

## Sounds of the Season

On December 4, the concert hall filled with joyful sounds of the season as the TCNJ Chorale and Eastern Wind Symphony took the stage for their winter concert. Dr. Michael D. Mendoza, chorale director, and Dr. William H. Silvester, Eastern Wind Symphony conductor, showcased the work of their ensembles to an appreciative audience.

The choral portion of the concert opened with *Cantate Domino*, by Heinrich Schultze, offering a magnificent start to the evening. The chorale performed a number of noteworthy songs, including *Sanctus* ("Messe"), *Riu, Riu, Chiu*, *Carol of the Drum*, and other such seasonal selections. *Hark the Herald Angels* sing was a brilliant opening for the Eastern Wind Symphony segment of the concert. They continued with other traditional music, such as *Deck the Halls*, *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen*, and the

selection *Sleigh Ride*, which provided an exciting conclusion to this segment.

Finally, the performance came to a close when the two ensembles joined together for a performance of other great holiday works, including *Joy to the World*, *Adeste Fidelis*, and *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*. Those who attended the standing room only concert enjoyed a salient musical experience. Jason Price, a junior music education major shared his enjoyment of the concert, stating that "[the] balance and blend were great, and the musical selections were appropriate for the size of the ensemble. Also, the variety of musical styles was very interesting to hear.



The two groups also performed together once again at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark, NJ on December 10 at 7pm.

Kim Hill

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## NJEA in Atlantic City

Held on November 10 and 11, the New Jersey Education Association's annual conference was well attended. Teachers, prospective employers, vendors, and students gathered in Atlantic City for a weekend of fun and professional development. Students from TCNJ attended sessions, watched rehearsals, and met with teachers in the field. Exhibitors at the conference excitedly shared information about their products and gave away samples; many attendees walked away with free bags (the Staples booth was a huge hit!), books, and materials for classrooms. One lucky girl walked away with twenty textbooks, which she intends to sell on E-Bay to make some money!

Several of our music students joined other New Jersey collegiate MENC

members at the annual meeting on Friday morning, where they learned about statewide happenings. Many wonderful fundraising opportunities were shared, and those in attendance made great friends and contacts. Sophomore Shannon O'Connor attended the meeting and said that, "it was such a wonderful experience; it was great to meet with students from other chapters to share ideas and experiences." NJMEA board members were also in attendance at the conference and are excited to share whatever they could with collegiate members. They ask that college students let them know how to encourage and motivate us to stay in the field of music education. There is a huge problem with recruitment and retention in this field, and the current teachers want to do anything they can to help.

Overall, the conference offered a great deal of experiences, despite the fact that they were focused primarily on elementary education. Though some people felt they had to search for the experiences they wanted, they did find the convention to be worthwhile. As TCNJ junior AJ Falisi shared, "the conference is worth it, if for no other reason than that it's another conference in the year before the NJMEA conference in February." Many students do attend with this in mind and find that the convention is well worth the time, money and effort it takes to get there. The MENC conference, coming this February, will certainly bring equal, if not more, excitement and beneficial professional experiences for music majors at TCNJ!

## Faculty Spotlight: Inside the Music Office

Andrea Fleming

*For this issue of the MENC newsletter, we decided to take you into the Music Office to learn a little more about those who help make this department run. Susan O'Connor and Laura Vichroski-Weber both work hard at their jobs and are always there for students who need their assistance.*

**Andrea:** How did you end up at TCNJ?

**Susan:** My first contact with TCNJ was in 1990 when I was invited to join a panel that was presenting the Indiana State music teachers' conventions. One of the other members of the panel was Marvin Blickenstaff. Then, about 3 years ago, I moved to New Jersey, saw the advertisement for this position, did some research, realized Marvin was still here, reread the job description and, realizing it sounded like it had been written specifically for me, I applied. So that's how I ended up at the college. I was hired shortly thereafter, and I've been here 2 and a half years.

**Laura:** I've actually always been at TCNJ in one way or another. My father has been a football coach here for 36 years now, and I pretty much grew up on this campus. I came to my first football game when I was 8 and a half weeks old, so I know this place rather well! As far as coming to the department though, I just heard that there was a job opening, I applied, they called me back, I came for an interview and here I am, 3 years later!

**Andrea:** Do you have musical background?

**Susan:** I don't have any degrees in music, but I had studied with a variety of teachers. My last piano teacher was Virginia Campbell, who was a graduate of Peabody Conservatory. I went on and had my own piano studio for 18 years. It started in Virginia and continued in Indiana when I moved there.

**Laura:** I can play the piano a little bit by ear, I played the violin when I was

in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades, and I played the viola when I was in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. In addition, I've always participated in chorus and school plays throughout elementary, middle school and high school. I was on the drill team in the marching unit my junior year of high school and then senior year I made drum major! Also I have a really strong background in dance. I have taken lessons for ballet, tap and jazz, but ballet was my favorite out of all of them.

**Andrea:** If students were to come to the music office, what kinds of things would they come to you for?

**Susan:** Student organization representatives come frequently for help in planning events, and for carrying out the details—everything from publicity, to room reservations, to debriefing after the event. Lots of students come with basic questions about events or the music program. I deal a lot with perspective students and their families. Pretty much, by the time a student gets here to audition, I should know them very well. I'm here to make sure everything is in place and organized, and that there are no surprises to the students or the family on that day. A lot of my job has been to develop the audition process organizationally as well.

**Laura:** Scheduling appointments mostly. Also, basic questions about the department that I can either answer or refer them to someone else if they have a problem. People also come to me to drop off program information; I do all the programs for the department. Students can also just come to me for advice – I'll always listen to what someone has to say.

**Andrea:** What is the best part about your job?

**Susan:** I absolutely adore working with the students. I like the energy, excitement, and the music that fills the build-

ing all the time. Except for the summers—I have about three days of summer, and that's enough! I like the variety of my job because I deal with students and projects. I spend a significant amount of my time acting as a liaison between the music department and other departments and offices across campus, which I really enjoy and seeing what possibilities are out there keeps me interested.

**Laura:** I think is the best part about it is interacting with the students. I think its fun to be around so much great talent; it boosts the morale! I think we have a great program here and the way the students interact with each other is just a really wonderful thing. There's a nice, solid community about the students in this building and you don't see that too often in a lot of other schools and a lot of other places. I think that's a really wonderful thing and I'm happy to be a part of it!

*To close the interview with Susan and Laura, I asked if they had any advice to share with the music majors. Here is what they said:*

**Susan:** I think the biggest thing I would encourage is that no matter how busy we get, communication is important. Music is all about communication; it's expanding those skills and making sure we communicate in as many ways as possible, including the mundane. It's about building our repertoire of skills that music develops anyways.

**Laura:** Be true to yourself, definitely study hard, and make sure you cover all your bases. Also, don't be close-minded to things—always be open to possibility, change, and new things. The world changes fast and as long as you keep up with it, that's a really positive thing. The students here do really well and I have nothing but good thoughts and feelings for them. So come by and have some candy!

## But Amy And Cheryl Say...

\*Cellular telephone rings during performance\*

**Alexis:** Oh my gosh! I can't believe I forgot to turn it off!

**Anastasia:** I never turn mine off; hardly anyone ever calls me.

**Alexis:** I don't want people to know it's mine...

**Anastasia:** Just don't answer it!

### BUT AMY AND CHERYL SAY...

*You never know when your cell phone might ring! Always turn it off or put it on silent (not vibrate!) before a performance, even if you're really unpopular. If for some reason your phone does ring, silence it as soon as you can! We'd rather hear the performer than*

*three rounds of "La Cucaracha."*

**Hector:** My breath really smells. Thank goodness I have this plastic-wrapped mint with me.

**Robert:** Open it really slowly so you don't distract the other people in the audience.

**Hector:** Good idea! \*crackle crackle crackle crackle crackle\*

### BUT AMY AND CHERYL SAY...

Opening your candy, et cetera, is better done quickly and discreetly but best done during applause. Again, we'd rather hear the performer than your eating habits. Does this seem straightforward? You'd be surprised what some people do!

Amy Wilcox & Cheryl Glitz

**Lynn:** \*yawns while on stage\*

### BUT AMY AND CHERYL SAY...

*It is extremely gauche to yawn while on stage, even if you aren't playing yet. Also, keep the rest of your personal hygiene for backstage (excessive scratching, nose picking.)*

\*Page-turner gets up after the performance and exits the stage before the performer\*

### BUT AMY AND CHERYL SAY...

*Page-turners should always wait until the performer walks off stage to leave. He or she should not bring any attention to himself either. This includes bowing when the performer walks out, making excessive noise, or fidgeting during the performances.*

## Juries for Dummies

Kristina Gannon

jury—n. a body of individuals sworn to give a decision on some matter submitted to them; *especially* : a body of individuals selected and sworn to inquire into a question of fact and to give their verdict according to the evidence.

*For the TCNJ music major, the word "jury" has a slightly different connotation than the traditional dictionary definition. It is a detailed process that represents an entire semester's worth of work. While juries can seem stressful, there are two surefire ways to make sure that your jury turns out a success—physical and mental preparation. And the good news is that although juries are rapidly approaching, there's still time left to get ready for them. Here's a checklist to make sure you've got some of the most important aspects of the jury covered:*

Do you have specific questions about your jury such as date and available times, location, or grading?

♪ Ask your peers to get their perspective.

♪ Ask a professor for help.

Do you know what piece(s) you are playing for juries?

♪ The sooner you decide, the easier it will be to find an accompanist.

Have you worked on your jury music enough to feel confident in performing it?

♪ You should not be fixing wrong notes and general technique the night before your jury. The last few days before the jury should be spent on fine-tuning and running through the material (solos, etudes, scales, and rudiments).

♪ Spread out your practice schedule. Sometimes having two shorter focused practice sessions in one day helps you to accomplish more than if you had one long one.

♪ Lastly, consider taking it easy the day before juries with more emphasis on listening and mental-based practicing. Your chops might need the lighter practice load and there's less risk of pulling or overworking muscles

that you need to be in top functioning condition the next day.

Are you worried about nerves?

♪ Try reading even a part of Tim Gallwey's *The Inner Game of Tennis*. This book offers a wide variety of strategies to help change your mental approach to performing in stressful situations.

♪ Practice performing in front of friends. This technique forces you to *perform* your piece.

♪ Eat a banana or two right before you have to play. Bananas are natural beta blockers. In other words, eating this fruit may help guard against certain aspects of nervousness such as shaking.

In the end, there's no need to worry. On the day of the jury it all boils down to keeping mistakes to a minimum—nobody's perfect—and not letting the flaws that you notice in your playing distract you enough to cause you to make more. Oh, and one more thing—don't forget to have fun!

## So You'd Like to Student Teach...

Kyle Bennett

Student Teaching – it's an event that you spend most of your college career planning for and when it comes around, most don't feel nearly prepared enough. What's worse: it's the truth.

Well now that we have that fact out of the way, what are some things to know before you go out into the real world? One of the most important things to do is to practice conducting over and over again. Pretend that you have an ensemble in front of you, play music and start cueing sections. College doesn't give you a lot of opportunity to conduct ensembles and it definitely doesn't compare to the amount of time that you will be given when you're teaching. Conducting is one of the pride and joys of teaching, especially at the high school level. Teaching individual lessons and theory is fun, but instructing an ensemble to sound like a cohesive unit and watching them all grow together is just an unbelievable feeling that can't be described.

What else can you do? Go back to your theory and keyboarding books

and practice the piano. It is very hard to get back into theory mode when you've had 2 years off from taking theory, and the last thing you want to look like in front of the students is unprepared. Don't stay one lesson ahead of them: get a chapter ahead of them, because students in theory can pick that up very easily.

Also, learn all of the school's copier functions right away and how to fix paper jams. It will save you a lot of time, especially if you have a co-op who wants to have one original copy of music in the folder for back-up which, by the way, is probably one of the most important things I have learned thus far. Students lose music, and by keeping at least one original tucked away in the score box, it will save you a lot of aggravation in the future, especially with your percussionists.

So what else is there about student teaching? One of the main questions people think about before student teaching is where your placement will be. For those who want marching

band programs, you will obviously want to go to a school that has a decent marching band, BUT it's extremely important to go to a school that still has band class throughout the school day. Otherwise you really can't conduct an ensemble till after Thanksgiving. The main thing is to do your research *before* the semester you student teach. Ask to go to certain schools and always go into your school knowing about its program.

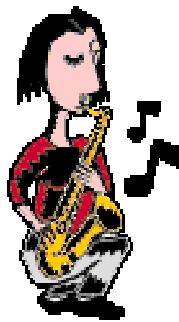
The last thing I can offer for advice is just to enjoy your time. It will be the only time in your life when you teach and you really don't have a lot of responsibilities. When all is said and done, it's still your co-op's program. When a parent has a complaint, it will go to the teacher and when working out grade problems, it will go to the teacher. The semester you student teach is all about getting ready for your future career. TCNJ has a great reputation of sending out music teachers of the highest quality and I'm sure each and every one of you will continue to add on to this history!

## TCNJ Saxophone Clinic

Jordan Smith

Ever wondered what your fellow music major friends do on cold, unforgiving Saturday mornings, such as November 19th? Most likely, they were at the TCNJ Saxophone Clinic. High school and college musicians who attended this workshop learned everything from the basics of the saxophone to advanced techniques. Several students had the opportunity to gain firsthand experience with the saxophone, while others learned effective strategies for teaching beginner players. All who attended also received an informational

packet with valuable resources compiled by TCNJ Saxophone Professor Kathleen Mitchell, who also taught the clinic.



The day was a success and all who attended thoroughly enjoyed it. The relaxed atmosphere combined with Ms. Mitchell's superior knowledge made it possible for students of all skill

levels to gain salient information. In addition, attendees were also treated to a performance by the TCNJ Saxophone quartet and a master class featuring Ms. Mitchell, who exemplified her grasp of extended techniques such as altissimo, multiphonics, and growling. We are grateful for the support of the department, our volunteers, those who attended, and Professor Kathleen Mitchell.

## NJ Collegiate Convention

Shannon O'Connor

Imagine a day when scores of music education majors from across the state of New Jersey meet in one place to participate in professional development and share ideas. This will come to reality on January 29, 2006, right in our neighborhood! Westminster Choir College is hosting this year's New Jersey Collegiate Convention. The day will begin at 9 am, and will continue into the evening with concerts from many of New Jersey's Collegiate ensembles. The Following clinics will be offered between 10 am and 4:20 pm:

"The Young Band" (Professor Eric Haltmeier)~"How to Get the Job" (Joe Akinskas)~ "Teaching AP Theory" (Dr. Joel Phillips)~"Lesson Learning: Planning Through Critical Pedagogy"(Professor Patrick Schmidt)~"The Praxis Exam for Music" (Dr. Scott Hawkinson)~"Body Mapping for the Musician" (Professor Heather Buchanan)~"The Choral Curriculum" (Dr. Paul Head)~"Urban Education" (Professor J. Donald Dumpson)~"Urban Instrumental Education" (Dr. Carol Frierson-Campbell)

This is an excellent opportunity, and the cost is only \$15! If you are interested in attending the convention, feel free to get more information on the MENC bulletin board in the basement lounge of the music building, from Shannon O'Connor, or by visiting the convention website: <[www.rider.edu/~menc/njcon](http://www.rider.edu/~menc/njcon)>

## Upcoming Events

January 29—NJ Collegiate Convention

This year's collegiate convention will be held at Westminster. See article at the right for more details.

January 30—MENC Convention Forms Due

Have forms in to Amy Wilcox by the 30th or you cannot attend the convention! Forms are being mailed January 31st.

February 5—MENC Meeting

Meeting is at 7 pm in the Choir Room.

February 19—MENC Meeting

Meeting is at 7 pm in the Choir Room.

February 24-25—NJMEA Convention

The convention is at the East Brunswick Hilton. Please see [www.njea.org](http://www.njea.org) for more details.

## THE ECHO STAFF

Editor: Dave Adams

Assistant Editor: Liz Lagerstrom

Staff Writers: Kyle Bennett, Andrea Fleming, Kristina Gannon, Cheryl Glitz, Kim Hill, Greg Marsh, Naomi Rutz, Shannon O'Connor, Jordan Smith, Amy Wilcox

We are always looking for more staff! MENC members with experience in writing, photography, advertising, or marketing are welcome to contact [menc@tcnj.edu](mailto:menc@tcnj.edu) if interested. Experience is not required!

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## TCNJ CONTACT INFO

TCNJ MENC  
Music Building  
2000 Pennington Road  
Ewing, NJ 08628  
[menc@tcnj.edu](mailto:menc@tcnj.edu)  
[www.tcnj.edu/~menc/](http://www.tcnj.edu/~menc/)