

## **From the Music Director**

Welcome to the 19<sup>th</sup> season of the Fairfield County Children's Choir! We have planned a fantastic series of concerts, along with collaborations and projects that will make the year quite exciting. This issue of *Quarternotes* includes information about our concert calendar, various news items and the always-popular Chorister Profiles.

In this column, I often address issues concerning music and education. In this vein I pose a question for our readers: Do you still enjoy -- even cherish -- the music you listened to as a teenager? I will attempt an explanation based on some recent readings in music psychology and then connect this with some thoughts on the repertoire of the FCCC.

In his book *This Is Your Brain On Music*, Daniel Levitin asks, "Why do we like the music we like?" As he details the various stages of human development, he tells us, "Researchers point to the teen years as the turning point for musical preferences.... As adults, the music we tend to be nostalgic for, the music that feels like it is our music, corresponds to the music we heard during these years.... Part of the reason we remember songs from our teenage years is because those years were times of self-discovery, and as a consequence, they were emotionally charged; in general, we tend to remember things that have an emotional component because our amygdala and neurotransmitters act in concert to 'tag' the memories as something important." (pg. 231)

In *Thinking Musically*, author Bonnie Wade is in agreement, "My favorite theory about the reason that we continue to hate or love (if not get stuck in) the popular music of our teenage years is that it is situated: we absorbed that music when we were experiencing love and other emotions intensely as adolescents. It is not only the style of the music that stays with us, but also the embedded memory of the meaning it had at that crucial time in our lives." (pg. 17)

I believe that one of the reasons so many of our choristers choose to participate in the choir for many years is their emotional connection to the repertoire of the FCCC. Our programming of authentic music from a wide variety of genres can be compared to the reading of classic literature in that the best material is the most rewarding, and our singers are experiencing the music at a very impressionable age while having fun and making friends. If music is food for the soul, our repertoire is a feast! It is my sincere hope that the music our choristers experience here at the FCCC will hold a special place in their hearts and minds for the rest of their lives.

I would like to invite all readers to write to us to share some thoughts on your favorite music from your adolescent years. I will include as many of your responses as possible in the next edition of this newsletter.

Please join us for the concerts listed below. The music we share as singers, conductors, accompanists and audience is sure to inspire and enrich as well as entertain!!