

In Memoriam: David Griggs-Janower



It is with heavy hearts that Albany Pro Musica announces the passing of Founding Artistic Director and Conductor Emeritus, David Griggs-Janower. In the words of Albany Pro Musica Board of Directors President Karen Hitchcock:

“David’s untimely passing is such a terrible loss — to his students who treasured him as a caring mentor and inspiring teacher, to his beloved Albany Pro Musica singers, who for over 30 years had the rare privilege of working with such a uniquely talented artist.

David shared with all of them his deep love of music and his uncompromising commitment to excellence in its performance. David will live on in the continuing musical excellence of Albany Pro Musica, in the lifelong love of music he instilled in his students, and in all of us whom he inspired with his talent, his belief in the transformative power of great music, his commitment to excellence and his devotion to the well-being of others. Our beloved maestro will be deeply missed, but long remembered and celebrated by all fortunate enough to have known this exceptional man.”

The audio CD of David Griggs-Janower’s memorial service in Troy Savings Bank Music Hall on August 30th is now available. To order a copy, send a check for \$15 (made out to Joel Patterson) to Mountaintop Studios, 216 Goodell Road, Petersburg NY 12138. Allow two weeks for delivery.

[David Griggs-Janower conducts Albany Pro Musica](#), The Empire State Youth Orchestra and massed high school choirs, singing Z. Randall Stroepe’s “Omnia Sol” at the Albany Pro Musica High School Choralfest at the Troy Savings Bank Music Hall, January 2013.



Tributes: David Griggs-Janower



*From David's memorial service, August 30, 2013 at Troy Savings Bank Music Hall.
Photo credit: Kelly Ortiz*

Karen Hitchcock's tribute to David in The Times Union

Spirit will accompany us forever

By Karen R. Hitchcock

David Griggs-Janower, founding artistic director and conductor emeritus of Albany Pro Musica, and professor of Music at the University at Albany, brought his unique talents and artistry to thousands upon thousands of us in the Capital Region and beyond. He was, simply put, a major force in the world of choral music. And if there is one thing our dear David would have wished for us all, it is that the music would go on, that it would continue to inspire, excite and comfort.

David passed away Sunday, and we already miss him beyond words, and in so many different ways. Those fortunate enough to have sung under his direction in Albany Pro Musica, the University Chorale, the University at Albany Chamber Singers and so many other ensembles for more than three decades will miss his energy, his commitment to excellence in performance, his passion and his conviction that music can be transformative. Through his talents, through his caring and through his generosity of spirit, those of us privileged to have known him have, indeed, been transformed.

His singers and students of all ages have become more accomplished vocalists, more sensitive to the profound messages that great music can convey. His audiences have become more engaged listeners, enthralled by the beauty of the moment.

But, most of all, we have become better, more giving human beings for having known him. He has touched so many lives, in ways large and small.

Like so many others, I have been buoyed by his tenderness and concern at difficult moments in my life. And, like many others, I have also been brought firmly back to earth by his perceptiveness and wit — but always, always with a gentle touch. His sensitivity to the needs and the pain of other people was unparalleled. He knew the right words, and always said them at the right time, and in the right way.

As a musician, David was encyclopedic, but never arrogant, in his knowledge of the repertoire. His delight in conveying to the singers the meaning of the text and nuances of the score was palpable, as was his displeasure if he perceived a lack of engagement with the music. David had the rare ability to create an atmosphere at every concert of a shared journey, of an experience unique to that moment and to each member of the chorus and each member of the audience — intimate, meaningful and unforgettable. The music was the vehicle, and David, our beloved conductor, brought it to life and filled the hall with beauty and joy.

Throughout David's long illness, hundreds upon hundreds of his friends and colleagues from around the country, and beyond, wrote to thank him for being such a force in their lives, for enriching their journey and for caring so deeply. One especially touching tribute from a former student was entitled "Don't Wait: Tell Them." I know David agreed with this philosophy; indeed, he lived it. He never waited till "tomorrow" to extend his hand to others, to let them know what they meant to him. He freely shared his love, and that love came back to him many-fold.

So, David, while your passing has brought a stillness born of grief and loss, know that we all will, very soon, sing for you again — sing with the joy of having experienced your prodigious artistic talents; sing with the joy of having shared your delight in the beauty of music in all its forms; and sing with the joy of having known someone who cared so deeply and loved so well.

The music will go on, David, and it goes on for you.

Karen R. Hitchcock is president of the Board of Directors of Albany Pro Musica.

From the media

From the Altamont Enterprise: *“Love permeated all he did.”*



David Griggs-Janower

GUILDERLAND — “How wonderful to be in love!” wrote David Griggs-Janower, the founder, artistic director, and conductor of Albany Pro Musica, on the last release he dispatched for a concert.

“My pile of favorite choral love songs would easily take five hours to perform,” he wrote before expounding on the list he’d distilled for the March concert.

A guest conductor took his place since Dr. Griggs-Janower had suffered a stroke on March 8 in the midst of surgery as he battled cancer.

“What David has created with Pro Musica,” Matthew Kopans, the group’s executive director, told us at the time, “is a force for good in the community.”

Dr. Griggs-Janower died Sunday, Aug. 25, 2013, surrounded by his family. He was 60. Love permeated all he did.

Dr. Griggs-Janower frequently sent notices to *The Enterprise*, detailing the accomplishments of his daughter, Kathryn, and his son, Michael, all the while apologizing for being a “stage father.” “Not to be piggy,” he wrote when sending in news of his daughter’s choir singing at Carnegie Hall soon after he had submitted a dean’s list notice for her.

His son had the lead in Guilderland High School’s spring musical and went on with the performance despite his father’s stroke. “Mikey feels like that’s his father’s legacy,” said Jennifer Amstutz, president of Albany Pro Musica at the time.

Born and raised on Long Island, Dr. Griggs-Janower was the son of the late Benjamin and Claire Janower. After graduating from Cornell, where he studied music theory and history, he earned master of music and doctor of music degrees in conducting from the Indiana University School of Music.

Since 1981, he was the director of choral music and professor at the University at Albany. That same year, he founded Albany Pro Musica.

Karen Hitchcock, the president of the University at Albany from 1996 until 2003 and currently the president of Albany Pro Musica, after Dr. Griggs-Janower's death, distributed statements from some of those who knew him best.

Dr. Hitchcock, herself, wrote, "David will live on in the continuing musical excellence of Albany Pro Musica, in the lifelong love of music he instilled in his students, and in all of us whom he inspired with his talent, his belief in the transformative power of great music, his commitment to excellence, and his devotion to the well-being of others."

Margery Whiteman, a singer with Albany Pro Musica for 28 years, wrote, "His restless study of the rich depths of the western choral tradition, as well as offerings from non-western cultures, ensured that the singing experience was forever fresh."

"David was always happy conducting," wrote Kopans, the executive director, "but I think he was happiest when leading APM along with the six or seven high school choruses we invited each year to the High School Choral Festival. He would look out at the audience and ask, 'Aren't these kids great!' with such joy in his voice."

Deirdre Michael, a soprano with Albany Pro Musica, wrote, "David demanded that we have high musical standards to match his own. But, more than that, he demanded that we feel and be moved. If we weren't moved, how could our audience be moved?"

"David was exasperatingly accurate at hearing what was going wrong and mirroring it back to us," wrote Sharon Roy, an Albany Pro Musica alto. "He could be sarcastic or just devastatingly accurate in showing us our mistakes. And wickedly funny. Sometimes I thought he aspired to be the Victor Borge of choral music."

"David introduced people unfamiliar with choral singing to its glories," wrote William Tuthill, an Albany Pro Musica bass. "He carried the message — lived the message — of why music matters. He bridged the gap between everyday life and choral music."

Dr. Griggs-Janower's everyday life was lived in Guilderland where his wife, Paige Griggs, is a teaching assistant at Lynnwood Elementary School. Dr. Griggs-Janower frequently dispatched e-mails and letters to the *Enterprise* editor, commenting insightfully and passionately on a wide range of topics.

The quotations he posted at the ends of his e-mails embodied both his precision with the practice of music and his understanding of its worth to society.

"Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life," he quoted from Berthold Auerbach.

Dr. Griggs-Janower also referenced Aristotle: "Although nature has gifted us all with voices, correct singing is the result of art and study."

Humor was important to Dr. Griggs-Janower, too. His e-mails quoted Michael Torke:

"Why waste money on psychotherapy when you can just listen to the B Minor Mass?"

And finally, he had this, from Winston Churchill, when asked about cutting arts funding to fuel the war machine: "Then what are we fighting for?"

— Melissa Hale-Spencer

From The Business Review: “A statement on the Albany Pro Musica Facebook page announcing Janower’s passing received dozens of comments from singers, orchestras around the country and others who described Griggs-Janower as having a tremendous talent, big heart and quick wit.”

Albany Pro Musica founder David Griggs-Janower dies

Pam Allen

Albany Business Review



David Griggs-Janower, founder of Albany Pro Musica and University at Albany

David Griggs-Janower, the founder of Albany Pro Musica, died Sunday at a Guilderland, NY nursing home.

Griggs-Janower, 60, suffered a major stroke while undergoing bone cancer surgery in March.

He was a music professor at the University at Albany and directed its choral activities. He was named outstanding conductor of the year in 2003 by the New York State American Choral Directors Association.

Prior to suffering the stroke, he directed Albany Pro Musica, the region’s most well-known choral ensemble, the group he founded in 1981.

A statement on the Albany Pro Musica Facebook page announcing Janower’s passing received dozens of comments from singers, orchestras around the country and others who described Griggs-Janower as having a tremendous talent, big heart and quick wit. The organization’s Facebook post, which appeared Sunday, said Griggs-Janower’s “generous support of students, musicians and colleagues forged strong arts bonds not just here in the Capital Region, but throughout the choral world.”

Griggs-Janower, of Guilderland, is survived by his wife, Paige Griggs, a soprano in Albany Pro Musica; and two children.

From Hudson Sounds: “David was an exceptional person with remarkable music talents, passion for excellence, and caring for others and his community, whether it was the greater Capital Region or the global choral community. He chose to share his talents, insights, and passions with us and through that he brought joy, care, and support to many, personally and professionally.”

David Griggs-Janower

BY LIZ FRIEDMAN



We are saddened to post that Albany Pro Musica’s Founding Artistic Director

and Conductor Emeritus, **David Griggs-Janower** passed away Sunday, August 25th. As noted in correspondence from Albany Pro Musica, “It is impossible to quantify the impact he had on thousands of musicians over his 30+ year career. David’s generous support of students, musicians and colleagues forged strong arts bonds not just here in the Capital Region, but throughout the choral world.”

David was an exceptional person with remarkable music talents, passion for excellence, and caring for others and his community, whether it was the greater Capital Region or the global choral community. He chose to share his talents, insights, and passions with us and through that he brought joy, care, and support to many, personally and professionally.

Indeed, more will be related over the next year while we—as family, friends, and professional community—adjust to this loss, but it is a comfort to know that the beloved Maestro is now at peace. *Shalom.*

From The Times Union: *"...In rehearsal he was known to be an exacting and effective taskmaster, supplementing scholarship and experience with well-aimed humor to coax the best from his singers. He loved love songs — he especially liked to conduct them in the spring — and regarded vocal music as "so personal...part of human being, and part of every culture."*



David Griggs-Janower, the impassioned and rigorous conductor who founded Albany ProMusica and shaped it into the region's preeminent choral group, died Sunday afternoon at a Guilderland nursing home, a spokesman for the organization said. He was 60. He had suffered a major stroke while undergoing surgery for bone cancer on March 8.

"David's untimely passing is such a terrible loss — to his students who treasured him as a caring mentor and inspiring teacher, to his beloved Albany Pro Musica singers, who for over 30 years had the rare privilege of working with such a uniquely talented artist. David shared with all of them his deep love of music and his uncompromising commitment to excellence in its performance," said Karen Hitchcock, former president of the University at Albany and chairwoman of the Albany Pro Musica board of trustees. "David will live on in the continuing musical excellence of Albany Pro Musica, in the lifelong love of music he instilled in his students, and in all of us whom he inspired with his talent, his belief in the transformative power of great music, his commitment to excellence and his devotion to the well-being of others. Our beloved maestro will be deeply missed, but long remembered and celebrated by all fortunate enough to have known this exceptional man."

Janower, who lived in Guilderland, was a professor of music at UAlbany and directed the University Chamber Singers, guiding generations of young singers with his expertise, encouragement and wit.

Over a career that spanned several decades and both coasts, Janower taught at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, conducted at Williams, Skidmore and Cornell and served in various capacities, for several years apiece, with the Oregon Bach Festival and the Aspen Music Festival Choral Institute. Closer to home, he guest-conducted the Albany Symphony Orchestra and the Mendelssohn Club and directed the choir at Albany's First Presbyterian Church. He also led the Berkshire Bach Society and, back in the late 1980s and '90s, served as the first conductor and a frequent guest conductor of the now-defunct St. Cecilia Orchestra.

"Audiences, singers and music students of all ages were not the only ones to benefit from David's influence," said William Tuthill, an APM bass since 1997. "David introduced people unfamiliar with choral singing to its glories. He carried the message — lived the message — of why music matters. He bridged the gap between everyday life and choral music."

Born and reared in the Long Island hamlet of Jericho, Janower graduated from Cornell in 1977 and, three years later, earned his doctorate in conducting from the Indiana University School of Music. After a year at Greensboro he came north, joining the faculty at UAlbany and founding Albany Pro Musica in 1981.

In 1987 he married Paige Griggs, adding her name to his. They raised two children, Michael and Katy. His wife is a soprano in Albany Pro Musica, and both children are preparing in college for music careers.

From its earliest seasons, Albany Pro Musica distinguished itself with its professional-grade performances of unearthed or overlooked works from the choral repertoire. In remarks to the Times Union in March 1986, Janower said he "intentionally avoided the kinds of pieces you can hear elsewhere around here — even at Tanglewood and Saratoga" and, instead, chose such works as Anton Bruckner's Magnificat in B-flat, which had not been performed since the composer's death in 1896.

In 1989, talking again to the Times Union, he wondered about the group's low profile and asked: "Why doesn't Albany notice us more?"

It did. Over the years, Albany Pro Musica amassed audiences, accolades and recordings, becoming both the premier choral ensemble in the region and, along with the Albany Symphony, a pillar on the classical music landscape. In addition, Janower and the APM participated in arts-in-education programs at Albany High School and other area schools.

"David was always happy conducting, but I think he was happiest when leading APM along with the six or seven high school choruses we invited each year to the High School Choral Festival. He would look out at the audience and ask, 'Aren't these kids great!' with such joy in his voice. Music education was so important to him," said APM Executive Director Matthew Kopans.

A man of robust and well-articulated views, he also blogged for timesunion.com and contributed regularly to the TU letters page, offering lively opinions on matters political and cultural. He proposed carpooling on the Northway, urged tolerance for Muslims, rebutted biblical objections to gay marriage and expressed disbelief at the thought of a 16-ounce steak ("An entire pound of steak? Who eats that much?").

In his last missive, published in July 2012, he took issue with arguments that cutting state legislators' per diems would hurt the Albany restaurant business. ("Seriously, we could give food vouchers to people below the poverty line to spend at downtown restaurants. Wouldn't this be better?")

In rehearsal he was known to be an exacting and effective taskmaster, supplementing scholarship and experience with well-aimed humor to coax the best from his singers. He loved love songs — he especially liked to conduct them in the spring — and regarded vocal music as "so personal...part of human being, and part of every culture." After his stroke, Albany Pro Music performed the remainder of its seasons with guest conductors, dedicating its two love-themed concerts to Janower.

Music Mobile founder and director Ruth Pelham, writing in the Times Union in March 14, said Janower "spent much of his life bringing beauty, inspiration, passion, hope, vision, integrity, knowledge and community spirit to thousands of us living here in the Capital Region and beyond."

From WNYT: *"Albany Pro Musica mourns death of founder."*

From The Troy Record: *David Griggs-Janower, founder, artistic director and conductor of Albany Pro Musica, is being remembered for his love of music and his commitment to excellence in its performance.*

From WAMC: *“There’s a mournful tune playing this week in the Capital Region’s musical community. David Griggs-Janower, who died Sunday from complications of a stroke, was the face of choral music in the region for decades.”*

Capital Region Music Icon Dies at 60

By JESSICA BLOUSTEIN MARSHALL

There’s a mournful tune playing this week in the Capital Region’s musical community. David Griggs-Janower, who died Sunday from complications of a stroke, was the face of choral music in the region for decades.

"He really was, I think, one of the finest choral conductors anywhere in the United States and one with a really major national reputation," said Albany Symphony Orchestra conductor David Alan Miller, who frequently collaborated with Griggs-Janower. Miller remembers him as a consummate musician.

"His style was pretty low key because he was such a gentle, patient, decent human being," Miller said. "He wasn't one of those tempestuous guys who would throw his baton and scream and yell. He got incredible results from Pro Musica."

Griggs-Janower started Albany Pro Musica 32 years ago and shaped it into a high-profile choral ensemble that performs around the region and the world. Times Union editor Rex Smith has been a member of Pro Musica for 14 years. Smith says the loss is devastating.

"It's a great loss to the Capital Region music scene and to many of us personally. But we are guided and transformed by David, and will always have that as our memory of him and as that changing force in all of our lives."

Griggs-Janower was also a venerated music professor at the University at Albany, leading the University Chamber Singers and acting as mentor to many students pursuing music.

Griggs-Janower’s impressive repertoire doesn’t end there. He also served as music director of the Berkshire Bach Society, choir director at First Presbyterian Church of Albany and as guest conductor for a variety of other musical ensembles in the region. He has been honored with numerous awards, including Outstanding Conductor of the Year by the New York State American Choral Directors Association.

Griggs-Janower was born in Long Island, graduated from Cornell and earned a doctorate in conducting from Indiana University. He was 60 and had been in poor health since the stroke in March.

From musicians, colleagues, students and friends:

From Sheri Bauer-Mayorga, APM Alto/accompanist, 2010–present: *How we will miss a great humanitarian, musician, and scholar, the incomparable, David Griggs-Janower. The world cannot have too many of such a one as these. The loss of this person is great in the world's balance. Still, his sincerity, generosity, and genuine compassion proved that such goodness does not disappear, but kindles and magnifies itself in others. I feel it in myself, I see it in my fellow APM singers, in the mission statement and activities of Albany Pro Musica, in the APM community, and in the greater choral community.*

David was generous with his time. He had such ease in sharing his insights, experiences, and musical resources with fellow musicians. He cared deeply for the world's people and efforts to right injustice and unfairness in the world. David was an excellent human being.

I interviewed David twice for my classical radio show on WGXC in Hudson. The interviews were centered on building a biographical portrait in sound and story of a devoted musician and teacher. I asked him to bring music which influenced him as a boy, to speak on his early training as a musician, and lead up to the point in time when he made a conscious decision to study choral music. A few points stood out as key in the telling of his personal story. I learned that he listened intently to not only classical music, but folk music as well. The words to many Weavers, Phil Ochs, Tom Lehrer, and Tom Paxton songs were enviably always on the tip of his tongue. The songs' contents appealed to his political concerns, sense for irony, and choice of activism through music. Besides, they were songs and "song" was soul food for this person. David played the piano chords to these songs as a young boy and insisted that it was this chordal self-training, this primarily vertical listening to harmony over horizontal listening of melody, which assisted his reading of choral and orchestral scores. I wanted to know what other sounds lived in his boyhood memory. Apparently there were not a lot of records in his home, but his father did sing. Ah, songs again! What music?: Mario Lanza, "The Student Prince," his father's voice as cantor for the synagogue, the Mamas and the Papas, Peter, Paul & Mary, choral music of Johann Sebastian Bach. Where did the passionate draw to Johann Sebastian Bach begin? As in all such stories there is usually a teacher in high school who can see a student who is reaching for something not defined and assists them in the search. David had such a high school teacher in his life who gave him the present of the Bach "B Minor Mass" score as a gift, knowing that

one day he would conduct it. David said that it wasn't until he was a few years into college that he decided to pull out all stops and study choral music. He learned from the great masters of the choral tradition in America, Julius Hereford, Margaret Hillis, Helmuth Rilling, Fiora Contino, and John Nelson, listening and learning from everyone he met.

When I met David, only four years ago, it seems his energy for learning had only increased from that point. It would be easier to make a list of which concerts he didn't go to and which books he didn't read. David's path was truly unique and self-propelled. He was a perpetual student, great musician, and fine scholar and I can't imagine that his love for this path ever waned. "Never stop learning," was the background to the conversations I had with him. I was intrigued to learn his biography. I was a similar student and I clearly understood why I wanted to work with him. It takes a nerd to know a nerd. I recognized myself in him. As a child, what I needed as a musician was not so easily available, but I heard the threads in the sounds of music around me. I became a super-sleuth for all information musical and spiritual sparked by a desire to understand everything. My early resources were limited. I'm pretty good at finding what I sense is out there, but when I met David I had met my match. Actually, perhaps in this realm he was my superior. (Perhaps he just got a ten year head start.) As fellow super-sleuth, I plan to carry on and pass on the tradition. I'm only further fueled by my appreciation for all which David shared with me. To quote the song of Sonny and Cher, "The beat goes on...la di dah di dee, la di dah di dah."

From Ann Casey Bullock, APM soprano, 1988–present: *In 1991, when APM was preparing what I believe was its first performance of the Bach B minor Mass, David, who was preparing his own translations (!) was stumped on a two syllable translation for the German word "Holle" meaning "hell." He brought this question up in rehearsal and asked for suggestions. From the back of the room came Frank Leavitt's answer: "Potsdam." The room exploded with laughter, no one laughing harder than DJ.*

I learned several things then: first, DJ was brilliant (whoever would prepare their OWN English translations from the German of such a monumental work ????) Secondly, in case we hadn't noticed, DJ had a zest for life and a sense of humor that never stopped. And, perhaps most important in retrospect, DJ looked at music and music-making as a group effort: from taking suggestions (when asked!) on a word choice (I think he actually used "darkness" which came from several of us) to his never-ending quest for the perfect vowel—from everyone—music and the pursuit of beauty is not a passion to be pursued individually, but a love to be shared.

In David's honor, I hope we will all work a little harder; laugh more; and marvel at the love and beauty that surround us which can best be shared through music.

From Valerie Donovan, APM soprano 1991–present: *It is indeed a great sadness that David Griggs-Janower has passed. Such an untimely, far-reaching loss. In 1991, as a lawyer, mother, and recent transplant to Albany, my acceptance as a soprano by David into APM was truly a seminal event for me. I was thrilled that I could work and create beautiful music with APM. We may not have been a paid chorus, but our work ethic—spurred by David's devotion and talent—culminated in a 22 year professional, sonorous, and life enriching experience for me. David was the consummate musician and spirited leader—he was attuned to every aspect of assuring APM's high musical quality and exposing the gift of music to all in the Capital region. He was devoted to his family, his choruses and to the betterment of the human and world spirit. I will miss you, David, and I thank you so much for the good times.*

From Margie Dunn, SUNYA Chorale member: *I was thrilled to discover from a colleague that David welcomed members of the community to join in the U of Albany chorus. Although I could only spare to “skip out a bit early from work” for a semester, I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity last Fall (2012) to join in. I immediately appreciated David's expertise as a musician and teacher as well as his great humor. My background is limited—mostly just small church groups—so it was a great privilege to perform at Proctor's last December with the orchestra. The music from the experience will live with me forever. It is with a heavy heart that I send my condolences to the Griggs-Janower family.*

From Ann Marie Grathwol, APM alto 2006–present: *During the last several years of singing with APM, I started noticing that I could hear David's guidance in my head no matter when or where I was singing, whether it was an APM rehearsal or not. “That word has an ugly vowel, this note needs more color, you don't have the melody here, etc.” I once told DJ that I couldn't get his commentary out of my head and he was very happy. “Then my job is done,” he said, looking quite pleased.*

One of the pieces I most closely associate with David and APM is the Brahms Requiem, which contains the line, “daß sie ruhen von ihrer Arbeit; denn ihre Werke folgen ihnen nach / that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.” While the time for David to rest from his labors has come far too soon, he leaves behind a legacy of beautiful music and uncompromisingly high standards. The responsibility now lies with us as singers to carry his works forward by continuing to implement what he taught us in rehearsals. In David's own words, he did his job, as his direction became internalized for so many of us.

I am immensely grateful for the opportunity to sing with David and for the way he insisted on excellence from us. My life has been greatly enriched by his musical direction and friendship.

From Jonathan Hansen, APM tenor 2004–present: *I met David in 1996, when I was 17 years old, as a Freshman at the University of Albany, when I auditioned for the University Chamber Singers. Over the past 17 years, he has played an enormously significant role in my development as a musician. David had the very rare ability to connect with his students and his singers. This connection brought pride when he praised you and laughter when he flashed his brilliant sense of humor. This connection would also bring stress and guilt when you knew you weren't living up to his standards. David knew that through this roller coaster ride of emotions, superior musicianship would be born and thrive. Like all great leaders, David knew how to motivate his singers. He knew that if he made you feel special, you would believe you were special, and you would then commit yourself to achieving special things.*

In addition to being a natural leader, David was an extremely talented musician. He played piano, but he wasn't virtuosic. He sang, but he wasn't a gifted soloist. He was, however, the greatest conductor I ever had the privilege to perform under. In the same way that he connected with his students and singers, he connected with the music, in deep and profound ways. He could gracefully shape the chorus's sound with subtle hand gestures or facial expressions—a slight cup of his hands for a warmer, richer tone, or a raise of the eyebrows for a more exciting passage—while simultaneously conducting so clearly and with such unwavering precision that the technical accuracy of the chorus was always preserved.

David's passion and artistic vision was infectious. He always pushed his ensembles, most particularly Albany Pro Musica, to work harder and dream bigger. You just knew his career and artistry were on a perpetually upward trajectory, and you wanted to be along with him for the ride.

After growing up under his watchful eye for my entire adult life, losing David is like losing a parent, and I know there are hundreds of other students and singers who feel exactly the same way. While nothing can be done or said to fill that void, we can continue on the musical course he has set for us, the one with the perpetually upward trajectory, fueled by the passion and commitment that he has nurtured within us, and guided into the future by our undying memory of him.

From Colin Helie, APM bass 1983–present: *David Janower. David Griggs-Janower. Our conductor. Our Artistic Director. Our leader. Our inspiration. My dear, dear friend.*

I auditioned for Albany Pro Musica in January of 1983, at the urging of a fellow singer in my church choir. Little did I know it would be a more than 30-year engagement that has been musically and personally enriching, to the point of it being a huge part of my life.

My first concert with Albany Pro Musica was an a cappella concert featuring a very demanding piece by Benjamin Britten: Rejoice in the Lamb. How amazed I was as David pulled every nuance—every subtlety—out of the chorus. He always wanted us to understand every word of the text, and everything that the composer wanted to say. I do believe this this was one of David's strongest assets.

Then, in succeeding years, we went on to Bach. Ah, Bach. David had studied at the Oregon Bach Festival under Helmuth Rilling, one of the foremost Bach interpreters of our time. It showed.

Oh, my—how he inundated us with Bach's tone-painting, his incredible love of every note. Oh my, how David loved Bach.

Then, through the years, Holiday Concerts, more Bach, Mozart, Mahler, Stravinsky, Beethoven, Dvorak, Schubert. Collaborations with David Allan Miller and the Albany Symphony. More music than you could ever imagine.

And the current, living composers. David, as the choral conductor at the State University of New York at Albany, would receive hundreds of manuscripts every year. He would put them into piles: Songs about dance. Songs about love. Songs about animals. Christmas songs. Funny songs. Songs about sadness. Songs about flowers. Songs about death. And on and on. Then, when he had time, mostly during his summer "vacation," he would listen or play these pieces through, throwing out many, but keeping others. This is how he put together our Christmas and a cappella concerts. He never stopped working. Never.

A word must be said about our tours—and this was all David.

First we were accepted and performed at American Choral Director Association conferences in Boston, Philadelphia (twice,) San Antonio (twice) Baltimore and Providence. What a thrill it has been to sing in front of David's peers—his fellow choral conductors. Talk about a knowledgeable (and critical!) audience. He was amazingly well respected.

Now on to our international tours.

First was the Czech Republic and Salzburg. We performed at Smetana Hall in Prague and St. Peter's church in Salzburg. We ate at the restaurant in the basement of St. Peter's. It's the oldest continuously serving restaurant in the world. They've been serving there since 932 AD. David liked to say, "We ordered the mutton." Such a thrilling trip.

And then in June of 2004, one of the life-changing highlights of all of those who were there—we sang at the 60th anniversary of D-Day at the American Cemetery in Normandy at Omaha Beach. David's father-in-law, Jerry Griggs, represented the American forces as he, along with a Frenchman and an Englishman, presented a wreath at the statue of Freedom, while APM, along with a band from Valley Forge, PA, sang "America the Beautiful." (My dad had been a member of the invading forces in 1944, so I was an absolute basket-case for all of this.) Thank you, David, for this especially.

And then on to a concert at Notre Dame in Paris. Glorious.

And the next trip to Spain. Glorious.

And then Italy, where we sang a Mass at St Mark's in Venice We sang Monteverdi and Gabrieli—both of whom were music directors in this fabulous place.

And the next one to Ireland, where we sang at St. Patrick's in Dublin. And we had a Guinness or two afterwards. Or three. This was our last tour.

What am I missing? Oh, so much. 30 years.

David, the educator: He was so important to this community. He instituted the High School Choral Festival, the APM Apprentice program. The Albany High School collaboration, one thing after another. I think above all, David was an educator. His commitment was to bring good music—good art—to everyone.

I always felt that every single Tuesday night rehearsal was a voice lesson. David entreating us to open our mouths; to sing good vowels: to sit up straight; to understand what the song is about; to GET IT...as he always did.

Lastly, David the husband and father. This was his essence. Paige, Katie and Mikey were his life, his loves, his joys.

But bringing Bach, Brahms, Mozart and Beethoven to his singers and his audience was a close second.

I really miss this man. Most of all, I miss my friend. The guy who sent me dirty jokes via email. The guy who would down a glass of Guinness or a fine glass of wine with me. The guy who complained about this person or that, but who would figure out some way to get older voices to blend with younger. The guy who understood when I was going through difficult changes in my own personal life.

David Griggs-Janower—my best friend. Oh, how I miss you.

From Karen Hitchcock, President, Board of Directors, Albany Pro Musica: *David Griggs-Janower, founding artistic director and conductor emeritus of Albany Pro Musica, and professor of Music at the University at Albany, brought his unique talents and artistry to thousands upon thousands of us in the Capital Region and beyond. He was, simply put, a major force in the world of choral music. And if there is one thing our dear David would have wished for us all, it is that the music would go on, that it would continue to inspire, excite and comfort.*

David passed away Sunday, and we already miss him beyond words, and in so many different ways. Those fortunate enough to have sung under his direction in Albany Pro Musica, the University Chorale, the University at Albany Chamber Singers and so many other ensembles for more than three decades will miss his energy, his commitment to excellence in performance, his passion and his conviction that music can be transformative. Through his talents, through his caring and through his generosity of spirit, those of us privileged to have known him have, indeed, been transformed.

His singers and students of all ages have become more accomplished vocalists, more sensitive to the profound messages that great music can convey. His audiences have become more engaged listeners, enthralled by the beauty of the moment.

But, most of all, we have become better, more giving human beings for having known him. He has touched so many lives, in ways large and small.

Like so many others, I have been buoyed by his tenderness and concern at difficult moments in my life. And, like many others, I have also been brought firmly back to earth by his perceptiveness and wit—but always, always with a gentle touch. His sensitivity to the needs and the pain of other people was unparalleled. He knew the right words, and always said them at the right time, and in the right way.

As a musician, David was encyclopedic, but never arrogant, in his knowledge of the repertoire. His delight in conveying to the singers the meaning of the text and nuances of the score was palpable, as was his displeasure if he perceived a lack of engagement with the music. David had the rare ability to create an atmosphere at every concert of a

shared journey, of an experience unique to that moment and to each member of the chorus and each member of the audience—intimate, meaningful and unforgettable. The music was the vehicle, and David, our beloved conductor, brought it to life and filled the hall with beauty and joy.

Throughout David's long illness, hundreds upon hundreds of his friends and colleagues from around the country, and beyond, wrote to thank him for being such a force in their lives, for enriching their journey and for caring so deeply. One especially touching tribute from a former student was entitled "Don't Wait: Tell Them." I know David agreed with this philosophy; indeed, he lived it. He never waited till "tomorrow" to extend his hand to others, to let them know what they meant to him. He freely shared his love, and that love came back to him many-fold.

So, David, while your passing has brought a stillness born of grief and loss, know that we all will, very soon, sing for you again—sing with the joy of having experienced your prodigious artistic talents; sing with the joy of having shared your delight in the beauty of music in all its forms; and sing with the joy of having known someone who cared so deeply and loved so well.

The music will go on, David, and it goes on for you.

From Tom Johnston, APM tenor 2001–present: *My deepest connection with David was in his passion to deliver meaningful and heart felt music to the world. While he was not a religious man, he was one of the most spiritual people I have ever met. He truly cared for his fellow man, woman and child. This was always reflected in his musical choices and musical direction. His caring was true and honest, not originating from a need for recognition or reward.*

The time spent on tours is what I will remember the most. Those were the times that we had the most fun. Six or eight of us spontaneously sang some sacred song in an ancient cathedral. To hear that beautiful music sung where it was first performed so many years ago. And then to have all the visitors applaud when we finished. It was so fulfilling. We visited so many beautiful and exciting places. Eight separate tours either with APM or Chamber singers. I have memories that will last a lifetime.

My favorite concert was Bach's B--minor mass. When we started rehearsing the work, I thought—I'll never get this. It was difficult and complex on so many different levels. David knew this piece backwards and sideways. He understood all of the nuisances and structure that Bach incorporated in the work. I was intrigued and inspired to work at it, and I learned to love the work. He had that unique ability to inspire and excite.

Most of all, I will miss his sarcasm and humor. If you didn't carry your weight, he would let you know it. Rehearsals were for perfecting not learning the piece. Often there was a lot of music to prepare. If life got busy it was hard to keep up. He wouldn't accept any excuses. The passion for excellence is so difficult to instill in 50 people. He believed that this volunteer chorus was capable, and he was right.

When I auditioned for the group in the summer of 2001, I thought getting in was a long shot. David was positive and constructive with his advice. He was able to see people's potential and provided guidance to foster the best of everyone.

I feel blessed to have known such a profound and significant man. My life has been enriched by the experience. Because I knew him, I have been changed for good.

From Deirdre Michael, APM soprano 1996–2001, 2010–present: *To me, David, in his role as a conductor, was three things—elegance, truth and passion. David had a way of finding the heart of every piece we sang, of finding the kernel of truth that spoke to everyone, regardless of age, gender or situation. He stood in front of us, guiding us, leading us to that truth, and through him, its meaning was amplified to and for our audience.*

Leading us to that truth often meant he demanded a lot of us—he was picky, and he demanded that we have high musical standards to match his own. But more than that, he demanded that we feel and be moved. If we weren't moved, how could our audience be moved? David's insistence on excellence not only deepened our audience's experiences, but enriched our lives as well.

I often feel that our audience missed out on some of the most wonderful moments of our concerts, because they couldn't see David's face when it was radiant with joy, his gentle hands when they finally gave the last downbeat of a piece that none of us wanted to let go of, even his amusement when things didn't go quite as planned. The joy of singing with David was very rooted in his passion for music, but also in his wonderful sense of humor.

Most singers learn how to "read" a conductor. Conductors carry the ictus of the beat in different parts of their bodies. Some are in their head or neck. In some, it's the elbows. Others, it's the shoulders. David was a shoulder man, but his elegant cut-offs were always in his fingers. The lift and intensity of a phrase was always in his palm. As the years went by, and as we became more used to "reading" David, our singing and our expression became tied to the nuances of how he moved his body.

After 25+ years of singing with David, and after 25+ years of being responsive to his smallest cue, I am still having a hard time believing that that physical connection won't be there. I'll always be looking for that raised eyebrow, that sly smile, that gentle dove-like motion when he let a cut-off go. Those cues won't be visible anymore, but I will feel them in my heart.

From Starr Norman, APM alto 1981, APM accompanist 2003–2013: *David Michael Janower. How does one put his essence into words?*

I always joked with David that he was my right arm and that was true in so many ways. Something about his conducting always brought out the best in my playing. He constantly challenged me to achieve more than I ever thought possible, to get beyond the notes as a soloist as well as an accompanist. As a mentor, David always found the time to send opportunities my way. He was immensely generous to my family, freely giving of his time to council our children, to make college audition recordings, to be present at every recital they gave, to send opportunities their way. I know he did this for many others as well. His love of travel was infectious and as a result he was responsible for my very first flight...and it was to Spain! From there I experienced France and Italy with both UA Chamber Singers and APM. This was a true bonding experience for the accompanist whose musical experience with the group(s) was mostly from the piano bench (though he did allow me to sing with APM on occasion).

David's passion for the choral art was unsurpassed. I was so amazed when we returned to the Capital region in 2001 to see that APM was still healthy and functioning in a culture that does not often value the choral art. Over time I realized that this was due to David's tireless efforts to keep the group on the cutting edge, to find financial and performing opportunities keeping the group solvent, to educate, to mentor, to plan for the future beyond his tenure. David was Albany Pro Musica and Albany Pro Musica is his crowning achievement, his legacy. I am so proud to have been a small part of it all.

I have never known such a generous person in his drive to make the world a better place. David gave up time to work with Habitat for Humanity and often organized fund drives, bottle drives, and gave his time and money for various causes. He shared innumerable books and publications that opened my eyes to injustice and worldwide need.

David had an innate curiosity and a keen intellect that was unquenchable. I never had a conversation with him that I didn't learn something new. His energy was boundless. His interests were insatiable. AND, he punctuated all of this with a wonderful witty humor

that kept us all laughing. He experienced life to the max. I have to wonder if he knew his life would be cut short.

I miss my friend and pray that he is finally at peace. He is a huge loss that leaves a terrible hole in all of our lives. The full impact of his loss has yet to be realized. I do hope he will forgive my feeble attempt here to remember him!

From Deborah Hildreth Phelps, APM soprano 1988–1998: *I met David at the 1988 APM Christmas concert at St. Paul's Episcopal Church. I was so impressed, I asked, "How do I join this group?" He said, well, you have to audition, but I'm going to Eastern Europe in January with the SUNY chorus. So if you're willing to go to the first five APM rehearsals and then audition when I get back, with the possibility that you won't get in, then I'll see you when I get back. So that's what I did, and I got in (January, 1989)!*

I sang for 10 years in the APM core group and the 11th year in the expanded chorus. I was lucky to perform during the 10th and 20th Anniversary years and to perform at the National Choral Director's Conventions in San Antonio TX in 1993 and a few years later in Philadelphia PA.

David was a demanding choral director. His attention to detail and deep understanding of the meaning imbedded in both the words and music; and his passionate ability to mold the sound clearly, expressively and poignantly, allowed a rich experience for both musicians and audience.

I was a high--voice soprano and one of David's "birds" (with Paige and Meg Gallien)—high, light, lyric. Under his direction, my musical skills and knowledge were greatly expanded. The knowledge, confidence and emotional connection with the music that I possessed each time I stepped on stage with APM was unmatched in my life and a testament to David's style of directing—providing a musical and scholarly depth of knowledge of each piece. His choice of music was inspiring and different...We didn't simply 'sing the old standards'.

When my daughter, Eleanor transferred to U. Albany, David took her under his wing and supported and encouraged her musically. She was an APM baby and attended many rehearsals when she was very young, occasionally singing along (on pitch) with the sopranos.

I am so blessed to have known him. He will be greatly missed.

From Sharon Roy, APM soprano (now alto) 30 years: *I sang with David for 30 years, traveled with him to France, Spain, Italy and Ireland, and to ACDA conventions around*

the US. I learned so much from him and grew as a choral singer because of him. I can't tell you how much I miss him. Not that he was an easy guy to get along with! I remember staying up all night translating the last (almost forgotten) pages of our program for the trip to France. When we got to the bus and open the box of freshly printed programs, the first thing he noticed was a typo. He could spot a typo a mile away—just not his own! APMers have all had the experience of puzzling over one of his "coded" messages. I bugged him to let someone proofread messages he planned to send to the group, and sometimes he did. But most of the time he was in too much of a hurry. And that's the thing. He could never keep up with all the ideas he had. There was always something else to try, another project to take on. Never enough time.

In the early days of APM, we took on challenging new music. Old timers will always remember is "Carols of Death" by William Schuman. Impressive to other choral conductors, but not a crowd-pleaser. In time he realized that we had to give something to the audience. His motto became, "Beautiful words to beautiful music—there isn't time for anything else."

It wasn't just drawing a crowd that was important, but educating the community about choral music. So many people associate choral music with bad church choirs or being asked not to sing during their elementary school concert. He was passionate about taking music to the community that would touch their hearts and give them something to think about. And he was passionate about giving young people the experience of singing excellent choral music and showing them they could make it a part of their lives forever. That's what the high school choral fest and the Albany High School artist in residence programs were all about.

Once I teased him about still wearing his contacts when I had given up on mine years ago. He said he had to wear them for the same reason he had laser surgery: "They have to see my eyes. It's true. He conducted with his hands, his mouth, even his feet, but most of all, with his eyes. It was uncanny how he maintained eye contact with every member of the chorus. If you weren't watching, you heard about it!"

He was sometimes frustrated that he had to say the same things over and over at rehearsals. Why couldn't we just remember to sing long, open vowels? To sing beautifully all the time? "Oh, why didn't I think to mention you should sing beautifully?" "Never sing louder than you can sing beautifully!" "Sing as if you believe it!" And that was the most important thing. He wanted us to sing with heart, with expression, with passion.

In rehearsals he was exasperatingly accurate at hearing what was wrong and mirroring it back to us. He could be sarcastic or just devastatingly precise in showing us our mistakes. And wickedly funny—the Victor Borge of choral music.

I miss him, but his voice, his heart, his eyes will be with me forever.

From Helene Runion, APM soprano 2002–present: *I never really put much time into practicing choral music. Unlike chemistry and trigonometry, music came a bit easy to me and so I would just show up at a rehearsal and sing. That is until I joined A.P.M. and started singing with David. After a few shameful weeks of rehearsals I realized that not only did I need to practice before I came to rehearsal, but I was going to be practicing practically every day of the week. As David would say, “don’t leave you’re practicing till the night before a rehearsal”. Little did I know that David would instill in me the kind of discipline I never had nor understood in all of my years in school and higher education.*

Surprisingly, I began to look forward to practicing. I would hear David’s voice in my head as I took apart the notes, rhythms, dynamics, and texts. I even praised myself for being able to think like him and I would try to predict what he might say about a particular measure or text.

But the true experience came with the concerts. Because of the preparation I had done I was able, for the first time, to completely experience the passion of the music that I was singing as I had never before experienced it.

I thank you David, with all my heart, for showing me how to attain so much more from music and from life!

From David C. Scheiber, APM bass 2011–2012, APM apprentice 2003: *I was only in APM for one year, not counting the Itaipu concert as a high school senior in 2003. But David Griggs-Janower kept showing up to things I was a part of growing up—as a clinician with nearly every school choir I ever sang with, as the narrator of Peter and the Wolf in the Guilderland Town Band, and so many others. His influence had a profound impact on my decision to become a choral music educator—and particularly my decision to return to the classroom after a year’s hiatus. I will never forget you, David, or Dr. Janower as I knew you as a student. I will cherish the music—from Sondheim to Carmina Burana, you were never afraid to Stomp Your Foot upon the floor, nor raise a pint of Guinness at the end of a concert well done, until, some nights, the Milkman DID walk with mysterious movements. I will miss your energy, your verve and your chutzpah. Many thanks for all you have given me.*

From Amy Shake, soprano & APM Apprentice 2004: *The one and only time I ever had the pleasure of really working with Dr. Janower was in 2004 as a high school senior in the APM Apprentice Program. It was my first time working with any sort of professional-level artists...and I was mortified. Then I opened up the score for the Verdi Requiem and I really thought I was done for! But David made the transition easy in two unique ways: (1) He made rehearsals enjoyable, simply by keeping everyone focused and working together—his energy was magnetic, and his knowledge was unparalleled. (2) He fostered a non-judgmental environment, where I was able to learn and sing and make acquaintances and be proud of what I was doing.*

I went away to college, got my Bachelor's degree in Vocal Performance...and promptly moved home. I didn't quite know where to go from there. I continued voice lessons, performed in a recital or two...and next thing I know, I receive an email from DJ saying he was proud of my work and wanted me to sing for him—he wanted to help me take the next step as a musician. Since then, it seemed as if he was my number one supporter. Even with seven hundred billion other singers always clamoring for his guidance and attention, he never let me feel as if I were on the periphery. He became a mentor and a friend—one of THOSE people—the type of person to whom you feel you owe your soul and your first-born child, and can't say hi to without a warm hug and genuine smile.

That, among many things, is what truly made him special. He was the true essence of what a teacher should be—intelligent, caring, compassionate and always willing to help. What I took from him in just a short time will be with me for the rest of my life and career.

This is a terribly difficult time, but rest soundly knowing that he was loved and appreciated, and that he gave all he could give each and every day of his life.

From Tony and Stephanie Siracusa: *The world of music is better because of David. Our condolences to the David's family. May he rest in peace.*

From Marion Roach Smith, writer, friend: *For all of us who have chosen to spend our lives with a man, there comes a moment when we realize that he is not—perfect. Shocking, I know. If we are determined to keep house together, we recalibrate our audit of the other to accommodate an outlook that speaks not necessarily to perfection, but perhaps perfect for the here and now. Perfect for us.*

For instance, maybe he's not handy. Possibly he thinks that a butter knife is a perfect substitute for a screwdriver. Ooops. Sorry. I was talking about my husband there,

though I do know that one of the many things that bound Rex and David, literally secured their friendship, was a shared, utterly unshakable belief that all things can be strengthened with just the right amount of duct tape.

One of the things that secured my friendship with David was that he was a magnificent liberal, one hallmark of which is being inclusive. Consider Passover at their house. They included my husband, who hails from South Dakota, part of America with no known ethnicity, me, a Shiksa from Queens, our daughter, born in China, and a smattering of others of unsteady claim to the Seder table. This inclusiveness extended to the celebration's date. Passover 2012, which officially began on April 7, was celebrated at the Griggs-Janowers' sometime closer to June. I've always suspected they did not want to exclude anyone who might actually be performing a more traditional rite.

Not that we were not traditional. Our celebration included a lusty singing of the beloved, thousand-year-old Dayenu, though it featured a muscular bass line arranged and performed by David that repeated "Oh, Baby," and supported us as perfectly as Gladys Knight was backed by her Pips, swinging beneath us, reassuring us that we were at the first Motown Seder this side of Detroit.

A perfect man for this time and place would choose among the seemingly insurmountable challenges of the world and take one on. What was David's? Understanding sopranos. This begins by interpreting their communications. If you've ever had news delivered to you by a soprano, you understand, especially if it was via that exotic game of telephone that goes from one soprano to the next. Along the way, the original news item gets transposed by each to a higher key. Ultimately, it's rather like getting Fox News delivered by the Rockettes. It's larger—and more festooned—than it was in its original format. Whenever my husband comes home with news from an Albany Pro Musica rehearsal, I ask him which section he heard it from.

I considered editing out that line, mentioning to Rex merely that I wrote something that might offend some sopranos, to which he soberly replied, "You mean it's like a viola joke?" I had no idea what he was talking about, until I remembered how deflated he was when David imparted to him the conductor's solemn code to never look at the trombone players. Apparently it only encourages them. My husband plays the trombone. He took this badly.

David and I agreed on a different solemn code, both of us believing that while marriage may be the hardest room to work in Las Vegas—and it is—that the proximity to perfection depends on the laugh track you choose to live with. Neither of us wanted an

easy laugh track, but one with the right amount of skepticism, intelligence and candor, that making that one person laugh is the hard work no paycheck can equal.

Paige has that laugh. Not easy to win, but a joy to behold. But David went one step closer to perfect, wanting also a gorgeous soundtrack for his life, and found it in the song of the finest woman he'd ever met.

Together they raised great children: Katy, who went right back to college this spring, despite the enormity of her family's grief, never considering an alternative; Michael, who strode out on stage on March 15, days after David's stroke, and belted out a Some Enchanted Evening as the lead in his high school's "South Pacific" that would make Enzo Pinza consider putting his vocal chords out to pasture.

David, going for perfection in this world, would only want the partner he did, and together they would raise their children to know that the reason the show must go on is because the love of life itself depends on it.

I'm not an APM-er. I'm a fan, an audience member, observing from the good seats. And in the years knowing the Griggs-Janowers my heart has sat right down in those good seats and paid attention. Here's the closest thing to perfection I've observed: It's Paige, speaking the phrase, "the Maestro," referring to David. When she does, she combines a hint of a wink with the hint of a girlish sigh, letting us listen in for a moment to the pitch we can all try to hit when choosing to make a life with one another.

From Rex Smith, Editor—Times Union, APM bass 1999—present: *He called me "Perry," or "Chief." David and I were born three weeks apart, in the waning months of the Truman administration, so we had the same cultural reference points. As little boys, we both watched the black-and-white Superman show on TV on Saturdays. I don't think the role model of Perry White is why I became a newspaperman, but I suspect The Daily Planet was the first newspaper David cared about. In any case, he became a lifelong, zealous newspaper reader, so Paige has asked me to say a few words about David and the newspaper.*

But doing that will carry me a bit beyond that specific assignment—because David's relationship to the newspaper was characteristic of the way he related to civic life more broadly.

I don't say this lightly: He was the most careful reader of the paper I know, from the comics pages, which he loved (especially "Pearls Before Swine")...to the news pages deep inside (where he was delighted to find grammatical errors and odd double

entendres in headlines)...to the opinion pages, where his thoughts often appeared in letters to the editor.

In fact, long before I knew David, I knew of him from his words in the paper, and so I was just a bit terrified when it came time to meet him. Because he was brilliant, you know. His thoughts were considered, his arguments well-reasoned, his words sharp. He wrote mostly on issues of justice and peace—themes that we all saw permeating his whole life: in his selections of music, in the good deeds he did for such organizations as the food bank, and in the causes big and small that he championed at just about every rehearsal, where he exhorted us to give, dollar by dollar.

It seems to me—if you'll permit a very amateur detour into the Hebrew language—that David personified the concept of "tzedakah." In English, we use the word "charity," but the Jewish tradition of tzedakah goes beyond that. Giving to the poor is not viewed as a generous or magnanimous act; it is simply an act of justice and righteousness. Tzedakah, David's way, is the performance of a duty—giving those in need their due, in word and in deed.

It was that drive for justice that so often propelled his letters to the editor, and, in more recent years, his blog on timesunion.com.

(Selections from David Janower's letters to the editor of the Times Union...)

Here, for example, is an excerpt from one of David's letters published in the Times Union in 1997, on people who cite the Bible as they oppose gay rights legislation:

"How arrogant to assume that we can decide that the injunction against homosexuality is a great and modern sin, while other laws are no longer valid. This is NOT a biblical argument. How convenient to choose what we like in the Bible to support our arguments and ignore the rest."

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Two years later, again chastising those who oppose gay rights:

"I cannot understand, nor tolerate, the religious right's fanatical obsession against homosexuality. Jesus' main message was love; the most important commandment is "love thy neighbor." How has that central message of Jesus been turned into "hate homosexuals?" It's pure bigotry. Jesus accepted everyone into his church, including prostitutes, lepers, tax collectors, and even politicians who couldn't pass a budget. The

church has done much to maintain discrimination against gays in this country, contrary to Jesus' message.

If you truly feel abortion is murder, then by all means peacefully protest. If you feel homosexuality is a sin, you have the freedom to hold that point of view, but don't foist that view on everyone else, and don't prevent gay people from living with the freedoms the rest of us have!

I think bigotry is a sin. Hmm, maybe we shouldn't let bigots marry..."

(This, recall, was 13 years before our state legislature assured that gays would have rights equal to straight people.)

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Two weeks after the 9/11 attacks, he wrote:

"The horrid events of Sept. 11 have struck a spot at my center that I'm not even sure I knew was there. Like many of us, I am immeasurably sad and angry and feeling frustrated and helpless, and I find myself crying at the TV and the newspaper. I am surprised at the depths of my sadness, and at the depths of my patriotism.

But I am also incredibly saddened by the individual vigilante attacks by some of our citizens against fellow Americans who are Muslim. ...If I may state the obvious, what we must remember about Muslim Americans and Native Americans, and gay Americans and Hispanic Americans and name-your-most-feared-group Americans is that they all have "American" as part of their name and part of who they are. How can we persecute them? It makes us no better than the terrorists."

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From 2003, a short letter, quoted here in its entirety:

"It's wonderful to see that Joe Bruno's struggle with prostate cancer has spurred him to spend a half million dollars of state money for public awareness of this curable disease.

The other side of the coin: Will he spend that much of our money on breast cancer awareness, or do we have to wait for him to get it? Ah, men in power..."

In other letters to the editor:

- He inveighed against Boy Scouts' prejudice (14 years before the Scouts accepted gay members)...
- against "blue laws" (since why should people who don't celebrate Sunday as a Sabbath not be able to buy wine on that day?)...
- in favor of expanding the bottle deposit law ("Do our landfills really distinguish between the glass of a wine bottle and the glass of a beer bottle?)...
- against the invasion of Iraq (arguing, "As bad as Saddam is, I'm incredibly suspicious of a war that so few people, and other nations, support.")...
- in defense of John Kerry's answer about abortion during the presidential candidate debate, which commentators had said Kerry mishandled. ("Bush scoffed at Kerry's response, wondering if he could understand it. My 12-year-old understood it, but then again, she reads more than Bush does.")

I'm honored to have been able to bring you some of David's words today. He had so much more to say, and we're all devastated that we won't be able to read and hear more of these pungent comments...to marvel at his broad intelligence and quick wit...to witness firsthand his deep commitments and passions.

But we were all so changed for the better by our time with him, that it would almost be ungrateful of us not to say, as the seder service reminds us, "Dayenu. It is enough." For in these years we have shared with him, David gave us more than we ever might have fairly asked for, more than any lesser man could have summoned. He was no man of steel, but on our Daily Planet, he was a true Super/man.

From Andrew Tidd, APM bass 2007-present: *In his e-mails to the chorus, David would include the Berthold Auerbach quote "Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life" in his signature. This quote perfectly embodied David's passion for music and for life as well. He lived to make music and he did everything he could to share and instill that passion into not only the chorus and his students, but to the community at large as well. He wanted everyone he met to live to make music, to wash away the dust of everyday life, as it were. His passion would always come through in our rehearsals, concerts, and his numerous e-mails to the chorus. David also had a unique ability to always press the right buttons as a conductor. He would command respect without being too demanding. His sense of humor would put everyone at ease without everyone losing focus on the music. He could communicate the subtleties of a text without being too literal, and he could convey his interpretation of the music without getting too bogged down in technicalities. Sadly, he is no longer with us, and for that we mourn, but anyone who has worked with or been taught by him has a greater passion*

for music, and consequently, a greater passion for life as well, and that is something we can celebrate.

From Anne Turner, voice teacher, former SUNYA music faculty colleague: *The first time I saw David, he was a lean (but not mean) conducting machine.*

As an adjunct instructor of voice in the Music Department at SUNY Albany, I had been invited to sit in on the conducting portion of his interview for assistant professor at the university. He was intense and articulate. He knew what he wanted. The students listened, and they responded.

A few months later, he was settling into his office two doors down from mine. And so, started our conversations, sometimes brief and sometimes longer, when either of us had breaks in our schedules.

David talked, and I listened. I learned that he was a wonderful “mistake,” born a few years after his older sister had been adopted. I learned that his father died of a heart attack when he was still a young kid in high school. I learned how much he loved his mother Claire. And I learned that he intended to found a community chorus that he was going to call Albany Pro Musica.

David had just come to SUNY when I had a concert at Troy Music Hall that he had to miss. But after it was broadcast on the radio, he took time out to call me, offering gracious praise. His opinion meant a great deal to me.

Over a period of many years, he hired me to sing as soprano soloist with the SUNY Chorale and with Albany Pro Musica. He was a fine conductor, immensely respectful of the music, and of me. I couldn't believe my luck, not only in getting to work with such a promising conductor, but to be singing high quality music, and to be treated so kindly.

One day, at the beginning of a fall semester—I don't remember the exact year—an extremely pretty young student came to my office with the wish to audition for me for private voice lessons. I accepted her, on the condition (as I did with all of my SUNY students) that she sing in the SUNY Chorale. So, I walked her down the hall, and introduced her to Dr. Janower. She became his choral assistant, and as they say, the rest is history.

A year or two later, in the fall of 1986, when my family and I were living outside of London, I received an airmail letter from David, announcing: “I'm gonna ask Paige to marry me!!!!” I wrote back with congratulations, and a few weeks later, received another letter from him: “We want you to sing at our wedding!!!!”

In the early spring of 1987, Paige and David came over to the house. I took out my binder of wedding music, and sat at the piano and played and sang a bunch of wedding songs for them. Paige chose the Bach--Gounod "Ave Maria," and David chose Ralph Vaughan Williams "The Call."

The day of their wedding in July 1987 was VERY hot and humid. First Pres. wasn't air-conditioned. Paige wore a beautiful long satin gown with long sleeves and a fairly high neckline. Her parents walked her down the aisle. I got a bird's eye view of this starry-eyed, adorable couple, both in white, as they exchanged their vows.

Later that summer, when I was immobilized in a bed at Albany Medical Center after extensive spinal surgery, David and Paige came to visit me with tales of their European honeymoon. I was so touched that they took the time to see me.

David was always terrifically supportive of my work with SUNYA students. He never missed one of their recitals, and was always warm and generous in his praise of them. When I received my full time position at Skidmore College, and had to resign from SUNYA, I was sad to leave David. He was a star for me—a lovely friend, a highly respected colleague, and a superlative musician.

Over the years, we maintained a cordial relationship, though we saw little of each other. I was continuously impressed with David's relentless pursuit of excellence in his professional life, and with the pride and love he carried for his beautiful wife Paige, and his two wonderful children, Katy and Michael.

He gave so much to everyone who passed his way, whether as his student, his APMer, colleague, or friend. He lived his life with meaning, love and unerring ethical purposefulness. He was the epitome of excellence, coupled with equal doses of humility and humanity. For David, it was about love, life, and music.

The likes of a man—"mensch" in Hebrew—like David comes along rarely. We all were so very lucky.

From William Tuthill, APM bass 1997–present: *While David's death was not unexpected, it still comes as an enormous shock and loss. It is simply impossible right now to get our heads around him not being here, because of his involvement in so many people's lives—lives in so many different communities, not just the music community that loved and looked up to him. He was a great musician and conductor, yes. But also a scholar; a teacher; a mentor; a father, husband and son; a writer; an organizer and an activist. The list of David's roles goes on. And he brought all of them to*

bear as founder, conductor and artistic director of Albany Pro Musica. We are privileged and honored to have been the recipients.

Albany Pro Musica was one of David's greatest passions. From 1981, when he and others got together to start the group, to the present day, David built, improved and stretched APM to become a great choral organization that now does so much more than the core subscription season. Just one example was David's devotion to education and his service to young people which resulted in APM's extensive Arts-in-Education program.

Audiences, singers and music students of all ages were not the only ones to benefit. People who might not have previously known about choral singing were introduced to its glories by David. He wanted everyone to share in his enthusiasm and wonder at it. David carried the message—lived the message—of why music matters in people's lives. He bridged the gap between everyday life and choral music, and made it one.

From Diane Warner, Artistic Director, Capital District Youth Chorale: *Last May, the Capital District Youth Chorale dedicated its year-end Talent Gala to David and included the attached tribute on the back cover of our program. As so many others have stated in their remembrances, David was unique in fostering the love of choral music in his own family, in APM, in his singers at SUNYA, and in the hearts of young singers who participated in the annual High School Choral Festival, and through his choral outreach to various local high schools. CDYC was privileged to have had his children Katy and Michael as talented, dedicated, contributing members of CDYC from the time each of them became eligible to join. Each of them sang joyfully with CDYC until graduating from high school. As the attached indicates, David was a very active and engaged member of the CDYC Board of Directors and promoted our organization whenever an opportunity to do so presented itself. Our young singers profited from CDYC's many joint ventures with Albany Pro Musica during the past 22 years. David was truly a great human being and those of us who knew him, beyond his musicianship, are better for having known him. We miss his company but will always treasure the brief time we spent together with him and his loving family but he will always be with us whenever we hear great choral singing!!!!*

From Margery Whiteman, APM alto 28 years, APM Board President 2006–2011: *It is with a heavy heart that I offer these thoughts about David as choral conductor and community builder committed to strengthening the cultural life of the Capital Region.*

Musician—*David was first and most profoundly a musician, a professional devoted to the highest possible standards in every enterprise he undertook. Whether in rehearsal*

or performance, he sought to excite his Albany Pro Musica singers, as well as his UA students, to achieve more beautiful tone, asking us always to practice more, try harder, sing with more heart, enter the music and breathe its very soul. He never asked of us efforts he was not himself prepared to make. He was determined that Albany Pro Musica should be merit the attribution: professional quality, amateur choir. Rehearsals every Tuesday night at UA became for me a 28-year ritual, a time during which we worked to use the capacity of music to illuminate the human condition. For David performance offered the opportunity to give people musical experiences they might otherwise never have. He asked his audiences to stretch, to enter with him and his singers into new and exciting musical territory, to listen and hear with new ears.

Scholar—*David explored endlessly the vast choral repertoire, forever finding new settings of familiar pieces as well as exciting new works, many commissioned by colleagues. His restless study of the rich depths of the western choral tradition, as well as offerings from nonwestern cultures, insured that the singing experience was forever fresh. With Albany Pro Musica he first built a chorus known for its a capella singing. More recently he expanded that group of 55 singers into a performance group twice that size, Albany Masterworks Chorale, in order to perform major choral works such as “Carmina Burana” and the Verdi Requiem. In the past ten years that group has performed annually with the Albany Symphony Orchestra. Study was for him a constant discovery, a journey never finished. It shaped and illuminated his interesting programs, which audiences came to anticipate with excitement.*

Educator—*A tenured professor of choral music at State University of New York at Albany, Albany Pro Musica was David’s avocation. Generations of UA students, many of whom continued to sing with him in APM, eagerly sought his courses in music theory and the experience of rehearsal and performance with the University Chorale and the UA Chamber Singers. Within Pro Musica David reached into secondary schools to help build the talents of future singers and musicians. He instituted the High School Choral Festival in 2000, bringing together performance groups from regional high schools to perform for one another on the Troy Savings Bank Music Hall stage. He instituted an apprentice program wherein talented high school students could join APM in rehearsal and then performance of a major work. In collaboration with Albany High School, he created a workshop program to give the students in that chorus the experience of singing with adult singers for whom singing is a lifelong passion and performing on the stage of the acoustically beautiful Massry Center at the College of St. Rose. He believed absolutely that serious work in artistic expression was every bit as important as sports activity for young people and sought to raise the recognition by educators and the public alike of this fundamental truth.*

David carried many quotes at the end of his copious and frequent email messages, never missing a chance to drive home the messages he wished to convey. One such message read: 'When asked about cutting arts funding to fuel the war machine, Winston Churchill stated: "Then what are we fighting for?"' David believed deeply in the capacity of music to unite people everywhere and lived a life dedicated to making that happen in the Capital Region and beyond.

From Maureen Whitcomb, SUNYA Chorale and Chamber Singers Alumni: *Dr.*

Janower was a true inspiration to all of his students. During my freshman year of college, joining the University Chorale was one of my saving graces in the tumultuous transition into my college years. It gave me a confidence and drive that I still have with me today. Dr. Janower made me the best musician I could be. In my Sophomore year, he gave me the chance to become an Alto in the University Chamber Singers. Not only was that year of college filled with some of my favorite memories, but I also met my fiancé Jon who was then a Tenor in both University Chamber Singers and Chorale. We now have a five month old son named Max. Jon and I would not have met if it weren't for David Griggs-Janower and his love for music and ability to inspire others.

From David Wilkinson, Violinist: *I had the privilege of playing under Maestro Janower on a number of occasions, including a performance of Amahl and the Night Visitors. It was a delightful experience. David's untimely death will be a tremendous loss to the world of music.*