

Michigan Music Teacher

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TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

*Affiliated with the Music Teachers
National Association*

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President's Letter

Dear MMTA Members,

As spring comes to an abrupt end, I hope this finds everyone enjoying a lighter schedule and our beautiful landscape. It has been an extremely rewarding but busy spring.

I attended the **MTNA Conference** March 21-25 in Las Vegas. Besides attending the East Central Division and the State President's Advisory Council (SPAC) meetings, the most enjoyable moments were the concerts by Anne Schein, James and Jeanne Galway, the Canadian Brass, the presentations by William Westney, Louis Nagel and Catherine Rollin and of course hearing the student winners in competition and in concerts. MMTA is proud of our students representing Michigan and especially Ayana Terauchi (Amy Porter) who placed first in the Senior Woodwinds.

Our annual **Concerto Competition** was held at Aquinas College on March 14 and 15. The results may be found in this issue (page 3) and on our website. Much appreciation and thanks goes to

Giuseppe Lupis for chairing and organizing this competition.

Our **Student Achievement Testing** officially finished on May 2 with our voice and piano finalists (results found on page 9). Being held on a beautiful day at the Michigan State University College of Music, this successful day requires many volunteers. Thanks especially to Margarete Thomsen for chairing SAT finals, Megan Nyquist, CAMTA President for organizing the food, Penny Draper for organizing keys and rooms, Eric Van De Vort for his assistance in relaying information via the website and all of the teachers who worked that day. I would also like to thank the SAT Semi-Final Chairs, Alisha Snyder and Sister Mary Margaret Delaski (west), Wendy Wan-Hsing Chu (central) and Maria Lonchyna-Lisowsky (east).

I was fortunate to represent MMTA at the **Michigan Youth Arts Festival** in Kalamazoo, May 7-9. Past President, Dr. Garik Pedersen has been graciously serving on the MYA Board. I had the pleasure to present a 2015 Touchstone Award to one of our most diligent and hard working members, Dr. Penny Draper. Touchstone awardees were presented to Michigan educators representing dance, film, theatre, visual arts, creative writing, and music. We attended a beautiful concert after the awards dinner, with extraordinary student performances from students throughout the state. Many of these students study with our MMTA members. It was a delightful evening and truly a testament to how arts education is strong in Michigan.

There is no time off for good behavior if you are a member of MMTA! Business continues for the MMTA Board, the Certification Committee, the SAT Handbook Revision Committee, the SAT Woodwind Committee, the SAT Strings Committee and the SAT Semi-Final Chairs. I would like to welcome Michelle Mitchum to the Board as Awareness and Advocacy Chair. I regretfully accepted Barbara Collin's resignation and would like to

President's Letter cont. on p. 3

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Full page \$140

2/3 page \$120

1/2 page \$95

1/4 page \$70

Less than

1/4 page \$60

Submit ads to the MMT editor
with a check payable to MMTA.
Fees are for one issue only.

DEADLINE

FOR THE

SEPTEMBER 2015

MMT:

August 15

All materials must be
received by this date

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR E-MAIL

Send to

Lester Castellana, Membership Chair: lestercastellana@gmail.com

~ or mail to: ~

Lester Castellana, 7164 Palmer St., Dexter, MI 48130

June 2015

thank her for her many years of dedicated service to MMTA. Vice-President Charles Aschbrenner and the Piano Teachers' Forum of Grand Rapids are actively involved with the planning of our 130th State Conference. Please take a moment to read about the details of this outstanding conference and mark it on your calendar now!

As I write this newsletter, I have just finished a studio recital and three performances within five days. Life is certainly never boring. I am thankful that I have a full teaching studio of students age 6 to 68. I am also fortunate to have been teaching since the age of 20. I am thankful for those early mentor teachers in graduate school, Kenneth Drake, James Lyke, Tony Caramia who emphasized continuing education, and membership in MTNA, MMTA and our local associations. I feel blessed by the retired teachers and deceased teachers that I met in CAMTA when I first joined in the late 80's, Jean Hull, Eileen Keel, Delaine Counsellor, and Barbara Miller. These music educators exemplified participation in the Summer Workshops, the SAT programs, the State and National Conferences and being involved with our local associations. Membership is so vital to our students, to our teachers, and to our strength in remaining vital to the arts community.

Take time this summer to enjoy the beautiful season and nourish your mind, body and soul.

Sincerely,

Gail Lytle Lira, MMTA President

**MMTA Concerto Competition Winners
March 14 and 15, 2015
Aquinas College, Grand Rapids, MI**

DIVISION IV (grades 10-12)

Winner: Ting Ting Chang, student of Logan Skelton
2nd Place: Steven Cheng, student of Faye Mao
3rd Place: Juliana Patselas, student of Christopher Harding
Honorable Mention: Karen Cao Beach, student of Faye Mao

DIVISION III (grades 7-9)

Winner: Isabelle Liam, student of Arthur Greene
2nd Place: Shuheng Zhang, student of Mary Siciliano
3rd Place: Kelvia Jaupi Grieg, student of Mary Siciliano

DIVISION II (grades 4-6)

Winner: Harold Wu, student of Izabella Vilensky
2nd Place: Salem Wang, student of Izabella Vilensky
3rd Place: Alexandra Zhang, student of Izabella Vilensky

DIVISION I (grades 1-3)

2nd Place: Ryan Wang Haydn, student of Marta Pietrzyk

130th MMTA State Conference
October 11-13, 2015, Grand Rapids, MI

Dear MMTA Members,

Preparations for the 130th MMTA Conference are well under way! The conference opens on Sunday, October 11th at 1:00 pm (on-site registration begins at noon), and continues through noon on Tuesday, October 13th at the boutique Double Tree by Hilton Grand Rapids Airport, 4747 28th Street. The beautifully renovated hotel also features the award-winning Ganders Restaurant and Lounge featuring seafood and steaks. The hotel is easily accessible from I-96 and 28th Street, and complimentary parking is included with your attractive room.

We are incredibly fortunate to have Ann Schein as our conference artist this year! Just featured as the MTNA 2015 Conference Artist in Las Vegas, she was a guest pianist at Hope College and Calvin College 15 years ago. I am thrilled that she accepted my invitation to be our own state conference artist this year. You will be inspired by her extraordinary intuitive and penetrating interpretation of the great Romantic composers as illustrated by her recital in Las Vegas, by her charming conversational talk about her remarkable early training with Mieczyslaw Munz and Arthur Rubinstein, and by her insightful master class teaching. Her recital will be Monday evening after the banquet and she will teach a master class Tuesday morning.

We will also have presentations by Catherine Rollin both on technique and on her most recent publications, and a presentation by Derek Polischuk on the teacher as psychiatrist as well as a master class with younger students. Maria Holian will speak on a multi-sensory approach to piano teaching, drawing on her training in occupational and music therapy. Melanie Helton of MSU will also give a talk on singing and the young pianist.

The Piano Teachers' Forum of Grand Rapids is hosting the conference this year, with Mary Scanlan and Yelena Wells as co-chairs. They are organizing the Sunday evening program which will include this year's commissioned composition by Kalamazoo native Gene Knific. And we will enjoy listening to the winners of the MMTA and MTNA competitions Sunday and Monday afternoons. Please check out our website, <http://www.michiganmusicteachers.org> and click and drag on Events to see the conference webpage.

Put the 2015 conference on your calendars now, even as it may seem a long way off, but after a restful and restorative summer we will all be into our teaching routines before we know it. See you in Grand Rapids!

Sincerely,

Charles Aschbrenner, MMTA Vice President

Please note the following deadlines for our 2015 Conference:

August 1: Deadline for conference schedule material for the program booklet. This includes presenters, titles, descriptions, performers' bios, photos, and program information.

August 15: Deadline for all advertisers and exhibitors. Please contact Michelle Mitchum (p88keys@chartermi.net).

August 15: Deadline for all other entries in the conference program booklet. This includes welcome letters, Teachers of the Year, Distinguished Service Award, and the list of conference volunteers.

September 19: Deadline to register for a room at the Double Tree by Hilton Grand Rapids Airport and receive the MMTA conference rate of \$99 plus taxes for Single/Double room.

September 19: Conference pre-registration deadline—both mail and online. This is also the last date to withdraw from the conference and receive a registration refund.

MMTA 2015 Conference Artist

Ann Schein



Considered one of the premier Chopin pianists of our time, and in the same league with Alicia de Larrocha, and Gina Bachauer, Ann Schein made her debut in Mexico City in 1957 and has since performed with major orchestras at elite concert halls all over the world. Schein was on the Peabody Conservatory faculty from 1980 to 2001 and was honored with a Distinguished Alumni Award at the school in 2012. Since 1984, she has been an artist-faculty member of the Aspen Music Festival and School. She has also served on the faculty of Indiana University and on the jury of the Irving S. Gilmore Keyboard Festival. Schein was recently featured in a book by Washington Post music critic Cecelia Hopkins Porter entitled *Five Lives In Music: Women Performers, Composers and Impresarios from the Baroque to the Present*. She continues to give lectures and master classes and has recently performed in Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore, Brazil and throughout the United States. She was the Conference Artist at the 2015 MTNA National Conference in Las Vegas where she performed works by Beethoven, Schumann, and Chopin which were received with spontaneous standing ovations.

MICHIGAN MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

130th Annual State Conference

October 11-13, 2015 ~ Grand Rapids, MI

CONFERENCE AND MEAL REGISTRATION

(online registration at <http://www.michiganmusicteachers.org/2015-conference-information>)

Name: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____
Local Association: _____ Certification: State National

REGISTRATION FEES:

Advance Conference Registration: MMTA Member
(registration after September 19—\$85) \$70.00 _____
Advance Conference Registration: non-MMTA Member
(registration after September 19—\$95) \$80.00 _____
One Session/One Day Registration \$55.00 _____
Registration: MMTA Member's spouse
(registration after September 19—\$50) \$40.00 _____
College Student Registration \$10.00 _____
Monday Night Concert: non-Registrant \$20.00 _____

MEAL RESERVATIONS (Advance reservations only—not available after September 19):

Monday Evening Banquet, October 12 \$28.00 _____

Please select one Banquet entrée. Tax and gratuity are included in the price.

_____ Braised Top Round
_____ Herb Seared Chicken
_____ Chef's Stir Fry

* All entrees come with Fresh Garden Salad, Freshly Baked Rolls with Butter, Chef's Selection Starch and Fresh Vegetable, Cheesecake, Freshly Brewed Coffee, Decaffeinated Coffee, & Iced Tea.

TOTAL ENCLOSED: _____

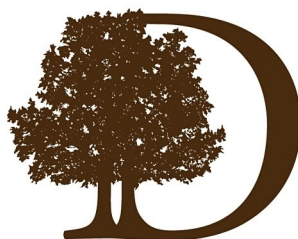
CONFERENCE AND MEAL ADVANCE REGISTRATION DEADLINE: September 19, 2015

Please mail this registration form and check (payable to MMTA) to:

Diana Spitnale Miller, MMTA Treasurer
3352 W. River Dr,
Gladwin, MI 48624-9730

For more information, contact Charles Aschbrenner, MMTA Vice President and Conference Chairperson:
Phone: (616)396-4282; Email: aschbrenner@hope.edu

MICHIGAN MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
130th Annual State Conference
October 11-13, 2015 ~ Grand Rapids, MI



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- Conference rate for Single or Double Rooms: \$99/night + taxes
- This rate is only available until SEPTEMBER 19. Rates cannot be changed at check-in or at checkout.
- To receive this rate, you may call the hotel directly at 1-888-709-8081 and state that you are with the MMTA 2015 Annual Conference; visit the event page on the MMTA website for reservation information about the hotel, or you can make your reservations online at <http://tinyurl.com/nwu9gnp>.
-
- Please note that there are some rooms available at the Hilton Grand Rapids Airport Saturday night, October 10, for MMTA members arriving a day early.
- Check-in time is 3:00. Complimentary Parking is available to all hotel guests.

A letter from Past President Garik Pedersen, first emailed to members on April 17, 2015

SAT Piano Handbook Revisions WILL NOT become effective in 2016

Dear MMTA Member,

If there is no struggle, there is no progress.

- Frederick Douglass

Your MMTA leadership, in consultation with our Piano handbook Revision Committee, has decided to delay indefinitely the implementation of the revisions that was scheduled for the 2016-2017 year. There are several reasons for this decision:

1. The Committee has asked for a bit more time to complete this substantial project.
2. The Committee needs more time to carefully consider new input that it has received from our membership.
3. The MMTA Executive Board has determined that the implementation of the revisions will require time, open communication, and, perhaps, a gradual process.

Our dilemma is that we hate change and love it at the same time; what we really want is for things to remain the same but get better.

- Sydney J. Harris

Many of you have provided input or expressed concern about some aspects of the revision. Many more have listened to your colleagues' concerns and have felt uneasy about the future of a program that has benefitted your teaching and your students' musicianship for many years. We understand your unease; change is, almost by definition, difficult. But we have all agreed that our SAT needs to be revised. Our assessment instruments must adapt to new research and trends in our field or we risk becoming out-of-date and, eventually, obsolete.

To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often.

- Winston Churchill

What should you do now?

1. Relax. Rest assured that no one is trying to force their opinions and attitudes upon our membership. And even if they were, we wouldn't let them!
2. Trust. Although the Revision Committee is comprised of some of our best and brightest (and most generous) members, they are all independent teachers who teach the same kind of students you do. They know what it's like to repeat things week after week to students who are underprepared, overinvolved, and under-motivated.
3. Wait. There will be ample opportunity to express your reaction to the revisions before we implement them.

4. Be open. As I said above, change is inevitable, and sometimes even beneficial. We need an assessment tool that serves all our members and the many kinds of students we teach. If you encounter something that doesn't match your teaching philosophy, begin by inquiring of teachers who find it useful. That's what MMTA is all about!

Because things are the way they are, things will not stay the way they are.

- Bertolt Brecht

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Garik Pedersen, Past President, MMTA, for the MMTA Board of Directors

gpedersen@emich.edu

State Piano & Voice Finals
Michigan State University, East Lansing
May 2, 2015

Piano: Intermediate Division

First Place: David Mutone, student of Catherine Rollin
Second Place: Shuheng Zang, student of Mary Siciliano
Third Place: Roger Wang, student of Izabella Vilensky

Piano: Junior Division

First Place: Joshua Zhe, student of Mary Siciliano
Second Place: Liya Jin, student of Annie Leong
Third Place: Catherina Lu, student of Catherine Rollin
Honorable Mention: Jubilee Wang, student of Mary Siciliano; Isabel Valencia, student of Jon Ensminger;
Nerissa Wang, student of Catherine Rollin; Eric Yu, student of Wei-Qin Claire Tang

Piano: Senior Division

First Place: Isabella Hu, student of Catherine Rollin
Second Place: Lucas Myers, student of Catherine Rollin
Third Place: Andrew Buscher, student of Joan Conway
Honorable Mention: Jaehee Lee, student of Catherine Rollin; Feeney Nolan, student of Derek Polischuk;
Richard Hou, student of Mary Siciliano

Voice: State Finals Winners

First Place: Michaela Love, student of Lisa Keim
Second Place: Lindsey Skidmore, student of Judy Ellis
Third Place: Hannah French, student of Judy Ellis

June 2015

MMTA History Events in the Early 1990's

In the closing paragraph of the last MMTA history installment (December, 2014 edition) we read about the establishment of the Gilmore Festival in Kalamazoo in 1987, President Jill Christian's thank you to Jerome and Betty Stasson for their efforts to arouse interest in legislation to protect the independent teachers throughout the state, and the May 1, 1988 MMTA Board's acceptance of the report of the Credit/Recognition Committee and its approval for its submission to the Michigan Department of Education.

We will talk about the Zoning Ordinance history in this issue.

The Stassons were cited by a neighbor, complaining about their teaching in their home. West Bloomfield, where they lived, had an ordinance prohibiting home-based businesses. In essence, the neighbor really was angry about something else- (my memory tells me it was an air conditioner!)- but the ordinance was how the neighbor chose to vent his anger. The Stassons went to the township board, which changed the ordinance. Legislation at the state level was the result of State Senator David Honigman, R-West Bloomfield and State Senator Jack Faxton, D-West Bloomfield who sponsored a three-package bill to permit tutoring in the home. It prohibited townships, cities, and counties from using zoning laws to ban home tutorials.



Michigan State Capital Building

Members of MMTA were asked to write their representatives and senators in support of the bill. Jean Hull gave copies of the bill and the names and addresses of those on the senate committee to whom members could send messages in support. Representatives from MMTA- Jean Hull, Eileen Keel, Jerre Jean McDaniel, Bonnie Johnson, and Rebecca Knapp - were present when Senator Honigman presented the bill (1987). The Metropolitan Detroit Musicians League presented "relentless and dedicated interest, involvement and promotion" in support of the project. MTNA provided the publications, "Local Taxes and Legal Restrictions Imposed on the Independent Music Teacher" and "A Quick Guide for Zoning Issues." The bill passed and was signed into law by Governor John Engler in December, 1994. (The House had only 1 dissenting vote!) The Stassons received calls from many other states as well. This awareness of similar situations throughout the country made several MMTA chapters check their local situations. One of our Holland Piano Teachers' Forum members and I checked what our local situation was. We attended a City Council meeting to present our case. We were gratified that our city

council really wanted music teachers to be able to teach in their homes without any fees or permits to do so.

We will discuss the history and implementation of School Recognition in the September issue of the MMT.

Mary Vander Linde, Historian

Nagel, cont. from p. 12

large contraption which played only 78's. I remember standing on a chair while listening enchanted to the music (the Beethoven Sixth Symphony stands out in particular in my mind) and trying to read the label that identified the music as it spun around and around on the turn table. These memories and sounds undoubtedly fueled my already musical mind. I suggest that hearing music in the home-----all types, INCLUDING whatever Toscanini is around today is an integral part of music education. I suspect all of you who are reading this, as well as the Dan Tollys and Melissa Overheisers of the teaching profession would agree with this. Hearing music is an essential component to learning it.

I write this, of course as a university professor and performing pianist. I do not teach at this beginning level. Many of you reading this do this vital work. I have nothing but admiration for the teachers who instill a good sense of rhythm, a sense of joy (not fear) in the making of music, and the familiarity with music other than the sounds of practice and the lesson. I know that metronomes sit sternly on most of your pianos, as mine does. I know that studio recitals and classes are a mixture of fun and nerves. And I would suggest that during lessons either performing yourself for your students, or if that is not to your liking, put on a CD of something. And it need not be Mozart. Try playing the Opus 9 Six Bagatelles for String Quartet by Webern (a very short several minutes of strange-sounding but beautiful atonality) and talk about it with the student(s). Wait a while before analyzing it---who really cares anyway? Put on a Schubert song. "What do you think of this?" is the question I ask when I do this. It is wonderful some of the reactions students will share with you. And at home during the week between lessons, encourage the students to listen to something on that wonderful modern turntable YouTube.

I close with the somewhat idealistic notion that the primary teachers such as we heard last night and those of you who teach at that level are the best answer to the cliched fear about the "graying" of American audiences. I believe that building a house with a solid foundation will help it last a lifetime, and live concerts will continue to have a purpose and meaning.

Musical Musings

A Salute

By Louis Nagel

One of the perks----indeed the great benefits-----of being a grandparent is attending school concerts. As a child I had nothing to do with such activities----first of all because as I recall, few concert activities went on until high school, and secondly, I was orbiting in a somewhat different musical path. But at this time of life, Julie and I have had the pleasure of attending Sarah and Rachel Lewis, our granddaughters', school concerts. We have heard choir concerts with Sarah singing, and band and orchestra programs with Rachel playing the clarinet at both Slauson and Dicken Schools. These concerts all have been amazing, and uplifting.

Last night we attended the fifth grade music program at Dicken School. I was struck by the skill and authority with which Dan Tolly led his string players, stressing basic musical virtues and providing creative harmony at the keyboard while conducting. I watched Melissa Overheiser conduct and comment from the podium with boundless enthusiasm as she guided her wind, brass and percussionists into harmony. These teachers, as well as the many others in this community, have worked tirelessly to bring music and young students together in the common cause of a concert for parents, grandparents, fellow classmates, and other teachers. I could not have enjoyed a concert more, and I want to salute them and thank them for the pleasure they and their students gave grandparents Julie and Louis.

Now I would like to consider a couple of the virtues that were taught. There are many, but this is only a short article. For me, the most important virtue in making music is a good sense of rhythm. We who perform at a professional level are always reminded of its importance, especially if we play any sort of ensemble repertoire. How deflated I can feel when I am gently informed by a colleague, "Louie you are rushing here"-----I KNOW I am right and they are wrong until I put the metronome on and swallow my pride. So I was gratified when I saw the strings playing their pieces with a fine sense of rhythmic control, and good uniform bowing. Mr. Tolly told the audience that he stressed these virtues. It was also gratifying that when the tempos changed from one piece to another, or even within the piece itself, there was no raggedness. The players understood the rhythmic changes and anticipated them.

Another virtue I feel is important is enthusiasm. Mrs. Overheiser was a bundle of energy and spirit as she spoke to us about the music and then conducted with strong clear motions. The students responded in kind. They all had a sense of the joy of making music and a sense of their individual and collective presence before the audience. That is a contagious virtue, I promise you. If they are excited, we will be too.

There is another virtue that I need to address, but this one is not only a school-taught one. I think that in order to learn music ---- any music, popular, concert hall, eastern, western, whatever, it must be heard beyond the lesson or the classroom. I cannot remember very much about my own early lessons but I can assure my readers that in our house there was music on much of the time. Believe it or not we listened to The Hit Parade (remember that, those of you who are past never mind?) And we listened to the NBC Symphony Orchestra. I recall going to bed at an insufferably early hour but able to hear the radio (remember radio?) clearly from my bedroom as Toscanini (remember him?) conducted with alarming speed and verve a Beethoven symphony. I learned to hate Beethoven, as a matter of fact, because of his proclivity for sforzandi which really made it impossible for a little kid to drift off to dreamland. (In this I have somewhat changed, having played a fair amount of Beethoven and his sforzandi.) We had also a record player, a

Nagel, cont. on p. 11