

Noteworthy

A publication of The Wednesday Morning Music Club (Austin)

Website: musicclubaustin.org

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MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

Charles Palmer

CO-CHAIR, COMMUNITY SERVICE COMMITTEE

I am a native Austinite (Casis Elementary, O'Henry Jr. High, Austin High, UT). Further credentials include attending a Toscanini concert at the Paramount Theater (or was it Gregory Gym?) in 1952 and watching Mary Martin fly around the stage at Gregory Gym not long after that. I even now live in the same neighborhood where I grew up.

But quite a lot of water has passed under the bridge between my growing-up days and the present. After graduating from the Plan II Liberal Arts Program at UT, I served for two years with the Peace Corps in a small village in eastern Bolivia. After I got married (the best thing I ever did) and completed a Master's Degree in Latin American Studies at UT, my wife Ann and I spent two years teaching in Colombia. When we returned to the US, I got my Ph.D. in Latin American Geography at the University of Florida, which included a year-and-a-half of field work in The Dominican Republic and Haiti. After I got my doctorate we returned to Austin, where I worked for the state government for more than 30 years. I retired ten years ago. My wife Ann, meanwhile, has just completed 30 years on the faculty of Austin Community College. We have two grown children; our daughter teaches in a university in Segovia, Spain, and our son has a health care consulting business here in Austin. We have two grandchildren.

My musical background is focused on singing. I sang in church choirs throughout college, then, after a long hiatus, went on to sing for many years in civic choruses conducted by Morris Beachy, Barry Williamson and several others. I have now been studying voice with UT faculty baritone David Small for nine years, and I consider myself very lucky to have him for a teacher. About seven years ago I teamed up with WMMC member Kathryn Govier to give singing programs—mainly sing-alongs—in retirement homes and similar facilities. We do two or three programs each month and have now performed in more than fifty different venues. Collaboration with Kathryn has been one of the highlights of my recent years. She is the true musician in the duo and really puts up with a lot! The Wednesday Morning Music Club is important to me because it gives me an opportunity to perform and to meet amazingly talented and interesting people. I consider it a privilege to enjoy such fine music from my WMMC friends.



President's Message

Janie Keys

One of the highlights of the year is the Holiday Coffee. Come at 9:30 and enjoy refreshments and visit with friends and guests, all with Christmas music in the background played by Maxine Gomes. It's a festive event.

Our program also begins and ends on a festive note (the pun is accidental), starting with Charles Palmer and Kathryn Govier performing Christmas Carols, and finishing with the Hanukkah and Christmas Singalongs. In between we will hear some great music by Schubert, Franck, and Myaskovsky. You can read Michelle d'Arcy's preview of the program at www.kmfa.org/events (choose classical live.)

After the program, we will honor the recipients of the Distinguished Service Award. This award is given to those members who have contributed in an extraordinary way to WMMC. We will be honoring Lee Meyer, Natalie Morgan, Katharine Shields, Sue Breuer, Suzy Gallagher, Maria de Waal Putter, and Virginia Kniesner.

Let it snow! Oh what fun it is to look out the window and see something white on the ground! In Texas, this is a treat. As my piano students left Thursday night, they exclaimed with voices full of wonder and delight, "it's snowing!" My cat, however, being a cat, ran inside through the front door, disgusted at the turn of events. It's that time of year to experience wonder and delight. My wish for your holidays is that you find it.

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

By Robert Frost (1874-1963)

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flakes.



Wassailing

Reprinted from www.whychristmas.com and submitted by Marie White

Wassailing is a very ancient custom that is rarely done today. The word 'wassail' comes from the Anglo-Saxon phrase 'waes hael,' which means 'good health.' Originally, the wassail was a drink made of mulled ale, curdled cream, roasted apples, eggs, cloves, ginger, nutmeg and sugar. It was served from huge bowls, often made of silver or pewter. Jesus College, in Oxford University, has a Wassail bowl, which is covered with silver. It can hold 10 gallons of drink! Wassailing was traditionally done on New Year's Eve and Twelfth Night, but some rich people drank Wassail on all the 12 days of Christmas! The Wassail drink mixture was sometimes called 'Lamb's Wool,' because of the pulp of the roasted apples looked all frothy and a bit like Lambs Wool! Below is a recipe for wassail.

One legend about how Wassailing was created, says that a beautiful Saxon maiden named Rowena presented Prince Vortigen with a bowl of wine while toasting him with the words 'waes hael.' Over the centuries, a great deal of ceremony developed around the custom of drinking wassail. The bowl was carried into a room with a great fanfare, a traditional carol about the drink was sung, and finally, the steaming hot beverage was served. From this it developed into another way of saying Merry Christmas to each other!

*Here we come a-wassailing
Among the leaves so green,
Here we come a-wassailing,
So fair to be seen:*

*Love and joy come to you,
And to you your wassail too,
And God bless you and send you,
A Happy New Year,
And God send you,
A Happy New Year.*

Recipe for Wassail

- 4 pints of Dry Cider
- A bare 1/2oz root of Ginger
- 6 Cloves
- A blade of Mace
- 1/2 small Nutmeg, grated, or 1 level teaspoon grated Nutmeg
- 1/2 level teaspoon ground Corriander seeds or 4 seeds
- 1/2 level teaspoon Cardamom seed or 4 seeds
- 8oz granulated Sugar
- 2 lemons
- 1/2pt Water
- 2 Egg yolks
- Demerara Sugar
- 6 small cooking Apples

Method

Bruise the ginger with a hammer, then put it into a large pan with the cloves, grated nutmeg, mace, coriander, cardamom and sugar. Finely grate the rinds of the lemons and add this to the spices with the water. Bring these ingredients to the boil and simmer them for five minutes. Squeeze the lemons, add the juice to the spices with the cider, and heat the mixture slowly.

Put the egg yolks into a bowl and gradually beat in half a pint of the hot, but not boiling, liquid-this should make a good froth. When the rest is almost at boiling point whisk in the egg mixture.

Meanwhile core the apples and put them in a roasting tin, fill the centers with demerara sugar and bake them in a moderately hot oven about 190C / 375F / Gas Mark 5 for approximately twenty minutes. Put them into the Wassail.

Drink and enjoy!!!

ABOUT OUR PERFORMERS

Charles Palmer, baritone

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Kathryn Govier, piano

I started music lessons at age 4 and “cut my eye-teeth on Bach.” I was lucky to have a piano teacher who stressed the classics. I earned a Bachelor of Music, piano major (1971), and I’ve used my skills as accompanist and collaborator, as well as soloist. I work with Charles Palmer through the Butler School of Music Outreach program giving retirement home programs. My professional job was teacher of the handicapped. I spent 3 years in Marrakesh, Morocco, working with handicapped children as Peace Corps Volunteer (1987-1990). I love living in Austin with many wonderful cultural events to attend and participate in.

Maxine Gomes, piano

Maxine Gomes earned piano performance degrees from the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston and New York University where she received her Ph.D. She pursued a dual career in New York for many years as a music teacher and solo pianist giving numerous recitals and FM radio broadcasts on Long Island and New York City. After earning a Professional Diploma in Administration, Maxine took a hiatus from music and had a career in school administration on Long Island, New York. Maxine, again, is enjoying performing in the metropolitan Austin area.

Rachel May, violin

An unknown fact about California girl, Rachel May: when she was 15 she toured Europe with "America's Youth in Concert." Before leaving for Europe, the group performed in Carnegie Hall and at the White House for President Nixon where she was a witness to the signing of the 26th amendment allowing 18 year olds to vote.

Robert Centeno, piano

Robert Centeno has taught piano privately in the Austin area for almost 20 years and is the organist for the Burnet Presbyterian Church. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Piano Performance at Texas State University, San Marcos. Lately his energies have been devoted to developing a unique 12-volume music theory series which features interactive capability. By swiping QR codes found in the books with a smart phone or pad, students can access ear training web apps which drill them on intervals, scales, chords, and melodic and rhythmic dictation. Also included in this series are extensive and progressive solo drills designed to develop sight-singing and dictation skills. When he is not working, Robert enjoys reading, biking and website development.

Joseph Shuffield, violin

Joseph knew he wanted to be a musician when his second grade music teacher played his class a recording of Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Suite. He began taking violin lessons at age 9, Joseph earned his Bachelor of Music and Master of Music Theory from Baylor University. Joseph has also done doctoral work at Washington University in St. Louis, and at UT Austin. He has performed in the Memphis and Austin symphonies, as well as several regional symphonies throughout Texas. You can hear Joseph on the soundtrack of Richard Linklater's film, A Scanner Darkly, Grupo Fantasma's Grammy-winning El Existential, and Fastball's Little White Lies. Joseph is a native of Midland, Texas.

Elizabeth Warren, violin

Elizabeth Warren grew up in a musical family and began playing violin at age four. She studied with violinist Sungrai Sohn at Sarah Lawrence College, where she earned her BA. For over twelve years she has maintained a private violin studio of students ages six through adult. Coupled with her love of teaching, Elizabeth enjoys a diverse performing calendar. She has toured internationally with Bill Callahan, performing throughout the UK and Israel. Elizabeth was featured at All Tomorrow's Party's Fest, The Hardly Strictly Bluegrass Fest, South by Southwest, and Austin City Limits. Her recent performances include debuting new music for short films with Access Contemporary Music, and performing alongside Redd Volkaert and Ruby Jane for the world-premiere of Graham Reynolds' Marfa Tryptich. She is also an active volunteer teacher and mentor through Kids In a New Groove, a local non-profit that provides free music lessons to children in foster care.

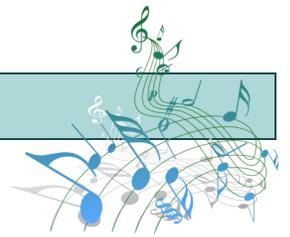
Caiti Coughlan, viola

Bio not available.

Hector Moreno, cello

Hector Moreno began his musical studies at the age of four in Austin, TX, starting with piano and eventually switching to cello. In 2004, he obtained his Bachelor's degree from Stanford University. In 2006 he completed his Master's degree at the University of Toronto. Since moving back to Austin, Mr. Moreno has been performing with a variety of orchestras and ensembles, including the Abilene Philharmonic, the Symphony of Southeast Texas, Victoria Symphony, and the Round Rock Symphony. Mr. Moreno has participated in a variety of festivals including the Banff Summer Chamber Music Festival and the St. Lawrence String Quartet Workshop. He currently is a coach for the Austin Chamber Music Center. He has recorded for numerous labels, and he's been a guest lecturer on the history and performance-practice of cello as part of the *Learning Unlimited* organization of Etobicoke, Ontario. His cello is a black Luis & Clark carbon-fibre cello created by Luis Legulla.

Events Calendar



Ensemble VIII – ensembleviii.org

Dec. 14 @ 7:30 PM – Westlake Hills Presbyterian Church, 7127 Bee Caves Road

Dec. 15 @ 7:30 PM – St. Louis Catholic Church Chapel, 7601 Burnet Road

Vivaldi Gloria – Christmas with Ensemble VIII. Join Ensemble VIII in celebrating the joy of Christmastime with one of the most well-known and beloved Baroque works, Vivaldi’s infectious “Gloria.” With voices and chamber orchestra, this concert will include other sparkling works of the Baroque that will thrill and inspire.

Austin Ballet - balletaustin.org

Dec. 15 @ 7:30 PM, Dec. 16 @ 2:00 & 7:30 PM, Dec. 17 @ 2:00 PM, Dec. 19, 20, 21 @ 7:30 PM, Dec. 22 @ 2:00 & 7:30 PM, Dec. 23 @ 2:00 PM – The Long Center

The Nutcracker. Journey with young Clara Silberhaus from her family’s holiday party to the confection-filled Court of the Sugar Plum Fairy, where sweets of all kinds come to life. Austin Symphony Orchestra plays Tchaikovsky’s magical score.

Chorus Austin – chorusaustin.org

Dec. 16 @ 3:00 PM – St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church, 8134 Mesa Drive

28th Sing-It-Yourself Messiah. This holiday tradition invites the audience to be a part of the chorus, joining in to sing Handel’s monumental oratorio.

LOLA – (Local Opera Local Artists) - lolaustin.org

Dec. 28 @ 8:00 PM – 4th Tap Brewing Coop, 10615 Metric Blvd.

The LOLA Holiday Spectacular! This night of many stars features Kyle Maig on the keys and a whole bunch of the best dang musicians in Austin performing operatic and holiday faves. Tickets are \$10, kids 12 and under are FREE.

Austin Symphony – austinsymphony.org

Dec. 29 & 30 @ 8:00 PM – Palmer Events Center, 900 Barton Springs Road

I Heart the 80s. Gather your friends and get on your best parachute pants, jelly bracelets and jean jacket because the Austin Symphony is transporting you to the 1980s! Come have the time of your life with music from The Police, George Michael, Michael Jackson, Cyndi Lauper, and so much more with special guest vocalist Jessica Phillips and Tony Vincent with your Austin Symphony Orchestra!

La Follia Austin Baroque – lafollia.org

Jan. 5 @ 8:00 PM & Jan. 6 @ 3:00 PM – Redeemer Presbyterian Church, 2111 Alexander Avenue

Bach’s Herd of Harpsichords. A reprise of one of La Follia’s most popular concerts of all times. Concertos for 1, 2, 3 and 4 harpsichords. Featured are harpsichordists Keith Womer, Lenora McCroskey, Jeffrey Jones-Ragona, and William Cory, along with the La Follia string ensemble. Twenty minutes before curtain, Director Keith Womer will lecture on the harpsichord and demonstrate the instruments to be used.

Gilbert and Sullivan Society - gilbertsullivan.org

Jan. 7 @ 3:00 PM – Genesis Presbyterian Fellowship Hall, 1507 Wilshire Boulevard

Musical Revue and Sing-Along. Calling all G&S Enthusiasts. This is your chance to perform your favorite Gilbert & Sullivan song before an adoring crowd of G&S devotees. A fervent crowd of supporters will gather again for the year’s first musicale – and this time, you could be the star!