

September, 2001

Spirit of life will flow again

by Howard Meharg, Editor, NW-Notes

Most of the articles appearing in this issue of NW-Notes were written prior to the events of September 11. As your editor, I could not fail to comment on this insane tragedy. I wrote this on the 23rd of September for my church newsletter, The Grapevine, a mailing to members of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church where I serve as Minister of Music.



We've all had our share of reactions and our range of emotions since September 11. I add my own account.

By Thursday of that week I was tired. Not the usual "I worked hard in the yard" kind of tired. A profound, sad weariness that made me feel as if I were carrying twice my usual substantial weight. I have a theory about that.

It was as if my sadness, my anger, my frustration, had reduced the very spirit of life within me. I was weary in body because my spirit was weary. Somehow that God-given flow of life had been reduced to a trickle.

I can pinpoint when the spirit of life began to flow again. It happened first in the National Cathedral when the music began. It continued Sunday, the 16th, at our outdoor service at Seaquest Park when the music began.

It was especially fulfilling in the first hearing of the *Kyrie* (Lord, Have Mercy) of the Schubert *Mass in G*, as I began rehearsals with our community group for our upcoming concert.

I was electrified by hearing those superb high school kids sing "God Bless America" and "The Star Spangled Banner" in that most spine tingling and tear producing rendition at the start of the first Mariner game after the week's layoff from baseball. . .and that as I listened on my car radio!

On the afternoon of the 23rd, we heard a concert that nourished the soul. It was presented by Paul Klemme, organist, and Jerry Webster, trumpet virtuoso.

Jerry and I talked before the concert. "Where would we be without music?" For me the answer is clear. We would be tired! Our body and spirit would continue to be weary for a very long time.

I hope you will join me in your continual and persistent support of public school music programs and our private teachers of music. And I thank you on behalf of all of our musicians for your encouragement as we try to bring our best music to the services at St. Stephens.

I've since talked with choral directors who, like Mark Robinson (writing on page 22 of this issue), have found more than solace in what we do. Our art form provides the vehicle through which that spirit of life can flow again. And again, I am so grateful for this magnificent art.

Howard Meharg, Editor