

The State College Choral Society Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2007

www.scchoralsociety.org

From the Podium: Planning our Work

Did you know?

- The 2008 - 09 season will begin our 60th year!
- We have a national Science Medal winner among our ranks!
- What's new on our web-site?
- We are planning a Valentines Day Diner/Dance for February 14 at The Nittany Lion Inn?? *More information to come.*



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As we return to a more traditional repertoire this season, our hope is that the work we've done these past few years will show an increase in the choir's choral skills. If the Philadelphia Voices concert is any indication, this increase is quite noticeable.

One of my goals for the current season is to ensure each singer has a much greater sense of confidence and familiarity with the music. "By the skin of our teeth" is not a practice to which we should aspire. Given the more accessible nature of the Handel, Mozart, and Vivaldi, this confidence and familiarity should be quite possible. Here's the plan.

The rehearsal schedule is available at the first rehearsal. More difficult sections in the repertoire are scheduled earlier in the schedule to allow more time for maturation, proficiency, and review. Prior to each rehearsal, each singer reviews the scheduled repertoire sections. This review takes the form of singing through, looking at each section while listening to a recording, or looking at the sections to become familiar with what the music and text does. Such a review puts the music in the mind yet one more time to increase familiarity. At each rehearsal, we begin or end with a review of what was scheduled the previous week, checking for problem spots and incorporating more nuances. The meat of each rehearsal is the scheduled repertoire sections. At each initial group sing of each scheduled rehearsal section, our goals are to make sure pitches, rhythms, and text are clearly learned and to begin teaching phrasing, style, etc. The rehearsal plan has built-in periodic review of sections to keep us fresh on earlier sections. As the preparation moves closer to the concert, larger chunks of each piece are scheduled so singers begin to gain a greater sense of the whole.

That's the plan. As we work the plan, it's important to remember the steps and take them for each weekly cycle. Theoretically, this will yield a confidence and familiarity that our audience will notice and appreciate in January and May.

Onward!

Russ

"Music is the universal language, and love is the key. People who are making music are the happiest people I've ever seen. Who knows? Maybe someday we'll come up with a song that'll make people wanna stop their fussin' and a-fightin' long enough to sing along." Mac Davis

Concert Notes 2007-2008

Concert Date & Time: Sunday, January 20, 2008
Location: Worship Hall, Pasquerilla Spiritual Center

1/14/08	Rehearsal	Worship Hall (PSC)	6:30 - 9:30 p.m.
1/19/08	Dress Rehearsal	Worship Hall (PSC)	9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
1/20/08	Concert Call	Worship Hall (PSC)	2:00 p.m.
	Pre-concert Lecture	Garden Room (PSC)	2:00 p.m.
	Winter Concert	Worship Hall (PSC)	3:00 p.m.

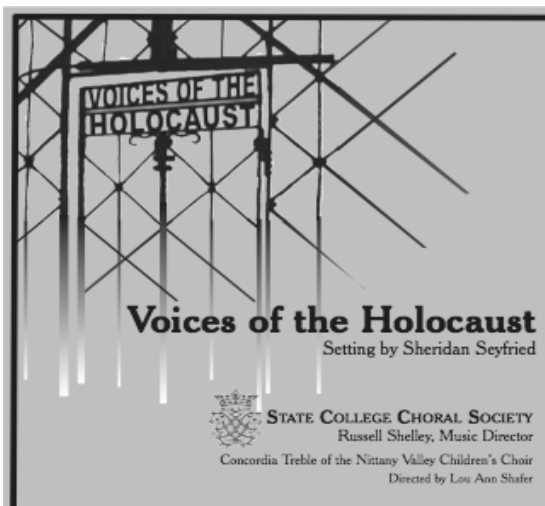
Concert Date & Time: Sunday, May 4, 2008
Location: Worship Hall, Pasquerilla Spiritual Center

4/26/08	Rehearsal	Worship Hall (PSC)	6:30 - 9:30 p.m.
5/3/08	Dress Rehearsal	Worship Hall (PSC)	8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
5/4/08	Concert Call	Worship Hall (PSC)	2:00 p.m.
	Pre-concert Lecture	Garden Room (PSC)	2:00 p.m.
	Spring Concert	Worship Hall (PSC)	3:00 p.m.

Thank You, Patty Zarkower

For many years, Patty Zarkower was the modest archivist and historian for the State College Choral Society. My guess is that just a handful of altos who sit next to her, a few board members, and a couple of librarians at Penn State know of her work and dedication. In looking through the records I inherited last spring, I came across a letter to Patty from Jackie Esposito, University Archivist. She said, "Your term as historian for the Choral Society has been phenomenally productive. The future organizational researchers and leaders will owe you a great debt for all your service" — and we do. Thank you, Patty!

~ Tanja Bekhuis, SCCS Archivist, *alto, of course*



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You can order or buy CDs of many of our previous performances from **Nancy Wilson**, Music Sales Manager, at any time. Some are being sold at bargain rates. She is also the one to ask regarding music and practice CDs.



a national medal of science winner among our ranks

Washington, D.C. --- Sixteen scientists including Penn State's Nina Fedoroff, three corporations, one research team and seven innovators were honored July 27, 2007 as the latest National Medal of Science and Technology Laureates for their contributions in areas ranging from paleoclimatology to the chemical synthesis of DNA, from mathematics education to the dissecting of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

"America is proud of those who carry on our nation's long legacy of discovery, and the National Medals celebrate the extraordinary accomplishments of some of our most talented scientists, engineers and innovators," said U.S. President George Bush in the official program. "By challenging the status quo and boldly asking important questions, you have applied your talent to great purposes and achieved historic results that will endure beyond your years."

At the ceremony, Bush noted, "Each of our Laureates has deepened our understanding of the world, and many have directly changed our lives. Their discoveries have led to hopeful treatments for HIV/AIDS, new vaccines to prevent childhood illnesses, safer drinking water around the world. Innovations are responsible for the CD players in our homes, the guardrails on our highways, the stealth fighters in our Air Force. Their breakthroughs have helped make it possible for burn victims to heal with fewer scars, and older people to hear more clearly, businesses to e-mail documents around the world, and doctors to administer medicine without needles. That's a much welcome change for a lot of us.

"Whatever their chosen field, the National Laureates in Science and Technology have brought great credit to themselves and this country. And you have the gratitude of the American people," he added.

The National Medal of Science honors individuals for pioneering scientific research in a range of fields that enhances our understanding of the world and leads to innovations that give the U.S. its global economic edge. The National Medal of Technology recognizes individuals, teams and/or companies/divisions for their outstanding contributions to America's economic, environmental and social well-being through the development and commercialization of technology products, processes and concepts.

Fedoroff, the Verne M. Williaman chair in life sciences and an Evan Pugh professor at Penn State, is one of the nation's most prominent researchers in the life sciences and biotechnology. At the ceremony, the Penn State scientist was recognized for "pioneering work on plant molecular biology and for her being the first to clone and characterize maize transposons. She has contributed to education and public policy pertaining to recombinant DNA and genetic modification of plants."

"We are very proud of Professor Fedoroff and delighted with this great honor for such an outstanding member of the Penn State faculty," said Daniel Larson, dean of the Eberly College of Science. "Professor Fedoroff has made enormous contributions to Penn State and to the country as a scientist, as an academic and scientific leader, and as a communicator of science and scientific issues. She sets a very high standard of contribution and accomplishment for scientists at Penn State and across the country."

Douglas Cavener, head of the biology department in the college, added, "The National Medal of Science is the highest honor bestowed to scientists in our nation. It goes without saying that this a proud moment in the history of our distinguished department."

Fedoroff noted, "It is extremely rewarding to have such recognition for your life's work. Professionally, it is my hope that it will help me in my new position as science and technology adviser to the Secretary of State." *con't.*

Grant assistance needed

If there is anyone who has past experience with securing grants or would like to assist Pat Daniels with some work on grants, please see myself or Pat after one of the rehearsals. Pat has done a superb job for us and I am sure she would not pass up any helpers. Give it some thought. Thanks.



➤ Don't forget to purchase your **Macy's "Shop for a Cause"** coupons that will benefit SCCS. Shopping passes will be available from Nancy Wilson from September 10 until October 8. Sale day is **Saturday, October 13**. See Nancy for details.

➤ **Program ad sales packets will be available soon. Be ready to sell an ad and help SCCS raise funds.**

Yard Sale Success...

Our Yard Sale, held on August 24 & 25 was a huge success. SCCS was able to raise \$1,727.31 at this event.

A huge "Thank you" to all members who helped set-up, break down and all who stopped by with donations. We could not have done this without the help and support of everyone.

A special thank you to Frank and Patti Hartranft

In addition to the honor, the scientist will move to Washington D.C., as the U.S. Department of State's chief scientist and principal liaison with the national and international scientific and engineering communities, on leave from the University starting next month. Her duties for the next three years will include providing advice on current and emerging science and technology issues as they impact foreign policy, enhancing science and technology literacy and capacity at the State Department, and increasing the number of scientists and engineers working in Washington and in missions abroad.

The public stage is a familiar scene to Fedoroff. In addition to serving on international and national scientific organizations, she is a member of the distinguished National Academy of Sciences and the National Science Board, a 24-person board that oversees the activities of the National Science Foundation.

Most recently, she has been active in public discussions surrounding the introduction of genetically modified crop plants. Her book "Mendel in the Kitchen: A Scientist's View of Genetically Modified Foods," co-authored with Nancy Marie Brown, provides a well-documented history of how the DNA in our food has been altered in various ways over the centuries and a clear account of the science, issues and people involved in the development of genetically engineered foods.

In a 2005 Research Penn State online article, the scientist noted, "We've been changing the genetic makeup of our food for millennia, coaxing nature to do our bidding. Long before scientists understood what genes were and how they worked, early civilizations created wheat and corn. These crops, so very different from their wild ancestors, were mankind's first ventures in genetic modification. In time, plant breeders learned to stir up plant genes faster, using novel hybridization methods, chemicals and even radiation, to produce such marvels as white blackberries, Ice Cube lettuce and Rio Red grapefruit.

"The label sparks heated debate," she said. "Genetically modified foods are as safe to eat as foods made from plants modified by more traditional methods of plant breeding. In fact, they are very probably safer, simply because they undergo testing that has never been required for food plants modified either by traditional breeding techniques or by mutagenesis, both of which can alter a plant's chemical composition.

Rita Colwell, the University of Maryland researcher of marine microbes, most notably the causative agent of pandemic cholera, joined Fedoroff as the only women in both groups of awardees.

Fedoroff noted, "The most important thing is to find something that catches your imagination -- and then devote yourself to it, irrespective of possible rewards."
Reprinted from Penn State Live

If you have articles or stories of interest, please submit them to Tom Penkala, State College Choral Society General Manager, e-mail katepenkala@comcast.net.

We love to hear what is going on with our membership.

