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JOHN JOST NAMED 2016 STEGMAN AWARD RECIPIENT

John Jost, Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois since 1989, was named the 2016 Stace N. Stegman Award recipient at the ACDA Central Division Conference in Chicago. The Stace N. Stegman Award was established in 2003 in memory of Stace N. Stegman (1946-2003), who “gave tirelessly and selflessly in the service of choral music.” The award is presented at each Central Division conference to a member who has demonstrated similar characteristics in service to the choral art.

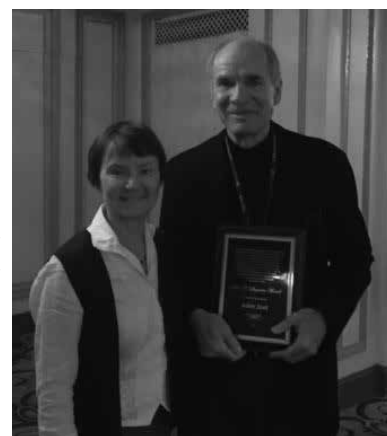
From the award nomination: “John Jost is both a superb musician and consummate advocate for choral music. His devotion to ACDA has been both steady and deep; when not presenting at an ACDA event, he is an avid participant/learner at summer retreats and conferences. His presidency was a time of positive change within IL-ACDA. He is a welcoming presence within our profession and has always acted as an agent for inclusiveness and the greater good. He reached out to choral directors at every opportunity, and has always made new people feel welcome to the organization.

John is a giving person, having served the choral profession at every level of the art, both nationally and internationally. Those who have been near John recognize him as a profoundly thoughtful man who holds and acts on deeply spiritual values.”

Jost is co-founder and co-director of the nationally renowned Peoria Bach Festival, which presents vocal and instrumental works of Bach annually. A native of California, he received his bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees from Stanford University, where he was assistant concertmaster of the Stanford Symphony and principal violist of the Stanford Chamber Orchestra.

After spending four years teaching music in Haiti, he returned to the San Francisco area, serving as Director of Creative Ministries at Peninsula Christian Center, teaching in Palo Alto and Redwood City schools, and serving as assistant concertmaster and assistant conductor of the Peninsula Symphony Orchestra. After receiving his doctorate in choral conducting, he became Director of Choral Activities at Houghton College in New York.

Jost lived and taught at the Ecole Sainte Trinité for Haitian youth in Léogâne, Haiti, including teaching at their summer music camp, through most of 1972-1975, and has returned every summer since then for the three-week camp except for four summers: two when working on his doctorate, and two when the political situation did not allow foreigners to enter the country. In total, Jost has taught at the camp for 40 years. In the late 1970s, he was appointed director of the camp, a post he has held since then.



John Jost, shown above right with Sandra Frey Stegman, at the 2016 Central Division Conference

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YOU WORK HARD, AND IT MATTERS!

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Resound

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Most choral teachers and conductors I know work incredibly hard conducting and educating large groups of people, recruiting members, participating in evening and weekend concert events, and managing PR. We do these tasks in a world defined by rapid changes in technology, communication, work structure, and income. Unfortunately, the combination of an intense workload with the hectic pace of modern life can easily lead to burnout.

I am convinced that choral music changes the world for the better, and that sharing the power of ensemble singing on our planet is an important job. We need our choral conductors and teachers to remain vital, healthy, committed, and happy! I offer here a few suggestions for avoiding or healing burnout.

1. Talk to a mentor. Actively seek out a mentor; make a date to talk with someone you respect about any work or life situation that might cause burnout. This could be a colleague, family member, friend, pastor, or a teacher from your past. Mentors are just as important for those of us over 50 as it is for young conductors. ACDA is currently working to bring forward mentoring opportunities for our members. If you do not currently have a mentor in your work life, contact your state ACDA President and ask to be connected with a mentor.

2. Attend an ACDA conference. Each state in the Central Division has its own conference. These conferences offer many opportunities to meet colleagues with similar work situations, make new friends, to be inspired by amazing headliners, and to collect practical ideas for your choirs. Upcoming state chapter conferences include: Indiana - June 27-29 at the University of Indianapolis; Ohio - June 20-22 at Otterbein University, Westerville; Illinois - June 29-30 at Illinois State University; Michigan - October 28-29 in Kalamazoo.

3. Attend or sing in an outstanding concert event. After a heavy day of making and teaching music, I don't always feel like going to a concert. However, when I get out the door and into a concert hall seat, the stress is gone. I have vivid memories of concerts that have changed my life - each time I have attended one of these, I have found myself rededicated to choral work.

4. Dedicate a few minutes each day to meditation. Give yourself some space during each day to experience being alive. Yoga is a great way to discover meditation. There are also numerous online videos and helpful apps for guided meditation. In his book *The Power of Now*, spiritual teacher Eckhart Tolle offers the following suggestion: "Use your senses fully. Be where you are. Look around. Just look, don't interpret. Be the light, shapes, colors, textures. Be aware of the silent presence of each thing. Be aware of the space that allows everything to be." Meditation doesn't have to be time-consuming; a few minutes a day can make a big difference in managing stress. It is great to dedicate a few minutes breathing with our choir during warm ups; our singers sound better as a result, and they appreciate the respite from stress.

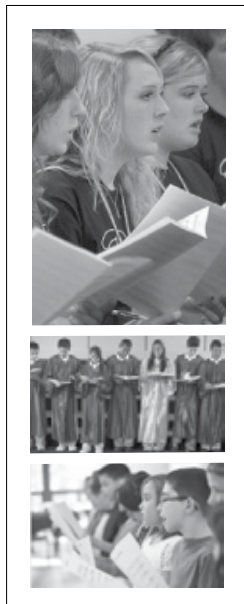
5. Read books that offer support. The following books have helped me work through periods of burnout: *The Power of Now* by Eckhart Tolle; *The Gifts of Imperfection* by Brené Brown; *Hardwiring Happiness* by Rick Hanson; *The Untethered Soul* by Michael Singer; *Creating the Special World: A Collection of Lectures* by Weston Noble. Additionally, books that provide positive affirmations can be very helpful when negative feelings come to the fore - there are many of these on the market, as well as apps that can send daily affirmations to your smart phone. I have also appreciated video presentations by these authors, especially the videos of Eckhart Tolle and Brené Brown.

6. Exercise and/or walk outside each day. It is not always easy to find time for this, but exercise can help fend off depression. Catching some vitamin D from the sun is also important for chasing away the blues, so walking outside is a plus.

7. Remind yourself about the importance of what we do. Each one of us has watched the life of at least one singer in our rehearsals improved through being in a choir. Our own lives were changed for the better through choral music; that is why we were drawn to the field. It is easy to forget those victories when we are down about our work. Keep a treasured thank you card, or a photo with a positive singer by your desk. That one visible thank you stands for the hundreds of silent victories happening throughout a year of leading rehearsals.

Burnout is an inevitable byproduct of having busy jobs in a hectic world. However, it is possible to overcome burnout and once again be the person who has discovered their

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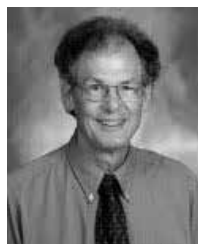
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Good things have been happening in the Illinois Chapter of the American Choral Directors Association since January 1.

The Illinois Music Education Conference (IMEC) in January provided IL-ACDA with the setting

for a productive board meeting, a reception for Illinois choral directors, a reading session with free music and support, courtesy of Kidder Music Service, and the involvement of various members with the all-state choirs, reading sessions, and session presentations.

Membership Growth - Perhaps the most exhilarating event of the IMEC was the addition of some 30 new ACDA members brought on board during the conference. Membership co-chairs Andy Jeffrey (Glenbard West High School) and Brandon Catt (Glenbard East High School) spoke briefly with the college students at the end of the IL-ACDA reading session. Andy quickly explained the career benefits of belonging to ACDA and provided application materials, most of which he was able to collect on the spot. A student currently pays only \$5 to join - a tremendous bargain. The balance of the student membership fee is split between the national organization and our state chapter. Brandon had emphasized earlier that morning at the board meeting that the key to retention is to get the new members actively involved during their first year of membership through attendance at an ACDA conference. The board gave its endorsement, enthusiastically and unanimously. We are committed to making this a reality.

The ACDA Central Division Conference in Chicago in late February was a stellar event highlighted by outstanding choral performances. Illinois was well represented in attendance, as befitting the host state. Visiting with friends both old and new is an invaluable addition to the many scheduled events.

Two-Year College Choir Festival - this festival is scheduled for April 9 at the College of DuPage in the western Chicago suburbs, with eight choirs scheduled to sing.

Retreat - Our annual summer conference is a huge hit with our membership. The attendees value the opportunity to sing rather than conduct. They form the Director's Chorus and will rehearse this year under the direction of headliner Jonathan Reed of Michigan State University. Children's, middle school, and junior high choirs will be a particular

focus of the Retreat, with a number of sessions to be headlined by Susan Brumfield of Texas Tech University. Interest and reading sessions, our annual banquet, presentation of the Decker Award, performance of the composition contest winning selection, good food, and lots of fellowship have become a given.

Dear colleagues from Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan, I invite you to join those of us in Illinois for our Retreat on June 29-30 on the campus of Illinois State University in Normal. You'll come away with new music, new friends, and a renewed sense of purpose. I promise that you'll feel welcome!

- Dennis Morrissey is a retired K-12 music educator serving on the adjunct faculty of Heartland Community College and as President of Illinois ACDA.

*Many thanks to the
Conference Committee and
Central Division leadership for
their dedication to the
ACDA Central Division
and for countless hours of
work on the "Lift Every Voice"
conference in Chicago!
You have freely shared your
precious time, talent,
friendship, and excitement
about choral music with the
Central Division.
We are fortunate to have
you all in the Central Division;
please know that we are
extremely grateful!*

*Gayle Walker, ACDA
Central Division President*

TEACHING YOUR CHOIR TO LEARN



A choir has to learn their music well in order to perform well. How they learn varies widely from choir to choir. Some directors teach by rote, either playing parts on the piano or providing some sort of electronic aid that allows the singer to listen to a performance of the music. The Indiana All-State Honor Choir, for example, provides a performance recording, recordings with an accompaniment only, and recordings of individual parts. Other directors employ sight-reading to some degree, perhaps sight-reading part of the song only, or playing a simplified harmonization to help the singers maintain their sense of tonality as the singers read their parts unaided. My college choir at Indiana University prided itself on getting a single pitch from the piano at the beginning of a rehearsal and only using it to check if we were in tune at the end of the rehearsal.

I don't play piano very well. Early in my career (before a kind principal chose to divide some of the band's "assistant" funds with the choir so that I could hire an accompanist), I made a conscious decision to teach kids how to read music. I confess I did it so that they could eventually learn to read music more quickly, without having to depend on my limited piano skills — not because that's what we're supposed to do as educators (Indiana Academic Standard 5 for Music).

As I became more experienced, I gradually refined the methods I use to teach music reading. I remember being inspired by someone telling me that Sue Finger of Anderson had a middle school choir that would learn music using solfege. Prior to that, I used solfege to teach sight-reading examples, but I still taught their concert repertoire by rote. I don't remember when I decided to use sight-reading exercises for the purpose that they were intended; i.e., to help the choir increase its sight-reading skills so that it could read music.

In order to do that, singers had to gain some proficiency with rhythms. I started using the same rhythmic exercises that our band used. At the same time, I continued working for greater facility with solfege exercises during our warm-ups. Singers had to be able to sing scales automatically, backwards and forwards. Depending on the skill of the choir, I might ask them to speak—no pitch—the notes of their music using solfege and the correct rhythm. Over a period of several years, the skill level of

the advanced choirs progressed to the point that they often sing the parts of a medium-difficulty song using solfege alone.

Adding the text of the piece can be difficult for young singers. Sometimes, we sing our parts on a neutral syllable such as "loo" or "doo" to help bridge the gap between singing with solfege and singing their parts with the words. Part of the difficulty is that they are not only reading the notes (pitch and rhythm), but they also have to read slurs, begin to realize diction, and to add any articulations. At the same time, they continue to become more aware—visually and aurally—of the harmonies surrounding their part. A choir that is able to sing in this manner will probably be able also to "count-sing." This helps us to move precisely in time, to be sure that we are singing every pitch correctly, and to work on performing dynamics correctly. Count-singing is a great way to help the choir to crescendo and decrescendo at the same rate.

There are certainly times throughout the year when the pressure of an upcoming performance or contest does not allow the entire regimen. A beginning or intermediate choir may only have time to learn part of their music in this fashion. Ultimately, though, it is extremely rewarding for students to read music, and satisfying for the teacher to know that they have produced a musician and a singer.

- Rick Gamble is Choral Director at Avon High School and serves as President of the Indiana Choral Directors Association.

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SINGING TOGETHER MAKES A DIFFERENCE!



Congratulations to the ACDA Central Division leadership for the wonderful division conference in Chicago. Thanks to the conference committee for the many hours/days/weeks that were devoted to the success of the conference.

At the conference, it was also a pleasure to have a dinner meeting with the Central Division state presidents. Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois are all in great hands with very resourceful and responsive leaders. We were able to compare ideas and listen to the ways that programs are administered and how leaders from each state provide resources for ACDA members. The opportunity to sit and exchange ideas with great peer professionals in choral music is what ACDA is all about.

There were so many fine choral performances at the conference: from early music to the *avante garde*, from gospel to Baroque, from Renaissance motets to unaccompanied jazz arrangements—something for everyone. All four central division states were well represented in the concert sessions. Many performances at the conference stand out in my mind—some for beautiful choral tone, others for adventurous repertoire, some for manner of presentation, and others for the clear response from the audience. The performances by the Soul Children of Chicago and the Chicago Children's Choir showed the power that great music has on the lives of children as well as an audience that gets to participate with them. The children sang (and spoke) with such spirit and poise. They were fully committed to the message of every song that they sang. You could feel it in the audience, especially as the audience was asked to sing along. The community singing facilitated by these choirs underlined (again) in my mind the power of song.

These performances reminded me of the ways that singing together can change hearts—to help singers look beyond themselves and consider the thoughts and feelings of others, especially peer singers. While I was working on my master's degree, I had the opportunity to serve as a volunteer conductor of an inmate choir in the Utah State Prison. This group of men was housed in a medium security facility—many were incarcerated for terrible crimes. Those Tuesday night rehearsals often brought really beautiful surprises.

One evening we were rehearsing a hymn that we would perform in a worship service. As I stopped the choir to give some feedback, a man raised his hand and asked to speak. "Eagle," he said, addressing another inmate in the choir, "I feel like I need to apologize for the way that I spoke to you earlier. I'm sorry. Please forgive me." Now, what would motivate a man to turn to his peer and ask for forgiveness, especially in such a rough place as prison? Certainly it was the music; Schmitt could not sing without first trying to make things right with Eagle, his fellow choir member.

Could you imagine what great things could happen in our communities if we only had more opportunities to sing together? We are in such a great profession with such potential for good. I applaud all of the wonderful work that our members do in schools, in houses of worship, and in broader communities. What a great association we have—the American Choral Directors Association!

- Jared Anderson is Director of Choral Activities and Chair of the Visual and Performing Arts Department at Michigan Technological University. He serves as President of the Michigan chapter of ACDA.

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FILLING THE CLOSET WITH GUCCI: SELECTING THE BEST FOR YOU!



In the last issue of *Resound*, I wrote urging every director to select the best possible literature for their choirs, using the analogy that, in music, Gucci costs the same as Walmart. We must push back against the wave of exclusionary academic pressure to assert the importance of choral education in the teaching of history, literature, culture, as well as multi-tasking and technical skills. The literature sung by your choir is the most important element in your entire teaching process to confirm music's validity. In the last article, I promised to share further thoughts about this subject.

It is important to keep a list of priorities in mind when selecting music. A highly respected high school director in Ohio made a genre list each year, and selected literature to fill categories: motet, madrigal, major work movement, Romantic song, etc. We must examine the entire year of programming to assure the teaching of historical perspective and a wide range of styles. Next, one should consider text. Choral music provides an excellent opportunity to teach languages, but we must balance the demands of language with rehearsal time and overall programming. The quality of the text is paramount – it conveys the emotional content of the piece, inspires higher thinking on the part of the singers, and allows us to develop good singing diction.

Musical quality, of course, is central. Compositional integrity, avoidance of triteness, challenge and difficulty all must be considered – but one also must think about whether one is convinced this choral piece will enter the literature. I suggest that we have no time to work on insignificant music. Key; tempo; length; divisi; unaccompanied vs. accompanied; harmonic language – all these items must be evaluated for balance and diversity of programming. Finally, make sure the piece is one which really excites you creatively – it's difficult to teach material in which you have little personal interest.

For me, this all means spending a great deal of time reviewing choral pieces. A concert in which I can program six pieces will begin with 100-150 titles. This process causes me to feel so strongly about each piece programmed that I bring it to the choir in an absolute frenzy of excitement.

The most wonderful benefit of careful selection of high-quality literature is communication and durability. When your library is filled with timeless, quality texts beautifully set by masterful composers, this music never gets old. It can be programmed repeatedly with no loss of effect or educational opportunities. To those who might suggest that audiences aren't interested in "that" music, I can tell you from experience, it's not the case. Quality is discernable in all arts. The "education" of our audiences is part of our responsibility. Parents and community members are completely capable of recognizing excellence, and they appreciate it.

Once your musical closet is filled with Gucci, you'll love going in there to select how you'll "dress" your choir!

I'm looking forward to continuing this series. Next time, I'd like to share some literature for all levels of choirs. I'm hopeful that a few examples might set you on a very satisfying journey through our wonderful world of choral literature.

I am editing this column the day after returning from Chicago for the ACDA Central Division Conference. My mind is exhausted, but my choral sensors are tingling with renewed fervor for our wonderful profession. Hearing 30 choirs, the absolutely sublime Valparaiso/Leipzig *St. John Passion*, not to mention the interest sessions, reading sessions, exhibits and – best of all – camaraderie, I feel overwhelmed with new thoughts, new experiences, great music, and memories which will last a lifetime. This is truly what ACDA has always meant to me! Performances of new music, from Ola Gjeilo's new piece, to the wonderful Hebrew work by student composer Alex Berko, and the indescribable experience of hearing the Bienen (Northwestern) performance of "Privilege" – these moments were equal in power to the Bach, proving that our art is certainly alive and relevant! If you missed Chicago 2016, you missed indescribable moments – anyone breathing who heard (and felt) the Soul Children of Chicago and the Chicago Children's Choir will surely agree. How fortunate we are to be choral directors!

ACDA conferences have been the torch that lit the fire for me, and made me an insatiable consumer of choral literature. Take advantage of these opportunities! To this point, I'd like to personally invite all members – from any

Please see Gucci, page 11

BASIC VOCAL JAZZ INFORMATION FOR THE TRADITIONAL CHORAL DIRECTOR



You have a traditional choir and now want to dabble into vocal jazz!?

YESSSSS! The jazz harmonies are soothing to listen to, even if they are dissonant and sometimes crazy hard to learn. Vocal jazz literature is available in all levels, styles and subgenres. You get to experiment with different grooves and choose between a cappella or so many wonderful instrumental accompaniment combinations. It don't mean a THING if it ain't got that SWING! It was born in America and loved around the world.

Size: Most vocal jazz groups vary from 8 to 16. Some are larger and some are smaller.

Age: No limit. Kindergarteners can be taught improvisation. Start with Happy Birthday. They sing, and then have them alter the melody. You can do call and response. Older folks love it too! There are books that focus on help with the middle school voices. (Junior Jazz-Kirby Shaw) There are apps for teaching improv (ScatAbility - Michele Weir).

Choosing literature: The same way you select your literature for your classical ensembles is a place to start. Currently most go to JWPepper, YouTube, music conferences, etc., but vocal jazz is a hidden gem. It's a secret. You can't find it if you don't know where to look! Here's the secret... Join JEN, the Jazz Educators Network. (No, I'm not on the board and didn't receive chocolates to promote them.) It's simply a great place to find out who's doing great arrangements. There are also many jazz arrangers who have their own websites. Check out Kerry Marsh, Jeremy Fox, Rosana Eckert, Michele Weir, and Jennifer Barnes, Matt Falker, and Michael Englehart, to name a few. There is also a place called Sound Music Publications which offers many excellent charts.

There are stock arrangements and some originals on JWPepper. You can find very accessible charts from Roger Emerson to medium/challenging charts from Kirby Shaw and Greg Jasperse, to more advanced music from Darmon Meader of the New York Voices. You can also network on Facebook by joining Vocal Jazz Educators. This is a small list of resources, but hopefully its a start for you. It is a friendly community and music educators love to share and help others.

Listening: listening is key to learning jazz. Listening will help you to decide what you *Resound, Spring 2016*

like and selections can serve as examples for your students. It will be your teacher for style and jazz articulations that are so important. It will teach you to swing. Listen to professional vocal and instrumental jazz groups and solo artists, then have your students try to imitate or transcribe some of the improvisation solos.

Following are a few of the great jazz solo artists I would recommend for listening purposes:

Female

Anita Baker
Natalie Cole
Ella Fitzgerald
Billie Holiday
Diana Krall
Diane Reeves
Diane Schuur
Sarah Vaughn
Nancy Wilson

Male

Chet Baker
Tony Bennett
Nat King Cole
Harry Connick, Jr.
Al Jarreau
Bobby McFerrin
Oscar Peterson
Frank Sinatra
Mel Torme

For groups, I would recommend listening to:

Four Freshmen	Singers Unlimited
Hi-Lo's	Take Six
Manhattan Transfer	The Real Group
New York Voices	Vertical Voices
The Ritz	

Improvisation: This is where it gets fun. There are lots of help books out there. The current trend is circle singing, where you get the students involved in creating melodies. Each section can come up with their own line that works with the initial melody. One person is the leader and can give direction as to when you change your motif. They create "in the moment," similar to Bobby McFerrin in his vocal group Voicestra.

There are several books with CDs out now to promote this, and you can also use this with your traditional choir to promote choral creativity. Improvisation is just a start. You can then progress to understanding the blues scale, learning the 12-bar blues and breaking down the chords from the roots, thirds, and seventh, teaching dominant seventh chords. There are many great method books out there. Again, Michele Weir's app offers call and response, and the people that demonstrate are top-notch

Please see Jazz, page 18

DIVISION LEADERSHIP

SENIOR HIGH CHOIRS

Mike Martin
7908 Madison Place
Winchester OH 43110-9053
O - 614/921-7368
Mike_Martin@hboc.org

SHOW CHOIRS

Debora S. Utley
Buffalo Grove High School
1100 West Dundee Road
Buffalo Grove IL 60089
O - 847/718-4161
C - 630-531-0274
debora.utley@d214.org

TWO-YEAR COLLEGE CHOIRS

Andrew Jensen
124 Sundew Drive
Belleville IL 62221
O - 618/235-2700, ext.5032
andrew.jensen@swic.edu

WOMEN'S CHOIRS

Beth Holmes
School of Music, Millikin U.
1184 West Main Street
Decatur IL 62522
C - 217/433-0082
H - 217/429-3568
eholmes@mail.millikin.edu

YOUTH & STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Karyl Carlson
Illinois State University
Campus Box 5660
Normal IL 61790-5660
O - 309/438-2012
kkcarls@ilstu.edu

EXCITING CHANGES IN STORE FOR THE 2018 CONFERENCE

[The following article is comprised of excerpts from an address given by Division President-Elect Mark Munson at the 2016 Central Division Conference in Chicago.]



Soon after I was elected, I was contacted by the national leadership of ACDA and asked if we in the Central Division would consider sharing our 2018 conference with the North Central Division.

Why would we want to do this? I asked myself, thinking, "It's not broken, is it?" We have great conferences on our own and it's really nice to be able to drive to them.

Then I heard some numbers that gave me pause. Of the seven ACDA divisions, the two smallest financially are the Central and the North Central. Annual budgets can help demonstrate this. According to the national office, assets held by each division at the end of calendar year 2015 were:

- Central \$17,000
- North Central \$13,000
- Western \$82,000
- Southern \$90,000
- Southwestern \$92,000
- Eastern \$115,000
- Northwestern \$120,000

In fact, the assets of Central and North Central combined would be less than half that of the next smallest division, the Western Division.

Holding conferences in major cities is costly for the divisions, and especially challenging financially for the smaller divisions. ACDA Executive Director Tim Sharp told me that the main reason that the national leadership had suggested sharing a conference was for the financial benefit of the two divisions.

Okay, I thought, finances are one thing, but could there be other advantages in sharing with the six neighboring states to the west of us? Well, yes, I think that there are. After all, the North Central Division is not exactly a desert with regard to choral music! I don't know a lot about the choral traditions in some of those states, but when I think about what I do know about choral music in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa, I can't help but think that the contributions that would come from the states in our sister division would do nothing but enrich the 2018 conference.

On September 19, the Central Division Board and planning committee for this conference gathered here at the Palmer House. I talked with members about the notion of a shared conference, heard concerns, and invited input.

It needs to be made clear that we are not being asked to merge the divisions in 2018, but only to share the 2018 conference. Future conferences may or may not be shared, division lines may or may not eventually be redrawn, but neither is the issue at hand. We are simply being asked to share the 2018 conference with the North Central Division.

Mary Kay Geston, North Central Division President-Elect, and I shared many e-mail messages and talked on the phone about both the feasibility and the possibilities of sharing. We agreed that if we were to share a conference, Chicago would be the ideal place for the event. It is a great city and we could find facilities large enough for a shared conference. Further, of all of the cities within the two combined divisions, Chicago is probably the most centrally located.

In November, Mary Kay and I met in Chicago to visit potential venues, visit with some of our national leadership, and to finally decide if sharing was indeed the way to go.

I am pleased to announce to you today, that the principal performance venue of our 2018 Central/North Central Division Conference will be Chicago's Harris Theater, which is just a few blocks from here. It is located in Millennium Park, near "The Bean."

The Harris Theater is a 1500-seat state of the art performance venue that opened in 2003. The primary mission of the Harris is to partner with an array of Chicago's performing arts organizations to help them to build the resources and infrastructure necessary to achieve artistic growth and long-term organizational sustainability. A number of outstanding Chicago performing arts organizations have made the Harris Theater their home.

Contracts have been signed with the Fairmont and the Swissotel to meet our lodging and meeting room needs. These hotels are connected to each other and are located adjacent to the Harris Theater. There is also immediate access from the hotels to Chicago's downtown pedestrian way system, the Pedway. This system of underground tunnels and overhead bridges links more than 40 blocks in the Central Business District, covering roughly five miles. The really good news is that there are plenty of eateries in the Pedway, so if you'd rather not experience more of Chicago's February weather, you can make like the groundhog that never even came out to see his shadow!

And so you may be asking yourself when this conference will occur. While it would be difficult to top the performance of the *St. John Passion* that we heard the other night as an opening event, there are a number of interesting and exciting ideas under discussion for the opening of the 2018 conference that will occur on February 14. Yes, that's right, be thinking about chocolates, champagne, and a program of love songs to help us celebrate St. Valentine's Day on opening night, but also know that we are working to secure one of the beautiful churches nearby so that we may first observe Ash Wednesday with musicians who are leading experts in liturgy. As always, there will be outstanding choral performances and interest sessions, but this time drawn from ten states.

So mark your calendars for February 14 through 17, 2018. It is going to be a great event!

- Mark Munson is Director of Choral Activities at Bowling Green (OH) State University and serves the ACDA Central Division as President-Elect.

Jost, from page 1

Jost's duties at Bradley included directing the Chorale, Chamber Singers, and Community Chorus, and teaching private voice and conducting. He has led the Bradley Chorale in over two dozen concert tours to locations throughout much of Europe, the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., and the Cathedral of St. Louis, King of France in New Orleans. He has performed with the Chorale for Illinois Music Educators Association Conferences and for ACDA state and division conferences. He also oversees Bradley's efforts to serve the central Illinois choral community, which include skills clinics for area choral directors, an honor choir for area high schools, a festival audition preparation workshop for district high schools, and rehearsal clinics for area school choirs.

He received Bradley's First Year Teacher Award in 1990, the Charles Putnam Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2004, a service award from the Haitian Ministry of Culture in 2004, and the Bradley Parents Association Award of Excellence in 2005. IL-ACDA recognized his contributions to ACDA with the Harold Decker Award in 2012.

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Gucci, from page 8

state – to attend the Ohio Summer Conference June 20-22 on the campus of Otterbein University in Westerville, Ohio (near Columbus). Headliners are Rodney Eichenberger and Andrea Ramsey. Reading sessions for every type of choir will bring great new music to your library; exhibitors are on hand; and you'll hear performances by some of Ohio's finest choral ensembles. OCDA sponsors a Children's Honors Chorus, conducted by Fred Meads of the American Boychoir School; as well as High School Men's and Women's Honors Choirs, under the direction of Lynda Hasseler and Frank Bianchi. Your Ohio ACDA friends would love to welcome you to our state! Information about registration and housing can be found at <www.ohiocda.org>.

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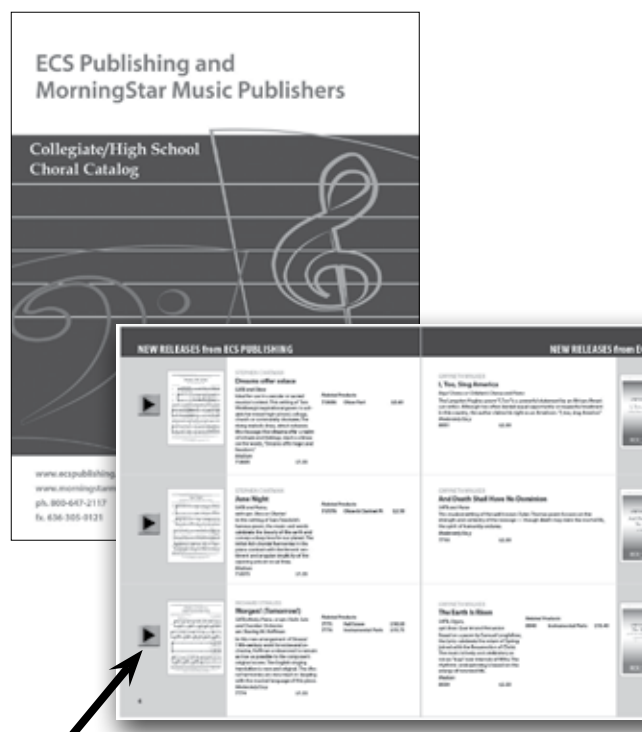
- Loren Veigel is Artistic Director of Voices of Canton, Inc. and President of the Ohio Choral Directors Association.

Resound, Spring 2016

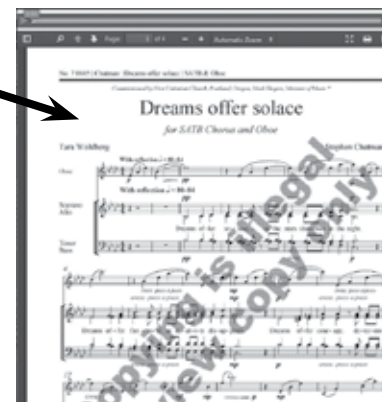
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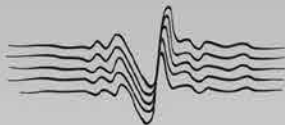
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Leon Thurman

HAVE YOU BEEN LOOKING IN THE SECOND ROW?



Two recent conversations about choral music have had me pondering the role of the conductor in supporting composers and new music, and how we navigate the wonderful abundance of creative output that surrounds us.

The first conversation occurred among the many wonderful musical and learning moments provided for us at the Central Division conference in Chicago. In a special lunch session with the conductors of the Webern Kammerchor, someone asked who the current 'big' composers were in Austrian choral music. Responding, Johannes Hiemetsberger said, "I like to look beyond the hype to the composers in the second row." It was a statement not meant to condemn the most popular composers, but to acknowledge that there is a depth of creative output to be explored and nurtured beyond those composers or compositions that are currently receiving the greatest amount of advertisement or performance time.

The second conversation was with composer Abbie Betinis during a recent residency with the choirs at Marietta College. During a discussion regarding the relative popularity of some of her pieces versus others, Abbie shared that she believed "every piece needs an angel" – that group or conductor that connects with it and begins to share it with others. While each piece is special to its creator, it requires an ensemble to devote its time, energy, and love to lift it from the page, and that commitment can create a ripple effect that leads to more groups engaging with the work.

As a young conductor teaching middle school choir and directing a small church choir, I never envisioned myself 'discovering' a new gem for my ensembles, let alone introducing a new work to other conductors. I thought it was the responsibility of my college professors, those in leadership positions in ACDA, or those who could afford to commission something new. With an overwhelming abundance of new music choices around us, we all have the opportunity and a responsibility to look beyond the first row, to be an angel for a work that resonates with our ensembles and us. With what seems to be more choral composers than ever before, there is an abundance of music to be discovered beyond the 'hype.'

Here are a few tips:

1) If you have found a published piece you like (or heard a work on a recording or at a conference), check out the composer's website to see what self-published or unpublished works they might have available. If a website exists, a simple search of the composer's name (sometimes it helps to add the word 'music') will help you to find it.

2) Explore some of the new marketplaces and cooperatives that

offer the works of self-published composers through a single website. The marketplace provided by MusicSpoke (musicspoke.com) or the Independent Music Publishers Cooperative (www.imp.coop) are great places to start.

3) There are a growing number of smaller publishing companies (such as Swirly Music or See-a-dot Music Publishing) that are worth exploring. As this is a changing landscape, you might find it helpful to talk with your choral music dealer about new catalogues to explore.

4) Dig deeper (beyond what comes in the mailers) into the catalogues of the larger mainstream publishers.

5) Engage with young composers in your school or at a nearby university or college. There is perhaps nothing more valuable for a young composer than the opportunity to hear their music performed.

6) Project: Encore (projectencore.org) is an online programming resource with the goal of providing a platform for new, post-premiere choral works that have been evaluated by a panel of expert choral conductors.

7) You can also find recordings of new works at places like the First Readings Project (firstreadingsproject.org), a professional choir whose website provides first recordings by a number of composers.

There is something truly special in knowing that you and your students played a role in the life of a musical work and by reaching out and connecting with that composer we can build a relationship that allows our students to experience music making on a new level. My thanks to Johannes and Abbie for reminding me to look into the second row and be an angel for the works I discover.

- Daniel Monek is Chairman of The Edward E. MacTaggart Department of Music and Professor of Choral & Vocal Music at Marietta College and serves as Central Division Repertoire & Resources Chair for College/University Choirs.

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THE VOICE OF AN ANGEL AND PEAR-SHAPED TONES: MUSINGS, OBSERVATIONS, AND PERSPECTIVE FROM DECADES OF BOYCHOIR EXPERIENCE



I can't remember a time in my life when I wasn't singing. Growing up, I was always surrounded by music of many genres and eras, whether my mom playing sonatas on the piano, my father playing soundtracks to musicals like *Flower Drum Song* on the phonograph, my brothers cranking REO Speedwagon or The Carpenters through the car stereo, watching Lawrence Welk and then Hee Haw on TV at Grandmas, or watching relatives whoop with joy as they polka – danced around the living room during special occasions. Somehow, it was vocal music that grabbed my heart and never let go.

I suppose it started in first grade, when my elementary music teacher, Mrs. Robinson, made me sing "The Candy Man" from the recently released Willy Wonka film for our music program. From there, it was a whirlwind of singing solos and joining choirs, first discovering and then nurturing what would eventually become both my passion and future vocation. My junior high school music teacher, Mrs. Artabasy, inscribed on my yearbook: "Best wishes to a boy genius, with the voice of an angel, and pear-shaped tones like a fruit." To this day, I am still not sure exactly what she meant, but I've always thought of it as a compliment... I hope. I am currently in the midst of a 23

year association with Kantorei, Singing Boys of Rockford. Having participated in a boychoir, directed a boychoir, accompanied a boychoir, and been a parent of two boychoir members, I feel that I have much to share, but I will focus on four key things that I have gleaned from my experiences in the hopes that I can educate, encourage, enlighten, or just entertain those who will read on.

Camaraderie: My current Associate Director position affords me the opportunity to assist the Artistic Director whenever needed. Sometimes, this requires me to sit in among the boys and lend a hand. Being within the choir is much different than being in front of it. I get to hear their mistakes first hand, and can be the first to remind them of proper posture, what page we are on, and how to turn off their cell phones. However, what I see most of all is camaraderie. These boys aren't just singing together. They are growing together, sharing a common love for choral singing, and just plain enjoying being with one another. The boychoir can be like a fraternity, a family of young men who work together to achieve collectively what they cannot accomplish individually. The bond of this friendship lasts far beyond the confines of the rehearsal or even their final concert experience. Many of these young men become lifelong friends. Alumni events are always filled with laughter, tears, and plenty of "stories" from the good old days.



Choral Performance Opportunities

- » Concert Choir
- » Chamber Singers
- » Women's Chorale
- » Cardinal Chorus
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- » Naperville Chorus

Dr. Ramona M. Wis, Director of Choral Activities and
Professor of Music

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Confidence: Prospective member boys are always encouraged to attend a concert or rehearsal. Then, if they desire, they can 'audition' and we schedule a voice hearing. More often than not, this experience is difficult for many young boys. After all, a boychoir is a fairly rare organization and singing using head tones and the upper registers can make some uncomfortable, even timid. This is despite the fact that the parents often relate how their son usually sings ALL THE TIME at home, in the car, or even in the shower! Once a boy joins the group and learns that he is not alone, the proverbial 'light bulb' goes on. Over a period of time, the boys eventually sing out, gaining a measure of confidence that can often be overlooked within a typical mixed ensemble. The unified sound of a boychoir brings a boost of self assurance to these boys as they endeavor to use their gifts within the friendly confines of a group of like-minded young men.

Character: The culmination of a typical concert season is the tour. Following a final home concert, the boys, directors, and chaperones depart for several days to exotic locations ranging from Indiana to Italy. Seeing the boys out of their normal routines and their comfort zone reveals a depth of character that such circumstances bring to light. The older boys are expected to 'look out' for their younger members. Where one might expect a groan of exasperation or a rolling of the eyes, instead I see enthusiasm and a genuine concern for the well being of the younger boys. They seem to enjoy the challenges of keeping them together in the group, making sure that they eat properly, apply sunscreen appropriately, wake up on time, get back onto the same bus they left, and to focus on making beautiful music when it comes time to perform. This character can also present itself when interacting with complete strangers. On a recent tour on a cruise ship, I was stopped by an elderly lady who saw my bright red t-shirt which identified me as one of the group. She related how she was hurrying toward a closing elevator door when one of our boys thrust his hand into it, saying "there you go, ma'am" as she got inside. Another couple on board the ship expressed admiration for how "quietly and respectfully your boys walk throughout the ship" as opposed to other youngsters on board. Yet another elderly gentleman described how nice it was to see "a young man hold a door open for his elders." Manners and proper behavior are often discussed and taught throughout the year. It never ceases to amaze me how well many of these boys seem to take these lessons to heart.

Commitment: Four years ago, I entered a new phase in my association with the boychoir: parent. I knew my boys loved to sing, but I never wanted to force them to be in the boychoir just because Daddy was there too. I was thrilled when they expressed a desire to join Kantorei, but this brought up a few interesting situations. For instance, one day my son raised his hand and quipped, "Should I call you Mr. K or just Daddy?" and "Am I allowed to hug you or would you prefer a handshake?" I also began to wonder whether I need to notify myself in writing when one of my

own boys is going to miss a rehearsal. Then, there's writing all of the important rehearsal dates, concert dates, tour dates, banquet dates, fundraiser deadlines, and wardrobe requirements onto the family calendar. This led me to a profound appreciation for the parents and families of these boys. It is indeed no small sacrifice to carve out all of these dates and times, and to come up with the costs involved in participating in an organization like ours year after year. The boys wouldn't be able to come at all if it weren't for the commitment of their parents to get them to come. Not only that, but the boys themselves must show extraordinary commitment to be at all of these events, prepared to sing, dressed correctly, with all of the necessary music in the exact order in their folders. As I write this column,

I can hear my own boys singing their concert music while riding around the driveway on their RipSticks. Finding time to get it all ready, in addition to finishing homework assignments and participating in sports, school plays, and chess teams, takes a high level of dedication which many of these

young men demonstrate every year.

So, do you know a boy who loves to sing? That is our "advertising" slogan on most of our posters, brochures, and business cards. Yet, that is just the foot in the door, so to speak. What gets the boys to really get involved in the organization is perhaps the realization of the intangible yet important benefits that come with being in a boychoir. Although we know we are not the only game in town, we are confident that the things that the boys take with them are just as important as the things they bring to the choir. They learn what it is like to be a reliable member of the team. They learn that they really can do more than they initially thought. They learn that when out in the crowd, one of us represents all of us. They learn that prioritizing is the key to successfully managing a busy life. Camaraderie. Confidence. Character. Commitment. And as a bonus, there's also pear-shaped tones, like a fruit!

- Brad Koloch is an Elementary Music Specialist in Rockford #205 and Associate Director of Kantorei, The Singing Boys of Rockford (Illinois). He serves as Repertoire & Resources Chair for Boychoirs in the ACDA Central Division.

MAKING MEMORIES



Happy Spring, dear show choir directors! As you read this, many of us are at the end of winter and the end of the show choir competitive season. We've moved our clocks ahead and our thoughts have shifted to end-of-the-year concerts, musicals, and planning for 2016 – 2017! There will be a summer vacation, but we often skip right over that in our planning!!!

As the snow melts and the flowers bloom, it is a time of renewal. We get excited about spring-cleaning our music files, throwing away any unnecessary paperwork, and deleting so many emails! For me, spring is a time of reflection. I am able to sit in a cool, quiet hour and truly assess the effect I have had on my students throughout the year.

As I write this, it is the Monday after our last show choir competition and the first day of auditions for next year's show choir. I am anxious to see how many new students will show up for audition clinics - will there be enough to create a quality group for next year? The age-old question - will there be enough boys? Will all of my current students return for next year?

No matter how big or how small your program, numbers are always a concern. It always brings us to ponder if we are doing everything we can to not only maintain our program, but to ensure its constant growth. A few reminders for all of us:

- Success breeds success. Students want to be a part of something special. Any high-quality choral program will

continue to have students, but that doesn't mean we can rest on our laurels.

- Actively recruit. Invite students within your school to audition. I often have my students write personal invitations to students they know might be interested. Sometimes that personal touch is all it takes to get someone into your classroom and fall in love with vocal music.

- Be visible at your feeder schools. You must develop a relationship with your fellow teachers and work together. Remember, their students are your future, so get invested in what is happening at your feeder schools. Be available to assist them in whatever they need. Help to run sectionals, work with each choir, and get to know the students. This relationship will make it much easier for them to choose choir over another elective when they get to your school.

As far as my reflection on what I have done to guide the young people in my daily care, I know that I have had a successful year. We have had many great successes, one or two failures, and endless opportunities to learn. I truly hope you have as well. As we navigate through the world of show choir, the most important part of our job is to create memories for our students, memories that they will one day look back on with great joy and love. My wish for you is that you have many wonderful memories of your year and that you can create a few more before the year is done.

- Debora Utley is Director of Vocal Music at Buffalo Grove (IL) High School and serves the ACDA Central Division as Repertoire & Resources Chair for Show Choirs.



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BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH SOCIAL JUSTICE REPERTOIRE



When I began my work at the University of Michigan, I knew that I wanted the Men's Glee Club to perform music that honored the male chorus canon and that reflected them as an ensemble. However, repertoire that deals with issues of social justice is also important to me; a part of my philosophy of teaching. It engages our audience, builds a strong

sense of community amongst our singers and can foster 'musical' *ubuntu*.

Nelson Mandela defines *ubuntu* as a concept that permeates African culture and states that our humanity is dependent on the humanity of others. The more we can allow ourselves to see the world through the eyes of others, the more we experience this concept. Providing a safe place for students to express and process issues that affect us all can be very rewarding and act as another vehicle for bringing change to our world; choirs not just doing well, but being a 'force for change for good' in our schools, communities, and ultimately, our world.

Choral music has the opportunity to not just educate and entertain, but to motivate and call to action. As we prepare our future leaders, it is important to foster open-minded thinking and promote awareness of the world around us.

An example of a piece that resonated with my students and with me this fall is Joel Thompson's "Seven Last Words of the Unarmed" for TTBB, piano and strings (MusicSpoke.com). When I first saw the score for "Seven Last Words of the Unarmed," I realized immediately that it was a strong piece and one that needed to be heard. In seven short movements, Joel Thompson gives new resonance to the dying words of African-American men — men killed in police encounters, including Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and Trayvon Martin in Sanford, Florida.

The idea for the composition came to Joel on seeing the texts depicted by Iranian-American artist Shirin Barghi. From more than a dozen of her illustrations, he chose seven statements that most readily aligned with the textual structure of Haydn's "Seven Last Words of Christ on the Cross." Christ's final words were, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit." Joel's piece ends with "I can't breathe," the plea Eric Garner repeated as he lay dying on a Staten Island sidewalk in 2014. Joel's point is not to suggest Garner and the six other men were Christ-like, nor does he mean to cast blame on the police. Joel intends simply to recognize and value lives that have sadly, even tragically, been cut short.

Underscoring that more universal aim, Joel avoided obvious gospel or spiritual influences and instead borrowed from musical theater, Bach, Brahms, and even aleatoric

music—a different style for each of the seven voices. Fragments of the often-quoted French Renaissance song "L'homme armé" (which begins, "The armed man should be feared") appear throughout as a recurring motif. There are episodes of anger, but along with them are moments of meditation and sweet melancholy.

Through a remarkably well-crafted composition, Joel manages to amplify the powerful message contained in the simple words of these dying men.

Although I connected with "Seven Last Words of the Unarmed" on many levels, I hesitated before taking it to my glee club; I did not want them to think I was pushing an agenda. When I introduced the idea, some members said performing the piece would be overly political. We talked about it, some wrote essays about it, and once we focused on the central theme of loss, we were able to get through the journey.

Some of our audience expressed similar misgivings, but most of the response was extremely positive. One woman wrote to me, "I'm reminded once again that art, whether it be on a canvas, on a musical staff, or in writing, should not always be comfortable."

In preparing the premiere of "Seven Last Words of the Unarmed," I collaborated with Joel and Minneapolis composer J. David Moore. During one of our conversations, David thanked Joel for not making the piece angry and for writing it in a way that invites reflection and meditation. That is exactly how I feel. That is why I needed to do this piece. I highly recommend it to colleagues all across the country. It is a wonderful opportunity for us to engage our students, bring a strong sense of community, and challenge our audiences.

Other TTBB pieces for consideration that deal with social justice issues:

Elegy for Matthew, by David Conte (ECS publishing)
Harriet Tubman, by Rollo Dilworth (Mark Foster)

- Eugene C. Rogers is Associate Director of Choirs at the University of Michigan and serves the Central Division as Repertoire & Resources Chair for Men's Choirs.

Work, from page 2

life's joy in song. What we choral directors do is incredibly important for the world – we create community by sharing beauty. Weston Noble summarized this in a 1991 interview for *Choral Journal* when he said:

“As choral conductors, we are given one of the greatest challenges and opportunities in life: to discover and free our inner beings, our inner persons – to be transparent vessels for the recreation of one of the most powerful vehicles in our civilization – MUSIC. What this does for others – performers and audiences – is often of such significance it cannot be expressed; it can be life changing. Indeed, it can be said that for all of us, music can be lifesaving!”

- Gayle Walker is Director of Choral Activities at Otterbein University and serves as President of the ACDA Central Division.


Jazz, from page 9

music educators and professionals who start it simple. You can record and play back and learn.


Sound system: Since many vocal jazz groups use a rhythm section (piano, bass, guitar, drums), it is essential to have a sound system. Invest in mics, a sound board, mains, monitors, and someone trained to teach you how to use it. It is worth it and will save your singers' voices. Have them use good mic technique and keep the mic in tight. Make sure you put the piano in their monitor so they can tune. Practice on the system so that they get used to hearing themselves.

This has only scratched the surface. I hope you found something to further your appetite for jazz. It is delicious and worth a taste!

- Susan Moninger is Director of Student Choral Activities at Elmhurst (IL) College and serves the Central Division as Repertoire & Resources Chair for Vocal Jazz.



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THE LAST WORD



What goes around, comes around. We've all heard that saying, and more and more, it seems to be true, whether it is in music, fashion, school class schedules, or even ACDA conferences!

If you were present at the terrific 2016 Chicago Central Division conference, then you heard President-Elect Mark Munson discuss the plans for the 2018 conference, where Central Division will combine with the North Central Division (see page 10 of this issue of *Resound*). Longtime members will remember that prior to 1981, the two divisions were one entity!

Having lived and taught for nine years in the North Central Division, and having attended division conferences there, I can tell you that there are some fantastic programs with long histories of choral excellence - the combined conference will be musically outstanding. I know that with Mark's leadership, the friendliness and cooperation of the Central Division will be in full force, and if you are interested in helping to plan the conference, be sure to let Mark know! I've served on six conference planning committees, and each one has helped to restore my faith in people - watching all of the committee members working so selflessly, helping each other to create the best possible conference within our budget!

We are all nearing the end of the academic year, and with that comes the planning for the future. To those who are retiring, congratulations! Please be sure to notify ACDA at the appropriate time and become one of our cherished retired status members. (Now, maybe you will have the time to serve ACDA at a state or division level? ☺)

If you are looking ahead to another year of music making, I hope that you found a lot of ideas in this issue of *Resound* - social justice music (page 17), suggestions on how to expand your choral program's opportunities or ways to sustain your program (pages 9, 13, 16), and of course all of the possibilities in state conferences from the presidents' articles. When summer (finally?) gets here, as Gayle discussed (page 2) don't forget to take time for yourself, too!

As I mentioned in the first paragraph, sometimes things which were abandoned come around again. We see it in a resurgence of music styles, in "retro" music which many of us can't imagine being called "oldies" because that would mean that we, too are "old"... Sometimes it is more of learning from what was good in the past, not throwing out the present altogether. The idea of combining the divisions for the 2018 conference could be a terrific opportunity - let's all mark our calendars, look for more information to come, and show all our Central Division excellence!

In ACDA, most states and divisions no longer have a print newsletter for financial reasons. Some states have returned to a print newsletter, having found that members were not getting the information needed from only an online issue. Again, what goes around... We couldn't have a print newsletter without our advertisers! If you have contact with any of our *Resound* advertisers, please be sure to mention that you saw their advertisement and please thank them for their support of ACDA and *Resound*. Thank you, also, for reading *Resound* and for being an ACDA member!

- William G. (Bill) Niederer is Choral Director at Elkhart (IN) Central High School and serves the Central Division as *Resound* Editor.

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