

PROGRAM & POLICIES

MISSION

The mission of Oregon Festival Choirs is to provide the highest level of choral music training and performing experience for young people as a means to develop the whole person.

BACKGROUND

Oregon Festival Choirs began as the Pacific International Children's Choir Festival (PICCFEST) in the fall of 1997. Inspired by the Oregon Bach Festival, PICCFEST was founded by Peter Robb, making its debut as an exciting new event in June 1998.

PICCFEST now occurs annually in June bringing 300 young singers and their choirs from across North America to Eugene for six days of rehearsal, performance, and community building. The event features collaboration with the Oregon Bach Festival and draws the world's top children's choir conductors as guest clinicians.

In 1998, Oregon Festival Choirs (OFC) was formed as a non-profit corporation to run PICCFEST and operate a year-round choral program for local young people. OFC launched local boychoir and girlchoir divisions in the summer and fall of 1999. Each season the Choirs present a series of concerts in addition to collaborations with other music organizations. Highlights include performances with the Oregon Bach Festival; Oregon Mozart Players; Eugene Ballet; Oregon Festival of American Music; Eugene Concert Choir; Eugene Opera; Cantus (Minnesota); On the Rocks; Divisi; and many more. OFC aims to contribute to the cultural life of Oregon by promoting growth, appreciation, and support for fine choral music in the community at large; and to offer leadership in modeling respect, self-confidence, sensitivity, discipline, compassion, global awareness, and the pursuit of excellence

In addition, the Choirs tour each spring or summer. Past tours have taken the Choirs to Philadelphia, San Francisco, Salem, Portland, Boise, Seattle, Vancouver and Victoria (British Columbia), and England.

In September of 2009, a collaboration was established between OFC and the music department of St. Mary's Episcopal Church of Eugene. The result is a rehearsal, office and performance home for the Choirs, now formally named Oregon Festival Choirs *In Residence at St. Mary's Episcopal*. The non-sectarian partnership brings the shared values of both communities together to provide much needed choral music opportunities for area young people as well as promoting peace, cultural understanding, positive role models, serving those in need and living green.

ARTISTIC STAFF

PETER ROBB • Founder/Artistic Director/Conductor

Peter Robb has been involved with choral music since joining the San Francisco Boys Chorus at age six.

A tireless advocate for music education and choral music in the schools, Mr. Robb created OFC's public school residencies in 2002 to support the efforts of local music educators to keep choral music in the school day.

Mr. Robb has directed choirs and taught in elementary, middle, high school, and university settings in addition to working with civic and professional choruses during 27 years as a choral director. He serves as Executive and Artistic Director of the Pacific International Children's Choir Festival, now in its thirteenth year. Mr. Robb is also Music Education Director at St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Eugene.

Mr. Robb earned a master's degree in choral conducting at the University of Oregon and makes his home in Eugene with wife Genevieve and family. The Robbs have four children and five grandchildren, all living in Eugene. Their youngest daughter Marissa sings in ARIA.

MATTHEW SVOBODA • Director of Musicianship Advancement / Dir. of Operations

Matthew Svoboda joined Oregon Festival Chorus in 1999. He is Director of Musicianship Advancement, overseeing the development and teaching of OFC's musicianship skills program, in addition to his job as Director of Operations for the Pacific International Children's Choir Festival.

An Oregon native, Mr. Svoboda is on the music faculty at Lane Community College, teaching theory and musicianship classes and conducts the Chamber Choir; serves as Director of Music at Central Presbyterian Church in Eugene; and accompanies dance classes at the University of Oregon. He served as Assistant Conductor of the Eugene Symphony Chorus from 2003-2005 and was invited to guest conduct for the Eugene Chamber Singers' 25th anniversary season in 2004. In 2003, he was selected as a Participant Conductor for the Oregon Bach Festival conducting masterclass with Helmuth Rilling. In 2002, he received a Conducting Fellowship to intern with the Auckland Philharmonia directed by Miguel Harth-Bedoya.

Mr. Svoboda earned master's degrees in Choral Conducting (2003) and Composition (2004) at the UO, where he was awarded a graduate teaching fellowship in both departments and served as Assistant Conductor of the University Singers. He remains active as a composer and collaborator with choreographers, dancers, filmmakers, and other musicians.

ADDITIONAL ARTISTIC TEAM

CAMILLA CARTER • Principal Accompanist

Camilla Carter is a Eugene freelance collaborative pianist who played frequently on the Oregon Mozart Players' "Chamber Music and Chocolate" series, at the University of Oregon and for the Eugene Opera. She played extensively in the San Francisco area before moving back to Oregon, including work with SF Girls Chorus, with whom she had toured to Hungary.

Mrs. Carter began accompanying in fifth grade for her school choir and continued with school and community productions. While a student at Stanford University, she played for over a hundred recitals in her four years there (while studying harp, not piano). Masterclasses with Elly Ameling, Margo Garrett, and Jean-Pierre Rampal were highlights during those years.

The last 10 years have been filled with the joys and demands of parenting with her piano technician husband, Rick, and homeschooling their two children Ariana and Anthony. Ariana is a member of both Lyrica and ARIA.

AMY ADAMS • Training Division Co-Director

Amy Adams is a music educator, working in area schools for 20 years. She is currently the music teacher at O'Hara Catholic School where she teaches general music, band and choir for pre-school through eighth grade.

Mrs. Adams sings with the Oregon Bach Festival Chorus and Eugene Symphony Chorus for whom she is the chorus manager. In addition, she serves as music director for St. Paul Center United Methodist Church in Springfield. She is married and mother to three children. Their oldest daughter, Jane, is a member of Lyrica, and son James is a member of Allegro.

HEATHER STEIN • Training Division Co-Director / Neighborhood Choir Academy

Heather Stein served as a music educator for fifteen years in the Olympia School District in Washington. She received her training at the University of Puget Sound where she earned a teaching credential in choral and general music education. She also has a master's degree in educational technology. Mrs. Stein also worked with the Olympia Youth Chorus for three years and served as a choral adjudicator and clinician in the Puget Sound area.

Currently, Mrs. Stein is co-directing the Training Division and leads OFC's Neighborhood Choir Academy at Crest Drive Elementary School. She also has a piano studio for beginning students and is on the music staff at McNary High School in Salem.

Mrs. Stein is married and mother to two girls who are both members of Cantilena.

LISA ADAMS • ARIA Assistant Director

Lisa Adams, a choral music teacher originally from Ohio, graduated from Hope College. She teaches in the Central Linn School District in Brownsville to all students in grades K-12, including choir and general music.

Mrs. Adams is the Assistant director of ARIA. In addition to her school and OFC music duties, Mrs. Adams is a cross country coach. She also sings with her husband sing in the Central Presbyterian Church Choir. She is proud to be an active member of Eugene's vibrant music community.

ADDITIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

SHERRI PHILLIPS • Volunteer Coordinator

LESLIE RENKEN • Wardrobe Coordinator

JOVONE KETTWIG • Music Librarian

CONNIE BURDEN • Data Manager

BOB RUTLEDGE • Administrative Coordinator

KRISSIE McBRIDE • Financial Coordinator

BETH GYDE • ARIA/EXIT 194 Registrar

BEN KELSO • FIREO/LYRICA Registrar

DANIELLE LAPRARIE • Rehearsal Assist.

PROGRAMS

ALLEGRO & CANTILENA: performing boy and girl training choirs for 1st - 5th graders.

Training Choir Directors: Mrs. Heather Stein and Mrs. Amy Adams

Rehearsals: Tuesdays, 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. in Parish Hall

LYRICA & FIERO: touring girlchoir and boychoir for boys 5th - 8th grades and girls 6th – 12th grade.

Director: Mr. Peter Robb Musicianship Instructor: Mr. Matthew Svoboda

Rehearsals: Thursdays, 4:30 - 6:30 p.m. in Parish Hall and Sanctuary

ARIA: advanced young women's ensemble grades 8 - 12. Open to older Lyrica members by audition.

Director: Mr. Peter Robb Assistant Director: Mrs. Lisa Adams

Rehearsals: Tuesdays, 6:00 - 8:00 pm in Choir Room and Sanctuary

EXIT 194: advanced male ensemble grades 8 - 12. Open to young men with changed voices by audition.

Director: Mr. Peter Robb

Rehearsals: Tuesdays, 7:00 - 9:00 pm in Sanctuary

SCORE!: A weekly segment of of Training and Touring choir rehearsals, focusing on sight singing, ear training, and exploration of improvisation and composition.

Lead Instructor: Mr. Matthew Svoboda

OFFICE AND STAFF DIRECTORY

The Festival Choir InfoLine will be updated regularly with schedule information, so when calling for information or to report an absence, please use the Oregon Festival Choirs phone number.

This will enable use of the voice-mail system if no one is in the office. Cellular phone numbers should only be used in an emergency situation or to advise staff of information crucial to an ongoing activity (i.e. transportation delay in picking up chorister).

OREGON FESTIVAL CHOIRS OFFICE

Mailing address: PO Box 207 • Eugene, OR 97440

Physical address: St. Mary's Episcopal Church

166 E. 13th Ave. Eugene, OR 97401 (corner of 13th & Pearl)

Office: 541-465-4990 **Cell:** 541-912-9009 **Fax:** 541-687-5745 **Web:** www.oregonfestivalchoirs.org

INFOLINE AND VOICEMAIL DIRECTORY:

- **#1** Festival Choir InfoLine with general information and periodic schedule updates
- **#2** Voice mail for **Peter Robb** • Artistic Director
- **#3** Attendance Line and Voice mail for **OFC staff**
- **Main mailbox** Voice mail for **audition inquiries and general information.**

E-MAIL ADDRESSES:

Peter Robb:	peter@oregonfestivalchoirs.org
Matthew Svoboda:	matthew@oregonfestivalchoirs.org
Bob Rutledge:	bob@oregonfestivalchoirs.org
Connie Burden:	connie@oregonfestivalchoirs.org
Sherri Phillips:	volunteer@oregonfestivalchoirs.org
Leslie Renken:	wardrobe@oregonfestivalchoirs.org
JoVone Kettwig	library@oregonfestivalchoirs.org

MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS AND GOALS

Oregon Festival Choirs is firmly committed to the philosophy that everyone can sing. The fading notion that some people are tone deaf or monotones has been replaced with the good news that it is exposure, experimentation, and experience that enables someone to sing. Although all children begin at different levels of early aptitude, the ability to sing in tune, learn to read music, and make a meaningful contribution to a choir are learned skills available to all. The audition process gives as many young people as possible the opportunity to acquire these skills.

The following general guidelines are used in selecting boys and girls for membership:

- a high level of interest in singing
- openness and eagerness to explore their voices
- ability to respond quickly to new ways of making vocal sounds
- character and social skills
- ability to focus

GOALS FOR CHOIR MEMBERS:

- Learning the fundamentals for healthy, efficient, flexible singing by developing a sense of balance in use of breath, movement, and the voice.
- Becoming musically literate by learning to read music, identify musical symbols and terms; sight-singing through use of solfege; being exposed to a wide variety of musical styles; and singing in foreign languages.
- Performance experiences that develop poise and confidence in a variety of settings including elementary school assemblies, community service presentations, collaboration with University and professional music organizations, concert tours, and Oregon Festival Choirs seasonal concerts.
- Development of social skills with regard to public behavior, ability to interact appropriately with a wide range of people, and personal responsibility for actions, appearance, and possessions.

In accordance with the Rehabilitation Act, Section 504 and the Americans with disabilities Act, Oregon Festival Choirs does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, creed, economic background or physical disability.

CHORISTER AGREEMENT

Each member of an Oregon Festival Choir is required to sign a chorister agreement that contains the following information:

Membership: The Choir provides a wonderful opportunity to learn and grow with experiences the chorister will carry throughout life. This includes learning about commitment and responsibility. Membership in this very special group should not be taken lightly. Enrollment in OFC is for the season that begins in September and concludes with the final activity in late Spring/early Summer, including tour. **Every chorister is expected to remain active and committed to the program for the entire season, which includes participation in tour** (*see tour policy later in this booklet*). As with many choirs, OFC makes budgetary decisions according to enrollment numbers. For this reason, OFC cannot refund choir tuition for choristers who do not fulfill their season commitment.

Performances: Sharing music with others is an exciting part of the choral experience. In addition to the major performances listed in the Season Calendar, other performing opportunities, including school assemblies, arise during the year. Sufficient notice will be provided regarding date/time/and location of these performances.

Attendance: Choral music making is a group activity. Each member of the Choir is essential to the rehearsal and performance experience. Therefore, attendance is crucial at all rehearsals and performances. Choir members are encouraged to eat a snack or have a drink of fruit juice before arriving at rehearsals. Sports bottles with water are welcome in rehearsal room. However, no food, candy, or other beverages are permitted unless provided by OFC.

Choristers should arrive 10 minutes before scheduled starting time to check-in and prepare for beginning of rehearsal. *Be sure to visit restroom as needed before this time.*

Absence Policy: Every chorister is expected to attend all rehearsals and performances. However, under the following conditions, a limited number of absences are permitted per term:

- One excused absence, **arranged in advance with the conductor** (i.e. family commitment, school performance, etc.)
- Two unexcused absences, (i.e. illness, transportation problems, etc.)

Beyond 3 absences, it will be at the conductor's discretion whether or not the chorister will be permitted to perform with the Choir following absences. Excessive absences jeopardize the chorister's continuation with the Choir.



IMPROVED PROCESS FOR REPORTING ABSENCE: Now you can call the OFC Attendance Line voice mailbox to report absences before rehearsal. The rehearsal assistants will check the voice mail before calling when a chorister is not present. Your use of this will streamline the process for everyone. Call 465-4990 #3.

Personal practice outside of rehearsal: The best experience for each chorister and the Choir as a whole is only possible when each member has learned the music. Choristers are responsible for spending adequate time in personal practice to accomplish this. Additional help is available in the form of practice CDs and extra instruction.

Personal conduct: Membership in Oregon Festival Choirs is a privilege and an honor. The attitude and behavior of each chorister reflects on the Choir as a whole. The following conduct priorities set the tone for the choir experience:

- Positive attitude**
- Focus in rehearsal**
- Hard work for the good of the choir**
- Cooperation and responsiveness to music staff**
- Respect for others, demonstrating courtesy, kindness and generosity in words and actions**

Conduct that works against these priorities is not appropriate and will result in a private conference with the conductor. Subsequent failure to correct behavior may result in dismissal from choir.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Absences: Please contact the choir office prior to the rehearsal to be missed, whether excused or unexcused. Excused absences are more likely to be granted when requested (“May I be excused”) well in advance and when the chorister has been performing well in rehearsals and concerts.

Absence Follow-up: After missing a rehearsal or performance, it is important that a chorister check with the Rehearsal Assistant to see what repertoire was rehearsed, if any new music was handed out, and if a schedule or other information was distributed. It is the parent’s responsibility to check with the Rehearsal Assistant regarding communications or announcements that may have been distributed during the absence. Always feel free to call the choir office for lost or missing communications.

Music and Notebook: All music, theory books, and notebooks are property of Oregon Festival Choirs. Notebooks should be periodically cleaned out and up to date. A list of currently distributed music is available upon request. Choristers are encouraged to write in their music with a pencil when instructed to do so. These markings should be erased before music is turned back in. The replacement cost of lost or damaged music and notebooks will be assessed to the chorister.

Facilities: In any rehearsal or performance situation, the central principle for behavior is a recognition that choir members are guests and must behave accordingly. Guidelines for areas that are open to choristers and areas that are off-limits will be discussed at each location.

The designated rehearsal site is St. Mary’s Episcopal Church. Choir members are to report to their rehearsal room through the exterior door in the courtyard on Pearl Street. Use of restrooms and drinking fountain are encouraged. Use of other church facilities are closed to choir members and families without OFC staff permission. As guests, it is imperative that choristers, parents and families treat the facilities with respect and not wander through other rooms and buildings.

Parking: Be aware that parking in spaces controlled by other businesses can result in towing. Therefore, it is important to park in the St. Mary’s parking lot for purposes other than drop off and pick up. The Christian Science Church immediately south of St. Mary’s has invited parents to use their parking spaces (other than those immediately next to church) for pick up and drop off.

Tour Participation

Every OFC chorister makes an important contribution to the sound and community of their choir. **Therefore, all choristers are expected to participate in the annual tour. Plan ahead by marking the dates now and taking advantage of fundraising opportunities. (Dates and fees are published early in the season.)**

The primary goal in touring is to provide choristers with the unique chance to grow in knowledge and appreciation for people, culture, and communities other than their own. The opportunity to travel, strengthen OFC relationships, meet choristers from other communities, share music with new audiences, and build self-confidence are among the many benefits of this experience.

Choristers have the opportunity to begin to explore independence and other maturation steps in a safe and nurturing environment. The OFC staff bring many years of tour planning and supervision into the process of creating an exciting and secure experience for the choristers. For some, it is the first time away from home without family members. Others come to touring as seasoned travelers. For all choristers, it is often the highlight of the season.

Rehearsals and Public Performances: Parents and family are encouraged to purchase tickets and attend all public performances by Oregon Festival Chorus. Unfortunately, no complimentary admissions can be provided for ticketed performances.

Performances given for *private groups* and all rehearsals are “closed” unless otherwise noted in announcements. Parents are encouraged to visit shops, stores, the library, or bring reading material since many performance sites do not provide a waiting room and private performances are often limited to membership of the concert host. Rehearsals are closed, including “on site” rehearsals for public concerts in order to help the choir members and music staff maintain maximum focus, free from audience distraction.

Parent Projects Available During Some Weekly Rehearsals: Parents who prefer to remain on site during rehearsal are invited to assist with choir projects (folding, sorting, filing, etc.) while visiting with other parents. Feel free to ask if any projects are currently underway during any given rehearsal.

Volunteer Requirement: OFC has many opportunities for parents and other community members to serve as volunteers. Volunteers are needed for the season ticket campaign, hosting visiting choirs, tour chaperoning, concert support, and various special projects. All choir families are required to serve a minimum of ten (10) parent volunteer hours of service in one of these areas *(If you are unable to fulfill the volunteer requirement, you may “buy out” your hours at \$10 per hour or \$100 for the season)*

Season Ticket Campaign: (suspended for the 2009-2010 season*) OFC contributes to the educational and cultural life of the community at large through its many quality programs. In return, the community helps support OFC by paying for and enjoying the benefits of OFC programs. Since tuition covers less than 35% of operating costs for Oregon Festival Chorus, concert tickets sales provide a valuable source of revenue in helping OFC meet the challenge of additional funding. Without season ticket sales, the cost of tuition would be significantly higher per family. This season, however, there will be an alternative admission procedure.

**Although suspended for the 2009-2010 season, each OFC family would normally be required to participate in the fall season ticket sales effort by selling a minimum of four (4) season tickets (or the equivalent of \$66 in season and individual concert tickets). This includes tickets purchased for the family’s use. Choir families who do not wish to participate would simply purchase four tickets or have the total billed to their account.*

SAFETY MATTERS

Be punctual: Parents are urged to observe the arrival and pick up times. Supervision is not available until fifteen minutes before rehearsal.

Carefully observe pick-up times: It is imperative that choristers be picked up immediately after rehearsals and performances. A staff member or parent will stay with choir members until they are picked up. However, if a chorister is not picked up within 15 minutes of the stated ending time, the OFC staff member will take the chorister with them until the parent can be reached. The emergency cell number is listed below and additional numbers are listed on the Office and Staff Directory page of this booklet.

Drop off/Pick up for rehearsal: Go directly inside to the rehearsal space. Parents are advised to wait until child goes into the building or is met by staff member before leaving area. Procedures for pickup are specific to each choir. Please check with your child's choir director for clarification.

When rehearsing or performing at a different location, parents must accompany chorister to gathering site before leaving. The same procedure is followed for dismissal.

Be friendly, but cautious: Choir members are encouraged to be cordial when interacting with audience members and those sharing use of rehearsal facilities. However, this is not meant to encourage any kind of interaction with strangers that safety considerations would discourage.

EMERGENCY CELLULAR NUMBER: 912-9009

PARENT/GUARDIAN OPPORTUNITIES

As fulfillment of the volunteer requirement, some parents will be asked to serve on the Parent Action Council. This group will be responsible for two primary functions:

TOUR PLANNING

Parents will be selected from those who have served as tour chaperones to propose and plan itinerary, and develop fund raising options for spring tours, employing established OFC tour and fundraising criteria and working with music staff.

ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

In order to keep OFC participation affordable for the most young people possible, the tuition rate is much lower than the cost of operations. This difference is made up by appeals to community donors, granting agencies, and OFC families. The Annual Campaign is a direct appeal to OFC families, those who know best the life-changing experience of choir participation.