



Con Brio

Oregon Music Teachers'
Association, Inc.
Eugene District

Affiliated with the Music Teachers' National Association, Inc.

Opus 260

April 2015

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Editor's [Half] Notes

Dear Teachers,

Welcome to April! The end of the school year is in sight, as are our final meetings and events. Now is the time to encourage our students and inspire them to even deeper musical expression as they approach their final recitals and competitions. May we all find a way to "get behind the notes" in our times together studying music.

I hope you will join us this next Monday, April 13, for our monthly meeting (First Congregational Church, 1050 E. 23rd Ave in Eugene). We will have a short chatting time, 9:00-9:15, a short business meeting from 9:15 to 9:45, and the presentation will be 9:45-11:45. Peter Mack will be our guest presenter, giving his lecture: "Lower the Rear End of the Elephant Slowly onto the Keys." Dr. Mack is an internationally recognized pianist and speaker on Pedagogy issues. He is a delightful and informative teacher of teachers. He is Professor of Piano Performance at Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle.

As usual, next month, on May 11, we will have our brunch at the Valley River Inn. It will be \$14.00 per person. If you would like to participate, please plan to bring money, preferably a check. If you would like to bring a friend or your spouse, please do so! Genevieve will collect money during the meeting.

Sincerely

Neil Patton

Con Brio Editor

Con Brio

April 2015

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

President: David Cragun, Vice-President: Genevieve Mason, Treasurer: Wyatt Burger,
Corresponding Sec: Fern McArthur, Recording Sec: Neil Patton, 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

Treasurer's Report

03/01/2015 to 04/01/2015

CHECKING ACCOUNT

DATE	DESCRIPTION	INCOME	EXPENSE	BALANCE
03/01/15	Beginning balance			\$ 4,816.64
03/04/15	First Congregational Church—March meeting		50.00	
03/04/15	Willamette Jazz Society—Composition Celebration		90.00	
03/12/15	PEAK Internet		26.28	
03/16/15	Membership Dues (2014-2015)	40.00		
03/16/15	District Recitals		12.47	
03/19/15	Peter Mack—April Program		403.00	
03/19/15	District Recitals—student fees	315.00		
04/01/15	TOTALS	\$ 355.00	\$ 581.75	\$ 4,652.89

Respectfully submitted,

Wyatt L. Burger

OMTA Eugene District Treasurer

Spring District Recital Report

The Spring District Recitals were given at the United Lutheran Church, 2230 Washington Street in Eugene, OR, on March 14, 2015. There was very good attendance, at least 53 in the audience in the 1:00 pm recital, and about twice that number for the 2:00 pm recital.

The total expense was \$147.47, income \$315, and \$167.53 profit. There were 12 teachers and 45 students participating.

The students were well prepared and the repertoire was varied and interesting. There were some amazing performances from several students, including two violin numbers, one from Shuhan Li on her tiny Suzuki violin, and Victor Rudkowsky played a wonderful Prelude of Max Bruch's Concerto No. 1 in G Minor. Everyone did very well, so it was a treat to hear them all. The second recital went a bit long, but there weren't quite enough students to make up a third recital, so it all worked out fine.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean M Wilson

Event Chair

Message from the President

[Editor's Note: This text was taken from an e-mail sent by President David Cragun to the Eugene Membership on March 28.]

To Eugene District OMTA Members:

In our latest meeting, on March 9th, we discussed a topic which proved to be quite controversial.

Our State OMTA President, Cindy Peterson-Peart has recommended that OMTA follow in the footsteps of other MTNA affiliated organizations and make membership in our group more inclusive. There was a motion at our state board meeting addressing that question, and it will result in a state-wide membership vote.

The motion was to change the bylaws to eliminate the provisional membership provision and to eliminate the language requiring teachers to hold a music degree for full membership. In other words, anybody could be a member just by paying dues and filling out an application.

As you might guess, this raised quite a discussion in our district meeting on the 9th. There were differing views in many points regarding the need to maintain strict membership requirements and a high standard of teaching in our group. I appreciated that many of you felt comfortable expressing opposing view points and that everybody was kind to each other.

When there are major, historic decisions to be made, there will always be debate. Without it, we will not come to the best type of conclusion: a compromise. But we need to continue to debate in a way that respects the opposite camp and maintains our friendship despite our differences.

I am reminded of an event in our national history when the 55 delegates of the Constitutional Convention almost reached an impasse because some were unwilling to compromise their ideal conception of a government, and others refused to believe it would benefit them equally. There was such heated debate at times that it came to blows.

At a critical moment, Benjamin Franklin gained the floor and called for a recess so they could cool their emotions. Upon returning, he said he was now, more than ever, convinced that the constitution which they were about to form, in order to be just and equal, must be formed on the basis of compromise and mutual concession. He admitted that at times he had been wrong in his judgment of things.

Although he did not approve of all the aspects of the plan, he saw that it was the best they could do and a good compromise. He urged everybody to sign it and put their whole efforts into rallying support for the new government. Almost immediately after his speech, the Convention carried another vote and created the Senate of the United States.

While our decision does not have quite the same bearing as that of the Constitutional Convention, it will have historic importance to Oregon Music Teachers Association. We need to share our opinions readily and heartily. But at the same time, we should remember that there is not one among us who has all the right answers. Let us listen to each other and consider that another person might have an idea to improve upon our own ideals once we are able to see through a new light.

Being among all of you through the years, I have seen that we are strong allies. The cause of improving music education in our community and the world binds us together as does our friendship and professional necessity. Regardless of where we stand on this issue, we are determined to stand together for OMTA and for our district.

David Cragun
[541-653-9704](tel:541-653-9704)

Member Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

I would like to share some personal thoughts on the proposed changes to the OMTA membership requirements. These changes would alter the bylaws to eliminate both the provisional membership option, and the requirement that a teacher have a music degree to hold full membership in the organization.

The OMTA brochure describes our organization as “...dedicated to fostering excellence in music education,” and “...we seek to elevate the status of the private music teacher.” Would we be doing this by dropping the degree requirements for membership? The very founding of OMTA in 1915 was based, in part, on the belief that independent music teachers had a responsibility to their students and the community to provide the highest standards in music education.

I have several questions I would like to pose to those who favor a “dumbing down” of membership requirements:

1. Has a study been done to determine approximately how many new members OMTA would actually gain by eliminating the degree requirement? How many members might OMTA lose by making this change?
2. Are public and private primary and secondary school teachers still required to have a degree? What about college faculty? Should OMTA’s requirements and expectations be anything less?
3. Isn’t a four- year college degree or the equivalent, considered the minimum basic education for a professional musician? Shouldn’t all music teachers have a basic background in music theory and history; participation in both large and small ensembles and demonstrate competence on their primary instrument?
4. How can we as teachers, be responsible for preparing some of our college- bound students for admission to a college music degree program, that we are no longer required to complete?
5. Do parents, students, and the community in general no longer consider educational background important when choosing a teacher?

Certainly, a degree in music does not guarantee good teaching, but it does indicate that the teacher cares enough about the profession to seek a minimum educational standard.

I don’t see this issue as being nearly as controversial as it has been described. I have witnessed far more heated discussions over changes to syllabus requirements. Nor can I see a comparison to the decisions made by delegates to the Constitutional Convention. The delegates were responsible for creating a new government from scratch. We can deal with this without the help of Benjamin Franklin. We are about to change the foundation and principles of an organization that has been a united body for 100 years. Neither does compromise figure into our decision: we either vote to adopt or reject the proposed changes.

As a possible alternative, OMTA could provide a clear and concise means for provisional members to achieve full membership in lieu of a degree, through a plan which includes independent study, examination, student evaluation, and mentoring. Such an alternative would be similar to OMTA certificate on options that existed years ago.

I believe a vote on this issue by the full membership of OMTA is the best course of action. Whatever the outcome, it will not alter the aura of friendship and feelings of community we share as a group.

Wyatt Burger, NCTM

“A teacher who loves learning earns the right and the ability to help others learn.”

—Ruth Beechick

“Education is the key to success in life, and teachers make a lasting impact in the lives of their students.”

—Solomon Ortiz

“Excellence is a better teacher than mediocrity. The lessons of the ordinary are everywhere. Truly profound and original thoughts are to be found only in studying the exemplary.”

—Warren Bennis

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- Website: www.gpyinternational.org/hostfamily_short.html
- Contact: luannlangford@gpyinternational.org or
Phone 541.517.5915 for additional details

*We are Looking forward to having Your Family
Join in the Fun with Us!*



Upcoming Member Performances

Paul Safar in Concert

An upcoming concert of music written by Eugene OMTA member Paul Safar:

Cherry Blossom Musical Arts is full of the energy of spring, and we are excited to announce a new show! On April 25, at the **First Christian Church in Eugene** we are presenting "**Birds, Blossoms and All Things Living: New Music by Paul Safar**".

This concert, co-sponsored by Aprovecho Research Center, will feature a wide variety of chamber music including the **DelGani String Quartet, Pickles and Peppers Clarinet Quartet, and The Metropolitan Saxophone Quartet**. For this concert, we will also bring back the piano duo of **Ben Farrell and Paul Safar**, juggler **Andrew Teem**, and a beautiful new story by **Nancy Wood set to music**. This concert will also feature "**The Warbler Sings**", the piece commissioned by the OMTA, featuring **Nathan Waddell and David Bender in addition to Nancy and Paul**.

We'd love to see you there!

Saturday, April 25th at 7:30 pm, First Christian Church

1166 Oak street, Eugene,OR 97401

\$10 suggested donation at the door

The deadline for submitting articles and announcements for the May 2015 issue of Con Brio is Sunday, April 26, 2015.

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.

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APRIL 2015

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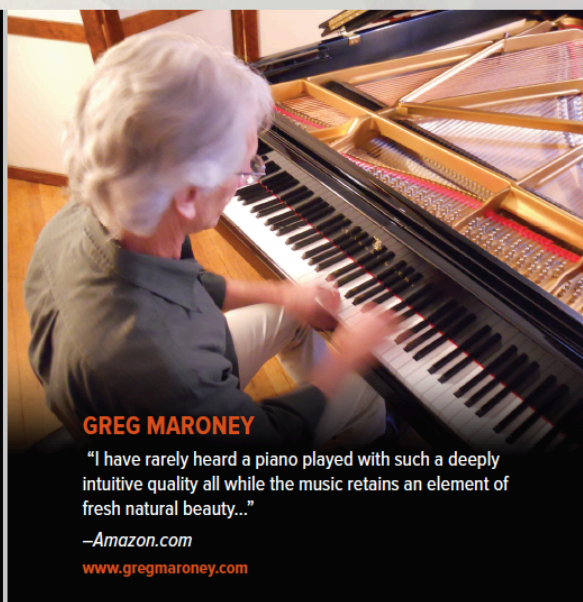


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