
Celebrate the season with the Land of Lakes Choirboys

Wednesday, 02 December 2009

Melodious sounds ring out in a building nestled in Nowthen. Inside the home of the Land of Lakes Choirboys, the sounds of young voices fill the air while the boys prepare for their annual Christmas concert.

By Kelly Johnson

Staff writer

Melodious sounds ring out in a building nestled in Nowthen.

Inside the home of the Land of Lakes Choirboys, the sounds of young voices fill the air while the boys prepare for their annual Christmas concert.

The Land of Lakes Choirboys entertained visitors at Nowthen Heritage Day in September. The choirs will perform in their annual Christmas show Dec. 12 at Elk River High School. (File photo by Kelly Johnson)

The 34th annual Land of Lakes Choirboys' Christmas concert is set for Saturday, Dec. 12 at Elk River High School's Zabee Theatre, located on School Street.

Two concerts will take place at 2 and 7 p.m.

Featured will be the Viking, Nordic, Voyager, Training, Prep and Schola Cantorum choirs.

There will also be a bake sale and refreshments.

Admission to the concert is free.

The Christmas concert comes on the heels of the Land of Lakes Choirboys' induction into the Minnesota Music Hall of Fame.

The Choirboys were inducted in the Hall of Fame, located in New Ulm, along with five other Minnesota musicians during ceremonies Nov. 6.

Other inductees included William Makovsky (Wee Willie), Marilyn Sellars, Dick Macko, Steve Moran and Dale Menten.

Since 1989, the Minnesota Music Hall of Fame has inducted 117 people or organizations into its membership.

Previous inductees include Bob Dylan, Judy Garland, Bobby Vee, Johnny Holm, Big Walter Smith, The Minnesota Orchestra, Prince, The Dale Warland Singers and the Steele Family Singers.

“It is a tremendous honor for us to be inducted to the hall of fame and share membership with some of the world’s greatest musicians from Minnesota such as The Minnesota Orchestra, The Dale Warland Singers, Judy Garland and Bob Dylan. This was outside the possibilities of my thinking when we founded this choir back in 1976,” said Craig Carmody-Anderson, founding director, in a press release.

Carmody-Anderson founded the Land of Lakes Choirboys in 1976.

That first choir, formed to sing at a celebration of the country’s bicentennial in Elk River, included 18 boys.

Carmody-Anderson and John Fitzgerald partnered together that first season, taking the choir on a tour and growing the choir’s membership.

The Land of Lakes Choirboys organization is now in its fourth decade and includes more than 100 boys in six groups, including an alumni choir.

Tours have also progressed from the initial five-day trip to Mount Rushmore in South Dakota to two annual concurrent tours, one nationally and one internationally.

The Land of Lakes Choirboys perform works from the old masters to contemporary composers and pieces written exclusively for them.

The boys are trained in more the breathing, phrasing and intonation, however.

They also receive training in old-style manners.

Training begins in the Prep Choir, for boys ages five to seven, where they learn how their body works to produce a pure and natural sound.

Boys move on to the Training Choir, ages eight and older, where they begin the process of becoming a performer.

The Voyager Choir is the next step the boys progress to. This choir performs locally in Minnesota.

The Nordic Choir tours the United States and the Viking Choir tours internationally.

Both choirs sing in unison, two, three and four parts, performing throughout Minnesota and neighboring states during the year.

Once boys graduate from the choir program, at voice change or age 14, they can perform in the Schola Cantorum, or alumni choir.

For more information about the Land of Lakes Choirboys, call 763-263-8880 or visit www.lolcb.org.

For entertainment story ideas, e-mail Kelly Johnson at kelly.johnson@ecm-inc.com.