



**HICKORY
CHORAL
SOCIETY**

NOTEWORTHY

**Opus 47, No. 1
December 2024**

**Inspiring, Educating,
and Connecting
THROUGH SONG**

This digital newsletter is best viewed on a desktop device.

THAT GINGERBREAD FEELING

This Christmas, let the Hickory Choral Society bring you “that gingerbread feeling”—the warmth and nostalgia we hold dear during the holidays. This year’s program takes you on a journey through the music of classic holiday movies, including Home Alone, The Snowman, A Charlie Brown Christmas, Lemon Drop Kid, A Christmas Story, The Polar Express, and more. For many, these familiar songs are woven into cherished traditions, stirring memories of joyful scenes, cozy gatherings, and heartfelt moments.

In Home Alone, John Williams’s music underscores Kevin’s longing for “that gingerbread feeling” as he watches a family celebrate together. In A Charlie Brown Christmas, music the singing of “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” carries the characters through their search for the true meaning of the season. With over 100 voices and a full orchestra, we’ll recreate the sounds of these iconic scenes, immersing you in the spirit of the holiday season. The program’s familiar selections make this concert especially welcoming for first-time concertgoers while still offering longtime choral fans plenty to enjoy. The mix of movie music and traditional holiday pieces will appeal to audiences of all ages, creating a celebration of the season that feels both fresh and warmly familiar. Gather your family and friends, and join the Hickory Choral Society as we share the music, memories, and joy of the season. We look forward to celebrating together!

Ryan Luhrs

Artistic Director and Conductor



Can you match the song to the movie in which it was featured?

Somewhere in My	Shine
Memory	Empire of the Sun
Walking in the Air	Lemon Drop Kid
Silver Bells	The Polar Express
Gabriel's Oboe	The Snowman
Christmas Time is Here	The Mission
Vivaldi Gloria	A Charlie Brown
Suo Gan	Christmas
Spirit of the Season	Home Alone



Christmas Concerts

**SOUNDTRACK OF
THE SEASON**

Friday, December 13 • 7:30 pm

Saturday, December 14 • 3:00 pm & 7:30 pm

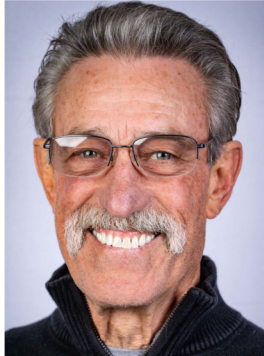
Sunday, December 15 • 3:00 pm

Corinth Reformed Church

Hickory Choral Society is a funded affiliate of
Arts Culture Catawba.

WELCOME ABOARD!

Gary Eisenbraun is one of the HCS Board of Director's Members at Large. After growing up in small towns in South Dakota, often moving around due to his father's work at a midwestern lumber company, Gary enlisted in the Navy, where he served our country for over 30 years. He retired to Colorado Springs where he decided to go into real estate, becoming very involved with the local and state real estate boards. Now, he has retired from a position on the Federal Government where he was the Director for the U.S. Small Business Administration in Boise, Idaho. Gary is a part of a blended family, and moved to Hickory to be close to his grandchildren. In 2022, he attended the HCS Christmas Concert and was inspired by it, making the decision to join the choir shortly after.



Music played an important role in Gary's life. He has vivid memories of his mother always having music playing on the radio or the record player, and of family gatherings filled with singing. He and his siblings took music lessons from his mother's high school music director who was a student of John Philip Sousa and played in the Marine Corps Band.

Gary played the Eb Alto horn before moving to the French horn, and he had his first singing performance as Mr. Froggy (went a courtin') at his school's carnival. After that, Gary went on to participate in music programs and perform at school functions every year, and he was selected to be a part of the All-State chorus his sophomore, junior, and senior years of high school. Outside of singing and performing, Gary enjoys reading and staying active and healthy, and cherishes time with family.

When asked about what makes him the most excited to serve as a member of the board, Gary said he feels "honored and excited to serve for such a talented group of performers and for such a respectful and respected organization."

Erin Mendoza-Laude
Singer

SPOTLIGHT: Our Fall Concert with André Thomas

This past October, we had the privilege of performing for a packed P.E. Monroe Auditorium with area college and high school choirs under the direction of our guest conductor, André Thomas! Thank you to our Underwriters for this concert - Arts Culture Catawba, the North Carolina Arts Council, and the Kenneth K. Millholland and Suzanne G. Millholland Endowment Fund for their continued support.



A GRAND DEBUT!

Also this past October, we had the pleasure of hosting our first booth at Downtown Hickory's Oktoberfest! We loved getting to meet so many people in our community who have never heard about the Hickory Choral Society before - both future audience members and potential future singers. Hickory has a rich culture and community of the fine arts, and we are grateful to be a part of it. Thanks to everyone who stopped by and said hi!

REMEMBERING MICKEY SHUFORD

a tribute written by current HCS singer Pat Rice

In September 1986, I walked into the Hickory Choral Society rehearsal hall as a new singer full of nervous anticipation, and the first person to take me under their wing was Mickey Shuford. I had never met Mickey before, so I was unaware the blessing and privilege it was to have this amazing woman show me such kindness and “teach me the ropes”. I truly learned from the very best! As my time as a singer progressed, I became acutely aware of the important roles Mickey assumed that had great impact on the success and smooth operation of the Hickory Choral Society.

Our founding conductor and longtime friend of Mickey, Don Coleman, has said that she was one of the true founders of HCS when it started in 1978. In Don’s words: “Mickey’s leadership and fundraising skills made the Hickory Choral Society strong and helped it grow into what it is today.”



Mickey’s generosity, not only financially, but with her time and talent was genuine. Giving of her time and talent was in her DNA. Mickey served as the second President of the HCS Board in 1981-82 and 1982-83. She also served as Publicity Chair for several years. Over the years, Hickory Choral Society was just one organization in which Mickey Shuford served as Board member. Her leadership roles on the Arts Council, the Catawba County Foresight Committee, Board of Children’s Advocacy, Catawba Science Center, Educational Foundation, Chamber of Commerce, SALT Block Foundation, and Family Care Center had great impact upon the community at large.

Mickey was a strong alto from 1978 until 1994. However, for years after her retirement as a singer, she continued to be a vital influence in the operation and success of Hickory Choral Society. Mickey chaired the Steering Committee for the “Raise the Roof” Capital Campaign that funded the building of our wonderful new rehearsal hall. Also, she chaired the amazing retirement event honoring our founding conductor, Don Coleman, who served in that capacity for 42 years.

As Isaac Newton once said, “If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.” The present and future success of Hickory Choral Society is possible only because of the groundwork laid by strong leaders and supporters such as Mickey Shuford. Mickey set the bar high in her commitment to excellence and desire for



Hickory Choral Society to continue to succeed, thrive, grow musically, and provide choral excellence in the Greater Hickory area and beyond.

Finally, Mickey’s support for HCS has been evidenced by the many financial memorials that have been given in her memory. To personally come back full circle, this past Fall Concert I was keenly aware that for the first time in my 38 years as a singer, Mickey was not either on the stage or in the audience. However, maybe —just maybe— she had the best seat in the house!

Bravo! Mickey Shuford, for the over 40 years of support, encouragement, leadership, vision, and commitment to ensure the future of Hickory Choral Society.

Pat Rice
Singer

DID YOU KNOW?

Those who contribute by **donating** to the Hickory Choral Society are eligible to receive **membership benefits**? Starting at \$65, our membership levels provide perks that include reserved and preferred seating, reserved parking, member-only events, and more.

It’s not too late to secure your 2024-25 Membership!

SING WITH US!

OPEN AUDITIONS

Thursday,
January 2, 2025

SALT Block | Hickory, NC

**for more information, visit
hickorychoralsociety.org/sing**

Contributions to the HCS General Operating Fund

In Memory of Mickey Shuford

Sharon Foster
Bobby Bush
Nancy Matheson
Susan Goldstein

In Memory of Georgia Pruitt and Mickey Shuford

Connie Burlison
Karl and Shirley Thomason

In Memory of Georgia Pruitt, Mickey Shuford, and Ann Gaither

Karen S. Whitworth

Contributions to the Conductors Endowment

In Memory of Mickey Shuford, Ann Gaither, Carson Ikard, and Susan Runyan

Rusty and Sara Isenhour

Contributions to the J. Don Coleman Education Fund





In Honor of Mickey Shuford

Beth Brandes

LEAVE A LEGACY!

Please remember the
Hickory Choral Society with a gift
in your will, trust, retirement
account,
or life insurance policy.
Contact the HCS office for more
information.

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