

*Westchester  
Concert  
Singers*

*Mark Bailey, Music Director*

*Membership Guide  
2009—2010*

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

**WELCOME ONE AND ALL!**

We welcome all former and new members to the Westchester Concert Singers. We sincerely hope you find that your experience with us wholly fulfills your creative expectations and that you form friendships which last a lifetime!

### ***MISSION STATEMENT***

Westchester Concert Singers offers singers opportunities to discover, study, and perform a wide range of sacred and secular music, including the great choral masterworks as well as other choral pieces from ancient times through modern. We are an enthusiastic, collegial, semi-professional ensemble of men and women dedicated to artistic growth, making quality music true to the spirit of the composer's intent from initial rehearsal through polished performance, and involving our audience in the musical experience.

### ***BACKGROUND***

Founded in 1955 as the Pleasantville Cantata Singers, the Westchester Concert Singers, as the group is now known, is dedicated to the goal of studying and performing the masterpieces of choral literature from the baroque to the contemporary. The chorus owes its beginnings and longevity to the founding conductor, Ludwig Sheffield, who led the singers for the first forty years. Currently under the direction of Mark Bailey, the chorus presents two major concerts each year.

Our members range from young adults to senior citizens: college students, working people, and retirees from an array of social and ethnic backgrounds, who come from all over Westchester County. Some members have had years of musical experience and training while others fall into the "dedicated amateur" category. All share a love of singing and truly enjoy the camaraderie of working together to create performances of which we are proud.

### ***MARK BAILEY, MUSIC DIRECTOR***

Mark Bailey was appointed Music Director of the Westchester Concert Singers in 2005, succeeding Conductor John Daly Goodwin. He begins his fifth season with us this fall.

A leading expert in the field of Slavic choral music, Mr. Bailey lectures throughout the country, notably at Lincoln Center as a featured speaker on the Great Performers Series.

Mr. Bailey's 1996 CD with the Yale Russian Chorus was placed on *The New York Times* "Critics' Choice List," as well as listed as a "must have" by National Public Radio's *Performance Today*. His most recent appearance at Carnegie Hall as guest conductor for a gala concert commemorating Russian poet Alexander Pushkin and featuring some of Russia's finest opera singers was praised

by critic Bernard Holland.

Broadly experienced in the choral, orchestral, and operatic repertoires, Mr. Bailey has composed and debuted several major works. He is also Artistic Director of the renowned Yale Russian Chorus and the New Haven Oratorio Choir.

### ***CONCERT SEASON***

The Westchester Concert Singers performs two major concerts per year, with rehearsals beginning on the Monday following Labor Day.

This season's first concert will be a performance of Handel's *Foundling Hospital Anthem* (which ends with the *Hallelujah Chorus*) and a collection of motets by Mendelssohn and will take place on January 17, 2010. In the spring of 2010 we will perform Mozart's *Requiem* twice: Saturday evening May 1 and Sunday afternoon May 2.

The venue for all concerts will be the *Chapel at Maryknoll* in Ossining, a delight not only for its sound, but because of its beauty and magnificent setting, overlooking the Hudson River.

### ***GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES***

Acceptance as a member is based on an audition with the conductor, purchase of music, and payment of a *tax-deductible membership contribution*. A discount is provided for members who pay their membership contributions on an annual basis.

Membership in WCS requires commitment. Once you become a member you may find that you have talents that will help the chorus in a variety of ways through fund-raising, marketing, or volunteering to assist in some way.

### ***AUDITIONS***

Auditions generally will be scheduled during the first rehearsals of each semester. Singers will be asked to perform a series of exercises including vocalizing and singing interval patterns. For information, directions, or scheduling an appointment for an audition, please call (914) 478-0074 or E-Mail us at *info@westchesterconcertsingers.com*. You may also write to us at:

P.O. Box 178  
Pleasantville, NY 10570

### ***PAYMENT OF DUES***

Annual, *tax-deductible* membership contributions of \$180 will be collected at the first rehearsal. Members who elect to sing for only one semester or who pay for one semester at a time will be charged \$100 per semester. Membership contributions are kept as low as possible in order that participation is not cost-prohibitive. Members are expected to purchase their own music at the first rehearsal.

### ***REHEARSAL ATTENDANCE***

Beginning Oct.19, 2009, our regularly scheduled rehearsals will be held on Monday nights from 7:45 to 10:15 p.m. at Scarborough Presbyterian Church in Scarborough. In addition, we sometimes schedule special rehearsals as needed. They may occur on a Saturday morning or another weeknight during the week prior to the concert. We always schedule at least one dress rehearsal. When severe weather forces Pleasantville school closures, rehearsals are cancelled.

All singers are expected to attend all rehearsals. Singers with special circumstances regarding attendance should speak to their Section Leaders. Please remember to call your Section Leader if you know you are going to miss a rehearsal.

### ***TICKET SALES***

The sale of tickets is the primary source of funds to pay our expenses. The suggested sales goal for each member is 7 tickets. ***However, each member (excluding PACE students) is required to sell or to buy at least 4 tickets per concert by the first dress rehearsal.*** Participation in the concert is contingent upon compliance with this policy.

### ***CONCERT DRESS***

#### ***Women:***

Full (ankle) length black skirt  
Long-sleeved black flat knit  
jersey top  
Black shoes and stockings

#### ***Men:***

Tux or dark suit  
White dress shirt  
Black bow tie  
Dark shoes, socks

No jewelry is to be worn during the performance except simple earrings.

## ***REHEARSAL DECORUM***

Good rehearsals are the key to great concerts! In order to make rehearsals productive and pleasant for everyone and assure optimal use of rehearsal time, a few common sense rules apply:

- Arrive on time, even a little early if possible. Allow yourself a few minutes to get settled.
- Please socialize, but remember to do it at the proper time and place. Chatting and side conversations distract other members from what the conductor is saying.
- The conductor requires our full attention throughout the rehearsal. Stay focused on singing. There's plenty of time before and after rehearsal to attend to other matters.
- When another voice section is being instructed or rehearsed, use the time constructively for some silent rehearsal of your own part. Resist that urge to talk to your neighbor.
- Direct any musical questions to the conductor to get the "official" response.
- Have a pencil ready and use it as often as necessary to mark your music. Write down the conductor's suggestions for dynamics, tempos, pronunciation, breath pauses, *etc.*
- If necessary, mark your copy of the music in a way that makes it easy for you to follow your voice part (*e.g.*, by highlighting)
- Sit up straight in your seat, slightly forward, with feet flat on the floor. This puts your body in the proper alignment for proper breathing.
- Train yourself to look at both the music and the conductor. The first step is to hold the music up in order to see both.
- Consider yourself fortunate; smile often.

## ***PERFORMANCE DECORUM***

- Be on time.
- Bring your music.
- Dress in the designated manner. (See Concert Dress.)
- Wear **NO** perfume, cologne, scented hairspray or after-shave.
- Place all music in a black folder.
- Enter stage with music held at the side facing the audience.
- Sit and stand as quietly as possible.
- When seated, keep both feet on the floor.
- Instead of turning pages, observe the soloists while they are singing.
- Hold folder high enough to watch the conductor instead of burying your head in the music.
- At the end of a movement, don't move or turn pages until the conductor relaxes his baton.

## ***FUND RAISING AND OTHER ACTIVITIES***

The Westchester Concert Singers receives no form of grant assistance. Funds are required to pay the salaries of our Music Director and Accompanist, as well as all concert expenses including, but not limited to, concert site rental fees, soloists, orchestra expenses (including those for dress rehearsals), lighting personnel, set-up labor, and printing of tickets, programs and all publicity materials. Therefore, fund raising activities are extremely important to meet expenses.

Only a small portion of our funds (approximately 20%) comes from annual membership contributions. We must engage in many other fund raising activities.

Although participation in these activities is not mandatory, we expect that each member will contribute time, energy and spirit to one or more of the following activities:

- ***ANNUAL SPONSOR DRIVE (Our Primary Source of Funds) - See Janet Accurso. Every fall a Sponsor Drive is initiated, and members seek out business and individual supporters in an all-chorus effort to raise the funds needed to carry out our programs. Many singers make personal contributions to this annual fund drive as well.***
- Ticket Sales - See Maureen Jaeckel or Section Leaders.
- Publicity Activities - see Angela Usobiaga
- Concert Logistics and Set-up - See Jean Feiman
- Leadership (Board of Directors and Ad-Hoc commitments) - See Mirijana Kocho.
- Hospitality - See Janet Accurso
- Program Ads - See Janet Gortsema.
- Tag Sales and other fundraisers - See Vera Esposito.

### ***MEMBERSHIP LIST / SALE OF MERCHANDISE***

It is the policy of the Westchester Concert Singers that (1) the chorus membership list is for the personal information of our members and may not be used for any commercial purpose or any other measure, and (2) the selling of any merchandise or product that does not directly benefit the chorus, at rehearsals or other events, is prohibited.

***BOARD OF DIRECTORS***

**Mirijana Kocho, Vice Pres.**  
[Mirijana.kocho@verizon.net](mailto:Mirijana.kocho@verizon.net)

**Janet Accurso, Secretary**  
[j.accurso@verizon.net](mailto:j.accurso@verizon.net)

**Stephanie Cosgrove**  
[scosgrove@optonline.net](mailto:scosgrove@optonline.net)

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Joan Robinson  
[Joan.m.robinson@gmail.com](mailto:Joan.m.robinson@gmail.com)

**Jean Feiman, Vice Pres.**  
[sjfeiman@att.net](mailto:sjfeiman@att.net)

**Laura Kimble, Treasurer**  
[kimblewitz@comcast.net](mailto:kimblewitz@comcast.net)

**Janet Gortsema**  
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[joeneke@optonline.net](mailto:joeneke@optonline.net)

Jeanne Wygant  
[jeannewygant@aol.com](mailto:jeannewygant@aol.com)

***STAFF***

**Mark Bailey, Conductor**

**David Baranowski, Accompanist**  
[baranowski73@yahoo.com](mailto:baranowski73@yahoo.com)

**SECTION LEADERS (Attendance and Ticket Sales):**

***SOPRANOS***  
Pamela Smith  
[Pamela.smith@aetn.com](mailto:Pamela.smith@aetn.com)

***ALTOS***  
Angela Usobiaga  
[Angela.usobiaga@verizon.net](mailto:Angela.usobiaga@verizon.net)

***TENORS and BASSES***

Phil Just  
[Phil.just@hotmail.com](mailto:Phil.just@hotmail.com)