



From the President

Katherine Tobey

Can it already be the middle of November? With the start of the school year disrupted by Hurricane Gustav, two weeks without electricity, and the LMTA Convention following so soon, I hardly had time to notice the change in seasons. It has been a strain just to keep up with daily events, not to mention trying to schedule make-up lessons, get students ready for upcoming events, and on and on. I suspect many of you feel the same way. Now here we are, finally past the seemingly endless political campaigns, in the midst of financial gloom and doom. Is there anything to really be thankful for this Thanksgiving? In the words of a newly-famous lady, "You betcha!"

When I count my many blessings this Thanksgiving, first and foremost will be family, including those with us only in memory. I am thankful for good health and for every new day. And I am grateful for the support of friends and colleagues. All of you, truly, are the wind beneath my wings. I have learned from you, counted on your assistance in so many ways, and been bolstered by the wonderful example you set through your dedication to your students, to your colleagues, and to LMTA. Please know that when I give thanks, every one of you will be in my thoughts.

When Donna Toney and I boarded the plane on September 5 for the MTNA Leadership Summit in Cincinnati, we both left homes without power or telephone service and yards with trees and fences destroyed. While the air conditioning, hot water and cooked meals in Cincinnati helped, it was the concern and support of the MTNA staff and the other teachers at the Summit that really lifted our spirits. And when we returned home to dive headlong into finalizing LMTA Convention plans, it was the dedication and positive attitude of the Shreveport convention hosts that got us through.

There are not enough words to thank GSMTA President Martha Bordelon, Convention Bulletin editor Janet Colbert, university host Ross Smith, as well as helpers **LaWanda Blakeney** and the other GSMTA members who did so much to make the convention a huge success. With **President-elect Donna Toney's** incredible planning and overseeing, the sessions were wonderful, and the attendance was excellent. I was pleased to see so many of you there and wish all of you could have attended. With Martha's wonderful planning, the Board dinner, hotel accommodations, banquet and hospitality were exceptional. Ross saw to it that everything ran smoothly at Centenary and planned a terrific faculty recital which included his own beautiful performance. LaWanda helped collect a record number of ads, and Janet spent countless hours producing a beautiful convention bulletin, complete with spiral binding. (If you were unable to attend the convention, contact your local affiliate president for your copy of the bulletin.) Congratulations and deepest thanks to all!

Sincere thanks also to Foundation Chair Sarah Roy for overseeing the very successful Foundation activities. Almost \$1700 was collected from the Silent Auction, Recycled Music Sale and other

contributions, and we were so pleased and proud to be able to nominate **Fred Sahlmann**, a past-president of LMTA, as our new **Foundation Fellow**. Fred will be honored at the gala during the MTNA Conference in Atlanta in March.

The MTNA competitions were held on the Saturday after convention. We congratulate our winners and representatives and wish them all good luck at the division competitions in Fayetteville in January. [Click here to see the list of winners and their teachers.](#) Congratulations also go to the winners of the [Upper Elementary Auditions](#) and [Elementary Composition Competition](#).

Also held on Saturday was the annual LMTA Playathon. Thanks go to local chair **Joy Ratcliff**, **LMTA Playathon Chair Sue Steck-Turner**, **Adele Shafferman** who assisted with the program, and all the teachers and students who participated. \$377 was raised. There were also three playathons held in Baton Rouge the weekend preceding convention. Students from six studios participated, raising a total of \$2763. The board voted to donate \$1000 to the Texas MTA Relief Fund to assist teachers in the Galveston and Houston areas affected by Hurricane Ike.

Congratulations to our Outstanding Teachers for 2008. Yes, there are two! BRMTA members **Hildabeth** and **John Dupaquier** were honored at the convention banquet. Beth and John have been pillars of the Baton Rouge music community for many years, and we are so proud of their many accomplishments. [Click here to read about Beth and John and see their beautiful photo.](#)

[Minutes from the Executive Committee Meeting and LMTA Board Meeting](#) are now posted. Of special note: on the recommendation of the Rally Board, the fee for teachers who enter students in Rally but choose not to work on Rally day has been raised to \$75.

The LMTA Google Group Discussion Board was announced at the meetings, and **Carla Breaux** gave printed information to the affiliate presidents to distribute to members. This is a great way for all of us to stay in touch through the year, share information, and ask colleagues for their ideas in specific areas. Please e-mail Carla at carlabreaux@aol.com if you would like to join, or if you would like more information.

I hope that many of you are planning to attend the MTNA Conference in Atlanta. If you will be there, please let me know. We always plan a special get-together for our LMTA members (last year's Louisiana "evening out" in Denver had over 30 attendees!) and it is always a highlight of the conference.

And I hope that ALL of you are planning to attend the 2009 LMTA Convention in Lafayette. Our clinicians will be Ingrid Clarfield and William Chapman Nyaho. There will be wonderful sessions, a special music fair for students, and I promise it will be an inspiring three days! Our hosts in Lafayette and our president-elect and performance area chairs are already hard at work planning a great convention for all of us on October 15-17, 2009 at UL-Lafayette.

I wish you all a wonderful holiday season.

Information usually published in the FALL SCORE is included in the Convention Bulletin. If you did not attend the convention, please contact your local affiliate president for a copy of the FALL SCORE/Convention Bulletin. [Click here for a printable version of the FALL SCORE/Convention](#)