

The 2011 annual Oklahoma District NATS business meeting was convened on Saturday, April 9 on the campus of East Central University in Ada, Oklahoma. Mark McQuade, OK District Governor, called the meeting to order at 1:15pm. Membership in attendance was smaller than normal (24 paid for lunch and approx. 20 attended), however the meeting was productive and spirited.

The meeting began with a brief welcome by McQuade and was quickly followed by the recognition of new and long-standing OK NATS Members. Several in attendance have been members of this district for over 25 years (names are excluded to retain the anonymity of the afflicted...I mean antiquated...I mean the dedicated).

Next, the floor was opened up for announcements:

- Robert Glaubitz discussed an upcoming vocal pedagogy workshop being hosted by the University of Central Oklahoma. Stephen Austin will be the guest clinician. Please contact Dr. Glaubitz or another member of the UCO voice faculty for further information.
- Mark McQuade presented some clarification regarding the fee structure for OK NATS. It was reported that our district does not collect dues, so everyone who attends the conference and auditions needs to pay the conference registration fee – even if they aren't entering students. They must also pay the luncheon fee if they want to eat lunch at the board meeting. (You may attend the board meeting, and are encouraged to, even if you don't eat.)
- TEXOMA Region Conference will be held on the campus of Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee, OK – November 2-5, 2011
- Total Participation was down significantly from the previous year:
 - 2010 Conference = 225 students and 45 teachers
 - 2011 Conference = 125 students and 28 teachers

A brief budget report was presented in which McQuade indicated that the projected post-conference balance would be \$1594.64.

McQuade gave a report on some items being discussed by the TEXOMA Board of Governors:

- Rewording the College divisions to include – “college-aged” students who may not be enrolled in a college or university.
- Dividing the YM & YW divisions.
- Upgrades to the Online Artist Series application process. (Keep everything anonymous, etc.)
- Starting an Online Discussion Forum through the TEXOMA Website

Lastly, a lengthy discussion of current copyright rules and enforcement ensued. The discussion stemmed from the disqualification of a student in the morning's preliminary auditions. The student in question was disqualified because the accompanist played from photocopies. The discussion centered around a few main points:

1. Why can't the accompanist play from photocopies if the originals are present?
2. Exceptions to the photocopy policy

3. Enforcement of the photocopy rules

Regarding point #1 above – as was the case for the disqualified contestant – it is very clearly stated on the National NATS website, “Collaborative Pianists must play only from original music or approved copies, in accordance with the NATS Copyright Policy.” This rule may not have been enforced in the past, but the National Office made enforcement mandatory beginning at the 2010 district auditions. So, it was in place at SNU last April, at the TEXOMA conference at Hardin Simmons in November, and here at ECU.

Regarding point #2 above: Many members gave input about the difficulty in determining which sources are acceptable and which are not. One example in which there is an incredible amount of “grey” area is the website, www.imslp.org. This website doesn’t offer a proof of purchase because it is free, and there are not always clear indications as to where the copy was obtained. With so many new downloadable sites popping up all the time, it was noted that we need to seek greater clarification of the accepted copy rules, and indeed we need to take a look at all of the rules relating to the disqualification of students.

Regarding point #3 above: The current OK District rules read thusly: “...the Oklahoma District will include a ‘Statement of Compliance’ on our teacher registration form that requires each teacher to check a box indicating that they have read and agree to follow the policy laid out by the NATS National office. By checking the box, they agree that their students and accompanists will also follow the policy laid out by the NATS National office. Students of any teacher who does not agree to the statement of compliance by checking the box will not be allowed to compete. Having such a statement of compliance means that judges will not and should not police the use of photocopies during the auditions.” During the morning judges meeting, the auditions’ coordinator also announced that no judge should disqualify a student during the audition. If they believe a copy infraction has occurred, they should make a note and return that to the auditions’ coordinator for consideration and action. By doing this, the judges were in fact not policing the action “during” the audition, but dealing with the suspected infraction after the student’s performance. Some members disagreed and felt that the judges shouldn’t have written anything.

It was agreed that the rules need to be clarified to eliminate as much grey area as possible, and teachers need to take responsibility for their students and accompanists following the rules.

(Note: A second student during this year’s auditions was considered for disqualification, but they were able to provide proof that the sheet music was obtained legally from an accepted source.)

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:10pm.

Respectfully submitted by Mark McQuade, OK District Governor, 5/2/2011