



VALLEY SYMPHONY ASSOCIATION ORCHESTRA & CHORUS

SEASON 52 | 2023-2024

In partnership with

The David
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CLASSIC DRAMA
FEEL THE MUSIC

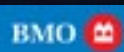


CHRISTMAS BY CANDLELIGHT
'TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS



Concert
Partner

Concert
Partner





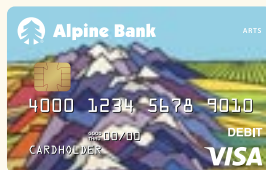
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1973-2023
**YEARS
YOUNG**



**VALLEY SYMPHONY
ASSOCIATION
ORCHESTRA & CHORUS**

SEASON 52 | 2023-2024

In partnership with

**The David &
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**COLORADO
OUTDOORS**



FREE

POPS IN THE PARK: FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA

Sat 9/9/23

6pm Montrose Community Band | 7pm Orchestra & Chorus

DMEA ELEVATE

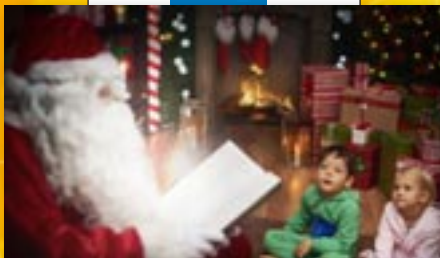


CLASSIC DRAMA: FEEL THE MUSIC

Sat 11/11/23 6:30pm | Sun 11/12/23 3pm

Orchestra

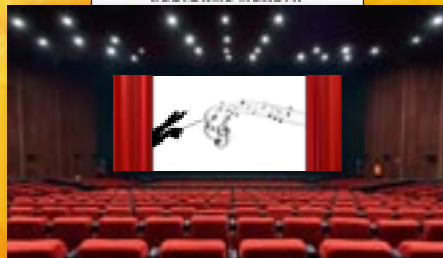
BMO



**CHRISTMAS BY CANDLELIGHT:
'TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS**

Fri 12/15/23 7pm | Sat 12/16/23 6:30 pm | Orchestra & Chorus

**MONTROSE
REGIONAL HEALTH**



**A NIGHT AT THE MOVIES:
HOLLYWOOD FAVORITES, STARRING THE CLASSICS**

Sat 2/24/24 6:30pm | Sun 2/25/24 3pm | Orchestra

**BUDGET
BLINDS**



HEAVEN & BLUEGRASS: SINGING THE SACRED

Sat 3/30/24 6:30pm | Sun 3/31/24 3pm

Chorus

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rites of spring: RHYTHMS OF NATURE

Sat 4/20/24 6:30pm | Sun 4/21/24 3pm

Orchestra

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Welcome! Season 52 marks a new chapter in myriad ways for the VSA.

We're back to our familiar six-concert series. We got off to a great start with *Pops in the Park: From Sea to Shining Sea*, where we debuted a new face to the organization, our new Music Director and Orchestra Conductor Troy Raper. We are also pleased to welcome back our delightful Chorus Conductor Katy Kristoffersen for her third season.

VSA FOUNDERS

Dr. Ted Dickinson
Bernard & Erma Hast
Girts & Ina Krumins
Wilma Lowell
Robert Phillips &
Joan Fetters Meikle
Robert & Norma Vold

We announce an approaching bittersweet farewell at season's end to the familiar faces of VSA Board President Hartland Clubb and Secretary/Treasurer Priscilla Fry. Each has devoted roughly 15 years to leading the VSA—and longer than that as volunteer musicians. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to them for their dedication and steadfastness to the organization, and extend our gratitude to them for holding the VSA together through many tumultuous years. What they have accomplished and given in service, loyalty, and contributions of their time, talent, and treasure to the VSA and our regional musical community is no small thing.

Our thanks also go out to Vice President Vince Snowbarger, who moved off the board in August, for his year of volunteerism.

With these three retirements, the VSA is looking to onboard 3+ members to the leadership team who are passionate about the continued success of the VSA, its future, and its positive impact on the Western Slope. To this end, we are recruiting members for the advisory committee, which directly advises the board. Members of this committee will be brought up to speed on the administrative workings of the VSA, so that they may assess their level of interest in becoming board members from an informed perspective. They will also advise and assist the VSA during this time of transition to ensure that we will continue to bring classical music to life. You are encouraged, invited, and welcome to join this committee! Please let us know if you are interested.

There are so many people, businesses, and organizations to thank.

We now have two season partners, both long-time and generous supporters: Cimarron Wealth Management is back for a second year; and the David Mize Family has quietly supported all types of Western Slope non-profit organizations for decades—including the VSA.

continued p.5

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD cont

Alpine Bank continues its bighearted support of our mobile billboard. TEI Rock Drills has lavished our percussion section with all sorts of new toys to play with and bang on, so their impact will be heard—loud and clear—especially through our beautiful new timpani.

With the help of our incredibly benevolent media sponsors, we're able to spread the word about our organization, our concerts, and our mission: special thanks to Townsquare Media, Budget Blinds, the City of Montrose, Montrose Daily Press/Delta County Independent, the Beacon, and Go Big Banners.

Ultimately, all of the hard work behind the scenes, along with all of the musical preparation, comes down to the moment our volunteer musicians take the stage to share beautiful music with you, our regional audience. Your presence and the appreciation you show us makes each performance so very special to each of us. To our partners, sponsors, underwriters, advertisers, donors, volunteers, and musicians, thank you for giving us the opportunity to share this concert with our audiences and bring classical music to life!

Hartland H. Clubb, Jr., President

Priscilla Fry, Secretary/Treasurer

Stephanie Helleckson, Member-At-Large

**"MUSIC GIVES A SOUL TO THE
UNIVERSE, WINGS TO THE MIND,
FLIGHT TO THE IMAGINATION AND
LIFE TO EVERYTHING." - PLATO**



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Holly Jolly Wrangler



Tree Lighting



Nov 24 • 5:30 pm
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Santa's Cabin



Nov 24 • 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Nov 25 • 2 - 4 pm
Dec 9 • 4 - 6 pm
Dec 16 • 4 - 6 pm
Dec 22 • 4 - 6 pm
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Letters to Santa



Nov 24 - Dec 17
Bring your letter and wish
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on Main St, east of
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SALUTE TO OUR ROOTS: Dedication



Kelly and Wendy Neill

For all they've done for the VSA, we dedicate our Season 52 fall performances to the Neills, for their early influence on the VSA Chorus, and for Wendy as our longtime webmaster.

Kelly grew up in Paonia and learned to love music as a student of Jan Tuin, Vivian Cheney, and Karl Hunerwadel. After earning three college music degrees and marrying Wendy, Kelly moved back to the Western Slope as the band director at Delta High School and Middle School. No community choir existed at the time, so the couple started the Grand Mesa Singers in 1998, with Kelly as the music director and Wendy as the administrator. They started with just 13 singers at Delta's First Baptist on April 4, 1998. Word spread, and the next year the group expanded to 44 singers from all over the Uncompahgre, North Fork, and Grand Valleys. By 2002, they had a group of 70. That year, they combined with other vocal groups to become the VSA Chorus.

Christmas 2001 is one of Wendy's fondest memories. It was just three months after the 9/11 attacks, and she and Kelly sang the duet "The Prayer" with 100 chorus members and a small group of VSA musicians. It was a magical evening of musical supplication to God for peace. The lyrics carried extra meaning that Christmas: "Lead us to a place, guide us with your grace to a place where we'll be safe."

In 2004, they moved to Arkansas when Kelly was hired by Harding University to teach vocal and choral music. From 2007-2009, Harding gave him leave to get his doctorate in voice performance from the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory. He returned to teach at Harding for another 13 years, conducting the concert choir and the chamber singers, and teaching various music classes. Wendy began Perfect Fit Web Design in 2004 and has been the VSA's webmaster since 2006. She builds and maintains websites for about 70 churches, non-profits, and businesses.

In 2022, Kelly finished a master's degree in counseling and went into full-time ministry. He is now the lead minister at the Bentonville Church of Christ in Arkansas and recently opened Wilderness Counseling, LLC.

Wendy is about to release a six-week Bible study entitled "Looking Forward to Heaven." She is a speaker at women's retreats, works part-time for Iron Rose Sister Ministries, and sings in the Symphony of Northwest Arkansas's SONA Singers.

The couple have three grown daughters (two who were born during their time on the Western Slope), two sons-in-law, and a precious two-year-old granddaughter.

If you'd like to reconnect with them, Wendy can be found on Facebook. They send their love to all the VSA chorus and musicians.

SALUTE TO OUR ROOTS: Founder

Wilma (Kendrick) Lowell had a passion for music that took flight when she left Eckert, CO, in 1941 to attend the University of Denver on a music scholarship. Within the span of a year, her life path changed dramatically with the onset of WW II. She traded learning music theory and practicing, for weather forecasting and decoding as a Navy Wave. While in the Navy, she married an Army Air Force officer from Cedaredge, Charles (Chuck) Lowell.



Wilma Lowell

After the war, Wilma settled into life as a military wife and mother of daughters, Terry and D.Jo. In the mid 1950s, her love of music emerged from the shadows and again became a priority. Wilma returned to college and completed her music degree. She taught piano from then until her death at the age of 88. Throughout Chuck's career in the Air Force, Wilma honed her skills for organization and developing programs to meet community needs: a 24/7 military base day care center, Turkish/American liaison for language and music, Girl Scouts, and a hobby store in Delta, to name a few.

Retirement saw the Lowell's return to Eckert with their young son, David. It wasn't long before their grown daughters and families also moved to Eckert. Music was a family staple in the Lowell home. Terry and D.Jo started piano and violin at an early age and continued their musical training in college. Years later, young David started learning several instruments. Wilma recognized that little opportunity existed in the area for playing classical music, and she didn't like instruments gathering dust. Subsequently, she began hosting weekly music nights as a way for her family and friends to keep their instruments well dusted!

Eventually, one of those music nights led to a conversation about the lack of a public venue for more classical musicians to play on a regular basis. The question of starting a local orchestra was raised. Wilma needed no additional encouragement, and with the help of a few others—now known along with Wilma as “VSA Founders”—musical magic quickly happened.

The newly organized Valley Symphony had its first concert in Cedaredge in 1971. Fifty-three years later, the Valley Symphony Association continues to thrive.



In musical memory of Ramona Good

A faithful contributor of funding and
bassoonists since 1984.



Her son, Paul Good, played bassoon parts on euphonium (1984–1998), and daughter, Carol Franklin, has played bassoon with the VSA since 1998.

Our gratitude to everyone who donated to the VSA in Ramona's memory.



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Troy Raper

TROY RAPER

Orchestra Conductor & Music Director

Musician, educator, and Colorado native Troy Raper began his teaching career in 1988 and retired from District #51 in 2022 after 31 years in education. He holds a bachelor's degree in music education from the University of Northern Colorado, where he graduated with honors, and a master's degree in education from Lesley University with an emphasis in educational technology.

During his long career, Raper's school orchestras were consistently awarded superior ratings at music festivals from Palisade to Disneyland. Many former students are now accomplished professional teachers and performers around the country.

As an active advocate in Colorado for teaching, Raper spent 10 years as chair/board member for the Colorado All State Orchestra Governing Board, helping to create a new charter and direction for the organization. He has also served as a board member of the Colorado Chapter of the American String Teachers Association, and as a member of the Colorado Music Educators Association State Board. He currently serves as production manager and librarian to the Grand Junction Symphony Orchestra (GJSO).

Raper is an accomplished musician with broad performing experience. He has played with the Greeley, Ft. Collins, Cheyenne, Durango, and Crested Butte festival orchestras and sits as principal bassist for the GJSO. He performs regularly in various jazz bands, recording studios, and as a concert soloist.

His hobbies and personal interests include spending time with his family. His wife, Lori, is an accomplished professional artist and teacher, and their adult daughters, Mandolyn and Melody, both work in careers in music and teaching. He enjoys arranging music for strings, computer games, mountain biking, riding his motorcycle, and remodeling projects in his new home.



VSA Orchestra Conductors

Walter Birkedahl	1970-1980	Season 1 - 9
Antonia Brico *	11/1978	Season 8
Rodney Ash *	2/1979	Season 8
Rodney Ash	1980-1985	Season 10 - 14
Keith Cochrane	1985-1989	Season 15 - 18
Dr. James Horton	1989-1993	Season 19 - 22
Michael J. Kern	1993-2022	Season 23 - 50
Scott Betts *	9/2022	Season 51
Troy Raper *	12/2022	Season 51
Charlotte Ruth Harrison *	2/2023	Season 51
Steven Aguiló-Arbues *	4/2023	Season 51
Troy Raper	2023	Season 52

* guest conductors Note: Seasons run from fall through spring

SEASON 52 ORCHESTRA ROSTER

Troy Raper (Grand Junction), Conductor and Music Director

♪ *Donnin Custer & Eunice Acker*

Violin

Sandy Sundstrom (Grand Junction)
Concertmaster
Rachael King (Austin)
Principal 2nd Violin *
Sandra Chern (Telluride)
Maggie Cline (Olathe)
Aaron Clubb (Grand Junction)
Dawnell Cook (Montrose)
Talitha Costello (Grand Junction)
Lois Drysdale (Delta)
Vince Farnsworth (Montrose)
Laurie Fowler (Ridgway)
Li Gomez (Montrose)
Stephanie Helleckson (Crested Butte)
Chase Houck (Grand Junction)
John Kim (Telluride)
Rachel Lavadie (Grand Junction)
D.Jo Lowell (Grand Junction)
Julie Martensen (Montrose)
Chris O'Leary (Ouray)
Tasha Pratt (Montrose)
Maya Varela (Olathe)
Hannah Wieder (Montrose)
♪ *Dr. Mary Kleinsorge, DC (First violins)*
♪ *Farnsworth Gallery (Second violins)*

Viola

Julie Appelhanz (Montrose) *
John Fuerst (Grand Junction)
Sage Koppana (Paonia)
Dan Lamar (Montrose)
♪ *Bill Starnes*
♪ *First Contact Medical Specialists:
Montrose Emergency Physicians*

Cello

Carissa Docteur (Grand Junction) *
Esther Alsum (Paonia)
Martha Ditto (Delta)
Brent Helleckson (Paonia)
Jacob Helleckson (Paonia)
Tim Larson (Montrose)
Mary Novak (Grand Junction)
Beth Pertz (Delta)
Chelsea Yamaguchi (Grand Junction)
♪ *Mary Novak*

Bass

Mike Kristoffersen (Ridgway) *
Richard Hansen (Delta)
Laura Payne (Montrose)
Charlotte Simkins (Montrose)
♪ *MusicalMud Studios, LLC*

Oboe

Sammie Alteri (Montrose)

Flute/Piccolo

Edie Burgess (Eckert) *
Desirée Simler (Delta)

Clarinet

Holly Burgess (Montrose) *
Stacey Ryan (Montrose)
♪ *Rounds & Brooks CPAs PC*

Bass Clarinet

Toby King (Austin)
Karla Miller (Palisade)

Bassoon

Carol Franklin (Grand Junction) *
Toru Arisawa (Grand Junction)
♪ *In memory of Ramona Good*

Alto Sax

Jordan Carls (Montrose)
Toby King (Austin)

French Horn

Sheri Williams (Cedaredge) *
Susan Conrad (Ouray)
Clint Miller (Palisade)
Jeff Williams (Cedaredge)
♪ *Marble Roots, LLC*

Trumpet

Kendra Sitton (Montrose) *
Janet Myer (Cedaredge)
Dave Reddish (Montrose)

Trombone

Cindy Swanson (Montrose) *
Bruce Mixter (Cedaredge)
Christian Pfretzschnier (Grand Junction)

Piano/Keyboard

Anne Koehler (Montrose)
♪ *Cedar Point Health*

Percussion/Timpani

Anne Clayton (Delta) *
Andrew Bruington (Olathe)
Gary Cook (Crested Butte)
Gabe Flores (Montrose)
Issac Lavadie (Grand Junction)
♪ *The George Miller Family*
♪ *Western Group Inc.*

*Denotes principal chair ♪ Denotes section underwriter



Katy Kristoffersen

KATY KRISTOFFERSEN

Chorus Conductor

Katy Kristoffersen’s 20 years of experience in coaching, accompanying, conducting, and teaching are backed by undergraduate degrees in music and psychology (Miami University, OH) and a master’s in music education (College of Mount St. Joseph).

Enamored by music from the start, at 2 she was reaching for the piano to emulate her talented older siblings. She started composing piano pieces at 4 and accompanying church choirs by 12.

As an undergrad, Katy had the great privilege of studying with Dr. Ethan Sperry, a world-renowned name in the choral and world-music spheres. He helped to draw out her confidence as an arranger and composer. Katy dated Mike Kristoffersen (contrabass) throughout college, which led to her accompanying every single string bass player in the university. She also caught the eye of bass professor, Dr. Steve Ullery, who requested that she accompany his recital as well as the great Edgar Meyer when he visited to teach a master class.

“Accompanist” is a good metaphor for Katy's skillset, although “joyful forklift” is apt, too. Katy thrives when in service of elevating people around her. This energy has drawn her to stretch her skills outward in several directions: through the lens of music (choral direction, music director, private teacher, music educator, accompanist), and through the lens of mindfulness (teaching her original curriculum to corporate and government agencies, private coaching, and starting her own mindfulness course with Mike).

When not hopping from one responsibility to the next, you might find Katy and Mike trail running near their Ridgway home, hiking with their kids, or just sitting outside in the awe and beauty that drew them here in the first place.

VSA Chorus Conductors

Kelly Neill	2002-2004	Season 31 - 33
Chris Davis	12/2004	Season 34
Aleta Jupille	03/2005	Season 34
Chris Davis	2005-2007	Season 35 - 36
Bethany Ward	12/2007	Season 37
Mary Anne Rathburn	4/2008	Season 37
Bethany Ward	2008-2010	Season 38 - 39
Lenore Hample	2010-2013	Season 40 - 42
Jan Tuin	2013-2017	Season 43 - 46
Allyson Connelly	2017-2019	Season 47 - 49
Katy Kristoffersen	2021-present	Season 50 - present

Note: Seasons run from fall through spring



SEASON 52 CHORUS ROSTER

Katy Kristoffersen (Ridgway), Conductor

♪ Peggy Kristoffersen

Accompanist

Susan Decker (Montrose)

♪ *The Ruthanna B. Snow Charitable Foundation*

Soprano 1

Diane Balk (Montrose)

Charlotte Heath (Montrose)

Kaitlynn Hurford (Montrose)

Julie Laube (Montrose)

Carol Mulvaney (Montrose)

Mary Redmond (Montrose)

Luanne Svaldi (Montrose)

Michelle Taylor (Olathe)

Bethany Ward (Montrose)

♪ *The Ruthanna B. Snow Charitable Foundation*

Soprano 2

Christine Bloss (Montrose)

Kathy Foglesong (Montrose)

Ann Holmes (Montrose)

Cathy Hoffman (Montrose)

Barb Krebs (Montrose)

Sarah Morales (Montrose)

Amiee Rawlings (Montrose)

Rachel Taylor (Olathe)

Demeris York (Delta)

♪ *Cathy & Jim Hoffman*

Alto 1

Brenda Anderson (Cedaredge)

Haley Benson (Cedaredge)

Judy Bunyard (Montrose)

Cheryl Harshman (Montrose)

Anne Harper (Montrose)

Lorchin Pulsifer (Delta)

Sara Schifino (Montrose)

Philis Schuhmann (Cedaredge)

Olivia Taylor (Olathe)

Rebecca Taylor (Olathe)

Sue Warren (Montrose)

♪ *The Ruthanna B. Snow Charitable Foundation*

♪ *Shirley Richardson Taylor*

Alto 2

Melissa Chapple (Montrose)

Sue Decker (Montrose)

Dianne McCully (Cedaredge)

Chris Munday (Montrose)

Liz Soler (Montrose)

Anna Strong (Montrose)

Marka Wellington (Cedaredge)

♪ *The Ruthanna B. Snow Charitable Foundation*

♪ *Sprague Mayger & Priscilla Fry*

Tenor 1

Deborah Gordon (Montrose)

Sam Kevan (Austin)

Bonnie Koehler (Delta)

Kevin Pulsipher (Delta)

♪ *Vince and Carolyn Snowbarger*

Tenor 2

Terry Belt (Delta)

Mike Edwards (Ridgway)

Jonathan Heath (Montrose)

Jim Hoffman (Montrose)

Judy Lokey (Montrose)

Erv Rawlings (Montrose)

Vince Snowbarger (Ridgway)

♪ *Joan Moyer*

Bass 1

Dave Conrad (Ouray)

Ted Cole (Montrose)

M. Ray Gilbert (Cedaredge)

Nathan Howe (Montrose)

Keith Laube (Montrose)

Bob McCormac (Cedaredge)

Seth Ryan (Montrose)

Van Tuin (Paonia)

♪ *The George Miller Family*

Bass 2

Rod Bunyard (Montrose)

Robin Nicholoff (Hotchkiss)

Jim Parks (Montrose)

John Thrasher (Delta)

♪ *Cole Custom Construction*

♪ *Denotes section underwriter*



Sandra Sundstrom

SANDRA SUNDSTROM

Concertmaster

Sandy grew up in Colorado Springs, CO, in a family of musicians. She was involved in orchestras, choirs, and bands throughout her youth, and earned her bachelor of music in education with an instrumental major and choral minor from Arizona State University. Sandy has taught band, choir, and orchestra in all levels of education, elementary through college.

In 2010, she and her family moved to Grand Junction. Sandy is a violinist with the Grand Junction Symphony

Orchestra (GJSO), High Desert Opera, and Rockestra, and has an active private studio teaching violin, viola, and cello. Her quartet performs in churches and for area events, and she plays in regional gigs, performs regularly in Aspen for summer weddings, and is a recurring violin coach for Camp Con Brio. Sandy adjudicates for the District 51 Solo/Ensemble, local auditions, and judged the Colorado West Invitational Music Festival in 2013. She was an active member of the GJSO Board for many years and served on their music director search committee.

In 2013, she started as a paraprofessional in Mesa County School District. Sandy assists orchestras at several middle schools, and in 2014, she was a long-term sub for choirs at a local high school.

Sandy and her husband have two daughters, a son, and three grandchildren. They absolutely love living in Grand Junction: the people, surrounding views, and connections they've made.

What is a concertmaster? The concertmaster is the principal or “first chair” violinist who leads the orchestra in its tuning prior to the concert and customarily plays all violin solos within pieces. As the leader of the entire string section, the concertmaster also marks the orchestra’s scores with the appropriate bowings to ensure all the strings are moving and playing in unison, and translates instructions from the conductor into specific technical language for strings.

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Come see us!



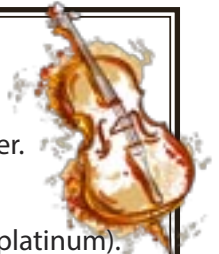
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ESSENTIAL *Chamber* ORCHESTRA FEAT. GJSO's Chamber Players

Friday | **Nov 17, 2023** | 7:30pm
First Presbyterian Church
This concert is a celebration of the intimate dialogue between musicians, where every instrument is a distinct voice contributing to a harmonious narrative.

CANADIAN BRASS HOLIDAY *Pops*

Tuesday | **Dec 12, 2023** | 7:30pm
The Avalon Theatre
World famous brass group boldly brings in the Holidays. In an extraordinary collaboration, the internationally acclaimed Canadian Brass will join forces with our very own Symphony Orchestra to bring you Christmas songs and other holiday favorites.

HOLIDAY CONCERT "THE JOY OF THE SEASON" *Western Colorado Chorale*

Monday | **Dec 18, 2023** | 7:30 pm
Tuesday | **Dec 19, 2023** | 3:00 pm
Love Recital Hall, Moss Performing Arts Center; CMU
This popular Western Colorado Chorale holiday concert is a must hear featuring the Charisma chorus, a children's choir, and joyful music of the season.

45TH
SEASON

Bold Strokes



NOTHIN' BUT THE BLUES *Pops* STARRING SHAYNA STEELE

Saturday | **Jan 13, 2024** | 7:30pm
The Avalon Theatre
GJSO joins forces with the extraordinary Shayna Steele, known for her powerhouse vocals and dynamic stage presence, creating an unforgettable evening.

BEETHOVEN UND FREUNDE *Classics* With a Piano Concerto by Adam Żukiewicz

Sat | **Feb 10, 2024** | 7:30pm
Sun | **Feb 11, 2024** | 1:00pm
The Avalon Theatre
Beethoven's Symphony No. 4 & Żukiewicz delight with Chopin's 1st Piano Concerto. William C. White guest conducts.

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FEATURED MUSICIAN

D.Jo Lowell - Violin I

D.Jo studied piano and violin from an early age, having inherited her love of classical music from her mother, Wilma, who taught piano lessons for decades. As a young mother living in Eckert, D.Jo was an original member of the newly-organized Valley Symphony in Delta County—founded by Wilma.



D.Jo Lowell

Life changes resulted in D.Jo returning to college. While completing her undergraduate and graduate degrees, playing music dropped into the shadows.

Following retirement from her career as a Presbyterian minister and chaplain, she returned to Delta County with her wife, Sue, and was amazed to discover that the VSA was alive and flourishing. Inspired by a VSA concert in 2019, D.Jo ended her 40-plus year hiatus from the violin by starting lessons with former VSA Concertmaster Deb TenNapel. “I got the violin back up but had no muscle memory; I couldn’t play it,” she said. “I told Deb that my goal was to return to the symphony and be in the first violin section.” D.Jo rejoined the VSA for the 50th season in 2021 at the *Christmas by Candlelight* concerts.

“I absolutely love playing in the symphony again and feel my musical life has come full circle.”

She lives in Grand Junction where she continues violin lessons and spends time practicing, fishing, reading, and enjoying life with her children, grandchildren, and Sue.

“My mother always thought it was unfortunate that there was nowhere for people to play their instruments. This was her dream. She would be grinning ear-to-ear with satisfaction at what the VSA has become.”



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Classic Drama: Feel the Music

CONCERT PROGRAM

London Symphony #104 - Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

L'Arlesienne Suite No. 1 - I. Prelude II. Menuetto - Georges Bizet (1838-1875)

Intermission

Air in D Major - Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Strings Only

Symphony No. 94 - "Surprise" Movement #2 - II. Andante
Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)
Presentation of Percussion Instrument Underwriter - TEI Rock Drills

Themes from **The Sorcerer's Apprentice** - Paul Dukas (1865-1935)

On the Steppes of Central Asia - Alexander Borodin (1833-1887)

"Triumphal March" from the opera **Aida** - Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

From the Music Director

Our *Classic Drama* concert showcases the rich tapestry of emotions we can experience. I truly feel that any time dedicated to engaging with art—be it listening, performing, or crafting—is a precious gift, and it brings me immense happiness to share this gift with you.

Every musical piece we encounter imprints itself with a unique emotion or memory. There are times when a melancholic tune uplifts us, or a cheerful melody evokes challenging memories. Each piece selected for today's concert resonates deeply with my own memories and emotions.

As we share our performance, I hope the music touches each of you in your own unique way. Our hope is that by the end, you will carry new memories and a glimpse of the joy, turmoil, and fervor the original composers intended.



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Classic Drama: Feel the Music

CONCERT NOTES

Franz Joseph Haydn's *Symphony No. 104*, also known as the "London Symphony," stands as a crowning achievement in the composer's illustrious career and a testament to his enduring influence on classical music. Composed in 1795-1796, it represents the pinnacle of Haydn's symphonic output and encapsulates the spirit of the late 18th-century Viennese symphonic tradition.

One of the *Symphony No. 104's* distinguishing features is its grandeur, which reflects Haydn's awareness of the expanding scale of orchestral performances in his time. This symphony was specifically composed for his two visits to London, and it catered to the taste of the British audience for larger and more majestic symphonies.

Georges Bizet's *L'Arlésienne Suite No. 1* transports audiences to the sun-drenched landscapes and lively villages of Provence, a region celebrated for its rich cultural tapestry. This suite, drawn from Bizet's incidental music for Alphonse Daudet's play *L'Arlésienne*, unfolds like a vivid musical travelogue, revealing the essence of this picturesque corner of southern France.

The suite commences with the "Prelude," a poignant and evocative movement that sets the stage for the dramatic narrative. Here, Bizet's music is a canvas upon which the soul of Provence is painted.

Following the "Prelude," the "Minuet" offers a delightful contrast. This movement is a lively and elegant dance, evoking the heartwarming scenes of a Provençal village square. The music sparkles with vivacity, as strings and woodwinds playfully interact. The "Minuet" captures the spirited, convivial nature of the Provençal people, inviting listeners to partake in their joyful celebrations. It is a testament to Bizet's ability to infuse his compositions with both charm and sophistication.

Johann Sebastian Bach's *Air in D Major*, famously known as the "Air on the G String," is a pinnacle of Baroque elegance. Composed as part of his *Orchestral Suite No. 3 in D major, BWV 1068*, it showcases Bach's mastery of melody and harmony. Its serene and timeless beauty is characterized by a flowing, lyrical melody that has the ability to transport listeners to a realm of tranquility and grace. The piece's nickname, "Air on the G String," reflects its popular adaptation for solo violin, emphasizing the simplicity and purity of the main theme. This composition stands as a testament to Bach's enduring influence on classical music.

Franz Joseph Haydn's *Symphony No. 94 in G major*, commonly known as the "Surprise Symphony," is a remarkable composition, celebrated for its engaging and somewhat unexpected second movement. Composed in 1791 during Haydn's time in London, this symphony is a prime example of his wit and creativity.

Classic Drama: Feel the Music

CONCERT NOTES cont

The second movement of the *Symphony No. 94* is an "Andante" marked by its famous surprise element. Haydn, known for his keen sense of humor, introduces a tranquil and gentle theme, which initially lulls the listener into a state of serenity. However, at a certain point in the movement, there is an abrupt and loud chord, often referred to as the "surprise," that startles the audience. This sudden fortissimo burst serves as a humorous twist within the otherwise peaceful movement, revealing Haydn's penchant for musical humor.

Paul Dukas' *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* is a captivating symphonic poem composed in 1897. Inspired by Goethe's classic tale, it masterfully narrates the misadventures of a young sorcerer's apprentice who, in a moment of curiosity, invokes a magical spell to animate a broom to perform his chores. Its timeless appeal was further enhanced by its inclusion in Disney's *Fantasia*, ensuring its place as a beloved and enduring piece in the world of classical music.

In the Steppes of Central Asia is a musical masterpiece by **Alexander Borodin**, a prominent Russian composer. Composed in 1880, it paints a vivid musical picture of the vast Central Asian landscape. Borodin skillfully weaves Russian and Asian themes together, creating a rich tapestry of melodies that evoke a sense of boundless expanse and nomadic life.

Giuseppe Verdi's "Triumphal March" from his opera *Aida* is a stirring and iconic piece of music that stands as a testament to the composer's genius. *Aida* is set in ancient Egypt and tells a tragic love story amidst the backdrop of war and conflict. The "Triumphal March" comes at the end of Act II and is one of the opera's most famous and grandiose moments.

Verdi's mastery in this piece lies not only in its musical brilliance but also in its ability to convey the contrasting emotions of triumph and love. While the march exudes pomp and pageantry, it also underscores the inner turmoil of the characters, particularly the love triangle between Radamès, Aida, and Amneris.



Christmas By Candlelight: 'Twas the Night Before Christmas

CONCERT PROGRAM

Hark the Herald Angels Sing Felix Mendelsohn/Arr. Ted Ricketts
Orchestra

Hark the Herald Angels Sing Felix Mendelsohn/Arr. John Rutter
Chorus and Orchestra

Sing We Now of Christmas Arr. Fred Prentice
Chorus

O Holy Night Adams/Arr. R. Clausen
Orchestra

Riu, Riu, Chiu Anonymous
Chorus

Soloists
Robin Nicholoff, Sara Schifino, Marka Wellington, Sarah Morales,
Demeris York, Sue Warren, Michelle Taylor

Fantasia on Christmas Carols Ralph Vaughn Williams / Arr. Doug Wagner
Chorus and Orchestra

Soloists
Nathan Howe, Bethany Ward, Seth Ryan

I'll be BACH for Christmas Michael Hopkins
Strings Only

Selections from ***The Polar Express*** Michael Story / Alan Silvestri
Orchestra

Reading of **“'Twas the Night Before Christmas”**
By Magic Circle Players Gary Hokit and Patti Scriffiny

Intermission

Christmas By Candlelight: 'Twas the Night Before Christmas

CONCERT PROGRAM cont

Christmas Day

Gustav Holst
Chorus and Orchestra

Julie Laube, Soprano; Charlotte Heath, Mezzo-Soprano;
Bob McCormac, Tenor; Ted Cole, Bass

Ave Maria

Traditional/ Arr. John Rutter
Chorus

Soloists
John Thrasher, Jonathan Heath, Vince Snowbarger

“Three Dances” from *The Nutcracker*

P.I. Tchaikovsky / Arr. McAllister
Orchestra

Personent Hodie

John Rutter
Chorus

A Christmas Festival

Leroy Anderson
Orchestra

“Hallelujah Chorus” from *The Messiah*

George Frederick Handel
Chorus and Orchestra

Former members of the chorus are invited to the stage
to sing the “Hallelujah Chorus”

Fom the Conductors

The VSA is thrilled to unveil our yearly *Christmas by Candlelight* concert. This year's lineup boasts timeless classics like the “Hallelujah Chorus” and Leroy Anderson's *A Christmas Festival*. We're also eager to perform Gustav Holst's *Christmas Day*, a splendid ensemble of 1910 Christmas carols showcasing both chorus and orchestra. These carols, each introduced one by one, gradually merge, culminating in a resplendent finale that epitomizes the spirit of Christmas. Being musicians and conductors during this melodious season is an absolute joy. The opportunity to infuse the atmosphere with musical merriment truly marks this as the most magical time of the year. Thank you for joining us for *Christmas by Candlelight* to immerse yourself in the harmonious heart of the festive season.

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Christmas By Candlelight: 'Twas the Night Before Christmas

CONCERT NOTES

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing is a timeless Christmas carol that has been embraced by countless generations during the festive season. Written in the 18th century by Charles Wesley, the lyrics of this song capture the essence of Christmas: the birth of Jesus Christ, and the profound hope and joy that this event brought to the world. The music, penned by **Felix Mendelssohn**, beautifully complements the lyrics. Its uplifting melody and harmonious chords evoke feelings of celebration, gratitude, and reverence. Over time, the carol has been adapted and performed in numerous styles and languages, further cementing its universal appeal.

In *Sing We Now of Christmas*, **Fred Prentice** teaches a master class on how to build a steady crescendo. Listen for the growing complexity in harmony, rhythm, and volume as the piece progresses to its fabulous finish.

While the origin of *Riu Riu Chiu* is officially unknown, it is often attributed to **Mateo Flecha the Elder**, who lived in the first half of the 16th century. The piece is written in the style of a Spanish villancico, or a common poetic/musical form from the time. Essentially, the gist of the piece is this: "With a cry of *Riu, riu, chiu, the kingfisher, God kept the wolf from our Lamb.*" The text is a beautifully poetic description of the nativity of Christ and the Immaculate Conception.

Ralph Vaughan Williams, one of the most influential English composers of the 20th century, had an innate ability to evoke the spirit of England's pastoral landscapes and its deep-rooted folk traditions. His works are characterized by their lyrical beauty, and this is especially true for his Christmas music.

Gustav Holst's *Christmas Day* is a choral fantasy on old carols, weaving together a tapestry of melodies that evoke the festive spirit of the Christmas season. Holst, an English composer best known for his orchestral suite *The Planets*, had a deep interest in folk songs and traditional melodies. *Christmas Day* stands as a testament to his ability to blend these age-old tunes into something fresh and evocative. Composed in 1910, *Christmas Day* begins with the familiar and beloved carol "Good Christian Men, Rejoice." As the piece progresses, Holst seamlessly transitions between various carols, including "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen," "Come, Ye Lofty, Come, Ye Lowly," and "The First Noel." This masterful integration of different melodies gives the piece a sense of journey—from the quiet anticipation of Christmas Eve to the jubilant celebration of Christmas morning.

Christmas By Candlelight: 'Twas the Night Before Christmas

CONCERT NOTES cont

Published in 1964, *Ave Maria* made the composer, **Franz Biebl**, a favorite among choruses around the world. When you listen to the piece, it feels like being hit with waves of gorgeous sound, over and over again. Listen for repeated ascending scales—almost like prayers floating up to heaven. And for the final nine measures, notice the rising “Amen” distributed among all singers—walking up a simple scale to the best finish ever.

Personent Hodie by **John Rutter** is an absolute blast for singers and audiences alike. It is rhythmic in the most basic way: with repeated half-note pulses on a single syllable that make you want to dance! Robert Cummings, writing in the *Allmusic* guide, states that the “...melody is glorious and ebullient in its lively, triumphant manner. It largely consists of bright, resolute three-note phrases whose overall structure gradually rises, then descends.” The piece tells the story of Jesus’ birth with the feeling of bells ringing and angels singing!

Leroy Anderson's *A Christmas Festival* is an iconic medley of beloved Christmas carols, masterfully woven into a symphonic tapestry. Composed in 1950, the piece was originally written for the Boston Pops Orchestra, and under the baton of legendary conductor Arthur Fiedler. Anderson's genius lies in his ability to seamlessly transition between these carols, creating a cohesive narrative that captures the essence of the holiday season.

The “Hallelujah Chorus” stands as one of the most recognized and celebrated pieces in Western choral music. This triumphant chorus is part of **George Frideric Handel's** *Messiah*, an oratorio composed in 1741. Though *Messiah* encompasses the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, it is the “Hallelujah Chorus” that often resonates most deeply with audiences, encapsulating the joy and majesty of the work.

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Volunteer orchestral and choral groups like the VSA are an outcropping from the concept of the American community band, which predates the Civil War. Immigrants brought the band tradition with them to the US, where thousands of ordinary citizens participated in these ensembles.

After the Civil War, census figures indicated that, across the country, there were about 10,000 community bands. Town bands were admired and provided townspeople with popular, light entertainment for concerts. While the quality of performance varied, the enjoyment and value to each town's social and cultural climate is undeniable.

Community bands experienced a great dying out after World War I, victims of a cultural shift to mass media, radio, and more, all which led to a rise in school music programs. The increased number of musicians who learned an instrument and played in high school and college bands but did not pursue music as a career also provided a rich pool of amateur talent seeking an outlet for their musical abilities. As a result—and ironically—there was once again a rise in participation in community bands.

While there will always be music teachers and professional musicians participating in volunteer music performance groups like the VSA, the majority of members come from professions that are not related to music. Most are amateurs who enjoyed playing in school and missed the camaraderie and music-making. Others are students looking to gain more rehearsal time and learn from more experienced musicians.

These ensembles give *everyone*, regardless of their age or chosen career path, a place to play their instrument, contribute to their community, and most especially, to enjoy themselves while making music.



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FEATURED MUSICIAN

Barb Krebs - Soprano 2

Barb Krebs is a “charter member” of the VSA Chorus. In 2001 she joined the Grand Mesa Singers, one of various choral groups that were seasonal contributors to the VSA, mainly at Christmas concerts, and in 2002, these choral groups combined and came under the VSA umbrella to create the VSA Chorus.



Barb Krebs

Although she’s had no formal voice training, Barb has been singing with her family at home, on car trips, and at Girl Scout camp. It was, and has always been, one of her favorite activities. At South High School in Denver, she sang with the acapella concert choir under the direction of Richard Eichenberger. Each year the choir learned one challenging Bach double-choir motet (a piece of sacred choral music) as part of their repertoire. After performing it numerous times, it was recorded at the end of the school year, a process that gave Barb a new outlook on singing. “Having it be quality enough to record elevated its importance to me.”

Her husband, Stuart, became a geography professor at Colorado State University in Ft. Collins, which was a logical outgrowth of several years of travel. Among their exploits, he and Barb drove from Europe to Pakistan on a mountaineering expedition to the Hindu Kush mountains. Several years later, as a graduate research assistant in Chile, the couple drove home over the Pan-American Highway (10,000 miles from Santiago, Chile, to Montrose).

While in Ft. Collins, Barb got deeply involved in international folk dancing and joined a performance group. She especially enjoyed Balkan music with its exotic rhythms and music.

In 1983, Barb and her family moved to Montrose, Stuart’s home town. Years passed before she joined the Grand Mesa Singers, and she was very glad to be back in a choir.

Barb’s sons, Sven (Arizona) and Arn (Rhode Island), sometimes return when the chorus performs. Barb says the boys are good critics and huge fans of the chorus.

“It’s a great benefit to my life that I have been able to participate in the VSA with folks who are so dedicated to creating a wonderful musical experience for all. Thanks to everyone—conductors, singers, musicians, and audience.”

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Carol Franklin	Bassoon	Jeanine (Good) Chinn
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Stacey Ryan	Clarinet	Jim & Eleanor Ennis, Jim & Devon Rea, Bill & Sharyn Bennett, Tricia Comstock-Dental Hygiene Care
Sheri Williams	French Horn	Camp Robber
Christian Pfretzschner	Trombone	Oktoberfest Oompah Band
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Chorus

Katy Kristoffersen	Conductor	Tim & Gen Spangler
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Christine Bloss	Soprano 2	Bloss Dental Care
Cathy Foglesong	Soprano 2	Anonymous
Demeris York	Soprano 2	Bob & Jeanie Brown
Anne Harper	Alto 1	Violet Marie Harper
Cheryl Harshman	Alto 1	Cheryl Harshman
Liz Soler	Alto 2	Roger Faucher
Bonnie Koehler	Tenor 1	Uppity Horn Women
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OUR HISTORY: BRINGING CLASSICAL MUSIC TO LIFE!

In 1970 a small group of classical musicians met in the parlor of Wilma and Charles Lowell's Eckert home. By October, 1971, the Delta County Community Orchestra was under the baton of Walter Birkedahl of Mesa State College and first performed on March 2, 1972, at Cedaredge Hunsicker Elementary School. On March 16, 1978, the nonprofit known as the Valley Symphony Association was formed to sponsor the orchestra. At that time, nearly 50 musicians from Montrose, Delta, Grand Junction, Ouray, Gunnison, Paonia, Hotchkiss, Cedaredge, and Eckert practiced once a week in Delta and performed four annual concerts.



In the late 1990s and early 2000s, numerous choirs, like the Grand Mesa Singers and the Christmas in the Valley chorus, were seasonal contributors to the orchestra, mainly at Christmas concerts. In 2002, these choral groups combined and came under the VSA umbrella to create the VSA Chorus.

The VSA continues to grow in membership, musical ability, audience size, and program variety, and is thought to be the only orchestra in Colorado that is not based in a college community. Today, the VSA's 100+ regional volunteer musicians come together from throughout the Uncompahgre, Grand, and North Fork Valleys to bring their skill, passion, and talent to the stage.

The VSA believes in the transformative power of music to inspire and entertain. Our diverse regional volunteer musicians treasure the opportunity to perform live to connect Western Slope audiences of all ages. The VSA's goal and purpose is to ensure that future generations will enjoy the legacy of live orchestral and choral music that so magnificently celebrates the human spirit.

As a regional, all-volunteer performing arts organization, the VSA takes pride in their long history of keeping classical music vital, building future audiences, and bringing classical music to life on the Western Slope.





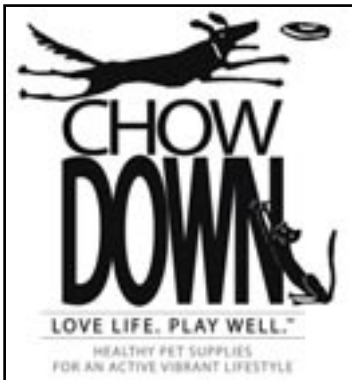
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FEATURED MUSICIAN

Chase Houck - Violin I

As a six-year-old, Chase started piano lessons under Joy Thompson and absolutely loved it. She continued through mid-high school and then began lessons at CMU under Professor Monte Atkinson.

At the end of her junior year, Chase decided to take the leap to learn the violin, which she always wanted to try, but she was scared to start all over with a new instrument. Her parents gifted her with her first violin, which gave her the courage to go for it! After a year of lessons with Deb TenNapel, the VSA's former concertmaster, Deb encouraged Chase to join the Valley Youth Orchestra (VYO).



Chase Houck

“It just goes to show that anyone can start and learn to play an instrument at any time in their life. If you've always wanted to play, DO IT! You don't have to start as a young child to be successful.”

Chase played with the VYO, a string-only ensemble, as a senior in high school and continued to mentor with them for several years after. She also served one year on the VYO Board as the secretary. Chase joined the VSA Orchestra in 2013 to learn to play with a full symphony and really loved the experience. In 2022, Chase moved to the tutelage of Sandy Sundstrom.

Chase has lived in Colorado her entire life: she was born and raised in Eckert and moved to Grand Junction after her marriage to Dustin in 2020. She loves and has been privileged to travel from a young age and has visited Mexico, Costa Rica, Iceland, Israel, France, Canada, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, and many Caribbean Islands. She currently works remotely for a large, Chicago-based corporation as a customer service lead and is delighted to travel to other company's sites several times a year. She also loves reading and spending time with family, friends, and her one-year-old toy Australian shepherd, Kona.

“Our community is incredibly blessed to have such an organization as the VSA. I love that many people, who have a passion for music but didn't choose to make it their career, can experience being in a symphony. We all are here volunteering our time because we love making music. Everyone dedicates countless hours of practicing and rehearsals to put on a concert for our community that we love. What an incredible organization where people of all ages and backgrounds can come together to play music!”

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WHO ARE OUR VSA MUSICIANS?

They live and work in our midst, represent the North Fork, Uncompahgre, and Grand Valleys, and hail from Montrose, Ouray, Hotchkiss, Eckert, Olathe, Palisade, Paonia, Delta, Ridgway, Austin, Cedaredge, Telluride, Crested Butte, and Grand Junction. Our musicians are teachers, parents, neighbors, students. They have jobs. They have children. They have homes and schedules and commitments. They teach at local colleges, high schools, middle and elementary schools. They work in business, the arts, health care, government, agriculture, law enforcement, and as entrepreneurs. Some are retired. Some are teenagers. Some are military veterans. Some are snowbirds. And they are all VSA musicians.

Learn more about VSA musicians by visiting ValleySymphony.net/About Us.

The Power of Music



Science has even backed the benefits of music. Research findings have demonstrated that music supports our physical, mental and emotional health. It can help in regulating our emotions, improving our mood, boosting productivity and concentration, and enhancing our sleep.

We salute the VSA and look forward to the 52nd Season!

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FEATURED MUSICIAN

Carol Mulvaney - Soprano I

Carol was born and raised in Lakewood, California. Her initial interest in music came from piano and singing lessons at the age of four, which continued until she was six years old. Later, she played piano for a church youth group and toured throughout California. In elementary school, she picked up the clarinet after being inspired by her older brother and father, who was involved with the Ralph Carmichael Orchestra (he is regarded as one of the pioneers of contemporary Christian music). Although she initially hid in the closet at band practice until class was over, she did eventually learn to play, becoming proficient enough to join her brother and father at church.



Carol Mulvaney

During middle school, she switched from clarinet to vocals. Throughout middle and high school, she sang with various choruses and did solo work. She sang at the Hollywood Bowl with her high school chorus for the Battle of the Bands, received various awards in high school for vocals, and performed with a ladies' group that "actually recorded a vinyl record."

In Montrose, her first vocal gig was singing the lead part with the Del-Rose Barbershop ladies. In 2006 she auditioned with VSA and has been singing first soprano ever since. "I switched to the mixed choral group because I love the richness of sound of the men's and women's voices together: it allows for such a great variety of music."

Outside of singing, Carol enjoys gardening and her local quilting group. She's played on a co-ed softball team and enjoys spending time outdoors—especially quad riding! She will decorate for EVERY holiday and occasion and enjoys traveling and getting together with family and friends.



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