



# KISS NOTES

The  
Karen Schuessler  
Singers

Karen Schuessler,  
director

Doreen Campbell,  
president

May McAllister,  
secretary

Chris Punter,  
treasurer

Lorraine  
Landgren,

Harry MacLean,

Marilynne  
McNeil,  
directors

## KISS Notes

Writer-Editor  
Tanya Chopp  
tanyachopp@  
hotmail.com

November  
2011

## Our November 19 KSS concert

# All Creatures Great and Small

Like music, the connection we feel with animals extends beyond our senses and resonates with a deeper part of us. A song within themselves, animals have the ability to truly touch our soul.

The Karen Schuessler Singers' mandate is to create concerts that are not only enjoyable, fun and thought-provoking, but lift spirits, lighten hearts and deepen souls. In following with that mandate, there is hardly any better complementary pairing than with our beloved fellow inhabitants of the Earth: animals.

To be held on November 19, 2011, at Wesley Knox Church, All Creatures Great and Small is a celebration of all things that walk, squawk, creep, crawl, slither and soar their way through our lives, touch our hearts and share this great planet.

"Through our pets and creatures we have a conversation with Mother Nature. With All Creatures Great and Small, we are aiming to tune in to a level of life and consciousness on the planet that we are often above and too busy to notice," says choir director and founder Karen Schuessler .

Concert goers will enjoy such delightful and engaging songs as Aaron Copland's I Bought Me a Cat, Bancheri's Contrapunto Bestiale (a Renaissance madrigal interrupted by sounds of the barnyard), John Taverner's The Lamb, Animal Crackers by Eric Whitacre and a rollicking spiritual, De Animals a'Comin'.

"When I was compiling my concert notes, I noticed that there was a particular emphasis on appreciating animals for their natural qualities, " says Karen. "The beauty of the concert moment, where the audience is open and receptive, means that you can share these thoughts."

Adding to the concert's celebration of animals are special guests from Animal Rescue Foundation (ARF).

Completely volunteer run, ARF works with local First Nations areas and rural communities to help find permanent loving homes for unwanted strays. ARF receives no government grants and operates

**KAREN SCHUESSLER SINGERS**  
in partnership with  
ARF - Animal Rescue Foundation

**ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL**

Dogs and cats, horses and hens, cows and crows, turtles and frogs: a joyous celebration of the creatures that share our lives

**SATURDAY NOVEMBER 19 2011**  
**Wesley-Knox United Church 8 pm** 91 Askin Street, London

Adults \$20 / Seniors \$17 in advance (\$22 / \$19 at the door)  
Students \$10 / Children 6 - 12, accompanied by an adult, free  
Tickets from Tuckey Home Hardware,  
Belle Air Music and Chapters

Information: 519.455.8895 or [www.ksssingers.com](http://www.ksssingers.com)  
Tickets may be purchased online at [www.ksssingers.com](http://www.ksssingers.com)

Logos: London Arts Council, LIBRO, sterling, ebeat, Tuckey Home Hardware

---

solely on donations from the community, funds raised through adoption fees and fundraising projects.

After the concert, patrons will be invited to visit with animals that have been rescued and are in ARF's care.

This special collaboration gives meaning to ARF's vision of promoting compassion and respect towards animals, as well as lending another note to the musical performance as concert patrons engage with and appreciate the animals on a personal level.

We look forward to seeing you at this concert. It's going to be a barking good time!

### **About ARF, Animal Rescue Foundation**

KSS is excited to be partnering with **Animal Rescue Foundation (ARF)** for its November 19 performance of **All Creatures Great and Small**.

Originally formed in Alberta, ARF has become an active London Ontario organization, assisting the community in rescuing, rehabilitating and re-homing stray dogs and cats.

After the concert, patrons are invited to a reception and "meet and greet" where they can interact with some of the rescued animals that are in ARF's care. Donations of cash and items on ARF's "wish list" will be accepted at the ARF booth. Some items on the wish list include: kitty litter, canned pet food, old blankets and towels, leashes, collars and cleaning supplies. Please visit **www.arfontario.com** for information on ARF and how you can help.

## **Lions, Tigers and Kids Engages Youth and Adults Alike!**

This concert season, **Lions, Tigers and Kids** had both adults and children tapping their feet and shakin' their booties from London all the way to Ridgetown. Interactive and playful, this concert featured songs from the barnyard and jungle, and special guest Rocky the Raccoon.

First held in London at Beck Auditorium on October 16, **Lions, Tigers and Kids** had over 30 children dancing their hearts out in the front row as the choir sang *Battle of Jericho*.

At its second performance, on October 23 at Mount Zion Presbyterian Church in Ridgetown, the concert was held in benefit of the new medical clinic. The audience was so impressed by the KSS performance that they heralded it as one of the best concerts ever in their series!

Public response was overwhelming and the choir was thrilled with this concert's success!



## **Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Order Your Christmas Wreaths Now!**

Once again, the **Karen Schuessler Singers** is offering **beautifully handcrafted, locally made, all-natural Christmas wreaths**.

These festive 20"-diameter wreaths are made using local fresh-cut greens from Cedarbrook Farms and feature a handsome double bow—red velvet or sheer.

The choir is also offering cedar and mixed-green garlands, available in 25' lengths in both a regular (\$12) and heavy (\$18) weight.

**To ensure freshness, all wreaths and garlands are made to order.**

Approach any one of our friendly choir members to place your order, either prepaid or COD. Choir members will pick up orders at Wesley-Knox United Church on Tuesday, November 22 and Tuesday, November 29, and deliver them shortly after that. Other dates TBA.

---

## Meet Michael Wotjak, KSS Stage Manager

In this issue, we go behind the scenes and speak with friendly and highly-organized Stage Manager Michael Wotjak to learn what it takes to make each KSS concert happen.

**Q:** Could you explain what a stage manager's responsibilities entail?

**A:** A Stage Manager is the equivalent of a House Manager but deals with everything that happens behind the show. I deal with the guests and performers, including choir members, soloists and bands. I attend dress rehearsals and, with director Karen, walk through the timing of everything.

I'm also responsible for ensuring everyone is in their proper place at the proper time, and I guide the master of ceremonies re what they have to say and when is best to say it so there won't be any awkward pauses in the performance when nothing else is happening.

**Q:** What would you say is the most challenging part of your role?

**A:** It's different when you're stage-managing in a church setting because you don't have wings where performers can wait and you don't have microphone systems to coordinate things.

I'd have to say that the most challenging part is just timing and making sure everything flows well and is seamless. This is especially true when you're dealing with musicians and soloists and choir members in a space that isn't necessarily designed for performances. There is always

the possibility of running into tech glitches (e.g. lighting) but everything still has to happen on schedule.

**Q:** How long have you been involved?

**A:** I've been handling the role of Stage Manager for the past three years but I've been with KSS for five years total. When I started I was doing a combination of looking after the lighting and sound.



**Q:** What inspired you to get involved with KSS?

**A:** A friend of mine, Cathryn Hall, is a choir member and I attended a couple of performances seven or eight years ago. They just happened to mention they were looking for a sound person. I was interested so I met with Harry MacLean and things evolved from there.

**Q:** What is one thing that goes on backstage that you think would surprise the audience?

**A:** The fact that we don't have a full dress rehearsal. Karen calls it a dress rehearsal but there isn't one time where we go

through everything from start to finish with the soloists, musicians, lighting and sound as it will be at the concert. Even though I may go to the rehearsal on Tuesday before the Saturday show, the show can change significantly before Saturday. That might be the first time everyone's played together (e.g. soloists and choir or soloists and musicians). But each show still has to go smoothly and seamlessly and everyone always pulls together and does a great job!—TC

---

## Committing to the Gift of Music

Experiencing live music is one of life's true pleasures. As we enter into the holidays and a new year, why not consider giving the gift of live music?

The Karen Schuessler Singers is committed to making affordable concerts so that everyone can access and enjoy the life-changing experience and excitement of live music making, but we can't do it without your support.

There are many ways to support KSS...

Become a KSS donor. Visit [www.kssingers.com](http://www.kssingers.com) and click on Support the Choir. There are donor levels for any budget, and your generous donation will be tax deductible. As a donor you'll also receive other perks—including acknowledgement in KSS concert programs. It's our way of giving back to you!

Become a KSS season ticket holder or purchase tickets for any of our exciting upcoming concerts. Visit [www.kssingers.com](http://www.kssingers.com). We hope you have a safe and happy holiday season. **Thank you for your continuing support.**

---

## The Karen Schuessler Singers' 2011–2012 Subscription Season...

- **November 19, 2011: All Creatures Great and Small**—Who knew there was so much wonderful music about animals? Presented in partnership with ARF, Animal Rescue Foundation.
- **March 31, 2012: Night at the Opera**—Your favorite opera choruses and more, with soprano Amber Cunningham and tenor Sebastian Haboczki.
- **June 2, 2012: All You Need is Love!**—Classic pop songs from the 1960s and 1970s with Canadian cover artist, Neil Donell!

All concerts at 8 pm, Wesley-Knox United Church, 91 Askin Street, London. For more information, please visit the KSS website, [www.kssingers.com](http://www.kssingers.com).



All Creatures  
Great and Small



Night at the Opera



Amber  
Cunningham



Sebastian  
Haboczki



All You Need is Love



Neil  
Donell

## A Call for Volunteers

KSS is in special need of volunteers to help with takedown after concerts. This job involves taking concert chairs upstairs, stacking risers in a nearby hall, gathering music stands, lights and cords and helping make the Wesley-Knox sanctuary ready for Sunday service. Each member of the takedown team would receive **two free tickets** to the evening's concert. If you think you might enjoy helping in this way, please call KSS at **519.641.1831**.



Enriching lives through choral excellence and community engagement...

**The Karen Schuessler Singers | Box 43033, London, ON N6C 6A2**  
**519.455.1668 | [www.kssingers.com](http://www.kssingers.com)**