

**Dues:**

Since we are a not-for-profit organization, dues and ticket sales make up the bulk of our funds. All singing and non-singing members of the RWCC are expected to pay dues each season (twice a year). Recommended dues are discussed with chorus members at the beginning of each season and range from \$40-70. No one will be denied participation in any chorus event because of an inability to pay dues. Members who have difficulty with the financial requirement should speak to their Section Leader, the Treasurer, or the Director.

**Committee Membership:**

We are a volunteer organization. Therefore, it is important for the singing members of the RWCC to take part in at least one committee or volunteer for one non-singing assignment per season.

# RWCC Membership Handbook

**Mission Statement:**

The Rochester Women's Community Chorus provides a creative and safe environment for women of various levels of musical expertise to sing together. The chorus embraces women of many cultural and ethnic backgrounds, life experiences and sexual orientations. The RWCC is dedicated to using music as the vehicle for messages of peace, hope, understanding, and cooperation within the global community. While all singing members are women, both men and women who wish to join the RWCC family are welcomed in non-singing roles.

**History:**

RWCC began in 1978 as Rochester Womyn's Community Chorus. Its philosophy at that time was to provide a vehicle for the feminist community through singing. The directors for the next five years were professional musicians and the chorus sang only music composed by women. In 1999, the RWCC became a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization and established a Board of Directors, in whose hands the fiscal responsibilities, planning, and major decisions are entrusted.

**Current:**

The RWCC is a medium sized organization that takes pride in the quality of its performances. There are two major concerts a year and one or two "run-outs" or smaller performances. All singers are expected to sing in the major concerts, while "run-outs" are based on singers' availability.

Dates of major performances are announced at the beginning of each season. If there is a conflict with a date, it is important that the Director be apprised of this immediately so that adjustments can be made if needed.

**Chorus Structure:***Board of Directors & Committees:*

The RWCC is run by a Board of Directors elected annually. However, each member of the chorus can influence chorus activities by joining one or more of the standing or ad hoc committees. These committees are responsible for aspects of the RWCC including music selection, performance enhancement, concert production, rehearsal retreat planning, fund-raising, membership recruitment, and website/publications design. New committees may be formed at any time as needed.

*Section Leaders:*

Each section of the chorus (Soprano I and II, Alto I and II), has a designated volunteer or volunteers who act(s) as Section Leader. These women are the chorus members' link to other members, other sections, the Board, and the Director. If there are musical or other problems within a section that come up from week to week, the Section Leader will communicate the concerns to the Director or an appropriate board member or committee chair.

An updated copy of the roster is distributed to all singers upon the closing of new member recruitment, after the first month of each season. Section Leaders will make sure that each member of their section receives one.

**Rehearsal Structure:**

Rehearsals are held on weekday evenings (currently Tuesdays) from September-December for the fall semester and January-June for the spring semester. They begin at 6:30 PM and last until 8:45 PM, with a short break and business items. During rehearsal, the focus is on singing and learning parts and lyrics. Socializing, eating, or other activities, including those related to committee work, should be addressed during breaks or outside of scheduled rehearsal time. Rehearsal tracks or CDs are available to all chorus members.

**Attendance:**

- Attend weekly rehearsals
- Arrive on time (6:30 PM)
- Notify Section Leader or Director of absences
- Participate in all concerts

In addition to weekly rehearsals, there are sectional rehearsals and additional rehearsals, including a rehearsal retreat and dress rehearsals held prior to each major concert. All singing members are expected to attend these extra rehearsals.

**Snoopy Club:**

There is a Snoopy Club which is responsible for acknowledging celebratory events and times of hardship for individual members, including non-singing members. There is also a system of Big Sisters or buddies who will welcome new members as they join in order to answer any chorus-related questions. Social events are periodically planned for the chorus, and everyone is invited to bring guests to these functions.

**Inclement Weather/Emergency Contacts:**

Occasionally, a rehearsal may be canceled if the rehearsal space is closed. When that is the case, the Director will change the RWCC hotline message accordingly, and she will attempt to notify each of the Section Leaders. If there is a reason to expect that the rehearsal might be canceled, members are asked to telephone either their section leaders or the hotline ((585) 234-4441) by 4 PM on the day of rehearsal to ascertain whether rehearsal will be held.

**Membership Requirements and Expectations:**

We are a non-auditioned group open to every woman who would like to sing. It is understood that everyone has different skills and learning styles. The ability to read music is not necessary. There is a voice placement for each new member of the chorus, and periodically for existing members, to help determine balance and voice part. Anyone who cannot match a musical pitch will be encouraged to work individually with the Director to improve their vocal skills prior to singing in the chorus. They will also be encouraged to be a part of the group by participating in one of the many necessary non-singing tasks.

Upon placing a small music deposit, each singer will have her own copy of all of the music. (If the deposit is a problem due to financial hardship, it may be waived by the Treasurer.) It is strongly encouraged that all music be memorized for performance.