

Dubuque Chorale Annual Meeting

Thursday, May 8, 2025, 6pm
Church of the Nativity, Dubuque

Committee reports

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Financial | Joe Amato |
| Fundraising | Terri Eckhart |
| Governance and Legal | Terri Eckhart |
| Education and Outreach | Mary Beth Ferring |
| Membership | Nick Anderson |
| Publicity and Marketing | Sarah Slaughter |
| Logistics | Mark Niemer |

Artistic Director's reports

| | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Children's Choirs | Karmella Sellers |
| Chorale | Amanda Huntleigh |

President's report and elections

Mark Niemer

Other Business

Adjourn

2025 Treasurer Annual Report

Budget

Income and expenditures were generally consistent with the budget. While we do not yet have final figures, here are some takeaways from what is known since the March income statement and budget:

- Membership dues were down due to about 14 fewer children in DCCC
- Fundraising exceeded expectations and balanced out total income
- Tentative final budget figures based on 3/31 Income statement and budget adjusted for all activity subsequent to 3/31:
 - Income exceeded expectations by \$2992
 - Expenditures exceeded budget by \$2848
 - Net budget surplus of \$144

2024-2025 Season News

- Office rent payment now paid via automatic withdrawals vs. monthly checks
- Memorials established for Richard Rollefson and Carol Baumann
 - Richard's: currently \$1520; designated towards new keyboard
 - Carol's: currently \$235.13; includes Square reader donated in her memory
- Square account established and reader purchased to facilitate dues payments
- Chorale dues increase for 2025-2026 season:
 - Full season increased from \$90 to \$110
 - Half season increased from \$50 to \$60
 - No changes to Cadenza (extra \$30) or DCCC (\$150)
- Student or 26-or-under category changed to simply under 27 years old
 - No need to be registered as a student
 - No longer applicable to students 27 or older
 - Remains at \$25 for the full season

Fundraising Annual Report, May 8, 2025 Dubuque Chorale, Terry Eckhart , Chair. Season 2024-25.

Fundraising goal: \$42,734

Received: \$51,587.60

| | | |
|---|----------------------------|-------------|
| Summary: Individuals (does not include "pass the hats") | | \$6775 |
| Foundations/Organizations: | | \$8600 |
| Shoen Family Charitable Trust | \$950 (DCCC scholarships) | |
| Butler Family Foundation | \$500 | |
| Wahlert Family Foundation | \$1650 (DCCC scholarships) | |
| Henry Family Foundation | \$5000 | |
| Morning Optimist Club | \$500 | |
| Corporate: | | \$13,378.60 |
| BVM'S | \$5000 | |
| Srs. Of St Francis | \$300 | |
| Gronen Properties | \$4000 | |
| DuRide (in kind printing) | \$503.60 | |
| Premier Bank | \$2500 | |
| New Melleray Abbey | \$500 | |
| Dubuque Ob-Gyn | \$500 | |
| Home and Floor Show | \$75 | |
| Grants: | | \$22,834 |
| City of Dubuque Ops Support | \$3166 | |
| Ia Arts Council | \$5000 | |
| City of Dubuque Cap Building | \$4000 | |
| DRA (Songfest25) | \$10,688 | |
| Total: | | \$51,587.60 |

Donations to Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque in Chorale's name: \$600

Endowment interest received \$3420

Grants and requests being written for 2025-26:

City of Dubuque Ops Support (submitted 4/1/25)

DRA for Songfest 26 (due May 16)

Ia Arts Council for \$5000 (already approved)

Schoen Family Charitable Trust

Wahlert Family Foundation

Money spent on fundraising this year: \$2372, for printing and postage

Governance/Legal committee: Terry Eckhart chair Season 2024-25

New contracts were made for all personnel receiving stipends, including subs.

A required background check was done on a volunteer working with children (all good).

Education and Outreach Annual Report

DCCC continues to work with 3rd through 6th grade singers with 2 directors. We continue to do joint concerts with the Chorale and Cadenza as well as extra events at the Library and Kennedy Mall.

Currently we are recruiting for next year. We had 19 students interviewed last week and have 10 scheduled so far for next week.

One area of growth for next year is to follow up better with attendance and if a singer drops out of the choir.

We have also created guidelines for an intern which will help with recruitment for this position in the future.

Membership Committee Annual Report

The membership committee has hosted treat nights. Additionally it has had activities for providing feedback and understanding on where members would like chorale to progress towards. We have had activities to get to know each other better with games. We have explored options for connecting with other groups and increasing our numbers. Afterglow events were provided for additional merriment. Membership has kept track of who is attending concerts and made sure the correct people receive the information. Membership has worked on connecting with other teams to provide a social media presence.

Annual Report - 2024/25 season
Dubuque Chorale Publicity and Marketing
May 8, 2025

This year the Publicity committee marketed Olympic Dreams, Songfest, and Books & Ballads using some established and some new strategies. Thanks to a capacity building grant from the City of Dubuque, we were able to work with a local marketing company, Lotus Marketing, on a marketing plan. They had some helpful advice about scheduling the different phases of advertising for concerts, and when to start pushes for recruitment of new members.

We continued to use print ads and articles in local publications like the Telegraph Herald, Julien's Journal, and 356Ink. Thanks to Amanda, Karmella, and Victoria for providing comments for the Julien's Journal articles, and thanks to Becky Canovan for her editing skills.

One new venture for us this season was billboard advertising. I believe this helped to raise awareness of our organization - as some anecdotal evidence, I had several people who were not involved with the Chorale mention on different occasions that they had seen one of our boards. This year was an experiment, but I think it turned out to be a worthwhile investment and I would like to give it another go next year.

On social media, we made an effort to incorporate more short video content to promote our concerts and recruit members to the organization. Thank you to all who participated! Facebook and Instagram reels tend to get more engagement and reach a wider audience than traditional posts, so I would like to continue with this effort next year. Thank you Danielle Phillips for handling recording the videos, and managing our accounts!

Another goal for this year was trimming costs. To do this we focused print ads on the publications with the widest reach, used lighter weight paper for programs and postcards, and relied on members for design work rather than hiring professional designers. Although, as it happens, one of our members actually is a professional, so huge thank you to Macayla Albee for volunteering her time and talent! I also need to shout out Mary Bryant for her work on designing our programs - her attention to detail is unmatched!

Over the summer the committee plans to work on designing new banners, as the stands for the current banners are starting to break down. This will also be an opportune time to refresh our image and tweak our brand colors to develop a more cohesive and versatile color palette that works for all the ensembles in our organization.

Thanks to the board and everyone who helps with publicity projects. I look forward to next year!

Sarah Slaughter, Publicity Chair

Logistics Committee Annual report 2025

Committee Members: Mark Niemer, Mary Beth Ferring (librarian), Peyton Bellings (vice-president), Curt Zeimet, Mike Josefowicz, Samantha Eschaves (all as needed)

The Logistics Committee is responsible for the physical stuff that the Chorale has, keeping track of it and making sure that we have the right material and supplies in the right place at the right time. We help the artistic staff with any production needs for Chorale performances. This includes set up and take down for performances. We also work with other committees (publicity, education, etc) to see that production needs are met. We also keep an office with all of our music that the Chorale owns, in addition to a long list of music we can easily borrow.

We have migrated our performances to Eleanor Roosevelt Middle School for Songfest and Westminster Presbyterian Church for other concerts. Scheduling, cost and familiarity with the facilities are the main drivers in those decisions about venues.

All of our supplies, including many files of sheet music, electronic piano and shells are now stored in the office space in the Caradco building. This is working out well for us.

Our electronic piano is performing well but is aging. We are working toward purchasing a second piano as a replacement. There are occasions when we do need access to 2 electronic pianos.

Curt Zeimet has been graciously towing the trailer when needed. Mike Josefowicz has helped with transportation of the shells to and from the office storage space.

Kayleese Thoma continues to work for us as a paid stage manager this year. She has been a big help and this model seems to work well.

Thanks to everyone who helps out with getting things done. Many hands make light work!

Respectfully Submitted, Mark Niemer

DCCC Directors' Annual Report

May 8, 2025

The Dubuque Chorale Children's Choirs finished their 11th season - the third season with two choirs. We started off with 50 singers - 37 in Legati and 13 in Staccati - and ended with 35 - 27 in Legati and 8 in Staccati. Retention, just during a season, has been an issue since Covid and Victoria and I are committed to working on learning and instituting some retention strategies in the 2025-26 season.

We did also have seven 6th graders age out, as well.

We sang all of our regular concerts this year, Fall and Winter with the full Chorale, the mall with Cadenza, and the library and holiday symphony concert by ourselves. Legati also sang at the community Thanksgiving service, as they have for several years.

Audiences seem thrilled with listening to kids sing. Parents and loved ones supporting our singers certainly boost our concert attendance!

We did have our first annual DCCC retreat, which helped get ready for fall but more importantly allowed all of us to start building relationships. We hope to keep this new event going next year!

This choir was one of the more musically settled choirs we've had. I believe that is because, in part, of the 3rd grade choir that cements some rudimentary singing ideas under Victoria's leadership. I am blessed to have a partner in her.

We are grateful for Katey Theis and Amanda Hauta, as well as all the volunteers who make performances and practices run smoothly.

Many thanks to Mary Beth, who keeps us all under control and in order. We simply could not do what we do without her. That being said, perhaps we should have a Mary Beth file, since I'm not sure anyone knows all the things she does. It would help smooth a transition, at the time when Mary Beth decides to off load some of her work.

Thanks, also, to Amanda, Than, and the board for their continued support of the DCCC. We know four choirs is a lot to manage, and we appreciate your willingness to continue to do so.

2024-2025 Artistic Director's Report

May 8, 2025 @ 6:30PM

Church of the Nativity

Thank you to the Dubuque Chorale for participating in another great season! I enjoyed putting our season together with the rest of the artistic staff, and most importantly, making music together in each rehearsal and performance.

24-25 SEASON REFLECTIONS

In the fall, we pursued our *Olympic Dreams* highlighting both music used in conjunction with the Olympic Games and music capturing the Olympic spirit. The integration of the visual elements both on the screens and at the back of the sanctuary was well-received, and it was wonderful to see our members engaged in so many activities across their full lives.

The DSO Holiday concerts continue to be a strong tradition for the Chorale, with another season of a successful partnership.

In February, Cadenza engaged in our first collaboration with the Dubuque Symphony Youth Orchestra, performing Mozart's *Requiem*. It is my hope that we can continue performing choral-orchestral repertoire with the youth orchestra as part of their three-year rotation of special music events

The 2nd Songfest performed at Roosevelt was moved to February and continued to be a well-attended and well-received concert. We intend to move forward with the event next year, submitting another grant application to the Dubuque Racing Association, and extending invitations to additional youth choirs (Roosevelt MS Choir & Dream Center)

In April, we put together *Books & Ballads* with success on the timing, varied integration of repertoire, and involvement of both Dubuque community and Ghanaian libraries. This program turned out to be among my most joyfully performed. It is always a bit of an exercise in trusting the process as the directors put their repertoire together in a cohesive setting, and I think this program struck a beautiful balance of serious and playful music.

25-26 SEASON TEASER

Much of the fall calendar is available on our website! Please consider subscribing for next year and stay up to date with Chorale, Cadenza, the Children's Choirs, and even our Board of Directors.

Fall into something different!

To accommodate the many DCS educators and parents within our organization, our dress rehearsal for the fall concert next year will be on FRIDAY October 24th, with concerts on 10/25 & 10/26

THEME NOT YET DETERMINED

Did you know, that October is National Arts & Humanities Month?

- Focusing to create through media
- Encouraging participation
- Allowing opportunities for organizations & businesses to declare their support
- Raising public awareness about arts & humanities

Members are always welcome to email me their ideas, with links when possible. :) I still have an email from Lisa Langraff in my inbox from fall that I revisit when I think about programming.

Spring, the sweet spring!

We have been invited to perform Beethoven's Ninth Symphony @ The Heritage Center with Dubuque Symphony Orchestra and area collegiate choirs on 4/18 & 4/19. The symphony has asked me to serve as chorus master, functioning as the liaison with other choirs preparing alongside Chorale. Details about required rehearsals and the possibility of an additional choir, organ, and string orchestra piece will be forthcoming at the beginning of next season.

Our spring concert will feature our children's choirs and Cadenza on May 2nd & 3rd in a program that honors the independent spirit of our founders and celebrates the 250th anniversary of our country.

Supporting our Members

Mary Bryant and Than Chesher have both composed music I would like to integrate into our programming as soon as possible.

Tom Taylor is pursuing a Master of Music Education degree at Vandercook and is interested in working a bit with the chorale next season on musical research for his masters project.

President's Annual Report May 2025

We enjoyed a great season of singing and performance this year. We celebrated the Olympic spirit with our fall concert and sang with the Dubuque Symphony at the Holiday Pops concert. We also performed Mozart's *Requiem* and sponsored Songfest in February 2025 and concluded the performance season with the Books and Ballads concert in April. I can still hear the people singing!

We have moved Songfest from September to February. It is much easier for the Children's Choirs to prepare for an event in February as opposed to September. The September date gave them only a few weeks to learn and memorize their music.

The Children's Choirs continue to do well with the Legati and Staccati singers. Cadenza and DCCC have had several other singing engagements. We are formalizing the internship process for interested students to work with the DCCC directors. The application portal will be open in May 2025.

Kayleese Thoma has been our paid stage manager this year with very good results.

On a somber note, we unexpectedly lost Carol Baumann in March. Her passing was a shock to all of us. Rick Rollefson, former member, also passed away in 2024. Our hearts go out to their families as we cherish their memories. Please also keep Bob Demaree in your thoughts and prayers. He has done well with his cancer treatment but his son did have a devastating spinal cord injury last year, and continues to work on recovery. Bob does have a CaringBridge pagewhere he and his family can post updates.

The board has decided to increase the tuition for the adult choir this coming year. The tuition will be \$110 for the entire year, \$60 for a semester. Cadenza and younger members less than 27 years old will be the same. In making this decision, the board considered the cost of music and the artistic staff for both the Chorale and Children's Choirs.

We are continuing on our strategic plan for 2022-2027. This includes emphasis on inclusiveness and diversity and community outreach in addition to growth in the DC and DCCC. Thanks to Terri's efforts, we had a very good year with receiving grants and are in sound financial shape. I would like to thank all of the members of the Board of Directors for their hard work and dedication to serving the Chorale. Father Dan Knepper is rotating off the board after serving 1 term. Peyton Bellings is stepping back from the board after serving 1 year out of a three year term. Trisha Mullen (non-singing board member) is also stepping down after serving 1 term. Under our by-laws, the outside (non-singing) board member is an appointed position. We will also appoint someone to fill Peyton's unfinished term. The board is nominating Nick Anderson to a 3 year position on the board. Nominations will also be taken from the floor.

I want to thank everyone for their volunteer help this year with regard to time and talents. I also want to express my gratitude to the dedicated artistic staff and board members who so

generously donate their time and energy. We are always looking for volunteers to help with committee work, especially publicity and marketing.

Great Give Day is a day devoted to online giving, sponsored by the Dubuque Community Foundation. It is an excellent opportunity to support the Chorale as well as your other favorite charities. It is usually in mid-May. Look for <https://www.greatgiveday.org/> then look for Dubuque Chorale. All of the donations this year will be to build our endowment.

Respectfully submitted, Mark Niemer, President, 2024-2025