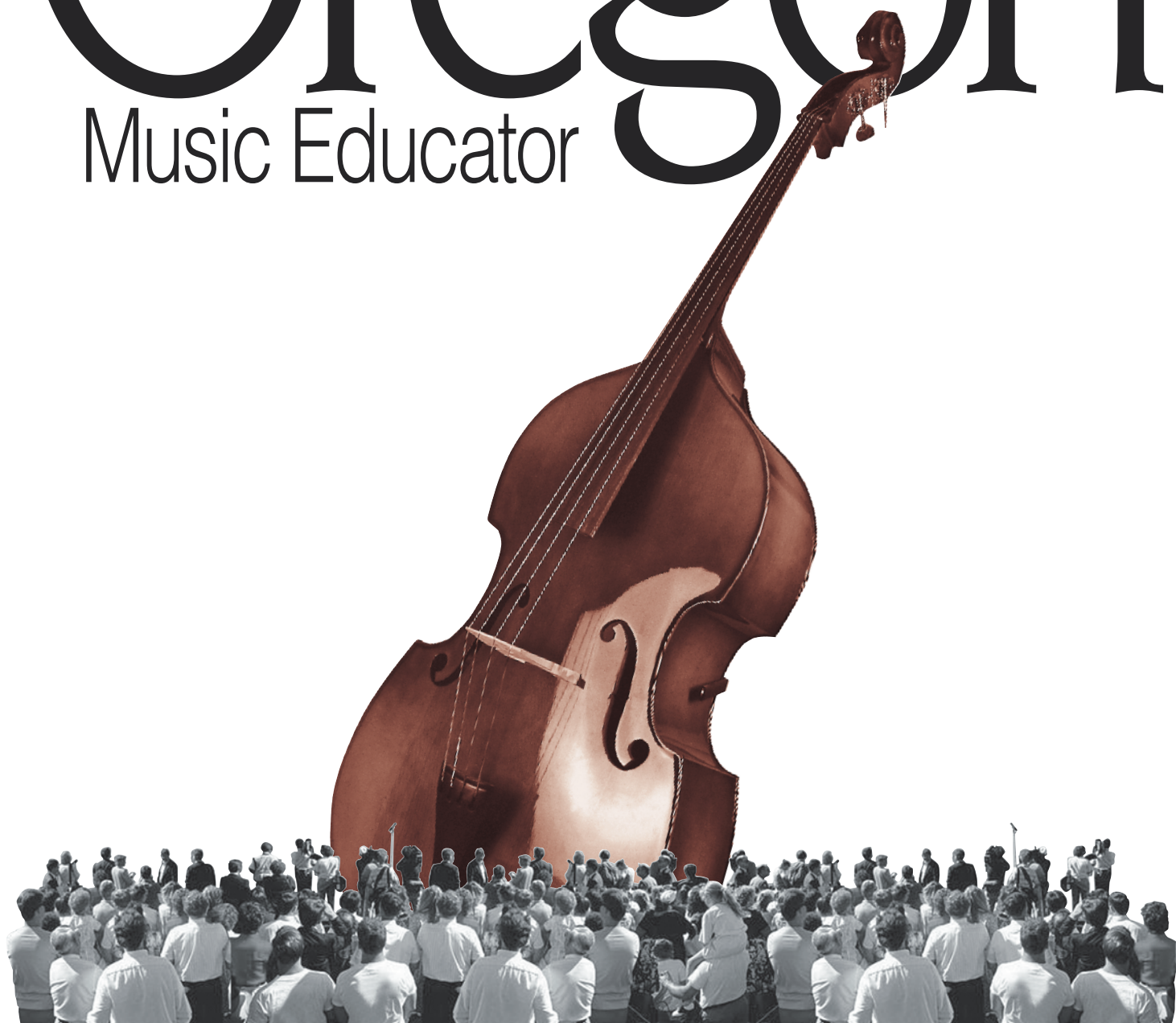


# Oregon

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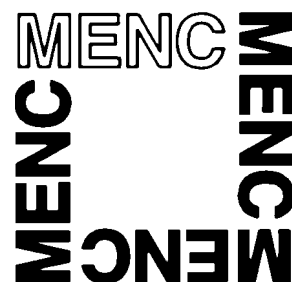
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# North By Northwest

David Weathered  
MENC NW Division President

## The Dilemma

What should I write in my first article to music educators in the 6 states who are as diverse as ours here in the Northwest? Would it be best to use this space to let you know how honored I am to be serving as your Northwest president, or do I jump right into No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the current crisis we are facing in the nation? I could probably fill more than one article with information about advocacy issues. I do feel that it is my responsibility to tell you about all the great things MENC is doing for you at the national level—and there really are many great things. Or, should I, on the verge of the birth of my second granddaughter, just show you family pictures? No, that probably won't do either.

Well, I do know my first task is to welcome you back to another school year!

After that, there really is only one direction to take: I must make sure you all are aware of the biggest change to happen to Northwest music education in many years—a change that, hopefully, will affect the majority of you only because it will cause an already very special event to become even better.

Your 6 state presidents, who compose the Northwest leadership, have voted to move the job of managing the Northwest MENC Conference and the MENC All-Northwest



ensembles from the national MENC office to local management. The control of the event now falls completely into the hands of the Northwest Board, and the role of the manager will move to the Washington Music Educators Association office. This change has been endorsed by a vote of the MENC National Executive Board and includes the assurance of a continued national MENC presence at the event.

## How did all this happen?

MENC has been slowly moving away from the business of running divisional conferences. Although there are still MENC-endorsed and/or MENC-sponsored divisional events in much of the country, for many years MENC has managed only the Eastern and the Northwest conferences. The leadership teams in both divisions and MENC have often discussed the possibility of moving this management to a local model. This change finally occurred in the Eastern division last year. That left only one divisional conference with MENC management—ours! Through very friendly, positive conversations between the Northwest division and national MENC leadership, our new locally controlled format is now in place, and the first conference under this new system will be held in February, 2009 in Spokane, Washington, at the newly remodeled Convention Center and new Exhibit Hall, and the beautiful Davenport Hotel.

The highlights of this new model are:

- More control by each state president and the Northwest Board as a whole
- A larger rebate of any profits back to each of the 6 states based on the number of attendees from the individual state
- Less expensive booths in the exhibit hall, which should increase the number of exhibitors
- Participation of the national MENC staff and leadership and the inclusion of the MENC Resource Shop
- All-Northwest ensembles at similar costs to past years in which all student fees will be used only to pay for costs and operations of the student events themselves
- Discounted online registration for conference delegates
- Online auditions and applications for All-Northwest students
- National caliber workshops, performers, and special guests
- All of this at costs comparable to past Northwest conferences!

Many details will follow as we move closer to the first locally managed Northwest Conference. I ask you to mark your calendars now, even though it is still a little less than 2 years away, and plan on attending.

The MENC Northwest Division Conference Presidents' Day Weekend: February 12-15, 2009, Spokane, Washington

I would like to end by congratulating Debbie Glaze from Portland State University, our new Northwest MENC President-elect. Debbie obviously will play a key role in this conference change, and she is excited and ready to take on the challenge.



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## Getting Up Early and Making the Difference

I come from rural Midwest types who believe what time you wake up is a defining character of your self-worth. During those early summers in my life, I would spend half the day sleeping in and the other half trying to stay ahead of the guilty voices that chased me from my subculture. Perhaps most irritating was the "Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise" proverb. Is it the sing-songy meter and rhythm of this proverb that has always annoyed me, or perhaps the notion that lack of sleep is the secret to acquiring health, riches, and wisdom? There is also the "early bird gets the worm" proverb that haunted me. The truth is, if there are worms for breakfast, I'm sleeping in. In reality, I preferred the related, and more often cited proverb, "The early bird may catch the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese."

Yogi Berra, who is now better known for his quotes than his baseball career, once stated, "I knew I was going to take the wrong train, so I left early." Now that is advice worth giving the young teacher. I love that Yogi accepted he was going to take the wrong train, and he didn't seem bothered by it. It was almost as if he expected it and was looking forward to the journey. Missteps are not to be feared but, rather, embraced as part of the process. Michael Jordan once stated, "I've failed over and over and over again in my life and that is why I succeed."



But, Yogi also stated, "You've got to be very careful if you don't know where you're going, because you might not get there." Knowing what you want to accomplish in your program and understanding how music should function at your school is as important as the everyday contact with students. The task of stepping back and thinking about who we are and what we do is not a nicety or a luxury, but a discipline each of us must cultivate. What is needed is a bit of time here and there to let us check our map, take a look around, and ensure that we are headed in the right direction. Here are a few ideas.

Learn from colleagues. Learning from colleagues is complicated when we spend most of our free time explaining to others just how much they irritate us. It is always a temptation to stoke rivalries with our counterparts by keeping an unwritten list of ways in which we outshine them. It is especially tragic when this kind of relationship arises between music teachers at the same school. Where we should be collaborators, we become competitors. Take the time to eliminate from your mind how you compare to your colleagues and focus on what makes them unique, powerful, and musical. We all possess gifts that others need to borrow, but if we place ourselves in the position where we cannot learn from our colleagues, we steal from our own potential.

Find time for a bit of reading. Read something for ideas and for inspiration. How about something on leadership or an autobiography by an influential leader, artist, or thinker? Try *A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future* by Daniel Pink. Pink outlines how he believes that the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be ruled by creative and innovative minds. Or, perhaps, *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ* by Daniel Goleman. Goleman discusses how our ability to perceive others affects our effectiveness as a leader. Both books are easy to read and will challenge you to think about who you are as a person, a teacher, and an artist.

Go to a concert. Or, should I say, go to a concert you are not performing in. Take the time to attend an inspirational concert that includes music that is performed at the very highest level of artistry. Remember that you are also an artist.


Get up early. I'm serious. Do this not to get more work done but, rather, to take time with a cup of coffee and some solitude before the work of the day demands your attention. It's time to think about how great life is, what it is that you do, and how you can enjoy what you do more.

## RAISING THE BAR



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# Past-President's Column

Pat Vandehey  
Past-President

By the time this journal is printed, we will all be back in the saddle and well into the new school year. I trust that everyone had a great summer. I did, although coming back in the fall makes me aware of the momentum loss from the previous year. This summer I made an extra effort to hone some skills that may have become a little dormant over the years. In late June I took part in the PSU conducting symposium that Edward Higgins so graciously hosted. Ed brought Allan McMurray in from the University of Colorado and co-taught the symposium. It's interesting when you have taught as long as I have (28 years), you tend to think that you are pretty good at some things. I have conducted ensembles of various kinds almost every day of my career, and several in a day, at that! It shouldn't have been surprising that Allan was able to peel back the layers almost immediately and find a multitude of things I could improve upon. It was a most humbling but stimulating experience. The good news is that I left the symposium a much better conductor than when I went in (that is, if I discipline myself to put into practice the lessons learned).

My point of sharing this is that we should never stop learning. Our jobs are too important and the culture in which we live and



teach is too fragile. It would be far too easy to become complacent in our teaching and to coast along. We all should constantly hone our skills in all areas of music education. I learn this lesson daily when teaching future music teachers. They are so fresh, so eager, and so energized. Their horizons are limitless and they are sponges,

trying to take in as much information as possible in order to prepare themselves for the job that is waiting for them. I remember that time well. My undergraduate days were filled with long discussions over coffee talking with my fellow music ed. students about our future programs. We all felt we had a corner on how to teach and what the perfect program would look like. Those conversations were full of passion, and I could hardly wait to get out and teach! Do I still have that kind of passion to learn and teach? I would like to say I do, but the reality is that I have to work much harder to achieve it. I love to teach, but my biggest fear is falling into mediocrity as I glide closer to retirement. That is the reason I participated in the conducting symposium at age 54. It was something I needed to do. I would encourage all of you to do the same. Every summer there is a choral conducting symposium at Cannon Beach with Rod Eichenberger. Ed will be hosting his annual conducting symposium at

PSU this next summer July 16-20. I strongly encourage you to look into participating in a conducting symposium, or any number of continuing education opportunities, that will stimulate your teaching.

This time of year is the planning time for our upcoming convention. It is our tradition to award those people who are outstanding in our field or who are contributors to our profession. Included in this journal are several nomination forms for the various awards that will be presented at the All-Conference Banquet on Saturday night. Each year I receive more nomination forms than the previous year. I hope this year will continue that trend. Please take the time to select and nominate those deserving individuals who make a difference. If we don't recognize our own, who will? Think of this as a wonderful form of music advocacy. It not only gets the word out that great teaching is going on in Oregon, but it also allows us to thank those whose work is truly outstanding.

Finally, as you strive for excellence in your profession, make sure you take time out for yourselves. As you all know, this job can be all consuming and can suck you dry. Find time this year to do non-musical, non-teaching activities. Variety in your lives will make you better teachers and better human beings. My hobby is woodworking. At the moment I am building a sailboat in my garage. I love to spend what free time I have working on my boat. It is relaxing and refreshing to do a creative project that no one is critiquing! An added benefit is that, when a student has yanked my chain hard and I am really angry or stressed over the encounter, I write that student's name on a plank of wood and run it through my planer. The name disappears and I feel better. Have a wonderful year!



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Cheryl Myer, A Challenge! The Middle School Orchestra: Building a Strong Program

Jim Snidero, Teaching Basic Jazz Style

Mallory Thompson, Conducting With Commitment: Finding a Visceral Connection to the Music

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# Elementary Column

Nancy Milliron  
Elementary Chair

As I sit here on my deck sipping a chai latte on this last sunny Central Oregon Saturday morning of the summer, I am pleasantly surprised at how calm I am with the beginning of the new school year only days away. Perhaps, it is because this will be my third year back at the same school, with the

same kids and their families, the same supportive colleagues, the familiar surroundings, etc. It's been a long time since I've felt that sense of security and contentment; I am so delighted to be going back to a community where kids are valued and the excellence of their education is a priority! That makes getting up and going to work everyday less of a chore and more gratifying, which is probably why I'm not stressing about the first day of school! I hope the same is true for you—if not this year, then soon.



is. For example, the card might say “getting ready for school in the morning.” One student might pantomime brushing their teeth. Another student could pretend to be taking a shower or washing their face, packing their backpack, eating breakfast, getting dressed and so on. The audience can then guess either the activity written on the card or one of the individual actions they are seeing that could lead them to figuring out what the activity is that is written on the card. It is a bit like charades but with an entire group rather than one individual.

Well, the fact remains, school is just around the corner, and what to do, or what to do differently, is always a question that lingers on our minds. I am taking a drama class this term for my master's program, and, I must admit, I was not looking forward to this particular class. However, I was inspired by what I learned in the first weekend and have decided to start the year with some theatre games.

I can see those light bulbs going on now! You can see the cooperative learning happening, the problem solving, the planning/presenting factor, etc. For me, it is just another way to spice up/enhance what I am already doing. This activity, and the many others that I plan to pull from these two resources, will hopefully give my students some fresh ideas for becoming more creative in their play and in their presentations. I hope, too, that some of my English Language Learners and quieter students will gain some courage to try new things.

The first question I ask myself, and one you most likely ask yourself, is always, “How does this relate to music?” Our national standards for music education state over and over again the importance of “understanding, analyzing, describing, and evaluating” music, specifically and in relation to the other arts and disciplines outside the arts. Drama becomes, then, another avenue for showing what you know.

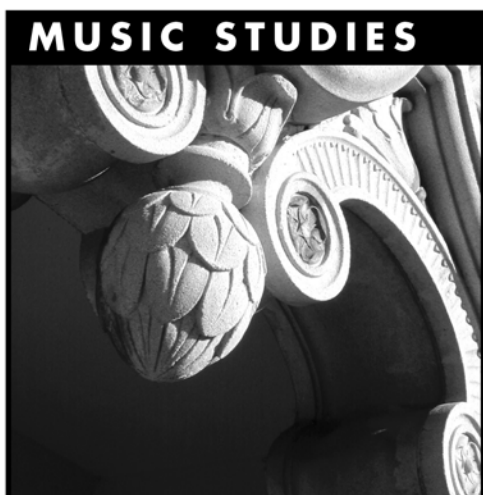
Well, there's one new idea that I plan to investigate with my students, but I'm sure that many of you have wonderful ideas to share, too, which leads me to my next thought: I would love to open up this column for anyone who would like to write an article or share an idea that they think the rest of us would benefit from. If you would like to be a guest columnist for our winter or spring OMEA journal, please email me (nmilliro@bend.k12.or.us) with your thoughts and ideas. Collaboration is a good thing!

If this approach interests you, there are two books that I would like to recommend to you:

- Theatre Games for Young Performers*, by Maria C. Novelly
- Drama in the Classroom: Creative Activities for Teachers, Parents & Friends*, by Polly Erion.

The first activity that I plan to use with my upper grades comes from Novelly's book (p. 15), “What is drama?” Simply asking the kids to brainstorm about what drama is will get them thinking about all the drama that happens around them everyday. From there, I will divide them into groups of 3 to 5 students and hand them an index card with an activity written on it. Each group will come up with ways to pantomime different actions that will get the audience to guess what that activity

REMINDER: Our 2008 OMEA conference is just around the corner, January 25-27, in Eugene! This is a fabulous conference with sessions specifically designed for elementary music educators. This year, we will have Susan Brumfield, Jim Solomon, and Doug Goodkin join us, to name a few. Several local folks will share their choral skills and tried-and-true classroom techniques with us as well. Please make an effort to be there—you won't be sorry! Look for more information coming soon to your areas, hopefully in time for your in-service day festivities.



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I. In your letter of recommendation, please address these qualifications:

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II. Provide at least three letters of commendation from any of the following: students, administrators, fellow teachers, community, or state or national leaders.

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Attach your letters of recommendation to this form and send by December 10, 2007, to

Pat Vandehey OMEA Past-President

George Fox University

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"There is no greater calling than to serve your fellow men. There is no greater contribution than to help the weak. There is no greater satisfaction than to have done it well."

— Walter Reuther

I knew I wanted to be a band teacher when I was a junior in high school. There were a few teachers who were very influential in this decision. I respected them very much. They were terrific at communicating musical ideas and stories with students.

When I told my parents that I wanted to teach, I got mixed reactions. My mom was supportive. She was probably just relieved that I didn't want to play my trumpet on a street corner to make money! My dad was less than enthusiastic. He wanted to test the level of my conviction. His comments ranged from, "There's no money in education" to "There are no opportunities for career advancement." In some ways he was right. We are not going to earn massive amounts of money in the field of education.

The rewards of teaching come through different channels. We are in a very giving profes-



sion. We give many hours to our job. We give our hearts and souls to help each student reach their potential. The rewards are better than the giving. We all look forward to those "light bulb moments" when a student finally gets a concept taught in class. We all are elated when we share a wonderful performance. The joys of service to the community and to each other far outweigh any time commitment.

I came home from school early one day this week and sat down to mindlessly watch some TV. I wanted to unwind from a busy day. I got hooked on a show. The topic of the day was about giving and service to others. One statement, in particular, got my attention:

"Not everyone can be famous, but everyone can be great. Greatness comes from service."

—The quote was attributed to Martin Luther King, Jr.

I have been a teacher in the public schools for about 25 years. During the first few years I worked hard to learn the craft of teaching. I admired the more experienced teachers who

were involved in organizing honor bands, festivals, etc. They were leaders in the profession. When I started asking how and why things worked, I was graciously shown without reservation. There are no real secrets about organization—it just takes someone willing to jump in and do something.

My point is this: We all have the opportunity to make our profession great. One just needs the courage to step up and the conviction to follow through. We all are busy in our daily activities at school. It is through the idea of service to others and to our profession that we grow into our full potential as individuals. The music profession also benefits from "new blood" becoming involved.

I challenge each of you to take a moment to think about how you can give back to the profession that has been so good to all of us. I love it when music educators call me to ask how they can help. On the other side, if you receive a call asking for help, be generous with your time and agree to help wherever you can. Take a moment to send a thank-you message to someone who inspired you, or to an educator who offered mentorship as you learned the craft of teaching.

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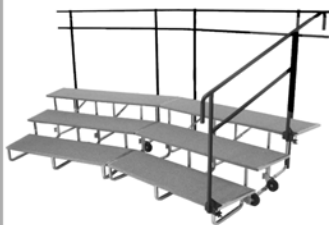


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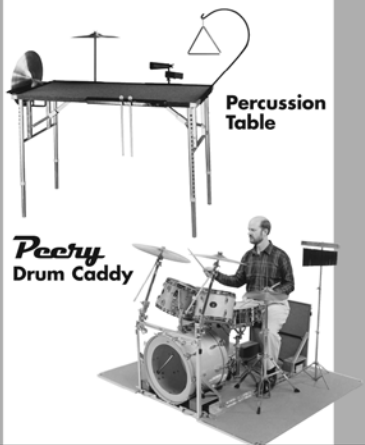
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# Choral Column

Kim Kroeger  
Choral Chair

As summer closes and our lives as Choral Educators accelerate toward warp speed, I find myself reading the September, 2007, *Choral Journal*, absorbing Patrick K. Freer's two-part article, "The Conductors' Voice: Experiencing Choral Music." Freer shares the wisdom, perceptions, and thoughts of many respected conductors, covering an array of topics from rehearsal environment to the choral experience. We begin each year with a new collection of students and voices. Freer quotes Jameson Marvin, "The importance of music in peoples' lives results from its capacity to inspire, which allows the performer and listener to momentarily join together in a mutual communion of spirit that transcends everyday life experiences." Our goals, jobs, and responsibilities as music educators are to facilitate our students' development so that they can experience performance at a higher level. The challenge is to structure an educational environment where these goals can become a reality.

I would like to recommend that each of you become a member of MENC and ACDA. Within your OMEA district, advocate and encourage all music staff members K-12 to attend the 2008 Oregon Conference in Eugene. Encourage each other to send students from the elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools to participate in the honor choirs offered by OMEA (see the OMEA website at [www.oregonmusic.org](http://www.oregonmusic.org)).

Students love to participate in events where their directors are involved. Be involved together and learn together.

I suggest two instructional books for use in your choral rehearsals, *Ear Training Immersion*



*Exercises for Choirs*, by James Jordan and *The Structures and Movement of Breathing*, by Barbara Conable. *Ear Training Immersion Exercises for Choirs* offers solfège syllable exercises in all modes. These exercises are easy to explain and give a logical approach to note and rhythm reading. *The Structures and Movement of Breathing* is a must-have primer

for each choral student. This book focuses on body alignment, breathing, and body awareness. Learn together.

Be aware of all the journals available to you: *Teaching Music*, *Journal of Research in Music Education*, *Music Educators Journal*, *Journal of Music Theory*, *Journal of Musicology*, *The Kodaly Journal*, and *The Orff Echo*; each offers a wealth of information to the music instructor. Learn together.

In closing, remember why you began your journey in this profession: passion and joy. Share ideas, concerns, projects and performances with other directors and their students. You are not alone. Learn together and enjoy!

"For me, music making is the most joyful activity possible, the most perfect expression of any emotion."

– The late Luciano Pavarotti





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## 10 Tips for Your After-School Elementary Choir

Unless you are one of the lucky ones who have a choir period scheduled into your school day, running an after-school choir program is a great way to teach children the fundamentals of singing while also building a solid performing group. Here are some tips to get you started.

1. Decide who will be in your after-school choir group. Choose your criteria carefully. Do you plan on this being open to everyone, or are you going to be selective? If you are selective, are you planning on auditioning or inviting students? Since this is a class to learn about singing at the elementary level, I would not expect students to be already trained at singing. As a teacher, I prefer desire, behavior, and commitment as my top three criteria.

2. Make sure you clear all of your ideas with your principal. If your principal is clear about the merit of your programs and the criteria you set, they can become a huge ally in dealing with others' expectations—I know my principal is.

3. Send home a permission slip that includes all the information that parents will need. This includes a calendar of the rehearsal and concert dates, concert attire, a t-shirt order form if applicable, expectations for behavior, and the number of unexcused absences you will tolerate. Don't forget to put a "return by" date on your slip!

4. Make sure you have a plan. When the kids tumble in on the first day of choir, it will be after school and probably hot outside; most likely the students will be tired, wired, and hungry and will be looking at you for direction. They will need a spot for their backpacks (and coats in wintertime). Explain to them exactly how you want that done. You will need to be at the door, directing them like a traffic cop to put their things against the wall in an orderly fashion. At the end of the session, when parents are standing at the door, having personal items organized will keep the kids from stepping all over others' belongings while searching for their own. Not a pretty sight.

5. Hang a chart on your wall with cards in it for each of your students by name. Color-code the cards. I use pink for soprano and yellow for alto. (I also highlight my music pink for soprano and yellow for alto.) As your students enter the room each class, they turn the card with their name on it over on the chart. This system allows you take roll after everyone is gone; it's easy; and it saves time.

6. Yes, you will also need to tell your students where to wait for their rides. Remember the permission slip? That's a great place to inform parents that they need to be prompt when picking up their children.

7. When selecting materials, take a look at the big picture. You will spend a lot of energy teaching these pieces. Do they make a cohesive whole? Will they work well together in a program? Are they appropriate for the level of your students? Are they tried and

true favorites? There is nothing wrong with repeating songs each year, especially if they are great learning pieces. But don't fall into the rut of repeating everything year after year. Challenge yourself each year with new material, but keep your teaching gems handy.

8. Keep your warm-ups and opening activities upbeat, fun, and consistent so that your students want to be there. The familiarity of coming in and warming up to the same routine every time helps young singers feel self-assured. They are on task, focused, and ready to learn.

9. Arrange your students by voice part and height as soon as possible. It takes time. You should plan on spending at least half of your first rehearsal time on this. You may change a few positions before the end of the period, but getting this done early in the year helps to solidify your group.

10. Last, but not least, have a dress code. Having students dress consistently for a concert not only looks good, but it also adds a sense of formality to the group. Dark slacks or skirts and matching colored tops are a simple way to make your choir look formal.

These are brief, simple tips that could be elaborated on extensively. Keeping these points in mind when planning your elementary school choir should help you to plan ahead so that you enjoy your time with your students as much as possible. Nothing takes the place of pride in a performance well done. As your chorus develops, your students will become proud to be part of a special and significant group. Don't forget to celebrate your accomplishments by celebrating with your students.



## Balance

**G**reetings friends and colleagues! I hope the year is off to an amazing and exciting start for you. I hope that all of your cellos have mastered extensions, that your violas are plentiful, your violins are eager to balance strength within the firsts and seconds, and that your basses are the smartest students in the school!

As I was preparing for the start of this school year I was feeling somehow unbalanced. I was feeling as if something were missing. I had my class lists; my instruments were ready to go out, my music chosen, my substitute folder turned in, and my staff meetings attended; my chairs and stands were out and ready. And, yet, it wasn't until



I saw the students on the first day that I once again felt mentally balanced for the school year to begin. I sometimes catch myself during the course of the school year wishing for just 15 more minutes a day without students to get that last grade report, purchase order,

e-mail, phone call, candy break, and program preparation done. Then I remember the Friday before school starts and how unbalanced I was without the students. My day always goes better once the balance check is done.

Currently, one of the things that is most in need of balance in Oregon's classroom music education is the balance of orchestras to bands and choirs. It is time for orchestras to develop a literature list, to dramatically expand the number of judges and adjudicators available

for contests, and to balance the groups that participate in state contests. We need to balance the treasure we have in full orchestras at state contest against the void that we have for medium-sized school orchestra programs.

We all desire to improve our teaching and our students' abilities to perform. As we go through the year, it is exciting to see our students go on stage to demonstrate their improvements. We are blessed to receive written and constructive feedback from judges and adjudicators about the improvements that our students demonstrate. It is important for all of us to receive this feedback. My wish is that we balance the competition with the camaraderie.

My wife, Brenda, is also an orchestra teacher in the Bend-LaPine Schools. Once a year, our groups are evaluated against themselves

*continued on page 18...*

A large advertisement for Forum Music Festivals. The background is black with white text and images of musicians. At the top, it says "Join the West Coast's Most Popular Music Festival". Below that is a diamond-shaped logo with "FORUM MUSIC FESTIVALS" and a musical note. The text describes the festival's features: "Festival performance in concert-quality venues", "Weekly festivals from mid-March through May every year!", "San Francisco Area, Anaheim Area, Los Angeles Area, San Diego Area", "Nationally known adjudicators | Motivational awards ceremony", "One-day festival itinerary includes adjudicated festival plus admission to theme park.", and "Custom overnight itinerary includes: adjudicated festival, lodging, breakfast, plus theme parks and attractions." It also provides contact information: "Visit our website or call us toll free. www.forumfestivals.com 1-888-76-FORUM (763-6786)". Images of musicians include three women singing, a boy playing a trumpet, a girl playing a flute, a boy playing a trumpet, and a girl singing.

and each other. It is always exciting for me to hear her groups and the leaps that they make from year to year and to see how my teaching is holding up to hers. Sometimes the challenges of remaining impartial to the results of our own groups and celebrating the accomplishments of others' can throw the balance off of the most important aspect of our profession, the people.

Just as with our ensembles, where we can't place all of our attention and energy into one piece of music, we must apply this diversity of our attentions to our lives as well. We all are friends, children, spouses, parents, and confidants. It is important to balance the work with the personal lives. Whenever anyone asks what we do as a vocation, all of us, with justifiable pride, say that we are orchestra

teachers. But we are also a comforter to a smashed finger, a listener about hard days, or a jovial conversationalist. Coming from a household that contains two orchestra teachers, it has taken us several years to find a balance between school and home. I sincerely hope that all of you can maintain the balance of family and work.

It is also important for us to balance our own profession. We all hear about programs from around the country being cut from both schools and districts simply because of the inability to find qualified and quality teachers. Each one of us has students who love orchestra, and each one of us is going to someday retire. Wouldn't it be an amazing world if every one of our programs produced four future orchestra teachers in our time? We all know someone who has been teaching only a short while and is feeling unbalanced in the demands that this profession makes. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the experienced and veteran teachers could help that young teacher to balance, to help them stay in this profession, the greatest job in the world? Let us work together to balance the experienced with the fresh, the excitement of classroom preparation with the anticipation of retirement, and orchestral teaching staff to the needs of our students.

In our schools we have the oldest and most proven curriculum offered. Works written hundreds of years ago are still valid and exciting for our students and audiences. It is important that we balance our concert programs with new works in addition to the classical masterpieces—both can be equally exciting for performers and audiences. It is important that we balance the driving overture with a lyrical selection. Balance.

So, as we go into this school year, let us all remember to balance our jobs and our homes, our smiles with our referrals, our competition with our education, our past with our future, and our duty to education—past, present, and future—with our passion for music and kids!

## Thank you, teachers.

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## Achieving Vertical Balance within the Band: Getting the Modern Wind Ensemble to Play the Old War Horses and Transcriptions

Composers of the modern wind ensemble have a variety of instrumental timbres from which to choose, including full band, woodwinds only, brass only, and percussion, to name but a few. The composers and arrangers of the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, however, utilized the band much in the same manner as the symphony orchestra, doubling the melodic, harmonic and rhythmic aspects of the music for a bold and aggressive sound that could be heard in outdoor concert settings. Since the inception of the modern wind ensemble in the 1950s, conductors have been asked to create more intimate sounds with their concert bands. The question then arises: How can we get our smaller, more solo-oriented, bands to perform the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century music as it was intended to be heard on the concert stage? The answer lies in the vertical balance in each section and full band ensemble. The following are a few ways to address vertical balance problems for the modern wind band.

### RAISING THE BAR



Oregon Music Educators Association  
2008 Annual Conference and All-State  
Eugene, Oregon  
January 24-27, 2008

Question: How do I address a stacked dynamic (one dynamic for every part simultaneously)?

Answer: If we were to allow our musicians to perform the written dynamic, it would soon turn into a trombone and percussion duet with flute, trumpet, and alto saxophone accompaniment. Consider changing the dynamics for each section. The following is a suggestion to balance a stacked forte dynamic marking in “war horses” and orchestral transcriptions:

Flutes (mp), oboes (mp), bassoons (f), clarinets (mf), bass clarinets (f), alto saxes (mp), tenor saxes (mf), baritone saxes (mf), horns (mf), trumpets (mp), trombones (mf), euphoniums (f), tubas (f), snare drum (mp), bass drum (mf), cymbals (mp), timpani (mf)

Question: It is so loud in the melody. How can I achieve better balance if the music is written with so many on the melody?

Answer: In many of the “war horses” and transcriptions, arrangers simply gave the melody to the flutes, clarinets, oboes, trumpets and, sometimes, saxophones in unison. Unless parts are excluded, there is no way to balance this. The melodic instruments must be performed at a much lower dynamic than the chordal outline, the counter-melody, or the bass line. Consider having fewer musicians perform the melody at any given time.

Question: Are there any quick fixes to achieve a vertical balance (pyramid)?

Answer: Try this technique from Frank Battisti. The equalizer: Assign musicians to particular notes that spell out a concert F chord. Join your fingers together and flatten out the arms to the side to simulate an equalizer on a stereo. Assign the upper register musicians to your left elbow, your middle voices to your conjoined fingers, and your lower sounding instruments to your right elbow. Let the musicians know that, when they see their assigned elbow or fingers raise up, they should

play slightly more loudly. The other voices will play slightly more softly. Once the musicians begin to play, change the balance of the band by raising and lowering the left elbow, the fingers, or the right elbow. After a couple times through the sequence, have the right elbow slightly higher than the fingers and left elbow. This is a pyramid balance. If at any point after this exercise you need to address balance, remind the musicians by placing your hands in the position that best describes their current balance, and then move the hands to the right elbow raised position.

Another technique to vertically balance the ensemble requires placing the musicians in pods around the room with each pod containing an entire choir of instruments (i.e., flutes together, clarinets together, etc.) This arrangement will serve as a mini sectional within the full band setting. With the conductor in the center of the room, musicians, who will be looking at one another, will have the opportunity to hear their choir, blend their tones, and work toward achieving balance within the full band setting. This technique reinforces the importance of the chamber ensemble sound and allows the musicians to hear all parts within their section, thus achieving a pyramid balance from each section.

Wind band balance issues continue to be important to conductors and composers for the medium. These concerns should be addressed by the conductor and performers to ensure consistency from one piece to the next. The aforementioned techniques are but a couple exercises to aid the wind ensemble conductor in rehearsal preparations for the “war horses” and transcriptions of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

*Christopher Chapman is the Acting Director of Bands for the Oregon State University Department of Music, where he conducts the Symphonic Wind Ensemble, the Concert Band, and the Jazz Ensemble; and teaches courses in music education, and graduate and undergraduate instrumental conducting.*



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# OMEA Conference Registration Policy

During the past several years, the OMEA Board has enforced registration policies for teachers with students who participate in All-State honor ensembles. This action includes the enforcement of a policy that stipulates that teachers failing to register and pay for the conference are not allowed to send students the following year unless the back registration is paid. Previously, there had not been any penalties for those who violated the policy. The need for fairness and consistency, however, led the OMEA Board to make a decision to enforce the policy and to notify teachers accordingly

Because some confusion still exists as to the specifics of these policies, I thought it would be good to provide another printing of the policies and their rationale. The policies in question are as follows:

## OMEA Board Policy: All-State Honor Groups – Teachers

1) Middle school directors must be registered and present at all conferences where they have a Middle School Honor Group participant(s). 9/23/2000

2) High school directors sending students to the All-State Honor Groups are required to register for the conference. A music teacher from the participating school or and OMEA approved representative must also be in attendance at the conference. 1/12/2002

3) Teachers of all students of all ages in OMEA Honor Groups shall be required to register for the full conference, pay in full, and be current MENC members. If such is not the case, that school's specific discipline (i.e., Band, orchestra, choir) will be sanctioned from participating in honor groups until the bill is paid in full. 5/22/2004

## Arguments against the policy.

Arguments against the policy have mostly focus on the two following points:

1. The unfairness of students being punished as a result of the actions of their teacher. The basic point is why should students have to suffer? If we are concerned about students, then they should come first. We should never restrict student learning because of the teacher's mistakes.

2. The unfairness of requiring teachers to register so that their students can participate. Students already pay to participate, so why does the teacher also have to pay? Since teachers already are required to be a member of OMEA/MENC, is this not a required second membership?

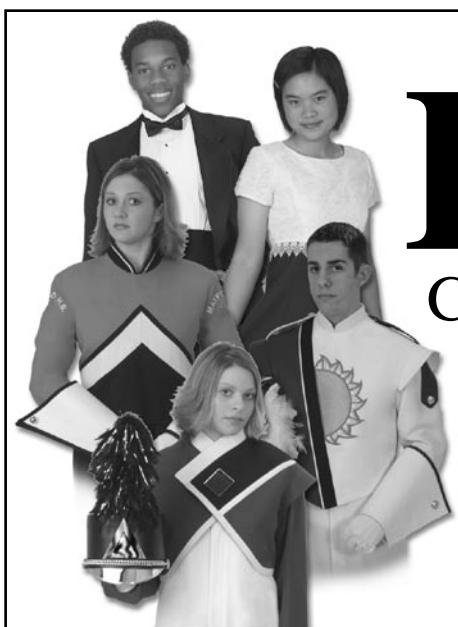
OMEA exists for Oregon's music teachers. The purpose of OMEA is to serve the music teachers of Oregon. One of the ways we do that is to provide music opportunities for students of OMEA members. It is important

to remember that, while we are devoted to the music education of students, the focus of our service is not actually to students, but to music teachers. Because we provide an educational opportunity that teachers are not able to do on their own, the organization of events, such as the All-State ensembles, is vital.

Teachers benefit from the All-State Honor Groups in a number of ways. First of all, they benefit because they are able to provide their students with a transformational music experience that they cannot provide in their school program. Their students interact with other music students around the state and develop new relationships. Their students bring attitudes and advocacy back to the rehearsal. While all of these outcomes certainly benefit the students, the primary goal is to support OMEA members in their professional work.

Someone should pay! This misconception is one of finances. We all are guilty in our lives of having the belief system, "someone should pay." When we say that, we mean, "someone else should pay." Of course, students pay to participate in the ensemble, and their fee is vital in paying the expenses of the All-State ensemble.

The key question is, who pays for the existence of OMEA? Who should pay? Of course, someone should pay. I wish it were someone else, but for better or worse, we



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# for Teachers of Participating Students

are the “someone else.” A strong and active OMEA ensures that the projects of OMEA continue, including All-State ensembles. So who should pay? Well, the folks who should pay are the ones who benefit the most. Do you benefit when your students spend 3 days with other like-minded musicians studying at the altar of music with one of your profession’s best conductors? Yes, you do. You benefit because your students benefit. Do you benefit enough to support the organization with your participation? That is a question all teachers must answer.

Should students suffer because of the failure of their teacher to register? Well, ideally, the students should not have to suffer because of their teacher. But remember that OMEA is not a music association for music students. It is a music association for music teachers. Membership has its benefits, and the willingness to support OMEA allows teachers to provide opportunities to their students for life-altering musical experiences. This is not an OSAA event, where the state supports an activity for the benefit of Oregon students. This is an event organized and sponsored by the OMEA, a professional, non-tax supported, tax exempt 501(c)(6), association to benefit music teachers.

Don’t the students already pay? Well, yes and no. They do pay for the expenses related specifically to the All-State ensemble. But, their fees do not pay for the organization that makes that musical event possible. The All-State ensembles are the fruit of our organization, and it is a very powerful fruit indeed. But it is not the tree. The tree comprises the many v olunteers, the Executive Manager, the webpage, and the structure of the organization: all of which cost money. While MENC dues pay for a portion of these expenses, the organization could not survive without finances raised from annual conferences. Our organization would cease to exist, as would its activities, such as All-State ensembles.

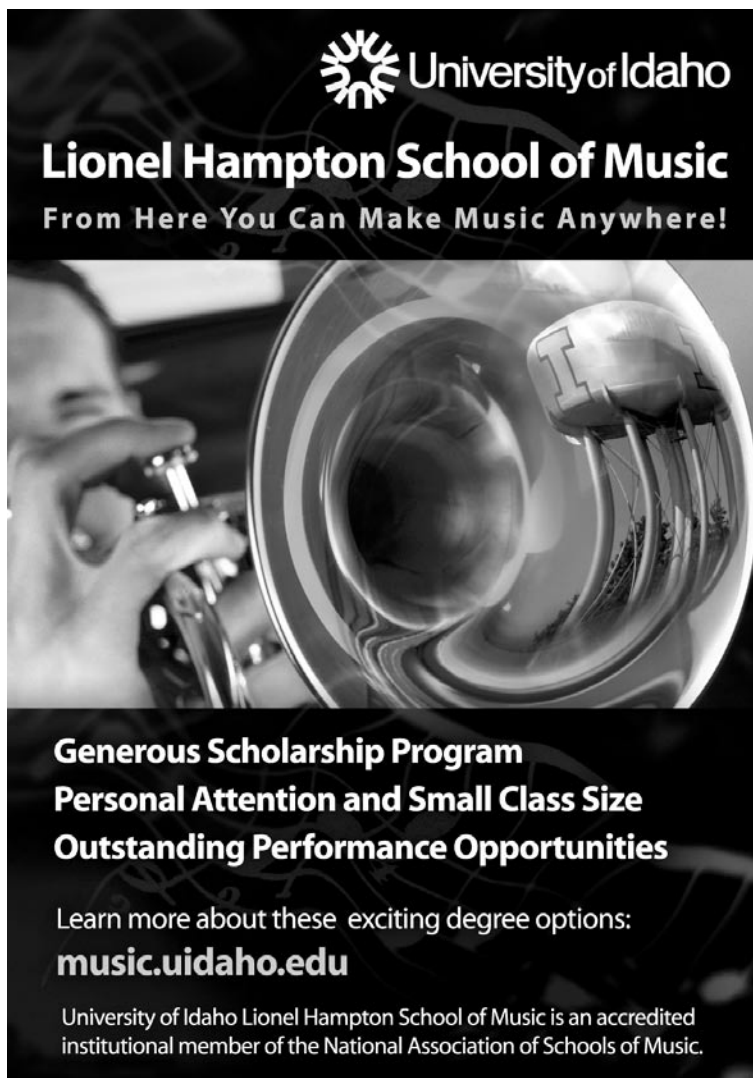
In these days of budget cuts, paying for another conference and missing more school can be difficult. Yes, this is a very important point, and we must continue to


remember this in our discussions of how we plan our events. When one has to pay not only MENC/OMEA dues, but also the conference registration, room and board while attending the conference, and perhaps, even pay for a substitute teacher, it can become very difficult for teachers to participate. In a fair world, school districts would support vital professional development such as an OMEA conference. In an ideal world, school districts would require their teachers to attend and they would pay for all the teacher’s expenses. We understand that these Board decisions can hit you right in the wallet, and Board members attending the conference understand this because they pay the same conference fees and other related expenses (only Board members whose duties preclude

them from active participation in the conference activities (e.g., All-State managers, etc.) are relieved of the conference fee).

Again, the purpose of this article is to explain the OMEA Board’s recent actions regarding the enforcement of this policy. Please remember that the Board is simply a collection of music teachers just like you who volunteer their time and effort beyond their normal teaching responsibilities. Those of you with comments and ideas regarding this article and the above-discussed policies are encouraged to communicate your thoughts. I would love to hear from you.

Steven Zielke  
szielke@oregonstate.edu



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# John C. McManus

## Distinguished Teacher Award

### **John C. McManus defined the standard of service for music educators through a life of selfless**

service to his students and colleagues. He inspired his students to achieve the highest of performance standards and a comprehensive music education. He taught instrumental, vocal, and general music, and music education to students of all ages. John compiled extensive historical records of music education in the Northwest. He served OMEA in positions including President, Historian, Directory Editor, Retired Newsletter Editor, and Chairman of the Retired Oregon Music Educators. He offered leadership to MENC at the Northwest and National levels. John was awarded the Oregon Teacher of the Year award in 1965, the Distinguished Music Educator Award by the Northwest Bandmasters Association in 1966, the Distinguished Service award by OBDA in 1986, the OMEA Outstanding Music Educator Award in 1989, the MENC Distinguished Service award in 1989 and the OMEA Distinguished Service Award in 1996. The Oregon Music Educators Association presents an annual award in honor of John C. McManus for distinguished service in the field of Music Education. Do you know a music educator who embodies the spirit of John C. McManus? If so, please nominate him/her to receive the John C McManus Distinguished Teacher Award. This award is based on the outstanding leadership of John C. McManus, former OMEA President, Historian, Director Editor, Retired Newsletter Editor, and Chairman of the Retired Oregon Music Educators. Nominees must be a current or retired Oregon music educator, and current MENC/OMEA member in good standing

### **Nominee Information:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Employment: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Nominator Information:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Nomination Procedure: A strong application typically includes letters of recommendation from other music teachers, colleagues and students/parents which should address the nominee's significant professional achievements and career contributions, ways the nominee demonstrates excellence as a leader, teacher and musician. Consider the following guidelines when writing or gathering nominations:

1. Attempt to keep the letter to one page in length.
2. Describe the nature of the relationship to the nominee (former student, colleague, etc.).
3. When describing strengths of the individual, support them with specific examples/episodes of how they were demonstrated.
4. Factual information is preferred to subjective judgments. If an opinion is expressed, identify it as an opinion, explaining the circumstances upon which you base your opinion.

OMEA will solicit a resume from the nominee or a family member as Part II of the nomination procedure. Candidates selected for the award will be recognized at the All-Conference Banquet of the OMEA Convention.

To nominate, send information by December 10th to:

Patrick Vandehey, George Fox University, 414 N. Meridian St., Newberg, Oregon 97132

During my freshman year of college, I made what for me was a mistake: I joined a "social" sorority, thinking I would make friends for life. As it turns out, my best friends today are those with whom I share my music and my profession as a music teacher and a musician. I can think of many classmates I never got to know because I failed to become involved in a professional organization as an undergraduate.

I have remedied that error and am now active in a number of professional organizations. These groups provide a network of colleagues with whom I share teaching ideas, campus exchanges, performance and adjudication opportunities, and, perhaps primarily, that which is my passion, music and music instruction.



A new academic year is beginning, and with it comes the opportunity to be a link in an important professional chain: CMENC. Students are allowed to join CMENC at a nominal rate, comparatively speaking, and, as a member, may attend the same conferences that teachers and professors attend, receive periodicals and electronic information, and be a part of a network for jobs and life-long learning. There seems to be no end to the information that MENC has for us. And, building a strong university chapter can bring the opportunity to make personal and professional friendships that last a lifetime. Your CMENC chapter can be an enviable hub of activity for the department of music at your school and a source for music making, music teaching, community outreach, service to your campus, and social exchange. Last year alone, our

chapter presented a musical theater review at a retirement center, painted the music education room, helped to teach music to children at the campus preschool, designed and sold T-shirts for a fund-raiser, attended both the OMEA conference and the Northwest MENC in Portland, and served countless receptions for faculty and students at a nominal fee, which was a real convenience. As a face for our university and department, CMENC has been highly positive.

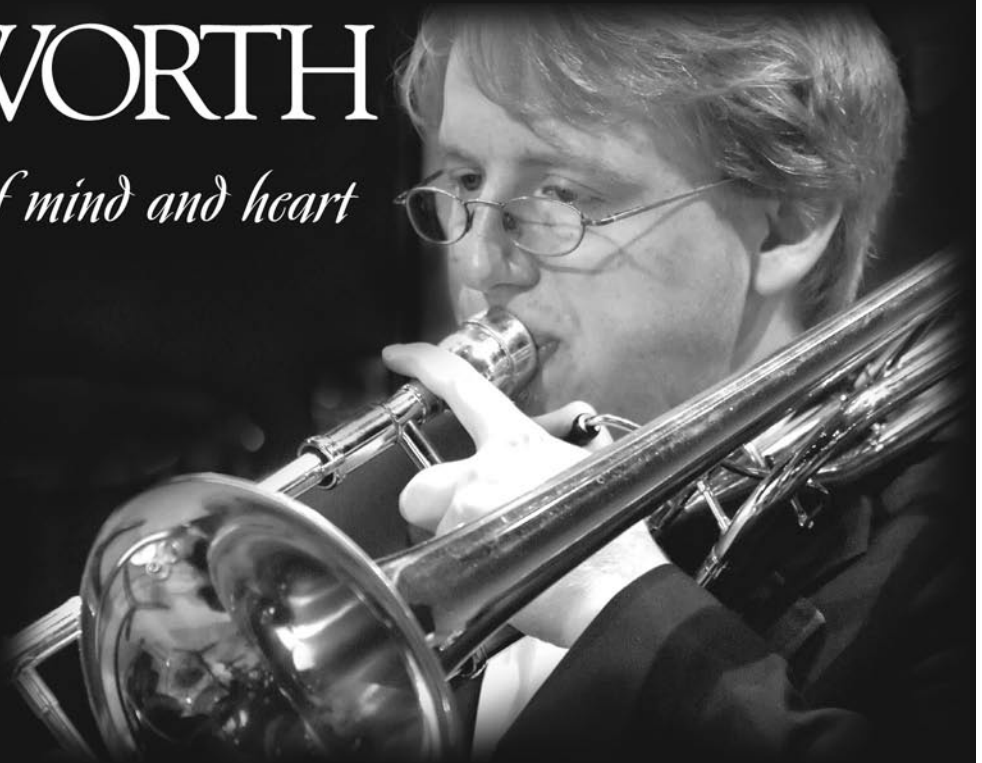
I encourage each campus to establish or strengthen the membership and activities of a CMENC chapter at your campus. Professionalism doesn't begin with your first job; it begins now! And MENC is so important in that process. Finally, I hope to see many, many students at our OMEA conference in Eugene, January 25-27, 2008. CMENC will have two interesting sessions that I honestly don't think you'll want to miss—more on that later. I hope my students will meet all of you and that you can learn from each other.

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## Tune In to Reading

### Tune In to Reading Technology Raises Literacy Levels in Recent Study

A computer software technology that started out as a popular learn-to-sing tool is now creating great new harmony in other areas of education. The technological concept behind Electronic Learning Products' (ELP) *SingingCoach* software is now showing remarkable promise as a literacy-training tool. ELP's new *Tune In to Reading* program uses that original learn-to-sing technology from *SingingCoach* and applies it to reading—allowing students to improve reading skills significantly, essentially while singing songs on the computer.

Based on 2 years of research, the *Tune In to Reading* singing software program helps students improve in all five areas of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. ELP is a software platform company that uses its real-time pitch tracking and speech recognition technology to create products for an increasingly wide range of educational purposes.

### The First Note: SingingCoach

Since 2001, *SingingCoach* software has allowed anyone to become a better singer simply by using his or her personal computer. The program comes with 20 singing lessons and a high-fidelity headset with a built-in microphone. *SingingCoach* uses a patent-pending vocal range analyzer that tracks and displays the pitch of the singer, comparing it to the correct pitch of the chosen song.

The software's pitch tracking line gives real-time feedback on singers' performances as they sing. This allows them to see and hear, note for note, exactly where their pitch, rhythm and tempo need to be corrected. At the end of each song performance, the software calculates and displays a score from 1 to 100, giving users an immediate report on vo-

cal progress. For more *SingingCoach* product information go to the ELP website at [www.elpcorp.com/ReadingabstractUSF.pdf](http://www.elpcorp.com/ReadingabstractUSF.pdf).

### The Next Verse: Tune In to Reading



Two years ago, the University of South Florida (USF) expressed interest in the *SingingCoach* product line and began a pilot study to determine if *SingingCoach* could help struggling middle schoolers improve their reading.

The results showed that the product improved the student's reading level by 1 full year after having used *SingingCoach* for just 9 weeks. That led ELP to the development of the new literacy product *Tune In to Reading*, an intervention program designed to address the components of reading.

Much like the *SingingCoach*, the *Tune In to Reading* program uses a micro-phoned headset linked to any home or school computer. It is a computer program that leverages the relevant technology from *SingingCoach* and adds automated on-screen reading assessment, advanced speech recognition for fluency, and corrective feedback down to the specific letter and phoneme being mispronounced.

After the initial study, the Florida Department of Education sponsored a wide-scale replication of the USF pilot study across 500 students in the state. The results have been reported with similarly remarkable results at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Additional testing includes an MIT study this fall, which will have test students taking part in a brain scan before and after the ninth week *Tune In to Reading* session. Designed with teachers in mind, lesson plans can be created for a student with an individual need or for the entire class. ELP even has implemented professional grant writing services to help school districts implement *Tune In to Reading* at no cost.

A complete abstract detailing the *Tune In to Reading* program from birth to its bright future

is available upon request or by going to the ELP website at [www.elpcorp.com](http://www.elpcorp.com).

The push in our nation's schools is to improve reading and math scores according to No Child Left Behind edicts. Of course, as music educators we have our own curriculum to teach; however, it is wonderful to be able to include books within our music program. Using a musical approach is a wonderful way to bring books to life by adding a melody and instruments to the story line.

There are so many books. Ask your school librarian to help you find books with repeating phrases, such as these:

*Hand, Hand, Fingers, Thumb* by Al Perkins. Publisher: Random House. 1969. ISBN: 978-0-394-81076-8. Grade Level: Early Childhood

*In the Small, Small Pond*, by Denise Fleming. Publisher: Henry Holt and Company. 1993. ISBN: 978-0-80-505983-0. Grade Level: Early Childhood

*In the Tall, Tall Grass*, by Denise Fleming. Publisher: Henry Holt and Company. 1995. ISBN: 978-0-80-503941-2. Grade Level: Early Childhood

*Jump, Frog, Jump*, by Robert Kalan. Publisher: HarperCollins Children's Books. 2003. ISBN: 978-0-688-09241-2. Grade Level: Early Childhood  
This book is also available in Spanish.

*Leaf Man*, by Lois Ehlert. Publisher: Harcourt. 1991. ISBN: 978-0-152-66197-7. Grade Level: Early Childhood

*Red Leaf, Yellow Leaf*, by Lois Ehlert. Publisher: Harcourt. 1991. ISBN: 978-0-152-66197-7. Grade Level: Ages 4-8

*Possom Come A-Knockin'*, by Nancy Van Laan. Publisher: Dragonfly Books. 1992. ISBN: 978-0-679-83468-7. Grade Level: Early Childhood

*continued on page 29...*

# Outstanding Administrator Award

---

Nominees must:

- currently be working in Oregon
- show outstanding achievement/support in the total music education program at level for which he/she is responsible
- promote good relationships with music faculty
- support and/or contribute by participating in community cultural events

## Nominee Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Employment: \_\_\_\_\_

## Nominator Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Please Complete Part I of the nomination procedure

**Please include a list of all other music teachers and contact information (including email) for each music teacher that is served by this administrator as a part of the nomination. Nominations that do not include this additional information will not be considered**

## Part I — Nomination Procedure

A strong application typically includes letters of recommendation from other music teachers, colleagues and students/parents which should address the nominee's significant professional achievements and career contributions, ways the nominee demonstrates excellence as an administrator and the nominee's interest and involvement in the total music education program.

Consider the following guidelines when writing or gathering nominations:

1. Attempt to keep the letter to one page in length
2. Describe the nature of the relationship to the nominee (former student, colleague, etc.)
3. When describing strengths of the individual, support them with specific examples/episodes of how they were demonstrated.
4. Factual information is preferred to subjective judgments. If an opinion is expressed, identify it as an opinion, explaining the circumstances upon which you base your opinion.

## Part II

OMEA will solicit a resume from the nominee or a family member as Part II of the nomination procedure. Candidates selected for the award will be recognized at the OMEA All-Conference Banquet.

To nominate, send information and application by December 10<sup>th</sup> to:

Patrick Vandehey  
George Fox University  
414 N. Meridian St.  
Newberg, Oregon 97132





# Outstanding Music Educator

---

Nominees must:

- exemplify outstanding achievement in the field of music education
- be members of OMEA
- currently teaching in Oregon

## Nominee Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail (if known): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of employment: \_\_\_\_\_

Award level: (circle one)    Elementary    Middle/Jr. High    High School    College/University

## Nominator Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail (if known): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete Part I of the nomination procedure

## Part I — Nomination Procedure

A strong application typically includes letters of recommendation from other music teachers, colleagues and students/parents which should address the nominee's significant professional achievements and career contributions, ways the nominee demonstrates excellence as an administrator and the nominee's interest and involvement in the total music education program.

Consider the following guidelines when writing or gathering nominations:

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3. When describing strengths of the individual, support them with specific example/episodes of how they were demonstrated.
4. Factual information is preferred to subjective judgments. If an opinion is expressed, identify it as an opinion, explaining the circumstances upon which you base your opinion.

## Part II

OMEA will solicit a resume from the nominee or a family member as Part 2 of the nomination procedure. Candidates selected for the award will be recognized at the Gala Banquet of the OMEA Convention.

To nominate, send information and application by December 10<sup>th</sup> to:

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Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

School Name \_\_\_\_\_

School Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred? Address:  Home  Work

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