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## Tower Chorale welcomes new director

By Viki Gonia Contributor August 29, 2011 12:58PM

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Barbara Miner of Hinsdale introduces herself to Patrick Godon's son, Gilbert, during the Tower Chorale's annual picnic Sunday in Western Springs. | Steve Johnston~for Sun-Times Media

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Updated: August 29, 2011 5:00PM

After 25 successful years, the Tower Chorale of Western Springs is moving into new and exciting directions with a new music director, Patrick Godon, after the retirement of founder and director, Western Springs resident Jim Winfield earlier this year.

Godon began his tenure at the Tower Chorale July 1, and brings with him an impressive list of accomplishments and talents. He has been director of music at St. Gregory the Great Church in Chicago, founded the International Chamber Artists, a Chicago-based chamber music ensemble, and holds a degree of master of music in piano performance from DePaul University.

Godon performs frequently with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as second keyboardist, with the CSO's MusicNOW ensemble, the Ars Viva Symphony Orchestra, the Virginia Symphony Orchestra, and the Delaware Symphony Orchestra.

The Tower Chorale is an 80-voice community chorus of amateur and professional singers, including many members of local church choirs founded in 1986 Jim Winfield. In 1996, the Chorale became an independent, not-for-profit organization.

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The Chorale's stated purpose "is to offer the opportunity for choral musical enjoyment and growth, in an environment of fellowship, by means of a variety of secular and sacred musical experiences, providing an entertainment resource for the community and satisfaction for the performers."

A nonprofit organization, the Chorale is one of the premier music groups in the Western Suburbs, and is known for musical diversity.

Its 26th season includes "Do You Hear What I Hear? Holiday Classics with The Tower Chorale," on Dec. 3 and 4. Voices will be accompanied by a brass quartet, organ and piano. The holiday event will be held at St. Cletus Church, 600 W. 55th St., La Grange.

On March 4, Haydn's "The Creation," a piece which took its composer seven years to finish, will be performed at Divine Infant Church, 1601 S. Newcastle, Westchester.

May 5 and 6 will bring "A Night of Gershwin" at Nazareth Academy auditorium, 1209 W. Ogden Ave., LaGrange Park.

The 2010-2011 season included holiday performances with Anima, a renowned children's chorus from Gen Ellyn; a patriotic program called America Sings!, which was free to honor the community that has supported the Chorale for 25 years; and a packed-house tribute to Broadway called Steppin' Out on Broadway! featuring Gracie Williams, a 17-year-old soprano and George Zima, an octogenarian tap-dancer.

Godon is excited for the upcoming season.

"There is a palpable energy in the air that the audience will be able to feel," Godon says. "I encourage anyone reading this article to buy a season ticket; I can guarantee you will be inspired. I am especially looking forward to preparing the 80 voice choir and instrumentalists so that each concert will be an experience of musical greatness."

Mark Miner, chairman of the Tower Chorale Board, says they "feel very fortunate to have found such a wonderful musician to carry on for Jim Winfield."

Tickets for individual performances are \$18 for adults, \$15 for seniors and students, and children 10 and under are free. Season subscription prices are \$40 for adults, \$35 for seniors and students, and free for children ten and under.

The first two rehearsals are open to visitors, and for those who wish to audition to join The Tower Chorale, the first two of ten consecutive Monday rehearsals are open to newcomers. Rehearsals are 7:15-9:15 p.m. Mondays at the Grand Avenue Community Center in Western Springs. Those auditioning will sing with the choir for two songs, then audition privately with the director. Sept. 12 is the first of the rehearsal series for this year's holiday concert. Those new to the Chorale should arrive 10-15 minutes early.

Tickets and subscriptions may be purchased by downloading an order form from The Tower Chorale's website, [towerchorale.org](http://towerchorale.org).

As with most performance and arts organizations, The Tower Chorale's expenses are only partially covered by ticket sales. Tax-deductible contributions help the Chorale continue to provide the western suburbs with professional and lively entertainment. Information on helping to support the Chorale via donations, as well as via program advertisements, can be found at their website.

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