



OCDA *news*

BULLETIN OF THE OHIO CHORAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

FROM THE DESK OF OUR PRESIDENT



Dear colleagues,

On August 4, 2004, the new national headquarters of ACDA was officially opened in Oklahoma City. The seven of us in the Central Division attending the national leadership conference were fortunate to be a part of the ceremony. The facility is as beautiful as it is functional. It has room for expansion, houses a museum, and is directly across the street from a stunning new music hall.

During his remarks to the invited guests and ACDA national leadership, Dr. Gene Brooks, Executive Director, described the very early beginnings of ACDA. He mentioned the small house in southern Florida, barely a step above a hut, that served as the national office for the first few years. He described the move of the headquarters to Lawton, OK, made possible by a generous gift from the McMahon Foundation. This same foundation

also help to establish the new national headquarters in Oklahoma City, along with the generous support of the city itself.

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We often forget, I think, what it was like to be new to the choral scene. I remember attending my first national convention in New Orleans in 1981. In my mind, I thought I was going to a great party! In reality, it was an experience that shaped my career goals. I head choirs from all over the country and beyond. I met people who were excited about their profession and glad to talk about any aspect of their work. We find the same excitement at our division conventions and state summer conference.

Please take time to encourage your students to participate in these activities as an honor choir student, a college attendee or a new teacher in search of a choral network.

It would be remiss of me not to thank, once again, Gayle Walker for her tireless dedication to our annual summer conference at Otterbein. Gayle and I are already planning next year's conference, and will soon announce our headliners. Please check the website, www.ohiocda.org, for the latest details.

Luke Rosen, our OCDA webmaster, would also like for me to remind you of the calendar function. If you email him (luke@ccup.org) he will put your event on the state calendar.

Finally, I wish you all a successful new academic year. Be certain to let me or anyone on the board know if there is anyway we can help you.

Regards,
Tom Merrill

Fall 2004

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June 20-22

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Westerville, OH

Gayle Walker
Conference Coordinator
gwalker@otterbein.edu

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FROM YOUR EDITOR

Greetings. Finally this issue is out! Many thanks to all who have contributed to this and to every installment of the OCDA News.

Well, how do you like the new look? Our goal has been to make this newsletter sharper and more professional in appearance.

Allow me to take this opportunity to thank you for the privilege of serving such a fine organization as the OCDA in this way. I have attempted to learn on the job; special thanks to Mike Lisi, a former editor.

You are encouraged to patronize our advertisers, or at the very least, say hello at conventions! They are all fine business people who provide for us in fine fashion.

And you are all encouraged to contribute news items and/or articles of interest. Send them to me by snail mail or e-mail to the addresses indicated elsewhere in this issue.

Happy singing!,
Ron Blackley



Celebrate

Kettering Children's Choir • Community Christmas Concert
December 12, 2pm and 4pm
at the Kettering Seventh Day Adventist Church
Admission free



FALL 2004 TREASURER'S REPORT

OCDA Checking Account: \$2,364.12

Edward Jones Investment Account: \$7,904.63

2003-2004 Fiscal Year:

Inflows: \$44,280.30

Outflows: \$47,840.81

Net Total: \$-3,560.51

Jacqueline A. Nielsen
OCDA Treasurer



OCDA News, the official publication of the Ohio Choral Directors Association, is published three times annually, from Ashland, Ohio, and is distributed without charge to members of the Association as well as to selected members and officers of the American Choral Directors Association.

OCDA reserves the right to edit any application for appearance and to edit all materials proposed for distribution on the basis of content and length.

Copy and Ad Deadlines

Fall Issue	September 15
Winter Issue	January 15
Spring Issue	April 15

Advertising Rates

Full Page 9"x 7"	\$130.00
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ACDA National Conference

February 2-5, 2005

Los Angeles, California

For More Information, go to:

<http://acdaonline.org/conventions/national.shtml>

Winter 2005 NL

In the Winter 2005 Newsletter you can look forward to articles from your:

- President
- Summer Conference Coordinator
- Retired Members Chair
- College & University R & S Chair
- Student Rep Interest Area
- Northwest Regional Chair

Did You Know?

Every penny of ACDA life memberships goes to national headquarters and stays there. Our state organization receives a small portion of each regular membership fee, but nothing from life membership fees.

SO... if you're perhaps a life member who is all or mostly paid up, and so inclined, a tax deductible contribution directly to the OCDA might be a nice gesture. Just a thought...

Choral Reading Sessions

Choral Reading Sessions at OMEA, sponsored by the OCDA, will be on Friday morning again this year (specific times TBA). Lots of people preferred that time slot, and we are here to serve, so wake up and bring your friends!

NEW NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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*Jing Ling-Tam "correcting" the face of
Ben Ayling at the 2004 OCDA
Summer Conference*

2004 OCDA SUMMER CONFERENCE

There were many highlights to the 2004 Summer Conference, but one stands out - the people. Choral conductors are a remarkable group. After a year of hectic classroom, church, and concert schedules, they elect to gather each summer to deepen their understanding of the choral art. The conductors assembled at Otterbein this June were motivated, energetic, curious, fun, friendly, and helpful. It never ceases to amaze me how passionate choral professionals are about their field. Thank you to all who attended the conference, and to all who assisted in countless ways to make the 2004 Summer Conference a success.

Three leaders in the choral field highlighted the conference schedule of events. Dale Warland, founder of the Dale Warland Singers, led sessions on conducting technique, score preparation, and the commissioning of new works. His intellect, experience, and depth of knowledge were an inspiration to conference participants. Jing Ling-Tam, internationally recognized composer and conductor and Director of Choral Studies at the University of Texas - Arlington, conducted the conference Directors' Chorus with passion and humor. Additionally, Dr. Ling-Tam shared her expertise in the areas of choral warm ups, voice building, and Chinese choral literature. Lynne Gackle, contributing author of *Music at the Middle Level: Building Strong Programs* and conductor of the ensemble Le Petit Choeur, shared her research and instructed participants in the development, classification, and physiology of the adolescent female voice. Dr. Gackle's thorough knowledge of this important subject are major contributions to the choral field. Additionally, Steven Plank presented an enlightening session on Renaissance performance practice.

A wide variety of excellent choral ensembles performed at the conference, including Cincinnati's Vocal Arts Ensemble, a professional SATB ensemble conducted by Earl Rivers; the Ft. Hayes High School Metropolitan Singers, conducted by Kathy Wallace; the Columbus Children's Choir, conducted by Sandra Mathias; and the Otterbein College Concert Choir, conducted by Gayle Walker. Multiple reading sessions and a social *Gemütlichkeit* topped off the events.

If you were not able to attend the 2004 Summer Conference, make plans now to attend the 2005 conference, June 20-22 at Otterbein College in Westerville, OH. Clinicians will include Eric Whitacre and Rebecca Rottsoik. A new event for 2005 will be a Children's Honor Choir, directed by Rebecca Rottsoik. Be on the lookout for more information regarding the upcoming conference: flyers will be distributed at upcoming OMEA and ACDA conventions, postcards will be sent to OCDA members in February, and the registration brochure will be mailed in April. If you have questions about the 2004 conference, feel free to contact me at gwalker@otterbein.edu or 614-823-1318.

Gayle Walker
Summer Conference Coordinator

Attention Young Singers

Celebrating 30 years of musical excellence, the Ohio Boychoir announces auditions for participation in its 2004-2005 concert season. The ensemble is composed of outstanding singers drawn from throughout Northeastern Ohio. Interested singers must be 7-9 years old for the training ensemble and at least 9 years old for the advanced ensemble. The ensemble rehearses on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings from 7 till 8:30 pm at Schaaf Community Center in Parma, and is located on West 54th, just south of Snow Rd. Auditions will be held throughout September and October by appointment. For further information and to schedule an audition, please call 440-915-2396.

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The Ohio Choral Directors Association Summer Conference 2004 featured several outstanding artists, including Jing Ling-Tam and Dale Warland.

BOYS AND MIDDLE SCHOOL CHOIR

*by Jane Brewer, MS/Jr Hi R&S Chair, Indiana Choral Directors Association
Reprinted from ICDA Notations, Fall 2004*

A friend of mine once described a 7th grade middle school boy as a student who rushes out of your classroom when the bell rings leaving a trail of homework papers, runs down the hall to his next class yelling to all his friends, jumps into his next classroom door, and hits somebody! In my experience this is a pretty accurate picture. How to we get these goofy boys to join and then stay in choir? Why, you may ask, do we want them in our choirs? We want them because today's middle school boys become the tenors and basses of tomorrow.

I have always been blessed to have boys in my middle school choirs and I would like to share a few of the reasons why I think boys join and stay in choir. First you have to be able to think like an adolescent young man – having three sons of my own probably helped me here. Some of the rules (in no particular order) that I live by are:

Bodily functions, food, and sports are great topics of conversation. Attend their games and talk to them about it. If you don't know about sports, learn. Use words that aren't totally offensive, but will surprise them – words like poop, puke, and guts are good choices! Changing the "All cows eat grass" sentence to "All cows emit gas" is a great way to get their attention. Not all boys are into sports: find out what makes these boys tick. I almost always have one excellent guitar player who can accompany the choir at some point in the year, or a artist who can create a program cover.

Don't choose music with lyrics that would offend their growing sense of self. I make this the priority when selecting music, even more important than correct ranges and musical lessons that the piece would teach.

When speaking to the boys' section in rehearsal, occasionally call them men. They know they aren't grown up, but they like the sound of it.

Take the time to be knowledgeable about the changing voice. I talk to my boys about exactly what to expect, and I let the girls know what is happening with the boys. I tell the boys that the first time they tried to catch a ball they were probably not successful, but they learned the eye-hand coordination necessary to do it. Singing is nothing more than ear-throat coordination, and so they will get better with practice. I also give the girls a challenge to work on a focused, beautiful tone quality. Everyone has something to work toward and nobody is perfect.

Find ways to make anything a competition. To get the boys to sing in their "high" voices I often have them compete with the girls on who can sing the highest. Believe it or not, the boys often win. We can then translate that feeling to other music.

Work with the boys, without girls. Without the girls, the boys are more willing to sing out and sing by themselves, so that you can correct problems. If you can't get the girls out of the room, at least give them something else to do while the boys work with you. Even short periods of time are beneficial.

Take up a hobby that boys relate to. Last year I learned to ride a motorcycle and so I often have conversations about my Harley. They begin to think of me as a real person, and not just a teacher. They need to like you before they trust you.

Expect excellence. Nothing builds a program like excellence. Challenge them to be great and they will be.

Having a large number of middle school boys in choir is a challenge, but they can also bring the greatest pleasure (and surprises) to your teaching day. I hope some of these "rules" help you to relate to the "men" in your middle school choir.

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.

HOW TO MAINTAIN A HEALTHY VOICE

*Ruth G. Randle, Chairperson, Ethnic and Multicultural Choirs, Mississippi ACDA
Reprinted from MS Choral Advocate, Fall 2004 (slightly edited)*

Each new year, it is important to review with our students some of the basic facts about maintaining a healthy voice. So many times our students are unaware of the small things which have such a large impact on our vocal cords, breathing, and ability to produce a quality tone. Maintaining good general health and good vocal health go hand in hand. The following are a few suggestions and tried and true practices to maintain a healthy voice throughout the school day and the school year.

You should avoid:

1. viral colds: do not sing when throat is sore or hoarse.
2. emotional and physical stress.
3. large amounts of salt, refined sugar, caffeine, and spicy foods.
4. dry, artificial interior climates.
5. cigarette smoke.
6. excessive loud talking.
7. clearing your throat (sip water, swallow, or take a deep breath instead).
8. coughing if you don't have to.
9. singing parts out of your vocal range.
10. talking and singing over loud noises.

Signs of vocal abuse

1. The throat is tender to touch after singing or talking.
2. The voice is hoarse after singing.
3. The throat is dry with a persistent tickle.
4. You cannot produce your highest notes at softer dynamic levels.

Vocal Management Ideas

1. Learn how to use your voice with as little effort and tension as possible.
2. Do not sing in a tessitura which is near the extremes of your range.
3. Before singing use some vocal warm-ups: 7 to 10 minutes is a minimum.
4. Reduce voice usage before a concert.
5. Drink 6-8 glasses of water a day. Take a water bottle to rehearsal; drink water at room temperature.
6. Wash your hands several times a day.
7. Rest your voice in times of illness.
8. Stay relaxed (yeah, right!).
9. Pace your practicing.

You, the choral director, are their vocal coach and must do your part to ensure that the students are physically, mentally, and vocally prepared for each rehearsal and performance. Your choir will sound its very best when all voices are healthy, stress-free, and ready to sing. Talk to your students at regular intervals about ways to maintain a healthy voice, and you will help your ensembles as well as the individuals in them.



Lynne Gackle demonstrates techniques with some young voices.

Gems from Iowa

by Kim Ward, South-Central District Representative, Iowa Choral Directors Association

Singing is as much a mental process as physical. Keep your mind in the game.

Rehearsal means to "re-hear."

Rests are not for resting. Rests are for thinking and counting.

Keep directions as short as possible: 5 words or fewer.

Kids don't care about every note. They care that you care.

Take time to care for yourself or there won't be anything left for your family or your students.

Choral Events

December 1, 7:30 pm
Xavier University Advent
Lessons and Carols
Bellarmine Chapel, XU

December 4, 7:00 pm
Xavier University Madrigal Dinner
Conaton Board Room, Schmidt Hall, XU

December 18, 7:30 pm
Oberlin Choristers: Songs for the Season
Finney Chapel, Oberlin College

January 8, 2005 10:00 a.m.
OCDA Board Meeting
Otterbein College

February 2-5, 2005
ACDA National Conference, Los Angeles

February 3-5, 2005
OMEA Conference, Cincinnati

June 20-22, 2005
OCDA Summer Conference,
Otterbein College

2006
January 26-28
OMEA Conference, Cleveland

February 15-18
ACDA Central Division Conference,
Chicago

2007
Jan 31-Feb 3 ACDA National Conference,
Miami, FL

With all the rush and hurry in today's world, it is worth reflecting on the death of a very important person which went almost unnoticed recently. Larry LaPrise, the man who wrote "The Hokey Pokey," died peacefully at age 93. The most traumatic part for his family was getting him into the coffin. They put his left leg in... And then the trouble started.

SHOW CHOIR TIPS

*Matt Huth, Show Choir R&S Chair, Iowa Choral Directors Association
Reprinted in part from ICDA Sounding Board, September 2004*

Here are some tips, which may or may not be new to you. Hopefully, they will be helpful to some.

Show Order

A suggested order that many use:

1. Opener – upbeat, audience grabber
2. Something lighter or a novelty tune
3. Ballad – should sing well, but keep it on the shorter side
4. Some groups do a men's or women's number here, or not
5. Closer – the peak of your show; driving beat, foot tapper
6. The bow – go back into your closer and sing the refrain for a few measures, bow, recognize the accompanist(s), and finish up the refrain and set a huge pose for your final picture.
7. Exit music – play that same bow music with no singing so your kids can exit with lots of energy.

If you have a student or students who could do a solo, feature them.

Pick music that fits the ranges of your students that can be sung while moving.

Try to use instrumental backup: a bassist and a sensitive drummer added to a keyboardist will make a huge difference.

If the metronome marking doesn't feel right to you or your kids, it probably won't to the audience: change it.

K.I.S.S. – Keep It Simple, Stupid. Make sure you can sing well and have choreography that you can do well and doesn't get in the way of your singing! Then worry about the props and 47 costume changes. Concern yourself with doing the basics well and other stuff will come. Strive for the philosophy: "we are a choir that dances," not dancers that sing.



The Columbus Children's Choir

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- Two-Year College
- College/University
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