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**TREBLE CHORUS  
OF NEW ENGLAND  
2008-2009 Handbook**

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**Experience the joy of creative sharing!**

Treble Chorus of New England  
Merrimack College  
315 Turnpike Street, A-32  
North Andover, MA 01845  
978-837-5461



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## Mission

To educate children and young adults by providing vocal training and performance experience that inspires a life-long passion for choral music.

## Membership

Membership for all choirs is by audition. We welcome new members in September and in January. Each current member is required to re-audition in the spring for the following concert year. The Treble Chorus of New England strives to serve all individuals regardless of race, gender, socio-economic status or disability. Participation in the TCNE is based on equal opportunity. Being a member of TCNE is a privilege and requires dedication and commitment.

The Treble Chorus of New England organization consists of three choirs:

### **Training Choir**

Our training ensemble for emerging voices  
Rehearsal - Monday 4:15 - 5:15pm

### **Concert Choir**

Our intermediate ensemble  
Rehearsal - Monday 5:30 – 7:00pm

### **Schola**

Our advanced ensemble  
Rehearsal - Monday 6:00 - 8:00pm

# TCNE Responsibilities and Expectations

## **Respect**

1. It is your responsibility to act appropriately and be attentive at all times.
2. It is your responsibility to read and understand the expectations in the chorus handbook.
3. As a choir member please treat others as you wish to be treated.
4. TCNE does not condone any actions or remarks that offend the dignity of other members.
5. Go to the bathroom before rehearsal begins and during the break.

## **Commitment**

1. Commit yourself to excellence - give your best.
2. Maintain faithful attendance to all rehearsals.
3. Take time to practice your music outside of rehearsal. If music is being performed in a language that is new or difficult for you, practice the lyrics to improve your familiarity with them.
4. Arrive on time so that you don't miss warm-ups that are essential to both you and the chorus as a whole.
5. Keep current by reading our weekly Treble Notes.
6. The Treble Chorus of New England has a zero tolerance policy for any alcohol/ Substance abuse, and or smoking.

## **Rehearsal CD's**

Rehearsal CD's will be provided for each member of the Training and Concert Choirs, as needed throughout the year. Please listen to your CD and familiarize yourself with YOUR part. It is your responsibility to be prepared for rehearsal. Schola will receive CD's as necessary.

## **Music Folders**

Music will be handed out to each chorister at the start of the season and additional music will be added throughout the year. Choristers will be loaned a folder that contains the printed music he/she needs for his/her specific choir. The music and folder must be cared for respectfully and kept in good condition. It will be returned at various times so that it can be updated.

- After the final concert of the season
- When the librarian requests it to make major changes
- If your child drops out of the choir for any reason

The music and folders are not only expensive, but requires a great deal of time and effort to be replaced. It is the chorister's and his/her parents' responsibility to return the music and folder to the choir manager, the TCNE office, or the librarian.

# Rehearsals

Rehearsals are weekly beginning the first full school week of September, and continue through May or June, depending on the concert season and the touring choir rehearsals. Additional rehearsals are added with advance notification.

## **Sunday Afternoon Rehearsals**

All choirs will be required to attend Sunday rehearsals, through December (times and dates below). These are intensive rehearsals that are held at West Parish Church. Concert Choir and Schola only attend Sunday rehearsals throughout April.

*Please refer to the calendar for the September 14 rehearsal times due to the kick-off potluck dinner.*

Training	3:30-4:30pm (First hour only)
Concert & Schola	3:30-6:30pm

Additional rehearsals for the **opera cast** will be added with advance notification.

## **Sunday Rehearsal Dates**

- September 14 - Potluck Dinner for all families 6:00-7:30pm
- October 19
- November 23
- January 11
- February 8
- March 22
- April 26

## **Rehearsal Location**

All regular rehearsals will be held at West Parish Church, 129 Reservation Rd, in Andover. This is located at the corner of Rt. 133 (Lowell St.) and Reservation Rd.

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# Attendance

## **Rehearsal Attendance**

**The Treble Chorus of New England (TCNE) is meant to be a positive and enriching learning experience for all members.**

- Commitment and responsibility are central to a successful year. To feel a sense of pride, a member is expected to remain active and faithful to the entire program.
- Members of the Chorus are required to attend weekly rehearsals, as well as any extra rehearsals needed prior to a performance.
- Choristers should arrive no more than 15 minutes prior to rehearsal time and should be picked up promptly after rehearsals.
  - At the given start time of the rehearsal, the chorister is expected to be in his/her seat, with your coat off, your music ready, and ready to sing. Any socialization should occur prior to taking your assigned seat.
  - Bring your music folder inside your tote bag and a pencil to each rehearsal.
- When additional rehearsals are scheduled, including dress rehearsals for specific performances, attendance is required. The chorus staff will provide timely notification of such rehearsals.

## **Absences**

- An absence occurs when a student misses a rehearsal for any reason.
- Absences should occur only in the event of illness, death in the family, or mandatory school activities.
  - Three absences are permitted per semester.
  - All absences, other than illness, should be called/emailed one week prior to rehearsal.
  - Any illnesses should be called in to Melanie Muggia, either to her office line, (978-837-5462) or after noon to her cell,(508-954-6749).
- For choristers with excessive missed rehearsals, participation in concerts is subject to the Director's approval.
  - If a member has more than three absences from rehearsals, he/she may not be considered for any concert solos, or may not be allowed to sing in the next concert.
  - In this situation, in order to determine adequate concert preparation, a chorister may be asked to individually perform selected concert pieces for the Director.
  - This information will be noted on the attendance roster for each choir.
- If a singer is absent from rehearsal without notifying the TCNE Office, a conference may be required with the Director and may result in a dismissal from the chorus for the semester.

## **Tardiness**

- Repetitive tardiness will not be tolerated. If this occurs, a conference will be required with the Director and may result in performance restrictions or dismissal for the semester.

## Attendance at Performances

- All performances of TCNE are mandatory for all singers in the choirs involved. Every member voice is needed to provide a high quality performance.
- If a singer has a conflict, the parent will need to speak to the Director well in advance of the scheduled concert. If a singer is not present for the dress rehearsal of a performance, participation in the performance will be at the discretion of the Director.
- Parents will be notified in advance whether it is appropriate to attend a performance.
- Private performances are strictly for the singers and those parents who have been asked to serve as chaperones. All other family members are to wait outside the venue or simply drop-off and pick-up their singer.
- For all TCNE-sponsored concerts, we ask that families remain outside or in the foyer until 30 minutes prior to the performance.

## Performances

TCNE's scheduled performances for 2008-2009 are – *Summer Workshop* in August, *Songs of the Season* in December, *In the Merrie Month*, and *A Celebration of Women* in May. All performances are open to the public. Please feel free to bring friends and family!

Attendance at all scheduled performances, and dress rehearsals for those performances, is **mandatory**. Dress rehearsals are needed for logistics at each venue - i.e., standing positions and acoustical details. **TCNE polo shirts MUST be worn at dress rehearsals.**

The choirs may also perform, when asked, at designated events at the discretion of the director.

Call times for the concerts vary. Please read the weekly Treble Notes for this information.

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## Tickets

Concert ticket prices vary; there are no discounts for TCNE families. Some of the concerts are free with a good-will offering. All other concerts require that tickets be purchased, in advance whenever possible, as concert space is limited at certain venues.

# Performance Dress

## **Formal Concert Dress**

### **TRAINING CHOIR**

For holiday and spring concerts, girls should wear festive dresses and boys should wear khaki trousers, a shirt and tie.

### **GIRLS: Schola and Concert Choir** (needed prior to first concert of year)

- Dress - New dresses to be ordered for all Concert Choir and Schola girls
- Black stockings
- Black, flat or low-heeled dress shoes (no clogs, sandals, or platform shoes)

### **BOYS: Schola, Concert Choir**

- White, pleated, wing-collar tuxedo shirt
- Black button covers
- Black bow tie
- Black tuxedo pants
- Black socks
- Black polished dress shoes
- Tuxedo jackets

## **Casual Concert Dress**

### **All Choirs- Girls & Boys**

- Polo shirt with TCNE logo
- ~burgundy(Schola/Concert Choir) or light blue (Training Choir)
- (Boys) Khaki/tan slacks or shorts
- (Girls) Khaki/tan slacks, Capri pants, shorts or skirts knee length or longer
- Clean sneakers/ shoes or sandals with strap back; no flip flops or crocs

The first year a member joins the chorus, each chorister receives the polo shirt at Singers' Workshop. The cost of the shirt is included in the Singers Workshop tuition. New shirts can be purchased for \$20 through the TCNE office. Polo shirts must be worn at dress rehearsals. Any chorister who did not attend Singers Workshop will need to purchase a polo shirt at the beginning of the choir season.

### **Concert Dress Details**

- **Jewelry.** Only simple stud earrings. Schola female choristers ONLY will wear a string of pearls, given before each concert and returned to the choir manager at the end of each concert. Concert Choir choristers are not permitted to wear any necklaces.
- **Makeup.** Makeup should be tastefully applied. No heavy fragrances are permitted!
- **Hair.** All choristers' hair should be neatly groomed and away from the face. Shoulder length or longer must be pulled back. Hair ribbons, elastics, headbands, etc. must be black.
- **Attire.** Skirts must be floor length; shoes must be black flat or low heeled. Stockings must be black. Shirts for formal (boys) attire should be tucked in.

**All choir members are required to arrive at concerts in full attire and stay in full attire until the choir is dismissed from the concert venue/public eye.**

- Exceptions are allowed ONLY by the Director (i.e. arriving in opera costume).
- Choristers represent TCNE to the public at all concerts and functions, and should behave accordingly.
  - When traveling, attire is worn in its entirety until the choir is back in the bus/cars for the return trip/out of the public eye.
- The tuxedo shirt, button covers, cummerbund, bow tie, and tuxedo pants and jacket (Boys Schola/Concert only) can be purchased from any tuxedo store.
  - Mr. Tux in the Rockingham Mall or Lawrence provides a discount to Treble Chorus choristers (just ask!). Russo's Tuxedo, located in Revere and Wilmington, and K&G's in Reading also have excellent prices. Rental stores will often sell their rental attire for a significantly reduced price.
  - If a member does not have the entire formal concert dress for a concert, he/she will **not be allowed** to perform.

## Singers Workshop 2008

Each August, members of TCNE choirs are required to attend Singers Workshop for one week. This is an intensive week of musical learning and fun.

Members of the Schola and Concert Choir may also choose to attend the Opera Workshop that begins during the week prior to Singers Workshop for an additional three days and an extended day during the week of Singers Workshop. A student must be entering the 4<sup>th</sup> grade in order to enroll. Rehearsals begin during summer workshop and continue throughout the year on specified days. Workshop is held at West Parish Church, Andover, MA.

Participation in these workshops is important to a chorister's success in TCNE as the workshop provide:

- Classes in English diction, foreign language diction, music theory and solfege, sight singing, basic musicianship and music appreciation, group voice instruction, score orientation, deportment, musical teamwork and ensemble singing.
- The opportunity for choristers in each chorus to meet and get to know the choristers in other choirs.
- A head start for all choristers in learning the new season's music.

The costs for the Summer and Opera Workshops in August 2008 were:

- Singers Workshop: \$ 285
- Opera Workshop: \$ 175

Please note that the Board of Directors reviews all tuition rates annually. The Summer Workshop 2009 tuitions will be voted on in April 2009. Singers and Opera Summer Workshop 2009 is scheduled for August 13 - 21. Please refer to the calendar. The culmination of Summer Workshop is a concert on Friday night, at the Rogers Center, for the choruses and opera cast to showcase their progress during the week.

## Opera Workshop 2008 and Season

Students involved in opera workshop will spend three days before Singers Workshop begins, from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm becoming familiar with and learning a shortened version of the opera, which will be performed at the Summer Workshop Concert. A longer version will then be presented in March for the Education concert. Students will receive training in staging, movement, make-up, scenery and costume making.

**Full company rehearsals** are from 9:00am – 2:00pm on the following dates:

September 27  
October 25  
November 15  
January 24  
February 28

**Solo rehearsals** are from 9:00am to 12:00 pm on the following dates:

October 11  
January 10  
February 7

**Dress rehearsals** are March 3 - 6pm – 8pm, and March 5 – 5:30 – 7:30 pm

**Performances** will take place at the Rogers Center on March 6 – 10:30 am and 7:00 pm  
There is the possibility of another opera performance - TBA

## Tuition and Payment Schedule

- **Audition Fee:** (For new choristers only) \$25 payable at the time of audition (non-refundable). This fee is not applied to Singer's Workshop or fall tuition.
- **Tuition.** Tuition is due in full prior to the first rehearsal of the year. Checks should be made payable to "Treble Chorus of New England" and may be mailed to the office.

Tuition fees for the 2008-2009 are:

Training: \$504 per year  
Concert: \$534 per year  
Schola: \$646 per year

These fees include instruction and the use of published music.

If a member chooses to withdraw from a chorus after rehearsals have begun, any refund shall be based on the following:

- Withdrawal after one (1) rehearsal: 75%
  - Withdrawal after two (2) rehearsals: 50%
  - Withdrawal after three (3) rehearsals: 25%
  - Withdrawal after four (4) rehearsals: No refund
  - If a member moves from one chorus to another during the year, tuition adjustments may be required.
- **Families with Multiple Choristers.** 10% discount off lowest/subsequent tuitions. Limited Scholarships are available and will be awarded based on need. Contact the TCNE office for more information.
  - **Tote Bags.** Each member is required to purchase a tote bag to carry his/her music binder. This should be brought to each rehearsal and is considered part of the concert dress uniform. This tote bag helps keep the music in good shape, and helps members to not lose their music. Be sure to put your NAME on your tote bag with a luggage tag so that you can distinguish it from others. The tote bags cost \$20 each and are available through the TCNE office.

# Student Recognition Awards

## Description of Awards

An **Attendance Award** is self-explanatory. Although it is the expectation that all choristers will make all rehearsals, in reality, this does not happen. To that chorister who does, special recognition is deserved as well as to those who only miss one or two during the entire year.

An award is given to that chorister who is **Most Improved Vocally** as an incentive to singers to work hard, no matter at what vocal level they begin. The recipient may be a terrific singer who still shows incredible growth during the year or it may be a singer who began with no skill set and improves greatly.

An award is given to that chorister who is **Most Improved Musically** as an incentive to singers to work on musical skills such as ear training and theory. The emphasis is on obvious improvement, not on actual skills.

The **Saint Cecilia Award** is given to that brand new chorister who catches the TCNE spirit and demonstrates the above qualities of improvement and learning.

The **Director's Award** is for the chorister who singularly exemplifies a thirst for musical knowledge and skill, and exhibits extra time and effort at rehearsals and performances to develop the choral art, and set an example as well as mentoring others. Usually, only one chorister per choir is given this honor, but it can be split on rare occasions.

The **Robert Barney Award** is given to the Schola chorister who combines all of the above qualities and, in addition, shows a capacity for leadership and promotes a sense of nurturing among the group. Because a choir is a team, the recipient will demonstrate selflessness by fostering a sense of commitment to the mission and purpose of TCNE as well as generosity among choristers, promoting a positive spirit in the choir.

## Tour

### **General Information**

Touring although not required, is encouraged. It is a way for young artists to share their music, learn to appreciate other cultures, be ambassadors for their state and experience the rewards that come from doing their work well.

### **Tour Guidelines**

1. Any member of Concert Choir or Schola is eligible for tour.
2. Choir members can make music rehearsals scheduled for tour.
3. Choir members have completed and returned all paper work by deadlines.

## Updated Information and Changes

As with any organization, there will be unforeseen changes during the year. Information about any changes will be handed out by the Chorus Manager at the end of a rehearsal or provided to choristers and their families through email or the TCNE website [www.treblechorus.com](http://www.treblechorus.com). Make sure to update your home calendars accordingly. Please check your email regularly as TCNE regularly uses email and the TCNE website to keep you informed. A Weekly update, **Notes from Treble Chorus** will be emailed every Thursday.

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### **Weather Related Cancellations**

In case of inclement weather on the day of or the day before rehearsal, please call the office (978-837-5461) to check for a cancellation message. This cancellation policy also applies to summer workshops, retreats and performances.

If public school is cancelled in your town, choir rehearsals might NOT be cancelled, so please check with the TCNE office.

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## Personal Safety

TCNE is committed to ensuring the safety of all members. To ensure the safety of choristers; the following is required:

1. Parents are responsible when they drop off their chorister to check that a TCNE representative is present.
2. No child should ever be left alone.
3. Any chorister leaving rehearsal early must be picked up by a parent (or representative) Please make sure you are seen by the choir manager before you leave.
4. While at rehearsals, concerts, and on tour, all choir members must remain in the designated rehearsal/performance site and with the tour group.
5. At least two adults must be present at all times when a chorister is receiving musical instruction (e.g. auditions or practicing solos).

## Parent Volunteers and Fundraising

TCNE is a growing educational non-profit arts organization whose budget is primarily funded through chorister tuition. As a member-supported organization, TCNE expects each parent to volunteer his/her services appropriately. Parents are VITAL to our organization. A few of the volunteer opportunities include **concert tour committee, publicity, website maintenance, advertising book design, citrus fruit organizer and hospitality.**

A volunteer list will be handed out early in the year for parents to select at least one volunteer activity in which to contribute. We ask that you keep track of the hours that you volunteer and report them to the office at the end of each project. This information is most helpful to us when applying for grants.

We are indebted to our wonderful parents and families for their time and talents. Your support is appreciated tremendously.

Additionally, each family is required to participate in the fundraising endeavors for TCNE. These include selling ads for the annual advertising book, ticket sales, and participating in the annual citrus sales program.

In 2001-2002, TCNE began selling Fresh Florida Citrus. These oranges and grapefruit are sold 2-4 times from November to March. This has been a very successful venture for TCNE.

## Choir Managers

Each choir has a manager(s), whose job is to assist the Director with non-musical matters. Duties include:

- Set up rehearsal space
- Attendance
- Disseminate memos, music, etc.
- Act as liaison between choristers/families and the director or office staff
- Assist at dress rehearsals and performances

<b>CHOIR MANAGERS FOR 2008-2009</b>			
<b>CHOIR</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>HOME</b>	<b>CELL</b>
Training	Sandra Tobies	978-448-6350	978-996-3196
Concert	David /Sue Shawn	978-473-2145	978-927-7920
Schola	Cindy Wells	978-969-1039	508-843-1888



## Staff

### Directors

Valerie J. Becker, Artistic Director  
Heather Chu, Director of Opera and Schola  
Anne Kaihlanen, Music Assistant  
Monica Wallace, Pianist  
Thomas Lissey, Pianist

[vbecker@treblechorus.com](mailto:vbecker@treblechorus.com)  
[hchu@treblechorus.com](mailto:hchu@treblechorus.com)

### Office

Business Manager 978-837-5461  
Melanie Muggia, Program Manager 978-837-5462  
Anne Smith, Librarian 978-372-1339

[tcnemanager@treblechorus.com](mailto:tcnemanager@treblechorus.com)  
[mmuggia@treblechorus.com](mailto:mmuggia@treblechorus.com)

The Treble Chorus website is: [www.treblechorus.com](http://www.treblechorus.com). It is regularly updated and will be used as a primary mode of communication.

TCNE office hours are:

- Monday, Tuesday and Thursday: 9am - 2pm. You may leave a message at any time. We will return the call as soon as possible.

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## 2008-2009 TCNE Board of Directors

President	Maureen Costello-Shea
Vice President	
Treasurer	David Cores
Secretary	Mary Ann Lennon
Members-At-Large	Nancy Bergeron Grace Curley Lisa Doyle Michael Hoyt Eileen Seavey
<u>Non-Voting Members</u>	
Artistic Director	Valerie J. Becker
Director of Opera & Schola	Heather Chu
Program Manager	Melanie Muggia