

## ORGANIZATION HISTORY

### *VOICES IN HARMONY*

The Crystal Lake Community Choir (CLCC) was first formed as part of the 1987 Fourth of July Gala Celebration in Crystal Lake. Membership was recruited from church choirs and other singers in the area that wished to contribute to the festival. The success of this first concert directed by the current and founding artistic director, prompted the members to form a community choir.

Shortly after this, a board was formed to draw up a constitution and by-laws, and the CLCC was established as a not-for-profit corporation with the State of Illinois. The choir has always been an affiliate of the Crystal Lake Park District, but the CLCC receives no direct financial support from them.

In the December of 1987 the choir presented its first official concert as the CLCC, which included Gloria by Vivaldi with piano accompaniment in a shared concert with the Crystal Lake Community Band. The first concert with orchestra included the Mozart Solemn Vespers and was presented in April 1988. The summer of 1988 saw the choir again performing as part of the Fourth of July Gala.

In September 2001, VIH participated in the inaugural program at Crystal Lake's historic and beautifully restored **Raue Center for the Arts**. This venue is an excellent concert space, and continues to be the concert home of the CLCC.

With the membership and reach of the choir continuing to expand well beyond Crystal Lake, in 2007 the CLCC officially changed its name to ***Voices in Harmony***, expressing our goal of bringing many together in unity.

VIH presents at least four concerts annually. The November concert has become a "theme" concert that is shared with a guest artist or ensemble. At this concert, the choir has performed with classical guitarists Jeff Kust and Brian Torosian, the Contemporary Children's choir, storyteller Jim May, a harp duo, a piano duo, a brass band and the Winds Off the Lake Woodwind Quintet. The annual performance of Handel's Messiah has become a community tradition. Our concert in March or April is a "major works" concert accompanied by orchestra and has included such works as Mozart's Requiem, Haydn's The Creation, Brahms' A German Requiem and Vaughn Williams Mass in G Minor. In November 2003, VIH gave the American premier of A Cycle Round Britain, a work by the English composer Goff Richards. The choir also continues to honor its commitment to perform as part of our community's Fourth of July Celebration, which gave the choir its start.

In recent years VIH has been developing an auditioned ensemble of 16 – 20 voices. This group has performed as part of the regular concerts, and is beginning to make "community outreach" concerts as entertainment for various meetings and events throughout the year.

*Voices in Harmony* has a hard-working membership and board of directors that work to provide organizational and financial support. These efforts allow the choir to present quality musical performances at reasonable prices for our local audience. The patron program began during the 1994-95 season continues to grow and has become a primary source of revenue for the choir. This exemplifies the rising prominence of VIH in the community and the diligence of the board of directors. The board of directors has an annual retreat during the summer to plan the coming year and work on long-term goals.

VIH provides opportunities for local musicians, both instrumental and vocal, including high school, adults and professionals to perform great music in local settings.

VIH also seeks opportunities to share programs with other community musical organizations. Organizations that have been on programs with VIH include the Palatine Community Band, the Salvation Army Brass Ensemble, the Valley Civic Symphony, the Northwest Community Youth Choirs, the Winds Off the Lake Woodwind Quintet, The Prairie Brass Band and McHenry County College. VIH believes that working together enhances everyone's experience and fosters the growth of the arts in the community.

VIH serves our diverse community by performing varied programs attracting many different audiences.