

Director Lynn Stevens' remarks at the end of her farewell concert
with the Sacramento Children's Chorus, May 7, 2017

Thank you for coming and sharing this most wonderful day and concert which is special to me. After 24 years I would like to say some special thanks to very special people who have been on this journey with me.

First - I would personally like to thank Sac City College and especially Daniel Paulson, head of choral activities, for hosting us this afternoon. It has been a delight to work with you.

I would like to thank my good friend, Carol Malinowski for the years of beautiful programs that she has most lovingly produced.

I'm so grateful for my family, my three children – Robert, Joe and Chris – all who have been in the choirs, and I thank them for their loving support. To my husband, Rob who I don't think has ever missed a concert! Thank you for your support and your musical advice and expertise. Some of the folks know that Rob has been a freelance singer in LA, and he arranged "The Star Spangled Banner" that has been used in all SCC outside concerts; he also had taken the song "Little Tree," written by my son, Joe, and arranged it for SATB. The 65 alumni and I had such a great day this past Saturday rehearsing. I arrived, and to my surprise, there the alumni were sitting ready to sing. Joe sat me in a chair, and they all sang this song for me. I was beyond shocked—I was deeply moved and quite emotional—the alumni choir sang this song for the audience with Joe playing guitar as my husband Rob joined in. It was not in the program. I wish I could have shared it with the entire world! I hope someday it may be...

We wouldn't even be here if it weren't for Donald Kendrick, head of choral activities at Sac State University. As you all know, this group was my master's project, and Don and I worked together to form this organization. He was the first artistic director and formed the first board. His early concerts for the SCC are what quickly put us on the map. Do you remember when we brought up Charleton Heston to be the speaker in William Walton's *Henry the V*?

I so very much appreciated my administrative staff: my first comrade in arms was Claudia Rich, who was sitting in her chair checking in the alumni yesterday, just as if it were a regular Tuesday, Thursday rehearsal. Thanks to our board of directors and our current executive director Daphne Quist and secretary Beth Steele who wear many hats and work tirelessly to keep SCC moving forward - thank you for the collaboration all these years.

And to you, our Artistic staff: my first accompanist, Cecile King, Helen Mendenhall, Jennifer Reason, Ryan Lee, **David Lee (I forgot to mention him on stage that night!!!)**, Meagan Fitzpatrick and Kami Davis. The conductors I've had the honor to work with: Julie Adams and Melanie Huber! It has been a privilege to work with all of you and your talent; thanks for all the hard work that goes into making the concerts the best we can for these young singers and audiences.

Unsung heroes—thanks to the parents who have supported me and this organization, understanding what SCC gives their children and the Sacramento community. I recognize and acknowledge the hours spent in your cars, the rehearsal schedules—because they make this a priority in their children's lives. I want to make special mention of: Jana Boccalon, Chris Thompson and Lourdes Gonzalez, my liaisons for the past few years who have helped me run

the two choirs with such grace and kindness.

AND, of course the singers: it has been a privilege to have known you and to have worked with all of you - past (alumni) and present alumni - about 65 who came from far and near - Sacramento, Bay Area, Southern Cal, LA, Montana, Texas, Indiana, Chicago, North Carolina, Utah and New York – I want to express my gratitude to all of you for a fabulous weekend, the thoughtful and loving comments and memories that you shared with me – **a special thanks to JOSSIE IVANOV who spearheaded this entire Alumni event!**

Current singers who will go on to keep the legacy of singing and SCC alive in Sacramento, thank you for all the good times – I have watched all these singers grow musically and emotionally – I have seen the “light bulb” go off when they have mastered a piece of music.....and then they want more – all the tours we have shared: singing down a street in London, serenading newlyweds on the street in Reno, making wreaths in Sweden for midsummer, singing in a cave in the Czech Republic, singing for the AME Church in Charleston, North Carolina, swimming in the Baltic Sea; getting lost in...China, oh wait that was me...

I'll leave you with a story about the time I got lost in the Forbidden City in Beijing! You see... I am that person who loves to hold the group back a little as I lagged behind... stopping at every artifact, piece of literature, or artwork. You know those types... where they simply must read every placard, note, and scribbled bit of information. And as I was taking my time enjoying myself immensely, I noticed something quite peculiar. A moment that crept upon me in a somewhat eerie fashion—silence. I glanced up from my 14th century light reading and realized that I... was... alone. It was sort of surreal and creepy. Everyone had gone but me. I wandered about for what seemed several moments and had no clue where anyone was. Did they leave me? I hope someone noticed that I'm not on the bus... and just as anxiety and fear began to settle in— I heard the “My life goes on in endless song..” So... I did what any lost choir director would do – I followed the sound of those voices, and there they were! I'm sure they could see the relief on my face amidst the terror melting away. As soon I as rejoined the singers, they shared with me, “We knew if we sang, you would come...”

And that's what I will do – when you sing I will come. They have given me the greatest gift of all – they let me teach them, they let me give them what I could, and that is an act of love.