

Melisma



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From the President:

by Kay M. Hartzell

The passing of the torch and the lighting of the Olympic flame officially open the Olympic games wherever they are held. This summer in Barcelona, runners from Olympic relay teams will pass the baton to the next runner as they complete their laps in the race. In July, the ACDA "Flame of Leadership" will be passed to the presidents-elect of four divisions: North Central, Eastern, Southwestern and Northwestern. No opening or closing ceremonies will take place, no races will be run and no medals will be awarded, but the event is no less significant simply because it lacks pomp and ceremony. The passage of the ACDA "Flame" marks a process of training that guarantees continuity in the work of the organization, while allowing and even embracing differences in the personal leadership style of elected officers. What time could be more appropriate for thank-yous and special recognition for tasks superbly accomplished and support freely given?

Thank you to Aimee Beckmann-Collier, Mark Lehmann, and the entire steering committee of the North Central Division ACDA Convention held in Des Moines, Iowa. A convention planning team wears many hats, but their most important consideration is customer satisfaction, a monumental task that requires hours of creative labor combined with hours of physical labor.

Thank you to Steve Parker who completed his last official tasks as Vice President of the North Central division while in Des Moines. Steve has been a strong leader and a true friend. Though he officially retires from the Board, he will remain actively involved in North Central ACDA as Chair of the 1994 Division Convention in Rapid City, South Dakota.

A special thank you to the State Presidents — past, present and elected — who have served the North Central Division with such devotion to the choral art and to the membership of the organization. This is a very special group of people, each of whom has come to the board table with a strong sense of responsibility and commitment to the organization and with their

own personal style of leadership. It is this diversity of leadership style that has allowed the North Central Division Board of Directors and its membership to embark on a grass roots level campaign to serve the very specific needs of you, the membership of our organization.

Thank you to Dione Peterson for her outstanding work as Editor of *Melisma*. Every time I receive a new issue, I am thrilled with the continued improvement in the quality of this important tool of communication in the North Central Division.

Thanks to Donald Peterson as well. His contributions as secretary and treasurer of the division often go unnoticed, but they are never taken for granted.

We are very fortunate to have such excellent leadership role models in the North Central Division. Diana Leland, currently serving as Vice President of the National Board of Directors was the recipient of a plaque presented to her in Des Moines by the North Central Division Board of Directors. The plaque honored this very special lady for her leadership as Minnesota State President, North Central Division President, and National President. All of Diana's service to ACDA has been in consecutive years, a feat that is monumental in terms of the time commitment to the organization. Thank you, Diana!

William Hatcher, another member of the North Central Division, currently

serves ACDA as National President. What a thrill it was to hear the performance of his fine choir, Kantorei, on the convention program in Des Moines. Thank you, Bill, and again, congratulations!

The Division and State R & S Chairs have been presented with a challenge — an assignment that is due the end of May — asking for guidelines to performance, literature lists, and program suggestions for independent North Central Division R & S activities or for special sessions at the 1994 Rapid City Convention. Thank you to all of the chairs for serving in a position of leadership that has often been frustrating. I hope that you will accept this assignment as a start — an opportunity for input to a Board of Directors that really does value your expertise.

I am proud of the North Central Division of ACDA. The superb quality of the choral music in our six states, the innovative programming and activities at our conventions, and the dedication of our membership to the choral art is recognized nationwide. What an exciting opportunity we have to share everything that is a part of North Central with the other divisions when we host the 1995 National Convention in Milwaukee. We will call upon the efforts of every member of the division to make this the greatest national convention ever.

(continued on page 7)

Thank You, Iowa!

Des Moines was an inspiration from beginning to end! The planning committee can indeed be proud of their work and the numerous opportunities they provided North Central in those few short days. Thanks, Aimee, Mark and the committee!

Where else could we experience the creativity of master conductors and their fruition? Where else could we find examples of tried and tested quality literature? Where else could you sit in the same room and glean from the knowledge of Margaret Hawkins, Paul Salamunovich, Ann Howard Jones, Kenneth Jennings, Weston Noble, and Jean Bartles?

Did you go home and take a new look at your conducting technique or check the strength of your conducting garb's closure?

If you missed all this, you missed even more! Make plans now for San Antonio in '93 . . . Rapid City in '94 . . . Milwaukee in '95.

The Ugly Question of Beautiful Religious Texts

Reprinted from
New York Choral Cues
Richard Kegerrel, Editor
Nov./Dec. 1990

We sing. Joy engulfs us. Our souls take wing. A surge of feeling that can only be described as spiritual carries us heavenward.

Every singer has felt this again and again. Palestrina experienced it. Bach knew it. And Mozart. And Stravinsky. That spirituality inherent in choral music is enough to justify our existence as directors. It is a non-specific spirituality, non-sectarian, appropriate to all of humanity regardless of individual creeds. I tried to express something like that in a graduate seminar years ago. I'll never forget the knowing smile and the cynical reply of my professor: "Don't try to tell that to a school board."

Of course she knew whereof she spoke. The unmusical know that singing is somehow a good thing, but they don't really understand why we do it. They can't understand that, though the text be specific, the true meaning of the music is universal. And it is the specificity of the texts that can cause trouble for directors in secular institutions.

By and large, our reporters said they had no particular problem themselves with religious programming. But all knew of problems fellow directors had experienced, some of them quite ugly and unfair.

You might expect that it would be regional, that the problem would exist only in the large, liberal metropolitan areas. As Karl Hawes says, "We at Silver Creek are fortunate to not have any particular problems with programming sacred music in our school. We still call our December concert a 'Christmas Concert' and we also have a 'Concert of Sacred Music' just prior to Easter." Even in suburban Rochester, Dean Ekberg reports that in Nazareth "each school regularly gives concerts in December which are called 'Christmas Concerts' or 'Holiday Concerts'."

But what of the metropolitan area? Shirley Muzzi says that in Mineola, the county seat of Nassau County, "My students perform a Sacred Music Concert annually in a local church. This concert is always enjoyed and appreciated by parents and members of the community."

But the ugly specter of censorship still lurks in the wings, in all sections of the state. We found one director on Long Island having problems, and Lonnie Arnold says there have been serious troubles in some other districts around Rochester.

Diana Spradling, who is at Syracuse University, tells us, "In one central New York school district an assistant superintendent released a memo to all music teachers announcing, 'There can no longer be Christmas music on winter concerts.' Teachers were told they could 'no longer teach songs with Jesus, Mary and/or Joseph in them,' but could use traditional secular music."

"One esteemed colleague had to settle for several pieces of 'fluff and fill' because, in essence, an administrator decided he knew more about significant choral literature than the music teacher did."

Surely this is unacceptable, blatant censorship. We simply cannot condone such actions, we cannot stand silent when our colleagues are stifled in sincere efforts in choral education. As Thurston Dox said, "We're doing music not

propagating an idea. If I were told I couldn't use a particular text I would feel that would be an encroachment on my freedom of speech."

Balance in Programming

Inevitably we found that directors who were sensitive about their students' religious beliefs and concerned that students understand why the music was chosen felt no interference from the community.

William Hawes says that at Carmel High School he tries "to program music representing both Christianity and Judaism, and tries to stay away from music in which the text is obviously for church use. I have no problem if a student wishes to 'sit out' a particular piece of music. This can be a good compromise provided it can be done unobtrusively and with no reprisals."

Nancy Krestic says that even at Silver Creek they strive for a balance, and, when they do their sacred music concert, they present it as a part of the history and background of choral music.

Lonnie Arnold explains that at Fairport, "At Christmas the choirs have always performed music suitable for that holiday, both sacred and secular, including music from the Jewish tradition. We do not limit our performance of materials from a given ethnic tradition to just one holiday. I would feel that we would be patronizing if we did so."

Preparation of the Students

Mindy Edwards says that in Baldwin, "The choice of my holiday concert repertoire is based on the same criteria I use for choosing literature for any program: find selections of quality and diversified style (both sacred and secular) appropriate for the musical maturity of the choir."

"Because the emotional content of sacred music is approached through awareness of how the composer achieves the ideas of joy, piety, power, subservience, awe, devotion, and praise, a student who may find speaking a particular text offensive, becomes so involved in the aesthetics of the music that by concert time the text no longer appears threatening to him as specific dogma, but rather a means of expressing universal emotional ideas."

During rehearsals of her seventh and eighth grade chorus, Sue Fay Allen explains to her students "why I have chosen each selection — the students certainly have a right to know, a certain vested interest so to speak. Let the students know why you chose the piece and they will be proud of the quality of the music they perform."

Don Lang, at SUC Fredonia, is careful about not offending his singers' religious feelings: "For instance, if we're singing a 'Hodie,' I tell my singers it's not important that they believe, but that they must sing as if they do."

"This year my Chamber Singers are singing 'Sweet Little Jesus Boy' in a delightful arrangement by Fred Thayer. But actually this is the first time in a long time that I've had my singers sing the word 'Jesus.'"

Preparation of Parents and Audience

Sue Fay Allen is careful to prepare the parents as well as the students. "At the open house in October, I explain to parents that we will cover the major periods of music history. As the time line is painted across the back wall

in my music room it's the perfect set-up to explain that the major employer of musicians during most of those periods was the church."

And William Hawes explains to parents, "I am teaching music, not religion. My choices are made on the value of the musical content of the selection, its durability in time, and the challenge it presents to the performing group. I am not out to convert your son or daughter."

Historical/Cultural Justifications

An historical approach to choral teaching would be impossible without performance of sacred music. Again we quote Lonnie Arnold: "It is important that the historical background of the material be discussed. We would do our students a major disservice if we did not perform representative materials of all styles and periods of music history, the vast majority of which is sacred."

And Sandy Valerio, Northport High School, says, "Historically significant choral music by all major composers is very heavily sacred. Ours is not to rewrite history to suit those who object to sacred music programming. One could argue for balancing programming with secular music, but one would not be true to history."

"Our Western culture, indeed the fabric of our very society, its laws, traditions, etc., have been founded on Judeo-Christian principles. Much of the history of mankind is infused with the mystical reflections of sacred art treasures. Are we to deny the teaching of documented history through the arts?"

Continuing the thought, Sue Fay Allen says, "The Notre Dame Cathedral must be admired for its architecture, the 'Pieta' for its symmetry in sculpture, the *B Minor Mass* for its extraordinary music. These major works of art cannot be ignored because they dealt with religion. This quest of mankind for God is a constant thread in our existence, and to ignore that as motivation is to ignore a large slice of history, and to risk misinterpreting much of it. What parents fear is that the teacher will proselytize or indoctrinate their children, taking unfair advantage of the teacher's position as a role model and authority figure. An honest historical approach, accompanied by the sincere declaration that the music has been chosen for educational and musical reasons will go a long way to alleviate any misunderstandings. The education of our students demands that they rehearse and perform the very best of whichever medium we choose. To do less is to cheat them of a rich and varied inheritance."

Musical Justification

Here Sue Fay Allen hits at the crux of the matter. Our final grounds for the choice of any work must be based purely on musical values. Yes, we incidentally teach history and cultural roots, and we must always endeavor to introduce music of all historical styles, but first and last we must teach music, and teaching other than great music in our choruses is an unconscionable dissipation of the time and energy of everyone involved.

Shirley Muzzi explains, "I teach the music of the 'classics,' sacred and secular, in hopes that my students will develop a lifelong appreciation for this type of music." Some of her favorite sacred selections are:

- "Hallelujah Amen," Handel (SAB)
- "Sing Unto God," Handel
- "Honor and Glory," Bach (SSATB)

- "Sing Praise to Your Creator," Bach/Ehret (SA or SATB)
- "Kyrie," Faure/Frachenpohl (SAB, opt. T)
- "Sanctus," Gounod (SATB, T solo)
- "All Things Bright and Beautiful," Rutter (SATB)
- "For the Beauty of the Earth," Rutter (SATB)
- "Cantata Domino," Pitoni (SATB)

Sue Fay Allen programs an occasional Hanukkah song. "But please," she pleads, "don't stick to 'The Dreidel Song.' Handel's 'Praise the Lord' (arr. Hopson for SAB and SATB, pub. H. Flammer) from *Judas Macabaeus* would certainly qualify. I also program some Christmas music. We usually do at least one piece from Britten's *Ceremony of Carols*, for instance. This year I'm really pleased to have found an SSA wintery piece by Jean Henderson Watkins (accompanist for the Toronto Children's Chorus) which is called 'The Train Dogs' and covers the northern sled dogs. I seldom have time for Christmas carols per se, but do take time to have the chorus sight read the harmony parts, as the students will have many opportunities to sing those parts and the harmonies are so basic that it's one way to start singing harmonies 'by ear'."

Christmas Schlock

Our directors are united in their disgust with the incredible amount of trivial, non-musical octavos advertised for the Christmas season. Don Lang is incensed at the result. "I very strongly believe that much of the junk that publishers are trying to push on us is presented just to avoid good music with sacred texts, particularly at Christmas. This artificial music is simply unacceptable. The core of what we're about is good music." Yet Don found that ninety-five percent of the music he ordered this year was out of print.

Most of this drivel was secular texts, but they seldom avoid the question of the Christmas celebration. How can singing, "I'm dreaming of a white Christmas," or "It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas," be any more satisfying to someone who doesn't celebrate Christmas than singing "For unto us a child is born," or "Angels we have heard on high?"

Time to Take a Stand?

So the final question is: What should we do about all this? Let it go? Be thankful it hasn't hit us personally? Or try to achieve public approval for what we know to be the true goals of choral music?

Nancy Krestic suggests, "Maybe it's time to write a proposal and present it to the Board of Education that would explain the historic and edu-

Study Music to Improve Reading Skills?

Want to improve reading skills in our public schools? According to Betsy Aaron of ABC News:

"When the St. Augustine School in the South Bronx altered its curriculum to allow thirty percent of the school day to be devoted to musical experience . . . remarkable academic attainments of the students resulted."

We know those remarkable achievements include over 90 percent of the 350 students in the school reading at grade level — only one of three schools in the greater New York area to achieve this level of performance — even though the students came from a disadvantaged environment and are not pre-selected for special skills.

Wouldn't it be a shock for all of us to find out that the very subject which has the power to reverse our academic decline in the "hard" subjects has been tossed in the trash heap by our school boards and educators? And it comes as a further shock to find that other countries discovered the value of music education many years ago, placed music education at the heart of their curriculum — and are now reaping the rewards.

From "Music Education as a Gateway to Improved Academic Performance in Reading, Math and Science" — Eric Oddleifson

cational values of covering the full range of what's there in choral music."

And Diana Spradling, still sizzling over the situation she described where an administrator squelched choral educators, offers the following: "Is it time for ACDA to take a professional and political stand on the matter? Shouldn't we challenge these political opportunists in order to protect our right to present historically significant materials to our students in a clearly academic setting? Must we continue to be victims of a publishing industry which deluges us with octavos that produce little more than recreational singing? Do our parents know enough about the value of what we do to adequately support us in a moment of need? What might at first appear to be a question of literature choice is obviously a complex and volatile issue. Do you know where you stand?"

Surely Diana is right. We cannot duck the issue, we must make our position on this matter clear and explicit.

COLLEGIUM PROUDLY RELEASES JOHN RUTTER'S "MAGNIFICAT!"



John Rutter's "Magnificat/The Falcon" has been eagerly awaited since the "Magnificat" was first performed at Carnegie Hall in May, 1990. Based upon one of the most familiar and best-loved of all scriptural texts, Rutter's "Magnificat" features The Cambridge Singers with soprano Patricia Forbes and The City of London Sinfonia, directed by John Rutter.

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Music is my *raison d'être*, and singing is a joyful expression of my inner feelings! Teaching is a great challenge! To be in a profession which gives one the power to mold and shape a young mind is to me a sacred trust. It demands that I pass on the best of what I have learned and experienced from life, with unstinting energy and dedication.

William Warfield

Iowa:

President: Robert Anderson
608 East Clay
Mt. Pleasant, IA 52641
President-Elect: Robert Youngquist
831 S. 13th
Washington, IA 52353

Minnesota:

President: Steven Boehlke
3280 147th Street W.
Rosemont, MN 55068
President-Elect: Michael Smith
631 Homestead Dr. South
Baxter, MN 56401

The North Central Division of ACDA is hard at work developing an action plan for a document concerning the use of sacred music in the schools. Minnesota has adopted a very strong positive paper entitled "The Study About Religion in Minnesota Public Schools," a policy statement. Representatives from the Minnesota Music Educator's Association, Minnesota ACDA, the Department of Education, and the Minnesota Civil Liberties Union participated in the development of these guidelines. This paper has been adopted as a position statement pertaining to music from a sacred tradition in Minnesota. You will see this position paper as part of the document that will come out of the North Central Division.

Minnesota ACDA membership as of March 1, 1992, is 684. The state membership voted in February as to their wishes to become an affiliate state of the National ACDA, much like Iowa, Nebraska and Wisconsin. The membership voted overwhelmingly to seek that status from the national office. This issue has been a

very lengthy issue in Minnesota and much discussion has taken place over the last three years. The state executive board is pleased with the response of the membership.

Minnesota, like our sister states in the North Central Division, has been extremely busy with projects and special events for the membership.

The 6th Annual Student Symposium, sponsored by the student ACDA chapter at St. Cloud State University (Stephen Fuller, advisor) presented a full day of activities and special sessions geared to the new choral director. Clinicians included Paul Brandvik, Bemidji State University; Marcelyn Smale, St. Cloud State University; and Dennis Jewett, Plymouth Middle School, Robinsdale, Minnesota. Robert Scholz, St. Olaf College, Northfield, is the R & S Chair for this activity.

The 2nd Annual Combined Male Chorus/Treble Choir Festival involved nearly 1000 voices as Minnesota collegiate and high school students combined their voices in song. The festival, on the campus of St. John's University, October 26, involved four collegiate male choruses and 235 high school boys and seven collegiate treble choirs and 255 high school girls. This year the festival called for commissioned works and two were selected: "March of the Three Kings" by Robert Witcomb for women's voices, and "Song of Solomon" by David R. Moberg for TBB chorus. Both selections were planned for October 24, 1992, on the campus of St. John's University. Treble Project chairs were Judy Sagen, Eagan High School, and Tim Sawyer, Northwestern College, Roseville. Male Project chairs were Stan Carlson, Staples High School, and Axel Theimer, St. John's University.

The 17th Annual State Convention was held on November 22-23 at Bethlehem Lutheran

Church, Mankato, and on the campus of Mankato State University. The convention featured 16 different performing ensembles, including Minnesota's first Junior High Honors Choir, Davis Jorlett, director. Marlys Fiterman and Sonja Chamberlain served as co-chairs for this very successful event. Friday evening featured a worship event entitled "An Ecumenical Psalter Worship Festival" involving four different church choirs. Each choir sang Psalms in their own worship style. Paul Oakley is R & S Chair for Church Music. Sir David Willcocks, England, was the guest headliner for the convention. Sir David presented two reading sessions on English choral music. Karle Erickson, Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, delivered the keynote address. His talk was entitled "Communicators, Curators and Choral Directors." Performing groups appearing at the convention included the Big Nine Conference Honors Choir, Paul Oakley, director; the Good Samaritan United Methodist Church Choir, Dennis Jewett, director; Ha Shira Chorale, dedicated to the preservation of Jewish music, Marlys Fiterman, director; Prince of Peace Lutheran Church Choir, Bruce Becker, director; St. Paul's Episcopal Church Choir, Paul Oakley, director; the Northfield Children's Chorus, Cora Scholz, director; Bethany Lutheran College Concert Choir, Dennis Marzolf, director; the Hastings High School Concert Choir, Lin Warren, director; Big Lake High School Concert Choir, James Fiskum, director; Paynesville High School Concert Choir, Cheryl Bungum, director; and the College of St. Benedict/St. John's University Chamber Chorale, Axel Theimer, director.

Interest sessions included "Successful Small High School Programs," "Voice Building in the Elementary Classroom," "Choral Music for Lent" (Continued on Page 5)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

From *New York Choral Cues* — March/April 1991

"The Ugly Question of Beautiful Religious Texts"

I was quite interested in the Nov./Dec. 1990 issue of *Choral Cues* as it addressed an issue on the use of religious sacred music that I researched several years ago. It is sort of sad to see this issue pop up every year and its resulting drain of time from directors who must defend their choice of music instead of rehearsing and teaching — what they were hired for in the first place. With the little rehearsal time that is available, every precious minute counts. It is also frustrating to note "administrators" who make decisions such as the one indicated in your journal ("There can no longer be Christmas music on winter concerts.") as there are *better* administrators who have addressed the issue and taken the weight OFF the local director allowing them to do what they do best . . . conduct and rehearse.

I am enclosing an article that I developed for *Principal* magazine on research regarding the Sioux Falls case I completed ten years ago. It shows how a school district addressed the religious issue, developed a solid policy and handled a legal dispute that went all the way to the Supreme Court. I believe the article may have value in the hands of local directors.

Sincerely,
Fred Kersten, D.Ed., Washingtonville

Fred's article, "Here We Come a-Caroling and into Court," appeared in the November 1982 issue of *Principal*. It concerned the case in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, where a school district, distressed at parental complaints about a decidedly sectarian kindergarten Christmas pageant, asked a committee of concerned citizens from every faith to come up

with a set of guidelines for the school district.

A suit against the guidelines was filed even before the guidelines were adopted. The case, *Florey v. Sioux Falls School District*, 49-5, involving the singing of "Silent Night" in a school pageant, went all the way to the Supreme Court, which by declining to hear the case, upheld a lower court which had found in favor of the School District and its guidelines. The Courts, impressed with the school district's objective, impartial procedures, declared that the guidelines, "if properly administered and narrowly construed, would not run afoul of the First Amendment."

Two statements in the Sioux Falls guidelines are pertinent to music:

1) "The several holidays throughout the year which have a religious and a secular basis may be observed in the public schools." (This rules in Christmas and rules out Good Friday programs.)

2) Music, art, literature and drama having religious themes or basis are permitted as part of the curriculum for the school-sponsored activities and programs if presented in a prudent and objective manner and as a traditional part of the culture and religious heritage of the particular holiday." There was a statement in the guidelines permitting students to be excused from participating.

We recommend Fred's article to you for further perusal.

Kirk Dunklee sent us the policy paper issued by the 1987 MENC Ad Hoc Committee on Religious Music in the Schools, which states, "To omit sacred music from the repertoire or study of music would present an incorrect and incomplete concept of the comprehensive nature of the art." The paper suggests that elementary teachers should be particularly sensitive to their students' religious beliefs, and concludes, "It is hoped that with sensitivity to the issues raised, with careful understanding of legal aspects, and with consideration for personal feelings, educators will use the full range of music literature as appropriate while avoiding religious entanglements."

and Easter," a panel discussion on touring with your choir, contest music for the smaller high school choral program, and "Suitable Repertoire for the Junior High/Middle School Choral Program." Presenters included Dennis Jewett, Larry Bach, Avis Evenrud, Paul Oakley, Gary Skapyak, Bob Johnson, Lee Carlson, Stan Wold and Ron Nelson. The Awards Program was the featured event at the Saturday noon luncheon. The awards, recognizing outstanding contributions to Minnesota choral music, were presented to Roger Tenney, Owatonna High School. Mr. Tenney received the prestigious "F. Melius Christiansen Award" for life-long contributions. Stan Kindzerski, Roseau High School, received the "Minnesota Choral Director of the Year" award and Christopher Fettig was named the "Outstanding Young Choral Director."

The 1st Annual "Star of the North" Festival Series featured three festivals in January and February for smaller performing ensembles. On January 11th the Show Choir Festival was held at Bloomington Kennedy High School. James Bontrager, R & S Chair for Show Choirs, was host and presenter. The Madrigal Singers/Chamber Choir Festival was held February 1st in the chapel of the University of St. Thomas. St. Paul. Christopher Cock, Concordia College, Moorhead, was the guest clinician. The day concluded with the Rosemount High School Chamber Singers presenting a session on madrigal dinners and a combined choir concert. The third event was held February 22nd and featured Jazz Choirs from across the state. Guest clinicians included Ron McCurdy, state R & S Chair for Vocal Jazz; Roberta Davis, Voice Trek; and Leon Thurman. The "Star of the North" Festival Series is an annual event in Minnesota.

ACDA of Minnesota was involved in major programming events at the Mid-Winter Clinic of the Minnesota Music Educators Association (MMEA). Appearing on the MMEA program were the Collegiate Honors Choir, Gregg Smith, guest director; the Minnesota Community College Honors Choir, Sharon Hanson, director; and the Junior High Honors Choir, David Jorlett, director. This year, Minnesota ACDA initiated a noon luncheon for members on Saturday during the clinic. Minnesota ACDA is already working with MMEA as they make plans to host the North Central MENC Convention in February 1993.

Elections for the state executive board were held in February and the new members will assume their offices on July 1, 1992. The new secretary is Anne Klus, St. Paul Academy. District chairs elected are as follows: Diana Moxness, Mankato State University, Southeast Chair; Christopher Fettig, Bemidji High School, Northwest Chair; and David Mennicke, Concordia College, St. Paul, Metro-East Chair. Congratulations to these new board members.

The 8th Annual Summer Dialogue will be held August 3-8, 1992, on the campus of Bemidji State University, Bemidji. Special topic presenters will include Eph Ehly, Carl Stam, Sigrid Johnson, MMEA All-State Choir Directors. Other presenters will include Paul Brandvik, Elizabeth Shepley, David Jorlett, Rene Clausen, Dwayne Jorgenson, Axel Theimer, Paul Oakley, Ken Hodgson, and Stephen O'Connor. Minnesota "Pick Six" repertoire will be presented in reading sessions by the state R & S Chairs. The dialogue will conclude with the public performance of the three MMEA All-State Choirs. Join ACDA of Minnesota in our

"Great Summer Get-Together" in August. For more details, contact Bruce Becker, dialogue coordinator, or Steven Boehlke.

Future plans for 1992 and 1993 include church choir workshops, a continuation of the Northstar Choral Festival, a Junior High Summer Music Camp, an Elementary Honors Choir, and a divisional Collegiate Honors Choir for the North Central MENC Convention in February 1993.

ACDA of Minnesota is alive and continues to grow. It will be a strong and vibrant professional organization for many years to come.

Nebraska:

President: Ron Troester
2112 Viking Road
Grand Island, NE 68803

President-Elect: Dick Palmer
1038 N. 28th Ave.
Blair, NE 68008

Nebraska is having a great year with over 300 members and many positive activities. The NCDA Show Choir Festival held at two sites for 45 schools was very successful as well as the first "Sing Around Nebraska." Thanks go to the R & S Chairs who have made these activities successful!

Our summer convention is going to be expanded to three days. Be sure to check with Nebraska leadership in May for details. We know you won't want to miss this!

Have a good spring!

North Dakota:

President: Gary Walth
Minot State University
500 University Ave. West
Minot, ND 58701

President-Elect: Angie Koppang
Simle Junior High School
Bismarck, ND 58501

South Dakota:

President: Charles Canaan
South Dakota State University
Box 2212
Brookings, SD 57007

President-Elect: Clayton Southwick
Central High School
433 N. 8th Street
Rapid City, SD 57701

The South Dakota Summer Directors Conference will be held on the campus of Augustana College, Sioux Falls, August 2-7, 1992. The conference will feature as headliners James Kimmel and Diane Scrobbs. Dr. Kimmel, Milliken University, will present sessions dealing with the following topics: "Surviving Successfully in a Small School," "Failure is Never Fatal; Success is Never Final," "The ABC's of a Successful Show Choir," and recommended repertoire for high school choirs.

Diane Scrobbs, Carroll College, will deal with the topics of "Developing Vocal Techniques in the Classroom Setting" and "Rehearsal Techniques for Children's Voices." Diane will also have a reading session of music for children's voices.

There will be sessions on multicultural music

in the choral setting, teaching applied voice at the high school level, working with the church organist, and organization of a successful middle school/high school choral program. There will be observations of Andre Thomas working with the South Dakota Honors Choir as well as a dialogue with the conductor. In addition, there will be choral reading sessions for all levels of choral activities.

Two hours of graduate credit are available through Augustana College. For more information, contact: Dr. Charles W. Canaan, South Dakota State University, Box 2212, Brookings, SD 57007.

Wisconsin:

President: Robert Gentile
935 Woodland Drive
Rhineland, WI 54501

President-Elect: Greg Carpenter
1604 Cottonwood Drive
Waukesha, WI 53186

Wisconsin boasts a current membership of 489 and a healthy treasury balance of slightly over \$7,000.

Members are currently in the process of electing three new district representatives and a president-elect. The recent appointment of a fourth district representative, to fill a vacancy on the board, means that four of our district representatives will be new to the upcoming board. In addition, a new secretary-treasurer this year and new appointees to begin serving July 1 as newsletter editor and membership chair, will give our next board an entirely new complexion.

These several changes are indicative of new directions for WCDA. With a sense of pride in the strength of our past few state conventions, and accompanying profits, we also sense a need to now branch out with additional services to members.

The first of two exciting new ventures is "Singing in Wisconsin," a district-level choral festival. The festival will be held at six sites, one in each of the six WCDA districts. Three festival choirs will be included this first year — SSA, TTBB, and a children's choir. A concert will be held on the same night, November 14th, at all six sites, and choirs in each category will perform the same literature at all six sites. Each festival is intended to be self-supporting, with budgets established to set fees for and pay expenses through singer registration.

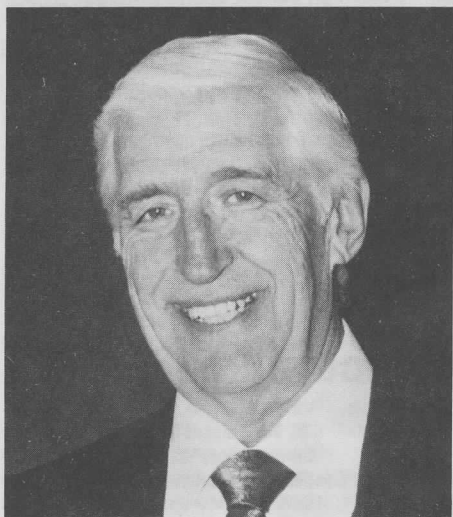
This activity will also expand the successful festival choir program that has been a part of the WCDA state convention for two years. The major benefits of this aspect are twofold: (1) many more students will be allowed to participate, with approximately 300 at each site, and (2) WCDA will extend its services to closer proximity with its membership.

Further involvement will include district representatives serving as chairpersons for their district festival, and state R & S chairs assuming responsibility for establishing a committee to select literature in each area of voicing activity.

Our second new area of involvement centers upon sponsoring a WCDA Summer Choral Music Camp. The camp is scheduled for August 2-8, 1992, on the campus of Shattuck-St. Mary's School in Fairbault, Minnesota. The camp will be open to all interested students in

(Continued on Page 7)

Choral Profiles:



John DeHaan
Clinton, Iowa

40 years of choral work

Education: N.Y. University, Drake University
B.M.E. & M.M.E., University of Colorado, University of Iowa graduate work

Choral groups: Clinton High School A cappella Choir and Girls Choir

1. What do you believe are the marks of a successful director?

A successful director must be concerned with the well being of the students under his or her direction, has to love "kids", and must keep sharpening skills in theory, sight-reading, score analysis, and playing the piano. Demonstration and imitation are still the most effective teaching techniques teachers of singing have. Successful conductors always keep their own personal music skills as sharp as possible.

2. How do you recruit singers? What do you do to keep them?

I let the students and teachers know that I am always looking for singers. Our choir sings a concert in the spring at the middle schools every year. Students bring in their friends for an audition. When we have auditions for the school musical in the spring, which we put on with the drama department, I sometimes hear good voices and get them in the choir.

To keep my singers, I try to make them feel important. I want the choral program to be one of their daily highlights. I want them to feel that the choir room is a happy place where we care about each other.

3. What are your goals as a conductor?

I really am not a conductor. I am a teacher of beginning singing. My goal is to be a better teacher each year that I teach, to be a positive influence on each student that I have. If I can make high school a more enjoyable and rewarding experience for my students, then I will feel I have accomplished a great deal.

4. How do you select literature for your groups?

After 40 years of being a high school choral teacher, one has a lot of pieces in mind that have a history of success or failure. I know pieces that are very rewarding musically and emotionally, pieces that I understand and enjoy. I avoid most atonal music. Just give me

Bach, Brahms, Mozart, Haydn, Faure, some nice folk songs and spirituals. That's the music my students love. Because I have every student of the choir in voice lesson situations, I know the ranges of each section so I keep that in mind when I select music.

5. Why are you in choral music?

I'm in choral music because it's about the only way a person who likes music and loves singing can make a living. I studied in New York for three years after I got out of the Navy, had a great experience there and loved it. I soon found out, however, that a professional singing career meant living a "lifestyle" I could not accept. I also could not see starving the rest of my life. I became a teacher and have loved it since the first day. I believe choral music to be one of God's greatest gifts to mankind. I want to share this love of the art with the students I am privileged to teach.

6. How can we be better role models for young directors?

I think this is very difficult because school directors have very little contact with each other. When we do see one another at All-State try-outs, contests and festivals, all of us are so busy with our own responsibilities, we have little time to be role models. I'm certain that under these stresses I'm not a good role model anyway. I think the best place to be an example would be in one's own school district. When a new young director comes into the community, be certain that you make them feel welcome. Be supportive of their musical endeavors. Let them know that every time you conduct that you, too, still get nervous and temperamental. Always keep reminding young directors that music is one of the greatest gifts.

7. Who are your role models?

These are the people I remember most. They are teachers who have shaped my musical conscience: Luther Goodhart, New York University; Stanford Hulshizer, Drake University; Henry Veld, Augustana College; Lawrence Reid, New York City; Andrew White, University of Cincinnati; and Dr. Berton Coffin, University of Colorado.

8. What goals do you have for the future?

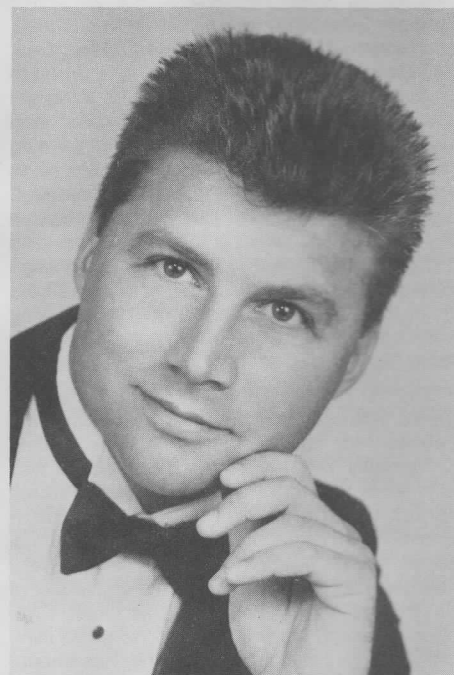
To give my students love and encouragement in their chosen field, and the skills to enjoy singing, be it as a soloist or a chorister. The ultimate goals would be to make each student I have feel better about him/herself. It is only when one feels good about him/herself that one can begin to consider him/herself a musician.

9. What is the highlight of your career?

The highlight of my career is always in the future. It is always the next day that I teach voice or work with the choir. It's the next hug I get from a kid who says, "Thanks for caring."

10. What unique or special activities does your choir experience because you are the director?

None. I do the same things every other choral director does. All I know is that I approach every rehearsal in a very serious manner. I expect every student to give complete concentration during every rehearsal. Singing in a choir is one of the most demanding musical disciplines we have. I'm not demanding — it's the music that's demanding. Every now and then we have a party during rehearsal, but don't tell the administration!



Christopher Fettig
Bemidji, Minnesota

6 years of choral work

Education: B.S., Bemidji State University; working on Masters program at the University of Illinois

Choral groups: Bemidji High School 9th Grade Choir, Women's Chorus, Concert Choir, Vocalmotive (a 20-voice pop/jazz group), Madrigals, and the Bemidji Choral, an adult group

1. What do you believe are the marks of a successful director?

A successful director knows his instrument. Understanding the singer's instrument is more than knowing simple vocal technique; it involves the whole person. Good directors and educators understand people. They know how to motivate, when to discipline, and how to reward and reinforce. The successful director consistently models the technique, sound and attitude he or she expects from students. Good directors are efficient with rehearsal time and always have a well-developed concept of what the end result of their work will sound like. By setting short-, as well as long-range goals, they are able to build a healthy self-esteem in their students. A successful director educates his singers to be musicians and provides them with reading skills so they are not musically illiterate.

2. How do you recruit singers? What do you do to keep them?

The best recruiters are the students themselves. If the students in a program understand the need for growth in the choir, they will recruit. Directors need to have vision. They should know where they want their program to be in three years and not be afraid to share this with their students. For new singers to feel free to join a group, the director must create a positive attitude within the school. This attitude must start within the program itself before it can spread throughout the school and ultimately into the community. As my high school choir di-

rector, Don Danialson, once told me, "If you take an interest in what students are doing, they will take an interest in what you are doing." By attending events outside of my own program, I try to show an interest in all the activities my students excel in. When I make myself visible outside of the choir room, I have a chance to relate to my own students in a different atmosphere and meet other students as well. I try to support all students, even if they choose not to be in the choir program. When I do approach a student about joining choir, I always talk to them individually.

The key to keeping students involved is maintaining some individual contact with them outside of class as well as offering them a worthwhile experience in class. A voice lesson program is essential in this area. Even if it is just two ten-minute lessons a quarter, individual instruction is a must.

3. What are your major goals as a conductor?

First of all, I want to continue to grow as a musician myself, so that I have more to offer my students. Second, I want choir to be an acceptable course selection for all students. To have a successful program, students who want to try singing should not be prevented by foolish stereotypes and uneducated adults. And third, I want all my students to graduate with an understanding of and appreciation for quality choral music as well as the skills to perform and properly use their voices.

4. How do you select literature for your groups?

In selecting music for my groups, I am more interested in quality rather than quantity. It is important to do some music that students can have immediate success at as well as literature that challenges them. I use some music to de-

velop certain skills or isolate various vocal styles that the students need work on. For example, I always try to do a few pieces each quarter that can be learned entirely away from the piano. Other selections are based on the size, talent, and balance of the sections within the choir and the choir as a whole. Finally, I try to select works which represent a variety of styles and musical periods.

5. Why are you in choral music?

I have always enjoyed teaching and helping others to grow and learn. Choral music provides the ideal medium for me to help students to develop a healthy self-esteem. The experience of creating music together teaches cooperation, organization, and self-discipline. Many of the skills taught through performing groups are hard to evaluate and grade, but they are definitely necessary.

6. How can we be better role models?

We need to understand all types of people and be the well-rounded individuals that we want our students to be. We have all confronted hostility from those who are threatened by or ignorant of what we do, but we must not in turn show a similar narrowness in our own perspective. The directors who have inspired me the most are those who are more interested in educating their students than receiving personal gain and attention.

7. Who are your role models?

Don Danialson, choral director at East Grand Forks High School; Paul Brandvik, choral director at Bemidji State University; Stan Carlson, choral director at Staples-Motley High School; Terry Bradley, band director at Bemidji High School; and Jeff Dahl, choral director at Wayzata junior high school.

8. What is the highlight of your career?

The beginning of this school year has been the highlight of my career. For the first time, I don't have the pressures created by a need to recruit singers or stimulate enthusiasm. I have a record number of students involved and they are all very excited about singing. Now I am able to simply concentrate on what I enjoy most — teaching.

9. What unique or special activities does your choir experience because you are their director?

Each spring the Concert Choir has the opportunity to hear and perform for many other high school choirs by touring and attending festivals. Last spring we heard 18 high school choirs perform. We annually attend Bemidji State University's Choirfest and last year we went to Luther College's Dorian Choral Invitational. In the last four years we have performed at the following outstanding high schools on tour: Anoka, Park Center, Staples, St. Cloud Apollo, Brainerd, Edina, Owatonna, and Onalaska (WI). I feel it is very important for my students to hear as many outstanding high school groups as possible.

FROM THE PRESIDENT: (cont. from page 1)

I want to officially welcome Gary Schwartzhoff to the office of President of the North Central Division ACDA. His two-year term will begin on July 1st. He will be working closely with Bruce Becker, the newly-elected President-Elect. Together they will continue to seek your input and your ideas. Please let your voice be heard, for it is only in knowing how ACDA can best serve you that we can actually meet your needs. Thank you for the opportunity to work with you!



Dennis Port
Northwestern College
Shoreview, Minnesota

27 years of choral work

Education: B.A. in Music Ed., Bethel; M.Div., Bethel Seminary; M.A., University of Minnesota; PhD. in music, New York University

Choral groups: Northwestern College Choir, Northwestern College Chamber Singers, East Central Minnesota (Community) Chorale, Northwestern Festival Choir, North St. Paul Baptist Church Choir (interim director)

1. What do you believe are the marks of a successful director?

Every successful director possesses the ability to draw music out of their singers; is able to motivate them to work harder and to sing better than they believe they are capable of. Discipline, love of music, enthusiasm, seem to me to be only the means to that end. The vast majority of directors work with amateur singers — and the ability to draw music (sometimes from a turnip!) is the irreplaceable mark of all of the successful ones.

2. How do you recruit singers? What do you do to keep them?

I'm a firm believer that the only real recruiters for a choral program are the happy consumers. I have never gone out to recruit, per se. I will frequently give a word of encouragement to one who I've been told is interested and/or talented, but possibly too intimidated to audition. But with that exception, I try to let the program recruit for itself.

I try to make certain that they've had such a wonderful and meaningful time singing that they'll never want to leave, and that they'll weep when they finally graduate! Obviously, that isn't always the case — but it is my goal. All of us who really value choral singing experiences, I suspect, would like to think our singers would give up *anything* before choir.

3. What are your major goals as a conductor?

As a choral conductor in a Christian liberal arts college, I view myself as an educator in musical aesthetics. Just as my colleagues seek to help students to grow in other areas of their mind as their service to God, so I hope to unlock for every singer a keener sense of themselves as created in that image of God, as cre-

VOICES FROM THE STATES

(Continued from Page 5)

grades six through twelve. There will be a separate curriculum for the Junior Division (grades 6-8) and the Senior Division (grades 9-12).

Campers will experience and perform choral music of all styles — classical and popular, including instruction in staging, choreography, voice production, and music theory. Special interest classes in vocal literature, electronic music, accompanying, conducting, and music history will also be part of each camper's day. In addition, the students will have access to the superb recreational facilities at the school. These facilities include a nine-hole golf course, indoor swimming pool, tennis courts, indoor ice arena, and a fifteen-acre waterfront area, complete with speedboat and diving platform.

Staffing the camp with our Wisconsin members once again provides an increased involvement for our state members. Rick Bjella, from Lawrence University in Appleton, and Kevin Meidl, from Appleton West High School, will serve as principle clinicians.

As we look back with pride to the accomplishments of our past, including our recent state convention in Fond du Lac January 23-25, which brought together 209 WCDA members, we also look with great anticipation to the exciting new activities our future holds. And all of you are part of our future, too, as we look forward to a first for our state and our division, when we host the 1995 ACDA national convention in Milwaukee!

ative beings. If I've accomplished that I've reached my highest goal. Obviously, beneath that I want to develop singers who will have such meaningful experiences with music that they will carry it with them for the rest of their lives; become the adult supporters of the choral art.

4. How do you select literature for your groups?

For my touring college choir program, I have two overriding criteria: Historical variety and a range of vocal/choral styles. Within those parameters, I use a variety of sources: music heard at conventions, reading sessions, on recording, and at live concerts; music I've sung myself; occasional perusal; and recommendation of respected colleagues of "winners" they've done. I like to find lesser-known pieces as well as standard repertoire. In addition, I program for musical variety (fast/slow, major/minor, more listenable/higher concentration listening, and easy to difficult for singers). Spirituals are so much a part of American music and such great audience pieces that I regularly program them. Northwestern also comes from a hymn-singing tradition, and I always program hymn arrangements without apology.

5. Why are you in choral music?

A real strong disposition toward singing from earliest childhood in a musical family, the influence of a college choral director who affirmed and nurtured my love for singing, and a calling: "What else could I do in which God has given me some ability and wonderful opportunities, that I enjoy so much."

6. How can we be better role models?

By being uncompromising in our demands for excellence. By performing music that is worth the time that it takes to prepare it. By demonstrating to them that our group consciousness does not preclude our care for them as individuals. By showing them that product does not have to be sacrificed by being process oriented. By taking time to nurture them.

7. Who are your role models?

Robert Berglund for his uncompromising demands for excellence; Dale Warland for his unique ability to work with people and his keen sense of programming; David Willcocks for his unpretentious spirit in the face of overwhelming success; Leonard Bernstein because he made music accessible to the musically unsophisticated without compromising the music.

8. What goals do you have for the future?

More of what's been happening for the past several years. Unique and challenging Christmas programs, successful tours, exciting major work performances, and everyone at Northwestern singing in a choir!

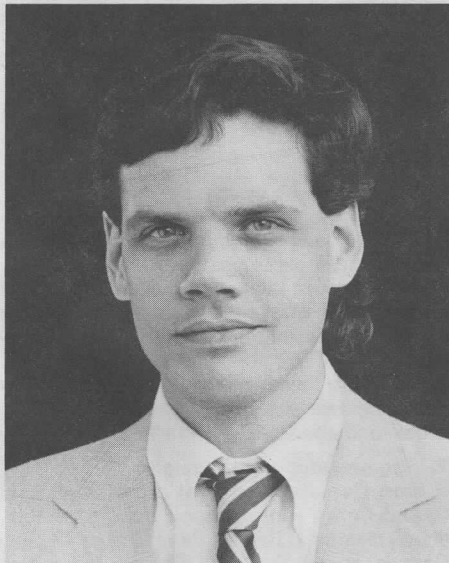
9. What is the highlight of your career?

Probably the most recent is getting to work with David Willcocks in Malvern, England — to see how humbly he worked with very amateur singers, never humiliating them, and finally providing them with what possibly was the highlight of each of their musical lives. He ate every meal with my wife and me, and insisted on serving us dessert! There have been many highlights, but that's the most recent and the most memorable right now.

10. What unique or special activities does your choir experience because you are their director?

Because we're on a quarter system and tour after the second quarter, our schedule allows for a complete uninterrupted quarter to prepare

a major choral/orchestral work. In addition, we have the funding to be able to hire a professional orchestra. Thus our students are regularly provided the opportunity to perform major choral works in addition to developing their "a cappella tradition." I probably covet that experience for my students as much as any which I provide for them.



John Stuhrr-Rommereim
Grinnell College
Grinnell, Iowa

11 years of choral work

Education: B.A. (Music Theory/Composition) St. Olaf College; M.Mus. (Composition) San Francisco Conservatory of Music; D.M.A. (Choral Conducting) University of Kansas

Choral groups: The Grinnell Singers and the Grinnell Community Chorus

1. What do you believe are the marks of a successful director?

Successful directors are not satisfied with merely sounding good; they enable the choir to become a vehicle for authentic human expression. Successful directors instill a sense of purpose and vision in their choirs, and give each singer the sense that they are involved in a meaningful endeavor.

2. How do you recruit singers? What do you do to keep them?

I recruit for the community-based choir through letters, phone calls and advertisements. I have received enormous help from a retired local high school director, Marvin Kelley, who constantly gives me names of potential members and has recruited quite a number of singers for me. I try to make the choir as visible in the community as possible. When we did *Messiah* last year, for instance, we performed downtown rather than at the college. The local arts council provided a grant and helped us to acquire funds from the state. The more the community invests in the ensemble and vice versa, the more people seem to embrace it and support it.

Unfortunately, I do not devote as much energy to recruiting college-age singers as I might. Research and performance (as a harpsichordist or singer) tend to take up the time that I might be able to spend on that sort of thing.

This is an area in which I would like to improve.

I keep choir members by keeping in touch as much as possible. If someone is dissatisfied with something, I meet with them privately and try to work out the problem. It is important for the singers to feel that their input is valued and that their concerns are heard.

3. What are your major goals as a conductor?

To convey the essence of each piece to the singers and to the audience. After having mastered the technical details (knowing the score, correcting all the mistakes, etc.) to generate a certain indefinable energy. To be moved myself by the music and the text, and effectively to communicate those sensations and emotions to the singers. To transform the concert experience into an engaging, exciting adventure.

4. How do you select music for your groups?

One thing I have learned is to make use of absolutely every resource, and never to give up until you locate a piece. If you hear a piece on public radio that you like, write down the title and go and find the score. Recently, for instance, in searching for a work by Shostakovich, I followed a trail by phone that led me first to various publishers, then to the National Symphony, then to the choral library of the National Cathedral, then to Ros-topovich's personal secretary ("Slava's not in town," she told me), and on and on. Searching for elusive scores can be fun.

5. Why are you in choral music?

I earned a master's degree in composition, but turned to choral conducting because the day-to-day interaction with people appealed to me. My most treasured musical experiences have been in choirs, in the St. Olaf Choir and elsewhere. Choral music seems to be the deepest, most satisfying form of musical communication.

6. How can we be better role models to young directors?

By expanding our vision outside the world of choral music. It's helpful to me as a conductor whose instrument consists of a group of human beings — highly changeable, mercurial creatures — to continue to be active outside of the choral realm. I am often renewed and re-inspired by my non-choral musical activities (as a keyboardist, for instance), and my choral work is in turn strengthened as a result. We are not just conductors, we are vital transmitters of culture and world citizens. Shostakovich said, "There are some things that are more important than music." A remarkable statement from someone who gave so much of himself to his art.

7. Who are your role models?

People who are (or were) on fire with zeal for their art: Robert and Clara Schumann, Walt Whitman, Vincent Van Gogh, Vladimir Minin (conductor of the Moscow Chamber Choir), Helmut Rilling.

8. What goals do you have for the future?

I would like to establish a permanent professional baroque orchestra in Iowa. I hope to write a book about contemporary Soviet choral music, and to serve as a musical ambassador between Soviet and American choral musicians. I would like to build a first-rate, nationally-recognized choral program at Grinnell. I hope to be able to do more choral/orchestral conducting — to conduct major works such as the *St. Matthew's Passion*, or Britten's *War*

(continued on page 9)

Sing Around Nebraska

Inspired by dialogue with colleagues at Milwaukee's NCACDA convention in 1990, the children's music sector of the Nebraska Choral Directors' Association decided to develop some festival opportunities for our elementary-aged students. The model was established by the Indiana Music Educators' Association. With their willingness to share information, we set about finding ways to use and adapt their model.

As our festivals were formulating, we decided there were some things which we would not compromise:

1. We would provide an inspirational choral experience for selected students in grades 4-6.
2. The festivals would all happen in the same time frame as much as possible (same part of February, same daily schedule).
3. Each choir would perform the same literature, to make the experience as equal as possible.

Music Alone Shall Live — round
Festival Alleluia — Pote
Bist du bei mir — Bach
Circles — Goetze
Kookabura — Curtright
Bashana Haba-a — Leck

4. We would provide t-shirts, certificates, programs, name tags, etc., of the highest quality possible, to edify the kids' experience.

To do this, we identified five sites that would give the regional opportunity we were looking for. Because we had never had the chance to

network the children's choir folk for other purposes, part of our job was to get to know each other. (There are many wonderful folks dwelling in similar trenches.) Each teacher was expected to attend the day-long event with their students. In addition to the joy of meeting one another, we found that easily one in three kids had never had an opportunity to sing in a choir before, due to the rural nature of much of our state. The enthusiasm in response to this event was overwhelming. It will continue on an every-other-year basis.

Each site was organized by a site chair. That person found an accompanist for each site, received all registrations for the specific site, and did all of the organization needed with the buildings that would host the event. Pianos needed tuning, snacks and drinks were to be secured for the weary singers. Local businesses had the chance to show support to the arts by contributing food items where needed.

Three areas of concern were taken care of by individuals. All program printing, certificates, and name tags were handled in one place. Regional inserts were added at each site. All t-shirts were done in one place. We had a treasurer to handle all monies and bills. She organized things for the State Treasurer of NCDA.

Clinicians were selected from within the state. The optimum was to find folks who work with children's choirs on some regular basis. It was interesting, finding those folks! I'm sure

that next time we'll be able to find our directors a bit more easily. It's just too much fun!

The modest fee asked of each participant allowed us to pay the bills and provide seed monies for future state children's choir events. We are eagerly awaiting Mary Goetze's visit in October to direct a children's honor choir at our fall convention. She is composing a piece for us, set to the poetry of our poet laureate, John Neihardt. This would not be possible without the success of Sing Around Nebraska.

We are very thankful for the kind support of our NCDA President, Ron Troester. Because of his desire to encourage the choral artistry of our Nebraska children, the go-ahead was given to "do what you need to do." We did that, and the result was an experience that was rich and full for us all.

JOHN STUHR-ROMMEREIM (continued)
Requiem. (I'll probably be very lucky to accomplish just one of these goals!)

9. What is the highlight of your career?

Hopefully, it's yet to be encountered! One particularly memorable experience was singing in the choir at the Festival of Russian Choral Music in New York in 1988. Standing near recent Soviet emigrants as we sang some of the most profoundly moving choral music ever written (including portions of Rachmaninov's *Divine Liturgy*), I had a powerful sense of the ability of music to create a deep bond between people from opposite sides of the globe. My vision of what choral music could be was heightened greatly.

10. What unique or special activities does your choir experience because you are their director?

This fall, we will be performing Handel's *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day*, with a professional baroque (period-instrument) orchestra. Last spring we helped to make a new edition of sacred choral works by the pre-revolutionary Russian composer Alexander Katalsky. We then made the premier CD recording of those works.

Music is an orphan and it will always be an orphan until we get a grip on the music education of the young.

Leonard Bernstein

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Book Review

Entertaining Ourselves to Death

by Neil Postman

Viking Penguin Inc., New York

"As he (Aldous Huxley) saw it, people will come to love their oppression, to adore the technologies that undo their capacity to think." (vii)

From this statement in the foreword, Neil Postman, in this provocative book, proceeds to chart the progression of art and culture centers in America, from Boston to New York to Chicago to Las Vegas. The march to Las Vegas is accompanied by a concurrent march to an ever decreasing depth in the media through which we gather information, through which we learn.

This "must read" book is for every choral artist and educator. It focuses on "two ways by which the spirit of a culture may be shriveled. In the second — the Huxleyan — culture becomes a burlesque . . . For America is engaged in the World's most ambitious experiment to accommodate itself to the technological distractions made possible by the electric plug."

The chapter "Teaching as an Amusing Activity" is particularly relevant. It gives integrity to the concept, about which many teachers have speculated, that the *Sesame Street* syndrome has had a direct impact on the way we present material, the depth to which we expect students to think, and the limited extent of their retention.

While Postman factually outlines the

From the Editor: Separation of Church and State

by Dione Peterson

It seems as if my entire teaching career has been haunted by these words. I have learned first hand what one individual's poor choice in education can do to affect an entire school system — and even a nation.

I have learned to carefully plan and wisely select and program quality music . . . Music whose worth can stand up in court for its educational value . . . Music whose text is of equal quality and not the sole purpose of the selection.

My sensitivity came as the result of the court proceedings: *Florey v. Sioux Falls School District 49-5*. My winter choral concert became a reality because a court injunction was lifted on the day of our performance.

To know that the sacred music of the great composers could be banned from our curriculum has given me a greater appreciation for all choral music. I will fight hard and long to maintain this right in the United States.

To realize that choral directors in public education throughout the U.S. misuse this privilege is disturbing. The guidelines are "grey" in many communities; however, do you realize that your "Christmas Concert" to a packed crowd at the local church could be the beginning of this loss for all of us? As interpreted by our attorney, the performance of one of our public school choirs in a church service, vespers concert or convention religious service could remove sacred music from the nation's curriculum.

Protect the right of America to experience the great sacred works. Program them appropriately. We have too much to lose over one small innocent mistake.

changes in and the degrading of public discourse in America, he offers few concrete solutions. In spite of this, the book remains a powerful indictment and should be required

reading for musician, artist and educator.

Gregory Carpenter
Waukesha South High School
Waukesha, Wisconsin

Popplers
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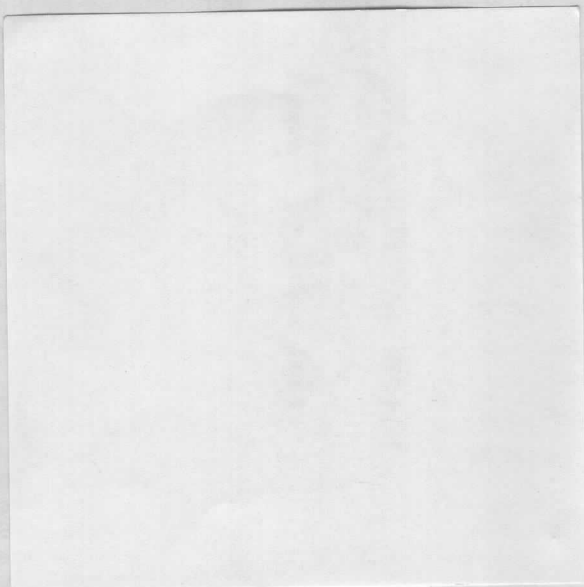
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