

The Encounter



Kodály Educators of Texas,
an affiliate chapter of the Organization of American Kodály Educators

October 20, 2011

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President's Column



As I write this, we are all enjoying slightly cooler temperatures and I've even heard rumor that some places have received that wet stuff from the sky called,

"rain". It is a little hard to remember what it looks like, but I'm looking forward to experiencing it again someday! Just as my grass is starved for as much water as it can get, I've found that my children are starved for singing and playing in my classroom. They spent the summer relaxing but they seemed so ready to "get busy" when school began! What a fun time of the year getting to sing, review, play, and create music together!

I hope that you have all enjoyed getting back to creating beautiful music as well. I find that my best teaching is done when I love the songs, games, and

activities I have chosen. To that end, I am always searching for something new and inspiring. Our KET region representatives have created a fantastic array of opportunities for all of us to renew and learn, and I hope that you will check out the fall workshop offerings in your area.

As we all begin our "new normal" after the spring budget cuts, remember that it truly is all about the children. I always ask myself, "What can I do with this activity/song/game to make it more musical?" No matter the conditions or restrictions with which we operate, we all want our children to experience as much of the beauty of music as we can provide. So enjoy that music-making and have fun inspiring the future musicians of the world. They will remember what you do.

Brenda Keen

In memory: Virginia Irvin



Bronze Statue given in honor of instrumental Kodály teacher

Virginia Irvin was a beloved teacher and choral director for 46 years at Sam Houston State University. She was a cofounding member of KET and served as president of OAKE from 1988 to 1990. “Ginny”, as she was affectionately known to all, was a pioneer of the Kodály movement in Texas. Beginning in the early 70’s, she organized workshops bringing American and Hungarian Kodály pedagogues to SHSU where she established a Kodály certification program and a Kodály-centered graduate degree program. She organized two study tours to Hungary and initiated a cooperative liaison with the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest.

Upon her retirement from SHSU in 1989, hundreds of former students, music colleagues, and friends honored Ginny with the gift of a beautiful bronze sculpture of Zoltán Kodály by noted Hungarian sculptor, Imre Varga. The life-size art work of Kodály in his later years, sitting on a park bench is installed in a park in Budapest. Varga created nine small-scale copies and Ginny’s bronze is one of those numbered pieces.

Ginny passed away in 2008 and this bronze is soon to be given to Sam Houston State University, honoring Ginny and her remarkable career and influence in music education. The bronze will be permanently displayed in the lobby of the new James and Nancy Gaertner Performing Arts Center on the SHSU campus. The presentation will be made during the Fall SHSU Chorale Concert, Saturday, October 29 at 7:30 p.m. The concert will be in the David and Grette Payne Concert Hall of the Gaertner Performing Arts Center. Tickets may be purchased by calling 936-294-2339 or at tickets@shsu.edu. A reception will follow the concert.

All who knew Ginny are cordially invited to attend.

BY JANET SCARCELLA

Upcoming Workshops

South Region

“A Treasure Chest of Transitions: Games and Activities to Keep your Lesson Moving”

presented by Rhona Brink and Mary Neeley Stevens

DATE: Saturday, October 29, 2011

WHERE: M. O. Campbell Educational Center, 1865 Aldine Bender, Houston, Tx 77032

TIME: 8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. registration; 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. workshop with a 30-minute lunch break.

COST: \$10; free for those who attended a Kodály training class during the summer of 2011

DETAILS: The clinicians will present a variety of games and activities, for all levels of elementary school children, which will both delight and teach. While providing a fun, joyful experience, each game and activity will be linked with a transition designed to reinforce a musical concept, as well as, provide a seamless musical experience keeping students engaged in music learning. Many games also provide structured movement experiences which partially fulfill state-mandated physical education requirements. Teachers attending the workshop will earn 6 hours of C.P.E. credit while acquiring valuable, practical training for the music classroom.

CONTACT: For information about the workshop, please call Colleen Riddle (281-985-6105).

Exploring the Southwest and Mexico through Song and Movement

presented by Gabriela Montoya-Stier

DATE: Saturday, January 21, 2012

WHERE: University of Houston Moores School of Music, 120 School of Music Building, Houston, Texas 77204

TIME: 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

CREDIT: 4 C.P.E. Hours

FEE: \$35 Early Registration Fee; \$50 after Jan. 13

DETAILS: This presentation focuses on Mexican children folk songs and singing games along with children's literature that have a Southwestern theme. The workshop will incorporate a Kodály approach to implementing the folk song selections into an elementary music curriculum.

CONTACT: For registration, please call (713-743-3398) or email msmpcs@central.uh.edu.

Upcoming Workshops Continued...

Central Region

“It’s Just Hand Signs and Singing, Right?”

presented by Lauren Bain, Rebecca Juárez, Meredith Riggs, and Lori Sweet

DATE: Saturday, November 12, 2011

WHERE: The Montessori School of San Antonio; 17722 Rogers Ranch Parkway, San Antonio, Tx

TIME: 8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. registration; 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. workshop

COST: \$5 for OAKE/KET members; \$15 for non-members; free for college students

DETAILS: The Kodály method has long been associated with the Curwen hand signs and singing, but is that all it is? This workshop will explore how the method uses more than just hand signs, and how it can be used to engage older and younger students alike, while developing their musicianship through canons, part-singing, games, kindergarten pedagogy, and general pedagogy. **FREE LESSON PLANS PROVIDED!** An entire sequence of plans will be provided for each workshop participant as part of the demonstration lesson. 4 CPE hours.

CONTACT: For information about the workshop, please contact Lauren Bain at lfbain@gmail.com

“Sequencing for Success: Developing Artful Instruction for Musical Development”

presented by Dr. Brent Gault

DATE: Saturday, January 28, 2012

WHERE: Mead Elementary, 3803 Midorizon Drive, San Antonio, Tx 78229

TIME: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00p.m.

COST: \$10 for TMEA or KET members; \$20 for non-members; free for college students

DETAILS: Dr. Brent Gault has taught elementary and early childhood music courses in Texas, Wisconsin, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Indiana. He specializes in elementary general music education, early childhood music education, and Kodály-inspired methodology. Gault also has training in both the Orff and Dalcroze approaches to music education.

This workshop is generously sponsored by TMEA, KET, OAKE Southern Division, San Antonio ISD, and Northside ISD.

CONTACT: Corrie Box at corrie@corriebox.com or Gabriela Montoya-Stier at gabrielamontoyastier@gmail.com

Upcoming Workshops Continued...

North Region

“Make a List and Check It Twice!”

presented by Phyllis King

DATE: Saturday, November 5, 2011

WHERE: The Sockwell Center for Professional Development, 6301 Chapel Hill Blvd, Plano, Tx

TIME: 8:30 a.m. registration; 8:45 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. workshop

COST: \$15 for OAKE members; \$20 for non-members; free for college students

DETAILS: Being able to refer to a list can be quite helpful when we sit down to design lesson plans for our music classes! Join Phyllis as she guides us through ideas of vocal exploration, beat activities, ways to teach a song, hand clapping games, extensions into part work & even ideas on holiday materials! Almost like a crash course on indexing, participants will walk away with developmental lists and appropriate materials to address all elementary age groups.

CONTACT: Kim Nithiananda at knithiananda@gmail.com; see the website under “Workshops” for the registration form.



Save the date!!!

Deadline for Registration:
December 1st.

For more information, contact:
Lauren Bain
KET Vice President
lfbain@gmail.com

Southern Division Gathering—Kodály Together

A Division Gathering is a way for us to connect with our fellow Kodaly educators. In this time of budget cuts and stresses galore, take a breath and join us in beautiful San Antonio for a weekend filled with laughter and learning. Organizations that 'play together stay together'!!!

Schedule

Friday, January 27th

7:00-9:00 p.m. Informal Soirée @ the home of local teacher Greg Zouzalik

Saturday, January 28th

9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Workshop presented by Brent Gault, *Sequencing for Success: Developing Artful Instruction for Musical Development*

1:00 p.m.– 4:00 p.m.

Track 1: Observation of Brent Gault teaching a special topics course for the SAISD Kodály Certification Program.

Track 2: Visit to the Riverwalk to see the Alamo and go shopping.

5:30 p.m.-7:00 p.m. Division Gathering Dinner at local Mexican Restaurant.

8:30 p.m. (Optional) Live Flamenco or Jazz at local favorite tappas bar, Carmen's de la Calle Café.

Cost: Registration Fee = \$25 (Includes workshop, t-shirt, Friday evening gathering)

Housing Option #1 = \$95-120 for rooms in hotels such as La Quinta.

More info will be provided if you select this option.

Housing Option #2 = Lodging with KET member. To save money on housing, you are welcome to stay with one of our local members. We have space for 10-12 people.

More info will be provided if you select this option.

OAKE Southern Division Gathering

Registration Form

January 27th - 28th, 2012

San Antonio, Texas

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone #: _____ School/District: _____

T-Shirt Size: **S M L XL XXL** OAKE member: ___yes ___no Chapter Affiliation: _____

Housing Options:

____ I will be reserving my own hotel room in San Antonio.

____ I would like to stay with a local KET member.

____ I live in the area and would like to be a housing host and/or provide transportation. Please contact me with further information.

Event Registration:

For reservation purposes, please check the following events you plan to attend:

____ Friday, Jan 27th at 7:00 p.m. Informal Soirée

____ Saturday, Jan 28th Workshop with Brent Gault at Mead Elementary School

____ **Saturday Track 1:** Observation of Brent Gault teaching a special topics course for the SAISD Kodály Certification Program. 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

____ **Saturday Track 2:** Visit to the Riverwalk to see the Alamo and go shopping.

____ Division Gathering Dinner at a local Mexican Restaurant

____ Live Flamenco/Jazz at a local tappas bar, Carmen's de la Calle Cafe; Saturday, Jan 28th at 8:30 p.m.

Payment: \$25 for workshop, T-shirt, and the Friday Evening Informal Soirée

Please make checks payable to **KET** and mail along with this registration form to:

Lauren Bain
224 Goliad Drive
New Braunfels, TX 78130

Connect the Dots...Color the Lines

Legacy is defined, by Merriam-Webster as, “something transmitted by or received from a predecessor ...” According to our OAKE mission our common legacy is, “to enrich the quality of life of the people of the USA through music education by promoting the philosophy of Zoltan Kodaly” (www.oake.org). We even have a ‘Legacy Fund’ to ensure that our mission is sustained for generations to come. However, what will we say in twenty years about our organization, about KET, and about our own work in the classroom? Answers to the below two questions can help us all in our quest:



*By Corrie Box,
Huebner Elementary,
NEISD*

- Will we connect the dots now or later?
- How are we coloring in the lines?

Steve Jobs, in his famous speech at Stanford (that went viral on the media recently), admonished graduates to trust that the ‘dots will connect’ down the road. His premise is to that if you explore whatever avenues intrigue you, eventually, all things will connect and create a complete picture. While this is profitable for a person it is also helpful for an organization. Trying too hard to ‘connect the dots’ can make one anxious to control an outcome in a particular way. An old Quaker saying is to simply “Let your life speak” (Palmer, p. 10, 2000). Meaning, look inside to see what is calling out to be heard. Obviously, there is a necessary time for deep personal reflection before the larger decisions in life. However, what about the smaller miraculous moments occurring every day? Am I really listening to my students as they respond to questioning? If they are not able to answer critical questions, is it really that I did not do enough preparation for the concept? Are they just having an “off” day? Did I miss something and forget a step in the process? Am I listening as they let their lives speak with where they are as mini-musicians?

While we are exploring the wonderful avenues that teaching music affords, we need to ask ourselves: How are we coloring in the lines? According to Parker Palmer, “Good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher” (p. 10, 2000). Estelle Jorgensen articulates this challenge: “When we are deluged with information and pressed with work, it is sometimes difficult to take the time for, and realize the importance of, listening to the teacher within... We can become so busy... that we do not have time to reflect on what is really “important” (Jorgensen, p. 4, 2008). Too many times, I find myself caught up with e-mails, field trip requests, and other administrative duties, making it difficult to carve out time to really focus on my teaching process. This is especially true when what worked last year does not work for this year’s group. Do I blame the group or do I place the onus on myself to change and adapt? Do I consistently allow the Kodály mantra of “Quality music for everyone” to guide and steer my repertoire choices? Is my practice consistent with my beliefs of who I am as a teacher and who we are as a KET community?

Recently, I completed an in-depth comparative analysis of *The Kodály Method* by Lois Choksy and *Kodály Today* by Micheal Houlahan and Philip Tacka. Personal communication with authors, Dr. Jerry Jaccard and Patty Moreno was conducted. Also, the number of pages devoted to various topics was statistically analyzed. Quality of content was not assessed. Strikingly, they were more similar than expected though their personal journeys did influence their differences. After communication with Choksy, Houlahan and Tacka, all authors shared in their core philosophy:

- Music should be the end goal, not the method.
- Extensive use of singing as a tool for learning.
- “To make the masterpieces of the world literature, public property...” (Kodály, 1974, p. 160).
- Use of high quality music.
- Teaching music is hard work.
- Teachers should be high quality musicians.
- Teachers should adapt pedagogy to individual situations. According to Choksy, “...the sequence given here will and should be altered according to the population with whom it is to be used” (1999, p. 179). Similarly, Tacka explained, “You follow a basic recipe when you’re cooking but you make the end product really distinctive and your own by adding your own creativity to it” (personal communication March 20, 2010).

Both curricula devoted a similar amount of time to Choral Literature, Creative Expression, Instruments, Literacy and Part-work. Differences arose due to the following possibly factors:

- Other publications by the author that could supplement the curriculum.
- Categories were focused on in different ways.
- Changing historical context between the publishing dates of both curricula (1999 & 2008).
- Differing visions for the text.

After all data were analyzed and categorized, all authors developed their curriculum out of passion for their fellow musician-teachers with a conviction that they had something valuable to contribute to this end. During interviews about the vision for the work, both author groups did not state that they wanted to create the most famous curriculum ever written. On the contrary, both curricula were devised to help teachers and articulate their own philosophical vision, to leave their own legacy. These massive curricula (between 543-620 pages), were designed out of a desire by master teachers to let their life work speak into the world.

As we learn from master pedagogues, of the past and present, and from our students every day, we create our own connections —making our own “dots”. What will we keep? What will we erase? How will we “color in the lines”? Will we teach with integrity to our training as well as to the knowing that comes from experience? Will we trust our own voices to speak from our identity? Will we live with integrity to who we say that we are? May we all take a moment, to reflect; what “dots” are there still left to explore? How will we walk in-between the dots and color in the lines? May we walk with integrity in our common vision and, most of all, with ourselves.

References

- Box, C. (2010). A qualitative comparison of *The Kodály Method* by Lois Choksy and *Kodály Today* by Micheál Houlahan and Philip Tacka (Unpublished master’s thesis). Texas State University–San Marcos, San Marcos, TX.
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- Jorgensen, E.J. (2008). *The Art of Teaching Music*. Indiana University Press: Bloomington, IN.
- Palmer, P. (2000) *Let your life speak: Listening for the voice of vocation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Inc.



2012 Oake convention

Are you going?

www.oake.org/conferences

From Our Members...



Each newsletter contains a question that was posed to the members. Here is the question and their responses!

What is one of your favorite ways to warm-up your choir?

I begin with stretching, deep breathing with their hands on their waist, and then ‘roller coasters.’ In fact, I begin the year drawing one on the board for them to follow. Then, I have one student come to the board and draw a roller coaster for us to follow with our voices. That student gets to point to where we are on the ‘track’ and lead us through the roller coaster. Lots of fun to create and the kids love getting to be the director!

-Brenda Keen, Hightower Elementary, PISD

I love to use rounds and canons as warm up material. The range of many canons are an octave and are easy to sing. Canons and rounds can also become an opener for any concert.

**-Jennifer Thrasher
Rice Elementary School, Tyler ISD**

In tune singing is best achieved when tuning to another's part. This can easily be achieved with a two-part group reading solfa from the teacher's two hands. For example, Part 1 holds "so" (indicated with teacher's hand sign) as Part 2 sings "so mi la so " or whatever solfa the teacher indicates with her other hand. Everyone breathes. Then Part 2 holds "so" as Part 1 sings "so mi la so mi do" or whatever solfa the teacher indicates with her other hand. Obviously, patterns can be adjusted to grade level curriculum. Chord roots - so and do - occurring in one hand while chord tones of the dominant and tonic are explored with the other hand is a more advanced option.

-Karen Gentry, retired PISD

I begin with singing several pentatonic patterns (pentachordal patterns later in the year) then do our sight-singing. After this we move to a limited range canon. I don't do the traditional warm ups any more because the kids mentally went to sleep and the warm-

ups weren't proving to be any more beneficial than going directly to patterns and sight-singing.

-Jan McFarling, John Drugan School, Socorro ISD

For our 4th and 5th Grade Honor Choir, my student teacher from Texas Tech, Lauren Moore, taught this one. The kids love it!

“Zing-a-mama, zing-a-mama, zing-a-mama,

s - - - - *f* - - - - *m* - - - - ,
♫♫♫ ♫♫♫ ♫♫♫

zing-a-mama, zing-zing-zing-zing-zing!” (clap clap)

r - - - - *d* - *m* - *s* - *m* - *d*
♫♫♫ ♫ ♫ ♫ ♫ ♫ ♫ ♫

**-Beverly Fleming, Murfee Elementary,
Lubbock ISD**

I love getting the kids moving and energized with a Shake-Down and Shake-Out Countdown:

RH: 1,2,3,4,5 LH: 1,2,3,4,5 R leg: 1,2,3,4,5
L leg: 1,2,3,4,5 and then count-down
RH 1,2,3,4 LH 1,2,3,4 R leg 1,2,3,4 L leg 1,2,3,4.
Continue this until each arm and leg is shaken once.

Mountains and Valleys: in the key of your first piece
drd drmrdr drmfmrdr drmfmsfmrdr drmfslsfmrdr
drmfsltsfmrdr drmfsltd'tlsfmrdr

d'td' d'tltd' d'tsltd' d'tlsfsltd' d'tlsfmsfsltd'
d'tlsfmrmsfsltd' d'tlsfmrdrmfsltd'

BUNGING JUMPING: Mountains and Valleys
(Intervallic work)

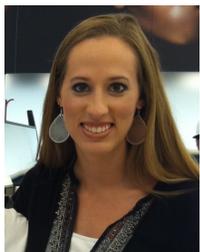
d...drd...dmd...dfd...dsd...dld...dtd...dd'd...

d'...d'td'...d'ld'...d'sd'...d'fd'...d'md'...d'rd'...d'dd'

**-Cecile Johnson, Woodrow Wilson Elementary,
Denton, Texas; Director of the Woodrow Wilson All-
Star Choir, a 3-time TMEA Elementary Honor Choir**

Final Thoughts

by Lauren Bain, *KET Vice-President*



How'd it go?

How was your first 9 weeks back at school? Mine were incredibly busy, and full of exciting changes. I'm sure with all the budget cuts and staff changes, you are being challenged in ways you've never experienced. My school population grew but our staffing did not! I have larger classes and a longer schedule, but I cannot let that dampen my enthusiasm for the music and the kids. I want to encourage you to do the same! There will always be something that stretches us physically, emotionally, and mentally, but we can choose our reaction and attitude. Early in my teaching career, the front secretary stopped me and said, "You are always smiling! No matter what happens, you always have a smile on your face. How do you do it?" I responded with "I love my job!" Ever since that moment, I've tried to always smile when I see a staff member come around the corner, when "that class" comes to my room, when my administrator comes in my room for a walk-through, or when I'm struggling with hundreds of kids on stage for a program. Honestly, I do not always have a smile on my face or do not feel like smiling, but the mere act of smiling helps remind me of how good I have it. Will you try it? :)

What's your next challenge?

I am always hunting for a new way to challenge my teaching. I love to learn! Right now I am focusing on assessment - wow, it is hard to correctly and efficiently assess hundreds of kids! Are you overwhelmed due to the sheer numbers you work with? Focus on one area at a time. This past 9 weeks, my goal was to have a writing grade for each child in the school. While it created a lot of papers to grade, I learned many valuable lessons about assessment through the process. I now know what works well and what needs to be changed for the next round. My goal for the next 9 weeks will be to hone my singing assessments where I can accurately (fingers crossed) assess the precious voices of my kids.

Perhaps you have enough challenges on your plate with all the changes...whatever it may be, give your best!

Lauren Bain

Additional Information

Check our website for updated information concerning workshops, meetings, and the latest news! Go to www.ket.oake.org and click on the "KET Website" link in the middle of the page to be redirected to the new site.

"Like" us on Facebook! Search for "Kodaly Educators of Texas" and press "like." You can read updates and keep track of other KET members through this outlet.

Questions or comments? Email us at kodalyedoftx@gmail.com or our President Brenda Keen at brenda.keen@pisd.edu.