



My Favorite Things!

Classical chestnuts and songs about waltzing, hot men in flannel and plenty of schmaltzing, Rochettes for dancing and drummers and kings . . . these are a few of my favorite things! Or, at least, some of our favorite things in the first Rochester Gay Men's Chorus concert of the 2017-2018 season on Saturday, December 16th at 7:30pm and Sunday, December 17th at 3:00pm at Hochstein Performance Hall, 50 North Plymouth Avenue.

Ring in the New Year with everyone's favorite part of the season-- music! Ranging from holiday classics to pop tunes and everything in between, the RGMC will be joined by the Flower City Pride Band, and Rochester local and friend of the RGMC, Thomas Warfield. We look forward to celebrating the holiday season with all of you!

Tickets are available at www.thergmc.org or by calling (585) 423-0650. Tickets can also be purchased in person at Equal=Grounds, Parkleigh, or from any chorus member.

Advance sale tickets are \$8.00 for children 12 and under, \$17.00 for students and seniors 60 and older, and \$20.00 for adults. Tickets at the door are \$8.00 for children and \$25.00 for all others.

Season tickets are still \$45 (\$40 for seniors and

students) and available online or at the door.

Bring an unwrapped toy for our annual toy drive to benefit the Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network (*see more elsewhere in this issue!*)

RGMC Out On The Town



The Rochester Gay Men's Chorus is thrilled to be able to continue to realize its mission statement out in the community by participating in varied and important events in and out of Rochester.

On Thursday, June 7th the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus appeared at the annual conference of the New York State Association for College Admission Counseling at SUNY Geneseo. The chorus gave a preview of some of the songs for its June 17th *We Will Rock You* concert and highlights from our June 2nd and 3rd performances of *Miscast* to a VERY enthusiastic audience.

The RGMC participated in PRIDE events again this past July. At the opening ceremonies on Friday, July 14th at Cobbs Hill Park, the chorus sang "I Want to Break Free" and "Bridge Over Troubled Water." The next day, the chorus marched in the parade alongside members of the Rochester Women's Community Chorus, then performed crowd-favorites "Fat-Bottomed Girls," "Bridge Over Troubled Water," "Make Them Hear You," and "Crazy Little Thing Called Love."

The RGMC appeared for the third time as part of Asbury Tent Week, this time for their Diversity Day. The chorus not only performed some of their signature pride repertoire, but included a group sing-along of "We Shall Overcome." The crowd was thrilled to hear us, and was even more excited to sing along with us!

On Saturday, September 16th, the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus sang the National Anthem at a Veteran Suicide Prevention Awareness Event at the American Legion in Ontario, New York. The event, which also featured SAGE Rochester, an organization that provides advocacy & services for LGBT Elders, was organized by Rochester Pride 2017 Grand Marshall, Wanda Martinez-Johncox, who works for Veterans Affairs in Canandaigua.



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KEYNOTES is the official newsletter of the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus and is published three times a year. The RGMC is solely responsible for its editorial content.

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Seventh Annual RGMC Holiday Toy Drive

During our holiday concerts on December 16 and 17, we will be collecting donations of toys for our seventh annual Toy Drive for the Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network (RAIHN).

RAIHN is a nonprofit, interfaith organization that assists homeless families to achieve sustainable independence by supporting them with tailored services, including shelter, food, personalized case management services, and a diverse network of caring volunteers. In 2016, RAIHN provided 4,345 total bed nights serving 33 families including 60 children.

Thank you in advance for your donation! This year, we

hope to exceed our 2016 drive of 50 toys. We will accept new, unwrapped toys brought to our holiday concert on December 16 and 17, 2017.

We are excited to help brighten the holiday season of those in need with your contribution, as well as birthdays throughout the year.



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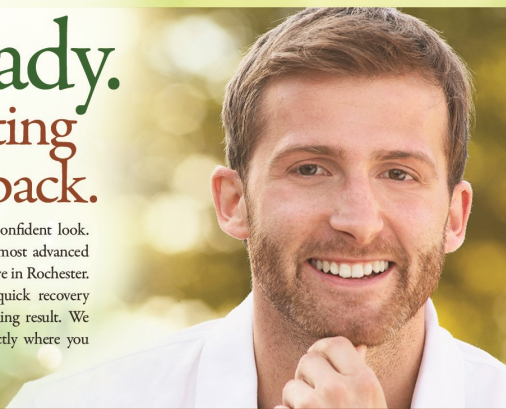
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Member Spotlight—David Knoll

David Knoll's musical journey began when he was just in junior high, singing in his school's chorus all the way up to high school. After a brief time singing in a rock band, David's lesbian friends in the Rochester Women's Community Chorus inspired him to find a Men's Chorus in Rochester. After learning there was none existing in the Rochester community, David contacted RGMC Alums Kent Peterson and Nick Williams inquiring if they would be interested in starting up a Gay Men's chorus, like the ones he had heard about in Madison and New York City. Several months later, Kent Peterson founded and music directed the very first Gay Men's Chorus rehearsal in his very own living room. Today, David is now one of the only original members of the chorus still singing with RGMC!

Within the 35 year span David has been singing with the chorus, he has seen some important and happy changes in society, which have been reflected in the chorus. "I came out at 19 and had the good fortune of a very open work and social environment, and lots of family support, but many gay people and chorus members did not," said David. "We grew in numbers slowly- it was a big deal for many people to show up at rehearsal, stand on a stage under the banner of the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus, appear in photographs or have one's name in the program.... I am glad things are more open now." One of his favorite parts of the chorus, other than the meaningful and fulfilling repertoire, is the diversity of the group and the members. Though titled "Gay Man's", the chorus is proud to include straight, transgender, and women

allies. Not only has this strengthened the overall sound of the ensemble, but also has provided a strong source of friendship and support for many members over the years.

During the day, David works part-time at his business, Genesee Co-Op, a community-development credit union located in South Wedge, and spends quality time with partner and RGMC member, David. Despite his many talents and musical experiences, David's favorite has been his time with RGMC. We are thankful for David's long support of the chorus, and look forward to many years to come with him!

The RGMC is offering the opportunity for you to sponsor a song during any performance.

For a tax-deductible donation of \$250, sponsorship will allow you select a song from an upcoming show and include a personalized message to be featured next to the song in the program.

To sponsor a song, contact us at song@thergmc.org or (585) 423-0650.



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35 years of RGMC—Act 1: The Dream

The Rochester Gay Men's Chorus came to life in November of 1982 when five friends - David Knoll, Bob Olsowski, Kent Peterson, Ken Setera and Nicholas Williams, - decided to pursue a dream. The dream is using music to create an acceptance of social diversity and to use the harmony of voice to create a harmony of the spirit.

LGBT choruses had been started in the mid-to-late '70s and early '80s in Philadelphia (1975 - the Anna Crusis Women's Choir), New York City, San Francisco, Dallas, Los Angeles, Seattle, Chicago, Vancouver as a way to create community, to give LGBT issues a voice, and to make beautiful music

David Knoll had some friends in the newly formed Rochester Women's Community Chorus, and was inspired to start a men's chorus. He talked to Nicholas Williams, whom he'd met through the Gay Alliance about his idea, and Nick agreed to participate, but not (yet) as director. When David met Kent Peterson, who had been one of the original members of the Madison Gay Men's Chorus, the RGMC found its first conductor. An article was put in the Empty Closet, and flyers were hung around the Park/Monroe area of Rochester. The first rehearsal was held on November 18, 1982 in Kent's living room.

Six months later, on Saturday, May 7, 1983, the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus performed their first concert, simply yet boldly called *Rochester Gay Men's Chorus in Concert*, at Calvary Street St. Andrews Church. By then, the chorus consisted of eighteen singers: in addition to Knoll, Olsowski, Peterson, and Williams, they were joined by Lavern Doud, Steven Getz, Michael Holden, Steven Jarose, Chuck Kruppenbacher, David Merritt, Bill Metz, Pat Moran, Greg Partridge, John Rutkowski, David Skinner, John Strawway, Chuck Telier, and Del Titus. These eighteen men, singing show tunes, spirituals, and light classical tunes, set the stage for the RGMC to have a long and vital history, as we continue to stand on the shoulders of these pioneers!



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A Heartfelt Thank You to all of our Donors

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Staff and Members of the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus we would like to thank all of our donors listed below for their generous support during the past twelve months.

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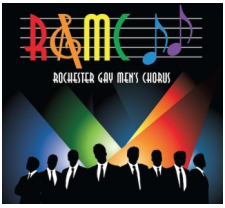
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