



**The Viva Voice** August 28, 2009  
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 Viva's 22nd year!



**FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

Greetings to all past, present and future singers and their families,

I am looking forward to the coming season, my first as Artistic Director. It will be hard to fill Connie More's shoes, but I have been doing a lot of preparation in the wings and I had some great time away in July to rest, relax and dream about what Viva's future can be.

I grew up singing in choirs – at church, in school, and then in a number of community choirs in Vancouver, including the B.C. Boys Choir under Don Forbes and the Gallery Singers under Frederick Carter. When I arrived in Victoria in 1990 I joined Cappriccio for a few years. Now my main focus as a singer is with the a capella sextet Hexaphone (see us at [www.hexaphone.org](http://www.hexaphone.org)). I have worked as a choral and orchestral conductor for many years here on the Island, first in the Cowichan Valley (at Shawnigan Lake School, and with the Duncan Choral Society and the Cowichan Musical Society), and, beginning in the 1990's, in Victoria where I have worked with the Victoria Choral Society and the Linden Singers, as well as directing several church choirs.

As a composer, I particularly enjoy writing for singers, and I look forward to introducing several new pieces this year that I have written specifically for Viva. In particular, I want to tell you about a very exciting relationship we have developed with Victoria's Poet Laureate, Linda Rogers, who has written some poems especially for Viva, to be set to music and performed this season. I have composed music for "Kite at Clover Point" and "Songlines of Praise" for the Chorale and Concert Choir respectively, and Boys and Girls Choirs accompanist David Archer, a recent graduate of the UVic Masters programme in composition, has written music for a third poem entitled "Rat Milk". You will be hearing more about these premières as the season progresses.

Singing in a choir is more fun and learning goes faster when the group is larger, so we are really focussing this fall on RECRUITMENT. If everyone brought one new singer to the first rehearsal, our numbers would be up well over 100, and that's the goal we are working towards.

Our second goal is STABILITY. I want to encourage all singers to stay with it! If everyone continued as a Viva singer until they turned 19, what a fantastic choir we would have!

Our third goal is AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT. In addition to our concerts in December and April and while continuing to perform in schools, rest homes and at community events, we want to look for new audiences and bring more people to our main winter and spring performances. While in the end the learning process is more important than the performance, singing in public forces us to hone our skills and do and be the best we can.

We are continuing to work on keeping the Viva community informed, and while we don't want to overwhelm you with emails and phone calls, vital information needs to get out to everyone, so please check the website which should be your primary source of information. Margaret Brownrigg, our valiant General Manager, keeps the website up to date regularly.

You will be receiving one of our colourful new brochures with this newsletter. Please pass it on to someone who might be interested in joining Viva. More are available at the office, just call or email Margaret and we can pop some extras in the post for you.  
 Yours in music, Nicholas Fairbank

**Viva Youth Choirs Society of Victoria**

Every family with a child in Viva is a member of the Viva Youth Choirs Society of Victoria. Input from parents guides this legal body and provides a connection to the community at large. If you're interested in helping out by serving on the Board of Directors, please call Tamara Malczewska, Chair, at 250.592.5897.

**FROM MARNIE SETKA-MOONEY**, Conductor of Foundation Choir (UVic), Boys Choir & Girls Choir.

The Mooney household is gearing up for another season with Viva, with the youngest Mooney, Kate, joining the

Foundation choir this September, while Erin John continues in Boys choir. Both are re-fuelled, and excited about the upcoming year. Erin is still talking about Whistler and the Children's ChorFest where many wonderful friendships and memories were formed. The eldest Mooney, Matt, is now moving from Viva choirs into his new love, Musical Theatre, at his high school. I know for a fact that this child of mine would never have auditioned for Musical Theatre if it had not been for his participation in the Young Men's choir. Thanks for your two years of instruction with Matt, Mr. Fairbank!

I've been busy this summer, and have enjoyed teaching summer voice lessons to Viva choristers, and to some potential new choristers who have expressed interest in joining this Fall. I'm also looking forward to the Foundation choir, as I have a few graduates from the Music Together programme that I teach, including my youngest child, Kate.

My musical highlight of the summer has to be the Summer Vocal Academy at the Conservatory. I attended both the masterclasses, and the highlight concerts, one involving our own Victoria Symphony. The focus was on Baroque music, and I had the privilege of auditing courses taught by the conductor of the world-renowned group Tafelmusik, as well as Nancy Argenta, the internationally recognized Baroque soloist, now teaching at the Conservatory. Baroque instruments were played to accompany the student vocalists, and I was able to listen to my favourite - the Oboe d'Amore which sounds identical to the human soprano voice – stunning!

I look forward to seeing you all and working with you in the Fall. Until then, soak up the sunshine!  
 -Marnie Setka-Mooney

**FROM ARLENE OVERMAN**, Conductor of Foundation Choir (Colwood), West Shore Choir.

This is going to be an exciting first year for me holding the baton for the West Shore Choirs. I had a fantastic year apprenticing under Connie Foss More, gleaning all I could from her vast experience. We all will miss her greatly. Didn't we have a great time, all of you who came on the Whistler ChorFest Tour at the end of our Viva season last April? Together with the 250 other singers from BC and Alberta, you made one of the most beautiful and vibrant sounds I've heard from children's mouths in years. Under the direction of Elaine Quilichini you were brilliant! Human voices blended together in song are truly inspiring. So "Sing, sing, musicmakers, a song for the joy of the singing!" I'm looking forward to making music with you this fall. Please share the joy and invite a friend!  
 -Arlene Overman

**Getting Underway**

Greetings from General Manager Margaret Brownrigg to all newly registered & potential members - and returning singers, too! If you don't have a registration form, you can get one from the St. Aidan's mail drawer (below the church office inside window, bottom left corner) and leave it with your cheque(s) in an envelope. It's also on our website.

On Sunday, Sept. 6th: 3 - 4 PM: There will be a Parent Information Meeting and Volunteer Orientation at St. Aidan's (just north of Richmond Ave. and Cedar Hill Crossroad) - this is an orientation for all parents/guardians and for everyone who has been contacted for a volunteer job or is thinking of helping out, and also when the music librarians get the music to prepare for distribution. Please attend if you can. Don't be shy - we especially need managers, librarians, and uniform coordinators to contact us to help our season's start!

## Schedules - Look Carefully!

Regular rehearsals begin (All ages as of December 31<sup>st</sup>):

- Tuesday, September 15<sup>th</sup> at UVic, MacLaurin Bldg.  
FOUNDATION CHOIR UVic (FNU) Ages 6 & new-to-Viva 7 (Call Marnie at 250-480-7691 if not a "beginner"); 5:15 - 6 PM, in Rm A169  
BOYS CHOIR (BC) age 8 to voice-change (age 7 by permission); 6 - 7:30 PM at Rm A169  
GIRLS CHOIR (GC) ages 8-11 (age 7 by permission); 6:30 - 8 PM in Rm A169,

- Wednesday, Sep. 16<sup>th</sup> at Pilgrim United Church, 3319 Painter Rd., Colwood (near Dunsmuir School):  
FOUNDATION CHOIR WEST (FNW): boys & girls aged 6 & new-to-Viva 7 (Call Arlene at 250-380-0300 if not a "beginner"); 5:30 - 6:15 PM  
WEST SHORE Children's Choir (WS): boys & girls aged 8-12 (age 7 by permission); 6:15 - 7:45 PM

- Thursday, Sep. 17<sup>th</sup> at UVic, MacLaurin Bldg.  
CHORALE (CH) treble voice, ages 12 - 18 (auditioned; younger by permission); 5:30 - 7:45 PM at Rm A166  
CONCERT CHOIR (CC) co-ed ages 12-18 (auditioned, younger by permission), 6:30 - 7:45 PM at Rm A166  
YOUNG MEN'S ENSEMBLE (YM) age 12-18 (auditioned, changed voice); 6:30 - 8:45 PM at Rm A166

Parent Orientation Meetings will be held the week of Sept. 22-24. These are especially important if you weren't able to attend the Sept. 6th meeting; please send a friend or relative if you can't make it.

Tues. (UVic) FNU 5:15, BC & GC 6:30;  
Wed. (Colwood) FNW 5:30 & WS 6:15;  
Thur. (UVic) CH, CC, YM 6:30

Please be sure to mark Viva events on your family's calendar & let us know right away if you spot conflicts with anything that's on the preliminary schedule that was handed out in April and included in registration packets. Look for your singer's code: FNU, FNW, WS, BC, GC, etc., or ALL. Check [www.vivachoirs.ca](http://www.vivachoirs.ca) if needed. Also add to it the items shown below, and watch for an early Fall updated schedule.

## New Items for the Schedule (since April)

Saturday, October 17th: for ALL except Foundation Choirs - group workshops and rehearsals, 2 - 4 pm at St. Aidan's Church. Amongst other things we'll work on the song for the Olympic Torch, and massed choir pieces for our December Concert.

Note: (not FNU, FNW) We're still waiting for confirmation from Torch Ceremony organizers about participating in the Oct. 30th event at the Legislature, but do plan to block off 5:30-8:30 that day. We'll let you know as soon as we can.

A special invitation to Parents: We invite any parents (or grandparents) who would like to perform with us in one of the massed choir pieces at the December concert to join us if you can for the first half-hour of the October 17th rehearsal, as well as a short period (TBA) during the dress rehearsal on Dec. 11th. Consider singing with your child to augment the group to over 100 voices for the concert grand finale! More details to follow...

Spring Break in 2010. Victoria School District 61 has announced a 2-week Spring Break this year from Sat., March 6 to Sun., March 21. This puts quite a gap into our concert preparation, and we plan to hold rehearsals during the second week, i.e. March 16-18. If you have a choice, please try to plan your family holidays during that first week so that you will be able to attend your rehearsal in the second week.

## Tuition

If your registration isn't yet paid in full, please send it in as soon as possible. Enrolment is for the full season and full amount; we accept post-dated cheques for the convenience of families. In the event of an unavoidable withdrawal, one month's written notice is required (received before the first day of the month) and the return of music and uniform in good condition. Include a letter stating reason for withdrawal and request for refund.

Save \$20 by Sept. 6!

There's a \$20 discount if we have your full registration by Sunday, Sept. 6th, either as a single payment or cheques post-dated to the 1st each month (note 3-4 PM information meeting and orientation that day).

## Uniforms

You supply black shoes & socks, and black dress pants with elastic in the waist (preferred over a belt) plus specific additional parts as described below. Please make sure you have, or are ready to pay for, all the right pieces of your choir level's uniform. Uniforms are not worn at rehearsals, except for Dress Rehearsal prior to concerts. Vests and ties must be returned in good condition at the end of the season.

FOUNDATION CHOIRS (FNW and FNU). Additional uniform: buy at rehearsal a \$10 Viva t-shirt.

WEST SHORE CHOIR (WS), GIRLS CHOIR (GC), BOYS CHOIR (BC). Additional uniform: you supply plain white long-sleeved button-to-neck dress shirt or blouse; we lend the vest. Add informal Viva t-shirt (\$10) optional, but necessary for trips and tours.

CONCERT CHOIR (CC), including CHORALE (CH) and YOUNG MEN'S ENSEMBLE (YM). Additional uniform: you supply black button-to-collar dress shirt; we lend the hummingbird vest (girls) or the tie (boys). Add informal Viva t-shirt (\$10) optional, but necessary for trips and tours.

SANTA PARADE "Outdoor Uniform": anyone performing in the Nov. 21 Santa Parade (apply by Oct 15) should wear appropriate layers of clothing, finishing with a black sweatshirt or sweater topped with an unsnapped Viva vest that will be provided at the warmup location. Add black slacks, socks & shoes plus blue, black, white or red scarf, hat & gloves. Bring a flashlight with coloured tissue over the end.



## UVic Parking

As part of its ongoing effort to encourage alternative forms of transportation, UVic has fees for campus parking every day and night except Sundays. Viva was provided previously with parent passes to simply drop off and pick up their singers, but we don't yet know if this will continue. Anyone who needs to park longer than the 15 minutes we may be allotted may park in any numbered lot or in the adjacent Lot E for \$1/hr until 6 PM and a \$2 flat rate after that - buy tickets from any campus parking machine in a numbered lot. If there's an available metered spot in Lot E just outside the MacLaurin building, the cost is \$1 per hour.

## Fundraising

While we try to keep fundraising to a minimum, low tuition fees mean we do sometimes have to explore other sources of funding. Thrifty Foods Smile Cards are available at rehearsals, and Viva receives 5% of all amounts loaded onto your card(s).

Ads in concert programs help cover our costs and, besides being beneficial to the advertisers, are a good way of showing their community support. A business card size ad costs \$30 for one program, \$50 for two. Just send your card (or a friend's...) into the office along with your cheque and an indication of which programs you want to support. Call Margaret at the office about larger ads.

Buying concert CDs helps defray the cost of recording our concerts and can give families a lasting memento. For further enjoyment, get the \$10 "Viva Viva" CD, a compilation of the "greatest hits" of our first decade, or our 20th anniversary double CD, "Winter Gifts" for \$24.98 - both are a wonderful overview of the wide variety of music and styles that we have performed. They can act as a home rehearsal tool as well as a high quality listening experience.

## Interviews, Coaching Sessions & Auditions

Each Viva singer is eligible for an individual voice-coaching session with one of our conductors upon entry & thereafter every 2 seasons. Most groups simply register by age & gender, but auditions (by appointment) are required for Concert Choir, Chorale and Young Men's Ensemble. New-to-Viva 7- year-olds with musical experience should have a voice coaching session for placement. Call 250.472.2655 or 250.382.6485 to schedule.