

Expanding the future of Opera through development, mentoring and advancement of volunteer service through the Art of Opera.

Opera Volunteers International

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www.operavol.org

Summer 2006

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OVI MEMBERSHIP

The power behind opera companies around the globe

The Opera Volunteers International Membership team of Addie Appelbaum, Vice-President – Membership and Cynthia Johnson, Individual Membership Chair, send greetings to you. We want to encourage your continued membership or new membership in this organization, OVI.

Why? For starters, how about being provided with tools for your support groups growth: publications, the OVI Resource Manual, stimulating regional meetings and national conferences. If that isn't enough, we also offer a consulting service (see page 6) to help you with almost any problem your opera group may come up against.

Do you have ideas for projects that recruit, develop and train volunteers? Could you benefit from some financial assistance to 'get the ball' rolling? OVI membership can help you here also. We offer member support groups matching grants of up to \$1,000 to help fund your creative ideas.

Do you want to acknowledge outstanding volunteers, the ones who continually give above and beyond the call of duty? With your input, OVI may choose to honor one with a Partner in Excellence award that gives valued recognition to that individual or group so necessary to your organization's success.

And last but not least, there is the benefit of networking – meeting new or long time opera volunteer friends and being able to share information vital to growing and nurturing both individual organizations as well as Opera Volunteers International.

Enrich the talents of you and/or your hardworking volunteers through these many services of OVI. If you are already a member, renew your commitment. If you have been considering joining, now is the time. **DON'T HESITATE...DON'T DELAY.**

Additional information or answers to your questions are only a call or click away. OVI office: 301-652-0407, operavol@comcast.net or Addie Applebaum: 717-533-8817, aramusic@aol.com.

Best regards,

Addie Applebaum

OVI Vice-president - Membership

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

Even though we are all still enjoying these special last days of summer, most of us are looking forward to fall and all the excitement and activity the season brings. So many of our opera companies begin their new production seasons, so many of our volunteers renew their support and resume the myriad of jobs that make these companies strong.

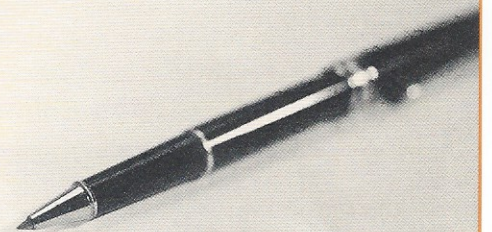
OVI's membership year runs from October 1 thru September 30: it's time for our renewal too! Please join us again or join us anew; your membership and support are all-important to us. You, our esteemed volunteers, are what give us our strength and enable us to provide the important, much-needed services to opera companies, opera lovers and opera learners.

Take advantage of all the resources and information that OVI can provide and enjoy the camaraderie and companionship of wonderful, engaging, enthusiastic people who share your love of opera and the arts. Join us!

Sincerely,

Fern Grauer

President



Outreach Update

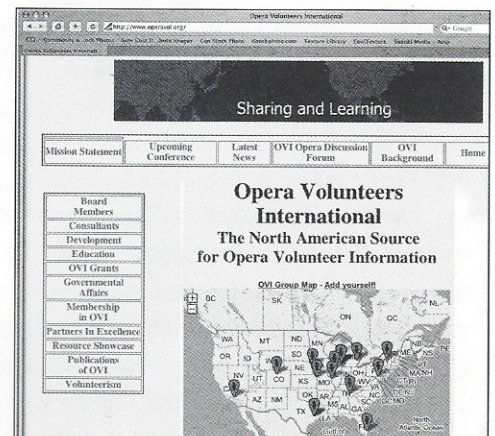
We are happy to add Walter Briggs to the roster of Regional Coordinators. Walter will be covering the Northeast Region, and his contact information appears on page 4. He would welcome hearing from support groups and volunteers in his region. Please be sure he is on your mailing list for newsletters and event notices.

This is the time of year when groups typically elect new officers and bring in new board members—don't forget to let us at OVI know about your changes so we can properly direct OUR mail to you AND be sure someone is listed to receive e-mails. If your president does not have e-mail access, it is important that someone on the board does, as this is becoming the most common method of "keeping in touch".

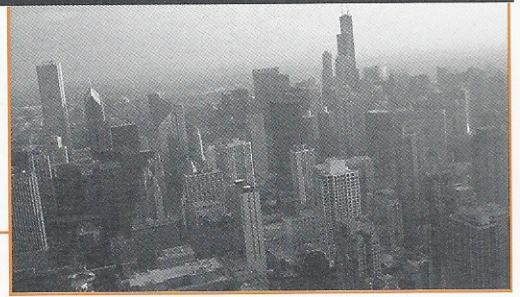
A few of you have "gotten on the map", but there is room for many more! Go to our website, www.operavol.org and click the "add yourself" link—and speaking of the website, please tell us how we can make it more useful to you. What would you like to see changed or added? Talk it over with your Regional Coordinator in your next e-mail or phone call. Everyone at OVI is here to work with you, and it takes all of our volunteer village to raise that wonder child OPERA to the maturity we envision and strive to achieve.

I look forward to hearing from you, and you can expect to be hearing from me directly from time to time by e-mail, in addition to communications from your Regional Director. We do hope to encourage greater sharing within Regions through regular contact, and possibly developing Regional e-mail newsletters. Till next time, enjoy your summer!

Gerald Elijah,
Vice-President Outreach



Chicago Meeting



"The Chicago gang" very much looks forward to your visit to the Fall OVI Board Meeting November 3, 4 and 5, 2006. "Your visit" includes OVI Board members as well as other OVI members.

- 1) The board meeting will be at the Seneca Hotel, a small boutique hotel just off the Magnificent Mile near the Water Tower.

FOR A VIRTUAL TOUR GO TO:

www.senecahotel.com/vtours.htm

FOR RESERVATIONS CALL:

1-800-800-6261 or 312-787-8900 (Mention OVI)

- 2) The Board meeting will be 9AM - 2PM Saturday, November 4 with a Dutch treat lunch ordered in advance. All OVI members are welcome to attend this meeting.
- 3) "Salome" at Lyric Opera of Chicago will be performed Friday night, November 3.

FOR PRODUCTION INFORMATION GO TO:

www.lyricopera.org/productions.aspx?arrR EF=3D20073

(A Board member reception will be hosted by a Lyric Opera of Chicago Guild board member in his AMAZING residence. From 5-7PM the same evening.)

- 4) "il Trovatore" at Lyric Opera of Chicago will be performed Saturday night, November 4.

FOR PRODUCTION INFORMATION GO TO:

www.lyricopera.org/productions.aspx?arrR EF=3D20074

- 5) The "King Tut" exhibit will be in Chicago during this same time frame

FOR INFORMATION GO TO:

www.fieldmuseum.org/tut/index.html

- 6) The Board of the Metropolitan Opera Regional Competition

has extended an invitation for their program on Sunday, November 5 at 2PM. Tickets are \$20 per person.

While the Fall Board meeting does not include workshops available at Regional Meetings and Conferences, if enough OVI members decide to join in the Chicago fun, time can be set aside for the Board to meet with support group representatives and volunteers. Getting together is always interesting, informative and fun. Won't you all join us?

Warmest regards,

Julie Ann Benson

Chicago Meeting Committee



"The Chicago gang"



Northeast Region

Walter Briggs walterbriggs@earthlink.net
 phone 607-264-9312
 115 Fish and Game Road, Cherry Valley, NY 13320

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| Connecticut | Delaware | Maine |
| Massachusetts | New Hampshire | New Jersey |
| New York | Pennsylvania | Rhode Island |
| Vermont | | |

NEW YORK

On Saturday, July 29, Glimmerglass Opera will sponsor its first "Perfect Pitch" event. This is a new opera appreciation opportunity, especially for the younger (30-40 year old) business/professionals. They will see the opening performance of *Jenufa* (with a 15% discount on ticket price). If they like, they may enjoy a picnic supper before the opera and attend the opening night cast party following the performance. This new initiative from Glimmerglass Opera, with leadership from the Guild's **Mary Dunkle**, is to attract younger members of the community to the Opera.

Southeast Region

Leatrice (Lee) Damus damusl@aol.com
 Phone 305-667-7671
 8145 S.W. 53rd Avenue, Miami, FL 33143

- | | | |
|-------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Alabama | District of Columbia | Florida |
| Georgia | Kentucky | Maryland |
| Mississippi | North Carolina | South Carolina |
| Tennessee | Virginia | West Virginia |

FLORIDA

The **Sarasota Opera Guild** held their installation luncheon at the University Club on May 2nd. Outgoing president, **Juanita Connell** expressed her gratitude to the SOG members for their support. The Guild's financial contributions to the Opera and Scholarship programs exceeded \$55,000.00 in the past year. Incoming president, **Joan Suddarth** expressed her pleasure in having the opportunity to keep the Guild rolling and to help opera. The Guild has selected its Sweetheart for 2006-07. The recipient is soprano **Judith Blegan**, who with her husband divides her time between Massachusetts and Western Florida.

Central Region

Wilma Wilcox wilmawilcox@yahoo.com
 phone 913-302-9789
 16314 West Saddletree Lane, Olathe, KS 66062

- | | | |
|--------------|----------|--------------|
| Arkansas | Iowa | Kansas |
| Minnesota | Missouri | Nebraska |
| North Dakota | Oklahoma | South Dakota |

MISSOURI

The **Opera Theatre of St. Louis** held its annual Artists in Training Spring Recital on Sunday, April 23. Seventeen students participated this year. Soprano, **Shirley Verrett**, was the adjudicator. **Curtis Finch, Jr.** was the winner and he was awarded the Monsanto prize of \$2,500. Over 25 attended the recital and they were rewarded with some fabulous singing.

Great Lakes Region

Mary Ellen Clancy

meclancy@sbcglobal.net

phone 309-686-1368

3805 N. Knoxville Ave., Peoria, IL 61614-7403

Eastern Canada

Illinois

Indiana

Michigan

Ohio

Wisconsin

Old West/Mountain/Desert Region

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phone 480-515-3725

10333 Buckskin Trail, Scottsdale, AZ 85255 and

phone 630-837-6071

8 N 190 Naperville Road, Bartlett, IL 60103

Arizona

Colorado

Idaho

Montana

New Mexico

Texas

Utah

Wyoming

ARIZONA

Arizona Opera League finished the season with a spectacular Opera Ball "Night of the Casbah" on April 29th at the famous Phoenix Ritz Carlton. About 375 guests oohed and ahed upon entering the ballroom which was magnificently decorated to the match the theme. This is typical of Arizona Opera-to present balls featuring different periods of history. It is a must to see and attend. Applause goes to Pearle Marr and Jody Chandler plus the many volunteers who made it such a success. The next Opera Ball will be held May 5, 2007, location to be determined. The Season Opening Gala will be Saturday October 14, 2006 at the new Phoenix Convention Center West Ballroom. Let me know if I can be of any help regarding tickets, etc.

COLORADO

Central City Opera celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2007. They will be presenting four new productions, including a world premiere. The world premiere, *Poet Li Bai*, will be performed in partnership with the Asian Performing Arts of Colorado and will be directed by Lin Zhaohua. The performance will be sung in Chinese with English supertitles. **Opera Volunteers International** is currently finalizing plans with **Central City Opera House Association Guild** to hold our next conference during the **Summer Festival 2007**, and

you will soon have an opportunity to make your plans to join us for this special opportunity!

Pacific Rim Region

Robert Brock

operabobb@yahoo.com

phone 650-365-3965

3988 Jefferson Ave., Emerald Hills, CA 94062

Alaska

Australia

Baja California

California

Oregon

Washington State

Western Canada

BAJA CALIFORNIA

Congratulations to the new, as of March 2006, **Opera Guild of Los Cabos**. This is no small feat since there is no opera house or resident opera singers. In true OVI spirit, however, **Annette Farmer** (a former president of Opera Guilds International) instrumented the birth of this group. After a successful dinner by the sea which featured singers from Portland, OR, and Spain accompanied by a pianist from Argentina the guild is underway.

CALIFORNIA

Thank you, thank you and once again, thank you. This was the message the **Opera League of Los Angeles** had to give to its cast of dedicated volunteers recently at the June 5th Volunteer Appreciation Night. In the words of **Gerald Elijah**, Volunteer Coordinator, it was a ... "huge celebration" ... and this time the spotlight was on the 'behind-the-scenes' stars.

Bass **Eric Owens**, starring in the lead role of the same name for the world premiere of *Grendel*, regaled the volunteers with tales of his performing in two world premieres in one year.

If words and applause and certificates were not measure enough of the League's gratitude, each volunteer left the evening's event with a loaded 'Goodie Bag'. It was a stellar evening for a well deserving crowd.

WESTERN CANADA

Over 130 **Vancouver Opera Guild** members and friends experienced a truly memorable event at the Pasta and Puccini evening on March 20th. The evening started with a reception where old friends mingled with new acquaintances, all of whom share a passion for opera. Singers from the UBC Opera Ensemble, moved around the room as they sang arias from *La Boheme*, *La Rondine*, and other operas after the guests had enjoyed a four-course dinner in the inviting atmosphere of Don Francesco's Ristorante.

The Basics of Excellence

In 2005, Opera Illinois experienced company wide changes. Many veteran members of the Company Board and the League Board departed and were replaced with new, less experienced members. Although change always seems chaotic, we on the League Board were determined that we would use this opportunity to build a better organization.

Our lack of history with the League was an asset, for it compelled us to seek out advice and guidelines about running an effective opera volunteer group. It seemed that each of us had opinions about what to do, but none of us knew much about the experience of other companies. We needed guidance from an objective third party, someone who could explain our relative roles to us and offer examples from the rest of the industry.

Such expertise, however, is usually expensive. We thought we were stumped, until we came across the OVI Consultant Program. We learned that we could have an OVI consultant come to Peoria and meet with members of the Company Board, League Board and

administration, for no charge other than the cost of transportation. That offer seemed so impossible that we spent considerable energy trying to identify the "catch." We found that there was none, and promptly arranged to have Don Dagenais come to Peoria in October, 2005, for a consultation. The benefits of that consultation have been evident in every project and in our increased effectiveness, as well as in our co-operation with each other.

Before coming, Don requested some facts, such as the population figures for Peoria and some nearby areas served by our company. He later incorporated this information into his comments about our viability

and where we should look for support. No one before had so clearly identified our geographic identity. Our regional identity is now part of everything we do, and we are discovering supporters we never knew we had.

Don pointed out the common error of mixing goals when planning an event. Perhaps this was our most dramatic eye opener, for we typically tried to make each event do as many things as possible. For example, if we had a fund raiser, we tried to build in some audience growing and, while we were at it, make it a perk for League membership as well. He pointed out the advantage of establishing just one clear purpose for any project, and sticking with it. We no longer have fund raisers which lose money because we comped too many members, or turned off a lot of folks who didn't want to hear opera. We address each of these objectives on its own, with much better results. Our new dedicated efforts at giving members something to show for their dues is paying off in increased renewals over the same time last year.

There were so many other specific things which we learned, about the most successful ways for the three parts of the company to relate, about expecting accountability from all Board members, about thinking "outside the box" of our predisposed notions. All were valuable.

The experience of the OVI consultation has made our League Board more objective and reason-based in our decisions, moving away from pet projects and unsupported ideas. We test ourselves against the guidelines we have chosen to use, and we back away from the old dead end arguments.

At one point, we asked Don Dagenais why in the world he does this type of thing. Why would he and the other OVI consultants cheerfully give up their time to travel to places far from home to provide all this help and information for free? His reply stays in my mind as much as anything else from that weekend, for it brought us back to the heart and soul of our mission.

The question made him smile. "Why? That's easy. We do it because that's what volunteers do."

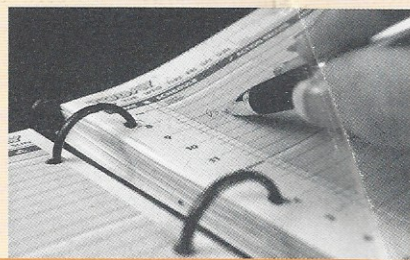
Mary Ellen Clancy

President, Opera Illinois League

SAVE THE DATE

We are pleased to announce that the OVI Conference 2007 will be held July 19-22 in Denver and Central City, Colorado. Our host is the Central City Opea House Association Guild, and our venue the Westin Tabor Center in Denver.

Stay tuned for more details...



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Opera Volunteers International

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512-327-2281, rbetty@austin.rr.com

Website-David Yuen

954-432-3743, dyuen@trapsystems.com

AT LARGE:

Roger Bessey-Texas

MATCHING GRANTS

If YOUR guild could use \$1000 for a special project, applications can still be submitted, and grants will be awarded on a continuing basis. All it takes is a really good idea, and an application to get the process underway!

The requirements are that the Grant Project be devoted to:

- A. Formation or expansion of programs for recruitment, development and training of volunteers with special consideration for programs which involve the multi-cultural community, or
- B. Creation of programs for recruitment, development and training of volunteers for opera for disadvantaged or underserved groups, or
- C. Development of programs for recruitment, development and training of volunteers which are educational, audience development or recruitment programs of support group members that include special consideration for programs involving the multi-cultural community.

Grants are up to \$1,000 and must be matched dollar for dollar. We hope to have groups develop programs that would encourage participation from those who have traditionally not been associated with opera and to encourage the participation of volunteers in all phases of supporting the opera company.

Information can be obtained from:

MARY EARL,
7115 PIPER GLEN DRIVE
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62711.
 phone 217 483-6680 or email Maryoperal@aol.com

Advertising Rates

	1 Insertion	4 Insertions	Savings
Business Card	\$45	\$165	\$15
Quarter Page	80	300	20
Half Page	130	500	20
Full Page	250	850	150

4-color full-page flyers are available: \$1,000

Prices are for camera ready copy or copy on computer disk (pdf, tif or jpeg formats).

**Deadline for the Fall 2006
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