



CHORAL EDITION  
 SPRING 2008 WV-ACDA  
 West Virginia  
 American Choral Director's Association

May 12, 2008 VOLUME ? Issue 2

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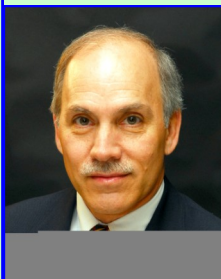
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**From the President's Pen**

**Jeff Poland**



**ACDA Conventions:**  
**Satisfaction Guaranteed**



I can't say that I have paid much attention to rock n' roll since my undergraduate college days. Occasionally my children would make me listen to something or someone, encouraging their father to "get with it". And occasionally I came to appreciate and value an "artist" such as Billy Joel who, as it turns out, has more recently composed some wonderful classical works. In those long-ago college days the Beatles and the Rolling Stones dominated the popular culture. The Beatles have maintained universal acceptance, even adulation, in many diverse genres and the Stones are still going strong doing what they do. Good grief, Mick Jagger is older than I am! But speaking only for myself, I shall admit that (*I Can't Get No) Satisfaction*.

We're speaking about musical satisfaction in this context, not the kind expressed in that song. To be satisfied is to receive fulfillment of our desires, expectations, needs, or demands; to be content. As choral professionals we expect to be satisfied when we attend a conference in our discipline. Doing so as active members of the ACDA, we can be assured of satisfaction guaranteed. We may not receive complete fulfillment of every desire or need, but there will always be an interest session, a conversa-

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## *President's Message, cont.*

-tion with a colleague, or a performance that provides temporary or lasting satisfaction.

Our WVACDA Conference in Charleston and the Southern Division Convention in Louisville certainly provided ample amounts of choral satisfaction. The state conference included the debut of a director's chorus that was great fun for me and its participants, with requests to continue that performance in the future. Please join me in expressing superlative thanks to our interest session presenters, the honor choir accompanists, Registration Chair and State Treasurer Patty Austin, Local Arrangements Chair Truman Dalton, and the R&S Chairs who skillfully organized each choir. The guest conductors of the Honor Choirs were all highly complimentary of student preparation by our membership and the concert performance by our singers. You will find an article with their remarks elsewhere in this newsletter.

I need to request your input in several areas to prepare for the 2009 State Conference, January 29-31 in Charleston. First, consider what topics and presenters you would like to have for interest sessions in our current format. Second, what nationally recognized conductor/clinician would you suggest to present various topics appropriate for all levels of choral music? Third, if WVACDA could afford to commission a new composition for your

honor choir level, who would the composer be? Finally, the Executive Board will appreciate your nominations for the Jean Singer Award, which is our organization's highest recognition presented every other year. That award will be given in January 2009. I hope to hear from many of you with regard to these four topics prior to the summer meeting of the Board on June 13.

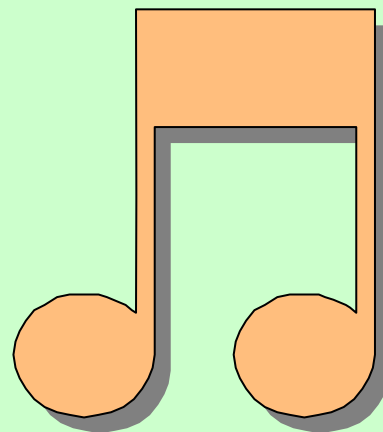
David Castleberry also deserves the highest order of gratitude for his planning and leadership of the Southern Division Convention. I just wonder, when he selected Louisville as the convention city, how he knew that the pedway would be so significant for the weather conditions. Add "psychic" to his résumé? Thank you, David, for a genuinely satisfying program of sessions and concerts. My report of our activities at the Division leadership meeting is included in this issue, including mention of our members who are Division R&S Chairs and those who served on the convention committee. Hats off to them! Special recognition is extended to Pam McClain and the Parkersburg High School Choir who were chosen as the demonstration group for Fred Spano's session on "Rethinking the Choral Warm-up". I am delighted to report that twenty-seven students from West Virginia participated in Southern Division honor choirs. A list of their names and their directors appears with hearty congratulations in this newsletter. How satisfying that experience

must be for teachers, parents, and singers all!

In closing, may I remind you to keep your membership current and don't delay when the national office sends you your renewal notice. At the leadership meetings in Louisville, a major presentation by ACDA Interim Executive Director Jerry Warren was on the topic of membership recruitment and retention. Please encourage your colleagues within and without West Virginia to reap the benefits of the ACDA. Many of our recent college graduates will be taking positions vacated by retiring choral directors. When these positions change hands, let's be satisfied that the ACDA standards of repertoire and performance are maintained.

Best wishes for a very satisfying conclusion to your academic year!

-- Jeffrey Poland



## Interviews with Honor Choir Conductors

As always, the annual WVACDA conference in Charleston was inspiring and uplifting. One of the greatest benefits of conference attendance is the opportunity to watch top-notch choral directors at work with excellent choirs. The 2008 line-up of guest directors offered particularly productive opportunities for observing good teaching and good choral conducting. In an effort to utilize the resources that we enjoyed in our three guest directors, I was fortunate to engage each one in a brief conversation before the final concert of the conference on Saturday, January 26. I posed a set of questions to each of our three guests: Dr. Hilary Apfelstadt (Collegiate Honor Choir), Dr. Joshua Haberman (High School All-State Chamber Choir), and Ms. Ginger Wyrick (Junior High/Middle School Honor Choir). My hope is that you, the choral directors of West Virginia, will find some information or insight in their answers that will be useful for you as you stand before your various choirs.

Submitted by Carol Benton, WVACDA newsletter editor

**Choral Edition:** *Why did you make the repertoire choices that you made? Do you have any special thoughts to pass along to choral directors regarding the process of repertoire selection?*

**Hilary Apfelstadt:** I chose music that would be accessible to collegiate singers in one day of rehearsals, knowing that our choir would consist of non-music majors as well as music majors. As it turned out, about half the members of our group were non-music majors. Next, I considered stylistic variety. We tend to program so much contemporary music; and we forget our younger generation of students may not be familiar with standard choral repertoire that many of us take for granted. In addition to providing stylistic variety, I wanted the selections to be not so technically demanding that they would not be conducive to musical expressivity. Of course, it is important to choose repertoire in a variety of languages, too. My next consideration was audience appeal. The only place where I think I may have "missed the boat" in programming this concert is the fact that I did not include an a cappella piece. We did, however, have some variation of instrumentation with the piano, organ, and violins.

**Josh Habermann:** When I am selecting music, I think first of providing an educational experience for students; offering breadth of repertoire, historical styles, multiple languages, and the highest quality choral literature. I also try to vary a cappella and accompanied pieces. It is important for students to sing a cappella music. This practice provides an opportunity to train their ears. When choosing music, I think of the flow of the concert program. For example, I would not want all fast pieces or all slow pieces. As I construct the program for an honor choir experience, I try to select some repertoire that will be new to the directors in attendance. For instance, the Kuhnau piece (*Tristis Est Anima Mea*) may have been unfamiliar to many directors. The Sarah Hopkins piece (*Past Life Melodies*) was new and interesting, with the overtone singing. *Byker Hill* is a folk-

song from a mining community; and I thought it might resonate with the people of West Virginia.

**Ginger Wyrick:** I look for a variety of musical styles. I try to choose music by different composers and from different publishers. My purposes are to introduce students to a variety of composers (both dead and alive) and to introduce teachers to music from different publishers. I try to select repertoire that is simultaneously challenging and classroom accessible. I am hoping that teachers will use the repertoire during the regular school year, not just for festivals and honor choir experiences. One of my criteria for building a concert program is audience palatability. The choral musician not only brings something beautiful, but also brings it in a way that can be received by the audience as having beauty. When selecting music for a concert, you must consider your audience. Our purpose is not merely to entertain, however. Our purpose is to reach a balance in artistic, educational, and entertainment values in concert programming.

**Choral Edition:** *Do you have specific suggestions for choral directors in West Virginia?*

**Hilary Apfelstadt:** Start with healthy vocal technique. In warm-ups, remind your students about breath management. Use lip trills in the warm-up. Remind students to listen carefully to each other for matching vowels. Encourage students to not engage in over-singing. Good vocal tone production starts with the breath – with moving air. In rehearsals this weekend, we spent a lot of time on rhythmic acuity and on feeling the pulse. I utilized count-singing in rehearsals. During warm-ups, I required students to perform consonant sounds in specific rhythm patterns taken from the repertoire. When releasing a consonant, singers must place the consonant sound with rhythmic accuracy and with a forward placement. For example: “Lord-(ih)” rather than “Lord-uh.” A shadow vowel may occur following the final “d” consonant, but it must be an “ih” or “eh” shadow vowel, never an “ah” or “uh” sound. Placing consonants in the music with precise rhythmic accuracy is quite important. It is also important that singers feel the underlying subdivision of the beat at all times.

**Josh Haberman:** In Chamber Choir this weekend, we worked on vocal tone. Singing tall vowels is important, especially for the younger guys. We worked on German diction, and I am happy with that, now. We also worked on building a cohesive “whole” in the choir. Students learned to listen to each other. They learned how each voice can fit into the fabric of what we do.

**Ginger Wyrick:** This weekend, in the middle school honor choir, we focused on vowel unification. As a choral director, I feel that if you expect excellence from your choir, then you must *equip* them to be excellent. Sometimes, we tell them what they are doing wrong; but we fail to tell them how to fix it. I think that we sometimes sell ourselves short regarding the young singer. They can do more than we think they can. Choral directors should remember that all choirs are cyclical. You will have years with many excellent singers and years with fewer excellent singers in your choirs. We may feel that “the grass is greener . . .” But, remember – there is no green grass, only good farmers. You may have good soil or poor soil. If you have poor soil, you must be a better farmer to enrich the soil that you have.

**Choral Edition:** *Please share with us your reflections on the West Virginia ACDA conference and honor choir event.*

**Hilary Apfelstadt:** The practice of having a collegiate level honor choir is unique to West Virginia. I do not know of another state where this happens (on the state level). Students in this year's collegiate honor choir were well-mannered, responsive, and had a wonderful spirit. I did not hear any complaining. I was pleased with how quickly they came

together to become a choir and a community. It is imperative that ACDA continue to support these events; especially events of this nature, where middle school, high school, and collegiate singers all get to participate. The MENC and state MEA cannot do it all; whereas, ACDA can provide greater focus on choral music.

**Josh Haberman:** The event was well-run. The students were well-prepared. It was apparent that a rigorous audition process preceded the event. This showed up in what the kids could do when they got to here. The West Virginia students were polite, attentive, and welcoming. They were willing to try new things and experiment. I would like to express my gratitude to West Virginia choral directors.

**Ginger Wyrick:** I applaud the vision and commitment on the part of West Virginia ACDA members toward the students of the mountain state. I encourage them to continue their good work. It is very humbling for me to be here. I feel that a trust is placed on the director to bring something to the experience. I am grateful for the opportunity, and I do not take lightly the importance of what I have been asked to do.

### Repertoire and Standards Chairs

High School Chair: Clara Glover

cjglover@access.k12.wv.us

Children's Choirs Chair: Selina Midkiff

Selina\_midkiff@hotmail.com

Junior High/Middle School Chair: Julie Watkins

musicmomma1098@yahoo.com

Youth & Student Activities Chair: Jeffrey Poland

jpgoland@fairmontstate.edu

College & University Choir: Joseph Janisch

josephjanisch@ucwv.edu

Community Choirs Chair: Erik Reid Jones

ejones04@shepherd.edu

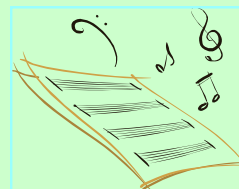
Music & Worship Chair: David Donathan

ddonathan@ccumwv.org

Women's Choirs Chair: Vacancy

Ethnic & Multicultural Chair: Harmon G. Young III

HG.Young@mail.wvu.edu







## PRESIDENT'S REPORT ON WVACDA PLANs & EVENTS



The annual state conference was held January 24-26, 2008, in Charleston, WV. Our main venue was the Baptist Temple, which many Southern Division members will recall as a performance site for the 2006 convention. Three honor choirs presented first-rate performances under the direction of our prominent guest conductors. Dr. Hilary Apfelstadt, from The Ohio State University and ACDA national president, conducted the 80-voice Collegiate Honor Choir. Dr. Joshua Habermann, San Francisco State University, conducted the 65-voice All-State High School Chamber Choir. Ginger Wyrick, Queens University of Charlotte and North Carolina ACDA President-Elect, conducted the 240-voice Junior High-Middle School Honor Choir. Highlights of that program include the Chamber Choir's rendition of *Past Life Melodies* by Sarah Hopkins, and the original, unedited SATB voicing of Handel's *Let Their Celestial Concerts All Unite* by the Junior High-Middle School choir. Several interest sessions, including a reading session, were presented by invited West Virginia conductors. A new and quite successful event for this conference was a Director's Chorus which rapidly read, rehearsed, and performed three anthems for conference attendees and honor choir singers.

The Executive Board has decided to publish all communication and the state newsletter online beginning in the fall 2007. Information about the conference, including registration forms, honor choir repertoire, and conductors' photo/bios, appeared on the website with thanks to webmaster Brenda Hager. Our first online newsletter without hard copy, *The Choral Edition*, was published in September with another issue scheduled for the first week in April 2008. We are fortunate to have a new newsletter editor, Dr. Carol Benton from Glenville State College, who has done a wonderful job with this time-consuming task.

At the Division level, we are proud to count President David Castleberry among the West Virginia contingent, and equally proud to have Melissa Life, choral director at Parkersburg South High School, as the 2006 winner of the Colleen Kirk Award. Serving as Division R & S Chairs are Selina Midkiff, Children's Choirs, and H.G. Young, Two-Year College Choirs. 2008 Convention Committee members include Dr. Joseph Janisch, who coordinated convention sings, and David Donathan, who chaired arrangements for the ecumenical service. Erik Reid Jones from Shepherd University is presenting a session on building an MP3 library. The honor choirs at this Louisville convention all have singers from West Virginia, and the Parkersburg High School Choir, under the direction of Pamela McClain, is the demonstration choir for Fred Spano's interest session on "Rethinking the Choral Warm-Up".

Plans include the following: updating the e-mail directory for state membership in order to provide better communication; commissioning a new choral work for a state conference; and employing another conductor-clinician for the conference to offer expertise on a variety of choral topics. The West Virginia ACDA needs to find ways to attract more members at all levels, especially among church musicians and community choirs. We look forward to future challenges and successes in our organization.

-- submitted by Jeffrey Poland

President, WV-ACDA





## 2008 Appalachian Festival of Young Voices Coming Soon!



Members of the Appalachian Children's Chorus (ACC) are busy preparing to host their second-annual Festival of Young Voices that takes place May 22-25. This regional children's choral festival offers a unique look into Appalachian culture and music through a rich education program.

Nearly 200 participants from across the United States will participate in the festival that takes place in Charleston, W.Va. Festival participants—which include ACC's choristers—will learn Appalachian songs, learn to square dance, hear Appalachian tales, participate in West Virginia's Vandalia Gathering, learn from a world-renowned composer/conductor and perform with nationally-acclaimed traditional musicians.

Dr. Rollo Dilworth is the composer in residence for the festival. Last year, ACC commissioned Dr. Dilworth to compose a piece for our first-ever Appalachian Festival and invited him to attend. He enjoyed it so much that he has agreed to return to conduct every year. Dr. Dilworth is a nationally-acclaimed African American choral conductor and composer with special expertise in children's choirs. ACC is thrilled to have the honor of working with him. Dr. Dilworth has composed a Dream Trilogy based on poems by Langston Hughes that will be performed with an orchestra during the festival.

Other directors for the festival include Mrs. Selina Midkiff, the founding and artistic director of ACC and Mr. Ron Sowell, a traditional musician most known for his role as the music director of West Virginia's Mountain Stage.

The cost of the festival is only \$400 per child. ACC is able to keep costs down thanks to the support of community organizations and corporate sponsors.

The children will showcase their experience from the festival in a final concert that is being offered *free of charge* on Sunday, May 25 at 7:30 p.m. at the Civic Center Little Theater in Charleston. Members of ACC are encouraged to attend to support this fantastic event.

ACC is committed to preserving Appalachian culture and sharing it with as many people as possible. Guests are warmly welcomed and shocked by the hospitality displayed by West Virginia residents.

A director who participated in last year's festival had wonderful words to say. Sandy Holland, director of the Charlotte Children's Choir, said: "The four-day event was filled with experiences that immersed our singers into the Appalachian music and culture. Students came away with a deep appreciation for the music of the Appalachian Mountains, the beauty of its landscape and the overwhelming hospitality of its people. I look forward to returning in the near future to share this wonderful experience with more of my students."

The festival takes place over Memorial Day Weekend each year. If you are interested in attending a future festival, please call ACC's office at 304.343.1111 or e-mail [kacie@wvacc.org](mailto:kacie@wvacc.org). We would also love to see you at the free concert on May 25!

## Kudos !! To Southern Division Performers and Directors



**ATTENTION**

OFFICERS

and

R&S CHAIRS

**WVACDA**

**EXECUTIVE**

**BOARD**

**MEETING**

**JUNE 13, 2008**

**FAIRMONT  
STATE**

**UNIVERSITY**

**FALCON**

**CENTER**

**10:00 AM**

LUNCH PROVIDED

Southern Division Children's Honor Choir

Carissa Channel and Andrew Stackpole –

**Bruce Ensinger**, director

Sydney Pay, Bethany Taylor, Emily Waybright,  
and Lydia Waybright – **Lara Donahoe**, director

Southern Division Junior High SATB Honor Choir

Hannah Ayers – **Ed Harkless**, director

Jared Ballard – **Cindi Jamison**, director

Victoria Neil and Emily Stroud – **Brenda Hager**, director

Southern Division High School Honor Choir

Katy Pettit – **Ed Harkless**, director

Renee Ritenour – **Karma Wood**, director

Alex Ruble – **Patrick Norton**, director

Molly White – **John Ryder**, director

Amanda Branch, Dillon Carden, Evan Cottle, Brent Cox,

Andrew Doering, Benjamin Gandee, Elizabeth Knight,

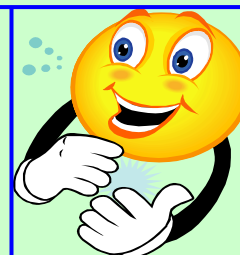
Elliott Lewis, Elizabeth McCormick,

C.J. Mowery, Ben Noffsinger, Carson Smith,

Richard Thomas, Ryan Wolfe

Parkersburg HS and Parkersburg South HS –

**Pamela McClain** and **Melissa Life**, directors



**ATTENTION**

ALL MEMBERS

**SEND ADDRESS  
CHANGES**

(ESPECIALLY

**E-MAIL ADDRESS)**

TO

**MEMBERSHIP  
CHAIR:**

**BRUCE  
ENSINGER**

[ensinger@](mailto:ensinger@adelphia.net)

[adelphia.net](mailto:ensinger@adelphia.net)

**AND/OR**

TO

**WEBMASTER:**

**BRENDA  
HAGER**

[brenda@](mailto:brenda@wvacda.org)

[wvacda.org](http://wvacda.org)

## CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW ACDA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**DR. TIM SHARP**

TIM IS A WEST VIRGINIA NATIVE AND GRADUATE OF EAST FAIRMONT HIGH SCHOOL!

DR. SHARP OFFICIALLY BEGAN HIS POSITION ON MAY 1, 2008.