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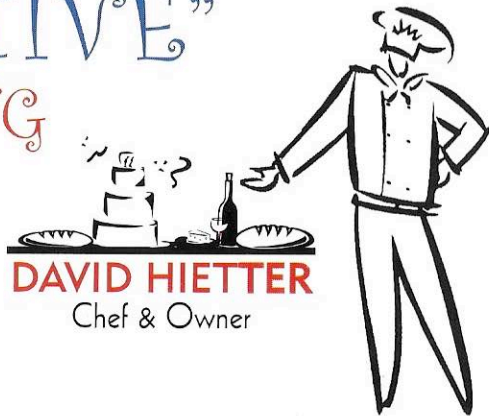
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# A Decade of Song



## CHARIS

### 10th Anniversary Celebration featuring Holly Near

### Friday, March 7, 2003



*Welcome*

*Dot Bailey, President of CHARIS*

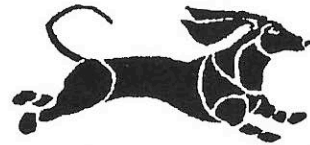
Dear Friends,

Leading CHARIS into the next "Decade of Song" will be exciting and challenging. Filling the shoes of my predecessor Loretta Haggard will be a monumental task, however, CHARIS is fortunate to have excellent administrative talent and skill amongst our membership. With the assistance of our diverse board of directors, CHARIS members, and multi-talented artistic director Merry Keller, we have a solid team to ensure that we are successful in all our endeavors.

We are thrilled that Holly Near, one of the foremost pioneers in women's music, is our guest artist this evening. What better way for CHARIS to celebrate A Decade of Song!

If you would like to sing with CHARIS, come and visit us on Tuesday evenings 7-9 PM at Immanuel Congregational UCC, 3460 Jamieson Avenue. CHARIS is a non-audition chorus open to all women. For more information, visit our website at [www.charischorus.org](http://www.charischorus.org)

Please sit back, relax, and drift back through the past Decade of Song with CHARIS and Holly Near. Thank you for your continued support of CHARIS - The St. Louis Women's Chorus.



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## *10th Anniversary Celebration*

### *Merry Keller, Artistic Director*

More than a year ago a group of women gathered in my living room to generate ideas and make plans for CHARIS' future concert seasons. My job as Artistic Director is to listen – listen carefully for a creative spark that is generated by a “heart/mind/music” connection that will ignite enthusiasm for singers and audience alike. Near the end of the planning session, someone mentioned Holly Near's name, and lightheartedly suggested we invite Holly to help us celebrate this banner anniversary year. We laughed, knowing that it would be TOO perfect and ... absolutely impossible.

Several days later, on a whim, I typed “Holly Near” into my internet search engine. It connected me immediately to Holly's website and I browsed through the biographical information, looked at photos of Holly and friends, and read about Holly's tour and concert schedule. I clicked on a link provided on the website to send a message, and wrote a short note about CHARIS and an inquiry about having Holly as a guest artist in the coming year.

By the end of the following day, I had a response from Holly's agent. We wrote back and forth several times, discussing possibilities and sharing information. Following months of negotiating a contract, working out schedules, finding a venue, and choosing concert repertoire, what CHARIS thought to be “absolutely impossible” has become a reality. There is a definite air of excitement within the chorus. New organizational teams have been working hard to take care of all the details that surround such an effort. CHARIS' Board of Directors has welcomed many new members who are infused with energy and purpose, and we are on track to have the largest group of singers for a performance in our ten-year history.

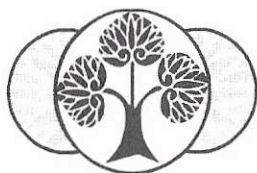
### *10th Anniversary Celebration, cont'd.*

I think Holly would have felt quite at home at our pot-luck discussion session so many months ago, because I have come to understand that Holly's creative expression comes from that same “heart/mind/music” connection we always strive for as a group. From her website, Holly writes: “I do not separate my music from my heart nor do I separate my ideas from my daily life. I open my self up to learning as much as I can about humanity and this mysterious life experience, but I do not relate to political work as a series of ‘causes.’ Moment by moment, I integrate what I learn into my personal life, personalizing my politics. It is from this personal place that I write my songs.”

Tonight you are in for a special treat – you will experience the power and richness of Holly's music, which for more than forty years has provided a voice for women and a call for peace and justice. Tonight, you celebrate with CHARIS ten years of creating music and making meaning for the St. Louis community. As we move forward in uncertain times with the knowledge that our voices united are voices of strength, I encourage you to join your voice with ours in the never-ending effort for a more caring and peaceful world.







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## *Guest Artist - Holly Near*

As a peace activist and advocate for human and civil rights, Holly Near has spent more than 30 years linking the multitude of issues that form the basis of the worldwide human struggle for peace and dignity. Holly has steadfastly refused to separate "causes," calling for lesbian and gay rights concerns to take their place as a vital, but not isolated, part of the world peace agenda. Holly urges lesbians and gay men to develop a world consciousness and to work toward ending racism and sexism within the community. "I am selfish," Holly says. "I believe in leaving our best to our children."

Holly sang publicly from the age of eight, appearing on numerous television programs and in the Broadway production of *Hair*. She has collaborated with such legendary artists as Pete Seeger, Arlo Guthrie, Ronnie Gilbert, Bonnie Raitt, Cris Williamson, and Linda Tillery. Redwood Records, the independent record label Holly founded in 1972, was a major force in alternative music for nearly 20 years. Dedicated to recording and promoting the music of politically conscious artists from around the world, Redwood and Near supported the work of artists from Nicaragua, Chile, Argentina, Cuba, Uruguay, Viet Nam, El Salvador, and Mexico, as well as Canada, England, the United States, and Australia.

Holly also speaks out about issues at home, championing gay and lesbian rights and a woman's right to choose, and addressing the problem of domestic violence, long before those causes became politically popular. Holly has been honored by the ACLU, the National Organization for Women, the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, and the National Lawyers Guild. With more than 20 recordings to her credit, Holly has also been the recipient of the Women's Music Award.

Among her other talents is the ability to share her expertise and her passion in the classroom. Holly has taught successfully at numerous colleges, addressing the crucial role of music in the political movements of the past 30 years. Holly also offers master classes in performance craft and songwriting. Her most recent recording, *Edge*, appears on her own record label, Calico Tracks Music.



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### ***Sign Language Artist - Glenace Humphrey***

Glenace has interpreted for CHARIS since it was founded in 1993. She has worked in the field of interpreting for more than 27 years and is a staff interpreter for Deaf Inter-Link as well as a freelance/community interpreter. She holds national certification from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (R.I.D.). She currently holds the position of RID Region IV Representative, which represents 14 states and three provinces in Canada. She has interpreted in many places in the United States, and also in Japan and Europe. Glenace has attended the GALA choral festivals since 1989. Her initiation to GALA was in Seattle interpreting for the Denver Women's Chorus. Later festivals took her to Denver, Tampa and most recently San Jose. She has recently interpreted for Bruce Villanche, Maya Angelou, Nell Carter and President George W. Bush. Jeffrey Maynard and the New York City Gay Men's Chorus invited Glenace to perform with them in Carnegie Hall in December of 2001 and June of 2002 with Armistead Maupin. She recently had the honor of interpreting for Ann Hampton Callaway at the Pageant and Stephen Schwartz, Liz Callaway and Scott Coulter, at the Edison Theatre, Washington University. Glenace loves sharing the poetry, inspiration and laughter of music through sign language with the Deaf and hearing communities.

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## Artistic Director - Merry Keller

Merry Keller, Artistic Director of CHARIS - The St. Louis Women's Chorus and the Gateway Men's Chorus, brings a professional choral background and extensive performing experience to her work. With an undergraduate degree in vocal/choral music, and advanced studies in choral conducting and voice, Merry has been involved in performing, directing and teaching music for over 25 years. Merry Keller's local performance experience includes The Ladies' Friday Musical Club, The St. Louis Women's Chorale, Random Access, The St. Louis Chamber Chorus, several community-based groups, and solo performance in a variety of venues in the area. In Pennsylvania Merry performed in such diverse settings as a top-forties band, piano bar and opera theater. As director and teacher, Merry Keller founded and directed a St. Louis community chorus in the Central West End, served as Director of Music at Centenary United Methodist Church, helped produce musicals at Dignity House and a local children's community theater, and has taught privately and in the public school systems of Pennsylvania and Missouri.

With additional degrees in business and divinity, Merry is an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ. She has produced and hosted a community service program, *Steeple and People* for KMOV, Channel 4, was Chaplain of Evangelical Children's Home and was Director of Development at Care and Counseling. Merry continues her ministry as "Minister of Choral Music" at Parkway United Church of Christ in Des Peres.

As Artistic Director of CHARIS, Merry has produced concerts that have included "Music She Wrote" - songs by and for women, "Heart of a Woman" - a concert of love songs, "Rainbow World" - celebrating children, "CHARIS Sings the Blues" - featuring Denise Thimes, "Changing Woman" - a collaboration with Gash/Voigt Dance Company, and most recently, "A Labyrinth of Song" - a journey of feelings through music. In June of 2001, Merry Keller directed both CHARIS and the Gateway Men's Chorus in "Sing for the Cure" - an amazing celebration of life in support of the St. Louis Affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation.

Merry lives in St. Louis with her partner, Debbie, and two sons, David and Mike.



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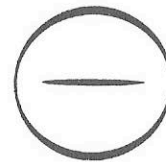


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## **CHARIS**

*The St. Louis Women's Chorus*

*Merry Keller, Artistic Director*

*Susan McIntosh, Accompanist*

*Glenace Humphrey, Sign Language Artist*

### **Soprano**

Elizabeth Bewig  
 Wendy Bruner  
 Darlene Dougherty  
 Kathleen Duncan  
 Cindy Fedders  
 Penny Frame  
 Sonja Sanae Furiya  
 Colleen Gilmore  
 Loretta Haggard

Ruth Hasser  
 Annis Hopkins  
 Julie Jennings  
 Kristen Myers  
 Angie O'Gorman  
 Julie O'Guinn  
 Joy Ovington  
 M. S. Phillips  
 Lesley Wilson

### **Alto**

Linda Agnew  
 Dot Bailey  
 Karen Clodfelter  
 Susan Drake  
 Candice Freeman  
 Mary Hizer  
 Georgia Johnston  
 Debbie Lawson  
 Jane Levdansky  
 Susan Levin  
 Elaine Lopez  
 Susan McIntosh

Sharon Opp  
 Kim Powlishta  
 Lesley Proud  
 Chataunya Rawles  
 Sandy Smiljanich  
 Sharon Smith  
 Jean Snyder  
 Sharon Spurlock  
 Cheryl Stockton  
 Debbie Stover  
 Mia Ulmer  
 Nadine Varner  
 Dina Young

CHARIS concerts are interpreted  
 for the Deaf/HH



Interpreted for the Deaf

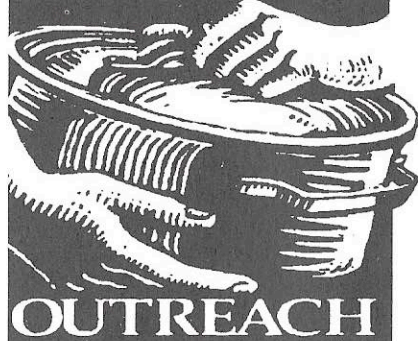


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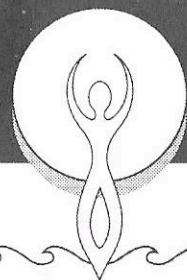
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## CHARIS - The St. Louis Women's Chorus a history

CHARIS - The St. Louis Women's Chorus, was the realization of the dream of its founders Cindy Sohn and Juliet Jackson. Sohn and Jackson, with the guidance and support of the Gateway Men's Chorus (GMC), organized a Committee to Unite Women Singers in the fall of 1992 with the goal of creating a chorus open to all women, regardless of cultural background or musical experience. The seed money for the group came from fundraising activities sponsored by the GMC.

Twenty-five women attended the first meeting of the chorus held in January 1993. An acting Board of Directors was appointed at that time to organize and direct the activities of the chorus. CHARIS was granted status as a not-for-profit organization by the State of Missouri on September 27, 1993, and received confirmation of its tax-exempt status as a 501 (c)(3) corporation in July, 1994.

Since January 1993, the members of CHARIS have met weekly to learn and rehearse music, develop musical skills and vocal technique, and broaden their range of musical experiences. CHARIS is a non-auditioned chorus with both experienced singers and members who cannot read music. Chorus members and section leaders work in sectionals and with practice tapes to memorize music and improve pitch and vocal quality.

The chorus made its first public appearance on May 23, 1993, at Trinity Episcopal Church in a fundraiser to benefit Northside AIDS Outreach. Shortly thereafter CHARIS took the stage with the Gateway Men's Chorus to perform at the latter's Pride Concert in June 1993. CHARIS made its solo debut in October 1993, at the Center of Contemporary Arts, drawing a total audience of over 700 people for its two performances. The chorus has subsequently produced two to three solo performances each year with an additional three or four guest appearances annually. CHARIS produced three annual Women in History concerts with scripts, professional actresses, and musical selections highlighting the achievements of a diverse range of notable women.

Other chorus highlights include a performance at the "Notes From Home"



series at the Sheldon Memorial on January 24, 1995 at which time the chorus recorded "Dream In Color," its first commercially released tape. CHARIS hosted and performed at the 1995 Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses (GALA) Leadership Conference for delegates from around the United States and a number of foreign countries. In 1996, after much rehearsal and a major fundraising effort, CHARIS proudly performed in Tampa, Florida at GALA Festival V, an event attended by over 6000 people. For two years CHARIS participated on the planning committee for, and performed at "St Louis Sings," a festival of choral diversity and a benefit for the Metropolitan Food Pantry Association held at Powell Hall in 1996 and 1997. During its first six years, CHARIS donated its time for many benefit performances to aid organizations such as the Cathedral Mission Society, The NAMES Project, Habitat for Humanity, and Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG).

Our founders and co-directors, Cindy Sohn and Juliet Jackson, resigned from the chorus in November 1998 after giving CHARIS six years of outstanding musical and artistic leadership. Jeffrey Maynard, the Artistic Director of the GMC, volunteered to be CHARIS' Interim Director and challenged the chorus musically, while giving a large dose of encouragement. With Jeff directing, CHARIS sang at Pridefest in June 1999. This was the chorus' first public performance in over six months, and provided the boost CHARIS needed to once again take its place in the community.

As CHARIS worked with the interim director, chorus members also worked hard at making organizational changes to strengthen the group. With assistance from Eve Campbell, president of the Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses (GALA) and Executive Director of the Women's Chorus of Dallas, CHARIS members mapped out a plan to enlist five non-singing board members to bring fresh perspectives and valuable skills to the chorus. Longtime friends of the chorus helped in the transition. Glenace Humphrey CHARIS' beloved and talented sign language artist became a CHARIS board member and enthusiastically joined in the reorganization effort.

Merry Keller came to CHARIS as Interim Director in 1999. Merry's exceptional leadership skills and strong background in music, both as a performer and a teacher, provided valuable assets to the chorus. Merry's

directorial debut with CHARIS took place in September 1999. Later that fall, Jeffrey Maynard and the Gateway Men's Chorus invited CHARIS to perform at their December concert, "Home for the Holidays," at the Grandel Theatre. Merry led the chorus in several seasonal pieces, and CHARIS joined the Gateway Ambassadors for two songs. The December concert with the GMC was an exciting experience for the chorus and a great opportunity to show and tell the community that CHARIS was entering the new millennium with renewed energy and spirit.

The match between chorus and director was made permanent when Merry accepted the position of Artistic Director in January 2000. From that time through March 2003 Merry and CHARIS have successfully produced many full concerts and performances. The concerts include "Heart of a Woman," featuring songs about the many aspects of love, at the Ethical Society in November 2000, and "Rainbow World," a children's concert featuring the CHARIS Kids, at Union Avenue Christian Church in April 2001. With the Gateway Men's Chorus, CHARIS presented "Sing for the Cure," a concert benefiting the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation in June 2001. Recent concerts include "CHARIS Sings the Blues," featuring Denise Thimes, at the Grandel Theatre in November 2001, "Changing Woman," a collaboration with Gash/Voigt Dance Company, in June 2002 and in November 2002, "A Labyrinth of Song," at the St. Louis Art Museum.

Now in its tenth year, CHARIS has moved to a new and spacious rehearsal site at Immanuel Congregational Church UCC. We are celebrating our tenth anniversary with the production of "A Decade of Song" featuring Holly Near. With a talented board of both singers and non-singers addressing management issues and with Merry's wise and able artistic direction, the chorus is looking forward to sharing its voices and vision with its audiences for many years to come.

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## A Decade of Song 10th Anniversary Celebration

*St. Louis Community College at Forest Park  
Mildred E. Bastian Performing Arts Center  
March 7, 2003*

*Merry Keller, Artistic Director  
Susan McIntosh, Piano  
Kathy Morris, Emcee*

*with Guest Artist Holly Near*

### *Kiss the Girl*

Words by Alan Menken, Music by Howard Ashman  
Arranged by Steve Milloy

### *Sky Dances*

Words by Jimmy Durham, Music by Roy Brown  
Arranged by Jennifer Stasack

### *Change of Heart*

Words by Holly Near  
Music by Holly Near, Jim Scott & Derek Nakamoto  
Arranged by Steve Milloy

### *St. Louis Blues*

Words and Music by W. C. Handy  
Arranged by Kirby Shaw

**Holly Near**

**Intermission**



## Holly Near

### CHARIS and Holly Near

*Simply Love*

Holly Near  
Arranged by Steve Milloy

*The Sun Won't Stop*

Holly Near and Steve Wood  
Arranged by Anne Albritton

*The Great Peace March*

Holly Near  
Arranged by Anne Albritton

**Congratulations  
to Charis on  
10 years of St. Louis  
Womyn's Music!**

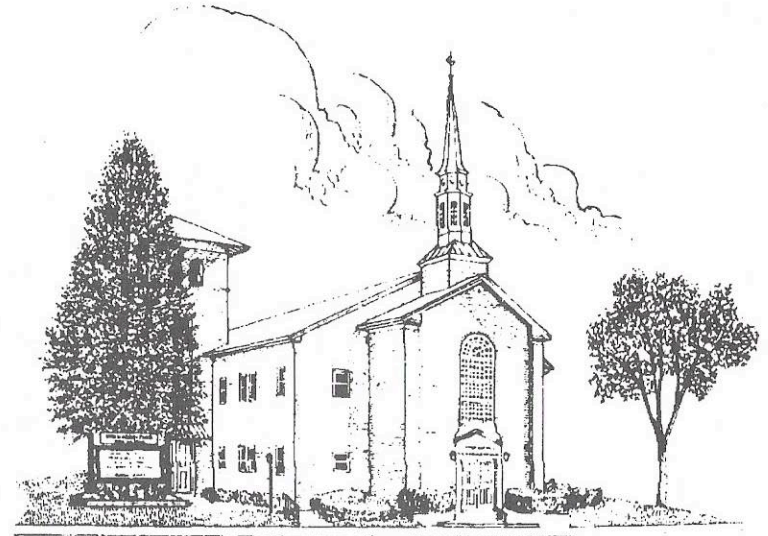


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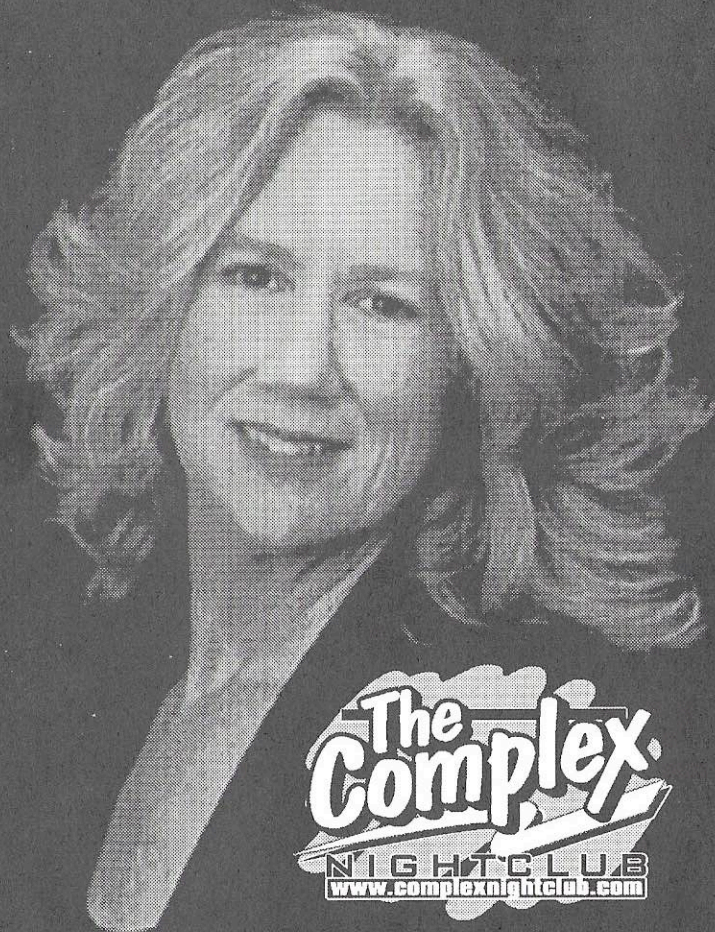
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## *Who we are*

CHARIS is a lesbian chorus open to all women. We differ in age, size, ethnic background, sexual orientation, and abilities but we share a goal to seek musical excellence, voice messages of social justice, and create a fun and supportive place for all women.

## *Membership information*

CHARIS extends an open invitation for membership. Practices are currently held Tuesday nights from 7 to 9 at Immanuel United Church of Christ, 3460 Jamieson Ave. If you are interested in membership information or attending a rehearsal, please call (314) 968-8169.

## *Board of Directors*

Dot Bailey, President  
Lesley Proud, Vice-President  
Sharon Smith, Secretary  
Susan Levin, Treasurer  
(\*) Marilyn Stavenger, Recording Secretary  
(\*) Linda Clark  
(\*) Glenace Humphrey  
(\*) Julianne Smutz

(\*) Non-singing directors

## *Accompanist - Susan McIntosh*

Susan has been making music for many years, with her voice and on the piano. She has accompanied soloists and small ensembles in the St. Louis area, and is now proud to be the principal accompanist for CHARIS. She also enjoys singing with her three girls, and plans to make beautiful music for many more years with her partner, Dayna Deck.





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## 6th Annual Anniversary Concert

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### Pops Concert

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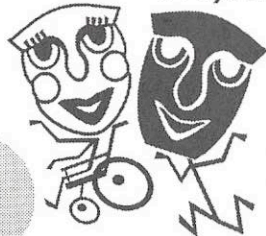
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mark your calendars now to save the dates.*

**March 29, 2003:** *La Triviata*, annual CHARIS trivia night fundraiser to be held at Eden Commons, Eden Seminary, Bompert and Lockwood, Webster Groves, at 7:00 p.m. Call 781-8331 to reserve your table.

**June 28-29, 2003:** CHARIS will sing at St. Louis Pride weekend in Tower Grove Park.

*And don't forget.....*

**April 4 & 5, 2003 :** The Gateway Men's Chorus presents *Singing For Our Lives* - "Twenty years on, the AIDS crisis is still with us." At 8:00 p.m., Union Avenue Christian Church, Delmar and Enright, St. Louis.

***Acknowledgements***

CHARIS gratefully acknowledges the help of the following persons in the preparation of this concert.

*Concert Coordinator:* Linda Agnew

*Publicity/Program:* Debbie Lawson, Sharon Smith, Dina Young

Graphic Design: Heath Karch

Flyers and tickets: Debbie Lawson, Georgia Johnston

T-Shirts: JenWorks

Program: Cindy Fedders

*Production:*

Director's Liaison: Renee Dix

Back Stage Coordinator: Mike Eppenberger

Photographer: Joseph W. Turner

Emcee: Kathy Morris

Concert helper for Holly Near: Sally Nelson

*Box Office:* Patrick Niedringhaus

*Plants for Stage Decoration:* Warren Sanders

*Special thanks to Forest Park Community College staff:*

Theatre Manager: Dennis Rau

Music Chair: James Hegerty

Sound Manager: Garry Koesterer

*House Manager and Friends of CHARIS Coordinator:* Chad Johnson

*House Manager and Volunteer Coordinator:* Julianne Smutz

*Volunteers for this performance:* Pete Housman

Kathleen Murphy

Aileen Abbott

Patty Pelikan

Jan Beckert

Linda Power

Bill Byrd

Jim Sinclair

Linda Clark

Marilyn Stavenger

Lara Christy

Donna Street

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Robin Hanson

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Kwang S. Kim, M.D., Ph.D.



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## Friends of CHARIS

Become a member of Friends of CHARIS and be a part of our future! You can help with a tax-deductible contribution, or by volunteering to assist with such things as concert production, publicity, writing for our newsletter, the *Quarter Note* or fundraising. You are needed to help keep CHARIS singing.

# Yes!

I want to become a *Friend of CHARIS*

Please fill out the information below and drop it off at  
our Friends table or mail to:

**Friends of CHARIS  
3460 Jamieson  
St. Louis, MO 63139**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Work) \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

My gift is in honor/memory of \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Please contact me about volunteering.
- ☐ Please do not publish my name in the concert program.
- ☐ Please do not add me to the CHARIS mailing list.

Gift amount

- ☐ \$25  
☐ \$50  
☐ \$100  
☐ \$250  
☐ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_



## *Friends of CHARIS*

We would like to thank the following Friends of CHARIS for gifts (including in-kind donations) made during the last twelve months.

We sincerely regret any omissions or errors.

Holly L. Anderson,

In memory of Karin J. Anderson

Donita R. Bauer

In honor of Jill S. Thompson

Bill Bauer and Neal Richardson

Susan Block and Barbara Greenberg

Joan Brackmann

In honor of Antoinette Brackmann

Jane Clark

Laura T. Cohen

Betty Cross and Kit Klein

Gail Doell and Sarah Bridges

Stuart Falk

Tami Fortel

Marcia and Gale Haggard

In honor of Jonathan Michael Gilmore Haggard

Jessica Hentoff

George Michael Hulsey

Bartie Jones

Merry Keller

Jennifer Kelly

Susan N. Lukwago

In honor of Sandy Knaebel

Betty J. Lurk

Daniel and Kim Madden

Barbara J. McGough

In honor of all women making music

## *Friends of CHARIS, cont'd.*

Jane Miles and Chris Reinhard

Audrey and J. Tom Miles, Jr.

Judith C. Miniace

Kathleen Murphy

In honor of Dot Bailey and Linda Agnew

Hugh Pavitt

In honor of Russell Wycoff

Simeon Prager, M.D.

Paul D. Richter

Jilaine Rosenthal

Rev. Betty L. Shirley and Linda L. Mudd

Linda Shubow and David Howard

Marilyn L. Stavenger

In honor of Merry Keller's superb leadership

Garnet A. Thies

Marilyn A. Turner

Marge Van Diggelen

Karen Wilkening

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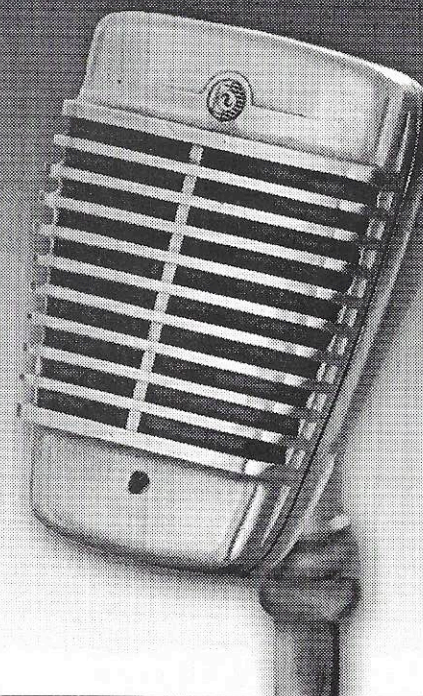
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