



Fairfield County Children's Choir

quarternotes

The Newsletter of the Fairfield County Children's Choir • Vol. 6, No. 1 • September 2005

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From the Music Director

Welcome to the Eleventh Season of the Fairfield County Children's Choir! While we are preparing for a wonderful year of making music, we have had some interesting news since the last issue of *Quarternotes*. Our Spring Concert on May 7 featured all of our choirs, and Julia Blue Raspe as our guest soloist, performing many of your favorite selections from the first decade of the FCCC. On May 14 we traveled to New York to see *The Phantom of the Opera* on Broadway. Our group consisted of 275 choristers, family and friends on five coach buses! The Chamber Singers and I have recently returned from Hawaii where we participated in the Pacific Rim Children's Choral Festival. This was a most amazing way to finish our Tenth Anniversary Season! See inside for details and more photos of the tour.

The 2005 - 2006 Season is shaping up to be fantastic as well. On November 1 our Chamber Singers and Concert Choir members will have a once in a lifetime experience - performing at Carnegie Hall! The FCCC has performed on the main stage (Stern Auditorium) in 1997 and in Weill Recital Hall in 2001 (three weeks after September 11). This will be the first experience in Stern Auditorium for our present members. (*See inside.*)



The FCCC Chamber Singers in Hawaii

Our Winter Concert will take place on Sunday, December 4 at 3:00 P.M. at the Klein Auditorium in Bridgeport. Our program will feature wonderful seasonal selections and great classics from the children's choir repertoire. Following this, our Chamber Singers and Concert Choir will both be very busy with exciting collaborations of their own. The Chamber Singers will be joining forces with the Fairfield County Chorale & Amor Artis Orchestra conducted by Johannes Somary in Handel's oratorio *Judas Maccabeus* on December 11 at the Norwalk Concert Hall. And the very next week (December 18) our Concert Choir will join with the Norwalk Symphony under the direction of Diane Wittry for a varied program of classical and seasonal selections, also at the Norwalk Concert Hall.

Don't miss our Broadway Concert & Silent Auction on February 4 at the Klein - always an audience favorite! I am very proud to announce that our Chamber Singers have been invited

continued on page 2

From the President

As the Fairfield County Children's Choir begins its second decade, I thought I would share my thoughts about the importance of the arts in the development of a human being and, most particularly, how the FCCC supports our children in their growth and development. If "it takes a village to educate a child", I would add "it takes a village full of the arts to educate the whole child; mind, body and spirit".

We need to instruct in music and all of the arts because this is where we can train the "instrument" called the human body/mind/spirit for its own sake. It's not "art for art's sake". To me it is "art for human's sake". It is easy to see that reading, writing and arithmetic need instruction. It is not so easy to see that those "basic" skills you shared with your infants while singing a lullaby also need additional instruction to develop. Music is not just about singing a song or playing an instrument; it is about organizing sound all around you and using sound to communicate.

One of the things that pleased me the most when I first heard about the formation of FCCC was its mission to bring high-level vocal musical experiences to children of all levels of talent and ability. Along with Jon Noyes, I believed that there was no need to sacrifice excellence for broad participation. I also believed that with excellent instruction and hard work a children's choir would have no need to apologize for the quality of its performances. And so, ten years later we have hundreds of "regular kids" singing beautifully and enriching our whole community with their music making.

I remember when the choir first started and Jon wondered if he would get enough students interested in joining and staying once they knew it would require commitment and hard work. I knew for sure that children do not stay with something unless they get something back for their efforts. Each year we have seen their response to this challenge as the choir has grown musically. Each year we see them broaden their repertoire to include highly sophisticated and difficult music, not just for the sake of singing difficult music, but because their vocal instruments have grown and they are looking for music to help them express their increased confidence and joy in this musical growth.

Before the world made artists specialists, there was a time when we were all music-makers. I still remember a time when arranging music for a wedding or dance was simply accomplished by sending a brief message to my grandfather and he would check to see who would be around that night. In much the same way, the FCCC has brought music back to center of the community. FCCC choir members know that their music is highly regarded and requested to help celebrate important events. These kinds of experiences help children see that the arts are not "outside", but "inside". They know that they can create their own music because instruction has increased their skills to meet their personal musical needs. Instruction in improvisation and creative harmonizing have made them more independent and freed them from the printed page. The FCCC helps children find a way to say, "Here I am, I'm unique and my singing can show you!" Through FCCC they can also feel connected to each other and know the joys of creating something larger than themselves. Abraham Joshua Heschel said, "Above all, remember that the meaning of life is to build life as if it were a work of art." Children who have experienced singing with FCCC have taken the first steps along that path.

Carol Kolonay-Spangler

Chorister Profiles

The FCCC has numerous sets of siblings participating in our choirs, which adds greatly to a feeling of family within the organization. In this issue we feature the brother and sister duo of Max and Sarah Rein. The Rein family, including parents Peggy and Jack, have been and will continue to be an important part of the extended FCCC family!



Name: Sarah Rein

Age: 16

School: St. Joseph High School (Sr)

Town: Fairfield Resident

Favorite FCCC Song:

Ave Maria – Andreissen

In Your Own Words: "As an incoming senior, this year will be my eighth and final year with the Fairfield County Children's Choir. To this day, I still cannot believe how many wonderful

musical selections and incredible and diverse experiences I've had the opportunity to be a part of.

In these past several years, with the Chamber Singers, I've had the distinct privilege of performing at such venues as Carnegie Hall, West Point Military Academy and with the Connecticut Grand Opera. Most recently, we just returned home from an amazing summer tour with the Pacific Rim Choral Festival in Honolulu, Hawaii performing with Choirs from all over the Country and Canada - experiences I will not forget! Being a member of the Fairfield County Children's Choir has taught me extraordinary leadership and mentoring skills, how to sing properly as well as simply enjoying singing!

The choir has enabled me to make lasting friendships and I thank Mr. Noyes and the rest of the FCCC choral staff for this life-long experience.

From the Music Director *continued from page 1*

to perform on one of the most prestigious concert series in New England. On March 26 they will travel to Hartford's Immanuel Congregational Church (directly across the street from the Mark Twain House) to perform a full length program as part of the Woodland Concert Series. The invitations above indicate that the FCCC is in demand throughout our region!

Our Spring Concert on May 6 at 7:00 P.M. at the Klein will feature the world premiere of a newly commissioned piece from West Hartford composer Rob Hugh. This will be our third commission from Rob. I am pleased to report that both *The Attic* and *Clear Water* have been published and are available for all choirs to sing. To finish up the year we will travel to Broadway in New York on May 20 to see *Beauty and the Beast* and our Chamber Singers will attend the Niagara International Children's Choral Festival in Canada on July 5 - 9. This promises to be an outstanding year of making music together!

Finally, I was saddened to hear of the passing of a good friend and colleague as well as former FCCC conductor Lynden Emery. Many of our choristers and parents have fond memories of Lynn in the early years of the FCCC. She taught choral music in Connecticut for thirty years, retiring to New Brunswick, Canada in 2001. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family.

Jon Noyes

Chorister Profiles

Name: Max Rein

Age: 12

School: St. Thomas Aquinas
School – 7th Grade

Town: Fairfield Resident

Favorite FCCC Song: Nigra Sum

In Your Own Words: “This year, I will be going into the 7th grade and it will be my 4th year in the Fairfield County Children’s Choir - (2nd year with the Chamber Singers). Being a part of this choir is a fun and great experience. One of the most memorable experiences has been taking the trips with the choir. My first unofficial trip was with the Chamber Singers to San Francisco two years ago. (Our whole family went since my Mom was a chaperone). It was truly awesome and inspired me to try very hard to get into the Chamber Singers. We just returned from Hawaii and it was an incredible opportunity to be a part of the Pacific Rim Festival. We spent countless hours rehearsing, but also learned so much about Polynesian culture. It was really cool to be a Maori Warrior!

I have also enjoyed the festive concerts we do at West Point during the holidays. I would just like to say thank you to Mr. Noyes and all of the accompanists and conductors for a wonderful experience.

FCCC will definitely help anyone later on in life. I really enjoy being in the Chamber Singers, especially all the trips we go on, for example, Hawaii this summer. It is quite an enjoyable experience”.



Choir NEWS

The Pacific Rim Choral Festival in Hawaii

From July 12 – 21 our Chamber Singers and a large group of family and friends traveled to Hawaii to participate in the Pacific Rim Choral Festival. This festival is the most in demand of all of the children’s choral festivals around the world – it is presently full through 2008 - and now we know why! We were immediately immersed in Polynesian culture as the opening ceremonies featured a Samoan fire dancer and a group of Maori warriors (see the photo below for a group of our choristers ready for battle – the warriors really do stick out their tongues to scare away their enemies!). Representatives of many cultures, including Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Tahitian and Hawaiian, were in residence with us throughout the festival, sharing both traditions as well as pronunciations for the songs we were performing.

The choirs rehearsed many hours over the first four days of the festival with the fantastic Henry Leck as guest conductor. Two massed-choir festival concerts were then performed with many special guests and a large audience, many of whom are local Hawaiians who have heard about this amazing program. Each of the ten choirs from throughout the US and Canada also performed individual concerts for each other. The music chosen by Henry Leck was spectacular and we will continue to perform many of these selections in the future, with the addition of the dances and/or choreography that we learned on the tour.

The final two days of the festival gave us lots of time for touring the island, including a very moving visit to Pearl Harbor, and some free time at the beach near Waikiki. The photo on page one includes most of our group and was taken just before sunset in Honolulu. Yes, that is Diamond Head in the background! Our choristers represented Connecticut very well and the choir was invited back to a festival in the future, probably in 2012 or 2013! Aloha!!



Our fearsome Maori warriors



A group Hula lesson

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ANNOUNCING
A Fairfield County Holiday

The FCCC Chamber Singers will be releasing a compact disc of holiday music this fall which will be a wonderful addition to any collection of music for the holidays. Recorded in the beautiful acoustics of a local church, selections will include such perennial favorites as *O Holy Night, Joy to the World, I Wonder As I Wander, Carol of the Bells, Let There Be Peace on Earth, Silent Night, Jingle Bells, Ocho Kandelikas* and many more. You may purchase a CD at rehearsals in November, by calling the choir phone (414-4292) or at local music outlets.

2005 2006 FCCC Schedule

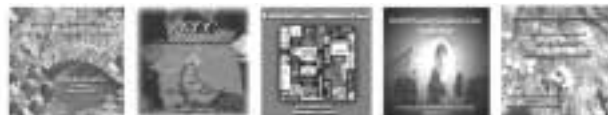
(CS-Chamber Singers; CC-Concert Choir; CH-Chorale; Ch-Chorus)

- Sept 17** Pitney Bowes - Shelton (CS)
- Nov 1** Carnegie Hall (CS & CC)
- Nov 17** Broadway solo auditions - 6-8P.M.
- Dec 4** FCCC Winter Concert - 3P.M. Klein, Bridgeport
- Dec 11** Judas Maccabeus / Ffld. Cty. Chorale & Orch. (CS)
- Dec 18** Norwalk Symphony- 3P.M. (*reh. Dec 17, 3-5P.M.*) (CC)
- Dec 21** Chorale & Chorus at Trumbull Mall - 7P.M.
- Feb 4** FCCC Broadway Concert - 7P.M. Klein, Bridgeport
- Mar 26** Woodland Concert Series - Hartford (CS)
- Apr 25** Fairfield Holocaust Commemoration Service (CS)
- May 6** FCCC Spring Concert - 7P.M. Klein, Bridgeport
- May 20** Spring Tour to Broadway Show
- July 5-9** Niagra Int. Children's Choral Festival, Canada (CS)

www.singfcc.org

FCCC Choirs to perform at
CARNEGIE HALL

On November 1, 2005 the Chamber Singers and the Concert Choir of the FCCC will be performing at Carnegie Hall as guests of the Cross Border Orchestra Ireland. This orchestra is made up of 130 Catholic and Protestant 12 - 24 year olds from the border counties of Ireland including Down, Armagh, Belfast, Louth, Meath, Monaghan and Cavan. It was founded in 1995 shortly after the first cease-fire as a peace building initiative. As part of their 10th anniversary they are planning a concert tour to New York and Boston in November 2005. Performances will be held at Boston Symphony Hall as well as Carnegie Hall. This connection was made possible by choir grandparent Mrs. Peggy O'Connor - many thanks to her!!



Fairfield County Children's Choir CDs

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