

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Chorus Abilene, 2011-2012

**Office Address:** Mailing – PO Box 3358, Abilene, TX 79604  
Physical – 1174 N. 1<sup>st</sup>, corner of N. 1<sup>st</sup> & Cedar – use Cedar St. entrance  
**Office Phone:** 325-673-SING (7464)  
**Office Email:** info@chorusabilene.net  
**Website:** www.chorusabilene.net  
**Office Assistant:** Marisue Meyer (Monday & Tuesday)  
**Office Hours:** 10 – 2, Monday-Friday  
Often the office is open longer, but it is wise to call before coming.

#### **Gwynn Haseltine, Executive Director**

Office Email: gwynn@chorusabilene.net  
Home Email: ghaseltine@suddenlink.net  
Home Telephone 672-9667

Chorus Abilene was founded in 1990-1991 with 23 adult singers as The Classical Chorus of Abilene, Inc., by Dr. Betty Karol Wilson who successfully led the chorus for fourteen seasons. Chorus Abilene is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation. The chorus is not affiliated with AISD, any of the three universities in Abilene, or any church. Chorus Abilene is artistically and financially independent and therefore must raise all its own funds and supply all its own needs. Funding comes from singer tuition, ticket sales, fundraising events, individual and corporate donors, and, if awarded, grants from foundations and arts councils.

**The Classical Chorus**, as the adult chorus is known, sings a variety of repertoire: oratorios, masses, and motets, as well as spirituals and contemporary secular literature. They have performed *The Messiah*; Byrd's *Mass for Four Voices*; Mozart's *Requiem*, *Coronation Mass*, & *Cantata #14*; Haydn's *Mass in Time of War & Lord Nelson's Mass*; Beethoven's 9<sup>th</sup>; the Texas premiere of Handel's *Solomon*; Orff's *Carmina Burana*; Brahms' *A German Requiem*, *St. John's Passion*; Verdi's *Requiem*; Bach's *Cantata #140*; Faure's *Requiem*; and both Verdi & Rossini's *Stabat Mater*; among other things.

The Classical Chorus has performed numerous times with the Abilene Philharmonic and with the Texas Baroque Ensemble and the Mercury Baroque Ensemble, in addition to collaborating with the Abilene Ballet Theatre and the Abilene Community Band.

Other choirs include: **Youth Chorus**, singers in grades 5-8; **Chorale**, grades 9 – 12; and **Children's Chorus**, grades 1 – 4.

## Artistic Staff

Previous Classical Chorus conductors are:  
Dr. Betty Karol Wilson, founder (1990-2004);  
Shawn Chu (fall, 2004);  
Dr. Paul Piersall (2005-2011).

For the 2011-12 season, the Board has contracted with a different conductor for each concert. They are looking to spend this year searching for a new full-time director for this choir.

**Shirley Anderson**, accompanist, is beginning her seventeenth year with the Classical Chorus. She is an honor graduate of Hardin-Simmons with Bachelor's and Masters degrees in Music. While a student, she was recipient of the Dean's Honor Award, the SAI scholarship, and winner of the TMTA Composition Contest. She has maintained a successful independent piano studio in Abilene for 38 years, teaching preschool through adult students. Abilene Music Teachers Association selected Mrs. Anderson as Teacher of the Year in 1979, 1984, and 2003. In 1995 Texas Music Teachers Association presented her the prestigious award for Outstanding Pre-College Teaching. She has held numerous offices in AMTA and during her presidency in 2002, Abilene MTA was chosen as the Outstanding Local Association of the Year by Music Teachers National Association.

In addition to her work with the Classical Chorus, Mrs. Anderson teaches class piano and serves as a staff accompanist at Hardin-Simmons University. She is the pianist at Lytle South Baptist Church. She is married to chorus charter member Marcus Anderson. They have one daughter and two grandchildren.

## Performance Dates

October 8	Fall concert – all choirs
Nov. 19	Mexican Dinner– all choirs
Dec. 10	Christmas concert– Messiah Sing-a-long (adults only)
Apr. 14	Masterworks concert - adults only
May 26	Encore! – adult only spring fundraising event

## Fees

- **Fees are due by the semester: \$125/semester, due by September 1.** This allows us to maintain a stabilized financial footing. You still have the option to sing only a single concert; however our bills remain constant regardless of whether you will miss a concert date. Fees may still be paid monthly but the entire semester amount is due regardless of whether or not you are unable to sing a particular concert. Please understand and respect this. It is an attempt to keep costs down.
- **Multiple Family Member Monthly discounts** are still available. If you have another family member participating (in any choir), fees are \$100/semester.

- **Tuition scholarships are available** – please let me know if you would like a form.
- **Registration Fee of \$40/year. Due by September 15.**

### **Tuition Pays For**

Tuition pays the salaries of the professional accompanist and conductor. The adult chorus tuition does not cover the expenses of any administrative, office, or executive staff. Neither does it pay for mailings, hall rental, concert advertising, employee tax, insurance, or other expenses that comprise the operating expenses of Chorus Abilene. These costs must be covered by donations, fundraising proceeds, or concert ticket sales which net beyond the cost of the concert.

### **Payments**

**Reason for payment (tuition, tickets, etc.)** should be included on the memo line of any payment made to Chorus Abilene. Your clarification on the memo portion of your check will help us with proper accounting of the money we receive. Cash should **always** be given in an envelope with the singer's name and reason for payments written on the outside.

All checks or money orders should be made payable and **MAILED TO:**

**Chorus Abilene PO Box 3358 Abilene, Texas 79604**

All checks returned to Chorus Abilene by the member's bank will be charged the same fee per item that is charged to us. **Please mail or bring all payments directly to the Office.** Classical Chorus members may also give payments to Marisue Meyer at rehearsal, **if appropriately marked.**

### **ABSENCE POLICY**

While the Classical Chorus does not have a formalized absence policy, it is expected that all singers treat their commitment seriously. At times, if you have missed several rehearsals, the conductor may ask you to sing your music to see if you will be able to perform. If not acceptable, he may ask that you not sing a particular concert. **Just because you may know your notes does not mean that you know the nuances of the music that the conductor desires nor any of the particular decisions that were made regarding a passage at the rehearsal.**

**Please be respectful of all those in the Chorus who are relying on your participation at performances and scheduled events.** It DOES make a difference to your section if you are absent. Although we know that work commitments may arise suddenly, please do not cancel your Chorus commitment for a social (or other) event planned later when we have worked hard to give you this schedule well in advance.

**Please notify Dr. Piersall or the office of any planned absences at least one week prior to the absence.** In addition, please email or call with any last minute illness, etc. It is very helpful to have knowledge of why singers are missing and how many will be gone.

## Rehearsal Procedures

**Rehearsals:** Monday evenings from 7-9pm at ACU's Williams Performing Arts Center in the Choir Room.

- Arrive at rehearsal at least 5 minutes prior to rehearsal time. At ACU, please remember that classes and recitals sometimes occur at the same time as our rehearsals.
- Always bring your music and a pencil to rehearsal.
- Water is encouraged at rehearsal, but other food or drinks are prohibited.

## Uniforms & Concert Instructions

### Informal Choir Uniforms

For the youth, this consists of choir T-shirts and jeans. Classical Chorus members are welcome to buy a \$10 T-shirt to use for fundraising or informal performances; however it is entirely optional.

### Formal Uniforms

#### **For women:**

- Floor-length black skirt and round neck black shirt of your own choosing.
- Black formal jacket paid for by singers and ordered through the choir office (cost estimated at \$69).
- black hose; and black shoes (comfort and stability recommended).
- Women's jewelry for concerts will consist of pearl studs.
- If you choose to borrow a jacket from the chorus office, a \$7 cleaning fee is required at the end of the year.
- Women, please do not wear perfume or perfumed products to a performance. Even if you put them on early that morning the effect may still linger enough to bother other singers.
- **For men:** black tuxedo, purchased by singer. At this time, there are no tuxedos available to borrow at the office.

### Concert Information:

- Dress rehearsal, unless otherwise notified, is not really "dress". Come in comfortable clothes & shoes. Dress rehearsal is typically the morning of the concert and times will vary from concert to concert.
- Concerts begin at 7:30pm; call time is usually 7:00pm unless otherwise notified.
- Please drink plenty of water during the day of the concert.
- Line-up on the risers may not be the same as in rehearsal (where no seats are assigned). However pay attention to where you are placed during dress rehearsal.
- For entrance to the risers, please begin at the end of the risers, go straight up to your row, then walk across in a line. If everyone takes a step up (or down) in random places, it looks extremely messy from the audience. For exiting, walk to the end of the row and then step down to the floor. For those with more difficulty, a choir member will assist you.

## MUSIC

### **Rehearsal Procedure:**

Music is distributed at the first rehearsal for each concert. A blue tub is brought from the office in which each singer has a green hanging file, alphabetized by last name, which is filled with music for that concert. Please check your music and email the office if you are missing something. Although office records are kept by folder number, it is advisable to pencil in your name on the front of the music, in case of mix-ups. You are ultimately responsible for the replacement cost of the pieces of music that are checked out to you.

We sometimes bring the tub to rehearsal a second time, in case singers miss the first rehearsal. However we respectfully request that you accept responsibility for your own absence and your music and contact the office about getting your music if you have missed a rehearsal or returning it following a concert.

The music tub will again be available at rehearsal on the Monday following the concert. Please take this time to place your music from the previous concert that is no longer needed in your hanging file while taking out new music for the next concert. Much of our music is borrowed and we must return it in good condition!

You are welcome to make notes in your music in pencil. If the music is borrowed, please erase your notes before returning the music.

It requires staff time to track music that is not turned in, as well as requiring money to replace the borrowed music. **If music is not returned by 1 month after the concert in which it was performed, a fee of \$3 per octavo will be assessed to the adult singer's account.**

In addition, you will need a black 3-ring binder with a matte cover.

## Fundraising

Fundraising is a continual activity shared by all singers, and the Board of Directors. **The money from these fundraisers are applied to operating expenses.** Fundraisers are crucial in keeping costs where they are now!

**Authentic Mexican Dinner:** This fund-raiser has been held since 1998 and it is a great casual, family-type dinner. Tickets are \$6 each and each singer is asked to sell 10 tickets or make an equivalent donation. In addition, we ask that chorus members volunteer in some capacity for the event. We have a wonderful cook who prepares dinner for which tickets have been sold. The Choruses also perform while everyone enjoys dinner. Dinner and a concert for \$6 – can't be beat!

**Encore:** Encore is a fairly new event, first performed in May, 2009. It is a lot of fun and a great chance for individual and small group performances in a more intimate setting. By acclaim, we incorporated this into an annual event. Tickets are \$25/each or \$40/couple. Guests are seated at tables of 8 and a buffet of simple finger foods is served. In addition, there is a silent auction available. The choir performs as a whole, but most of the performance is comprised of soloists and small groups. In addition to ticket sales and the silent auction, sponsorships are solicited at the \$150, \$300, \$500, and \$1,000 levels. Sponsorships provides much of the income for the event and we ask that everyone participate in soliciting them.

While all singers may not be able to participate due to work schedules, please realize that

tuition for May is included in your semester fee. In addition, we hope that those who are not able to sing will accept some sort of volunteer role that can take place ahead of time (such as soliciting sponsorships) – this fundraiser will be very important in making ends meet in May when there is no other income.

## Tour

The Adult Chorus last tour was to Italy and Greece in June, 2011. The previous tour in 2008 visited Vienna, Krakow, & Prague. We will consider a future tour if there is sufficient interest, so please let the office know.

## Donations

Chorus Abilene, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. We exist on donations from individuals, and, when awarded, grants from arts organizations, foundations, and corporations. As adults in the business world, your connections will reach in many different directions that just the office staff. All of these connections can be used to support choral music in our community. **Encouraging your friends and business associates to support us is necessary and greatly appreciated.** The office will be happy to provide a list of ways individuals and businesses can help and the appropriate documentation. It is often as simple as asking.

Tax-deductible donations should be sent to the office at PO Box 3358, Abilene, TX. 79604. Individual and Corporate donor names are listed in the concert programs, newsletters and on our website.

Gifts given in memory or honor of a loved one will be acknowledged by the Board of Directors, and if instructed so by the donor, names will be printed in the next program.

Other ways to help include: scholarships for a deserving singer; assisting the chorus in the creation of an endowment; concert sponsorships; Encore sponsorships; ads for our programs; choir sponsorships; donations for music purchases; and youth tour scholarship donations. Please contact Gwynn Haseltine for more information.