



Redwood Coast Children's Chorus - Handbook

Musical Director Mailing Address

Kathé Lyth
RCCC
7721 Kneeland Road
Kneeland, CA 95549

Rehearsal Site: TBA

Contact:

Director, Kathe Lyth:499-3920
kathelyth@gmail.com
redwoodcoastchildrenschorus.net
info@redwoodcoastchildrenschorus.net

Mission Statement

The purpose of the *Redwood Coast Children's Chorus* is to prepare its members for participation in a concert-level performing group while developing individual musicianship and enthusiasm for musical achievement. Through unaccompanied part-singing, children will increase their aesthetic senses, develop their intellectual and physical abilities, and most importantly, experience the joy of sharing beautiful music with each other and providing a gift for others.

Musical Philosophy

The musical training of the Redwood Coast Children's Chorus is based on the Kodály concept of musical education, a program of sequential activities in vocal music. Skill in memorizing, analyzing and reading music is founded on the study of sight-singing, sol fa, ear-training and vocal techniques.

Zoltan Kodály was an early twentieth century Hungarian musician, composer and music educator. He believed that the mission of music is to reflect the eternal harmony of the universe and to show people how they can fit in with it. He further believed that music must be consciously fostered as early as possible in a child's life. Beginning with nursery rhymes and folk songs, Kodály's system of musical literacy for children builds upon this foundation of tradition. Furthermore, Kodály believed that music is to be shared. "Music is an indispensable part of human culture. Imperfect is the culture of him who lacks it. There is no complete person without music."

Musical Director: Kathé Lyth

Kathé Lyth was born in Berkeley, CA. She received her BA, a Life-Time Teaching Credential and an MM in Music Education with Kodály Emphasis from Holy Names University Oakland, CA. She has taught pre-school through university levels, which includes Kodály music education graduate courses at Holy Names University, West Chester University and on the Navajo Reservation.

In 1978, Kathé founded The Redwood Coast Children's Chorus. Members of the RCCC have traveled on eleven World Harmony Tours beginning with Soviet Russia in 1989. The primary mission of the Chorus is to spread peace through music.

In 1974 Kathé received a Ford Foundation Grant to teach with Dr Klára Kokas, Budapest, Hungary, collaborating in a unique educational project involving music, movement and academic learning. From 2003-2007, she was invited by Maria Joao Pires (world renowned pianist) to direct a children's chorus and to provide workshops for children and teachers in schools and conservatories (Belgais Center for the Arts, Portugal; Salamanca, Spain; Belgium).

Currently Kathé is composing and arranging music for children's choruses, women's choruses and for the celtic harp. She has published several works. Her latest, *"Turtle Dove – 60 Two-Part American Folk Song Arrangements"* has just been published (2018) by OAKE (Organization of Kodály Musical Educators). **She is beginning a new project: The World's Children's Concert Fund (For Children Survivors of Natural Catastrophes) WCCF.** Please refer to the Chorus Website: redwoodcoastchildrenschorus.net

Program Organization

The Redwood Coast Children's Chorus is a part of **The Ink People, "Dream-Makers"**, a nonprofit 501 (c) (3) corporation. The Ink People is located in Eureka, CA.

Registration/Enrollment

All chorus members are required to have a current **Registration Form**, **Student/Parent Contract**, **Attendance Contract** and **Volunteer Sign-Up Sheet** on file. Please download these forms. Please **MAKE SURE** that your **emergency contact information** is on file at all times. If there are any changes to your contact names or numbers or if there is going to be another person in charge and authorized to respond to an emergency for a period of time, please notify us immediately.

Tuition

Tuition for RCCC is based on a 2-semester school year, **September through January and February through Mid-June. Tuition is \$250 per semester, which, for payment convenience, can be divided into five monthly payments of \$50 each.** Monthly tuition payments are due on the first week of each new month of rehearsals. **Checks should be made out to Kathe Lyth.**

Tuition checks may be mailed to:

Kathé Lyth - RCCC
7721 Kneeland Road
Kneeland, CA 95549

Scholarships

The RCCC will offer limited half tuition scholarships as fundraising permits. The director of the RCCC will determine all scholarships awarded, based on need and circumstances.

Scholarship applications may be obtained on the Chorus website:

redwoodcoastchildrenschorus.net Previous scholarship chorus members must **reapply** each semester. **Scholarship recipients and or their families must be willing to help with fundraisers and/or other RCCC events and functions which will help to benefit other scholarship recipients.** The RCCC does not discriminate the choice of scholarship on the basis of gender, race, color, age, religion, national origin, physical ability, or sexual preference.

Volunteering and Fund-raising

The Redwood Coast Children's Chorus will have ongoing fund-raising events which will be necessary to offset the costs of local and major singing tours and to help cover ongoing administrative costs. Chorus families will be expected to participate in these events as they arise. **All families are expected to sign up for at least one area of volunteer work** (see volunteer sign-up sheet). **All chorus members and their parents who will be touring must be involved in fund-raising that directly focuses on raising funds for the World Harmony Tour.** *

* Parents of touring members may be responsible for a major portion of the tour costs.

Parent Participation

Participation is an outstanding way to show support for your child and to help build the Redwood Coast Children's Chorus. There are many ways in which parents can become involved in their child's musical growth and the development of the RCCC. Parents are asked to volunteer for at least one item on the volunteer sign-up sheet. We do realize that the amount of time each family has to contribute varies greatly depending on their personal schedules and demands. Any amount of time a parent is able to offer to the Chorus will be greatly appreciated. If you are unsure of how you can participate or if you have something special to offer, please bring this to the attention of the music director. We will be happy to try and work around your schedule or we can offer suggestions for ways in which you can become more involved in your child's musical education and the development of the RCCC.

Chorus Description

The Redwood Coast Children's Chorus has several levels. Each chorus level meets once a week for a period of time appropriate to age and musical ability. Chorus age guidelines are somewhat flexible: If a younger chorus member meets the musical standards expected and is emotionally mature enough for advancement, then it is possible for that child will be placed at a higher level.

Level - I (Pre-Chorus – workshop) Children from 3-4 years of age who show enthusiasm for singing and who are able to follow directions will be considered for this group. Parents are encouraged to learn songs and skills taught and to participate during sessions. Pre-Chorus meets for 30 minutes per week. (Please refer to the Chorus website for current dates and times.)

Level - II (Training Chorus for boys and girls) - Children who are of the approximate ages of 5-10 years participate at this Chorus level. There are limited openings or no more than 20 students. Level II children must be able to sing in tune reasonably well. They are expected to rehearse for one hour per week. **The ability to stay focused and to keep a positive attitude is essential.**

Level - III (Concert Chorus - Auditions only!) - **MEMBERS OF THE NEWLY FORMED WCCF (World Concert Children's Fund – for Children Survivors of Natural Catastrophes)** make up the Concert Chorus. Approximate ages for this level are from 8-18 years. Concert Chorus members must meet all the requirements of Training Chorus. They must also have the vocal quality to blend well with the rest of the Concert Chorus.

At this level, chorus members are expected to come to chorus rehearsals with a positive attitude and be ready to rehearse. Chorus members **must** bring all required materials to rehearsal each week, **as well as arrive on time and be picked up on time. Level III meets for one and a half hours per week.** They participate in various performances throughout the year. If a Chorus member misses more than two consecutive rehearsals without ample excuse (illness, family emergency, etc.) he or she may be asked to discontinue the Chorus and their place will be filled by another individual on the waiting list.

Women's Chorus (Refer to 'Women's Chorus' in the navigational section of the home page of the RCCC web -site)

Requirements for each Chorus Level

Level - I (PRE-CHORUS Workshops)

1. At this level, children will be accepted by their desire to sing and their enthusiasm for music. Children will participate in creative movement, games, and learn to interact positively with other children.
2. If there is a workable relationship between parent and child, the director encourages parent participation during the sessions with follow-through of the songs, games and skills at home. Sometimes an older brother or sister may participate in the place of a parent .
3. Punctual and consistent attendance for these sessions is required.

Objectives

1. Children will learn a select group of singing games and folk songs that they will be able to sing alone or in a group.
2. Children will learn basic musical skills on a concrete (not abstract) basis: reading picture charts, stepping and clapping the beat and rhythm, developing listening skills and developing correct intonation through ear training.
3. Children will have the opportunity to listen to recordings of children's choruses as well as to hear other levels of the RCCC.
4. Children will become sensitive to beginning harmonies and correct intonation as well as the development of simple rhythmic and harmonic skills.
5. Children will learn respect for each other and their teacher.

Level - II (Training Choruses)

Children will be accepted into Training Chorus if they:

1. Indicate a personal level of positive enthusiasm and commitment to participate in all rehearsals and concerts for the year.
2. Are able to sing in tune.

Objectives:

1. Children learn correct vocal technique.
2. Children learn correct performance practices and manners
3. Children will sight read selections that include the extended pentatonic scale and several rhythm patterns.
4. Children will sing with clear intonation and beautiful expression. They will sing folk songs and composed music in unison and in two parts.
5. Children will develop their aesthetic senses by continuous listening to their own choral singing as well as those recordings of other outstanding children's choruses.
6. Children will have opportunities in creative movement and learning several folk dances.

Performance - The Training Chorus will sing two or three times during the year in all-level concerts.

Attendance - It is expected that each member in the Training Chorus arrive consistently and promptly to all rehearsals and participate in all concerts.

Level III (Concert Chorus)

WCCF (World Concert Children's Fund) *Please refer to Chorus Website*

Chorus members who **audition** for Concert Chorus must:

1. Show a high level of enthusiasm, commitment and positive "spark" which generates throughout the entire chorus.
2. Be willing to arrange personal activities so that they will not interfere with our once a week rehearsal time or any scheduled concerts.
3. Be at a high level of musical ability. (Reading music is highly recommended)

Audition - the chorister will:

1. Be asked to sing one or two unaccompanied pieces. Correct posture, clear intonation and expression, proper diction and breathing, as well as poise will be considered.

2. Sing alone one part while another student or the music director sings the second part of a known song.
3. Sight-sing an unknown simple selection.

Those accepted into the Concert Chorus must:

1. Have completed the requirements of the Older Training Chorus
2. Show an equal level of musical ability, having already received adequate musical training.

Objectives:

Chorus members will:

1. Develop vocal technique.
2. Develop the ability to sight-read.
3. Learn and memorize a large repertoire of music from various periods and styles.
4. Perform locally.
5. On occasions, make professional recordings.

Weekly Rehearsal Schedule

Chorus Group Rehearsal Time:

Level II (Training Choruses) TBA

Level III (Concert Chorus) TBA

The **fall semester** will begin within the first or second week in September.

The **spring semester** will begin the first week in January. Chorus rehearsals will not be held during major holiday breaks: Thanksgiving, Winter/Christmas, President's Week, Spring /Easter break.

Women's Chorus: 7:15 - 8:45 P.M., Wednesdays. Rehearsals are held at Garfield School on Freshwater Rd, Eureka (Please refer to the RCCC website)

REHEARSAL/BEHAVIOR POLICY

Attendance

Attendance at all rehearsals, concerts and recording sessions is mandatory if the objectives of the Chorus are to be maintained. The only acceptable excuses for absence are severe illness and occasional educational school trips. The musical director must be given a letter of explanation as early as possible prior to trips. If a chorister is ill, please contact Kathé Lyth : 499-3920 or email: *kathelyth@gmail.com*.

If a chorister is absent, he/she should call the chorus director to find out:

- a) What music was covered and must be practiced
- b) What new music was handed out
- c) What memos were handed out (all levels)

Rehearsals

Chorus members should:

1. Arrive in enough time to pick up new music and memos
2. Bring all music to rehearsals, neatly alphabetized in a one inch black binder.
3. Use washrooms and drink water *before* rehearsals.
4. Be seated 5 minutes before the rehearsal begins.
5. Keep noise level down
6. Help to keep the rehearsal space clean

No chorus member may leave the premises unless the designated driver is there to pick up the chorus member.

Care of music

Training and Concert Chorus members will be given music throughout the chorus year. These items are costly and will be the responsibility of the chorister. If any assigned music is damaged or lost by a chorister, parents will be charged for the cost of its replacement. All music must be returned when completed.

World Harmony Tours

(Touring Chorus only) TBA

A World Harmony Tour by the Redwood Coast Children's Touring Chorus takes place when the Chorus members are musically and emotionally prepared to do so and when the Chorus as an organization is financially stable. The World Harmony Tours are represented by our most advanced and mature chorus members. On tour, they are expected to perform for and with children and adults in another country. Through singing and personal contact with other schools, choruses, orphanages, etc, it is hoped that our Touring Chorus members will grow as human beings, and will help to make the world a better place. In order for these tours to be successful, a great deal of commitment to our Chorus goals and philosophy is necessary by all chorus members, their families, and the chaperones.

Touring Chorus members are expected to:

1. Attend rehearsals throughout the touring year. (Do not sign up for activities that will take you from rehearsals)
2. Learn all music by memory
3. Develop a caring, open rapport with all other chorus members.
4. Be respectful of the music director and of all parents and chaperones involved with the tour and its planning.
5. Not argue decisions made by the director or the Touring Committee
6. Help in all ways to prepare for the Tour.
7. Realize the World Harmony Tour is a working, giving opportunity for choristers to represent Humboldt County and our country in a positive way.

Touring Chorus parents/families are expected to:

1. Make sure their chorus member attends rehearsals by getting them to and from chorus on time.
2. Support the Chorus's philosophy on the World Harmony Tour. This includes understanding and accepting the details and consequences laid forth by the Touring Committee and the Board of Directors. (INK – The Ink People)
3. Make Tour payments on time. (VERY IMPORTANT)
4. Help in whatever scholarship fund-raisers may be set forth by the Chorus as a whole, or whatever may be asked of them.
5. Realize that the World Harmony Tour is a working, giving, and highly eventful tour for the Chorus members. It is NOT to be considered a family vacation. Non-chaperoning adults and nonperforming siblings or friends may not participate in this tour. Families may, however, make their own arrangements to meet with their touring chorus member by following the tour. However, it is be understood that **Chorus members must travel with the rest of the touring chorus at all times.**

Policy for Sports, Plays, Extras:

Physical fitness is a necessity for the well being of all chorus members. Sports, dance classes, plays, martial arts, etc. are very important, and the Chorus is willing to compromise under the following conditions:

A chorus member may be involved in an after school sport for **one season**, missing chorus **ONLY EVERY OTHER WEEK** except for Touring Chorus members during a tour year. All concerts must be performed, however, and of course all music learned and memorized.

- * If a chorus member wishes to continue a sport for another season or seasons during the year, they must arrange it so that they do not miss chorus rehearsals for the purpose of a sports practice. Also, **concerts must not be missed** because of a sports event (there may be occasional exceptions to this). If so, that chorus member may be asked to drop out of chorus and his or her place will be filled.

Please note: The above policy will be enforced on a case by case basis depending on the director's assessment of the child's progress and the impact on the progress of the group.

Health Policies

The **RCCC** is concerned with the health of all choristers, staff, and parents. In order to help prevent the spread of communicable illnesses please do not bring your child to rehearsals or performances if they demonstrate any of the signs or symptoms of **severe** or communicable diseases. If your child is feeling a little "under-the-weather" or a bit tired, please plan on attending anyway. A lot can be learned just by just 'sitting in' during a rehearsal, listening, and following the musical score. If your child becomes ill while at RCCC functions, he/she will be isolated for his/her comfort, providing whatever care is necessary. Some illnesses are undetectable in early stages. If children in the RCCC are inadvertently exposed to an illness or other communicable condition, parents and/or guardians will be notified immediately and told of the signs and symptoms to watch for. If your child receives a **minor** injury while attending an RCCC sponsored event, staff will help the chorus member and provide whatever assistance is required. Parents will be notified ASAP. If your child develops a medical or dental emergency, parents will be notified immediately along with the family physician or dentist. If a family physician or dentist is not available or if the condition is a life-threatening emergency, appropriate emergency personnel will be notified.

Rides/Transportation

As a reminder, please make sure your child gets to Chorus rehearsals before the actual chorus rehearsal begins. Also make sure the chorus member is picked up **ON TIME**. Please call the director if rides become a problem so we can help to work out carpooling. **If someone other than those listed in your child's file will be picking up or dropping off your child, please notify the RCCC in writing.**

Mailing/Newsletter

An on -line monthly newsletter will be emailed to each chorus family. If you have ideas or suggestions for the Chorus newsletter, please contact the director. If you have any **newsletter contributions** please contact Kathe Lyth by the **third Friday of the month.**

Photos

At times, publicity photos will be taken of the Chorus. These may be posted in the newsletter for the enjoyment of children and parents alike. Occasionally we will use some of the pictures in recruitment and advertisement materials, as well as for the chorus website. If you would rather that we did not use photos of your child in any of our printed and posted materials please let us know in writing. A release for photos statement is included with registration material.