



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

## Rogue Valley Chorale Association Newsletter

CELEBRATING THE JOY OF SINGING

**RVCA**  
ROGUE VALLEY  
CHORALE ASSOCIATION

**2020-2021 SEASON**



MICHAEL MORRIS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

[www.roguevalleychorale.org](http://www.roguevalleychorale.org)

724 S. Central Avenue, Suite 102  
Medford, OR 97501 · 541-414-8309



### HOLIDAY FAIRE

Choral Singing in the Time of Covid

A Holiday Concert Sponsored by  
James Morrison Collier and Southern Oregon  
Subaru presented on SOPBS.

Premieres Friday, Nov. 27, 2020, 8:00 PM  
Re-airs: Sunday, Dec. 13, 2020, 11:00 AM and  
Thursday, Dec. 24, 2020, 8:00 PM

The Rogue Valley Chorale, Youth Ensemble, Cantare Chorus, Rogue Valley Chorale Chamber Orchestra and Jefferson Baroque Orchestra join forces to produce a unique concert that will air on Southern Oregon PBS during the holiday season.

For more information visit [roguevalleychorale.org](http://roguevalleychorale.org)

### 2020-2021 SEASON

#### GIVE THE WORLD A SONG

February 20, 2021 and May 15, 2021

Come hear the exceptional voices of the Rogue Valley Youth Choruses as they celebrate the joy of singing.

Social distancing and face mask required. Donations graciously accepted at the door

Visit [www.roguevalleychorale.org](http://www.roguevalleychorale.org)  
for location and time

#### CARMINA BURANA

Friday, June 11, 2021, 7:30 PM

Sunday, June 13, 2021, 3:00 PM

Grizzly Peak Winery

Carl Orff's exhilarating oratorio, *Carmina Burana*, offers a visceral musical setting of secular medieval poems from the 11th and 12th centuries that produce a dramatically vibrant effect. The Rogue Valley Chorale, Youth Choruses, and Chamber Orchestra join together with exceptional soloists to present this intoxicating performance.

*Carmina Burana* will be presented in an outside setting with social distancing and face mask requirements.

Tickets: \$23 adults, \$7 students and children

#### HANDEL'S MESSIAH

Saturday, December 4, 2021, 7:30 PM

Sunday, December 5, 2021, 3:00 PM

Collier Center for the Performing Arts

The Rogue Valley Chorale presents the Christmas movement of George Frideric Handel's masterpiece, *Messiah*, with a dramatic interpretation featuring Portland's Polaris Dance Theater and accompaniment by Jefferson Baroque Orchestra on period instruments. The concert features exceptional soloists and the masterful voices of the Chorale in a new production that tells the timeless story of the birth of Christ through the eyes of the prophets, shepherds, and the heavenly hosts.

Tickets: \$23 adults, \$7 students and children

Interested in  
joining the Chorale  
or Youth Choruses?

For more information contact us:  
[info@roguevalleychorale.org](mailto:info@roguevalleychorale.org)



**Making Lemonade**

By Michael Morris, Artistic Director



We've all heard the adage 'If life gives you lemons, make lemonade!'. The proverbial phrase is used to encourage optimism and a positive can-do attitude in the face of adversity or misfortune. The year 2020 has been a true global lemon with

pandemics, quarantine, natural disasters, wildfires that have burned millions of acres and left tens of thousands homeless, political unrest, and the challenges of structural inequality. These events have caused humanity to step back, reassess, consider new ways of doing things, to get creative, and to learn to make lemonade.

Early in March of this year, some 180 singers, including the Rogue Valley Chorale, the Youth, the South Medford High Chamber Choir, the 30-piece RVC Chamber Orchestra, and amazing soloists presented Schubert's *Mass in G Major* and the Mozart *Requiem* at the Craterian Theater in Medford. Within a week, the Rogue Valley Chorale Association, which includes the Rogue Valley Chorale, Children's Chorus, Cantare Chorus, and the Youth Ensemble, ceased rehearsals and cancelled the remainder of the 2019-2020 season because of the Covid-19 pandemic. It just wasn't safe to sing together, and at that time no one knew how and when we would be able to sing together in a safe manner. In addition, performing arts venues could no longer hold events with large crowds because the safety of the audience and performers might be at risk.

But performing artists have an indomitable, creative spirit and it didn't take long for them to figure out how to share their art with an audience. Virtual choirs and instrumental ensembles began to perform on Facebook. Creative performances were being offered live on Zoom and Instagram. The performing arts world quickly learned how to use social media and communications apps to develop new, imaginative, and innovative works of art. This new approach allowed performing groups to not only reach out to their patrons, but to expand to a much larger audience with no geographic limitations. In other words, they could invite anyone, anywhere to attend their performance, as long as they had access to the internet. Amazing!

Immediately after the general shutdown of performing arts organizations, I began to research ways that we could get the Chorale singing again. What was the estimated distance of a singer's vocal aerosol? Was there a recommended social distance between each singer? Could a singer use a mask and still be understood? Naturally, many other singers and directors were asking the same questions, and soon a general consensus began to form among those in the singing community that answered these pertinent questions. The answers to these questions were daunting.

**Board Resiliency**

By Donna Barrett, Board President



Organizational resilience is the ability to anticipate, prepare for, respond and adapt to incremental changes and sudden disruptions in order to survive and prosper. Resilience is a strategic imperative in the face of today's challenges. A resilient organization is "Darwinian" in the sense that it requires adaptations to a changing

environment in order to remain viable.

Resilience requires commitment from the whole organization. It is the leaders of an organization who drive these 'soft' factors, but it requires top-down direction and bottom-up engagement through clear communication and a willing embrace from all members, singers, audience and supporters.

RVCA has spent the past two years embracing organizational resiliency. Two years ago, we welcomed Michael Morris as our new artistic director, which has been a rewarding experience. Two seasons of exciting concerts had us motivated and eager to share music with our community. Then Covid-19 appeared. The board immediately went into Zoom mode, meeting, communicating, meeting outside, figuring it out. We understood that our purpose and goals remained intact. What changed is how we achieve our mission. At our annual board retreat at Executive Director Laura Rich's home in Rogue River, we revised our strategic goals to address the uncertainty and challenges posed by Covid-19. Some of our new strategic goals include:

- continuing to provide singing opportunities
- offering virtual and televised concerts to our community
- addressing tech deficiencies to make virtual concerts accessible
- facilitating youth participation in choral activities

I am very proud of our board, which has embraced the challenges that surround us and turned them into opportunities. It seems "resiliency" and "adaptability" are our middle names!

Aldous Huxley said, "Experience is not what happens to us; it is what we do with what happens to us." The Chorale Association is eager to learn from experience and grasp opportunities. With Covid-19 creating barriers to live, indoor performances, fires rattling our lives and destroying the homes of our friends and family members, civil unrest, and a tumultuous election season looming, we are presented with unprecedented opportunities to practice resiliency. I have no doubt we will prevail.



**Making Lemonade**

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On average, speaking can generate an aerosol spray up to 6 ft. For a singer, that distance can be as far as 18 ft. The recommended distance between singers while wearing masks is 12 to 15 ft. A singer can be heard and understood while wearing a mask, but greater care must be taken to pronounce the consonants.

Armed with this information, I began to plan a holiday project that could be “broadcast” online. As the project, now named “**Holiday Faire**” took shape, Executive Director Laura Rich made a bold call to the Programming Director of Southern Oregon PBS, Brad Fay, to see if SOPBS would be interested in the program that the RVC was preparing. Laura informed Brad that this was a unique program that featured the Rogue Valley Chorale, the Jefferson Baroque Orchestra, and an amazing group of vocal soloists performing some favorite holiday songs and carols, all recorded professionally at some of the most amazing locations in the Rogue Valley. **Holiday Faire** was accepted by SOPBS to be broadcast Friday, Nov. 27 at 8:00 pm, Sunday, Dec. 13 at 11:00 am, and Thursday, Dec. 24 at 8:00 pm.

Great care was taken to protect the singers, instrumentalists, and crew. Everyone was required to wear masks. The recommended distance of 12 to 15 feet for singers and 6 to 8 feet for instrumentalists was observed for all recording sessions. Large auditoriums were used to record smaller vocal ensembles and outdoor locations were used for the full choir and larger ensembles. The project has been a wonderful opportunity to develop new skills for both the singers and instrumentalists, and everyone was happy to have the opportunity to perform together again. We look forward to sharing this new performance opportunity with you!

It has been a challenge to find new ways to sing together. By nature, choirs are a community of collaboration, each singer adding their part to create a universal, artistic whole. In addition, performing arts organizations prepare, rehearse, and present musical works not only to present their talent to an audience, but to share concepts, emotions, beauty, a sense of humanity, and spiritual understanding. This is best done in a live performance. So, the Rogue Valley Chorale Association will present the iconic choral work *Carmina Burana* by composer Carl Orff on June 11 and 13, 2021 in an outdoor performance at the beautiful Grizzly Peak Winery. This production will include all 4 of the RVCA's choirs, including the Chorale, the Children's Chorus, Cantare Chorus, and the Youth Ensemble, accompanied by the RVC Chamber Ensemble and featuring stunning soloists. The wide open, beautiful outdoor venue at Grizzly Peak Winery will allow both the performers and the audience to enjoy this amazing choral work while staying a safe distance from each other. More information about this performance will be coming soon!

The Rogue Valley Chorale Association looks forward to the possibilities for the future. We will continue to explore our options to enrich and inspire all members of our community through great choral music performed by choruses of all ages.

**Choral Singing in the Time of Covid-19**

By Laura Rich, Executive Director



We are singers, which means we are, by nature, expressive and emotive. Some of us were here when the Rogue Valley Chorale presented its first concert back in 1973. We've seen each other through love and loss, illness, childbirth, and virtually all significant life events. We are a family.

How do we social distance, yet retain the intimacy to which we have become accustomed over these past 47 years? And how do we safely present our music to our community? That is our challenge in the time of Covid.

According to Dr. Kevin Kavanaugh, in an article for MJH Life Sciences, “The combination of singing in close quarters and decreased ventilation is nothing short of a petri dish for viral growth.” Singers fall into the “super spreader” category. The deep intake of air and long, sustained exhalations move our breath much further than resting breathing or normal speaking. As a result, we cannot safely come together to rehearse or perform in the way we have for nearly five decades.

But we are singers. Singing is a physical need. It is the way we emote, celebrate our spirituality, release tension, communicate and even intellectualize. It is personal, but sharing our souls through singing with an audience is also important. It is somewhat akin to having a conversation, which requires both talkers and listeners.

A highly creative artistic director and conversations with the Jackson County Health Department staff have revealed options. We sang together over the summer while filming and recording an SOPBS television special called *Holiday Faire*. We did so socially distanced from one another with masks on. We are exploring ways to convene rehearsals for our Youth Choruses and adult singers in smaller “mini-choruses,” and streaming rehearsals for home practice. Concerts will be either broadcast to our audience on television or other video platforms, or performed live outside with ample room for social distancing.

Every two years we celebrate an evening of singing with our supporters during an event called *Soiree and Song*. We are exploring ways to host the soiree virtually. For those of us with computer aversions, Covid-19 is certainly providing opportunities to become tech savvy, whether we want to or not!

This era of Covid is our new normal for the time being, so we are adapting and embracing ways to live full lives safely. We are all on this new and unprecedented journey together, figuring it out as we go along, step by step.

## RVCA Welcome New Board Member

### Ken McPherson

Rogue Valley Chorale Association is pleased to introduce new board member Ken McPherson. Ken brings experience and passion to the board that will contribute to organizational growth and vitality.

Ken McPherson's love of performing arts began with a French horn as a third-grader in Greenbrae, California. From that moment forward, instrumental music, the discovery of theater a year later, and eventually a full immersion into choral singing, became his passions. Those activities led to a series of leading roles, solos, and leadership positions in various school and community productions.



Ken studied music/theater at UCLA and DeAnza College in Cupertino, where he added conducting to his skills under the mentorship of Dr. Royal Stanton. In addition to playing several roles in theatrical productions, including a three-month USO tour of Asia, Ken served as musical director/conductor for five main stage productions, was the student director of the Musical Comedy Workshop, a member of the UCLA Men's Glee Club, and a finalist in the Frank Sinatra Pop Singing Awards. It was during this time that he was in his first Equity performance, the 25th anniversary production of "South Pacific" at the Westwood Amphitheater. In 1975, Ken was awarded a scholarship to the LA Music Center's

Musical Theater Workshop. He supported his acting habit at the Sidewalk Cafe in Venice Beach, studied acting with Sally Kirkland, and interned at Actor's Studio West in Hollywood. Ken discovered and embraced computer communications with his first 300 baud modem in 1983 and moved back to



the Bay Area in the hopes of developing communication platforms within the nascent LGBT community. His focus on the arts was postponed indefinitely when his friends began dying during the HIV epidemic. In 1985 he joined America's first full-time AIDS advocacy organization, Mobilization Against Aids, becoming San Francisco chair in 1986, then national chair from 1987-91. This led to leadership positions in a number of other local/state/national HIV/LGBT non-profits. He was a weekly radio talk show host at LIVE 105 in San Francisco from 1989 to 2000 and was the first and longest-running openly gay radio talk show host on a major radio station in US history during that period.

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**Not only do we share a love for music,  
but we both know what it's like to hit  
all the right notes.  
Everytime.**

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(Continued from page 4)

When his show ended in 2000, Ken decided to go back into the performing arts, working at Theater Rhinoceros for several years as stage manager, musical director and production manager. He spent two years as volunteer coordinator/ program manager at the SF LGBT Community Center, followed by 8 seasons with the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus, regularly as a soloist at Davies Symphony Hall.

At age 60, Ken performed in a 3-month run of "My Fair Lady" as an Equity actor at the Union Square San Francisco Playhouse.

In 2014, Ken purchased the Edgewater Resort in Kelseyville, California, hoping to finance his retirement. Two years of drought and three years of close-call forest fires later, Ken sold the property and finally succeeded in achieving his goal. He moved to Medford in late 2019, hoping to participate in the Medford/Ashland performing arts scene, while enjoying his new home and retirement along with his two golden retrievers. Ken is now a highly valued singer in the Rogue Valley Chorale. Welcome Ken!!!

### **Holiday Faire CD For Sale – only \$15**

During the summer filming of *Holiday Faire* for SOPBS we put together a CD of the concert music, which also includes selections from the 2019 *Home For the Holidays* concert.

To purchase a CD for \$15, you can do so in the following ways:

- Visit [roguevalleychorale.org/holiday-faire-cd/](http://roguevalleychorale.org/holiday-faire-cd/) to purchase on-line
- Call us at 818-239-9878 and pay by credit card
- Mail us a check at:  
Rogue Valley Chorale Assoc.  
724 S. Central Ave. Suite 102  
Medford, OR 97501

Please include your contact information.

The CDs are in production now and will be ready by early November, just in time for the holidays!

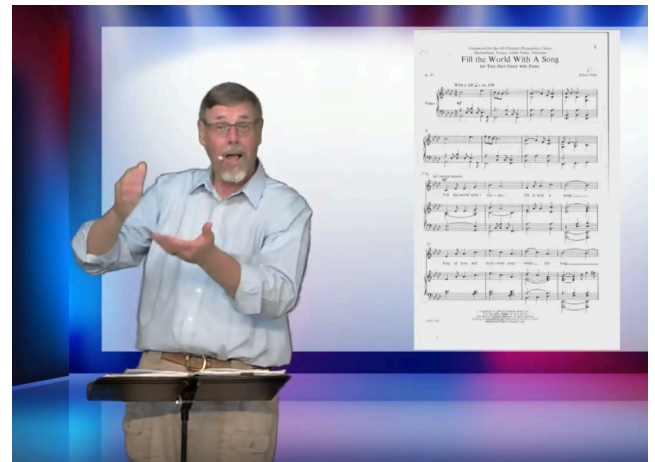


### **Anywhere Learning TV**

When we canceled concerts and rehearsals last March we were concerned about removing music from the lives of our Youth Chorus singers. The problem became more pronounced when school choral activities and performance opportunities evaporated.

Our Youth Chorus staff worked together to find a solution, which was presented to us by the ever resourceful and creative Pamela Nordquist (Youth Ensemble Director). Pamela suggested we approach the Medford School District about creating three programs aimed at encouraging kids to sing. We tapped into Anywhere Learning TV, a platform that brought learning resources to children sheltering at home due to Covid-19.

Rogue Valley Youth Chorus produced choral instructional programming, which was broadcast throughout the valley on Anywhere Learning TV. Many of the songs the Youth Chorus directors taught had meaningful connections to the pandemic and what students were experiencing while sheltering at home.



The programs were narrated by Gerry Flock (Children's Chorus), Shayne Flock (Cantare Chorus), Pete and Pamela Nordquist (Youth Ensemble).

To see the Cantare and Children's Chorus *Anywhere Learning TV* program visit: <https://www.kdrv.com/content/anywhere-learning/570534682.html>

To see the Youth Ensemble *Anywhere Learning TV* program visit: <https://www.kdrv.com/content/anywhere-learning/570627552.html>

*Rogue Valley Youth Chorus will be providing opportunities for young singers to engage in choral singing during the 2020-2021 season. Rehearsals address Covid concerns with smaller choruses, using air purifiers, practicing social distancing, wearing facial coverings and scheduling singing times in 30 minute blocks.*

*This season there are **no participation fees or auditions!** Come join us. For more information email [info@roguevalleychorale.org](mailto:info@roguevalleychorale.org).*





Rogue Valley Chorale Association

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Donna Barrett, President  
Valerie Darby, Secretary  
Ken McPherson, Treasurer  
Carmen Adams  
Nancy Shulenberger  
Kristy Denman  
Sharon Dady  
Mary Ann Graham  
Rebecca Webber  
Gary Ward



To contact Rogue Valley Chorale Assoc.  
Call us at 541-414-8309,  
email [info@roguevalleychorale.org](mailto:info@roguevalleychorale.org)  
or visit [www.roguevalleychorale.org](http://www.roguevalleychorale.org)

**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  
Ron Ochs, Youth Choruses

**ROGUE VALLEY CHORALE ASSOCIATION STAFF**

Michael Morris, Artistic Director  
Laura Rich, Executive Director

*Rogue Valley Chorale Association is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable organization.  
Donations are tax-deductible to the extent of the law. For information on making a  
donation please contact us or visit [roguevalleychorale.org/donate/](http://roguevalleychorale.org/donate/). Thank you!*



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