

# **Wescustago Youth Chorale Handbook**

Welcome to Singers and families. This handbook has been prepared to provide you with information about the policies and activities of Wescustago Youth Chorale ("WYC"). For the continued success of our organization, Singers and their families must be actively involved in the Singers' musical experience. We strongly encourage you to become familiar with this handbook.

## **Our Name**

Wescustago Youth Chorale is named after the Wescustago, or Royal River, which flows through North Yarmouth. Wescustago is derived from the Abnaki - "tegooe": "a stream that is moved by the wind or the tides"; "Wescus" is closely allied to a word signifying "clear" - thus Wescustago - "the clear tidal river." Wescustago Youth Chorale is a group where the spirit or tide of the music will "move" the singers as they grow to clarify their own identity. Our individual choruses are named after three of our local rivers – Harraseeket River, Kennebec River, and Wescustago River.

## **Our Mission**

Our mission is to provide a superior choral arts education in which students gain not only musical skills and a life-long appreciation of music, but also develop individual skills and strategies that will help them to be successful in all academic areas and throughout their lives.

## **Our Choirs**

WYC includes three choirs: The Harraseeket Singers (a preparatory choir for students in grade 3 - 5); The Kennebec Singers (a treble choir for students with intermediate musicianship skills in grades 6-8) and The Wescustago Singers (an SATB choir, including changed male voices, grades 9-12).

## **Our Organization**

Wescustago Youth Chorale is a nonprofit corporation organized and in good standing under the laws of the State of Maine. A volunteer Board of Directors ("Board") manages the corporation. The Board is vested with the responsibility of establishing and implementing specific objectives and policies in conformity with the general purposes of the Corporation as contained in the Articles of Incorporation ("Articles") and the Bylaws. The Articles and Bylaws are available for review upon request. The Board contracts with a managing director, three conductors and two accompanists to accomplish its mission.

# Wescustago Youth Chorale

## 2018-19 Personnel

### **The Board of Directors:**

President	Renee Williams	reneewlcsw@gmail.com
Vice President		
Treasurer	Leslie Trundy	Ltrundy1@gmail.com
Member at Large	Tonya Lohutko	
Member at Large	Joe Vertenten	Vertenten.fam@gmail.com
Member at Large	Tony Bullentini	Abullent@gmail.com
Member at Large	Louise Chasse	louise.chasse@gmail.com
Member at Large	vacant	

### **Conductors:**

Harraseeket Singers	Renovia Day <a href="mailto:renoviamarro@gmail.com">renoviamarro@gmail.com</a>
Kennebec Singers	Jennifer Hand Runge, <a href="mailto:butterflyjuniper@hotmail.com">butterflyjuniper@hotmail.com</a>
Wescustago Singers	Amanda Mahaffey <a href="mailto:ammahaffey@gmail.com">ammahaffey@gmail.com</a>

### **Accompanists:**

Katy Stetson and Deana Ingraham Gurney

### **Managing Director:**

Leigh Palmer  
846-0705 [WYC.palmer@gmail.com](mailto:WYC.palmer@gmail.com)

## **Eligibility**

Any third through twelfth grade student, regardless of race, marital status, color, religion, ancestry or national origin, sexual orientation or physical or mental disability is eligible for membership so long as he or she is musically qualified. The Conductors in their sole discretion determine music qualification through audition. All Singers will have a voice check each spring for the following year. All WYC Singers are strongly encouraged to sing in an ensemble in their school. If there are circumstances which make this impossible, please discuss your situation with your Conductor.

## **Funding**

WYC relies on tuition, fundraising events, concert ticket sales, donations and sponsors for its funding. Singers and their families will be expected to promote ticket sales and participate in fundraising activities associated with the two self-produced concerts. In addition, Singers and their families will be encouraged to participate in all other fundraising efforts of WYC.

## **Tuition and fees**

Tuition is \$360 per year for Kennebec and Wescustago Singers and \$300 per year for Harraseeket Singers. A \$100 nonrefundable tuition deposit is due July 1st to secure your place in the group; the balance is due September 11. The only other anticipated cost is for the uniform which will be discussed at Fall Kick-Offs. There is also a minimal fee for the weekend retreat, if scheduled, for The Wescustago Singers (SATB choir) which may be offset with fundraising. Any default in payment must be remedied by the end of the semester or that Singer will not be able to start the next semester. Tuition is non-refundable after the third rehearsal. Participation in WYC is expected to be for the full year. If a singer joins midyear, tuition costs are \$200 for Harraseeket Singers and \$220 for Kennebec and Wescustago.

## **Scholarships**

Wescustago Youth Chorale will make every effort to grant scholarship aid when available or to assist in locating a sponsor to any Singer who is otherwise qualified for membership. Scholarships are awarded by application and Board approval in September to Singers in need of financial assistance. If you are interested in contributing to the scholarship fund, please contact the Treasurer. Payment plans are also available, but tuition is expected to be paid in full by the December concert.

## **Communication**

The Managing Director and Conductors keep singers and their families informed by e-mail and through the WYC Website: [www.wescustago.wordpress.com](http://www.wescustago.wordpress.com). Updates are also posted on the WYC Facebook page.

Please check email a few times per week to stay informed. If you are not a regular “e-mail user,” please notify the Managing Director **ASAP** to arrange another way to receive information.

The Board and the Conductors are available for discussions about individual concerns at all reasonable times. However, rehearsal or performance times are not reasonable times for individual discussions with singers or families. To make an appointment with your child's Conductor, please use the email address in this Handbook. The Managing Director is usually available during rehearsals and can offer advice on various situations and answer general questions.

## **Rehearsals**

Rehearsals take place on Mondays at Mast Landing School in Freeport.

Harraseeket Singers	4:30-5:45pm
Kennebec Singers	5:30-7:30pm
Wescustago Singers	6:30-8:30pm

Once each year, families will be asked to provide a small snack for Harraseeket, Kennebec, or Wescustago singers during rehearsal breaks. The Managing Director will maintain those sign up lists.

## **Performances & Other Events**

WYC will perform two self-produced concerts and may sing other events each season. All families will be asked to promote sales of concert tickets and participate in fundraising efforts.

Performances are scheduled as far in advance as possible. Singers must be present for the performances no later than the announced call time. Only appointed chaperones are allowed to accompany Singers before and during performances, unless such arrangements have been made in advance with the facility for families to accompany the chorale. Parents, other family members, and friends are asked to refrain from going to the backstage area before or during all performances.

In addition, The Wescustago Singers (SATB Choir) will have Saturday rehearsals, such as a retreat day or PJ Brunch in the spring. The Kennebec Singers will have one Saturday morning rehearsal each semester. The dates for these activities will be set by the end of August each year, or as early as possible in the semester. All singers are expected to attend.

## **Attendance Policy**

Consistent attendance is absolutely necessary to build a quality music program. The child's Conductor or the Managing Director must be notified at least three days prior to rehearsal of any absence other than illness or emergency. If a **Singer is unable to attend rehearsal or a concert** due to illness or emergency, the **Conductor or Managing Director must be notified via email by 3:00 on the day of the rehearsal**. More than three absences per semester will be cause for review of the Singer's membership status in the program. Participation in WYC is expected to be for a full-year (Sept-May). Music is chosen and each year's program is planned based on registered participants.

Singers should arrive at rehearsal on time and ready to sing. Music folders, pencils and water bottles must be brought to all rehearsals. Extra rehearsals should be anticipated before any concert and attendance at dress rehearsal is mandatory. **Singers are responsible for learning music if absent.**

During rehearsals, cell phones and other electronic devices need to be turned off and put away.

Please note that a singer's absence affects the entire chorus, and especially that singer's section. Your attendance is crucial to all singers in your chorus, so please make every attempt to attend. Of course, if illness is an issue, please stay home with your germs.

## **Standards and Expectations**

A disciplined musical environment leads to excellence in performance. Beyond that, a disciplined environment promotes self-reliance, cooperation, leadership and a positive self-image. To this end Wescustago Youth Chorale requires the highest standards of personal behavior from each of its Singers during all choir activities. These include the following:

Be prepared for rehearsals; arrive on time with your music, a pencil, a water bottle and your enthusiasm.

Be a positive influence on the choir and encourage others. Do your best at all rehearsals, concerts and other WYC events.

Be respectful and considerate of all people, their property and their traditions.

Take the best care of Mast Landing School; help clean up after rehearsal, please leave nothing behind.

Singers are only allowed in the café, music room and restrooms at Mast Landing. There should be no wandering in the halls and other atriums.

No food, gum or drink (except water) in rehearsal or concert facilities.

No foul language, or any language that could be offensive to someone, even if you do not think it is foul.

No smoking or use of any form of tobacco product when with WYC.

No nonprescription drugs or alcohol at any WYC rehearsal or event.

Membership in good standing in the WYC is conditional on the observances of these behavior guidelines.

If a Singer is unable to abide by these standards, his/her membership status in the group will be reviewed by the Board and Conductors. A Singer may be asked to leave the group, but this action will not occur without a meeting with the Singer.

## **Cancellation Policy**

WYC will announce cancelled rehearsals on TV station 6, WYC website, and on WYC Facebook page. Often when school is cancelled because of inclement weather, the roads are clear by evening. A decision will be made by 3:00pm on questionable days and WYC families will receive an email from the Managing Director. She can also text families, but you need to make that request prior to the winter weather. Texts can also be received via REMIND app.

## **WYC Uniforms**

All uniform pieces will be purchased and maintained by the singers and their families. A parent volunteer or managing director will provide you with information for ordering your uniform pieces. We may have some used pieces in our swap inventory which the parent volunteer will tell you about at the Kick off meetings in September.

We order dresses and the jewelry from a few vendors, as well as the tux pants and tux shirts, bow ties, etc. for the boys. We can also order tuxedo jackets and accessories as needed or they may be purchased locally. Tom at Tuxedos on Broadway in South Portland will give WYC members a discount.

### **Concert Dress for The Wescustago Singers (high school)**

#### **Women**

Floor length "Geneva" long-sleeved black dress, hemmed 1-2" from floor  
black dress shoes and black knee-high stockings  
16" pearl necklace and pearl studs (optional)  
available from same company as dress

#### **Men**

Black tuxedo pants and tuxedo jacket  
White wing tip tuxedo shirt  
Black dress shoes; black socks;  
Black cummerbund and black bow tie

### **Concert Dress for The Harraseeket Singers (gr 3-5)**

#### **Harraseeket Girls**

floor length blue dress  
black dress shoes  
black knee-high stockings  
triple-drop pierced earrings, opt.

#### **Harraseeket Boys**

black dress slacks and black belt  
white wing tip tuxedo shirt  
black dress shoes; black socks  
black bow tie

Harraseeket boys are asked to wear black dress pants or dockers. No black jeans please, and no black sneakers.

Girls dresses to be hemmed 1-2" from the floor with concert shoes on.

## **Concert Dress for The Kennebec Singers (gr 6-8)**

### **Kennebec Girls**

floor length short-sleeved Geneva dress  
black dress shoes  
black knee-high stockings

### **Kennebec Boys**

black tuxedo pants  
white wing tip tuxedo shirt  
black dress shoes; black socks  
black bow tie

Girls dresses to be hemmed 1-2" from the floor with concert shoes on.  
Style is the same as the Wescustago High School Singers, but in short sleeves.  
Boys tux pants can be ordered from our vendor for under \$30 or purchased locally.