



Holiday Concerts



*Our
120 fabulous singers
greet the season!*

In MEDIA

SATURDAY, Dec. 4, 7:30 p.m.

First United Methodist Church
350 W. State Street

**In CHESTER—New Location
FRIDAY, Dec. 10, 8 p.m.**

White Rock Christian Church
308 W. 3rd Street

In WAYNE

SATURDAY, Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m.

Central Baptist Church
106 W. Lancaster Avenue

CCC Shopping Night Dec. 9 at Ten Thousand Villages

101 W. State Street, Media

- Chorus receives 15 percent of sales between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m.
- Home décor, table linens, toys, jewelry, baskets, and ceramics
- Artisan-made, fairly traded wares from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East
- Help the chorus, help the artisans!

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Singing is the Easy Part

Singing is the easy part. As our boys become young men, they need more than music to help them find their way to responsible adulthood.

That's why, for our 18 basses, rehearsals are about much more than learning music. And why we so appreciate a generous donor's gift to form our Young Men's Club (YMC) two years ago.

Rehearsals are an opportunity for me to talk with the boys about many issues in their lives, from difficulties with their mothers to respectful language.

The "mother" conversation began when a mom brought her son to rehearsal with tears in her eyes and asked me to talk with him. It turned out that they had been arguing over his cell phone. So during a rehearsal break, I mentioned that a few boys were having trouble with their mothers and asked how many were being raised solely by their mothers. Sadly, 15 boys put up their hands. I, too, was raised solely by my mother, so my hand went up as well. I told them that I fought a lot with my mom and that I am ashamed that I took out my frustrations on her. I explained that their



Deondre Jordan (left) and Marquise Miles talk history with teacher Mindy Nguyen.



The basses, aka the history class, in their concert R&B groove

mothers, despite all the love in their hearts, will never know what it's like to be a teenage boy—and that the boys have no idea how difficult it is for a single mother to raise children, especially boys. We were all aching from the knowledge that we

Letter continued, over

CCC's Sing-to-Learn Reaches 310 Children in Chester Public Schools

In 2009, the chorus embarked on a new venture: bringing a combination of music and academic instruction to Chester chil-

dren in public school classrooms through our Sing-to-Learn Partnership with the Chester-Upland School District.



Assistant Music Director Dan Beal with second-grade Sing-to-Learn chorus at Stetser Elementary School

Children, teachers, and principals responded so enthusiastically that this year Sing-to-Learn has expanded from 250 to 310 children and has added second-grade choruses at two of the three participating elementary schools—Main Street and Stetser.

Sing-to-Learn began in kindergarten and first grade, but the children "had so much talent and passion for singing that we really wanted to keep

Sing-to-Learn continued, over

To make a tax-deductible contribution to the Chester Children's Chorus, please detach this coupon, complete, and mail to:

Chester Children's Chorus, Swarthmore College, 500 College Avenue, Swarthmore PA 19081

Enclosed is a check in the amount of \$35 \$75 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1,000 Other: _____.

Check should be payable to Swarthmore College with Chester Children's Chorus in memo field)

Please charge my gift to my:

Visa Mastercard Discover American Express

Card # _____

Expires: ____ / ____ Amount to charge: \$_____

Name _____

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____

My gift will be matched by my employer.

(Please enclose your signed matching gift form.)

Give online at www.swarthmore.edu. Choose "other fund," and specify "Chester Children's Chorus." **THANK YOU!**

Chorus Builds on Summer Foundation

With the addition of 26 new third-graders, the CCC has grown to 120 children. In our six-week Summer Learning Program, chorus members spend full days together making music;

enjoying art, dance, reading, and science; absorbing the chorus culture of respect for all; and building the cohesive community that lays the foundation for a year of music learning and powerful concerts. These photos show the summer's joy and intensity.



Letter ... continued

never fully appreciate our mothers.

Later in the rehearsal, one ninth-grader casually used the *N* word. That was a rehearsal stopper and led to a thoughtful conversation about when, if ever, that word is appropriate. Most boys agreed that it was never appropriate to use the word.

Young Men's Club funding lets us support boys outside rehearsal, too. I take them to restaurants, where they explore new tastes and practice skills that include conversing graciously to navigating an Indian menu. There's also a twice-weekly workout at a gym. We don't just build bodies; I give them constant positive feedback, and that's helping them learn how to encourage and support each other.

Also through the YMC, 14 boys study history twice a week with Mindy Nguyen, an extraordinary teacher. Mindy is so smart and cool that the boys happily gave up two sports periods each week during the summer to study history. Mindy is a full-time, first-grade teacher at CCC's sister organization, the Chester Upland School of the Arts.

Hopefully, with months and years of these kinds of activities, our boys will learn to not be angry with their mothers and to take better care of themselves and each other.

As I said, the singing is the easy part.
—John Alston

Sing to Learn ... continued

them engaged in second grade," explains CCC assistant music director and Sing-to-Learn teacher Dan Beal.

All second graders participate in the choruses, which rehearse during class time. Their repertoire features songs with educational content, such as lyrics in foreign languages, and with positive messages about character and values, including gospel songs written by director John Alston for the Chester Children's Chorus. Second-graders also learn the kinds of

songs that John and Dan write for the younger Sing-to-Learn classes, with lyrics that reinforce the academic curriculum in areas including science and social studies.

Chorus members learn teamwork and performance etiquette as they work toward Dan's goal of singing at senior centers and other settings outside their schools.

This year, Sing-to-Learn is in 12 classrooms in three schools, including Columbus Elementary.

Churches, Board Member Support Additional Concerts

Last year, director John Alston felt the children were singing so beautifully that it was time to take them "on the road"—to bring their polished, joyous music-making to new audiences as a way to spread good news about Chester and find new supporters for the chorus.

This fall, the chorus program includes concerts in four communities where the children have never performed before. In October, the children sang at Church of the Holy Trinity in West Chester, Pa., and at the Prince Theatre in Chestertown, Md. The December Holiday Concert will be presented in Media and Wayne, Pa. (See box on page 1 for Holiday Concert details.)

Holy Trinity and Central Baptist are sponsoring the performances at their churches, and both have pledged continued support for the chorus. They join St. Peter's Church in the Great Valley, Malvern, Pa., which has generously supported the chorus since 2004.

The Chestertown concert was the gift of former CCC board member Leslie Price and her husband, Andy. Their gift included an overnight stay for chorus members at Echo Hill Outdoor School in Chestertown, followed by a day of outdoor adventures on boats, a giant swing, and a zipline.

The chorus thanks these and all our donors for their vital support.

CHESTER CHILDREN'S CHORUS

John Alston, founder and director
Andrea Knox '64, managing director
Daniel Beal, assistant music director
Elisa DeNofio, assistant

Voice
The newsletter of the Chester Children's Chorus
Andrea Knox, editor
Philip Stern '84, designer
Photos by Eleftherios Kostans, Jonathan Hodgson, Andrea Knox, and Jeffrey Lott

Swarthmore College • 500 College Avenue • Swarthmore PA 19081
(610) 328-8180 • ccc@swarthmore.edu
www.chesterchildrenschorus.org

