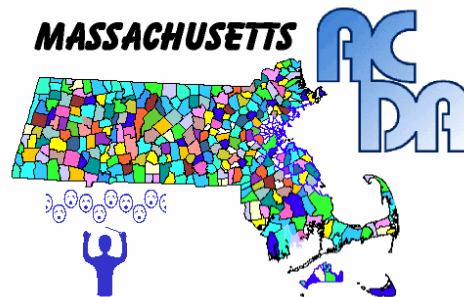


# MASS SINGS

A publication of the Massachusetts Chapter  
of the American Choral Directors Association



[www.massacda.org](http://www.massacda.org)

April 2006



Kayla Werlin  
President, MassACDA

## CONGRATULATIONS!

Friends,

It was a pleasure to see so many of you at the Eastern Division Convention in New York. And we can all take great pride in the many roles Massachusetts members played in the convention whether on the convention committee or as performers, presenters or presidents.

First of all, a former president of the Massachusetts chapter, E. Wayne Abercrombie, is currently division president and spent two years planning the convention. All right – full disclosure here: yes, Wayne is my husband, and I'm glad it's all over and I have him back!

Next, the convention honoree Alice Parker is one of our own as well. Alice maintains a busy composing, teaching and conducting life based at her family home in Western Massachusetts.

I must make special mention of our Vice-President and Treasurer, Bob Eaton. You will remember reading Bob's letter to the ACDA National Executive Committee in which he expressed concern about the way honor choirs had been run. His strong commitment to young people and music led to his acceptance of the position of Honor Choir Chair for the division. For the first time scholarships were offered to participants, and Eastern Division is leading the way in opening the honor choir experience to all.

Tom Berryman served as Interest Sessions chair, coordinating the needs of some 25 presenters and providing an incredible buffet ranging from yodeling to Brahms.

Nick Page was on hand to lead the assembled in song. More about Nick follows – he is the recipient of our 2006 Choral Excellence Award.

John Delorey served as Technology Chair, and his students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute were on hand to document and digitize.

Three of our members serve as division Repertoire and Standards Chairs: KC Conlan, children's choirs; Bill Pappazisis, Senior High Choirs; Jonathan Hirsh, Women's Choirs.

Four of our members had choirs selected to perform in concert hours: Matthew Garrett's Handel & Haydn Society Youth Chorus; Jonathan Hirsh's Smith College Glee Club; Mallorie Chernin's Amherst College Concert Choir; and Catharine Melhorn's Mount Holyoke Glee Club.

Composer Clifton J. Noble, Jr. had selections performed by the Young People's Chorus of New York, Smith College and Mount Holyoke.

We were represented in the Interest Sessions by John Delorey, Ann Howard Jones, Brad Wells, and Marie Stultz.

Congratulations to all of our Massachusetts members who contributed to the convention. My sincere apologize to anyone I may have left off the list. You are truly a gifted group of colleagues, and I feel honored to work with all of you.

— Kayla

<i>Congratulations!</i>	1
<i>Warming Up Your Altos</i>	2
<i>Choral Excellence Award</i>	3
<i>Advice for Women's Choirs</i>	4
<i>Welcome, Gretchen Preneta</i>	4
<i>Vocal Health Workshop</i>	5
<i>Into the Quagmire</i>	6
<i>Summer Wkshop Clinicians</i>	8
<i>Summer Wkshop Schedule</i>	9
<i>Jazz Director Reflections</i>	10
<i>ACDA Calendar</i>	11
<i>ACDA Contact Information</i>	12

We invite you to explore our website for conference and workshop information, calendar, job listings, Executive Board contacts, our online newsletter, & more.

Email your suggestions for features you'd like to see on our site to

[web@massacda.org](mailto:web@massacda.org).

## Warming Up Your Altos

Michelle Graveline, MassACDA R & S Chair for Community Chorus

In adult choruses populated by amateur recreational singers, the altos are often the section that gets overlooked when trying to improve the sound. Longtime altos can be good readers who don't have the obvious vocal problems that tend to occur in the soprano section. If they are singing the right notes more or less in tune, directors tend to leave them alone. However, mature altos, like sopranos, who have not really had any substantial voice study, are apt to have a number of bad vocal habits. While the director cannot totally change these habits, s/he can and should urge them to develop a beautiful, warm tone as much as possible in the course of rehearsal. It can dramatically improve the sound of the entire choir.

At the risk of oversimplification, one can identify two types of alto sound that often occur in a typical amateur adult chorus. The first type of alto we find in these amateur choruses is one who is fairly loud and has the tendency to sing exclusively in chest voice. The alto who has been singing that way a long time tends to produce a tone that is unpleasantly strong and sounds suspiciously like Ethel Merman. This alto is most likely the proud leader of the section because she's a pretty good reader. I like to call her the alpha alto.

The other type of alto has a somewhat meeker type of tone. She sings in a light chest voice up to about F4 and then a light breathy tone beyond that, fading out about C5 (C4 is middle C). There is no energy in her sound, and she is petrified of standard alto part high notes such as D5 to E5. She depends on the alpha alto to carry the section through the tough times. She is part of the herd of alto sheep, or follower altos.

Most, if not all, of these singers have poor breath management. Their tone, as well as that of the other sections, can be improved with better posture and breathing habits. However, giving them occasional exhortations to sit up straight and support the tone is not enough to help them. More specific instruction is needed from the director, who in addition to dealing with poor tone has to contend with flimsy folding chairs that don't promote good posture, tired singers rehearsing at night after a day's work, and the usual assortment of physical problems that occur in mid-life and old age.

The system of *appoggio* breath management is the one recommended by many leading vocal pedagogues and scientists, including the eminent Richard Miller and Shirlee Emmons. It is very not at all difficult to train your singers to use this system. The main components are a high sternum and expanded ribs with low shoulders. By raising the arms above the head, then lowering them along with the shoulders, keeping the sternum high and rib cage expanded, your singers will be in a good position for optimal breath management. The sternum must not collapse during the

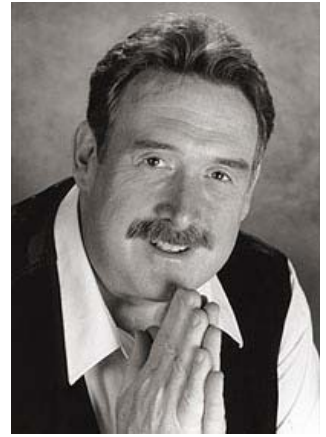
singing. Teaching your altos to maintain this position, which Richard Miller calls the "noble" position, should help their sound by giving them the ability to keep the breath energy. For a more detailed and very readable discussion of how to use this technique with your singers, read the excellent new book by Shirlee Emmons and Constance Chase, *Prescriptions for Choral Excellence* (Oxford U. Press, 2006).

To improve the alto tone, the director should generally try to get the altos to work more in head voice, and with perseverance, to also work to mix the head voice with the chest voice. The altos should be encouraged in warm-ups to sing beyond the usual choral alto range. If there is resistance from the altos to sing high (D5-F5), try asking them to speak a line in a Julia Child voice. All your altos will know who Julia Child was, and having them speak in imitation of her full-bodied voice will usually produce some laughter (always a good relaxant) and a range of high tones that they can then vocalize on. Another image/sound connection that is useful is the poor woman on the opening of the PBS program *Mystery!* She is swooning over a tombstone, holding a hanky, and crying on a high pitched "Uh" in what one could call head voice. When the director demonstrates, the singers instantly get the picture and imitate the cry (more laughter). Then have them sing a descending line in the G4-D5 range, keeping the cry in the voice, without a glottal attack. Then try having them sing a full scale downward from D5 on "Uh" (IPA [ʌ]), making sure they keep the tone of the high voice on the lower notes. If the director demonstrates what is incorrect, exaggerating a honking chest tone on E4 and D4, and then demonstrates it properly, they will get the picture. This can be particularly useful for smoothing out the edgy sound of the alpha altos in the area of D4-G4, where they are often offensive. On the other hand, the full tone of the Julia voice or the cry of the *Mystery!* lady will give a little warmth to the bland tone of the follower altos in the upper half of the octave.

With concert deadlines constantly looming, there always seems to be precious little time to work on vocal technique in a once-a-week rehearsal. Try to focus on a few goals like good breath management and incorporating the head voice into the tone of your altos with everything they do. With frequent repetition, they will get the picture, and will only need quick reminders after a while. Have the other sections listen and comment on how improved their sound becomes. Finally, keep referring to books that deal with specifics of vocal technique, such as the one mentioned above. They offer a wealth of information on dealing with specific problems, and you as director are probably the only voice teacher that most of these folks will have. Have a beautiful sound in your mind and then develop a plan to achieve that sound with your singers.

## Nick Page Receives Massachusetts ACDA 2006 Choral Excellence Award

Kayla Werlin, President of MassACDA



**Nick Page**  
Photo by Susan Wilson

One of my favorite memories of Nick Page is the day he came to Williams Middle School in Longmeadow. As part of our World Cultures Celebration Week, we invited Nick to do a “Power Sing” with the entire school. And we sang! All 400 of us. Even the 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys sang. I know many of you have experienced Nick’s magic, and I’m glad we can offer him our Choral Excellence Award this year.

We played phone tag for a day or two. I called and left Nick a message. He called me back and got my husband. He said “I got a prank call from someone claiming to be your wife who said I had won an ACDA award.” I called him back and assured him that the award was real, that it had come from his colleagues’ nominations, and that our award committee was thrilled to be able to honor him.

**KW:** What are your earliest musical memories?

**NP:** My family sang folk music at home every Saturday night. I sang in a Boys’ Choir, and I remember singing the music of Alice Parker. I grew up listening to Beethoven Symphonies, but also Miriam Makeba, Theodore Bikel and the Weavers.

**KW:** What were some of your most important early experiences in choral music?

**NP:** Singing in church choir. Louise Goni was the youth choir director. Francis Judd Cooke from the New England Conservatory was the organist and adult choir director. Every Christmas he had the congregation come to church 30 minutes early so he could teach them the parts for the Hallelujah Chorus.

**KW:** Tell us about your path as a professional musician.

**NP:** I played double bass and went to Ithaca College where I studied composition. I composed an oratorio called “Comic Requiem” for Barbershop Quartet and Double Bass Quartet.

I studied conducting with Lorna Cooke deVaron at NEC. Recently I’ve returned to the study of conducting, including lessons with Darren Dailey of the Boston Children’s Chorus, because the art has changed so much since my college days.

I got a job teaching high school in Meriden, New Hampshire. The choir began with 9 kids. So I brought in the football team, and soon there were 100 kids in the choir.

From 1983 to 1986 I worked with the Chicago Children’s Choir, and that was a wonderful experience. I worked with Keith Hampton there. And I had my first piece published, “Niska Banja” [KW – which so many of us know and love]. Now I have forty pieces published.

I taught grades K-8 music in Cambridge, and I loved that. In 1990 I formed the Mystic Chorale.

**KW:** You grew up in Lexington, which doesn’t offer the

diversity of a large urban area like Chicago or Cambridge. How did you get interested in World Music and in community involvement in singing?

**NP:** In high school I met an exchange student from Kenya, and that had a strong impact on me. I was also influenced by my family’s involvement in the civil rights movement. Other important influences were Jack Langstaff and Revels, and a workshop I attended with Ysaye Marie Barnwell of Sweet Honey in the Rock in 1987. Now I’ve worked all over the US, as well as Costa Rica, Ireland, Scotland and Germany.

**KW:** Any final thoughts?

**NP:** I’m doing what I can to make the world a better place. There were five boys in my family, and we were raised to believe that each one of us could contribute, and that we were obligated to do so.

Note: Nick has a new book, “Sing With Us,” and a new choral series, “Nick Page: Sing With Us,” both published by Hal Leonard. They are intended to help us do what Nick does so well – get our audiences singing with us. More info about the Mystic Chorale is available at their website, [www.mysticchorale.org](http://www.mysticchorale.org). Nick would also like to invite people to read his Choral Family essays on his website: [www.nickmusic.com](http://www.nickmusic.com).

### Our Website: Serving Your Needs?

At [www.massacda.org](http://www.massacda.org) you’ll find a wealth of helpful information, including:

- a directory of your Board members and R&S Chairs;
- the MassACDA calendar of upcoming events;
- registration forms for conferences and workshops;
- past newsletters going back to 2003;
- a discussion forum, and our list of open jobs.

Looking for additional features? Let us know —.email Rick Lueth at [web@massacda.org](mailto:web@massacda.org).

### Moving? New Email Address?

Be sure to keep the ACDA National office informed. They send us updated member lists each quarter. If these new lists contain outdated information, we won’t be able to reach you, either by email or postal mail.

Just visit [www.acdaonline.org](http://www.acdaonline.org), and click on “Membership Services,” then on “Change of Address Submission Form.” Fill out the form, click “Send,” and you’re done.

## SOUND ADVICE for Your Women's Chorus

By Catharine Melhorn, Mass R&S Chair for Women's Chorus

It was an honor to perform at the 2006 ACDA Eastern Division Convention in New York—so many years after my only other ACDA appearance with the Mount Holyoke Glee Club, in 1974! Bookends on a long career conducting women's voices. And getting honest feedback afterwards from respected colleagues meant/means so much to me. Yet the number one recurring compliment surprised me: "The women SOUNDED wonderful!" "A beautiful, truly enviable SOUND from your group." "The SOUND was fantastic." "How do you get that wonderful SOUND?"

We don't have any "voice majors" at Mount Holyoke; we accept into the Glee Club most students who audition, the proverbial mixed bag. Of course I want the choir to make a good sound—appropriately powerful or tender, always engaging. But being a string player, with only three months of private voice lessons to my credit, I haven't tried to mold choral sound the way a real singer might. I've directed my attention to so many other areas of concern, beginning with the selection of worthy repertoire—well-crafted, diverse musics that women would want to spend time with. Pieces which pique one's curiosity, provide intellectual stimulation and emotional contrast. Pieces which allow the altos to use the full range of their voices, pieces which don't hang the sopranos forever above the staff.

I have learned something about the vocal instrument. Wary of gimmick warm-ups, still I begin every rehearsal with stretching—even modest aerobics if it's early in the day—and deep breathing, and descending mid-range vocalises, gradually expanding range in both directions, varying articulation as required for the each rehearsal's agenda. From day one, I obsess about intonation, insisting that even the simplest warm-up scale be sung in tune, never

accepting the weather or fatigue as excuses for singing flat. We choose to sing in many different languages (Mandarin, Russian, German, and Shakespeare's English were featured in our ACDA program)—often coached by native speakers—which requires that we listen hard and concentrate on all aspects of diction. We fuss over rhythmic precision (Thank you, Robert Shaw!)—attacks and exits. We use precious rehearsal time to seek compatible, resonant vocal combinations (Thank you, Weston Noble!) and try to accommodate singers' own preferences for near neighbors, varying our seating/standing formations according to a piece's texture.

Since we're a big choir, with personnel changing every semester, we have to work extra hard to promote strong human bonds within our ensemble. We celebrate birthdays, and acknowledge our members' other interests and successes beyond music, setting aside the final moments of Thursday rehearsals for "plugs" for their other weekend activities. I circulate a "morning after" email to the membership after every performance, inviting shared critical responses from the singers. Surely our sectional rehearsals in circles—facing each other, naming names—our road trips, retreats, fund raisers, and an effective board of elected student officers—all play a part in building commitment and a level of social comfort that inevitably contribute to our esteemed SOUND? And what about staying healthy? My singers tolerate my mothering instincts, my constant reminders to hydrate, sleep (ha!), not to smoke, to use alcohol in moderation.

In the end, if what the audience admires most is our wonderful SOUND, I'm happy for that. But that's not where I start.

## MassACDA Welcomes Gretchen Preneta as New R&S Chair for Children's Chorus

Gretchen is the choral director at the McCarthy School in Chelmsford where she teaches the fifth and sixth grade choir, the seventh and eighth grade choir, an auditioned chamber ensemble and a general music class. She also teaches a weekly music class at McLean Hospital in Belmont. Gretchen began her teaching career in 1997 as a middle school choral director in South Windsor, Connecticut.

She taught music at the Wediko Children's Summer Program for children with behavioral and emotional disabilities in 2000 and directed a children's church choir during her two years of graduate school. For four years before her move to Chelmsford in September of 2005 she was the director of the Cambridge All-City Choir and a general and choral music teacher at the King Open School. Gretchen earned her Kodaly Certification from the Hartt School of Music in 2005. She received her Bachelor's Degree in Music Education from Ithaca College in 1997 and her Master's Degree in Music Education from the University of Maryland in 2001. She studied voice with Dan Sullivan at the Longy School and has performed with the Trinity Choir of Boston, the Cambridge Madrigal Singers, and the Harvard-Radcliffe Community Chorus. In her free time, Gretchen hikes, reads, and works for an ambulance company. She currently resides in Medford.



## ACDA Vocal Health Workshop Held on March 4, 2006

Michelle Graveline, MassACDA R & S Chair for Community Chorus



About 90 singers and music directors gathered at Assumption College on Saturday, March 4, to participate in the vocal health workshop jointly sponsored by the Massachusetts ACDA and the Salisbury Singers of Worcester. The featured clinician for the day was **Lin Wallin Schuller**, an expert in the field of voice technique for enhancement of healthy voices and help for troubled voices. She has lectured throughout the United States on children's voice development, aging voice, and voice technique for Music Educators, Voice Teachers, Speech Pathologists, singers, speakers and story-tellers. She has spoken to many state and re-

*(Continued on page 7)*

# singing auditions

## NEW YORK • MAY 2006

For its twelve current productions and upcoming creations, with original music performed by **live bands**, *Cirque du Soleil*® is seeking **PROFESSIONAL SINGERS** with **strong technique, stage experience, improvisational skills and versatility.**

We are looking specifically for:

- MALE VOICES** • Countertenors & World beat • Soul • Folk • Rock • Jazz • Gospel • R&B
- FEMALE VOICES** • Mezzo-sopranos & Sopranos • World beat • Soul • Folk • Rock • Jazz • Gospel • R&B
- YOUNG FEMALE SINGER (9 to 14 years old)** • Soprano (excellent technique)
  - Excellent learning abilities • Small and slim (ingénue); maximum height 5' 3" (1,60 m)
  - Solid singing training is essential • Facility with accents, "good ear" • Very good acting skills
  - Open and extroverted personality • Must have stage experience

### CIRQUE DU SOLEIL.



*Auditions are by invitation only, based on video demo submission.  
Please note that only selected candidates will be contacted.*

**Send your demo material NOW!**

**Details: [www.casting.cirquedusoleil.com/mass-sings](http://www.casting.cirquedusoleil.com/mass-sings)**

## Second Steps into the Quagmire (and deeper Into the [MultiCultural] Woods)

Sam Martinborough, MassACDA R&S Chair for Ethnic and Multicultural Choirs

There is nothing that upsets me more than listening to a well-executed concert of music by the "Masters," performed by a choir that could give the angels a run for their money, conducted by a true sound-energy master, that ends with a rousing rendition of a Negro Spiritual (or Gospel, or Pop Song). It has taken me almost fifteen years to figure out why. (I hear you tapping your foot in anticipation). It's not a "Why you gotta put the black folks music at the end" thing, nor is it a "What you mean *Bridge Over Troubled Water* ain't 'High' music," and it definitely has nothing to do with begrudging the audience (or performers) that blow-out finale that brings down the walls of Jericho with the resultant cheers.

You cannot eat breakfast all day,  
Nor is it the act of a sinner,  
When breakfast is taken away,  
To turn his attention to dinner.  
And it's not in the range of belief  
To look upon him as a glutton  
Who, when he is tired of beef  
Determines to tackle the mutton.  
— *Trial By Jury*, **Gilbert and Sullivan**

It's because I suddenly realize that I've been ever so slightly... bored. I was the mutant child who grew up listening to the first side of Haydn's *Creation* (think LPs here) followed by *The King's Herald's* (a male quartette), Sandi Patti (the early years), then the symphonic highlights from Bizet's *Carmen*. No one informed me that the *Creation* was classical music and required a non-stop listening experience, nor that Sandi had little in common with *Carmen*.

In order to have a category, one must build a wall, or two, or more. Walls go all the way back in history. Walls may be high or low, thick or thin. The dictionary says a wall is an upright structure that divides or encloses... There is a wall around the ghetto, and, surprisingly enough, there is often a wall around the cathedral. Some walls crumble, and others, like the sound barrier, are burst asunder. There is the wall of love that Romeo climbed to Juliet, and there is the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem.  
But did God ever build a wall?

— *Music is My Mistress*, pg 360, **Duke Ellington**

So the child in me wonders what would happen if we created performances that were like suspense movies, a roller-coaster-ride of sound. As the audience enters the candle-lit lobby they deposit their ticket stubs, or money to the pulsating beat of a Hakaka Wicasa, the chants and songs readjusting the ears, expanding expected tonalities to encom-

pass the unknown. The opening Hildegard von Bingen chants seem to be a natural progression interspersed with early arrangements of Negro Spirituals, the drumming in the lobby providing a subtle continuous heartbeat. Handel's Chandos Anthem 10, *The Lord is My Light* begins with Richard Smallwood's *Total Praise* instead of the *Sinfonia*. *I will offer in his dwelling* is followed by *I Will Sing Praises*, *It is the Lord that ruleth the sea* is preceded by *Angels Watching Over Me*. As the choir files out, from the balcony the secret guest gospel choir breaks out with *Great is the Lord* while the audience, their senses a blur have experienced a juxtaposition of worlds; Richard Smallwood nudges Handel. By intermission the patrons are either found dashing to their mode of transportation, sitting in shocked silence, or dancing in the aisles. (I'm sure there are other options ;-)

During Intermission a variety of percussion instruments are passed out and patrons are invited to join the performers, and elephants, in a drumming circle. (Did you know that elephants communicate through the soles of their feet, picking up vibrations through the earth? I saw it on PBS.) Just imagine where the second half of the concert could go... how about the Art of Dali. The audience returns, the hall darkens as images of Dali's artwork are projected on every available surface as the strains of ... (insert the appropriate piece) begin. (with a scenario like that you could put a Christmas carol on the Easter program and it would fit).

Heyoka ...who are sacred fools, doing everything wrong or backwards to make the people laugh. They have sacred power and they share some of this with all the people, but they do it through funny actions.

— *Black Elk Speaks*, pg 144, **John G Neihardt**

Ok, so this may sound like theatrics just for the sake of novelty, and sometimes it is, and how many of us rush to see the latest movie just for the sake of enjoyment? And how many times do we find that in the midst of that crazy movie we have learnt something about ourselves and/or others?

The quagmire consists of one major question, (ok maybe two). Why do you do what you do? If our main goal is to preserve musical integrity, then why not truly embrace and preserve a wider variety of music? If it is our love for tone combinations and sequences then imagine how we could increase that joy by exploring different combinations?

What is preventing you from delving into a wider sphere of

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

music and creating a relationship that goes beyond "some of my best friends are multi-cultural?" Your boss' response? Audience response? Selling power? Limited knowledge of the style? Difficulty of the exploration? Pulling it off? Day to day grind? What will happen to Bach if we spend time on Guyanese composer William Pilgrim? Sporadic (and sometimes non-existent) interaction with the elusive ethnic sound-energy master?

To enjoy a concert of Indian classical music, it helps a lot to have knowledge of the basic traffic rules. Most concerts are solo vehicles for an instrumentalist or vocalist, and unlike most Western music, which is harmonically based, Indian music is monodic, with a single melody line. At first the soloist explores the road - or *raga* - alone with just a drone accompanying; ...a performance, which may last for several hours, there is an altogether un-Western attitude to time.

— *World Music, The Rough Guide. Vol 2 pg 63,*  
**ed. Broughton and Ellingham**

So I invite you to enter (at your own risk), take your first steps into the Multi-cultural woods, through the quagmire (sound like *The Princess Bride?*) to emerge into an ever-changing and fascinating world of unique sounds, rhythms and energies.

**Step 1** Evaluate your place in this business of sound-energy production; your definition of, feelings about, and importance placed on World Music.

**Step 2** Begin your aural exploration of random styles of music that fall under your definition of World music and allow yourself the time needed to feel comfortable with the sounds. Do some research about the music that vibrates positively with you.

**Step 3** Examine your beliefs in the 'legitimacy' of music. How do you honestly feel about Cajun Music, Britney Spears, Reggae, Steve Green, Rap, Ives, Hymns, Bach chorales, Show choirs? Do you consider musical styles as a hierarchy or a continuum, and words do you place at each end?

(Vocal Health, Continued from page 5)

gional Music Educators Conferences, school departments, National Association of Teachers of Singing, American Guild of Organists, St. Dunstan's College of Sacred Music, and the American Choral Directors Association.

Lin is the Founding President of the McCloskey Institute of Voice in Boston. This Institute is actively involved in teaching the non-surgical intervention in disorders of the voice, and the use of techniques for the enhancement of the healthy voice. As part of its training program, they offer a Certification course as well as several summer Seminars throughout the United States. She also served as the Supervisor of the Voice Therapy Clinic at the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary in Boston for seven years. She maintains a private studio in Easton, MA, teaching singers, speakers and those with troubled voices. Her workshop last year was so well received that she was asked to come back and do a more in-depth presentation.

**Step 4** On a purely gut level (ask your education and experience to take a vacation) listen to various styles of music and enjoy how you feel (both comfort and discomfort, I never said it was going to be easy.) At random times explore possible reasons for those feelings and make some conscious decisions about ways to expand your own appreciation for the new and unfamiliar (and give yourself enough time and no pressure. I still don't really enjoy Rap or Reggae for that matter.)

**Step 5** What methods of expansion worked best for you? What types of music have you begun to really enjoy exploring? Make a commitment to truly inter-grate your repertoire, concert formats and your life, then be prepared to have your decision challenged, self-doubt stab you in places you didn't know you had, bouts of inspiration and overwhelming despair cripple you, followed by the subtle realization that what was new and unique has begun to enrich what was.

Lakota Singing and Dancing

Song and dance can't really be separated. We never dance without singing and we rarely sing without dancing. The involvement of the whole body is to us part of the balance we look for in our lives. The body and the voice are there along with the mind and the heart.

— *Standing in the Light, A Lakota Way of Seeing,*  
**Severt Young Bear & R. D. Theisz**

As the world becomes smaller we have an opportunity to create pockets of creative musical collaboration, education and harmonic delight.

Finally we come again to those rare gifted, unique ones, the ones who can do it all, the *hoka wicasa*, the mastersingers. The mind of such a *hoka wicasa* is very unique. It is almost a big song library he has there. He has to know the meaning of the words, what song belongs to what family and how to put it together, how to get in front of people with that drum, be able to open his mouth wide in front of many people, look people in the eye and start a song. And that's very difficult.

— *Standing in the Light, A Lakota Way of Seeing,*  
**Severt Young Bear & R. D. Theisz**

Namaste

(Continued on page 11)

## MassACDA Welcomes Distinguished Clinicians to Summer Conference



**Anthony Leach** is associate professor of music and music education at Pennsylvania State University where he directs the University Choir and Essence of Joy and teaches courses in choral music education. Dr. Leach holds the Ph.D. in music education and the M.M. in conducting from Penn State University, and the B.S. in music education from Lebanon Valley College in Pennsylvania.

Dr. Leach taught music in Maryland, Pennsylvania and New York City for 14 years. He served as music consultant at the Maryland Summer Center for the Arts at Goucher College and also served as music director of the Capital Area Music Association in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. His choirs have performed at festivals throughout the United States and Canada as well as touring England, Scotland, Italy, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Austria and South Africa. Essence of Joy, organized by Dr. Leach in 1991, has performed for regional and national conventions of ACDA and MENC.

Dr. Leach has appeared as guest conductor for choral festivals and workshops in Maryland, Florida, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Utah, Vermont, Kentucky, Nebraska, North Carolina and Connecticut. He also was co-conductor of the 2004 World Youth Choir sponsored by the International Federation of Choral Musicians in South Korea.

As a recitalist, Dr. Leach has presented organ dedications and concerts in the eastern United States as well as Ohio, and has been a piano accompanist for numerous faculty and student recitals at Penn State. He also has accompanied The United Negro College Fund Choir in New York City and the Howard University Concert Choir in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Leach has presented seminars and workshops for numerous professional and music organizations in the United States and beyond. Seminar topics have included: 'Print Resources in Black Gospel Music for Choral Directors'; 'Two Generations of Burleigh: Harry T. Burleigh and Glenn E. Burleigh'; and 'Black Gospel Music: Strategies and Techniques for Performance and Non-Performance Music Classes'. His article "Does Gospel Music Have a Place In General Music?" was published in *General Music Today* (1993), and his seminar 'A Spiritual for the New Millennium' was presented at the Second IFCM Multicultural and Ethnic Conference held in Jokkmokk, Sweden in

(Continued on page 9)

**Robert Russell** is professor of music at the University of Southern Maine where he conducts the University Chorale and Chamber Singers and teaches choral conducting and music history. A native of Roanoke, Virginia, he studied music and religion at Wake Forest University (B.A.) and choral music with Lara Hoggard at the University of North Carolina (M.M.). He

earned the D.M.A. degree in the literature and performance of choral music from the University of Colorado, studying choral music with Lynn Whitten and vocal pedagogy with Barbara Doscher. He has further studied with Robert Shaw, Alice Parker, Helmuth Rilling, and Elmer Iseler. He is deeply indebted to inspiring teachers throughout his life.

Dr. Russell was appointed music director of The Choral Art Society in 1979. He conducts the Choral Art Singers in a concert series each year and prepares the Choral Art Masterworks Chorus for annual performances with the Portland Symphony Orchestra, including Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem* in 1991 with distinguished guest conductor Robert Shaw. With the symphony he conducted the world premiere of Derek Holman's *Two Poems*, commissioned by the society to celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Choral Art Society in 1996 released its first CD, *Windswept the Trees: The Choral Music of Dan Locklair*, on the Gasparo label and its second CD, *Christmas at the Cathedral*, in 1999. The Choral Art Society performed statewide its popular Christmas at the Cathedral concert on Maine Public Broadcasting Network (MPBN-TV) on Christmas Eve 1996.

The University Chamber Singers and The Choral Art Society have appeared in concert for eastern division conventions of the American Choral Directors Association, American Guild of Organists, and Music Educators National Conference. In 1998 the Chamber Singers released a CD, *Wrapped in Song: A Christmas Portrait*, and used the proceeds from the CD sales to tour Vienna, Venice, and Paris in 1999, singing in Notre Dame de Paris, St. Stephen's in Vienna, and the Karlskirche in Vienna. The Chamber Singers produced a second CD, *Bright Journeys*, in preparation for a tour in 2002 of Ireland, Wales, and England. A third European tour in 2005 included performances in Austria, Italy and France. The Chamber Singers performed in 2000 to great acclaim works of Rodgers and Hammerstein as guests of the Portland Symphony Orchestra.

(Continued on page 9)

(Leach, continued from page 8)

2003. New arrangements of African American Spirituals by Moses Hogan, Marvin Curtis, Rosephanye Powell, Roland Carter, Keith Hampton, Glenn Burleigh and Robert Morris were included in this presentation.

Dr. Leach is a member of Music Educators National Conference, the American Guild of Organists, and the Gospel Music Workshop of America. He is past national chair of the ACDA Repertoire & Standards Committee on Multi-Cultural & Ethnic Perspectives. His arrangement of *Walk Together Children* is published by Earthsongs. Currently Dr. Leach serves as minister of music and organist at New Bethel Baptist Church in Washington, D.C.

(Russell, continued from page 8)

In addition to his campus and regional performances, Dr. Russell has worked with music teachers and their students as a leader of numerous choral workshops and clinics and as a guest conductor of festivals throughout New England, New York, and at the University of Leicester, England. He has conducted Maine, Massachusetts, and Vermont All-State Choruses and the 1991 and 2003 All-New England Chorus. He has twice served Maine ACDA as president, and in 1993 received its Distinguished Choral Director Award; he is currently the ACDA Eastern Division chair for Youth & Student Activities.

Bob lives in Portland with his beloved wife Linda, a piano teacher and devoted companion of 30 years. He celebrated 25 years of making music in Portland with a gala performance of Beethoven's *Choral Fantasia* with a chorus of 250 high school and adult singers and a massive performance of Orff's *Carmina Burana* with dancers, orchestra, and a chorus of more than 200. He enjoys yoga, hiking, skiing, gardening, and trying to keep up with two sons, Peter (19) and Ben (17).

## MassACDA Summer Conference July 16-19, 2006

### Sunday, July 16

4:00 – 6:00 p.m. Welcome and registration: Phillips Music Center  
5:00 – 6:00 BBQ: Phillips Music Center Courtyard (all are welcome)  
6:15 – 8:00 **Robert Russell** — *Vocal Training in Chorus*  
8:00 – 8:30 Performance: Boston Arts Academy Jazz Choir  
8:30 Reception: Meet the performers and clinicians; refreshments served

### Monday, July 17

7:00 – 8:30 a.m. Breakfast (all meals served in Lane Student Center)  
8:00 – 8:45 Late registration: Phillips Music Center  
9:00 – 10:20 **Anthony Leach** — *African-American Traditional Gospel for Mixed and Treble Choirs*  
10:20 – 10:40 Break  
10:40 – 12:00 p.m. **Robert Russell** — *Efficient and Effective Rehearsals*  
12:00 – 1:15 Lunch  
1:15 – 3:00 **Anthony Leach** — *Sacred and Secular SATB Music by African-American Composers*  
3:00 – 3:20 Break  
3:20 – 4:20 **Luellen Best** — *WORKSHOP*  
4:20 – 5:15 **Allyssa Jones** — *Jazz Choir*  
5:15 – 7:00 Dinner  
7:00 – 7:40 Social time by interest area (coffee and dessert served; locations TBA)  
7:45 – 8:45 **Bob Schunemann** — *E. C. Schirmer Reading Session*

### Tuesday, July 18

7:00 – 8:30 a.m. Breakfast  
9:00 – 10:20 **Sandra Doneski** — *They Can't Sit Still . . . For a Reason: Using Movement and Storytelling to Build Technique and Artistry in the Elementary Choral Rehearsal*  
10:20 – 10:40 Break  
10:40 – 12:00 p.m. **Anthony Leach** — *The Leach One-Page Guide to Performing Spirituals and Gospel*  
12:00 – 1:15 Lunch  
1:15 – 2:00 **Choraltech** — *A Revolution in Teaching Sightsinging*  
2:00 – 2:15 Break  
2:00 – 3:20 **Robert Russell** — *Beyond Notes to Phrases: The Idea of Choral Artistry*  
3:20 – 3:40 Break  
3:45 – 4:45 **Mike Driscoll** — *Teaching Sight Reading*  
5:00 – 6:45 Dinner  
7:00 – 8:30 **Kenneth Phillips** — *The Adolescent Singer*  
8:30 Reception (refreshments served)

### Wednesday, July 19

7:00 – 8:30 a.m. Breakfast  
9:00 – 10:00 **Robert Russell** — *These Things I Believe*  
10:00 – 11:00 **Anthony Leach** — *WORKSHOP*  
11:15 – 12:00 p.m. Wrap-up: Q&A  
12:00 Lunch

# Reflection from a Tired Jazz Choir Director

## Allyssa Jones, MassACDA R&S Chair for Jazz Choirs

### Why jazz?

I ask myself this question every day. Any time a piece seems too hard to teach, any time I struggle with my own musicianship, I return to this place, this point of inquiry. Why am I so convinced that jazz language and repertoire are essential to school music programs? Why do I put myself through so many changes (pun intended), wearing myself out, in an effort to push what often feels like my own agenda with my students? Teaching jazz, *truly* teaching jazz is a slow and painful process. Why bother?

We bother, because jazz matters.

We could talk about the need to be multicultural in our concert programming. Or, we could talk about the efficacy of studying jazz within the context of Western music and American history. We could even talk about the level of musicianship required to perform jazz choral repertoire, and the scaffolding needed to get there. All of these are valid and important conversations. However, in my experience, students need jazz because it is the intersection of everything we teach as voice and choral professionals. Specifically, there are truths about singing in this idiom that make it clear why jazz matters.

**Good jazz singing requires good vocal technique.** Contrary to popular belief (and save a few legendary examples), jazz singers sing on the breath and into appropriate resonators. Many of the best jazz singers are just as health-conscious as their operatic counterparts and, in fact, stand behind their classical training. A prime example is Dianne Reeves, who, after years of classical study, chose jazz because it resonated most with her artistic vision. She and others like her follow responsible vocal practices and have had long and fruitful careers because of this. In my own work, the only difference between my classical singing and my jazz singing is vibrato and color. All of the rest is the same. When I share this with my students, they find it easier to then apply what they learn in class to the pop and Gospel singing they do outside of school.

**Also, skilled jazz musicians practice well and often.** I don't know of any successful or respected jazz musician whose career is not built upon countless hours in "the shed." Just like classical musicians, jazz musicians, practice sessions are frequent, long and intense. Note that these practice sessions include not only technique and repertoire work, but improvisation as well. For the choral student, improvisation may take a back seat to sight-reading during practice, but because what is written was once improvised, the latter is actually a doorway to the former. All of this is

to say that an important part of teaching jazz is helping students understand that practice is not just about tone production and notes but about acquiring a new language.

Thus, **singing jazz requires an intellectual and emotional connection with the music.** This is true of any music. What makes jazz different is that it is perceived as "too hard" for choral students. Certainly the literature can be daunting. But, if the choral arrangement is taught in the context of the standard from which it came, the process drives itself. Why? Because, if students fall in love with the lyric as a poem, the melody as an expression of the poem's message, and a legendary recording as the embodiment of both, then the piece they are working on becomes less about "hard parts" and more about bringing something else to the table.

This leads us to the fact that **successful jazz ensembles are a community unto themselves.** Jazz performances are sharing, about having a conversation. It is obvious how this happens on a nightclub stage, but it also happens in very profound ways in a choral setting. To tune altered seventh chords, to create a "group groove", to deliver the character and message of a jazz piece, the students have to connect with one another. Exciting jazz choirs (or vocal jazz ensembles) are so because the members feel every accent, every breath together. There is not only energy, there is synergy. This only happens when students trust each other to sing well, to know the music and to be truthful in performance. One of my greatest joys is watching my students rehearse themselves, because I can see them owning both the music and the process. Then, when they step on stage, that ownership becomes confidence which translates in joy and freedom in performance.

So, here is the point: I teach jazz because of its profound affect on the way my students see themselves, both as musicians and as people. The way my students think, work and function changes when they join jazz choir. Because of the model their peers provide, my other students, in turn, strive for more. This is when ensembles, when programs, when education itself works- when students engage each other. Jazz choirs create special opportunities for such interaction. That is why when I find myself asking, "Is this worth the effort," the answer is always a resounding YES!

# MassACDA Calendar Spring-Summer 2006

**April 2, 2006, Sunday, 1 – 7 PM**

## **ACDA Children's Choir Festival**

### **St. Mark's School, Southborough, MA**

Announcing a wonderful opportunity for children's choirs across the Commonwealth! For the past several years, the MA ACDA chapter has sponsored a Children's Choir Festival with great success and very positive reviews. Tom Berryman, Choral Director at the St. Mark's School in Southborough, MA has offered once again to host this event in a central location in the hopes that we will have participants from all over the Commonwealth!

Join K.C. Conlan, State R&S Chair for Children's Choirs, and Matthew Garrett, Conductor of the Handel & Haydn Society Children's Choirs in Boston, for this one-day festival. Activities will include rehearsal sharing and performances from each participating choir as well as preparation of a combined work for the evening concert. To keep things simple, we meet for just one afternoon and evening on Sunday, April 2nd with breaks for activities and dinner. That's it, no stress, no formal adjudication, just a unique opportunity to meet and hear other children's choirs from around the state!

Due to time constraints, space is limited. So check your calendars and make plans now to join us for the 2006 MA ACDA Children's Choir Festival! Contact K.C. ([KCConlan@comcast.net](mailto:KCConlan@comcast.net)) or Matthew ([mlgarrett@beld.net](mailto:mlgarrett@beld.net)) for registration details or for more information.

**June 8, 2006, Thursday**

## **Middle School / Junior High Choral Festival**

### **Ipswich Performing Arts Center**

All Massachusetts junior high and middle school choirs are invited to participate in an outstanding choral festival with Choral Professionals familiar with the adolescent and changing voice. Held at the Ipswich Performing Arts Cen-

ter, Ipswich. The two-page registration form must be returned by **May 1, 2006**. For more details and the registration form, see [www.massacda.org/ACDA\\_calendar.htm](http://www.massacda.org/ACDA_calendar.htm).

- Available to all choruses
- Perform a fifteen minute program
- Receive written adjudication by qualified judges
- One judge will work with your group for fifteen minutes
- Receive a plaque of participation
- Excellent opportunity to provide your group with another performance experience
- Excellent opportunity to hear other groups
- No rating system

Fee per group: \$100.00 for ACDA member \$110.00 for non-member. For more information contact Claire Cayot at [ccayot@ipswichschools.org](mailto:ccayot@ipswichschools.org).

**July 16 - 19, 2006**

## **MassACDA Summer Conference**

### **Gordon College - Wenham, MA**

This summer's program features clinicians **Anthony Leach** and **Robert Russell** as well as **Sandra Doneski, Allyssa Jones, Ken Phillips, Mike Driscoll, Luellen Best,** and **Bob Schunemann**. See [www.massacda.org](http://www.massacda.org) and pages 8 and 9 in this newsletter for more details. Sessions:

#### **Anthony Leach**

- African-American Traditional Gospel for Mixed and Treble Choirs
- Sacred and Secular SATB Music by African-American Composers
- The Leach One-Page Guide to Performing Spirituals and Gospel
- WORKSHOP

#### **Robert Russell**

- Vocal Training in Chorus
- Efficient and Effective Rehearsals
- Beyond Notes to Phrases: The Idea of Choral Artistry
- These Things I Believe

*(Vocal Health, Continued from page 7)*

The morning began at 9:30 with an overview of the vocal mechanism, including detailed images of the larynx. Videos of the breathing mechanism and of vocals folds in action gave many participants their first-ever view of what actually happens when they sing. Following the videos, Lin worked on proper posture for good breath technique, emphasizing elongation of the spine and the expanded rib cage.

Another topic that was covered was the importance of maintaining overall body health through diet, exercise, hydration and humidification, avoidance of drugs that could cause bleeding in the vocal folds, such as aspirin, and the importance of controlling acid reflux. Releasing muscle tension in the jaw and neck was also emphasized, and Lin guided the group through an extensive relaxation process, followed by a slow and easy warm-up of the voice. Throughout the morning, Lin answered the many questions from the audience.

After lunch, four singers participated in a masterclass with Lin. She worked with each of them on optimizing breathing and getting rid of tension, with very positive results. Then it was time for the participants to be the chorus. Using the Mozart *Requiem*, the participants sang through a number of the choral movements. After each movement, Lin worked section by section to improve their sound. The afternoon ended with a final question and answer period.



Lin Schuller (l.), Beth Gondek

# MASS ACDA

8 Irving Drive  
Walpole, MA 02081-2430

FIRST CLASS  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
BOSTON, MA  
PERMIT NO.  
51544

---

## MASSACHUSETTS ACDA OFFICERS AND R&S CHAIRPERSONS 2005-2007

---

### **PRESIDENT**

Kayla Werlin  
Longmeadow High School  
95 Grassy Gutter Road  
Longmeadow, MA 01106  
413-565-4244 x354  
kaylawerlin@yahoo.com

### **PRESIDENT ELECT**

William Pappazisis  
Belmont Public Schools  
221 Concord Ave.  
Belmont, MA 02478  
617-484-6099  
wpappazisis@belmont.k12.ma.us

### **VP / PAST PRESIDENT**

Robert Eaton  
146 Stiles Road  
Boylston, MA 01505  
508-869-0438  
rpesing@charter.net

### **SECRETARY**

Chet Laskosky  
17 Salmi Road  
Framingham, MA 01701  
508-788-1239  
cl3rd@yahoo.com

### **TREASURER**

Robert Eaton

### **PUBLICITY**

Jennifer Moss  
Acton-Boxborough Music Dept  
36 Charter Road

Acton, MA 01720  
(267) 235-7677  
Jenmoss77@yahoo.com

### **MMEA LIAISON**

Faith Lueth  
8 Irving Drive  
Walpole, MA 02081  
508-668-7931  
flueth@comcast.net

### **NEWSLETTER & WEBSITE**

Rick Lueth  
web@massacda.org

### **R&S CHAIRS**

#### **CHILDREN'S CHOIRS**

Gretchen Preneta  
McCarthy Middle School  
250 North Rd.  
Chelmsford, MA 01863  
(978)251-5122  
prenetag@chelmsford.k12.ma.us

#### **MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Claire Cayot  
Ipswich Middle School  
130 High Street  
Ipswich, MA 01938  
978-356-3535 x182  
ccayot@ipswichschools.org

#### **HIGH SCHOOL**

Kevin McDonald  
Wellesley High School  
50 Rice Street  
Wellesley, MA 02481

781-446-6290 x5226  
mcdonaldkevin23@yahoo.com

### **WOMEN'S CHOIRS**

Catharine Melhorn  
Mount Holyoke College  
50 College Street  
South Hadley, MA 01075  
413-538-2018  
cmelhorn@mtholyoke.edu

### **MEN'S CHOIRS**

John Delorey  
Worcester Polytechnic Institute  
100 Institute Road  
Worcester, MA 01609  
508-831-5051  
jfd@wpi.edu

### **COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY**

Brad Wells  
Williams College  
Bernhard Music Center  
Williamstown, MA 01267  
413-597-2295  
bwells@williams.edu

### **YOUTH AND STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

Sheila Heffernon  
Northfield Mt. Hermon School  
206 Main Street  
Northfield, MA 01360  
413-498-3341  
sheffernon@nmhschool.org

### **MUSIC IN WORSHIP**

Malcolm Halliday  
First Congregational Church  
19 Church Rd.  
Shrewsbury, MA 01545  
508-845-7286  
mhalliday@fccsm.org

### **COMMUNITY CHOIRS**

Michelle Graveline  
Assumption College  
500 Salisbury Street  
Worcester, MA 01609  
mgraveli@eve.assumption.edu

### **ETHNIC & MULTICUL- TURAL**

Sam Martinborough  
PO Box 230913  
Boston, MA 02123  
781-799-5768  
Exordiumma@aol.com

### **JAZZ CHOIRS**

Allyssa Jones  
Boston Arts Academy  
174 Ipswich Street  
Boston, MA 02215  
617-635-6470 x576  
ajones@bostonartsacademy.org

### **SHOW CHOIRS**

Michael Winslow  
Somerset High School  
Grandview Ave  
Somerset, MA 02726  
508-324-3115  
winslowm@somerset.k12.ma.us