



CHORALE NOTES

December, 2012

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We wish you the merriest of holidays, and the most prosperous, healthy and happy of New Years! Keep a song in your heart!



Our Spring Season Starts:

Jan 7th – First Rehearsal 6:30 pm at Open Door Baptist Church
 Jan 26th – Youth Chorale (ages 7 & up) starts 5:45 at Open Door Baptist Church.

We Sang of Christmas!



The Chorale's 2012 holiday concert, *Sing We Now of Christmas*, began with rehearsals which started in August and ended with joyous concerts on December 5th, 7th and 9th. We met every Monday except for the evening hurricane Sandy came to visit, and along the way we had a lot of activity: serving refreshments at the Air Show, holding our Holiday Marketplace, selling beautiful poinsettias, singing at the Culpeper Community Thanksgiving and the Culpeper Tree Lighting, and we

We sang our *Sing We Now of Christmas* concert at the Boxwood Recovery Center in Culpeper, at Prince Michel Vineyards in Leon, and our final concert of the season at the beautiful Reynolds Memorial Baptist Church in Sperryville. At Reynolds, we were joined by the Culpeper Presbyterian Church Bell Choir for an extra dynamic performance.

even made the front page of the December 6th *Culpeper Times*. The result of all that practice was a wonderful, happy season and concert!

We love to sing. Do you? Join us this season for a program which will include show tunes! This is going to be a lot of fun!



The Director's Corner - Carole Tomhave

Happy New Year! As I write this, it is actually a couple of days before Christmas, and I'm still reminiscing about the wonderful festive times we (the Chorale) had at our holiday concerts at Boxwood Recovery Center, Prince Michel Winery and Reynolds Memorial Baptist Church in Sperryville. At Boxwood, we were almost outsung by the mostly teenaged audience during the sing-along carols, and we had more helpful "roadies" to pack up the trailer than ever before! Prince Michel was decorated to the nines, and the wine and goodies pre-concert set such an elegant tone. The final performance, at Reynolds Baptist, was the epitome of old-fashioned, traditional Christmas, with the Culpeper Presbyterian Church Handbell Ensemble joining with the choir, and a full church raising the rafters in song. You can get a taste of this final performance by visiting the following link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5f52GhWTZIQ&feature=youtu.be>

However, in the world of the arts, we can't sit back and rest on our laurels for long! I have spent the last week combing through the Chorale library and publishers' websites, and am ready to announce that our Spring concerts will have a "New York, New York" type of theme. Of course, when most musicians think New York, they think BROADWAY, so much of the concert will be a mini-history of Broadway favorites, from "South Pacific" to "Wicked". But in addition, we will pay tribute to other faces and boroughs of the 'city that never sleeps'. The concert will also feature a Gershwin medley, Sinatra's "New York, New York", "New York State of Mind", Irving Berlin's "Give Me Your Tired, Your Poor" (the famous Emma Lazarus poem inscribed on the Statue of Liberty), and "Kyrie", a beautiful piece from Rene Clausen's "Memorial", written to commemorate those who lost their lives in the 9/11 attacks. It promises to be a concert of wide-ranging musical styles and emotional response. Concert dates and venues will be announced soon — keep checking our website!

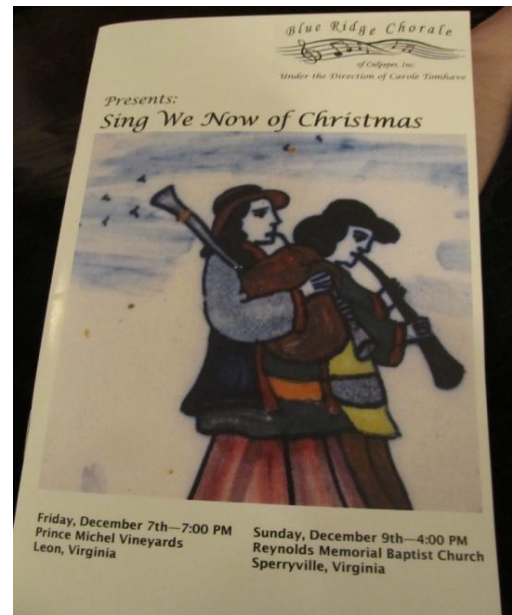
May 2013 bring you harmony of spirit and music in your heart!

Carole Tomhave, Music Director

Who Are Those Little Guys?

Our program, fliers and tickets for this concert season featured a sort of unusual graphic: two men, in old style garb, playing a bagpipe and (probably) an oboe against a wide sky dotted with birds. This is a typical motif from antique pottery made in Quimper, a town in Brittany which has been known for its pottery since 1708. The Quimper style of pottery, which is very distinctive, traditionally represents the lives of Breton people of the 16 and 1700s.

This design nicely represents this concert's focus on the beautiful and traditional French *chants de noel*. From the folk melodies which inform the Charpentier *Messe de Minuit* to popular carols such as "Angels We Have Heard on High," our concert sampled the rich heritage of the French carol, which continues to enrich Christmas around the world.





Dress Rehearsal

On November 27th, the Chorale held its “dress” rehearsal at Open Door Baptist, rehearsing the concert program along with a full array of accompanists. Accompanists this season were our own pianist, Brittany Bache, our soprano, flutist, and Concert Master Kathy Tester, our tenor and violinist

Scott Tester, and guest accompanists Dan Hall on bass and guitar, Joe Whitesides on percussion, Linda Lacy on flute, Emma

Spector on violin and the Culpeper Presbyterian Hand Bell Choir. Our photographer, Jeanette Calhoun, was there and caught some great views of the rehearsal.

Soloists practicing the Charpentier. Doug Schmit (from top left) Tim Carlson, Beth Burns. Also in this photo, (from bottom left) Bobbie Terry, Kathy Tester, guest accompanist Linda Lacy and Director Carole Tomhave.



The Bell Choir rehearses. What beautiful sound!



I Love to Sing! I Think I'd Enjoy Chorale, But I Wonder About....



Commitments - Rehearsal and concert participation are what we do. The Chorale rehearses every Monday evening (including holidays, in most cases) from the first Monday in January to the end of the season – usually the last weekend in April or first or second weekend in May. In the fall, we start rehearsals the last Monday of August and our concerts are in early December. Rehearsals run from 6:30 to 8:30 pm, at Open Door Baptist Church on the Fredericksburg Road in Culpeper, very close to the intersection of Rt 3 and Rt 29.

We expect all active members to make a serious effort to attend all rehearsals and, of course, to sing at the three season-end concerts. Our policy is to allow 2 absences from rehearsals each season, after which the Director determines whether a singer can stay on. This decision is based on preparedness and effort by the singer, and may mean adding in an extra rehearsal. We all know that life events don't always cooperate with plans, however, and work with singers as much as possible to make each season work out for us all.

All active Chorale members are expected to participate in three Concert week events: the free concert we perform in the community as well as our two ticketed concerts. These dates are published to members within the first 6 weeks of the season, allowing you time to mark your calendars.

Community Events - The Chorale participates in various community events: usually 3-4 each year. Two of these usually are singing carols at the Community Tree Lighting and singing at the Reading of the Declaration of Independence on July 4th, as well as other events. These are not "required" of Chorale singers, however they are a lot of fun and are good for the Chorale and the community, and many of our singers enjoy taking part.

Cost- The enrollment fee is \$35 each season to participate. Couples or families enrolling pay \$50, which is a real bargain. The Youth Chorale (ages 7 to about 14, at the Director's discretion) costs \$10 per season and is covered in a family membership. Our season dues help in a small way to pay the Chorale's costs. Members don't buy their sheet music: it is the property of the Chorale and is signed out to each member to return at season's end.

Ladies do have to purchase a uniform concert dress, with the uniform pearl necklace. They are worn with black hose and shoes. These dresses are surprisingly easy to wear, are durable and washable and cut in a style which suits most figure types very nicely. The dress currently costs \$70 and the pearls cost \$5. Often a departing singer will donate her dress back to the Chorale and we sell these for usually \$55. We usually have one or two available each season.

Men are expected to wear a black suit, white shirt, black socks and shoes at concerts. Uniform bow ties are issued for each concert.

Culture – The Chorale has a relaxed, fun atmosphere and is very supportive of its singers.

We work hard during rehearsals, but we have fun, too. Once each month we have a social time with snacks at break time.

We use email as much as possible to keep members informed between rehearsals. There also are announcements during rehearsals, and a printed schedule is available about 3 weeks into each season.

Experience/Skill/Talent - The Chorale features singers of considerable talent and even professional experience, however it also has many singers with very average voices, skills and experience. Blending these gifts into a musical and pleasing concert is one of the Director's most primary skills, and new singers at many levels are welcomed each season. If you love to sing, you're likely to be well qualified for the Chorale.

Some of our singers can read a musical score, some can't read one at all and many read music "sort of." As your experience grows, you become more familiar with reading music, we all benefit from using CD's with our section's parts to learn from. These are a wonderful tool for all of us!

Inclement weather - If the Culpeper schools are closed that day due to weather problems, the rehearsal is also cancelled. If weather changes look threatening, and cancellation seems advisable, an email will be sent out to all members by 4:00 that day.

Beyond how businesslike this all sounds, singing with the Blue Ridge Chorale is a lot of fun, is supported by a relaxed and friendly culture, is a great family activity and a constant challenge to grow and learn. We hope you'll join us! Call Carolyn Osborne at 540-22305462 and visit our Website, www.brcsings.com to learn more.

Concert Photos!

Taken by Jeanette Calhoun at Reynold's Memorial Baptist Church, Sperryville, on Dec. 9th.



Above, Brittany Bache, the Chorale's pianist.

Right, the Chamber Ensemble singing.

Below, in "The Twelve Days After Christmas" Martha Smith puts the three French hens to good use.



Right, Guest Accompanist Joe Whitesides.
Below, trio of Tim Carlson, Doug Schmit and Beth Burns singing in
the *Messe de Minuit*.
Bottom of page, the Chamber Ensemble echoing the song “Noel
We Sing”





Above, Kathy Tester and guest accompanist Linda Lacy playing recorders.
Right, Cathy ter Weele sings the Bach/Gonoud "Ave Maria"
Below, both Chorale members and guest performers accompany the Chorale.

