

Grayson Hirst, Founder/Artistic Director

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#### **Chairman Richard**



Because Sons of Orpheus is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization, we are required to be overseen by a board of directors, but the disposition of day-to-day matters is handled by a committee elected by the choir. Second tenor Richard Miller has recently been named chairman of this committee.

Continued on p. 4. - Richard

# The Voice of Orpheus

A Newsletter of Sons of Orpheus - The Male Choir of Tucson

Editor: Ned Mackey - Layout and Design: Iván Berger - Copy Editor: Chuck Dickson

## XIX ANNUAL GALA SPRING CONCERT, 2010

Sunday, April 11, at 3 PM - Center for the Arts, Proscenium Theater, Pima Community College West Campus

Sunday, April 18, at 3 PM – DesertView Performing Arts Center, SaddleBrooke

Sunday, April 25, at 3 PM - Valley Presbyterian Church, a benefit for the Green Valley Food Bank, Green Valley

**I** Wach' auf! (Chorus and Finale) from Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg ...... Richard Wagner (1813-1883) Brent Burmeister / Marco Antonio Jiménez, Pianists

Cantico di Pasqua (Easter Hymn) from Cavalleria Rusticana ......Pietro Mascagni (1863-1945) arr. Ray Tess / Vern Williamsen Vicki P. Love, Soprano

п

Orpheus With His Lute, from Henry the Eighth, Act III, Sc. 1, W. Shakespeare . . Augustus Barratt (1866-1928) How Sweet the Moonlight, from Merchant of Venice, Act V, Sc. 1, W. Shakespeare . . . Eric Helmuth (1965-)

Vocalise, Op. 34, no. 14	.Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)
Rebekah Butler, Violin	
V Malchanyi nochi tainai (In the Silence of the Secret Night), Op. 4, no. 3	Sergei Rachmaninoff
Brandon Dale, Tenor	
Prelude in G Minor, Opus 23, no. 5	Sergei Rachmaninoff
Shu Ching Cheng, Piano	-

Morskaya Lyegyenda (Sea Tale) ......Sergei Rachmaninoff, Russian Lyrics, Olga Yakovenko

\_\_\_\_\_ Intermission \_\_\_\_\_

 V

 Banquet Fugue
 John Rutter (1945- )

 The Owl and the Pussy Cat, Edward Lear
 Reginald de Koven (1859-1920)

 Brandon Dale, Tenor
 Sam Pottle (1934-1978)

#### ſ

 Tears on My Pillow
 Gene Autry (1907-1998) and Fred Rose (1898-1954)

 Night Rider's Lament
 Michael Burton (1944-)

 Jim Gates, Frank Hartline, Jim Hogan
 The Moonstruck Cayotes

VII

 Home on the Range
 Brewster Higley (1823-1911) & Daniel E. Kelley (1843-1905), arr. Greg Gilpin Jim Hogan, Tenor

 Ghost Riders in the Sky
 Stan Jones (1914-1963)

 El Paso
 Marty Robbins (1925-1982), arr. Michael Fraser

 The 3:10 to Yuma
 George Duning (1908-2000), arr. Maurice Hill

Jim Hogan, Tenor

**Brent Burmeister, Pianist** 

#### Volume 11, Issue 2 - Spring 2010



## What We Díd Last Winter

## Tucson Estates, November 8th, 2009

We greatly enjoyed performing this concert, although we were distressed to see that the "Salute to the Armed Forces" in the first part of our program evoked tears from several women in the audience. (When we sing for groups where gray hair is the mode, we note with some discomfort that there are many more women in the seats than men. Although the concert was on a Sunday afternoon and some men may have managed to stay

home to watch football, no doubt we sang for a number of wives whose husbands had served our country and were watching the game on that Big TV in the Sky.)

The following is the kind of letter we love to get. We thank the writer for blowing our horn for us.

Dear Grayson:

Once again you and your "Sons" treated us to a stellar performance. Close to Veterans Day as the concert was, the patriotic songs you selected to start the show touched the hearts of everyone in the audience starting right off with your beautiful rendition of "The Star Spangled Banner." (I'm sure you heard the "wows!")

Throughout the concert the enthusiasm and the facial expressions of the singers sent the message of joy In song to the audience. The variety of the program provided an afternoon of culture and enjoyment. We sat on the edge of our seats thoroughly entertained.

Thank you for the many hours you all put in to enrich our lives. Thank you also for providing Southern Arizona with this mastery of men's voices. I look forward to your next concert in December, 2010.

Sincerely,

Nancy Smith Publicity Chairman Tucson Estates

#### ASDB/Community Food Bank December 16, 2009

The best feel-good concert of the holiday season saw us singing on December 16th at the Arizona School for the Deaf and the Blind for a Community Food Bank fundraiser. We were joined by students from the school and by a wonderful local group, Mariachi Sonido de Mexico, to perform for a large and appreciative audience.

Our own Jim Hogan again led fundraising efforts by challenging the choir to raise more money than he could raise single-handed by picking the pockets of his friends and the students at the Hogan School of Real Estate, the winner to be treated to pizza and beer. His ploy worked well for everybody but himself, which he knew full well would be the case. Sons of Orpheus raised \$7,789.00 and brought in over 700 pounds of food.

Jack Parris of the Community Food Bank has sent us a day-by-day accounting of our efforts showing 126 entries, an average of \$61.81 per donation—a good number for giver and receiver alike!

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Our thanks to Jim for his inspiration

#### The Arizona Balalaika Orchestra Concerts, January 30, 31, 2010

We sang with the Arizona Balalaika Orchestra at the Proscenium Theater. The house looked full for both concerts, at least as far as we could tell with the stage lights shining in our eyes. The applause certainly made the place sound full!

In the first half of the program we sang "Gari Gari Maya Svyezda" and "Ey Ukhnyem," the latter featuring our U of A student Jess Koehn whose big bass voice gives the lie to his youth and slender frame.

We also sang the theme from "The Hunt for Red October" and an encore piece directed by Mia Gay, the founder of the organization.

#### Mission San Xavier del Bac, December 8, 9, and 10, 2009

The men of Orpheus joined the Tucson Arizona Boys Chorus and a variety of soloists and accompanists for six concerts in three nights in the gorgeous old "White Dove of the Desert," whose refurbishment is supported by the Patronato San Xavier. The collaboration marked our 13th annual fundraiser for the Patronato, an organization with a great story to tell. You may read it at <patronatosanxavier.org>.)

One of the Orpheus numbers, "Es ist ein Ros' Entsprungen," was especially enjoyed by three singers whose last name is DiCurti. Pete and his son Leo sing with us, and third generation Chris is a member of the TABC. Chris sang a descant to the final verse of the hymn as his proud grandpa and dad beamed from the baritone section behind him. Pete reportedly gave a wellhidden fist pump for Chris each time the music died away.

(Alarmed by the awareness that fourteen-year-old Chris could awaken any morning and greet the day as a *basso profundo*, we planned a hasty trip to the recording studio after the concerts were over. Chris lost his top note as the New Year was beginning. He didn't need it for the recording, but the rest of his high notes will come crashing down tone by tone as the winter ensues. By spring he'll be as useless to the TABC as a grizzly bear, just another candidate for a male voice choir.)

The San Xavier audiences may have noted some irony in this year's processional, "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence," and recessional, "Silent Night," for the ancient stones fairly rattled in synchrony with the voices of men and boys let loose by the Spirit of Christmas.



#### Green Valley, Dec. 19, 2009

Our newest baritone, Jim Kitchak, who commutes from Green Valley, was asked to play a major role in filling the seats for our holiday concert at the brand-new Green Valley Performing Arts Center.

Jim says, "I handled Orpheus's Green Valley publicity by charming many of the local merchants to display our posters. I hung approximately twenty-five posters, bored anyone I was standing near in grocery lines and other places about the upcoming concert, and bullied many of our Green Valley friends into attending. My wife Lorna also sold some tickets at her AAUW meeting, and Jim Mack, manager of the GVPAC, did some advertising as well. We seated approximately 180 adults and a handful of kids."

Jim must have handpicked the audience that packed the hall. They could not have been more appreciative of the combination of secular and sacred music we sang for them. It was an eclectic array ranging from the Bach/Gounod "Ave Maria" with soprano Vickie Love, to "Mele Kalikimaka," for which a delightful ukulele group, the Ukesters, joined us to provide just the right Hawaiian touch.

The Kitchaks invited us to party at their beautiful home after the concert, after which we headed north, buoyed by the party's high spirits and the holiday cheer we always get from singing our winter concerts.

#### **Two Short Ones**

We memorized Reginald de Koven's setting of Edward Lear's "The Owl and the Pussycat" and performed it for a Glassman Foundation fundraiser, and then, on the very next evening so we wouldn't have a chance to forget it, for a fundraiser for St. Cyril Catholic Church. It's a merry piece, enjoyed by singers and audiences alike. You'll be able to hear us sing it again at our spring concerts.

## Orpheus Gets a New Lyricist:



## William Shakespeare

We devote two numbers in our spring repertoire to songs from Shakespearian plays. Act III of *Henry VIII* begins with the rejected queen Katherine asking one of her ladies to cheer her up by singing her a song. It's one we especially like, for obvious reasons.

> Orpheus with his lute made trees And the mountain tops that freeze Bow themselves when he did sing.

To his music plants and flowers Ever sprung; as sun and showers There had made a lasting spring.

Everything that heard him play, Even the billows of the sea, Hung their heads, and then lay by. In sweet music is such art: Killing care and grief of heart Fall asleep, or hearing, die.

If Katherine was cheered by the music, it didn't last long. As the words die away, the odious Cardinals Wolsey and Campeius enter with annulment proceedings on their minds. Our version of the Bard's song is set to a tune by W. Augustus Barratt, who began composing before World War I.

The Bard begins Act V of *The Merchant of Venice* on a beautiful night with lovers Lorenzo and Jessica teasing each other by making references to famous lovers from literature—Troilus and Cressida, for example. Their gentle banter is interrupted by the appearance of several men bearing urgent messages. (Don't you hate when that happens?) When they are alone again, Lorenzo woos Jessica with the following lines:

> How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank! Here will we sit and let the sounds of music Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night Become the touches of sweet harmony. Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold: There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st But in his motion like an angel sings, Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins; Such harmony is in immortal souls; But whilst this muddy vesture of decay Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

Well, what young woman could resist that? If only young men studying Shakespeare understood how handy a little memorization could be.



Richard - Continued from p. 1

We wrote the following piece about Richard in the October 2004 edition of our newsletter. Some details have changed in the intervening years, but the man is still the man. Richard would be a gem in any organization: a diamond, cut by an appreciation for hard work during his early years on upstate New York farms. and polished by 33 years working in a private school. Richard received a B.A. in history from the University of Rochester in 1963 and an M.Div. from Union Theological Seminary in 1967.

Seeking a ministry with young people, Richard decided to go where the kids were rather than waiting for them to come to him. That's how he began a career at the Westminster School of Simsbury, Connecticut, where he coordinated the chapel program. taught history, coached cross country and track, and eventually worked with an annual budget of over \$13 million as assistant headmaster.

Richard came to Tucson with his wife, Linda, a singer herself (it was love at first sound), in 2000 after discovering Arizona at the time of their son's graduation from Prescott College.

Some people are doomed to make the world a better place. Richard is one of these, so his retirement is a busy one. He is the president of his homeowners association; Program Chair, St. Philip's Academics; Member, United Way Supporting Seniors Impact Council; and he has served as a fundraiser

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and consultant to several councils and boards since moving to Tucson. Richard joined Orpheus in 2000. He is our grant writer and a gentle but persistent critic of our diction and musicality.

Richard contributed the following for this profile: "I used to be a runner, but my knees don't let me do that anymore.

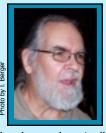


Richard gets in shape for the new season

Generally I walk an hour a day, listening to books on tape, (mostly history and other nonfiction), hit the weights three or four times a week, and when the weather is cool, enjoy hiking. I also try to stay abreast of local, national, and international news. In other words, when I'm not doing nonprofit work or reading, I'm working out, although to look at my body, one might not draw such a conclusion."

It is true that Richard's image could appear in a dictionary alongside the word "slender." So, he perfectly depicts Pascal's description of man as "a reed..., but a thinking reed." And a giving one.

## THE RISER CREW



Van Honeman is simply the most important man in the choir, at least he is if we want to be standing on risers so we can have a clear line of sight to our director.

Van has a nice voice, but we desperately need his ability to

back our riser trailer down cramped and sinuous paths to the back door of theaters without ever leaving parts of the trailer behind.

Van, a veteran white-water rafter, has polished this skill over a lifetime of easing boat trailers down slippery slopes to the torrent's edge. He is also the only man in the choir strong enough to lift the main sections of the risers into the top row of racks in the trailer. Mother Nature and a lifetime of hefting rafts have made him superbly fit to be our honcho.



A few of the men in the crew are engineers who understand how the various parts of the balky risers go together and stay that way under 7000 lbs. of singers. Other crew members are just good guys who like to pitch in.

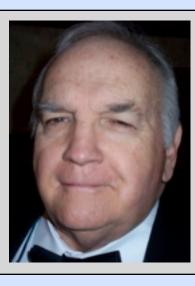


Once Van gets the risers to the concert venue, the assembly work begins. These are in preparation for our concerts at the San Xavier Mission.

Photos taken by I. Berger



## Profiling



## Míke Bradley

Baritone Mike Bradley is a jolly fellow, always upbeat. He's a fine singer too. His first choral experience was with a Sea Scout troop in the San Francisco Bay area. His scout master was an amateur composer who taught sea shanties while the scouts cruised the inland waterways of the San Francico Bay delta in a World War II landing craft. Young Mike also began developing a feel for the spotlight, working as a theater usher and as a roustabout with his uncle's small, truck-borne carnival.

The autumn after graduating from high school Mike enlisted in the Marines and learned a new song, one that famously begins "From the halls of Montezuma, to the shores of Tripoli."

When his tour was over, he had jobs with Safeway and the Southern Pacific Railroad, attended evening classes at a business college in San Francisco, and met his future wife, Dortha, a senior at Mills College.

Mike's next stop was Oakland City College, then on to Albuquerque where he finished his B.A. in Political Science and Economics at the University of New Mexico. In his senior year he worked for the Sierra Club's campaign to defend the Grand Canyon from hydropower and irrigation dams.

The couple then moved to Ann Arbor so that Mike could attend graduate school at the University of Michigan. Here he earned an M.A. in Public Administration and a Ph.D. at the School of Natural Resources and Environment, writing his dissertation on policy for the international conservation of the pelagic whales and marine mammals of the northern Pacific and the Arctic. His research took him to an International Whaling Commission meeting in London and to the first Law of the Sea conference in Malta. He also traveled to Denmark and Norway.

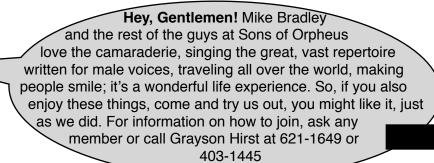
His work led to a consulting position at the National Science Foundation in Washington, D.C. When Mike finished that job, he and Dortha were ready to return to the sunny Southwest. Mike says, "We drove westward toward the family hacienda in Santa Fe, looking forward to a joyful reunion and good meals made with New Mexico red and green chilies."

While there, Mike was asked to become the first Ford Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow at the new Center for Marine Affairs at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in San Diego, an appointment that is among Mike's favorites, both for its rigorous intellectual challenges and for all wonders that San Diego has to offer.

In 1972 the University of Arizona invited Mike to join the faculty of Hydrology and Water Resources, where he specializes in water rights and policy. Subsequently he accepted a joint professorship with the Graduate Planning Degree program.

He has also been a visiting professor at UCLA's Graduate School of Architecture and Urban Planning and a consulting expert for the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization in Rome.

On the lighter side, Mike has taken up water color-mostly pleinair landscapes—and is a member of the Southern Arizona Watercolor Guild. He has resolved to give portrait painting a try. And of course there is Orpheus. Mike joined the choir three years ago. His section leader reports that Mike has missed just one rehearsal in all that time. He also sings with our do-wop group-the Lost Chords-and he has served on our choir's Executive Committee and our riser crew, where his days as a roustabout come in handy. He enjoys Orpheus for the comradeship and for the wide variety of our repertoire.

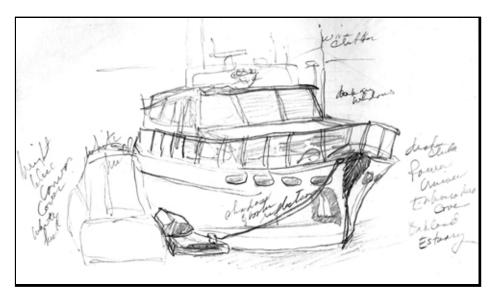


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## Samples of Mike Bradley's art

Power cruiser, Embarcadero Cove, Oakland Estuary

(pencil sketch with notes)





Lake Concho, New Mexico

(plein-air watercolor)

## Rio Pecos, New Mexico

(plein-air watercolor)

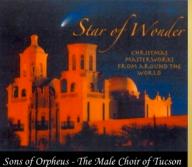




## Our line-up of CDs and INTRODUCING OUR NEWEST CD



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Performed and Recorded at Mission San Xavier del Bac, Tucson, Arizona

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## May I Have the Envelope, Please?

No nominee on Oscar night could have been more breathless about that special envelope than we are about the envelope you received in this mailing. And our envelope gives you options!

We are grateful for the funding we receive from the Arizona Commission on the Arts and the Tucson Pima Arts Council even as their own sources have diminished in the whirlpool of the recession. Arts organizations everywhere are having a rough go of it, but we are not crying poor. Tears shed over the past couple of years are at flood stage anyway. Instead, we relish our commitments to the community, and we take pride in the effort we put forth to present top-quality concerts. We are committed to earning our keep in Southern Arizona by paying our dues, selling tickets, selling ads in our concert programs, and, at this moment, asking for support from the readers of our newsletter.

You can use our envelope to:

1. buy tickets to our April 11th Spring Concert at the Proscenium Theater. The tickets are \$15, \$12 for students. (Of course you can buy tickets at the door, or reserve them at the box office, 206-6986. 2. donate to our student scholarship fund (see Favorite Student Singers, page 7), to our Magee Family Endowment, managed by the Community Foundation of Southern Arizona, or to our general operating fund. (Note your choice on the memo line of your check.)

3. order CDs you see at the top of this page. They are \$15. Our CDs are professionally recorded and produced.

And one thing more!

#### The Fleming's Raffle

Once again the generous folks at Fleming's Prime Steakhouse and Wine Bar, 6360 N. Campbell, have given us a \$150 gift certificate to raffle off to the readers of our newsletter. For every ten dollars you donate for the raffle, we'll put a slip with your name on it in Grayson's Stetson. The winner will be drawn on stage right before the cowboy numbers at the April 11th concert. You need not be present to win, but we'd love to hear somebody shout "Yeehaw!" from the audience.

If you are ordering tickets or participating in the raffle, please get your envelopes back to us by April 3.



Favorite Gals

women's chorus have performed a second joint holiday concert and several of the Glassman Foundation Valentines concerts. After performing at Carnegie Hall in 2006, the women's chorus re-



Our sister community choir, the Southern Arizona Women's Chorus, was first formed as a Masters project by a choral graduate student at the University of Arizona. It was officially incorporated as the Foothills Women's Chorus in 1985 as a self-supporting group with the limited goals of enjoying singing and sharing their music with the elder community. In 2003 the group performed with us at the U of A's Crowder Hall in their first public holiday concert. It was the women's first experience at selling tickets, and sell they did, putting us to shame in the marketing department! Since then Orpheus and the

wrote their bylaws and changed the organization's name to the Southern Arizona Women's Chorus. With the name change membership doubled. A new Board of Directors was

formed, and goals were expanded to include extended community involvement.

For the past ten years the chorus has continued under the direction of executive and artistic director Terrie Ashbaugh, who was nominated in 2009 for an Arizona Commission on the Arts award and has received recognition for her work with SAWC from the mayor of Tucson. During Terrie's tenure the organization has been performing a wide range of music and collaborating extensively with such groups as the Tucson Symphony, the Arizona Symphonic Winds, the Tucson Youth Chamber Ensemble, the Tucson Girls Chorus, Rene Clausen and the Concordia Choir of Moorehead, Minnesota; Kirby Shaw, the Tucson Arizona Boys Chorus, and Con Brio Women from Seattle.

Orpheus looks forward to sharing the spotlight with the Southern Arizona Women's Chorus in the near future and congratulates them on 25 years of successful singing and service to the Tucson community.

The SWAC's upcoming Silver Anniversary Concerts:

Friday, April 30, 7:00 PM Catalina Foothills High School,

Sunday, May 2, 4:00 PM Ascension Lutheran Church (1220 W Magee Rd)

These concerts celebrate SAWC's 25th Anniversary with music from the earlier years as well as the recent past, photos, a fashion show and a cookie reception. Cookies too! How can you turn that down?

Tickets are \$15 at the door. To order tickets or pay by credit card, please call 404-3148.

## Favorite Student Singers



Brandon Dale is a full-scholarship freshman in vocal performance in the U of A School

of Music. He is a lyric tenor enamored of the *lieder* of Franz Schubert, although his voice teacher, Grayson Hirst, has begun introducing him to the operatic arias he'll need in his auditions repertoire. Grayson says, "Brandon has a promising future. Not only does he have a beautiful voice, he looks like Clark Kent." Super!

Jess Koehn, a bass/baritone, has completed his studies at the U of A and is preparing to enter the cutthroat world of auditioning for operatic roles. His association with Orpheus has toughened him up for the fight. He traveled with the choir to Germany, Austria, and the Czech Republic in the summer of 2008 and sang Sarastro's arias from Mozart's Magic *Flute*, pleasing our audiences all along the way.

Orquidea Guandique is a multitasker! She studies voice with Grayson Hirst, and she is a DMA candidate in viola performance. In 2007 she graduated with honors from the University of Costa Rica in viola performance. In 2008 she attended the Beijing International Music Festival to study with world renowned teachers. We are pleased that Orquidea is an accomplished violist, but we're at least as pleased that she is an accomplished singer.

Soprano Vicki P. Love has garnered many awards in prestigious compe-

titions, the latest being a 2009 first place in the "Quest for the Best," sponsored by the the Opera Guild of Southern Arizona, and another from the National Association of Teachers of Singing. Past solo performances include the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Grant Symphony Orchestra, and the Chamber Musicians of Chicago.

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Sons of Orpheus is supported in part by grants from the Tucson Pima Arts Council and the Arizona Commission on the Arts with funding from the State of Arizona and the National Endowment for the Arts.







First Tenors: Brandon Dale Eugene Friesen Christopher Hutchinson John Kamper Tom McGorray Bruce Mortensen James Naughton Jim Tomlinson Jerry Villano Dick Wroldsen	Seconds Tenors: Kenneth Bosma Dave Burns Jim Gates Jim Hogan Van Honeman Bob Kurtz Richard Miller Mike Negrete Larry Ross Larry Sayre	Baritones: Mike Bradley Chuck Dickson Leo DiCurti Pete DiCurti John Evans Jim Filipek Cameron Fordyce Michael Fraser Jim Kitchak Ned Mackey Rick Sack Raymond Tess	Basses: Ronald Bailey Iván Berger Jeffrey Handt Frank Hartline Tom Kane Jess Koehn George Ledbetter Gary Smyth Melvin Swingler Thomas Wentzel Woon-Yin Wong

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## TUCSON, AZ 85751 P.O. BOX 31552 TUCSON, AZ 85751