

# Minnesota Federation of Music Clubs

**HALF NOTES NEWSLETTER — SPRING/SUMMER 2024**

**WEB SITE: [WWW.MFMC.NET](http://WWW.MFMC.NET)**

**COMPILED BY CHERYL SCHMIDT**

## Official Call

**Spring State Meeting:** Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, 9:30am – 11:30am. Virtual via Zoom

**Summer State Meeting:** Wednesday, July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, 9:30am – 11:30am. Virtual via Zoom

## President's Message – Sarah Twedt



**Sarah Twedt, MFMC State President**

Happy Spring to all MFMC members! I hope everyone had a successful festival season! Please know that each person involved in our festival programs is a valued member of our organization.

We owe a debt of gratitude to all who have helped with their local festivals, and to the state chairpersons who continue to dutifully fulfill their roles for the entire state year after year.



The organizational steps for setting up a festival have not really changed since we started hosting these events. Technology and the use of VIVACE has changed the recordkeeping part of festivals – Grace Kopitske has done an excellent job of supporting our clubs to implement this new system.

MFMC currently needs a treasurer, a vice-president, Festival, finance and scholarship chairs. If we do not find a new treasurer, we will need to hire a paid position. Others on the leadership team have remained in the same roles for a long time. Historically, there has not been a lot of change with festival chair/record keeper roles throughout the state. We are grateful for and proud of our leaders at all levels – local, regional, state, and national and cannot function without them. But we cannot expect these folks to continue in perpetuity.

What other changes will be needed for us to continue the vital role we play in the musical lives of our students? Will we become more committee-based? Will we continue to be a cog in the wheel of NFMC and North Central Region? *Are there simple things that each club could contribute to support the “mother ship” with some team effort?*

I plan to get solid, updated written job descriptions for each role from our leaders, revisit the org chart with the board, and determine how to move forward. If any of you has thoughts about any of this, please send me an email with any supportive ideas.

Our nominating committee has received lots of “no” answers to requests for leadership positions. If you know of anyone that has a particular gift in a certain area, please forward the name to anyone on the board. My grandmother used to say, *“many hands make light work.”* Please consider your gifts that you can give back to MFMC for a time. *Let’s do this!*

Sarah Twedt, NCTM  
President, MFMC

## IMPORTANT! MFMC Open Positions

Many important MFMC positions will be open beginning in July, and it is necessary for members to come forward to fill these positions! Please review the job descriptions and contact President Sarah Twedt with your or your club’s interest.



### **MFMC Vice President and Insurance Coordinator:**

The MFMC Vice President presides at state meetings in the absence of the MFMC President, typically serving a four-year term and commits to taking the position of MFMC State President. The Vice President serves on the executive committee to make important decisions regarding MFMC.

The Vice President also serves as the MFMC Insurance Coordinator. Job Description MFMC Insurance Coordinator - April 2024. Current coordinator, Sarah Twedt.

Skills needed: General communication and computer skills, (Word, PDF, excel or equivalent)

Role: The insurance coordinator for MFMC involves working with NFMC and the various clubs in Minnesota to make a tally of MFMC sponsored events throughout the state that involve the requirement of obtaining liability insurance. (Festivals and Festival related recitals)

This is how it works:

June/July: The insurance coordinator will receive insurance information from NFMC – this includes the instructions for Child Protection Form, submission deadlines for summer/fall and winter/spring events and the cost of insurance for each event.

June/July: Once information is received, you will update Minnesota forms with your contact information and deadlines. These will be posted on the MFMC website and sent out to club presidents.

Fall/Winter: Clubs will send you their completed forms.

The insurance coordinator will keep a tally of the returned forms in an excel spreadsheet (or use the tool that works best for the individual). On this spreadsheet, you will include the club's name, dates of the events, the cost (according to the information from NFMC), name and address of the location, and the contact person.

By the designated deadline, you will submit this list to Jennifer Griffin, NFMC office administrator, and the treasurer of MFMC, with the included tally of the cost. The treasurer of MFMC will submit the check for the cost of these insurance requests.

Jennifer Griffin will order the insurance after receiving this information and the certificates will come to you, the insurance coordinator. You will need to save these individually, as they come in bulk. Once certificates are saved on your computer, you will e-mail the clubs their certificates. At times, you will need to follow up with Jennifer Griffin if issues arise.

Samples of my reports are available as are the previous forms. This does not take a lot of time, but it is an ongoing task as reports and requests dribble in. The coordinator would submit a report to MFMC for yearend meetings.



I am glad to help anyone who would like to give this important task a try. I would estimate 20-30 hours per year for this important task.

### **MFMC State Festival Chair:**

MFMC is currently recruiting a new Festival Chair. Nadine Berg, current chair, has been at the job for at least 10 years, and is wishing to pass the office on to someone new. Please consider this important and rewarding position. Nadine would be happy to visit with anyone with questions and/or interest!

#### Minnesota Federation of Music Clubs - Festival Chair - Job Description

The MFMC Festival Chair oversees the workings of Festivals around the state, communicates with the various sites, the Vivace facilitator, as well as the North Central Region Festival Chair, and the NFMC Festival Chair. A \$1000 stipend is offered from MFMC, and expenses (mailing, travel, etc.) are reimbursed.

Related duties include:

Familiarize oneself with the Festival Bulletin. This does not mean having all the answers, but having a good idea where to find answers that will arise.

Update the Festival Directives each year in late summer. These should be emailed to Festival Site Managers and Record Keepers, and sent to the website coordinator to be posted on the MFMC website.

Maintain an email list (group) in order to communicate effectively with Festival Site Managers.

Attend MFMC meetings to both relate and receive information and present reports pertaining to Festival.

Order Theory Exams and participation certificates from NFMC. *(The NFMC Festival Chair will send an email in the fall with an order form for this purpose).*

Manage the ordering and distribution of certificates, both participation certificates and consecutive superior certificates. *(Participation Certificates are ordered from NFMC (see above), consecutive superior certificates are ordered from Express Print in Hibbing).*

Receive Festival Reports from each site as their Festival concludes, then compile data and send a report to the North Central Region Chair. Also provide information to the MFMC Treasurer so that accurate Festival Fees can be sent to NFMC.

Keep Festival Reports on file. *(Electronic copies eliminate the need for storing boxes of records).*



This is a basic outline of the Festival Chair responsibilities. Details, resources, spreadsheets, training, and support would be freely offered to the new Festival Chair by the current Festival Chair!

### **MFMC Treasurer Job Description**

MFMC is looking for a new treasurer. For a detailed job description and timeline, contact current treasurer, Gwen Degner. Here is a brief overview of the treasurer's responsibilities:

- Establish, maintain, and monitor all accounts.
- Pay all bills as promptly as possible. Save receipts. Document expenses.
- Provide written financial reports whenever required, especially at state meetings.
- Send annual dues statements to junior and senior clubs and process all dues and contributions.
- Compile a comprehensive list of all senior club members, their contact information, and other information as requested by the MFMC Board.
- Submit funds to the National Federation of Music Clubs along with the appropriate forms.
- Cooperate and coordinate efforts with other officers and chairs, especially the Festival and Gold Cup chairs.
- Serve as a member of the Minnesota Federation of Music Clubs Executive Committee.
- Prepare 1099's and 990 each year, or work with an accountant.

The busiest month for the treasurer is November when the membership list is compiled, dues are processed, and forms are completed and sent to NFMC. April and July require a little extra time because that's when treasurer's reports are prepared for state meetings.

A \$1000 stipend is offered from MFMC, and expenses (mailing, travel, etc.) are reimbursed.

### **MFMC Finance Chair Job Description**

The Finance chair, with the finance committee, maintains fiscal policy, provides a yearly proposed budget, oversees investments funds, and will make financial recommendations to the executive committee and the board as needed.

The Finance Chair works closely with the MFMC Treasurer to confirm appropriate spending to maintain a fiscally sound organization and adhere to non-profit requirements.



## **MFMC Scholarships, Awards and Grants Chair (SAG)**

The SAG chair and committee reviews applicants and approves recipients of the Tuition Assistance Grants.

Promotes all scholarships, awards, and grants available through MFMC and the National Federation of Music Clubs.

The SAG committee also makes recommendations and approvals regarding any changes to our current MFMC scholarships, awards, and grants to include distribution of funding and expenses such as payment for judges.

## **National Federation of Music Clubs Convention – Mary Wescott**

I am pleased to share with you that Iowa is hosting the NFMC Convention, June 11, to June 15, 2024. I would personally like to invite all of the teachers in the region to attend this conference even if it is for one day. Many teachers in Iowa have contributed ideas to make this a great conference.

Thursday June 13, we have three wonderful clinicians presenting various topics that pertain to all of us teachers. We have Melody Bober, Helen Marlais and Jason Sifford sharing their music and interesting topics.

If you live somewhat nearby, try to make it to the North Central Regions luncheon on Wednesday and stay for the presentations on Thursday. The hotel is reasonably priced, including free parking and free breakfast for those that are staying at the hotel.

The Happy Dogs Duo will be playing on Thursday evening. Audrey Johnson will provide a performance/ presentation. Audrey performed at the MFMC State Convention.

Look for more details in the Music Club Magazine and the Junior Key Notes magazine.

\*Attending the National Convention:  
Mary Wescott, North Central Region Vice President  
Sarah Twedt, MFMC State President  
Nancy Fisher, MFMC State Board Representative

## Junior Composers Chair – Sharon Kaplan

### The Latest in Composition – Feel the Energy

It has been about 15 years since I became involved with the Junior Composers summer programs, and 10 years since I took over the job of MFMC composition chair from Pat Steege. And it has been a wonderful ride which is not yet finished.

My respect and amazement for students and what they can do grows each year. I have kept the scores and mp3s of what the kids have done ever since working electronically has been at first just encouraged and then become mandatory. I have followed many of the kids even past high school and college, and many have evolved into practicing composers. But that is not surprising because I guarantee that if I played some of these for you and did not tell you about the composer, you wouldn't guess that it is a kid. This year we had 18 apprentice composers enter compositions ranging from solo piano through many full orchestral works. Congratulations to all who participated – it is a daunting job – and to the 8 students selected by our judge, Kyle Vanderburg to represent our state at the regional level. At this date, I do not have the regional winners; however, kudos to state winners.

- Class I - 1<sup>st</sup> place – Arthur Scott (Sarah Miller)  
2<sup>nd</sup> place – Calvin Christensen (Fern Davidson)
- Class II – 1<sup>st</sup> place – Nicholas Bodner (Sarah Miller)  
2<sup>nd</sup> place – Elisa Fowler (Sarah Miller)
- Class III- 1<sup>st</sup> place – Kevin Chen (Sarah Miller)  
2<sup>nd</sup> place – Ariella Kim (Sarah Miller)
- Class IV – 1<sup>st</sup> place – Tim Guillaume (Randall Davidson)  
2<sup>nd</sup> place – Stephen Elsinger (Bright Sheng)

The winners in classes III and IV will be offered scholarships to the Composers Institute, the present name of the summer camp begun by the region more than 20 years ago. Randall Davidson, who has been the driving force behind the program for most of those years, has handed over the mantle of leadership to Sarah Miller. The camp will once more be held on the University of Wisconsin, River Falls campus. Sarah is developing a new website which should be up and running by the time you read this: [composersinstitute.net](http://composersinstitute.net).

I would also like to give a plug for more of you teachers to include composition in your teaching and in your personal life. I didn't realize it, but in retrospect, I composed for most of my life but did not consider myself a composer. I composed for my students, ditties for groups I was in, piano accompaniments and arrangements, but to me it was just something I did. Once I met Randall and started working with him at Junior Composers Institute, he encouraged me. I joined a composition group. I did camp assignments. And finally, I joined a zoom composition class for teachers taught by Sarah Miller. It has

changed my way of looking at the pieces I am learning, changed the way I teach my students, but most of all, it has changed me and given me so much more confidence in myself, in what I can do and can't do.

I would love to talk to your groups about things that I am doing with the kids – whether or not they will ever get interested in composing. And I encourage you to compose – your students will be so impressed!

## Opera in the Ozarks!

Did you know that Opera in the Ozarks at Inspiration Point in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, is a unique festival founded in 1950 and is affiliated with the National Federation of Music Clubs?

Opera in the Ozarks has earned the reputation of being a prominent training program for all singers interested in pursuing a career in opera.

Currently, a new opera theater, that will seat 300 patrons and provide additional rehearsal space, is being built to include new faculty housing and other campus improvements.

Opera in the Ozarks produces three fully staged operas in the original language and with a professional opera. It also produces a children's opera that travels to public libraries and community centers throughout northwest Arkansas and southwest Missouri. All roles are double cast so that all young singers get roles in one or more shows. Singers receive extensive coaching from professional opera coaches such as career development, and the business of opera, recitative singing, master classes, and choral singing.

In the past, some of our MFMC members attended Opera in the Ozarks productions on a regular basis and raved about the wonderful productions.

Keep Opera in the Ozarks in mind if you are planning travel in Arkansas or make a special trip with friends who would enjoy these amazing performances.

For current production information go to: [www.opera.org](http://www.opera.org).



## Composers Institute!



2024



### Junior Composers Institute

July 7-14 University of Wisconsin- River Falls

Ages 14-20 for in-residence program only. We will not hold online-only classes this year. Creative projects are written, played and recorded by the end of the week; daily theory and composition lessons. \$1600 includes all instruction, double occupancy dorm room and all meals.

### Junior Composers Studio

July 14-21 University of Wisconsin- River Falls

Ages 14-20 for in-residence program. We will not hold online-only classes this year. Featuring film and game music projects, synchronizing visuals with music, played and recorded by the end of the week; daily theory and composition lessons. \$1550 includes all instruction, double occupancy dorm room and all meals.

## WHAT HAPPENS at JULY PROGRAMS?

Each creator finishes and records a new project during every institute: either using a DAW (digital audio workstation) or with acoustic sounds or a hybrid of the two. There are **daily** opportunities to...

- Explore & practice a variety of music literacies
- Analyze how music is put together & explore new music
- Generate, revise and polish a new piece of music
- Record & engineer your projects with professional composers and songwriters
- Work with guests taking deep dives into their lives as professional creative artists
- Collaborate and partner with other creators

### Crazy Ideas Institute

Hopewell Music Cooperative

For girls ages 10-13; five half-days in-person. For Minneapolis-area students only. Learn about music creation, sound, and basics of notation in a supportive female-led space. No previous music or composition experience necessary. Each composer will create music that will be performed and recorded with professional musicians by the end of the week. Cost and Dates TBD

[Composersinstitute.net](http://Composersinstitute.net)



## MFMC State Treasure – Gwen Degner

Thank you to all senior club treasurers and junior club counselors for your help with this year's dues. Most of you did a great job following directions and meeting the Nov. 1 deadline. That makes my job much less stressful.

Our senior club membership declined slightly this year. We have a total of 292 senior club members compared to 320 last year. Our junior club membership total has shown a more significant loss, with a current total of 2,614 juniors compared to 2,886 a year ago.

As we begin to look toward the next school year, be sure your local club treasurer has your correct contact information on file. Please double and triple check your email address. This is where most errors occur.

Also looking ahead, I would like to step down as your treasurer this summer. I have enjoyed working with you, but it's time for someone new to take over. The job is not that difficult, but it does require attention to detail, and quite a bit of patience. I would be happy to assist the new treasurer during the transition.

Thank you for all that you do for your clubs and your students.

Wishing you a happy spring and a successful end to the school year,

Gwen Degner, Treasurer

## The Beginning! – MFMC History

During the early years of the *National Federation of Music Clubs*, membership was comprised of Music Clubs throughout the country who joined that organization. As time went on, it became clear there was need for the clubs to be more closely associated, so clubs in various states formed state federations and were represented on the National Board by their (respective) state presidents.

In 1914, the Minneapolis Journal sent Miss Edna F. Hall to the National Federation of Music Clubs National Conference. Mrs. Harry W. Jones, past president of Thursday Musical, attended the conference with Miss Hall. Mrs. Harry W. Jones was elected the first Minnesota representative to the National Federation of Music Clubs.

The organizational meeting of the Minnesota Federation of Music Clubs was held on April 14, 1921, in Minneapolis.

## 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](http://WWW.MFMC.NET)



Nancy Fisher • National  
Board Representative



Sarah Twedt • President  
Insurance, Festival Cups



Gwen Degner • Treasurer



Mary Kaye Rabaey • Secretary



Karen Erickson • Historian  
International Music Camp Scholarships



Julie Gutzmer • Membership Chair



Mary Wescott • North Central  
Region President



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



Nadine Berg • Festival Chair,  
Certificate Chair



Grace Kopitske • Festival Online  
Registration Administrator



Liz Raihala  
Biennial Student Auditions



Sheila Shusterich  
Student/Collegiate Auditions

Not Pictured:



Cara Caravetta  
Product Line/Logo Wear

Rebecca Heerdt • Parade of American Music

Sharon Kaplan • Junior Composers Contest and Composer Camp Scholarships

Louise Lundin • MFMC Web Site — Content Manager/Advisor



Peggy Karsten  
Parliamentarian/Advisor