previously I sang for 5 years with a precious and powerful group that was 1/4 our size in Josephine county: The 3 Rivers Chorale.

On September 9th, Rogue Valley Chorale began rehearsals for Home For the Holidays,

a concert to be presented on December 7 and 8 in Medford.

From among the songs that we will be performing at the concert, I selected the Ralph Vaughan Williams Fantasia On Christmas Carols as the subject of this article. Thumbing through my copy, I noticed a condensed version of my favorite carol, one from the 18th century, the one in Dickens' A Christmas Carol:

God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen let nothing you dismay For Jesus Christ our savior was born on Christmas Day To save us all from Satan's power when we were gone astray

Why my favorite? These few lines clearly indicate to me the original and best explanation in all of Christmas Carol-dom the reason for the season, the Advent of Christ as a babe in order to fulfill God's purpose three decades later.

The Vaughan Williams version was extracted from a 3-verse carol version of the earlier 9-verse original 18th century version, and published in 1905 by Cecil Sharp, Come All You Worthy Gentlemen, also known as Somerset Carol. It was used by Sharp's friend and fellow music collector, Ralph Vaughan Williams, in his 1912 Fantasia on Christmas Carols. The first two verses request that "the worthy gentlemen that may be standing by" hear that "Christ our blessed Savior was born on Christmas day and the Virgin Mary unto the Lord did pray," Both versions (18th century and 1905) repeat choruses of "tidings of comfort and joy" and reference the account of the visit of the shapherds to the Christ Child. Revisions of the final verses of the early and later carols, which ask for God to *bless the ruler of the house" and "Many Merry Christmases for friends and kindred both near and far," are from the 18th century version and included in the Fantasia.

A few seasons ago a tenor friend expressed, "The Christmas message we sing about is beautiful but I can't believe it. It's not logical." It wasn't meant to be logical, I thought, which is why they call it faith. Faith is the reality of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. This is so clearly expressed in a song we'll be singing during the concert entitled *Hope for Resolution*. My hope is that we consider well the message in this delightful-to-sing plea for an end to the kind of strife, ill will and destruction prevailing today.

While rehearsing *The Promised Land* on our 2nd day together, director Michael Morris encouraged us to interpret the lyrics and "to make sure the words have meaning...and come to life." Christmas music is enjoyable for me year-round because the words have meaning and the melodies are very appealing.

Songwriter Harlen Howard described country and western music as "three chords and the truth." Christmas music falls under Howard's description as well as having a truth, melodies uncomplicated and certainly more joyful, not so sad. I usually begin my personal practice of Christmas tunes on the ukulele as early as October. I recently attended my high-school reunion in Reno and entertained my hosts with uke, semi-dulcet baritone, Patsy Cline and Roy Orbison. My hostess danced hula and invited me back (might not have had I been ready with carols!).

But now we're getting prepared for the main event in December! I feel we have the responsibility to sing it like we mean it and express the truth in the music as intended by its composers.

Rogue Valley Youth Choruses Restructures

During the Sumer of 2019 the Rogue Valley Youth Choruses Steering Committee made the decision to eliminate its Discovery Chorus and restructure its remaining three choruses to align with local school district age groupings. The Youth Choruses now includes Children's Chorus, grades 3-5; Cantare Chorus, grades 6-8; and Youth Ensemble, grades 9-12. We believe that the change will enable our directors to more easily select age appropriate choral literature while also providing familiarity and comfort in the composition of the choruses for our young singers.



Children's Chorus provides emerging singers with the foundation of proper singing technique and musicianship. Gerry Flock is the director of Children's Chorus. Gerry is an experienced Rogue Valley educator. After teaching music in local schools for 21 years, he began serving as an elementary school principal. He is currently the principal at Lone Pine Elementary School. Mr. Flock has served as the Director of the Rogue Valley Children's Chorus since 2005. When time allows Gerry sings with the Rogue Valley Chorale. Gerry's

kind and gentle demeanor provides our elementary aged singers with a nurturing environment in which to explore their emerging passion for singing.

Shayne Flock was brought into the Rogue Valley Youth Choruses organization during the 2018-2019 season on an interim basis, a position that was made permanent in June of 2019. Shayne "grew up" in Youth Choruses and sang in Discovery Chorus, Children's Chorus, Cantare Chorus and Youth Ensemble. He earned his degree from Oregon State University and currently serves as the Choir Director at Crater High School and Scenic Middle School. Shayne offers the benefit of "relatability." He is fun and youthful, and offers singers a comfortable place in which to transition from childhood toward the pre-adult years. Shayne selects music for the Cantare singers that is both challenging and engaging, and provides musical growth through the choral music learning process.

Pamela Nordquist founded the Rogue Valley Youth Ensemble in 2002 as an extension to the RVYC treble choruses, and as an enriching, extra-curricular chorus experience for advanced high school singers in the area. The singers rehearse and perform high quality choral literature that is diverse, challenging, and beautiful. The ensemble tours each summer and sings for a variety of events throughout the year.

Pamela received a master's degree in choral conducting at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. She co-directs the choirs at South Medford High School. She is an active guest clinician/conductor for middle school and high school choirs, and served as President of the American Choral Director's Association of Oregon.

Pamela and her husband, Assistant Conductor Pete Nordquist, create an environment that generates a longlasting camaraderie among the singers. Friendships endure long after participation in Youth Choruses comes to an end.

Whatever the age of singers that join Youth Choruses, the experience will remain a significant part of their lives for

years to come. Youth Choruses sets young people on a pathway toward life-long singing, an endeavor that brings richness, inspiration and reward for a lifetime.



Did you know that the Rogue Valley Chorale Association...

- · Was founded in 1973 is Southern Oregon's oldest public choral organization
- Includes over 300 singers ranging in age from eight to well over eighty
- · Enriches our community by providing classical and contemporary concert programs
- Embraces and nurtures young singers through Rogue Valley Youth Choruses
- Performed in Salzburg, Austria for Mozart's 250th birthday celebration
- · Has an extensive library of choral literature available to other choruses
- Provides life-long access to choral singing from childhood through adulthood
- Has singers who, as children, sang in Rogue Valley Youth Choruses
- · Has over 60 singers who work, or have worked as professional musicians
- Appeared in concert at the Civic Theater in Medford's sister city: Alba, Italy

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.

Sponsorship - The Rogue Valley Chorale Association is committed to providing our audiences with exceptional choral music. We bring in world class guest artists and accompany our concerts using instrumentalists and orchestration from our newly formed Rogue Valley Chamber Ensemble. Sponsorship opportunities include support for concerts, the conductor, guest artists or instrumental ensembles. For more information about sponsorships call us at 818-239-9878 or email office@roguevalleychorale.org.

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



Donna Barrett, President Valerie Darby, Secretary Augustus Ogu, Treasurer Sue Thomburg Maureen Vega Carmen Adams Kenne Horton Kristy Denman Sharon Dady Mary Ann Graham

ROGUE VALLEY CHORALE ASSOCIATION STAFF

Michael Morris, Artistic Director Laura Rich, Executive Director



To contact the Rogue Valley Chorale Association: call us at 541-414-8309, email us at info@roguevalleychorale.org, or visit our website at www.roguevalleychorale.org.



Rogue Valley Chorale Association

CHORUS DIRECTORS

Michael Morris, Rogue Valley Chorale Gerry Flock, Children's Chorus Shayne Flock, Cantare Chorus Pam Nordquist, Youth Ensemble Pete Nordquist, Youth Ensemble Assistant Conductor

ACCOMPANISTS

Mikiko S. Petrucelli, Rogue Valley Chorale Danika Locey, Children's Chorus, Youth Ensemble Ian McCarty, Cantare Chorus

REHEARSAL ASSISTANTS

Danika Locey, Discovery Chorus Sharon Dady, Children's Chorus Ben Franklin, Children's Chorus Marissa Carson, Children's Chorus Eric Smith, Cantare Chorus Cate Adams, Cantare Chorus Marissa Gann, Youth Ensemble

CHORUS MANAGERS

September Flock, Children's Chorus Cate Adams, Cantare Chorus Shawna Gann, Youth Ensemble



Rogue Valley Chorale Association

724 S. Central Ave. Suite 102 Medford, OR 97501

Celebrating the Joy of Singing