



MEMBERS' QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

"Come Sing With Us!"

2018-2019 Season

Revised August 2018

Welcome from “Doc”!

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the Orpheus Male Chorus of Phoenix!

It is my dream that Orpheus will have an impact on our society musically – framing and defining the way people in the Valley and the region think of Choral Music in general and Male Choral Music specifically. It is my hope that audiences, Arts organizations, community leaders, and citizens of the Phoenix area and beyond will know who Orpheus is because of the way in which we touch audiences with the high-quality musical product that we present at every performance.

To achieve this goal in the community, my short-term goal is to expand the singing membership of Orpheus while maintaining the high quality musicianship for which Orpheus is already known. This will permit both the dynamic musical performance that I envision, and will also provide a greater number of men to share the responsibilities of leadership, service, and creativity that are essential to the long-term survival and growth of Orpheus.

In addition to being known for our musical performance, I hope Orpheus will be an Arts organization known for community outreach that has an incredible impact in the Phoenix metropolitan area and beyond.

Please know that as important as the musicianship that Orpheus exhibits in performance is, I would rather audition attitude, commitment, work ethic, and character – i.e., please do not join Orpheus and merely be a consumer. Please do your best to become involved in the *machine* and don't just come along for the ride.

I hope you enjoy your time with Orpheus and that your musical “season” with us is long and fulfilling.

Sincerely,

“Doc”

Brook Carter Larson
Artistic Director
Orpheus Male Chorus of Phoenix

Membership Expectations

Policies and Procedures

The policies and procedures governing the Chorus are contained in the Bylaws and in the Member Handbook. This Quick Reference Guide is intended to be a brief summary of some of the matters covered in those documents. All members are required to abide by all such policies and procedures.

Auditions and Part Checks

New singers will be required to have an audition. The audition will consist of singing a simple song (e.g., “Happy Birthday”, “My Country ‘Tis of Thee”, etc.), checking general music ability, and listening for vocal quality. Anyone passing the audition will be accepted on a provisional basis to ensure a good fit with the existing chorus; re-evaluation and confirmation of acceptance will rest with the directors and occur following the sixth rehearsal of each concert series.

Singers interested in joining Orpheus must begin attending rehearsals by the second rehearsal of each concert series. Those who begin attending on the third or subsequent rehearsals will be encouraged to sit in on rehearsals to see if they would like to join the following concert series, but will be allowed to participate in performances during that concert series only at the discretion of the Artistic Director.

Current members who have been away from Orpheus for more than two consecutive concert series will be required to re-audition. The directors reserve the right to re-audition any member where re-evaluation of section placement or singing skill is deemed necessary for the good of the chorus.

Section leaders will work with all singers on a regular basis to assess their level of preparation and performance and to determine who is adequately prepared for performances and who needs additional preparation. Singers in need of additional preparation will be re-checked (potentially each week) to ensure adequate progress is being made. Members who are not ready for a performance, for any reason, will be asked not to participate in performances until adequate preparation has been demonstrated.

Attendance

The Board has approved an Attendance policy that is attached as Appendix A.

Members who are absent from rehearsals or performances without notice to the section leader or Artistic Director may, at the discretion of the Artistic Director, be deemed to have resigned from the Chorus.

Please arrive for rehearsal on time. We sell tickets for a 50/50 raffle at each rehearsal, but ***ticket sales cease when rehearsal begins***. Half of the proceeds from the 50/50 raffle go into the Chorus’ general fund; the other half go to the lucky winner.

Music

The Librarian will issue each member a packet of music for the current concert series and a binder in which to keep the music. You will be held financially responsible for replacement of damaged, lost or unreturned music.

Please bring your music with you to every rehearsal and always have a pencil out during rehearsal. **Chorus members should mark scores according to the Director’s instructions – and only in pencil!**

It is expected that each singer will spend time outside rehearsal in preparation for rehearsals and performances. It is expected that each singer will come ready to participate in rehearsal. Be prepared: bringing a pencil, marking scores, focused attention, etc. Singers who would like to invest more time in improving their voices and skills are encouraged to do so, including pursuing study with a private voice instructor.

Dues

Each Chorus member is assessed dues for each concert series, the amount of which is set by the Board of Directors. If a hardship exists in paying dues, arrangements may be made to address this issue. If you believe that paying dues may be difficult for you, or if you would like to make special arrangements, please speak in confidence with the Treasurer.

Dues for each concert series (fall and spring) are currently set at \$100 (\$200/year). Dues are to be paid in full by the sixth rehearsal of each concert series unless the member makes other arrangements with the Treasurer by the sixth rehearsal.

Dues are not refundable for any reason (e.g., decision to leave Orpheus, excessive absences, lack of preparation) after the sixth rehearsal of each concert series. Should a member choose to leave the group on or before the sixth rehearsal of each concert series, his dues will be reimbursed in full.

Section Leaders

Each section of the Chorus will have two or more Section Leaders: an administrative Section Leader and one or more music Section Leaders. Section Leaders will be appointed as follows:

- The administrative Section Leader is appointed by the Board of Directors.
- The music Section Leaders are appointed by the Artistic Director.

Roles and Responsibilities

The administrative Section Leader will:

- Act as the single point of contact for members of his section to report planned/unplanned absences.
- Keep attendance and report absences to the Artistic Director.
- Work with the Membership Committee to ensure that all new members are familiarized with the procedures/guidelines of the organization.
- Introduce themselves to new members.

The music Section Leaders will:

- Assist members of the Chorus with basic musical development/advice.
- Ensure that section members have the latest markings on their music.
- Work with the professional staff on improving the efficiency of rehearsals.
- Work with the professional staff on improving the quality of performances (parts-check, etc.).
- Introduce themselves to new members.
- Encourage the use of recorded educational material.

Mentors

New members may be paired with older members as mentors. The mentors help new members to feel welcome and to acclimate themselves to the Chorus, including meeting other members, learning music, and becoming familiar with the Chorus's policies and procedures.

Concert Attire

There are two styles of dress:

The "A" dress consists of black tuxedo jacket (no tails) and trousers; white dress shirt with French cuffs, under which is worn a plain white t-shirt (sleeved or sleeveless); cufflinks; black dress tie; black vest; black full-length socks; and black dress shoes (formal patent leather shoes are not required but *athletic shoes are not permitted*). Additionally, white dress gloves are worn when performing some numbers.

Orpheus has arranged with a local haberdasher, Nick's Menswear of Arrowhead Towne Center, Bell Road at 77th Avenue, Glendale, to make the shirt, tie and vest and, if desired, the tux and trousers, available at a special price. Once a prospective Chorus member has successfully passed audition and has accepted the Chorus' offer of membership, he must go into Nick's Menswear to be fitted for the "A" dress. The cost for the shirt, tie and vest is \$45.00; vest and tie alone are \$30.00. Additional shirts are \$15.00 each. All prices are plus sales tax.

Nick's Menswear is located at the west end of Arrowhead Towne Center, on the ground floor, near Dillard's. NOTE: Their Tempe location in Arizona Mills may have the A uniform; call first (480-897-9060). The vest is black satin and is "Brand Q." The tie is a straight black tie, not a bowtie. The shirt is brand "Milani." Their Chandler location no longer carries these items.

As an alternative, you may obtain the tux, shirt and trousers (but not the tie and vest) from whatever source you choose (Burlington, Men's Wearhouse, etc.).

The Chorus will supply the white dress gloves for a nominal charge when required.

The “B” dress consists of a black golf shirt with the Orpheus logo, under which may be worn a plain white v-neck t-shirt (the neckline must not show); khaki trousers with black belt; black full-length socks; and black shoes. You will purchase the black golf shirt from Orpheus. Cost is \$20.00.

Rehearsal and Concert Etiquette

The Board has approved a Rehearsal and Concert Etiquette policy that is attached as Appendix B.

Season Calendar

The calendar for the upcoming concert series is distributed at the end of the previous season and at the first few rehearsals of each concert series. Additionally, it is posted on the Chorus website. Chorus members should mark Orpheus dates in their personal calendars and schedule personal matters around Orpheus events as soon as they have committed to the group. If you use Google Calendar, you may automatically sync the Orpheus calendar into your personal calendar; see the website for instructions. Currently, Orpheus performs a legacy series in October with another local choral group (currently the Phoenix Children’s Chorus); a holiday series in December; and a spring series in late April/early May. We may also make other appearances at various events in the fall and spring as will be announced.

Ticket Sales

Ticket sales are a major source of revenue for the Chorus. As a member you are asked to try to sell a minimum of ten tickets for each concert series. Of course, you are allowed to sell more than ten!

Retreat

One Saturday in September, and again in February, the Chorus gathers for a day-long retreat (9:30am-4:00pm). The primary purposes of the retreat are to develop deeper appreciation for the music being performed, build camaraderie, and “bang notes” if required. Beverages, lunch and snacks will be provided at no cost. It is vitally important for all members to do their best to attend the entire day of retreat.

Boys to Men

The annual Boys to Men workshop is held on the first Saturday in November. It is a half-day-long event (1:00pm-6:30pm) in which young men from high school and college choruses join Orpheus and other Phoenix area male choruses to sing under the direction of top choral directors. Culminating in a mass concert, Boys to Men is a celebration of male voices joined together in song. We hope to encourage young men to continue singing as a manly endeavor that they can pursue proudly throughout their lives.

Social Events

Chorus members are invited to meet for a quick dinner each Tuesday before rehearsal, at an affordable but good restaurant in the general neighborhood of the rehearsal venue. Restaurants are chosen from a list suggested by members and are rotated through on a regular basis. The restaurant for the week is announced in the weekly newsletter.

Also, the Chorus adjourns to a local bar/restaurant the first Tuesday of each month after rehearsal, for general relaxing and unwinding. All are invited to take part.

Additionally, the Membership Committee organizes a pot-luck social for Chorus members and guests early in the fall and again in the spring, at a member’s home. Other outings, such as concert or theater trips, baseball games, etc., are also organized from time to time.

One of our newest opportunities for socializing is the bi-monthly “Solo Salon” held at a member’s home on a Saturday evening. As a chorus, we can’t all be chosen to sing the solos that some of our selections include. And so the “Solo Salons” are an opportunity for us to try out solo pieces of our choosing on each other, accompanied by good drink, good food, and much great camaraderie.

Newsletter and Website

Each Friday during the season, the Membership Committee distributes the Chorus’s weekly newsletter via e-mail. *It is VERY important that you read the newsletter each week.* It will contain information about concerts, uniforms, retreat, call times, directions/maps to concerts, and other significant business. It may also include

instructions regarding preparation for the upcoming week's rehearsal – e.g., music markings, directions for work on your own outside of rehearsal time, etc.

Orpheus also maintains a website geared toward the general public, with a Members section where you will find member photos, minutes of Board meetings, financial statements, the membership roster, calendar, and other such documents. The Webmaster will provide you with a login and password for the Members section of the website.

In addition, downloadable soundtracks for parts for most of the pieces to be performed during the current concert series, as well as the Chorus's Bylaws, Member Handbook, Quick Reference Guide, etc., are available from the website. The Webmaster will tell you how to access these documents.

We expect all members to check the website regularly.

Board of Directors and Committees

The affairs of the Chorus are managed by a Board of Directors consisting of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Members-at-Large, appointed members from both inside and outside the Chorus, and the Artistic Director. Elections to the Board occur at the Chorus's Annual Meeting held in May of each year, at the end of the spring concert series. Any Chorus member in good standing may be nominated for office and may vote at the election.

The Board is assisted in its work by several standing and ad-hoc committees, including Development, Marketing, Outreach, Membership, and Production. The duties of each of these committees are listed in the OMC Member Handbook. All members are strongly encouraged to volunteer to lead or work on committees as their interests and talents dictate and to the extent they are able. Remember, the Chorus is only as strong as each individual member's dedication and commitment!

We want *you*!

We encourage your creativity and ideas on how to help Orpheus continue to grow and impact the arts community. Orpheus is *your* chorus. Don't be passive – volunteer for a committee and be an active contributor to the Chorus. There are unlimited ways to contribute. If you have ideas or want to get involved but are not sure how, talk to your Section Leader, a Board Member, or Doc, and they will get you in contact with the right people.

Again, Welcome!

We're glad you have chosen to be a part of this great musical organization. We value your presence and the unique contribution you have to offer us! We hope that as we get to know you, and as you get to know us, many new lasting friendships will form.

APPENDIX A: ATTENDANCE POLICY

In order to achieve the best possible musical outcome, best serve our audiences, and provide an enjoyable and rewarding rehearsal experience, attendance at rehearsals and concerts is critical. Furthermore, consistent attendance and participation in the rehearsal process ensures that each singer is aware of and has practiced the instructions and musical interpretation presented by the artistic staff. To ensure the best possible experience both for our singers and audience members, the following items detail our attendance policy and the accompanying follow-through.

1. Chorus members should not miss more than three rehearsals in any given half season (fall or spring).
 - a. In the event our fall half season involves two separate concert programs, singers may not miss more than two rehearsals before our first concert.
2. Attendance at retreat is mandatory. Missing more than a half-day will result in a recorded absence.
3. Leaving rehearsal early will result in half an absence.
4. While singers are allowed up to three absences per half season, singers are highly encouraged to miss as few rehearsals as possible.
5. In the event a singer will miss a rehearsal, retreat, or concert, please report your absence as early or soon as possible to the following:
 - a. Rehearsal absence to be reported to your administrative section leader
 - b. Retreat absence to be reported to your administrative section leader
 - c. Concert absence to be reported to the administrative section leader AND the artistic director
6. If a singer exceeds three absences in any half season, that singer will be asked not to participate in the immediately following concert or concert series.
7. In the event a singer exceeds the number of allowed absences and is asked not to perform in a concert or concert series, said singer is still responsible for his chorus dues.
8. While it is a singer's responsibility to be aware of his absence status, each time a singer is absent, his administrative section leader will endeavor to send him an email reminding him he has missed a rehearsal, stating how many allowed absences remain, and reminding him that exceeding the allowed absences will result in his being asked not to perform in the immediately following concert(s). An email not being sent does not absolve the singer of his responsibilities.
9. At the discretion of the artistic staff, a singer who has exceeded his allowed absences will be permitted to perform in subsequent concert(s). Such exceptions will be made under the following conditions:
 - a. The singer demonstrates thorough preparation of the repertoire for the performance(s) in question. This includes knowing the notes, rhythms, dynamics, tempo, shaping, lyrics, meaning of the text, as well

as any other pertinent information that has been given to the chorus by the artistic staff.

- i. It is the sole responsibility of the singer to prepare himself and demonstrate his preparation. While he may certainly ask for help from those within the chorus, it is not the responsibility of the chorus members, section leaders, or artistic staff to ensure the preparation of those singers who have exceeded their allowed absences.
 - b. Preparation will be demonstrated to music section leaders or artistic staff, or any combination deemed necessary to make a proper assessment.
 - c. If not singing in a performance affects the balance of a section to the extent that it decreases the quality of the performance, the artistic staff or music section leaders will assess the level of preparation for those not singing to help improve concert balance.
 - d. Missing a large number of absences will likely result in not performing in concerts regardless of the level of preparation.
10. If a singer knows in advance he is unable to commit to the attendance policy, the singer is asked to consider taking a half season off. This allows the singer to meet his additional commitments and return at a time when he can commit the required time to the rehearsal process.
11. In the event a singer takes a leave of absence for one half season or longer, the singer will be asked to re-audition for the chorus upon his return.
12. Attendance sheets in the foyer at rehearsal will visually remind singers of their absence totals.

APPENDIX B: REHEARSAL AND CONCERT ETIQUETTE POLICY

Concert Etiquette

- Wear appropriate attire
 - A Uniform
 - Black tuxedo
 - Plain front, regular collared, French-cuff white dress shirt, no pleats
 - Matching black vest and tie purchased from Nick's Menswear
 - Black polished dress shoes
 - Black dress socks
 - No ankle socks
- Keep all conversation polite whenever Orpheus members are at a concert venue, particularly when visible by audience members,
 - Don't criticize other groups
 - Be friendly and express thanks to patrons
 - Remember that what patrons hear us say reflects on us as an organization
- Pre and post stage performance;
 - Once we have lined up to go on stage the concert has begun
 - Give smiles to audience members as we enter and leave the stage and performance areas
 - Refrain from conversing
 - Turn electronic devices off
 - Silent/vibrate in extreme situations: on call for work; expecting birth of a child, etc.
- On-Stage Etiquette
 - Do not talk while on stage
 - Refrain from touching face, hair, etc. unless an emergency
 - Do not applaud
 - Smile at the audience between pieces/sets of music
 - Be engaged and use body language and facial expressions (particularly your eyes) to communicate with the audience
 - Watch the conductor when performing
 - If faint, sit down on riser and/or leave stage quietly. Signal to others if you need help
 - Remember to refrain from behaviors that draw attention away from the ensemble to yourself

Rehearsal Etiquette

- Do not talk when singing stops
 - If you need to discuss something musical with your neighbor (question or mistakes), try to do so when the conductor has paused or very quietly
 - Don't engage in social chitchat. We all want to be friends and socialize, but do so during break, or before and after rehearsal.
- Have a pencil at every rehearsal and USE it to mark everything the conductor says and including additional helps and notes you may need
- Keep music help up, flat, and in a way so as not to block your voice but to allow you to see the conductor at all times

- Please help your fellow choir members by alerting them to general mistakes so we can all be aware of how to improve
- Make sure comments to fellow choir members are respectful and helpful, not critical or offensive
- When we collaborate with other ensembles, set the example for appropriate behavior

Expectations as a Choir Member

- Attend all rehearsals and performances possible
- Keep absences to no more than four for the spring and two for the first half of fall and two for the second half of fall
 - (This was suggested by as we split the fall and four absences in either half make a huge impact)
- Complete homework assignments each week
- Spend at least 30 minutes each week, in addition to the homework, reviewing your parts, scores, notes, memorization, etc.
- Commit to embrace and demonstrate the idea that each member is a section leader
 - Demonstrate this through persistent preparation, attention during rehearsals, and engagement during rehearsals and performances
- Inform administrative section leaders as far in advance as possible of conflicts, absences, or being significantly tardy
- Purchase, maintain, and wear the appropriate uniform to all functions
- Communicate with section leaders, and artistic staff as necessary, concerning struggles, suggestions, and needs for help
- Be willing to memorize as assigned by the artistic staff
- Take notes during each rehearsal using a pencil to mark scores
- Pay dues on time and communicate with staff concerning difficulties or inability to pay dues

Additional Possibilities

- Separate list for section leaders
- Section leaders need to set an example of preparation and behavior
- Should there be a basic music reading requirement to join (suggested via section leader feedback)