

*Our Mission is to promote progressive ideas in music education, to encourage professionalism in the art of teaching;
and to stimulate a high standard of music and culture*

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President's Message

Sandra Kerr



As I reflect on SRMTA over the past teaching year and what has been accomplished, I am most thankful for the people who have given of their time, talent, and industry to this organization, whether they serve on the executive of the branches or the provincial board, or coordinate or attend an event. Inside this issue of Opus, SRMTA branches report on their activities, workshops, concerts, and acknowledgements. News at the provincial level includes: Convention/AGM in Saskatoon in October; the approval in principle of our bylaws from the Minister of Education; the recipients of the Dorothy Bee award, Community Service Awards, and the Summer Camp Bursary; results of the Gustin, Wallis, the Music Writing, and the new Jean McCulloch piano competitions; and the publication of the new provincial brochures. Nationally, the CFMTA Convention will be held in Regina in July of 2011. Of course none of this happens automatically. Thank you to board members and organizers! The adage "many hands make light work" certainly holds true, though often we see the same hands raised to volunteer time after time.

Mark the Fall Convention/AGM on your calendars. It promises to be an interesting event so we hope to see you there. The AGM? Okay, not the most interesting part but important nonetheless, for the association's business. Among other things, we will once again be asking for volunteers to serve on the Provincial Board. The requirements are simple: to be willing to "take your turn"; to contribute what skill and time you can; to be willing to learn about this association; and the ability to work as a team with other board members. Please read Sarah Clark Gregory's article about serving on the Board!

I want to thank again the board members and the many who organize our events. Thank you to Gregory Chase, our retiring Opus Editor, who so ably transformed our journal from paper to its electronic version. I'd also like to welcome Sheri Andrews, our new Registrar/Treasurer and soon-to-be-Opus Editor. With her background and work experience she will be a great asset to us.

As we head into the summer hiatus I hope you are able to take advantage of some "R&R" in whatever form that means for you. See you in the fall!

From the Editor's Computer

Gregory Chase

As I post the final issue of Opus E-journal it is time for me to say farewell as the Opus editor (again). I am pleased to announce that Sheri Andrews will take over as Opus editor. I know with her past experiences, which include being the Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Dutch Elm Disease Association, she will have much to bring to the format and style, as well as the makeup and content of Opus. Although I am leaving the role of Opus editor, I will be taking on the role of the coordinator for the SRMTA Winter Retreat 2011. As this is a new adventure for SRMTA, and a time for us to replenish our energy during the winter, and the halfway mark of the teaching year, I encourage you to take part in this new SRMTA venture. It will only be successful with YOUR participation.

In closing, I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve you as your Opus Editor.

A few tips on how to navigate through Opus Online

Please Visit our Sponsors. It is through their sponsorship that we are able to bring you OPUS. By clicking on the links under "Visit Our Sponsors", some links will take you directly to the supporter's website, while other links will open an advertisement or pdf file. If there is an email address or website link on the pdf file, click on these links to take you to the supporters website or email. SRMTA would like to thank all of our sponsors and thank them for their continued support as we venture down the electronic avenue.

On the left you will see the table of contents, "Found in this Issue". You can scroll down Opus to read the entire journal, or you can click on a specific topic. To return to the "Found in this Issue" (Table of Contents), click on the [back to top] link

New Submission Deadlines for OPUS

Fall: August 15, 2009
Winter: Nov. 1, 2009
Spring: May 15, 2010

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found on the bottom right of each article. Within an article, you may find a word that is underlined, this is linked to the application or document that is being referenced. This will save you from having to look for it on the website and will give you easy access to the mentioned document.

Have you ever wanted to send a quick email to a contributor of Opus, but kept forgetting when you were at the computer? Now, all you have to do is click on the contributor's name, found under the article's title, and your email program will open with the contributor's email address already addressed to the contributor. This will save you a step in looking up their email address.

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If there is a section you would like to print off, highlight that section with your cursor and click on the print button. While in the print preference window, click on "print selection". Only the text that you highlighted will be printed.

If you come across a page, link, or information which is not working, or accurate, please feel free to email the [webmaster](#) with the concern and necessary changes.

If you know of a member that has not yet submitted their email address to SRMTA, please encourage them to do so, and feel free to forward them the link to Opus.

Welcome to Sheri Andrews, our new Registrar, Treasurer, and Opus Editor

SRMTA welcomes Sheri Andrews as our Registrar, Treasurer and Opus Editor. She brings with her many years of administrative experience as Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Dutch Elm Disease Association as well as working with the Ministry of Environment as a Special Lands Forestry Specialist. Sheri received her Bachelor of Science Honours Degree, Bachelor of Physical Geography, Master of Science and one year of a Ph.D Environmental Engineering degree, from the University of Saskatchewan. And as if that wasn't enough education, Sheri is currently completing her Bachelor of Education degree at the University of Saskatchewan.

Sheri lives in Rosthern with her two young boys where she enjoys her indoor and outdoor sports, a variety of music, reading, quilting, home renovations, photography and scrap booking.

Welcome Sheri.

Have An Event?

Does your branch have an event that they would like to share? Contact the [webmaster](#) with the information formatted as you would like it posted on our website's [Events Page](#).

Stay in Touch

Have you moved or changed your e-mail address? Be sure to stay in touch by forwarding your address changes to the [Registrar](#).

Dorothy Bee Memorial Scholarship

Gail Murray

Marjorie Moldon of Foam Lake has been chosen as the 2010 winner of the Dorothy Bee Memorial Scholarship. A member of Yorkton SRMTA Branch and member of SRMTA for a year, Marjorie is an experienced piano teacher currently working toward her Associate Diploma with CNCM. Having also studied voice, she is active in her area and surrounding communities in a variety of musical interests.

From the Recipient of the Dorothy Bee Memorial Scholarship

Marj Moldon

I would like to take this opportunity to thank SRMTA for providing teachers with the Dorothy Bee Memorial Scholarship. I will be taking lessons for four exams. These exams include: Credit twelve for Associate Teacher's Pedagogy course with the Canadian National Conservatory of Music. In this written pedagogy exam I will answer questions regarding sight reading, ear training, technique, style of music, repertoire, ways to correct problems in music, the history of the piano, etc. I will also be completing the Senior Repertoire exams including playing grades 9, 10 and Associate pieces and questions regarding how to teach these pieces and an Intermediate Repertoire exam regarding grades five to eight where I also play the pieces and answer questions related to the pieces.

The money that I receive will also be used for a festival workshop related to the pieces that will be played for the exams and of course for the exams themselves. I will be using the information that I gain to better teach my students; in the music activities that I conduct with mentally and physically challenged students; in group lessons with younger students; in singing and playing with our local community choirs and leading worship in our church services. Thank – you so much for this scholarship.

Young Artist 2010 Update

Cathy Donahue

The Provincial/Interprovincial Young Artist Competition took place at the U of S Quance Theatre on March 20, 2010. The only Saskatchewan competitor was Chelsea Mahan, soprano from Saskatoon. After Chelsea's performance, the Manitoba representative, Daniel Tselyakov, pianist from Brandon, presented his program. Both artist performed beautifully and judges David McIntyre and Lisa Hornung adjourned to pick a winner.

Chelsea Mahan was named the Young Artist winner. She is accompanied by Kathleen Lohrenz Gable. Chelsea is a recent Education Grad from the U of S and although she will be busy Interning in the schools in the fall, she is looking forward to the tour and visiting all the centres across Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Watch for a complete Bio in the coming month.

Here is the 2010 Young Artist Tour schedule. Plan to attend when she visits your community; you won't be disappointed.

Fri. Sept 17.....Saskatoon
Sat. Sept. 18....East Central ...either Humboldt or Watrous
Sun. Sept 19... Prince Albert
Fri. Sept 24.... Regina
Sat. Sept 25Rosetown
Sun. Sept 26....Swift Current
Sun. Oct. 3 North Battleford
Sat. Oct. 16..... Brandon
Sun. Oct. 17.... Winnipeg
Times and venues TBA

For more information please contact [Cathy Donahue](#)....Western Young Artist Convenor

SRMTA Fall 2010 Convention and AGM

For full information on the Convention, click here [link removed due to time-dated information)

Tickets are already selling and registrations are pouring in! What an exciting way to celebrate being only 5 months away from the Chopin at 200 convention.

Dr Jennifer Snow has announced her workshop topics - Dr Snow is the head of pedagogy for the RCM and teaches performance and pedagogy at UCLA.

RCM Workshop on Pedagogy - Friday, October 15th at 3:30pm

Strong Foundations:

This interactive workshop will discuss the importance of strong foundations in our teaching. Through a range of teaching fundamentals, Dr. Jennifer Snow will explore the core concepts of piano playing and learning processes and how these elements are the foundation for our teaching at all levels. An integrated holistic approach to building successful musicianship essential to teacher pedagogy will be discussed.

Chopin Workshop - Saturday, October 16th at 9am

Inspiring the Imagination

The Salon Music Of Chopin

Join Dr. Jennifer Snow for this engaging workshop on the salon music of Chopin. Experience the atmosphere of the waltzes, nocturnes, and mazurkas to inspire and illuminate the wonders of Chopin for your students. Chopin's unique style and influences will be discussed through his music with pedagogical strategies to help further engage and motivate students.

Important Note about concert VIP tickets - please note that your Early Bird registration is the only way to get VIP tickets. VIP tickets are NOT for sale through Persephone Theatre's Box Office. Tickets are now on sale for the general public at Persephone's Box Office - 384-7727 or www.persephonetheatre.org There are a limited number of VIP seats - if you want VIP seating you must register for the convention before July 1st. We have already had a lot of registrations come in, please do not miss out on having VIP seating for Jan Lisiecki in Concert.

Early Bird Registration is \$100, and the deadline is July 1st. After that VIP seating will no longer be available.

We are wondering if there would be interest in a Vocal Workshop on the Friday afternoon at 3:30. We would appreciate hearing feedback from voice teachers on how a vocal workshop would be received. We are open to any and all suggestions!

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask- [Mark](#) at 652-4413.

Check out www.rmt2010.blogspot.com for ongoing updates on news about the convention and concert!

Chopin at 200 Convention FAQ's

How can I book my VIP ticket for Jan Lisiecki in Concert?

The only way to get a VIP ticket is to send in your Early Bird Registration. Once you send in your registration before July 1st, we automatically reserve you VIP seat, and you will get your ticket when you register at the convention earlier on the day of the concert.

What does my registration include?

Everything. Well, almost. It covers the cost of all workshops, a VIP concert ticket, the Saturday luncheon, and our President's Reception held at one of Saskatoon's hottest spots The Ivy. Registration does not cover Friday evening supper.

When is the Early Bird deadline?

The Early Bird deadline is July 1st.

Where can we stay for the convention?

The convention is being held at the newly renovated Best Western on Idylwyld Drive. They are offering us a "convention rate" so please be sure to book and ask for that when you call to reserve your room.

Where can I hear Jan?

Jan Lisiecki's first CD, The Chopin Concertos, is available for purchase on iTunes. It is being hailed as one of the great recordings of the concertos.

Can my student register for the convention?

Yes! Please consider having senior students who would be interested register for this exciting education opportunity.

How do friends/students get concert tickets?

Tickets are available through Persephone Theatre's Box Office, offering three great ways to get your tickets: in person, online at www.persephonetheatre.org, or over the phone 306-384-7727. Tickets are on sale now.

Where can I get updates and more information?

Please check out our convention/concert blog - www.rmt2010.blogspot.com. It can answer most questions, and has lots of cool features including videos and links to all sorts of convention related things!

Bylaws Revised

Audrey Bayduza

At last year's annual meeting, we presented by-laws revised to accommodate the new levels of membership. Those by-laws were passed. Pursuant to the Registered Music Teachers Act, the by-laws were then submitted to the Minister of Education for approval. The Minister's legal advisors "suggested" that several changes be made before the by-laws could be approved.

1. There were a few typographical errors - punctuation omitted, "t's" not crossed. These errors have been corrected.
2. It was suggested that the exact amount of our annual fees should be stipulated in the by-laws. We pointed out to the Minister that our fees change every year and stating a specific amount in the by-laws would then make necessary a complete revision of the by-laws each year. This suggestion was withdrawn.
3. It was suggested that the sections of the by-laws be re-numbered so that Membership was in a separate section by itself. This has been done.
4. The legal advisors took the position that, under the Act, any member of the Association has to have at least some, minimal musical qualifications. It was, therefore, not possible for us to create the Auxiliary Membership category as there were no minimal musical qualifications necessary for admission to this category of membership.

It was suggested that we should, instead, allow for persons to be come "Friends of the Association." This suggestion took us a bit by surprise as there was no objection to the Auxiliary Membership category when it was first discussed. However, as this was simply a concern with what we called this group of people, it did not seem worth arguing over. One should, after all, choose carefully what one is going to argue about with lawyers! We have simply changed all references to "Auxiliary Members" to "Friends of the Association." There has been no change to the rights or responsibilities given to persons in this category.

The Ministry has told us that, if these by-laws are passed as they are, then they would recommend them for approval by the Minister. We are, therefore, presenting them to the membership, once more, for approval.

To view the new Bylaws that will be voted on at the AGM [click here](#)

Resolution - "Affiliate 3" Motion

Saskatoon Branch

Currently SRMTA has 3 membership levels . . . full RMT status, and 2 types of Affiliate memberships for those teachers who have completed their Grade 9 and 10 qualifications. We move that SRMTA explore the idea of expanding its membership to include a new Affiliate 3 category, similar to what has happened in a number of other provinces across Canada, and that this new Affiliate 3 membership category be created for those teachers who have completed Grade 8 qualifications.

Motion made by: Noreen King, RMT

And seconded by: Lynn Ewing, RMT

Resolution - Minimum Tuition

Saskatoon Branch

[NOTICE OF CORRECTION:

In the minutes of the 2004 AGM, the motion reads: "...that we raise the minimum lesson rate from \$15.00 to \$17.00 per half hour and that the provincial minimum rate be reviewed every 2 years." The "incremental cost of living increase" as mentioned below, only applies to the professional membership fee.]

Preamble: An incremental cost of living increase is to take place every two years to our Association's recommended minimum tuition.

Be it resolved that the Saskatchewan Registered Music Teachers Association increase the recommended minimum tuition for a 30 minute lesson to \$22.

Moved by: Noreen King

Seconded: Heather Waldner

What is Happening Around the Province

Battlefords Branch

Diane Neil

We held our annual meeting on May 1, 2010. We will again be sponsoring and hosting the Young Artist Concert, featuring Chelsea Mahan, soprano, from Saskatoon, hopefully in October. We discussed ideas for our Canada Music Week concert as well as ideas for future enrichment programs. We conducted Election of Officers and Appointment to Committees. Congratulations to our new President, Robyn Rutherford and new Vice-President, Cathy Swerid. Diane Neil remains as secretary and Carolyn Voss as Treasurer. Special congratulations to one of our members, Junice Headley, who was inducted into the Battlefords Wall of Fame on March 10, 2010 in the category of Arts for her ongoing commitment to the community in the field of music. The other categories for the inductees are Business, Humanities, Science, Education, and Sports. An awards ceremony was held in the Frontier Mall, with a large audience attending. The Meota Hobby Band, which Junice is a member of, performed following the ceremony. Later, Junice's family hosted a delicious banquet for 60 close friends and relatives in her honor. Junice certainly is a well-deserved

recipient of this most prestigious award and we as a group are very proud of her.

We are all looking forward to a restful and enjoyable summer.

West Central Branch

Cathy Donahue

It's been another busy and successful year for the WC Branch. We started the year in Aug. at the home of Cathy Donahue near Perdue where we enjoyed catching up and planning our year.

In Oct. we were pleased to have our own Gloria Nickel present a workshop on the New Festival Syllabus. It was also at this meeting that we decided to put together another Con Brio Cookbook. With Peggy L'Hoir heading this endeavour we got busy and by the end of February we had **Con Brio Encore** ready to sell. It has been well received and makes a great gift. Call any WC member for your copy!

Our Contemporary Showcase held in Rosetown in November was very successful. Wes Froese was a very positive and enthusiastic adjudicator. The special "Wall of Fame" featuring all participating students, and the Silent Auction were especially enjoyed by all attending. Canada Music Week Recitals were also held in Biggar, Rosetown, Kindersley, Kerrobert.

We all had a wonderful time at our Christmas Social at the home of Claire Seibold. We welcomed new member Kerry Lowndes who had recently moved from Tisdale to Kindersley. We especially enjoyed the Carolling of a Madrigal Trio from Rosetown.

In February we met in Kerrobert at the home of MaryLou Dawes. MaryLou and Laura Ewson presented a workshop on some of the new RCM Contemporary music. In April we traveled to Helen Barclay's studio at Arts West in Kindersley where we enjoyed hearing Helen's Adult Drum Circle perform. What a treat.

We continue to enjoy performances by MaryLou Dawes at all of our meetings. This year we have heard a rarely heard Clementi Sonata, Lennox Berkeley's "Six Preludes", Faure Preludes, and some Kabalevsky. We are fortunate indeed to have such a treasure among us. We look forward to our year-end BBQ and more music at the home of Donna Thomson in Alsask in May.

Our new executive for 2010-2011 is:

President – Cathy Donahue

Vice- Pres. – Peggy L'Hoir

Secretary – Helen Barclay

Treasurer – Laura Ewson

Regina Branch

Kim Engen

It was an exciting year for the Regina Branch! We hosted our first ever week long session of workshops, **A Week With Nancy Telfer**, involving private teachers, the school systems, the university, local choirs, and church choirs. It was a huge, but successful undertaking in which Nancy Telfer provided workshops and master classes for students, teachers and choirs, culminating in a concert of her works at the end of the week.

The Regina Branch has also tried to update our mode of communication by establishing our first wikispace. We are using the wikispace to notify members of upcoming meetings, workshops and concerts, to display our students' awards and accomplishments, and as advertising for our local members. A wikispace is unique from a website in that all members can edit and add information, posting concerts, events etc. and it is free for us to set up and use. As everyone gets used to using it, the wiki will become a very useful communication tool for the branch. You can check out our wiki at www.srmtaregina.wikispaces.com.

In March we had a yoga workshop given by Kelly Green that focused on relaxation and stress relief techniques for performers, students and teachers. It was so informative and practical that Karen Frandsen, who was the organizer of this workshop, is looking into the idea of having a class set up for members in the fall. In addition to yoga, we are also getting our exercise with "Pedagogy Walk the Talk" where teachers get together to walk around Wascana Lake discussing pedagogical issues together, while enjoying a little sunshine! We are also looking forward to a Business Policies Round Table Discussion to be held in May with Janice Elliott-Denike hosting.

In November and January we co-hosted two discussion groups with the Yamaha Piano store on the benefits of students having a properly maintained, good quality piano and the pros and cons of the digital piano. Roger Jolly and Garry Paul were able to give us with lots of pertinent information and provide thought provoking discussions.

Avila Lotoski and Tanya Myles are currently organizing a branch recital at the Cathedral Village Arts Festival in May. Students will perform one morning in a local church and in the afternoon outside Cobb Swanson Music. This is a great opportunity to promote our organization and celebrate our students' achievements.

It wasn't all work this year though! We enjoyed a lovely Christmas Party this year hosted by Kathy Watt and we are looking forward to a family BBQ held in Wascana Park in June.

Our future endeavours include a Baroque Dance workshop, a workshop with Valerie Hall on Baroque performance practices and the teaching of ornamentation, and a "Know Your Piano" Workshop to be given by U of R piano technician, Amy Porter. We hope to continue to be a progressive organization providing many learning and growth opportunities for our members.

Saskatoon Branch

Mark Turner

The Saskatoon Branch has been busy in the last few months with workshops and planning for the fall convention. In February we had a presentation on "How to work with different learning styles" with child psychologist Darcia Evans. This is the second presentation we've had from Darcia, and as always she brought her incredible knowledge and fantastic sense of humour to the workshop. It was a great reminder that sometimes when our students "aren't getting it" it might be because we haven't explained it in the learning style that student needs.

In March we held our Annual General Meeting - it was great to see so many of our members who came to take part in recapping a great year, and making decisions for the future. To coincide with the AGM, we had a presentation from member Bonnie Nicholson on "A Teacher's Approach to Chopin". People have been raving about her workshop ever since! Also in March, we held our annual Medalist Recital at St James Church - had a lot of great performances, and a great crowd turn out.

Now that we've all survived festival, its time to wrap up the year and look forward to some time not glued to our teaching schedules. We end our year with our annual May potluck, at the home of Karen Reynaud, later this month.

Lots of work is going in to the upcoming convention and Saskatoon members are very excited to see everyone in October!

Swift Current Branch

Rebecca Chilton

In January we discussed the value of introducing Baroque music early to students. In March we enjoyed the workshop with Audrey Bayduza, "Just say No to note-pushers" as well as a guided tour of the current exhibit at the Art Gallery.

The Swift Current branch sponsored several scholarships again at our Music festival: \$150 to the most promising senior piano student, \$150 to the most promising senior vocal student, \$50 to the winner of the accompanist classes. We also manage scholarship money left in memorium of Margaret Anderson, Hazel Steinborn and Helen McIntosh (Helen's is a high school bursary).

Our May meeting concluded with a pot luck lunch. Election of officers produced the following executive for 2010-2011:

President- Heather MacNab
Vice-president- Diana Martens
Past-president- Lois Noble
Secretary- Rebecca Chilton
Treasurer- Grace Funk
Publicity/Archives- Marilyn Ginther

We all look forward to enjoying some sun and a restful summer.

Yorkton Branch

Barb Waldbauer

Greetings to our fellow Saskatchewan teachers. The teaching year is nearly over and we are preparing for exams, final recitals, and many other music-related occasions.

We held our Contemporary Showcase Workshop, Recital, and adjudicated sessions on Nov 27 & 28. Our clinician and adjudicator was David McIntyre, and we thank him for an informative and inspirational weekend. His concert on Friday night was enjoyed by everyone. Our Christmas luncheon was held in November this year. We met at Melrose Place on Nov.21 and decided that we each would donate \$10 to charity rather than exchange gifts. We donated to the Yorkton Salvation Army. Our Annual Music-Writing Competition was judged in February. Nine students entered, and as always we were impressed by the talents of our students. This year we decided to sponsor a Spring Gala Concert to give our students an opportunity to perform. We held the concert on March 8 at the Gallagher Centre, combining a Boy's Recital, Vocal Recital, Girl's Recital and Duet Recital, for an entire afternoon of 50 performances. It was such a success that we are sure to make it an annual event!

SRMTA Music Writing Competition Winners

Audrey Watson

8 YEARS AND UNDER – PREPARATORY, CLASS 1 (\$50 PRAIRIE MALT AWARD)

First Place: Jessica Tosh

Composition: "Ladybug"

Student of Noreen King

Second Place: Judith Gieck

Composition: "Bouncy Bouncy"

Student of Janet Gieck

11 YEARS AND UNDER – CATEGORY A, CLASS 1 (\$75 PRAIRIE MALT AWARD)

First Place: Adrianna Dolata

Composition: "Spanish Delight"

Student of Sarah Konecsni

Second Place: Anna Glasgow

Composition: "In the Meadow"

Student of Raena Barnes

15 YEARS AND UNDER – CATEGORY B, CLASS 1 (\$100 PRAIRIE MALT AWARD)

First Place: Sarah Cunningham

Composition: "Aiden"

Student of Sharon Guina

Second Place: Alissa Creurer

Compositions: "Rain"

Student of Sharon Guina

19 YEARS AND UNDER – CATEGORY C, CLASS 1 (\$150 PRAIRIE MALT AWARD)

First Place: Brandon Mooney

Composition: "Blink"

Student of Sarah Clark Gregory

Second Place: Brooklyn Nemetchek

Composition: "He Spoke"

Student of Janet Gieck

Adjudicator's Choice

Sarah Cunningham

Composition: "Aiden"

Student of Sharon Guina

SRMTA Summer Music Camp Award

Gail Murray

The winner of the SRMTA Summer Music Camp Award for 2010 is Presley Reddekopp of Prambun, Sk. Presley who is a student of Beatrice Peters, plans to attend Wes Froese's Gospel and Worship Music Camp in Swift Current in August. The award will be \$150.00 and will be presented after Presley attends camp. We look forward to hearing all about it in the next issue of Opus.

Memorial Donations

In memory of loved ones, former music teachers, colleagues or students, you may receive a tax receipt for donations of \$50 or more. The method for receiving such a tax receipt is as follows:

Make the cheque out to CFMTA

Send the cheque and indicate to where you would like acknowledgement be sent, to:

SRMTA
Box 754
Rosthern, SK S0K 3R0

These memorial donations will be used to help a deserving music student to attend a music camp of his or her choice. Donations of less than \$50 will also be welcomed but a regular receipt rather than a tax receipt will be sent to the donor. The method for submitting this type of donation is as follows:

Make the cheque out to SRMTA

Send the cheque along with where you would like acknowledgement to be sent:

SRMTA
Box 754
Rosthern, SK S0K 3R0

Margaret Elizabeth Anderson (nee Kennedy)

Lois Noble



Margaret Kennedy was born July 24, 1920 and spent her early years on the family homestead at Waterhole, Alberta before moving with her family to the farm at Green Island on the Peace River overlooking Dunvegan. She took her high school and piano lessons in Fairview, Alberta and in 1939-1940 attended Normal School in Edmonton.

In September 1940 Margaret began her teaching career. She especially loved music and drama. Margaret and her husband Hank and family moved to Swift Current in 1963 where she became involved in church and community activities.

Margaret was a fine musician who sang and accompanied at many events and taught piano and voice to countless students over more than 50 years. She directed the First United Church Children's Choir, also the Rotary Chorus for the Annual Carol Festival. She performed with the Swift Current Oratorio Choir and the First United Church Senior Choir.

The Saskatchewan Choral Federation recognized Margaret with the "Golden Note Award" in 1993. Margaret was a founding member of the Swift Current Registered Music Teachers' Association and served as the Royal Conservatory Representative for twenty four years.

She was very involved with the Swift Current Music Festival both as a performer and submitted many student entries. She also loved the visual arts and was involved in many aspects of the arts community in Swift Current. She was an active supporter of the Swift Current Allied Arts Council and a dedicated member of the Orpheus Club.

Margaret also served on the National Board of "Save the Children- Canada" for many years.

Most of all, Margaret was a loving wife, mother of five, grandmother to seven and a very special friend to many. She had wonderful sense of humour and a determination that enabled her to overcome life's many obstacles.

She will continue to be an inspiration to us all.

Hot Off the Press!

Gail Murray

SRMTA has new brochures for prospective students. They are being distributed to teachers this spring with the hope that you find them useful in promoting your studio. The brochures will be available on-line for you to print off more as needed.

To download a copy of the brochure [click here](#) We ask, if possible, to print this on cream coloured paper to unify the look of our brochure with the CFMTA brochure and our insert.

Plan now to attend the 2011 CFMTA Convention



For more information, [click here](#)

The Gryphon Trio

As the featured artists of the 2011 CFMTA Convention, the Gryphon Trio will be performing a concert and giving master classes, clinics, and workshops. Jamie Parker will be an adjudicator for the CFMTA Piano Competition and Roman Borys and Annalee Patipatanakoon will be performing David McIntyre's Piano Trio with the finalists of the piano competition.

Thomas Yu

As a former winner of the CFMTA Piano Competition we are thrilled to have Thomas Yu agree to be part of this convention. The winner of numerous amateur piano competitions, including the 2009 Bösendorfer International Piano Competition for Amateurs, Thomas' performance experience around the globe gives him much to offer those attending the convention.



Canadian Composer Day

Composers of all ages will be in attendance at the convention. From winners of the CFMTA Music Writing Competition to the Call for Compositions winners, our Canadian Music will be heard in formal and informal venues. Established composers will be in attendance to showcase their compositions and to work with young composers.

University of Regina

Adjacent to Regina's Wascana Lake in beautiful Wascana Park, the University of Regina is the venue for the 2011 CFMTA Convention. New dormitory facilities provide comfortable and affordable accommodations. A variety of other accommodation options are also available within a short drive of the University.

Plan to be part of Convention 2011 How you can get involved ...

A) Convention Session Proposals

As part of the planning for the 2011 CFMTA Convention, we are inviting interested teachers and composers to put forth a proposal on a topic they would like to present in keeping with the theme of this convention, "Music is a Life Force".

1. **GENERAL SESSIONS** – Teachers are invited to submit proposals on workshop sessions they feel would be of interest and relevance to primarily private studio teachers in various disciplines– piano, voice, strings, etc.
2. **CANADIAN COMPOSER SESSIONS** – Canadian composers are invited to participate in the special Canadian Composers' Day, July 7th. There will be opportunities for presenting workshops for delegates and/or young student composers, for showcasing compositions in mini recitals, and for displaying in the trade show.

Proposals should not be commercial in nature. The convention committee will choose from the submitted proposals and preference will be given to those with pedagogical value, and also those that offer a significant music making component on the part of the presenter and/or involvement of the delegates.

Sessions are generally 60 to 90 minutes in length.

B) Poster Session Proposals

The convention will provide an opportunity for the presentation of posters that present pedagogical ideas in a condensed way, geared to the visual learner. These posters should be based on studio/pedagogy projects that demonstrate interesting and creative ways of teaching music skills such as harmonization, sight playing, composition, music history, theory, or any other practical information, at any level.

Please visit www.cfmta.org for detailed information on submitting proposals and deadlines



Give a Little, Gain a Lot -- Reflections on serving on the SRMTA Board

Sarah Clark Gregory

Did you know that:

- Saskatchewan has the highest percentage of volunteers in Canada, but the lowest number of volunteer hours, yet just under 5% of volunteers account for 54% of the volunteer hours? (CSGVP p. 39) This means many people give a few hours a year, while 5% of our population gives over 400 hours per year.
- only 2-3% of those volunteer hours are given in the areas of arts and culture? (CSGVP p. 47)
- most Canadian volunteers are in the 15-24 year age bracket? (CSGVP p. 53)
- volunteerism is a growing "prosocial behaviour" trend in Canada?

Be part of the trend? I'd like to, but ...

"I Don't Have the Time"

In fact, through the SRMTA Community Music Awards (CMA) Program, some of our students have already donated 60 volunteer hours this academic year already. Meanwhile, I have volunteered about 45 - 50 hours as a board member. Yes, that's right ... some of your students have given more time than me! The good news for YOU in this, is that as a board member, your time commitment would not necessarily be any greater than your own students give. Obviously, some members of our board contribute many, many more hours than I do. The minimum time requirements are 3 meetings per year (total about 15 hours), and keeping up with weekly communications (about 30 - 45 minutes per week). If you choose to, you can take on more responsibilities through overseeing a particular program (CMA) or project (designing and printing the new SRMTA brochures), but those additional hours are totally at your discretion. I have never experienced any pressure from a board member to take on more than what my schedule ever allows.

"No One Has Asked Me"

I was asked by another board member to consider serving. As a shy person, I was grateful for that invitation, and for someone I knew to be with me at the first couple of meetings. But it didn't take long to feel very welcomed by everyone else in the room. Do you need an invitation? Please consider this your personal invitation. Nervous about coming alone? Ask a friend to volunteer with you.

"What's in it for me?"

1. *You can make an important contribution.* Volunteer hours in Canada are estimated to be valued at approximately \$16.50 per hour. This means, in a year of volunteering on the SRMTA board, you have donated upwards of \$825 in volunteering value to your colleagues without writing a cheque!
2. *You can make a unique contribution.* We all have our unique strengths, and we have a more fulfilling life experience when we are able to use our strengths and see positive outcomes. What excites me more than anything is to see young people begin to dream about what their future may look like and have positive experiences as they "try out" their dreams in preliminary ways structured for success. That is why the CMA program was such a good fit as a special project as a part of what I could uniquely offer.
3. *You broaden your role modelling to your students.* We work hard at modelling the importance of theoretical knowledge behind the playing/singing, and of making music not just learning notes. We also need to model community involvement in the arts, and it's hard if not hypocritical) to encourage my students to volunteer in the arts if I don't.
4. *You develop deeper collegiality.* Two years ago, my circle of colleagues that I would have sought out for exchanging teaching tips (for example) was very good, but was much smaller than it is today. During my involvement with the board, I have met wonderful, warm, talented, giving people who would welcome giving support to me personally. Some of these new colleagues are the board members, but some are those who have taken the time to introduce themselves to me at gatherings because I am a board member.

Had I known at the beginning of my teaching (during the previous millennium!) what I know now about the benefits of serving on a provincial registered teachers executive, I would have volunteered much, much sooner. And I would encourage **you**, teacher, to begin thinking about letting your name stand for election to the SRMTA board this coming fall, and call a friend to join you in the adventure.

Sources

Caring Canadians, Involved Canadians: Highlights from the 2007

Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating ("CSGVP"), c. 2009 http://www.givingandvolunteering.ca/files/giving/en/csgvp_highlights_2007.pdf

Call for Compositions

CFMTA is calling for compositions for performance during Canada Music Week 2010. For more information click here . . . [link removed due to time-dated information]

Are you missing Festival Focus? You can read this on SMFA's website. [Click here](#) . . .

A Week with Nancy Telfer

Kim Engen

In February 2010, the Regina Branch hosted esteemed Canadian composer, Nancy Telfer, for a week of workshops with teachers, choirs and piano and voice students. The week concluded with a concert featuring pieces composed by Nancy. Eight local students each did an admirable job performing one of Nancy's pieces, and Nancy performed one of her piano duets with a local teacher. In addition, we were pleased to have three choirs sing at the concert, Juventus Concert Choir, Cantate Senior Choir, and Luther Girls Choir. The concert concluded with a massed choir performance of the Swallow, conducted by Nancy. There were approximately 300 people in attendance to hear these enjoyable performances.

We were very pleased with the number of participants we had for all the workshops/master classes. We had the following number of participants:

Choir Workshops: 9 choirs

Private Composition Lessons: 4

Teacher Workshop: 40

Student Masterclasses: 30 students, 14 teachers observing and 27 parents/observers

What was particularly gratifying was that we were able to involve a number of other local musical organizations and groups; the university, the public and private school systems, local community and youth choirs, and church choirs. In addition, a wide variety of teachers participated, both RMTs and non-RMTs, including teachers coming all the way from Yorkton, Yellow Grass and Foam Lake.

All of this would not have been possible without the tireless work of the committee, Sandra Kerr, Diana Woolrich, and Greg Chase. [EDITOR'S NOTE: Kim Engen played a vital role on this committee as well.] It was an honour to work with such a dedicated group on this project. I am also very grateful to all the branch members who volunteered and participated in this week of workshops. Branch members and spouses helped with various jobs; baking for the reception, helping at the concert and workshops, providing advertising opportunities, driving Nancy to her workshops and much more. Special thanks to Christine Vanderkooy for doing such a wonderful job as emcee at the concert. The support of these volunteers made this venture a success..

CFMTA What's New

CFMTA has added a "What's New" link to their website. [Check it out . . .](#)

Jean McCulloch Junior Piano Competition

Karen Langlois

Congatulations to the first place winners of the *Jean McCulloch Junior Piano Competition!* This inaugural event took place on Saturday, May 29 at the Dr. William Riddell Centre at the University of Regina. Dr. Joan Miller from Brandon, MB adjudicated the fine young pianists. Each competitor performed a programme including a Baroque, Classical and Canadian piece, as well as a larger work or a variety of smaller works from one or more other periods. The competitors were divided into categories by grade level.

The winner of the *Roger Jolly Yamaha* Grade 3/4 award of \$200 was Mary Sidloski from Weyburn, taught by Cherith Alexander. The winner of the *Roger Jolly Yamaha* Grade 5/6 award of \$250 was Bailey Parr-Hutchinson from Moose Jaw, taught by Carol McWilliams. The winner of the *Tim Hammond Realty* Grade 7/8 award of \$300 was Kean-Martin D. Seno from Regina, taught by Sarah Konescni. Thank you to our sponsors!

Congratulations to all the other participants and teachers!

Thank you to all of the volunteers who helped out with the competition including Local Coordinator Avila Lotoski, Sandra Kerr, Greg Chase, and members of the Regina SRMTA. Thank you also to the University of Regina for use of the venue and piano.



Grade 3/4 Level

(Left to Right) Dr. Joan Miller (adjudicator), Mary Sidloski, Jonah Toth



Grade 5/6 Level

(Left to Right) Bailey Parr-Hutchinson, Dr, Joan Miller (adjudicator)



Grade 7/8 Level

(Left to Right) Kean-Martin D. Seno, Kovie Luu, Erik Andvaag, Mason Charlton, Dr, Joan Miller (adjudicator)

**Lyell Gustin Memorial Piano Scholarship
Lynn Ewing**



Melissa Liu (1st) student of Bonnie Nicholson
Eric Bews (2nd) student of Lynn Ewing
Anita Lazaruko (3rd) student of Cherith Alexander (missing)
David Tutt, adjudicator





Gustin competitors from left to right: Thomas Yee, Cordell Young, Britney Alexander, Naomi Kwong, Gabrielle Paul-McKenzie Melissa Liu (seated), Megan Zong, Meagan Ong, Katie Ng, Lena Xiao, Brandyn Rodgerson Back row: David Tutt, adjudicator, Bevan Buhler, Eric Bews, Justin Min Missing: Anita Lazurko and Cora Xiao

Gordon C. Wallis Piano Competition Eunice Koehler



Karen King, winner of the Wallis Pedagogy scholarship, student of Lynn Ewing
David Tutt, adjudicator

Community Music Award Program

Sarah Clark Gregory

The May Community Music Award (CMA) recipients. We have 5 Bronze CMA and 2 Gold CMA recipients as follows:

Bronze

Joshua Amendt-Moylan - East Central Branch
Kelsey Hammond - West Central Branch (WCB)
Lara McCarty - WCB
Tayler McCarty - WCB
Kyle McCarty - WCB

Gold

Regan Sittler - WCB
Katja Meszaros - WCB

Desperate Situations Call for Desperate Measures

A Story with a Happy Ending

Lore Ruschiensky

At this time of year we are all looking forward to a much needed break from our hectic schedules and our wonderful students. At the same time we are making plans for next year and we may be wondering what to do with those students who are not always so wonderful. Lack of practice, lack of focus or a bad attitude may have gotten to us during the year and we are considering if we really want to spend another year with the same issues.

This is the situation I found myself in with four students – two different families, one of two girls and one of two boys. They were all great kids, very bright and very musical BUT, due to the reasons mentioned above, many lessons during the year had felt like negative experiences for me and for them. The result was that productive music lessons were few and far between. I had already arranged to have a meeting with both families – parents included of course – when I was given a brilliant idea from a teacher (Liselotte Jongedijk) in Toronto in whose music school I was examining. Her solution to the problem was that if a student arrived at a lesson and had not practiced, the lesson counted as two and parent had to pay double. When the time for the meeting arrived I had written up a contract with the double lessons charge

clause and I added another one of my own to address another situation that arose often especially with the older children in the family. If students displayed a negative attitude that would end any real learning, they would be sent home.

With the parents in attendance, we discussed the reasons for these rules and everyone was free to offer their input. In the end however, I do run my own studio so the rules are mine. If they wanted to continue lessons in the fall, the students and parents were required to sign the contract which they did and we all headed off on our summer holidays.

I scheduled the lesson times in such a way that if the contracts were not kept my teaching schedule was not horribly disrupted. The beginning of the year went predictably well but soon the old habits returned. First, one student was sent home after 30 minutes of an hour lesson. And later the other three were charged double for lessons where the material had not been prepared. Enforcing the rules made immediate changes that were for the most part maintained throughout the year. A display of attitude from one of the young teen students later in the year resulted in an invitation to call home for a ride home. When she accepted the offer and got her father on the phone her tune changed immediately and we continued on with a productive lesson.

While all of this may seem harsh the wonderful outcome of enforcing the rules in the contract has had a wonderful result for all four of the students and of course for me. They all did or will be doing piano exams this year, the older two wrote two levels of theory, all participated in Contemporary Showcase and Music Festival and are overall happy students excitedly looking forward to another year of music next year (as am I).

One of the families has a Clavinova and had been told repeatedly it should be upgraded to an acoustic piano to no avail. They are now making moves to upgrade their instrument. It feels great to be able to give genuine praise for work well done. At this past weeks' lesson when I wholeheartedly endorsed some fine playing for a Grade 1 exam by the youngest of the four she insisted on giving me a hug!

I have told them all that I am SO GLAD that they signed those contracts! I now look forward to their lessons each week and two of them are at 8:00 a.m.!

SRMTA Winter Retreat 2011

February 4 - 6, 2011

Shekinah Retreat Centre
Waldheim, SK

Cost (all inclusive*)

\$199 -- SRMTA Member

\$225 -- Non-SRMTA Member

*Includes all meals, snacks, lodging, and attendance to all sessions being offered.

Further Registration information will be available in the Fall 2010.

The SRMTA Winter Retreat will be a time of rejuvenation for teachers. It's an opportunity for us to do something for ourselves. As winter sets in and as we approach the half way mark of the teaching year, often times a little "pick me up" is what is needed to give us the boost to carry on the momentum for the remainder of the year. The SRMTA Winter Retreat will provide you with this. [Shekinah Retreat Centre](#) is located 50 minutes north of Saskatoon, nestled in the valley of the North Saskatchewan River.

Call for Proposals:

SRMTA is accepting proposals for the SRMTA Winter Retreat 2011. Topics should be applicable to teachers of all instruments/disciplines. Provide the title and a brief description of the session being offered (approx. 500) words. Presentations should fall within the time range of 45 - 75 minutes. Deadline for submissions is August 15, 2010.

Presenters will have access to a piano, small sound system, white board, multi-media projector and screen, and laptop. Any other AV equipment will need to be supplied by the presenter. Please note that there will not be internet access, unless you are able to tether to a 3G device (e.g. iPhone). Presenters will be asked to supply their own handouts.

Since the retreat is a small fund raiser for SRMTA, we ask that the selected presenters donate their session and cover their cost of travel, accommodations and meals (approx. \$115). SRMTA will cover the remainder of the retreat costs for presenters.

When submitting a proposal, please include the following information:

- Title of the session
- Brief description of the session (approx. 500 words)
- Time length of session
- AV or other requirements to be supplied for the session
- Name of the presenter
- Contact information of the presenter
- Email address of the presenter
- Biography of the presenter

Submit proposals, via email, to [Gregory Chase](#) by August 15, 2010.

Please note that to keep the "retreat" atmosphere, a trade fair will not be available. However, presenters are free to sell their product to help receive remuneration for their session.

Request A Topic:

Is there a topic you would like addressed at the SRMTA Winter Retreat 2011? Suggest the topic and we'll see if we can find someone to address it at the retreat.

Selection of Topics:

Since the retreat is for you, the members, you will be on the selection committee of what will be presented at the 2011 Retreat. All topics and a brief description will be posted online from September 1 - October 1, 2010, on the [Convention](#) page of our website. Select the topics you would like addressed at the 2011 Winter Retreat. The sessions chosen will be those with the highest request. The line up of sessions and presenters will be announced at the Fall AGM.

Red Leaf Pianoworks

Janet Gieck

Red Leaf Pianoworks is a group of like-minded Canadian composers who have joined forces to bring you the best music we can in the most convenient way possible. We are primarily internet-based and try to make shopping from home a cost-effective alternative for everyone. We also make it a priority to attend conventions and trade shows where we can meet and share ideas with teachers from across Canada. Each member is a piano teacher as well as a composer so we are actively involved in creating and testing music that is pedagogically sound and enjoyable for our students and yours.

The group began as a trio consisting of Ontario composers **Beverly Porter**, **Susan Griesdale** and **Martha Hill Duncan**. Bev's latest book *Lady Bug and Friends* is a delightful collection for Gr. 2-5 that explores a lot of jazzy rhythms and textures. Look for titles like *Jitterbug*, *Fashion Bug*, *Snuggle Bug*, and a duet, *Don't Bug Me*. Susan's music is designed to encourage students to begin the journey towards hearing and discovering the sounds of non-traditional harmonies. *Little Hands, Big Pieces* for beginner students is a great resource for building on pentascales and chords because every piece is constructed of major triads. They are easy to teach but sound difficult, so are appropriate for any age of student. Hot off the press is her solo *Lavender Dreams*, and her piano trios *Cool Cat* and *O Yeah*. You may have recently heard Martha Hill Duncan adjudicate at the Saskatoon music festival in 2009. She composes for all levels of pianos and includes CD's with her books. *Kingston Mills Locks*, an expressive advanced solo, explores pedal and interpretation as well as a bit of Canadian history. An avid composer of choral and vocal music, Martha has just produced the CD *Singing in the Northland* to go along with her 15 solo/duo song collection.

Recently three new composers have joined the ranks including Nova Scotian **Rebekah Maxner**, **Christine Donkin** (Ontario) and **Janet Gieck** (Saskatchewan). Rebekah's brand new collection *Old MacDonald had the Blues* features 12 familiar tunes arranged in today's popular styles for Gr. 1-4 pianists. They are rhythmically exciting pupil savers with titles to match: *Jazz! Goes the Weasel*, *Twinkle, Twinkle Superstar*, and *London Bridge is Gettin' Down*. Christine's advanced collection *Peace Country* was inspired by the area in Northwest Alberta where she grew up. She is a busy composer, also writing for choral and chamber groups. Janet has been working on updated editions of all her collections to make them easier to read. Also, look for her newest collection *Dances, Daydreams and Dinosaurs* for beginner to late elementary students. The dinosaur pieces are especially attractive to boys. Along with dance-like and whimsical pieces are some explorations of 20th/21st century innovations such as cluster chords, extra-piano percussive sounds and aleatory music.

You are invited to check out more information available at Visit our Sponsors where you can see and hear samples of our work. We look forward to meeting you at the SRMTA conference this October in Saskatoon!

You Have a Question? We'll get the Answer.

Lesson Planning

(Answered by [Gregory Chase](#))

Q. How do you make a good lesson plan and how do you execute it when you don't really know how the student has prepared (especially with a short amount of lesson time).

A. Although lesson planning for a private lesson is different than planning a lesson for a class at school, the main concepts are the same. We also have to set our objectives, and list resources and materials to be used in the lesson. However, the individual detail will need to be flexible to accommodate the individual student. It's important to keep in mind that whatever we do in the lesson that it is a purposeful activity and we understand the reasoning for doing such an activity.

A lesson plan is much like a financial budget. We often get unexpected expenses, but those expenses do not render the budget useless. A lesson plan is a guideline we follow (as is a budget), with changes made along the way. The success of the lesson does not need to be evaluated by how closely we follow the lesson plan.

One of the biggest challenges for private music teachers is the fact that we will not know how much the student has progressed from the last lesson's assignment. Did they practise as much as we expected? Did they have trouble in a section that we weren't anticipating? Above all, flexibility is needed when lesson planning for private music lessons.

Knowing the Learning and Retention Cycle of the Brain:

In planning lessons, I work with a 45 minute lesson plan. The reasoning for this coincides with the learning episodes of the brain. The learning episode of the brain is comprised of Prime-time (learning) and Down-time (practise). A 45 minute lesson has two Prime-time learning episodes – for a total of 30 - 35 minutes or 75% of the teaching time. The down-time (reviewing/practising) is about 10 minutes, or 25% of the teaching time of a 45 minute lesson. Understanding the learning and retention cycle of the brain helps me in planning the 45 minute lesson.

The peak of the first Prime-time learning episode occurs about 3 minutes after the lesson has begun – a very quick incline to the peak of the first learning episode occurs. The peak itself will last about 8 – 10 minutes and then will slowly decrease to the Down-time, which occurs about 22 minutes into the lesson. It is during this first Prime-time that you want to introduce the new information of the lesson. During the 10 minute Down-time is when reviewing of old material should take place. Approximately 32 minutes of the lesson has occurred at this point.

The second Prime-time learning episode also has a sharp increase to its peak. Although, this learning episode is shorter in length and doesn't have as high of a retention rate as the first Prime-time learning episode, it is still much higher than the Down-time. The second learning episode begins about 32 minutes into the lesson and reaches its peak of retention and learning at about 35 minutes into the lesson. The second Prime-time learning episode remains at its peak for about 4 to 5 minutes and then slowly decreases in its retention and learning to the close of the lesson.

In the event that I need to work with a student for more than 45 minutes a week, I ask the student to come for two 45 minute lessons per week. This allows me four Prime-time learning episodes with a student per week. Although we often think that we can achieve the same results by having the student come once a week and extend their lesson to 90 minutes, to create two-45 minute sessions in the 90 minute lesson, we still only have the two Prime-time learning peaks. In a 90 minute lesson the Down-time actually takes on a longer time period, which is over 30 minutes of the lesson.

Warm-Ups:

What is the goal of warm-ups? We are trying to aid the student to understand that s/he needs warm-ups for any physical activity (hockey, dance, figure skating) and it is equally important to warm up our body before we play an instrument or sing. Warm-ups not only help in the physical preparation of playing an instrument or singing, they also help in the mental preparation by warming up the brain and ears.

The warm-up portion of the lesson does not need to be long. A few minutes is usually sufficient and will take us to the peak of the first Prime-time learning episode of

the lesson. Warm-ups should be exercises other than scales, triads, arpeggios. For piano, they would be a combination of larger kinesthetic arm and body motions moving towards smaller tactile finger movements. Warm-ups should be a combination of "away from the piano" and "at the piano exercises". The warm-ups chosen will be tailored to the age and level of the individual student, as well as to their overall yearly goals and needs.

Introduction of New Material, New Repertoire and New Concepts:

After the brain and ears are awake, introduce the new material of the lesson. Often we start the lesson by reviewing the technique (scales, triads, chords, arpeggios) that was assigned at the previous lesson. If a student has difficulty we can easily fall into the trap of spending the precious "Prime-time learning" on drilling and reviewing old material. It is here, when the brain is at its peak Prime-time, when we should be introducing the new material, rather than reviewing what has been previously learned.

This is where the challenge lies in teaching a skill; we often want to ensure that students have mastered the assigned concept before advancing to the next concept. However, we can teach a new concept before reviewing the previously assigned material. For example, if teaching a beginner who learned certain notes at the last lesson, at this point jump to the page in their method book where the new note, rhythm, or concept is introduced. When introducing this new concept have the student spend a minute or two practising it to make sure s/he has a full understanding before moving to the next stage of the lesson. The student will better retain what they have learned in the lesson if they have had a few minutes to practise it in the lesson. "Practise by doing" has a retention rate of 75% over a 24 hours period.

In the practise session of the new concept be sure to give specific instructions of how the student is to practise at home. Since this is being introduced during the first Prime-time learning episode the student will retain how to practise this at home. The retention rate, if introduced later in the lesson, will not be as high.

Reviewing of the Old

After time is spent on teaching the new concept(s) of the lesson, that is, after the peak learning period, move to reviewing material the student prepared for the current lesson. This may be where we review their technique, ear training, sight reading, transposition, harmonization, improvisation, vocalisation, creative activity, repertoire and any other prepared material.

The question often asked is "How do I get through all of this in such a short amount of time, or in a 30 minute lesson?" If you find that you are running a "factory line" lesson, then perhaps it's time to increase the lesson time of the student. Factory lines are all about the end result, with little consideration to the process or the transference of information from one concept to the next.

Sight reading, ear training, transposition, harmonization, improvisation, vocalization, composition/creative assignment can be done rather quickly and with minimal time once the tools have been put in place. Often each of these can be done in one minute or less. We don't have to spend five minutes on sight reading, five minutes on ear training and so on. If students are working on these as assigned material at home, it then becomes a matter of testing them at the lesson with a few suggestions given to aid them further in developing these skills.

With the creative assignment, whether it is composition or other, again, guidelines can be given in a short amount of time. You can literally spend one minute on composition that will give a student more ideas and creativity to take them to the next step in the process. It is not necessary to spend a lot of time on the creative assignment, but it is important to follow up any creative assignment with time, interest, and enthusiasm. Often, a simple question is the best tool to send the student to the next level.

Reviewing of repertoire could have four elements: quick studies, memory work, workout, play and discuss.

Quick studies are really "at home" material for the students. Ideally, quick studies are pieces that are a couple of levels below the student's current working level. When assigning a quick study avoid prepping the student with any information. A quick study is a piece students practise "on their own"; a piece they will practise for one week only. Quick studies provide an opportunity for the student to show you what they know. It can also be a very good analysis of your own teaching (as humbling as that can be at times).

Memory work needs to be a part of every lesson and a student's daily practise. The amount of assigned memory work will depend on the grade level of the student and on the immediate and long term goals. A technique that will save valuable lesson time is to hear only the section that has been assigned for memory work.

Workout approach is a great way to spend the "Down-time" of the lesson. Although this will occur during the Prime-time episode on new material, it will also occur during the Down-time. This is the practising part of the lesson where you will work with the student to "work out" trouble sections. I like to call it the "grunt work". Often times when a student says, "I ALWAYS play that wrong", that is a good indication that they need further guidance in their "grunt work". Spend this down-time aiding the student in reviewing and practising these "always wrong" sections.

Play and discuss is a great tool to use if you do not have time to hear an entire piece in a lesson. It is best to time this section of the lesson with the second Prime-time learning episode. As teachers, we often know before assigning a piece which sections will cause problems to the student. It is easy enough to pinpoint these sections in the lesson and play and discuss them with the student. Play and discuss is also an opportunity to teach students to transfer the ideas of practising from previous pieces to this piece/section. Discuss and teach them HOW they will practise that section. Not only does this apply to technical problems, but to aspect of music. Play and discuss is a great way to save valuable teaching time while still being able to touch on each piece. This allows us to make greater use of the second Prime-time learning episode. It is also an effective approach for introducing new repertoire during the first Prime-time learning episode.

Closure of the lesson:

As the student declines from the peak of the second Prime-time learning episode, spend the time reviewing the new concept(s) that were taught in the first few minutes of the lesson, during the first Prime-time learning episode. Follow this with a quick review of what was learned during the peak of the second Prime-time learning episode. After a few weeks of following this format you will notice a routine emerging that will allow you to get through more of the lesson plan.

Do you need a hard copy of a lesson plan?

We often have lesson plans in our mind. Is it necessary to make a hard copy of your lesson plan? That is a question that only you can answer. I think we can all attest to the fact that even though the student has left the studio it doesn't mean that we, the teacher, has left the lesson. Often times during the week we'll think of a student and ponder what we will need to address next in this piece or that section. Although writing things down ensures we will remember to do it, it doesn't mean we have to spend hours and hours of preparation time writing out lesson plans. However, we do need to make sure that whatever we do in the lesson is purposeful and that it aids the student in accomplishing the immediate and longer term goals of the student.

Sources:

Sousa, David A., *How the Brain Learns*. Reston: The National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1995.

Goss, Louise L. "Questions & Answers." *Clavier Companion* September/October 2009: 71-72

[Do you have a question? Email the editor with your question and we'll find the answer and publish it in the next issue of Opus.](#)

