



Editor's [Half] Notes

A few years ago, I had the honor of teaching a pianist friend's children. They were wonderful students, but eventually, they became frustrated with practicing in the shadow of a well-known father who supported the family with his own piano music. First one child, then the other dropped out to pursue other artistic expression. One became a dancer. The other found other instruments to study and learn that gave him his own voice that was distinct from his father's. He took up bass, then drums, and then guitar, excelling at all of them.

One day, years later I had lunch with my friend. He mentioned that his (now high-school-aged) son had been hiding in his room, transcribing the piano part to Billy Joel's *Piano Man*. His goal was to create a video of himself playing the bass and the drums of the song, and then have the video accompany himself as he played the piano and sang the song live for his school talent show. I was floored and excited for him!

My friend added that he told his son we were going to have lunch together that day. His son replied, "Tell Neil 'Thank you' for teaching me these things. I couldn't have done this without him."

You never really know what they take with them when they leave your studio. Mission accomplished.

Be encouraged. Love your students well. Keep making music together!

Sincerely
Neil Patton
Con Brio Editor

Con Brio

November 2017

Con Brio is the newsletter of the Eugene Chapter of OMTA, published and distributed monthly, except July and August.

President: David Cragun, Vice-President: Laura DuBois, Treasurer: Wyatt Burger,
Corresponding Sec: Alexis Gibbons, Recording Sec: Nick Rieser, Past President: Delores Tiktin
Con Brio founder and first publisher: Lea Mirabella
All materials for publication are due on the last Sunday of each month.
Con Brio is posted on the Eugene District website on the Wednesday prior to the monthly meeting.
Neil Patton, editor

The deadline for submitting articles and announcements for the December 2017 issue of Con Brio is Sunday, December 3, 2017.

Send your news and announcements to district members between regular issues of Con Brio!

Simply submit the news item or announcement as usual, indicating you would like it sent immediately. It will be formatted and sent via email to all members.

From the Vice President

Greetings, OMTA!

At our next meeting, Dr. Diane Baxter will present “The Body Always Wins, or: How to Prepare for Just About Anything.” She’ll focus on how we approach new performances through the athletic self, to prepare for solid performances. This workshop has been very well received in both the United States and in England, and we look forward to the Eugene presentation!

Dr. Baxter is currently Professor of Music at Western Oregon University, where she has received the **Faculty Honors Award for Outstanding Creativity** and the **Mario and Alma Pastega Award for Excellence in Teaching**. She regularly teaches courses in Ethnomusicology, Graduate Research Methods, Performance Anxiety, and Studio Piano. Her article on music and the brain, “**The Science of Artistry: The Fourth String**”, was recently published in the international journal, **Clavier Companion**. She is editor of **The Oregon Musician**, a journal for the Oregon Music Teachers Association. Dr. Baxter frequently gives workshops on performance anxiety for students and teachers, and adjudicates for piano competitions and festivals around the northwest.

The meeting will take place at First Congregational Church, 1050 E 23rd Ave, Eugene, 97405. Refreshments will be served at 9:00, the business meeting will follow, then the presentation will take place from 10:00-12:00.

Hope to see you there!

Laura DuBois,
District Vice President

Last Call for Clavier Companion

OMTA members:

This is the last call for anyone wanting to subscribe to the Clavier Companion through our group membership price. Write a check for \$20 to Jean Wilson and bring it to the next meeting, or send it to me at 860 E 43rd Ave. Eugene, OR 07405. I am sending the renewal in this next week.

Thanks.

Jean Wilson
Clavier Companion chair.

Treasurer Report



CHECKING ACCOUNT ACTIVITY October 1, 2017 - November 1, 2017



DATE	DESCRIPTION	DEBIT	CREDIT	BALANCE
10/01/2017	Beginning Balance			\$ 3,865.24
10/12/2017	PEAK Internet	14.97		
10/18/2017	First Congregational Church—meetings/programs	360.00		
10/20/2017	Office Max—Fest. Pop Music recital programs	18.00		
10/26/2017	2017-2018 Membership Dues		75.00	
10/30/2017	Thomas Otten—September program	500.00		
10/31/2017	Fest. Popular Music—student entry fees		378.00	
11/01/2017	TOTALS	\$ 892.97	\$ 453.00	\$ 3,425.27

Savings account balance: **\$ 9,476.31**

Certificate of deposit: **\$ 2,339.76**

Respectfully submitted,

Wyatt L. Burger

OMTA-Eugene District Treasurer

Beverly Soule Memorial Scholarship Fundraiser Recital

**Saturday, May 19, 2018 at 3 PM
Unity of the Valley**

The teacher showcase recital has been scheduled for Saturday, May 19, 2018 at 3 PM. It is not too soon to begin looking for music you would like to perform for this event. This would also be an ideal time to team up with colleagues for duets, trios, and other ensembles.

In this issue of *Con Brio*, I have included a copy of a program that was presented at the 2017 OMTA Conference by members of the Lincoln County District. Lincoln County OMTA presents two benefit concerts each year, and this program was a sample of the type of music they feature in their concerts. I thought it might be interesting to see what another district is doing.

Wyatt Burger, Chair
BSMSF Teacher Showcase Recital



Festival of Popular Music

The Festival of Popular Music was held Saturday, October 21, at Unity of the Valley. This year we had 54 student entries from 14 teachers, divided between three recitals. (By comparison, in 2016 we had 25 student entries from 6 teachers, and one recital.)

Net income from this year's festival came to \$360. The 2016 festival brought in \$167.40.

I would like to thank all of participating teachers and students for making this year's Festival of Popular Music an overwhelming success. We exceeded expectations! I would also like to thank the teachers who helped out during the recitals. Your assistance was greatly appreciated.

Unity of the Valley again proved to be an excellent venue and an inviting setting for student recitals.

Encourage your students to prepare for the 2018 Festival of Popular Music.

Respectfully submitted,

Wyatt Burger, chair
Festival of Popular Music

westlanepiano@cvcable.net



PIANO FOR SALE



2006 Yamaha GC1
5' 3" baby grand
Excellent condition
Like new hammers
Regulation excellent
Recently tuned and appraised
\$9500
541-520-9054

What is the Alexander Technique?

The Alexander Technique is a unique approach to the process of teaching and learning, similar to the Suzuki Method. It was developed in the early 1900's by F. M. Alexander, an Australian actor who was searching for a way to stop losing his voice when he recited Shakespeare. By careful observation, he noticed that he had a habit of tightening his body when he spoke, and his search for a way to undo those habits helped him develop an understanding of how humans move. Today, the Alexander Technique has evolved to include an understanding of physiology, kinesthesia and neurology, and has a presence in music and acting schools around the world.

So what is the Alexander Technique? It is based on a set of principles, and they are:

1. **Mind-Body Unity:** A thought produces change one's the body, and a change in one's body reflects in one's thinking. They cannot be separated.
2. **Primary Control:** The relationship of the head to the spine both initiates and reflects the balance in the rest of the body.
3. **Inhibition and Direction:** a change in coordination can be brought about by first stopping the negative pattern and then encouraging a new, healthier pattern.
4. **Faulty Sensory Perception:** One's kinesthetic sense adjusts to what is habitual, labels it "normal," and blocks it from our conscious awareness. To change a habit requires Awareness, Inhibition and Direction, and the new habit will feel strange until our kinesthesia recalibrates and the new habit becomes the new "normal."
5. **Universal Constant:** A pattern of mis-coordination progressively becomes worse, and a pattern of healthy coordination continues to improve.

F. M. Alexander discovered that it was important to stop the old pattern of speaking before implementing the new pattern; correcting the balance of his head on the top of his spine was essential to the healthier pattern; the new pattern was initiated with a thought in his mind; the new pattern felt "wrong" until it felt "right," and that once the new pattern had been implemented, his speaking coordination continued to progressively improve over time. Improved use is defined here as being more ergonomically correct according to our structure and design. When we are moving more according to our design, then movement is freer, easier, more fluid, less effort, and less likely to cause repetitive strain injury over time.

The Alexander Technique can be applied to any complex activity, such as playing a musical instrument, dancing or learning or a sport. It is especially useful to the teacher in re-training a student's old habits. More coming on how the Alexander Technique applies specifically to playing an instrument or singing. Or find out about Alexander Technique workshops on my website: www.cantarestudio.com

Shared by Eugene OMTA Member, Marieke Schuurs