



Associated Male Choruses of America

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GOD BLESS AMERICA AND THOSE WHO CHERISH FREEDOM

Events of September 11, 2001 have changed all of us. The images of that horrific day return to me almost daily. For people who had to live through it or have lost friends, loved ones or colleagues, the pain must be almost unbearable. I hope that they can be somewhat comforted knowing that the prayers of the faithful are with them.

Music has been a tremendous balm for people throughout the world; I was touched by Paul Simon's performance of *The Boxer* on *Saturday Night Live*. I couldn't get his song, *America* out of my mind for a week. National Public Radio (which I listened to from the University of Buffalo) played great uplifting songs throughout the last week of September. I found myself putting Aaron Copeland's *Springtime in Appalachia* on the stereo several times. As I type this, I find myself being comforted by the music of Valdy (reminding me of a more simple time).

Choristers have been sending their thoughts into Dave Thomas at the AMCA website; I will be printing some of these thoughts in a later part of the issue to encourage you to visit our site and join in the dialogue.

I have had a lot of fun playing up the differences between Canadians and Americans in past issues and I hope to continue to do this as this is a sign of our true friendship – that we can joke about our differences because we are far more alike than we are different.

To our Scholarship winners, I say "Congratulations!" You are an important part of the life of the Association and the gifts that you are working so hard to develop will surely bring great things to our world. This issue is dedicated to you and I thank you for sharing your talent with a world that needs music more than ever.



RAYNER IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS FOR 2001

Tom Rayner, Chair of the AMCA Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce the winners of the 2001 scholarships. Tom points out that these are awards of merit as we recognize the talent and hard work that these young people have exhibited so well.

The winners are:

- Giles Tomkins from the University of Toronto (Lester Axdahl Scholarship Award)
- Bryan Blessing from St. John's University in Collegeville, MN
- Heather Brandon from University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario
- Leah Gordon from the University of Toronto
- Karen Pinkney from Pensacola Christian College in Florida
- Christina Rice from Central Michigan University

Tom and his committee evaluated the ten eligible applications received and the awards were based on the rankings of the six members of the committee. Mr.

Bryan Blessing

Because of my love of music, I decided to teach others about it, hoping that people can enjoy similar experiences.

Karen Pinkney

I hope to be able to further use my talents for the Lord someday, whether that means teaching, performing, or ministering in the local church.

Rayner was also glad to announce that the value of the Scholarships increased this year. Last year AMCA awarded \$2900 and this year we awarded \$4300. We were happy to give The Lester Axdahl Scholarship Award, valued at \$800, and five awards valued each at \$700.

This increase in the awards was due to several factors. Donations by members at District Sings and through individual gifts (Memorials, etc.) increased this past year. At the October 2000 AMCA Meeting a change in the allocation of funds was made. "Funds available annually for Scholarships: 40% of annual donations to Capital (investments which sustain our Fund, interest applied annually to Scholarships) and 60% to directly to fund the Scholarships".

The Scholarship Committee appreciates greatly the financial support which our members provide annually for this program. The AMCA motto reads: ***Good Singing, Good Fellowship, and Public Service***". The Scholarship program is one of our prominent examples of Public Service. Well done, fellows!

Words from Tom Rayner

It has been a privilege for me to serve our Association in the capacity of Scholarship Chair. Over these past years I have been your contact with a great number of multitalented music students who have contacted me about the AMCA Scholarship program. This service which we provide for these music students is invaluable. I want to thank all those who have made this opportunity known to their communities. I also want to thank the many Evaluators who have assisted us each year, and the Trustees who work so closely with the Scholarship Chair in assisting with the over-all organization of this program. It is my sincere wish that this program will continue

to be sustained by our membership, and indeed that we find ways to increase our funds so that more awards can be given annually. These young people are the future of music! Perhaps the organizers of the Lansing International Sing 2003 will find a venue to showcase some of these Scholarship Winners. Our membership needs to hear some of these outstanding young folks in performance.

Best wishes to you all,
Tom Rayner,
AMCA Scholarship Chair.



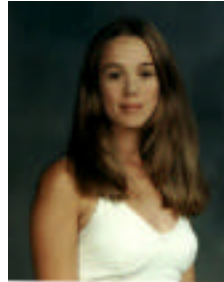
Bryan Blessing



Heather Brandon



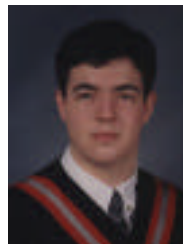
Karen Pinkney



Leah Gordon



Christina Rice



Giles Tomkins

Heather Brandon

Heather is a first year recipient of an AMCA Scholarship. This Fall Heather will enter her second year of studies at the [Faculty of Music, University of Western Ontario](#). She has embarked on an unusual "double major" study in both voice and violin (allowed only on occasion by the Faculty). In her first year at the University Heather performed in the Symphony Orchestra and sang with the Campus Choir. In addition she performed in the London Musical Theatre's production of The Gondoliers. Upon graduation from High School she was awarded the Governor General's Award for her graduation average of 96.8 %. Prior to entering University Heather was the recipient of many awards for her proficiency in her musical endeavours. This past June Heather was a featured soloist at a combined concert of the Kawartha Male Chorus and the Queensmen of Toronto Male Chorus.

Following her completion of her undergraduate studies Heather hopes to obtain her Masters degree in either Music Performance or Music Education.

The members of the [Kawartha Male Chorus](#) are proud to sponsor Heather's application for this scholarship award. (\$700.)

Bryan Blessing

This is Bryan's first AMCA Scholarship Award. This Fall Bryan is entering his Sophomore year at [St. John's University](#) in Collegeville, MN, where he is studying in both voice and guitar. In his High School studies, Bryan excelled in all aspects of his music programs.

He won Superior Ratings at the Minnesota State Solo-Ensemble contests and was a two-time member of the Minnesota All-State Choir. Throughout Bryan's High School years he was an active member of the Staples Area Men's Chorus along with his father, Mike, who has been a member of this chorus for over thirty years. Stan Carlson, Music Director of SAMC, shared with us that "Bryan has the ability to run sectionals and full choir rehearsals. He is extremely musical."

Bryan's future directions are in music education

The Staples Area Men's Chorus proudly sponsors Bryan. (\$700.)

Leah Gordon

Leah is receiving her second AMCA Scholarship award. This very talented young woman is beginning her second year of studies at the [Faculty of Music, University of Toronto](#). Leah's past accolades are highlighted in [last year's winners profiles](#). In addition, this past year Leah was involved in the University Women's Choir and the MacMillan Chamber Choir. At the Toronto Kiwanis Music Festival she was named the winner of the Intermediate Silver Tray having placed first in all the voice classes in which she was entered. At two combined concerts of the Kawartha Male Chorus and the Queensmen of Toronto Male Chorus Leah performed a number of solo selections and combined with Giles Tomkins (another AMCA Winner) in a most entertaining duet.

The [Kawartha Male Chorus](#) is proud to serve as Leah's sponsor.

Karen Pinkney

This award will be Karen's third consecutive AMCA Scholarship. This Fall Karen will commence her Junior year studies at [Pensacola Christian College](#) in Florida. Being a past winner Karen's many accomplishments are highlighted in [previous profiles](#). At Pensacola Karen is studying music with a sacred voice concentration. As well Karen has been active in a number of musical dramas. She continues to excel academically being named to the Dean's List at PCC.

Karen is proudly sponsored by the **Mansfield Men's Chorus**. (\$700.)

Christina Rice

Christina is a first time recipient of an AMCA Scholarship Award. This September she will enter her Freshman year at [Central Michigan University](#). Her Undergraduate programs involve a major in Music Education and a minor in Vocal Performance. In Christina's programs at Midland High School she excelled in both her choral and instrumental activities. She was a featured soloist in the International Choir of the International Bands of America European Tour (July,1999). Christina has also found time to be very involved in her church's music programs. In addition to all her music accomplishments Christina is a member of the National Honors Society.

In the future Christina wishes to become a teacher "because I want to influence a child's life."

Christina is proudly sponsored by the [Midland Men of Music](#). (\$700.)

Giles Tomkins

Giles is this year's winner of [The Lester Axdahl Scholarship Award](#) (also the 2000-2001 winner of this same award).

Giles will commence his Senior year this Fall at the [Faculty of Music, University of Toronto](#). His past accomplishments have been highlighted in [previous winner's profiles](#) as this is Giles' third consecutive scholarship award. This past year Giles has also been enrolled in the Opera School's Undergraduate Program, and performed in the world premiere of Kulesha's The Last Duel and in Puccini's La Boheme. This summer Giles sang with Opera Lyric in Toronto. Giles also performed as guest soloist with a number of choirs in Toronto. In April and in June he was a featured soloist at combined concerts of the Kawartha Male Chorus and the Queensmen of Toronto Male Chorus. In June Giles placed second at the Ontario Provincial Kiwanis Music Festival Finals (Voice Diploma Class).

The [Queensmen of Toronto Male Chorus](#) is very proud to sponsor Giles' application for an AMCA Scholarship. (\$800)

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Bob Anderson was Scholarship Champion

(Ron Felsch)

Bob Anderson, Sr. who was a charter member (1947) of the 3M Male Chorus, St Paul, MN, passed away June 1, 2001 in St Paul. A male chorus activist, Bob rose through the ranks of AMCA and served as president from 1981 until 1985. He also held several of the district and -- back when it existed -- regional offices of the organization. He devoted countless hours of personal time and travel to help move the AMCA forward, as well as in some new directions.

Bob helped in the establishment of the AMCA Scholarship Fund, and in his passing, continued to contribute. Along with a generous portion from his beloved 3M Male Chorus, Bob's family made a very generous financial contribution to the fund, which continues its valued assistance to promising music students in America and Canada. The AMCA and its scholarship fund are eternally indebted to Bob's dedication and personal efforts.

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

(Tom Rayner)

Over this past year a number of individuals, and choruses have chosen to remember loved ones through gifts to the AMCA Scholarship Fund. On behalf of all members, and on behalf of the Scholarship Committee, I extend my sincere thanks to those donors for their generous gifts. You can be assured that these gifts will be used carefully to further assist deserving music students with their education.

IN MEMORY

- ❖ Robert Anderson Senior
- ❖ Clay Moore
- ❖ David Whitney Brewer
- ❖ Mrs. Robert Lockwood.

A New Source of Music

Edited from Interactive with Bill Bates

Would it not be wonderful if you could find a regular supply of new music written with the male chorus in mind and available in TTBB for your chorus? Well my friends, read on, some of you may be surprised to learn where that music source can be found.

AMCA has encouraged the writing of music for its members beginning with William Bentz who wrote and dedicated *Salutation - Hail Friends of Music* to AMCA. It was then adopted by the Board of Governors on July 1934 as the official salutation of AMCA and has since been an opening selection at massed sings.

The arrangements many of us still sing of the American and Canadian national anthems were written by members for members.

In September 1992, a contract was signed between composer, Dr. Paul Brandvik, director of choral activities at [Bemidji State University](#) in Bemidji, MN and AMCA to write a composition to be completed by September 1992 for a performance debut at the [International Big Sing in Marquette, Michigan in 1993](#). *Sonnet 29* was based on a poem by William Shakespeare

In May 1993 the suggestion to initiate a music contest as outlined in Executive Secretary, Bill Bates' proposal was given general approval.

The theme song for our [Lansing 2003 International Big Sing](#), "Friends", was last year's first place winner of the AMCA Music Contest. If you are planning to participate, [you should have ordered this music by now!](#)

Editor's Note:

Look for an issue devoted to winners of the Music Contest in January 2002. Harry Learoyd (not Leasroyd) as appeared in the masthead in the September Issue has been busy reviewing music for the contest this year.