

# RIMROCK OPERA

# Aria News

P.O. BOX 11 BILLINGS, MT 59103-0011 (406) 671-2214 [www.rimrockopera.org](http://www.rimrockopera.org) Summer 2006

## 2006 - 2007

### Rimrock Opera Season

#### Opera 101

Wednesdays Sept 27,  
Oct. 11, 18, & 25, 2006

#### Opera on the Avenue

Saturday, Oct 21, 2006

#### Madama Butterfly

Friday, Oct 27 &  
Sunday, Oct 29, 2006

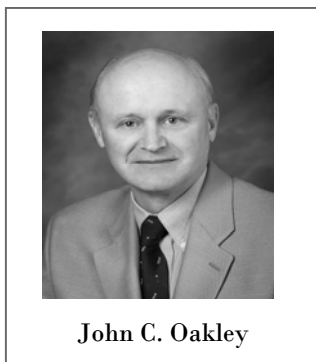
#### OperaFest

Saturday, Mar 10, 2007

#### Così fan tutte

Friday, March 23 &  
Sunday, March 25, 2007

## A Leader in the Arts and Sciences: A Tribute to John C. Oakley



John C. Oakley

Rimrock Opera and the Billings community were saddened by the death of John C. Oakley, MD, neurosurgeon, researcher, husband, father, and friend, April 17, 2006.

An outstanding physician and surgeon, John was a man of many passions. Fortunately for us all, one of those passions was opera.

Along with his wife, Shirley, he was a dedicated board member of the Rimrock Opera. Serving on the Executive Committee and providing experience and stability to the company, John was a strong fund-raiser. His laugh and smile were evidence of his passion for music and opera.

His obituary allows a glimpse into the man we have lost: "John approached every aspect of his life with the same fervor as his career. He was as interested in climbing mountains as he was in appreciating a fine wine or listening to an opera."

"Not only a scholar and an athlete, John was an artist

and a musician as well. In high school he taught himself to play guitar and he sang folk music in a trio called The Kinsmen. He and his wife continued singing together in church choirs and home; they also shared a spirited love of the opera."

Memorials to Dr. John Oakley will be published in our opera program for our October performance of *Madama Butterfly* at Alberta Bair Theater.

Please consider celebrating John's life and passions in this special way.

## Summertime and the Opera is Easy...

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### Heights Concert Set for June 10

The cast from Rimrock Opera's outreach program *From Met to Broadway* and Artistic Director Douglas Nagel, will unveil a new vocal performance in the Billings Heights at Skyview High School at 7 p.m. Saturday June 10.

Admission is \$5; children 10 and under are free. Selections will include solos and ensembles from favorite grand opera and Broadway

productions. Come hear Puccini, Mozart, Strauss, Bernstein, Rodgers, Sondheim and many more!

### Strawberry Festival ROCKS

Rimrock Opera Chorus for Kids (ROCK) will perform Saturday, June 10, from 8am to 5pm at the Strawberry Festival downtown. *From Met to Broadway* will also perform. Fill your senses with yummy strawberry cake and fun music.

### Summer Kids' Camp

The second annual Rimrock Opera Kids' Camp will take place at Cisel Hall on the campus of MSU-B June 26 through the 30th. This educational summer camp focuses on vocal performance and technical aspects of stage production for kids 1st grade through high school. For more information, please contact Amy Logan, camp director, at 671-5174.



## October Offers Three Opportunities to Enjoy Opera

### Madama Butterfly on the Mainstage

Rimrock Opera opens its '06-'07 season with Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* October 27 and October 29 in the Alberta Bair Theater. Mozart's *Così fan tutte* will be staged March 23 and 25, 2007.

Please note that both Friday night performances will feature a new 7:30 pm curtain time. Put it on the calendar!

### Opera on the Avenue

*Auction of Arias on the Avenue* is our fall fundraiser featuring fine music courtesy of our *Butterfly* stars, wine and desserts. This year, the event will be held Saturday, October 21, at the McCormick Café Center on Montana Avenue at 8 pm. Dine at one of the Avenue's fine restaurants: Q Cuisine, the Rex, Sweet Ginger and others.

### Opera 101

Douglas Nagel presents another entertaining and educational series to prepare for *Madama Butterfly*. Classes will be held on Wednesdays: Sept. 27, Oct. 11, 18, at the West Park Plaza rehearsal space. This year Doug will offer a bonus class on the 25th. Please call Helen Nagel at 656-6586 for more information and to register.

## Executive Director Change

Jan Fluitt-Dupuy has stepped down from her position as Interim Executive Director for the '05-'06 season. She has rejoined the board and will serve on the Executive Committee.

Jan spearheaded the educational panel discussions for *La Traviata* and *Die Fledermaus*, the result of two grants from the Montana Committee for the Humanities. In addition, she wrote and implemented the National Endowment for the Arts grant that sponsored Rimrock Opera's *Great American Voices* tour to Malmstrom Air Force base in the fall of 2005. Many thanks to Jan for her fine work as interim ED.

Tracy Nielsen has been named Rimrock Opera's new Executive Director.

Originally from Spokane, Tracy moved to Billings with her husband Mike and her three children in October of 2002.

A radiologic technologist with a background in marketing and a stellar record of community service, Tracy brings much expertise to Rimrock Opera. Tracy may be reached at 672-2214 or at [info@rimrockopera.org](mailto:info@rimrockopera.org).



## Save an Aria! Raise Cultural Awareness! Join Rimrock Opera's Volunteer Team

Take tickets at outreach events, pitch in at the office, greet guests at our mainstage ABT events, sew costume bags, or help host opening night receptions, *Auction of Arias* and *OperaFest*, and much more.

Call Darrah Plank at 245-3954 or Gail Hein at 248-7808 for more information.

## "Thank you, Rimrock Opera Needs Your Continued Support." A Letter from the President

Dear Rimrock Opera Patrons,

This spring, the Strauss comedy *Die Fledermaus* was a great success. Rimrock Opera produced the educational outreach show *The Night Harry Stopped Smoking* in January and February reaching over 10,000 kids in their schools in Montana and Northern Wyoming. This anti-smoking musical will continue to be staged around our state in 2006 and 2007 as part of the educational mission of our opera company.

Rimrock Opera Chorus for Kids (ROCK) has become a vital part of our organization. With over 70 children in ROCK, their performances have been seen with Rimrock Opera, the Billings Symphony and at many other venues in Billings and Yellowstone County. I am very proud of Rimrock Opera.

As you can see, there is a great deal going on with the Rimrock Opera Company. The future of opera in Billings depends on the ongoing commitment of its benefactors. None of the events described in this letter would be possible without the financial support of friends and fans of the Opera like yourself. We are very appreciative of all you do for the Rimrock Opera and for your generous response when we ask for your help.

Please take a moment now to mail in your gift with the enclosed donation envelope. Every gift in any amount is greatly appreciated. Have a great summer and we'll see you in the Heights June 10 and at the Kids' Camp June 26-30.

Lucinda Butler, President, Board of Directors

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