

Minnesota Federation of Music Clubs

HALF NOTES NEWSLETTER — SPRING/SUMMER 2023

WEB SITE: WWW.MFMC.NET

COMPILED BY CHERYL SCHMIDT

Official Call

Spring State Meeting: Saturday, April 22, 2023, 10:00 am – 12:00pm. Virtual via Zoom

Biennial Convention: Wednesday, July 19th, 2023, 10:00am – 12:00pm. Virtual via Zoom

President's Message – Nancy's Notes



Nancy Fisher, MFMC State President

A Snowy Path

I have a story I like to tell my students to help them understand the importance of practice:

Think about your backyard and what it looks like after a new snowfall. Imagine

you went outside to play and walked in your snow boots across the backyard. If you looked behind you, you would see your boot prints in the snow. If you wanted to cross your snowy yard in the other direction, you could follow your boot prints, but it would still be difficult to walk across since there was only one set of footprints to walk in. Now imagine if you went back and forth on that same path many times. What happens to the snow? You will notice a change in the snow as you create a clear path, making it easier to walk on. That is exactly what happens in your brain every time you start to learn a new song. If you just play the song one time, you have only made one set of footprints on your path. But if you play the song several times in a row you are creating a pathway in your brain that becomes more comfortable to follow the more times you repeat it.

My vision for the Minnesota Federation of Music Clubs is to be a group of musicians who build each other up, push each other to attempt new things for ourselves and our students, and who share music and promote the arts in our communities. I think my "Snowy Path" story applies to all of us who are part of MFMC. As we attempt new things for ourselves and our students, we grow along with them. Almost all of us have now learned how to use the Vivace Festival Management System and I am proud of us for that! The Federation has hundreds of opportunities and awards for clubs, students, and teachers that I would encourage you to explore. Perhaps there are new Festival events that your students could add to the ones they already participate in. Some of you are new in your leadership roles in your clubs. Congratulations on being willing to volunteer. Some of you have been in leadership in your clubs for many years and I want to thank you and encourage you to attempt new things in your clubs.

I embarked on a new path this school year when I accepted the part-time position as the high school choir director. I have indeed been learning many new things, from the school's technology and software platforms, to building a sense of community among the choir members. We have our second concert coming up at the beginning of March. By the way, I absolutely love this new adventure!

When my young piano student, Ivan, came for his piano lesson the week after I told him the snowy path illustration, he was able to play "Yankee Doodle" successfully. He smiled and said, "I guess it didn't snow in my brain because my path is still there!" I wish you all success as we continue on our paths and may any snowy paths we encounter for the remainder of this winter be solely in our imaginations!

Nancy Fisher

President, Minnesota Federation of Music Clubs

MFMC Finance Committee Meeting Outcomes

Outcomes from the MFMC Finance Committee meeting held on January 27, 2023.

Due to MFMC experiencing a sizable deficit in the budget for 2021 – 2022 and anticipated for 2022 – 2023, the following proposal and recommendation will be brought to the MFMC membership at the MFMC State Meeting on Saturday, April 22, 2023:

1. The MFMC finance committee is proposing increases to the following dues and fees effective July 1, 2023.

Senior membership dues increased from \$30.00 to \$42.00.

(This includes a \$2.00 increase required by NFMC.)

Junior membership dues increased from \$2.00 to \$3.00.

Festival fee increased from \$5.00 to \$6.00.

Festival Gold/Silver Cup fee increased from \$6.00 to \$8.00.

***If the National Federation of Music Clubs raises junior dues and festival fees, the NFMC increase will be added to the proposed amounts accordingly.**

The MFMC membership will be asked to vote on the dues and fees increase at the meeting on April 22, 2023.

2. Effective July 1, 2023, the MFMC finance committee has recommended that the state no longer cover the costs of the Grand and President Festival cups and that the purchase of these cups will now be the responsibility of the recipient's club or the recipient's family.

Explanation:

A significant budget deficit has resulted from decreased membership, festival participation and increased costs for festival cups, engraving and postage as well as travel costs for our representatives to the NFMC National Convention.

With the dues and fees increased, the elimination of purchasing Grand and President Festival Cups and continuance of virtual meetings, MFMC can continue to:

Adequately fund the Festival program to include payment for insurance.

Maintain current level of distribution for scholarships, awards, and grants.

Continue to send two representatives to the National Federation of Music Clubs yearly national convention.

Support web site, administrative costs, and stipends.

Keep the checking and savings accounts at acceptable balances and maintain the emergency investment fund.

MFMC 2023 State Student Audition Winners Announced – Liz Raihala, Chair

Let's meet the MFMC 2023 State Student Audition Winners:



Cecilia Buzzeo – (Voice) is a senior at Willmar Senior High School and is the daughter of Christopher and Carla Buzzeo. For the past 6 years, Cecilia has been a vocal student of Cheryl Schmidt.

She was a member of the 2022 and 2023 Minnesota All-State Choir. Cecilia received numerous Best of Site awards at the Solo Ensemble contest in 2022 and in 2023, earning the honor for both duets and solo pieces.

Cecilia is Willmar Sr. High Schools' Class of 2023 Class President, Student Council President, and a Captain of the Speech team. In addition to her passion for music, Cecilia also enjoys musical theater, speech, and orchestra.

Cecilia will attend Concordia College in Moorhead, MN this fall and is a proud recipient of Concordia College's Christiansen Award.



Elizabeth Blilie - (Piano), a Lakeville South High School senior, has a talent for making music as a pianist, percussionist and composer. Her love of music started at a young age, and she began taking piano lessons at the age of five. Currently, she enjoys studying piano with her teacher, Mary Wescott.

Elizabeth performs at numerous festival piano competitions and in her community. Elizabeth is a percussionist in her high school marching band, winter drumline, and a piano player in the jazz band. Her marching band has performed in Hawaii twice and has won two Minnesota marching band state championships. Her winter drumline also won a state championship in 2022. She has also composed and performed original works for the marimba.

Aside from music, Elizabeth is also a member of the National Honor Society and the captain of her school's math league team. She enjoys reading, solving puzzles and spending time with her friends and family (especially her dog Niko). Elizabeth plans to study aeronautical engineering in college but hopes to continue playing percussion and piano throughout college and beyond.



David Lafferty – (Piano) is currently a senior at Lakeville South High School. He has been a piano student for 9 years and a band student for 7. His piano teacher is Mary Wescott.

In his years of band, David has participated in his high school's marching band as a part of the drumline for 4 years, been a member of the Lakeville Area Percussion Winter Drumline for 2 years and done concert band percussion for all 7.

In the fall, David will be attending the College of Biological Sciences at the University of Minnesota with the goal of obtaining a Bachelor of Science Degree and eventually attending graduate school.

MFMC Junior Composers Contest Winners Announced – Sharon Kaplan, Chair

Congratulations to the winners of the 2023 MFMC Junior Composers Contest!

Class 1:

1. Arthur Scott
2. Gloria Reitsema

Class 2:

1. Emma Lu
2. Elise Fowler

Class 3:

1. William Feng
2. Timothy Guillaume

Class 4:

1. Stephen Elsinger
2. Gordan Novak

“Wow, what a set of compositions!! It was SO tough to pick first and second in the upper classes! If you can, please let them know that it was incredibly tight, and I was floored by the talent that was demonstrated by every submission!” stated judge Douglas Harbin.

Douglas Harbin is Associate Professor of Music Theory and Composition at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota.

Composer Clara Edwards – Rebecca Heerdt, American Music Chair



Clara Edwards

It is always fun to find composers whose works are included in the Federation Festivals Bulletin selections, and who have a Minnesota connection as well. One such composer is Clara Edwards, whose composition “Into the Night” can be found in the Senior Class III Female Art Song Event.

Clara Edwards was born Clara Gerlich in Decoria Township, Blue Earth County, Minnesota on April 17, 1880. Decoria Township is just a bit south of Mankato, and Clara attended Mankato State Normal School there. She then went on to study at the Cosmopolitan School of Music in Chicago. Before finishing her degree, she married a physician named John Milton Edwards. They moved to Vienna and had a daughter, Jane, during their time there. While in Europe, Clara continued her music studies and prepared for a career as a singer. She gave concerts in both Europe and the United States. It is said that the Queen of Sweden was so impressed with her singing that she was invited to join the Royal Opera, an invitation that Clara declined.

In 1914 Clara and her family moved to New York City. Two years later her husband died, and Clara found herself a single mother in New York City with no steady income. Needing to support her daughter, Clara began a career as a composer and songwriter. In 1925 she joined the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP). Her songs ranged from sacred choral arrangements, solo piano and solo vocal to music for children’s marionette plays and animated films. She wrote most of the lyrics to her own



songs, although she did often collaborate with Jack Lawrence. She composed over 100 works and published over 60. Many of her songs were written under the name Bernard Haigh.

During this time, Clara toured in Vaudeville and also organized the Chautauqua Concert Company in 1934. She passed away on January 17, 1974. Although there is not much written about her, from what we can glean her's is truly an inspiring story. With her own career as a singer interrupted by the death of her husband, and finding herself a single parent in a time when there were few options for women, she did not give up. She launched a new career, and today we are blessed with the results. Her works have been described by *The Bell Telephone Hour* as "tasteful and truly lovely melodies", and they "successfully blended the styles of art song and the sentimental popular ballad".

Rebecca Heerdt
Parade of American Music

National Federation of Music Clubs celebrates 125 Years!

The National Federation of Music Clubs is celebrating its 125th anniversary and is planning a celebration!

In honor of this milestone, NFMC is asking every Junior, Student and Senior member to donate \$1.25 toward their 125th Anniversary Celebration. Any remaining funds will be donated to the Fund for the Advancement of Music Arts (FAMA).

Also, everyone is welcome to donate \$125.00 and become a 125th Anniversary Celebration official sponsor. Sponsors donations must be received by May 1, to receive special recognition in the NFMC convention program.

NFMC will be a 125th Anniversary Celebration Sponsor.

NFMC individual members and clubs are encouraged to donate. You can do so by collecting donations and sending a check to NFMC headquarters or upload funds to the NFMC website. Donations will be accepted throughout the conference.

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



Nancy Fisher • President



Sarah Twedt • 1st Vice President
Insurance, Festival Cup Chair



Gwen Degner • Treasurer



Mary Kaye Rabaey • Secretary



Karen Erickson • Historian
International Music Camp Scholarships



Julie Gutzmer • Membership Chair



Mary Wescott • NFMC Board
Representative



Cheryl Schmidt • Finance Chair, Web Site,
Half Notes Newsletter, Special Needs Awards



Nadine Berg • Festival Chair,
Certificate Chair



Grace Kopitske • Festival Online
Registration Administrator



Liz Raihala • MFMC State
Student Auditions

Not Pictured:

Rebecca Heerdt • Scholarships, Awards and
Grants Chair, Parade of American Music

Sharon Kaplan • Junior Composers Contest
and Scholarships

Louise Lundin • MFMC Web Site — Content
Manager/Advisor



Cara Caravetta
Product Line/Logo Wear



Peggy Karsten
Parliamentarian/Advisor