

**STOCKTON**

NEW JERSEY'S

**DISTINCTIVE**

Public College

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The production brings together people from all over the region, including Preston Forchion, owner of one of the deepest bass voices you'll ever hear. "People come up to me in restaurants and say, 'I love your voice,'" he said. "My wife finds it annoying sometimes."

Forchion is retired and lives in Sickerville in Camden County, but works part-time for Hammonton's Via Bus company.

He said he had sometimes driven gamblers to casinos in Atlantic City, then dropped in on a Stockton Oratorio rehearsal in Atlantic City. Later he picked up his customers and drove them back home.

"I'm an 18-year veteran with the Stockton Oratorio Society," said Forchion.

"I learned 'The Messiah' and sang it for the first time in 1996, because we do it every other year," he explained.

Sally Russell and her daughter, Sarah, who live in Hamilton Township, will be singing, and Sarah will also be dancing and signing during the production.

Sarah, 36, is working on a sign language degree and is a dancer who has performed with various area dance troupes including Atlantic City Ballet and the Paul Morris DanceXplosion group in Hammonton, her mother said.

Sally, a former teacher and bookkeeper, now keeps busy as a seamstress. She said she has been involved with Stockton's 'Messiah' concerts for decades, and her daughter "decided to tag along with her mother when she was still in high school."

So what does being in The Messiah mean to them?

"To me that's what Christmas is all about – Christ. It's one of the songs I have loved since I was little. Not just the Hallelujah chorus, the whole thing," Sally said.

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Vaughn urged anyone who's interested in being part of the concert – even if they hadn't been part of the previously scheduled show – to come to open rehearsals. Rehearsals are being held Jan. 13 and Jan. 20, 2014 from 7 to 8:45 p.m. in the Alton Auditorium on the second floor of the A-Wing of Stockton's main Galloway campus.

For more information about participating in the performance, please contact Brian Lyons in the School of Arts and Humanities at [Brian.Lyons@stockton.edu](mailto:Brian.Lyons@stockton.edu), (609) 652-4891.

Tickets previously purchased for the concert canceled due to snow will be re-issued ne