

Lyric Chorale leaves lasting impression

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After seeing and hearing the Lyric Chorale perform a variety of seasonal music in December, it's difficult to find one single word to describe the group, in-residence at St. Louis Church in Pittsford.

"Impressive" comes to mind. The chorale exhibits impressive talent, an impressive repertoire and impressive diversity of background.

From Bach to rock, this group sings it all. The mixed-voice chorus numbers about 35 men and women from the community.

Though musical training within the group varies, all are longtime singers with a passion for song.

"We have all ages and all backgrounds and all walks of life. It is kind of an interesting group," says Susan Barnes of Victor.

Barnes is president of the chorale's board of directors, and one of the group's charter members.

Nearly 60 years separate the oldest and the youngest singers, says Barnes, and members return year after year because of the challenging music and focus on excellence.

More than half of the current singers were with the chorale when it was founded by director Chrisanne Yule in September 2003.

"She is just unbelievable with what she can get out of us," says Barnes. "She is incredibly dynamic."

Even more than a desire for excellence is a passion for finding meaning in the music.

Music is more than just a series of lines and dots on a page, she says. It's about feeling connected to a piece, and helping an audience feel that connection along with the singers.

Yule is discriminating about the musical selections.

"If Chrisanne doesn't love the piece, then she can't make it connect for us, and then we can't connect it for the audience," Barnes says.

"She is not just about singing the music."

The purpose of the music, she says, is to provide a genuine emotional and thought-provoking experience for the audience.

Whether singing time-honored classics by the likes of Mendelssohn and Handel, or more contemporary pieces by Leonard Bernstein or Stephen Sondheim, the Lyric Chorale strives for vocal perfection and attention to detail.

Precision, balance between voice parts and clear, synchronized diction are goals.

And regardless of your musical preferences, you're sure to find something to like.

For more information about concerts or to learn more about the Lyric Chorale, call (585) 924-7242.

To schedule an audition, call (585) 478-0778 or complete the audition request form found on the group's Web site.

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