



Fall NEWSLETTER

November 19, 2015

2015 - 2016 VMTA Calendar

- December 5, 2015** Deadline for Winter Newsletter articles
- January 15-17, 2016** Play-a-Thon at University Mall
- January 23-24, 2016** Eastern Division Competition
- March 26, 2016** Spring Festival at St. Michaels College
- April 2-6, 2016** MTNA National Conference in San Antonio, Texas

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* Melody Puller has moved out of state. Patricia Bergeron will assume her position until the VMTA Elections.

Hello Everyone:

Many, many thanks to Patty Bergeron, our QUAD State Chair, who has done an incredible job of living VMTA the past six months. She also planned VMTA's 50th Anniversary Reception and Concert. Thank you also to our sponsors listed in this newsletter. Such a memorable occasion! Here is a sampling of quotes from those who attended:



"What a wonderful QUAD State you put together. I really enjoyed all of it. The workshops were so informative. I loved the workshop on Amy Beach and of course Bartok. The last workshop done by the PT person from Ithaca was very helpful and Gail Smith's improvisation/composition was filled with great ideas! The performances were wonderful." ~Cheryl Laughlin, Director, Music Workshop of Concord, NH

"Many thanks for a most successful convention weekend. I must say I was very impressed. It was great, well worth attending, and a boost to us teachers." ~Lilly Ramsey, Independent Piano Teacher, Essex Junction, VT

"Congrats on a wonderfully successful QUAD State! All the Maine folk loved the sessions." ~Amy Maier, MMTA President, Bangor, ME

"Many thanks to all those who helped to put on an amazing QUAD State Convention and wonderful 50th VMTA Anniversary Celebration! It was terrific and I greatly appreciate the countless hours put in for it to be a huge success." ~Brenda E. Logee, Independent Piano Teacher, Fairfax, VT

"Brian Connelly had such character and personality that he made the piano pieces come alive." ~Sarah Ames, Essex High School senior, Essex, VT

Board members who helped Patty on the 50th Anniversary Committee included Terry Miranda, Elizabeth Metcalfe, Susan Nicholas, Lilly Ramsey, Jina Smith and Sarah Williams. Dave Goodrich and Cal Williams brightened the room with their art displays. Massachusetts MTA's congratulatory flowers and Elley-Long's donation of flowers added cheer. Several years ago, Sarah Williams digitized VMTA's archives which made it possible for the unique compilation of membership lists, commissioned composers lists, board member lists, and state competition performance and composition winners lists to adorn an entire wall. The return investment of all the time and energy was the joy and enthusiasm of all who attended.

Who could imagine that our Commissioned Composer, Pierre Jalbert, and our Concert Pianist, Brian Connelly, would be helping to make name tags, move tables and chairs to change the room set-up, and help with clean-up? They acted as true Vermonters! Pierre grew up in South Burlington and studied piano and composition with Patty's mother. It was meaningful to have a South Burlington high school teacher and Pierre's parents, who live in the Northeast Kingdom, at the world premiere of Pierre's piece for piano entitled Preludes. Even young children were spellbound with Brian Connelly's performance. One seventh grader asked Pierre a question about notation and a fourth grader wondered how Brian practiced to play accurate notes with his knee! Congratulations to the teachers who encouraged students to attend the Friday evening concert and dessert reception. The cupcakes were awesome.

VMTA was honored to host Dr. Gary Ingle, Executive Director and CEO of MTNA, and Grace Bottelier, Eastern Division Director of MTNA, to the entire weekend of festivities. Dr. Ingle provided an overview of MTNA and its benefits for teachers, and presented VMTA with a 50th anniversary plaque honoring VMTA for its 50 years of service to Vermont teachers. Their attendance enriched the experience of us all.

Think back 50 years to VMTA's beginnings and to the lives of the many students and teachers touched by VMTA. With no paid staff, a small non-profit organization must rely on volunteers to do the work. Many have gone before us, and many will continue into the future to give leadership and direction to VMTA. To all those leaders before us, a multitude of thanks. To all those who have not yet been asked, please say YES. It is time for the next generation to create new ideas and guide VMTA through the next 50 years. I look forward to energetic and passionate leaders to ensure VMTA is relevant.

Marie Johnson, President, VMTA

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Quad State

A wonderful Quad State Conference was held on October 2 and 3, 2015 at St. Michael's College. Thank you to all of those that attended.

Forty two members from the Quad States attended. Maine had 9 members, Massachusetts had 5 members and New Hampshire had 8 members. It was great to see the futures of our Music Teachers Associations represented by student members: one student from the University of Southern Maine, one student from Plymouth State University and four students from Keene State (one is actually a new student member from VT, Emily Vaccaro). We look forward to them becoming even more active members!

Those who attended were treated to: a Friday workshop on Amy Beach as well as a workshop on composition and improvisation, a Saturday workshop on Bartok as well as a workshop on Musician Wellness. Each of the four states had compositions commissioned specially for the conference.

Gary Ingle, CEO MTNA traveled from Ohio to attend. Grace McFarlane, Eastern Division Director, came from Washington, D.C. It was great to have them with us.



THANK YOU!

Thank you to all for the beautiful wall quilt I was presented during the VMTA 50th Anniversary reception. It is absolutely beautiful! I have proudly displayed it in my studio. It is such an example of how much VMTA and its members mean to me!

I'm so pleased to have been involved in celebrating such an exciting milestone.

VMTA- 50 YEARS STRONG!

Patty Bergeron, Conventions Chair

VMTA CELEBRATES IT'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY WHILE HOSTING THE QUAD STATE CONVENTION



Our Quad State Convention got off to a tremendous start Friday afternoon, October 2, 2015, with a delightful workshop on the life and music of Amy Beach. Our presenter, Gail Smith, began her presentation with examples of young Amy's musical talent. As a baby Amy harmonized as an alto, by age 4 she composed 3 pieces, and throughout her life she had a unique ability to hear music in colors.

Amy has appeared on the cover of numerous magazines, has had many newspaper articles written about her and now has been included on the granite wall. During our break we enjoyed looking through her music.



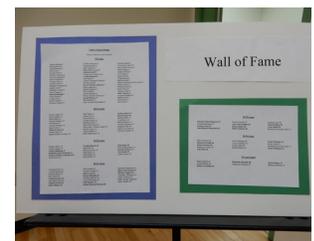
Our 2nd Workshop of the day was on Composition and Improvisation. Gail Smith began by showing us how we could use the letters in our names as a basis for our improvisation. She also encouraged us to use RH 4ths and LH 6ths giving us a chimes pattern. One of her patterns involved using any chord in root position followed by the 5th + 1st tone, 2nd tone, and 3rd tones of the scale.

VMTA's 50th Anniversary Celebration began after our Friday afternoon workshops. Our Anniversary Committee spent a year compiling and printing our history. It was fun seeing how many years our members had spent in our organization; which members had served on the board throughout the years; and whose students won our competitive auditions. While we were enjoying our Blast from the Past, we snacked on delicious finger foods worthy of such a momentous occasion. How wonderful to reconnect with old friends during our Pre-Concert Reception.



Gary Ingle, Executive Director and CEO of MTNA, presented Marie Johnson with a celebratory plaque. VMTA is fortunate to have had Marie as our President for so many years. How fitting for her to be able to accept this award on behalf of our organization.

Patty Bergeron, Conventions Chair, was presented a quilted wall hanging in appreciation for her many years of service and for her outstanding job of making our 50th Anniversary Celebration a resounding success. Many years ago Patty's mother, Arlene Cleary, taught Pierre Jalbert in her South Burlington home. Pierre went on to win many awards and is now Professor of Music at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music in Houston. Pierre was chosen by VMTA to be our 2015 Commissioned Composer. Pierre, along with his mother, celebrated with us Friday evening.





Our Anniversary evening continued with a piano concert by Brian Connelly. Brian teaches piano performance and chamber music at the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University in Houston. His program was enjoyed by all: VMTA members, MTNA members from other states, our students with their families and various community members. Our youngest students were enthralled by the Poltergeist Rag Fantasy and Brass Knuckles. With such a diverse program including Beethoven, Chopin, Debussy, Bolcom and Jalbert, our audience thoroughly enjoyed the show.

To conclude our concert, Liz Metcalfe was presented with a lovely bouquet of flowers in appreciation of her 48 years of service to our organization.



What is an anniversary without cake? Our evening concluded with Cupcakes and beverages for all of our members and guests.



VMTA's 50th Anniversary Concert from the Students Perspective



The 50th Anniversary Concert was one of the best concerts I've ever been to. One of the pieces that I enjoyed a lot was the Polonaise by Chopin. The piece was very different from Beethoven's pieces. I also really enjoyed listening to FIVE FINGERS by Claude Debussy. It was for five fingers. It was surprising that such a classic composer named his song something like FIVE FINGERS. I really liked how it started with easy five fingers and got more and more complex and FIVE FINGERS. My favorite piece was TURNING. Turning, Turning, Turning, Turning, Turning or faster, faster, faster! Also I liked CRAB MOTION. All the Modern songs are just like their names: TURNING was like turning, and CRAB MOTION was like crabs! BRASS KNUCKLES was my all time favorite. I've never heard any piece with so many clashes. CLASH made the song just like brass. When the concert was all over I was so sad, but what kept me happy was the reception. Whoever made the lemonade: good, I mean AWESOME job!

Tanisha Gerg

Brian Connelly's performance superbly interspersed styles and techniques performed with exquisite skill. Pierre Jalbert's composition, Preludes (2015) made me alive with visual and sensual reactions to his interpretations. My 3 young grandsons' favorite was Brass Knuckles (1968) with all of the unconventional and literal twists and turns that Mr. Connelly executed with ease!



Flora Hurteau

QUAD State Highlights from October 3, 2015



Sylvia Parker, VMTA member and professor at UVM, presented a thorough workshop about Bela Bartok and his PEASANT JEWELS.

Bartok first wanted to be a performer and next a composer. When he became a piano professor at the Royal Academy of Music in Budapest, he did not teach composition. As he became aware of the lack of suitable teaching materials for developing pianists, he wrote and developed short songs which became the Mikrokosmos series. On his own time, he teamed up with Kodaly to collect folk songs. It was fascinating to hear his field recordings of folk tunes and then to hear these same melodies in his compositions.

Sylvia explained Bartok's cataloging system which enabled him to easily find the thousands of folk melodies. First he sorted melodies by transposing to specific keys and then used the ending note for identification. He had a specific number/letter system to organize where and when he had recorded these folk songs. Bartok recorded Hungarian, Romanian, Slovak, Serbian, Bulgarian, Arabian and Turkish melodies. It's amazing how much culture and tradition Bartok and Kodaly were able to preserve by collecting such a tremendous amount of folk music.



Bartok Collecting Folk Songs

After Sylvia performed Bartok's Sonatina, she focused on his life. He and his wife Ditta, one of his piano students, first moved to NYC in 1940 due to the Nazi threat. Agatha Fassett became a friend of the Bartoks' and she brought them to Vermont. The summer house they visited has been torn down and is now part of the Vermont State Forest (near Sylvia's home). It was a unique experience to hear the fun stories Sylvia shared about Bartok's Vermont visit. Bartok became ill with leukemia after moving to the United States. He was homesick, poor and thought his composing life was finished until the Boston Symphony commissioned him to write the work, CONCERT FOR ORCHESTRA, which sparked a surge of creativity. He worked on his final works, VIOLA CONCERTO and 3RD PIANO CONCERTO, during the last summer of his life in a cottage on Saranac Lake in New York. Thank you, Sylvia, for a riveting presentation on Bartok.



Every Quad State Convention features our Commissioned Composer Concert. We were treated to a wonderful concert. Each performance was varied and completely unique.



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COMMISSIONED COMPOSER PROGRAM:

Maine: TRIO FOR CLARINET, VIOLA, & PIANO by Eric Thomas.

Massachusetts: I PROMISE EVERYTHING WILL BE OKAY for Piano by Stephen Feigenbaum.

New Hampshire: WHY? FROM THREE PIECES FOR PIANO SOLO, Opus 243, by Dianne Goolkasian Rahbee.

Vermont: 4 Piano Preludes for solo piano by Pierre Jalbert

A Special Thank You goes to Allan Day for his impromptu tuning of our piano at no charge.



Dr. Nicholas Quarrier, a highly respected physical therapist from Ithaca College, led our final workshop on Musician Wellness. For the past few years, Dr. Quarrier's specialty has been the treatment of injured musicians. His presentation focused on how we could personally become healthier musicians and specific strategies for us to use with our students.

Dr. Quarrier began his presentation with the results from a recent study showing that 75% of performing artists have suffered injuries – primarily due to overuse. String players are the most prone to injuries, followed by pianists and then percussionists. Women are more prone to injuries than men. The majority of injuries are from repetitive movements, awkward posture, technical difficulties and playing on unfamiliar instruments.

Suggestions to avoid injury include therapy interventions (i.e. move piano bench), reducing rigidity (frequent shoulder rolling), and stress reduction (deep breathing). Dr. Quarrier's concluding advice: ice for pain and heat for stiffness!

A Special thank you goes to Amy Maier, President from Maine, for her notes to compile this synopsis.

Marie Johnson

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2015 VMTA Composer Commissioning Project

The 2015 VMTA Composer Commissioning project concluded with the premier performance of FOUR PIANO PRELUDES by Pierre Jalbert on Saturday, October 3 at the Quad State Convention. Vermont Music Teachers Association commissioned Pierre Jalbert to write a composition for the event. Pierre grew up in South Burlington, Vermont and studied piano and composition with Arlene Cleary. He is Professor of Music at the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University in Houston, Texas. The Preludes were performed by pianist, Brian Connelly, also a faculty member at Shepherd. There are four movements in the composition: After Chopin, Turning, Chant, and Crab Motion.

The Commissioned Composer concert included a trio for clarinet, viola, and piano by Eric Thomas, the commissioned composer from Maine. New Hampshire MTA commissioned Diane Goolkasian Rahbee to write a solo piano piece, "Why? Three Pieces for Solo Piano". Stephen Feigenbaum was the commissioned composer from Massachusetts. He also wrote and performed a solo piano entitled "I Promise Everything Will Be OK".

Pierre Jalbert's composition has been submitted to be considered for MTNA's Distinguished Composer of the Year.

Susan Nicholas, Composer Commissioning Chair,

Competitive Auditions

VMTA congratulates the winners of our Performance and Composition Competitions for 2015, and wishes them well as they enter the Eastern Division competitions, to be held at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey in January.

Vermont had two entrants in the VMTA/MTNA Junior Piano Performance Competition, held on November 8th at the Richmond Library, following the BBVMTA fall recital. The judge, Vermont pianist and teacher Claire Black, declared the winner to be Alexander Larrow of Cornwall, student of Cynthia Huard of Middlebury College, and the alternate Liana Lansigan of Hanover, N.H. who studies with Victoria Dobrushina of Norwich, VT. Both performed beautifully for a small but appreciative audience, who waited after the performances for the announcement by the judge of the winning contestant.

Two compositions were entered in the Senior Composition Competition. They were evaluated by our composition judge Dr. Patricia Julien, Professor in the Department of Music and Dance, University of Vermont, who submitted written comments about each score to each student, and chose the winning entry, by Patrick Ryan of South Burlington, teacher Patricia Bergeron. His score was then forwarded to the Eastern Division judges for their consideration in the next level of the competition. Patrick performed his composition, RONDO, at the program in Richmond, following the programs of the two performance competitors. Honorable Mention in the Senior Composition was awarded to Tracy Ferguson of South Burlington, student of BBVMTA president Nancy Osborne.

Elizabeth Metcalfe

Play-a-Thon at the University Mall in South Burlington

Dear VMTA Members:

Please join together again for the next Play-a-Thon to be held at the University Mall during the weekend of January 15-17, 2016. The VMTA Board has approved the Play-a-Thon as a charity fund raiser to benefit the Children's Oncology Unit at the University of Vermont Medical Center and VMTA. All donations will be divided equally.

It is our students who will participate by obtaining sponsors and performing. Our venue will be on the main stage near Sears. A stage area will be set up with a small grand piano (compliments of Hilbert Piano) and a sound system to ensure all students are heard. There will be chairs where people can sit and listen to students.

Performance times are as follows: January 15 (5:00 to 8:00pm), January 16 (11:00–5:00pm) and January 17 (12:00–4:00pm)

The following are guidelines for participation:

A teacher must be a current member of VMTA and must be present when his/her students perform.

A solo performer must be a current student in a VMTA studio. For an ensemble performance, at least one student must be studying with a VMTA member.

Performance suggestions include piano/instrumental solos, piano/instrumental ensembles, vocal solo or ensemble with accompaniment.

Performance times will be in half-hour increments. A teacher may request as many increments as he/she would like; however, there must be continuous music throughout the time slot.

Time slots will be given on a first come/first served basis. Requests for time slots may be emailed to Lynn Smith at luspiano@gmail.com. The deadline for signing up to participate is January 10, 2016.

Each student must have at least one sponsor. Sponsors may dedicate a donation in honor or in memory of an individual.

To maintain our professional image, no photo copied music is allowed. Legal downloads are allowed.

Now for the fund-raising part. Each student will have to gather at least one sponsor. The more sponsors each student contacts the more money we will raise. You may set goals within your studio. All donations will be split evenly between the Children's Oncology Unit at the University of Vermont Medical Center and VMTA. We are thus supporting children in Vermont who have cancer and music education for children. You are responsible for all funds that come through your studio. Please keep careful records. All donation checks must be made payable to VMTA. VMTA will write one check to the Children's Oncology Unit. A final accounting of this event will appear in the spring newsletter.

Please see the following forms for your use:

A letter you can distribute to your students.

A letter giving event information and a receipt for donors.

A form to have each student record all donations, and turn in with monies raised.

Please encourage your students to GET INVOLVED to share their music and support Vermont children with cancer and music education in Vermont. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thanks for participating.

Lynn Smith, Play-a-Thon Chair, luspiano@gmail.com



DEAR STUDENTS:

The Vermont Music Teachers Association (VMTA) has scheduled the next Play-a-Thon at the University Mall on January 15, 16 and 17, 2016. The Play-a-Thon is an opportunity for you to join other students from throughout Vermont to share your music for the benefit of Vermont children who are fighting cancer. Specifically, fifty percent of all monies raised will go to the Children's Oncology Unit at the University of Vermont Medical Center. The other fifty percent will go to VMTA to promote music education in Vermont. Both organizations are non-profit and thus all donations are tax deductible. Vermont children will benefit from all contributions. It will even be possible for donors to dedicate their contributions to honor a specific individual.

Your teacher will have all the details about your musical selections and the schedules for when you will play or sing. He/she will also provide a form for you to solicit family, neighbors and friends to list your sponsors and the amounts pledged. Please set aside the time your teacher schedules to participate. Let's work together to raise money for other children fighting for their lives!

I hope to see YOU on January 15, 16 or 17, 2016 at the University Mall in South Burlington!

Sincerely:

Lynn Smith, Chair VMTA Play-a-Thon



The Vermont Music Teachers Association (VMTA) is pleased to announce the next Play-a-Thon to be held January 15-17, 2016 at the University Mall in South Burlington. The Play-a-Thon is an event that gives music students an opportunity to GIVE BACK to their community while having fun at the same time.

Students are asking family, friends and neighbors to pledge an amount of money to sponsor that child's performance in a community setting. All donations will benefit Vermont children. Fifty percent of the proceeds will be contributed to the Children's Oncology Unit at the University of Vermont Medical Center, and fifty percent will be used by VMTA to promote music education in Vermont. Both organizations are non-profit and thus all donations are tax deductible.

Music teachers will be selecting music with the students to share during the Play-a-Thon weekend. Please feel invited to be present when the student you sponsor performs during the January 15-17, 2016 weekend. Provide your e-mail address to be notified of the date and time.

Thank you for your contribution supporting music students to benefit cancer treatment and music education in Vermont. If you have any questions, please ask the music teacher of the student you are sponsoring.



Receipt of Donation to Vermont Music Teachers Association

Name of Sponsor: _____

Amount: _____ Date: _____

Student: _____

From the studio of: _____

Please make checks payable to VMTA.

Elder Statesman and Stateswoman of Music in Burlington



Photo by Peter Arthur Weyrauch

Each year, the Vermont Arts Council, in association with the Governor's office, recognizes outstanding individual and organizational contributions to the arts. Awards and citations are given to educators, artists, performers, advocates, administrators, volunteers, and scholars. In 2015 the Council will be recognizing the contributions of Vermonters in five different awards categories, as well as installing a new Poet Laureate.

The awards were presented at a celebration held at 7 p.m. Monday, November 2, 2015 in Alumni Hall at the Vermont College of Fine Arts in Montpelier.

Walter Cerf Medal for Outstanding Achievement in the Arts

William and Elizabeth Metcalfe, *Burlington*, met in a French class at the University of Toronto and married in 1958. From 1965 to the present—with Elizabeth most often playing piano or harpsichord, William most often conducting—they are responsible for the founding and success of four remarkable musical organizations. They founded the University of Vermont Baroque Ensemble, the Gilbert and Sullivan Singers of Vermont, and the Oriana Singers of Vermont. Oriana is now in its 34th year. William is also the co-founder of the Vermont Mozart Festival.

Elizabeth was a founding member of the Vermont Contemporary Music Ensemble and performed for 30 years with the New York Chamber Soloists. At the University of Vermont, William chaired the Music, History, and Canadian Studies departments, won the Donner Medal for Canadian Studies in the U.S., and edited the *American Review of Canadian Studies* for 16 years.

Excerpted from the Vermont Arts Council Blog article posted September 17, 2015

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Welcome to Our New Member



Hi, my name is **EMILY MOTT**. I just moved to Burlington's ONE this summer with my wife, two cats, piano, and many boxes. We relocated from Arlington, MA, where I had a piano studio and my partner designed online curriculum for Berkley College of Music. I am slowly getting going, trying to make a home for my family and my business. It's fun to now be blocks from my twin sister, Alison Mott, who teaches Music Together - an early childhood music program. My other loves include early childhood music, dance--I teach a form called Noyes Rhythm Joyful Movement, Dalcroze, singing, and therapeutic horseback riding. I'm looking forward to becoming part of musical and other communities in the Burlington area! Thanks for the work you all do to keep music-making thriving in VT.

Member News



Pianist **Elizabeth Borowsky** performed Beethoven's TRIPLE CONCERTO with the Gettysburg Chamber Orchestra in September and Gershwin's RHAPSODY IN BLUE with the Greenspring Valley Orchestra (Maryland) in October. Together with THE AMERICAN VIRTUOSI, she was invited to Cuba for a three-week concert tour (January 2016) with the specific intention of building people-to-people relationships through artistic collaboration. The tour includes a donation of instruments to Cuban school and community music programs.





STUDENT NEWS: Henry and Nathan Wu, duo-pianists, were the Grand Prize winners of the 2015 VERMONT HAS TALENT competition, Barre Opera House, Oct. 18th. Alan Chiang, after playing in master classes at the Adamant Music School for several years, has been invited, along with other Adamant pianists, to perform in a recital at Carnegie Hall this spring.

Paul Orgel

Elaine Greenfield happily reports successful October concerts and master classes in Wisconsin, with more engagements to come in North and South Carolina in January. Greenfield Piano Associates has gathered twice this fall and is preparing for an active season of classes, workshops and concerts. St. Paul's Cathedral Arts has a full roster of concerts, both Tuesdays, Noon to One, and the Weekend Series. Check the Cathedral Arts website for details. Elaine travels to New York in March to participate in the Annual Adamant Music School Concert, at Weill Hall, Carnegie Hall. This concert is set for Sunday, March 13th, 2 pm.





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