



LOOKING AROUND

With

ALLENE BEDFORD

A minimum of 15 hours of choir rehearsal a week plus piano, clarinet and violin lessons and practice plus three hours of study hall five nights a week plus regular classes in seventh grade school work

This is what attending the Columbus Boychoir School in Princeton, N.J. means to 12-year-old David Karl McKenas.

And he loves every moment of it.

The son of Mr. and Mrs. Allen R. McKenas of 219 Stone St., David received his opportunity to audition for the school when the Boychoir was brought to Oneida April 5, 1967 by the Oneida Area Arts Council. Following the evening's performance, Donald Bryant, musical director, held auditions for boys from the entire part of upper New York State.

Accepted in addition to David were three boys who had come from Rouses Point on the St. Lawrence to audition — Edward, John and Brian Carney.

David was encouraged by Bryant to attend the summer camp held by the school and received \$100 from the school to make it possible. On Sept. 3 he enrolled in the seventh grade for the school year and received \$1,500 grant-in-aid. However, the board of trustees has pointed out to Mr. and Mrs. McKenas the need for additional financial assistance from the Oneida area.

The Columbus Boychoir School has a basic tuition for board and day students which represents only one-half the expense of the full maintenance of a choirboy for each school year.

This has been made possible by the concert and television performances of both the Concert and Resident Choirs, the sale of the choir's recordings, and the contributions of interested individuals who recognize the Boychoir School's important place in the cultural and educational life of the nation. Without the assistance of voluntary contributions, the School and the Boychoir could not continue, according to Bryant.

David Progresses

David's progress at the school has been more than outstanding. He was allowed to skip Music Theory 1 and 2 and enroll in the advanced Music Theory 3 class taught by Bryant, who also teaches him piano. When the first marking period ended this month, he was the only member of the seventh grade who made the headmaster's honor roll. In addition, he is one of three selected for the solo group in the Resident Choir.

His instructors' comments speak for themselves.

"David is applying himself assiduously to his school work and thus far is doing grade A work in both History and French I. His adjustment to the school and his attitude, both in class and outside seem very satisfactory."

"He is a super organizer and this type of student can only do good work."

"Very well adjusted. Makes an excellent impression."

"A very fine boy, well mannered and generally concerned about the welfare of those about him. He promises to be a good citizen of the school."

Well Prepared

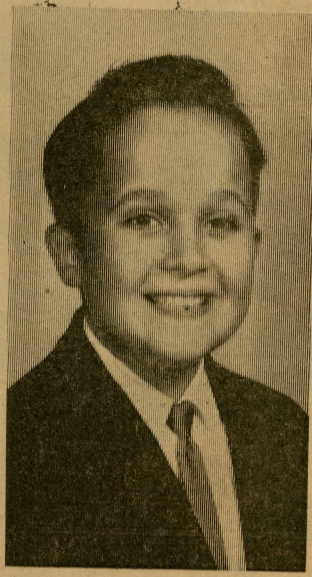
David was well prepared to take advantage of opportunity when it knocked.

He started piano lessons at the end of the second grade and studied under Mrs. Dorothy Brophy and Mrs. Garth Warner. Clarinet lessons followed in the fourth, fifth and sixth grades with organ lessons started in the sixth grade.

A member of the school chorus and county chorus and the junior choir at the First Presbyterian Church, he received an A rating in state competition in clarinet and piano in the Spring of 1967.

He has appeared in and played for school plays as well as performing at the Owls Club, Madison County Old Ladies Home, the Moose Club, Retired Teachers Association and the Oneida Musicales.

At present he is a member of the Resident Choir at the school but hopes that he may become a member of the Concert Choir by the end of the year. The first is



DAVID MCKENAS

the training group and the latter the group which goes on tour.

A Soccer Player

The boys participate in all sports and David has gone out for soccer.

Emphasis is placed on manners at the school and an ethics course is given which aids poise and confidence.

This year there are 28 new boys in the school. One is from Japan who auditioned when the choir appeared there last year. Interestingly, it was necessary for him to audition over the telephone as the choir was so popular the fans swarmed all over the boys. It was necessary to park the bus right at the door in order to see that they felt safely and even then some had their clothes torn, David reports.

Obviously, there is one problem that worries each boy — the fact that his voice will change. However, when this happens, the boys are allowed to finish out the year with complete participation in events. And, they are told, sometimes their voice may even improve after it changes, in which case they will remain in the school.

When this happens to David, he should have no worry. With his other musical talents there should be no reason why he will not achieve his ambition — a career on the concert stage.