



Peter Robb
Artistic Director

Summing Up and Looking Ahead

choristers. The common themes of hope and peace in all these letters (from Bolivia, Canada, China, Nigeria, Switzerland, Venezuela and a Pittsburgh choir that attended PICCFEST last summer) gave reality to the lofty ideals we espouse about choral singing bringing people together.

OFC's musical growth was also obvious as every choir presented a confident and inspiring performance. Add to that the largest OFC audience to date and we can comfortably state that the bar has been raised for artistic and organizational achievement.

Fewer than two weeks later, 40 choristers began a six-day marathon of rehearsals and performances of *The Nutcracker* with Eugene Ballet and the Eugene Symphony. Maestro Robert Ashens commented on several occasions how much the Choir has matured over the four years of our collaboration on this production. The choristers entered the first rehearsal with a new level of confidence, and grew with each of the four performances. In past years, I remained in the same area where the choristers were singing to respond should anything unexpected occur. What a thrill this year to entrust the choir entirely to their own self-discipline and musicianship (and a few parent chaperones nearby) as I observed each performance from the other side of Silva Hall.

After a short and well-deserved holiday break, we were back in

rehearsal when school started on January 8th. January is mid-season audition time. With ads on KVAL-TV, interviews on KWAX radio and the Shelley Kurtz noon news, and informational packets out to 50 elementary and middle schools, we scheduled 27 auditions. The total number of new choristers is 17, putting us over the 100 chorister milestone for the first time.

And now, we look ahead to the wonderful challenges this spring and summer will bring. We begin with the first tour of our high school male ensemble, EXIT 194, in April. Next, a tour to Corvallis and the Coast for our Training Choirs, and the annual spring concert for all choirs on May 18. Then on to the final preparations for PICCFEST 2008, in which our touring choirs will participate for the first time since 2005, and a special appearance with the Oregon Bach Festival Chorus and Orchestra in the July 13 performance of the *St. Matthew Passion*.

I hope the central point of this summary is perfectly clear: **You won't want to miss any opportunities to attend upcoming OFC performances.** And, I suspect that on July 14, like today, I'll be reflecting on them from the post-event perspective and wondering how so many people could have so many wonderful experiences in such a short period of time. I look forward to seeing you along the way.

When life delivers back-to-back-to-back experiences that are full of joy and satisfaction, the glow of each event seems to overshadow what came before. That's what happened when I sat down to write this update. OFC's holiday concert and Nutcracker performances seem like ages ago! And though we just wrapped up mid-season auditions, it already feels like we are swept into the anticipation of what is still ahead. So it's no surprise that taking time for reflection on these recent activities makes the work of OFC all the more satisfying.

Words can't capture how inspiring the holiday concert was. We discovered in the Fall that our concert titled **Dreaming and Believing** coincided with the World Day of Choral Singing. This gave us the opportunity to exchange greetings with other participating choirs from around the world.

We sent letters to 50 choirs we knew were taking part. Worldwide, more than a million singers were expected to participate. We received many responses, and some were read to our audience by OFC

Who's tickling the ivories?



By Camilla Carter

What could people possibly want to know about me? That I've always loved music and young people? That I started accompanying the school choir when I was singing in 5th grade? That I love to sight-read music. It's one of my favorite things to do, and comes in handy when playing chamber music with my father-in-law, husband and friends.

Maybe people want to know that I played for the San Francisco Girls Chorus before moving to Eugene, and that I missed the girls terribly during a year in Italy.

I went to Europe to learn the languages singers use so often, starting with Italian. The plan was to head for Germany to brush up my German and then to France, but I headed home early when my grandmother visited and had room in her suitcase to sneak me back to the States (she didn't *exactly* put me in her suitcase, but it was a lovely gift to be able to come home).

I studied harp while at Stanford getting my sociology degree, and after the blisters and hours of practicing, borrowing and moving the harp to a gig and getting all dressed up, I got tired of being told I looked like an angel...so much for that childhood dream.

Piano is definitely now my primary instrument. Besides, the harp is a beast to tune (and I can leave the piano-tuning to my husband, Rick!)

What else? I love to go hiking on our Monday family day. I like to create jewelry, I love dancing and enjoy all the creativity and humor of Ariana and Anthony, 12 and 10, who both sing with OFC and of my husband.

I'm grateful to be a part of OFC, part of an organization that takes good care of voices and uses them well. Kids are capable of spectacular music-making, and I love seeing it happen.

Choristers' Birthdays



March

Brennan Franssen
Mickayla Brown
Zoe Bredeweg
Ian Rankins
Alicia Berning-Anderson
Guadalupe Gonzalez
Janae Teige

April

Jane Boggs
Tayler LeBlanc
Chelsea Blair
Emily Flynn
Madison Kettwig
Mtima Richardson

May

Justin Hambright
Patrick Martin
Emma Strgar
Jonathan Wildish
Adrian Young
Cashia Walsh
Courtney LaFranchi



Members of OFC's male a cappella group, EXIT 194, share a joyful moment during the holiday concert.



Allegro Boychoir chorister Patrick Martin searches for his personalized holiday ornament at the post-concert reception.

OFC's Wish List

Like every other non-profit organization in the world, OFC has an ever-expanding wish-list. These are items that aren't in the budget, but that would add immeasurably to our organizational performance, creative capacity, and in some cases, simple office upkeep.

Here are a few of the items currently on our list. If you can help with any of these items please call the OFC office at 465-9600.

A FEW CURRENT NEEDS

- ❑ Upright vacuum cleaner
- ❑ Carpet cleaning service for the office
- ❑ Office supplies--all kinds!
- ❑ Digital camera
- ❑ LED Projector
- ❑ *And, as always, we appreciate your generous financial support.*

C horister Profiles

Courtney LaFranchi has a puppy and three cats and is an only child. She has been to 20 states and travelled to England and Canada through OFC. She's in the IHS and Spanish Immersion programs at Sheldon and is part of the Feminist Philosophy Club. She does community service at her mom's Assisted Living Facility, plays piano, composes, and enjoys long drives or walks with her puppy.



Courtney

Alex Davis is 12 and joined the choir 3 years ago. Alex says that his favorite part of OFC is singing, but he also enjoys meeting new people. His favorite song from our last concert was "Bonse Aba." When Alex isn't enjoying himself in OFC rehearsals and events, he likes to play the saxophone. Well, Alex, go right on singing and playing your heart out.



Alex



By Jeanie Neven

Song of the south

Originally from the South, growing up in Florida and Georgia, I came out west to study music and lose my southern accent! (You might still hear an occasional "y'all" come out of my mouth!) I was a bassoonist at the time, and a recovering violinist (a *serious* affliction).

I ended up with an undergraduate degree in music theory, which is just the beginning of the twists, turns, bumps, and a good share of bruises I've experienced in my life.

Friends (and the idea that there was nothing better to do since a bachelor's degree in music theory won't even get someone a job flipping burgers) brought me to Oregon in 1982. I instantly felt at home here.

It turns out, having a degree in music theory looked good to a local bank, where I was hired as a receptionist. One day, the Chief Financial Officer told my supervisor that I didn't smile



Peyton

Peyton Brazell has a dog and a cat and is an only child. She has been all over the east and west coasts as well as Canada and wants to see Australia, Chile and South Africa. Her strongest subject at Sheldon High School is math, which

comes naturally to her, but she doesn't enjoy it very much. After school she likes to chat with her friends online when they can't hang out. She is also taking guitar lessons. She's not afraid to state her opinions, and she's very open to new things.

enough and I was moved to Construction Lending. It was one of the best things that could have happened to me. (Don't worry, I'll get back to music in a minute - much faster than the 10 years it actually took me to get back into music!)

In my position at the bank, I found my first mentor. It was my new supervisor who taught me that I already knew what I needed to know in order to do what I wanted. The day I told him I was leaving to go back to school to get a Masters degree in Choral Conducting, we both cried.

Then I was back on my way, pursuing music - something I knew I was born to do. I went from a Master's degree in Choral Conducting to a Master's Degree in Horn Performance.

I dabbled in doctoral work in Early Music Performance, but that was one of those "bruises" I mentioned. It came to a grand halt at dissertation time. They call it your ABD (All But Dissertation) but I think of it more as a disorder than an accomplishment.

It was during this time that I met Peter Robb. We had a lot in common. We loved to sing, conducted the campus choirs, and loved children. Peter asked me to join him in his inspired vision to bring choral music to as many children as possible. It took me about five years to say "yes" and it is one of the best things I've done.

Oregon Festival Choirs is a caring organization, committed to providing music opportunities to all children. During my time with OFC--an opportunity that stumbled on me--many dreams have been realized. Oregon Festival Choirs is a wonderful group of people who help realize Peter's dream - a world in which everyone sings for love, joy and hope!

Today, I teach middle school band and high school orchestra in Springfield, direct the Chancel Choir at First Congregational Church, and am the director of OFC's Training Choirs, *Allegro* and *Cantilena*.

If this is where bumps and bruises get you - bring 'em on!



Choristers gather with Eugene Ballet's Toni Pimble and several dancers after their final Nutcracker performance in December.

OREGON FESTIVAL CHOIRS 9th Season 2007—2008

I DREAM A WORLD

Allegro & Cantilena:
Tour Oregon 2008, May.

All choirs:
YOU MAY SAY I'M A DREAMER
OFC annual spring concert,
May 18, 2pm, Central
Presbyterian Church.

**Pacific Int'l Children's Choir
Festival: I DREAM A WORLD
PICCFEST 2008**

With guest conductor
Bob Chilcott
and 9 choirs from across the US
June 24 – 29

Gala Concert, June 29, 7:30 pm
Silva Concert Hall

*Tickets for Silva Concert Hall
performances available through the Hult
Center box office. Tickets for Central
Presbyterian concerts available through
OFC office.*

OFC Staff and Additional Music Team

Peter Robb	Founder/Artistic Director
Matthew Svoboda	Operations Director/Choir Director
Sheryl Ohlsen	Enrollment & Financial Coordinator
Jeanie Neven	Director Training Choir Division/Recruitment Coordinator
Camilla Carter	Accompanist
Connie Burden	Development Coordinator
Sherri Phillips	Volunteer Coordinator
Hung-Yun Chu	Principal Accompanist (on leave 2007–2008)

OREGON *festival* CHOIRS

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www.oregonfestivalchoirs.org
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