

Greetings VEMEA Members,

The 2012-2013 school year is quickly coming to an end. As we say goodbye to our elementary students moving on to middle school, it is a good time to reflect on our school year and be proud of our students and ourselves for all we have accomplished this year. VEMEA has had a very successful school year and I'd like to give you a few highlights of the things we should be proud of!

We had an outstanding conference in November 2012 at The Homestead. Our clinicians were inspiring and refreshing. I am positive that every teacher in attendance learned something new, renewed an old friendship, or strengthened their interest in our organization. Our elementary sessions were well attended and everyone was receptive to the new location for the elementary sessions. We had plenty of wide open space for dancing, movement, games, and instruments!

Planning for the November 2013 conference is well under way. The in-service conference will be held at The Homestead again this year. We have some very exciting sessions with highly acclaimed clinicians scheduled. The official program of sessions and clinicians cannot be announced until all the details are confirmed over the summer and early fall. However, I can promise you that it is a conference you won't want to miss! Keep an eye on the VMEA & VEMEA websites and the Fall, 2013 issue of *Notes* for more information about conference.

Our 8<sup>th</sup> annual All-Virginia Elementary Chorus concert on April 13<sup>th</sup> was an incredibly successful event. Our host site, Patriot High School in Prince William County, was a wonderful venue to showcase the talented singers that gathered together. This year there were over 180 students in the choir, representing 37 schools and fourteen VMEA districts. Having coordinated this event for the past 5 years, I am more and more impressed with the talent of our students and the dedication of our teachers each year. An event of this caliber requires many people. Some are very visible, but some work behind the scenes for many months in advance. I owe a great deal of thanks to the following people. Debra Kay Robinson Lindsay, our VMEA chairperson for MIOSM and past president of VEMEA, was an outstanding guest conductor. Her engagement and enthusiasm with the students was a joy to watch. Thank you, Debra Kay! Michael Salvatierra, music teacher at Venable Elementary School in Charlottesville, was our accompanist for the second year in a row. Michael is an outstanding and talented accompanist! Thank you, Michael. Two very important people in Prince William County served as the local liaisons. Lynn Maletick, our District 9 VEMEA representative, and Dave VanGelder, the District 9 VBODA representative and band director at Patriot High School, were incredibly helpful to make sure everything ran smoothly with hotel reservations, lunch accommodations, riser set up, pianos, rehearsal spaces, microphones, lights and so much more! Thank you, Lynn and Dave. You were great hosts! Finally, thank you to the teachers who dedicated their time and energy to sponsor their students' participation in AVEC. Your dedication to your students is admirable and something they will remember for many years. Thanks for an outstanding AVEC 2013. Stay tuned for our 9<sup>th</sup> annual AVEC in 2014.

This year VEMEA awarded three grants to VEMEA members. All three grants were awarded to teachers in District 12. Dr. Maritza Sadowsky, the District 12 VEMEA representative, worked diligently with the teachers in her district to promote this opportunity. The events that were funded through these grants were outstanding and provided valuable music opportunities to the students in District 12. Mary Hannah Klontz and John Findley were awarded a grant to host Mexican-American music educator, author, singer and song writer Jose-Luiz Orozco. Mr. Orozco shared his traditions of Latin American children's music, instruments, and language to the elementary students. Jennifer Brown was awarded a grant to host a workshop entitled "Chimes to Handbells" that featured a performance by the Peace Ringers and sessions taught by nationally-recognized handbell instructor, Nancy Cappel. These sessions provided experiences of notation reading practice, hands-on playing techniques, and demonstrations of the acoustics of vibration and sound. Dr. Maritza Sadowsky was awarded a grant to host Palestinian-American oud and violin virtuoso and composer, Simon Shaheen. Mr. Shaheen performed on the oud and other traditional middle-eastern instruments and played traditional Arabic music. Congratulations to these three recipients of the annual VEMEA grants. Since 2005, VEMEA has awarded more than 15 grants to our members to help fund workshops, professional development opportunities for teachers, or guest artist experiences for students.

We have had a turnover of district elementary representatives this year. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our outgoing representatives for their time and commitment to VEMEA over the past years. We have new VEMEA representatives in Districts 5, 7, 10 and 15. We welcome Jennifer Smith from Stuarts Draft as our new District 5 representative; Dawn Kinman from Galax as our new District 7 representative; Elizabeth Linsley from Fairfax as our new District 10 representative; and Kim Upshaw from Spotsylvania as our new District 15 representative. If you are unsure what district you are in, visit the VMEA website ([www.vmea.com](http://www.vmea.com)) and look under the "school systems" tab. If you are unsure who your elementary district representative is, visit the VEMEA website ([www.vemea.org](http://www.vemea.org)) and look under the "about" tab for a list of district representatives.

Let me close by saying thank you to the many members who have been involved this year in our events. This organization is for you – its members! I am humbled to be your president and thank you for this opportunity to have served this great organization in the 2012-2013 school year. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me via e-mail ([krinerj@wjcc.k12.va.us](mailto:krinerj@wjcc.k12.va.us)). Until my next article, I wish you the warmest of springs and the best of summers! Enjoy the summer with your family, friends, and loved ones!

Stay tuned,  
Jason