

# SCVA NEWS

Southern California Vocal Association January, 2013

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*John Hendricks*

Greetings to you! I sincerely hope that 2013 will be the most musically and educationally satisfying year for you and your students yet. Certainly, the new year is a time for renewal and optimism... a "clean slate" if you will. Yes, it is the season for resolutions, and this year I have just one primary goal (along with a host of related ones). In 2013, I resolve to be an active advocate for choral music during every class I teach, with every student interaction, with every parent I meet, with every administrator I know, and at every gathering where choral music is a topic of discussion. And if it is not part of the conversation, I will make it become one.

In fulfilling this aim, it will not be enough to produce an engaging program in the classroom and performance in 2013. This goal is far too subtle if we are to thrive as a profession in the future. We must all take this a step further and initiate the "chatter" and substantial dialog at social and professional gatherings where choral educators are not the primary presence, and where people don't automatically understand our purpose. We must seize every possible opportunity to clearly articulate the incomparable experiences that choral music in schools provides for our students. I will speak of the invaluable life lessons, friendships, and the ability to deeply appreciate and understand many cultures that are the unique result of a choral music education, and which serve to shape the character of internationally-oriented 21<sup>st</sup> century students.

I vow to do everything I can to convey the urgency of fostering self-sufficiency and personal responsibility in our young musicians. I will do my best to guide my students toward creating their own solutions to challenges, so that they might become empathetic citizens of the world. I will resist the temptation to "fix" things too quickly, or over-reward choristers in hopes of placating their anxieties and disappointments. I will strive to do this in an era when some parents are perhaps too involved in attempting to remove all obstacles that they perceive to be in the path of their child's success. I will simultaneously seek to create new avenues of engagement with those parents, administrators, and legislators who may be absent from our events and our dialog.

Today I am grateful to have rich relationships with colleagues so that I may learn from them (along with the great camaraderie that is part of the profession), and offer my thoughts in exchange. I'll ask them to share their opinions as to how we might truly stretch the boundaries of what is musically possible for our students, and how we may best instill singers with the skills and confidence that they need to thrive in a rapidly changing profession and world. I'll also ask them the following questions: How may we "feed the well" for ourselves so that we're increasingly inspired in our teaching? How must we continue to refine and perhaps reinvent our course content so that our lessons are relevant, innovative and engaging for students who have more and more options with which to occupy their time during a day? And, ultimately, how may we create an overall musical and performance experience that is so memorable for our singers and audiences that they and our increasing number of allies will demand at the ballot box that a choral option be an integral part of a comprehensive musical education in every school? I truly believe that when this finally happens, we will indeed have adequate and abundant funding in all our programs. In the pursuit of this, we must be willing to evolve our methods.

There are more than seventy events ahead in 2013 on the SCVA calendar, and I encourage you to thoroughly read this newsletter and regularly visit our website for updates. SCVA is here to help you "fill the well" that I mentioned, by providing invaluable opportunities for you and your students. We are steadfast in our mission to promote, support, and advocate for all education-based choral programs in Southern California, and on your behalf in the California State Legislature. I look forward to seeing you and your students as participants, audience members, and volunteers at upcoming SCVA events, as we strive to propel our profession forward in the coming year.

# Junior High Honor Choir Auditions are right around the corner!

*Molly Peters, VP-Junior High Honor Choir*

Auditions for Junior High Honor Choir scheduled for two Saturdays in 2013: January 26<sup>th</sup> and February 2<sup>nd</sup>. We have audition sites in various locations around Southern California, so there is definitely one close to you and your students! These wonderful site hosts are opening up their schools to you and your students (6<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade) so that they have the opportunity to participate in the honor choir. And it is going to be really special this year: Dr. Christopher Peterson is our guest conductor and he is wonderful! Your younger singers will really enjoy working with him.



The deadline for auditions is January 14<sup>th</sup>. I realize that many of us will just be getting back to school at that time, so time is of the essence!

## **Audition Requirements**

1. Sing a major scale up and down (a cappella)
2. Sing a major triad and a minor triad (a cappella)
3. Sing an octave (a cappella)
4. Sight read one melodic and one rhythmic example
5. Sing tonal memory patterns
6. Sing "*America*" / "*My Country 'Tis of Thee*" (a cappella)

## **Regional Audition Dates** (various sites)

### **Saturday, January 26:**

Venice High School, Venice (host: Wendy Kornbeck)

### **Saturday, February 2:**

Mesa Robles Middle School, Hacienda Heights (host: Debbie Montpas)

Lincoln Middle School, Santa Monica (host: Vanessa Ventre)

Murrietta Mesa High School, Murrietta (host Jeffrey Kopasz)

Rancho Pico Junior High School, Santa Clarita (host: Molly Peters)

Travis Ranch Middle School, Yorba Linda (host: Jessica Schlenz)

## **Regional Rehearsal Sites and Times**

Saturday, March 9:

John Adams Middle School, Santa Monica

Saturday, March 16:

Mesa Robles Middle School, Hacienda Heights

## **Final Rehearsal and Performance**

**Location:** John Adams Middle School, Santa Monica

**Date:** April 27

Rehearsal sessions will be from 10:00am to 6:00pm

Concert is at 6:00pm

**Ticket Cost:** \$5.00 general admission (available at the door)

# Vocal Solo Competition

*Jeffe Huls, VP-Vocal Solo*

SCVA has been in discussions regarding piloting a new model for our solo vocal competition and registration is now open. While the classical vocal solo competition remains “untouched” and is still the backbone of this event, we are very excited about the new ways in which students can participate:

1. classical vocal solo - non competitive for ratings (superior, excellent, good, etc)
2. classical vocal solo - comments only (great for less experienced students)
3. musical theater solo - non competitive for ratings
4. musical theater solo - non competitive for comments only
5. small ensemble (duet, trio, quartet, 5 part madrigal, barbershop quartet, etc) - one on a part for ratings
6. small ensemble (duet, trio, quartet, 5 part madrigal, barbershop quartet, etc) – comments only

Throughout my teaching, I have found that solo and small ensemble work has really pushed my students to be better, more musical musicians. I am very excited about this opportunity and plan on making it required for my advanced choir members. While each school is different, I would encourage you to find ways in which this would help motivate some of your strongest students. Consider performing that 5-part madrigal with one person on a part or develop a vocal solo unit. Getting a rating at a festival will look great on college applications. The feedback provided by the adjudicator at festival will help serve to reinforce concepts that you have been teaching in the classroom, or could provide a fresh perspective.

## Here’s how it works:

1. register a solo or ensemble for a festival on an appropriate date
2. select the category that best suits the need of the performer
3. pay the registration fee - \$25 for solo, and \$30 for small ensembles
4. All students will receive a certificate of participation. The appropriate rating will be printed on the certificate of those students who requested a rating. Certificates will be mailed, following the festival.
5. At the time of the performance, all students will receive a mini-clinic from the adjudicator to help improve their skills.

## Some important things to remember:

- registrations are due online by January 30, 2013 at midnight
- all registrations must have director approval
- directors must be current SCVA members
- the solo and small ensemble **festival** is open to all elementary, middle, and high school students of current members
- the solo competition** is only available to middle school, jr high, and high school students of current members
- when performing an ensemble selection, there can be no more than one performer per part
- all performers must supply their own accompanist
- an original copy of the music must be presented to the adjudicator at the time of the performance (photo copies will not be accepted)
- your performance time request is subject to availability and the limitations of the site you selected
- all registrations must be online

Visit [scvachoral.org](http://scvachoral.org) for more information or email [jeffe.huls@gmail.com](mailto:jeffe.huls@gmail.com) if you have questions.

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## Barbershop Harmony Festivals

*Mark Freedkin*



We are pleased to announce that Dr. Chris Peterson will be giving a presentation about barbershop harmony and working with young male singers at the Young Men's Harmony Festival on February 16 at Orange Coast College. In addition to his professional activities at Cal State Fullerton, Chris has been a member of the Barbershop Harmony Society and currently sings with the Masters of Harmony.

Even if you don't have any of your singers participating in this year's event, you are welcome to attend the presentation, which will be held immediately after lunch while the young men are in sectional rehearsals.

There may still be room for additional singers at this event. If you still wish to register some of your male singers, or to confirm your attendance at Chris Peterson's presentation, please contact Mark Freedkin at [mfreedkin@yahoo.com](mailto:mfreedkin@yahoo.com) or (714) 357-1187.



### Website Update

*Mark Freedkin, SCVA Webmaster*

Here are a few helpful hints when using our website:

1. When registering for a festival, be sure to use the same e-mail address that you used for your SCVA Membership Renewal. That way, you'll be able to see all of your festival registrations when you login to the Members Only page. If you use a different e-mail address, your festival registrations won't be displayed on your Members Only page.
2. If you reply directly to a broadcast e-mail message from "**admin@scavchoral.org**", your response will be forwarded to me (as webmaster), and I must manually forward it to the appropriate recipient. Instead of simply replying, you should respond to the sender's e-mail address.

We are always looking for better ways of utilizing our website. If you have any suggestions, please send them to "**mfreedkin@yahoo.com**"

**Hurry! Reserve your spot now!**  
**Clinicians/Adjudicators Christine Guter and Kate Reid**  
**SONOS to perform at the SCVA Vocal Jazz and A Cappella Festival**  
**Friday March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013**  
**Enrollment Fee per Ensemble: \$150**  
7 PM Performance of SONOS: Tickets \$10 each



All Southern California High Schools are invited to participate in the SCVA Vocal Jazz and A Cappella Festival at Valencia High School! Our highly renowned adjudicators will be **Christine Guter** (Cal State Long Beach) and **Kate Reid** (Cypress College). The guest artists for the evening's performance will be SONOS, the group that was recently featured on NBC's *The Sing Off*. Performance spots are limited, so reserve your time today! Email SCVA Vocal Jazz Vice President, Christine Tavares at [christinetavares33@gmail.com](mailto:christinetavares33@gmail.com) for more information.

Emerging in the fall of '09 from the Los Angeles vocal scene, Sonos has created a genre of their own, uniquely infusing vocals and electronics. On their Verve Records debut "SonoSings" the group reinvented artists like Radiohead, Bon Iver, Bjork, Fleet Foxes, Imogen Heap, Jazzanova, and dazzled with a dark, trip-hop take on a Jackson 5 classic, "I Want You Back". Special appearances include live radio sessions on NPR's *Weekend Edition*, KCRW, BBC Americana, Studio 360, and Sirius/XM; performances at SXSW '11, Sundance '10, TED, Celtic Connections, ASCAP Awards, and accompanying Sara Bareilles at the Orpheum Theater. Other performances include MojaMoja's Pre-Grammy Brunch '12, colleges, clubs, and performing arts spaces all around the country. Sonos also made an appearance for millions of viewers on season 3 of *The Sing Off* on NBC.

# **Coordinated System of Statewide Rated, Tiered Choral Festivals**

## ***A Five-Year Plan***

*Rodger Guerrero, Past President*

The following is a collaborative plan which was presented at the 2012 SCVA Fall In-Service. It originated from discussions I held over the past two years with Scott Hedgecock, current CMEA Vice President, former SCVA Executive Board member, and longtime SCVA supporter. Our conversations began with thoughts on a more innovative and comprehensive approach to choral music advocacy in California. As veteran teachers, both of us have vociferously promoted music education in a state where it constantly seems to fall to the axe of myopic politicians and administrators who shortsightedly balance budget constraints with educational necessities. However, our dialog took a new course as we began to examine how the Process/Product (Festivals!) aspect of choral music might better resonate with those who determine the direction of public education in California.

As a result, ideas concerning a *Coordinated System of Statewide Choral Festivals* began to be articulated. These random concepts have since experienced a major “accelerando” as a direct result of the newly created partnerships between CMEA/ACDA/SCVA established in conjunction with CASMEC. After sharing these exciting possibilities with the leadership of all three organizations, I am excited to announce that we have received an official “green light” to proceed! An outline of the *Statewide Choral Festival Plan* is as follows:

### **Rationale:**

Some 15,000 students participated in an SCVA Choral Festival in the spring of 2012. Throughout the state, thousands more also participated in CMEA Choral Festivals in which choirs also received standardized ratings. However, the adjudication approach and standards and rubrics upon which ratings are based are inconsistent throughout the state. Thus California choral directors seem to be fragmented and uncooperative. Festival results cannot be logically quantified along state and national criteria. Consequently, no school or district administrator can truly comprehend or appreciate what a “Superior” rating means. However, if California SCVA/CMEA Choral Festivals could operate under a unified umbrella of guidelines, standards, and ratings, achievement percentiles could then be plausibly related to those of curricular subjects. School and district administrators could then easily see that according to established state-wide goals and objectives, a choir that earns a “Superior” is achieving at the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile or better. What Superintendent or Principal wouldn’t applaud and publicize such an outstanding accomplishment?

### **Multi-Tiered Festival System:**

A tiered system might include local, regional, and state-wide rated festivals/non-competitive contests (All-Southern, Central, and Northern? Sections?) similar to the CIF regional and state playoff system. Admission into the “State Contest” might require a quantified “Superior” rating as well as adjudicator recommendations achieved at the local and regional systems.

### **Statewide Festival Committee Partners:**

*California Association for Music Education (CMEA)* – Scott Hedgecock, CMEA Vice President; the Choral Representative from the Council of Representatives; appointed Sectional Representatives.

*Southern California Vocal Association (SCVA)* – Rodger Guerrero, Past President; Jennifer Stanley, the current Vice-President in charge of High School Festivals.

*California American Choral Directors Association (California ACDA)* – High School Repertoire and Standards Chair; President and/or President-Elect.

The above will form a statewide committee to organize implementation of a five-year plan for a *Coordinated System of Statewide Choral Festivals*. The proposal will address statewide and national educational goals and objectives, adjudication and ratings philosophies and rubrics (including sight reading), organizational models, and issues of local and regional autonomy. Committee membership may change somewhat over the five years, but the core leadership will remain intact. The committee will meet a minimum of two times per year. CASMEC and ECCO are the most logical starting points for committee gatherings (February 2013!). These meetings will be supplemented with open-ended “town hall” and/or “round table” sessions among members who attend these events. An additional discussion will occur at the SCVA Fall In-Service each year.

### **Five-Year Plan: Year One Example:**

- a. Who? Committee make-up; CMEA/ACDA/SCVA Partnership; Presidents; Choral Reps; R & S Chair; Facilitator?
- b. How? Biannual meetings (SCVA Fall In-Service/CASMEC/ECCO); Emails, outline documents, meeting minutes, audio-visual presentations
- c. Why? The rationale/need for creating a united, tiered statewide festival contest system: a unified approach to educational goals, objectives, standards, and adjudication
- d. Creation of a Mission Statement for this CMEA/ACDA/SCVA plan as well as a timeline of desired achievement
- e. Open-ended forums at various times throughout the year so that all high school choral directors have a voice in the process (SCVA Fall In-Service/CASMEC/ECCO)
- f. Regular published updates of committee progress in all CMEA/ACDA/SCVA journals and on all organizational websites. The process must be as transparent as possible.

*A Coordinated System of Statewide Choral Festivals* is long overdue in our state. It will take hard work, a visionary willingness to listen and compromise, and an active and collective commitment to see it through to the very end. Most importantly, while we trudge through endless discussions, formidable geographical challenges, and an infinite array of details, we must keep our eyes firmly fixed upon the prize: the betterment of choral music education for our singers. Many other states have operated under such a unified network for many years. Isn't it time that we caught up?

Please feel encouraged to contact either of us with feedback and ideas. And always remember: “*A ship in harbor is safe – but that is not what ships are for*” (John A. Shedd).

Sincerely,

Rodger Guerrero ([rguerrero@hw.com](mailto:rguerrero@hw.com)) and Scott Hedgecock ([scotchdir@aol.com](mailto:scotchdir@aol.com))

## Southern California Vocal Association

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### IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES

Junior High Honor Choir Auditions	January 26, 2013
Diva Day	February 2, 2013
Junior High Honor Choir Auditions	February 2, 2013
Young Men's Harmony Festival	February 16, 2013
SCVA Festival Registration Deadline	March 1, 2013
Jazz Festival	March 8, 2013
Junior High Honor Choir Regional Rehearsal	March 9, 2013
Junior High Honor Choir Regional Rehearsal	March 16, 2013
California All-State High School Honor Choirs	March 21 - 23, 2013
Junior High Honor Choir Concert	April 27, 2013
Show Choir Spectacular	May 4, 2013