

# Welcome to the Badger State Girl Choir!

Congratulations on your decision to join the Badger State Girl Choir! This handbook will introduce you to the choirs, their directors, and our program.

## Mission Statement

The Badger State Girl Choir is dedicated to providing life-enhancing experiences for girls through the study and performance of significant choral music.

## Purpose and Goals

- To positively impact the lives of girls through the experience of studying and performing interesting, dynamic choral music.
- To create an exciting and challenging learning environment through the study of singing.
- To encourage singing within the family and throughout the community.

## Conducting Staff

Kevin Meidl	Vivace and Angeli Conductor	920-832-4170 (Day Office Number) 920-729-4753 (Girl Choir Phone) <a href="mailto:meidl@badgerstategirlchoir.com">meidl@badgerstategirlchoir.com</a>
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Autumn Meyers	Prima Conductor/ Angeli Accompanist	920-832-4168 (Day Office Number) <a href="mailto:meyersautumn@ascd.k12.wi.us">meyersautumn@ascd.k12.wi.us</a>
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**The Girl Choir Office Phone Line is 920-729-4753.** During the day you will generally get an answering machine. Please just leave a message and we will get back to you very soon.

## About the Choirs

The Badger State Girl Choir, LLC is an independent organization and an officially authorized corporation in the state of Wisconsin. It is an artistic partner with the Valley Academy for the Arts. The BSGC and the VAA coordinate common goals, philosophies and, by agreement, share in everything from marketing to facilities. Our choral organization enjoys the benefits of singers that dance and dancers that sing...helping build the complete artist. With that, we do have many girls that participate in both programs.

The choir was founded in 2006 to provide girls from the lower Fox River Valley an opportunity to sing high quality choral music in an integrated arts learning environment...a unique opportunity only afforded by the association with the Valley academy for the Arts. Anne Marie Abderholden, Executive Director of the VAA, was an important visionary regarding the establishment of a cooperative partnership.

**Prima** (meaning "first") is the choir's beginning level ensemble. Open to girls in grades 2-4, it focuses on developing good choral tone, proper breathing techniques for singing, notation reading, and beautiful unison singing. They venture into some two-part music and "partner songs" but primarily focus on building strong and healthy vocal technique while acquiring a love for choral music in our unique integrated arts program.

**Vivace** (meaning "lively and animated") is a more advanced ensemble and a principal performing group within the BSGC. Open to girls in grades 5-8, it offers a challenging and exciting artistic adventure into great choral music. This ensemble continues to develop good singing techniques and reading skills, but in addition, they work on part singing and performance practice at a much higher level. Vivace is a flagship choir for the organization, representing us through performances with symphonies, adult choral groups, and for select performance both in Neenah and beyond.

**Coro Angeli** (meaning "Choir of Angels") is our newest addition to the program. Open to singers in grades 9-12, this ensemble is able to perform more challenging and diverse music from a variety of genres. Many singers graduate from Vivace and follow with an extraordinary choral experience in Angeli. This fine choir often tours and performs with Vivace, including this year's tour of Italy.

### **Rehearsal Times and Locations**

We will rehearse at the new location for the Valley Academy for the Arts (139 N Lake Street, Neenah, WI). It is a wonderfully visible facility for the dance program and a close location to HWY 41 and downtown Neenah.

Prima:	4:30-5:15	Tuesdays	VAA
Vivace:	5:30-6:30	Tuesday	VAA
Angeli:	7:00 -8:15	Sundays	VAA

**Please refer to the season calendar for specific dates/Final rehearsal schedule and meeting times confirmed in the summer**

### **Attendance**

Attendance at all rehearsals and performances is mandatory. An ensemble such as ours requires every voice. Even one voice missing creates a different choir. Missed rehearsals cannot be “made up” because the nature of a musical rehearsal requires all of the players or singers. Please make every effort to attend.

We do know, however, that talented, busy girls will have conflicts. We do not have the right or knowledge to judge whether an absence is “excused” or not. So, we will recommend that a singer attend all rehearsals but we will not penalize her for missing a rehearsal or two due to illness or other family/school commitments. We hope this will take some pressure off families when deciding whether their child should attend a girl choir rehearsal. If she is very sick, please keep her home. We would like a call if she is not going to make it so we don't worry or wonder. Please call the BSGC office at 729-4753.

If Attendance becomes an issue, we will speak directly with a parent or guardian so that we can understand the issues associated with attendance conflicts.

### **Cancelled Rehearsals**

If a rehearsal needs to be cancelled due to bad weather or other factors, you will be able to hear of the cancellation on 1150 WHBY Radio. We will also send out an email to our distribution list. Please check the normal email box where you receive Girl Choir mailings if the weather is questionable. We will make a decision as early as possible but not later than 2:00 unless there is a sudden emergency or change in weather.

In the event your school activities in your hometown are closing or if the roads look dangerous. Please make your own decision about attending rehearsal. If we continue with rehearsals but it is dangerous for your family to be on the road...please understand we would like you safe and secure. No one rehearsal is worth a risk in bad weather.

### **Conflicts with School Concerts/Plays/Musicals**

The Badger State Girl Choir members are strongly encouraged to sing and become leaders in their school, church and community organizations. We want to develop and maintain a strong and mutually successful working relationship with music teachers and schools in the area. Experience and knowledge learned in both programs can be shared.

If there is a conflict between a Girl Choir rehearsal or event and a school concert...we believe strongly that the singer should attend their school program. If it is a conflict between two rehearsals or a rehearsal and a sports practice, we should try to find a way to share a time as much as possible. Please let us speak to the coach or director so we can help you work out that schedule.

If there is an unavoidable conflict that will force a singer not to attend a rehearsal (or is a rare case...even a tour or concert), please let your conductor know as early as possible. Last minute notifications are very difficult to handle in performance situations.

Students involved with sports teams that practice after school often have conflicts with rehearsals. Please remember that Girl Choir rehearses only once each week. Most sports teams practice several times each week. Sports teams understand that to be good, you need to have regular practice...likewise with the Girl Choir, we can't be successful if students miss rehearsals. One missed rehearsal means that a singer will have two weeks between practices. No sports team could be successful with that amount of practice. Please talk with a coach and with your conductor to work out a reasonable sharing of time.

### **Dress Rehearsals**

A dress rehearsal is the final rehearsal before a concert. It is absolutely required for every singer. Staging, entrances, program order, acoustics and other issues are addressed at these important rehearsals. Unless otherwise stated, girls do not need to wear their concert attire for these events...only for the concert itself.

### **Concerts**

Concerts are “game day”...the opportunity to share with our audience all of our hard work. Please tell everyone you know about the concert and bring them along. We hope you find concerts to be both interesting and moving. Please remember though...concerts are not like sporting events...audience members must wait until appropriate breaks in the program to enter or exit. Never enter or exit a concert hall while a choir is singing. Also, be aware that concerts are recorded for radio broadcast, compact disc production or archival purposes. The noise of candy wrappers or small children can ruin a concert recording. Use good judgment as an audience member.

### **Concert Tickets**

Tickets will be available for each concert in advance. Forms will be sent home with singers and be available on the website. Parents are encouraged to order tickets early. Tickets will also be available at the door for our regular home concerts. Concerts scheduled on the season program of other organizations (i.e. the Fox Valley Symphony, the White Heron Chorale, the Monteverdi Master Chorale, the Oshkosh Chamber Singers, etc.) each have unique ticket purchasing rules.

If there are two concerts scheduled with the same program (i.e. Midnight Clear 6:00 and 8:00 p.m.), parents and others must buy separate tickets if attending both concerts.

### **Rehearsal Etiquette**

We appreciate parent involvement in the choir and the support they give us as we endeavor to make music. We also understand the dynamics involved with young children and their parents. We therefore would request that parents not attend rehearsals for the girl choir. You are welcome to wait outside the choir room...or even sneak a listen if you like! However, we need the complete and total focus of each singer on the conductor and the mission at hand. It is also fun for parents to see and hear the choir in concert rather than in rehearsal. Thank you in advance for your understanding on this issue.

### **Music Selection and Performances**

The selection of music, performance venues, public performances, and all other artistic concerns are at the discretion of the conductors. The music selected will be considered for inclusion first on the basis of quality and then as to its appropriateness for a particular concert. Programs are very carefully prepared and the music selection is the most important part. Ethnicity and religious content is considered in artistic, educational, and programmatic ways. The Badger State Girl Choir does not teach any particular religious view, but it should be noted that 85% of all choral music ever written...including most of Bach, Mozart, Vivaldi and other masters is sacred and Christian.

### **Retreats, Camps and Tours**

The purpose of a retreat or camp is to give singers the opportunity to grow very quickly as musicians...immersed in the study and performance of program repertoire. Having rehearsals close together during a retreat allows for great retention and for conductors to build upon knowledge and skill base in a dramatic way. It also allows singers to get to know each other through music and fun social time. This type of experience can help create a very fine ensemble that works well together. There are no retreats or camps scheduled this year...but look for them in the future.

Tours, both local and distant can be tremendous learning experiences for the choirs. To have the opportunity to sing in a fine concert hall or a space for which the music was originally written is an amazing experience that is very exciting for singers. Likewise, travel brings a world of understanding to children. To share their culture through performance of music is truly a bridge to international understanding. Any tour suggested by the conductors for the Badger State Girl Choir will be announced well in advance so families can consider participation.

Last season Angeli and Vivace performed a concert-Cultural tour of central Italy. A highlight of the extraordinary experience was a performance at the Vatican in St. Peter's Basilica! Day tours brought the Vivace choir to Stevens Point for two shared concerts with the Monteverdi Master Chorale and a concert in Oshkosh with the Oshkosh Chamber Singers. Other past tours included performances in Washington DC, Princeton, New Jersey, St. Louis, Missouri, and Minneapolis, Minnesota.

All national tours are announced at the conclusion of the previous season and international tours approximately 18 months in advance.

### Choir Outfits

Choir outfits are the property of the BSGC and are rented on an annual basis to each girl. Outfits can be expensive and the rental system guarantees that each singer will have an outfit that fits. It will be replaced during the year if a child begins to quickly grow at no extra cost to the family.

**Prima** wears an embroidered yellow top with a pleated black skirt that we purchase from Lands End. Parents must supply Mary Jane type black shoes and white knee-highs.

**Vivace and Angeli** wear a concert black dress that we purchase from Formal Fashions with a closed-toe black dress should be provided by parents. In addition, Angeli may wear a colorful Pashmina scarf as determined by the concert.

Please keep choir outfits in good condition so we look our best on concert night. Outfits will be returned at the end of each season for cleaning. If you need to clean a choir outfit yourself during the season, please follow the label directions. Normally wash in cold water and then hang to dry. Do not put choir outfits in the dryer.

### What to bring to Rehearsal

Please be on time for rehearsal so we can start right at the bell. Be in your chair and have your music in hand...AND have a pencil behind your ear! Keep all of your materials in your choir bag or binder that will be provided for you. A water bottle is highly recommended for all rehearsals. Mark music with a pencil and be sure to erase all markings before music is collected.

Name badges will be provided. Please wear them at all rehearsals and then return them at the conclusion of rehearsal.

### The Badger State Girl Choir Boutique

The Badger State Girl Choir has its very own online store! Girls and families can shop for a wide variety of clothing and play items. You will be able to choose from a variety of logos, or graphics unique to our choir for any of your purchases. To check out the boutique...go to: [www.cafepress.com/BSGC\\_Boutique](http://www.cafepress.com/BSGC_Boutique)

### Special Achievement Ladder

Prima Girls begin at the level of **NOVICE**. If a girl attends regular rehearsals and performs at all required concerts, she will advance to the level of **APPRENTICE** as she enters the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. If she achieves the expected level of participation over the next few years, she will be promoted to the level of **MASTER** as she enters the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. The final level is promotion into our top choir **Coro Angeli**. Girls achieving this level of participation become **SCHOLARS**.

### Tuition

Prima Tuition	\$310	Outfit Fee	\$30	Annual Total:	\$340
Vivace Tuition	\$360	Outfit Fee	\$30	Annual Total:	\$390
Angeli Tuition	\$360	Outfit Fee	\$30	Annual Total	\$390

Tuition can be paid in full before rehearsals begin or by the semester. Semester payments should be on or before the first rehearsal of that semester. If a family needs a special payment plan...please let us know!

If payment is made in full by August 31<sup>st</sup> you may take a deduction of \$20 from the annual total. Send all payments to:

**The Badger State Girl Choir**  
Kevin Meidl, Artistic Director  
916 S. Park Ave.  
Neenah, WI 54956

We are a very young organization and do not have financial assistance available. However, if your family has the means to assist or support another child who is interested in singing, please let us know. It could change her life in a very positive way.

### Fundraising and Volunteering

The Badger State Girl Choir depends on the donations and generosity of others. In order to keep tuition as low as possible, we seek out any source of funding available. Participation in fundraisers is not required, but it is encouraged and helps keep tuition down. Normal fundraising profits go directly into each girl's account and are kept by the girl choir to help pay for tours and other events.

One of the best ways to support the choir is to become a **"FRIEND OF THE BADGER STATE GIRL CHOIR."** We are not a 501 C3 organization, but we can accept financial and physical gifts to the choir with acknowledgement in annual programs and other literature. **We can also receive tax deductible donations through our partner organization (VAA).** They are greatly appreciated.

Levels of donation are as follows:

Up to \$99	Silver Level Donor
\$100 to \$249	Gold Level Donor
\$250 to \$499	Platinum Level Donor
\$500 to \$999	Choral Guild Member Donor
\$1,000 and up	Founder's Club Member Donor

A second way to help support the Girl Choir is to **sponsor a singer**. The annual cost of tuition is not high, yet, it is difficult for some families. Your willingness to help is greatly appreciated and will give a young lady the opportunity of a life-time. Because of the value of such a gift, donors are placed in the Choral Guild Member level of donation.

A third way to support the choir is with **concert underwriting**. If your company or organization would like to underwrite an entire concert, the corporate logo and heading will be listed on all publicity, in the concert program and any other promotions the choir sponsors.

A fourth way to support the choir is through the purchase of **advertising in concert programs**. If your company or organization would like to purchase an ad for any season concerts, please ask for an advertising specs sheet from the girl choir.

Finally...if you are able to **volunteer or donate** to the choir, that would be a treasured gift! If you are able to provide discounts on any equipment, rehearsal space, music, outfits or any other choir need, it will be well received. Likewise, if you have a talent that could be put to use by the choir (i.e. sewing, painting, building, lighting, etc.), please let us know so we can keep it in mind for future events.

Thank you so much for being part of our choir and for sharing your talents with us!!