

Oklahoma District NATS Spring 2010 Newsletter

Dear Oklahoma District NATS Members,

In the immortal words of the great Bob Dylan, “The times they are a changin’!” I know Dylan could have benefitted from a few lessons with one of us, but never-the-less his statement rings very true for the NATS community today. This letter will mainly focus on the details of our upcoming conference and student auditions, which will be held April 9 & 10 on the campus of Southern Nazarene University, but there is also a major change of which I need to make you aware. Before we get into that, however, we have a few housekeeping items I need to address.

First off, I want to thank Rebekah Ambrosini and her colleagues at SNU for their tremendous efforts and preparations for our 2010 conference and auditions. They are working very hard to make this event happen! Second, I would like to encourage all of you to reach out to those teachers of singing in your area who might not be members of NATS. If you have names of teachers you feel would benefit from membership, please have them contact me or the national office. I think we need to especially reach out to the private and high school teachers in our communities. They are a vital part of the singing landscape in Oklahoma and across the country. Lastly, I would just like to let you know that the Oklahoma district will have five singers participating in the upcoming NATSAA auditions in March, so let’s wish them all luck. Part of the NATSAA weekend is the annual governor’s council meeting. I would like to extend an invitation to each of you to submit questions, comments, ideas, suggestions, or concerns to me that you might have about NATS events, policies, initiatives, etc. Please feel free to send issues regarding both the Oklahoma district and the TEXOMA region. I will compile a list and present it at the governor’s council meeting in March.

Now I would like to turn your attention to our Oklahoma district auditions. As usual all of our student auditions will take place on Saturday. Conference Registration will begin on Saturday, April 10 at 7:30 a.m. in the main lobby of the SNU Fine Arts Building. Following registration, at 8:00 a.m., we will have a mandatory judges’ meeting in the Choir Room where you will receive your judging assignments and instructions. It is essential that all judges, even those not entering students, attend the mandatory judges’ meeting. We will have much to discuss. (Note: Practice Rooms will be available in the Fine Arts building.)

Our annual luncheon and business meeting will take place from 1:00-2:00 p.m. on Saturday, right next door to the Fine Arts building in the Heritage Room. The Price is \$10 and the menu will consist of a chicken Caesar salad bar, with many side salads (pasta, bean, etc...), bread, and coffee or tea. I hope you will join us for this brief hour to reconnect with colleagues

and discuss our district's business. Driving directions and hotel information can be accessed at <http://www.snu.edu/directions-to-snu>.

Traditionally our conference has been kicked off on Friday night by a concert, recital or performance of some type presented by the host school. This year, however, we have decided to forgo that tradition, as there are several other exciting events happening in the OKC metro area that evening, in which you or your students might be interested. On Friday, April 9 at 7:00 p.m. internationally recognized mezzo-soprano, Marilyn Horne will be giving a public master class in the Catlett Music Center (Pitman Recital Hall) on the University of Oklahoma Campus. This is free of charge and open to the public. The University of Central Oklahoma will be performing "The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber" at 8:00 p.m. in the UCO Jazz Lab. Oklahoma City University has a performance of *The Angelina Project* at 8:00 p.m. in the Wanda L. Bass School of Music Black Box Theatre. The Pollard Theatre, in Guthrie (<http://www.thepollard.org/>), will be offering the Broadway musical, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, also at 8:00 p.m. Please contact UCO, OCU and the Pollard directly for tickets.

Now on to the "fun" stuff! As I stated in the opening paragraph, there is a major change of which I need to make you aware. In November of 2009, at the fall TEXOMA board meeting in Lubbock, TX we were informed that the National NATS office had issued a new mandate of strict adherence to national copyright laws at all future NATS events. This holds true for all chapters, districts and regions. Here is a link to the NATS policy on Copyright Law: http://www.nats.org/images/stories/copyright_policy_revision1-2010.pdf

Basically this new mandate states that we can no longer permit/tolerate the use of photocopied music at NATS auditions. (There are a few limited exceptions listed, but I would invite you to check out the policy on the website to read these exceptions for yourself.) The biggest problem this creates is for our collaborative pianists, as they will no longer be able to play from photocopies in most cases. I know this not ideal at all, and please believe me, the region board has discussed this at length and frustration has already been expressed by NUMEROUS governors about this. However, National office is standing firm. So, I ask for your patience and flexibility as we work through this new challenge together. A committee from the TEXOMA region has already worked diligently to find a solution to the monumental task of policing this new mandate.

At the same fall board meeting where we found out about the new mandate, Deborah Williamson, TEXOMA Region Governor, asked for volunteers to serve on a Copyright Committee. The charge for the committee was to propose a process by which we may seek to achieve compliance with the copyright laws. Marion Russell-Dickson, Chair; Charles Chapman; Linda Poetschke; Frank Ragsdale; and Deborah Williamson served on the committee. The committee recommended including a Statement of Compliance on the TEXOMA online Student Audition Form. (This recommendation has since been voted on and accepted by the board of control.) A check mark agreeing to the statement will be a required field on the form and the form will not submit without all required fields completed. There will be a link which will send the members directly to the full "NATS Policy on Copyright Laws" statement. Here are the

details: The Statement of Compliance on the TEXOMA online Student Audition Form will read: "I have read and understood the Copyright Policy as set forth by the National Association of Teachers of Singing. This certifies that my students and their pianists will conform to the law."

Following the region's example and advice, I have adjusted our Oklahoma district teacher/conference registration form to function similarly. While we don't have the capability of online registration yet, I have added a statement of compliance and a check box. This means that teachers will be required to check the box, indicating compliance, and then make sure their students and accompanists abide by the policy. ***One thing I need to make very clear is that judges will not be expected to or responsible for "policing" the copyright policy during the student auditions.*** By adding the statement of compliance to the conference/teacher registration form, we are eliminating that need.

Whew!!!! I am sorry I had to go into all that, but let's try not to let it put a cloud over our upcoming auditions. Let's all work to make it a huge success. The best solution to help our accompanists is to have each student be responsible for bringing his/her own original scores and handing them to the accompanist at the time of their audition. This will prevent the accompanist from carrying around stacks of music. (Also please note: the judges still do NOT need to have any copies, original or otherwise, to view during the audition.)

I've already mentioned our new conference/teacher registration form, but I want to encourage you to read each form very carefully. All of the forms including, the student entry form, rules for entering students, conference registration, etc., can be found on the OMEA website. (Thanks Charles Chapman!) All of the forms are also being sent to you as PDF & Microsoft Word e-mail attachments along with this newsletter.

Please remember the change we made to the Pianist/Accompanist form last year—we would like to request that only ONE form be turned in per accompanist. This means that teachers at the same school, who share an accompanist, should consult with each other to determine who will fill out and return the ONE form for each accompanist. If an accompanist plays for students at multiple schools, there is space provided on the form to indicate this. (In this case, an accompanist may have multiple forms submitted – one from each school for which they are playing – however, each form should indicate that the pianist is playing for multiple schools which will help eliminate possible confusion.)

Please note and double-check the postmark/return deadlines on all forms. We cannot accept late forms. Student Audition Entry forms must be postmarked on or before March 12, 2010. This will allow our auditions chair time over spring break to schedule the countless auditions that must take place in one day! Conference/luncheon registration forms – along with check(s) for student entry fees, registration and lunch – must be postmarked on or before March 24. Also please note to whom you are supposed to return each form. All student entry forms, pianist/accompanist forms, and "Agree to Judge" forms should be sent directly to our auditions

chair, Melody Baggech. All conference/luncheon registration forms and checks (for student entry fees, conference registration and lunch) should be sent to directly to the district governor, Mark McQuade.

Lastly, we will be having a “Winner’s Recital” Saturday afternoon while scores are being tabulated. If you have students who were winners last spring and would like to perform on the recital please e-mail me their name, division in which they won, musical selection they wish to perform (including composer & larger work if applicable), and their accompanist’s name by April 1, 2010.

Thanks for taking the time to read this BOOK! If you have questions, please don’t hesitate to contact me. I am truly looking forward to seeing you all at SNU in April, and I wish you all the best until then! Cheers!

Mark McQuade, Oklahoma District Governor