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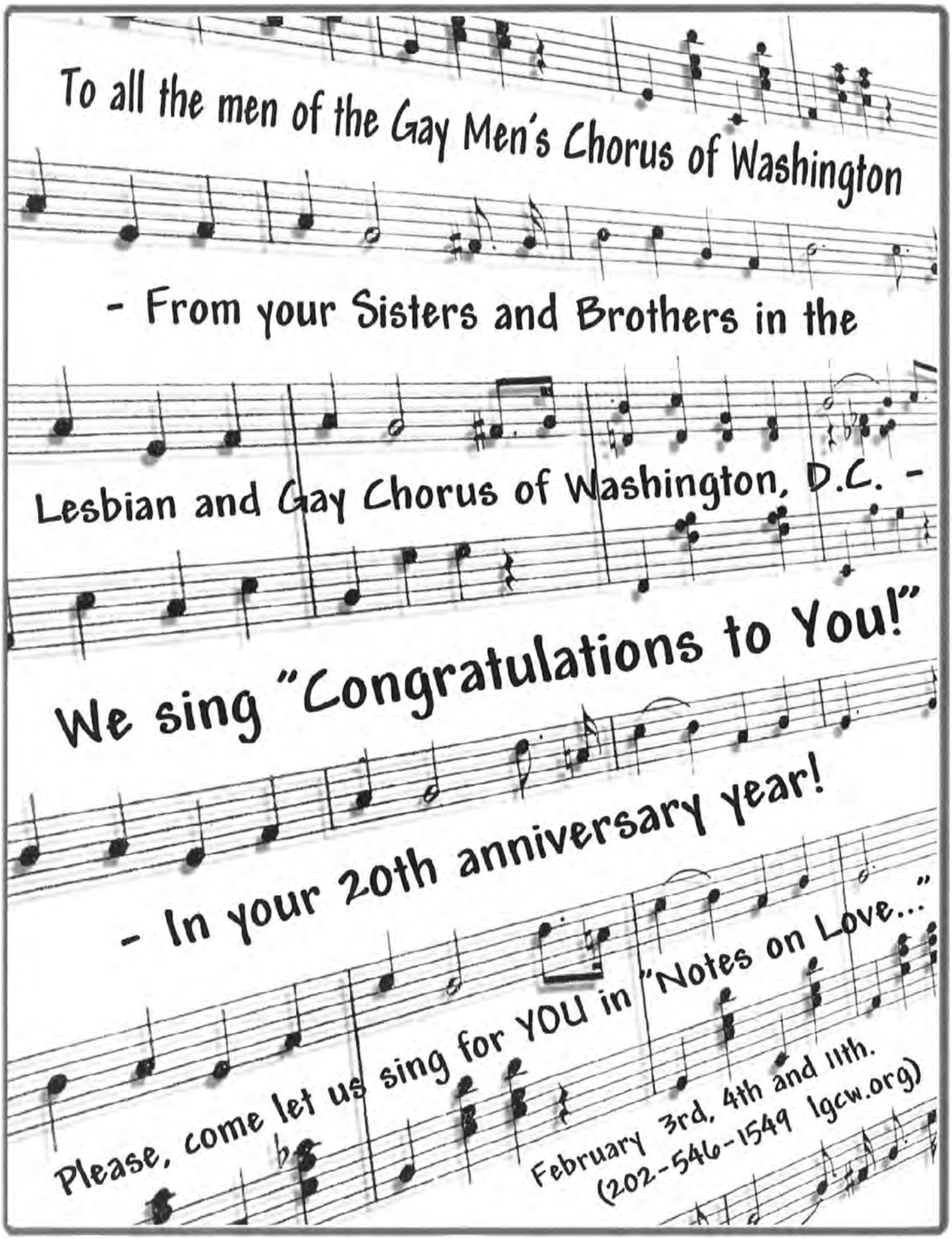
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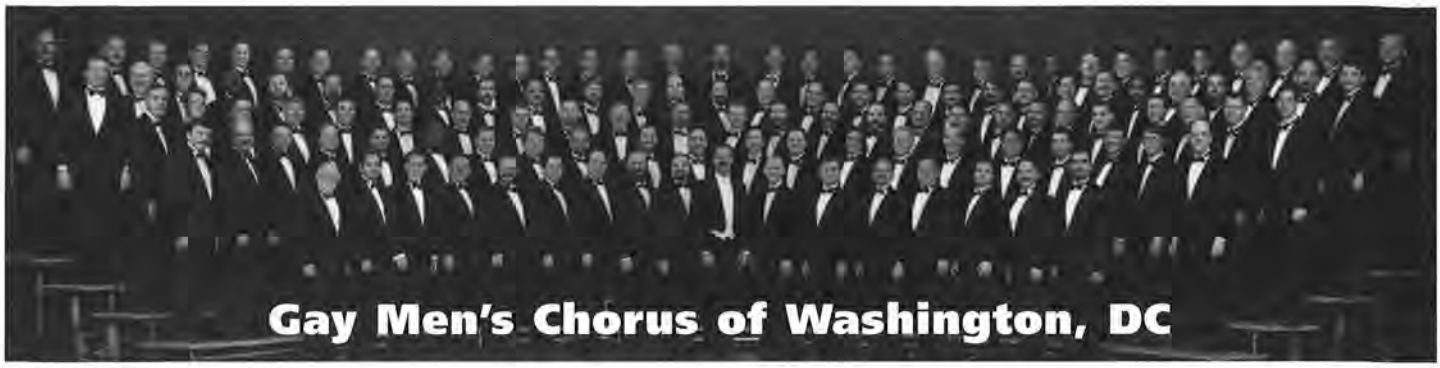

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Joe Bloomer
Brad Boekeloo
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Peter R. Brayton
Joe Cannon RC
James Chang GM
Lawrence "Chevy" Chevalier RC
Bill Cutter
Jarrin Davis PF
Gary Dwyier
Luis Raul Flores Sanchez GM
Alex Ford
Paul George
Paul Harouff
Michael Horton
Branko Jovanovic RC
Craig Lustig RC
Van L. Neel RC
Dan Patton SL
Gary M. Regan
Jack Reiffer SL
Robb Rexroth GM
Philip M. Rogerson
Richard T. Spillane
David F. Streit
Jeffrey Van Luyn
Kevin Webster
K. David Weidner RC
James W. Williams RC
Robert K. Wonneberger

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W. Eric Balthrop
Marty Barron PF
Tom Bell RC
Corey Bent RC
Roger C. Bergstrom
Nathan Bowden
David Carmody PF, SL
Paul Cline
Chris Cochran PF
Harvey Cohen
Frank Corazzi
Larry Crow Jr. RC
Bill Eadie RC
Roger Edens RC
Roland D. Emenheiser GM
Bruce D. Emery
Don Griesheimer
Jeff Hamlin
Robert E. Hensley RC, SL
David W. Holmes
Yasunari Ishii
Ricky Jacobs
Dennis Kennedy II
Jeb King
Matt Komornik GM
Stuart Kopperman
David Lindsey RC
James P. Madigan III
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Pierre Méthot
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John A. Niemi GM
Paul Nino GM
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Sean Robinson GM
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Scott Starin
Chuck Walker GM
Juan Washington
Tim Whitehouse
Joseph Wolfe
Mark S. Zimmerman SL

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Tom Baldridge
Robert T. Boaz PF
Jeffrey L. Bowers
Joseph Canter
Donald Chandler
Jeffrey Allen Chelsky RC
Larry Cohen
Andrew Cordonnier
Chip Crews RC
Dwight Dekeyser GM
David M. Dolecki RC
David Edmiston SL
Kurt Ehrman
Doug Fowler
Thom Gibb
Martin Good PF
Christopher M. Grieder
George Huffman
Kurt G. Ehrman
David Jansing RC, SL
Eric Johnson GM
Dan Kaufman
David Kincaid
Grant Klink
Dean Lester
Bill Lipsett SL
Jeff Mace
Rick Marlett
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Will McLaughlin
Edward P. Oseroff
Jim Peterson
Michael Brendan Smith
Steve Spar
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David Taylor
Richard Weatherill

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Don Armstrong PF
Terry M. Ayers GM
C. Michael Baker RC
Will Bellais
Charles Bridgeman
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Russ Capps PF
Jim Carey
Dan Chadburn
Kenneth T. Cole
Ted Collins
Tom DiGiovanni
Bob Dragoset RC
Robert Featherstone
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President's Message

Fred Boykin

Fred Boykin

Welcome to the first concert of GMCW's 20th anniversary season! I am so thrilled to have been part of this wonderful group since its inception in 1981. Little did I know as a young gay man, that 20 years later I would still be singing with and be president of what I think is the finest male chorus in this city (in my humble opinion)!

In the early 80's we were a groundbreaking force for gay rights in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. I distinctly remember being booed onstage during one of our early performances, only to receive a standing ovation at the end of our set. Why would an audience have such a change of heart? Simply because people full of prejudice and societal myths about gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals, are transformed when the sound of beautiful music comes from the stage. Those same people open their hearts to who we really are —human beings struggling to make a difference in the world, just like they are. And the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, DC has done just that —-year after year, performance after performance, singing with pride and telling this city, this country and the world that we are proud of who we are.

We don't get booed anymore. New members come into our chorus to sing because we are a high quality men's choral group that still carries a message of pride for gay people. Certainly we have grown and matured, and our performances have become more musically entertaining and satisfying for our audience and our members. I know you will find that true as you enjoy the concert. We are proud of our progress in musicality and we are proud to uphold our tradition of our uniqueness.

I am also honored to say "Welcome back!" to Jeff Buhrman, our new director. As most of you know, Jeff was our assistant conductor for 10 years before moving to New York with his life partner. Now they are back, and we are so happy to have Jeff leading our chorus. I speak for the board and the chorus in saying thank you to Jeff, for his inspiration, his talent, and his unbridled positive energy. The finished product speaks for itself! We look forward to many productive years for GMCW with Jeff at our helm.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, the chorus and the Capital Club, I welcome you to our holiday concert. Jeff has put together an amazing mixture of sights and sounds that I know you will all thoroughly enjoy. And yes, our reprise of "Santa's Workshop" from our 1990 holiday concert will be something you will be talking about for the next 10 years!

We thank all of you for your support of GMCW over the last 20 years. Your attendance, donations and encouragement have kept our chorus a vital force in the arts community in Washington, DC. Please email me at gmcwprez2000@aol.com if you have any comments or if I can answer any of your questions or concerns.

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Music Director's Comments

Jeff Buhrman

Winter is my favorite time of year. The chill in the air makes me think of bundling in a warm coat and mittens and walking through the first snow, or sitting by a warm fire with a house filled with friends and joyous singing. We'll have to imagine the fireside, but you are certainly in a house filled with friends. For twenty years GMCW has been sharing song and festive spirit with you, our extended family. Whether you celebrate Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa or any other tradition, we are glad that you are here with us this year at St. Margaret's.

I think that many of us find that our holidays are a mixture of the Norman Rockwell fantasy and new traditions that we create for ourselves. Honoring the past and making memories for the future - that is what our holiday show is all about. Our program is a mixture of new music and old favorites. In particular, Santa's Workshop may strike a familiar chord in many of you. First performed by GMCW ten years ago under the direction of Jim Holloway, it was the inspiration of our then-stage director Michael Rivard. I hope the fun we are having comes across to you as you watch our performance.

Throughout this exciting 20th anniversary season we will celebrate our GMCW family...our past...our present, as we look to the future. Former longtime directors Jim Richardson, Bruce Trinkley, and Jim Holloway dedicated themselves to GMCW and were responsible for giving this organization the strong musical and spiritual foundation that still exists today. I am honored to follow in their footsteps.

My hope is that our concerts have a profound effect on you. We want you to laugh. We want you to be touched...amazed...amused...and even moved to tears. Thank you for being here to help us celebrate the holiday season and to share some very special moments with us.

We love what we do. And we hope you will love it as well.

Happy Holidays!

Jeff Buhrman
Music Director

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Who's Who

Jeff Buhrman

Jeff Buhrman
Music Director

Jeff Buhrman's association with GMCW began in 1986 when he joined the baritone section. Less than a year later he was tapped to direct the chorus's close harmony ensemble, Potomac Fever, a job he held for the next 10 seasons. In 1989 he began an eight-year run as Assistant Director of the chorus, working alongside Music Director Jim Holloway. Jeff had the honor of directing GMCW at an inauguration concert for President Clinton in 1996.

Under Jeff's direction, Potomac Fever attained a wide following with its distinctive style, which was characterized by fluid phrasing and warmth of tone. Through his tenure the group performed many concerts and fundraisers within the gay community. The highlight of his decade with the group came in 1997 with the release of the CD "In Our Lifetime," followed by a European tour, at which Potomac Fever sang at the opening ceremony of the European Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses festival in Munich. PF had the distinction of being the only American group to perform at the festival.

A lifelong musician, Jeff holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music Education and Voice from Montclair State University. In addition, he studied voice with Marden Bate and conducting with David Randolph and received additional training in voice with Walter Blazer of the Manhattan School of Music. He has performed with such preeminent choral conductors as Robert Shaw, Roger Wagner, David Randolph and Dennis Keene.

Jeff has more than 20 years of experience as a choral director, working with high school choruses, community choruses and church choirs. He founded and led a five-voice early music ensemble, Friends and Aires, in the 1980's. A devotee of musical theater, Jeff has also directed a number of musicals including "Bye Bye Birdie," "Once Upon a Mattress," and "Bells are Ringing." He has also served as musical director for many other productions including GMCW's 2000 production of "Little Shop of Horrors."

Although he was a frequent soloist at GMCW concerts, Jeff is probably best remembered as a singer for his rendition of Leonard Bernstein's "My House," which can be heard on GMCW's first CD, "Singing Free." He received one of the inaugural GMCW Circle of Excellence Awards in 1991 for his outstanding work on behalf of the chorus.

Jeff has a Master of Arts degree in counseling from George Washington University and works as a counselor at a private school in Alexandria. He shares his life with his partner, Robert Winter.

Daniel C. Meyer
Assistant Music Director

Daniel C. Meyer has studied composition and conducting at Calvin College (Grand Rapids, Michigan) and

Daniel Meyer

Westminster Choir College (Princeton, New Jersey). He has served as Professor of Music at Baltimore City Community College, Music Director for the Honolulu Theater for Youth, and the Assistant Director of the Guam Symphony and the Saipan Chorale. Two of his musicals, "The Biological Oratorio" and "How Sweet the Sound" were produced in Maryland, and in 1997, he was commissioned by Action Theater to compose incidental music for the world premier production of "Psychology of the Beautiful." His radio musicals "Michaelangelo at 15" and "The Ballad of Emily Brown" were performed at Towson University in 1999. His choral music is published by GIA Publications of Chicago.

Theodore Guerrant
Principal Accompanist

Theodore Guerrant (aka "Dr. Teddy"), now in his 17th season as GMCW's Principal Accompanist, began piano and organ studies at an early age. By the time he was a senior in high school, as a student of his aunt, the late Georgian pianist Eliza Holmes

Theodore Guerrant

Feldmann, he was accompanying four choral groups and playing five church services every Sunday.

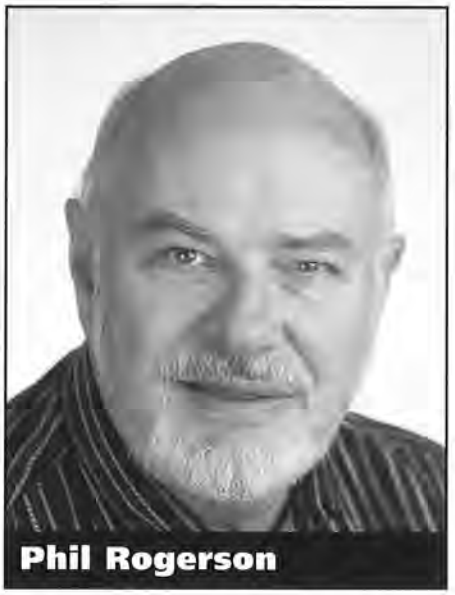
From there he went on to receive the Bachelor of Music in piano and the Master of Fine Arts in harpsichord from the University of Georgia, the Master of Music in piano from the University of Wisconsin, the Doctor of Musical Arts in piano performance-literature from the University of Maryland, and the Graduate Performance Diploma in organ from the Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University. He studied additionally in Buriton, England, with Denise Lassimonne.

Dr. Guerrant is Organist-Choirmaster here at Saint Margaret's Episcopal Church ; Associate Organist at Saint Mark's Catholic Church in Hyattsville; Assisting Organist at the University of Maryland Chapel; and, in addition to GMCW, accompanies for the Montgomery County Masterworks Chorus and the Prince George's Choral Society. He is Coordinator of Accompanying Activities for the University of Maryland School of Music.

Phil Rogerson
Vocal Coach

A native of West Virginia and a private teacher of voice and piano in the Washington area, Phil has been an active member of the Chorus since it was founded in 1981. He is a graduate of West Virginia University with bachelor's and master's degrees in music education.

Phil, along with the other members of the music staff, listens to the auditions of prospective new Chorus singers as well as to the "vocal reviews" that all GMCW singing members must pass. For members who have never had formal vocal instruction, he teaches a class in vocal technique each Sunday for an hour before regular rehearsal. Phil conducts sectional rehearsals and assists individual singers with vocal problems.



Phil Rogerson

He is active in many local music organizations, and has served as president of the Southern Maryland Choral Society, the Choristers' Guild, and the Prince George's Music Teachers Association.

John E. Perkins
Executive Director

John is celebrating his fourth season as GMCW's second full-time Executive Director. He previously served in

John E. Perkins

senior management positions here in Washington, DC, with the Council on Post-Secondary Accreditation, Trade Communications Inc., the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, and George Washington University. He holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in Music History and Literature from Florida State University.

A fan of the Chorus since its founding, John has been a member of the Capital Club since 1987, serving as its Vice Chairman and chair of the annual auction in 1992-93, and three terms as Capital Club Chairman, from 1993 to 1996. He received the GMCW President's Award in 1994 and was elected by the Chorus to a two-year term on its Board of Directors in 1995, serving as Secretary in 1996-97. When not occupied with the management of the Chorus and overseeing its development efforts, John's avocational interests lie in the areas of architecture, cooking, gardening and literature.

John is a judge for the Gay/Lesbian American Music Awards (GLAMAs) and serves on the Boards of Directors of the Northern Virginia AIDS Ministry and the Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts Associates.

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Kenneth Lowenberg, *Director*
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SANTA'S WORKSHOP

Sing We Now Of Christmas . . . . . French Carol
Chevy Chase Handbell Ringers — setting by Kevin McChesney

Deck the Halls . . . . . Traditional Welsh Carol
Chevy Chase Handbell Ringers — setting by Kevin McChesney

Light the Legend . . . . . Michael Isaacson
arranged by Bruce Trinkley

Ding Dong, Merrily On High . . . . . arranged by Kenneth Lowenberg
Chorus and Handbell Ringers
Conducted by Kenneth Lowenberg

Laudate Dominum . . . . . Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Van Neel, tenor

Almighty God of Our Fathers . . . . . Will James
adapted by Jeff Buhrman

The Sleigh . . . . . .Richard Kountz
arranged by Ralph Baldwin

Sweet Little Jesus Boy . . . . . .Robert MacGimsey
Jeff Mace, baritone — arranged by Mark Andrews

Lavender . . . . . .Larry Grossman & Michael Korie
From A Gay Century Songbook — arranged by Nina Gilbert
Martin Good, baritone
Richard Spillane, tenor

Music of Hanukkah . . . . . .Traditional folk songs
arranged by Anne Albritton

And In That Moment . . . . . .Dan Chadburn & Tom Nichols
Jeff Hamlin, tenor
Tom Nichols, tenor
Dan Chadburn, piano

O, Come All Ye Faithful . . . . . .arranged by Tom Mitchell
Chorus and Handbell Ringers

INTERMISSION

Santa's Workshop

Santa's Elves . . . . . .George L.O. Strid
The Elves and The Blocks

Down the Holiday Trail . . . . . .Ruth Roberts and Bill Katz
The Cowboys

Fruitcake . . . . . .Phillip Hageman and Penny Leka
The Bakers

Monotone Angel . . . . . .Don McAfee
The Angels

Hot Cup of Cocoa . . . . . .Phyllis Aleta Wolfe
The Raggedy Anns and Raggedy Andys

TOYLAND MEDLEY

Toyland . . . . . .Victor Herbert and Glen MacDonough
Wooden Soldiers on Parade . . . . . .Leon Jessel and Bernard Gaso
Additional lyrics by Michael Rivard
Our Team . . . . . .Leila Fletcher
The Toy Soldiers

Me and My Teddy Bear . . . . . Joan Javits, Phil Springer and Tony Springer
The Dolls and Teddy Bears

Good Morning Blue . . . . . .Count Basie, arranged by Daniel Meyer
The Angels

The Santa Song . . . . . .Johnny Kane and Michael Smith
The Children

Holiday Sing-Along
(song words on page 38)
Frosty the Snowman
Santa Claus is Coming to Town
The Audience and Company

Do You Love Me? . . . . . .Bock and Harnick
Santa and Mrs. Claus additional lyrics by Chris Cochran

The Reindeer Hula . . . . . .Stephen L. Lawrence
The Reindeer and Company

Let It Snow . . . . . .Jules Styne and Sammy Cahn
The Snowflakes and Company

Here Comes Suzy Snowflake . . . . . .Sid Tepper and Roy Brodsky
The Snowflakes, Suzy Snowflake and Company

Joyous Christmas . . . . . .John Marks
The Company

Santa's Workshop Cast

RAGGEDY ANNS AND ANDYS
Tom Bell
Dan Kaufman
David Kincaid
Grant Klink
Bill Lipsett
Zerxes Spencer
Scott Starin
David Taylor
Rich Weatherill
Joe Wolfe
John Niemi, *Choreographer*

BLOCKS
Jim Carey
Dan Chadburn
Larry Cohen
Chip Crews
Roger Edens
Jason Kuznicki
David Lindsey
David Smith

SANTA
Jerry Lee

MRS. CLAUS
Jim Murphy

SUZY SNOWFLAKE
Bob Wonneberger

FROSTY
Tim Whitehouse

COWBOYS
Will Bellais
Brad Boekeloo
Jeff Bowers
Michael Brinkman
Harvey Cohen
Bruce Emery
Paul Harouff
Rob Hensley
George Huffman
Jeb King
Jim Madigan
Rick Marlett
Erik Mazzacone
Rob Neighbour
Tom Nichols
Jack Reiffer
Rich Spillane
Mark Zimmerman
Chuck Walker, *Choreographer*

ANGELS *(Potomac Fever)*
Don Armstrong
Marty Barron
Robert Boaz
Matt Borkowski
Dave Carmody
Russ Capps
Chris Cochran
Martin Good
Dan Meyer
David Robinson
Kirke Smith
Warren Turner
Marvin Weeks
Jarrin Davis, *Choreographer*

BAKERS
Michael Baker
Peter Brayton
Jeff Hamlin
Dave Jansing
Craig Lustig
Jeff Mace
Mark Mattison
Van Neel
Paree Roper
David Streit

TOY SOLDIERS
(G-Men)
David Akridge
Terry Ayers
James Chang
Frank Corrazzi
Roland Emenheiser
Eric Johnson
John Niemi
Paul Nino
Todd Paul
Sean Robinson
Rob Rexroth, *Choreographer*

ELVES
Roger Bergstrom
Joe Canter
Ted Collins
Bob Dragosett
Kurt Ehrmann
JT Flores
Thom Gibb
Dan Gleckler
Jim Lopresti
Charles McClelland
Charlie Merk
Nick Neagle
Steve Pflasterer
Bob Reeg
Gary Regan
Wes Shank
Paul Singletary
Tom Tyler
Jeff VanLuyn
Barrett Whitener
Jim Williams
Paul Winters
Chuck Walker, *Choreographer*

CHILDREN
Carl Baldwin
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Don Chandler
Bill Cutter
Tom DiGiovanni
Gary Dwyer
David Edmiston
Robert Featherstone
Paul George
Dan Patton
Charles Sarner
Morgan Slusher
Steve Spar
Michael Smith
Duward Sumner
Gerry Umali

REINDEER
Eric Balthrop
Corey Bent
Joe Cannon
Paul Cline
Kit Grieder
Jim Grushus
Andre Marcial
Will McLaughlin
Pierre Methot
Chuck Walker
Chris Dalen, *Choreographer*

SNOWFLAKES
Tom Baldridge
Michael Horton
Ricky Jacobs
Dennis Kennedy
Matt Komornik
Ed Oseroff
Stan Piotroski
Juan Washington
Kevin Webster
Chris Dalen, *Choreographer*

TEDDY BEARS/ DOLLS
Tim Allmond
Fred Boykin
Charles Bridgeman
Chevy Chevalier
Ken Cole
Dwight DeKeyser
Bill Eadie
Alex Ford
Don Griesheimer
Yasunari Ishii
Stuart Kopperman
Harold Lewis
Michael Lohmann
Yoshii Nishio
Jim Peterson
Michael Quasebarth
Peter Scott
David Weidner
Rob Rexroth, *Choreographer*

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Many thanks to:

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Program Notes

By Jeff Buhrman and Chip Crews

GMCW's 20th anniversary season opens with "Light the Legend," a vibrant and infectious retelling of the Hanukkah story by the American Jewish composer Michael Isaacson.

The jaunty "Ding Dong, Merrily On High," which seems so steeped in holiday cheer, was actually written as a dance tune, or "brala," in 16th century France. It was adapted as a holiday number in the early 1900s by George Ratcliff Woodward, an Anglican priest.

"Laudate Dominum" is a movement from Mozart's magnificent "Vesperae Solennes de Confessore," or "Solemn Vespers." It was written in 1780, when the composer was all of 24.

"Almighty God of Our Fathers" is both a solemn prayer and a majestic testament of faith to ring in this holiest of seasons.

"The Sleigh," by the little-known composer Richard Kountz, is a rousing and playful Russian composition that seems to take its very inspiration from the wind as it whips past reveling sleigh-riders.

The poignant "Sweet Little Jesus Boy" is a 20th-century composition in the style of the spiritual. Asked in 1966 to explain its power, its composer, Robert MacGimsey, responded, "This is not so much a song as just a meaning. You have to imagine an aging Negro standing off in the middle of a field just giving his heart to Jesus in the stillness."

"Lavender" is a movement from "Gay Century Songbook," written by Larry Grossman and Michael Korie for the New York City Gay Men's Chorus as an evocation of gay life through the last hundred years. Its beautiful melody and festive, celebratory tone make this piece perfect for any season of the year.

"Music of Hanukkah" is an arrangement of traditional Jewish folk songs. This combination of a hauntingly beautiful melody and a spirited folk tune was arranged by Anne Albritton, the accompanist for the Turtle Creek Chorale in Dallas.

The song "And in That Moment" is very special to us. It is the Christmas creation of GMCW's own Tom Nichols and Dan Chadburn. We're confident that you'll succumb as we did to its melody and its message.

A holiday perennial, "O Come All Ye Faithful" was written in the mid-18th century by John Francis Wade, an English Catholic refugee who lived out his days in Douay, France, creating and selling beautiful manuscript books. Wade wrote the song in Latin, and so it remained until 1841, when a London clergyman named Frederick Oakley produced the now-familiar English translation for his congregation at the Margaret Street Chapel.

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The Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, DC

The 160-voice Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, DC, recently became the first gay chorus to perform as part of a Presidential Inaugural and the first gay chorus to sing in the Tivoli Gardens concert hall in Copenhagen, as part of its 1998 tour of Scandinavia. Now in its twentieth season, GMCW is in the forefront of the gay and lesbian chorus movement, continuing its vision to affirm the gay experience and promote a culture of diversity through musical and performance excellence.

Founded in 1981, GMCW quickly became a staple of the Washington choral music scene. Over the years, GMCW has performed at the Kennedy Center, the National Theater, the Warner Theater, Constitution Hall, the Lincoln Theater, and Lisner Auditorium on the George Washington University campus, along with a number of venues in and around the District. In addition, GMCW has toured to many of the major cities in the United States and, in 1998, to Scandinavian capitals.

GMCW performs three subscription concerts annually: a holiday concert; a spring concert that alternates between a serious music theme and a comic revue or musical; and a summer concert that often includes appearances by guest choruses. GMCW also appears at a number of community events, including programs for PFLAG, Whitman-Walker Clinic, and Human Rights Campaign. While in Scandinavia, GMCW was received by Sweden's Princess Christina to thank chorus members for singing in support of Noah's Ark, a Swedish AIDS services organization.

In addition, GMCW sponsors three small ensembles: Potomac Fever, a 12-person close harmony group that recently released its second CD; G-Men a 12-person song-and-dance troupe; and Rock Creek Singers, a 25-voice chamber music ensemble. During the current season, G-Men will be featured at GMCW's annual small ensembles concert in February, and Potomac Fever and Rock Creek Singers will each offer full-length concerts in the spring. The three small ensembles also make many community appearances.

GMCW has won a number of awards, including the prestigious Mayor's Arts Award for artistic excellence in 1989 and the Washington Area Music Association's WAMMIE award in 1995 for outstanding gospel-inspirational performance (for Live at the Lincoln). Pride and Joy, GMCW's holiday music CD, was nominated for both a WAMMIE and a GLAMMA award, given by the national Gay and Lesbian Music Association. In addition, GMCW can be heard on the CDs, Singing Free and Let It Shine!

GMCW Presents made its debut in 1996 by producing Forever, For Love and For Life: Holly Near. In January 1999 it presented the first production outside of New York of Dan Goggin's hit musical, "Nunsense A-Men!", and in January 2000 it presented an all-male cast production of "Little Shop of Horrors" to rave reviews in a sold-out run. For the winter of 2001 the musical "Pageant" will be presented.

GMCW's choruses are an activity of the Federal City Performing Arts Association, a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization, which also sponsors a chorus fundraising group called the Capital Club. Corporate sponsorships to GMCW have been provided by companies such as AT&T, Eastman Kodak, American Express and United Airlines. Information on upcoming GMCW events can be obtained by calling 202-338-SING or by visiting the Chorus' web page at www.gmcw.org.

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Chevy Chase Handbell Ringers

The Chevy Chase Handbell Ringers were founded in 1967 under the direction of Kenneth Lowenberg. This group of thirteen precision ringers performs a wide variety of seasonal, sacred, and secular repertoire.

The group rings on a 5-octave, 61-bell, set of English handbells cast by the Whitechapel Bell foundry in London. The bells range in weight from 7 ounces to 9 pounds. In recent years they have added a 3-octave, 37-note, set of Malmark choir chimes and an aluminum B2 bass bell.

The Ringers have played for a number of groups in a variety of places, including the following: The White House, The Kennedy Center Concert Hall, the Kennedy Center Grand Foyer, Washington Cathedral, on local television, on National Public Radio, for the American Guild of Organists, in hotels, for a number of nursing homes and retirement homes, in libraries, shopping malls, for several indoor and outdoor weddings, for church groups of many faiths, and at a Georgetown coffee house. Many of the group have attended regional and national Festivals of the American Guild of English Handbell Ringers.

The director of the Chevy Chase Handbell Ringers, Mr. Kenneth Lowenberg, is Minister of Music at Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church, a post he has held since July, 1968. There, he is in charge of a music program which includes four graded singing choirs, four handbell choirs, an "All church Orchestra," Gospel Choir, Morning Madrigals, Guitar Group, and a Concert Series. He has a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Northwestern University and a Master of Music in Composition from the University of Southern California. He has taught in public schools in Indiana and Illinois. A scholarship to study under Leo Sowerby and Dr. Paul Callaway at the College of Church Musicians at Washington Cathedral brought him to Washington, DC. He has served as a national officer of the American Guild of Organists and of the Presbyterian Association of Musicians, and has led church music workshops and given organ recitals in the Mid-Atlantic states.

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Holiday Tradition

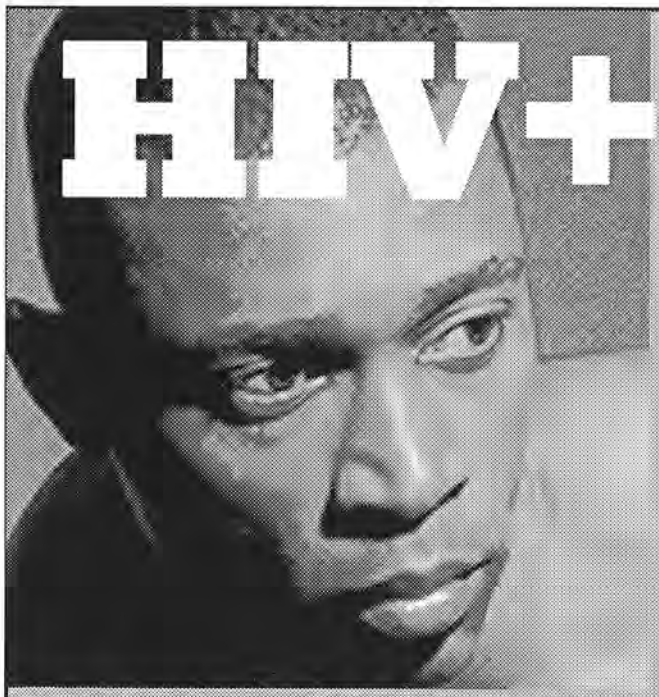
Launching GMCW's 20th Anniversary Season, and restaging Santa's Workshop after ten years, brings back a cascade of memories from holiday concerts gone by - and reminds some of us how many trips we've made back to the wassail bowl (to put the matter of aging as delicately as possible).

For example, after the first performance of "Suzy Snowflake" (by A Few Good Men) in the 1986 holiday concert at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, one of us brought his 5-year-old niece backstage during intermission and introduced her to Bob "Wanda" Wonneberger, who sang the part of Suzy, resplendent in a glittery white gown. Asked what she thought of Suzy Snowflake, the niece said, "That was really a man!" All that frou frou didn't fool her! That little girl is now a sophomore in college, but we hear they're still cleaning Wanda's glitter off the floor at New York Avenue.

The GMCW holiday concert has been a tradition in our community for so many years, few may remember that for its first three seasons, GMCW did not produce its own holiday concert. Instead, we participated in joint concerts with the D.C. Area Feminist Chorus (now Bread and Roses), DC's Different Drummers, and organist Carl Barnwell, all held at the First Congregational Church, then the home of MCC/DC. While the 1981 concert featured each group performing separately, we joined forces at the conclusion of both the 1982 and 1983 concerts for a grand musical finale - quite a feat when you consider that this required finding musical arrangements suitable for 20 women, 80 men, a brass band, and a mighty Cassavant organ!

The last of the joint holiday concerts in 1983 is perhaps best remembered for the debuts of Jim Holloway and Ted Guerrant as our accompanists. Jim, of course, went on to become Assistant Conductor under Bruce Trinkley and then GMCW's Music Director for a record nine seasons. And Teddy is still at the piano after 17 years. If you were at last year's holiday concert at the National City Christian Church, you know that one of the highlights of that concert was the inaugural appearance of the Teddy Cam, which showcased Teddy's incomparable organ artistry.

GMCW's first solo holiday concert was presented in 1984 to launch its first full 3-concert season. Among the



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highlights of that concert was the first audience sing-along - conducted by our Founding Music Director and then-Assistant Conductor, Jim Richardson. Since that time, both the GMCW holiday concert and the audience sing-along have been annual audience favorites. The concert has usually been performed in downtown churches, such as the Church of the Epiphany, New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, and the National City Christian Church, though in recent years the Lincoln Theatre was used several times, permitting the concerts to be a bit more theatrical.

Over the years, as the Chorus moved increasingly away from traditional recitals to include more choreography and greater use of smaller ensembles, the lack of raised stages or raked seating in the churches has offered challenges to our production crew - and occasionally to our audience, when some wonderful bit of stage business was obscured by poor sight lines. The trend toward greater showmanship has also inspired wondrous (not to say unnatural) feats by our resident seamstresses, whose task this year was to transform otherwise staid chorines into elves, toys, and the other inhabitants of Santa's workshop.

GMCW took its first baby steps into the world of "choralography" in the 1985 holiday concert, with a semi-staged production of the Christmas Party scene from Benjamin Britten's opera, "Paul Bunyan." The entire Chorus became Paul Bunyan's crew of lumberjacks and partied hearty on the risers, while soloists playing Johnny Inkslinger, Miss Tiny, Hot Biscuit Slim, and others went through their paces in front of the risers. Even more theatrical was the presentation of Act II of "Die Fledermaus," with soprano Dorothy Kingston as Rosalinda and Wanda (again!) as Adele, in the 1989 holiday concert. (This, by the way, was the only holiday concert to face the threat of being "snowed out." Fortunately the subway stayed open, Dorothy and the Chorus were troupers, and the show went on. The audience braved the snows and filled the sanctuary, and were rewarded with a memorable performance.)

Theatricality the GMCW holiday concerts reached their height, of course, in "Santa's Workshop" in 1990, the first production of our 10th Anniversary Season. This jolly holiday offering was the love child of Michael "Ginger" Rivard, the demented director/choreographer of A Few Good Men, and Jeff "Betty" Buhrman, at that time GMCW's Assistant Conductor and director of Potomac Fever. Michael had been working with both A Few Good Men and the full Chorus since 1985, while Jeff made a stunning debut in the 1986 holiday concert with his first GMCW solo, the debut performance of Bruce Trinkley's arrangement of Leonard Bernstein's "My House."

The show these two pros conceived was such a hit ten years ago that a reprise for the 20th Anniversary Season was practically mandatory. Almost all the numbers that were in the show in 1990 are back, and some very special new ones have been added. You'll see many new faces and some older ones in new roles. Never fear, though, Wanda is back for her third time in Suzy Snowflake's snow-white gown! (We got it cleaned and had it let out.)

The holidays can be a bittersweet time as we think of the dear friends we've lost, while also celebrating the new friends we've made and the traditions that are embraced and interpreted by a new generation. We will be looking out for familiar faces and unfamiliar ones, especially that little child who has never seen Suzy Snowflake before. Let everyone, old timers and newcomers alike, join in the merrymaking. Here's wishing you warmth and joy this season - but first, when it's time for the sing-along, remember the words of the immortal Ethel Merman and "Sing out, Louise!"

- Duward Sumner and Rick Rosendall

(The authors were members of the original group that founded GMCW on June 28, 1981. This is the first in a series of retrospectives in honor of the chorus' twentieth season.)

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GMCW Capital Club

The Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, DC wishes to extend a heartfelt thanks to the Capital Club, whose boundless support brings the dreams and visions of the Chorus to life. Membership is available to those individuals who contribute $250 or more to GMCW on an annual basis; for couples the minimum is $300.

The benefits of your tax-deductible gift to the Capital Club include priority seating in reserved houses, a special red Capital Club Polo shirt, lapel pin, invitations to special events & receptions, and special recognition.

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With a corncob pipe and a button nose and two eyes made out of coal.
Frosty the Snowman is a fairytale they say.
He was made of snow but the children know how he came to life one day.
There must have been some magic in that old silk hat they found.
For when he placed it on his head he began to dance around.
Frosty the Snowman was alive as he could be.
And the children say he could laugh and play just the same as you and me.

Frosty the Snowman knew the sun was hot that day.
So he said let's run and we'll have some fun now before I melt away.
Down to the village with a broomstick in his hand.
Running here and there all around the square saying catch me if you can.
He led them down the streets of town right to the traffic cop.
And he only paused a moment when he heard him holler stop.
Frosty the Snowman had to hurry on his way.
But he waved goodbye saying don't you cry I'll be back again some day.

Thumpety thump thump, thumpety thump thump look at Frosty go.
Thumpety thump thump, thumpety thump thump over the hills of snow.

SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN

You better watch out, you better not cry.
Better not pout, I'm telling you why.
Santa Claus is coming to town.

He's making a list and checking it twice.
Gonna find out who's naughty and nice.
Santa Claus is coming to town.
He sees you when you're sleeping, he knows when you're awake.
He knows if you've been bad or good so be good for goodness sake.

You better watch out, you better not cry.
Better not pout I'm telling you why.
Santa Claus is coming to town.

With little tin horns and little toy drums.
Rooty toot toots and rummy tum tums.
Santa Claus is coming to town.

And curly head dolls that toddle and coo.
Elephants, boats and kiddie cars too.
Santa Claus is coming to town.

The kids in girl and boyland will have a jubilee.
They're gonna build a toyland town all around the Christmas tree.
So! You better watch out, you better not cry.
Better not pout, I'm telling you why.
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