

hitting the high Notes.

A Newsletter From  WILLIAMSPORT
CIVIC CHORUS

Volume 19, No. 2 Jan. 2017
Barbara Hemmendinger, editor

On Sunday, February 5th, see “Singing the Body Electric”

In his 1855 poem, “I Sing the Body Electric”, Walt Whitman recognized how beautifully connected body, mind, and spirit are in all bodies (male, female, slave, and free), which rankled the traditionalists of his time. Terming these intricacies the “exquisite realization of health”, he presaged today’s emphasis on both diversity and integrated healing by more than a century.

In our eponymous concert at 3 pm on Sunday, February 5th at Williamsport Regional Medical Center, the Williamsport Civic Chorus will sing to the glorious pursuit of body

and soul. Come hear baseball-themed music, spirituals, a bit of jazz, and even a tribute to an area collegiate teacher and coach as we “...fly on up to heaven.”

Jeff Johnson will accompany the Chorus on piano in the Hospital’s main lobby, and guest artist, Jacob Kerbaugh, principal clarinetist with the Mansfield University Symphony, will perform an obbligate feature.

What better way to kick off Super Bowl Sunday than to listen to sports music? Tickets may be purchased at The Otto Book Store, R.M.



Jacob Kerbaugh

Sides Family Music Center, and at the door. As always, children ages 12 and under will be admitted free. 🎵

Singers’ Corner: Our Athletes and Healers

On Super Bowl Sunday afternoon, the Chorus will perform “Singing the Body Electric”, and in that spirit we acknowledge the singer-athletes and singer-healthcare professionals among us. In a recent informal survey, 18 of our current members, or almost half, train, coach, play, or work in fields that build body and mind. They include one dentist, two physicians, one medical student, one pharmacist, four licensed nurses, two clinical social workers one of whom is also a hospital chaplain, a certified occupational therapy assistant, and a therapeutic behavior support person. Others run, teach yoga and aqua Zumba, assist with “superstars” drumming, play golf, swim, and belong to swim, soccer, and softball teams.

Aside from our many “weekend warriors”, a few people stand out for their athletic and related professional accomplishments:

Lt. Delia Behpour (alto) is a third-year medical student looking forward to a career in emergency or internal medicine. She is also an officer in the United States Air Force medical corps. Delia has played co-ed softball and was a forward in a women’s soccer league. She has run five marathons while helping many runners train as a team captain for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

Dr. Bob Fredrickson (bass) practices dentistry and has a Mastership in the Academy of General Dentistry as well as the American Academy of

Sports Dentistry. He has played, refereed, and coached high school and college soccer, where he was inducted into the Lynchburg College Sports Hall of Fame. “Doc” is a long time member of the American Youth Soccer Organization and past member of its national Board of Directors. He is directly responsible for bringing the AYSO program to Lycoming County and to the thousands of youngsters who began soccer while playing in that League.

Steve Muthler (bass), a retired math teacher from Jersey Shore Area High School, is a masters swimmer, who for almost a quarter century has swum more than 200 miles every year. Competing since 1996 at the national level, Steve has finished in

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Know the Score



Michael Connor

Humans are the only creatures we know of who leave the memory of themselves behind when the term of their natural lives is over.

All other animals have but one object that controls their actions; namely, the supply of the necessary accommodations to sustain their lives. Humankind has a power sufficient for the accomplishment of this task, plus a desire to drive beyond. Humankind is able, when feeling prompted, to bring to life the prototypes and concepts which previously existed only in thought.

The labor of human intelligence is endless. How bountiful is the volume, and how extraordinary the variety, of our sciences and our arts! The number of humans who devote themselves to higher pursuits is great in every civilization. And this has been more or less the condition of our species in all ages, ever since we left our savage and pastoral existence.

Chimpanzee lead guitarists are thin on the ground. The stage at London's Royal Albert Hall sees few lemur violin virtuosos. Conventional wisdom has it that music is a relatively modern human invention, and one that, while fun and rewarding, is a luxury rather than a basic necessity of life.

This appears to be borne out by the archaeological evidence. While the first hand axes and spears date back about 1.7 million years and 500,000 years respectively, the earliest known musical instruments are only 40,000 years old.

We know that humans evolved into a musical species. In fact, we have been creating music longer than we have been farming or even painting. While human history and music seem to go hand in hand, scientists still grapple with the question of why we make – and love – music.

Music has long served the dual purpose of entertainment and communication. Over the past hundreds of thousands of years, humans could have developed music as a tool to perpetuate the species. We use music to express, experience, and emphasize our emotions. In some evolutionary arguments about the purpose of music, theorists believe that music allows for communication from one generation to another.

Music is an advantage that evolution has given to us. It makes us much more successful than the apes and monkeys, and it

helps human societies become much more complex.

Our next concert will pay tribute to humankind through music. We will sing piece focusing on the marvel of our species, on the human body, and on human achievement. We will “Sing the Body Electric” to celebrate the me and the me yet to come! 

“Know the Score” is provided for the enjoyment of our readers by Michael Connor. Currently in his second year as music director of the Williamsport Civic Chorus, Michael comes to us from the Harmonia Gesang Verein, where he is entering his fourth year as conductor. He holds a master's degree in education with music specialization from Bucknell University, having served as a graduate assistant to Dr. William Payn there. Connor teaches choral music at Central Mountain Middle School in Clinton County and has also appeared as a frequent vocal soloist with the Chorus and with numerous other performing organizations. He is also the proud father of Aidan, Gabrielle, and Liam.

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73rd SEASON

"The Body Electric"

Sunday, Feb. 5, 2017

3 pm

Main Lobby—Williamsport
Regional Medical Center
700 High Street

"A Rock Tour

**Collaboration with the
Uptown Music Collective"**

Saturday, May 27, 2017

7 pm

Community Arts Center
220 West Fourth Street

The Williamsport Civic Chorus receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

Remembering Mahler a Century Later

Your editor is pretty much a rationalist, not one given to dream revelations, "signs", or Internet conspiracies. Yet, when in the same week, she chanced upon a photo plus an unrelated video that recalled meetings with Gustav Mahler over a century ago, she had to question why.

In a documentary about the life of pianist Alice Herz-Sommer made when Alice was 108 years old and the world's oldest living Holocaust survivor, Mrs. Herz-Sommer recalled travelling with her mother from Prague to Vienna two days before her own fourth birthday to hear Mahler conduct the farewell performance of his Second Symphony on November 24, 1907. She said that she and her mother spoke with the conductor after the performance, calling their encounter "a moment in the presence of genius". (Mrs. Herz-Sommer's own musical genius and positive attitude would later help her survive imprisonment in Nazi concentration camps and to thrive afterwards).

The second Mahler coincidence came in a Facebook feed that features throwback photos of old New York City. In it, the very cosmopolitan Gustav is seen

walking in Central Park with his young daughter, Anna Justine (1910).



Could these coincidences possibly connect to the Chorus' role in vocal accompaniment for the Williamsport Symphony Orchestra on February 14th? Together with the Lycoming College Choir, the WCC will sing the final movement of Mahler's epic Symphony No. 2 in C minor, *Resurrection*, that evening.

Serendipity aside, please do purchase your tickets for this grand concert at the Community Arts Center box office, or at: <https://tickets.caclive.com/Online/> Regrettably, our patron tickets will not be applicable. 🎵



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



“The Williamsport Civic Chorus is an open community of singers dedicated to making fine music accessible to all through education, participation, and inspiration.”

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the top 10 in all his events over the past five years!

Marie Vannucci (tenor), now in her ninth decade, started swimming at the YWCA some 45 years ago. Presently retired, she has coached the Loyalsock swim team and the Williamsport Area High School diving team. Marie has also has taught water skills to over 2,000 area youngsters and still instructs many of their offspring.

As you watch our performance on February 5th, let's give a shout-out (in tune, of course) to all the

singer-athletes and healers who walk the talk by keeping body and spirit healthy. 

