



Georgia Newsletter

VOL.12 NO1

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From the President

Millie Turek

Greetings! I hope everyone has had a successful and musical Fall season. I am anticipating an exciting and eventful year for ACDA as I take over the Georgia presidency. I would like to thank Roger Waters for his years of service to ACDA in this office. We all appreciate his leadership and dedication to this organization and know he will continue to serve us well as Past-President.

I had the tremendous good fortune to begin my term of office this summer as the ACDA held its second annual national leadership conference. Through a grant from the McMahan Foundation, ACDA was able to fly all 50 state presidents, the national board, national repertoire and standards committee, and division board members to the national headquarters in Lawton, Oklahoma. Georgia was represented at the leadership conference by Dr. John Haberlen, National President, Beth Brown-Shugart, Southern Division Treasurer, and myself.

During our five day visit, we toured the national office, learned about the history of ACDA, and planned for the future. It was truly

**Please take the time right now
to mark and mail your ballot for
Georgia President-Elect.
Postmark Deadline - Jan. 3, 1994**

exciting to find that ACDA does represent all spectrums of the choral art. Since ACDA plays such different roles in each state we were given the opportunity to exchange ideas on state events, newsletters, awards, budget planning, R & S committee structure, and arts advocacy to name only a few.

Gene Brooks gave a personal tour of the beautiful national office in Lawton including his own account of the history of ACDA. To hear him speak of the founding of ACDA and how our headquarters came to be in Lawton is inspiring. If you see him at a convention, ask him about it!

In this issue you will find the biographies of two very qualified choral directors who have been nominated to run for the office of President - Elect. Kevin Hibbard of West Georgia College and Melissa Stamenkovic of Walton High School have agreed to place their names in nomination. Both are excellent choral directors as well as leaders in ACDA. Please take the time to consider their qualifications and VOTE!!

Some interesting facts about ACDA membership:

The National ACDA membership as of April, 1993 was 16,215. Georgia has the second largest membership in the Southern Division with 400 members. Florida is first with 456.

Are We in Artistic Red Ink?

by Robert Harris

The newscasts of late have been filled with talk of deficits and debt reduction. It occurred to me that in choral music we face much the same situation, and the ramifications for us are hardly less consequential than they are for our government leaders.

I submit that for the last two or three generations we [in our profession] have been operating in musical red ink. We have been squandering the artistic capital built up over the years by our predecessors. Public respect for our subject, indeed for our art may be a thing of the past.

In recent years as external pressures to lower our standards have increased, we have dipped into our reserves instead of making the tough decisions and maintaining our inherited capital. Too many in our profession have lost sight of the fact that we have a sacred calling to preserve and protect an art form which enriches the lives of all with whom we come in contact.

Instead, we have chosen to take the path of "entertainment." Our students have been provided with the kind of classroom experience which we assumed would help maintain sufficient enrollment to insulate our position and keep us out of an English classroom a couple of periods a day. In other words, we have underestimated the basic value of what and who we are as musical artists and educators. Worse, we have insulted the intelligence of our students.

What are the ramifications? Well— we have survived over the past several decades, and while many of us complain about the level of students who come from our feeders (unless we are at the bottom of the food chain) we are grateful that we have a job. Inexplicably, we are still able to turn a blind eye to the fact that the subject area which we hold so dear, is becoming a "frill" which is expendable in times of tight budgets. We are in artistic red ink!

The students we have entertained over the years are now voting. Some of them are on the school board; they are our bosses! How can we be surprised when the students we have "entertained" become reticent to make the difficult decision to cut out something less important (in our eyes) when our subject was not important enough for us to respect its artistic integrity? In times of short money entertainment budgets are the first to go. If we are willing to water down our class offerings from within why shouldn't others have the right to do it from without? We are servicing our professional debt!

Along the way we have squandered our artistic capital. We have spent the last few years in educational deficit. Our curriculae are in musical red ink and we don't seem willing to do something meaningful about it. We hope we can manage a "II" rating at festival to keep the principal off our backs. In the process we make the students' learning experience secondary to practical "necessity." More red ink!

Some make the show choir the first priority, either by audition or by time spent in class. Students know how to finish off a step with a flourish before they learn how to read a syncopated rhythm. It's fun and the audiences love to be "entertained." In the end it is still more entertainment than substance and entertainment is a luxury when budgetary red ink threatens.

Many of our choir members have forgotten how to sing softly with a beautiful tone or to listen for the disciplined clarity of a well balanced chord. How can we expect them to listen to our needs after they leave our classrooms if we don't respect them enough to demand that they listen while they are in our choirs?

It wasn't too many years ago that a student who could play the piano was assured of instant popularity. Many can remember that one of the most coveted honors on campus was the lead in the annual musical. General Eisenhower was asked what he considered the greatest difference between the troops of the two World Wars in which he served. His rather startling reply was that "in the first war the men sang." Granted, they weren't singing Palestrina motets, but the men sang. That was part of our invested capital.

If the analogy of the red ink is a little stretched, so be it. The simple fact is that the general state of our art is precarious. How can the students we cheated out of a real musical experience be expected to accept the sacrifice of supporting a program which only entertained them? It was fun, but . . .

Our solution, like Bill Clinton's, cannot be accomplished overnight. We all know those islands of excellence in our districts. We say, "If I only had those singers in my choir I could really show the principal a thing or two." Do those singers really come from a different gene pool? Is good singing somehow the private reserve of a few isolated groups of students? I could accept that but for the fact that good students always seem to appear in the choirs led by dedicated teachers, wherever they work.

Continued on page 3

Ballot

Candidates for President Elect

Please fold, stamp
and return to Millie
Turek by January 4,
1994

This is an official ballot

Please check one: Kevin Hibbard Melissa Stamenkovic



Kevin Hibbard is Director of Choirs and Assistant Professor of Music at West Georgia College in Carrollton, where he also teaches voice and conducting. Previously he was Instructor of Choral Music Education at Illinois State University, where he taught choral conducting and methods, voice, supervised student teachers, and directed various ISU choirs.

Kevin received the BA degree from Luther College and the MM degree in Choral Music from Arizona State University where he is currently a candidate for the DMA degree. He has done additional graduate work at Westminster Choir College and the Blossom Festival School of Kent State University. Conductors with whom he has worked extensively include Robert Shaw, Weston Noble, Douglas McEwen, Howard Swan, Robert Page, Paul Christiansen and Vance George.

Kevin's experience includes public school teaching, church, community, and boy choir directing. He has served as guest conductor for choral festivals in six states and frequently serves as adjudicator and clinician for vocal events. His choirs have appeared at conventions of the Wisconsin Choral Directors Association and the Illinois Music Educators Association. He presently serves as Choir Director at Grace Lutheran Church in Carrollton. A life member of ACDA, Kevin served as Central Division R & S Chair for Boy Choirs and is currently Georgia Chair for Youth and Student Concerns. He is also a member of MENC/GMEA, NATS, the American Choral Foundation, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, and Pi Kappa Lambda.



Melissa Stamenkovic is the Director of Choral Activities and Fine Arts Department Head at Walton High School in Marietta and Director of Children's Choirs at Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church in Atlanta. She earned her BM degree from Shorter College and is a candidate for a Masters of Music Education degree at Georgia State University.

Melissa has been at Walton High School and in the Cobb County System for seven years. In January, 1993 her choir was chosen to perform at the GMEA/Southern Division MENC Conference in Savannah. She was selected for Who's Who Among American School Teachers in 1991. Melissa is Membership Chair for Georgia ACDA and holds membership in the Chorister's Guild, GMEA/MENC and ACDA.

(Red Ink Continued from page 2)

The view may be a bit pessimistic, but if you are not part of the solution you are part of the problem. If you must, think of each of your students as a potential vote, a vote that will decide whether or not music (your job) will survive. If the flow of artistic red ink is to be reversed YOU must help to stem the tide. We have the honor to share with our students something which will enrich the rest of their lives. We must remember this to avoid extinction. The flow of red ink can drown us all!

The president is finding out what we already knew - erasing red ink is not easy and it cannot be accomplished quickly, but it is a shared responsibility which affects ALL of our lives. Let us, each one of us, shoulder our share of the deficit, for the sake of our children and our art.

Dr. Robert Harris is Assistant Professor of Music, Armstrong State College and conducts the I Cantori community chamber ensemble in Savannah.

Announcing the 2nd Annual Directors Chorus

Due to the enormous success of last spring's event Georgia ACDA, in partnership with GMEA, will again sponsor a Directors Chorus Workshop to take place at the GMEA All-State Chorus event in Savannah on April 28th and 29th, 1994. We are fortunate to have Norma Raybon from Spelman College, who directed the All-State Senior High Mixed Chorus in 1993, as our clinician this year. We will perform a wide variety of styles and periods of music. This event gives directors the opportunity to be chorus members and the students the chance to see their role models on the other side of the podium. Last year's student audience was very receptive, delighted, and definitely enthusiastic!

Be on the lookout for registration information in the next newsletter. We encourage all directors to come and participate and stay to hear the Georgia All-State Choruses! We will again be seeking to obtain SDU credit if at all possible.

WANTED!

**ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS BY GEORGIA
CONDUCTORS FOR PUBLICATION IN OUR
STATE NEWSLETTER.**

You may request and receive help on the final edit if you wish. Often articles from one state letter are picked up and reprinted by other state and regional letters. Let your ideas be known! This is the best vehicle for sharing that we have!

From the Editor

Dear Friends,

Thanks and encouragement are in order to Robert Harris who will be taking over the job as Newsletter Editor this year. My long hours at Ridgeview Middle School and a growing commitment to general music education has prevented me from doing the kind of job that needed to be done for our organization the past year.

I am happy to see the direction that ACDA and GMEA are taking, working together in our state. As Millie said in her column, ACDA plays many different roles in different states. In some states it is the organization that drives choral activities for the whole state. Because ACDA came to Georgia after GMEA was so well established trying to start new ACDA sponsored activities has been difficult for past administrations.

May I encourage both organizations to continue to find venues for sharing our choral art. My wish would be that we could work to bridge the communication gaps among church, school, and community directors. We have many common interests and concerns, and the strength of choral music in Georgia lies in our commitment to our communities, to our school children who live for their one period of chorus a day and to our church and community choir members for whom choir is the happiest and most satisfying activity of their week.

I have enjoyed serving ACDA these past four years and look forward to continuing involvement with ACDA activities.

Sincerely,
Suzanne Shull

To insure your receipt of ACDA mailings during the summer and holiday seasons, the Georgia ACDA Executive Board recommends that you use your HOME ADDRESS. Please send address changes/corrections to the national office.

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GA ACDA NEWSLETTER

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