

# The Encounter



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

April 15, 2012

## In This Issue...

President's Column .....	2	OAKE Convention Impressions .....	12
Southern Division President .....	3	OAKE Educator of the Year .....	13
Tech Time .....	4	OAKE Convention Review .....	15
From a Different Perspective.....	6	The Next Southern Division Gathering .....	16
Summer Training .....	9	Final Thoughts .....	17
KET Scholarship Winners .....	11		

## Meet our new KET Board Members!



**Kristin Moore**  
Secretary



**Greg Britt**  
North Texas  
Representative



**Evan Anderson**  
West Texas  
Representative



**Juan Saldana**  
South Texas  
Representative

# President's Column



Happy Spring! As the weather finally gets a little warmer, and a little stormier for us up here in north Texas, our minds dream of outside fun. What a fantastic time to take a

class outside for a music game! Kids get to “really run” and still enjoy music-making! There are just some games that are more fun if you can run full speed!

The OAKE conference in Phoenix over spring break was a fabulous experience for all of us. There were lots of wonderful sessions to energize our teaching and amazing music by all of the choirs. With students in all of the choirs, I am always so proud of the accomplishments of these ensembles in such a short time. The parents are always so appreciative. And it does my heart good to know we are continuing to create a community of singers that will remember the experience for their entire life.

That being said, I hope you are taking time to enjoy the spring weather yourself! Relax in the evenings as much as possible and allow yourself to sit in the garden or by the pool and watch the world come back to life during the spring temperatures. We all need to recharge ourselves for that end-of-year craziness that hits at the end of April and lasts throughout May!

As we begin to dream of summer vacations, be sure to plan some time to recharge your teaching as well. I love

getting to spend some time during the summer participating in workshops or training programs. It invigorates me and gets me ready for next year!

Your executive board will be meeting during June to make plans for the future of our organization. Your suggestions are always welcome! Feel free to contact your area representative or contact us directly by email or on Facebook if you have something you want to bring to our attention. Our Facebook page has been a great resource for all of us to stay connected and energized. Please be sure to “friend” us and pass it along to all of your friends as well.

Also, we are pleased to announce the first scholarship winners for training programs this year. Please read the article in this issue, and keep this scholarship in mind as you plan for your future. It is a great opportunity for us to spread the Kodály message!

Thank you again to all those who have served KET and are rotating off the executive board. You will be greatly missed, but we know you will continue to be voices of encouragement as we step forward. Our organization has so much to offer statewide and nationally. It takes a dedication from our members and officers, and all of your support and encouragement keep us one of the most vital chapters in the organization. Have a fantastic spring and keep singing!

*Brenda Keen*

# From Our Southern Division President

Dear OAKE Southern Division Members,

Our 2012 OAKE Conference in Phoenix was amazing. The strength of music in our division was exemplified by the exceptional performance of high school, middle school and elementary school choristers in the OAKE National Honor Choirs, as well as, the fabulous Southern Division clinicians and spectacular invited choirs. The thrill of the conference was the presentation of the Lifetime Achievement Award to our own Lamar Robertson (LAKE) and the Educator of the Year Award to Cecile Johnson (KET).

A special “thank you” goes out to KET for hosting the 1<sup>st</sup> OAKE Southern Division Gathering in San Antonio, TX. The 2<sup>nd</sup> OAKE Southern Division Gathering will be held in Oklahoma City, OK on October 5-7, 2012. Dr. John Feierabend will be presenting. Mark your calendars!

Southern Division has more exciting news ... The 2014 OAKE Conference will be held in Atlanta, GA. We will share our southern hospitality with all of OAKE.

Start saving your pennies to attend the 2013 OAKE Conference in Hartford, CT next spring.

Keep on singing,  
Mary Neeley Stevens  
Southern Division President



Mary & Hubert Stevens at the South Rim of the Grand Canyon are “on the trail” to Phoenix, AZ for the 2012 OAKE Conference.

# TECH TIME

Technology Tips for Kodály Teachers

by Alisha Gabriels



## *SMARTboard: Beyond the Basics*

### How to add TEXT:

In order to enter text on a blank page, select the font tool from the toolbar across the top of the page. The font tool is the letter “A.” Type into the box and adjust the text box side and font size as needed. 

If you wish to continue working in the page without typing text, you must click the arrow icon or another text box will be created. 

### To create a theme from a page:

Click **FORMAT** at the top.

Choose **THEMES** then “**CREATE theme from page.**”

Name the page something you’ll remember at the top. The default name is the date and time the page was created.

### To insert a theme on a page:

Have a blank page ready, then click the gallery icon, which looks like a picture frame.  **CLICK** on “My Content” in the top white box.

In the long white box below there is a section called **Backgrounds and Themes**. Themes or backgrounds you created will be there. **DRAG** it to the right onto the blank page.

**\*\*Extremely important! Choose “Insert theme on current page only.” Otherwise it will be on every page in your presentation.**

## ***SMARTboard Continued...***

### **To create LINKS in a presentation:**

To create a linked presentation such as tic-tac-toe, create all of the pages first. Use an object such as a box or picture to link to other pages in the presentation.

Right click on the object or clipart picture.

From the drop down menu, choose LINK...

Select "Page in this file" and click "OBJECT" (not corner icon)

Choose the page to link to from the pages you created. A thumbnail of the page will help you choose.

You can also rename the pages. See below.

To link back to the tic-tac-toe board, add a clipart picture or link back from a corner icon. You may use anything on the page to link to another page, file, or the Internet.

### **To rename pages in a presentation:**

SMART technology names pages with the date and time the page was created. So...

**CHOOSE** a page from the page sorter on the left hand side of the screen.

Click the **ARROW** in the top right hand corner of the thumbnail view of the page sorter.

Choose **RENAME** page. Name it something helpful.

Hit **ENTER** or click out of the box to finish.

### **How to use DUAL Screen options:**



Select the screen icon to the left of the camera. Select **FULL Screen**, the icon to the left on the dual screen icon.

*By Alisha Gabriel,*

*Great Oaks Elementary, Round Rock ISD*

*[alishagabriel@hotmail.com](mailto:alishagabriel@hotmail.com), 464-6889*

# FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

By Lori Sweet

While most elementary music teachers feel a sense of camaraderie with their middle school choir counterparts, dealing with band directors may prove a challenge. I am blessed to work with my district's middle school and high school band directors on a regular basis as the private lessons instructor of horn. We have quite a dialogue going about how to make our bands and choirs better, as well as improving the situations of our elementary music classrooms.

To open the dialogue and start the process of vertical alignment between elementary music teachers and band directors, I sent a poll to several directors from local districts, including the middle school that my students will attend.

To be honest, this poll stemmed from my frustration at the idea that entering middle school students “knew nothing” about music and had to start from scratch. Our district has supported music by hiring a full time music teacher at each elementary school, so that entering middle school students have approximately six years of weekly music classes under their belts before they step foot in the band hall or choir room. Hardly “nothing.” To pose these questions would help get to the bottom of the question - what are the students lacking that causes the band directors to feel like they are starting from scratch?

“If you had a dream group of 6th grade beginners, what musical skills would they already possess when they arrived on the first day of beginning band?” Of course, there were some tongue-in-cheek responses like, “Be able to listen and follow directions,” and, “Already know proper instrument care/procedures so we can start playing immediately.” I also asked them to answer with elementary music teachers in mind. Where might an elementary music teacher focus to help students with the transition to middle school band?

## **FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE...CONTINUED**

### **Five answers that occurred most frequently:**

1. Play instruments as much as possible - students would have many experiences playing beat, rhythmic and melodic instruments
2. Sing as much as possible - students would be able to verbalize if a pitch is higher, lower or the same note; be able to sing back a melody that has been played with good intonation
3. Steady beat - students would be able to tap steady beat with a foot while clapping rhythm patterns or singing a melody
4. Students would have developed a deep love of music and desire to make music part of their life
5. Internally feel the subdivision of the beat - students would be able to differentiate between the upbeat and downbeat; know that every beat can be subdivided into two (or sometimes three) parts

### **Play Instruments!**

Whether a happy choir lark or a reluctant singer, playing instruments can provide students with tactile input for any rhythmic or melodic concept. Set high standards when teaching your students instrument technique. Just as you teach exact vowel shape and demand good intonation, teach your students to be precise when holding instruments or mallets. If they expect to just hold it “any old way,” they may have a hard time adjusting to the precise demands of their band instrument. If you are unsure of technique, ask your local band director (vertical alignment).

### **Sing, Sing Sing!**

Have you heard it said, “Can’t sing? Join band!” The longer I have been around the band world, the more I am convinced the opposite is true. The top chairs in any section go to the student who can not only hear pitch relationships, but can sing it back as well. In-tune singing is imperative if we are to give our students a leg up in their future music opportunities. Kodály once said, *“To teach a child an instrument without first giving him preparatory training and without developing singing, reading and dictating to the highest level along with the playing is to build upon sand.”* (Kodály Today, p.22)

### **Can you keep the beat? Let me count the ways!**

While steady beat ranks among the top requests from all band directors, the definition varies. Many implied that tapping one foot to the beat is a separate skill than keeping the beat with body movements, marching to the beat or playing an instrument to the beat.

## FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE...CONTINUED

In Kodály Today (Houlahan and Tacka), subdivision of beat is taught in a variety of ways. Students learn that the subdivision of skipping songs is in three, and later compare the subdivision of 2/4 songs with 6/8 songs (p.132). Later, as students progress to anacrusis, the idea that a sound can come “before” the strong beat is introduced (p.318). Then as students learn about syncopation, they can truly recognize when a sound comes on the second half of the beat, or “after” the downbeat (p.332).

Teachers must ensure that beat and subdivision of the beat is internalized by forcing their students to do part-work. When students keep the beat (either toe-tapping or stepping the beat) while concentrating on tapping an ostinato and singing a song, beat-keeping skills are laid bare. Some have hypothesized that only through part-work can a teacher truly assess beat competency.

### **Loving Music!**

Although it seems an enormous task to teach a child to love music, that must also be a priority. Keeping the music classroom a positive place where students enjoy what they are learning is key to our students’ perception of music. *“Teach music and singing at school in such a way that it is not a torture but a joy for the pupil; instill a thirst for finer music in him, a thirst which will last for a lifetime.”* (Kodály Today, p.20)

### **Less Important**

Several directors mentioned absolute note names as being non-essential. One band director stated that most students without classroom music experience (having never had elementary music) catch up with those who have prior music experience very quickly, when it comes to naming notes. Other ideas mentioned include names and values of the rhythm symbols and knowing that a beat of silence is equivalent in value to that of a beat of sound.

*Several local band directors were polled for this article. I also drew from my own past experience as a band student and band director. This is by no means an exhaustive list, but a starting point.*

Houlahan, M. & Tacka, P. (2008). *Kodály Today*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.



**Lori Sweet**  
**Neidig Elementary School**  
**Elgin ISD**

# Summer Training Programs

## The Southeast Texas Kodály Certification Program

*Sponsored by Aldine ISD*

**Date:** June 11-28, 2012 (M-Th) & October 27, 2012 (Sat)

**Time:** 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**Levels Offered:** I, II, and III

**Instructors:** Rhona Brink, Cecile Johnson, Mary N. Stevens

**Location:** Hill Intermediate School, 2625 W. Mount Houston, Houston, Tx 77038

**Cost:** Early Bird through April 30, 2012 - \$350.00

Regular through May 18, 2012 - \$400.00

**Contact:** Colleen Riddle - [criddle@aldine.k12.tx.us](mailto:criddle@aldine.k12.tx.us)

---

## Texas State University Certification Program

**Date:** July 9-25, 2012

**Levels Offered:** I, II, and III

**Instructors:** Dr. Philip Tacka, Dr. Micheal Houlahan, Gabriela Montoya-Stier

**Location:** Texas State University, Music Building; San Marcos, Tx

**Cost:** \$350.00

**Contact:** Lisa Roebuck, [lisa\\_roebuck@roundrockisd.org](mailto:lisa_roebuck@roundrockisd.org)

Patricia Moreno, [patricia.h.moreno@austinisd.org](mailto:patricia.h.moreno@austinisd.org)

---

## Choral Directors Conference

*\*in conjunction with the 2012 Kodály Institute of Houston*

**Date:** July 30-August 3, 2012

**Instructors:** László Durányik, Cecile Johnson,

**Location:** University of Houston, Moores School of Music

**Cost:** \$200.00

**Contact:** 713-743-3398, [www.pcs.uh.edu](http://www.pcs.uh.edu)

# Training Programs Continued...

## **The Kodály Institute of Houston**

**Date:** July 16-24 & July 30-August 3, 2012

**Levels Offered:** I, II, and III

**Instructors:** Rhona Brink, László Durányik, Cecile Johnson, James Reifinger, Mary Neeley Stevens

**Location:** University of Houston, Moores School of Music

**Cost:** \$600.00

**Contact:** 713-743-3398, [www.pcs.uh.edu](http://www.pcs.uh.edu)

---

## **Plano ISD/SMU Kodály Teacher Training Program**

**Date:** July 5-20, 2012

**Levels Offered:** I, II, and III; Kodály Choral Track Level I & II

**Instructors:** Kathy Kuddes, Kenny Allen, Gay Baker deMontel, László Durányik, Lenke Igo, Cecile Johnson, Brenda Keen, Phyllis King, and Kristin Moore

**Location:** Meadows School of the Arts at Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas

**Cost:** \$800.00

**Other:** Advanced Seminar in Kodály for those individuals who have completed training and wish to refresh their skills - July 16-20, 2012

**Contact:** [www.smu.edu/muedworkshops](http://www.smu.edu/muedworkshops)

# **KET Training Scholarship Winners!**

**KET is proud to announce the winners of our first teacher training scholarships! Our winners are:**

**Elizabeth Bongat**

**Beth Carter**

**Nikki Walters**

These 3 dedicated Kodály teachers will receive a \$350 scholarship to the OAKE endorsed training program of their choice for the summer of 2012. They submitted letters of recommendation and an essay detailing the importance of the Kodály teaching method.

**Elizabeth Bongat** is in Converse, Texas and teaches at Mina Elementary and Bluebonnet Elementary. She is planning on beginning Level I at the Texas State University training program this summer.

**Beth Carter** is in Denton, Texas and teaches at Evers Park Elementary. She plans to complete Level III this summer at the Plano ISD/SMU training program.

**Nikki Walters** is in Allen, Texas and teaches at Chandler Elementary School. She plans on beginning Level I at the Plano ISD/SMU training program this summer.

**Congratulations to these 3 fabulous scholarship winners!**

# OAKE Impressions by gabriela montoya-stier

This year the OAKE conference was in Phoenix, Arizona. When we first landed, I was amazed to see beautiful 10 feet tall cacti. They were amazing! I was tempted to take a baby piece from one of the sidewalk gardens, but Sarah Martinez reminded me that I did not want to get arrested in Arizona! The conference hotel was in a very nice location in downtown Phoenix with access to several restaurants within walking distance. Of course, the conference had great sessions including presentations from Henry Leck and Jill Trinka. In this article, I am going to review the first session on Native American music by Robert "Tree" Cody from the Dakota/Maricopa tribe and Dr. Kay Edwards from Miami University.

Dr. Edwards organized the session while Tree filled in with personal anecdotes, performances, and information. Tree is a Native American flute player but he is truly a representative of Native American tribes. I was impressed by his knowledge of the different tribes in North America. He grew up in Canada along the border with the United States. He was raised by his grandparents who taught him their traditions and language. During his studies, Tree also met Elders who were over 100 years old and had fought in the Battle of Little Big Horn. He is very familiar with the Pow Wow circuit and explained many traditions within the Native American cultures. One tradition is their ability to assimilate other peoples traditions into their own. For example, Dr. Edwards played different examples of Native American music, ranging from banda style to very traditional Pow Wow

to New Age to Rap. Dr. Edwards created an iTunes PlayList that contains all the music she featured in the session. If you go to the KET website, there will be a link to download a copy of the handout which contains the link to her iTunes PlayList.

Dr. Edwards pointed out that Native American music includes both contemporary as well as traditional styles. Contemporary music consists of many styles that are varied, ever evolving, and changing. Traditional music also continues to evolve. She states, "'Traditional' means to hand over - not just to hand down in a static form." In the session, she discusses some characteristics of Native American music, Pow Wow drumming, Flute music, Game songs, Contemporary Navajo music, and provides a list of websites for additional information. My favorite moment was when we joined together to participate in a round dance while Tree performed. My favorite recording was that of a child singing Old MacDonald in Apache!

If you are interested in the session, go to the KET website and look for the link "The Musical Heritage of Indigenous Americans in Our Curriculum, Part 1". As always, I enjoyed the OAKE conference, especially all the beautiful singing. Next year the OAKE conference will be in Connecticut!

*by Gabriela Montoya-Stier  
Fisher Elementary  
Northside ISD*

# OAKE Educator of the Year

On Friday, March 16, 2012, Cecile Johnson received the "Educator of the Year" award at the National Convention general assembly meeting. A former colleague, David Gadberry, read quotes from letters from the students who nominated her.

Cecile Johnson has been the elementary music specialist at Woodrow Wilson Elementary School in Denton, Texas since 1987.

She is the founder and director of the school's All-Star Choir and currently serves as past-president of the Kodály Educators of Texas and National Program Chair of the 2002 and 2010 OAKE National Conferences held in San Antonio and Dallas, Texas.

Mrs. Johnson received her Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Lowell in Massachusetts and her Master of Music degree from the University of Northern Iowa. She completed her national Organization of American Kodály Educators (OAKE) Certification in Kodály Studies at the University of North Texas. She has taught for twenty-nine years in general classroom/vocal music at both the junior high and elementary levels and also taught secondary instrumental classes early in her career as a clarinet major.

Mrs. Johnson has supervised many early-field experience students and student teachers and has opened her classroom to both UNT and TWU college undergraduate music education classes.

She has published articles for the Music Educators Journal, Music K-8 Magazine, The TMEC/MENC Connection and The Kodály Educators of Texas Encounter Newsletter. She has been a frequent clinician for the Texas Music Educators Association, the Texas Association for the Education of Young Children, Denton Association for the Education of Young Children, Houston Association for the Education of Young Children, the Denton Independent School District and many other Texas school districts. She has also been an adjudicator for the Sandy Lake Choir Fun-Fest in Dallas and guest conductor for the Cedar Falls, Iowa All-City Elementary Choir Festival. Mrs. Johnson has presented workshops on such topics as "Motivation in the Music Classroom", "The Music/Reading Connection", "The Use of Children's Literature in the Music Classroom", "Commissioning New Works for Children's Choir", "Children's Singing Games That Solicit Solo Responses" and Musical Transitions and Extensions in the Kodály-inspired Classroom".

She has also been a member of the TEA Fine Arts training cadre and presented sessions at the last two state TEA Fine Arts Summits.



The Woodrow Wilson All-Star Choir, founded in 1987 by Mrs. Johnson, has earned several awards as an innovative group for commissioning more than 25 new works for children's choir with grant monies provided by the school's PTA. In 1998-1999, the All-Star Choir was designated the State of Texas TMEA Elementary Honor Choir and was invited to perform at the TMEA Convention in San Antonio. They were invited again in 2005 and in February 2011 will be making their 3rd appearance at the state of Texas Music Educators Convention as a designated state honor choir. More than 50 members of the choir have also participated in the National Children's Choir sponsored by the Organization of American Kodály Educators. Many choir members have also participated in the Metroplex Children's Choir Festival and the All-City Elementary Honor Choir. Mrs. Johnson has been recognized as a Nationally Registered Music Educator by the Music Educators National Conference (MENC) and was honored in 1995-1997 with Excellence in Teaching Awards and the 2001 recipient of the Robert M. Estes Award for Excellence in Arts Education and in 2005 awarded Woodrow Wilson Teacher of the Year.

Mrs. Johnson is currently a member of the professional music organizations Organization of American Kodály Educators, Music Educators National Conference, Texas Music Educators association, and Texas Music Educators Conference.

The source for this information was taken from <http://www.dentonisd.org/5126082914512/blank/browse.asp?A=383&BMDRN=2000&BCOB=0&C=104133>

Personally, I was so happy for Cecile. She is a wonderful person and teacher. She is honest and strong (she runs five miles everyday). She has guided many students, both young and old. I have attended many sessions that Cecile has presented at TMEA and OAKE. I remember the first time I saw her present. She brought a demonstration class down from Denton. I still use many of the activities she presented in that short lesson. I have never had the opportunity to take a levels course from Cecile, which she teaches in Houston and Dallas, but I have learned a great deal from her. She is one of our own. A Texan.

***If Cecile had some influence in your teaching career, maybe send her a note, or write about it for the next Encounter.***



***By Katherine Johns, KET  
President-Elect,  
Floresville South, FISD***

# OAKE Conference Review

Congratulations to the following Texas OAKE teachers who had choir members in the National Choirs this year!

## **Children's Choir:**

Tracey Adcock, Houston  
Jennifer Bollinger, Arlington  
Lenora Clayton, Odessa  
Susie Fergus, Fort Worth  
Beverly Fleming, Lubbock  
Neadra Green, McKinney  
Judy Holloway, Fort Worth  
Kathleen Jamison, San Antonio  
Cecile Johnson, Denton  
Brenda Keen, Plano  
Stephanie Kinnett, Wylie  
Laurie Robertson, Houston  
Ruth Shook, Fort Worth  
Christina Svec, Denton  
Kathryn Zetterstrom, Flower Mound

## **Youth Choir:**

Tracey Aycock, Houston  
Heather Bolin, Lubbock  
Jennifer Bollinger, Arlington  
Susan Brumfield, Lubbock  
Alan Buratto, Fort Worth  
Lenora Clayton, Odessa  
Beverly Fleming, Lubbock  
Brenda Keen, Plano  
Stephanie Kinnett, Wylie  
Laurie Robertson, Houston  
Ruth Shook, Fort Worth  
Lindsey Spitsberg, Lubbock  
Christina Svec, Denton  
Tara Westrich, McKinney

## **Concert Choir:**

Tracey Aycock, Houston  
Jennifer Bollinger, Arlington  
Susan Brumfield, Lubbock  
Susie Fergus, Fort Worth  
Beverly Fleming, Lubbock  
Brenda Keen, Plano  
Kathryn Kendall, Lubbock  
Stephanie Kinnett, Wylie  
Lindsey Spitsberg, Lubbock  
Tara Westrich, McKinney

The concerts were amazing. All the teachers worked very hard to submit the audition CDs and then prepare their students for the concert. It is a huge accomplishment and we are so proud of our Texas teachers.

# **Announcing...**

# **The next Southern Division Gathering!!**

**Date: October 5-7, 2012**

**City: Oklahoma City, Oklahoma**

**Details:**

**October 5: Community Folk dance**

**October 6 (Day): Keynote and Sessions presented by John  
Feierabend**

**October 6 (Evening): a water taxi/dinner cruise**

**October 7: travel home**

**MARK THIS WEEKEND IN YOUR CALENDAR!!**

# Final Thoughts

by Lauren Bain, *KET Vice-President*



Spring is here...and quickly leaving! Every year seems to fly by quicker than the year before. I know many of us faced challenges with scheduling, staffing, rotations, and programs. It is easy to focus on what went wrong or how you wish something was different. Don't give in to that! Rather, evaluate how you did as a teacher. What did you do well? What will you do better next year? How will you continue to be a positive influence in your students' lives? Did you make your program an invaluable part of your school community?

These last six to seven weeks of school are crammed with activities, assemblies, field trips, testing, and everything else. We are all ready for summer! Are you planning to take any professional training this summer? Be sure to read the section on the Kodály training programs in this edition. If you've already completed your levels, consider expanding your skills by taking the Choral track in Houston.

Finally...the next Southern Division Gathering will be October 5-7 in Oklahoma City!! Mark your calendars! I've corresponded with the Oklahoma people and they have a wonderful weekend planned. Please show your support for our division by planning to attend.

Finish this year well, and enjoy your summer!

*Lauren Bain*

---

## Additional Information

Check our website for updated information concerning workshops, meetings, and the latest news! Go to [www.ket.oake.org](http://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 "Kodály 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](mailto:kodalyedoftx@gmail.com) or our President Brenda Keen at [brenda.keen@pisd.edu](mailto:brenda.keen@pisd.edu).