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MUSIC

Chorus Niagara's sing-a-thon hits high note at Seaway Mall

The fundraiser's goal was \$50,000, which goes toward community outreach, youth music education and cultural programming.

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Voices echoed through Seaway Mall as Chorus Niagara turned the shopping centre into a stage for its annual sing-a-thon during a five-hour musical marathon Saturday. The 20th annual event was a fundraiser for the soprano, alto, tenor and bass choir.

Dave Johnson/Welland Tribune

By Dave Johnson Reporter Welland Tribune

A crescendo of voices echoed through [Seaway Mall](#) Saturday as [Chorus Niagara](#) turned the shopping centre into a stage for its annual sing-a-thon.

A five-hour musical marathon in the centre court featured the main group of singers and Chorus Niagara Children's Choir, raising funds for the symphonic choir formed in since 1963 as St. Catharines Symphony Chorus.

The event featured a diverse repertoire of medleys from "Les Misérables," "Loch Lomond" and other productions from the soprano, alto, tenor and bass choir, with guest conductors from the community.



Children's choir principal conductor Victoria Rondinelli leads Chorus Niagara members during an annual sing-a-thon.

Dave Johnson/Welland Tribune

"This is our 20th sing-a-thon and it's an important fundraiser for us," said Chorus Niagara board chair Jeff Baker. "Our goal is \$50,000 this year, and we're getting there. We're over \$35,000."

Funds are raised through pledges gathered by performing members. The proceeds support community outreach, youth music education and cultural programming across Niagara.

Baker said the group, which performs with an orchestra at the [St. Catharines performing arts centre](#), offers people the opportunity to sing at a high musical level.

“We’re just having a fun day today. It’s great for the community to hear us in Seaway Mall, who are very gracious hosts for us. We’ve been here for a long time. Ever since our [Hallelujah Chorus flash mob](#).”



Chorus Niagara associate director Yuan Chen leads Chorus Niagara members during an annual sing-a-thon.

Dave Johnson/Welland Tribune

In November 2010, the group performed in Alphabet Photography’s Christmas flash mob performing Handel’s “Hallelujah” in the food court. The video recorded that day has been more than 57 million times on [YouTube](#).

Baker said the 80-member group once had 100 singers, but the COVID-19 pandemic saw numbers drop. He said they are working to rebuild membership.

Managing director Elise Naccarato and associate director Yuan Chen took turns directing performances during the sing-a-thon.

Baker said Chen is an emerging conductor “who brings a lot of fun and energy.”



Two members of Chorus Niagara's training choir perform.

Dave Johnson/Welland Tribune



Members of Chorus Niagara's intermediate choir perform.

Dave Johnson/Welland Tribune

Children's choir principal conductor Victoria Rondinelli and intermediate choir conductor Sandra Mason directed the younger Chorus Niagara members during a performance just after noon in the Welland mall.

The training choir program includes children between three and six years old, while the intermediate choir includes singers aged six to 11.



Dave Johnson is a Welland-based reporter with the Welland Tribune.

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