

# Opera Volunteers INTERNATIONAL

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

Volume 34, Number 3

website: [www.operavolunteers.org](http://www.operavolunteers.org)

Fall 2010



## LOS ANGELES

September 23 - 25, 2010

### CONFERENCE

Opera Volunteers International  
and

## World Premier - *Il Postino*

PLÁCIDO DOMINGO

*"To my friends from Opera Volunteers International:  
It is my pleasure to welcome you to Los Angeles for your annual conference. Having worked in a wide variety of opera companies, for well over four decades, I have enormous respect for the dedication, hard work and enthusiasm that opera volunteers provide for their home companies every day. Every opera administrator I know shares my appreciation for your essential support. I look forward to seeing you at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion for the world premier of "Il Postino", and I am honored to have you join me for this exciting world premier."*

Sincerely,  
Plácido Domingo  
Eli and Edythe Broad General Director  
LA Opera

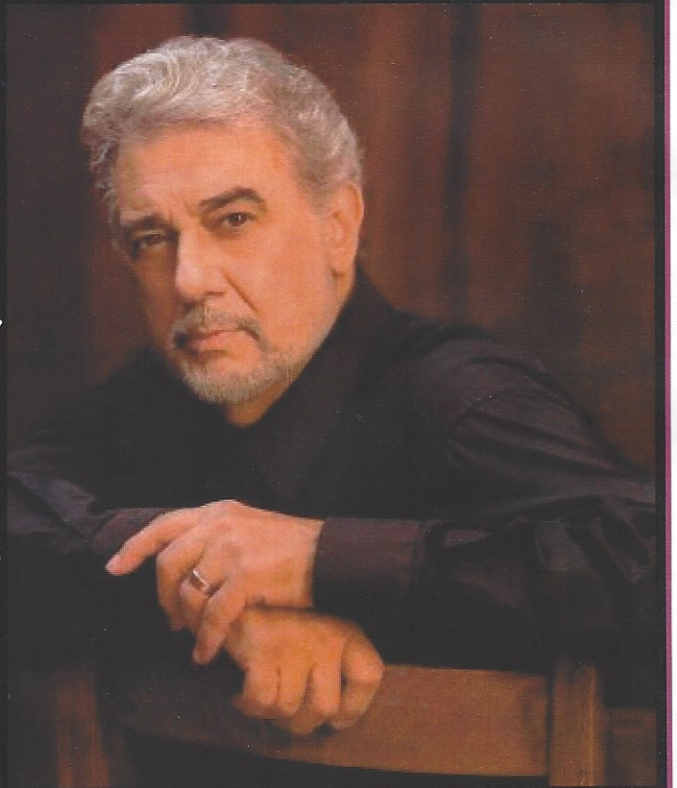


Photo by Greg Gorman



## BRAVO AWARD

OVI has awarded the BRAVO Award only five times in our 38 year history: Penny Walters 1988 (deceased), Leta Autry 1989, Pauline Cuncannon 1994, Hildegard Dutton 1996 and Don Dagenais 2004. The BRAVO Award is given on an occasional basis as a tribute to a person who has performed outstanding and unusual service on behalf of opera volunteers in service to OVI. Our current membership policy awards Honorary Lifetime membership status to BRAVO Awardees.

Sandra L. Burns (Sandi) is being nominated for this award for her 22 years of service on the OVI Board, especially her extraordinary service during her term as President 2003 - 2006 to reposition OVI as an "all volunteer" organization after the dissolution of the cooperating agreement with OPERA America. Key activities during this period included the re-establishment of the OVI office, resumption of membership database activities, marketing, mailings, and other activities formerly handled by OPERA America on behalf of OVI, resumption of smaller "regional 'now Focus' meetings" after six years of joint OVI-OPERA America annual conferences, and the planning and execution of the 2006 OVI Conference in Kansas City, our first in six years independent of OPERA America. Communications with members over this time period were extremely important, and Sandi's messages in the quarterly newsletters and other mailings were enthusiastic, energetic, and excited for this return to the all-volunteer form which was the basis for Opera Guilds International's formation in 1971.



Sandi joined OGI as an individual member in 1987 while she was President of the Opera/Omaha Guild. She joined the Board in 1988 as the North-Central Regional Coordinator. Other positions she has held on the board include Marketing Chair, Conference Guidelines Chair, Bylaws Chair, Artistic Support Services Chair and VP Development. Through the years she has faithfully attended and been an active participant in Conferences, Regional/Focus, and Board meetings. She remains enthusiastic, energized and excited for our organization.

The Board of Directors of Opera Volunteers International is proud to award the sixth BRAVO Award to Sandi Bruns.

## MATCHING GRANTS

The purpose of the Opera Volunteers International Matching Grants program is to encourage the expansion and development of programs that recruit, develop and train volunteers for service and participation in all phases of opera company support.

Awards up to and including \$2000.00 are available to opera support groups, organizations, and opera companies which create and/or support such programs. Recipients of awards may not receive subsequent awards for similar projects. Special consideration is given to programs directed toward and involving disadvantaged or underserved groups, multi-cultural communities and/or those who have not been traditionally associated with opera.

Please contact Mary Earl, Matching Grants Chair at [Maryopera1@aol.com](mailto:Maryopera1@aol.com) for an application. The next deadline is January 1, 2011.



On behalf of OVI please join me in congratulating the following 2010 award recipients:

\* National Endowment for the Arts announces the distinguished recipients of the NEA Opera Honors to soprano Martina Arroyo, general director, David DiChiera, composer, Phillip Glass and music director, Eve Queler. These honorees will be recognized during National Opera week, on the stage of The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC.

\* The President's Council on Service and Civic Participation Award will be given, on September 24, to Gerald Elijah, during the OVI Conference in Los Angeles. The award is in recognition and appreciation of his "making a difference" through volunteer services. Gerald has served as an OVI board member for many years.

\* This year's OVI Matching Grants awards will be given to four worthy Guilds; The Santa Fe Opera Guild, The Chattanooga Symphony and Opera Guild, The Ogden Utah Opera Guild and The Elgin Illinois Opera Guild. The awards will be presented during the Annual Meeting and Luncheon on September 23.

\* The OVI Projects of Special Merit winners for 2010 are; Kansas City Lyric Opera Guild, Nashville Opera Guild, Vancouver Opera Guild and Florida's Young Patronesses of the Opera. These Guilds will also be recognized at the Annual Luncheon.

\* Partners in Excellence Awards for 2010 will be presented to Sandi Simmons, Kansas City Lyric Opera Guild; Julie Todaro, Young Patronesses of the Opera; Dr. Helen Brown, Nashville Opera Guild; and to the Opera Guild of Los Angeles which is celebrating its 30th anniversary.

\* The BRAVO Award will be presented to past OVI president Sandi Bruns (see page 2) for outstanding and long time service to this organization.

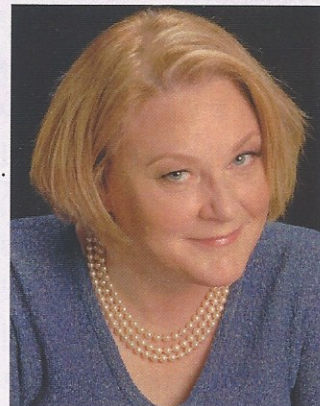


Photo: Larry Lapidus

To all the award winners thank you for helping to stimulate the interest, growth and support of opera from coast to coast and for connecting opera support groups, individual volunteers, donors, opera company staff and others interested in expanding the future of opera. To learn more about all the award winners go to [www.OperaVolunteers.org](http://www.OperaVolunteers.org).

Best regards, Julie

## SAVE THE DATE!



Mark your calendars to reserve May 6-8, 2011 for fun in the sun. Opera tickets and hotel rooms have been reserved for the Opera Volunteers International Focus Meeting in Miami Beach for those dates.

The Marriott Biscayne Bay hotel was recommended, by our hosts in Miami, for its location on the bay and its proximity to the Performing Arts Center. The hotel has offered OVI a reduced rate of \$149 per night, single or double occupancy. Additional night stays, before and after the meeting, might be available for the same rate. Those details are still being worked on.

Florida Grand Opera will perform *Cyrano* on Saturday, May 7 and *Don Giovanni* on Sunday, May 8. OVI will be offered discounted tickets to both productions. Attendees will be offered a backstage tour, pre-performance lectures and a recep-

tion in the private residence of a Florida Grand Opera donor.

The Guild of Florida Grand Opera, The Young Patronesses of the Opera, The Crescendo Circle and The Opera Society, all Florida Grand Opera volunteer support groups, will be our hosts. Julie Todaro, president of The Young Patronesses of Opera will act as coordinator.

More details will be available at the September Conference in Los Angeles and through forthcoming brochures.



## OPERA 101 by John Webber

Since early 2009, the Santa Fe Opera Guild (one of the eight guilds of Santa Fe Opera) has been planning a new approach to membership and opera education. As President, I set up a special committee to examine a variety of new initiatives, and we came to the Board of Directors with a long list of proposals. We asked them to prioritize the top five and by last July, we had a consensus. The two top priorities were (1) Community Outreach and Visibility and (2) Arts Advocacy. (Other initiatives had already been implemented including preparation of an illustrated membership brochure specific to the Santa Fe Guild.)

In October 2009 we moved into top gear to present monthly programs on many different aspects of opera. In the previous five years, these had been presented in members' homes, with capacity generally limited to fewer than 30. For our new initiative, we sought out locations in the community where 100+ capacities were possible, and also where we could partner with organizations which could promote the events to their members or their data base as well. These locations included the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum Education Annex (the director of which is a guild member), Rainbow Vision (a residential community), Collected Works Bookshop downtown (run by a guild member), Vanessie's, a local restaurant (with its own grand piano), and the United Church of Santa Fe.

As a result of promotion through a variety of local media (some of which is on-line), membership has increased by 100, with the most recent event - the launch of a book by one of our members on the upcoming summer opera season - generating seven new ones. Attendance has doubled and tripled with 70 to 80 being typical, and the book launch event reaching 120.

Finally, a real hit this season has been "Opera 101", two classes each offered twice, as introductions to opera. The classes were presented by a dynamic local opera lecturer, with the second session involving the planning for and presentation of (in outline) an opera written and "composed" by the group. Given that it was geared to opera "newbies", few Guild members signed up, and we ended with 200+ registered and 135 on a waiting list. The SFO offered a special opera ticket/dinner price to the graduates of the program, and these were snapped up. Needless to say, Opera 101 will be repeated next year.

## NEWS FROM CINCINNATI

This news piece just in from an OVI's 2009 Partner in Excellence Awardee, Patrick Korb, of Cincinnati, OH. "Cincinnati Opera continues to move forward - 90th anniversary this year and a gala concert and dinner that I'm co-chairing. James Levine will be here to conduct the concert and *Meistersinger* - just to keep it interesting. AND have you heard the news? One of our arts patronesses has given the Symphony, Opera and Ballet a gift of \$85,000,000 (yes, million!). It assures the Symphony Orchestra will perform live always or as our director says - forever - whichever comes first".

Founded in 1920 and the second oldest opera company in the U.S., Cincinnati Opera presents a thrilling roster of world-class artists and conductors, important debuts, stunning sets and costumes, and the spectacular Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. Today the company is hailed as Cincinnati's "prime summer arts festival" attracting a passionate regional audience as well as opera tourists from throughout the U.S. and Canada.

The transformational \$85M gift is from Louise Nippert, a 98-year-old arts patron. The Louise Dieterie Nippert Musical Arts Fund will help maintain the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra as a major, full-time professional orchestra. It also will allow Cincinnati Opera to continue a 90-year collaboration with the Cincinnati Symphony in its pit, and allow dancers to pirouette to live music at Cincinnati Ballet well into the future.



## GLIMMERGLASS OPERA GUILD LAUNCHES NEW FUND-RAISING EFFORT

With receipt of the first sponsorship contribution from a generous couple, who are members of the Guild, the Glimmerglass Opera Guild launched its exciting new fund-raising initiative "The First Night Fund". The "Fund" affords contributors the opportunity to sponsor one of the four Guild's popular First Night Parties for cast, crew, orchestra and patrons.

Sponsorship confers several benefits, including choice of sponsored cast party, and public and event recognition. Sponsors are listed on the company's website, in relevant Festival and Guild publications, and on appropriate signage at the First Performance Party. Sponsors are introduced at the post-performance party and enjoy reserved table seating. Exclusive sponsors, new to the Guild, also receive a free introductory year of Guild membership.

First Night Fund sponsorships are available to individuals, small groups and businesses. Exclusive sponsorship is available for \$1500, while a Participating sponsorship is \$500.

The Glimmerglass Opera Guild's mission is to support the Glimmerglass Opera through volunteer service and financial means. Traditionally the Guild has financed and hosted the opening night parties with its own funds, but costs have increased significantly over the years and that was no longer an option. Guild President Ed Brodzinsky noted "I'm so pleased that through the First Night Fund we will be able to significantly increase our support of the company in these difficult times.

For more information about the First Night Fund contact Susan Newman at [suchas@stny.rr.com](mailto:suchas@stny.rr.com).

## OPERA THEATRE OF ST. LOUIS

Opera Theatre Of Saint Louis Guild celebrated a very successful fund raising season with a live and silent auction, "Bright Lights, Naming Rights", in which participants bid on the naming rights for items that were part of the four opera productions of the 2010 season, netting over \$32,000.

OTSL volunteers have been very busy with many special achievements this year. Our mailing committee mailed over 17,500 pieces of information about our highest grossing season. 38 artists were housed in 30 patron homes and transportation provided over 200 rides for artists. "Welcome Bags" filled with gift certificates, local magazines, events calendar, city information and maps were given to artists and production people. Docents provided enthusiastic programs to schools and community organizations to promote appreciation of this seasons four operas sung in English.

During the year, 23 students were enrolled in the the Artists in Training Program and the Guild hosted the Metropolitan Auditions held last fall. Many of our Guild volunteers ushered at the dress rehearsals and staffed the expanded Boutique which grossed its highest amount ever. We also experienced a 10% increase in subscriptions sold to our popular Guild sponsored "Spotlight On Opera".

All in all, the season was spectacular, successful and lots of fun!



Mary Susman, Sharon & Elliot Zucker



### 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		

### South Region

Shelley C. Page *Spage813@comcast.net*  
 phone 615-665-1957  
 1813 Tyne Boulevard, Nashville, TN 37215

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

#### TENNESSEE

The Nashville Opera Guild will hold its major fundraiser *La Belle Notte* on January 22, 2011

### 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

### Great Lakes Region

Mary Ellen Clancy *meclancy@sbcglobal.net*  
 phone 309-686-1368  
 3805 N. Knoxville Ave., Peoria, IL 61614-7403

Illinois	Indiana	Michigan
Ohio	Wisconsin	

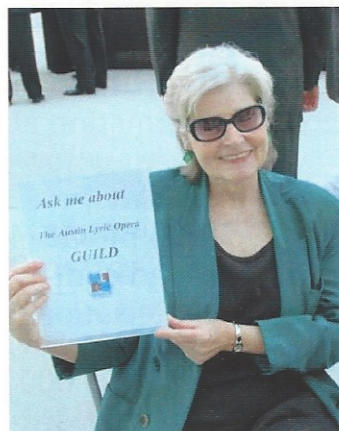
### Old West/Mountain/Desert Region

Shirley Litchfield-Bird  
 phone 480-515-3725  
 10333 Buckskin Trail, Scottsdale, AZ 85255  
 and  
 phone 630-837-6071  
 8 N 190 Naperville Road, Bartlett, IL 60103  
 Rosemary Schroeder *artws@aol.com*  
 phone 623-561-0129  
 9438 West Behrend Drive  
 Peoria, AZ 85382

Arizona	Colorado	Idaho
Montana	New Mexico	Texas
Utah	Wyoming	

#### TEXAS

The Austin Lyric Opera Guild, which this year celebrates its 24th anniversary, continues to present, in private homes, two Enrichment Events for each of the company's main opera productions. The first of these, by Guild member Dr. Linda Leff, presents a very comprehensive history of the composer, and the opera, and we listen to selected arias. The second of these is presented by the director of that particular production who brings a wonderful dimension to our understanding of the artist, the stage settings and the vision of his or her production. These are always very well attended. In the fall the Guild will host a chorus luncheon and an orchestra dinner with all foods prepared and donated by the membership. The Guild's major fundraiser is scheduled for February 26, 2011.



Dr. Linda Leff

Photo by Paul Glass, MD

#### UTAH

Each opera season the Ogden Opera Guild hosts four symposiums prior to the opera in Salt Lake City. The first symposium for the 2010-2011 season in on October 3 and it will be in conjunction with our annual Membership Party. In addition to the symposiums, OOG also hosts a fund-raiser each February "The Chocolate Affaire". The proceeds from this fund-raiser allow the Guild to sponsor the matinee performance of the final opera of the season. OOG also host the "Ensemble" singers from Utah Opera. Last year these apprentice singers performed in 180 schools across Utah.



## Pacific Rim Region

Mary and Harold Scott      *ovipacrim@aol.com*  
phone 425-485-2207  
3225 S. 238th Street SW, Briar, WA 98036

Alaska	Australia	Baja California
California	Hawaii	Oregon
Nevada	Washington State	

## Canada

Heather Clarke      *heather.clarke@shaw.ca*  
phone 6004-733-9329  
1575 Trafalgar Street  
Vancouver, BC, V6K 3R4, Canada

### VP - Outreach by Gerald Elijah

With all attention focused on Conference 2010 in September, and the dawning of a new Membership Year effective October 1, your Regional Coordinators and I have been busy making sure we have correctly updated our membership data to reflect current contact information for both individuals and groups. This is important as we increasingly rely on our "e-blasts" to keep you informed about OVI events and activities, but also to assure that this newsletter and other print communications don't go astray.

Please, if you have recently changed internet providers send us an e-mail! Send it to Rhonda Sweeney, Membership VP membership@operavolunteers.org with a copy to me, outreach@operavolunteers.org and to your Regional Coordinator (whose address is the name of the region you are in, @operavolunteers.org). If you have changed street addresses, please let us know that as well. If you do not have e-mail, we do still want to hear when you have a change. Be sure to communicate it to Rhonda by mail, and she will alert the rest of us.

As always a new year brings changes and in October 2010 we will introduce some of you to new or reassigned Regional Coordinators. We will be making the announcements officially at Conference 2010 in Los Angeles, as there is no change until October 1. In order to help you in changing your own contact lists, here is the new line up:

Canadian Region: no change, Heather Clarke  
Central Region: no change, Wilma Wilcox  
Great Lakes Region: Rosemary Schroeder (previously Mountain/Old West Region)  
Mountain/Old West Region: Judy Vander Heide (previously Chair, Projects of Special Merit)  
Northeast Region: Melody and Warren Schubert  
Pacific Rim Region: no change, Mary and Harold Scott  
Southeast Region: new member Elizabeth (Libby) Siskron replaces retiring Shelley Page-Many Thanks Shelley for your many years of service!

You will find the full contact information in your Directory and its Supplement. Please be sure your RC and I are on your mail and e-mail distribution lists!

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Opera Volunteers International Officers

**President Julie Anne Benson**  
Illinois • *julie.benson.opera@gmail.com*

**Vice-President-Administration Roy Fisher**  
Illinois • *yorhc@att.net*

**Vice-President-Member Service Barbara Eckel**  
Illinois • *bmeckel43@aol.com*

**Vice-President-Membership Rhonda Sweeney-** Texas • *rjsrochow@aol.com*

**Vice-President-Outreach Gerald Elijah**  
California • *gelijah@msn.com*

**Vice-President-Marketing Walter Briggs**  
New York • *walterbriggs@hughes.net*

**Secretary Melody Schubert**  
Maine • *wschubert4@aol.com*

**Treasurer Evelyn Troughton**  
Washington • *et1000@msn.com*

**Immediate Past President Fern Grauer**  
Illinois • *ferngrauer@sbcglobal.net*

### Committee Chairs

**Consultant Services -** Rose Betty Williams  
512-327-2281, *rbetty@austin.rr.com*

**Conference/Meeting Planning**  
Ann & Ellen Fusz  
314-961-5094, *aandefusz@aol.com*

**Conference 2010 Chair -** Rebecca Bowne  
626-577-4224, *rebowne@aol.com*

**Grants -** Mary Earl  
217-483-6680, *maryopera1@aol.com*

**Nominating -** Mary Earl  
217-483-6680, *maryopera1@aol.com*

**Education -** Marilyn Strange  
918-298-2211, *mstrange3@cox.net*

**Newsletter Editor -** Warren Schubert  
207-236-2162, *wschubert4@aol.com*

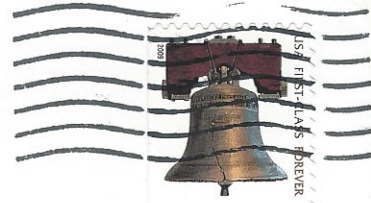
**Website/Tech Assistant -** David Yuen  
954-432-3743, *david@digitalpizzazz.com*

**Projects of Merit Chair -** Judith Vander-Heide  
801-479-8977, *jhheide@aol.com*

**Partners in Excellence-** Vernie Jones  
402-330-2384, *vjones3@gmail.com*



# Opera Volunteers INTERNATIONAL



## NEWSLETTER

Official Quarterly Publication  
Editor, Warren Schubert

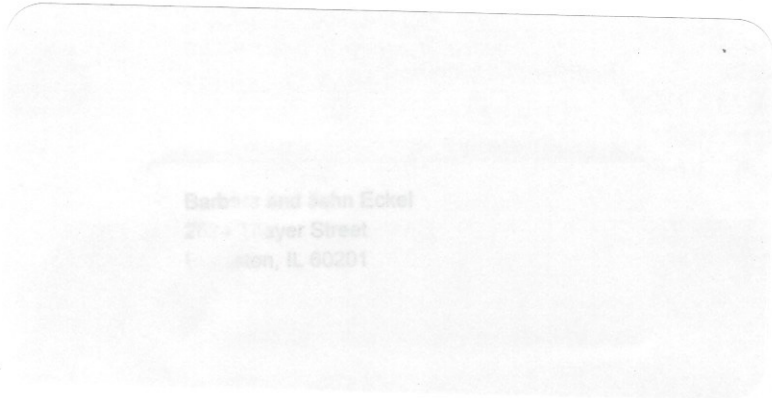
31 Barrett Drive  
Rockport, ME 04856-5156

Please send Support Group & Volunteer news,  
articles, comments and suggestions to:

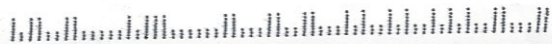
OVI Newsletter  
31 Barrett Drive  
Rockport, ME 04856-5156  
Telephone: 207-236-2162  
E-mail: wschubert4@aol.com

All other correspondence  
should be sent to the website:

website: [www.operavolunteers.org](http://www.operavolunteers.org)



6020131322 0855



*Opera Volunteers International is your organization and it is growing. The following are our newest members, listed by region. Welcome!*

### NEW INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF OPERA VOLUNTEERS INTERNATIONAL

#### NORTHEAST REGION

Anthony Cirillo, Lake Luzerne, NY

#### CENTRAL REGION

Jennifer Locke, Omaha, NE

Sheila McNeil, Omaha, NE

#### SOUTH REGION

Phyllis N. Driver, Knoxville, TN

#### MOUNTAIN REGION

Carolyn B. Sanders, San Antonio, TX

#### PACIFIC RIM REGION

Anne Prokopovych, Calabasas, CA

Ernest Prokopovych, Calabasas, CA

## 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

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

**Deadline for the Winter 2010  
edition is November 1, 2010**