

History of Pennsylvania Music Education—Part II

Margaretta Carey was the woman to follow Rosenberg in the position of chief of music education. Carey felt her greatest accomplishments were implementation of a planned sequence of study for each grade in both music and art; helping to upgrade the standards for teacher certification; inception of fine arts courses on the state level; and emphasizing consumer-oriented music in the public schools. When asked if she accomplished her goals as music adviser, she answered candidly, “not really. You can never accomplish all your goals in such a position involving the various government channels.”¹⁷

With the new name change that occurred in 1947 and many goals in mind, PMEAs was ready to move forward with efforts supporting school music education. Performance festivals remained the focus of the organization until 1968 when interest for the whole educational spectrum of music was introduced by the addition of elementary, junior high and senior high representatives-at-large to the PMEAs executive board, higher education already had representation on the Board. Meetings were held and many goals and objectives for Pennsylvania music education were identified.¹⁸

The PMEAs Go Projects (goals and objectives) were established in the mid-seventies derived from Frances Andrews’ MENC presidency. The committee for the Go Projects had the highest degree of responsibility since it dealt with curriculum, and ways in which the classroom teacher, from kindergarten through college, might become involved, and the area in which a professional association might extend its finest bit of service. Carmen Culp became project chairman and appointed the following people to the 5 teaching areas: 1) music in early childhood, Margaret Maguire, later Mary Lou Romanek and Marjorie Kemper; 2) music in special education, Kenneth Raessler, later Margaretta Carey; 3) middle school music, Jackie Boswell, later Stanley Cole; 4) music in non-traditional classroom, Kay McNall and Alice Rouch; and 5) mini courses, Ray Schweinberg and Richard Merrell. PMEAs recognized that making music a part of the core curriculum should become a major goal.¹⁹

During the 1970’s the PMEAs executive board took the position that “every child has a right to an education in music taught by a music specialist.” Carmen Culp was the coordinator of all projects and served as liaison between project chairmen and the Executive Council. Her deter-

mination made the projects work and made them an integral part of PMEAs emphasis at the time.²⁰

The members of the Board created and showcased their concerns and solutions after 1978 by presenting workshops throughout the state, creating lesson plans for teachers, writing curriculum guides, distributing materials through newsletters, planning conference presentations and most importantly of all, bringing the importance of classroom music to the attention of administrators, parents and teachers through the use of district representatives and enhancement programs.²¹ They set the groundwork to improve music education in Pennsylvania and made plans for the future.

The mission of PMEAs was to:

...promote the musical development of all Pennsylvanians; advocate for quality music education; recognize music education as a lifetime activity; support the changing professional needs of its members; and foster an appreciation of music. In order to achieve its mission, the PMEAs strives to attain the highest level of excellence in teaching and performance.²²

PMEAs provides a variety of services to music education in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Membership includes those engaged in music instruction at all levels, from preschool through college and university, retired educators, as well as those in the music industry across the Commonwealth. PMEAs provides leadership in professional growth and offers special opportunities for musical development in school students.²³

PMEAs can be broken down into several different organizational units. The Executive Board consists of officers elected by the membership, 12 elected district presidents, 12 elected curriculum/instruction (C/I) committee district chairs, a state C/I coordinator, as well as ex-officio members representing other special interests in music including special learners, early childhood, higher education, multicultural, and National Association for the Study and Performance of African American Music. Other additional ex-officio positions which may change depending on a certain year’s needs include membership, advocacy, public relations, PCMEAs advisor and president, adjudication, Tri-M, retired members, All-State Coordinator, All-State jazz coordinator, and Pennsylvania Music Teacher Association (PMTA) President. Each district president leads one of the 12 districts which are organized around intermediate units as shown on the provided map.²⁴ These districts then combine into a larger geographical area to make six regions and finally the all-state level which is the entire Commonwealth. The C/I Committee is structured in the same manner. The district presidents

oversee festival-related matters while the C/I representatives work with classroom issues and curriculum.²⁵

To this day, PMEA is the driving force behind music in Pennsylvania schools. It sponsors festivals in many areas including elementary band, orchestra and chorus. Honors festivals are offered for advanced high school performers and ensembles, generally only in larger city locations. Junior high/middle school festivals are provided for band, orchestra and chorus. These festivals continue into a student's high school years with district festivals for band, orchestra and chorus. Some districts may even provide jazz ensemble festivals at the high school level. Region/state festivals are held for students rated for their superior performances at the district level. After region/state auditions, students may progress to the All-State Festival. Over 600 of the finest high school musicians perform in band, orchestra, chorus, jazz ensemble and added in 2004, wind ensemble and vocal jazz, during the PMEA In-Service Conference held every spring.²⁶

Aside from the state-wide District, Regional and All-State festival events, students also have the opportunity, under the direction of their teachers, to participate in adjudication festivals. Various sites throughout the Commonwealth are selected for adjudication festivals. All grades and levels of performance are accepted, including soloists. For these performances, adjudicators provide ratings or comments only. This program is in an effort to rate the student ensembles against a standard of excellence, not against other participants. The adjudicators offer comments on areas of achievement and offer suggestions for improvement. Positive criticism is a goal to help enhance the students' playing abilities at all levels.²⁷

Not only are festivals being used to increase music participation across the Commonwealth, but the PMEA Curriculum/Instruction Committee (C/I) has also made significant contributions directed toward improving classroom music education. C/I serves teachers in each district at elementary, junior high/middle, senior high and higher education levels. C/I includes five special curriculum areas: early childhood and special learners; multicultural awareness; National Association for the Study & Performance of African-American Music; and higher education in conjunction with the MENC Society for Teacher Education and Research. C/I can be a great resource in music education because the majority of its members are music educators themselves. Used as a networking resource, C/I provides leadership, focus/expertise and coordinates efforts to implement projects to improve curriculum and instruction of music in the schools through workshops and clinics as well as in-service opportunities at various conferences.²⁸

There are several events held annually for music educators in Pennsylvania. These conferences and seminars are developed to help educators enhance their own local music programs. These events provide continuing education and networking opportunities for music educators across the state. An important goal of all educators is to serve their community by continuing the education of students within a knowledgeable, impressive and competitive music program. Two of the events are an in-service conference and a summer conference.²⁹

The in-service conference is held annually in the spring. This conference provides workshops, clinics and concerts featuring nationally recognized clinicians as well as Pennsylvania musician/teacher experts. The conference includes three days of intensive professional continuing education experiences for music educators at all levels. Outstanding musicians perform thrilling music and present high-level educational workshops. The festival sequence and audition processes previously discussed provide a means for selecting members for the six All-State ensembles that perform at the conclusion of the conference.³²

The other main activity is an annual summer conference in July. This two day event focuses on a different theme each year and includes breakout opportunities for attendees in a variety of focus areas. It is a great way for members to get rejuvenated for the upcoming school year.³¹

These are only two of the many activities/events that can be used as educational opportunities for teachers in Pennsylvania. Many educators return to school themselves to obtain their masters and/or doctoral degrees in music or music education. Other music educators continue their musical performing through participation in local community or professional ensembles.³⁰

PMEA is focusing on the present, but it also is looking proactively toward the future. The Pennsylvania Coalition for Music Education supports the study of music and the other arts for every child in the Commonwealth. A committee chaired by Russ Shuttlesworth studied ways to make the benefits of the PMEA program reach more students; the aim of fellow members of the planning group was to "provide equal opportunities for all children that will develop their physical, intellectual, spiritual, and social nature..." This is a quite familiar approach to the initial creation of music education in United States history.³³

Music advocacy committees of teachers and parents are established by many local districts. Increasing a better overall knowledge and communication about music education rights in a school district is aided by including the parents

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and community in such activities. Getting the importance of music education message to decision makers in the community and school district and to curriculum planners was a significant step. A newsletter to superintendents on a regular and continuing basis was begun in September 1982.³⁴

Through all these programs and many others, PMEA has helped to enhance music education in Pennsylvania. In 2001, a press release on www.amc-music.org, the nation's best 100 communities for learning music were determined by a survey. This web-based survey went out to thousands of public school and independent school teachers, school and district administrators, school board members, parents and community leaders, representing communities in all 50 states, during March and April. The participants answered detailed questions about funding, enrollment, student-teacher ratios, participation in music classes, instruction time, facilities, support for the music program, participation in private music lessons and other factors in their communities' quality of music education. The responses were audited in phone calls to district officials, and the sponsoring organizations reviewed the data. The conclusion of the survey resulted in the following: New York with sixteen communities, Pennsylvania nine Connecticut, Illinois and New Jersey with six apiece each led the way across the United States.³⁷ This ranking changed significantly in 2005.

The 2005 survey from www.amc-music.org, listed both Pennsylvania and New York with fourteen communities each, New Jersey with nine, Texas with six, Ohio with five and California with four. Other states were represented with one or two communities.³⁸ After four years, Pennsylvania can proudly say that improvements and increases in their music organization support may have been a factor in their impressive increase in communities that are supportive of music education. PMEA and its efforts for better music education in the Commonwealth hopes to have played a role in this increase.

PMEA is a prominent driving force for music education in Pennsylvania. There have been significant increases in community involvement and achievement confirmed by the change from nine communities in 2001 to fourteen in the year 2005 in the 100 Best Communities Survey. The survey results show that successful music programs are to be found in communities that balance measurable resources, such as budgets and buildings, with less tangible assets such as the will to make quality music education a reality. If all other communities in Pennsylvania would take advice from these 14 communities, perhaps the future could result in a higher number of communities on the top 100 list.

The history of Pennsylvania's music education is still in

its infancy just as our country is still young, but does have a good basis on which to lay foundations for continual future growth. There is sufficient historical background in Pennsylvania history to support music education advancements that are to come. As we push forward into the future of music education in the United States, Pennsylvania has a rich history that should help it to be a spearhead in quality music education. Where are we going? Historically significant, quick improvements in Pennsylvania's music education programs are hints to what we can expect for the future. Pennsylvania is a strong leader in the promotion of music education for our children.

Alyssa Britten graduated from Allegheny College with a BA in Music. She is attending Edinboro University, participating in the Master's Program and Teacher Certification Program. This project was Alyssa's Senior Comprehensive project at Allegheny. She chose this topic because she wanted to research music education in Pennsylvania and the history of music education in the US.

Music Teacher and PMEA Member Named PA Teacher of the Year

PMEA congratulates David Woten Jr. on being named Pennsylvania's 2008 Teacher of the Year. David teaches Governor Ed Rendell made the announcement in October stating that "Teachers like David Woten epitomize one of our society's silent strengths." Woten has spent all 16 years of his teaching career at Carson Middle School and has had groups selected to perform at past PMEA Annual Conferences.

David is the second music teacher and PMEA member to be named PA Music Teacher of the year in the past three years. Upper Darby High School teacher Barbara Benglian is Pennsylvania's 2006 Teacher of the Year. Woten was selected from 12 finalists and will represent Pennsylvania for National Teacher of the Year, which will be named in April of next year.



*Pennsylvania
Teacher of the
Year 2008
David Woten,
Jr.
Carson Middle
School, North
Allegheny
School District*