

# SCVA NEWS

Southern California Vocal Association

May, 2014

John Hendricks  
President  
[jhendricks@buckley.org](mailto:jhendricks@buckley.org)

Jennifer Stanley  
Executive Vice-President  
[scvaexecvp@gmail.com](mailto:scvaexecvp@gmail.com)

Carolyn Kelley  
Treasurer  
[choralcjk@earthlink.net](mailto:choralcjk@earthlink.net)

Lisa Lopez  
Membership  
[llopezscvamem@hotmail.com](mailto:llopezscvamem@hotmail.com)

Crystal Stone  
Secretary  
[cstone@powayusd.com](mailto:cstone@powayusd.com)

Karen Bluel  
Newsletter Editor  
[kbluel@cox.net](mailto:kbluel@cox.net)

Tina Peterson  
VP - High School Honor Choir  
[tpeterso@iusd.org](mailto:tpeterso@iusd.org)

Karen Garrett  
VP - High School Honor Choir  
[kgarretti@cnusd.k12.ca.us](mailto:kgarretti@cnusd.k12.ca.us)

Molly Peters  
VP-JH/MS Honor Choir  
[mepeters79@gmail.com](mailto:mepeters79@gmail.com)

Jeffe Huls  
VP - Vocal Solo Competition  
[jhuls@smmusd.org](mailto:jhuls@smmusd.org)

Mark Freedkin  
Web/Barbershop Festivals  
[mfreedkin@yahoo.com](mailto:mfreedkin@yahoo.com)

Nancy Ludwig  
VP I - Festivals  
[nancy ludwig6@gmail.com](mailto:nancy ludwig6@gmail.com)

Melva Morrison  
VP II - Festivals  
[melsmusic@verizon.net](mailto:melsmusic@verizon.net)

Patty Breitag  
VP - Show Choir  
[pbairhart@aol.com](mailto:pbairhart@aol.com)

Christine Tavares  
VP-Jazz Choir  
[christinetavares33@gmail.com](mailto:christinetavares33@gmail.com)

Rodger Guerrero  
Past President  
[rguerrero@hw.com](mailto:rguerrero@hw.com)

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*John Hendricks*

Greetings, SCVA members. This is our final newsletter for the current school year, as well as for the incumbent SCVA board. It has been such a privilege serving our organization as your president, and I couldn't be more thrilled and deeply grateful for the unwavering service of our membership and this board during these past two years in working toward the betterment of choral music education in California.

We have accomplished many things during this term, as our board has been committed to an ongoing process of innovation in order to best serve our members and students. Our festival offerings have thrived, and we are growing our influence statewide and in the California State Assembly through a coalition with CMEA, ACDA, and a variety of influential music organizations throughout California known as Stand Up 4 Music. It is my great hope that this partnership will continue to flourish in the coming years. While SCVA serves a very well-defined role in our region that is highly distinct from those of our superb partner organizations (as we focus on choral music education, above all else), we are highly effective and influential when working closely with other associations. This spirit of camaraderie must continue for the future well-being of our students. And in the midst of providing a wide range of events for you and your singers, your SCVA is fiscally sound, prudent, and thoughtful in expenditures—poised to remain a vibrant entity for years to come.

In this term, the High School and Middle School Honor Choirs have prospered. We have expanded the range and depth of our offerings, adding an important ensemble component to our Vocal Solo Competition. The Vocal Jazz Festival has become the Vocal Jazz and Contemporary A Cappella Festival, acknowledging the changing needs of our programs and students. Our Barbershop Harmony Festival has continued to attract young men in droves from all over our region. We have expanded our adjudicated offerings in the San Diego area, and are committed to offering a greater depth and breadth of events and convenience to our southernmost members. Our web presence has expanded significantly, and we have a Facebook page that is open to members. We have new and highly influential friends in the California State Assembly who are committed to the success of choral music education in our beloved state. Our Show Choir Festival has a particularly robust participation this year, and remains one of our best-attended events. Our Fall In-Service has evolved and continues to provide a rich professional development experience for our members.

Please take a moment to look at the list of your officers in this newsletter, as these exquisite professionals have been responsible for offering deep creativity and passion in guiding their particular events and responsibilities and contributing to the overall success of SCVA. Our organization owes them a huge debt of gratitude. I find it fitting to list these extraordinary professionals here, (in no particular order) with my most sincere and profound thanks for their depth of commitment and relentless inspiration: Jennifer Stanley, Tina Peterson, Karen Garrett, Jeffe Huls, Mark Freedkin, Christine Tavares, Carolyn Kelly, Karen Bluel, Molly Peters, Nancy Ludwig, Melva Morrison, Carolyn Kelley, Lisa Lopez, Patty Breitag, Crystal Stone, and of course, our Past President, Rodger Guerrero. These are truly remarkable people—the best of the best-- and I hope that you get to know them if you don't already. They are responsible for the enlightened evolution of your organization, and I really can't acknowledge or thank them enough.

In closing, let me strongly emphasize that the future of your SCVA solely depends on you. Become involved in your association and with your board. SCVA needs your creativity, knowledge, experience, and passion in order to grow, thrive and best serve our students. This is a truly great association, and in this, our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, I so look forward to many more celebrations of the successes of the current and future generation of choral educators in Southern California.

# 75 Years of SCVA History

by Jennifer Stanley, SCVA Executive VP

---

**1939** Seventy choral directors attend a meeting in response to an invitation from Ralph Peterson, and SCVA is founded on January 21. “You have sensed, as have I, the evident need of such an organization, where instructors in the vocal field may meet at regular intervals for round-table discussions and demonstrations of practical problems concerning...the choir.” Ralph Peterson, First President of SCVA, and director of choral music at LA City College.

**1940** The first SCVA Choral Festival is held at Occidental College on April 19. Eight groups perform in the junior high festival at 3pm, and thirteen groups perform at the high school festival at 7:30pm. The adjudicators are Howard Swan of Occidental College, Max T. Krone of USC, and Mae Nightingale of Le Conte JHS.

**1942** “It was a worried group of music educators who took office in SCVA in summer 1942...With wartime restrictions [on gasoline] being tightened and with blackouts precluding the holding of intra-school events at night, the outlook for festivals looked bleak indeed.” from USC thesis titled *A History of the Southern California Vocal Association and Its Choral Festivals* by Halstead McCormac, 1963.

**1959** SCVA steadily increases its number of choral festivals. Lois Wells, President of SCVA, states that, “SCVA sponsors some 32 festivals in the southland each spring, covering an area from Ventura to San Diego and from Palm Springs to Santa Monica. In 1959, nearly 21,000 singers participated in festivals.” Records from 1959 show that there were 14 junior high festivals attended by 139 choirs, and 17 high school festivals attended by 194 choirs.

**1966** SCVA organizes its first high school honor choir. Weston Noble conducts the honor choir in Poulenc’s *Gloria* at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.

**1971** The 1971 Music Educators Directory (published jointly by SCVA and SCSBOA) lists 816 choral directors, and there are 44 high school choral festivals listed.

**1985** After the passage of Prop 13 in 1978, SCVA membership plummets to 239 members as funding for school music programs declines. Howard Swan, SCVA’s first VP of College Level, tells Gordon Paine in a 1986 interview “I am quite happy to see that here in Southern California ‘the pendulum seems to be swinging back.’ It is happening primarily with the renaissance and resuscitation of the Southern California Vocal Association. It is most encouraging – that organization was practically finished four or five years ago and was being kept alive only by the efforts of a few dedicated persons. When I compare what is happening now in SCVA with its history for the last ten years, I believe that there is improvement.”

**1994** After many years of discussion and debate, SCVA adopts ratings (good, excellent, superior) for use at choral festivals. However, the main tenets of SCVA choral festivals remain: festivals are non-competitive performance opportunities for choirs to hear and appreciate the work of other choirs.

**2000** SCVA launches its website [scvachoral.org](http://scvachoral.org) under the direction of webmaster Mark Freedkin.

**2013-14** President John Hendricks commemorates the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of SCVA with a celebration at the October Fall “Choral School” Inservice. In November, the SCVA Honor Choirs Concert at Barnum Hall in Santa Monica features the Men’s Choir conducted by Dr. Jeffrey Benson, the Women’s Choir conducted by Dr. Amanda Quist, and the Mixed Choir conducted by Dr. Robert Istad. SCVA organizes 58 choral festivals attended by 372 choirs with a total of 14,500 students. Specialized festivals are also held for solos and small ensembles, show choir, vocal jazz and contemporary a cappella, and women’s and men’s barbershop. The Junior High/Middle School Honor Choir is conducted by Ms. Desiree Fowler on April 26 at John Adams MS in Santa Monica. The SCVA Membership Directory lists 320 members.

# SCVA High School Honor Choirs

*Karen Garrett, VP - High School Honor Choirs*



## **MARK YOUR CALENDAR for the 2014 SCVA High School Honor Choirs:**

- On-line audition registration opens: Thursday, August 28<sup>th</sup>
- On-line audition registration closes: Friday, September 19<sup>th</sup>
- Audition time/location confirmation: Tuesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>
- Honor Choir auditions: September 27 or October 4<sup>th</sup> (students choose one)
- First Rehearsal: Saturday, October 25<sup>th</sup>
- Honor Choir Weekend: Friday, Nov. 21<sup>st</sup> and Saturday, Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup>

I am very pleased to announce our 2014 Honor Choir conductors; Dr. Geoffrey Boers from the University of Washington will conduct the Mixed Choir, John Tebay from Fullerton College, the Men's Choir and Dr. Arlie Langager from MiraCosta College, the Women's Choir.

Please encourage your students to audition for this inspiring choral opportunity. Their experience in the Honor Choir will no doubt bring renewed passion and honed choral skills to their home ensembles.

***Plans are nothing; planning is everything. .... Dwight D. Eisenhower***

How many times have you heard your students say, "I plan on auditioning for (pick one) the drama production, the musical, the soccer team, honor choir, etc" and yet you see no obvious signs of preparation. For many teenagers (not all of course) expecting to succeed without effort or planning is common. As teachers, it is our job to understand where our student's current skills lie and how to get them to the skill level required by the audition.

It's not too early to start! Here are some ideas in May and June to prepare your students for High School Honor Choir auditions in the fall.

- After your Spring Concert, choose one Italian Art Song and have the whole class sing it in unison.
- Do a half dozen tonal memory exercises each class.
- Sing a major triad, minor triad, major scale and chromatic scale for warm-up each day.
- Continue your sight reading lessons to the end of the year. For those seriously interested in Honor Choir, prepare a sight reading packet from their level to the approximate level of the audition. Tell them to sing 5 melodies per day. Use on-line resources as well for sight singing practice. Encourage them to keep practicing during the summer.
- If you are holding your own choir auditions for fall ensembles, consider using the same format for your school's auditions as the Honor choir auditions. Especially for students who are currently in your program.

Interested in hosting auditions this year or being an Honor Choir judge? Just email me your preference. There's nothing like being involved to better understand the process for your students.

A heartfelt thank you to Tina Peterson, the out-going Honor Choir VP. Tina put in countless hours and much heart and soul into the Regional Honor Choirs for the past three years. Thank you to for your service to the students of Southern California – you rock!

# SCVA Vocal Jazz & Acapella Festival a Great Success!!

*Christine Tavares-Mocha, VP - Vocal Jazz*



*Santa Susana High School A Cappella Singers— Director, Bevin Abbe*

On March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014, over a dozen singing groups descended into a packed theater to perform and be critiqued by adjudicators Matt Falker and Fletcher Sheridan! The evening performance by *True North* was inspiring and amazing to hear! Thank you to Verdugo Hills High School *Verdugo Voices*, Verdugo Hills High School *Verdugo Voices A Cappella Singers*, Valencia High School *Soundwaves*, Saugus *Blue Notes Jazz Choir*, Santa Susana High School *Acapella Singers*, Oaks Christian School *OC Voices*, Marina High School *The Marina Voices*, Granada Hills Charter High School *Once Upon a Time*, McAuliffe Middle School *Sforzando*, Valencia High School *Two N' Four*, Royal High School Jazz Choir, and Cathedral City High School *Lions' Pride Chamber Singers* for participating in our festival! Last but not least, a huge thank you to College of the Canyons and True North for their inspiring performance. For more information on this festival contact [christinetavares33@gmail.com](mailto:christinetavares33@gmail.com) See you in 2015!



## **SCVA Choral Festivals**

*Melva Morrison, VP II – Junior High & High School Festivals*

### **Festival Season Nears the Finish Line!!!**

One of the most valuable missions of SCVA is the continued commitment to providing quality festivals for our hard-working choirs to attend. This year is no exception. We have 372 choirs registered for 54 festivals – 31 high school level and 23 middle school level; BUT the most significant number is 14, 552 SINGERS who are learning the “first art” , “first hand”!

Our choir directors (and accompanists) are continuing to inspire, improve, and encourage their developing musicians. Our singers are continuing to listen, learn, and respond to the suggestions made by our fine adjudicators. All of us are continuing to hone our listening skills and open our minds to new music and revisit known “gems” as we attend festivals.

Having hosted two festivals this year and attended three others; all five of my choirs have heard at least seven other choirs, listened to and read adjudications for their own performances, experienced “live” performance in settings other than their own, and hopefully developed a renewed sense of awe and wonder as they continue their investment in choral music. I know that all of your singers who were able to attend a festival this year experienced the same.

Many thanks to all of our board members who whole-heartedly support our dedication to providing fine festival experiences; our esteemed adjudicators who listened and evaluated for many hours; our festival hosts who spend countless hours preparing for, monitoring, and cleaning up details following their festivals; and special thanks to Nancy Ludwig, Jennifer Stanley, and Mark Freedkin (my friends in time of need!) for all they do in guiding us all through the festival season.

Here’s to continued great festival opportunities (followed by a summer of rest and renewal!!)



## Young Women's and Young Men's Harmony Festivals

*Mark Freedkin, VP of Barbershop Harmony Festivals*



The Masters of Harmony held their 14th Annual Young Men's Harmony Festival on Saturday, February 15 at Orange Coast College. We had 148 young men from 27 high schools and junior high schools throughout Southern California in attendance, including several first-time schools. The feedback from students, parents and teachers has been overwhelmingly positive. The evening show was nothing less than stellar, and it featured the young men's chorus; quartets or small ensembles from nine different schools; guest quartets Masterpiece, OC Times and The Newfangled Four; and the Masters of Harmony, culminating with a combined finale with over 250 singers on stage. This year's event brings our 14-year total to just over 2,900 students who have participated in one or more of our festivals.

While the young men were in Section Rehearsals, Dr. Chris Peterson gave a presentation about how to coach barbershop quartets (or any other vocal ensembles). This session included coaching techniques that could be useful with a variety of genres, not just barbershop harmony.

Plans are already underway for next year's Festivals. The women's festival is tentatively planned for Saturday, February 7, 2015, and the men's festival is tentatively planned for Saturday, February 21, 2015. Please watch the SCVA website for more information as it becomes available.

The Harborlites Chorus held its 9th Annual "Diva Day" on Saturday, February 8 at Orange Coast College. We had 176 young women from 17 Southern California high schools come together for the barbershop experience including four first-time schools. The young women and their choral directors thoroughly enjoyed the day of learning and performing four-part harmony barbershop style under the direction of guest clinician Jennifer Perry, lead of the 2009 International Champion Quartet Moxie Ladies and Vocal Music Director for the Lake County Schools in Canton, Ohio. The girls were entertained with a late afternoon visit from *The Newfangled Four*, the 2013 Barbershop Harmony Society International Collegiate Quartet Champions. The festival ended with an evening performance for an audience of over 400 parents, families and friends. The audience enjoyed performances by the Harborlites Chorus and their chapter quartets along with the Diva Day chorus and an ensemble from the Granada Hills Charter High School. The show ended with a combined 300-plus chorus when the Diva Day Chorus joined Harborlites on stage singing "*We Are Family*". We are excited to announce that twenty-five students were able to participate through a newly-established scholarship program funded by a generous grant from the Disney VoluntEARS Community Foundation. Through the years we have welcomed over 1700 young women to our program and hope the tradition continues for years to come. Next year's Diva Day is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, February 2, 2015 – our tenth year!!!

**Diva Day**  
**February 8, 2014**



**Young Men's Harmony Festival**  
**February 15, 2014**



# Southern California Vocal Association

c/o The Buckley School

3900 Stansbury Ave. Sherman Oaks, CA 91423

[www.scvachoral.org](http://www.scvachoral.org) / email: [admin@scvachoral.org](mailto:admin@scvachoral.org)



**Coming Soon! .....  
Summer 2014!**