

ACB's Outreach Goals

Happy New Year!

The ACB Executive Committee, Appointed Officers and Board of Directors had a productive meeting in Chicago the week before Christmas. The minutes from the meeting are printed in this Journal and I am pleased to announce the new board members who will take office in April are Barbara Hunter and Lewis Buckley. We are grateful to Col. Arnald D. Gabriel (Ret. Air Force) for his support of ACB by presenting an outstanding lab rehearsal session at the Midwest Clinic. We also thank the Palatine Band, Mr. Ronald H. Polancich, Conductor, from Illinois for their help with the session.

I have been concentrating on the "MORE" approach to long range planning for ACB in my first two presidential messages. After "M", Membership – and skipping to "R", Recognition, I am going to challenge our membership with the "O", Outreach, a systematic attempt to provide services beyond conventional limits.

I am a Facebook fan and read my "Fortune Cookie" daily. Three cookies have appeared on my profile regularly:

- The secret of getting ahead ... is getting started.
- If you want the rainbow, you must put up with the rain.
- Now is the time to set your sights high and go for it.

Fortune Cookie One: To get started we must focus on our Outreach Goal, which is MUSIC FOR LIFE. We begin by remembering our roots as children, recognizing the outstanding teachers we had and the programs that brought us to where we are today as community band members, directors, administrators, supporters and fans.

Fortune Cookie Two: Accepting rain in order to enjoy the rainbow means **advocating** for available funding for music programs. MENC's, (now called NAFME as of Sept. 2011) Executive Director Michael Butera says, "We are gravely concerned about the impact cuts will have on music education programs across the country now and in the future." As conscientious musicians and members of the Association of Concert Bands, we must oppose any cuts knowing that the children who will be denied a music education are the future of community bands.

Fortune Cookie Three: Now is the time for ACB members to set our sights high and battle to keep the programs we have. We can do that in a number of ways.

- Contact elected officials by phone, e-mail, personal letter, or visit and urge them to support legislation that does not cut music programs.
- Advocate for music education at concerts by telling audiences about the values of music participation. Google "Advocacy Music Education" and you will find over 4,530,000 sites on this subject.
- Donate instruments to schools. Tough economic times have made it impossible for many families to provide instruments for their children. Schools do not always have instruments available. Perhaps you upgraded to a more professional instrument and no longer need your "beginner" instrument. Most school districts give tax vouchers for donations of instruments. At the Midwest Clinic this year, well-known conductors spoke of getting help with their first instruments from a caring adult. This act of kindness changed their lives.

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- ACB bands with large budgets could donate an instrument each year to school districts.
- Conduct (or Present) Side by side, Intergenerational rehearsals and concerts to enrich and strengthen student musicianship. Since not all schools offer the programming of concert selections that we think of as Community Band, there are students that have never experienced the thrill of performing a march or a composition by one of the band world giants such as Reed, Barker, Grainger or Holst.
 - Work with colleges and universities to promote the Association of Concert Bands and our many goals. Five Marist College students attended the Midwest Clinic and presented an exciting preview of the 2012 ACB Convention at our Board meeting. Their involvement with planning the convention is a perfect ACB Outreach project.

NOW IS THE TIME! We must advocate, advocate, advocate on behalf of music education programs everywhere. NOW IS THE TIME to nourish and strengthen the roots of the future of community bands. NOW IS THE TIME to ensure that as many young people as possible have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument and that they are introduced to the truly life-enhancing dimension that music-making can bring.

Judy



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