
KODÁLY EDUCATORS OF IOWA

August/September 2018



From the President ~ Patty Haman

Happy New School Year! Have you ever been assured that something is “just like riding a bike” because it will presumably come back to your memory quickly? I have heard this idiom and used it in conversation because I assumed it was the sort of conventional wisdom that most of the population could relate to, but this summer I learned firsthand that even riding a bike can be a little wobbly if you are out of practice. I switched from a wide-tire mountain bike style (my ride of choice for more than 20 years of bike riding) to a road bike with skinny tires and the adjustment was not initially natural. Though the mechanics were similar on the new bike, I was immediately more vulnerable to crashing because I just was not secure. Worse than learning the new gear shifting and hand position was stopping my bike fully. Perhaps my seat needs adjustment, but my toe barely touches the ground when I’m stopped on the seat. In my first couple

weeks of riding I basically fell off my bike at a couple intersections where cars stopped to let me cross. Naturally because they had come to a grand stop for me it meant that I got to follow my less than elegant tip over with a mortifying parade across the street to acknowledge their kindness (on foot because I did not trust myself to ride successfully in front of the audience).

I think I can connect that wobbly and slightly worrisome adjustment to bike riding to another school year because our students might have wobbly transitions as well. For many of them it has been months since they thought about solfège or rhythm syllables, and cooperative work or critical music listening has been far from their minds while they have been engaged in summertime activities, daycare, or just hanging out at home. They might resist the work we set before them to recover those skills because their own fear of failing is greater than their realization of learning.

But the part I left out about the bike, as much as I had to work to get used to riding it this summer, was that it was fun from day one. The reasons for that had mostly to do with the bike and its quality: it is lightweight and easy to put in my car, the components make shifting easy, and I feel good riding it. It was a worthwhile investment. That is the thing about teaching music with a Kodály philosophy that I love the most, too. It means work for our students (and us!), but it is fun from day one because it is good quality from day one. We emphasize play and reinforce literacy concepts through multiple learning modalities, using quality literature with cultural relevance. The work of re-training is redeemed by the joy of the music experience.

I would invite you to gather some ideas for your music teaching by attending our fall workshop at Iowa State University on October 6, 2018, from 9:00-1:00. We will be hosting our own Kris VerSteege as she presents “Creating Creative Musicians”.

Good luck in the new year, and don’t forget to wear a helmet when you ride your own bike!
Patty Haman

Upcoming Events!

8/25/18 — **Sarah Fairfield, Kate Hagen**, UNI

9/29/18 — **Sandy Knudson**, Simpson

10/6/18 — **Kris VerSteegt**, ISU

11/15–17/18 — **IMEA**, Ames

1/19/19 — **Kathy Kuddes**, Simpson

KEI **Winter Sharing** tba

3/21–24/19 — **OAKE**, Columbus, OH

4/13/19 — **Josh Southard**, UNI

Kudos

Congratulations to **Tom Sletto** on his retirement from Grand View University. Tom has been a music educator for many years, working with students from preschool through adult. Thank you for your service, Tom!

Don't Forget

The deadline for OAKE honor choir submissions is October 15. If Columbus is too far for your students, consider MKMEA 2019 in Omaha or MKMEA 2020 in St. Louis.

KEI Fall Workshop with Kris VerSteegt



Plan now to join KEI for our fall workshop on October 6 featuring Kris VerSteegt. She will present ***Creating Creative Musicians*** at ISU Music Hall in Ames from 9am-1pm.

Kris is passionate about creativity and inspiring creativity in others. Her workshop will provide you tools and techniques to engage your students' creativity, communication, and critical thinking skills. Through collaboration, participants will expand their individual potentials to problem solve, work as a team, and think outside the box. This workshop will be an active music making experience, so please come dressed to sing, dance and play! Workshop notes will be provided to each participant in a pdf format, and will also be available on Mrs. VerSteegt's website, www.firstegg.yolasite.com where you can find numerous ideas, videos, and free downloads.

Cost of the workshop is \$20 for KEI members, \$30 for nonmembers, \$10 for first-year teachers, \$5 for college students and free for ISU students. Visit <https://kodalyeducatorsiowa.weebly.com> to register online. Bring a friend, the more the merrier! Come join us for this fabulous fall workshop and start your school year off right!



A Hungarian Experience ~ Sara McCue

The 30th International Kodály Seminar will be held in Kecskemét, Hungary July 15–26, 2019. In 2003, at the end of my Level 1 courses at Capital University, it was announced that Levels 2 and 3 would be offered in Hungary the next summer. I decided that I couldn't pass up an opportunity like that, so I went.

Level 2 was taught by Susan Tevis, who trained us using American Methodology (many of the sample lessons in the book are hers) and Level 3 by Joan Litman. All of our other courses were taught by international instructors with international classmates (Greece, Netherlands, Korea, Germany, to name a few). Many of the Institute's faculty travel to the United States to teach, so they weren't all strangers. We attended musicianship, choir, workshops, conducting, concerts and demonstrations, and many Americans also formed a chamber choir coached by Marta Erdei (Peter Erdei's daughter). Classes were held in a former monastery and in a nearby college, all in Kecskemét. One highlight for me was having Ann Eisen in my conducting class.

It wasn't all work! We toured a vineyard, spent time at the Kolosca Paprika Museum, and got to see an organ that Liszt played back in the day, as well as tour Eger Castle. We also had plenty of time to wander through markets and shops and eat and eat and eat and eat.

If the opportunity to go to Hungary to study presents itself to you, you should go. When I went, I was unemployed with no job prospects, but I've never regretted going. I learned much about myself and gained a lot of confidence and skills for when I did get my own classroom. Getting to know so many people from around the world who follow Kodály's example, in the place where it all started, was a humbling and amazing experience. Being able to witness the beautiful music that was a direct result of Kodály's teaching was something every Kodály teacher should do, and there's no better place than Hungary.



members of my Institute Class, including Aileen Miracle and Sandra Mathias.

So long, farewell!

KEI is sad to say goodbye to Tom and Barbara Sletto as they move to Florida to start a new adventure. We are grateful for all of the support they have given to our chapter over the years including expert workshops and demonstrations, their excellent work at MKMEA 2016 and their pioneering and directing of the OAKE-endorsed levels program at Drake. KEI members have had singers participate in the Meet the Composer festival sponsored by Heartland Youth Choirs or sing in one of the HYC choirs, founded by Barbara in 2003. The Slettos have been an integral part of the music education landscape in the Midwest. Best wishes — you will be missed!

***Patty Haman, President • Lydia Schettler, President-Elect • LeAnn Houlette, Vice-President
Sonia Johnson, Secretary/Treasurer • Kelly Janson, Lauren Fladland, Members at Large
Carly Schieffer, Membership • Molly Loftin, Webmaster***

***KEI is member of the Midwest Kodály Music Educators of America
and an affiliate chapter of the Organization of American Kodály Educators***

mkmea.com

kodalyeducatorsiowa.weebly.com

oake.org

