

ANTELOPE VALLEY CHILDREN'S CHOIR



PARENT'S HANDBOOK Fall 2015

(661) 524-6189

P.O. Box 8845
Lancaster, CA 93539-8845
avchildrenschoir@gmail.com

antelopevalleychildrenschoir.org

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General Information 2014

Founded in 1995, The Antelope Valley Children's Choir is a non-profit community organization dedicated to enriching children's lives through music.

Our Mission is to provide quality musical instruction with the goal of attaining the highest level of artistic excellence in choral music performance.

The children perform an annual Winter (Dec.) and Spring (May) Concert and participate in competition at a regional event (often in April). In addition, the Choir actively seeks opportunities for performance in a variety of community events.

Past performances have included:

Washington D.C. Festival of the States, representing California
Video Hall of Fame Awards honoring Julie Andrews
California Music Educators Conference – Pasadena, CA
Hurricane Katrina Benefit, along with *It's Only Tuesday Productions*
Polar Express with the Tehachapi Community Orchestra
Carnegie Hall in New York City, New York
Multiple performances for Relay For Life
Songs of Spring with the AVC Master Chorale
Multiple performances during City of Lancaster's Magical BLVD Christmas
LA Clippers Game – National Anthem
Crossroads Festival of Music in Nashville, TN

Auditions for New Applicants: Tuesdays in September 2014 at Cedar Center for the Arts along with rehearsals and by appointment. Tell your friends!

Registration through the City of Lancaster can be completed on-line @ cityoflan-casterca.org, by phone @ 661-723-6073

Registration and Mandatory Parent/Guardian Meeting: Tuesday, September 8, 2015, registration will be between 4pm and 8pm with a parent meeting meet your Directors and answer any questions at 5:30pm in the upstairs Chorus Practice Room for introductions and questions.

Rehearsals: Tuesdays at Cedar Center for the Arts

Chorus	4-5:30pm
Choir	4-6pm
Chorale	6-8pm
A'Capella	8-9pm

Families will always be notified, in advance, when rehearsals deviate from the regular schedule or location. There will be additional rehearsals scheduled prior our Winter and Spring Concerts.

CHOIR LEVELS

There are four Choir levels. Each performs a wide variety of musical styles ranging from classical to popular. They sing in numerous languages which have included Chinese, French, German, Hawaiian, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Swedish and Latin.

Placement or advancement in each of the Choir levels is based on the age, maturity and ability of the singer as well as the need for balance in each level. There is no automatic movement from one level to another. Placement is left to the discretion of the Artistic Director.

Chorus

Chorus consists of singers mainly from 1st to 3rd or 4th grade levels. We will work on correct breathing techniques, pitch placement (including two-part singing), basic music fundamentals, correct posture, and concert performance etiquette. The goal of this chorus is to introduce children to choral music and to prepare them to enter the next level at the appropriate time. The Chorus appears in concert with the other levels and may participate in out of town performances.

Choir

This Choir consists of singers starting at 4th or 5th grade level, who have successfully demonstrated music readiness. We will work on correct breathing techniques, pitch placement, basic music fundamentals (including sight singing), correct posture, and concert performance etiquette. These singers will also move on to more advanced music fundamentals and sing in two and three-part harmony. The Choir appears in concert with the Chorale and on its own. They may travel outside of the area and perform numerous times throughout the year.

Chorale

Singers who have successfully demonstrated complex vocal abilities are eligible for Chorale. Although most singers start around high school age, there are some who may be younger. These singers continue the learning of their musicianship and sing in multi-part harmonies. The Chorale can appear in concert by themselves and with the Choir. They may travel outside of the area and perform numerous times throughout the year.

A'Capella

Chorale singers that demonstrate an ability and interest in participating in this special ensemble will have to audition. All new and current participants are required to audition annually. They will be meeting immediately following Chorale practice and will meet from 8p to 9p. There will be an additional fee of \$100 per semester to cover additional material and director fee.

COMMUNICATION – KEEPING IN TUNE WITH AVCC

Your first place to look for up to date information is our online member's page located at antelopevalleychildrenschoir.org – password: **AVCC2014**. The member's link on the homepage will take you to a webpage that lists rehearsal and performance schedules, including other pertinent information our Choir families and singers need to know. It is recommended you view the information on this site at least once each week. Emails from the managers will have an attachment to our Shutterfly Account and calendar of events.

We are also on **FaceBook**. Please request to become a friend of the Choir. We use **FaceBook** to keep our families updated on upcoming Choir activities. We sometimes post short videos or photos you can share with loved ones that are far away. If there are any **last minute changes** (weather or performance cancellations) we will post them immediately here.

Choir Managers will communicate with their Choir families and singers via email and/or telephone. The Choir Managers will always do their best to keep families informed. If a Choir family does not have e-mail, it is up to the Choir families to obtain information either by face-to-face contact or by telephone. **All questions and/or concerns are to be directed to your singer's Choir Managers.** If they don't have an answer, they will get one for you.

The Directors devote their time to working with the singers. He or she **will not** be available for answering questions about where, when, how, or why.

FEES

The Choir Board will always do it's best to keep fees as low as possible while still providing an exceptional experience for your singers. We rely heavily on fundraising and grants, when available, to keep fees down. We adhere to all of the laws and tax requirements that apply to 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations.

CHOIR COSTS PER SEMESTER

A.V. Children's Choir Registration & Material Fees

	Chorus	Choir/Chorale	A'Capella
Registration Costs - includes director and accompanist fees, Insurance, tax adviser, facility rental, etc.	\$90	\$125	\$50
Material Fee - includes music, set and costume pieces, 1 choir T-shirt per year, printing, advertising, and some travel costs, etc.	\$60	\$75	\$50
Formal Uniform - If you are new to the Choir or your size has changed; we will order your uniform which will then belong to you. This cost is an estimate only and is incurred only when needed.		\$60 to \$100	
Other Uniform Pieces - See description (pg. 7)		Varied	
Travel - We plan on at least one out-of-town performance or competition, usually in the Spring. In the past, the cost for this has been at least \$250.00.			Varied

****All fees are approximate based on choir level and subject to change without notice.****

METHOD OF PAYMENTS ACCEPTED

We accept cash, check, and credit card payments during registration. You may also pay via credit card online at www.antelopevalleychildrenschoir.org. All credit card purchases will include a 2.9% service fee.

ADD/DROP POLICY

You can request a full refund of material fee and drop from the Choir through Tuesday, September 29th. All refunds are based upon board approval and the return of all Choir materials. As of September 29th there will be no refund if a singer drops from choir.

VOLUNTEER/FINANCIAL NEED DISCOUNT

Parents/Guardians, who volunteer a total of 10 hours of their time during the semester will receive \$50 off of the registration price. There are many varied opportunities to fulfill your commitment. You may choose to work an additional 10 hours and receive another discount for each singer you have registered. Tracking your volunteer hours will be coordinated through VP of Volunteers.

MULTIPLE CHILD DISCOUNT

For families that enroll more than one singer, we also offer a discount. Participants must belong to a single household family group.

15% off of the second sibling's registration fee

20% off of each additional sibling's fee

SCHOLARSHIPS

Liam Briggs Scholarship

This is a Merit Scholarship, to be awarded to 3 singers per semester, one from each choir level except for A'Capella. Anyone may donate to this fund. Award values may vary and will be applied to the semester following the award announcement. This Scholarship is open to ALL singers.

Application details to follow.

FUNDRAISING

A.V. Children's Choir General Account

As a non-profit organization, the choir operates mainly through donations, grants and fundraising. Our Patron and Advertising Drive is our largest General Fundraiser. The Patron Drive is ongoing. The Advertising Drive sells ads for the Winter and Spring concert programs and the yearbook. Twenty-five percent (25%) of patron and advertising money collected by a singer will go into the singer's personal account. Each Choir family is encouraged to raise \$100 per year for the Choir.

Choir Members' Personal Accounts

Each semester we look for interesting fundraisers that can be used to help you fund your singer's participation in Choir. These are voluntary, and the money you earn may be used to pay certain fees and expenses. However, these funds may *NOT* be used to pay for fundraising activities, such as candy sales, tickets, etc. Please email the VP of Fundraising with any ideas or suggestions.

Twenty-five percent (25%) of fundraising monies raised will go to the A.V. Children's Choir General Fund, and seventy-five percent (75%) will go to the Singer's personal account.

The Personal Accounts Funds return to the A.V. Children's Choir account if the singer leaves the Choir.

UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

All singers require a Casual Uniform and a Formal Uniform. The uniform is an important part of the Choir experience. Consistency of uniform and presentation is a reflection of the excellence we strive for continually. Singers not wearing the required uniform will **not be permitted to perform**.

Casual Uniform

T-shirt (1st shirt is provided by the Choir each year, replacements are \$15.00 each)
Dark Navy blue jeans with minimal embellishments and no shredding or holes
Bright, **solid colored** tennis shoes – like vans, keds, or converse in style.
T-Shirts are available for \$15 for parents.

Formal Uniform

Girls

Black Dress – The Choir will order for your singer, once payment is received.

Chorus will provide their own dress, details to follow.

Black character shoes and black tights. Chorale singers may wear black opaque panty hose in place of tights.

Boys

Black Tuxedo pants and white tuxedo shirt, black dress shoes, and black socks

-Chorale boys also wear a tuxedo jacket, details to follow.

-Chorus boys will wear black pants and a white long-sleeved shirt.

Vest and tie (provided by choir and remain in the choir inventory).

For consistency in fabric and design, tuxedo clothing may be purchased through:

Bo-D's Tuxedo: 39178-B 10th St West, Palmdale 272-6843

Tuxedo Station: 43631 10th Street West, Lancaster 726-3660

Dress shoes should be simple in design, free from decoration, and in a matte black color. No patent leather please. Character shoes work well for female singers. They can be purchased at any dance-clothing store and at some department stores or online.

The Artistic Director will determine the appropriate uniform for each performance or during travel, and will advise Choir members and families well in advance. You must keep your uniform pieces clean and in good repair at all times. A garment bag is strongly suggested.

Hair

Hair should be well maintained and kept off of the face. Long hair may need to be pulled back in a pony-tail (for males) or held back with a black headband or black scrunchie or clips. Extreme hair color or styles that could be distracting to the overall look of the Choir are not permitted. This will be left to the discretion of the Artistic Director.

It is recommended that singers have a “hair kit” to keep with their uniform. Put useful items, such as a brush, comb, and extra clips as needed in a zip-lock bag with the singer’s name on it. Please remind your singers that brushes and combs should not be shared.

What’s NOT Okay –

All singers will refrain from wearing watches, jewelry (simple, stud earrings are allowed), nail polish or cologne. For sensitive people, perfumes can interfere with their breathing.

CHOIR EXPECTATIONS

Professionalism

The A.V. Children’s Choir strives to promote professionalism in the appearance and actions of all Choir members during weekly rehearsals, performances and any Choir activities. During public appearances, our quality and professionalism are displayed for all to see. The singers are taught how to behave in a manner that reflects well on them, their families, and the community as a whole.

Attendance

All Choir Members are expected to make a commitment to the Choir and to be present at all rehearsals and performances. Choir Managers will always confirm a singer’s commitment to perform ahead of time. However, this is merely a reminder that there is a forthcoming performance at which the singer is expected to participate, it is **not** giving the singer a choice to perform or not.

Please understand that it is difficult for other Choir Members to perform at their best when various singers are missing. It can lower the quality of a performance which is a bad reflection on everyone. It is understood that illness and unforeseen situations occur. If your singer is going to be absent, you **must** contact your singer’s Choir Manager to let him or her know. More than two absences in a semester require that the Singer and Parent consult with the Choir Director. **The director will decide if the singer may still perform.**

Preparation

Choir members should arrive to rehearsal prepared to sing. They are to have their music, a pencil, and a bottle of water with a cap, which can be closed. Singers must arrive to all events **on time!**

Food

Gum, candy, food, and drink (other than water) are not allowed during rehearsal or performances. Snacks must be consumed prior to rehearsal or performance or during breaks. Trash must be disposed of properly.

Behavior

Choir members will be required to listen and follow directions, whether it comes from the Director, accompanist, or another adult in charge. All singers will be respected and will be expected to respect themselves and others. All Choir members are expected to keep their hands to themselves. Cell phones and other electronic devices may not be used except during breaks. Rude behavior will not be tolerated. This includes speaking disrespectfully or with inappropriate language to the Director, fellow Choir member, accompanist, parents/ chaperones, etc. This also includes inappropriately discussing members or Choir-related matters on any social media or through any other electronic means. Choir members disrupting rehearsals or performances will be subject to consequences as noted in the Rules of Conduct Agreement. Singers and their parent or guardian will sign this form yearly.

PROCEDURES

Check-In and Check-Out

We are concerned about your child's safety and we must also adhere to specific guidelines relative to our insurance requirements. A parent or authorized person **must** sign their singer **in and out** of all Choir activities, including, but not limited to, rehearsals and performances. Only Chorale singers with a 'Teen Self-sign' form on file may sign for themselves. You may authorize other adults using the registration form. We will request to see a picture ID until we recognize the person dropping off or picking up your child(ren). For unexpected changes, please contact your Choir Manager as soon as possible.

The A.V. Children's Choir is only responsible for your child during rehearsal and Choir events, from the time the singer has been checked in until the time that they are checked out.

Since rehearsal times are limited, parents are *strongly encouraged* to have their children dropped off 5-10 minutes prior to rehearsal time. Valuable rehearsal time is lost when members arrive late. We also expect you to be considerate to our volunteer Choir managers by being on time to pick up your singer from rehearsals and performances. *Repeated late pickups may be reason to drop your child from Choir.*

Call Time

Our Director will establish a Call Time for performances. **Call Time** is the time the Director expects singers to be at the performance location. It is **strongly suggested** that singers arrive 15 minutes prior to **Call Time** to be ready on time. If singer is not present at call time for performance, the singer will not perform.

Travel

When the choir travels, it is frequently by chartered bus. However, sometimes we do rely on carpooling. Any parent/guardian who wishes to drive a singer (other than their own) must provide *Proof of Insurance* and complete the "Adult Driver Release Form".

Chaperones

Chaperones are required for overnight occasions. Choir families will be given the opportunity to sign up to be a Chaperone. This is not a position to be taken lightly as Chaperones provide supervision to insure that our singers are behaving appropriately and respectfully toward others. They are also there to ensure the safety of our singers; therefore, no siblings or friends may accompany a chaperone.

Volunteers and Safety

Anybody who volunteers for the AVCC should expect to complete background verification and a criminal background check prior to volunteering. This is solely for the purpose of ensuring the safety of all children of the Choir.

CHOIR LEADERSHIP

The Choir Board is comprised of elected and appointed board members who volunteer for various positions that are integral to the Choir. Non-elected persons make a one-year commitment to the Board and the singers. The elected positions are as follows: President, 1st Vice President, VP of Events, VP of Fundraising, VP of Volunteers, Secretary. The offices of President; Vice-President; VPs of Volunteers, Fundraising, and Events; and Treasurer are set as two-year terms. For a complete list of board members, please see the last page of this handbook.

The Choir Board plans and oversees the activities of the choir. All persons listed on the Choir Board have an ability and obligation to vote, with the few following exceptions: Asst. Treasurer, Asst. Choir Manager, and Asst. Chorale Manager, and Accompanists for both Choir/Chorale and Chorus.

The meetings are generally held the first Wednesday of each month during the regular Choir year. Meetings are scheduled as necessary during the summer months. Elections for open positions will be held prior to the start of a new Choir year and typically at the end of a Choir year (APR/MAY). The elected member may continue to hold office after their singer has left Choir if that is the decision of the voting Choir membership (parents/guardians). If you are interested in being placed on the ballot, please talk with your Choir Manager.

The Choir would not be able to exist without parent volunteers. We encourage **all parents to volunteer – we are certain that every parent has a talent that would be put to good use for our singers.**

All parents are encouraged to attend the Choir Board meetings. We welcome your input and involvement in the organization and administration of the Choir. The time and location for meetings is announced each month on the website member page.

A separate meeting will take place for discussions and confidential decisions regarding behaviors or questions/problems that may arise as needed. The board members to attend will be the Artistic Director, the Chorus Director, President, the VP's, the Secretary and the appropriate choir manager of the singer or issue involved and any others that are needed and relevant. Decisions needing a vote will then be brought to the board if necessary.

The Choir Board positions are as follows:

Artistic Director – Directs, trains, and develops all singers in the Choir and Chorale levels and oversees this work in the Chorus. Selects music and plans all performances accordingly. Attends the Choir Board meetings.

Chorus Director - Directs, trains, and develops all singers in the Chorus. Works with the guidance of the Artistic Director to conduct auditions, select music, and develop performance schedule in coordination with the Choir Board. Attends Choir Board meetings.

A'Capella Director - Directs, trains, and develops all singers in the Chorus. Works with the guidance of the Artistic Director to conduct auditions, select music, and develop performance schedule in coordination with the Choir Board. Attends Choir Board meetings.

President – Plans, delegates, and coordinates duties and jobs necessary to the operation of the Choir. Represents the Choir in meetings with members of the community and other interested parties. Plans the agenda and attends all Choir Board meetings.

Vice-President – Arranges venues, oversees the VP of Fundraising, VP of Events, VP of Volunteers in their efforts for the Choir, assists with administration of the Choir, and performs any other ancillary duties deemed necessary. Steps in for the President as necessary in representing the Choir or conducting its functions. Attends all Choir Board meetings.

Vice-President of Events – Works with Vice-President to prepare for events. Once any needed dates and locations are confirmed and any contracts are signed, he/she plans and prepares for major events, including coordinating with the VP of Volunteers the number of volunteers needed, and their duties, supplies, decorations, signs, etc. Attends all Choir Board meetings.

Vice-President of Fundraising – Works with Vice-President to organize all general and personal fundraising activities and written notification of same to Choir membership. Coordinates receipt of fundraising documents and monies received. Generates appropriate receipts for tax-deductible donations. Provides records to the Treasurer. Attends all Choir Board meetings.

Vice-President of Volunteer – Works with Vice-President, VP of Events, and VP of Fundraising. Oversees management of non-board member volunteers. Provides orientation, direction, and accountability of service hours. Attends all Choir Board Meetings.

Secretary – Assists with the calendar, takes minutes at all meetings, and maintains member records and Board directory. Attends all Choir Board meetings.

Treasurer – Maintains the financial accounting and budget, reconciling the checking account on a monthly basis. Makes purchases and pays bills as required or requested by the President or Director. Prepares Income Tax documents in conjunction with contracted accountant, and contracted Bookkeeper. Attends all Choir

Board meetings. This is an *appointed* position.

Assistant Treasurer – Assists Treasurer with duties by mutual arrangement. Appointed position. Attends all Board meetings.

Choir Managers – Two per Choir level; a primary manager and an assistant . Responsible for checking singers in and out for all events. Coordinates information between the Director, Choir Board, and Parents by sending emails, letters, or telephoning parents/singers. Attends all rehearsals, performances, and events. Assists the Director as requested during rehearsals. Attends all Choir Board meetings.

Principle Accompanist - Works in collaboration with the Choral Director. Attends rehearsals and performances.

Accompanist – Works in collaboration with the Chorus Director. Attends rehearsals and performances.

Publicist – Coordinates publicity and advertising activities. Works with the Graphic Designer and Webmaster to strengthen community relationships. Attends all Choir Board meetings.

Webmaster - Maintains Choir website. Meets with Choir Board or relevant members, as needed, to discuss pertinent issues relative to website. Responds quickly to emails requesting changes/additions/deletions of material on the website. Works with the Publicist and Graphic Designer to strengthen community relationships. Makes recommendations regarding website content, advertising, etc. Attends all Choir Board meetings.

Graphic Designer - Responsible, at the direction of the President and/or Artistic Director, for designing Choir literature, brochures, programs, and handouts. Attends all Choir Board Meetings.

Uniform/Costume/Prop Coordinator - Explains and maintains uniform standards with parents/guardians. Coordinates purchases and rental of uniforms. Maintains uniform inventory. Collects costumes/props, creates costumes/props (with help of other volunteers) and coordinates items for performances. Attends required Choir Board meetings to fulfill his/her duty.

Music Librarian – Enters new music into the “Music Library” excel spreadsheet, providing a copy to the Choral Director and the President via email. Pulls music as requested by the Choral Director. Prepares singer’s music folders for the beginning of the fall and spring Choir semesters. Files all music at the end of each semester. Attends required Choir Board meetings to fulfill his/her duty.

Historian: Collects records of Choir activities in the form of photos, videos, print material, newspaper clippings, etc. Works with the general Choir membership, Publicist, and Webmaster. Attends required Choir Board meetings to fulfill his/her duty.

Yearbook Coordinator – Collects data and files needed for the yearbook. Designs presentation and styling of yearbook. Accesses publishing/printing services. Attends required Choir Board meetings to fulfill his/her duty.

Stage Manager/Event Chaperone – Provides supervision and direction of singers and assistants when backstage. Creates list of needed supplies and ensures their availability.

Technical Support Coordinator: Helps create lighting, audiovisual, and all other technical needs for Choir performances.

COMMUNICATION WITH BOARD MEMBERS

Your Choir managers are your first line of communication. They are tremendous at keeping you informed and can answer most of your questions when you see them at rehearsal. In addition, you are welcome to direct your questions to any Board member.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Please note that the information you provide for your volunteer service will be kept confidential under lock and key with restricted access. The information provided will only be used for the benefit of the organization. No other use is granted or warranted. The individuals with access to these confidential files are: the President and the Secretary.

Please be advised that the collection of this information is for the exclusive use of this organization. It is required to be completed annually and will be shredded after one year of archival record keeping.

The A.V. Children's Choir shall provide access to its program without regard to national origin, ancestry, religion, sex or gender, sexual orientation, race, color, medical condition, physical or mental disability, or because he or she is perceived to have one or more of the foregoing characteristics, or based on association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

**Thank you for being a part of the A.V. Children's Choir
We look forward to a fun filled year with your children!**

A.V. Children's Choir Board Members

Position	Name	Email
Artistic Director	Kara Slocum	kslocum1@verizon.net
Chorus Director	Christine Sullivan	thesingsullivan@gmail.com
Ahesingsullivan@gm	Aaron Ali-mam	aalimam@hotmail.com
President	Bridgett Amis	AVCC.President@gmail.com
Exec. Vice President		AVCC.VicePresident@gmail.com
V.P. Events	Griselda Perez	AVCC.Performances@gmail.com
V.P. Fundraising	Shelly Ogden	AVCC.Fundraising@gmail.com
V.P. Volunteers	Serena Bieze	AVCC.Volunteer@gmail.com
Secretary		AVCC.Secretary1@gmail.com
Treasurer	Sara Folsom	AVCC.Treasurer@gmail.com
Asst. Treasurer		
Chorus Manager	Shelly Ogden	AVCC.Chorus.Manager@gmail.com
Asst Chorus Manager	Penny Wilson	
Choir Manager	Griselda Perez	AVCC.Choir.Manager@gmail.com
Asst. Choir Manager		
Chorale Manager	Courtney Unander	AVCC.Chorale.Manager@gmail.com
Asst. Chorale Mgr		
Webmasters		
Uniform Coordinator	Shawna Clark	
Music Librarians		
Historian	Stephanie Lutman	
Yearbook Coordinator		
Piano Accompanist	Phil Slocum	
Chorus Accompanist	Diana Frieze	