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Crescendo! The Newsletter of the Buffalo Gay  
Men's Chorus

Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

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Fall 2005

### Crescendo!, Fall 2005

Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

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# Crescendo!

The Newsletter of  
the Buffalo Gay  
Men's Chorus

Volume 4 · Issue 1  
Fall 2005

## 'Touching Hearts/ Changing Lives' in Kansas City

Representatives from many of the 200 GALA member choruses in the United States attended the 2005 Annual GALA Choruses Conference held in Kansas City, Missouri September 1-4. Several tracks of institutes, workshops and clinics provided learning opportunities for everyone in the chorus. Tracks were designed for Artistic Directors, Administrative and Board Leadership, Small Ensembles and Individual Singers. The four BGMC Conference goers – Barbara Wagner, Lorne Gretsinger, Peter Smith, and Dennis Stuart each came back to Buffalo and the chorus with inspiring ideas, renewed energy, and myriad ways to access the tools necessary to continue the BGMC's growth and mission.

It was time well spent!

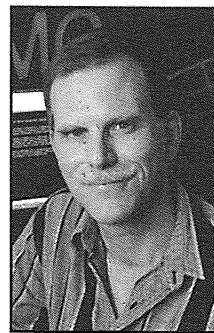


Barb Wagner and Dave Gannon display the "Best Walking Contingent" trophy awarded to the BGMC following the Pride Parade in June.

all photos by Mike Longo

## *In the Spotlight:* Chuck Alaimo, Chorus Archivist

*interview and photo by Roger Parris*



Until last year, the job of maintaining an orderly archive of the BGMC's written and published matter was the responsibility of several singing members who kept copies of chorus-related materials in a set of well-ordered scrapbooks, held in a box in the chorus office.

Now the chorus has help from a bona fide professional who volunteered his services to the BGMC.

"I'm not a singer," says Charles "Chuck" Alaimo, a librarian in the Humanities Department of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library.

Privately, he's an avid reader and collector of gay men's literature and non-fiction from the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

"I sing only at home, by myself. But Cynthia Van Ness, my colleague at the library and a great friend of the BGMC, told me that the chorus was looking for someone with professional library skills to keep track of the chorus' records."

Chuck now has custody of the nascent archive, which includes (but is not limited to) personal notes, fan mail, recordings, concert programs, newspaper clippings, photographs and awards.

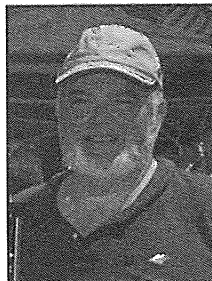
"Our archive is made with archival-quality materials," he says, "It's set up chronologically, kept in binders with tables of contents for every year of the chorus' life. Right now, we have two linear feet in a box in the office. Because of all the chorus' activities the archives have grown so large that it now takes two binders to cover a year - which is fantastic!"

Chuck is developing an index system that will help users find almost anything related to the chorus. He has one special request: "In the downtown Buffalo library I have access to local magazines and the Buffalo News, but not suburban papers. The chorus appeared in Beamsville, Ontario - but I couldn't trek to Beamsville a week after the event to look for a newspaper. If you see something about us in your local paper, bring it in!"

The BGMC thanks you, Chuck, for volunteering your professional skills to help preserve our history.

# President's Column

by Dave Gannon, BGMC President



It's a brand new season. We began rehearsals September 13 well rested after our summer break. Many of our previous singers have returned after work, time or family commitments prevented them from singing with us for a semester or two. We are glad to have them back, along with our members from last season. We are particularly thrilled to welcome 11 new singers to the BGMC.

Our growing BGMC family, encompassing singers, non-singing members and volunteers, our artistic director, our news and information director and our accompanist continues to evolve into friendships and bonds one would be hard pressed to find elsewhere. The talent in this family runs the gamut from professional musicians and actors to 'amateurs' who simply love music and love to sing. Our bonds as a family, our constant focus on our mission, our respect for one another, and for you our friends and audience keeps us coming back each September.

This year will mark another milestone when we make our debut in a 'non-church' venue. We are pleased to announce that the June 23 & 24, 2006 concerts *Let Us Entertain You* will be performed in the air conditioned comfort of The Performing Arts Center at Rockwell Hall on the Campus of Buffalo State College on Elmwood Avenue. We look upon this change as an opportunity to extend our growth as one of Western New York's premier arts organizations.

An exciting feature of this new setting is the ability to offer the option of purchasing concert tickets on-line at the Performing Arts website. And for the first concert this year, you'll also be able to purchase concert tickets online at our newly designed website [www.buffalogaymenschorus.com](http://www.buffalogaymenschorus.com). Please look for it after its October 15 launch date.

Please be assured that we are not abandoning the welcoming embrace of our

local faith communities that have showered us with warmth, open arms and generous support. We owe them much.

I would be remiss in not acknowledging Rev. Joel Miller at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo; The Rt. Rev. J. C. Fricker of St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral; Pastor Charles Bang of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church; Rabbi Harry Rosenfeld of Temple Beth Zion; Rev. Gerri Lyons of First Presbyterian Church; Dr. Thomas Yorty of Westminster Presbyterian; and Rev. Cam Miller of Trinity Episcopal Church. To you and to your congregations we say, thank you for your gracious help, love and support in bringing us the success we have enjoyed thus far. We plan to continue our winter concerts in the venues of these faith communities when possible.

We'll perform *A Winter's Tale* twice: Friday, January 20 at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo on Elmwood at West Ferry and again on Saturday, January 21, 2006 at Temple Beth Zion, 805 Delaware Avenue. We're confident that you will enjoy the performances and please join us at our now famous post-concert receptions. As always, thank you for your friendship, love and support.

Dave Gannon  
President, BGMC

The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus, Inc. is a member of the **Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses, Inc. (GALA Choruses)**. GALA Choruses fosters the artistic and organizational development of member choruses through a variety of programs and services.

For more information, visit [www.galachoruses.org](http://www.galachoruses.org)

## Crescendo!

The Newsletter of the  
Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus

Volume 4 · Issue 1 · Fall 2005

Editor: **Delwyn Milander**  
Designer: **Vilardo Printing**

**Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus, Inc.**  
Incorporated 2001 as a 501 (c)(3)  
not-for-profit corporation in the  
State of New York.

Artistic Director: **Barbara Wagner**  
Accompanist: **Debi Overton**

News & Information Director:  
**Kathleen Niles**

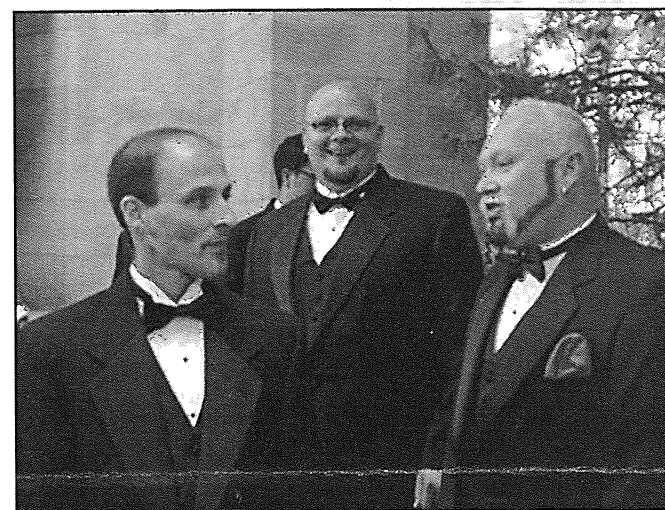
**Officers 2005-2006**  
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Vice President: **Dennis Stuart**  
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**Bill Gardner, Edward N. Giannino,**  
**Michael P. Gillis,**  
**R. Jeffrey Proctor, Steve Young**

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## New, improved website coming soon

Michael Gillis announces the arrival, soon, of the new BGMC website. Mango Multimedia is the developer, known for having produced the Rochester Gay Men's Chorus website. Our site will offer information about the BGMC, our members, concert information, and dates. Web users will have the ability to purchase tickets on-line, sign up for the newsletter, receive notifications, and make online donations. Assisting Michael are Barb, Dennis Stuart, Dave Gannon, and our new News and Information Director, Kathleen Niles.



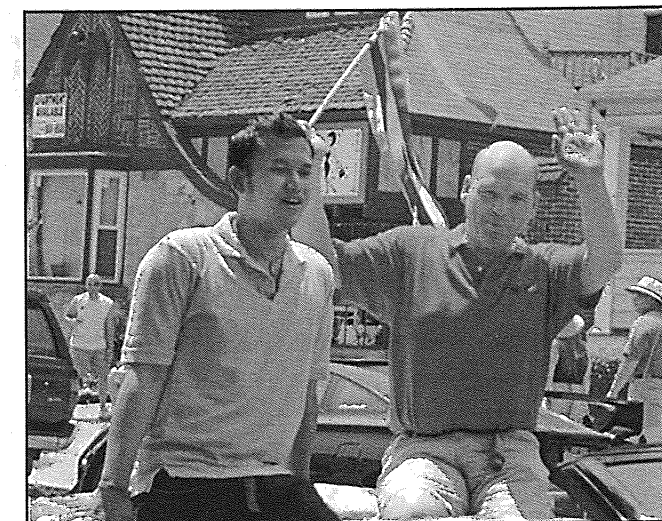
Peter Bruschi (left) visits with Nick Mawer before last June's concert at the Unitarian Universalist Church while Norm Duttweiler smiles in the background.

## Family values are more than placards!

The men of the BGMC braved protestors and picket lines at a concert on April 24 and raised their voices in song to successfully give financial and moral assistance to Blessed Trinity Church and Habitat for Humanity. Family values and your valuable BGMC family need your help. The concept of "family values" requires that we speak up for what we believe and that we assist anyone we see persecuted. Community outreach efforts like these require your financial help.

Please be generous when the annual BGMC October fund-raising letter arrives in your mailbox. And please appreciate the fact that chorus fund-raising efforts are accomplished solely by volunteers. Every penny of your contribution goes to the music programs that enrich our community so much.

Thank you.



Aidan Ngin and Jimmy Rigo get to ride in June's Pride Parade.

## Garage Sale Report

by Michael Gillis

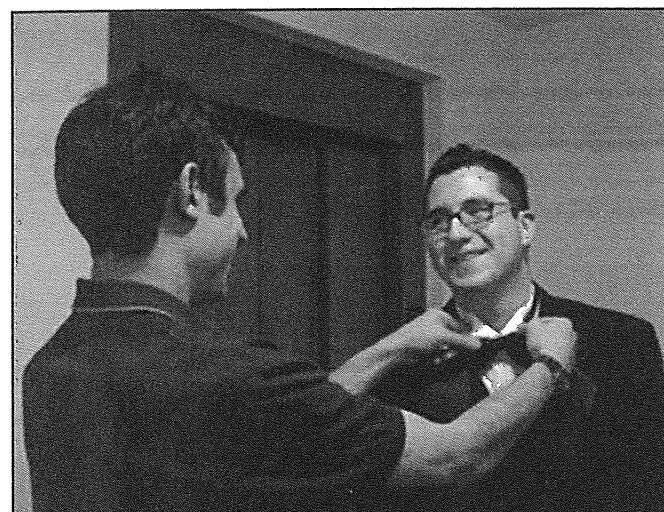
Thanks for all the support and help at the BGMC garage sale. We raised over \$3000.00!

MOST OF ALL, thanks for all the friendship and support. Together, we can do ANYTHING we decide we want to do.

# Welcome Kathleen Niles

Kathleen Niles of The Bryce Focus Group of Central and Western New York has been appointed News & Information Director for BGMC. Kathleen brings twenty years experience promoting non-profit organizations to this position. Additionally, she has taught advertising and successfully directed programs from their inception to established and respected places in the arts communities.

*More about Kathleen in the Winter Crescendo!*



Tony Penque of Tuxedo Junction adjusts Jeff Proctor's tie.

# Our voices raised to help others

The Buffalo Gay Men's Chorus is honored this fall to lend our voices in support of two very worthy organizations. We'll perform at the request of AIDS Community Services at the Statler Towers on November 5 at their annual fund raiser 'Cause for Celebration' and will also perform in concert on November 27 at the request of AIDS Family Services at First Presbyterian Church, One Symphony Circle. The BGMC, in it's mission to offer music of high vocal quality that educates as it entertains, is pleased to be able to assist both AIDS Community Services and AIDS Family Services and the important work they do on behalf of the individuals and their families in Western New York living with HIV/AIDS. We wish to add our voices to their message that there is much work yet to be done.



Brad Williams rehearses his solo "Let Me Fall" at St. Paul's Cathedral.



A back rub feels real good before the chorus performs.

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YOU GIVE US YOUR LOYAL SUPPORT  
NOW TAKE US HOME WITH YOU!  
BGMC'S LAST 2 CONCERTS - ON CD!  
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www.buffalogaymenschorus.com  
OR CALL THE BGMC OFFICE AT 716.883.1277  
CDs ARE \$10.00 PLUS \$3.00 SHIPPING AND  
HANDLING EACH WHILE THEY LAST!  
The Fearless Concert CD will be out soon.**

## Barb's Corner by Barbara Wagner, BGMC Artistic Director

As I look back at the 2004-2005 season, I am filled with pride and joy. There was an early concert with Ars Nova in their Viva Vivaldi Series. We sang at Fredonia State College and for Gusto at the Gallery. There were the winter concerts with the weather challenges they presented and the refusal of the Jewish Review to run our press release.

All this was a prelude to singing with our friends from the Unitarian Universalist Church Choir at Blessed Trinity Roman Catholic Church in April to benefit Habitat for Humanity and to help pay for roof repairs on that historic building. Outside, the protestors were gathering as the two choirs rehearsed inside. After the rehearsal, the men of the BGMC donned their tuxes, went outside in the cold, and greeted members of the audience as they arrived. As seventy five openly gay men flanked by their fifty UU partners in music filled every aisle, the church reverberated with the sounds of "Antya Laba," an African gathering song. The 750 people in the church jumped to their feet, clapped their hands, laughed, and cried as the singers passed by. It was the finest day of my life. We had changed hearts with our music. We had honored our mission to enlighten and educate.

We went on to inspired performances of our Spring Concert, *Fearless*. Every song seemed colored by our Blessed Trinity experience. We were indeed "fearless" and affirmed. In the words of Holly Near, we were "singing for our lives" and we will continue to do that.

It's been a good summer, but the best part was attending the GALA Leadership Conference in Kansas City over the Labor Day weekend. It was truly amazing. There were 270 GALA people in the same place, all with the same goal - to change hearts with music. Everyone came at it from a different place and with differing styles, but the goal was clear from the outset. There was a Leadership Track for Board Members and Executive Directors, which Dennis Stuart followed; a Singers Track that Lorne Gretsinger and Peter Smith followed; and the Artistic Director track which I had the great good fortune to be part of.

I was on sensory overload for 3+ days. There was so much to learn, so much that was affirming, and there were the extraordinary musicians that we were able to talk with and listen to and with whom we were able to share common problems.



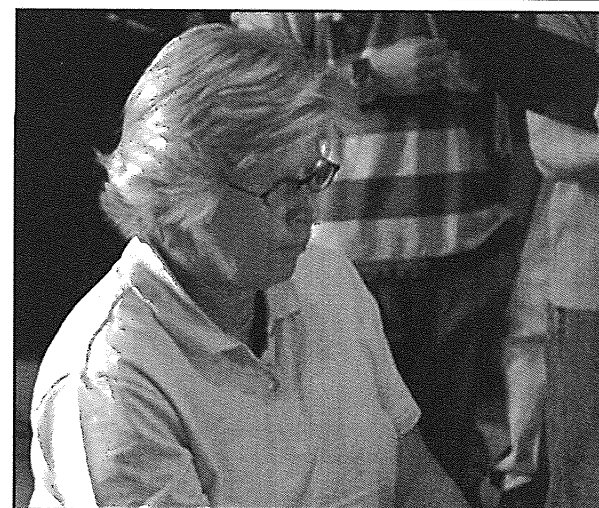
The BGMC will be reaping the benefits of that weekend for a very long time. The collegiality among the Artistic Directors was very special. Workshops led by Tim Seelig, Dennis Coleman, Cathy Roma, Charles Bruffy, Eric Lane Barnes, Kathleen McGuire, Stan Hill were extraordinary. The list of luminaries from the GALA movement goes on and on and they were all there.

The horrors of Hurricane Katrina haunted us constantly during the weekend. At the closing concert, over \$2,000 was collected for New Orleans Gay Men's Chorus, and donations continue to come in. I am happy to report that all members of the NOGMC have been accounted for, and they are looking forward to a bright future. If you would like to help the NOGMC, please visit their website at [www.galachoruses.org](http://www.galachoruses.org). On the homepage is a link to a donation form for this purpose.

Watch for news of *A Winter's Tale*, our January concerts, in the next issue of Crescendo.

With love and gratitude for all that you do and all that you are.

*Barb*



Debi Overton concentrates during rehearsal before the June concert at the Unitarian Universalist Church.

## KUDOS

The BGMC congratulates Guy Tomassi for his role in the Lancaster Opera House production of *Cabaret*.

Matt Mooney has been chosen to play the lead in *The Perfect Life*, a gay musical with recent performances in Toronto and currently at the Alleyway Theater in Buffalo. Next summer, the show will go to New York City with Matt continuing in his role.

Shaun Doyle has been crooning a lot at Daffodils lately.

Applause, applause to these and *all* BGMC performers whose talents lead them to other venues far and wide.

# SAVE THESE DATES!

Friday, November 4, 2005 • **Pride Alliance Diversity Concert** • 8 pm • Juliet J. Rosch Recital Hall  
State University of New York at Fredonia

Saturday, November 5, 2005 • **Performance at Cause for Celebration** • 10 pm • Statler Towers Golden Ballroom  
107 Delaware Avenue in downtown Buffalo

Sunday, November 27, 2005 • **AIDS Family Services Concert** • 3 pm • First Presbyterian Church  
1 Symphony Circle in Buffalo

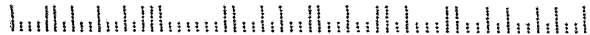
Friday, January 20, 2006 • Concert — **A Winter's Tale** • 8 pm • Unitarian Universalist Church,  
Elmwood Avenue at West Ferry Street

Saturday, January 21, 2006 • Concert — **A Winter's Tale** • 8 pm • Temple Beth Zion, 805 Delaware Avenue

**BGMC** 695 Elmwood Ave.  
Buffalo, NY 14222  
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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