

Come Celebrate With Us!



ANNIVERSARY CONCERTS
Friday, May 8, 8 p.m.
Saturday, May 9, 8 p.m.
 English madrigals, Elvis,
 And glorious gospel!
Lang Concert Hall
Swarthmore College
 Admission free—all invited.
 Doors open 7:30 p.m.

Special Anniversary Events: New CD, October Benefit

We're celebrating our 15 years of growth and success with two special events: a new CD and our first benefit fundraiser.

CD's goals are recognition, reward
 "Most children's choruses don't sing gospel. Our children not only sing it, but

Mark Your Calendar!

Spring Concert on Tour
 St. Peter's Church in the Great Valley,
 Malvern, Pa.
 Sunday, May 17, 4 p.m.

Chamber Choir Joint Recital
 with Larks of Philadelphia
 St. David's Episcopal Church, Wayne, Pa.
 Sunday, June 7, 4 p.m.

Summer Concerts
 Friday, July 24, 8 p.m.
 Saturday, July 25, 8 p.m.
 Lang Concert Hall, Swarthmore College

Anniversary Benefit
 Guest Performance
 Champagne Reception
 Sunday, Oct. 18, 4 p.m.
 Lang Concert Hall, Swarthmore College
Concert admission is free. Benefit tickets go on sale this summer.

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

What Comes Next: Chorus Will Grow, Take Music into Chester Schools

Every time I'm with the children, I see how music reaches their souls and encourages them to nurture their best selves as well as their musical gifts. I see how much music teaches them about poetry, history, culture, and language. And I see, as the Chorus looks to the future, how necessary it is to bring this transformative power of music to many more Chester children. This year, as we mark our 15th anniversary, we will begin to fulfill this mission through our new Sing to Learn Partnership.



begin to provide classroom music instruction to more than 300 kindergarten and first-grade children in the Chester Upland School District. We'll teach the children beginning music skills and immerse them in the pure joy of music. We'll also use music to enhance their academic progress. Just as the alphabet song makes it easy to learn letters, we'll use other songs to help children learn subjects including math, science, and social studies.

Classroom Music in Chester
 In a groundbreaking initiative, in September our Sing to Learn Partnership will

Chorus Expansion
 At the same time, the Sing to Learn Partnership *continued, over*

Young Men's Club Promotes Fitness, Broadens Cultural Horizons

Last summer, we created a Young Men's Club to give our older boys additional support in preparing for roles as responsible men in their families and the community. Boys from 12 to 17 years old participated in daily physical fitness training, explored new cuisines and cultures at Thai and Ethiopian restaurants, and toured hip-hop historical sites in Harlem during our Concert Choir field trip. The Junior Choir boys, 9 to 11 years old, developed critical and communications skills in a poetry slam class, where they wrote, recorded, and critiqued hip-hop, rap, and blues lyrics. During the school year, the 13 older boys are learning the skills and discipline of karate in twice-weekly classes with Sensei Thomas Keen at Keen's Martial Arts Academy in Upland, Pa. *continued, over*



sing it well," says director John Alston. "This CD will help us gain recognition, funding, and opportunities to sing before new audiences." The CD will also be an anniversary gift to the children: It will be a tangible record of their fine singing and an affirmation that the music they love is valued in the broader world. The CD will be recorded live at our May 9 and July 25 concerts.

The CD will be released in early November and we are planning a CD release party at the Chester Upland School of the Arts in Chester.

Benefit Honors Maurice Eldridge
 Maurice Eldridge, Swarthmore College vice president for college and community relations, will be honored for his role in the Chorus's founding and success at our Anniversary Benefit, Sunday, October 18 at 4 p.m. in Lang Concert Hall. Tickets for guest performance and following Champagne reception will go on sale this summer.

For additional information about the October benefit and updates on other chorus events, sign up for our email bulletins. Send your request to development director Andrea Knox at aknox1@swarthmore.edu.

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: \$ _____

My gift will be matched by my employer.
 (Please enclose your signed matching gift form.)

Saturday's Busy Buzz

Saturdays are abuzz with Chester Children's Chorus activity in the Lang Music Building and elsewhere on campus. Chorus rehearsals begin at 9 a.m. with the Training Chorus and end at 2 p.m. when the Concert Choir wraps up. Throughout the day, 12 chorus members take individual half-hour piano lessons with our teacher Amie Richan. After a quick lunch, about 20 Concert Choir members head for either Composers' Circle with director John Alston, individual tutoring, or a laboratory science class, where their activities include making and testing electrical circuits and studying the behavior of sea anemones, bacteria, and fiddler crabs. The tutoring sessions and science class are organized and



staffed by 11 Swarthmore College student volunteers. Farah Hus-sain '09 conceived and directs the science class, while Erin Ronhovde '10 coordinates the tutoring.



What's News

Our new 25-member Chamber Choir will present a joint recital with the Philadelphia Larks on Sunday, June 7, at 4 p.m. in St. David's Episcopal Church, Wayne, Pa. This is the first collaborative performance for chorus members. The Chamber Choir debuted in December for a delighted audience of senior citizens living at Episcopal Place at Park Row in Upland.

To receive news of this and other chorus events, sign up to receive our e-mail bulletins. Send your request to Development Director Andrea Knox at aknox1@swarthmore.edu.

Director John Alston has been honored by two organizations for his work with Chester children. He was recognized in November by Epsilon Pi, the Chester chapter of Omega Psi Phi fraternity, and on April 4, by Turning Points for Children, a Philadelphia child welfare agency.

Read With a Child

Volunteer Ted Blinder of Wallingford enjoyed reading a wide range of books last summer with our Training Chorus member Wendell Wimbush. Ted plans



to return this summer. Will you join him? We need 40 to 50 volunteers to read one-on-one with 8- and 9-year-old children

for an hour a day, Mondays through Thursdays, from June 22 through July 23. Full information is posted under "Give! Volunteer!" at www.chesterchildrenschorus.org. If you don't have Internet access, call Andrea Knox in the Chorus office at (610) 328-8286 to have the information mailed to you. We will send information to last summer's volunteers by April 15.

What Comes Next ... continued

will enable us to increase the number of exceptionally talented children who participate in the Chorus' after-school, Saturday, and summer program of rigorous music instruction coupled with cultural and academic enhancement. We'll bring in a new group of third-graders for each of the next two summers, to expand our membership from 100 to 125.

Assistant Music Director

The Sing to Learn Partnership will be directed by a new staff member, the assistant music director (AMD). The AMD

will teach the new Chorus members and in-school classes, and will give the Chorus the leadership depth it needs as we grow into the future. The AMD will teach each new group of children, starting in 2009, as they progress through the Training Chorus and Junior Choir. This will give me more time to work with the Concert Choir and our new Chamber Choir; to supervise the Summer Learning Program; and to do the fundraising that is vital to our success in reaching more and more Chester children.

—John Alston

Arts Reinforce Classroom Lessons At CUSA

The children in a kindergarten class at the Chester Upland School of the Arts (CUSA) were having a bit of trouble learning the months of the year. But they easily learned a song that named all the months. In another class, a social studies lesson on family relationships came alive through an art project in which each child created his or her own family tree. Classes learning shapes choreographed a dance, using their bodies to make triangles, crescent moons, ovals, and other shapes.

This use of the arts to reinforce classroom lessons, known as arts integration, is a fundamental teaching philosophy at CUSA, a public school operated by the Chester Upland School District whose arts curriculum is largely funded by the Chester Children's Chorus' sister organization, The Chester Fund for Education and the Arts. Arts integration is based on the understanding that children learn better when they absorb the same information in different ways, says John Alston, director of the Chester Children's Chorus and founder of The Chester Fund. Because arts learning uses a different part of the brain from other learning, it helps improve children's school performance.

CUSA opened in September with 200 children in pre-kindergarten through second grade

... Cultural Horizons continued

The restaurant dinners broadened the boys' cultural awareness and sparked intense conversations with director John Alston. "We talk about what it means to be a gentleman, to be responsible, to be our brothers' and sisters' keepers, and why the world needs some boys to become heroes when they grow up," John says. The range of activities promotes what John calls "The Young Men's Club 3 Cs: courage, confidence, and curiosity."

We thank Katharine Myers of Kendal, in Kennett Square Pa., for the generous gift that makes the Young Men's Club activities possible.

CHESTER CHILDREN'S CHORUS

John Alston, founder and director
Anjali Gallup-Diaz, managing director
Andrea Knox '64, development director
Elisa Denofio, assistant

Voice

The newsletter of the Chester Children's Chorus
Andrea Knox, editor
Philip Stern '84, designer
Photos by Jonathan Hodgson, Andrea Knox

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