

OMEA District I

Honors Festival Committee Report 2011

In attendance: Eric West, Vicki Shutters, Ali Knowles, Kelly Barkhimer, Betsy Lawrence, Michael Smith, Janine Baughman, Annette Slater, Joe Lewis, Ben Pack, Megan O'Connor and Kathy McGrady.

I. Chairs discussed operations and concerns of this year's event as well as changes for next year.

A. CHOIR

1. Janine said that securing risers was a problem again this year and asked what had happened. For the past two years Vicki had provided, loaded and transported the risers herself, but she made it clear at last year's wrap up meeting that she would not be able to do that again. Eric had spoken to the Sylvania superintendent who said that we could use their risers and they would transport them for us, but it was too late. At the last moment, Kelly and Ali borrowed Evergreen's risers and Ali transported them. It was Janine's first year chairing the event and she was not aware that it was her responsibility, but Kelly read from the Honors Fest manual that Chairs are responsible for securing any equipment their group needs. Eric said we need to make sure that it's done ahead of time and Janine will make the contact for the future. Janine will remind Ali to do the paperwork for Sylvania Schools' grounds crews, and it was suggested that we get the risers, percussion equipment and a rack of stands all from the same place. If Sylvania can't provide it all, Eric Boswell from Wauseon may be able to. All of this will be discussed and secured at the District's fall meeting.
2. Annette said that the email communication was good, but she suggested a regular mailing also. Eric told us that next year the G-mail account will be used to email more efficiently and that the OMEA websites have mailing labels. Mailing postcard reminders to everyone will be done at the beginning of the year.
3. Janine asked if there was a **universal application form** available and Eric said that he has developed a prototype with criteria that can be adjusted for different groups. Apps will all go to one place first, to one spreadsheet that will have all information on applicants and then get emailed to the Chairs. Using Excel, Chairs will be able to gather information without retyping. Eric will send the prototypes to Chairs for experimentation and approval.

- Applications will be streamlined with easily marked categories.
- Required information will also be clearly highlighted.
- Chairs can easily format a blind audition from this process.
- It was agreed that the Director's overall ranking of their own students is more of a hindrance than a help and needs to be eliminated.
- Administrator information will not be on the application form but on a separate form letter to the directors.
- The second mailing of acceptance will be the one that requires signatures, t-shirt sizes etc. Eric will do a universal acceptance form on the website.

B. ORCHESTRA

1. Michael said the some orchestra directors had emailed their objections to having blind auditions for orchestra when the current method of selection works well. Eric replied that the objective was to have an audition process for Honors groups, not festival groups. Kelly pointed out that directors have a year to prepare their students for the idea of taped auditions, but Michael is afraid that schools with smaller orchestra programs won't have students audition and won't be represented. **The blind audition process makes the Honors selection fair to all applicants, and directors should encourage their students to audition.**
 - It ensures consistency and quality players.
 - Every school that applies will be represented.
 - Eric has an excel spreadsheet with a formula for adding numeric value to data. That way the Chairs could rank all the information and points would be added to the taped audition which would pull the most weight in the selection process.
 - Betsy asked why it's necessary to have the director's evaluation on a blind audition, but Ali talked about using director information to make difficult choices easier.
2. Eric reminded everyone that information about the audition process is on the website, and he intends to write an editorial for the next newsletter.
3. Mike also got an email that Perrysburg Schools may be charging us custodial fees after the fact. If so, we'll have to pay them, but Eric asked Mike to negotiate as best he can.

C. BAND

1. Megan said the new certificates were nice, but electronic signatures of clinicians and chairs needed to be done ahead of time. Ali questioned whether we needed to give certificates, but everyone agreed that they were important to the kids.
2. Joe will not be chairing JH band next year.

II. Ali read through the written suggestions/comments from the event.

- A. Mrs. Mitten has offered her services to come and be a deaf interpreter. It was generally agreed that it would be too distracting and not enough deaf people attend the event.
- B. The choir met in the auditorium and they were talking loudly during the band rehearsal. They were supposed to have met in the upstairs lobby, and more directors need to be supervising their students.
- C. We tried to have ensemble chairs give volunteer names to event chairs to assign duties, but it didn't work. **Ensemble chairs need to assign duties to participating directors and to supervise their duties.** Ensemble chairs need to have people in place at least 45 minutes ahead of time for proper supervision. Volunteer info will go on the director form, but directors that don't show up should be disciplined. Directors with split duties need to have some leeway, but there **MUST** a contact person in charge of students at an event.

III. The following recommendations were made for next year's event.

- Everyone liked the logo design on this year's t-shirts, and Kelly suggested that they just say Honors Festival but have no group label. We will keep the same design and just change colors – next year's will be yellow.
- Vicki complained that the OMEA banner hung on the curtain looked tacky. It's fine in the parking lot for an adjudicated event, but we should have a quality cloth banner, about 10'X10', with the OMEA logo and District I Honors Festival printed on it. Kathy had said she would look into it.
- The general traffic pattern needs to be adjusted to avoid problems with carrying instruments and groups coming and going at the same time. There should be a circular traffic pattern.
- ALL junior high groups will wear **BLACK** dress pants, **BLACK** shoes and t-shirt.
- Ensemble chairs should be giving **WRITTEN** instructions for Sunday's event to the kids at Saturday's rehearsal. Those should include precisely when and where to report.
- On-site photo copying of music can **NOT** be done and ensemble directors are responsible for having extra copies of music for their own students.
- Vicki talked expenses and the fact that the cost of everything is rising each year. The event barely breaks even and Kathy pointed out that it has been many years since we've increased the participation fees. After a brief discussion about all the benefits the

students get from the experience, the Committee agreed to recommend at the next District meeting that the fee be increased from \$35 to \$40.

IV. Honors Fest 2012 will be January 29th.

- After carefully checking the OMEA calendar, Kathy said this was the only possible date. Convention next year is the President's Day weekend, so the Festival will be before HS S&E.
- Follow the Honors Festival Manual for moving up dates!!!!