

The Cuts and CMA

The all-volunteer organization cannot afford to apply to the NEA. Kelly says that she will dip into the organization's \$200,000 endowment before she cuts programming. She and her husband, who have no paid staff members, are concerned about finding successors. "It does not look good," she said. "My husband and I are very elderly. We will try to keep it going, though."

Norfolk Chamber Music Festival. Norfolk, located in western Connecticut, lost all of its \$12,900 NEA grant. The total budget for the summer festival is large enough (\$560,000) that executive director Michael Geller is confident that he can make up the loss in other ways. He plans more aggressive ticket promotions and is considering raising the fees for a student training program at the festival. But Geller is worried about the future. He thinks chamber music will fare poorly under the new NEA application guidelines and is concerned about recovering lost NEA funds.

Purdue Convocations and Lectures. Very little of Myers's \$1 million budget (about \$120,000 for chamber music) comes from government sources. The West Lafayette, Indiana, presenter stopped applying for NEA money a few years ago after some rejections. There is no Indiana arts commission, though she occasionally gets help from Arts Midwest, a regional funding agency. The bulk of her revenue is from the box office and fees from Purdue students. "When I sell 6,000 seats for country music," Myers says, "it helps support chamber music." Ten years ago she started Friends of Convocations and now raises between \$150,000 and \$200,000 a year. She also has a dozen corporate contributors, often companies with strong ties to Purdue. "I'd like to be optimistic about a rebirth of government support, but I don't see how it can happen. It's pretty clear that we have to find alternate sources of income. We're all hustling and working harder to build these sources."

Chamber Music America, like many of its members, has not escaped government funding cuts. CMA currently receives two grants from the NEA, according to Dean Stein, CMA executive director. Both have been reduced. The first, which totaled \$40,000 in 1996, supports this magazine, the national conference, and the technical assistance program (which offers advice and office support to chamber music organizations). This grant has been sliced to \$28,000. The second grant, which supports the rural residencies program, was \$200,000 in 1996, and the NEA has committed the same amount for 1997. Both grants have one-to-one matching requirements. Overall, NEA funding accounted for 15 percent of CMA's \$1.9 million budget in 1996. In 1997, that drops to 11 percent.

Stein says the cuts in NEA funding will not affect the approximately \$700,000 in grants that CMA makes to chamber music presenters and ensembles each year. But he acknowledged that replacing the lost NEA money will be difficult. "As a national service organization, it's hard to raise money from individuals," Stein said. "Without a local presence, it's more difficult to show people how you are helping their community."

Stein predicts that in the years ahead, some presenters will continue to thrive. "Chances are, though, most federal grants will be smaller. And I think the effects will be more devastating to smaller presenters and to chamber music ensembles."

Sarasota Music Festival. Trevor Cramer is one of the few presenters surveyed who receives significant government support and who is optimistic about its continuing. For SMF's budget of between \$350,000 and \$400,000, he receives \$5,000 to \$7,000 from the NEA; \$24,000 from the state in its Major Cultural Institutions program; and \$65,000 from Sarasota County from the bed tax fund. Despite this largesse, Cramer is building up an endowment for the festival (and its attached training program for young musicians), that now exceeds \$4 million. He is also stressing planned giving to his patrons, and he expects to harvest these gifts in the coming years. "We are lucky to be in Sarasota, where the arts are supported well" by both private donors and government, he says.

Sedona Chamber Music Festival. With the help of a CMA expansion grant, Sedona's budget has increased in the past three years to about \$100,000. Executive director Bert Harclerode received \$7,000 from state sources in 1995-96 and is hoping for \$16,000 in 1996-97, but because of NEA cuts to the state, he knows this may not happen. The Arizona Legislature is debating a real estate development tax to support cultural activities, and Harclerode notes that the measure has passed the House. Ticket sales account for 48 percent of his budget; 9 percent comes from the sale of posters and art works; and 30 percent comes from private donations. He has 8,000 names on a potential donor list and notes that there are a lot of wealthy people who live or vacation in Sedona, but he is just beginning to approach them. He is also staging a golf tournament as a fund raiser. Harclerode has apparently found a link between a quartet and "Fore!" ■

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