



# Fairfield County Children's Choir

# quarternotes

The Newsletter of the Fairfield County Children's Choir • Vol. 4, No. 2 • December 2003

## Music Director and Founder

Jon Noyes

## Business Manager

Barbara Brauner

## Choir Manager

Ellen Ryan

## Book Keeper

Peggy Rein

## Conductors

Lisa Bettke

Lucille Parkinson

Marsha Whitman

## Accompanists

Robin Heller

Todd Simmons

Roger Thulin

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Beau Villecco

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## *From the Music Director*

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year! December, the most musical month of the year, finds FCCC choristers very busy making music throughout the region. On November 23 our Concert Choir joined the American Classical Orchestra at the Norwalk Concert Hall on their outstanding children's concert series *Classical Kids* for a stunning performance of selections from Handel's *Messiah*. On December 7 our Chamber Singers joined the Fairfield County Chorale and Amor Artis Orchestra in Greenwich in a performance of Honegger's Christmas Cantata. If you remember, December 6 was the date of our first major snowstorm of the year and it was also scheduled as our only rehearsal with the chorale and orchestra. Due to the blizzard, I made the rehearsal optional for our choristers as Greenwich is a long drive for most of us. Kudos to Katherine Brandt and Katie Griggs for being hearty souls and representing us at the rehearsal! The rest of the group performed the concert with no rehearsal and did a wonderful job!

On December 13 our Chamber Singers traveled to West Point to rehearse with the US Military Academy Band for their annual Hudson Valley Holiday Concert. This was our fourth visit to West Point to collaborate with the Army and it is always one of the most exciting experiences of the year. Unfortunately, the concert on December 14 was snowed out! Happily, Colonel Rotondi, Conductor and Commander of the Band, has invited us back to try again next year!

Still to come in December is our annual performance at the Trumbull Mall on December 16 and our Ninth Annual Winter Concert on December 21. The big news for the FCCC is that this will be our debut concert at Bridgeport's Klein Memorial Auditorium! Please join us at this newly renovated venue at 3:00 P.M. and wish for sunny weather!

In the previous issue of [quarternotes](#), I mentioned two recent events through which the FCCC was recognized nationally as an outstanding musical organization (our participation in the Golden Gate Festival in June, 2003 and the invitation to perform at the American Choral Directors Association Convention in Boston in February, 2004). I am very pleased to announce another important recognition: the FCCC has been awarded a grant from the Connecticut Commission on Arts, Tourism, Culture, History and Film in the amount of \$4921 for "a young person's musical experience that is challenging, rewarding and enjoyable." A rigorous evaluation process, including a visitation to last year's Spring Concert, rated us in the following areas: artistic merit/impact, mission, audience development, planning, budget, volunteers/staff/board and adequate resources to administer programs. The FCCC Board of Directors, Music Staff and Business Staff will continue to strive to provide our members with the highest quality music education. Many thanks to all who make it possible!

*Jon Noyes*

## Chorister Profiles

Ann Branca and Kristian Otten are two of our most dedicated and talented choristers. Ann has been a member of the FCCC for eight years and is a solid member of our soprano section. Kristian has been with us for five years and is not only one of our distinguished soloists, he is one of the most enjoyable choristers to watch on stage.



**Name:** Ann Branca

**Age:** 16

**School:** Fairfield High School

**Town:** Fairfield

**Favorite FCCC Song:**

Angel's Carol, Go Where I Send Thee, St. Louis Blues

**In Your Own Words:** "Back in 4th grade my mom thought I should join the FCCC. At that

time, however, I did not *really* want to join. I guess I hadn't realized what an experience it would be. But after the first rehearsal eight years ago I was so excited about it that I looked forward to choir every week. Activities such as school, sports, friends and family events are inevitable, and sometimes choir becomes difficult to fit in. However, in the end I am glad I chose to stick with the FCCC because my mom was right when she told me it would be a good experience. I've met so many wonderful people and have been able to work with many amazing directors. The variety of song styles and the yearly trips have all contributed to my enjoyment of FCCC as well as my personal growth as a musician. FCCC has been a wonderful experience in so many ways – certainly one I shall always look back on with great gratitude and satisfaction."

**Name:** Kristian Otten

**Age:** 13

**School:** Jockey Hollow

**Town:** Monroe

**Favorite FCCC Song:**

Go Where I Send Thee

**In Your Own Words:** "My favorite things about choir are scatting and traveling. I especially enjoy improvisation on pieces that we've



done in the past, like *Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy*. The scats have helped me to develop a good ear for my family band, the Cheerios, and have helped me in my composition on guitar, piano and clarinet. I also enjoy traveling to choral festivals and working with other composers that have a different approach on teaching choral music. My other interests are sailing, playing in my family band, basketball and scouting."

## New Staff and Board Members Join FCCC Ranks

**Barbara Brauner** - *Business Manager*

Barbara comes to us with 22 years of theater management experience. She has overseen hundreds of national tours for the educational field including drama, comedy and ethnic dance performances. Her expertise in insurance, venue contracts and negotiation will be a valuable asset to FCCC. Barbara lives with her husband and two children in Trumbull and looks forward to utilizing her skills in arts administration to benefit FCCC.

**Ellen Ryan** - *Choir Manager*

Ellen comes to us through her niece, chorister Julianne Shea. She is a Registered Nurse specializing in pediatric care. She attended Boston University and Southern Connecticut State and has worked in hospitals and clinics in Stamford, Greenwich, Norwalk, Boston and Palo Alto, California. She brings to the FCCC her wonderful sense of humor and three generations of her family!

**Peggy Rein** - *Bookkeeper*

Peggy is Mom to Sarah (*Chamber Choir*) and Max (*Concert Choir*). Peggy works full-time as an Executive Administrator for General Electric Company in Fairfield. She enjoys reading, movies, music and spending time with her family. "It has been wonderful to be a part of this organization for the past 7 years -- I look forward to many more years and special memories!"

**Nancy H. Goncalves** - *FCCC Board Member*

Nancy H. Goncalves, Ph.D. is Director of Fine & Performing Arts for the Bridgeport Public School System. Dr. Goncalves has over 30 years of experience teaching and supervising vocal and instrumental music in public education, civic and community organizations, and commercial and private venues. She speaks English, Portuguese, and Spanish, is computer literate, and very desirous of building capacity in the arts department by expanding the variety of arts offerings while improving instructional quality through arts technology, related professional development, and partnering with the local arts community. Dr. Goncalves has participated in curriculum development, coordinated many local performances, owned a school of music, and served as adjunct faculty at the Fairfield University Graduate School of Education. She has performed at Carnegie Hall, published in children's and professional periodicals, and has earned a number of recognitions.

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**New Staff and Board Members** *continued*

**Joseph A. Peri** - *FCCC Board Member*

Joe is Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the National Council on Economic Education, a national not-for-profit corporation headquartered in New York City that promotes and provides economic and financial literacy programs in K-12 school systems throughout the country. Joe and his wife Nina (*an active FCCC volunteer*) live in Fairfield with their daughters Caroline and Victoria, who is in her second year with FCCC and sings in the Concert Choir.

**Beau Villecco** - *FCCC Board Member*

Beau Villecco is a CPA with 25 years experience in both public and private accounting. She currently has her own practice in Stamford, CT. Beau has served on the Boards of several non-profit organizations, including 6 years on the board of Mead School, four of those as Co-Chair. In addition to her board work she volunteers as a Sunday school teacher at Southport Congregational Church. Her son Reggie is in 7th Grade at Mead School and is in his third year with the FCCC.

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# FUND-RAISING 101

My son is studying budgeting and home finance at school. At the breakfast table one morning he asked me why I was spending so much time working on the ad book for the FCCC concert. Sensing a 'learning moment', I explained that FCCC needs to sell advertising to help pay for the costs associated with performing.

"What costs?"

"The cost of the concert hall, the janitorial staff and lighting people, insurance and printing costs."

"But we all pay money just to be in the choir."

"True, but the tuition covers only about 55% of the FCCC budget."

"What?"

"Well, each chorister pays \$250 - \$350 in tuition, but the FCCC incurs approximately \$520 in expense per chorister each year."

"For concerts?"

"Well, for concerts, conductors, accompanists, financial aid, fees, music, choir managers, newsletters, and other operating expenses."

"Why don't they just charge us \$520?"

"If we keep tuition low, it encourages more families to have their children audition. To some families \$520 for one activity is too much money. Also, there are families who have more than one child in the Choir."

"So, we get the rest of the money from selling ads?"

"Not really. Advertising and ticket sales only account for about 15% of the income. What are we up to now?"

"70%?"

"The other 30% comes from fundraising, such as contributions to annual fund, grants and the auction. Grants are usually limited in use, say for scholarships, and can't be used to fund general operating expenses. So fund raising is really important."

"If families can't afford \$520, how can they give money?"

"Well, that is what is great about annual giving. We want everyone to contribute, but they can give in the amount that is right for them. Some families could afford \$520, so they may contribute \$270 or more. Other families send us \$25 or \$50 dollars. But the small gifts multiply into larger amounts. There are tax benefits to contributions as well, but I don't suppose you are interested in that?"

"Right. So how will you get all the contributions?"

"Well, we will have an appeal and ask people to give what they can. We will also ask people to donate something to the auction and to go to the auction and buy something."

"That's a lot of asking."

"You're right. But if everyone buys tickets to the concert and participates in the other events in whatever way they can, the Choir will be able to pay all of its expenses."

"Mom?"

"Yes?"

"Can I watch TV now?"

*Beau Villecco, Treasurer - FCCC*

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## 2004 FCCC SCHEDULE

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

- February 7** FCCC Broadway Concert  
7:00 P.M. Fairfield High School
- February 11** Marsh Chapel, Boston University  
8:00 P.M. (CS)
- February 12** ACDA Convention, Old South Church, Boston  
(CS)
- February 29** Chamber Singers with GBYO  
3:00 P.M. Klein Auditorium (CS)
- April 14** Fairfield Holocaust Commemoration Ceremony  
7:30 P.M.(CS)
- May 1** Tour to Philadelphia  
(CC, CH, Ch)
- May 8** FCCC Spring Concert  
7:00 P.M. Klein Auditorium
- June 6** FCCC at Bridgeport Bluefish  
1:30 P.M. Harbor Yard

# Broadway 2004!

Please join us for our annual Broadway Concert and Auction on Saturday, February 7 at 7:00 P.M. at Fairfield High School. This year we are performing selections from The Music Man, My Fair Lady, Pippin and Annie. And, as always, there will be many wonderful items in our auction. So please come, enjoy the music and support the choir!

