

## SOUTH SUBURBAN MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

February 2012 Newsletter

**President:** Yoko Ashcroft (303) 470-5936

**Membership Chair:** Bonnie Kreutz (303) 378-5265

**Editors:** Stephen Fiess/Neal Wegener (303) 791-6473

### CALENDAR

- February 11: **SSMTA Student Achievement Day**, Foothills Canyon LDS church.
- February 15: **SSMTA/DAMTA Teacher Performance Group**, at the home of Blanche Greenberg. Please RSVP to (303) 755-7898
- March 3: **SSMTA Masterworks Festival**, Foothills Canyon LDS church.
- March 4: **SSMTA Masterworks Festival Honors Recital**, Schmitt Music
- March 24-28: **MTNA 2012 National Conference**, New York City
- April 14: **SSMTA Student Recital**, Onofrio Music (see article herein)

### TEACHER REFERRAL

If you have any openings for new students, our SSMTA Referral Chair Dorothy Lomme has requested that you call her as soon as possible. Her phone number is (303) 798-5579. *Thanks, Dorothy!*

### ACCOMPANIST REFERRAL LIST

Linda Cody, 796-0369; Stephen Fiess, 791-6473; Barb Galuzzi, 936-1772; Alicia Johansson, 797-9630; Nancy Kettering, 204-6430; Carol Rankin, 477-2686; Cheryl Saborsky, 771-2532; Elaine Van Dellen, 955-5790. Please contact newsletter editors if you wish to have your name added to this list!

## MEASURE FOR MEASURE

*from Yoko Ashcroft, President*

Greetings, SSMTA Colleagues!

This time of year is exciting because of some great events coming up!! Achievement Day is this week, and the Masterworks Festival is in just under a month. I use Achievement Day as a goal to review theory with my students; the month of January is a month where I focus most on theory each year in my studio. I encourage all of my Sonatina-level and upper-level students to participate in the Masterworks Festival and get two classical pieces memorized. They will have such an accomplished feeling after completing it!

Thank you so much for all of these programs, including Student Recitals! I want to thank each committee chair and members for working so hard to get ready for the events! It has been quite a challenge for the committee members to find a location this year since Baker's Piano closed. We should keep our communication open so when we hear of good places to hold events, we can give those places consideration for the coming year.

We will have Achievement Day before our next meeting, so see you on the 10th & 11th! I will pray for good weather!



## MINUTES OF JANUARY 10, 2012 SSMTA MEETING

The meeting was called to order by SSMTA President Yoko Ashcroft at 9:35 A.M.

Minutes of the December 2011 meeting were approved as published.

Gloria Ross read the Treasurer's report. The savings account balance is \$11,695.22, and the checking account balance is \$8,319.75.

### PROGRAM

Kat Wagner announced that the January 2012 program would be presented by Lynn Maloy on the topic *"Dyslexia and the Keyboard: When Students Can't Read."*

### TEACHING MOMENT

Ruth Wyeno and Neal Wegener shared teaching ideas that have proved successful in their studios:

#### Ruth Wyeno:

Sometimes our teaching experiences require us to dig deep for solutions in dealing with students. I once had a piano student who couldn't bear criticism, no matter how delicately she was approached. After she had pounded through a piece, semi-accurately at top speed, I might respond with, "Wow you can really play those notes fast!" or "Great crescendo and diminuendo in this line. I wonder how that would sound at a different tempo." This might be followed later by, "Can you name the right hand notes in this measure?"

As soon as any change or challenge to accuracy was suggested, there would be a noticeable tightening of her neck and shoulders, her lips would form a tight, straight line, and then the eyes would become teary. I would tenderly explain that I certainly didn't want to hurt her feelings, but that she already was playing well, and I wanted her to build on that good stuff. The tears would start to run, and the lesson would be over, as far as she was concerned. I finally told her that this response pattern was becoming a habit, and that it was really

blocking her progress. Mother was summoned from her car, and we had a discussion about how this had been my own manner of non-coping as a child. The habit had not served me well, and I finally had to "just get over it," in my young adulthood. We both pledged to search for solutions to our dilemma.

Remembering how miserable one can feel with tight neck and shoulders, and how difficult it is to give up a pout, I made a list of pleasant, brief actions that might allow the student to break through the physical tension, as well as the emotional response. The list included washing face and hands and applying soothing lotion; going to get a drink of cold water; brief exercises to stretch arms and legs; and sitting and bouncing on my exercise ball for 1 minute. The exercise ball appealed to her, and we used that before each lesson, or whenever it occurred to me that the child was showing tension. She would return to her lesson smiling or even laughing, and became more receptive to instruction for the term.

#### Neal Wegener:

When students have ongoing difficulty with a particularly tricky rhythm, I often find it most effective to think up a "favorite food" saying that helps students with that rhythm. A short example may be two sixteenth-notes followed by an eighth note, which fits nicely into the phrase "choc-late shake," where counting "1-e-and" may come out more like a triplet, and may be less familiar to the student than the familiar syllables "Choc-late shake." I've found that many the frustrating passage gives way to a smiling student who's put their favorite food saying to good rhythmic use!

### SSMTA STUDENT RECITALS

Pam Simpson reported that the February recital will be Saturday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, 1:00 p.m., at Schmitt Music. The SSMTA April Student Recitals are scheduled for Saturday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. at Onofrio Music. **PLEASE NOTE: If there are not enough students to schedule two separate recitals on Saturday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, then only the 3:00 p.m. recital will be held and the 2:00 p.m. recital will be cancelled.**

Teachers' entry forms (available on the SSMTA website) and a \$5.00 fee per student must be received by Pam two weeks before the recitals.

Please consider if you may be willing to co-chair this excellent student recital program, as Pam has mentioned that she will likely need a co-chair to help with SSMTA Student Recitals in 2012-2013.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jackie Garner

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

**SSMTA Achievement Day** is February 11, 2012 at Foothills Canyon LDS Church. Pam Simpson announced that the Ear Training option of the Theory Exams is no longer available at Achievement Day due to "woefully outdated technology".

Achievement Day certificates will be available to be signed and proofread at the church on Friday, February 10th, starting at 12:00 noon.

Achievement Day student projects can be delivered to the church Friday, February 10<sup>th</sup> from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m., or from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Ruth Wyeno recommended that student projects be labeled with teacher's names.

Achievement Day set-up begins at 5:00 p.m., Friday, February 10<sup>th</sup>. Linda Vogan reported that high school students who volunteer to assist in the Bingo room can earn community service points!

**SSMTA Masterworks Festival** will be Saturday, March 3, 2012 at Foothills Canyon LDS Church (**this location was confirmed in an email from Robin Stewart on January 15, 2012.**) The Honors Recital is Sunday, March 4, 2012, at Schmitt Music.

The SSMTA group's consensus is that Robin and Ardith can use whatever funds are needed to have pianos moved to the Masterworks Festival location. It is undetermined whether the waived \$500 Achievement Day fee (waived by the Foothills Canyon LDS church) or other SSMTA budget revenue will be used for this purpose.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

A 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President (Membership) co-chair volunteer is needed to help Bonnie Kreutz. If you are able to assist with this position, please email Yoko at [yokoashcroft@yahoo.com](mailto:yokoashcroft@yahoo.com)

Special thanks to all who participated in the "Play it Forward" food drive project!!!

**MTNA 2012 National Conference** will be in New York City, March 24-28.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 A.M.

## SSMTA MEETING DAY SCHEDULE

♥ Tuesday, February 14, 2012 ♥

9:00 -- 9:15 a.m.	Board Meeting
9:15 -- 9:30 a.m.	Arrival and Refreshments
9:30 -- 10:30 a.m.	SSMTA General Meeting
10:30 -- 11:30 a.m.	February Program

## PLEASE HELP THE MEETING RUN SMOOTHLY

Help is needed from 8:30 to 9:00 a.m. to set up the tables with boxes of SPARKS music. This should also be the time that materials are put on the sign-in table.

Please arrive on time for refreshments if you plan to partake, and be seated at the tables by 9:30 so we can begin the meeting on time.

Please plan to stay for the program.

## AT OUR FEBRUARY SSMTA MEETING

Our January meeting program, entitled "*Improvisation/Play it By Ear*," will be presented by Doris Merritt. Please plan to attend this interesting and informative program!

## REFRESHMENTS FOR OUR FEBRUARY MEETING

Refreshments for our January meeting will be provided by Patty Kershaw, Barb Galuzzi, and Liane Rockley

Thanks, too, to all who have provided refreshments during this past year!

