

www.southshorechorale.org

News 'n Notes

Spring 2023

South Shore Chorale celebrates Golden Anniversary!

The South Shore Chorale will conclude their **Golden Anniversary Concert Season** with an epic collaboration of nearly 400 musicians! Joining the 158 voice Chorale will be the entire Fond du Lac Choir Program, full orchestra and professional soloists. Our soloists will feature **Erin Bryan** (soprano), **Erin Sura** (mezzo soprano), **Timothy Rebers** (tenor), and **Thomas Weis** (bass). Our **Golden Anniversary Concert** will take place on Saturday, April 29 at 7:30 pm and Sunday, April 30 at 2:00 pm in the Fond du Lac High School Performing Arts Center.

As part of the 50 year anniversary celebration, the first half of the concert will feature music from our first 50 years of performances. The first set of music will honor our early years when we were known as the Fond du Lac Oratorio Chorus. The concert will open with *He Watching Over Israel* from Felix Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. *Elijah* was the first work our organization performed on our very first concert in the spring of 1971. We will then perform *Dies irae* from Mozart's *Requiem*, *How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings* from Brahms's *Requiem* and *The Last Words of David* by Randall Thompson to close out our early years. Then we celebrate our later years after we changed our name to South Shore Chorale in 2006. This portion of the concert will feature *Va, pensiero* from Giuseppe Verdi's famous opera *Nabucco*, *Masquerade* from Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Phantom of the Opera*, *Down By The Riverside* by John Rutter, and *Battle Hymn of the Republic* by Peter Wilhousky.



Erin Bryan
Soprano

The second half of the concert will feature Ludwig van Beethoven's famous *Symphony #9 (4th movement)*. This iconic work has become one of the most popular pieces of music ever written. The famous *Ode to Joy* has become a staple in many movies, commercials and other TV shows. According to our research, our performance will be the **FIRST EVER PERFORMANCE OF THIS WORK** to ever happen in Fond du Lac!

American soprano, **Erin Bryan**, has been praised for her "deft" operatic characterizations and a voice that is "a lyric soprano of exceptional beauty." Recent roles include work with Kentucky Opera, Cedar Rapids Opera, and the innovative Fresco Opera, and she is featured as Young Anne/#1 on the recently released world-premiere recording of Conrad Susa's *Transformations*. Solo concert engagements in the 22/23 season have included Schubert's *Mass in G* (Green Lake Festival of Music) and Haydn's *The Creation* (Oshkosh Chamber Singers). An advocate for new music, she seeks frequent collaboration with living composers, with notable projects including the Midwest premiere of Laura Schwendinger's *Kay Ryan Songs* and the world premiere of *Dangerous New Avenues*, a
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Major concert sponsors for this special anniversary season



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duet for soprano and percussion by Justin Giarrusso. Dr. Bryan holds degrees from Lawrence University, where she studied with Steven Spears and Patrice Michaels, and the University of Louisville, where she studied with Edith Davis Tidwell. She earned the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in vocal performance from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she studied with Paul Rowe. She is on faculty at Ripon College in Ripon, Wisconsin, where she holds the post of Assistant Professor of Music and Voice Area Coordinator.

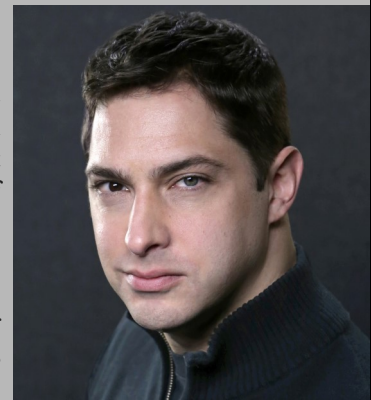


Erin Sura
Mezzo-Soprano

Mezzo-Soprano, **Erin Sura**, has been praised for her “vocal warmth and depth, emotional heart” and for her “powerful polished vocal work” by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, and for singing “with formidable power” by Milwaukee Magazine. Clevelandclassical.com said her “role was memorably sung and acted” and described her as “indefatigable.” Ms. Sura’s amplex of voice and range have made her desirable in a wide variety of roles. Recent performances include Second Wood Sprite in *Rusalka* with Milwaukee Opera Theatre; Komponist and Dryade in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and First Maid (excerpts) in *Elektra* with TUNDI Productions; Mother in *Amahl and the Night Visitors* with Belle Ensemble and Music On Site; Second Lady in *Die Zauberflöte* with Milwaukee Opera Theatre, Music on Site, and Lawrence Opera Theatre; Kate Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* with Opera West; the title role in *Carmen* with Brew City Opera; Prince Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus* with Master Singers of Milwaukee; Donna Elvira in *The Sopranos (Don Giovanni)* with Fresco Opera Theatre, Betty in *Passion in Pigskin* by Lydon and Mandel with Wisconsin Opera on Tap, and the Second Lady in the world premiere of Jordan Jenkins’s *Queen of the*

Night with Fresco Opera Theatre. Additional roles include Jo March (*Little Women*), Fatme (*Zemire et Azor*), Dido and the second witch (*Dido and Aeneas*), Gertrude (*Hansel and Gretel*), and Mother Marie (*Dialogues of the Carmelites*). Active in concert work as well Ms. Sura has appeared as a soloist in Handel’s *Messiah*, Beethoven’s *9th Symphony*, Vivaldi’s *Gloria*, and the Verdi *Requiem*. Upcoming performances include the role of Ruth in *Pirates of Penzance* with Madison Savoyards August 2023.

Tim Rebers, tenor, is a Milwaukee based singer/actor, composer/arranger, conductor, teacher, and director. He has performed regionally in operas, musicals, plays, cabarets, concert works and recitals with the likes of Milwaukee Opera Theatre, Skylight Music Theatre, Florentine Opera, Brew City Opera, Madison Savoyards, Acacia Theatre, Opera for the Young, Music Theatre Works, Sunset Playhouse, Forte Theatre, Concord Chamber Orchestra, Choral Art Society of Southeast Wisconsin, Southwest Suburban Symphony, Colla Voce Concert Series and others. Tim is a frequent recitalist with his wife, (and accompanist) Maggie. They have performed over one hundred recitals together including major works such as Schubert’s *Winterreise* and Schumann’s *Dichterliebe*. Several of their recitals are available on the Colla Voce Concert Series’ YouTube channel. Tim is also one third of Tenors MKE, a trio that blends classical, Broadway, and pop music with big vocals and their signature comedic banter. Tim has composed operas, art songs, choral works and chamber pieces. He is a frequent music director and conductor for shows and concerts, and he is the Artistic Director of Brew City



Tim Rebers
Tenor

Opera. You can hear BCO’s original audio-drama *L’ultima Canzone* (which Tim arranged and orchestrated) by visiting their website: brewcityopera.com.

Showing his vocal versatility, **Dr. Thomas J. Weis** has appeared as leading man in *Kiss Me Kate* and *The Music Man* with The Heartland Festival in Platteville, Wisconsin, Grandpa Moss in Skylight Opera Theater’s production of *The Tender Land*, which aired on Wisconsin PBS in January 2003, and as Bass Soloist in Handel’s *Messiah* with the Milwaukee Symphony. Thomas has performed leading and secondary roles with a wealth of operatic, oratorio and symphonic, and musical theater companies in the Midwest and across the country. Thomas has sung as Bass Soloist in Bach’s *Magnificat*, Haydn’s *The Creation*, Verdi’s *Requiem*, Mozart’s *Requiem*, Dvorak’s *Stabat*

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Dr. Thomas J. Weis
Bass

Mater, Brahms' *Requiem*, and more. Rena Archwemety Beyer from The Capital Times, in a classical review of Dvorak's *Stabat Mater* wrote, "Weis gave a moving bass solo in 'Fac ut ardeat cor meum'. From his strong entrance with the brass section to the emotion he conveyed, his interpretation of the text was outstanding". Mr. Weis embodied the title role of Figaro in the University of Wisconsin-Madison Opera program's *Le Nozze di Figaro* of W.A. Mozart. In the Opera Review for the Wisconsin State Journal, Jay Rath stated "As Figaro, Thomas Weis has a voice that is warm and mellow but with an edge like good black coffee". Thomas obtained a Doctor of Musical Arts - Vocal Performance degree and an Opera Production minor from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2007, where he studied with Paul Rowe, William Farlow, and a plethora of internationally acclaimed faculty. His Master of Music degree in Vocal Performance was earned from the University of Arizona in 1996 under the tutelage of Dr. Lawrence Day, an early student of Berton Coffin. Undergraduate work was completed at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville in 1994, where Thomas also performed as an apprentice actor in the renowned Wisconsin Shakespeare Festival.

Major concert sponsors for this special anniversary season are Dimond Brothers Insurance / Auto Owners Insurance, Jimmy Johns, Drexel Building Supply and the Fond du Lac Area Foundation.

SSC's conductor, **Cory Schneider**, will lead the concert from the podium. Schneider is in his 18th season as conductor of the Chorale. A native of Fond du Lac, he earned his Bachelor of Arts Degree from Carroll College and a Master of Music Education with an emphasis in Choral Conducting from the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee. He has been a secondary choral director for the past 28 years in Wisconsin, having been at Fond du Lac High School since 2001.

RESERVED SEATING admission tickets are \$18 in advance at www.hometowntickets.com or \$23 at the door one hour prior to the concert. Email southshorefdloffice@gmail.com for more information or visit www.southshorechorale.org.

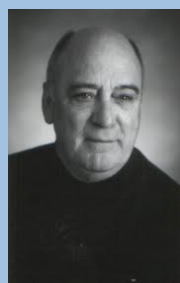
The History of FDL Oratorio Chorus and South Shore Chorale Directors



Ray Wifler,
1971-1972



John Bauerlein,
1972-1973



Alan Lemery,
1973-2005



Cory Schneider,
2005-present

FDL Oratorio Chorus & South Shore Chorale Through the Years



The first Oratorio Concert, May 2, 1971



Director Al Lemery works with singers in 1974



Oratorio members. 1984



Buttermilk Summer Concert Series
Summer, 2018



South Shore Chorale trip to Canada, 2018



An American Salute
Spring, 2018



Current South Shore Director Cory Schneider
at Cathedral Concert, March, 2023

Schneider's Scribblings...

Cory Schneider, Director

After 52 years, we are FINALLY at the point where we are celebrating our 50 years of existence in the Fond du Lac community. We had hoped to celebrate our Golden Anniversary during our actual 50th year, however, the Covid pandemic forced us online to a virtual academy. Now that we are finally past the pandemic, we are primed and ready for an amazing **Golden Anniversary Concert Finale!**

Five years ago, when the SSC Board of Directors started to brainstorm what we wanted to do for our 50th Anniversary, the board members unanimously wanted to collaborate with the Fond du Lac High School Choir Program.

I am continuously amazed by our SSC family at their desire to encourage the youth in our community through these collaborative endeavors. This isn't the first time these two organizations have collaborated together. For our 45th Anniversary, we performed Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* together with a full orchestra and professional soloists. In addition, FHS Choirs have been invited to sing several times with SSC throughout the last 52 years:

- 2016 Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* with the entire FHS Choir Program and orchestra.
- 2012 Carol Barnett's *The World Beloved: Bluegrass Mass* with FHS Concert Choir and Monroe Crossing, a bluegrass band from Minneapolis
- 2007 Franz J. Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass* with FHS Concert Choir and full orchestra
- 2004 John Rutter's *Mass of the Children* with treble voices from FHS Cardinal Singers

In the 1980's and 1990's, there were also several performances where selected FHS singers joined the Fond du Lac Oratorio Chorus for special guest performances.

Joining our combined choir of 325 voices will be a 60 member semi-professional orchestra and 4 professional soloists. Our orchestra will feature some of the finest string, wind, brass and percussion players from this part of the state. Our four professional soloists will join us on *Beethoven's 9th* in the second half of the concert. **Erin Sura** (mezzo soprano) and **Thomas Weis** (bass) are no strangers to SSC as they have performed several times in recent years with our Chorale. Joining us for the first time will be **Erin Bryan** (soprano) and **Timothy Rebers** (tenor). These four soloists will fill the Performing Arts Center with their amazing voices and will be a delight to hear.

There are so many storylines for this concert. Multi-generational singing is one of them and one of the most inspiring parts of my job. In January, we encouraged parents of the FHS choir students to join us for this special concert. We had a great turnout of parents who joined SSC just to be able to sing with their child for this concert. There is even one THREE GENERATION family singing. There is nothing more magical than watching high school students singing next to their parents on stage. Be sure to find their pictures and names in this newsletter.

Then there are the SSC members themselves. These volunteer singers are some of the most dedicated people in Fond du Lac! They care so deeply for making the choral arts an important part of the Fond du Lac community. I continue to be amazed every rehearsal at their dedication and commitment to our organization. I think of our two most veteran singers, *Garvin Shields*, who sang in our first concert in 1971, is our longest tenured singer and will be performing his 95th concert with us in this concert. He has been on the Board of Directors for many years, only missed a few concerts throughout our history, and has given so much to our organization. *Diana Beck*, our second most veteran singer, will be performing her 88th concert with us and continues to be a driving force in our alto section. Garvin and Diana, are just two examples, I could go on and on with all of the dedicated people who give so much to SSC.

The music for our **Golden Anniversary Concert** will feature a wide variety of music for all to enjoy. Our first half of music will be dedicated to the music that we have performed in our last 52 years. The first set of music will honor our early years when we were known as the Fond du Lac Oratorio Chorus while our second set will feature music since we changed our name in 2006 to South Shore Chorale. You will witness Fond du Lac history in the

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second half of the concert as we believe this will be the FIRST EVER PERFORMANCE in Fond du Lac of Ludwig van Beethoven's famous **9th Symphony (4th movement)**! Performing Beethoven's masterpiece is a once in a lifetime opportunity. It is a dream for any conductor, singer, soloist, orchestra player or audience member to be part of a live performance of this iconic work! You will not want to miss it!

I get asked all the time about our ticket prices. These types of performances don't just happen. They take a lot of planning and require many things to happen before we even start rehearsing the music. Ticket income is only one way we cover our expenses each year. From guest musicians (orchestra and soloists), singer's music, orchestra music rentals, staff salaries, music composer royalties, bleacher rental, performance rights, concert programs, venue rental, publicity, and marketing to name a few line items; the annual budget for this special anniversary season is over \$100,000. After all, you are coming to a live performance with nearly 400 musicians. Our SSC Board is thrilled to be able to keep our concert tickets affordable. Concerts of this magnitude in the Fox Valley will be \$25-\$40 (or more) per ticket and in Milwaukee would be \$30-\$50 (or more) per ticket. A special thank you to all of our individual and business donors for supporting our chorale to help meet our budget. I would also like to thank our Golden Anniversary Concert Season sponsors of Dimond Brothers Insurance / Auto Owners Insurance, Jimmy Johns, Drexel Building Supply and the Fond du Lac Area Foundation.

Did You Know?

Last fall, I wrote about some of the choral music history prior to the Fond du Lac Oratorio Chorus in 1971. The earliest record we have of choral singing in Fond du Lac started in 1871 as part of the Handel and Haydn Society performing under conductor Mr. Butterfield from Chicago. In my last newsletter I covered the early years from 1871-1917. After 1917, the archives aren't as thorough as far as what was being performed. Here are some of the highlights.

- Fond du Lac Choral Society existed from 1905-1924
- Fond du Lac Civic Chorus was mentioned in 1934 and existed in different variations through 1960's.
- Elk's Men's Chorus mentioned in 1939 presenting a concert. This Chorus was very popular in the mid 1900's and competed in state contests for many years. The group existed until the early 2,000's.
- The Fond du Lac Civic Music Association presented many guest artists from 1940's until 1970's. We believe this is the early form of our current Fond du Lac Concert Association. Groups from all over America traveled to perform in Fond du Lac.
- Fond du Lac Oratorio Chorus performs *Elijah* by Felix Mendelssohn in the spring of 1971. Two concerts were presented every year from 1971 until today.
- Fond du Lac Oratorio Chorus changed name to South Shore Chorale in 2006. South Shore Chorale continues to present two-three concerts each year for the Fond du Lac community.

THANK YOU to everyone who has contributed to making this special concert happen! There really is a long list of volunteers who helped bring this special season to fruition. We are truly blessed in Fond du Lac to have our Chorale and I am honored to be standing on the podium for this concert. I hope to see you at our final concert for our special Golden Anniversary Concert Season. ***A concert like this may not happen for another 50 years....DON'T MISS IT! It is going to be an exciting weekend for our community and the history of choral music in Fond du Lac!***

Musically Yours,
Cory

On March 4th and 5th the South Shore Chorale performed a beautiful concert at the historic St. Paul's Cathedral in Fond du Lac. As well as the Chorale performing many beautiful pieces, the South Shore Chamber Singers also shared a set of music.



Laura Bingen,
Soloist



Brody Strachan,
Soloist



Hometown Tickets

*Purchase tickets for all South Shore Chorale
performances at
www.hometowntickets.com*

We interviewed our two 'most seasoned' veterans of South Shore Chorale and two of our younger FHS choir students and asked them a few questions about singing and this Anniversary Concert.



(left to right) Garvin Shields (SSC member since 1971), Diana Beck (SSC member since 1973), Quinten Mostek (sophomore), Anahlicia Lewis-Gellings (freshman)

What has been the biggest change in singing with the chorale all these years?

Diana: The biggest change has been the change in directors from Alan Lemery to Cory. This led to other changes such as more expanded choices of music, the choir becoming larger over time and more demanding precision on the performance. But I also loved Al Lemery's approach to music and his devotion to sacred music. Luckily, Cory sang with Al and is dedicated to preserving some of the tradition from Al.

Garvin: Growth of the organization. The first thing that comes to mind is how the number of singers has grown over the years. I don't think any of us who were part of the Oratorio Chorus, as South Shore was known in the early years, ever thought that it would not be unusual to be singing with 150 or more people.

Do you have a concert that you sang in that is particular memorable?

Diana: One of the most memorable was the concert was last spring - after the pandemic we were singing on the theme of Let Music Live. Cory tempted us back with *Requiem For The Living*, which is my favorite piece of music.

Garvin: Probably "Carmina" just for the sheer size of the production as well as the music. That concert was a collaboration that included a large group of students from the Fondy HS music program. It's always a pleasure to have them join us.

Do you have any advice for the students who are singing this concert with you?

Diana: Try to stay involved with a singing group. I have learned so many wonderful pieces of music over the years. It has been very rewarding.

Garvin: Keep singing. Continue to develop your skills. For those things that are really important, make it a habit to strive for excellence. There will be times when you may not reach your goal but you will be a better person for having made the effort.

Have you ever sung the Beethoven piece before?

Diana: I have never sung Beethoven's 9th before. It is a challenging piece. Luckily, I did take a couple of years of German in school.

Garvin: No! It is challenging, but, like "Carmina," I think it'll be an experience we won't soon forget.

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How do you feel about singing this classic piece of music (the Beethoven)?

Anahlicia: It's really great that we're singing a song that is so recognizable among all generations. We have all heard this song in our life somewhere and it's really special to have so many different people come together to sing it.

Quinten: Singing Beethoven is a challenge, especially the tenor part I sing. It gets very high and some rhythms in it get very complex. At the same time, it is very cool to sing a historical piece like Beethoven.

Was it hard to learn the German?

Anahlicia: Yes, it feels like every note we sing has at least ten syllables that go along with it.

Quinten: The German was pretty easy to learn especially considering that I have 2 choir classes a day and I practice outside of school as well. The German language itself is also pretty simple but the repetition is really what helped me to know it all.

What are you learning from the members of the chorale?

Anahlicia: I'm learning that you can always have a place for music, no matter what stage of life you are in. You don't have to give it up when you leave high school

Quinten: I am learning how they are able to read music and adapt so well to songs that I sort of know. It's cool to see the adults around me know these songs so well with very few rehearsals.

What was it like singing in a group this large?

Anahlicia: The atmosphere was invigorating. Watching hundreds of voices working hard to bring these pieces to life was so amazing.

Quinten: It's very refreshing to hear a large sound, especially for something this large. It's just really cool to hear the low basses to have a huge round low sound, but that's just one example. Having experienced adults around me is also really cool. The aesthetic of it all too is really cool. Just seeing a lot of people who want to sing all in one place was really cool.



Over the past several years the South Shore Chorale has acquired a large number of riser sections, platforms, and railings. Thanks to the kindness of members, friends, and the Fond du Lac School District, it has been possible to store this riser equipment in a variety of locations . . . not all of them close or convenient to our performance sites.

When the SSC Board was informed we could no longer store the risers in the facility where they were, the board was faced with trying to find a location that would protect them and make them readily available.

Enter Billie and Buck Giese - with a great idea and gift.

Billie informed the SSC Board that Buck had located a box trailer that, with considerable creativity and TLC could be turned into a permanent storage facility and provide transport for all of the riser and platform sections. Over the summer and fall of 2022, Buck transformed and refitted the empty trailer into more than adequate storage for all of our riser equipment. As a result, it is now possible to securely store and efficiently transport all of our riser sections.

South Shore Chorale is indebted to Billie and Buck for their incredibly kind donation and all of their work to bring the trailer project to completion. Be sure to give a HUGE "THANK YOU" to the Giese's.

On Saturday, March 25th South Shore Chorale members and FHS choir students got together in the FHS commons area for a 4-hour joint rehearsal which included a time of getting to know one another. It was so good to see students and adults singing side-by-side.



It has been a delight to have multiple generations of families singing together in rehearsals for the upcoming 50th Anniversary Concert. Here are some of the students in the FHS choral program with family members who are singing with the chorale this semester.



Henry & Todd Hayes



Miranda & Pamela Mase



Eспен Schraufnagel & Jennifer McGrath



Hannah, Sophie & Adam Utecht



Hollie & Konor Brown



Isabel & Glenn Buelow



Kaden & Jenni Zupke



Sam & Sherri Fuchs



Paige, Emily & Traci Freiberg



Melanie & Sophie Steinbarth



Graham & Marcus Anderson



Bill, Noah, Sean & Nick Dietrich -
3 generations!