

the gustavus choir

# Echoes & Overtones

volume 2 ♫ number 2

## Letter from the President

by **Melanie Kelly** *Soprano '01*

I am proud to inform you that our extended tour to the West was an incredible success. We had many wonderful experiences and performances, which are the focus of some of the articles in this issue. I would personally like to send out a special Thank You to everyone who helped make this tour possible, especially our hosts and host families. The Choir had the opportunity to connect with many alumni along the way and make new friends, who were always welcoming and ready to share stories and common bonds.

Following the completion of our tour, the Choir also had the wonderful and tiring experience of recording. During one Tuesday late night session, the choir recorded several selections from our tour program, which will be compiled with recordings made from last year's tour program. No date has been set yet as to when this recording will be completed, but we will keep you informed.

Currently the choir is preparing for our Spring Concert, which will take place in Christ Chapel on Saturday, May 5, at 3:30 p.m. Dr. Aune has programmed Romantic and 20th Century music, including Brahms, Barber, and Bruckner. So far, everyone's favorite song would have to be the *Agnus Dei*, by Samuel Barber, which is a transcription of his *Adagio for Strings*.

As this semester slowly rolls to an end, the Gustavus Choir looks forward to another year of Christmas in Christ Chapel performances, tours, and adventures. If you would like to post any alumni news or events for upcoming issues, please do not hesitate to send a message via mail or e-mail. Enjoy the spring and summer months, and I also hope you enjoy this issue of **Echoes & Overtones**.

## Random Singing Opportunities...

by **Melinda Siedschlag** *Soprano '01*

When you think of a choir tour, what are some of the first things that pop into your mind? A bunch of kids in robes singing in churches, staying with host families, and eating lots of lasagna and hot dishes? Well yes, this is all true (especially the part about the lasagna), but what you may not know about are all the crazy places where the Gustavus Choir sang during our tour of the West Coast this past January. We sang our hearts out in plenty of churches, but it was these "other" venues that made the trip so much more exciting. Let's look at the highlights...

Of course, at 5 a.m., all college kids are bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, so we sang a few hot little numbers on the airplane to Washington, oh, and on the airplane to San Francisco, oh, and on every bus ride to everywhere (Good morning, Duane! Good morning, Ozzie!...our bus drivers).

Some of our other performances included:

A small, authentic Irish pub near our hotel in San Francisco where a large group of choir members entertained the clientele (whether they liked it or not) with practically a full concert;

The Paramount Studios Dining Hall in Los Angeles, California, where we ate after taking a tour of the studio grounds and meeting a former Gustie who is currently the production manager for *Becker*;

In the audience of a taping of the sitcom *Two Guys and A Girl*, where we sang a few Swedish tunes to show the West Coast how it's done;

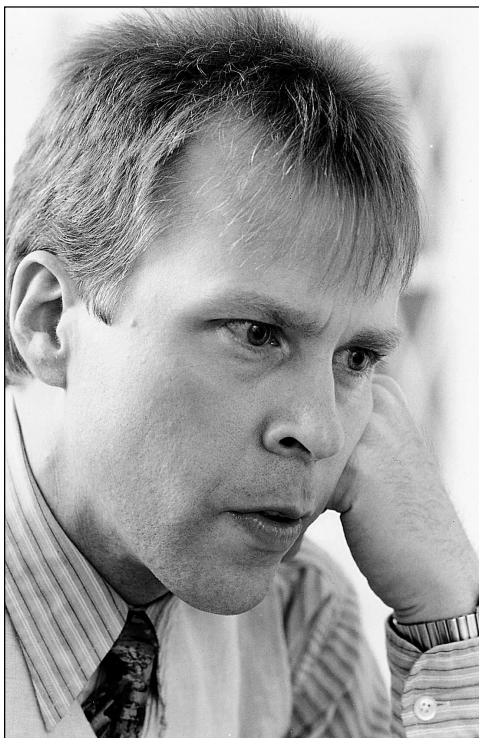
Colorado's state capitol building in Denver, where we sang a spiritual to begin the legislature sessions that morning;

**Opportunities** continued on page 4



# Conductor's Column

by Dr. Gregory Aune Conductor



**Nobel Symphony composer and Gustavus alumnus Steve Heitzeg '82**

This coming fall, the Gustavus Choir will "hit the ground running" to prepare for the world premiere of the *Nobel Symphony*. Gustavus has commissioned noted composer and alumnus (1982) Steve Heitzeg to help commemorate the centennial of the Nobel Prizes. *Nobel Symphony* will be performed on October 2, 2001, at Gustavus' Nobel Conference® XXXVII.

The work is scored for mezzo soprano, baritone, SATB chorus, children's chorus, and orchestra, and is set in six movements. Each movement is based on the various Nobel Prizes in Chemistry, Physics, Economics, Physiology and Medicine, Literature, and Peace. Interspersed between the movements are a preamble, proclamations, and a postlude for solo trumpet. Based on Martin Luther King Jr.'s essay "The Trumpet of Conscience," these fanfares—"for the known and unknown, for the sick and suffering, for economic justice and for the rights of all"—are calls to conscience and justice.

The text for the *Nobel Symphony* consists of quotes and writings by a diverse group of Nobel laureates, including Bishop Desmond Tutu, Elie Wiesel, Martin Luther King Jr., His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Dag Hammarskjöld, Rigoberta Menchu, Nelson Mandela, Pablo Neruda, Samuel Beckett, Albert Camus, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Mother Teresa, Amartya Sen, Adolfo Perez Esquivel, and Toni Morrison. The score of the 30-minute work features a variety of world percussion instruments and naturally found instruments such as stones and olive branches. Heitzeg says his goal in the *Nobel Symphony* is to address issues of human rights and justice and to honor the vision and voices of Nobel laureates.

In addition to preparing for the *Nobel Symphony*, the choir will be learning music for Family Weekend concert, Christmas in Christ Chapel, and the annual tour. All in all, a full plate! We are looking forward to the chance to explore new music that will enhance and enrich both performer and listener. ➤

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For more information about the Gustavus Choir, its tour itinerary, concert appearances, or any of the articles in **Echoes & Overtones**, contact:

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To recommend talented high school students who are interested in participating in vocal music programs in college, contact Dr. Aune or the Office of Admission at the College.

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# Geography of the Pacific Northwest

by Andrew Hasty Tenor '03

January 2, 2001 . . .

- 1) 8 a.m.—RINGGGGGGGGG!!!!!!
- 2) Reach over, hit the snooze bar.
- 3) 8:10 a.m.—RINGGGGG!!!!
- 4) Reach over, hit the snooze bar . . . again
- 5) Etc. This continues . . .
- 6) 8:50 a.m.—I'm lying there and suddenly conscious of the fact that "Geography of the Pacific Northwest" begins at 9 a.m. I'm running late (and I wasn't the only one)!

I arrive at 9:01 a.m. and, as I entered Olin 103, there is some funky music playing. Professor Robert (Bob) Moline is there to greet us with a smile and hand us several maps and information about water in the West. I find a spot, look around, and realize that I'm in the best possible class ever! I'm in class with all of my choir buddies! How could this get any better?

We soon dove into the history of the Pacific Northwest and learned about all the trials and tribulations that went into helping create the West. Each day of class we would learn about another of the areas we were to visit...with the help of [author] Patricia ("Patty") Limerick. This was very useful, because we had the opportunity to study the maps and populations of places like San Francisco, Seattle, Los Angeles, etc. Then once we arrived at these destinations, we knew where we were, what was there, and what we wanted to see. This allowed us to maximize our free time. This first portion of class ended at 10 a.m. for chapel.

At 10:30, we ventured over to Björling Recital Hall to have the second portion of class. These 1- to 2-hour sessions primarily were used to view slides. Bob had hundreds of slides—literally! They were so helpful to us! We had a chance to actually preview what we would be seeing and to take note of what we wanted to see. Now, given the facts that Björling was completely dark, we were in somewhat comfy chairs, and there were about 200 slides a session, choristers were not always about to stay conscious for every slide. As hard as many of us tried, sometimes we couldn't fight hard enough. Soon it was lunchtime and choir members either stood up right away and went to lunch, or were awakened by a neighbor and then went to lunch. This

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# Invitations Are Far Better Than “Cold Calls”

by Dean Wahlund *Tour Manager*

Touring with the Gustavus Choir over the past eighteen years has been a wonderful experience. As tour manager, I have enjoyed working “behind the scenes” with local hosts on site arrangements, promotion, sightseeing opportunities, accommodations, and publicity. This past January Term on our travels through the American West, the Gustavus Choir performed at 20 concert sites, 12 of which were arranged and hosted by Gustavus alumni and friends in that particular city. This was not only a great help to me and my staff assistants, but also a great pleasure for those who welcomed the choir to their community.

I am beginning to make arrangements for the choir’s Midwest tour planned for January 25–February 3, 2002. If you are interested in inviting the ensemble to perform at your church, civic auditorium, or concert hall, please contact me at Gustavus this spring. Cities we are considering include Eau Claire, Milwaukee, and Madison, Wis.; Rockford, Ill.; two or three communities in the greater Chicago area; and a couple of eastern Minnesota venues. I am sure we can make something happen, for either this tour or one in the future! Let’s begin the conversation!

Dean Wahlund, Tour Manager

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Fax: 507/933-6147 ➤

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## Tentative Touring Plans for the Years Ahead

- 2002 – Upper Midwest (Touring Week)  
Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois
  - 2003 – International (January Term)  
Scandinavia, Greece/Turkey, or Spain and Portugal
  - 2004 – High Plains (Touring Week)  
Minnesota, North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Nebraska
  - 2005 – Middle States, East Coast, or Florida (January Term or Touring Week)
  - 2006 – Midwest/West (Touring Week)  
Minnesota, Iowa, South Dakota, Colorado ➤
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# Music and Memories

by Toby Stalter *Tenor '02*

There is no telling what will happen on choir tour. This year’s three-week tour of the West Coast was no exception. With long bus rides, 23 concerts, two plane rides, 20 home stays, and nine states, anything can happen. Here is a list of just some of the memories and experiences submitted by the choir members following this year’s trip:

“A group of us skipped the Phoenix Zoo to go ‘climb a mountain,’ just like it says in *The Sound of Music* (though we did not ford every stream). We took pictures galore and it was a great experience.”

“I enjoyed visiting Mt. Rushmore on the way back, even though we were only there for fifteen minutes or so.”

“I have quite a few good memories. Bozo the clown, the burro...and the sock-puppet theater on the bus has to be one of them.”

“My favorite clap-up was either when Dr. Aune serenaded his wife or the Ewok song.”

“I remember the several days on tour when we did not have lasagna, but the days we had lasagna all run together.”

“I was amazed at how small the ‘World’s Smallest Park’ (in Portland, Ore.) really was.”

“I couldn’t believe it when we got ‘snowed-in’ in Las Cruces. Who would’ve thought we’d see snow in New Mexico?”

“I enjoyed watching them throw that short tenor into the Pacific Ocean while we were at the beach.”



**Whole Choir near Golden Gate Bridge after the bus breakdown. If it had to break down we chose the right spot and the right day!**

Other highlights of our trip included having bus trouble near San Francisco’s Golden Gate Bridge, visiting the Georgia O’Keeffe Museum in Sante Fe, climbing to the dome of the Colorado capitol, being part of a live studio audience at Paramount Studios and getting a personal tour beforehand, visiting the zoo in Phoenix, and playing a very intense 500 card tournament.

As you can see, there were several great memories all along our trip. There was something for everyone. Of course, our various concerts along the way were unforgettable. The 2001 Gustavus Tour was an enjoyable one, whether singing or sightseeing.

Does this bring back any memories? If you have gone on a Gustavus Choir trip and would like to share your tour memories, please feel free to write and tell us about it. We would love to hear about your tour experience! ➤

**Opportunities** continued from page 1

The Coors Brewery in Denver, where we took a tour, sampled some brews, and entertained the patrons with a Swedish drinking song;

The Carmel Mission Basilica in California;

A winery in southern California;

Singing our thanks to the church volunteer cooks for feeding us before the concert.

So, all in all, it was a pretty exciting tour. It's amazing the people you can reach when you don't restrict yourself to just one performance outlet. And if you are ever in a public place and you see a choir walk in, ask them to sing for you—if they're anything like us, they won't say no. ➤



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**Calendar of  
Gustavus Choir  
Appearances—  
2001**

Spring Concert – May 5, 3:30 p.m.

Baccalaureate Services, 9:00 & 10:30 a.m.

Commencement 2001 – May 27

Nobel Symphony – October 2, 8:00 p.m.

Family Weekend Sunday – October 7,  
2:30 p.m.

Christmas in Christ Chapel 2001 –  
Nov. 30, Dec. 1–2, 3:30 & 7:30 p.m.

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routine continued until we departed. There was a short test before we left.

On the trip, we were expected to do an "Awareness Walk" in groups of three to four and describe a city on one of our free-time walks. We were also required to take note of the scenery from the bus for about an hour and then write a reflection about what we observed as geographers. These papers were turned in once we concluded our tour.

On a few of the evenings, after choir rehearsal and dinner, the choir would return to Olin 103 for an educational movie. The choir really enjoyed the *Milagro Bean Field War*. After the movies, we would retreat to our rooms, read a chapter or two, and then retire for the evening. Whether or not we made it to class on time, or observed every slide, we had a chance to learn a great deal about the West and what helped shape it into its present state. ➤