

## Raymond A. Miller Biography

Born April 22, 1933, in Norristown, Pennsylvania.  
(A suburb of Philadelphia)

1951: Graduated from Norristown High School  
(High School Band member)  
Enlisted in the United States Air Force upon graduation

1951-1955: Member of the US Air Force Band during the Korean War  
Served in Iceland, playing the clarinet, saxophone, and flute

September 9<sup>th</sup>, 1955: Married Carol Virginia Canfield  
1956: daughter, Charly D. Miller  
1958: son, Drew Miller  
1960: daughter, Kim Elaine Miller  
1962: son, Steve R. Miller  
Currently: 3 granddaughters, 3 grandsons

1955-1959: Attended West Chester State College of Pennsylvania  
Double major; clarinet and voice  
Received a Bachelor's degree in voice and choral music

1959-1962: Employed as High School Band and Choral Director  
Fruita High School, Colorado

1962-1963: Attended University of Colorado, Boulder  
Received a Master's degree in vocal performance  
Awarded a scholarship to Julliard School of Music, New York

1963: Studied at Julliard's Opera Theatre Department for 3 months

1963-1966: Employed as a voice, choral music, and woodwind instructor  
Valley City State College, North Dakota

1966-1995: Employed as a Faculty Member of the School of Music,  
University of Nebraska, Lincoln  
Taught studio voice, choral and basic conducting, music appreciation  
Director of the Varsity Men's Glee Club  
Founder and Director of the Woman's Chorale  
Performed in faculty recitals, operas, the UNL Oratorio Choir  
Retired as a tenured professor in 1995

1966-1986: Director of the Wesley House Church Choir, Lincoln

1967-1990: All State Choir Director, clinician and adjudicator,  
for the (Summer) Nebraska All State Fine Arts Program  
Director of the Nebraska All State Fine Arts Program from 1980-1990

1972-1995: Founder and Director of The Scarlet and Cream Singers  
UNL Alumni Association Website of S&C info:  
<http://www.huskeralum.com/programs/scarlet/index.htm>  
A collection of S&C pix from 1973 to today:  
<http://www.huskeralum.com/programs/scarlet/groups.htm>

1975-1977: Host and organizer of Choral Associates Summer Workshops  
held in Nebraska, featuring Norman Luboff

Dates Unrecorded:

Served as President of the Nebraska Choral Directors Association  
Performer and clinician for NCDA workshops & conventions  
Vocal soloist with the Lincoln Symphony Orchestra  
Vocal soloist with the Omaha Opera Association  
Performer and clinician for MENC workshops & conventions

1990-2003: Singer and soloist with the Soli Deo Gloria Cantorum,  
Nebraska's professional chorale, directed and managed by Almeda  
and Jackson Berkey (of Manheim Steamroller fame)

1999: Recipient of the Soli Deo Gloria Cantorum Foundation  
"Excellence in Choral Music Leadership" Award

The Scarlet and Cream Singers' founding Director was Ray Miller,



shown here wearing his infamous “test pattern” red and white jacket (1994-1995).



The original Scarlet and Cream Singers: Academic Year 1973-1974



Flappers and razzmatazz filled a portion of the 1982-83 Scarlet and Cream tour of Japan





The 1983-84 group on the first Scarlet and Cream USO tour, traveling to Iceland, Greenland, and Newfoundland.



The 1984-85 ensemble poses for a group shot prior to their performance at the American Choral Directors National Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah in March of 1985.



Screamer men strut their stuff during a 1993-94 Department of Defense USO Tour



Ray's 1994-1995 Scarlet and Cream Singers



# Singers' director to retire

By Paula Lavigne  
Senior Reporter

Not many teachers can say their students act on Broadway, sing in Nashville or perform on a Hawaiian cruise ship.

Ray Miller, founder and director of the Scarlet & Cream Singers, can say this with pride.

But Miller is ready for his final curtain call. He will retire this year after 22 years as Scarlet & Cream director and 29 years as a music professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. About 130 Scarlet & Cream alumni will honor Miller at a special celebration this weekend.

Scarlet & Cream singers and musicians, who are sponsored by the UNL Alumni Association, perform at alumni functions across the nation and serve as a public relations tool.

But Miller made them much more than that—as a group and as individuals. Miller took the award-winning Scarlet & Cream Singers across the United States and overseas, and he scheduled a bi-yearly tour across Nebraska.

He said he also wanted to give students an outlet for their performing talents other than opera or oratorio. He had them perform popular, fun music mainly from the '30s and '40s—with a few Beach Boys tunes reluctantly thrown in.

Miller served as a director and a father figure to the 14 singers and five musicians. Miller said he would miss working with the students more than anything.

"It's not like having them for a math or science class for one semester," he said. "Some of these kids were with me for five or six years."

In that time, Miller said he tried to teach them more than notes and steps.

"We taught them cooperation and commitment," he said. "We said if you had a big fraternity or sorority dance on Friday night and we had a performance, you were coming with us."

For some, the commitment to performance turned into a career.

Ken Goodwin, who was in the group from 1979 to 1982, started a nationwide chain of piano rock-and-roll clubs.

Goodwin, who now lives in Cincinnati, said his experience performing on stage with Scarlet & Cream helped him with his career.

"Ray took a bunch of crazy kids from different schools and put them together to perform for the alumni," he said, "and still, somehow, kept his sanity through it all."

Don Robertus, who was with the group from 1985 to 1988, said Miller's demand for commitment helped him stay focused in school.

"Ray was there to keep us in line," he said. "He was kind of a father figure to us all."

Joel Johnston, vocal instructor at Gretna High School, said Miller had the ability to recruit quality students, match them with

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Jon Waller/DN

UNL vocal music professor Ray Miller is retiring after 29 years with the university. Miller's biggest contribution was creating the Scarlet & Cream Singers.

## Former student takes stage

By Doug Peters  
Staff Reporter

LAS VEGAS — Seven years ago, Rod Weber expected to be spending 1995 finishing medical school and wearing a lab coat and stethoscope.

Instead, the 29-year-old Nebraska native and former UNL student has spent much of the last 18 months on roller skates, playing one of the male leads in Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Starlight Express" at the Las Vegas Hilton.

Weber's role is the product of his six years of work in show business. He quit school in 1988, passing up medical school in favor of the stage.

Performing in "Starlight Express," which has twice been voted best show in Las Vegas, has been demanding. The role requires Weber to perform 10 90-minute shows every week.

"It's a high energy show," Weber said of the production, which is performed entirely

on roller skates. "It's the toughest show I've ever done, physically."

Weber, who performed with the Scarlet & Cream Singers while at UNL, credits the group with giving him experience and helping him learn how to work an audience. He also said Scarlet & Cream's retiring director, Ray Miller, influenced him.

"He's a man of experience," Weber said. "He gave us a taste of what this life was like."

Weber is no stranger to performing. He participated in show choir in high school at Plainview and at Blair, where he graduated in 1983. At UNL he also performed with the Varsity Men's Glee Club and the Nebraska Dance Ensemble's production of "Dancing Gershwin."

Until 1988, performing was a hobby for Weber, not a career option. He was a chemistry and pre-medicine major at UNL, and even after a six-month break from school in 1988 to perform at the Tokyo Disneyland, he

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[Larger PRINT version of both articles FOLLOWS]



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## Miller

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good music and point them in the right direction.

Johnston said he still used Miller as a musical resource for the school's swing choir, which has received honorary invitations and gold trophies.

Johnston and Goodwin said they had many fond memories of the group, including one time when a singer performed for 15 minutes at an Omaha show with his zipper down.

"Every time he turned around, the audience applauded," Johnston said. "He couldn't figure it out."

Fortunately, that incident did not

ruin Gene Klosner's career. Klosner, who was with the group from 1979 to 1983, went on to be an acoustic rock recording artist in Antioch, Tenn.

When reminded of the zipper incident, Klosner commended Miller for his tolerance.

"He definitely put up with our antics," he said, "which would have given anyone health problems."

The Scarlet & Cream singers will perform their annual spring concert at UNL under Miller's direction for the last time this weekend.

The singers take the stage Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for the public and \$6 for students and senior citizens.



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## Weber

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intended to finish his degree and go to medical school.

His plans changed.

"I wanted to become a specialist, and that meant at least another eight years of school," he said. "Once I got a taste of making some decent money doing what I really loved to do, it was hard to go back."

Weber was told by several different people that he should take a shot at the big time. He took their advice.

He said the fact that his gamble had been successful was a pleasant surprise.

"I never thought I'd be doing this for a living," he said.

After leaving UNL for good, Weber spent 1 1/2 years performing on a cruise ship. During that time, he said, his decision to pursue a show business career was reinforced.

"My last six months doing the cruise — that's when I decided to give it a go as a career and move to New York and really go for the big time."

The move to New York paid off. Working as a bartender at night, Weber auditioned during the day. He landed some work as an extra on a soap opera and won a role in a produc-

tion of "Cats" in Switzerland, where he lived for a year.

He also was a cast member on the national tour of "Starlight Express."

In September 1993, he moved to Las Vegas and began working in his present role. Because of his role in "Starlight Express," Weber said, he will have the financial security to move back to New York this September and audition exclusively, without having to work a night job to support himself.

Meanwhile, Weber is back in school — this time in theater arts. With 17 credit hours this semester in addition to his already rigorous performance schedule, Weber said he was sometimes hard-pressed to find time to study.

Looking ahead, Weber laughed, saying his ultimate goal was "to be a working actor."

Weber, who trained as an actor, singer and dancer, said his specific goals were to land a principal role on Broadway and possibly to break into television and movies.

Right now, he's looking forward to finishing his run with "Starlight Express" and moving on.

"It's time to make a break ... I'd rather get out and find out what else I can do."



# **Excellence in Choral Music Leadership Award**

## **Proclamation**

**WHEREAS Ray Miller has given a lifetime of service to the teaching of excellence in solo and choral singing**

**WHEREAS Ray Miller has given a lifetime of excellent service to his community and church as a leader and conductor of choral music**

**WHEREAS Ray Miller has given invaluable service as a master performer of solo and choral music**

**WHEREAS Ray Miller is exemplary through the beauty and sensitivity of his fine and intelligent musicianship**

**WHEREAS Ray Miller has become a shining example of excellence in dignity, character, and leadership to his fellow performers, his students, his teaching colleagues, his family and friends**

**Cantorum Foundation and its Board of Directors,  
in honor of**

**Soli Deo Gloria Cantorum  
Almeda Berkey, Music Director,  
bestows the Second**

**Excellence in Choral Music Leadership Award  
this day, May 2, 1999**

**to**

**Raymond Andrew Miller**

## RAY MILLER

Ray Miller was an Elm Street alley-kid from the West End of Norristown, Pennsylvania. He graduated from Norristown High School in 1951 and enlisted in the Air Force. During the Korean War he was stationed in Iceland slinging a clarinet and saxophone, rather than a gun and bayonet, and performing with the Air Force band for many functions, including Officer's Club entertainment.

In 1955, during his last few weeks in the Air Force, Ray chanced to encounter Carol Canfield on the streets of Denver Colorado. Although they had known each other in high school, Ray had only managed to steal one kiss (in the band room) during all those years. After only a few dates, Ray knew that she was the one for him. On September 9th of 1955, Ray and Carol were married. It was Carol who dragged Ray to church to sing in the choir. Ray identified himself as a bass vocalist, saying: "Well, I was such a big guy - I figured I would probably sing bass." Upon hearing Ray's voice it was quickly determined that he was a tenor. And what a tenor he was! A Helden tenor!

Ray's interest in choral music flourished at West Chester State College of Pennsylvania, where he double majored and finished his Bachelor's degree in vocal and choral music in 1959. He was asked to sing for the graduation ceremony.

Ray now had 2 of the soon to be 4 children: Charly and Drew. The family moved to Grand Junction, Colorado, where he directed the Fruita High School music department and marching band. By the year of 1963 Ray and Carol had 2 more additions to the family: Kim and Steve. The family then moved to Boulder, where Ray returned to school to obtain his Master's degree from the University of Colorado at Boulder. From there he took a teaching position at Valley City State College in North Dakota and taught woodwinds and voice and directed the College Singers.

In August of 1966 he accepted a position with the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. Ray taught voice, choral conducting, music education, and also directed the Varsity Men's Glee Club. Soon, his duties expanded to include the Women's Chorale. In 1973, Ray created the Scarlet & Cream Singers and was their only director until his retirement in 1995. During this time, Ray also worked with the Nebraska All State Fine Arts Program, conducting the All State Choir for 25 years, and directing the program for 10 years. He directed the Wesley House Church Choir and put together groups to perform in the Chatauqua Tour. When not teaching or conducting, Ray performed in several operas, including the lead tenor role in *La Boheme* and cameo rolls in *Napoleon* and *The Ballad of Baby Doe*. He began singing with Soli Deo Gloria Cantorum in 1990.

Throughout his career, Ray's wealth of accomplishments has been reflected in many awards and also in the successes of his students. He is also the proud grandfather of 6 grandchildren. The ***Excellence in Choral Music Leadership Award of 1999*** deservedly belongs to Mr. Raymond Andrew Miller.