

STAPLES AREA MEN'S CHORUS

General new member information for the 2019-20 year of song.

Greetings! We are the Staples Area Men's Chorus, and we are pleased that you are considering joining us. This information will answer some questions that you might have about who we are, what we do, and what we can expect from each other if you become a member. Additional information can be found on our web site, www.staplesmen.org or staples area men's chorus on facebook.

The Staples Area Men's Chorus is a group of men from central Minnesota committed to sharing a love of singing. In addition to providing a means of artistic expression for the membership, the chorus provides a good deal of fun and fellowship. We meet each Wednesday evening from September through mid-May. To accommodate travelers and church choir members, our practices run from 8:30 to 10:00.

As a chorus, we belong to a parent group called the Associated Male Choruses of America. This enables us to sing occasionally with other choruses and to participate in an annual "Big Sing" which involves twelve to sixteen choruses from the Upper Midwest District of the AMCA and features nearly three hundred male voices. Our chorus hosted this fabulous event in 2010 and again in 2017. Locally, we perform several times each season, including a Christmas concert, performances at area nursing homes, dinner concerts where the members wait on tables and sing between courses, and occasionally concerts with a different creative twist, such as our Sing Off concert. Each fall we facilitate a choral festival for area high school boys called **REAL MEN SING!** We have expanded this event to include middle school boys in a similar experience called **REAL MEN SING, jr.** This event usually involves over 300 singers from high schools, colleges, and the Staples Area Men's Chorus. This year (2019) **REAL MEN SING!** will be held on October 12th. We sing a wide variety of music and learn several new pieces each year. It is our custom to hold music during most concerts. The chorus includes men with a variety of music backgrounds and training. Some are music professionals while many others sang in high school choir or just enjoy singing in the shower. Most members read music, but some don't. Not being a music reader doesn't have to keep you out of the chorus but learning new music is easier for those who do read.

Individual chorus members pay most of their own expenses. Annual dues are currently \$90. Members are expected to purchase a tuxedo, which can be obtained from a variety of sources and can vary significantly in price, depending on quality. Many of the members have found sources of used tuxes which are usually quite economical. You might start your search by checking the internet and making a few follow-up phone calls. Recognizing that the initial cost of membership might make it difficult for a person to join the chorus, we waive the cost of dues for first-year members and for student members. The chorus receives some support from grants and this year we have received significant grant assistance for specific projects. We also generate income from our concerts and CD sales. Our expenses include the purchase of new music, payment of a modest salary for our accompanist and conductor and an annual recording session.

Our accompanist is Sandy Paskewitz and our conductor/artistic director is Steve Hoemberg, stevehoemberg@gmail.com. 218-296-2701.

Members of the chorus are expected to attend most rehearsals and we hope that you will enjoy the chorus enough to make it a priority. If you have reason to believe that your attendance at rehearsal or performances might be irregular, feel free to speak with

Steve about it. He might just say come when you can! We who have belonged to the chorus for a number of years recognize that we make better music as a group when our attendance is fairly regular.

Other information pertinent to new members includes:

- Basic black tuxedos with pleated shirts, bow ties, and cummerbunds may be purchased new or used from a variety of sources for quite a range of prices.
- Sometimes the rehearsal scheduled for the next Wednesday following a performance is eliminated.
- Black music folders might be available or can be purchased on line. Ask Jim Sauer.
- The rehearsal program is usually e-mailed prior to each rehearsal by Steve so you can get your music in order before you arrive. That really helps!
- Although you won't be required to sing alone in front of the chorus, Steve will most likely check your range after three practices to be sure you are in the appropriate section. He can do that privately if you prefer.
- Compact discs, our most recent recorded by the chorus and released in 2010 are available for \$10. These make great gifts! Contact Dave Anderson. (218-296-2701). davejoyceanderson@gmail.com
- Business for the chorus is conducted at a meeting of the board of directors at 7:30 on the first Wednesday of each month. All members are welcome to attend board meetings.
- Usually before an out of town performance, some local members meet in the high school parking lot to pool rides. Members from out of town frequently pool rides to rehearsals.
- The chorus has a wonderful web site developed by Jürgen Brunkhorst. Look us up at www.staplesmen.org or simply Google Staples Area Men's Chorus and find our home page. This site contains lots of good information about the chorus and hundreds of good photos taken by our member photographers.
- If there is ANYTHING else about the chorus you would like to know, ask any member. We want you to feel comfortable, welcome, and appreciated. We hope you will consider joining us. Feel free to invite a friend.
- Contact people include: Chorus president, Kevin Olsen penny.kevin.olsen@gmail.com 218-296-2430. Governor, Jim Sauer jsauer@staplesnet.com 218-639-7879.