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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Rachelle Randeem

It's Choral Festival & Competition Season!

It's the season of preparation – one that can teach our singers so much about life and the manner in which we navigate new, exciting and potentially stressful experiences. There are new techniques to try and long-standing models to reinstate with our student musicians (who are learning patterns of learning & performance that will impact their future existences!). My mind is continually swimming with evaluations of “where we are,” “where we are not,” and “how can we get there” on the performance continuum. Judges and their scores can vary from day to day, and these scores may not define our long-term progress, so our goal is to concentrate on the very best performance we can provide on festival day. Below are some ideas that have worked in the past as well as some potentially new ideas to consider during this season. Please know you can find many resources by choosing the Festivals tab on the SCVA website.

Choral Repertoire Preparation

1. **Know where you're going:** Study scores & familiarize yourself with adjudication forms.
2. **Know how you're going to get there:** Create a written plan so octavos are as close to audience ready as possible two weeks before the festival. Specifically choose how and when students will learn the notes (solfege!), rhythms and lyrics. Be precise about when you focus on blend & balance, vocal tone, vowel shapes and diction. This “two weeks before festival” goal may then allow time to work towards additional musicality (dynamics, phrasing, articulations, representation of text, listening, audience representation).
3. **Make your trip a bit more fun:** Have fun! Students learn more when they're experiencing joy. Here are some ideas: utilize completely different tempos and dynamics, sing the piece on a lip buzz/one vowel/only the vowels/one syllable, practice in varied formations/ sections/arrangements, sing in a variety of locations and for informal audiences, add movement, practice entrances/endings only, begin singing at random locations within the song, audio/video record their performance(s), sing with varied/random emotions, practice walking on and off the stage in different personality styles, complete practice performances & scores, bring in a guest clinician.
4. **Be flexible:** Assess and regroup as necessary!

Sight-reading Festival Preparation

1. **Know where you're going:** Acquaint yourself with the rubric and assess your students' current sight-reading prowess.
2. **Know how you're going to get there:** Choose your starting point and ending goal; plan to be where you need to be two weeks before your festival! Generate a written plan. Remember to develop your students' audiation skills, meticulously work through the rhythm and pitches, and then put it all together! Practice! Practice!
3. **Make your trip a bit more fun:** Assign each section a note (sing in a handbell manner), choose one pitch/note to audiate, choose to stand up/sit down/turn around, etc. when you sing a specific pitch, sing the exercise backwards, practice the entire festival process (including waiting outside the classroom and walking in) with the script and the samples.
4. **Be flexible:** Assess and regroup as necessary!

Lastly, I would encourage your goal to be improvement, never “winning.” Winning is fun but improvement on your best is one of the finest life lessons we could impart for success in the next generation.

Wishing you the very best as you walk through this year's festival season!



2020 Jr. High Honor Choir

Amanda Benavides, Jr. High Honor Choir VP

Thank you to the students who auditioned for the 2020 Jr. High Honor Choir and all the directors that encouraged their students to audition!

Results will be posted very soon and music and tracks will be sent out thereafter.

Honor Choir Dates to Remember:

- Regional Rehearsal – Saturday, March 21st 9:00 am-1:00 pm at Mesa Robles School
 - Students will need to submit their \$55 and their Honor Choir contract on this date
- Final Rehearsal & Performance – Saturday, May 2nd 9:00 am-6:00 pm at Portola High School

I'm going to need help on both of these dates. Please go to:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0D4EA8AA2EA31-jrhigh> to sign up to help with sectionals at the Regional Rehearsal or to help with various things at the Final Rehearsal & Performance. Please note that SCVA does ask all directors that have two or more students in honor choir to help with the activities.

WEBSITE UPDATE

Mark Freedkin, SCVA Webmaster

E-mail Broadcast Messages

A number of automated e-mail confirmation and broadcast messages are frequently sent from our website to choral directors for various events.

Please check with your school district's network administrators to ensure that your e-mail system can accept incoming messages from "**admin@scvachoral.org**" to prevent those messages from being rejected as suspected SPAM (unsolicited e-mail). In addition, students who are registering for SCVA events (such as Honor Choirs) should only use e-mail addresses that can receive e-mail messages that originate from outside of their school district.

Please also be aware that if you simply reply to any of those automated broadcast messages, your response will be sent to me (as webmaster), and I must then forward your message the originator. For more efficient communication, please do not reply directly to any of those messages. Instead, please send your response to the sender's e-mail address.



Hints for Using PayPal and Saving Money

When using PayPal to pay the application or participation fees for multiple students, you can minimize the processing fees by adding the desired item to your Shopping Cart only one time, and then specify a quantity for that one item. You should not add the same item to your Shopping Cart multiple times, since that will result in a larger processing fee added to your total transaction.

You can also use a single PayPal transaction to pay the application or registration fee for multiple events at the same time (such as Festival Registration Fees), rather than checking out after submitting each item. Simply add each item to your current shopping cart, and then click on the Continue Shopping link to return to the SCVA website. After you have completed all of the items you wish to purchase, you can then proceed to the checkout page and receive a single invoice that lists all of those items.

If you have any comments, questions or problems with any aspect of our website please contact Mark Freedkin at mfreedkin@yahoo.com or (714) 357-1187

SCVA Board Elections 2020-2022



**Contact Karen Garrett, Past President, by Feb. 1st
at kgarrett@cnusd.k12.ca.us
if you are interested in joining our vibrant and
service oriented team**

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

KNOW YOUR CHORAL COMMUNITY

Betsy Olson began teaching music in the La Habra City School District in 1993; first as a part-time general music elementary teacher, then adding middle school choirs. Her efforts in teaching music in La Habra earned her the La Habra Masonic Lodge Outstanding Educator Award in 2000, again in 2003 for organizing the Annual La Habra Middle School Chorus Invitational for 20 years, and in 2010 for her "Get La Habra Singing Project." In 2010, the Orange County Music and Arts Administrators honored Betsy as Outstanding Arts Educator in Elementary/Vocal Music and three years later the La Habra City School District named Betsy "Teacher of the Year." Currently she is teaching at the Arbolita Visual and Performing Arts Elementary School where she is leading her school to become a model arts school in California.

Betsy's strengths lie in curriculum development, classroom management and infusing her enthusiasm for music into her students. Through the years she has mentored many CSUF students, who are now outstanding teachers in their own right. Betsy has continually worked to become proficient and utilize technology in the field of music. With one-to-one iPads in the upper grades, using GarageBand and other apps have been a great motivator for her students. She even created a pentatonic composition project for her transitional kinders using new technology she found at the NAMM convention last year.

Having been on faculty with the Southern California Children's Chorus Intermediate Chorus for the past 19 years, Betsy would like to thank their artistic director, Lori Loftus, for her mentoring and support. She also owes a great debt of gratitude to the CSUF music education department, especially Dr. Dennis Siebenaler, Dr. Marc Dickey and Dr. Chris Peterson. Since receiving her master's degree there, they have been an ongoing system of support both personally and professionally.



Betsy Olson

PIANO POWER

Teaching your choral vocalists how to learn the notes!

Quick musicianship on the piano in under a minute.

Here are a few “cheat sheets” you can use with your choral singers & or jazz vocalists.

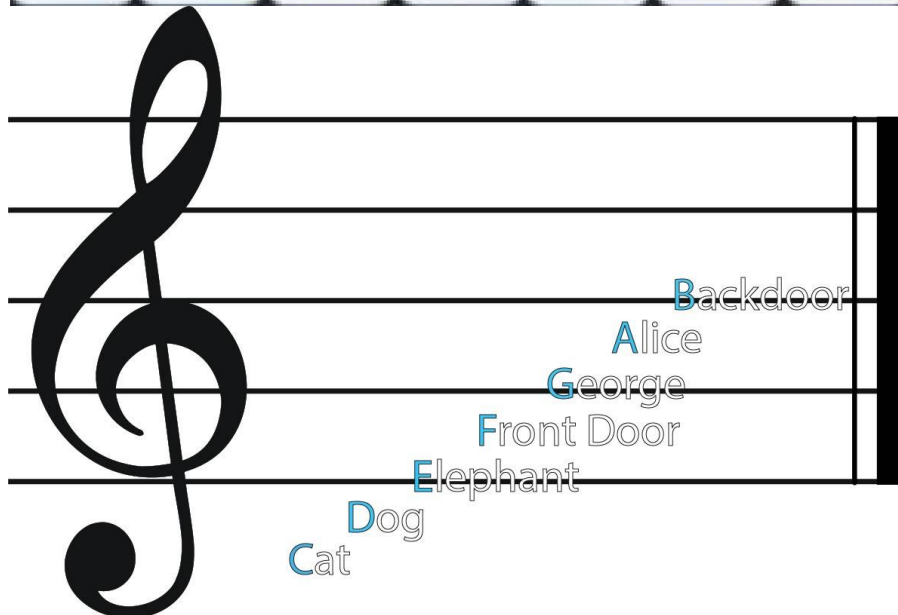
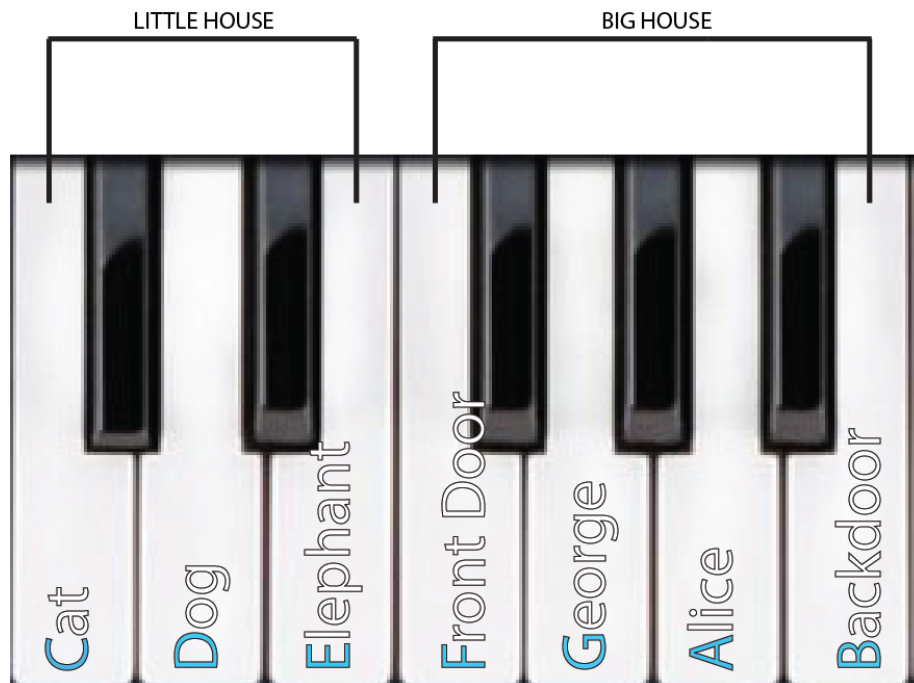
Christine Tavares-Mocha – SCVA Vocal Jazz Contemporary A Cappella Representative

cmocha@hartdistrict.org

THE PIANO

Teach Students (especially non-musician students) how to play their starting notes and pitches

on the piano.



TEACH THE STAFF

Every Good Boy Does Fine Always on the Line
DFACE "G" on the spacey "B"oy
Mordor "Middle Earth" C (one ring to connect them all)

Identify that the bass clef is exactly like the treble clef, except... move everything down from Treble Clef to Bass Clef by a 3rd. What would be middle C for treble clef is E for Bass Clef.

Bring the students to the piano and have them identify notes on the piano as you point to the corresponding notes out on the staff.

TEACH THE KEY SIGNATURES

"Magic #7!"

Order of Sharps on the Clef Warm - Up

"FCGDAEB the order of the sharps you see, BEADGCF the order of the flats on the clef"
I have created a song for this warm up above. Email me and I will send you the sound wave.

Tracing Sharps (using your finger, draw the letter. The strokes needed to create the letter equals how many sharps the key signature has. (For F# and C# draw out the # as well)

G = 1, D = 2, A = 3, E = 4, B = 5, F# = 6, C# = 7

Subtracting Flats – What's the MAGIC #? 7!!

If GM = 1sharp, then GbM = 6flats
If DM = 2sharps, then DbM = 5flats
If AM = 3sharps, then AbM = 4flats
If EM = 4 sharps, then EbM = 3flats
If BM = 5sharps, then BbM = 2 flats
If F#M = 6sharps, then FM = 1 flat
If C#M = 7 sharps, then CM = 0flats

*For more on this method of tracing sharps, email me. This tracing method is adapted from the teaching of D. Brinegar. :)

TEACH THE CHORD

The “claw” & “drop the anchor”

TRIADS

MAJOR $\boxed{4} \searrow 3$ half steps from the root

MINOR $\searrow 3 \boxed{4}$ half steps from the root

DIM $\searrow 3 \swarrow 3$ half steps from the root

AUG $\boxed{4} \boxed{4}$ half steps from the root

7th CHORDS

MAJOR7 $\boxed{4} \searrow 3 \boxed{4}$ half steps from the root

DOM7 $\boxed{4} \searrow 3 \swarrow 3$ half steps from the root

MIN7 $\searrow 3 \boxed{4} \searrow 3$ half steps from the root

Ø $\searrow 3 \swarrow 3 \boxed{4}$ half steps from the root

O $\searrow 3 \swarrow 3 \swarrow 3$ half steps from the root

**Practice Root Triads in a fake book chart or chord sheet.



Music Teaches Us What It Means to Be *Human*

Drew Lewis – President-Elect

I recently stumbled across a post shared on the Oxford Choral Facebook page which quotes statistics from Chorus America's 2019 *Chorus Impact Study*. I found the data from their study fascinating for our field of work as choral directors. They surveyed 5,700 choral singers and another 1,100 members of the "general public" in their research. The four main findings they had were:

- **Finding 1:** Choral singing is a significant part of American life, with more than 54 million Americans singing today.
- **Finding 2:** Adults who sing in choruses report significant personal benefits, including feeling less lonely and more connected to others.
- **Finding 3:** Choral singers are remarkably strong contributors to their communities.
- **Finding 4:** Older choral singers report both a better quality of life and better overall health than the general public.

I could spend pages going into all the data and inspiring implications this study brings to those of us in the choral world, but for now I will just highlight a few elements that stand out. First, it is important to work toward having an arts education for ALL students, from elementary and middle school to high school and college. From the study:

- *The majority of adults singing today say that they began singing because of a school choral music education opportunity. Over half of all choral singers started in elementary school, and three-quarters started by the end of high school.*

I believe that as a music educator it is through music that we learn and experience so many things about what it means to be human. This study also points this out in a significant way.

- *Nearly three-quarters of singers (73%) say choral singing helps them feel less alone or lonely.*
- *Chorus members credit singing with helping them be better collaborators, team players, and listeners.*
- *Chorus members are more adaptable and tolerant of others than the general population. Almost two-thirds of singers (63%) believe participating in a chorus has made them more open to and accepting of people who are different from them or hold different views.*
- *Choral singers credit singing in a chorus with making them more optimistic, mindful, and resilient. Eighty percent of singers expect more good things than bad things to happen to them, while only 55% of the general public has the same positive outlook.*
- *Singing in a chorus seems to have a significant impact on mental health. Older choral singers (age 65+) are less likely than the general public to say they have challenges with cognitive abilities, such as doing calculations in their heads, finding the right words to use, or organizing activities. Nearly eight in 10 older choristers credit their choral participation with helping to keep their mind sharper.*

I know that looking at these statistics only tells part of the story, but imagine if we were all more resilient, tolerant, collaborative, and were less lonely. This study helps strengthen my resolve that we need to pursue creative ways to help our students experience what music can teach us. Let this information inspire us to act. I welcome your ideas of how we as the SCVA community can encourage each other and work for ways to ensure students from all backgrounds and grade levels have access to a music and arts education.

If you haven't perused the Chorus America study already, the full details can be found in the link below:
https://www.chorusamerica.org/sites/default/files/resources/ChorusImpactStudy_SingingforaLifetime.pdf

Southern California Vocal Association

B. Encina: Los Osos High School 6001 Milliken Ave, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91737

www.scvachoral.org / email: info@scvachoral.org



IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES

2020

Jr. High Honor Choir Auditions at Various Venues	February 1
Vocal Solo and Small Ensemble Auditions	February 1
Close Harmony Festival at West HS	February 8
Vocal Solo and Small Ensemble Auditions	February 8
California All-State Honor Choir, Fresno, CA	February 20-22
SCVA Vocal Jazz / Contemporary A Cappella Festival	March 13
Jr. High Honor Choir Rehearsal at Mesa Robles MS	March 21
Show Choir Spectacular at Walnut HS	April 4
CMEA State Choral Festival at Sonoma State University	April 9
Jr. High Honor Choir Performance at Portola HS, Irvine	May 2