

Minnesota Federation of Music Clubs

HALF NOTES NEWSLETTER — SPRING-SUMMER 2021

WEB SITE: WWW.MFMC.NET

COMPILED BY CHERYL SCHMIDT

Official Call

MFMC State Meeting: Saturday, April 24, 2021 at 10:00am Virtual via Zoom.

MFMC State Meeting: Thursday, July 22, 2021 at 10:00am Virtual via Zoom.

President's Message – Nancy's Notes – Small Things



Nancy Fisher, MFMC State President

With the start of the New Year, I have been listening to a series called *Seize the Day*

about daily habits to stress less. One particular habit that resonated with me was about being faithful in the small things. Since hearing this talk, I often find myself thinking about the small things as I go about my daily life.

The first point in learning to be faithful in the small things was to redefine success. I liked the definition I heard – Success is doing the best you can with where you are and what you have. We have all had to make the best of difficult situations over the past year. Our studios have had to make adjustments in how we taught and as soon as we thought we had things figured out we would have to do something different. One evening I was discouraged as I tried to rearrange my schedule yet again and I wondered if all this effort was worth it. Then I got a text from one of my piano families that said, “Casey is home from college and is playing on the piano just for fun. She is going through some of her old festival songs and others she liked. Thank you so much for all the years teaching both my kids.” I was reminded of what I knew already, that we are making a difference and I just needed to keep doing the best I could with where I was and what I had.

The second point was to realize that every day is a miracle. Speaking of miracles, I am grateful to let you all know that my husband Steve is doing well after his battle with Covid. Every day is a new day for us to encourage the people that come into our lives. As teachers, we have unique opportunities in the time we have with our students. Last week, one of my third graders came for his lesson and I asked him how he was. Calvin told me he was sad because he had this good friend since kindergarten, but now she was just being mean. I was thankful to be able to encourage him that day. Just before Christmas, one of my piano students lost her brother in an accident. Her mom told me that her daughter had been playing piano often and she thanked me for giving her that avenue to express her grief. Personally, I know I need to focus on being thankful for each new day – even though days don't look the same as they used to. Each day is a gift and so are the people that we share that day with.

The final point in the talk was to celebrate the big stuff but sweat the small stuff. Normally, we who promote music and the arts plan a lot of big stuff – concerts, recitals, festivals, and conventions to name a few – and it feels great to celebrate with these events. But it is the everyday little things that we do that allow big things to happen. My student Evan was picking his Festival choice piece and we had narrowed it down to two. When he chose the harder piece because he wanted to challenge himself, I was quite proud of this three-sport high school junior. First-grader Meg had her first piano lesson in the fall. On the way home, she told her mom, “That was more fun than I thought it would be!” I will celebrate that opinion any day. Another new piano student reminded me that I needed to sweat the small stuff as we were starting to learn notes on the grand staff. After a few weeks and about 8 different notes, he said, “They just all look the same.” I am trying to remind myself each day that counting that half note matters, the right fingering matters, or that one staccato matters so that I am faithful in teaching the small things.

We were able to hold an in-person Festival in Warroad at the end of January. We did the best we could with where we were and what we had as the students went between remote lessons, to in-person, to no lessons, and back again. With the Governor's Pause, we did not know if we would be allowed to have our Festival until two weeks before. We realized that every day is a miracle, and we would wait to see what that day would bring. We did get to celebrate the big stuff, when our voice, piano, and violin students were able to play their pieces for the judges. And those who paid careful attention in sweating the small stuff were rewarded with Superior ratings. Happy Spring to all of you!

Nancy Fisher
MFMC President

MFMC 100th Anniversary Celebration Postponed

Who would ever think that we would still feel the far-reaching effects of Covid-19? But we are and will continue for a few more months.

With much sadness we have had to cancel our 100th anniversary celebration that was scheduled for July 2021. So far, we had a date, guest artists and guest speakers. There is a lot of planning that needs to go into a meeting of this magnitude and hopefully later this year we will be able to get together as a group and start to plan for another event.

The executive board is praying that all our members have stayed safe and have been or will be shortly vaccinated. Look for a new convention schedule in the Fall/Winter Half Notes edition.

Mary Wescott and Karen Erickson, Chairs

MFMC Treasurer – Gwen Degner

Thank you to all Junior and Senior Clubs for their careful work when submitting dues last fall. Special thanks to those who sent them in a timely manner. You made my work so much easier!

One problem that popped up this year was that some membership lists were sent as PDF's. In the future, please be sure to send them in Excel, so that I can copy and paste your information directly into the state master list. Your use of the Excel format saves me a great deal of time and reduces the chance of errors on my final copy.

Membership numbers continue a downward trend, but this year we saw a greater drop than usual. We currently have 334 Senior Club members, which is a decline of 41 from the previous year. Our 2020-2021 Junior Club membership stands at 3,056. That is a painful loss of 650 students.

One more thing: If any of your members are not receiving their subscriptions to *Junior Keynotes* or *Music Clubs Magazine*, please let me know. All Senior Club members should receive that latter. All teachers should receive the former.

Thank you for all the work you do for your students, especially during these challenging times.

MFMC Junior Composers Contest – Sharon Kaplan, Chair

The results of the 2021 MFMC Junior Composers Contest Winners have been announced.

Class I: 1. "The Sundown" by Emma Lu
2. "Dancing on Clouds" by Gloria Reitsema

Class II: 1. "The Detective" by Edward Wanger
2. "Christmas Feelings" by Kevin Chen

Class III: 1. "Golden Gate Rag" by Steven Elsinger (tied)
2. "Selcouths" by Tim Guillaume (tied)

Class IV: 1. "There Will Be Rain" Aayush Raheja
2. "Black Diamond Run" by Clara Miller

This year's judge, Randall Davidson, provided this message for these young composers: "The ranking of "winners" is anathema to music. As Schoenberg has been quoted to say: "Competitions are for horses." I congratulate every single composer who completed and submitted their composition for the NFMC 2021 Junior Composers Competition; because I also have an answer to the burning question that I'm sure Schoenberg never asked: "If a tree falls in the woods and no one is there to hear it, does it make a sound?" My answer is "No."

It is imperative for composers to share their compositions with others. Music is the ultimate social art. We need each other: audiences, performers and -- first and foremost -- composers. In sharing music, composers begin the nearly magical process of connection through air molecules (only) with every living thing. You have a deep responsibility to others. Can you remember that, please?

To the winners: your compositions are listed here because of me. I chose the music at the top of the lists because I heard something remarkable and charming and smart and beautiful and surprising and engaging, and I wanted to applaud these works. There are compositions not listed here by people that you should get to know. They are your colleagues and fellow inventors, explorers, creators. They have helped your compositions shine just a little brighter. You need them. They are essential to you. Treat them with respect. Embrace their musical efforts as your own. Their success is yours. Your success is theirs."

Let's meet some of our winners!

2021 MFMC Junior Composition Contest Winners



Edward Wanger is proud to win first place in the MFMC's Junior Composers Contest for his piece *The Detective*. This is his fourth entry into this contest and the second time he has placed first in the competition. Edward is 11 years old and in fifth grade. He started playing piano when he was four years old and started writing his own compositions at age seven. His favorite thing about piano is how many different feelings can be expressed through music. He is currently working on completing a goal of 1,000 practice days in a row. Edward's other hobbies include reading, playing video games and board games, weather exploration, and writing books. His favorite subject in school is literacy. He would like to be a detective when he is older. He lives in Minneapolis with his parents, little sister, and piano buddy cat. Edwards's teacher is Fern Davidson.



Tim Guillaume is a pianist and composer from Minneapolis, MN. He has studied music from a young age, starting with piano in first grade, which he continues today, saxophone in 5th and 6th grade, percussion in 7th, and is currently learning the clarinet. He studies composition under Randall Davidson at the MacPhail Center for Music.



Emma Lu is a third grader in the Navigator Program at Excelsior Elementary School. Emma started to learn piano when she was 4.5 years old. She passed the MMTA level 10 piano exam with high distinction when she just turned 8. She is learning piano, violin and composing. She enjoys the music by others and likes to compose her own. Emma's teacher is Sarah Miller.



Gloria Reitsema is 6 (almost 7) years old and has been learning piano for just over a year. She shares her love for piano with her Dad and older sister, and tries, comedically, to teach her grandparents the piano tricks she's learning. In addition to piano, she loves cooking with her mom, doing cartwheels, crafts, and exploring outdoors via bike or cross-country skis. She lives in Minneapolis with her Dad, Mom, and 3 siblings. Gloria's teacher is Sharon Kaplan.



Clara Miller has been studying classical piano since 2009 at the MacPhail Center for Music, Minneapolis, where she takes lessons from Annette Lee in Level 7 of the Suzuki Method, and from Sarah Miller in piano composition. She also has completed Level 5 of the Music Development Program offered by the Royal Conservatory, Toronto, Canada, in which she has previously won Best in School and Best in State for her level. She has performed frequently in the Twin Cities and completed a 2018 tour of Spain with other MacPhail performers. Clara plays piano and percussion in band at Southwest High and has played keyboard in the pit orchestra for the school's productions of "Fame" and "A Chorus Line." She is on the Southwest varsity tennis team and pursues language studies in French, Spanish, and Korean through school and online courses.

MFMC 2021 Biennial Student Auditions – Liz Raihala, Chair

The MFMC 2021 Biennial Student Audition winners have been announced.

This competition occurs in odd years only for Juniors and Seniors in high school with three \$600.00 awards available. Specific performance repertoire is required with a January deadline.

All details regarding the Biennial Student Auditions are available on the MFMC web site in the drop-down menu under Scholarships, Awards and Grants.

Please plan with your advanced students so they can participate in 2023.

Congratulations to the winners Rachel Lanning, James Cook and Lydia Rahn!

MFMC 2021 Student Audition Winner/Jane Jensen Vocal Award



Rachel Lanning is a senior at Willmar Senior High School. Her parents' names are David and Margaret Lanning.

She studies vocal music under Cheryl Schmidt and loves every second of it! Rachel is involved in many fine arts activities, such as theatre, choir, and violin/voice lessons.

She also enjoys being a captain of her speech team at WHS and teaching private violin lessons through Whitney Music in Willmar. She will continue her study of the arts in college as a choral music education major and a theatre minor.

MFMC 2021 Student Audition Winner/Jane Jensen Vocal Award



James Cook has had a love of singing since he was a small child. At the age of 4 he became the vocalist in the bluegrass band in which his family played.

James was home educated through grade 6, but began attending Central Minnesota School as a 7th grader. He started his involvement in musical theater as the butler in the CMCS production of "Annie" as an 8th grader. He enjoys drama, soccer, and singing.

He plans to go to college in the fall and major in political science. He has a goal of becoming an attorney and someday, perhaps, a judge. James appreciates the encouragement he has received from his voice teacher, Cheryl Schmidt, over the years.

MFMC 2021 Student Audition Winner/Piano



Lydia Rahn is a junior at Lakeville South High School and has played piano since early elementary school. Her piano teachers have been Mary Aalgaard, Nancy Lephart and currently Mary Wescott. Lydia played in the AVMTA Festival and the Upper Midwest Festival challenging her to learn some new music on the piano.

Lydia has also played the clarinet since 6th grade and enjoys playing in the band, solo & ensemble and Wisconsin's middle level all-state. This past year she wanted to play in the jazz band so started learning to play the trumpet. She is very grateful for all the support she has received for her music and the opportunities that have come out of it.

Outside of music, Lydia is part of the tennis team and the National Honor Society. Music has always been her passion and she hopes to continue playing clarinet and piano throughout college and beyond.

State Festival Chair, Nadine Berg: Festival 2021- One for the History Books!

As I write this, Festivals around the state are in full swing. Some of them are being done virtually, some in person. I must say that everyone has been wonderfully creative in making whatever situation they chose work smoothly! There have been a few more questions; there have been a few less students participating; one or two Festival Sites decided to forego this year. Mostly, you all stepped up and did what needed to be done! For that I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

I don't have much else to report – only a few of the sites have finished & sent in reports. The new Festival Bulletin proved to be a challenge, but that's where the cumulative experience of site managers takes hold and again, makes it work!

Best wishes to all of you as you complete this Festival season. I really look forward to next year and hopefully some normalcy!!

National Federation of Music Clubs 2021 National Convention

The National Federation of Music Clubs has announced that their in-person convention scheduled for June in Norfolk has been cancelled. It is possible there may be proceed with some virtual meetings and or events.

MFMC Product Line Update – Cara Caravetta

Geese are starting to return to our northern state, the grass is making a first appearance, and the greater part of our 20/21 school year is behind us. We may have a little bit of winter left but the end is in sight, generating a second wave of strength for teachers everywhere. Personally, I've been amazed by how many of my students came back after Christmas break with strength and courage that hadn't been there before our latest local school closure. It is inspiring to see them choose to stretch and grow.

The MFMC product line was designed to help encourage students - to let them wear reminders to celebrate their hard work and remember that the hard moments are not the end, as well as support MFMC's mission.

The Encore Music Club will be conducting a trial run of using MFMC Logowear as a local fundraiser this spring. Two new items are being featured, prices have been adjusted to allow the local club to raise funding, and 20% of all sales will be donated to MFMC. Fliers have been returned from Warroad Threads and they look great! If you have any questions about working with Warroad Threads to create your own fundraiser flier, reach out to Cara Caravetta for more information.

The two new items are being featured in the Encore fundraiser and will be added to the Warroad Threads catalogue when we have finished the test run: a crested apron will be included for the foreseeable future, and a limited edition *Yes I Can* hoodie will be available in May 2021. Be sure to keep an eye on the Warroad Threads website in early June for updated tee shirt colors.

Also now would be a prime time to order MFMC logo chocolates as thank you gifts or student favors! Don't forget to contact Cara Caravetta for the permission form required by the Carol Widman Candy Company to make your order process as smooth as possible. If you have any ideas or specific items you'd like to see included in line, let us know. We'd love to hear from you!

Composer Amy Beach – American Music Chair, Rebecca Heerd



Amy Beach

Amy March Cheney Beach was born into a wealthy family in Henniker, New Hampshire on September 5, 1867. She was an only child. Her mother, Clara (Marcy), was a talented pianist and singer. Being exposed to music from the start of her life, Amy was able to sing over 40 tunes accurately by the age of 1, and by the age of 2 began harmonizing to her mother's singing. She began composing music in her head at the age of 4. At the age of 5, she began composing hymns and waltzes with simple symphonies. When she was 6 years old Her mother began teaching her piano, giving her 3 short lessons a week. At the age of 7 Amy gave her first recital, playing the works of Chopin, Beethoven, Handel and some of her own compositions.

In 1875, the Cheney family moved to Boston. There, Amy continued her piano training under Ernst Parabo and Carl Baermann. She preferred being self-taught regarding composition. However, when she was 14, she met Junius W. Hill, and studied counterpoint and harmonies with him for a year. She enjoyed experimenting with music and studied classical pieces on her own. A possible reason for this could be that she had synesthesia, she related certain keys with specific colors. According to UNH professor Peggy Vagts, "If

her parents wanted to punish her when she was a child they'd play something sad on the piano and she'd cry." (This punishment was usually Louis Gottshalk's *Last Hope*.)

When she was 16, her parents finally allowed her to play in public. She made her debut with the Boston Symphony, playing a concerto performance conducted by Adolf Nuendorff. She gave many performances from 1883 to 1885 in Boston.

At the age of 18, Amy Cheney married Dr. Henry Beach, a widower who was 24 years her senior. Dr. Beach did not want his wife performing in public and limited her performances to once a year. He did, however, encourage her to compose and restricted her from formally studying composition as he feared it could destroy her originality. By the age of 22, she had written her first orchestral composition, "Mass in E-flat Major" Opus 5. It was performed by the Handel and Haydn Society and was well received by both critics and audience. During this time, she went on to write many works, such as her first symphony, "Gaelic symphony", premiered by the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1896. Not only was this her first symphony, but it was also the first symphony written by an American woman.

Following the death of her husband in 1910, Amy Beach spent several years in Europe, where she again rose to fame as a performer and composer. When WW1 broke out, she returned to the United States and lived in New York. She was given an honorary master's degree in 1928 by the University of New Hampshire. In 1932 she composed her first opera, "Cabildo", which became very popular, joining her 300 other successful works.

Amy Beach died of chronic heart disease on December 27, 1944 at her home in New York. Unfortunately, she was quickly forgotten, and her musical accomplishments were shelved until 1990 when her music was revived by women musicians. Celebrating her bravery in pursuing a field that was dominated by men at her time, she was given a place on a granite wall on "The Hatch Shell", in Boston, which lists the names of the most influential music artists. She was also given a place in the American Classical Music Hall of Fame in the year 1999.

Amy Beach's works can also be found in our Festivals Bulletin: *Scottish Legend, Op. 54, No. 1*, Piano Solo VDI; *Barcarolle*, Piano Solo VDI; *In Autumn, Op. 15, No. 1*, Piano Solo MAI; *Fire-Flies, Op 15, No. 4*, Piano Solo MAI; *Fairy Lullaby*, Female Art Song J3; and *Take O Take Those Lips Away*, Female Art Song MAI.

2020 Violin Grand Cup Winners



Joey Wu, a junior at Woodbury High School, has studied violin with Dr. Jackie Lo for more than 12 years. He has earned a superior rating in the violin solo festival for many years and competes in the NFMC concerto festivals. Joey participates in the high school orchestra, various chamber orchestras, and is the concertmaster for the Minnesota Youth Symphonies orchestra. He has also been a part of the All State orchestra for three years. In his free time, Joey composes and practices piano and guitar as well. As an inspirational figure once told him, “Without music, life would be a mistake”.



Stephen Ma is a junior at Woodbury High School and has participated in the NFMC Festivals for twelve years. He is the Concertmaster of his high school orchestra, chamber orchestra, and music teacher's string group and has also participated in Minnesota Youth Symphonies and All State Orchestra. He has competed in various competitions under the MMTA and won First place three times. Stephen has participated in the National Honors Society, Red Cross Club, Cross Country. He enjoys drawing in his free time and hanging out with his younger sister. Stephen received his grand cup in violin solo and his teacher is Jackie Lo.

How to Start a Non-Profit Organization in Minnesota – Cheryl Schmidt

Since MFMC will no longer be a fiscal host to clubs applying for grants, clubs may want to become a non-profit to have the capability to request grants. Club members asked that information be provided on how clubs can start their own non-profits. Groups can seek legal counsel for this process, but it is not necessary. The following is basic information from the Minnesota Council of Non-Profits, so please refer to the web site for specific details at <https://www.minnesotanoprofits.org/resources-tools/starting-a-nonprofit>.

#1. VISIONARY STAGE: Is starting a non-profit the best way to meet your goals? Decide on your mission and purpose. Recruit your founding board. Check for availability regarding the name of your non-profit with Minnesota Secretary of State's Office (once a name is reserved, no other organization can use that name).

#2. PLANNING STAGE: The founders of the organization should write its articles of incorporation. This document formally names the entity, its location, and its purpose. This document is the legal record of how the organization is to be managed. This information is necessary when filing for tax exempt status from the internal revenue service. Filing the article of incorporation with the MN Secretary of State's Office provides limited liability for the governing body of the organization. Fee required. Create a business plan and budget. Draft your organization's bylaws. Hold the first meeting of the board and establish officers. Consider any legal or insurance needs. Details regarding writing the article of incorporation and bylaws are on the web site.

#3. FEDERAL FILING STAGE: Nonprofit organization should have an EIN, often referred to as a Federal ID Number, even if it has no employees. Organizations must be incorporated before applying for an EIN and must have an EIN before applying for tax-exempt status (visit IRS website). Once the organization's articles of incorporation have been filed and the bylaws have been approved by the initial board of directors, the next step is applying for federal tax exemption from the IRS. Approval can take up to six months. Filing fee required - using a cashier's check will expedite the process. Smaller organizations can use the three-page 1023-EZ form to save time and money.

#4. MINNESOTA FILING STAGE: Some organizations require additional filing. Please check the web site for details if your organization needs sales tax exemption, MN tax identification number or to register as a charity.

#5. ANNUAL FILING STAGE: Even though an organization may be tax exempt, but it must file an annual information return with the IRS, file the Charitable Organization Annual Report Form (fee required), file the Nonprofit Corporation Annual Renewal. Often a local accountant office will complete these yearly requirements for non-profit organizations for a modest fee.

Tuition Assistance, Teacher Trust Grant– Rebecca Heerdt, Chair

There are still a few Tuition Assistance Grants available for this past year. These grants are for up to \$500. If you have a family struggling to pay for their music lessons, please consider applying.

The Teacher Trust Grant is also available in the amounts of \$100, \$200, or \$300 and may be applied for at any time.

Please find details about these opportunities on the MFMC website.

International Music Camp – Karen Erickson, Chair

The Minnesota Federation of Music Clubs (MFMC) offers two scholarships of \$450 each to attend the summer music program at the International Music Camp. Located in the unique International Peace Garden straddling the border between the United States (North Dakota) and Canada (Manitoba), the International Music Camp provides a picturesque setting for learning.

Requirements for this MFMC scholarship are that a student in grades 9-12 must have received a Superior rating in the same year's Festival and complete an application with an audio recording and two letters of recommendation, one from their present MFMC-member teacher. The completed application is due by April 1st each year.

This summer's programming is still in flux but there will be IMC@Home online sessions offered for week-long programs, half-day master classes, and lessons in June and July. The status of the US/Canada border and the health and safety of campers, faculty, and staff are key considerations in planning for this summer of 2021.

MFMC Web Site Membership List – Cheryl Schmidt

Please access the MFMC protected membership list on the web site and make sure that your contact information is accurate.

If you need the password and/or need to change your contact information, please send an email via the contact form on the MFMC web site.

2021 Grand and President Festival Cup Recipients

Teachers, if you have a Grand Cup or President Cup person this year, Minnesota likes to have the National Magazine Junior Key Notes be aware of the students' accomplishments. The deadline is July 15, 2021.

Have the student write a short biography about themselves along with a photo of themselves. The biography must be in a Word Document along with a Jpeg photo. In addition, you should get a release from the parents if the student is under the age of 18.

The information should be sent to both Mary Wescott and Cheryl Schmidt.
NFMC Junior Keynote Magazine - Mary Wescott: email: thewescott@aol.com
MFMC Half Notes Newsletter - Cheryl Schmidt email: crschmidt266@gmail.com

In addition, it might be nice for you to order the Junior Key Notes magazine for your student. You must purchase a year's subscription, but it may be worth it to the parents.

MFMC Officers and Chairs

***Thank you to everyone in leadership roles for their dedicated work for MFMC!
Members, please acknowledge their hard work that benefits you and your students!***

CONTACT INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON THE MFMC WEB SITE: WWW.MFMC.NET



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