Maine Motif
Conference Edition

May 16-18, 2019
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2019 MMEA Conference - Presidential Welcome

Welcome to the Conference Edition of The Maine Motif! A great big thank you to Sue Barre for pulling this edition together as we continue to search for a long-term editor for our professional publication.

Speaking of Sue Barre, if you missed the last Motif, Sue was just voted in as the NAfME Eastern Division President. She will become the first Maine educator to be elected the Eastern Division President. She will be the ninth woman to hold this post, and the first in the last twenty-five years. Maine is so proud of Sue and her accomplishments!

Now back to our regularly scheduled programming :)

I would be remiss in not thanking all the wonderful people who make the MMEA Conference possible:

Thank you to Nancy Cash-Cobb and Sandy Barry for being the conference Co-Chairs, Beth Labrie for organizing contracts, insurance, etc, Becca DeWan for registration and the conference booklet, Pam Kinsey for managing our exhibits, all our wonderful VPs (Jen Nash, Matt Waite, Dennis Boyd, Bill Buzza, Lauren Murphy, Erin Morrison, and Dorie Tripp) for finding our clinicians, and also Chris White, Laura Artesani, Webb Parker, and Phil Edelman for being such gracious hosts at the University of Maine.

We are happy to host our Eastern Division President, Marc Greene from Ithaca College, at the conference this year. He will be doing a formal welcome address at the Presidential Reception.

Speaking of the Presidential Reception, we hope you will be able to join us as we recognize our colleagues for the 2019 MMEA Awards.

As you look through this mailer, I know you will be excited by what the conference has to offer. Also think of all the time you will have together with your colleagues as we recharge and are reinvigorated for the end of the school year. Here’s to learning relevant PD at the MMEA Conference 2019 that we can take back with us to the classroom to enrich the quality of instruction for our students.

Musically,

Benjamin M. Potvin, MMEA President
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Top 5 Reasons to Attend the MMEA Conference

Jennifer Bissonnette, Schenck High School, MMEA District V

Educational Opportunities

No matter how long we have been teaching or how experienced we are, we all have more to learn. Many of us are the only music teacher in our building. For some, we are the only music teacher in the district! It is important that we not be isolated. Being exposed to a variety of viewpoints, new ideas, and technology not only helps us stay fresh, but validates what we are doing in our classrooms to ourselves and potential higher ups.

Sometimes at conference we discover new learning and performing opportunities for both ourselves and our students. We may learn of new products, festivals, concerts, grants, and pilot programs, as well as services the Universities can offer us as educators. One year I learned of a grant I had not heard of that helped tremendously with projects I had been wanting to pursue but could not because of budget restraints. At another conference, I was able to get new materials for my school music program by participating in a pilot program for a new series someone was promoting. You never know what you’ll find there!

Networking

It’s all about who you know, right? Well sometimes, who you know can help you more than you imagined. Having a network of music teachers not just in your area, but around the state can gain you knowledge, opportunity, and help when you need it. Forging these relationships becomes easy when you are surrounded with them at Conference.

I was recently looking for a piece of music for a guest conductor that is out of print. I quickly put the word out. Thanks to my many connections I received replies from music educators from Maine to Florida with who had it and how many copies, or suggestions on where I could find it. People are our most important resource. There is always someone who has been where you are and has the information you need.
Vendors and Suppliers

I love visiting the vendors. They become old friends that you meet a few times a year to catch up with. They always have something new and exciting. One year, I met a rep from McGraw Hill who introduced me to a new series they were marketing. I ended up signing up to pilot this series with one grade level, receiving hundreds of dollars’ worth of materials for my classroom for the cost of a few textbooks.

You can browse hundreds of pieces of sheet music, instruction books, and educational materials for both you and your students. Vendors know the restraints of working within a budget. They can give you tips on how to build programs. What should you start out with? What can you get later? Vendors can also provide you with connections to other teachers, suppliers, and resources that will help with your networking … not to mention that sometimes you just get cool stuff.

Clinics, Clinicians, and Panels

The clinics offered at All State Conference can provide valuable information about techniques, materials, and technology. You can gain knowledge about advocacy. Some clinics allow you to sing through new sheet music being put out. At one conference at the University of Southern Maine, Kirby Shaw was the clinician for one of these workshops. That was a treat! Sometimes, panels will be set up to discuss one of a variety of topics ranging from educational practices to legislation being proposed or recently passed at the state level.

There is, of course, always the Directors’ Choir, Band, or Orchestra to participate in. It is so nice to sit down with other experts in your field and be able to sing or play under a master conductor. Not only do you have a great time, but you get to experience playing under someone new. I look back fondly on playing in a band under the direction of Anthony Maiello. He was amazing to work with. He talked about the importance of knowing every aspect of your score and being able to pick out chords and notes as quickly as you could pick out a color. He also wondered at having ten French horns in the band.

Fun

Yes, professional development can be fun! You meet up with old friends at the UMO and USM reunions and you have lunch with new people who understand what you are talking about and get your wacky musical sense of humor. You may encounter other lovers of obscure instruments like yourself or learn of a Baroque recorder ensemble in the state … come on, we all know you have been dying to play in one.

The point is, Conference isn’t just about gathering CEU’s or accompanying students to a festival. This is your opportunity to gain SO much! Knowledge. Friendships. Connections. Affirmation. FREE STUFF!!! But most of all, Conference is about us. It’s about those of us who are the only music teacher in our building. It’s about those of us who work as part of a team of music teachers. It’s about all of us getting what we need in an environment that promotes growth and understanding of our unique abilities and place in this crazy thing we call public education. See you there!!!
Greetings Band Directors of Maine!

I am excited about the variety of workshops being planned for this year’s MMEA In-Service conference. In reviewing the various session proposals, I’ve tried to choose presenters that offer something for everyone across the spectrum of elementary, middle and high school bands. In designing the schedule, I’ve consciously planned for the middle school and elementary workshops to occur on Friday, as I recognize that many of you may have difficulty in getting time off from school to attend the conference. I know sometimes it’s difficult to leave your classroom at this time of year, but I’ve always found attending the Conference to be professionally recharging, and hope you will this year as well.

Below is the list of band workshops for this Spring’s conference.
I look forward to seeing many of you at the University of Maine in May.

Bill Buzza, MMEA Band

Stop Clapping!!! Verbalize rhythm using the Breath Impulse Method
Kyle Jordan (Oxford Hills HS)
Tired of saying "hold that note for the full duration"? Are rests often an oversight among your students? Want to improve the sight-reading capabilities of your students and your group as a whole? This session will introduce the Breath Impulse Method of counting rhythms and it's usefulness in a large group setting, be it band, choir, or orchestra.

Q & A with Doug Owens
Doug Owens - Maine All-State band conductor (Old Dominion University)
This session will allow the participants to directly learn from our All-State guest conductor by observing part of a rehearsal of the All-State Band and then Dr. Owens will discuss his preparation and rehearsal techniques, repertoire selections, and offer other advice from the podium.

The Art of B.S. (Brilliant Substitutions) - Effective Programming for Any Instrumentation
Jacqueline Townsend (University of Southern Maine)
Programming for any instrumental ensemble can be difficult, and this is made more daunting when the instrumentation available does not conform to the standard norms of much of the wind band repertoire. In this session, strategies for programming for wide varieties of instrumentation will be discussed, including effective substitutions, chamber music, and “non-traditional” works. All students deserve the opportunity to play great repertoire, and these strategies can help make
The Distance Dilemma: Teaching Percussion from the Podium
Danielle Moreau (University of New Hampshire, Westbrook HS)
“The Distance Dilemma: Teaching Percussion from the Podium” is designed to offer band directors tools for combating common challenges with percussion sections, leading to more productive rehearsals and student longevity. Topics will include identifying technique issues, recognizing proper sound quality and tone production, demystifying percussion ‘lingo’ and relating these to wind instruments, and implement suggestions.

Buying for the Back of the Band
Danielle Moreau (University of New Hampshire, Westbrook HS)
Unsure what timpani heads to purchase? Are they playing the triangle with a wind chime again? Wading through the plethora of percussion instruments, mallets, and hardware can be an incredibly daunting task even for the most seasoned director. “Buying for the Back of the Band” is designed to help alleviate some of this pressure, leaving you feeling confident that what you buy is worth the money you spend. Topics will include navigating the percussion marketplace, information on some of the most reliable products, and a buying guide based on various needs and budget levels. Furthermore, equipment suggestions will be based on their use in band literature, helping you create a practical inventory that will meet the needs of your students.

Improving Intonation in the Band Room
Caitlin Ramsey (Cape Elizabeth MS)
Intonation is often one of the most overlooked and underdeveloped fundamental music skills at the middle school level. This session will explore practical methods for improving ensemble intonation that are specifically targeted toward middle school band. High school directors with a second band or a younger ensemble may also find this clinic beneficial. Attendees will leave this session with a greater understanding of the skills and the sequence of skills needed to successfully develop students’ aural skills as well as new strategies and techniques that can be immediately implemented in their band rooms.

Roundtable-Topics in Elementary Band
Melinda Kimball (Augusta Public Schools)
Discussions and sharing ideas in: preferred method books, wind instrument embouchures and hand position (clear flute sound, highs and lows on brass) young percussion management, procedures in lending out school instruments, group instrumental lesson set up, basic emergency repairs....other? Participants are invited to bring a copy of the method book they use to share with others.

Performance by the Westbrook HS Wind Ensemble
Conducted by Kyle Smith
The Westbrook High School Wind Ensemble is comprised of the top musicians from the Westbrook Schools. Performing 6 concerts annually, students work hard to represent the Westbrook Community to the best of their abilities. Students in Wind Ensemble are the majority of the top students in the school academically, and participate in many other after school activities. The program will include Andrew Boysen’s Snowflakes Dancing, Timothy Mahr’s Hymn and Celebration, Flight of the Bumblebee, Chantry’s Two Marimba Reflections featuring Danielle Moreau, Terry White’s Rachel, Morricone’s Gabriel’s Oboe featuring Jenna Driscoll on vibraphone and the world premiere of Hail Dear Westbrook High School -1917.

Instrumental Music Portfolios: A Benchmark Assessment
Keith Hodgson (The University of the Arts)
How do you individualize assessment, track student progress and assist students in sequentially knowing what to practice? This session will look at designing individual student portfolios, the
ultimate teaching tool for implementing your curriculum through differentiated instruction and assessment. Examples will be presented for elementary, middle and high school curriculums.

The Maestro’s Magic! - Effective Conducting Techniques
Keith Hodgson (The University of the Arts)
This hands-on session will focus on the elements, characteristics and techniques to be an effective conductor. A crash course review of conducting basics followed by topics on: effective cueing gestures; communicating attacks, releases, articulation and fractional entrances; treatment of fermata; dynamic and stylistic approaches; lyrical conducting; score study, marking and much more! Bring your baton!

Orchestra Sessions
Martha Mooke – The Power of Strings: Plugging in!
Dr. Mark Laycock –
1. Monday Morning Strategies: Practical Ideas to Strengthen Your Orchestra
2. Conducting Rehab: Twelve Steps to Better Communication
3. Director Orchestra

PK – 5 General Sessions:
James Eldreth – Jazz Up Your Classroom: Using Jazz to Sing, Say, Dance & Play
Kaitlin Young with Vicky Cherry – Arts Advocacy in Action
Rachel Grimsby –
1. Introduction to First Steps in Music
2. Introduction to Conversational Solfege
3. Folk Dancing in Kindergarten?!?! (and throughout elementary too!)
4. Universal Design for Learning in the Elementary Music Classroom
6. Conversational Solfege and Orff Schulwerk

Danielle Collins – What does ‘General Music’ mean? A Round Table Discussion
Dr. Scott Burstein – Teaching Guitar Through Popular Music Education
Monica Moore – Escape the Music Room

6-12 General Sessions:
Dr. Scott Burstein – Popular Music Education and Modern Band
Gail Kelly – Games in the General Music Class
Andy Forster – I’m Afraid of Microphones!
Julianna Mateyko –
1. General Music Tools for Connected Students & Teachers
2. Digital Content & Solutions for the Chromebook Classroom
3. Technology Engagement: The Music Classroom Leads the Way

Dr. Robin Giebelhausen –
1. Yes Uke Can! Teach the Ukulele with a song based curriculum
2. Do You Hear What I Hear? Audiation, MLT, and the Elementary Music Classroom

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**Choral Sessions**

Deborah Mar –

1. So-li-dare-ri-ti: Daring to Use Solfeggio to Unify the Choral Mindset (Part 1)
2. So-li-dare-ri-ti: Daring to Use Solfeggio to Unify the Choral Mindset (Part 2)

Beth LaBrie – All-State Vocal Auditions 101
Dr. Richard Nickerson – It’s Beginning to Look a Lot Like…Summertime!
Camille Saucier – Vocal Jazz is Accessible
Dr. Bryan Hunter – Music Therapy: A Career for You? A Career for Your Students?
Christian Giddings – Choral Preparation Hacking
Mary Turner – Don’t Lose Your Voice! Vocal Health for the Music Educator
Kevin Rhein – Messalonskee High School Treble Choir
Heidi Corliss – Hampden Academy Chamber Singers
Robert Westerberg – Choral Warmups to Develop SKILLS!

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**Retired Sessions**

Sam Moore-Young & Nancy Curran – I’m Thinking of Retiring. Now what?

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**Jazz Sessions**

Mimi Rolphing: Helping your Singers audition for Jazz All-State

Dino Govoni: Tune Retention: How to practice more effectively

Dino Govoni: Jazz Improv Forum

D. Bennett Jazz Combo (6-12): UMaine Faculty Jazz Performance

D. Bennett Jazz Lecture (6-12): Building Ensemble Skills in a Jazz Combo Setting

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**Be My Guest!**

*Tips on hosting a festival*
Sandy Barry, MMEA President Elect
Just to state the obvious--winter has been a busy time for music educators in Maine! I’ve been fortunate to attend several (by far not all) district and state level events. Student musicianship, the skill of our guest conductors and accompanists, and the graciousness of the hard-working hosts is inspiring. These events, whether a district-wide middle school honors festival or a state jazz festival, are the result of the volunteer effort of people willing to fill a number of positions--event coordinators, ensemble managers, and hosts. The ultimate goal of these events is to provide an enhanced experience for our students, and to celebrate and showcase their progress and achievement. What is a necessity is the need for us to consider the volunteer positions that are vital for these events to exist.

Before you get overwhelmed and move along to another article, consider this:

IT’S ABOUT THE KIDS. When you host, you are providing an enriching, exciting experience that will motivate and inspire young musicians to seek further challenges.

IT’S ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL. Showcase your school, your program, your community. We all benefit from seeing how colleagues work.

IT’S ABOUT ADVOCACY. Hosting a festival brings what we do literally “home” for our administrators, our parents, and our colleagues. A festival brings energy, attention, and interest to music education, shining a spotlight on a wider audience of stakeholders.

IT’S A FINANCIAL BENEFIT. Depending on the festival, the money earned at concessions, gate percentage or host honorarium and be significant for your program. This isn’t the main reason to host an event of course, but every little bit helps.

IT’S ABOUT OUR PROFESSION. Bottom line, we need you. Every district is in need of people willing to take on a role. Beyond the district needs, there is a state-level need for hosts, managers and coordinators.

And, you won’t be going this alone. There are so many people and resources available to support you in any of the roles you wish to take on. The Maine Music Educators Association site has a wealth of information available--job descriptions, timelines, formats--it’s there.

www.mainemea.org

Look around your community--partner with a neighboring teacher to co-host, co-manage, co-coordinate. You’ll double resources, come up with better ideas, and it’s a great way to learn the process if you are new to this challenge. Get in touch with your district chair--that is what they are there for!
Here are a few final things to consider. This is by no means a comprehensive list, but hopefully it will get you thinking.

HOST: A suitable host site--what is the event? Any school could be the perfect site for the right event. A one-day district elementary festival has different needs than a state jazz event.

- All Hands on Deck: Colleagues, Parent volunteers, student assistants, administrative support, custodial and tech support. Talk with these people first, especially administrators. Many love to have guests come to their schools--get them on board and clarify what on-site things they will support (custodial? Facilities scheduling, etc.)
- Parking: either on site or nearby. Consider where buses will park, as well as large audience numbers
- Rehearsal Spaces: this depends on the festival--one per group
- Additional rooms: for sectionals if needed, a conductor/director meeting area, a warm-up room, picture room, etc.
- Homerooms: if a day-long event, one per school or school pairs if numbers warrant it.
- Cafeteria/Meal Facilities
- Performance Space: yes, an auditorium is nice--however, it’s not a necessity. Having enough space for multiple set-ups is nice too, and helps the concert run more quickly and smoothly.

ENSEMBLE MANAGER: The manager researches and chooses the guest conductor, assists with music selection, communicates with auditions managers and conductor to select ensemble, assists with acquiring the music, gets music out to students, and assists during the festival. After the festival, the manager collects music, refiles in library and sends formal thanks to all involved.

EVENT COORDINATOR: Many districts now have this position, and this person attends to the timeline and minutia of the event. The coordinator makes sure managers, hosts and teachers are all handling their responsibilities, and helps keep the communication flowing.

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**Can teachers still learn?**

Jon Simonoff, District 7 Chair

Recently I had the pleasure of taking a lesson from a professional bass player from New York. While it did cost me 90 dollars for 1 hour I have been so inspired to practice and play for the past two weeks. I
almost feel like I’m back in college where I loved my craft and I had the time to refine it. Don’t get me wrong, I still love my craft. But the lesson has inspired me to MAKE time to refine it!

I’m sure I’m not the only music teacher that may spend hours a day playing an instrument but this instrument may or may not be our primary instrument and sometimes the most musical thing I get to play is Hot Cross Buns. While this is important for our students it does lead to a stale feeling for the teacher.

I think it’s important to remember not only why we love to teach music but also while we love the art of music. Remembering those feelings of the joy of learning and accomplishment can be a great way to feel revitalized and reenergized. That positive energy (and perhaps new ideas) will positively impact what we do with our students. Surely a win-win situation.

I know not everyone will want to pay for a private lesson but I highly recommend making time to revisit what you love to play on your instrument. Try to remember your passion for making music so that you can help your students find their own passion for making music. Or just take some time to learn something new. Remember why you love to learn and that passion and that new knowledge may positively impact your classroom. By the way, a great place to learn something new is the MMEA All State Music Conference coming up in May. Perhaps that will be the place where you find something exciting for yourself and your students!

Plan to attend the President’s Reception
Meet and Greet the:
Maine Music Educator of the year
New Hall of Fame Members
Outstanding New Music Educator of the Year
Outstanding Administrator Award
MMEA Educator Appreciation Award
Dale F. Huff Outstanding Program Award
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