

Jane Frazee Honored With Distinguished Service Award

Following are remarks by Jane Frazee, recipient of AOSA's Distinguished Service Award at the 1992 Minneapolis National Conference.

Carl Orff concluded his speech at the opening of the Orff Institute in Salzburg in October 1963 by quoting Schiller, "I have done my part, now do yours." Just three months before Orff gave that speech, I was attending classes at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, learning not necessarily how to do my part, but rather just to keep it while all manner of percussion sounds and modes were being layered around me.

Ten years later—in 1973—Arvida and I were trying to do our parts by serving as local co-chairs of the first AOSA conference held in a hotel—the old Radisson in Minneapolis. I am certain to this day that the hotel directors thought that Orff-Schulwerk was some kind of infectious disease, but the pioneers who attended know better. Those hotel people had it half right—it is infectious, as we can see from the fact that this conference is at least five times larger than our first Minneapolis meeting.

Two more decades passed in which I continued to attempt to do my part, but such a challenge from even so compelling a role model as Carl Orff would not have sustained me in this work for more than thirty years. The children are the root of the inspiration. I've met very interesting people in my children's classes; people like fourth grade Joey who last year told me he had 20/20 hearing. Another of my students who last June graduated from Princeton in music was in my Orff ensemble in sixth grade. Just prior to our departure for a concert, Jay gave me complete scores of all the parts of the pieces we were presenting which he had written out from memory. He said, "I know how nervous you always at performances; this is to help you remember."

It's only fair to confess that the other side of this delight has been frustration that I could never quite attain my aspirations for my students. Or, if luck were with me for a day or more and I was satisfied that all was going well in the music room, I knew it wouldn't last. I often felt like Mark Twain who announced after his fifth marriage that he would keep trying until he got it right; it seemed that I was always teaching on the edge, never quite getting it right. But it has recently become clear to me that this sense of struggle has been a source of creative energy. If artists were comfortable with the status quo they wouldn't create; perhaps discontent is a



virtue in teachers, as well. We would do well to honor our doubts and welcome questions even more warmly than answers.

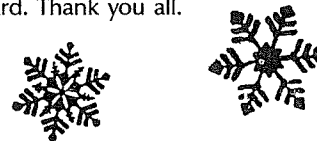
This is not to say that we all sing in unison. We love argument and have always debated process and content issues vigorously, which seems to me a healthy thing. In fact, our organization publicly states "we remain open to varied approaches and celebrate both our differences and our similarities." I also think it's healthy for us to be wary of methods, materials, research, degrees and projects which are not rooted in classroom experience. If that point seems self-evident, you need a good/news, bad/news story.

The good news is that the U.S. Department of Education has recently appropriated funds

to develop national standards for music in the schools, to be followed by some kind of evaluation. This, it is argued, will put music education on a par with other subject areas which already have standards in place. The bad news is that there is not one music teacher actively teaching children on the committee appointed to develop the standards.

Organizations like AOSA are the conscience of music education because they are child-centered. Because we're gathered here for the children, this meeting means a lot to me. Time—and the fact that this is not the Academy Awards, means that I can't offer a public thank-you to each individual who has taught me, but many are in this room and you know who you are. With each passing year, the list gets longer; it includes young, able teachers and graduate students who are doing fine work that regularly dazzles and inspires me. You'll meet some of them at breakfast tomorrow morning. My co-author, however, will not be at breakfast, and I wish to acknowledge Kent Kreuter's contribution to my life and work. He deserves a DSA too—a distinguished spouse award!

I'm very grateful to Arvida, my Minnesota friends and the AOSA for granting me this award. Thank you all.



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