



OCDA *news*

BULLETIN OF THE OHIO CHORAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

REFLECTIONS OF A PRESIDENT



Two weeks ago, a group of us gathered to listen to tapes and cds submitted for performance in the upcoming ACDA regional convention in Chicago, February 15-18, 2006. Assisting me in the evaluation of the tapes were a current Repertoire and Standards chair, and a past president of OCDA. As I was packing up the recordings to send back to the Central Division President-Elect, I reminisced about the times I had served on this type of committee in the past. It has, and I am certain will continue to be, an honor to volunteer for OCDA. There exists great leadership on our board,

and I am certain there are many willing volunteers among you who may be seeking such a position. I know from conversations I have had with you at conferences and conventions that you are out there!

Please feel free to contact any current board member of Repertoire and Standards chair if you would like to be considered for a position in the future on the OCDA board. We are always looking for fresh faces, particularly from our younger generation of teachers.

I would be remiss if I did not thank Gayle Walker for her exemplary devotion to our summer conference. You should have received your conference registration information in the mail by now. If you have not, you may download it from the OCDA website, <http://www.ohiocda.org>. This conference promises to be an excellent one for many different teaching areas.

Thanks also to Ron Blackley, our newsletter editor, for his tireless efforts in getting members to submit articles and soliciting advertisers. He has willingly learned a difficult job, and the OCDA board is most appreciative of his creativity, energy and effort.

I wish you all a great end to your school year, church season, or the pleasant continuation of your retirement! I look forward to seeing you all at our summer conference.

Regards,
Tom Merrill



Spring 2005

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OCDA
Summer Conference 2005

June 20-22

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Westerville, OH

Gayle Walker
Conference Coordinator
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FROM THE DESK OF OUR VICE-PRESIDENT

Lucinda K. Houck

Hello friends! This article will focus on three areas: a word about the OCDA elections, my “soapbox” perspective and a personal note.

First of all as I write this article, the ballots for this election are printing. This year the membership of OCDA is electing colleagues for the positions of president-elect, and Secretary. Likewise, Chairs for Northeast, South Central and Southwest Regions will be voted into service. We have a wonderful list of members running for these offices. (Don’t forget the postage stamp!) The elected board is the most important part in keeping OCDA growing, up-to-date and a vital part of choral music in Ohio.

During the many years I have been associated with this wonderful organization there have been many changes in education at all levels. While we as a group appropriately became involved and concerned about music education, I personally feel that we need to look at the broader picture. It is the whole structure of public school funding that is causing a threat to choral programs throughout the state. Cuts are being felt from kindergarten through higher education. We certainly have a huge obligation to make our feelings known “loud and strong.” I believe strongly that our elected officials should be held accountable or should be voted out of office. We can be a positive force by continuing to educate those officials and the public regarding the benefits of music at all levels.

Finally, July 1 (more appropriately the Summer Conference) will be the end of my president-elect, President, VP six year term. It has been my privilege to serve this fine organization. I have been most fortunate to be part of a team effort to continue OCDA’s sponsorship of Reading Sessions at the OMEA Professional Conference, regional workshops and our stellar Summer Conferences: a team which possesses many talents, high energy and an abundance of great ideas. Thank you for the wonderful opportunities.

A special note of appreciation and thanks to the close group of friends known as “The FAM.” Without the love, support and dedicated assistance of each one, I would not have been able to complete all of my work with OCDA, let alone OMEA.

At this point of my life and after 32 years of teaching, I am retiring. You may ask why not 35 years? First of all, my husband is completing his 42-year career in education, mostly as an administrator. Secondly and very simply, it is time! It is time for us to explore this new phase of our lives. Our exploration will begin in Wilmington, NC.

My final thank you is to my personal secretary, messenger, deliveryman, pick-up man, editor, list checker: my husband Larry. He has changed my life and made it easier these last six and one-half years. Blessings to you all!

EDITOR’S NOTE

These are the result of the elections, as reported by Lucinda Houck, outgoing Vice-President.

President-Elect.....Gayle Walker
 Secretary.....Ben Ayling
 South Central Region Chair.....Eric Kauffman
 North East Region Chair.....Jim Kotora
 South West Region Chair.....Michele Smith



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AN EXCITING ADVENTURE FOR YOUR PRESIDENT-ELECT

Mark Munson, *President-elect*



As I prepare to become president of OCDA, I reflect on the achievements that have been realized by our organization within the past two years. How wonderful to have had both Dale Warland and Jing Ling Tam at the 2004 summer conference, and to have Eric Whitacre along with our first children's honors chorus this year! Kudos to everyone on

the board for making the 2004 and 2005 conferences happen, and especially to President Tom Merrill, Conference Coordinator Gayle Walker, and Central Division Children's R & S Chair Robyn Lana for their leadership. Already we anxiously anticipate having Bob Chilcott as our headliner for 2006. OCDA's summer conferences truly are special times for choral directors of Ohio and for our many guests from neighboring states.

The exciting news is that I am going on a faculty exchange leave to Sweden for the 2005-06 academic year. I will exchange jobs for a year with Lena Ekman Frisk, and my family and I will exchange

houses and cars with Lena, her husband, and their three sons. We will live in Höör, a small town in the southern-most region of Sweden. One day each week I will travel forty minutes west by train to Musikhögskolan i Malmö, Lunds Universitet (The Malmö Academy of Music of Lund University) to teach two choral methods courses. On the other weekdays I will travel forty minutes east by train to teach 11 to 16 year olds at Fröknegårds skolan in Kristianstad, roughly the equivalent of an American music magnet school. I will also conduct Christianstads Motettkör, a community chorus of forty adult Swedes, on Tuesday evenings. This idea of university faculty being expected to work "in the field" makes a lot of sense to me!

Now don't worry about my OCDA responsibilities! With the help of electronic mail, and with the assistance of a fine vice president and president-elect, all of the responsibilities will be covered with no problem. Besides, those articles that I will be writing for each issue of OCDA News might be just a little more interesting than they would be otherwise!

Vi ses!

THESE THINGS I BELIEVE

Robert Russell, *excerpted from the Maine ACDA Choruspondent*

1. Ownership of a program is key to its growth and development. Develop strategies to have the singers involved with and responsible for their own successes and failures. Avoid blaming. Accentuate problem-solving.
2. Blend is not a four-letter word. Blend is not bland. Choirs sing with blended sound when every member of the chorus sings the same pitch at the same time with the same dynamic and the same articulation with the same vowel sound. To ask voices to match each other in vocal color is to remove an important ingredient in vitalized choral singing.
3. The essence of the choral program is music selection. You have the responsibility and privilege to make the curriculum anew each semester by the literature that you choose. In the process you are shaping not only voices, but lives. Does the choir have the ability to sing well the literature that you have chosen?
4. Be wary of choosing a piece of music because a) the singers, b) the parents, c) the administration, d) the Rotary Club, or e) the local TV affiliate wants you to perform it, UNLESS you also think it is a good piece of music. The above is null and void if the piece is an alumni tradition.
5. The singers will mirror the energy that they perceive coming from the podium. Singers will never give you back more than you give to them.
6. Never critique the past. Always critique the future. Enjoy the music that you make today, and be vigilant about how it can be better tomorrow.
7. The most important factor in choosing music is the text. Never sing a piece that has a text that puts you off or that you cannot relish for 2-3 months required to bring the piece to a performance. Whether you treat the text in a symphonic sense or a poetic sense, it will go a long way toward the quality of the musical experience.

(continued on page 11)

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REGISTRATION INFORMATION

The registration fee for members is \$130. Included in this fee are parking, the Tuesday business luncheon, and reading session music (guaranteed only for workshop participants registering in advance).

1. Fill out the registration form and return as indicated below. The registration must be postmarked by June 6, 2005, in order for the pre-registration fees to apply. After June 6, 2005, a higher fee structure is in place (see below). Reading session packets cannot be guaranteed for those who do not pre-register by the June 6 deadline.
2. A refund will be made if a written cancellation is received by June 6, 2005. After that date a deduction of \$80.00 will be made.
3. The option of earning graduate credit through Otterbein College is available. The cost will be \$140 per quarter hour of graduate credit, and participants may register for 1-3 credits. If you would like to receive a graduate credit registration packet, please indicate this in the appropriate space on the registration form below.
4. Mail payment and Registration Form to: Dr. Gayle Walker, OCDA Summer Conference Coordinator, Department of Music, Otterbein College, One Otterbein College, Westerville, Ohio 43081. Call Gayle Walker at (614) 823-1318 or e-mail gwalker@otterbein.edu with questions. Please make checks payable to the Ohio Choral Directors Association.

REGISTRATION FORM

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- \$130 – ACDA member
- \$205 – non-member (includes membership)
- \$50 – retired member
- \$75 – retired non-member (includes membership)
- \$65 – non-member spouse (does not include membership)
- \$35 – student member/first year teacher
- \$55 – student non-member (includes membership)

LATE REGISTRATION (postmarked after June 6, 2005)

- \$150 – ACDA member
- \$225 – non-member (includes membership)
- \$70 – retired member
- \$95 – retired non-member (includes membership)
- \$85 – non-member spouse (does not include membership)
- \$55 – student member/first year teacher
- \$75 – student non-member (includes membership)

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- \$8.50 - I am interested in purchasing a box dinner for the Dinner Roundtable Discussions.

Please check one roundtable interest area: Church/Community Middle School/Jr. High High School
 Elementary/Childrens/Boys College/University

I am interested in the following complimentary reading packets (check all that apply - not guaranteed after June 6):

- Church/Community Jazz/Show Middle School/Jr. High High School Elementary/Childrens/Boys
- Multicultural College/University

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OCDA Summer Conference

June 20-22, 2005

Otterbein College, Westerville, OH

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January 26-28, 2006

Cleveland

ACDA Central Division Conference

February 15-18, 2006

Chicago

ACDA National Conference

January 31 - February 3, 2007

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This workshop combines principles of vocal pedagogy with choral singing, as well as emphasizing appropriate repertoire for teaching healthy voice production. A resident high school mixed chorus comprising approximately 40 rising juniors and seniors will serve as the demonstration choir. High school choral teachers and youth choir directors will be invited to bring a balanced quartet of singers to participate. Private voice teachers or anyone wishing to take the workshop without bringing students is welcome to do so.

The workshop will be held at North Broadway United Methodist Church in Columbus from noon on Wednesday, June 15 - noon on Saturday, June 18. Cost is \$295 for adults (including two quarter hours of grad. credit) and \$75 for high school singers.

For information, contact Dr. Hilary Apfelstadt, School of Music, at 614-292-9926 or via e-mail (apfelstadt.1@osu.edu)

ENRICH YOUR COMMUNITY, CELEBRATE THEIR CULTURES

Emily DePaul Gil, Multicultural R&S Chair

A few years ago I was preparing to introduce a piece of music from India to my choir. It was a secular piece used to celebrate Holi, the Color Festival of Spring. As usual, I prepared to give my students background information on Indian culture and the Hindi language and had planned to start with a listening activity as a spring board for discussion. Before the class began I touched base with Jalal, a native born Indian, and asked him if I could call on him to answer questions or share his experiences with the Holi Festival. He gave me a very stern "No, please no," and walked quickly into the room with his eyes staring right at the floor. I was a little surprised, but respected his wishes.

As we began, Jalal's stature shrunk, eyes darting all around, scanning the reactions of his peers. He looked panicked. After a while when he realized that the other students weren't reacting negatively, he began to relax a bit. When the listening activity was over students began to share their reactions and thoughts on what we had heard. It was all very positive and there were many questions about the festival, the instruments used, the timbre of the singer's voices, the translation of the lyrics, etc. As the discussion went on the student's enthusiasm for the new piece had created a mixed look of shock and relief on Jalal's face. One student turned to him and asked if he had ever participated in the festivities when he lived in India. That was all it took, affirmation from his peers. Jalal straightened up a bit and was off and running with the discussion. He brought in pictures, instruments and his mother, who helped us with our pronunciation and performance.

Jalal later shared that he was terrified that his friends would laugh at "his" music, language and customs. He was so relieved that his friends not only accepted his culture, but were excited to experience it with him. From that day forward Jalal and I had a very different relationship. Somehow the whole experience connected us. He has since moved to another district, but keeps in touch with letters and phone calls. That shared musical experience had quite an impact on both of us and illustrates the importance of embracing all cultures within our communities.

When choosing multicultural literature for your classroom, consider the demographics of your student population. Make a list of all the cultures represented in your school. If you are unsure of the nationality of your students, or if you live in an area that is not "noticeably multicultural," survey your students on their family heritage. Choose one or two to highlight through music each year. Using students, parents and community members as guest experts in your classroom will only serve to strengthen your school community and broaden your students' view and acceptance of the diversity that exists not only in their school, but throughout the world.

America is no longer the melting pot of the early 20th century. Citizens from other countries coming to live in the United States no longer desire to shed their cultural past and become "Americanized." Most want to experience the freedom and the joys America has to offer while preserving their heritage and customs. As music teachers we can affirm that desire in powerful ways.

Resources for Selecting Multicultural Choral Music

Dr. Marian Dolan, former multicultural R&S for ACDA's Southern Division, has put together an excellent web site for choral directors. It has an extensive database of publishers of multicultural choral music. The database provides detailed contact information for each publisher, as well as informative personal commentary about what they offer as it relates to World Music. There is a section on sacred multicultural

Music with articles and links of particular interest to choral directors in the church setting. It also includes repertoire and resource lists which are categorized by countries and/or regions around the world. It is very extensive and will provide a valuable tool to those directors searching for a specific culture to highlight. Dr. Dolan's web site is titled, Multicultural and International Choral Music and can be accessed at <http://www.pitts.emory.edu/theoarts/multi.htm>.

When choosing literature it is important to select pieces with cultural integrity and to present and perform them in the most authentic way. Judith Cook Tucker, Founder of World Music Press, has written general guidelines for directors to consider when choosing multicultural music:

- Prepared with the involvement of a culture bearer (someone raised in the culture). In many cultures, music and other arts are an integral part of every aspect of the culture, and need to be placed in context by an insider who has the depth of knowledge necessary to increase your understanding. (Their presentation may be assisted by a student of the culture.)
- Biographical information about the contributor(s) including their personal comments about the selections
- Each piece/work should be set in cultural context, including the source, when it is performed, by whom, circumstances, etc.
- The work should include historical/geographical background, maps, specific locale (not identified only by continent or ethnic group).
- Original language with pronunciation, literal translation, interpretation of deeper meanings/layers of meaning. In this way, if a singable translation or version is included, you know how it deviates from the actual meaning.
- Musical transcriptions if at all possible. (Sometimes a skeletal or simplified transcription is best, but you'd be amazed at how many songs are presented with lyrics only.)
- Companion audio recording of all material in the collection featuring native singers or their longtime students, and employing authentic instruments and arrangements There is no substitute for hearing the nuances and subtleties or styling and pronunciation. These cannot be written down and must be heard. In many cultures, learning music is primarily or entirely an oral/aural experience.
- No sacred materials (ritual, holy - this does not refer to hymns or spirituals) in a collection intended for casual school/community use. It is inappropriate in many cultures to use these out of context unless the tradition is your own and you can make any necessary alterations; e.g., among the Navajo, the songs of the Blessingway, Beautyway and Nightway chants ARE the ritual, and are not sung out of context without changes even by the Navajo. In many cultures, the singer of such songs would have spent a lifetime learning them, and would never use them casually.

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ACDA Advocacy Resolution

Whereas the human spirit is elevated to a broader understanding of itself through study and performance in the aesthetic arts; and

Whereas serious cutbacks in funding and support have steadily eroded state institutions and their programs throughout the country;

Be is resolved that all citizens of the United States actively voice their affirmative and collective support for necessary funding at the local, state, and national levels of education and government to ensure the survival of arts programs for this and future generations.

MUSIC COMMUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY (ALL) MUSICIANS

Jody L. Kerchner, *Community Chorus R&S Chair*

Where in our society do models for empathetic leadership, respectful interaction, and civil discourse exist? At what point do we, conductors, decide to take a proactive stand in favor of promoting respectful interactions that build communities of respectful musicians? Who takes responsibility for attempting to redesign the manner in which teaching and learning occurs in music classes and ensemble settings? Who among us conductors, teachers, and musicians seeks to make teaching, learning, and music-making holistic and humanistic? How might this transformation occur?

Conductors in the 21st-century have the responsibility for not only providing a model of exemplary musicianship, but also a model of empathy, caring for, and communicating with those they lead into the music-learning and music-making partnership. The new century brings a new descriptor for conductors—conductors as empathetic leaders. Conductors need to address singers in their ensembles as individuals who imagine, create, suggest, and respond to the music they perform. In turn, these musicians will need to cultivate the craft of respectful communication with other musicians with whom they perform. Each person brings a rich variety of cultural traditions, musical backgrounds, personal and professional goals, intellectual capabilities, and imaginative interpretations to the music-making endeavor.

What concerns me is that there are musicians who sing in an ensemble who remain “outsiders” to the musical process. Their bodies, minds, and spirits have not been invited to participate actively in the music-making process or product. I believe that there are many performing musicians who, although they claim to be participants in an ensemble, have not experienced the personal respect and responsibility that accompanies being a member of a musical community. I also believe that there are certain conducting and rehearsal temperaments that do not facilitate the ensemble’s connection to the music; rather, some rehearsal styles constrain individuals’ and the group’s musical imagination and creative impulse. I am concerned that if conductors do not model respectful interactions with each individual in the ensemble, then musicians within the ensemble might not connect with one another or with the music itself. Conductors who ignore the need for community and musical connection might be embarking on musical “mal-practice.”

Working musically within a community, learning to be an “insider,” and learning to be a responsible citizen are experiences that transcend the musical ensemble or music classroom. These life skills are called upon in daily non-musical, personal interac-

tions. One way we, conductors, might “take a stand” on reducing the snowball effect of disrespect and apathy in our society is to foster respect, caring, empathy, and community in our own “backyard.”

Kohn described an educational community as “a place in which students feel cared about and are encouraged to care about others. They experience a sense of being valued and respected; the children matter to one another and to the teacher... not only physically but emotionally.” Applying this general education definition to musical communities, one might conclude that a rehearsal is a place in which: (1) the conductor and singers feel respected, valued, cared about, and connected, and (2) the conductor and singers take responsibility, together, for behaving in ways that reflect respect, value, care, and connection to each member of the ensemble.

A musical community makes conductors and singers feel invited into the music-making process, rather than feeling isolated from each other. As leaders, conductors set verbalized and un verbalized expectations and standards for rehearsal performance and musician interaction. Conductors might foster community and social trust by (1) nurturing respectful supportive relationships among all members of the group; (2) emphasizing common goals, ideals, and purposes that the group intends to achieve; (3) providing regular opportunities for service and cooperation; and (4) providing developmentally-appropriate opportunities for autonomy and influence. The conductor serves as the primary liaison between two completes (conductor and ensemble) that come together for the purpose of wholeness in the musical partnership.

The conductor is charged with finding a balance between group and individual instruction during any given rehearsal. The collaboration between conductor and ensemble evolves and takes on different forms, even within a single rehearsal. Depending on the amount needing to be rehearsed, the preparation of the musicians, the teaching opportunities that are seized, the focus of the group, and the musicians’ energy level, rehearsal “flavors” change from one rehearsal to the next.

Why would conductors want to build a strong sense of community among the singers? “If we [teachers and conductors] want to help children grow into compassionate people, we have to help them change the way the classroom works and feels, not just the way each separate member of that class acts. We have to transform not just individuals, but educational structures.” Certainly, the music community seeks to employ conductors who are interested in igniting the fire for music-learning within

each individual. Kohn’s statement, however, also prompts conductors to examine their strategies that are used in rehearsal. Are traditional “play and fix” rehearsal strategies effective and engaging, or is it time for a change in rehearsal structures look like?

Community-building within the performance ensemble is necessary, especially when conductors seek to engage musicians in discussion of interpretation, sight-reading unfamiliar music, studying unfamiliar styles of music, and applying new technique and means for producing particular sounds. Singers want to feel comfortable within a musical community, before they begin taking risks in front of the conductor and their peers. Therefore, conductors and singers require the establishment of environments where people feel free to risk disclosure of themselves as individuals in the midst of a collaborative musical community. Risk-taking in an ensemble typically does not occur until trust and connectedness to the group are established among the group members. Singers need to know that trying a potential technical or interpretive idea, making mistakes, and editing interpretive or technical choices are parts of the process of constructing musical meaning. No one wishes to appear incompe-

tent, thus facing rejection by her/his peers and the conductor.

It takes time to build a community among ensemble musicians who possess a common purpose – making music as an ensemble. Conductors, however, rarely have enough time to rehearse that which they need to accomplish. Rehearsals are not long enough. Not all of the musicians attend every rehearsal. Concert commitments reduce the number of rehearsals. Musicians each sing at a different skill level, so not everyone learns at the same pace. Conductors account for each moment of their rehearsals: which pieces will be rehearsed or introduced, what musical elements or concepts will be explored, which rehearsal strategies will be most time-efficient and effective. All of these time constraints represent viable reasons for conductors not fully investing in community-building strategies with their ensemble musicians. I would posit that the time spent in community-building, while initially time-consuming, ultimately expedites the music-learning process, enhances the expressivity of the ensemble, and facilitates the development of analytical, musical, and creative thinking skills. The investments seem worth the short- and long-term paybacks to the conductor and the ensemble.

(continued from page 4)

8. Don’t follow me; you will be behind (R. Shaw). Singers make the rhythm. Ensembles who have mastered the concept of corporate rhythm have the opportunity to make distinctive music.
9. During rehearsal, when you stop to critique the music, you can say one of five things: higher/lower, earlier/later, softer/louder, brighter/darker, shorter/longer. Determine which you want to say and say only that one. Then sing again. This does not apply to brief explanations about history of the piece, meaning of the poem, or an inspirational message. However, in general your rehearsal should be 80% or more singing and 20% or less talking.
10. You are what you read; you are what you think. Thought manifests as word; word manifests as deed; deed develops into habit; habit hardens into character. So watch the thought and its ways with care and let it spring from love born out of concern for all beings. As the shadow follows the body, as we think so we become.



OCDA LEADERSHIP ROSTER 2004-2005

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