



# Georgia Newsletter

Vol. 13, No. 1

June 1996

## AN ARTS 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 it 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.”

*•American Choral Directors Association approved February, 1994*

**Plan Now: ACDA National Convention - San Diego  
March 6-8, 1997**



# ADVOCACY: It's For Real

Kevin Hibbard, president  
Georgia ACDA

This summer I attended a National Leadership Conference at ACDA headquarters in Lawton, Oklahoma. Aside from covering all the logistical info that state presidents need to know, the major focus of the conference was advocacy. Our guest presentors for the conference included Dorothy Straub, past president of MENC, and John Benham, founder of "Music in World Cultures, Inc." Dr. Benham is an arts consultant who has gained a reputation for being especially effective in defending school arts program threatened with elimination. Also on the program was Jennifer Davis, assistant to the U.S. Secretary of Education, Richard Riley, and Senior Advisor on School Reform.

Dorothy Straub brought us up to date on the advocacy efforts of MENC, including the 1994 National Summit on Music Education, called a "first-of-its-kind" event. The summit affirmed the existence of the national Coalition for Music Education. The coalition's national goal is that "every child in every school will receive a well-rounded education that includes a comprehensive sequential, high-quality program of music taught by a qualified music teacher." One of the coalition's objectives designed to achieve its goal is that "every state will have a coalition for music education." The Georgia Coalition for Music Education had already formed at the January 1994 GMEA Conference in Savannah. It has now become part of the

Georgia Coalitions for Arts Education. Led by Susan Merritt, the GCAE seeks to align the efforts and shared concerns of various arts entities within the state. (See accompanying article.)

Jennifer Davis gave us some background on Goals 2000, and informed us of current events in Washington, most of which were having a destructive effect on this important project for education and the arts in the United States. Dr. Benham told us about his experiences in arts advocacy, with special attention to the recent crisis in Gwinnett County, Georgia. I found it interesting that arts cuts in Georgia were at the forefront of interest at this national conference being held in Oklahoma. All three presentors shared what they had learned about reaching those who are in the positions of making decisions regarding arts funding, and about reaching those who influence the decision makers.

In February of 1994, the ACDA Advocacy Commission presented its strategic plan to the ACDA Executive Committee. The Commission identified key issues, and determined goals and strategies to address each issue. The ACDA Advocacy Resolution, now appearing in all official ACDA publications is a result of the ADvocacy Commission. All ACDA members are encouraged to reprint the resolution in concert programs and other appropriate publications whenever possible.

(continued on p. 7)



# ADVOCACY: Food for thought

Robert Harris, editor

For the last six months state newsletters have been filled with requests for activism on behalf of what we do. From elementary school to college, choral educators have been implored to speak out to save the future of our programs. There is no denying that the threat is very real. Almost every night on the evening news we hear gleeful politicians sharpening their Philistine axes as they plan to eliminate their particular cultural phobias.

I take a back seat to no one in my advocacy of the choral art. However I can't help but think that our crisis should motivate some serious self-examination. One nagging thought keeps returning - "Why are WE being called upon to be our own advocates?" Is noone willing to speak out on behalf of the arts? Why doesn't the public feel strongly about the choral art? Weren't those people in our classrooms over the past few decades? Where are all of those singers who have passed through our choirs?

It seems to me that we turn our backs on a serious issue if we ignore the fact that we seem to be rather lonely in our cries. Where are those singers who were "involved" in our programs? If we have been doing our jobs as advocates for the choral art in our classrooms, our singers - our former students - should be our most passionate supporters. If they are not, perhaps we should re-evaluate what we have been doing. Is it our objective to supply our students with the enrichment of a life-long love of choral singing and an appreciation of the art, or are we merely

preparing our next concert?

For all too many, the last concert of our singers' senior year is the last choral concert of their lives. If we are dedicated to lifelong learning and the enrichment of our singers' lives then we should be serving them hor d'ouvres instead of dessert. Their musical banquet should just be beginning, not ready for digestion. How many conductors go out of their way to see that their singers are connected with another choral experience after they graduate?

Do our children's choir singers retire when their voices (and their musicianship) begin to mature? How many middle school singers (or their parents) demand time in their high school schedules for music? Do your high school singers allow themselves the pleasure of an artistically creative experience in college? For how many of our college choir participants is choral singing a source of lifelong enrichment? How many of our supposedly highly motivated singers shed a tear as the applause from our last concert dies out and never sing in a choir again?

The bottom line is rather simple: We cannot expect lifetime advocates for the choral art if our singers have a terminal musical experience in our choirs. If participation in our choirs is not sufficient to motivate advocacy for what we do then where is the viability? If we merely provide entertainment for an hour a day do we deserve advocates?



## GEORGIA ACDA JOINS COALITION PRITCHETT NAMED ADVOCACY CHAIR

Georgia ACDA has become an official member of the Georgia Coalition for Arts Education. Chaired by Georgia music educator and ACDA member Susan Merritt, the coalition seeks to align various arts organizations in efforts to advocate the inclusion of arts in our society in general, and in our schools in particular. All ACDA'ers are being called upon to support efforts to promote the inclusion of arts education in the curricula of our schools.

Judy Pritchett, recently retired choral director from Henderson School, has been named the Georgia ACDA Advocacy Chair. Please support Judy in her efforts to coordinate advocacy of choral arts with other organizations.

### "It's That Time of Year"

We all see articles on how to properly select good choral music, but nobody bothers to steer us away from the mountain of crud that is on the market. Well . . .

You know a composition is of little merit if:

- 1) the key changes harmonically up or down a half step more than one time per page;
- 2) the text has anything to do with "how much we like to sing;"
- 3) it has an accompaniment tape which features the London Philharmonic Orchestra;
- 4) the same piece is available from the publisher in either unison, two-part, SAB, SSA or SATB arrangement;
- 5) the last three measures call for the chorus to sing long notes, with a crescendo from forte to fortissimo, while the accompaniment alternates between massive chords in the upper and lower ranges on the piano.

## **PROFANE COMMANDMENTS FOR THE SACRED PROCESS: REHEARSING**

By William Dehning, University of Southern California

Known as the "Twelve Commandments of St. Cecilia" as revealed to the Apostle William by several mentors and numerous years of experience;

Known also as "Dehning's Dozen" by clusters of conducting students who gather annually about the Apostle and listen with eyes clouded by bemusement, awe, or incomprehension, the which is rarely discernible:

- I. **Thou shalt know and love thy score with all thy soul and all thy mind.** You "know" it by playing it, singing it, and staring at it for hours, thereby learning it from the inside out. Recordings teach it to you from the outside in and are not the shortcut they appear to be. They are the devil in attractive packages offering an easy deal that is difficult to refuse. There is no easy path to full comprehension of a score. (Sorry.) As to "love" - if you don't love it, why are you doing it?
- II. **Thou shalt know exactly what thou wantest to accomplish in each rehearsal.** . . . how long it will take and how it can be done. It helps ;to communicate these objectives to the ensemble so they have the opportunity to come along with you.
- III. **Thou shalt give a reason for stopping.** And speak to the point. Away with "Let's do that again," "One more time," and the like. You should know what you want to say before you stop. If you don't know, don't stop.
- IV. **Thou shalt talk only when necessary.** You title is "conductor." So conduct. If you think you want to talk about the "cloud-like buoyancy" of a rhythm, try singing it for them, - or show it. You should speak the "language of the baton" so fluently that you could conduct a rehearsal with laryngitis (yes, I have done it). If you have tried both of the above without results, then you may try "cloud-like buoyancy."
- V. **Thou shalt make certain that the "second time around" is really different (applicable also to marriage and jobs).** You have made a suggestion or a correction and they are doing it again. Did they take your suggestion or did you think you heard it because you wanted to (optimist that you must be)?
- VI. **Thou shalt admit thine own mistakes.** Do not use words to smoke screen them or blame the ensemble for them. We are not gods, but many of us find it easy to forget our own mortality. Remember also: conducting is essentially a parasitic



profession. Ensembles can exist without conductors; the converse is not true.

**VII. Thou shalt not create problems. Wait for them to happen.** Get these behind thee: 1) Okay, let's start and see how far we get; 2) This piece (or page or line) is tough - I hope we can do it (they can if you can).

**VIII. Thou shalt not waste time on minute details which are in inverse proportion to the total effect.** Scene at a conducting workshop of college choral conductors working with a chorus and orchestra under the tutelage of a mentor: music plays, conductor conducts, things are generally okay, but altos sang an F instead of an F#, basses were late on an entrance, articulation of the winds was long instead of short, and the violins were virtually swimming in a difficult 32nd-note passage. Music stops. Mentor to supplicant: "Did you like it?" Supplicant (after some pause): "Yes, well, the chorus could have exploded the final "t" a bit more. . ." Even the gods wept.

**IX. Thou shalt speak loudly, slowly, clearly.** . . and almost never while they are singing. This is usually futile and, to them, often maddening.

**X. Thou shalt be schizophrenic.** With gesture, inspire, with ears, correct. One function tends to cancel out the other, so beware. In fact, avoid doing anything in rehearsal (except praising them) which you cannot do in performance: singing, snapping, clapping, stomping, yelling "shh" and such. If it were not for this commandment, your job would be much easier than theirs.

**XI. Thou shalt make music at least once in every rehearsal.** You owe it to them. Let them know you are going to "go through it" and let mistakes happen. Their attention is greater and so is yours. We all make music so that we may have a "glimpse of the tragic stars" (Thomas Wolfe). How do they have a chance if we stop every four bars for a slip in pitch, a misplaced consonant, an error they know they made, or yet another of our finely-spun metaphors?"

**XII. Thou shalt know when to quit.** Sense the point of diminishing returns on an interval, a mood, a difficult section, a particular tone quality. Try it again at the next rehearsal. Or go stare at a big tree for a while. Better yet, let *them* stare at a big tree for a while. Or drop it altogether. Admitting defeat is not wrong. "Plodding on in the face of certain doom" (Garrison Keillor) is wrong.

*This ends the epistle.*



*It is not the intent of this scribe that these mundane laws should aspire to the immortality of import of the Beatitudes nor to that of another set of laws delivered to a grumpy leader on yet another Mount. Rather they are intended as reminders to me - and to others who would listen - that I am but a conduit for energy which is far greater than mine. No matter how great my craft or artistry becomes I will always merely serve. So will we all.*

*Finally, too, they are reminders that our corporate sacred process of rehearsing great musical ideas is accomplished through us by other people. (Stravinsky: "Something will always be left to the performer, bless him.") These people are at the same time intelligent, vain, kind, impatient, loving, petulant, gracious, and ignored by time, yet beloved of the gods.*

*As are we.*

#### **HIBBARD (cont. from p. 2)**

Each advocacy group identified similar concerns and strategies, not the least of which is to align with other organizations. Such alignment provides a bigger impact on legislators, the public, and the media. It reinforces shared goals without wasteful duplication of effort. But perhaps most importantly, it shows that our real interest is not in keeping our own jobs or furthering our own interests, but in preserving that which we all feel is vital to the development of every person's life: the inclusion of arts as a basic component of one's education and full development as a person in society. We must make people aware that the arts are not "frills" to be experienced when there is time or money left over. The arts are a necessary part of the human experience that cannot be fulfilled by other subjects.

One strategy is to educate the community

about the quality of life in that community. Many businesses and individuals look for such "quality of life" factors when relocating. Realtors need to know and understand the enhancements which your arts programs contribute to the quality of life in your area. Your Chamber of Commerce is especially interested in being able to say to prospective businesses that this area places a premium on the arts, and has a local arts council, community theater, galleries, a symphony, dance studios, and strong arts programs in the local schools. The people who understand the business advantages of strong arts entities may not understand the intrinsic value of the arts. It is important that you know their lingo. Learn the jargon of the school board. Attend meetings and you will find the politically correct, multicultural, enhanced and challenged buzzwords that push the right buttons in those who make decisions affecting the arts.

## **We're (finally) Here - Are You There?**

After a long hiatus the Georgia ACDA Newsletter is back in production. For it to grow and prosper it needs your assistance. Let us know about upcoming events. How about submitting an article? R and S Chairpersons are particularly encouraged to contribute articles about what is going on (or should be) in their chosen area. The deadline for copy for the next issue is July 31. The next issue will feature a look at festivals - Are they competitive? - Do we go for the right reasons? - Do we know why we go? Georgia ACDA is also planning a clinic dealing with the new repertoire lists. More about that next time. We will also begin a series of articles which we hope will help those with minimal computer literacy get up to speed (translation: catch up with your neighborhood seven-year-olds). Have a wonderful, restful, and restorative summer - keep us in mind if you are feeling literary!

### **more - "It's That Time of Year" (further contributions eagerly encouraged)**

**Why did the chicken cross the road?**

To get away from the bassoon recital.

**Why do bagpipers walk when they play?**

To get away from the sound.

**How do you get guitarists to play softer?**

Give them sheet music.

**How many percussionists does it take to screw in a lightbulb?**

One, but a machine can do it better.

**What's the difference between a soprano and the PLO?**

You can negotiate with the PLO.

**Why are orchestra intermissions only 20 minutes?**

So you don't have to retrain the percussion section.

**What's the difference between a violin and a viola?**

A viola takes longer to burn.

**How do you get two flutes to play a half-step apart?**

Give them the same part.

**variation: What is the definition of a minor second?**

Two clarinets playing in unison.

(Borrowed from "Cantabile," the Connecticut newsletter)



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### Boychoirs

vacant

### Children's Choirs

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### Ethnic and Multicultural Perspectives

vacant

### Jazz and Show Choir

J. David Faber  
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(H) 912-242-6781  
(O) 912-333-5813

### Junior High/Middle School Choirs

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1301 Dunwoody Lane  
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**Technology Coordinator**

vacant

**Women's Choirs**

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 (O) 770-228-8641

**Youth and Student Activities**

Rodney Caldwell  
 118-B Winding Way  
 Statesboro, GA 30458  
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 (O) 912-681-0616  
 (F) 912-681-0583

**Male Choirs**

John Broman  
 3777 River North Drive  
 Gainesville, GA 30506-3208  
 (H) 770-531-7962  
 (O) (706-864-1431)

**Music & Worship**

Stanley Roberts  
 4444 S. Beechwood Dr.  
 Macon, GA 31210-2306  
 (H) 912-477-2333  
 (O) 912-742-6485

**Senior High Choirs**

Susan Cotton  
 1615 Holly Lake Circle  
 Snellville, Ga 30278  
 (H) 770-972-7983  
 (O) 770-978-0572

**Two-Year College Choirs**

Michael Bray  
 1829 Yatesville Hwy.  
 Thomaston, GA 30286-9605  
 (H) 706-647-4213  
 (O) 770-358-5289

**WANTED**

Technology facilitator to help us communicate with each other via e-mail, to help us surf the net looking for choral bulletin boards, etc. Lots of you do it. Don't keep it a secret. Tell us how (in plain English) for Mac and PC users. Let's start a Georgia choral bulletin board. If you are interested in facilitating Georgia choral directors' computer savvy, contact Kevin Hibbard (see addresses, etc. in leadership directory).



This page represents the strongest advocacy statement you can make. First, make sure that your own membership is up to date. Second, pass this page on to a colleague, and then follow up and make sure that they have become a member of ACDA. Advocacy begins at home. As our Barbershop colleagues regularly point out, "Membership begins with ME."

APPLICATION for MEMBERSHIP in the **AMERICAN CHORAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION**

Please Fill Out Completely Membership Account No. \_\_\_\_\_

Please accept my application for membership in ACDA as indicated below:

- NEW       RENEWAL
- Active \$45.00       Institutional \$75.00
- Associate \$45.00       Industry \$100.00
- Student \$20.00      FOREIGN ACTIVE
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Life membership payable in annual installments of \$100.00 or more.

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Please remit in U.S. funds only.

Make check or money order payable to:  
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Please check areas of activity:

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- 5  ACDA Student Chapter
- 6  Jr./Community College
- 7  College/University
- 8  Community Choir
- 9  Church Choir
- P  Professional Choir
- S  Supervisor/Administrator

Please check classification of choirs directed:

- Children       Boy       Girl       Men
- Women       SATB/Mixed       Jazz/Showchoir
- Ethnic/Minority

Place of Employment \_\_\_\_\_

Title and/or Position \_\_\_\_\_

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As an ACDA member, I will comply with the copyright laws of the United States of America. (Compliance with these laws is also a condition of participation by clinicians and performing ensembles that appear on any ACDA-sponsored event or convention.)

ACDA is a founding member of the International Federation for Choral Music (IFCM). If you need additional information about IFCM, please check box.



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