

# Chorus Notes

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This issue of *Chorus Notes* brought to you by: Lynne Homeyer, Janet Thering and Linda Troyer. Edited by: Gabrielle Calkins and Cheryl Beatty. The newsletter is also available at [www.grwc.org](http://www.grwc.org).

## Spring Concert Preview: *We will, We will, Rock you!*

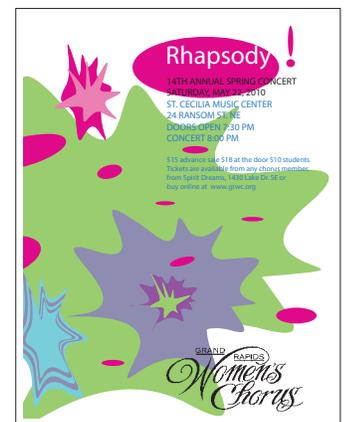
While we're always excited about our annual Spring Concert at St. Cecilia Music Center, well this year, look out!

We know our loyal fans expect a motley multicultural mix of lullabies and lunacy, poetry and protest, but we may surprise you with the second half of our concert. Anticipate many songs in—gasp—English. And don't be astounded to find a host of other musicians sharing our stage.

Those of you at our performances earlier this year caught the happy opening beat of *Thulele Mama Ya*, a spunky piece written by an Australian group named Coco's Lunch. It's a great leaping off place, and you caught us leaping into all kinds of love songs, such as the soaring *Canticle of the Spirit* with lyrics by 12th century mystic Hildegard von Bingen; *Alley Cat Love Song*, a silly wailing kitty ditty; and the bittersweet French chocolate mousse of *Chanson d'Amour*. We've been adding new pieces to this rhapsodic set, like a sexy tango in Spanish, *Noche de Lluvia (Night of Rain)*. We will also be performing once again the lovely *The Peace of Wild Things* by Joan Symko, with lyrics from a poem by Wendell Berry.

And that's only part one. After intermission, the sirens of the small ensemble will enchant us and then, fasten your seat belts. Part two will be an homage to the Summer of Love and an affirmation that none of us is ever too old to rock and roll. We're keeping the details under wraps, but trust us; you want to be there!

Join us at 8p.m. (doors open at 7:30) on Saturday, May 22 for our 14th Annual Spring Concert titled "Rhapsody." St. Cecilia Music Center Royce Auditorium is located at 24 Ransom NE in downtown Grand Rapids. Tickets are available online at [www.grwc.org](http://www.grwc.org), from any chorus member, or at the door. They may also be purchased at Spirit Dreams, 1430 Lake Drive in Eastown.



GRAND RAPIDS  
*Women's Chorus*

**MEMBERSHIP**

**Artistic Director**

Lori Tennenhouse\*

**Accompanist**

Blithe Brouwers

**Director of Small Ensemble**

Martha VanderEyck\*

**Associate Directors**

Brenda Baker  
 Blithe Brouwers

**Percussionist**

Barb Pitcher

**Soprano**

Brenda Baker (section leader)  
 Janet Bradley  
 Kristin Bauer  
 Nancy Court  
 Liz DeBraber  
 Gabrielle Groot  
 Lynne Homeyer  
 Wendy Kuenzel Kapolka  
 Martha VanderEyck\*

**Alto**

Elise Brown  
 Gabrielle Calkins  
 Donna Clark  
 Beth Jenkins  
 Bethany Joy Lange  
 Lynn Weaver (section leader)  
 Chris Sales  
 Pam Sandberg  
 Kyla Sisson

**Tenor**

Cheryl Beatty  
 Vicky Bourget  
 Sharon Burtrum  
 DeDe Esque  
 Ann Erhardt  
 Denise Joseph  
 Sheryl Mase  
 Nadine Miller  
 Janice Scalza\* (section leader)  
 Carol Wilson

**Bass**

Cathajane Galante (section leader)  
 Sara Homeyer  
 Leslie Kohn\*  
 Barb Pitcher  
 Janet Thering\*  
 Linda Troyer  
 Ida Vandunk  
 Connie Winter-Troutwine  
 Sue Wood  
 Paula Wurm

**GRWC Board**

*Chair* - Gabrielle Calkins  
*Vice Chair* - Janice Scalza  
*Treasurer* - Cheryl Beatty  
*Secretary* - Linda Troyer  
 Ann Erhardt, C.J. Galante, Barb Pitcher,  
 Lori Tennenhouse, Chris Sales

\*denotes charter members

# Ovations

When business questions, tasks, or problems crop up in the Grand Rapids Women's Chorus one of the first to respond and volunteer time and energy for a solution is Board member Linda Troyer. "Linda never hesitates to take on a task," says GRWC Board Chair Gabrielle Calkins. "She is instrumental in running the business of the Chorus and can be relied on to follow through on any project."



Linda Troyer

One of Linda's major undertakings was the development and maintenance of the Grand Rapids Women's Chorus website and database. With Linda's technical know-how, help from Aron Duby of the Community Media Center, Board input, and a grant from the Nonprofit Technical Assistance Fund, www.grwc.org was launched in the Fall of 2008. Among the website's postings are all GRWC events, Audition FAQs, and CD purchase information. Also featured is an impressive list of supporters and music affiliations, a GRWC photo album, the GRWC history, and complete Repertoire List.

In addition to maintaining the website and database, Linda serves as GRWC Board Secretary and is active on the Events Committee. She became hooked on the GRWC after attending a 1998 concert and has been a proud member of the bass section ever since. Being part of the performances is what Linda enjoys most about Chorus. In her words, "It's very cool that our audiences are supportive and open to our presentation style. We are a chorus encouraged to express ourselves on stage which makes performing fun and not terribly stressful."

Linda credits her love of choral music to her first church choir director, Homer Baker. Mr. Baker, a factory worker, spent his annual two week vacations training with Pennsylvania's showman extraordinaire Fred Waring. Often dubbed "The Man Who Taught America to Sing," Waring taught vocalists to sing with precision, sensitivity, and enthusiasm and encouraged them to go home and share what they learned. "Mr. Baker loved putting his training to work on our little twenty voice choir," Linda recalls, "And to this day I remember and use some of his teachings."

A former Steelcase employee and once a small business owner, Linda is now semi-retired from her current job as a computer consultant to individuals and small nonprofit organizations. She is an avid bridge player, golfer, and a huge baseball and hockey fan of her two grandsons. Linda is a native of Zelienople, Pennsylvania, and plays a big part in the lives of her two stepchildren and their families.





Lori Tennenhouse

## Director's *Upbeat*

After fourteen seasons of singing, you can be sure we've gotten lots and lots of feedback from our audiences.

Often, we hear how much people enjoy the variety of music we present, the many languages and styles explored, and how much they feel moved by the messages and the emotion with which they are presented. And sometimes, such as last season, we hear back from some listeners that the music is too heavy, too political, or too sad, too slow, and not "upbeat" enough.

As an artist, I've usually considered my compulsion to do art first and hoped for a positive response from the audience. If all artists only did works that were popular and well received, they would not succeed in their job of allowing us all the opportunity to ask new questions, and to see ourselves in unexpected ways. Certainly, sometimes the most difficult images and sounds compel us towards new understanding and action. For example, if not for the images sent by photographers of the horrors of the Vietnam War, enraging the American public, the war may have continued for many more years.

That said, I also enjoy the light and playful aspects of music—and feeling the pure joy of being and singing with other people, making something bigger than our individual selves. This season we've decided to indulge ourselves and our audiences in a more musically frivolous manner—and you'll see what I mean at the Spring Concert "RHAPSODY!" on May 22. This is not a disclaimer! You'll hear more than one song about peace and justice, I promise! But it feels like the right time to refuel; to sing for the sake of singing, and allow that silly side out. But always with sincerity.

## Singing for the Health of It

Ever wondered why the GRWC seems to be on a high? It could be that some of the well-documented health benefits of singing are at work. Studies indicate that singing improves mood, posture, and memory. It also increases lung capacity, tones facial and stomach muscles, and releases the same feel good brain chemicals as sex and chocolate.

According to Professor Graham Welch, director for advanced music education at London's University of Surrey, singing exercises the vocal chords and keeps them youthful even in old age. His studies also show that when you break into song, your chest expands and your back and shoulders straighten, improving your posture. Singing lifts moods and releases pain relieving endorphins. Dr. Welch adds that singing makes us breathe more deeply than many forms of strenuous exercise so we take in more oxygen, improve aerobic capacity and experience a release of muscle tension as well.

Evidently, breaking into song is both emotionally and physically therapeutic. With research suggesting such apparent links between singing and well being, it may just be the next big thing in fitness! Want to experience these benefits? Call (616) 459-2655 or email [info@grwc.org](mailto:info@grwc.org) for audition information.



# Festival and Fireworks for the GRWC

Fireworks will be in Chicago this year for the Grand Rapids Women's Chorus and over 20 other choruses attending the Sister Singers Network Choral Festival over this 4th of July weekend. The Festival, hosted by Artemis Singers of Chicago, features some of the top women's choral groups in the country and will be held July 1-4 on the campus of Loyola University.



Janice Scalza

This Festival follows SSN events hosted by GRWC in May of 2001, and by the San Diego Women's Chorus in June of 2006.

"This is an opportunity for the Chorus to build skills, network, and bring back new ideas to our

own community to keep our product and performances fresh and cutting edge," says Janice Scalza, GRWC tenor, event liaison, and SSN steering committee member. The four day Festival offers workshops, individual chorus performances, ensemble performances, and two mass chorus concerts. Mass choruses will be led by directors from all over the country, including GRWC's Lori Tennenhouse. Small ensemble performances will open the Festival on Thursday night and among them will be the GRWC ensemble directed by Martha VanderEyck. The Grand Rapids Women's Chorus is scheduled to take the stage Saturday night July 3 in the Mundelein Auditorium. Tickets for all concerts will be available at the door.

The Sister Singers Network is a feminist association of women's choruses created in 1988 to support and enrich the women's choral movement. The Grand Rapids Women's Chorus is among its 37 national members. Visit [www.sistersingers.net](http://www.sistersingers.net) for more information on the organization, the Chicago Choral Festival, and other upcoming SSN events.

## *Grace Notes!*

- The terrific promotional posters for our Spring and Winter concerts are designed by artist and GRWC tenor Nadine Miller.
- Thanks to Winter Concert volunteers Ruth Allerton, Joe Breuer, Pam Carlson, Ashley Carr, Cathy Howe, Nancy McCrohan, and Kris Petersen. To volunteer at upcoming events, send an e-mail note to [info@grwc.org](mailto:info@grwc.org).
- Congratulations to GRWC Euchre Tournament winners Molly Voorhies (1st place), Sue Brown (2nd place), Carrol Cook (3rd place) and to the 1st place Bridge table champ, Terry Roseander.
- Interested in auditioning? E-mail [info@grwc.org](mailto:info@grwc.org) or phone (616) 459-2655.
- The GRWC appreciates the support and generosity of Fountain Street Church and the gratis use of its choir room for Monday night rehearsals.
- Remembering loved ones through GRWC Memorial Fund contributions is a beautiful thing! Visit [www.grwc.org](http://www.grwc.org) for details.

# Calendar of Events

## *Make a Date with the GRWC*

May 22

GRWC 14th Annual Spring Concert  
"Rhapsody!"

St. Cecilia Music Center 8pm  
(doors open 7:30)

24 Ransom NE Grand Rapids, MI  
\$15 advanced • \$18 at door • \$10 students  
Tickets also available online at [www.grwc.org](http://www.grwc.org).

July 1-4

**Sister Singers Network Choral Festival**

Loyola University - Chicago, Illinois  
Contact [www.sistersingers.net](http://www.sistersingers.net) for  
directions/tickets

### **Sharp#Fact:**

*The earliest known example of musical notation was found on a clay tablet in Mesopotamia (modern day Iraq) dated 1,800 BC.*



## Cell Phone Recycling Project Rings No More

The GRWC Cell Phone Recycling Project has come to an end. Thanks to Board Member CJ Galante for coordinating the project that generated over \$400 and kept hundreds of cell phones out of the landfills. Thanks also to supporters who donated phones, and to area businesses Argos Books and Presto Print for serving as collection sites.



Recycling cell phones is a great environmental and social cause. Please continue your support by participating in the many programs and opportunities offered locally as well as nationwide. Visit [recyclephones.org](http://recyclephones.org) for more information.

***You're invited! Be a fan of the GRWC on Facebook!***



Visit Goldenrod Music - your only online source of the Grand Rapids Women's Chorus new CD "*Celebrating Time Together*"

via the  link

at [www.grwc.org](http://www.grwc.org) or (517) 484-1712

Remember, anything you buy, anytime, from Goldenrod's extensive catalog of music and music merchandise returns a percentage of that purchase to the chorus.

### **ALSO AVAILABLE FROM:**

The Grand Rapids Women's Chorus (616) 459-2655  
Spirit Dreams • 1430 Lake Drive SE (616) 456-9889

**Grand Rapids Women's Chorus**

PO Box 68486

Grand Rapids, MI 49516

Phone: (616) 459-2655

Email: [info@grwc.org](mailto:info@grwc.org)

**~ Mission Statement ~**



The Grand Rapids Women's Chorus is dedicated to singing music that celebrates and honors the diversity of women's lives. Drawing on music from many cultures, the Chorus strives to educate and inspire its community to promote justice, peace, and equality.

We welcome your comments, suggestions, compliments, questions, letters and tax deductible donations.

Please feel free to contact us.

PO Box 68486  
Grand Rapids, MI 49516

Phone: (616) 459-2655  
Email: [info@grwc.org](mailto:info@grwc.org)