

A MESSAGE from OUR ARTISTIC DIRECTOR by Jared Brayton Bollenbacher

I am so excited to wrap-up our 33rd season with Walt's Vault and PRIDE 2023. It's incredible to think that we actually survived the pandemic with 65 singers in the first year and are now up to 120 as of our first



rehearsal for Walt's Vault. During the pandemic, I think so many of us realized how important community and music were to us.

Despite the welcome ending of the pandemic, it's clear that LGBTQ individuals are having to face new challenges as we head into PRIDE season. These, however, are created by individuals that refuse to acknowledge the legitimacy and beauty of our identities. I hope that during this upcoming season, we will be able to continue to grow our community in song so that our harmonies will continue to grow and nurture our community while inviting others to join!

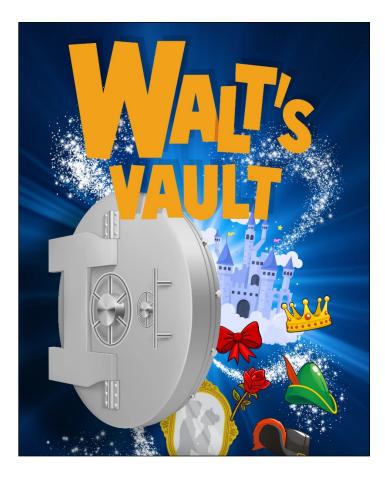
We would love to have you join us at our upcoming concert, Walt's Vault. We have added a third concert

performance (on Friday evening) so you now have even greater options to choose from for this concert. I guarantee that you'll recognize many of these songs from your childhood or the childhoods of younger generations in your families. Here's a hint about what you'll enjoy:

"Did you want to grow up to be a princess? Or hang with an imaginary dragon? Or maybe you wanted to steer your own ship to a faraway island? We have and we can't wait to sing your favorite songs from all your favorite childhood cartoons. There's no better way to celebrate PRIDE this year than through these magical moments of our childhoods! We can't wait to see you!"

CGMC presents "Walt's Vault!" Friday, June 9, 2023 | 7:30 p.m. Saturday, June 10, 2023 | 7:30 p.m. Sunday, June 11, 2023 | 2:00 p.m.

Lincoln Theatre 769 East Long Street Columbus, Ohio 43203 Tickets available at <u>www.cgmc.com</u>



A NEWSLETTER? WHAT IS THIS ALL ABOUT?

If you are reading this, it means that you are one of about 6,000 people – most likely living in Central Ohio - who are somehow connected with the Columbus Gay Men's Chorus. You might be a current or former singing member of the group, an active volunteer who helps with many behind-the-scenes activities, or a frequent audience member who regularly attends our concerts throughout the year. You may be a current or previous donor to our group or represent a business or charitable organization that has supported the group with a foundation grant or one-time contribution. You could also be someone who purchased ad space in one of our concert programs.

Whoever you are, we hope that this newsletter will provide some insights into our group. With it, we hope to positively promote the impact of CGMC on its many audiences; to share stories about our members, staff, board and benefactors; to provide substantive examples of how the power of music brings people together, and enriches lives; and to connect past, current and future members with each other through stories about their fellow singers.

UNITY PROM BRINGS LGBTQ+ GROUPS TOGETHER



On Saturday, April 15th, inside the beautiful Ohio State capital building, our very own Sharon Moss attended *Unity Prom* – an adult *"do-over"* prom party and fundraiser organized by the Columbus Lesbian and Gay Softball Association (CLGSA) – as CGMC's representative to the gender-expansive Prom Court. Before the end of the evening, she did us proud - and was named "Unity Prom Monarch!"

CLGSA invited local LGBTQ+ organizations to participate in the Unity Prom Court. CGMC membership organized a vote and decided that Sharon was bursting with enough gender pride to represent our chorus on the court. Her fellow Prom Court-isans included representatives from OutRunners, Stonewall Sports, and The Ohio State College of Social Work (shout out to Alan, from our bass section!)

The evening was a whirlwind of queer joy. Sharon and her girlfriend started with a photo session, with Prom photographer, Kelly Koolhoven, who generously donated a portion of the photo shoot proceeds to CMGC's membership fund.

Their VIP status got them early entry, boutonnieres, champagne, a "Meet & Greet" with Virginia West, and a tour of the Statehouse. Desserts and hors d'oeuvres were provided by Giant Eagle Market District.

A performance by Virginia West kicked off the entertainment and dancing. For the rest of the evening, dancing was interspersed with performances by drag kings, queens, and royalty of all kinds.

A short list of CGMC member memories from the evening that will live rent free in Sharon's brain forever include:

Rosemary's twirly dress – and Michael S. being captivated by its floofiness; Deon's fabulous shoes; our group desperately trying to do the choreography from "Bells, Bows, Gifts, Trees" when the DJ played (Todrick

Hall's original) "Nails, Hair, Hips, Heels" – our brains could not handle two different sets of lyrics for the same song – and hearing her girlfriend, our CGMC family, and the whole room cheer for Sharon when she was crowned!

The main organizers



from CLGSA – Adrian and Cheryl—shared a sense of urgency that in this current political climate, we all need to bring our community together as much as possible. Unity Prom was about being in a place where more than 300 of "our people" showed their determination to live their best lives. The attendees filled the statehouse with LGBTQ+ magic that night, when just the weekend before, three anti-trans bills heard testimony on the House floor.

Over \$10,000 was raised for Kaleidoscope Youth Center. While this was a fundraiser, CLGSA was committed to giving as many people this experience as possible. CLGSA intends to make this a yearly event and hopes that many more LGBTQ+ attendees will be there laughing and dancing the night away next year.

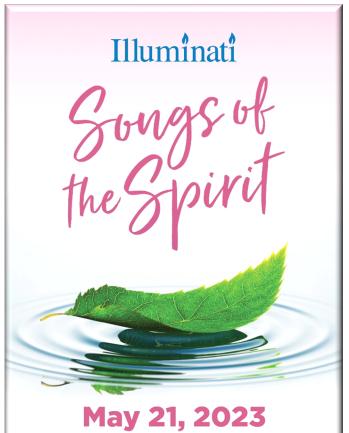
"SEE THE LIGHT" with ILLUMINATI – on May 21st!



Referring to a Latin expression meaning "the enlightened," Illuminati was created to respond to the community's expressed desire for musical performances of a sacred or spiritual nature. Its mission is to extend our outreach, particularly to religious organizations, while respecting our members' individual spiritual beliefs.

Illuminati performs monthly at various religious institutions and events throughout central Ohio, and sometimes beyond, and is proud to be a bridge between the LGBTQIA+ and religious communities. Illuminati works to demonstrate, through song, that we all have a place in sacred spaces, and are whole, holy, and loved.

Songs of the Spirit is Illuminati's annual full-length concert which presents all the music the ensemble sings



Worthington United Methodist Church

in its monthly free outreach services. Please join us for our next performance – for ticket information, see our website: <u>www.cgmc.com</u>

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN SINGING WITH US?

CGMC is comprised of three singing groups. There is the **CHORUS** – which performs two or three full concerts each year. Membership is open to all those who want to sing and fit into one of the four voice groups (Tenor I, Tenor II, Baritone and Bass.) Each new member is invited to a Voicing appointment, where our Artistic Director can determine which voice group each new singer will be assigned.



ILLUMINATI is a non-auditioned ensemble. Members of Illuminati are considered members of the Columbus Gay Men's Chorus, but participation in the full chorus is not required.



VOX (pictured above) is our only auditioned ensemble, typically comprising 14 to 18 singers, for which

prospective members must qualify through a rigorous and competitive audition process. Vox is a key part of our outreach and service to the community, as it allows us to perform more frequently and at various venues that our full chorus cannot always accommodate. Vox also performs its own concert as part of our regular concert season. Placement in Vox requires season-long commitment to both the ensemble and the full chorus.

Vox gladly solicits and accepts invitations to perform at weddings, memorials, house parties, corporate events, fundraisers, athletic events, and so forth. Please contact us at 614-531-4272 or cgmc@cgmc.com to inquire about availability.

VOX has performed for the Columbus AIDS Task Force, the Capital Area Humane Society, Stonewall Columbus, PNC Bank, Chase Bank, Battelle, The Ohio Statehouse, Franklin Park Conservatory, Columbus Blue Jackets, as well as at weddings and other private events.



Please contact our **Membership Director, Krystal Jackowiak** for more information about membership in any of our groups – via email: <u>members@cgmc.com</u>

FUN FACT ABOUT CGMC!

Matt Eisert, CGMC Archivist, has crunched the numbers to report that since its' inception in 1990, CGMC has had 901 singing members in its 95 concert productions:

- Tenor 1 = 151
- Tenor 2 = 288
- Baritone = 291*
- Bass = 171



(*) Since Baritones outnumber all the

other categories, let's review the term: A baritone is a of male singing voice whose vocal type range lies between the bass and the tenor voice-types. The term originates from the Greek (barýtonos), meaning "heavy sounding". Composers typically write music for this voice in the range from the second F below middle C to the F above middle C (i.e. F_2-F_4) in choral music, and from the second A below middle C to the A above middle C $(A_2 \text{ to } A_4)$ in operatic music, but the range can extend at either end. Subtypes of baritone include the baryton-Martin baritone (light baritone), lvric baritone, Kavalierbariton, Verdi baritone, dramatic baritone, *baryton-noble* baritone, and the bass-baritone.

LEADER PROFILE: TAHREA MAYNARD "Learn more about CGMC on social media"



Hi there! My name is Tahrea Maynard and I am the Social Media Manager for CGMC. I've proudly worked on this ongoing endeavor for just about a year now.

A little about me - my pronouns are she/her/hers. I just moved

to a 103 year old house in Chillicothe with my boyfriend and two pups, Picard and Eevee. I've been with CGMC since September of 2021. I am also the current Vice President of the Board of Directors for CGMC. And, my favorite color is yellow!

The first time I performed with CGMC was as a guest artist for the summer show, five years ago. I sang "This Is Me" from The Greatest Showman. The performance is on our YouTube Channel and I fondly share it with friends from time to time.

As CGMC's Social Media Manager, it is such a pleasure for me to visit rehearsals and listen to the chorus sing. Every Sunday evening, I feel like I get my own concert. I also get to watch folks grow as performers and watch friendships form. I create my own friendships. Sure, rehearsals are meant to be a time for work and focus on learning the music, but I've found that rehearsals are so much more - for some folks, CGMC is their community and/or family. Rehearsals may be the only time someone hears their correct pronouns used or their chosen name. Being at a CGMC rehearsal is a magical experience. Our mission statement is "Voices Raised, Lives Changed." I've seen many lives changed by CGMC. This organization is a real home for so many, including myself. Through my affiliation with CGMC, I feel like I have found purpose.

I am very passionate about social media and its importance to our modern world. With social media, CGMC has virtually traveled across the globe. Voices raised in Central Ohio are changing and touching lives across the world. It sounds cheesy, but it's true. And that I play a part in that is so important to me.

On the less glamorous side of things, I spend a lot of my life on my phone and laptop (don't we all?) I am always looking for new trends and thinking of new ideas to promote CGMC virtually. There are many different things you have to consider when creating and posting content. There are rules and regulations to follow, but there are positive things about this role that make it all worth it. My favorite ideas are the ones that involve chorus members. That's the good stuff. I also love watching folks interact with our content, sharing or commenting and liking it. It is very cool to come up with an idea, bring it to fruition, and then watch other people take it and do with it what they want. That is such an awesome level of creativity. If you already like and follow us, thank you!

Website: www.cgmc.com

YouTube: @ColGayMensChorus Facebook: Columbus Gay Men's Chorus Instagram: @Columbusgaymenschorus TikTok: @columbusgaymenschorus

You can find me on social media as well if you want to interact with me or send me your ideas! Facebook: Tahrea N. Maynard Instagram: @tahrea_maynard TikTok: @tahreamaynard on TikTok



MORE CGMC MEMBER PROFILES by Jared Brown

In this, and future issues, we will feature several members of CGMC with "get to know you" profiles. Our membership is both very diverse and unquestionably interesting – which gives us even more to celebrate as we find out more about them.



JAY MANTLE

1. How long have you been a member of the chorus?

since April 2019

2. What voice part do you sing? Bass II

3. Why did you join the chorus?

For many wonderful reasons. I love the energy and joy of singing with a group, for the love of different genres of music, to learn music, to meet and connect with people, and to get over stage fright (still working on that one - ha!)

4. What has been your favorite concert that you have performed in? Stonewall 50 was fun & emotional. It's difficult for me to say as I love all the shows.

5. Aside from the music, what is your favorite part of being in the chorus? Meeting amazing people who want to be a part of change and to advocate love in and for the community.

6. What would you say to encourage someone who is considering CGMC to sign up? It'll be the thrill of your lifetime. Just try it out and see for yourself.

7. What's one interesting fact that many people don't know about you? I love and live for everything artful.
8. What's your favorite movie? One of my recent favorites was "I Wanna Dance With Somebody: The Whitney Houston Story." A Classic would be "Steel Magnolias."

9. What do you like most about living in Columbus? I love our city's history, the adventures you find everywhere, the art, and the LGBTQIA+ community.

10. What's been your favorite vacation ever? So far, it the Outer Banks of North Carolina. I love the ocean!



MITCH MATHIAS

1. How long have you been a member of the chorus? – I joined in September of 1990 when the chorus began.

2. What voice part do you sing? – **Tenor II**

3. Why did you join the

chorus? I was looking for a gay outlet that wasn't centered around alcohol and as a sort of mental therapy for dealing with my recent HIV diagnosis.

4. What has been your favorite concert that you have performed in? I used to say the first concert, but now I say the first we did Naked Man, which was a work commissioned for the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus in 1996. We performed it in 1998. Through song, it addressed a lot of what was going on with gay men from the 1970's up to then.

5. Aside from the music, what is your favorite part of being in the chorus? The sense of family that I have with many of the people in the organization. More than friendship, it's chosen family.

6. What would you say to encourage someone who is considering CGMC to sign up? Put your fears aside. Just show up and do the placement audition. In my 30 years, rarely have I ever seen anyone not admitted. If you join, it will enrich your life.

7. What's one interesting fact that many people don't know about you? I was an exchange student to Japan in high school.

8. What's your favorite movie? Long Time Companion
9. What do you like most about living in Columbus? It's a good place to be gay. It's close enough to get home if
I need to, but far enough that they have to call first.

10. What's been your favorite vacation ever? In 2009, I did a bus tour of western Europe that lasted almost 3 weeks.

MONTHLY SOCIAL TIME FOR SINGERS AND FRIENDS!

Don't forget to join your fellow CGMC members and friends on the first Thursday of every month at A.W.O.L. for Karaoke singing time! The fun starts at 9:00 pm, and literally anyone is welcome to join us! Keep in touch with your best singing buddies and make new friends throughout the summer – Karaoke is a time to let your inner superstar shine bright!

THURSDAY, JUNE 1 THURSDAY, JULY 6 * THURSDAY, AUGUST 3



49 Parsons Avenue Columbus, OH 43215 (614) 621-8779

PLEASE HELP US WITH OUR IDENTITY SURVEY by Jason Guthrie

The Columbus Gay Men's Chorus is currently asking both the singing members and our audience to help us dig deeper into our identity.

Quick history lesson: The Columbus Gay Men's Chorus was founded in 1990 by a group of 5 gay men who wanted to start a gay chorus in Columbus Ohio. Places like New York City, San Francisco, and Chicago already had gay choruses of their own to place visibility on the stories and lives of the countless number of gay men succumbing to AIDS during the 1980's and 90's. When I joined the chorus in the spring of 2000, it was a wellestablished ensemble performing in the Southern Theater with an average membership of 90 to 100 singers.

What many people don't know is that our membership guidelines were opened up to include all who wished to sing music in a Tenor 1, Tenor 2, Baritone, Bass (TTBB)

arrangement regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation and economic means. As a result, our membership gradually became more diverse. Today, the Columbus Gay



Men's Chorus is more diverse than ever having many members who identify as gay, lesbian, straight, cis, trans, and non-binary.

Change can be a little scary sometimes. Some of our singing members and audience members have had questions about the changes they are seeing in the organization. In an effort to have an open conversation, we've developed an identity survey that we hope can guide us through the process of best serving our singers and audience members.



We want to hear from as many of you as possible regardless of how long you have been a singing or audience member. The people who more participate, the more meaningful the data becomes. This survey is designed to collect the

thoughts of both our current and former members as well as our audience and even the thoughts of individuals who fall into both groups.

The survey will take you some time to complete, so we encourage you to set aside a time when you can relax and respond thoughtfully. **The survey currently will remain open until May 14th (Mother's Day).** We hope to have preliminary information to share with both the membership and our audience by the June concert.

Things to remember when taking the survey, read carefully and take your time. Because of how the survey is designed, you cannot go back and repeat a question once you've answered it. Some questions are very intentionally open ended so don't be shy and please share your thoughts. HERE is the link to our survey:

https://s.surveyplanet.com/k84rcqag

To those of you who've already taken the survey, I personally want to thank you for sharing your thoughts. Just as your identity is important to you, our collective identity as an organization is equally important. This is our best opportunity to include all voices in the discussion. If you know individuals who would like to participate in this conversation whether they be former members, audience members, or both, please share the survey link with them.

Lastly, you can remain completely anonymous, but if you feel you have more to offer there is a spot on the survey where you can share your contact information. Thank you for your contributions To the Columbus Gay Men's Chorus as singers, patrons, and stewards!

CGMC MAKES PLANS FOR GAY PRIDE 2023 by Bill Ryan



CGMC will be raising its voice in pride at Stonewall Columbus' Pride Weekend, June 16th and 17th.

The chorus will also be having a booth at the Pride Festival in Goodale Park, Friday evening and all-day Saturday. CGMC's booth will be staffed by chorus members to meet and greet folks, sign folks up to join CGMC and Illuminati, encourage folks to take advantage of being a season ticket holder. The booth will also advertise the VOX performance in October and CGMC's Joy show. The booth provides chorus members with an opportunity to chat with folks and share how our mission is changing lives on a personal basis. CGMC will also be performing on the Main Stage Saturday afternoon.

CGMC is putting together a Pride Committee and we are looking for anyone who is interested in helping. There will be plenty of volunteer opportunities with all levels of commitment. We'd love to hear from you if you're interested in taking a leadership role, assist with decorations, or work a shift at the booth.

Please contact Bill Ryan at <u>pride@cgmc.com</u> to let us know that you are interested. Thanks in advance and Happy Pride!

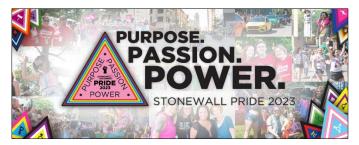
Columbus Pride Festival weekend kicks off at Goodale Park on Friday June 16 from 4 pm to 10 pm with the Pride March beginning at 10:30 am on Saturday, June 17. The march begins at the corner of Broad and High Streets, and travels north through the Short North area.

The chorus will be participating in the Pride March on Saturday, June 17th. CGMC will be marching, have a float, and singing songs from its most recent concert, Walt's Vault. This is a great opportunity for the chorus to perform in front of hundreds of thousands of potential fans and future members. All members of the chorus and their family members are welcome to march with CGMC. Those who wish to march with us that aren't currently active with the chorus, need to let us know by emailing Bill Ryan, since we need to register all our participants.

Be sure to listen for the Columbus Pride Marching Band and high step in that direction! Participating nonprofit and corporate vendors will be aplenty so you can safely assume you'll be able to pick up some free water bottles and string backpacks if you forget your own.

Goodale Park is big enough for a serious Pride celebration but still small enough to feel cozy, so you'll be able to enjoy the festivities without having to walk too far in the heat. The park has paved paths, so wheelchair users can navigate the party without having to do much off-roading.

STONEWALL COLUMBUS



Columbus Pride is organized by Stonewall Columbus, a local nonprofit and queer art gallery, which in addition to the official parade and march, is hosting a number of other events throughout the month of June. When you're in town, you'll definitely want to pop into Stonewall's headquarters and see their current gallery exhibition for yourself. Stonewall Columbus' headquarters are located at 1160 North High Street, Columbus, OH 43201

SHOW YOUR PRIDE ~ AND SUPPORT CGMC! CHECK OUT OUR TOP QUALITY MERCHANDISE

Your one-stop shopping location for all the CGMC merch you could want.

www.cgmc.com

A VARIETY OF T-SHIRTS AND HOODIES!



AND LOGO EMBLAZONED MUGS!

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR by Donovan Jones

"How do we keep an organization like CGMC operating smoothly, year after year?"



Ticket sales to our many programs and concerts throughout the year certainly do help defray the costs of keeping our group running, but we also rely on the generosity of individuals, businesses, and charitable organizations in our

community to help us stay strong.

Donations to CGMC go directly into our operating fund in support of our mission. Like any enterprise, we do our best to contain costs and make our resources stretch as far as we can. Donors can rest assured that their contributions are used wisely, and in support of our stated mission.

Although there is no financial commitment required by our group singers and volunteers, each member is encouraged to consider helping in whatever financial way they can. Donations of any amount are always welcome. We invite our current and potential future donors to explore the information below to see how you can direct your donation to a specific fund:

Please consider a gift in support of CGMC's mission of "Voices Raised. Lives Changed." Below, you'll find the various giving levels, and what you can receive in return, based on the amount of your donation:

The Conductor Level | \$10,000

- 30-minute performance by members of CGMC or VOX subject to date and time availability
- Full Page Ad at 3 CGMC performances (Main Stage productions)
- 12 Season Tickets
- Invitation for up to 12 for our Donor Appreciation Reception and Maestro Toast in June
- CGMC Tote Bag
- Program Recognition

The Divo Level | \$5,000-\$9,999

- Full Page Ad at 3 CGMC performances (Main Stage productions)
- 8 Season Tickets
- Invitation for up to 8 for our Donor Appreciation Reception and Maestro Toast in June
- CGMC Tote Bag
- Program Recognition

The Composer Level | \$2,500-\$4,999

- Half Page Ad at 3 CGMC performances (Main Stage productions)
- 4 Season Tickets
- Invitation for up to 4 for our Donor Appreciation Reception and Maestro Toast in June
- CGMC Tote Bag and Program Recognition

The Section Leader Level | \$1,000-\$2,499

- Quarter Page Ad at 3 CGMC performances (Main Stage productions)
- 2 Season Tickets
- Invitation for up to 2 for our Donor Appreciation Reception and Maestro Toast in June
- CGMC Tote Bag
- Program Recognition

The Soloist Level | \$500-\$999

- 1 Season Ticket
- CGMC Tote Bag
- Program Recognition

The Ensemble Level | \$250-\$499

- CGMC Tote Bag
- Program Recognition

Corporate Matching Gifts and Planned Giving

Please check to see if your employer matches your charitable contributions. If you have questions or would like to discuss with a member of our staff using the contact link found at cgmc.com



Planning for the future and creating the legacy you wish to leave is one of the most effective ways to ensure a lasting impact on CGMC and the arts in Central Ohio. Making a gift in your will or living

trust, known as a bequest, can guarantee that your legacy endures. Your gift may be a specific dollar amount, a percentage of your estate, or the remainder after all other provisions are specified. Bequests to CGMC are handled in collaboration with the Columbus Foundation. For more information, please reach out to Donovan Jones at donovan@cgmc.com or 614-531-4272.

> Donations can be made online at cgmc.com/donate, or by mailing your donation to: Columbus Gay Men's Chorus 51 Jefferson Ave. Suite 3 Columbus, OH, 43215

Email us with any questions at: cgmc@cgmc.com A member of the staff will contact you about any benefits at the patronage level associated with your donation.

Columbus Gay Men's Chorus is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

CGMC wishes to thank our Community and Corporate/Media Sponsors for their commitment in joining us in our mission of "Voices Raised. Lives Changed." and to increase awareness of, and support for, the entire LGBTQIA+ community!

OUR MISSION AND VISION

The vision statement of the Columbus Gay Men's Chorus can be expressed in four words: "Voices Raised, Lives Changed." As a performing arts group, we strive to enrich, empower, and entertain our audiences and members through varied concerts and other performances comprising a range of vocal, musical, theatrical, and dance presentations.

Our mission as an organization is to foster increased recognition, understanding, and acceptance of individuals in the LGBTQIA+ community. We dedicate ourselves to performing vocal music at the highest possible standard of quality, and to maintaining an atmosphere of camaraderie, support, and respect for our diverse members and audiences. We create and perform innovative, provocative, and entertaining programs that enhance the arts in Central Ohio, and that honor, preserve, and expand the legacy and artistry of the TTBB choral sound and tradition. We perform in accessible venues and provide ASL interpretation for our concert season.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND STAFF CGMC Board of Trustees

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Please contact us about board or other volunteer opportunities, or any other matters of interest or concern.

<u>www.cgmc.com</u> | <u>cgmc@cgmc.com</u> | 614-531-4272