

Conejo Valley Youth Orchestras'

Policies and Procedures

Musician's Handbook

Welcome to the 2009-2010 season of the Conejo Valley Youth Orchestras! To those of you who are returning, we are thrilled to have you back. To those of you who are new, we welcome you, and look forward to getting to know you and making music with you. There are more exciting changes for this season, and this year, our 49th, should prove to be an innovative, extraordinary year!

This handbook is intended to give you a brief overview of the policies and procedures of the Conejo Valley Orchestras (CVYO). If you have further questions, please feel free to call the CVYO office at (805) 523-8045, or you can e-mail us through our website at cvyo.com. If you have weekly questions, such as scheduling, or to stay up to date on notes from the director, such as when concert tickets are on sale, or concert information, our web site is current and updated weekly. The website is very thorough and it is expected that students and/or parents visit the site weekly to stay informed about the program. Again, if you have further questions, or should you ever want feedback concerning your child's progress in the orchestra, please feel free to contact us at the orchestra office or e-mail us through the website. Thank you for choosing the Conejo Valley Youth Orchestras as part of your child's musical education. We consider ourselves privileged to work with your wonderful children!

Rehearsal schedule

The orchestras meet Thursdays throughout the school year, which consists of two semesters. The first semester begins on September 10th, 2009 and concludes with the January 31st, 2010 Winter Concert. The second semester begins on February 11, 2010 and concludes with the June 6th, 2010 concert.

Occasionally we ask musicians to come early or stay late. If the need should arise, we will make every attempt to give you advance notice and post it on the website calendar.

Rehearsal times are as follows:

Conejo Valley Youth Strings 3:45-4:45

Conejo Valley Preparatory Orchestra 5:15-6:30

Conejo Valley Youth Orchestra 7:00-9:00

Because the safety and well-being of every member of the orchestra is of the highest priority to us, we ask that you be prompt in picking up your children. If you are going to be late in picking up your child, please plan on parking and coming inside to pick him or her up. It is not acceptable for students to be waiting outside, alone, especially once darkness sets in. Please be prompt! Also, if you recognize other students from the orchestras waiting to be picked up, would you please keep on the lookout, as we never have too many eyes looking out for the well-being of our students.

Scheduled vacation dates are as follows:

November 26, 2009

December 17, 24 and 31, 2009

February 4, 2010

April 22, 2010

Tuition

Tuition is \$290.00 per student. Discounts are available if tuition is received on or before the due dates. There is an additional discount for 2 or more students from the same family. First semester tuition is due before the first rehearsal or the date stated on the invoice and the second semester tuition before the first rehearsal of the second semester or the due date noted on the invoice. **TUITION RECEIVED BY DUE DATES WILL REFLECT DISCOUNTS. TUITION RECEIVED AFTER DUE DATES WILL NOT REFLECT DISCOUNTS.** If you are unable to pay tuition by that time, or if you need to make installments, please make alternate arrangements with Mr. Benson or Mrs. Sanchez. Also, please remember that it is the Conejo Valley Youth Orchestra's policy that no student will be denied the opportunity to play in an orchestra due to financial hardship. Please contact the orchestra office for further details concerning this matter.

Fundraising

This fall, the CVYO students will be participating in the Entertainment Book fundraiser again. The fundraiser will begin at the start of the year, and will conclude by the end of October. All information pertaining to the fundraiser will be addressed in a letter that will come out with the Entertainment Books. Additionally, we will provide another fundraiser for the 1st semester, which will be coffee and cds. In the Spring, we will again be selling World's Finest Chocolate, which always proves to be fun and easy. Fundraisers are subject to change.

Fundraising represents a large percentage (50%) of our budget, and without it the orchestras could not function without significantly raising the tuition rate. It is also important that our grantors see that we are actively participating in supporting our future by fundraising. Philosophically, we believe that, instead of raising tuition rates significantly, fundraising gives students a chance to actively participate in the economics of their music education, holding down tuition costs for parents who are already burdened with the cost of instruments, lessons, etc. Therefore, it is required that all students participate in the fundraisers, either by raising the required minimum funds, or by a **fundraising donation** of \$100.00 per student, per semester. However, it is to everybody's advantage if you choose to participate, because our profit margin is determined by the number of books, candy, etc. we sell. As always, students who meet the minimum requirements of fundraising are eligible for many fun prizes. Parents who choose a **fundraising donation** should be aware of companies which will make matching funds donations to the orchestra. To our knowledge, these companies include Amgen, Blue Cross and Oracle. If you are aware of other companies who participate in matching funds, or if you work for a company, or know someone who would like to make prize donations for our students, we would love to hear from you.

If you have a Ralph's or Albertson's card, you may register Conejo Valley Youth Orchestra with them and we will receive a percentage of your purchases when you use your Ralph's or Albertson's card. This is an easy way to support our orchestras.

Miscellaneous Contributions

This line item in our current budget is becoming more important than ever. Due to increasing costs to operate, miscellaneous contributions are vital to the financial health of the organization. **Please consider CVYO for your tax deductible, charitable giving this year. Any amount will help.**

Important Dates

Please mark the following dates and times on your schedule. Students are expected to perform at concerts, and attend their scheduled dress rehearsals. Failing to do so may jeopardize their standing with the orchestra, except in the case of an emergency or illness.

Wednesday, September 9, 2009 7:00PM

Orientation for new members

Westminster Presbyterian Church

We would like to see parents from every NEW musician. Returning parents are also welcome to attend. We have had many new and exciting developments. Come and hear about them.

Sunday, January 31, 2010 3:00PM

Winter Concert at the Kavli Theatre, Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza

Mandatory performance for students of all orchestras to perform.

The day will include mandatory dress rehearsals throughout the day with times announced closer to the event.

September Entertainment Book Sales

C & C Sale (Coffee & CDs)

April candy fundraiser to begin

April, 2010 – Date & time to be announced

“First Classic Concert For Children” &

Students in Recital

Westminster Presbyterian Church

Selected students and ensembles only

Sunday, June 6, 2010 3:00 PM

Spring Concert at the Kavli Theatre, Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza

This mandatory performance will be held in the Kavli Theater at the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza and will include members from all orchestras. The day will include a mandatory dress rehearsal with times announced closer to the event.

Concert Ticket Sales

The Civic Arts Plaza has changed its policy regarding ticket sales. In the past, we have had the ability to make tickets available at rehearsals without the \$4.00 ticket facility surcharge. Currently, all tickets issued **WILL** require this charge, whether they are sold at the box office or other locations. We will up-date you as more information becomes available.

Concert Attire

The goal for our musicians' concert attire is that it be conservative, yet elegant, so as not to draw attention to the individual musicians, but rather to enhance the performance with a look of cohesiveness. Therefore, the following attire is appropriate:

Young Ladies: Members of Youth Strings and Preparatory Orchestra. Please choose a solid black dress or a black blouse with a black skirt or pants. The skirt hemline should be below the knee, and dress or blouse sleeves should be at least elbow length, and should not be low-cut or backless. Shoes should be black and worn with black socks, tights or hosiery. It is acceptable for Youth Strings members to wear white blouses instead of black. **It is never acceptable to wear tank sleeves, spaghetti straps or midriff-baring tops.**

Young Men: Members of the Youth Strings and the Preparatory Youth Orchestra should wear a long sleeve white dress shirt with a dark tie and black or dark slacks. For members of the Youth Orchestra, a black tuxedo with a black bow tie is preferable, however, a dark suit is acceptable. Ladies in the youth orchestra only will need to purchase a dress approved by the conductors. We will provide information when and how to purchase in the month of September. Members of all ensembles should wear black shoes with black socks. **If musicians do not meet these requirements, they will not be allowed to perform on stage.**

PLEASE NOTE:

It has become increasingly popular for young people to adorn themselves with facial piercing and visible tattoos. Other than small earrings, all other piercing and tattoos must be removed or covered when performing. Again, it is important not to draw attention to any individual while performing with the orchestra.

Obtaining concert attire.

Each year, approximately 1 month before each of our concerts, we will offer gently-used concert attire that the students can purchase at an extremely low price. Most of the clothing is like brand new and is perfect concert wear. The only problem with the clothing is that the former owner outgrew it! If you have black clothing that your child has outgrown, and would like to donate it to the CVYO, we would love to have it. Please turn it in before or after rehearsal to Mrs. Sanchez or to Mr. Benson. As we get near our concert dates the students will be alerted as to when the clothing will be available. Proceeds from the sales will help the orchestra offset the cost of student scholarship.

Rehearsal Guidelines

Students are expected to attend all rehearsals. Attendance is considered during promotions and seating. **If you cannot attend rehearsal due to illness, school concert, etc., you need to e-mail or call the orchestra office before 1:00 p.m. the day of the rehearsal. (We know this is not always possible due to sudden illness) or e-mail the directors.** Students with any unexcused absences may, at the discretion of the director, be dropped from the orchestra program.

Preparation for Rehearsal

The intention of the orchestra rehearsal is to focus on ensemble playing, correct style and historical interpretation; it is not to teach individual notes and parts. Individual practice should take place at home, and with the student's private teacher, who in most cases will be eager to take an active part in the student's orchestral success. The more a student works with the private teacher and practices at home, the more the entire orchestra can get down to the business at hand: making music. A portion of the student's practice time should include the use of a metronome, which is now a required tool for our orchestra members.

Sometimes a particular piece of music is problematic and rehearsals for different sections may be held individually, but again, the more work students put in at home the more we can focus on following the conductor, listening to other parts and playing stylistically correct.

What to Bring to Rehearsals (Cell phones are for emergency only!)

Please bring your instrument(s), a pencil and all of your assigned music in your rehearsal folder to every rehearsal. It slows rehearsal down considerably when students don't remember their music, as the conductor must stop the rehearsal and pull new music for the student. (It is also an added expense to the orchestra!) Also, please take good care of the music assigned to you, as much of it is actually rented and we incur fines for damaged or lost parts. Always mark your parts in pencil, never pen, do not fold it, keep it in the folder and turn it in the day of the concert. A pencil should be brought to every rehearsal. It is unacceptable for students NOT to mark their music at their section leaders', coaches' and directors' request, as it is a huge waste of time when students need to be continually told to mark the same things. **Cell phones may be brought to rehearsal, but, must be turned off at the start of the rehearsal. TEXT MESSAGING DURING REHEARSALS IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED. Camera phones are NOT permitted to be used at any time.**

When to Arrive at Rehearsal

Please make it a habit to enter Fellowship Hall through the center doors facing the courtyard only. Check the white board every week when you enter. It will have important information every week. Also, we will have a lost-and-found box in the lobby area.

Please arrive at rehearsal early enough to take care of your business (paying tuition, buying tickets, etc...), unpack your instruments, warm up and have your instruments tuned, (if you need help) and be in your seat by the downbeat. If your rehearsal is scheduled for 5:15 and you are in the parking lot, you are late! Please be respectful to the directors and other students by being on time.

Conduct at the Rehearsals

The students of the Conejo Valley Youth Orchestras are amazing kids and are very well behaved. On occasion, however, talking can become a problem during rehearsals, which can be a nuisance to the other students and to the conductor. Talking that occurs during rehearsals can significantly reduce the amount of material covered in rehearsal and hinder other students' ability to listen and learn. Our time is very limited and VERY valuable, so we ask that all non-musical talk take place before and after rehearsals. We would also ask that no food or drink be brought into the rehearsal room or the concert halls. Always remember that we are guests at all of the locations where we meet, and our conduct should always represent appreciation and respect for our hosts. Students can show this appreciation and respect by obeying facility rules, being only where they are designated to be and conducting themselves in a courteous and polite manner.

The Conejo Valley Youth Orchestras have maintained a well respected reputation in our community and reaped its benefits for nearly 50 years, and with your support, we hope to continue well into the future!

Private Music Lessons

It is the policy of the CVYO that all its members are enrolled in private music lessons. The CVYO orchestral experience is designed to enhance the students' music education by improving ensemble experience through a variety of unique performance opportunities and is **not designed to replace private studies**. The orchestras are designed to supplement music education, not replace it. Failure to adhere to a private lesson schedule may jeopardize your standing with the orchestra. We highly recommend your involvement in your schools' music program. It is vital to the development of the Conejo Valley Youth Orchestras, as well as the students' overall music education.

PLEASE NOTE:

We DO NOT have a professional administrative staff. Gathering data, collecting tuition and fund raising monies, etc. is accomplished by our board of directors and volunteers. Therefore, it is a must that you meet deadlines on payments and requests for information. We value our volunteers greatly and would not be the wonderful organization we have become without their help. Please help make their participation a good experience.

About the Musician's Contract

All musicians are required to adhere to the contract. The CVYO has grown to such a large number that we are continually turning down young musicians for the orchestras. This means, more than ever, it is a true honor to be a member of the CVYO! If your student is not serious about being a quality member of CVYO, there are other students waiting to get into the program who will do what it takes to be quality members. Therefore, the points of the contract are what we believe, to be the traits that make quality CVYO members. Joining the orchestras is considered an acceptance of the contract terms.

A copy of the contract is here for your convenience.

WEBSITE

www.cvyo.com

**ALL MUSICIANS AND/OR PARENTS NEED
TO CHECK THE WEBSITE WEEKLY.**

**All important information can be obtained here.
The orchestras do not send home fliers or mailings
regarding most information as they are costly and
rarely make it home.**

**Also, we will send e-mail blasts to keep you
informed about important information.**

**Additionally, we need everyone's help to
“GET THE WORD OUT”**

**This means that all families should pass out fliers
regarding concerts and youth orchestra activities.
Professional advertising is very expensive and we
have found the most effective way to spread the
word is through our members and families.
Tickets sales help pay the bills and bring the
community to see our wonderful orchestras.**