

Georgia Sings!

The Official Newsletter of the Georgia chapter of
American Choral Directors Association

Volume 8, Issue 1

Spring 2009

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From the President-elect's Pen



GA-ACDA Summer Conference June 25-27, 2009 ~ Spivey Hall

The gathering of colleagues and friends is one of my favorite things about ACDA. Just as a family takes pleasure in crowding around table for a meal, and sharing memories and stories, so too does the ACDA family gather around the commonality of choral music to be nourished and to share ideas and inspiration. This year's conference will offer opportunities to enrich your imagination as well as give you practical tools for coping with day to day challenges.

Summer Conference continued . . .

Our headliner clinician this year is **Dr. Brad Holmes, Director of Choral Programs at Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois.** Dr. Holmes' choir performed at the national ACDA convention in Miami to great acclaim. One of the striking features of this excellent concert was the approach to tonal variety, which made for a wonderfully engaging performance. I am delighted that he will be among us this summer, to share his thoughts and philosophy with choral directors in Georgia. I am confident that you will find an avenue for the fresh application of your skills. An additional component of Dr. Holmes' time with us will be **Master Class** in conducting. If you are interested in participating in this, please contact me right away.

In addition to Brad Holmes, you will also hear from several of our colleagues from within Georgia. Our

Repertoire & Standards Chairs will be leading reading sessions.

Amy Foster will present an interest session on the *director/accompanist relationship*.

Jeff Bauman will share with us *creative ideas and methods for recruiting*. **Philip Copeland**, ACDA's technology committee chair, will present a session on *technology and the choral director*, which will help us use technology to be more efficient, organized, and less stressed!

We have **two Honor Choir offerings** this year for High School Men and Women. Please see the appropriate forms in the newsletter and send your singers to participate in this wonderful opportunity. We will experience a feature concert from the **Milton High School Chorale** under the direction of **Drew Bowers**.

The culminating event on Saturday will showcase singers from Georgia community and church choirs in a performance of

Faure's Requiem, with **John Dickson** conducting.

In these days of difficult times for individuals, communities, and institutions; it is more important than ever to be connected and to be inspired. The beauty of the choral art is found in its humanity – in that unique quality of *voices raised in song!* **Come to Spivey Hall in June and be reminded of the best reasons you became a choral director!**

Alicia Walker
**President-elect
 Georgia ACDA**



Brad Holmes

Clinician for GA-ACDA Summer Conference 2009

Brad Holmes conducts the University Choir and is the Director of Choir Programs at Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois. Dr. Holmes received the M.M. degree in conducting from the University of New Mexico and the D.M.A. degree in choral music from Arizona State University. Previous positions range from Choral Director for the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra to church choir positions; from public school teaching to conducting light opera in civic theatres. Prior to coming to Millikin, Dr. Holmes was Associate Director of Choirs at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa.

Choirs under Brad Holmes' direction have sung in every state but Alaska and in thirty-three countries. In 2000 he was a Visiting Fellow at Cambridge University working primarily with the Choir of Clare College. He has returned to England for guest-conducting engagements in Windsor and Manchester. Other

invitations include engagements in the Far East conducting choirs from Japan, Korea, China and the Philippines. Dr. Holmes' domestic guest-conducting schedule has included All-State, regional ACDA Honor Choirs, District festivals and church music clinics throughout the United States.



In his eighteen years at Millikin University, Dr. Holmes has overseen the growth of the choral program to five traditional choirs and a variety of smaller vocal ensembles involving 300 singers and eight staff. The Millikin University Choir has toured internationally to Norway, Russia, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Puerto Rico, China, Taiwan and England. Under Dr. Holmes' direction the choir has produced four

CDs on Millikin's First Step Recording label. In the past decade, the choir has performed for three regional conventions of the American Choral Director's Association (ACDA). Their recent performance before the National Convention of ACDA in Miami garnered new attention on the choir's approach to tonal variety.

Dr. Holmes' responsibilities at Millikin include teaching Choral Techniques and Conducting. He is artistic director for Millikin's *Christmas Vespers*, which attracts 7,000 people annually. He frequently contributes arrangements to First Step Publishing, Millikin's student-run publishing house. His arrangements have also been published by Santa Barbara Music Press.



GA ACDA Summer Conference
June 25-27, 2009
Schedule (subject to change)

Thursday, June 25

- 1:00 Greetings and Introductions
- 1:15 Brad Holmes - What Lies Beneath: Group imagination and interpretation
- Context and Composition
- 2:30 Jr. High/Middle School Reading Session – Suzanne Logue
- 3:15 Break
- 3:30 Brad Holmes -What Lies Beneath: Text and Movement
- 4:45 Interest Session: Technology for the Choral Director – Philip Copeland
- 6:00 Dinner (Board meeting)
- 8:15 Concert Session: Milton High School Chorale

Friday, June 26

- 9:00 College/University Reading Session - Paul Neal
Music in Worship Reading Session - Bryan Black
- 10:30 Brad Holmes - Style and Tone
What are the primary elements of variety in our concert programs?
- 12:00 Lunch
- 1:30 Interest Session: Recruiting and Retaining Singers in your Choral Program
Jeff Bauman – Compulsive Lyres, Demonstration Choir
- 2:45 Conducting Master Class – Brad Holmes
- 3:45 Break
- 4:00 Ethnic/Multicultural Reading Session – Alison Mann
Vocal Jazz Reading Session – Mito Andaya
- 5:30 Dinner
- 8:15 Honor Choir Concerts
HS Men – Leslie Blackwell, conductor; Amy Hughley, coordinator
HS Women – Jim Dunaway, conductor; Frank Green, coordinator

Saturday, June 27

- 9:00 High School Reading Session – John Odom
- 9:45 Interest Session – Director/Accompanist relationship – Amy Foster
- 10:45 Brad Holmes - The Shape of Life
Music seems to define our existence in ways that we are unable to put to words. Why? How do we draw this definition to the forefront of our music making? How does this 'shape' make its way into our music?
- 12:00 Lunch
- 1:30 Community Choir/Music in Worship Concert – Fauré *Requiem*
John Dickson, conductor;
Bryan Black & Janice Folsom, coordinators
- 2:30 Adjourn

2009 GEORGIA ACDA SUMMER CONFERENCE Pre-Registration Form
Thursday - Saturday, June 25-27, 2009
Spivey Hall at Clayton College and State University Morrow, Georgia

Name: _____ ACDA Number _____

Street
Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code +4 _____ - _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

School/Church/Organization: _____

Name of non-member attending spouse _____

PRE-REGISTRATION FEES	AMOUNT	AMOUNT PAID
ACDA Member	75.00	
*Nonmember (includes Membership)	160.00	
Attending Spouse	50.00	
Retired Member	50.00	
**Student ACDA member	Free	
*Nonmember Student	35.00	

Total Enclosed: _____

DEADLINE FOR PRE-REGISTRATION IS JUNE 5.

AFTER JUNE 5, ADD \$10.00 FOR LATE FEES.

Pre-registration is the only way to guarantee that you will receive reading session packets!

Mail pre-registration form and payment (checks payable to ACDA) to:

Erin K. Clarke
 GA ACDA Conference Registration
 102 Griffin Avenue
 Thomaston, GA 30286
 (ekeel@upson.k12.ga.us)

PLU Credit available – Contact Amber Dimkoff at 678-466-4481

Conference Schedule: Thursday 1-9 PM; Friday 9AM-10PM (including evening concert)

Saturday 9AM-2PM. Watch for details at www.gaacda.org

*Please submit with application form, available from the website.

** Must be an undergraduate student of a Georgia college/university with an ACDA student chapter.

**A word from:
Franklin Green,
R&S Chair for
Women's Music.**

Don't underestimate the power of a single event in the lives of your students!

As conductors, performers, and educators, concerts stretch out in an endless stream, back into our history and forward into our dreams and plans. We have climbed the heights many times and have been thrilled by creating art in the air around us. Our students however, are just beginning their journeys and their path is far from certain. Some of them with the potential to be musicians—fine singers and conductors themselves—will turn aside to other things. Others will have a seminal event in their life, or a series of seminal events, highly influential moments providing a basis for further development, that will direct their path forever into music. I believe that two days under the influence of noted conductor **Dr. James Dunaway** can have this kind of influence on your students.

Please continue to encourage your students, **rising 9th grade through college age** to participate in this outstanding honor choir.

(Contact Franklin Green, 678-770-0707, if you have any doubts about still adding your singers).

Dr. Dunaway retired from Augusta's Davidson Fine Arts School last year and was snatched up by the **University of South Carolina**, where he is now conducting and forming music educators. Any of you who have ever heard one of Jim's performances knew immediately that you were in the presence of something wonderful. The question that usually came to my mind was "How did he do that?" Known for doing impossible literature, expertly well, Jim's choirs scaled the peaks of choral literature and performed in noted venues around the country. The Grammy awards had to re-write their rules of competition so that Jim's group did not win their top prize every year. His program was recognized as the best in the country. His students performed twice in Los Angeles in the same year—at

National ACDA and at the Grammy Awards!

Dr. Jim Dunaway represents the finest of what we all aspire to be as conductors.

So now the onus is on you. This late in the year do you have enough energy to recruit your best young women to come have a Dunaway experience on June 25 and 26, rehearsing a rather difficult program for two days and performing for the GA ACDA conference? Yes, it means helping them with the music. It must be well understood when they arrive. Yes, it means working out the transportation and travel. Yes, these are tight economic times. But, *these students are being formed right now regardless of the economy.* If the opportunity is lost make musicians of them, both they and we may always regret it. Put together a group and send in their registrations. (If they are not in equal quartets, send them anyway. We'll make it work). The registration form should be in the newsletter and is also on the GA ACDA website. I hope I'll see you there.

The Georgia ACDA Women's SSAA Honor Choir 2009
Dr. James Dunaway, conductor
(Grades 9-12-College)
June 25-26, 2009

NOMINATION FORM

Applications must be postmarked on or by Wednesday, May 15, 2009.

Please enclose \$45 per student payable to Georgia ACDA.

Mail to: Dr. Franklin Green
202 Collierstown Way
Peachtree City, GA 30269

Send 1 or 2 quartets (SSAA). Duplicate this form as needed. If you would like to nominate more singers email Dr. Green: <rachelfrank1@bellsouth.net>

ACDA Member Name _____

ACDA Member No. _____ Exp. Date _____ Choir Director or Voice Teacher
 (circle one)

School/Church _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Work Phone _____

Home Phone _____ Cell _____

Singers' Information

Soprano 1

Student Name _____ Age _____ Grade _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Home Phone _____

Soprano 2

Student Name _____ Age _____ Grade _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Home Phone _____

(Women's Honor Choir Nomination Form, continued)**Alto 1**

Student Name _____ Age _____ Grade _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Home Phone _____

Alto 2

Student Name _____ Age _____ Grade _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Home Phone _____

***Rehearsals begin at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, June 25, 2009.
The concert in Spivey Hall will begin at 8:15 p.m. on Friday, June 26.***

The Georgia ACDA Men's TTBB Honor Choir 2009
Dr. Leslie Blackwell, conductor
 (Includes Rising 8th graders through rising college sophomores)
 June 25-26, 2009

NOMINATION FORM

**Applications must be postmarked on or before Wednesday, May 15, 2009.
 Please enclose \$45 per student payable to Georgia ACDA.**

Mail to: Amy Hughley
 3060 Valley Circle
 Decatur, GA 30033

Send 1 or 2 quartets (TTBB). Duplicate
 this form as needed. If you would like to
 nominate more singers
 email Mrs. Hughley
 (hughley@fulton.k12.ga.us)

ACDA Member Name _____

ACDA Member No. _____ Exp. Date _____ Choir Director or Voice

Teacher (circle one)

School/Church _____

Mailing
 Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Work Phone _____

Home Phone _____ Cell _____

(Men's Honor Choir nomination form, continued)**Singers' Information****Tenor 1**

Student

Name _____ Age _____ Grade _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Home Phone _____

Tenor 2

Student

Name _____ Age _____ Grade _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Home Phone _____

Bass 1

Student

Name _____ Age _____ Grade _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Home Phone _____

Bass 2

Student

Name _____ Age _____ Grade _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Home Phone _____

***Rehearsals begin at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, June 25.
The concert in Spivey Hall will begin at 8:15 p.m. on Friday, June 26.***

Lifetime Singing, Lifetime Learning 2009 Georgia ACDA Summer Conference

The **Community Choir** and **Music in Worship** R&S Areas proudly announce an exciting opportunity for affiliated singers to work with acclaimed **conductor John Dickson** as part of this year's state convention. Singers will prepare repertoire in advance, rehearse with Dr. Dickson on Saturday morning, **June 27**; then perform in concert as the closing event in **Spivey Hall at 1:30pm**. This is an excellent opportunity to introduce your singers to ACDA and celebrate the dedication of lifelong learners who sing in community, synagogue and church choirs.

Concert Repertoire

"Animal Crackers" (Eric Whitacre)
 "Five Hebrew Love Songs" (Eric Whitacre)
 "Requiem" (Gabriel Faure, ed. Rutter; published by Hinshaw)

(Participants are responsible for obtaining their own scores; music should be thoroughly prepared in advance.)

Send registration information to:

Bryan Black
 c/o Marietta FUMC
 56 Whitlock Ave.
 Marietta, GA 30064
bryanblack@mariettafumc.org
 (770) 429-7800 x7815

- Please include the names of your singers, their voice part and a **\$10.00** fee for each participant.
- Call time for rehearsal on **Sat., June 27** is **9:00am** in the Clayton State choir room adjacent to Spivey Hall.
- Drinks will be provided; bring a snack lunch to enjoy before concert time.
- The **1:30 concert** is open to friends and family of participants.

Registration must be received by Monday, June 8.

**Some thoughts from
Eric Nelson
President, GA-ACDA**



“Music that Moves Us”

Not so much an article today as a passing thought...

I did a workshop last week with a high school choir from South Carolina. They sang several pieces that were well rehearsed, well prepared, and well sung. It was quality repertoire. They had a few intonation issues here and there (don't we all?) but by and large their performance was exemplary. Since I was the clinician, it wouldn't have made much sense for me to simply say "Great job!" and send them home, so I mentally sifted through the various things I could address that might add another level of polish to what they had already achieved. As I mentioned, there were some problems with intonation and we would eventually spend quite a lot of time working on them, but that is not what I went after first. The first thing I heard myself say was:

“Why are you not moving?”

I don't know about you, but I have a hard time staying still when I hear music. I try hard to sit quietly and behave myself at concerts, but it's tough. The music sways and surges, bubbles and skips, soars and plummets and my body wants to respond. My weight shifts in my seat, my head toggles like a

bobble-head doll, and my leg keeps time until I feel the silent rebuke of my wife's hand on my knee—the signal to be still. To be sure, I am a conductor and I move to music for a living, but I think we are all wired in much the same way. I often see people bobbing to their car radios as they are stopped at a traffic light or grooving while plugged in to their I-pods. As we all know, there are whole areas of teaching and pedagogy that have sprung up around the importance of movement and motion in early childhood music education. **So why is it that we stop moving?**

I made a few suggestions to the choir that would enable them to react naturally to the ebb and flow of the music. (Please note that I'm not talking about anything remotely resembling choreography here, just permission to allow their bodies to respond.) Immediately, the sound of the music seemed to take on an added dimension of life and the level of connection between the choir and the music seemed more palpable. I complimented the ensemble, they smiled, the director smiled, and then things got interesting...

The director told me that the choir had been encouraged by another clinician a year earlier to move freely as they sang. The choir had been doing so until they sang for an adjudicated festival. When they received the judges' comments after their performance at the festival they were told, essentially, "Stop moving. It is distracting." So they had dutifully stopped.

So here is the first of my passing thoughts: Imagine going to a movie or a live theater production and watching actors stare blankly at the audience, faces immobile and unmoving, bodies as still as statues in the town square. Now imagine that these great

professional actors are doing this on purpose. “Shouldn’t you be moving in response to the lines you are saying,” we might ask? “Oh no,’ they might reply. “We have practiced for years in how to pronounce the words just right. Anything we do with our faces or our bodies would be distracting.”

For me, a choir that is fully engaged in the music making process is going to have some degree of body and facial movement. Not a false, plastered-on smile like a character from Disneyland, but a natural response that grows out of communication with the music, the director and the audience. Here’s an idea: try to have a real conversation with someone on any topic and remain completely still. Do not nod in agreement or gesture with your hands in any way whatsoever. Speak and answer, but do not smile or wrinkle your brow or move any muscles in your face. Nothing. Blank. Odds are, if you haven’t warned them what you are doing, it won’t take very long before they ask you what is wrong. Or, have two of your students have the immobile conversation while the rest of the class watch. I bet they’ll be giggling in no time. Not only that, but the two students involved in the conversation will start to sound disengaged and robotic. As they force themselves to be expressionless with their bodies, they will almost certainly become expressionless with their voices.

My second passing thought is this: In the midst of all of our efforts to teach our choirs to sing well, we must be careful not to train out of them one of their most basic human responses to music. When we cue the altos for their entrance, do they remain as still as statues? Or do they return our gaze, nodding slightly as they might in a genuine conversation. Do they sway slightly as the phrase rises and falls? Does their weight shift as the music

begins to dance and do their eyes sparkle in agreement? If not, perhaps it is because they do not yet understand the essence of the rhythmic pattern or the meaning of the text. Then again, since no one has to explain to them why they should move when listening to their I-pods, maybe they **do** feel it, but they just need our permission to respond to it, to connect the voice to the body. As **Helen Kemp** has said for so many years: “**Mind, body, spirit, voice, it takes the whole person to sing and rejoice.**” Helping our students to make that connection might be one of the most important things we teach all year. (But we’ll still have to solve those intonation problems!)

EN



***Choral Conducting –
The Greatest Job in the World***
By Vaughn Roste

I can't believe how wonderfully my life is going since I graduated from university and got my first teaching position. I was lucky, in the first place, to get my first choice of jobs in a place where I wanted to live: I live in a great neighborhood and was happy that I didn't have to relocate too far from home. I'm not sure how much competition there was for my position, but I was pleased that they selected me, because this was definitely where I wanted to work.

I've inherited a fantastic position from my predecessor – she left on good terms with the school and everything seems to be in fantastic shape. The Choral library is perfectly organized – the computer catalog means I've never had to spend more than 60 seconds finding a song selection. The facilities are almost world-class, a great acoustic to rehearse in, regularly-tuned pianos to rehearse with, ample and convenient storage space for music and uniforms and books and jackets and everything – the choral room seems to have been exceptionally well-designed, perhaps by a retiring choral teacher. In my community there seems to be enough funding for schools that I'm never worried about cutbacks or losing my position here – there's so much support for the arts that if anyone even hinted at it there would be an uproar!

Speaking of support, I can't believe my parent's organization... even before I started my first day of school there was a message from the president saying welcome and if I ever needed anything please let her know – and the few times that I have let her know that I did need something, it's been provided almost instantly! There has never been a vacancy on that board because too many parents are clamoring to get on it

– many parents are reluctant to leave and are practically forced out when their children graduate from school (I get the impression that some would rather stay on even after that!). They do so much extra work for me, from organizing my tours (not to mention paying for them entirely!), legwork on publicity and concert promotion, and even fundraising (not that I have many needs in that department, however!).

I'm not quite sure how I'm going to spend my entire allotted budget this year. I can't seem to find any needs to fill it! The choral library is enormous already, I can hardly think of a title for which we don't already have 50 copies in decent shape. I have all the percussion instruments and musical "extras" I could ever possibly use. The keyboards are all in great shape, our facilities don't need anything of an upgrade, our sound system is state of the art (thank goodness too that we have trained sound technicians to run and set that up for me wherever we go), and we have all the computer technology I can fit into a traditional music program! I've asked my parent's organization if they can think of anything that my program lacks, but they couldn't think of anything either.

This enormous budget at my school is due mostly to the incredible support that I have had from the administration. Why just the other day the principle had dropped by my office to say that she had gotten three more phone calls from pleased parents about last week's concert, which brings the total this week to 28 (last week's was, of course, much higher). She was wondering aloud if she could raise my salary – she didn't think there would be much objection from the school board knowing the reputation of the choral program at my school.

But I haven't even mentioned the #1 thing that's fantastic about my school

program – the kids! I have never met a group of more dedicated and diligent teenagers in my life. They always show up on time and seem to hang on my every word! I've never even had to ask for their attention because I always seem to have it anytime I'm in the same room. I have never had a disciplinary problem in any one of my classes, the peer pressure for group success is simply too great. They already seem to have an intuitive knowledge of how far this group can go if they work hard collaboratively towards the same goal, and every single one of them seems to have made choral singing the highest priority in their lives. I seem to have somehow been able to magically convince them of the incredible merits of hard work and the incomparable rewards and benefits that come from it, because every single one of them without exception seems to be completely on board.

Musically speaking I couldn't imagine having a more responsible group either.

They sing as well as they can all the time, with gusto and musicality. I'm especially pleased that I've never had to ask them twice for the same thing – if I request a bigger crescendo in measure 56, they all note it immediately in their scores and the next time we get there, by golly the crescendo is bigger in measure 56! I have never had to correct a note after the first rehearsal on a piece because the students are responsible enough to take the music back home and learn it for themselves! My choirs eat up repertoire like a hoard of locusts devour a harvest... we've run through hundreds of pieces so far this year and I've been able to program only the pieces that they like the most and are the most musical and meaningful for our audiences. They seem to relish doing harder and harder pieces and are constantly asking for more challenges, too. This attitude must come at least in part from all the choral concerts that I

know they're attending on their own time, hearing repertoire sometimes with which even I am unfamiliar!

Our concerts are incredibly well attended and exceptionally well performed... there is so much community support for the arts around here that I feel like a bit of a celebrity every time I walk out and about town! Our alumni make it a priority to keep coming back to hear us every year, and there's talk of building us our own state-of-the-art performance venue just so that we can house all of our own ever-growing audience! Now that we've performed (to universal acclaim, of course) for local, regional, state, division, and national choral conventions, I'm starting to think that we should begin to look internationally for next year (and my parent's organization is completely on board!). I can't think of even one area in which my professional life is lacking or needs supplementation, and I'm so glad that I chose this profession because I don't think any other would have left me so completely fulfilled.

Yes, life certainly seems to be coming up roses for me since taking this wonderful choral conducting position at my school. The only unfortunate thing about my life is that soon my alarm clock is going to ring, and then I'm going to have to wake up, get out of bed, and go in to my real job, where things aren't quite as good as what I just described. I still love it, though, despite the difficulties. Maybe I do it because I believe that somewhere, I'm making a profound difference in the life of just one student. Maybe I do it for those fleeting ephemeral moments of transcendence that occur only about once a decade yet still make everything else worth it. Maybe I do it because I believe somehow deep down that I'm really making the world a better place. I don't know. But I do know that I chose this profession, and despite the obstacles, I still think it's worth it.

by Vaughn Roste



Georgia Sings!

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