



OCDA *news*

BULLETIN OF THE OHIO CHORAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT



I was saying goodbye to my twelve through sixteen-year-old Swedish students on our last day together this past June. Many had stopped by the music room that afternoon on the way to their busses or bicycles. None would be satisfied with a handshake. The girls and boys alike wanted to hug their music teacher from America goodbye.

It had been a great year – the adventure of a lifetime for me. We had experienced joy and struggle in that room during the previous ten months. I smiled at the girls who wore the long faces that day and thanked

them for coming to help celebrate our time together. One last slap on the backs of the boys seemed the appropriate way to thank them and to send them on their way.

Then I noticed one of the twelve-year-old boys standing shyly just a few meters away. He wanted to say something to me, but was hesitating. I called him by name and said, “come on over, I’m hugging the boys, too!”

This little guy had lost his father just a month earlier to a terminal illness. Prior to the loss, I had not known that he and his older sister had been dealing with this for most of the school year. He had often been unfocused, and constantly needed to be reminded to bring his music to class.

He came over, put his arms around me, and squeezed hard. “You’re the best teacher that I’ve ever had,” he said. I just about lost it. Whether or not his statement was accurate, the important thing was that somehow, even without knowing it, I had been there for that little guy. It had been quite a year, and my family and I had done and seen many, many things, but perhaps being there for this boy had been the most important mission of the year.

I believe it is true that those of us who teach never really know the whole of our impact. On those really long, hard teaching days this year, when the sopranos just cannot seem to blend, when the basses cannot get their part together, and when the little guy in the front row has forgotten his music for the umpteenth time, I would encourage you to remember that we have many contributions to make beyond teaching notes and vocal technique to our students.

Have a great school year and remember to take really good care of those kids!

Mark Munson



Fall 2006

Volume 27, Issue 1

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**In the Winter 2007 issue you
can look forward to articles
from your:**

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“The past is the tomorrow that got away.”

by William Zurkey, OCDA Historian

I came across a quote the other day that seemed very appropriate for the first column of this kind. *History is a kind of introduction to more interesting people than we can possibly meet in our restricted lives; let us not neglect the opportunity.* ~Dexter Perkins. I would like you to take this opportunity to introduce one of our significant members of OCDA. As a matter of fact, if you attended the Summer Conference of 2006, you will remember that this master music educator received the **OCDA Distinguished Service Award** at that conference.



B. Neil Davis's gifts for teaching, conducting and singing have inspired and influenced musicians and listeners for over five decades. Mr. Davis earned his Masters Degree from Kent State University, receiving the Outstanding Music Education Alumni Award. As Supervisor of Music for the Lakewood Public Schools, Mr. Davis won the Distinguished Service Award from the Ohio Music Education Association and induction into the Lakewood Schools Teaching Hall of Fame. A student of the late Pauline Thesmacher, Mr. Davis has performed with the Robert Page Singers, taught at Cleveland State University and currently teaches voice at both Lakewood High School and at The Beck Center for the Arts.

In 2006, he received the Ohio Choral Directors Association Distinguished Service Award for his remarkable contributions to choral arts and to the lives of his students. Mr. Davis lives in Lakewood, Ohio with Nancy, his wife of 54 years.

Since 1985, Mr. Davis has served as Musical Director at the West Shore Unitarian Universalist Church, leading the West Shore Church Choir in special presentations of Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Poulenc's *Gloria* and other great works. In celebration of his twenty-second and final year at West Shore, the church is proud to host an Artists Series featuring the West Shore Church Choir performing with students, friends and choral groups from Neil's 50 year career.

There is an additional opportunity to honor B. Neil Davis. You are all invited to *The West Shore Unitarian Universalist Church 2006-2007 Artists Series*, which will be celebrating the career of B. Neil Davis. The church is located in Rocky River. The concerts include the Forest Hill Presbyterian Church Choir, where Neil spent 13 years as director; the Bellflower String Ensemble, directed by Mary Beth Ions; The West Shore Chorale, directed by another Distinguished award recipient, John Drotleff; and David Conte, composer and former student of Neil's at Lakewood High School. To check the schedule of events and for additional information, visit www.wsuuc.org.



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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.

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10% discount for the advance purchase of three consecutive ads.

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Advance payment must accompany materials. Please make checks out to: Ohio Choral Directors Association.

Editor

Ron Blackley
 Ashland University
 Department of Music
 Ashland, Ohio 44805
 H: 419-289-7792
 W: 419-289-5114
 Fax: 419-289-5683
rblackle@ashland.edu



Dates to Remember

OMEA

Feb 8-10, 2007
Columbus

ACDA National

March 7-10, 2007
Miami

OCDA Summer Conferences:

June 18-20, 2007
June 23-25, 2008
June 22-24, 2009
June 21-23, 2010

ACDA Central Division

Feb 20-23, 2008
Grand Rapids

January 20, 2007

Children's Chorus event

2006 OCDA Summer Conference

by Daniel Monek, Summer Conference Chair

The OCDA Summer conference continued its tradition of bringing choral greats from around the world to provide Ohio choral directors with a time of inspiration and rejuvenation. Over 135 choral directors from Ohio and surrounding states came together on the Otterbein College campus for three days of valuable fellowship and learning. All of us left feeling renewed, having made new friends and discovered new rehearsal ideas and repertoire possibilities.

Featuring an international line-up of clinicians, the conference opened with sessions on artistry and tone building by Emily Ellsworth, Artistic Director of the Glen Ellyn Children's Chorus. Former King's Singer and renowned composer, Bob Chilcott delighted conference attendees throughout the three-day event with sessions from a composer's perspective highlighting the importance of text. And Robert Shaw protégé and Director of Choral Activities at Boston University, Ann Howard Jones challenged us with a number of sessions on polishing the conductor's skills from conducting technique to score preparation.

We were also beneficiaries of the wonderful talent and depth of knowledge of many of our in-state colleagues as sessions were presented on old tuning systems by Ross Duffin of Case Western Reserve University, on incorporating state and national standards in the classroom by Ann Usher of the University of Akron, and on community choirs by Frank Jacobs. The students of the Hillsborough High School Symphonic Choir, under the direction of David White, shared their many talents with us in an evening concert. The hard work of Robyn Lana and her team brought us a fabulous performance by the second annual OCDA Children's Honor Choir under the direction of Emily Ellsworth to close the conference. In addition to all of this, we found time for numerous reading sessions, dinner roundtables, our annual business luncheon, and lots of fellowship!

As this was my first year serving as conference coordinator, I want to thank the members of our conference committee Amy Lenzmeier (facilities), Ann Usher (logistics), and Fred Locker (exhibits) for all of their help with preparations for the event. I would also like to extend a special thank you to Gayle Walker: as our previous conference coordinator she was a treasure trove of information and advice throughout the year!

If you missed the 2006 conference, plan now for 2007. **The next conference will be held from June 18-20 at Otterbein College in Westerville, OH.** Be on the lookout for information on clinicians at upcoming OMEA and ACDA conventions and informational postcard to be mailed in early winter. If you are interested in bringing your performing group to the OCDA summer conference, please see the call for performance tapes in this issue of the newsletter. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at monekd@marietta.edu or 740-376-4688.

Distinguished Service Award: Call for Nominations

The Board of Directors is pleased to call for nominations for the 2007 OCDA Distinguished Service Award.

Criteria for Nomination:

1. The nominee must be a member in good standing of ACDA.
2. Nominees should exemplify the following characteristics:
 - a high standard of musicianship.
 - a high standard of professionalism.
 - a record of service to choral music in Ohio.
 - a record of active service in OCDA.
3. Nominees may come from any specialty, discipline, or teaching level within ACDA membership.
4. Previous recipients of the award are excluded from further nominations.

Nominations should include the following information:

- Name of nominee
- Nominee’s address (address, city, and zip)
- Nominee’s phone and email address
- Nominee’s areas of work: indicate Elementary, Middle/Junior High, Senior High, College/University, Church, or Community
- Nominee’s years of experience
- Statement in support of nominee
- Your name, phone number, and email

Nominations should be sent no later than December 1 to Tom Merrill by e-mail (merrillt@xavier.edu) or by U.S. mail (6835 Ken Arbre Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45236.) The Board’s decision will be made at the January meeting and the award given at the summer conference.

Previous recipients of the award are John Leman, 2001; John Drotloff, 2002; Jim Gallagher, 2004; Richard Wesp, 2005; and B. Neil Davis, 2006.

Treasurer’s Report

by Kent Vandock, Treasurer

Net Worth - As of 9/20/2006:2
(includes unrealized gains)

<u>Account</u>	<u>Balance</u>
ASSETS	
Cash and Bank Accounts	
6 Month CD	2500.00
Checking	11,414.77
MaxSaver Account	22,532.39
TOTAL Cash and Bank Accounts	36,447.16
TOTAL ASSETS	36,447.16
LIABILITIES	0.00
OVERALL TOTAL	36,447.16

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.



Good to Great!

by Eric Kauffman, South Central Region Chair



What makes a good choral program a great choral program? The answer is paradoxical in that *good* is the enemy of *great*. The problem of *good* being interpreted as *good enough* is the first step to settling for mediocrity. With apologies to Jim Collins, author of the bestseller “*Good to Great*” -*Why Some Companies Make the Leap...and Others Don't*, I found inspiration in the correlation between running a successful business and a successful choral program. I want you to question why some choral programs progress while others stagnate. I want you to consider yourself more of a business person than an educator. Inefficiencies commonly found in our choral classes and rehearsals would never be tolerated in the business world.

First Who...Then What

The old adage “People are your most important asset” turns out to be wrong. People are *not* your most important asset. The *right* people are. Collins found that good-to-great leaders were not pre-occupied with changing their strategy and creating a new vision. They first got the right people on their team, the wrong people off of their team, placed the right people in their most productive sections- and *then* they figured out where the team wanted to go to be successful. Notice that I didn't say the most talented people but the people most interested in making great choral music. The ultimate goal is music education through great choral music. Surround yourself with people who want to make that happen.

Confront the Brutal Facts (Yet Never Lose Faith)

Good-to-great choral directors must maintain unwavering faith that you can and will prevail in the end, regardless of the difficulties, AND at the same time have the discipline to confront the most brutal facts of your reality, whatever they might be. When failure is not an option, the positive spirit can become contagious. Be proud of the progress you make daily.

The Curse of Competence

To go from good to great requires transcending the curse of competence. Just because something is your passion - just because you've been doing it for years or perhaps even decades- does not necessarily mean that you are as good as you can be at it. If you do not aspire to be the best choral director you can be, then you will never have the great choral department your students and community deserve. Have the courage to grow as an educator and a musician. Personal growth will ultimately reflect upon your choral program. Ask questions and share ideas with musicians, teachers, and people you respect the most.

A Culture of Discipline

All choral programs have a culture, some choral programs have discipline, but few choral programs have a *culture of discipline*. When you have disciplined members, you don't need hierarchy. When you have disciplined creative thought, you don't need bureaucracy. When you have disciplined actions, you don't need excessive controls. When you combine a culture of discipline with an ethic of musicianship, you get the magical alchemy of great performance. If making great music is the goal of the ensemble then self-discipline through self-motivation will prevail. It's all about education *through* choral music!

Technology Accelerators

Good-to-great choral programs think differently about the role of technology. They never use technology as the primary means of igniting a transformation. Yet, ironically, they are pioneers in the application of carefully selected technologies. Technology by itself is never a primary cause of either greatness or decline. It is important to use your technology dollars wisely. Consider purchasing ear-training software for your computer lab or even a laptop set up in a practice area. Students can use their study hall, lunch hour, or before and after school time to improve their aural skills. A carefully scheduled spreadsheet can easily help you account for every kid in the class to participate in ear training activities for a few minutes a week while the others are continuing to rehearse in class. Academic integrity is something choral music is often asked to demonstrate. The program assesses the student's progress and not you, helping you to qualify their final grade more accurately.

Process leads to Product

It is important to remember that no matter how dramatic the end result, the good-to-great choral transformations never happen in one fell swoop. There was no single defining action, no grand program, no one innovation, no lucky break, and no miracle moment. The process which leads us from good to great choral music is just that, a process. There are no such things as “quick fixes” in choral music but rather your bag of choral tools that, if cultivated and nurtured on a daily basis without fail, will lead you from good to better, if not great! Consistency, insistency, and persistency are major elements of daily success.

From Good to Great to Built to Last....

Creating a higher standard is actually easier than maintaining it. Each one of your successes will create an expectation from your students, your administration, your community, and hopefully yourself. It is your responsibility never to allow for your standard of excellence to be compromised. In order to overcome the standard of mediocrity which exists in many areas of education, you must never forget the importance of renewing what makes your teaching “superior” and “innovative.” Ultimately you are the catalyst between good and great choral music in your school or community.


Jim Collins, *Good to Great – Why Some Companies Make the Leap...and Others Don't* (New York: Harpers Collins Publishers Inc., 2001)

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It's About the People

by Andy Call, Music in Worship R&S Chair

"I don't teach music. I teach people *through* music." At the time I heard this, I remember thinking that it was a nice a philosophy of music education cliché. But after several years of practicing this inspiring art, I have a much greater appreciation of its deep truth.

As you began this new year, no doubt you were reminded of the importance of the people who make up your choirs. All the planning, score study, and preparation won't amount to anything without the singers to make the music. And sometimes, we need to be reminded to focus on the people who make our work so rewarding.

This fall as we began the year at Westlake United Methodist Church, we had two choir members preparing for significant surgery, one whose brother is terminally ill, one going through a divorce, one with a baby sister drifting from job to job and town to town, one with a child that has had run-ins with the law, and one whose teenage niece just announced that she is pregnant after repeatedly running away from home. How much did any of those people want to hear my plan for the coming year, with so much going on in their own lives?

The answer turned out to be that they not only want to be a part of the choir, but that they *need* to be a part of the choir. Music provides an opportunity to strive toward something greater than ourselves, a chance to leave behind the everyday world and to make something beautiful. But these people also needed to know that someone cared about them, and that their lives were important to others, too. We shared over the phone, in a note, in their living rooms, and at choir rehearsal. In the process, we learned more about each other and what is really important to us. And sharing with their director and with the other singers made them enormously more invested in making music together.

I want to encourage you to spend at least a few hours each week talking to your singers: not about choir, but about what's going on in their lives. Invest in the people that are so important to you. The gift to them – and to you – will be greater than you might expect.

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Calendar of Events: FALL 2006 and beyond

To have your concert included here in the next issue of the OCDA News, please email the editor, Ron Blackley, at: rblackle@ashland.edu

2006

Friday, October 6, 7:30 pm

Westlake United Methodist Church?
Spencer Myer, pianist

Sunday, October 29, 3:00 pm

St. Margaret's Episcopal Church, Dayton
MUSICA! EARTH, SEA, SKY: Concert I

Friday, November 10, 7:30 pm

St. Edwards' Catholic Church, Granville
Denison University Chamber Singers' Fall Concert
Mozart: Missa Brevis in F major

Sunday, November 12, 7:00 pm

Swasey Chapel, Denison
Denison University Gospel Choir Fall Concert

Tuesday, November 14, 7:30 pm

1st Presbyterian, Granville
Denison University Women's Choir Fall Concert
Music of Many Cultures

Wednesday, November 29 thru**Sunday, December 3, 6:30 pm**

Redwood Hall, Ashland University
31st Annual Madrigal Feaste
for tickets call 419-289-5950

**Saturday, December 2, 8:00 pm and
Sunday, Dec. 3, 3:00 pm**

Burke Recital Hall - on the Denison Campus
Denison University Singers' Theatre
Gilbert and Sullivan: Pirates of Penzance

Friday, December 8, 7:30 pm

Swasey Chapel, Denison
Vivaldi's Gloria and Christmas Choruses from Messiah
Denison University Concert Choir and Chamber Symphony

Sunday, December 10, 4:00 pm

Westlake United Methodist Church
A Celtic Christmas

Sunday, December 10, 7:00 pm

Ashland University Memorial Chapel
Choral Festival of Lights

Friday, December 15, 2006, 7:30 pm

First United Methodist Church, Troy, Ohio
MUSICA! EARTH SEA SKY : CONCERT II

Sunday, December 17, 2006, 3:00 pm

Lutheran Church of Our Savior, Dayton
MUSICA! EARTH SEA SKY : CONCERT II

2007

Friday, January 19, 7:00 pm

Westlake Schools Performing Arts Center, 27830 Hilliard Blvd.
Trout Fishing in America; tickets \$16, \$12; call 440-871-3088

Saturday, January 20, 2007

Cowan Hall, Otterbein College, Westerville
OCDA and Kinderchor will host an "All-Ohio Community Children's Chorus Festival" at Otterbein College in Westerville, OH. Guest conductor is Jean Ashworth Bartle. Participating: Columbus International Children's Choir, Con Brio Children's Choir, Cincinnati Children's Choir, Riverside Children's Choir, Kettering Children's Choir, Oberlin Choristers, Summit Choral Society – Concert Choir, Springfield Children's Choir, and Kinderchor.

Sunday, February 12, 4:00 pm

Westlake United Methodist Church
WUMC Musicians' Valentine Concert

Sunday, February 25, 4:00 pm

Westlake United Methodist Church
Kevin S. Foster, piano and voice recital

Friday, March 16, 7:30 pm

Westlake United Methodist Church
Cleveland Chamber Symphony

Sunday, March 25, 4:00 pm

Westlake United Methodist Church
Leslie Bauer and Lisa Falcione, duet recital

Sunday, April 29, 7:00 pm

Westlake United Methodist Church
Karl Jenkins'

Call for Choral Performances

The OCDA Conference Committee is issuing a call for choral ensembles of all types interested in performing at the OCDA Summer Conference to be held in Westerville, OH from June 18-20, 2007. Interested directors should submit a quality tape or compact disc recording of their group performing three contrasting selections from the 2005-6 academic year or most recent season along with a brief description of the group including size. Submissions should be postmarked by November 15, 2006 and mailed to Mark Munson, OCDA President, c/o Bowling Green State University, 819 Cherry Hill Drive, Bowling Green OH 43402.

Barbershop Banter

*by Thomas More Scott, doctoral student,
Kent State University*

Mark Munson had it right when he said, "Rarely do I sing with others for no other purpose other than the pleasure of doing it." I suspect many of us choral professionals are in the same boat. In fact, awhile back when I was conducting 9 different ensembles, I had exactly the same thought. Didn't most of us go into the choral field because we liked to sing? Then why aren't we doing it? I found I really wanted to just sing; not choose repertoire, schedule concerts, run rehearsals, negotiate with venues, secure funding, or argue with the dean.

So, I joined a barbershop chorus. It was really fun, we sang good arrangements at a high level and I wasn't in charge. Perfect! Then, less than a year later, tragedy struck. They wanted to make me director. I said, "No, I just want to sing." So, our board appointed two directors, and when I am not directing, I sing in the chorus just like everyone else. The other director is a terrific barbershopper with a keen sense of the style, and I'm learning a lot from him. On the other hand, I'm teaching the group about proper vocal production, solid breath support and the importance of in-tune singing. We have a lot of fun and are singing pretty well.

If any of you feel like Mark and I do, you might want to try singing with your local barbershop chapter. There are great ones in Cincinnati, Columbus, Central Ohio and Cleveland (Independence Chapter, that's us!). These groups perform at an extremely sophisticated level and are very satisfying for the choral professional. For more information, check out www.singjad.com. For a chorus in your area, (for women, there are excellent Sweet Adeline choruses in Cleveland and Toledo), and regain the joy of singing for the joy of singing.

From Your Editor

Greetings to all. For most of us, our new school year/church year is underway. Fresh opportunities are literally staring us in the face. Some of the articles in this issue emphasize the primacy of people over music, and that is a truth of which we may need to be reminded from time to time.

There are also a couple new items. One is a call for choral performances. The Board is looking for quality choral ensembles to share their music with all of us at the OCDA Conference in June. The other is a call for nominations for the Distinguished Service Award. The procedure for selecting the award winner has now been formalized and clarified, beginning with the request for YOUR input right at the outset. I encourage you to read both of these new items carefully and consider how you might participate in either of them. Finally, our historian, Bill Zurkey, has begun a series on each of the past recipients of the OCDA Distinguished Service Award, with a focus this time on B. Neil Davis.

As you probably know, nearly all of the articles in this periodical are contributed by OCDA Board members, both elected and appointed. This month we have one from a "regular" member: Tom Scott. And I think that's great. Please be encouraged to consider whether you might have something valuable to say to the rest of us regarding any aspect of the choral art.

As always, if you have ideas, suggestions, or complaints about this newsletter, please contact me. I seek to serve the membership.

Thanks.
Ron Blackley

“
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everyone.**”

Laurel Kunes
Choral Director
Mentor High School
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Mark Munson
819 Cherry Hill Drive
Bowling Green, OH 43402
munson@bgnet.bgsu.edu
H: 419.352-0488
O: 419.372-8733
Fax: 419.372-2938
Bowling Green State University

VP (PAST PRESIDENT)

Tom Merrill
6835 Ken Arbre Dr
Cincinnati, OH 45236
merrillt@xavier.edu
H: 513.891-9150
O: 513.745-3135
Fax: 513.745-3343
Xavier University

PRESIDENT ELECT

Gayle Walker
573 Peach Street
Westerville, OH 43082
gwalker@otterbein.edu
H: 614.865-9476
O: 614.823-1318
Fax: 614.823-1118
Otterbein College

SECRETARY

Ben Ayling
524 Overlook Drive
Kent, OH 44240
bayling@kent.edu
H: 330.677-9126
O: 330.672-4802
Fax: 330.672-7837
Kent State University

TREASURER

Kent W. Vandock
8192 County Road D
Delta, Ohio 43515
kwvandock@powersupply.net
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O: 419.
C: 419. 270-5396
Archbold Local Schools

NE REGION CHAIR

E. James Kotora
399 Parkside Dr.
Bay Village, OH 44140
jkotorajr@cs.com
H: 440.871-5639
O: 216.368-2400
Case Western Reserve U.

EC REGION CHAIR

Dara Gillis
289 Euclid Ave.
Delaware, Ohio 43015
dbgillis1@yahoo.com
H: 740.548-5061
O: 740.833-1010 ext. 4355
F: 740.833-1099
Rutherford B. Hayes H. S.

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Michele Smith
1042 Washington Ave.
Greenville, OH 45331
mismith@erinnet.com
H: 937.547-0780
O: 937.548-4188 ext. 855
Fax: 937.548-3082
Greenville H.S.

SC REGION CHAIR

Eric Kauffman
1650 Ridgeview Road
Upper Arlington, OH 43221
ekauffman@uaschools.org
H: 614.284-0883
O: 614.487-5240 ext.126
Fax: 614.487-5238
Upper Arlington H.S.

NW REGION CHAIR

Dennis Blubough
2020 N. Holland Sylvania Rd.
Toledo, Ohio 43615
dennis@musical-resources.com
H:
O: 419.539.9100
Fax: 877.377.7799
Musical Resources

CONF. COMM. CHAIR

Daniel Monek
215 5th Street
Marietta, OH 45750
monekd@marietta.edu
H: 740.374-6294
O: 740.376-4689
Fax: 740.376-4529
Marietta College

HISTORIAN

William Zurky
32161 Teasel Ct.
Avon Lake, OH 44012
Zurkw@hotmail.com
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O: 440.933-6290x1501
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101 Jacob Street
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edrobbin@bw.edu
H: 440.816-1980
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HIGH SCHOOL

James Vaughn
2901 Green acre Dr. # 7B
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H: 419.722-7418
O: 419.299-3384 x429
Fax: 419.299-3668
Van Buren Local Schools

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Deborah O'Rielly
3567 Springlake Circle
Loveland, OH 45140
dorielly@cinci.rr.com
H: 513-310-9450
O: 513.686-1760
Fax: 513.891-3162
Sycamore Junior High

COLL/UNIVER

Robert Jones
816.Otterbein Ave.
Dayton, OH 45406
rojonesiii@ameritech.net
H: 937.277-7113
O: 937.229-3909
Fax: 937.229-3916
University of Dayton

MUSIC/WORSHIP

Andy Call
27302 Seneca Drive
Westlake, OH 44145
acall@further.com
H: 440.250-0124
O: 440.871-3088
Fax: 440.871-4481
Westlake United Methodist Church

SHOWCHOIR

Michael Crandall
391 Frebis Avenue
Columbus, OH 43206
Mcrand1030@aol.com
H: 614.444-1654
C: 614.327-0238
New Horizons Travel

VOCAL JAZZ

Chris Venesile
32868 Fox Chappel Ln.
Avon Lake, OH 44012
cvenes@aol.com
H: 440.933-6998
O: 440.779-8816
Fax: 440.777-2216
C: 216-225-9842
North Olmsted H. S.

CHILDREN'S

Amy Chivington
2587 Tucker Trail
Lewis Center, OH 43035
AChivington@otterbein.edu
H: 614.579-1259
O: 614.823-1110
Fax: 614-823-1118
Otterbein College

MULTICULTURAL

Emily Gil
6431 Beaumont Square
Lewis Center, OH 43035
egil@conbrio.cc
H: 614.559-3914
O: 614.883-3200
Worthington Schools

FEMALE

Sandra Stegman
918 Bexley Drive
Perrysburg, OH 43551
sstegma@bgnet.bgsu.edu
H: 419.873.0478
O: 419.372.0281
FAX: 419.372.2938
Bowling Green State University

YOUTH/STUDENT

Hugh Floyd
143 E. College St #112
Oberlin, Ohio 44074
hugh.floyd@oberlin.edu
H: 440.774-4249
O: 440.775-8282
Fax: 775-8942
Oberlin C. of Music

MALE

Ethan Sperry
127 Acorn Circle
Oxford, OH 45056
ethansperry@hotmail.com
Oxford, OH 45056
H: 513.330-2166
O: 513.529.6009
Fax: 513.529.3027
Miami University

WEB MASTER

Luke Rosen
2103 Orchard Lakes Ct., #22
Toledo, OH 43615
Luke@ccup.org
H: 419-843-7328
O: 419-865-5743
Fax: 419-531-1775
St. John's Jesuit H.S.

NEWSLETTER

Ron Blackley
1283 Center Lane Drive
Ashland, OH 44805
rblackle@ashland.edu
H: 419.289-7792
O: 419.289-5114
Fax: 419.289-5638
Ashland University

RETIRED

Jim Gallagher
5168 Maplewood Court W.
Columbus, OH 43229
jgall0444@yahoo.com
H: 614.891-0444

COMMUNITY

Donna Tozer Wipfli
3804 Brookside Rd.
Toledo, OH 43606
stwipfli@sbcglobal.net
H: 419.536.7973
Masterworks Chorale
Ottawa Hills Schools,

BOYS

Robert Ward
1866 College Road
Columbus, OH 43210
ward.539@osu.edu
H: 614.607-5206
O: 614.292-4622
Fax: 614.292-1102
Ohio State University

STUDENT CHAPT. REP

Peter Hampton
SMC # 12046
1 Otterbein College
Westerville, OH 43081
Peter.hampton@otterbein.edu
H: 216.258-6586
Otterbein College

2-YEAR COLLEGE

Tim Sarsany
396 E. Whittier St.
Columbus, OH 43206
Tsarsany@aol.com
H: 614.449-9469
F: 614.449-9469
Ohio State U. -Marion



Ron Blackley
Ashland University
Department of Music
Ashland, OH 44805

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