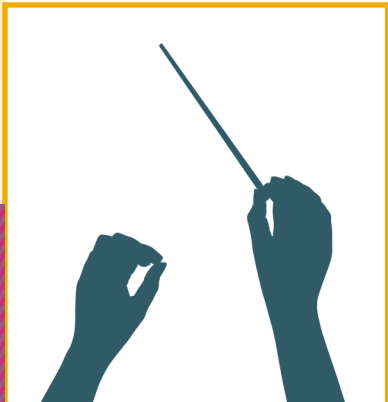


September 15, 2020
Volume 3, Issue 1



Virginia Harmony



MEMBERSHIP DRIVE
2020

Sing Sing

UPIP

AMERICAN CHORAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION
AMERICAN CHORAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION
AMERICAN CHORAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION
AMERICAN CHORAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

Inside this issue

President's Message.....2

Voices United Conference Wrap-up...4-5

"Sing Up" Membership Drive.....6-8

COVID-19 Special Edition Updates...8-11

Leadership Articles.....12-22

Editor's Note.....23

2020-2021 VA-ACDA Calendar.....24

Leadership Directory.....25



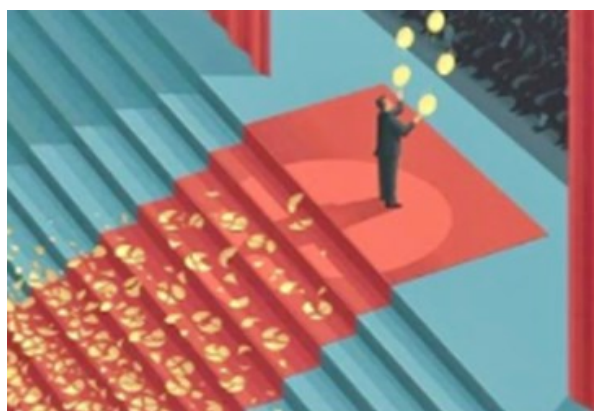
President's Message:
Choral enCOURAGEMENT!!! — Amy Moir



By now, many of us have returned to some kind of new normal. Whether it is virtual, in person, or partially in person is dependent on our situation. We are working with our ensembles in a manner that does not resemble anything we have done before. At times it feels like walking through the forest--in the dark--without a flashlight. Sometimes we see a glimpse of the moon to guide us. At other times we walk by faith and sheer will alone. What are we really doing for the singers in our care?

Usually our singers see the more polished version of their choral director. They do not see the score study we do in advance, the seating charts we pour over, the research done on a composition, or the conducting classes and seminars in which we participated. They do not see all the steps we took to get to our presentational goal. They see the best version of us.

Many of the things we are having to do right now are not part of our existing knowledge base. We are having to learn new things as we go and “sell it” to our ensembles. Even with the best preparation, we do not have the luxury of practicing some of these skills well in advance. What a unique opportunity we have to fail more often in front of our singers! Think about all they will learn as we model persistence with dignity, humility, and grace. We have the chance to allow ourselves to be vulnerable as we try new skills. Imagine what can be gained from this transition in our presentation. Imagine if the steps in the picture below were reversed and facing the audience.



As artists, we signed up for the constant pursuit of excellence. We are models of resiliency, creativity, and grit. We can demonstrate ways of reinventing ourselves as we try over and over again until we get it right--or maybe just sometimes--not get it at all.

As you ponder a different perspective, I encourage you to look at the role of ACDA in your life. There is a plethora of resources for you as you reinvent some of your methods and practices of ensemble instruction. All sessions presented at the Virtual ACDA Voices United Conference are accessible for free on our YouTube channel: ACDA Voices United. Other resources are available through various state ACDA chapters and on the National ACDA website. The quick transition to a mostly digital world has allowed for us to share more of our resources from state to state.

September 15 began our *Sing Up!* Campaign. This is a great time to renew your ACDA membership. ACDA is here to advocate for our profession. It is an organization designed to assist you, the conductor. It also relies on your membership to help advocate for the choral arts. Please encourage a friend or colleague to join as well! Share some of the perks of our membership and the community connections you make through our organization.

As you ponder in your mind and heart your next steps, choose a path, and go with it. Think about reversing the perspective and enjoy the ride that goes along with it. When you feel overwhelmed by it all, trim it down and focus on one new skill or technology platform. Celebrate each success. As always, you have a tribe within VA ACDA that believes in you and is here with you each and every step of the way.

Stay safe and well! Yours in service,

Amy Moir

SING4VA!!!



ARE YOU A CHORAL COMPOSER LIVING IN VIRGINIA?
DO YOU KNOW A CHORAL COMPOSER LIVING IN VIRGINIA?
HELP US PROMOTE VIRGINIA COMPOSERS!!
TO REGISTER YOURSELF OR A VA COMPOSER, VISIT:
<https://www.vaacda.org/sing-for-va>

From your Voices United Conference Chair:

Pamela McDermott

Why ACDA ... Why Conference? Voices United Shines Online

As chair of the Voices United planning committee, it is my privilege to volunteer alongside ACDA members from Virginia, Maryland/DC, and Delaware to continue the 20+-year legacy of our annual conference. The groundwork is laid in the Fall, and by January we are meeting regularly to put the conference together, ready to be up on its feet the first weekend in August.

When COVID-19 hit hard in March, I was at the Southern Region ACDA conference in Mobile with several of my students and many of my dear ACDA friends. As we prepared to hear the final concert, Tim Sharp reflected that this may be the last live choral music we hear for a long while. As life began to be “cancelled”, the Voices United Planning Committee met together online—as we usually do—to figure out what to do with the plans that were almost finalized for our 2020 conference.

You know how the story ends. If you don't, click on the link below and view for yourself.

<https://www.youtube.com/c/ACDAVoicesUnited/videos>

Here is some of the rest of the story:

- Unanimously, the 20+ members of the committee were determined to offer something to our profession that was free and that honored the mission of our conference as much as we could.
- No committee member stepped aside. Priorities shifted; seemingly smaller tasks became huge and some tasks became non-existent. New jobs needed doing; committee members stepped up and did them. THIS is a group of people who continue to amaze and humble me.
- All three original headliners agreed to come back in 2021, pandemic permitting. Professionals from around the country who had submitted proposals for in-person interest sessions said YES to making these sessions available to us online, for free.
- Max Nolin stepped into the role of coordinator for all things technical, and our three state presidents--Amy Moir, Michael Wu, and Joanne Ward--worked tirelessly to connect the work of their state to the work of our shared conference, reaching out to help fill in whatever gaps opened up.
- Members of the Voices United Committee and various leaders from the three participating chapters agreed to create NEW sessions, so that our conference would offer breadth and depth; often reaching out to colleagues around the nation to be a part of their session. This content was conceived, developed, and created between April and June, and designed to fit an online format.
- Tiffany and Deb from The Musical Source, our long-time sponsor, immediately offered their support and help knowing that the aspects of our conference that directly support their business would not be happening this year. Their loyalty to our conference and to choral music goes beyond their bottom line.

What happened is more than what you see in these videos, but it is also beautifully displayed in these videos. If you haven't watched them all, I encourage you to keep at it. Watch them. Look what we did. WE, ACDA in VA, MD/DC and DE, along with The Musical Source, showed up. We came together. We offered ideas, followed through, shared frustrations and successes, and practiced patience in the midst of a world-wide pandemic that was stressing our own families, jobs, and homes.

Membership in ACDA is elective. For most choir directors there is another professional organization—VMEA, Chorus America, Barbershop, denominational associations—that bring more immediate connections to our day-to-day work. We choose, however, to invest in ACDA because it helps us to keep our head up—to see the forest while we are so focused on our own trees, and to keep our heart inspired—to witness again and again the beauty of people coming together in music.

THIS is what happened when Voices United 2020 went online.

As I struggle into what this year brings for my career, I do so on the shoulders of the people of ACDA. This season has taught me that my membership dues and conference costs are an investment that produces a wealth of dividends in professional knowledge, support, friendships, mentors, and personal inspiration. Thank you, ACDA, for continuing to rock our world.

If you would like to be part of the Voices United Planning Team for 2021, please contact me at pmcdermott@vaacda.org.

Join us face-to-face in 2021!



**The annual collaborative summer conference
presented by the Delaware, Maryland/DC,
and Virginia chapters of ACDA**

Sponsored by The Musical Source



Michael John Trotta
Seminar Track
Conductor's Chorus



Ysaye Barnwell
Voices United Honor Chorus
(ages 15-adult)



Janet Hostetter
Children's Honor Chorus
(age 9-15)

**Save the date! Invite a friend! Sponsor Singers!
Join us as we celebrate 23 years of Voices United!**

**August 5-7, 2021
Fairfax, VA**

www.acdavoicesunited.org

Sing Sing Sing Sing UPUPUPUP

It's time to "Sing Up," Virginia!

Our yearly membership drive runs September 15-November 15, and we want YOU to help us find new members!

As we all have experienced this past year, not all changes are welcome or good, but the changes to the "Sing Up" drive are REALLY GOOD!

1. This year **Student Memberships** are ALL only \$5! For both new AND renewing students! What? YES! Please encourage ALL students you know to become members of ACDA. This incentive will continue to be available until next June, but if students want to go ahead and renew now, their membership will still last for a year from when the normal renewal would have taken place. (One less thing to remember.)

2. Virginia has been awarded twenty (20) **Complimentary Memberships**. This year in addition to awarding complimentary memberships to *new* members, we are able to help out existing members who may be having financial difficulties due to COVID-19. Please email President, Amy Moir at amoir@vaacda.org with your recommendations. There is a special form for complimentary members.

3. The **Membership Referral** program is still active, and works like this:

- A current ACDA member invites someone to join ACDA. We encourage the use of a special membership form to do so.
- The referring member writes their name and ACDA membership number on the form, as well as adding a personal encouragement. (Something like, "I hope you will consider this," or "call me if you would like to discuss," etc.)
- The referred colleague decides whether to take the next step. If they decide to join, there can use the printed membership form, or join online and notify the national office about the referral via an email: membership@acda.org.
- A special gift! If someone joins this way as a new Active, Student, or Associate member and mentions the referring member's name and membership number, each one will get the gift of a playlist of performances from the 2019 national conference!

Questions? I am happy to help! Stay safe!

Jane DeLoach Morison, Membership Chair
janemorison1@gmail.com

MEN'S CHORUS ROUNDTABLE

November 9, 2020
7:00-9:00PM

HOSTED BY KERRY WILKERSON
VA ACDA MEN'S CHORUS R&R CHAIR

LIVE VIA ZOOM - FOR MORE
INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER:
KERRY.WILKERSON@GMAIL.COM



Sing
UP

Compiled and edited by your Newsletter Editor:

Matthew Russell

COVID-19 Special Edition Resource List UPDATED

Recent Evidence-based Resources: SINGING

Russo, Frank A., Beatriz Ilari, and Annabel J. Cohen. *The Routledge Companion to Interdisciplinary Studies in Singing*. 3 vols. New York, NY: Routledge, 2020.

[Note: Volume 1: Development; Volume 2: Education; Volume 3: Wellbeing]

Sweet, Bridget. *Thinking Outside the Box: Adolescent Voice Change in Music Education*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2020.

Welch, Graham F., David M. Howard, and John Nix, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Singing*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2019.

Singer's PPE [click [Here](#)]

The National Association of Schools of Music broadcast a webinar entitled, "Bioaerosol Emissions in the Performing Arts - Reducing Emissions and Exposures: A Multi-Part Series" featuring scientists involved in the studies at CU Boulder, Colorado State University, and the University of Maryland.

Following are some of the findings that are pertinent to choral singing and overall SARS-COV 2 risk mitigation:

- 1."Singers masks" (no brands given) give poor protection;
- 2.The average homemade mask can be made close to an N95 respirator in efficiency by placing a furnace air filter, MERV 13 between cloth plys;
- 3.However, don't wash it - try steaming in a rice cooker (suggested elsewhere);
- 4.Don't judge a mask based on looks, but you shouldn't be able to see light through it;
- 5.Singing with a good mask reduces aerosol transmission by 90%;
- 6.Masked singing produces lower concentration levels of aerosols than most wind instruments tested;
- 7.HEPA air cleaners having a Clean Air Delivery Rating sticker WORK, provided you use the right size cleaner for the given space in the given amount of time;
- 8.Singing outdoors with a breeze produces a flume of aerosols which are mitigated by masked singing;
- 9.Maximum length of singing indoors or outdoors should not exceed 30 minutes before a break, and if indoors, recommend 3 air exchanges before resuming;
- 10.Length of time for a single air exchange will be different for each room and HVAC system, based on the ACH rating (air change per hour);
- 11.Air disturbances by simply walking into a room show how much aerosols can quickly disperse.

Self-care for the COVID-19 Pandemic: Suggested Reading

Brown, Brené. *Braving the Wilderness: The Quest for True Belonging and the Courage to Stand Alone*. New York, NY: Random House, 2017.

Brown, Brené. *Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough Conversations. Whole Hearts*. New York, NY: Random House, 2018.

Brown, Brené. *The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are*. Center City, MN: Hazelden Publishing, 2010.

Brown, Brené. *Rising Strong: How the Ability to Reset Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead*. New York, NY: Random House, 2015.

Gyatso, Tenzin [Dalai Lama], Desmond Tutu, and Douglas Abrams. *The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World*. New York, NY: Avery/Penguin Random House, 2016.

Hanh, Thich Nat. *FEAR: Essential Wisdom for Getting Through the Storm*. Sydney, Australia: HarperCollins Publishers, 2012.

Levitin, Daniel J. *The Organized Mind: Thinking Straight in the Age of Information Overload*. New York, NY: Dutton/Penguin Random House, 2016.

Professional Organization Resources

ACDA (American Choral Directors Association) COVID-19 Resources: linked [Here](#)

Big COVID Survival Choral Doc: linked [Here](#)

NAfME (National Association for Music Education) COVID-19 Resource List: linked [Here](#)

NATS (National Association of Teachers of Singing) COVID-19 Resources for Music Educators: linked [Here](#)

NCCO (National Collegiate Choral Organization) Statement and Resources: linked [Here](#)

Tennessee Tech School of Music COVID-19 Resources: linked [Here](#)

WACDA (Western Region ACDA) Task Force on Innovation COVID-19 Report: linked [Here](#)

Journal Articles, Research Studies, and Related News Media

“Airborne Transmission of SARS-CoV-2: Theoretical Considerations and Available Evidence” [Michael Klompas, Meghan A. Baker, and Chanu Rhee/JAMA Network]: linked [Here](#)

“Coronavirus autopsies--A story of 38 brains, 87 lungs and 42 hearts: What we’ve learned from the dead that could help the living” [Ariana Eunjung Cha/Washington Post Article]: linked [Here](#)

“COVID-19 Risks and Precautions for Choirs” [Juliette O’Keefe/ National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health (Canada)]: linked [Here](#) & [Here](#)

“CU Boulder Professors: Coronavirus is Airborne” [Katie Langford/Boulder Daily Camera]: linked [Here](#)

“Dr. Malcolm Butler: Why You Should Wear A Mask (It’s the Air You Share)” [Dr. Malcolm Butler/The Wenatchee World]: linked [Here](#)

“Innovations and Experimentations in Distanced Choral Singing” [Fahad Siadat/NewMusicUSA]: linked [Here](#)

“Moral of the Story: Use What Works” [Laura Dunbar/General Music Today]: linked [Here](#)

“Research to Resource: Developing a Sense of Community in Online Learning” [Kari Adams/Update: Applications of Research in Music Education]: linked [Here](#)

“Safer Singing During the SARS-CoV-2 Pandemic: What We Know and What We Don’t” [Voice Foundation/Journal of Voice]: linked [Here](#)

“The Future of Work—The Good, The Challenging, & The Unknown” [Jared Spataro/Microsoft 365]: linked [Here](#)

“Unprecedented International Coalition Led by Performing Arts Organizations to Commission COVID-19 Study” / “Performing Arts Aerosol Study Preliminary Findings” [Mark Spede and James Weaver, et. al./National Federation of State High School Associations]: linked [Here](#) & [Here](#)

[PLEASE NOTE: *Singing and Theatre* UPDATES on page 11!!!]

“When Will It Be Safe to Sing Again?” [Alex Marshal/New York Times]: linked [Here](#)

Virtual Choir Resources

Arts Laureate: linked [Here](#)

Choir Creator App (forthcoming): linked [Here](#)

Chor Amor: linked [Here](#) & [Here](#)

Virginia ACDA Nigel Tangredi's "Do-It-Yourself" Website, MAKING A VIRTUAL ENSEMBLE: linked [Here](#)

SIGNIFICANT UPDATES

Virginia Department of Health Interim COVID-19 Guidance for K-12 Performing Arts Programs: click [Here](#)

NAfME and NFHS *Updated* Fall 2020 Guidance for Music Education: click [Here](#)

COMPLETE, UPDATED: "Unprecedented International Coalition Led by Performing Arts Organizations to Commission COVID-19 Study" / "Performing Arts Aerosol Study Preliminary Findings" [Mark Spede and James Weaver, et. al./National Federation of State High School Associations]: click [Here](#)

COVID-19 After Effects: Concerns for Singers" [Lynn Holding, et. al./Journal of Voice]: click [Here](#)

"COVID-19 Is Transmitted Through Aerosols. We Have Enough Evidence, Now It Is Time to Act" [Jose-Luis Jimenez/Time Magazine]: click [Here](#)

"Droplets and Aerosols Generated by Singing and the Risk of COVID-19 for Choirs" [Prateek Bahl, et. al./Clinical Infectious Disease, Oxford Academic]: click [Here](#)

"Duke Mask Study: Low-cost Measurement of Face Mask Efficacy for Filtering Expelled Droplets During Speech" [Emma P. Fischer, et. al./Science Advances]: click [Here](#)

"Exhaled Respiratory Particles During Singing and Talking" [M. Alsved, et. al./Aerosol Technology and Science]: click [Here](#)

"Is Singing Together Safe In The Era Of Coronavirus? Not Really, Experts Say" [Anastasia Tsioulcas/NPR Music]: click [Here](#)

"The Next Few Months Could Get Ugly. Here's how to stay safe as the pandemic rages on..." [Scottie Andrew/CNN]: click [Here](#)

"Top 2020 Choral Solutions During the Pandemic: A Fast Track to Success" [Rebecca Lord/ChoralNet]: click [Here](#)

From your Four Year College R&R Chair: Erin Freeman

**Surviving (and Thriving) in a Remote Rehearsal Environment
12 Tips for Leading an Engaging Zoom Rehearsal**

The pandemic has forced many of us to change our usual routines. We are learning new technologies, making sourdough bread, and relearning to sew. Since I cannot go to the gym, I have found myself reconnecting with an online exercise program. Every day, I make my way to the basement, turn on the Daily Burn app, and forget about all the stressors of the world while I sweat my way through an untold number of sit-ups and squats. The other day, as I was about to give up on the final few burpees, the instructor said, "Please, don't give up. You can do this." How did he know that my will was flagging? And how did he know I needed a little civility in my life? Later, as I was holding a plank, he said, "Relax your face." Could he see me? Could he hear my jaw clenching? At the end, he praised my work and congratulated me for a workout well done. I was sure he was somehow able to measure my effort through the screen. How else did he know that I had not left the basement to go get an ice cream sandwich?

Later that evening, I was running a Zoom Rehearsal with the Richmond Symphony Chorus. With everyone on mute, I could not hear them, and--with varying internet speeds--I could not tell if they were on the beat. Nonetheless, I found myself saying, "Don't forget, that vowel is a schwa, not an Eh." And, "Do that again, and save that S for the very last minute. Do not anticipate it." And, "I know that phrase is long, but you can do it!" And even, "Basses, please sing that E-natural higher." As I listened to myself, I thought, "I am that Daily Burn instructor!" The singers know I cannot hear them, but somehow I am instructing them, encouraging them, and keeping them vocally in shape--all through a one-way computer screen.

To be frank, it is awkward, demoralizing, and, at times, unsatisfying to hold rehearsals remotely. After all, what we do is a community effort. We got into this artform because we thrive from immersing ourselves in the miracle of choral sound. But I go back to sweaty me, sprawled out on my basement floor with the polite and energizing instructor pumping me up from his studio in New York City. We are connected, just not in the usual way. He cannot see me sweat. I cannot see the other thousands of people working out with me. I am pretty sure no one except my dogs can hear me yelling at the teacher to cut down on the number of squats, but we are united in our mission, drive, and optimism. I can only hope that those on the other side of my Zoom Rehearsals feel the same way.

Below is a series of tips and tricks that I have developed since March for leading a successful ZoomHearsal. These are not technological ideas—that is another topic all together—but rather procedural, pedagogical, and social. They combine techniques that I have used with the Richmond Symphony Chorus singers, Wintergreen Music audiences, and the students at Virginia Commonwealth University. So, they all will not apply to every situation. Hopefully, however, they will give you a few more tools to engage your singers in productive and meaningful choral workouts.

1. Get a Moderator

Ideally, this is someone who is not a singer in the choir. For the Richmond Symphony Chorus, we use the members of the VCU student chapter of ACDA. They get to observe rehearsals, meet their service requirements, and learn new repertoire.

- At the beginning of rehearsal, share the moderator’s phone number so that if singers have technical difficulties, they can call or text. (You can set up a google number if you are not comfortable handing out someone’s phone number.)
- The moderator can:
 - ◇ Let people in from the waiting room
 - ◇ Mute and unmute people
 - ◇ Turn off people’s videos if there is an embarrassing image
 - ◇ Quickly remove interlopers or trolls
 - ◇ Answer questions
 - ◇ Provide links to referenced recordings or resources
 - ◇ Check attendance
 - ◇ Make sure the session is being recorded (See Tip #2)
 - ◇ Encourage positivity in the chat (See Tip #3)
 - ◇ Spotlight people as needed, so you can stay on gallery mode (See Tip #12)
 - ◇ Take notes on what went well and what needs improving (See Tip #12)

2. Record Each Rehearsal and Quickly Post for Members

Remember that routines have changed, so singers might have sleeping children or grumpy roommates nearby. They may prefer to sing along later. They can still participate in the live community, but it could be easier for them to do actual singing at another time. Posting recordings allows for this flexibility and also offers those who missed rehearsal the opportunity to catch up. (As an aside, this is a tool I will incorporate when we return to normal times.)

3. Use the chat function

The chat is one of my favorite parts of this remote format. For years we have been scolding disruptive singers, and now it is finally acceptable for them to chat during rehearsal!

- Allow them to say “Hi” and interact with each other. Sometimes it feels like a loss of control to have people chatting while you are trying to accomplish something, but remember that this is their lifeline—their community.
- Lead them through a phrase and ask them to type in the chat where they struggled. Let the singers and the chat function be your ears and adjust accordingly.
- Encourage them to ask questions in the chat. Normally, at least in large ensembles, we cannot allow questions. Rehearsal time is simply too precious. With the chat function, however, inquiries such as “Where are we?,” “Which vowel did she say?,” or “How do I hear that tritone?” will finally not derail your rehearsals. Your moderator and the entire ensemble can chime in to answer while you keep rehearsing.

4. Use Polls

The poll function on Zoom is a fantastic way to engage the singers, take a quick vocal break, have a laugh, create community, and gauge comfort level with a piece. You will need to set them up ahead of time, but simple questions such as “On which page are you struggling the most?,” “What was Rossini’s favorite food?” (Answer: Anything with Foie Gras!), or “Which of your fellow choral members just received an award this week?” can go a long way toward generating excitement and interest in an otherwise awkward ZoomHearsal environment. (Pro tip: Need help? Get your moderator to launch the polls!)

5. Take a Break

Use the breakout function to take an actual break. It only takes five minutes out of your rehearsal and will give your singers some opportunities to socialize. Divide people up into random groups, giving them a topic to discuss. They can share the results in the chat when they return. For example, ask them to find three places in the music where they struggle the most, or have them share a joke. Whatever you think your singers need!

6. Use Visuals

Visual cues not only help you assess if they are grasping the material, but they also keep the singers engaged and not hunched over their computers!

Some that I use are:

- Conduct their part
- Show the breath with a pickup gesture
- Demonstrate a carried-over phrase or a breath with gesture
- Breathe out while pushing out the sides of their Zoom boxes
- Solfege hand signs to master a tricky interval
- Poke the air for a staccato or to demonstrate a final consonant
- Shape a vowel with hand signals

7. SING!

Singers want (need!) to sing with others. They want the challenge of matching vowels or creating harmonies. The keyboard or piano is insufficient for this.

- Devise warmups in which they are listening to and matching your vowel or dynamic
- Perform one part of their usual intonation warmups while they sing the other
- Sing solfege in canon
- Sing one part of their piece while they sing another with you

8. Provide Normalcy

- Distribute actual paper music: this allows them to mark their parts, step back from the computer, and stand with excellent alignment.
- Give them markings and time to write them in
- Do some of your normal warmups and routines
- Have them sit and stand as you normally would
- Open the Zoom Room early for socializing

9. Involve Your Singers.

Asking your singers to sing keeps them involved and accountable. Depending on the ensemble, you may want to give your members advance notice.

- Have one member sing their part: this gives everyone the chance to harmonize with people besides you.
- Do popcorn rounds: have a singer sing a phrase and then pass it to the next singer.
- Have a volunteer give the solfege signs for an exercise
- Have singers speak the text and have the rest of the ensemble make note of the words that the volunteer highlighted
- Create a leadership team that can give you feedback on process, community, and individuals who may be in need: this is not the time to work in a vacuum

10. Pep Talks Work. Give Them, but Keep Them Short.

As I was reading some discussion board items in my VCU ensembles the other day, I noted that students were using my words of encouragement to bolster their colleagues. Sometimes those pep talks I give seem cheesy or overdone, but they work and they matter.

11. When in Doubt, Guess!

You are trained to anticipate problems. You know how to look at a score and pinpoint the trouble spots. Just like my Daily Burn trainer knows that I am going to clench my jaw halfway through a plank, you know your singers are going to collapse their support at the end of a difficult phrase. Use those magical skills you have and trust the process.

12. Take Care of Yourself

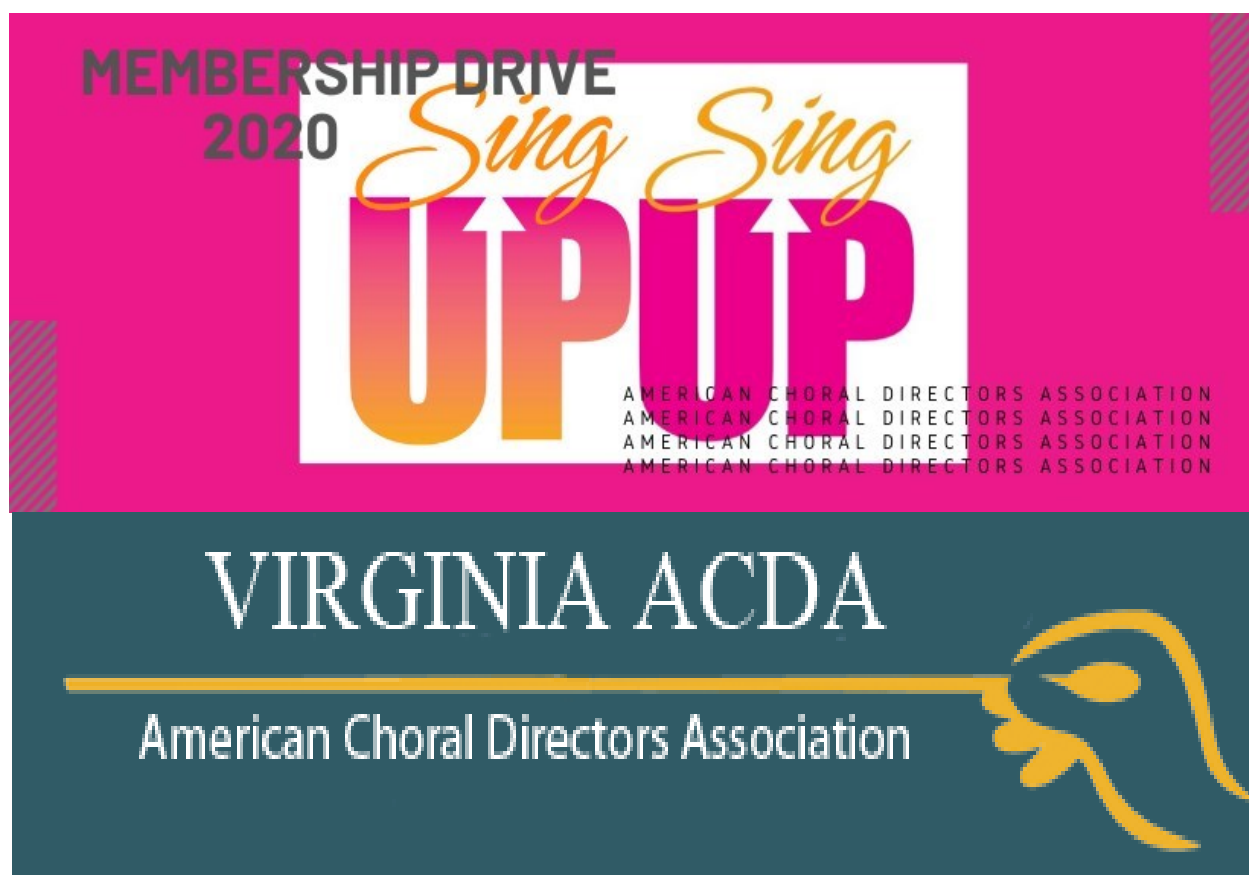
30 minutes of a Zoom rehearsal feels like 3 hours of a regular rehearsal. It is hard on your voice, your posture, and your psyche. Here are just a few tips to help **you** survive!

- Keep it in gallery mode and really look at your singers: they are the reason you are there, and their energy and effort will fuel you
- Monitor your voice usage: make sure your mic goes through your headphones at a proper level so that you do not shout through the entire rehearsal
- Stand! (I have a high desk with a stool, so I can shift from standing to sitting easily)
- Alter your expectations--do not lower them, just change them: our singers expect us to push them, but we must find unique ways to do so
- Acknowledge and grieve the loss of the old, but start a list of techniques that you will carry with you when we can share the same physical space again
- Talk to your moderator: have them create a list of things that went well and things that might have been awkward from the singers' point of view
- Express gratitude to and for your singers: it will remind you of the gratitude they feel for you
- **Congratulate yourself. You are doing the hard work. You are pushing through. You are making it possible for our art to thrive on the flipside of this pandemic. And, it is the right thing to do, even if it does not always feel so wonderful. Think of this work as the burpee of choral rehearsing.**

13. Bonus: Tips for the Choral Singers

Here is a list I have shared with my singers to help them feel more connected and engaged in this remote environment.

- Toggle back and forth between Gallery and Speaker View, and pick someone to sing to!
- Set the camera so you can stand with excellent alignment and step back away from it when you are singing
- Grab a kitchen chair or exercise ball and use that instead of your office chair
- Use the chat function for questions, compliments, and ideas
- Call in if you need to: there is a phone number with every Zoom link
- If the kids are asleep, watch and participate silently, and then watch again later and sing along
- Remember, this is for you: the more you put in, the more you will get out!



***From your Children's and Community Youth R&R Chair:
Leslie Dripps***

In the Hardscrabble Garden

'Hardscrabble' is rocky, dry dirt growing little to nothing, which gardeners encounter with dismay. "What can grow *here?*," we ask hopelessly, and the answer of course is nothing—that is, until the soil is built up by a gardener knowledgeable about such things. You probably know where this is going: this year, each of us will be working a hardscrabble garden.

My hardscrabble garden looks like a choir at 30% enrollment, but 300% increase of my work hours. My hardscrabble garden looks like a decade of our program development losing critical mass in people and income. My hardscrabble garden looks like stressed out singers, absent audience, grasping competitors, family health challenges, not enough hours in not enough days with not enough resources. My hardscrabble garden is full of rocky, dry dirt growing little to nothing. I have to build from the ground up.

There is a surprising secret to building the sort of soil which replaces hardscrabble: *rich soil is made up of dead things*. Fertile dark loam is full of a sort of grief, the total sum of nature's losses. All that nature loses becomes the soil. And, all that we have lost will feed this school year.

Stress, fear, weariness, grief we may or may not know, our own failures, and the failures of others—in this time of uncertainty. The one productive thing we can do with these is build the soil.

My soil building will look different from yours. We will each discover different methods for soil building which excite us and spark our imagination. I am going to make mistakes, as I always have, but those mistakes will mulch the new soil and feed what is sown: hope, promise, relationship, and community.

This building of soil requires us to consider histories which hold devastation for so many people, and tragic and appalling current events which continue to wound. This soil building requires courage and humility, love, and steadfastness.

In my hardscrabble garden, I am learning technologies which will be used to grow my organization later, which I would not have touched otherwise. In my hardscrabble garden, I am joining with colleagues to examine prejudice and inequity in our field with more care than I would have otherwise. As I build the soil in my hardscrabble garden, so am I building my very own character.

In this year's hardscrabble garden, may you tend the soil so that small things will grow so that bigger things will grow. May your mistakes be mulch. May peace be with you as you build from the ground up. *For the details of her hardscrabble plans, visit www.citysingerschoir.org.*

From your Vocal Jazz R&R Chair: Darden Purcell

NEW, Online Resources for your Vocal Jazz/Pop Ensemble

Fall 2020 poses challenges for all of us working with choirs. Since many in-person rehearsals are not feasible, I am finding myself leaning on technology more than ever before. Below are some new online resources for you and your students in this demanding time to stay engaged and, most importantly, continue to create beautiful music.

Sky Tracks by Kerry Marsh: <https://kerrymarsh.com/collections/skytracks-collection>

Brand new for Fall 2020, Kerry has created an online “Sky Tracks” mixer for directors and students. This mixer is a major upgrade to learning individual parts and is incredibly useful for distance learning.

How it works: “Sky Tracks” replaces the typical “part tracks” of the past. One can solo and mute any part of the mix, creating the necessary resource needed for most beneficial and efficient learning. For example, you can mute all voices and have a rhythm section part only. If you want to isolate the soprano part only with rhythm section, you can do that as well. Any combination of voices and rhythm section is doable with this “mixer.” It is a little expensive (roughly \$160 per song), but this includes the “Sky Tracks” mixer and chart. Once you purchase, Kerry sends a link and password for you to send to your students to use for their distance learning. The “sky’s the limit” with this incredible new tool!

Instant Downloads from Jennifer Barnes: <http://jenniferbarnesmusic.com/vocal-arrangements>

Jennifer Barnes, director of Vocal Jazz Studies at the University of North Texas, spent the summer updating her web site and adding new charts! She has two new arrangements “Give Me the Simple Life” (SSAA, SSAAB, SATB, level 3+) and the beautiful Rodgers and Hart A Cappella ballad “My Romance” (SATB, level 3). What is great about these new arrangements is you can purchase them directly from SheetMusic.com for an instant download. Her website has full song vocal demos for listening and review with your groups. These instant downloads make an easy upload for your students to whatever instructional platform you use with no photocopy limit. Jennifer is one of my favorite arrangers out there as her charts are accessible, fun, and always “tasty.”

JazzVoice.com: <https://www.jazzvoice.com/>

While this is not a “choral” site, this is definitely something your talented soloists (and perhaps yourself) might want to check out! Started by New York based Jazz singer, Alexis Cole, this site is an “online jazz vocal education community” offering private lessons, masterclasses, and workshops. This site is a “who’s who” of performers and educators including Sheila Jordan, Jane Monheit, Tierney Sutton, Cyrille Aimee, Dena DeRose, Kate McGarry, Kar-rin Allyson, Dee Daniels, John Proulx, and many more. In addition to individual voice lessons, subscribers can sign up for different master classes tiers, which allows them to attend classes throughout the month. This is a wonderful opportunity to work with top professionals in the Jazz field!

Instant Downloads from Matt Falker: <https://matfalmusic.com/charts>

Matt Falker runs the *Frequency* Vocal Jazz program and teaches piano and theory at MiraCosta College in Oceanside, CA. A wonderful arranger, Matt has twenty-four charts all available for instant download on Sheet Music Plus! Charts include Jazz standards “More Than You Know,” “Rhythm-a-ning,” “Save Your Love For Me,” and “Surrey with the Fringe on Top.” Also new this year is the “Matfal Pop Vocal Series.”

VMEA Fall 2020: I am pleased to announce that I will be presenting a virtual workshop “Shaping the Sound: Attaining Artistic Authenticity in your Jazz and Pop Vocal Ensemble.” Date, time, and details to be determined. I hope you can tune in!

From your Soprano/Alto Choir R&R Chair: Sherlee Glomb

Building Community and Recruiting in a Virtual Setting

It is that time of year again where the hustle and bustle of going back to school is in the air!! It is time to break out some new ideas that will set our class and students up for success in this new model called a “virtual setting.” In a typical year, building community may mean more physical time with one another. However, in the virtual setting, we may have to be able to gain access to build community in other ways. Building a community means we must spend time conversing and talking with our students. Kids need to get to know one another. And, yes, it is important they learn to sing well and learn challenging repertoire. But, it is *even more important* that our students get the chance to communicate and feel like they belong! They are in chorus because they are social human beings who need and thrive on interaction. Here are some easy tips to help guide your department in building community in a virtual setting.

Tip 1: Allow for Social Interaction

This can happen at the beginning of class in an icebreaker or throughout the entire class during breakout sessions.

Use breakout sessions to help kids interact. On Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, we have the ability to have breakout sessions. These breakout sessions (which can be randomized or grouped together) will provide socialization on an assignment during your asynchronous or synchronous class time. I breakout the class into 4 equal groups. The kids have tasks to do in 4 skill areas (Sight Reading Factory, Musictheory.net, Listening Lab, and Group Vocal Masterclass). They spend 10 minutes with their group on each of these areas. This allows for kids to meet new kids in each class period and practice skills.

Host a virtual Happy (“hour” you are thinking in your head!) “fill in the blank.” It can be a Happy Sing-along, Happy Game Night, Happy Theme Night, or Happy Talk Time. The point is to have a night (could be the end of each quarter) where all the kids in your department—maybe even extend it to your feeders, too--can get together and do something virtually social.

Tip 2: Mentor Leadership to Lead Socially

Leadership is a skill that must be taught, and the culture we provide in our classroom is modeled by the teacher and our student leadership. The stronger the student leadership is in helping develop positive language and modeling supportive energy, the more comfortable it will be for the kids in your program to open up and want to be social. I take my students through a leadership training course with questions that help the kids learn about themselves introspectively so that they in turn can help serve others. Through this course, they are given specific language that help encourage sharing and supportive attitudes.

Tip 3: Establish Big/Little Programs

Most of us have probably already heard of Big/Little Mentorship programs and have some form of this in your departments. But, what if we extend this opportunity to the elementary, middle school, and high schools because you can!

An extension of this mentorship program can be where HS/MS kids are assigned a block of time where elementary friends can sign up to take a lesson on basic breathing and singing solfege scales with correct hand signs, or even work on an audition piece with them.

Another extension can be more social where the bigs and littles get virtual talk time once a week just to mentor (not necessarily about music) and be available.

Tip 4: Host a Talent Show a.k.a. "Coffeehouse"

And, extend to your feeder school because you virtually can! Come up with cool names to reflect your school pride! (e.g. House of SoCo)

An extension of this could also be hosting a "Masked Singer" competition. Have teachers from either within your school or extended, feeder school music teachers be the contestants. Have all songs pre-recorded and put into a shareable movie. Do a live poll and have students not vote the teachers off, but just try to guess who the singers are. This will have your community buzzing!

Tip 5: Super Sight-readers Club

Kids will do anything for food! Have a friendly competition using Sight Reading Factory or SmartMusic. Have the kids submit a sight-reading assignment weekly. You grade it. The kids with the most perfect scores get to be in the "Super Sight-reader Club." They get to wear a gawdy necklace or hat for the next quarter to class, and win a FREE PIZZA delivered to their home at the end of the quarter for their great job! Use booster money or pay out of pocket. I know we cannot all do this, but you can modify your prizes. The kids will go CRAZY for this!

You can modify this and do a competition on whatever skill you want the kids to work on. Modify the name to something fun and creative and add a reward to it! Personalize it and make it fun!

Tip 6: Host Private Voice Lessons

Use your virtual office hours to host private voice lessons for individuals in your program. Make personal connections and get to know your student's voice and personality one to one. I will be assigning my kids dates and times during my office hours so they each get to meet with me twice before the quarter ends.

Extend this option to your feeder schools to build rapport and also RECRUIT!

Elementary Honor Choir can be modified to maybe doing a unison piece and a bunch of small breakout sessions with student leaders doing short masterclasses. These may include physical and vocal warmups, tongue twisters, tone building, sight reading, and repertoire work.

Tip 7: Develop a Culture to SEE the Student

It is important that kids see your face and you see theirs for all the obvious reasons that we teach choir, but more to build rapport and a relationship. I have been in breakout sessions with my colleagues and that norm to turn on the camera while in breakout sessions was not established, and it made me feel like I was not part of the group. I actually felt like I could not even share anything out of fear. I understand the sensitivity with homes and circumstance, but even to teach students to mute themselves and go up against a blank wall and frame the face, may help kids feel more of a sense of belonging.

Tip 8: Communicate to Parents and Students Often

I have a weekly newsletter called the “Chorus-pondence” that the student leaders help me to write. It is a brief note from the director, and then a leadership section with student led interviews, quotes, and a recap of cool things happening in each class and ends with upcoming dates and reminders. Students and parents love to see what is going on in the department and they especially love it when they are highlighted. It can include snapshots (videos and pictures) of the week’s happenings. It also has a student highlight section nominated by the student leaders.



From your Newsletter Editor: Matthew Russell

Virginia Harmony



November 2020 Edition

The VA-ACDA leadership team and I would like to invite all of you to contribute your articles and ideas for OUR November 2020 Edition of *Virginia Harmony*. ALL Virginia ACDA members and R&R chairs are enCOURAGED to make submissions. As your performance seasons and school and/or church years continue to emerge, it would be wonderful to hear from you. Please feel free to share articles and ideas about innovative, “remote”/online platforms for effective vocal instruction, successful models of choral practice, lesson plans and resources, virtual choir solutions, choir PPE, and any other ways that you have been keeping your choirs and audiences engaged and connected during this unprecedented time. TOGETHER, we are ALL made better by sharing our GROUP GENIUS!!!

Article due date: November 1, 2020

Publication date: November 15, 2020

Send to: mnr10707@gmail.com

Virginia ACDA 2020-2021 Calendar

August 6-7, 2020	Voices United Virtual Conference, VA ACDA membership meeting - 8/6 - 5-6 PM via Zoom
All Year	<i>Sing for Virginia</i> composer advocacy initiative #sing4va
September 1, 2020	Newsletter Publication #1: Voices United Wrap-up, Leadership Team highlights, membership drive information
Sept. 15 - Nov. 15, 2020	ACDA membership drive - encourage someone to join!
November 1, 2020	Newsletter #2: articles from membership, All VA Middle School Information, membership drive updates
November 8, 2020	Executive Board Virtual Meeting @ 7:30 PM
November 19-21, 2020	VMEA Virtual Conference: VA-ACDA state virtual meeting
January 2021	Recruitment for R&R chair positions
January 31 2021	Full VA Leadership virtual meeting - 3 - 5 PM
February 1, 2021	Newsletter #3: Voices United Conference information, All VA Chorus information, membership articles
March 28, 2021	Executive Board virtual meeting - 7 - 8:30 PM
March 17-20, 2021	ACDA National Conference - Dallas, TX
April 22-24, 2021	All Virginia Honor Choirs, free professional development workshops, state meeting - Richmond, VA
May 15, 2021	Newsletter #4: All State Middle School highlights, Voices United Conference information, state leadership information
August 5-7, 2021	Voices United Conference - Fairfax, VA www.acdavoicesunited.org

Voices United committee planning meetings: September, October, November, January, March, & May. Interested in being part of the planning committee? Please email Dr. Pamela McDermott at pmcdermott@vaacda.org

VA-ACDA LEADERSHIP TEAM DIRECTORY

Amy Motz
President
W.T. Woodson High School
amotz@vaacda.org

Bonny Tynch
President-Elect
Strathmore Children's Chorus
bonny.tynch@gmail.com

Pam McDermott
Vice President
Longwood University
pmcdermott@vaacda.org

Margie Woods
Treasurer
Luther Jackson Middle School
mmwoodsmt@gmail.com

Jane Morison
Membership Chair
Mountain Empire Children's Choral Academy
janemorison1@gmail.com

Hannah Ryan
Communications Director
University of Virginia at Wise
wunsch.hannah@gmail.com

Matthew Russell
Newsletter Editor &
Southeastern Region Coordinator
Norfolk State University
mnr10707@gmail.com

TBD
Social Media Coordinator

Purev Arslanbaatar
Webmaster
Poe Middle School
purevarslan@gmail.com

Suzanne Kane-Mace
Central Region Coordinator
Huguenot High School
mzsmkane@gmail.com

Jane Waldrop
Northern Region Coordinator
Clearview Elementary School
jwaldrop23@yahoo.com

Craig Robertson
Southwestern Region Coordinator
Mary Baldwin College
crobertson@marybaldwin.edu

Leslie Dripps
Children's and Community Youth
Choir R&R Chair
City Singers Youth Chorus
lesledripps@gmail.com

Susan Dommer
Junior High/Middle School R&R
Chair
Stonewall Middle School
dommersw@pwcs.edu

Megan Cartwright
High School R&R Chair
megan.cartwright1@gmail.com

Michael Slon
Community Choir R&R Chair
University of Virginia
ms9ec@virginia.edu

Jessica Irish
Music and Worship R&R Chair
Messiah United Methodist Church
jelardin@gmail.com

Joey Trivette
Two Year College R&R Chair
Southwest Virginia Community
College
Joseph.Trivette@sw.edu

Erin Freeman
Four Year College R&R Chair
Virginia Commonwealth University
efreeman@vcu.edu

Kerry Wilkerson
Tenor/Bass Choir R&R Chair
George Mason University
kerry.wilkerson@gmail.com

Sherlee Glomb
Soprano/Alto Choir R&R Chair
Glomb Music Studios
glombstudios@gmail.com

Daniel Jackson
Diversity Initiatives and World
Music/Cultures R&R Chair
Stone Bridge High School
daniel.jackson@cps.org

Darden Purcell
Vocal Jazz R&R Chair
George Mason University
dpurcel2@gmu.edu

Anthony Colostmo
Contemporary/Commercial Music
R&R Chair
ChorALLSinging@gmail.com

Harlan Zackery
Instrumental to Vocal R&R Chair
Norfolk State University
hzackery@nsu.edu

Annabelle Mills
Middle School Honor Choir Chair
Loudoun County
annabelle.mills@cps.org

Tim Drummond
Middle School Honor Choir Chair
Moody Middle School
ttimothy.t.drummond@gmail.com

Meredith Bowen
Student Activity R&R Chair
Radford University
mbowen@vaacda.org

Travis Krickovic
Student Chapter Representative
Virginia Commonwealth University
trickovict@mymail.vcu.edu