



Mental Health Association in Louisiana

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International Film Maker and Choral Director to begin Rehearsals of Hurricane Choir in New Orleans

Australian choral director Martin Meader will begin local rehearsals for the 1,000-voice Hurricane Choir in New Orleans March 30. Meader, who was co-executive producer of the Fox film *Paradise Road*, starring Glenn Close, was inspired to create the Hurricane Choir after watching television reports on the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina.

Meader felt called to use his gift of choral direction as a healing tool for the people of South Louisiana. Having previously used choral singing to uplift the disenfranchised, Meader understands the power of bringing people together in song to build community spirit and enhance individual wellness.

“We want everyone to participate in the choir. Singers, non-singers, hurricane evacuees, local residents, everybody,” said Meader.

Rehearsals in New Orleans will begin Sunday, April 2 from 4 p.m. – 6 p.m. at Carrollton Avenue, Church of Christ, 4540 S. Carrollton Avenue, New Orleans. Rehearsals will continue every Sunday up to and including April 30.

Singers from New Orleans will join choristers from throughout the state to form the 1,000-voice Hurricane Choir. Performances are scheduled for the State Capitol in Baton Rouge on Thursday, May 4 and Sunday, May 21. A performance at the River Center is scheduled for Saturday June 3 and a final performance in New Orleans in mid-June. It is hoped the June concert will be aired live via network stations around the globe!

With the support of sponsors such as The Mental Health Association in Louisiana, The Center for Natural Healing, The Abraham Group and others, the project will have broad appeal as survivors tell their stories through song. The University of Western Australia and Australian health service provider, Sentiens will conduct groundbreaking research on the effects of singing on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, anxiety and depression.

A film documentary of the complete choir experience is being produced for international distribution and Meader hopes to schedule a national concert tour, to include Carnegie Hall and the Lincoln Center in New York City, for select members of the choir. All proceeds generated through the sales of CD's, DVD's and other items will benefit Volunteers of America and their efforts to rebuild Louisiana communities

For more information on the Hurricane Choir, visit www.hurricanechoir.com or call 225-810-3815.