

DURANGO CHORAL SOCIETY

SPRING 2023 NEWSLETTER



Durango Choral Society



Dear DCS Friends,

Spring has finally sprung and we are grateful to be in full-swing with rehearsals for our end of April concerts! The day's light permeates until most of the way through our evenings together, as we joyfully prepare selections by Mozart, Ticheli, Elder and yes, Toto!

Our theme "A World of Love Songs" takes us on a grand tour of cultures and styles. The Durango Women's Choir will delight our audiences with romantic music from Serbia, Ireland, Brazil, and Peru, performing a broad history of traditional love songs through the ages.

The Durango Choral Society will shift the focus with a powerful message from songs focused on our love for the Earth, ranging from the sublime harmonies of Earth Song and Ballade to the Moon, to jazz and pop favorites from Irving Berlin and more. Our concert wouldn't be complete without the sweet voices of our Durango Youth Chorus and Durango Children's Chorale, under the direction of Amy Barrett, performing wonderful repertoire and joining us in a rousing and stormy finale!

It's not too early to get your tickets to this year's Cabaret on Sunday, May 21st at the Fort Lewis College Student Union Ballroom. "Live, Laugh, Love!" will feature our star soloists, the Durango Women's Choir, and special guests, the Jeff Solon Trio. Dinner, drinks, and a silent auction are all included in the ticket price. This event is a fitting and celebratory finale to our 2022–2023 season and is not to be missed!

I want to extend a huge thank you to our donors, sponsors, and audience members—we couldn't do it without you! Your generosity is crucial towards fulfilling our mission of bringing high-quality concerts and music education to our region. The opportunity to thank you, through song, is our greatest joy!

Looking forward to seeing you at our April and May concerts!

Sincerely,

Rhonda L Muckerman

Associate Conductor, Durango Choral Society

Thank you to our season sponsor:

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A WORLD OF LOVE SONGS



Friday, April 28, 2023 at 7 pm
at Summit Church
Sunday, April 30, 2023 at 3 pm
at Bayfield Performing Arts Center
Tickets \$20/\$5
Children 12 and under are FREE
www.durangochoralsociety.org

Featuring love songs from around the world, the Durango Choral Society and the Durango Women's Choir will present a heart-opening program of classical, jazz and pop led by Associate Conductor Rhonda Muckerman. The Durango Children's Chorale and the Durango Youth Chorus directed by Amy Barrett will add to this diverse program. Enjoy the international flair, ranging from Mozart to Toto, with a special nod to songs that honor the earth – you might even get rained on!

*Special thanks to our
Season Sponsor!*

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SPOTLIGHT ON ELLIE CLINE

BOARD MEMBER, VOLUNTEER EXTRAORDINAIRE,
DCS LIBRARIAN AND ARCHIVIST, QUEEN OF THE FRYBREAD DOUGH, DONOR, AND SINGER

Q: How did you end up living in Durango?

Like many people, I moved to Durango to attend Fort Lewis College: hard to believe, but I was a pre-forestry major in 1972. As soon as the Draft ended, I volunteered and joined the Army in 1973. Altruism was not a driving force in my life at that time, since I wanted the GI Bill for college tuition. After my first tour, I returned to Durango to finish my degree between 1978-1981. Deciding that I wanted to go into some kind of service, I went back to active duty for another 30 years. Durango has been my home of record since 1972, and I have been quite happy in my Forever Home since 2014. In fact, this past nine-year period is the longest I have ever lived in one place.

Q: Why did you join the Choral Society, as a singer and also as a Board Member?

While I was deployed to KFOR with NATO in 1999, I received a letter from Terri Cooley (she was my roommate in 1979), saying that she and Andrew were singing in DCS, and that she was impressed with the quality of the group. When I moved back to Durango, I auditioned and was warmly welcomed by the DCS Family. I sang for about two years before volunteering to sit on the Board. I really didn't have a job on the Board per se, so I talked Dawn into letting me take over the library database. Later, I started collecting "memories" from people to consolidate DCS historical records. I scanned binders full of programs from Linda, Jeannie, Gay, Julia, and Abby—20 years of good stuff! During Covid, Abby and I decided to consolidate DCS Board of Directors data into one location (in case we get audited!). Because DCS has been fortunate in having conscientious treasurers, recording secretaries, and presidents, I had no problem collecting 20 years of BoD documentation.



Q: What does the DCS Librarian do?

I catalog all new music into the database, number and holepunch each copy, get Linda's list ready to issue at the start of first rehearsal, and then put it all back after people turn the music in. I really wish we had an office devoted solely to the music library: the church lets us share their storage area in the church undercroft. As you may imagine, it is crowded, dusty, claustrophobic, and it seems that everyone has a key to the door. The library holds all the music, bought by the DCS budget, for the children's, women's, and big choirs; there are about twenty 4-drawer filing cabinets that have been donated through the years (most are in pretty ratty shape). Most singers in DCS are diligent about returning their music, but with the high cost of publishing, I need all the help I can get from everyone to recover the music. (Copyright law prohibits us from copying music.)

Q: Tell us a bit about your experiences in Turkey.



Ellie in Nyssa, Turkey

As most people know, Turkey is my favorite country overseas. As a closet historian, I grew up with the "mystery" of Asia Minor and all that it represented: the great Silk Road, the spreading of the Gospel, the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, the Iliad and Odyssey, the Crusaders. Once I got on the ground, I felt in tune (pun intended) with the rich history of that ancient crossroads between east and west. I fell in love with the people, the food, the music, the crafts, the culture. The climate and ecosystem are very similar to the Four Corners area, with the bonus of the beautiful seas that border three sides of Turkey. My main social outlet during my five years in Turkey was running cross-country with the Hash House Harriers, an international organization started by the British army in Indonesia during WWII. Calling ourselves a "drinking club with a running problem," we ran courses over areas of the countryside that very few tourists

SPOTLIGHT ON ELLIE CLINE, CONTINUED



get to see. Our H3 group was family friendly (kept the bad language and drinking manageable), and we had plenty of military runners from all the countries represented in the NATO headquarters, as well as Turkish friends and their families. Additionally, I had several colleagues who loved history as much as I, so we went on excursions to “haunt the ruins” as much as we had time for.

Q: Other interests and hobbies? Travelling? Where to next?

Growing older is not easy. I had definite ideas about what I would do when I retired. For instance, running was a way of life for me. However, four hip (yes, two on each side!) and two knee replacements have curtailed my dream of hiking or running in the back country. I have also had to stop most of my hand crafts (embroidery, beading, and crochet) and playing the guitar because of my arthritis. When a door closes another one opens, so my ventures into chickens and landscaping are a joy. I’m still weaving and journaling. This year I plan to do short trips and visit state parks and museums.

Q: You have planted a forest? Tell us more.

Everyone coped with Covid in different ways. I planted about 50 baby spruce trees on three acres between the county road and my house. Whenever I got upset about the political situation, I would walk to all the trees and try to center my spirit. I call it my Peace Park, and someday I hope to make walking paths and plant wild flowers and grasses. Lots of people walk their dogs along the road, so I plan to make the park “neighborhood friendly”—it’s a work in progress.

Q: When did you first sing and why are you still singing?

Like most people, I grew up singing in the children’s choir at church. Churches in the 1970s saw a surge in “singing sermons” (as in the movie *Sister Act*), and yes, my guitar and I hit the circuit. In the army (before cell phones and television), we soldiers often got together for jam sessions. I had the honor of singing the National Anthem for the July 4th parade in Honduras—surprisingly enough I hit all the notes (I was singing in the Key of Me)! I’ve sung with the international choir at the Gedachtniskirche in Berlin, the Augusta Choral Society for six months while in a military course, and the SHAPE International Community Choir in Belgium. I’ve sung in many church choirs wherever I have been stationed. For me, singing is connecting to God and everyone I am singing with. I don’t see how people can be nasty to each other when they are involved with music, either playing instruments or singing. To be in harmony we have to listen to each other and blend to make the music.

Q: What’s one of your favorite pieces of music that you have sung? And where did you sing it?

Oddly enough, I really enjoyed singing David Lingle’s Requiem for Eagles, and I was glad to go to Telluride to sing it.

Q: What is one quality you like most about yourself?

My spirituality: I strive to be in harmony with the Spirit of God. I want to go out of this world a better person than I am, but it is difficult when I deal with people. I often wonder how Mother Teresa kept her peace of mind surrounded by all the poor in Calcutta.

Q: What is one thing you would change in yourself if you could?

My impatience: I get so upset with stupid people and cruelty in the world. I wonder how God keeps patient with all of us selfish people.

Q: Why do you support the DCS so generously?

I grew up without learning the language of music and had no parental support with my choral singing in high school. I believe that music is integral to a person’s overall health, and the earlier a child can develop music appreciation, the better for that child. I am so fortunate to be in DCS, and I want to contribute as much as I can to sharing the blessing of music. I love how DCS raises up generations of singers with a strong sense of community: Linda’s legacy of 30 years teaching musicians who carry the torch within the school system and their own children who grow up with the love of music. She and Amy have done so much for the four choirs, and I am proud to be part of DCS.

News from the Durango Children's Chorale and the Durango Youth Chorus

All-State Choir brings together the best singers in Colorado. This is the first year that eleven of our very own who sing in the Durango Children's Chorale (DCC), (a part of the Durango Choral Society) were invited to participate in the Elementary All-State Choir. Elementary All-State is open to 4th, 5th, and 6th graders who attend an elementary school or sing in a children's choir like the DCC. Students are nominated based on their talent, their academic strength, their personal motivation, and their ability to focus in rehearsals. In All-State, students get the opportunity to work with some of the nation's best teacher-conductors who challenge students to push their musicianship to a new level.

DCC/DYC Artistic Director Amy Barrett took the young singers to Colorado Springs at the end of January for rehearsals, culminating in a performance. It was a wonderful experience for the kids! They were all so happy to be there singing and want to do it again next year. There were 400 kids on stage at the famous Broadmoor Hotel for the mass choir. Our singers experienced doing two mass pieces with the whole group and four pieces on their own. There were 1,400 people in the audience! The children who attended this year have really inspired other kids to audition next year! We hope to keep this opportunity a vital part of our organization.

Middle School All-State Choir is open to 7th and 8th graders from around the state of Colorado. Breeanna Barrett of the DYC auditioned in October and was accepted. As part of the audition, students are required to sing a solo, sing major and minor triads and scales, and sight-read on solfège*. This year 1,300 students auditioned and 320 singers were selected for three different choirs.

Durango 9R paid for some of the kids to attend through the Gifted and Talented Program, so they can be identified as gifted in music. Other expenses were covered by generous donors in the DCS Adult Chorus and the community.



A big **Thank You** to those folks who donated funds to send our young singers to All-State. Please forgive us if we left your name off this list. Your gift is much appreciated.

Jeanne Bandy
Abby Bowen
Ellie Cline
Louanne Crawford
Mitchell Dion
Julia Dodd
Ann Duff
Cathy and Paul Dugan
Lynn Eustance
Gay and Dick Grossman
Charlie Hakes
Don Hassemmer
Dwayne Heidenreich
Cory Kindle
Nancy Mace
Sandra Mapel
Suzanne Motsinger
Kent Norgren
Jan Patton
Robin Randolph
Robert ad Elizabeth Schurman
Alfred and Reta Shablo
Dawn Spaeder
Carol and Bill Thurman



* Your editor had no idea what solfège was! According to Wikipedia, "In music, solfège or solfeggio (Italian); also called sol-fa, solfa, solfeo, among many names (**geesh!**), is a music education method used to teach aural skills, pitch, and sight-reading of Western music. Solfège is a form of solmization (**yet another word I had never heard before**).

Syllables are assigned to the notes of the scale and enable the musician to audiate, or mentally hear, the pitches of a piece of music being seen for the first time and then to sing them aloud.

The tonic sol-fa method popularized the seven syllables commonly used in English-speaking countries: do re, mi, fa, so, la, and ti." (**Ok, now I'm on familiar ground.**)

Wow. The kiddos may not be able to define solfège, but **they can sure do it!**

Live, Laugh, Love.



A CHORAL SOCIETY CABARET!

The Durango Choral Society continues our romp through the season with great music and elegant cuisine, and the company of your friends and neighbors! Our talented singers will perform favorites ranging from Broadway to Opera while you enjoy a lovely dinner and drinks.

Sunday, May 21 at 5 pm
Fort Lewis College Ballroom
Tickets \$75

www.DurangoChoralSociety.org
Limited number of tickets will be sold to this highly anticipated event. Don't wait to get yours!

*Special thanks to our
Season Sponsor!*

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