

a tempo

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Children's Chorus of Washington is to foster both the artistic and personal development of a diverse and dedicated community of young musicians in the greater Washington, D.C. area by providing them with an opportunity to study and perform the highest quality choral literature.

Gala 2008 - Viva Italia!

This year's Gala, *Viva Italia!*, held at American University's Katzen Arts Center, was attended by more than 200 guests. The room sparkled with Venetian decorations, and guests were treated to delectable Italian cuisine provided by Ridgewells. This year's volunteer auction team, led by its dedicated chair and Board member, Carole Brand, deserve special thanks for their efforts in making this our most successful auction yet! CCW supporters helped raise over \$64,000 to fund CCW's world-class music education program and provide scholarships to choristers in need.

Auctioneer Sherry Truhlar led a rousing live auction, which included the popular wine frenzy and a special Fund-an-Item appeal to raise money for the creation of new commission pieces. This year's Fund-An-Item brought in more than \$14,000 to fund new music and provide CCW choristers with the opportunity to participate in workshops with composers, allowing them full participation in the artistic process. The "3-2-1" Raffle, co-chaired by alum parent Jean Catherwood and Bel Canto parent Catherine McCann, was a great success, realizing over \$16,000. The highlight of the evening was without doubt the performance by CCW's Treble Chorus, who ended the auction festivities with a charming interpretation of Rossini's "Cat Duet." These young singers with their beautiful, clear voices reminded everyone of the reason we come together each year to raise money for CCW. As Board President Kathy Ruckman said, "We are a special community of families and individuals who understand the power of helping children learn to make excellent music together." This night of "fun-raising" certainly demonstrated the commitment from our CCW community to ensure that our unique music program continues to thrive and grow.

From the Artistic Director

CCW founding board member and current Board President, Kathy Ruckman, is stepping down after thirteen years of continuous service and dedication to the Children's Chorus of Washington. Kathy has been a crucial and integral part of the formation and development of our organization and I will personally be forever grateful for the support and guidance she has provided me both in my work at CCW and when she was the Chorus Coordinator at Chevy Chase Elementary School. In fact, the idea to form CCW was developed at her kitchen table when we realized that there was a need for an area-wide children's chorus.

Kathy has an incredible "can-do" spirit that has allowed CCW to grow from one ensemble of 70 students to three ensembles of 170 choristers. Kathy has supported the chorus's international trips and strongly advocated that CCW be in the forefront of new artistic initiatives including our ground-breaking commissioned opera "The Nightingale." She served as board secretary for ten years, as board president for the last two, and under her guidance CCW has become known as a leader among children's choruses both nationally and internationally. We will miss her presence on the board, but are grateful that she will always be a part of the CCW family.



This spring is filled with performances and opportunities for you to hear the choral excellence of our young singers. The highlight of the year for all three CCW ensembles is our special Mother's Day Spring Concert at National City Christian Church on May 11. Each ensemble will perform music by Italian composers in anticipation of the Concert Chorus tour to Italy this summer. We hope you will join us and share our music at one or more of these concerts.

Joan Gregoryk

Calling all boys and girls who love to sing...

Auditions for the Children's Chorus of Washington's 2008-2009 season are now being held. Open to girls, and boys with unchanged voices, ages 9-16, auditions are easy - no preparation or experience is necessary to audition, just a love of singing! Students who qualify are placed in the appropriate ensemble based on their demonstrated experience, skill and ability. Scholarships are provided to all students in need.



To schedule an
audition, call the
Chorus Office at
(202) 237-1005

“The Nightingale” Sings Again

In May 2005, CCW made music history when it co-commissioned a ground-breaking opera written for children’s chorus and performed the East Coast premiere of “The Nightingale” by Canadian composer Imant Raminsh. The opera recounts Hans Christian Andersen’s familiar tale of a Chinese emperor who fancies a mechanical nightingale over the real one, and comes to regret his choice. The 2005 performances proved to be the highlight of CCW’s artistic history, and the staff and board are now making plans to remount the opera in May of 2009. This new production, directed by renowned playwright/director and Concert Chorus parent Mary Hall Surface, will be especially compelling when it opens in Washington’s new state-of-the-art downtown theater space, the Shakespeare Theater’s Sidney Harman Hall, on May 2 and 3, 2009. This beautiful theater is the perfect setting for “The Nightingale,” which Artistic Director Joan Gregoryk calls “achingly beautiful.”

The objective in remounting “The Nightingale” is to provide a fresh group of CCW’s young singers with the opportunity to experience the learning, joy and excitement of participating in a professional operatic production and to help secure the place of this remarkable choral opera for young voices in the international repertoire. Many of the gorgeous costumes and set design from the 2005 production will be used, but the staging, choreography and lighting will all be new. Both Bel Canto and Treble Choruses will have their own opera experience next season, including performances of opera choruses from several well-known and beloved operas, and selections from Benjamin Britten’s opera “The Little Sweep.” This Opera Season will be a thrilling one for all CCW choristers, their families and friends.

Photo: Quentin Furlong



CCW Receives NEA Grant

CCW is proud to announce that it has received its first grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in the amount of \$10,000 to partly support a new production of “The Nightingale” by Imant Raminsh. The one-act opera, written specifically for children’s chorus to introduce and engage them in the art form, will be presented by CCW’s Concert Chorus in May 2009. The NEA, a public agency and the nation’s largest annual funder of the arts, is dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts, both new and established; bringing the arts to all Americans; and providing leadership in arts education. This stamp of approval from our nation’s most esteemed arts funder is a milestone in CCW’s growth and provides essential support to ensure the success of this exciting new production.



The Windy City Blown Away by Bel Canto Chorus!

Following the Big Apple tour last year, Chicago was the new destination for Bel Canto Chorus’s musical journey this year. Thirty-three choristers, along with conductor Michael Wu, chaperones and CCW staff, joined this year’s tour for a musical exchange with the Glen Ellyn Children’s Chorus. Glen Ellyn choristers, staff and chorus families gave CCW a warm welcome, organizing a pizza dinner, potluck supper, and sharing their love of choral music with enthusiasm and dedication. GECC families generously hosted homestays for CCW choristers, offering them a wonderful opportunity to spend time and get to know other young singers. Sightseeing in Chicago included a rewarding architectural cruise and time to wander in beautiful Millennium Park. The final performance at Faith Lutheran Church was exhilarating, with these two wonderful choruses joining and sharing their talents. Bel Canto’s Chicago tour provided our young singers with a rewarding musical and cultural experience that they will long remember.

Joan Gregoryk at ACDA

Joan Gregoryk’s reputation for excellence in choral music education extends well beyond the boundaries of our nation’s capital. Nationally and internationally acclaimed for her work with children’s choruses, she was invited this year to conduct Children’s Honor Choirs for two of the seven divisions of the American Choral Directors Association, an organization devoted to promoting the choral art. Every other year, ACDA holds regional conventions, alternating with the national, and Ms. Gregoryk conducted the 2008 Southwestern Honor Children’s Choir in Kansas City, Missouri in February and the Southern in Louisville, Kentucky in March.

Southern Division Coordinator Sandy Holland said that Ms. Gregoryk was selected as clinician because of her “obvious love of children, strong knowledge of appropriate repertoire, and record of working wonders with young singers.” Auditioned choristers from seven Southwestern and eleven Southern states were required to learn their music prior to rehearsals at the conventions, allowing Ms. Gregoryk to focus on blending voices and refining the pieces for an optimal artistic result. The intense rehearsal schedule began on Wednesday evening, continued through Saturday morning, and concluded with a performance on Saturday afternoon. Selections ranged from Bach to Bernstein, and one chorister said she especially liked Ms. Gregoryk’s having the singers dance to Bach as they prepared his “Domine Deus.” For the first time, a chamber orchestra was hired for both division concerts, an exciting addition for those who had previously sung with only piano or organ accompaniment. Ms. Holland noted that Ms. Gregoryk, respecting the choristers as young artists, involved them directly in the process of music making, encouraging their input. “They felt valued and took ownership of their performance,” singing with beautiful tone and intonation.

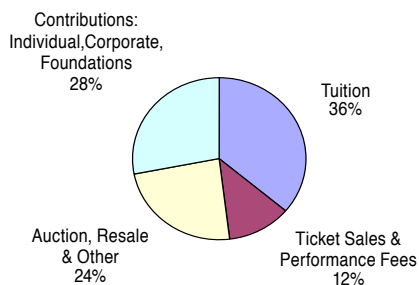
Ms. Gregoryk’s professional associations and friendships throughout her career have paved the way for and secured many unique opportunities for CCW. While the CCW community is well acquainted with her dynamic leadership, it can also take pride in and celebrate the recognition of her gifts and success in a wider world.

The Reality Show

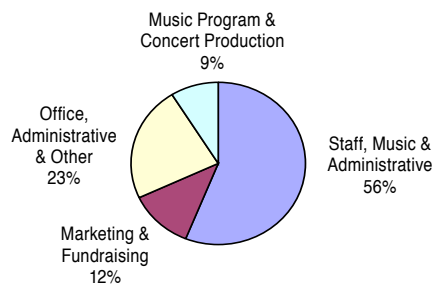
The CCW Board of Directors functions primarily to safeguard the organization's mission and further its exciting musical agenda. Whenever the Board meets, any serious consideration of plans inevitably leads to a discussion of money. Topics of diverse programs, performances in intriguing venues and upcoming tours cannot be pursued without initially looking at finances.

CCW shares a problem common among private schools, that is, tuition covers far less than half of actual expenses. In the last fiscal year, CCW tuition accounted for 36% of revenues, ticket sales and performance fees for 12%, auction monies and resale items for 24%, and individual and corporate donations and foundation grants for 28% of a budget of \$460,600. These figures fall well within national chorus income averages compiled by Chorus America. CCW has now received a scholarship endowment from the Shrager Foundation, fulfilling one of its top organizational goals and allowing it to provide tuition assistance to every child in need. Chorus typically depend on individuals to provide 17% of their total revenue. In the last fiscal year, CCW received 21% and CCW's Development Committee will continue to seek a broader base of individual donors.

INCOME



EXPENSES



On the expense side, CCW's percentages look similar to those of other children's choruses. The 56% that we spend on artistic and administrative salaries is exactly in line with the average of 56%. Administrative and office expenses, too, compare favorably with those of choruses our size: 23% for CCW and 26% nationally. Marketing expenses are greater, 12% as opposed to 4%, but proceeds from our auction more than compensate for the marketing funds used to launch that event. CCW's expenditures for the music program and concert production are 9%, compared to 8% for other choral groups.

The difficulty of raising money has been compounded in the past several years by a declining economy. Foundations have turned down requests for money previously granted; there is simply less available, yet more needed, and a widening gulf between the two. The Board constantly searches for answers to this dilemma. Members look for new grant money, seek out individual donors who might support specific needs, such as tuition and tour scholarships, and put an enormous amount of time and energy into fundraising projects like the auction. But raising money is a little bit like housework. As soon as you accomplish one thing, something else has to be done and then, before you know it, you're back working on that first project all over again. It is never-ending.

If, then, it seems that you have received a letter asking for money, following on the heels of another, when a tuition or tour payment deadline was just met, please understand that we are aware of the strain. But, as board members of the Children's Chorus of Washington, our duty is to maintain the wonderfully high standards of education and performance that Joan Gregoryk established at the Chorus's inception. And that takes money.

Martba Moss-Benavides
Treasurer

Joan Gregoryk honored by the InterFaith Conference

Artistic Director Joan Gregoryk will be honored by the InterFaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington for her work, nationally and internationally, in the field of children's vocal music. This year's InterFaith Bridge Builders Awards will be presented to Ms. Gregoryk, filmmaker Alex Kronemer, and the Indian community theater troupes SAHARA and Natya Bharati on June 19 at the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center. Created in 1978, the InterFaith Conference (IFC) now brings together the Baha'i, Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic, Jain, Jewish, Latter-day Saints, Protestant, Roman Catholic, Sikh and Zoroastrian faith communities in this region to advance justice, build community and nurture understanding in metropolitan Washington.

CCW's Welcomes New Board Members

CCW's Board of Directors is fortunate to have added the talents of two new board members to its ranks, each of whom brings special talents to further our mission and ensure that CCW's extraordinary music education program will continue to thrive.

Wendy Kenney, an attorney specializing in federal contract and grant issues, is now a private consultant. She currently serves as Board Chair of The American Century Theater in Arlington, and has performed in, accompanied, or served as musical director for numerous theatrical productions, choirs, and other musical events. Wendy currently sings with Polyhymnia, a small chamber chorus based in Bethesda. She is also a volunteer at the Greater Washington Urban League's Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired. She is married to Robert J. Kenney, Jr., and they have four children. Wendy's daughter Kate, a former Chevy Chase Elementary School student, was a member of Joan Gregoryk's CCES school chorus. Wendy has joined the Board Development and Finance Committees.

May Liang is Chief Financial Officer and General Counsel of Ruckus Network, Inc., a provider of digital entertainment to colleges and universities. May previously served as Vice President and Associate General Counsel with America Online, Inc., specializing in intellectual property law and technology licensing. She serves on several nonprofit boards, including the Epilepsy Therapy Project and YMCA-Fairfax County and is Co-Chair of the Executive Committee of the US-Japan Leadership Program. May is married to Jim Lintott and they have two children.

Calendar - Spring 2008

Monteverdi's *Vespers*

Concert Chorus

With City Choir of Washington
April 17 at Music Center at Strathmore

Bel Canto Chorus Chicago Tour

with Glen Ellyn Children's Chorus
May 1-4

CCW Spring Concert

Concert, Bel Canto & Treble Choruses
May 11 at National City Christian Church

John Adams' *El Niño*

Concert Chorus

with Choral Arts Society
May 18 at Kennedy Center Concert Hall

Britten's *War Requiem*

Concert Chorus

with National Philharmonic
June 7 at Music Center at Strathmore

Italy Tour Send Off Concert

Concert Chorus

July 21 at Metropolitan Memorial
United Methodist

Concert Chorus

Self-Produced Tour to Italy

July 24-August 4

Ciao! Concert Chorus Tours Italy

This summer, fifty-six members of the Concert Chorus will embark on CCW's first self-produced international tour to Italy. On each of our previous foreign tours, the chorus has joined with other children's choruses as part of a choral festival, working with renowned guest conductors and singing in mass choir performances, in addition to performing our own individual concerts. On this, our first solo tour, the Concert Chorus will have an opportunity to share its artistic accomplishments with the world, traveling through Italy and performing in some of the greatest cathedrals in Europe, including St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice and St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, the highlight of the tour.

Planned by Classical Movements, the tour will begin in the beautiful lake district in the north of Italy, then go south to Venice, and on to Tuscany, Umbria and finally Rome. We will visit and per-

form in such cities as Florence, Pisa, Siena, and Assisi. Italy abounds with music festivals during the summer and plans include a performance in one of these. Choristers will also have the unique opportunity of collaborating with an Italian children's chorus, offering our young singers an enriching cultural experience.

On this exciting tour, CCW choristers will experience new sights, new sounds, new food, new friends, and above all, will come to understand the power of song to bridge the gaps of culture and language. They will bring home memories to share and savor for a lifetime.

On Tour with Ms. G



**CHILDREN'S
CHORUS**
of Washington

Joan Gregoryk
Founder & Artistic Director

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