

## Durango Choral Society: August, 2020



Greetings to our singers, patrons, families, friends, and loyal audience members.

Every one of us has been affected by the events of 2020. The Durango Choral Society shut down on March 12, and we have not rehearsed or performed since.

Some of our cancelled events included the fabulous Vivaldi *Gloria*, a joyful Children's Choir concert, travel to Florence for a concert tour, *Beethoven's 9th* with Music in the Mountains, and our Women's Choir celebrating Women's Suffrage in the park.

Instead, we are singing in the shower, tending our gardens, learning zoom and a myriad of other technical mysteries, hiking, fishing, and trying to stay safe and healthy. I have been doing all of the above in addition to planning a virtual fall season for DCS and working to hold our choral family together with love, support, and gratitude.

We hope that all of you are safe and sound and finding ways to maintain your health and sanity. In the face of persistent uncertainty, what does the near future look like for us and for you? Let's begin with what we already have out there.

I hope that you have been able to enjoy our four videos on the Durango Choral Society Facebook page, Durango Choral Society YouTube page, and on our website, [Durangochoralsociety.org](http://Durangochoralsociety.org).

Our YouTube page also features many concerts from past years that you can watch and hear.

BUT we all know that there is nothing like live performance. We are hoping and praying that we will be able to share our beautiful choral music with you in person very soon, but for the time being we must do so in a safer way.

AND, you may ask, what are we doing

about keeping our choirs financially stable in the era of no live performances? Many generous donors have stepped forward to help us, and we are grateful for their love and care. We hope that you might consider donating as you are able in order to help us compensate for a substantial loss of performance income.

Now, what about our plans for the fall? Along with everyone else, we are adjusting to the new "normal," and we plan to bring you two beautiful and joyous online concerts that we hope will offer you some musical shelter in the time of storm.

We will start the season with our annual BIG GARAGE SALE on September 11 and 12 at 9 Sandstone Drive. Yes, we can do this with the proper precautions and social distancing/mask rules enforced. We have had six months now to clean out our closets, garages, and cabinets and there is a MOUNTAIN of wonderful treasure for you to come and peruse. You never know what you might find!

Our first online performance, **COMFORT: SONGS OF HOME, HOPE, and HAPPINESS**, will be released on Friday, October 9. Watch for an announcement about this concert that will feature solos, highlights of prior performances, the sweet voices of our Children's choirs, and a new VIRTUAL CHOIR presentation by our DCS singers. The choristers have just begun recording their individual voice parts, and we will assemble a performance of a beautiful and timely choral work that will warm your hearts.

For the Holiday season, you will be treated to **JOY! A TRADITIONAL FAMILY CHRISTMAS** starting on Sunday, December 6 and available through the holiday season. You will be treated to a rousing, FUN-FILLED performance featuring your friends, family members, and neighbors celebrating in style. You can look forward to a collection of your very favorite and familiar holiday songs chosen to evoke happy memories, joyful smiles, and plenty of laughter.

Watch your email, Facebook, and our website for more details and instructions

about how to attend our online concerts. We will be asking for a donation based on what you are able to give so that your entire household can be treated to our performances.

What will winter 2021 bring? At this time we have no idea, but we will adapt to our circumstances as they arise. Our greatest hope is that we can return to the stage and greet you in person as soon as possible.

We are committed, however, to keeping our singers and our audience members safe and healthy, so we will follow the science and make decisions in everyone's best interest.

In the meantime, what else has been going on with our singers?

Well, let's see—the good, the bad, and the ugly—two knee surgeries, a broken neck, a successful open heart surgery, two brand new babies, adopting a family seeking asylum, a new e-bike, camping, volunteering on the train, lots of complaining about how our voices are out of shape, recording hymns for online church services, learning to paddleboard, agonizing about sending kids back to school while two elementary teachers, a high school teacher, and a college professor from our choirs work to figure out how to adapt, learning new languages, new tech skills, digging in our gardens, trying to avoid the COVID 15 weight gain, and the list goes on.

What have YOU been doing with your now six-month hiatus? We hope to hear from you. Contact us at [Durangochoralsociety.org](http://Durangochoralsociety.org) and let us know how you are doing.

Thank you for being a part of our choral family, and hang in there! We hope to see you soon.

**With much love, admiration, respect, and hope for a bright future, Linda**



**What you'll find in this newsletter:**

- \* Greetings from Maestra Linda
- \* Who's who
- \* Garage sale news
- \* Kid's corner
- \* A Musical Reminiscence
- \* Resiliency through Covid-19
- \* Recharging
- \* How to donate

Effective in July, Abby Bowen was voted in as the new President of the DCS Board of Directors. After many years of selfless service, Jeanne Bandy has passed the gavel but remains on the Board as President Emerita, providing support and advice. If you would like to volunteer with our organization or as a member of the Board, please let Abby know.

Our stellar Board of Directors also includes the following volunteers:

- Ellie Cline, Librarian
- Lynn Eustance, Treasurer
- Gail (Gay) Grossman, Corresponding Secretary
- Charles Hakes, Member-at-large
- Don Hassemer, Member-at-large
- Kelsey Lancaster, Member-at-large
- Mary Moorehead, Vice President
- Jan Patton, Recording Secretary
- Dianne Pratt, Assistant Treasurer
- Doty Shepard, Member-at-large
- Bill Thurman, Member-at-large
- Robert Winslow, Member-at-large

Our team also includes Artistic Director Linda Mack Berven, Executive Director Dawn Spaeder, Artistic Director Amy Barrett and her assistant Robin Randolph, and accompanists Christi Livingston and Jill Waterman.



*Executive Director Extraordinaire Dawn Spaeder sings her heart out for the DCS.*



*Happy helpers from the 2019 garage sale!*



*Jeanne and Julia start sorting for the HUGE 2020 garage sale.*



Roll-top computer desk. Too heavy to move twice (the "wood" covers particle board). "Drawer" is for a keyboard. It has cable pass-throughs and convenient spots for a vintage CRT monitor and the latest model dot-matrix printer. (Or you could just use it as a desk.) AND the price is right. Get in touch with Charlie Hakes to purchase: [hakescl@gobrainstorm.net](mailto:hakescl@gobrainstorm.net)

**DO NOT MISS our fabulous annual garage sale!**

If you can't find it there, it's not worth having. Social distancing of course, and face masks will be available if you forget yours. It will be so good to see you all there!

**When: Friday 9/11 8a-12n and Saturday 9/12 8a-12n**

**Where: 9 Sandstone Drive** (East of Bread Bakery and turn north off of Florida Road into Sandstone complex)



# DCS KIDS CORNER



My name is Tommy. I am 9 years old. I like Legos, Minecraft, and playing tennis. I have played the cello for five years and I have sung in choir for two years. I love to sing in choir because music helps me slow down. My choir friends are important to me. One of my favorite choir events is the Navajo Taco Fundraiser. It is very fun to do.



Photo courtesy of RobertWinslowPhoto.com



Hello, my name is Benjamin Hinkley and I have been a member of DCC and DYC for 8 years. It has been so much fun to be a part of this community and to get to know all the amazing people in DYC. I enjoy choir because singing is one of my passions, and it is so cool to be able to sing in a group with other people who enjoy music as much as I do. One of my favorite memories of choir is sitting around the fire at camp and roasting marshmallows with my friends. Outside of choir I am a sophomore at DHS and I am in the theatre program. I also enjoy playing guitar, biking, slacklining, and art. My favorite form of art is ceramics because I love making things on a pottery wheel.

(Editor's note: I am sure many of you will remember Ben's performance in 2018 singing the boy soprano solo part in Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* with the DCS and the San Juan Symphony .

### **Learning to Play, A Reminiscence**

Rhys Schrock

Growing up in Appalachia in the sixties, the cash-strapped school system still thought it important to provide music and art lessons. The instructors travelled a circuit and showed up every week or two. For our third-grade year we were bussed down to an old brick building with oiled floors near the Ohio River. Our regular school within walking distance was built a few years back, but I suspect the school district decided to mix things up this year so the impoverished river kids got to mix a bit more and see a modern school. The river school had a piano, so over lunch I asked the itinerant music instructor if she could show me the basics. I imagine she was hav-

ing a bad day, because when she found out we didn't have a piano at home and that my parents couldn't afford piano lessons, she told me not to bother; there was no point.

Ten years later, living in Southern California, I was visiting with my friend Steve who came from a well-to-do family. Their house included a music room with a shiny white baby grand piano. I asked him to explain how chords were formed, and he patiently spent the next few hours explaining scales, half-steps and whole steps, and how a major chord was formed from the root, the major third, and the perfect fifth. He showed me minor chords, sevenths, and minor and major sevenths. He showed me how these rules applied

to any root. Chord inversions were a thrill to discover. Since the music we played in the late sixties was pop and rock, these chords were sufficient to play almost any song. He let me use the baby grand whenever I wanted, and when his rock band lost their rhythm guitar player, he lent me an incredibly heavy Vox electric guitar and showed me how that worked.

In the fifty years since, I've continued playing, mostly guitar, but have also dabbled with keyboards—synthesizers, pianos, electronic organs, and accordion—and have been invited to play guitar, bass, accordion, and other keyboards on several independently produced LPs, 45s, and CDs. Thank you, Steve.



## Sounds of Resilience

**Provided by Doty Shepard, MA, Founder and Executive Director of Resilient Colorado and beloved alto in the DCS Chorus.**

For six months, our rhythm has been off. COVID-19 has highjacked our plans and in one way or another, we are all feeling the cacophony of this societal trauma and collective grief. When so much is uncertain how do we find that internal steadiness again? Here are three ideas:

Allow yourself time and space to recharge. Many routine aspects of life that used to be pretty straightforward are more complicated now. It's exhausting. Do what you can to include less on your to-do list and decrease your expectations of yourself and others.

Create opportunities for connection. When we are losing so much and surrounded by such uncertainty, it's important to add self-care and connection where we can. Self-care needn't be costly or elaborate. Invite ease and joy in small ways... a walk with your dog, a talk with a friend, or maybe that corner piece of brownie fresh out of the pan.

In the rest of this newsletter, you will see some ways we are recharging ourselves this summer. If you would like some ideas for ways to reset and build your resilience, visit the Virtual Room of Refuge at <https://resilient-colorado.com/VRoR.html> . The Virtual Room of Refuge has been designed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to provide a place of calm and release from stress. It is full of resources for mindfully taking a pause for self-care, and hopefully bring a smile to your face.



*Linda conquers Animas Mountain last week. Good workout for the lungs!!*



*Abby Bowen and Jill Waterman are proud of their shared plot at the Ohana Kuleana community garden in Durango. (Also, earlier this summer, Jill was one of the 17,572 singers in Eric Whitacre's Virtual Choir: Sing Gently. Check it out on You Tube.*



After her recent accident, Jeanne Bandy was unable to cultivate her garden, so Ellie Cline put together a team of gardening angels who weed and share in the harvest. From left to right, Cathy Duggan (and friend), Mary Moorehead, Gisela Lott, Julia Dodd, Gay Grossman, and Sandy Brooks.



Linda gets heavenly help in her garden.



Drew Currie, DCS tenor, helps create a template for the virtual choir project.

News from our Laura Rieck: "We are all healthy here. Our baby girl Lyla is now 5 months old! Otherwise we're trying to explore more of our beautiful backyard, hiking trails around Mancos, and going surfing at McPhee! Love and miss you all!"

Thanks to our Season Sponsor:



**Donate to the DCS**

Visit our website, [Durangochoralsociety.org](http://Durangochoralsociety.org) to make an online donation or send your check to:

Durango Choral Society  
 PO Box 1043, Durango CO 81302

Thank you for your continued support.