

A Year and a Half of Accomplishments
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Greetings everyone! Instead of another historical retrospective, we decided to commemorate Fife and Drum Corps Day (July 22) with a look around the world. We hope you enjoy the articles on the opposite page this month.

Over the past year and a half, we have been so busy working behind the scenes. When we took this responsibility, there were four things we set out to accomplish: the 1st nationwide exchange, a music library, the "Cultural Dialogue" series and a book. And we're doing them!

The first exchange held in August 1996 was an incredible success. We established a network of support and communication, among all the groups around the country. In addition, everyone went back to their respective areas with a renewed sense of mission and responsibility, which has resulted in the growth of every person — as evidenced by the many local music festivals taking place in almost every major city this year. Most important is that every member is deepening her faith through these activities. We are so happy and proud of the members' accomplishments.

One of the outcomes of the exchange has been the monthly Music Corps pages in the *World Tribune*. Through these pages we have seen the development of not only the Fife and Drum Corps and the Music Corps but also the Youth Bands around the country.

We would like to clarify that while the Fife and Drum Corps and Music Corps are separate entities, we do work together as a team with the Music Corps leadership to support the 23 Fife and Drum Corps, Music Corps and Youth Bands nationwide.

The music library, while still in its early stages of development, is beginning to facilitate exchanging music across the nation. We are looking forward to the continued development of this vital resource far into the future.

We have just wrapped up our plans for the completion of the "Cultural Dialogue for Youth" series. In the coming months, there will be six more interviews featuring members of the Culture Department.

The much anticipated *SGI-USA Fife and Drum Corps Book* has been through some changes since its initial conception. It will include a collection of music-related poems, speeches and guidance from SGI President Ikeda as well as a background of the Fife and Drum Corps.

We are now preparing for our upcoming 2nd Nationwide Exchange at the Florida Nature and Culture Center (Aug. 7–10). This conference will focus on developing leadership. The conference sessions will include: music theory, arranging and dance clinics, study sessions, group-specific discussions and dialogues with our youth division leaders. Through this conference it is our hope that every member will deepen her faith and be inspired to develop her life for the future.

Thank you for all of your support!

Erica Gebhardt is the SGI-USA Fife and Drum Corps chief, Malina Moore is the secretariat chief, and Emy Mukumoto is the music coordinator. They were appointed in January 1996.