

This  
**Notes 4 U**



*The latest news and updates from River City Sound*



### Important Dates

**Next Rehearsal Date:**  
Wednesday, October 4<sup>th</sup>

**Music Committee**  
Wednesday October 4<sup>th</sup>

**Executive Committee**  
Wednesday October 11<sup>th</sup>

**Show Committee**  
Wednesday October 18<sup>th</sup>

**BOTY Awards Night:**  
Friday, October 27<sup>th</sup>

**Chorus Vocal Coaching:**  
Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup>

**Christmas Concert:**  
Saturday, November 25<sup>th</sup>

## President's Musings

ROB SMITH

Here we go with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Notes4U of this fall with very capable formatting and distribution by Andrea. On Wednesday, Brian M, who certainly knows about producing such things praised her for last week's issue. I thank her for her willingness to take this on.

Now we come to a crux of this organization. Sharing the work that needs to be done so everything runs smoothly and so we all have some fun while singing. This week, I especially want to thank Len. Among the many tasks he undertakes is arranging the printing of raffle tickets and Grey Cup Pool tickets. He knows what needs to be done and attends to it promptly and

without complaint. That is why the tickets were ready for distribution last week.

Len is also leader of the bari section, although he much appreciates the technical assistance Paul has provided in playing the learning tracks. Len is our stage manager, scouting performance venues and making arrangements with churches and other performance venues. For more than a year we have been inviting members to take over the coffee & snack time which Len quietly attends to. I have noticed some other members helping out and that is great but I also notice that it is Len who arrives early, sets out the sign-in table and sets out the coffee & snacks. I think he also purchases coffee and other supplies when they run low. He also fills in for Norm with the loonie draw. Len is only one of our members who works quietly behind the scenes to take care of many details.

Brian M, Les, Gord, Rosie and many other members quietly go about their work. This next Wednesday is the election for next year's executive. Most of the positions have been filled but not all. Here is a chance for you to get more involved. There will be nominations/ volunteers from the floor to fill vacancies or contest positions such as president.

I also want to mention that the amended chapter by-laws will be up for vote this next Wednesday. Shirley distributed them to all members by email on Sept 15<sup>th</sup>. The executive approved some changes to the bylaws at our Sept 13<sup>th</sup> meeting, but it requires a vote of the membership before they can be forwarded to the Society.

I am excited about all the new singers and also former members who show up at our rehearsals. I hope this is a sign of their confidence in the quality of music that we can produce.

In spite of some business to attend to, I hope we have as much fun next Wednesday as we had last week. The singing of the new music went amazingly well but I was impressed by all the

other singing including various ensembles during coffee break and then the tag singing Larry organized. I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did!

ROB 🎵

## Good Day Everyone!

LES CREEK

Here's the schedule for this coming Wednesday, and you may notice a couple of differences:

1. Our break and business meeting will be longer, as we have to elect the chapter officers for 2024, and
2. we have to consider the proposed changes to chapter bylaws, which were circulated to everyone a few weeks ago. These bylaw changes are proposed so that we:

- a) are recognized by our legal name, River City Sound inc.,
- b) include all people as members or potential members of the organization, and
- c) legalize the manner in which prospects are auditioned and admitted to membership.

The other change is that we will be working more on a couple of other Christmas songs - Silver Bells and Winter Wonderland and Jingle Bell Rock - as they are new to a lot of the current singers. We are really doing well with Rock and Roll Christmas and Mary's Boy Child, so we will be starting to sing those on the risers this week, along with some of the other, more well known pieces.

**Gentlemen, if you are able, please try to arrive by about 10 to 7 to help set up the risers every week from now on.**

I also wanted to suggest to everyone that they should start warming up their voices before arriving at the church. There are a lot of videos available on [Youtube](#) that will help you get your voice in shape before starting to sing. Check out the [videos](#) from BHS on vocal warm ups, and there are a number of other free videos available as well (I personally like the ones by [Roger Hale](#), but there are others as well). You'll notice that we don't spend quite as much time on vocal warm up as we used to; that's because we really want folks to be ready to sing when they arrive at the church.

All that being said, we are progressing really well on the Christmas music, so keep up the good work. We'll give the audience a show that they will talk about for a long time!

LES.🎵

## Raffle Organization in Full Throttle

ANDREA LEADER

Organizing the raffle is now well underway. Please take time to think of items you could offer to make this raffle a success. Any contributions will be gratefully accepted by Bonnie and myself up to October 15th. This is what we have:

- ❖ Dummy bottle of wine with attached gift card
- ❖ Water colour or ink art donated by local artist
- ❖ Lottery ticket and or gift card/ Christmas tree

Gifts confirmed so far:

- ❖ Bath & Body gift basket
- ❖ Harlequin's 'Gift of Music' basket
- ❖ McNally's gift card
- ❖ Bel Acres Golf Course gift card and golf balls
- ❖ Two free tickets to our next show
- ❖ Chiropractic cervical pillow and ice pack
- ❖ Acrylic painted keepsake box from local artist
- ❖ Ukelele

ANDREA.🎵

## BOTY Awards Banquet Go on Sale

GARY MILES

Tickets go on sale this Wednesday for the BOTY awards banquet on October 27<sup>th</sup>. Price is \$35 each and payment can be made in cash, by cheque payable to River City Sound, or by e-transfer to [garmiles@shawbiz.ca](mailto:garmiles@shawbiz.ca). Try to have exact change, but if you can't I will have a fund of \$5 bills. Tickets will be available up to the last Wednesday before the dinner.

GARY.🎵



## Grey Cup Pool Tickets

ROB SMITH

Thank you to all who took Grey Cup Pool tickets to sell to your friends, family and possibly your mortal enemies. Of the 900 tickets I set out on Wednesday, over 800 were taken. There are however, still another 900 to be bundled and distributed. I hope you see this as an opportunity and not as burden. It is a significant fund raiser for the chapter giving us revenue of over \$2000 if all 1800 tickets are sold. Dealing them out into piles of 10, 15 & 25 as shown in this photo, was kind of like dealing cards at a bridge game except it went on a lot longer and unlike bridge, we are all winners.

ROB.🎵

## Sing Canada Harmony – Land O' Lakes

GORDON BILLOWS

As mentioned in last week's Notes article, the Land O' Lakes District will be holding a "Parade of Checks (cheques)" at the upcoming House of Delegates meeting at the LOL convention on October 13th. River City Sound members have this opportunity to show their support for Sing Canada Harmony by adding their personal donation to that of the Chapter. Your donation would be included in the total amount that is announced at the "Parade".

You can donate two ways:

1. Write a cheque, payable to Sing Canada Harmony, and give it to me for processing.
2. Make your donation to Sing Canada Harmony online (<https://singcanadaharmony.ca/>) and let me know about it, so I can include your donation to the total amount.

All donations are appreciated and donations over \$20 will generate a tax receipt. October 11th is the last day to add your personal donation to the "Parade" total. Please take a few moments to explore the Sing Canada Harmony website to see how your donations support vocal music education throughout Canada.

Contact Gordon Billows if you would like further information about your Land O' Lakes District or Sing Canada Harmony's donor and scholarship programs. Keep a Melody Ringing!

GORDON 🎵

## Getting To Know You – Story & Structure

BRIAN METCALFE

When I first joined the Golden Chordsmen and became the Notes 4 U editor, I initiated a story telling strategy to help members better connect with colleagues. Our Executive, at the time, modeled this process and shared delightful stories which motivated the entire chorus to do the same. These initial, or first, stories (similar to Brian Blakley's, which follows) were shared in Notes 4 U. At the end of this successful endeavour, the initial Getting To Know You stories were saved in 2015 in the Archives on our website.

During 2020-2022, Krista Hanis-Gervais, our new Notes 4 U editor, encouraged members to update their stories by sharing a sequel (similar to Bruce Wilton's information which follows). Such sequels, which were again published in Notes 4 U, brought readers up-to-date with recent events in each barbershopper's life. These sequels were also added to our website Archives. To help readers quickly locate all related stories & sequels of a chorus member, I will create a link under the author's name which will transfer the reader to both the original and sequels of the individual.

BRIAN M 🎵



## Upcoming Birthdays

Ken Finnbogson  
October 4<sup>th</sup>

Donna Boyle  
October 11<sup>th</sup>



## Getting To Know ... Bruce Wilton - A 2023 Update

BRUCE WILTON

In terms of my now 28 years as a member of the Winnipeg Chapter, I have undertaken a few responsibilities over the years. I have served on the Executive for extended periods of time as Treasurer in 2000, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, and President in 2002, 2005, 2018 and 2019. I took the initiative to submit our application to Revenue Canada for Registered Charity Status which was subsequently granted in May of 2021. Our Registered Charity Status will have a lasting benefit for the chapter for years to come.

Perhaps my most memorable accomplishment however, was spearheading the “Everyone in Harmony” initiative which opened our chorus to women. As of September 2023, fully 42% of our chorus members were women. They have made a huge improvement in our sound on the risers and have breathed new life into the chapter by taking on some of the chapter responsibilities.

My life has had its high and low points but the one thing that has sustained me is my family and friends. I am privileged to consider the members of River City Sound within my Circle of Friends.

BRUCE 🎵

## Getting To Know ... Brian Blakley

BRIAN BLAKELY

I have always been interested in sound and music, but it did not start well. In first grade, my teacher coached our choir to win our section of the annual music festival in Saskatoon. I sang with gusto and enthusiasm, but she decided that I should just mouth the words and not really sing out loud. I was disappointed. Then at about the age of 8 or so I decided that I would like to go on the Ed Sullivan show and sing “Home on the Range”. Who doesn’t like a good old western song, right? I knew I could be much better than some of those weirdos he had on like Elvis and the Beatles. Well, I practiced that song at least three times, but Ed never called. I don’t know why. Maybe he talked to my first-grade teacher. Of course, after that he went off the air, so I guess he paid the price!

Maybe a musical instrument would be a better fit. My mother required us kids to take organ lessons, saying that “everybody” plays the piano. I thought that might sort of point toward taking the piano, but I tolerated organ until she agreed that instead I could learn to play a real man’s instrument – the trumpet! I loved trumpet. I was in some junior orchestras in Saskatoon growing up and an excellent high school jazz band (big band from the 40’s, etc.) which was a blast.

I was still interested in singing, so after some pestering, I convinced my mother to enquire about singing lessons. The first person she phoned said, “Oh, you mean sing-GING.” My mother was so put off by this correction that she declined, hung up and never called anyone else about singing lessons. Oh well!

I became a bit disenchanted with the symphony scene though because it seemed that the players were catty and nasty to each other. After all, it is just music, right? Why be grumpy about it?

Then I had to choose a career. I was able to go to medical school in Saskatoon, then specialize in Otolaryngology (Ear, Nose and Throat or ENT; the medical specialty most aligned with music). At the University of Minnesota I also completed a PhD in vestibular physiology. After a neurotology fellowship year in Toronto I was recruited to Wayne State University in Detroit to be their otologist (ie. ear surgeon). While there I remembered my uncle who was a long-time, passionate baritone with the Regina Barbershop chorus and decided to join the Rochester Hills chapter as a lead. I found that barbershoppers are a very happy, supportive bunch, unlike symphony people. I learned a lot there, including the knowledge that the lead part is a little high for my raspy voice. One of my ENT colleagues was able to find out why my voice is so raspy... I have a vocal cord sulcus. This makes it hard to hit the high notes or use falsetto. Maybe that is what my first-grade teacher detected. Now I think that I will never be an Elvis or a Beatle! After about 10 years in Detroit I was recruited to The University of Manitoba and HSC where I worked for 25 years, retiring in 2022 after a truly enjoyable career, but this is not the place to talk much about that. I have been involved in ear research for 40 years. Did you know that the ear is the most interesting organ in the body? It has a lot of great science, math and controversy. It is good for many things other than music. As of August, 2024 I will have been happily married to my supportive wife for 50 years.

I joined the Winnipeg Golden Chordsmen after I arrived in Winnipeg as a baritone. I had a good time but there were a lot of time-demands from work so I had to drop out for about 10 years, thinking that barbershop was something I could do when I had more time. So, in January 2023, after retiring, I came back to River City Sound. This time they were more suspicious of me and made me audition. I guess I don't blame them

with a voice like mine! I thought of my first-grade experience but now they let me sing out loud!

Barbershopping has a lot of older people in it because it takes time and is not too flashy. I must admit that I like it that way. I relate to barbershoppers and hope to continue for many years to come.

BRIAN BLAKLEY 🎵



## Connections Can Be Gigantic & Sweet

BRIAN METCALFE

I have been encouraging our chorus members to share either their first "Getting To Know You" story similar to Brian Blakley's or a sequel that brings us up-to-date like Bruce Wilton's example in this issue. Information shared through this

connecting process can be far reaching and I want to share with you a “sweet deal” that I learned from Charlie Siegel. As many of you know Charlie grew up on a farm near Hawley, Minnesota, just 30 miles east of Moorhead, MN. Prior to becoming a teacher in Manitoba, Charlie worked in a restaurant in Minneapolis and frequently drove on the I-94 interstate which connected his home and his work in the “big city”.



*Bear claw held in an adult's hand*

One evening Charlie and I were talking about my cycling adventure from the headwaters of the Mississippi River in Itasca State Park to Minneapolis. He asked if I was familiar with the Nelson Bros. Bakery & Truck Stop just off

interstate I-94 in the town of Clearwater, MN. Although I had cycled along the Mississippi River Trail, and had passed through Clearwater, I was biking on a road adjacent to the river and so I was unaware of this “Minnesota Favorite”.

I did some more cycling in Minneapolis and following Charlie’s recommendation and we stopped our vehicle at the Nelson Bros. truck stop which is located off the next exit east of St. Cloud, MN. Not only was the bakery filled with a plethora of treats, their donuts, bear claws, and apple fritters were gigantic! After experiencing several items in this “favorite” bakery, I was eager to tell others of this gastronomic treasure. Knowing that many of our chorus members travel for barbershop workshops and conferences in Minneapolis and beyond, I felt I should share this bakery location with them.

A few weeks ago I was at a barbershop celebration and I knew of several in attendance who regularly travel the I-94 interstate.

First, I spoke with Art Gross, (a former WGC tenor). I asked him “Do you know about the bake shop at Nelson Bros.?” His reply was ... “Who

doesn’t know of this mandatory stop in Minnesota when travelling east on interstate I-94?”.

Next, I approached Gordon Billows and asked him “Have you ever stopped in Clearwater, MN?” Without hesitation, Gordon replied, “Oh you mean Exit # 178 on the I-94?”

Although it appears that our more experienced chorus members may know of this bake shop, I’m sure there are others who may wish to check it out.



Take care & keep smiling :-)

BRIAN M 🎵

## Truth & Reconciliation in Portage la Prairie

GORDON BILLOWS

The National Residential School Museum in Portage la Prairie is one of River City Sound's 75th Anniversary sponsors. The CEO of the Museum, Lorraine Daniels, was one of my students at Arthur Meighen High School and a Portage Indian Student Glee Club member back in 1970. I was the musical director of the Glee Club from 1969 to 1971. We performed at the dedication of the Indian Village at Disneyland, CA in 1969 and at the Canadian Pavilion at Expo '70 in Osaka, Japan.

In those few years, my Glee Club did almost 100 performances. Last July, 50 plus years later, I got a call to direct some of the Glee Club Survivors and friends at the Truth & Reconciliation event on September 30th at the Portage Residential School. It was a very successful performance! A room in the Museum is dedicated to our Indian Student Glee Club.

If you are interested, I would encourage you to take a drive to this Saturday's event at the National Residential School in Portage. The information on image may help you decide that it is "worth the trip".

Chi-miigwech (big thank you)

GORDON 🎵



### 34. Give Me Your Hand To Hold In Mine

heart. \_\_\_\_\_

**F** Give me your hand to hold in mine, and I will give you my heart, my heart.

heart. \_\_\_\_\_

Lou Perry, early 1980s



# Rehearsal Timeline - October 4, 2023

by Les Creek

6:55 to 7:05	Physical warm up
7:05 to 7:25	Vocal warm up
7:25 to 8:05	Sectionals
	Silver Bells
	Winter Wonderland
	Mary's Little Boy Child
	Jingle Bell Rock
	Rock and Roll Christmas
8:05 to 8:30	Repertoire Review
	Rock and Roll Christmas
	Mary's Little Boy Child
	Light One Candle
	Silver Bells
	Jingle Bell Rock
	Lost in the Stars
	Peace, Peace
	Perfect
	O Holy Night
	Imagine
8:30 to 9:00	Chapter Meeting and break
9:00 to 9:50	Repertoire Review (continued)
9:50	Wrap up and Final Song



## Planned Upcoming Rehearsals and Events (SUBJECT TO CHANGE!!!)

	<u>New Music</u>	<u>Sectionals</u>	<u>Off page Date</u>	<u>Repertoire Review</u>
Oct 11		Mary's Boy Child Lost in the Stars Silver Bells O Holy Night Winter Wonderland	Oct 11	Light One Candle Perfect Lost in the Stars Jingle Bell Rock R & R Christmas Peace Peace Silver Bells
Oct 27	BOTY (Barbershopper of the Year) Awards			
Oct. 28	Coaching session with Mark McLaurin <b>confirmed</b> time 9 am to 3pm at St Andrews church			



## 2023 Chapter Executive



**President:** Rob Smith  
**Executive VP:**  
**Past President:**  
**VP Membership & Chapter Devel:** Rosanne Labossiere-Gee  
**VP Music & Performance:** Les Creek  
**VP Marketing & Public Relations:** Becki Ammeter  
**Secretary:** Shirley Christie  
**Treasurer:** Bruce Wilton  
**Chorus Manager:** Len Paluck  
**Board Members at Large:** Herold Driedger & Susan Altomare

This is the official weekly bulletin of the River City Sound Chorus. For more information about us, go to our website: [www.rivercitysound.ca](http://www.rivercitysound.ca)

Editor – Andrea Leader

Unless carrying a by-line or some form of credit to borrowed sources, all items in this bulletin are by the editor and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the chapter or board. If anyone wishes to contribute anything to the next Notes 4 U, wishes to subscribe or unsubscribe, or has questions about any of the items in Notes 4 U, contact the editor.

## 2023 Music Committee

**VP Music & Performance:** Les Creek  
**Chorus Co-Directors:** Larry Hunter & Jewel Casselman  
**Tenor Section:** Becki Ammeter & Andrea Leader  
**Lead Section:** Chris Magas & Charlie Siegel  
**Baritone Section:** Len Paluck  
**Bass Section:** Ken Broadfoot & Herold Driedger  
**Performance & Staging:** Gayle Wharton  
**Music Research:** Duncan Zaluski  
**Sheet Music Librarian:** Len Paluck  
**Learning Track Librarian:** Duncan Zaluski

## 2023 Leadership Positions

**Accountant:** Gary Miles  
**In-person Meeting Attendance:** Norm Silverberg  
**50/50:** Norm Silverberg  
**Awards Banquet Chairs:** Gary & Ricki Miles  
**Grey Cup Pool Chair:** Rob Smith  
**Historian:** Gordon Billows  
**Historian Assistant:** **Need Volunteer**  
**Notes 4 U Team:** Andrea Leader & Becki Ammeter  
**Refreshments:** Len Paluck **Need Volunteer**  
**Sing Canada Harmony:** Gordon Billows  
**Sunshine:** Charlie Siegel  
**Wardrobe:** Charlie Siegel  
**Women's Wardrobe Committee:** Becki Ammeter & Gayle Wharton  
**Website:** (update and maintain) Chris Magas  
**LOL District Liaison:** Gordon Billows  
**Christmas Show 2023 Producer:** Larry Hunter  
**Christmas Show 2023 Co-Chairs:** Charlie Siegel & Donna Boyle  
**Spring Show 2024 Producer:** **Need Volunteer**

