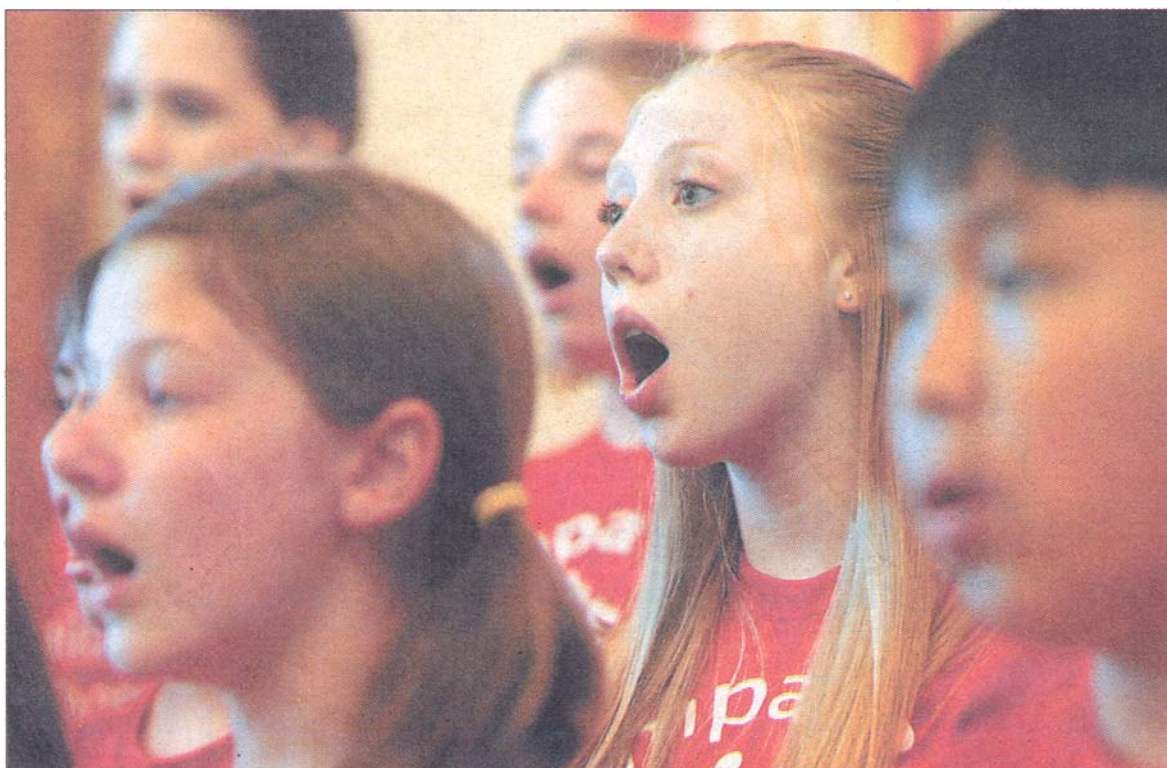


SATURDAY, JUNE 30, 2007

# NORTHEAST NEWS & TRIBUNE

SERVING NEW TAMPA, TEMPLE TERRACE, THONOTOSASSA, THE UNIVERSITY AREA AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES



Marissa Tweed, 17, and other members of Tampa Bay Children's Chorus travel and meet other singers from all over the world. The choir is headed to Vancouver, British Columbia, to participate in the Coastal Sound International Children's Choir Festival.

Tribune photo by JULIE BUSCH

## Voice Lessons

Being in the Tampa Bay Children's Chorus is a learning experience. Members learn discipline, life values. Even how to get to Carnegie Hall: practice, practice, practice.

STORY, PAGE 8

### TOP STORIES



#### Recipe A Finalist In Cookie Contest

Rose Terenzi's Tasty  
Nut Doubloons have  
Mrs. Fields' attention.

Page 3



#### Temple Terrace To Honor Heroes

City will celebrate the  
Fourth of July with a  
parade and fireworks.

Page 5

#### Curbing Speeders On Private Roads

Communities take  
different approaches



COVER STORY

*"They've really helped me get out of the shell I was in."*

MARISSA TWEED

*A member of Tampa Bay Children's Chorus*



Tribune photos by JULIE BUSCH

Longtime Temple Terrace resident Averill Summer founded the Tampa Bay Children's Chorus in 1989 and has since served as its artistic director.

# Singing Chorus's Praises

Members of the Children's Chorus gain confidence and a chance to compete around the country and Canada.

By JOYCE MCKENZIE  
The Tampa Tribune

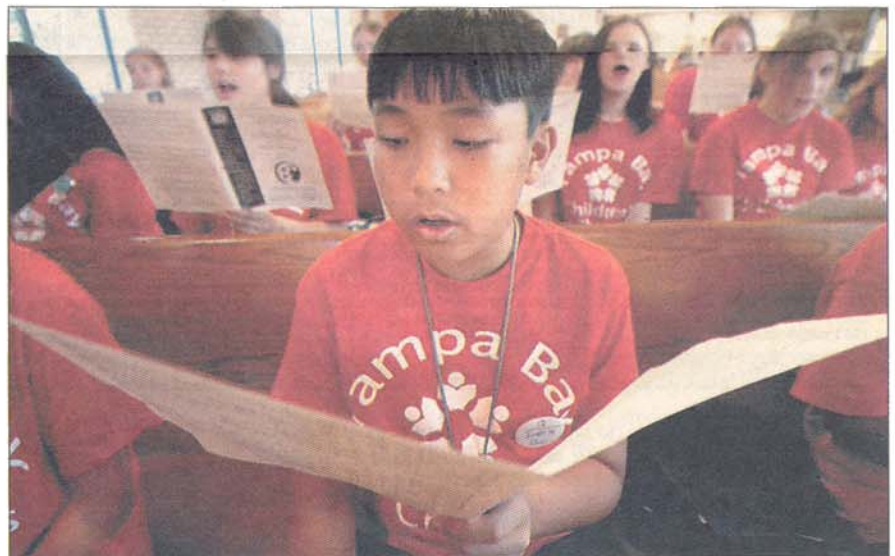
**TEMPLE TERRACE** — When Marissa Tweed joined the Tampa Bay Children's Chorus, the then-second-grader's sole objective was to improve her singing voice. Today, the 17-year-old King High School student from New Tampa realizes the past 11 years have changed her life.

"They've really helped me get out of the shell I was in,"

said Tweed, who in 2003 traveled with the concert choir to several major cities, including Toronto and New York, where it performed at Carnegie Hall. "It's built up my confidence to the point where I did my first solo at Epcot when I was 10 years old."

She credits much of her self-assurance and poise to Averill Summer, an associate profes-

See **YOUTH CHORUS**, Page 9 ▶



Jeff Mirafior, 12, practices with the chorus at a recent dress rehearsal for its trip to Vancouver, British Columbia. The choir has also performed in Scotland, Chicago, Charleston, S.C., and Toronto.





Tampa Bay Children's Chorus is composed of four groups, which are based on the student's age and ability.

## YOUTH CHORUS

Continued From Page 8

son of piano at the University of South Florida who founded the children's choir in 1989 and has since served as its artistic director.

"I have the greatest respect for Dr. Summer," Tweed said. "She has taught me so many of life's values. She's helped me in becoming the type of person she'd like me to become."

The discipline required to perform to the best of her ability also has influenced her study habits. The International Baccalaureate student has a grade-point average of 5.46.

"The whole experience, especially the ones where we travel and meet kids from all over the world, are wonderful. You bond with other choruses and learn so much about people from different backgrounds," Tweed said.

Fifteen-year-old Temple Terrace resident Erin McDonald, an IB student at King High, wouldn't trade her past seven years as a member of the chorus for any other experience afforded her.

"I'd been singing in my school chorus since the third grade, so at first I didn't really think I was going to be learning anything," she said. "But it's taught me how to better use my voice, like keeping the back of my mouth open and



Rehearsals are from 6 to 8 p.m. every Monday night during the school year and alternate between St. Catherine's Episcopal Church and the Patel Conservatory at Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center.

shaping my vowels correctly." McDonald, who refers to the group as her "family away from my family," also performed with the chorus at Carnegie Hall, an experience she described as "kind of overwhelming at first."

"I also love to sing at the Performing Arts Center, and some of my favorite time is going to John Knox Village and singing for the senior citizens. They really appreciate it," she said.

Jasah Millican, 14, a New Tampa resident and Wharton High School student, joined

the children's chorus two years ago.

"One of the best parts is meeting new people who have the same passion for singing as you," she said. "I'm going to stay with this chorus through my senior year, and after I graduate I plan to continue singing. It's a real honor to be part of this group."

Summer, who has also always had a love for singing and had worked with several children's choirs, often dreamed of starting a children's chorus of her own.

"I happened to hear the

Toronto Children's Chorus and I thought it was the most beautiful music I'd ever heard," said the longtime Temple Terrace resident who recently moved to Tampa Palms. "I didn't think long term when I started this, but I really enjoy it. I realize, too, how fortunate I've been to learn so much from my involvement in my own children's chorus."

She especially enjoys accompanying the children on their tours to places such as Scotland, Chicago, Charleston, S.C., and Toronto.

"It's always fun, and the children keep me young," Summer said.

However, during the Concert Choir's recent dress rehearsal for its trip to Vancouver, British Columbia, where it is participating in the Coastal Sound International Children's Choir Festival, Summer presented what she considers her more serious side.

"No hair in the face. ... Think of how you're standing, how you look. ... Mouth open wide. ... Hold the 'O.' ... Make the vowels sound beautiful. ... Sing through that tunnel. ... Give me those consonants," commanded Summer, but always with a smile on her face.

For the past 14 years, assistant chorus director Barbara Woellner has traveled every Monday night during the school year and for scheduled rehearsals from her home in Dunedin.

"Averill is wonderful to work with, and being involved with this chorus has enriched my life tremendously," said the Pinellas County elementary music teacher.

The Tampa Bay Children's Chorus is composed of four groups: the Cantate Children's Choir for the youngest singers; the Concert Choir, primarily for middle school students; the Chamber Choir for more advanced middle school singers and high school students; and Viva Musica, a small, select ensemble of superior singers.

"A lot of where the children are placed depends on their age but also their experience," Woellner said.

Tuition is \$600 per year for the cantate choir, \$800 a year for the concert and chamber choirs and \$300 a year for the Viva Musica ensemble.

Rehearsals are from 6 to 8 p.m. every Monday night during the school year and alternate between St. Catherine's Episcopal Church in Temple Terrace and the Patel Conservatory at the Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center in Tampa.

Auditions are scheduled for 6 p.m. Aug. 13 and 20 at St. Catherine's and 2 p.m. Aug. 19 at the Patel Conservatory. For details, visit [www.tbcchorus.org](http://www.tbcchorus.org) or call (813) 977-5558, Ext. 1.

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Keyword: Chorus, to hear the Tampa Bay Children's Chorus perform.