



Letter from the President, Tamara Bertram

Dear North Dakota Music Teachers,

I trust this message finds you well and brimming with anticipation for the upcoming school year, a time filled with promise for both musical maturation and creative inspiration. As I embark on my second year of presidency, I am thrilled to share some personal news with you. On August 5th, I welcomed a beautiful addition to my family—Julia Magdalin Bertram, a precious bundle of joy whose presence has already illuminated my life.



Reflecting on the NDMTA state conference held this past June, I was once again struck by the remarkable sense of community that unites us in North Dakota. The resounding conversations, the rich tapestry of topics discussed, the awe-inspiring performances, and the invaluable insights shared during this event served as a testament to the strength of our connections. It was truly a wonderful conference.

Thank you for being a part of NDMTA, an organization that continually strives for community and professional growth. Here's to a fantastic start to the school year and to the beautiful music our students will create under our skillful guidance this year.

Warm regards,
Tamara Bertram
President, NDMTA

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Enoch Orukotan, MTNA Competition Finalist from North Dakota

Editor's Note: NDMTA assisted Enoch Orukotan's travels to MTNA Competitions in Reno in March. This article is reprinted by permission of Wendy Reuer, Inforum, West Fargo. You can utilize the url listed below for more pictures.

West Fargo middle schooler heading to national music competition with new sax donated by supporters

<https://www.inforum.com/lifestyle/arts-and-entertainment/west-fargo-middle-schooler-heading-to-national-music-competition-with-new-sax-donated-by-supporters>

WEST FARGO — Three years ago, Enoch Orukotan had never played a saxophone. This weekend, he's in Reno, Nevada, playing against kids from all over the country in the biggest student competition in America, the Music Teachers National Association Competition.

The 8th grader at Liberty Middle School in





Popplers Competition Highlights

By Michelle Kallod

This year's Popplers Competition was judged by Eva Polgar, introduced to NDMTA by Lisa Bost Sandberg, ND 2023 Commissioned Composer.

We were able to award 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners in the following categories:

- * The **Elementary** winner was:
 - Cadence You, student of Yechun Wang
- The **Junior High** winners were:
 1. Grant Geller, student of Dianna Anderson
 2. Elaine Liu, student of Gloria Bethke
 3. Chloe Cox, student of Priscilla Keogh
- * The **Senior High** winner was:
 - Elvin Lin, student of David Poffenberger
- * The **Collegiate** winner was
 - Emily Storick, student of Michael Langer



The winners were awarded with a check from Popplers Music, presented by Sharon Pugh. Each first place winner was invited to and chose one of their pieces to be played at the winner's recital.

Thank you to all who participated!



Left to Right : Eva Polgar (judge), Elvin Lin, Chloe Cox, Elaine Liu, Grant Geller, Emily Storick, Cadence You, Sharon Pugh (Popplers) Michael Langer (NDMTA VP)

Upcoming Events

2023 MTNA State Competition Deadline	September 13	
2023 MTNA State Competitions	October 21	VCSU, Valley City, ND
2023 WCD Competitions	December	Video Performances
2024 MTNA Conference	March 18-21	Atlanta, Georgia
2024 Popplers Music Competition	TBD	Grand Forks, ND
2024 NDMTA Conference	TBD	Grand Forks, ND

NDMTA Thursday Evening Concert Ubuntu Marimba & Catherine Rollin

By Michael Langer

Ubuntu Marimba is a Dickinson-based group of junior high and high school students directed by Laurae Dykema, music director at Dickinson Middle School. The ubuntu is an instrument from Zimbabwe (Southern Africa) and is closely related to the marimba. One visible difference between the ubuntu and a marimba is keyboard layout. The ubuntu does not have chromatic bars laid out like a piano keyboard, but instead appears to have either one or two octaves of a single major scale. The highest range sounds like the upper range of a marimba, while the lowest range resembles a bass marimba with extra-wide bars and resonators. Additionally, the mallets have rubber heads instead of yarn like most marimba mallets.



The Ubuntu Marimba ensemble performed seven pieces. Several were traditional Zimbabwean pieces and a few were arrangements of pop songs like Ozzy Osbourne's "Crazy Train", The Chantays' "Pipeline", and Stevie Wonder's "Higher Ground". Dykema, the director, stressed the importance of rote learning for the group, as is the tradition in Africa. She explained how memorizing the music forces the students to listen to the multiple parts each other is playing. During the concert, Dykema directed mainly by playing cowbell or shakers with the ensemble. The music is exciting, highly rhythmic, energetic, and the students obviously love performing it.

Catherine Rollin presented a program of her own student works. The first six were brand new pieces from her self-published book *Museum Masterpieces: The Premier Exhibition*. As in her previous books in the Museum Masterpieces series, the new book features piano solos inspired by famous paintings. Highlights were Van Gogh's "Self Portrait", Renoir's "The Skiff", Monet's "Houses of Parliament", and Munch's "The Scream". Before performing each piece, Rollin shared the history of the artist and painting and then explained how those elements inspired her pieces. This created a richer experience for me, helping me understand the paintings better and reflect on Rollin's own feelings communicated through the music. For example, in Van Gogh's "Self Portrait", the artist's self-doubt and depression resonated through Rollin's performance.

Thank you! Outgoing Officers & Welcome our Incoming Officers!

Office
Vice President
Historian

Outgoing
Michael Langer
Di Wu

Incoming
Lisa Schuler
Tamara Bertram

NDMTA Conference Session by Catherine Rollin: Technique & Artistry: You Can't Have one without the other"

By Michael Langer

The theme of this session was how to avoid tension and create musicality through healthy technique. Rollin's belief is that to achieve a fully realized artistic statement a performer must have a full understanding of technique and identify its role in producing a desired sound through healthy movement that is free of tension.

Rollin defined a variety of technical physical movements and classified them into two groups: legato and detached. The legato movements include arm rotation, two-note slurs, rolling wrist, balanced torso and forearm, pivoting wrist, thumb-under, legato arm, wrist rotation, and sliding in and out of black keys. Detached movements include forearm staccato, push-off staccato, and wrist staccato.

Rollin demonstrated each technique and applied it to standard repertoire excerpts from elementary through advanced works. She described arm rotation as the motion of turning a door knob. She stressed this rotating motion throughout the presentation in relation to other motions as a foundation to future advanced filigree passagework and Alberti bass. To introduce the two-note slur to students, she places a rubber band on their wrist so she can lift and drop their hand into the keyboard so they can experience the correct feeling. For scales, she breaks the process into three elements: pivoting wrist, thumb-under, and legato arm. The wrist pivots to support the thumb, the thumb prepares for the next placement by moving under the palm, and the arm leads the hand to create a legato phrase. All three movements happen simultaneously, but need to be broken down for the student in slow motion when scales are first introduced.

In demonstrating detached movements, she broke down staccato into three levels of varying pressure and action. Forearm staccato is for basic staccato notes, such as a single-line melody, where the hand stays near the key and bounces lightly. Push-off staccato is where weight is thrown into the keyboard and then the

hands are quickly pulled back. It is used for large chords and is effective for articulations like the sforzandos in Beethoven's "Op. 13" and the opening chords in Burgmüller's "Arabesque". Wrist staccato is a snappy motion of the hand used for crisp running notes such as in Schumann's "Wild Rider" and octaves passages, such as Chopin's "Ballades". For octaves, arm and hand weight are thrown into groups of notes to facilitate movement.

At the end of the presentation, Rollin demonstrated the combined application of all the above techniques in various advanced repertoire. Personally, I felt Rollin's approach to technique aligned with my own pedagogical values. As a student, my teachers utilized many of these approaches, and I have successfully helped my students advance in technique over the years with this approach. The danger in not applying healthy technique at an early age is that students don't build the foundation to continue to advanced music. In my college teaching, I've met too many freshmen who played advanced pieces but didn't have healthy technique. This led to fatigue and pain as well as limiting their musicality. It's much harder to alter technical habits as an adult than as a child – but fortunately not impossible!



NDMTA Conference Session : The Magic of Imagery

By Amy Mercer

Catherine's session titled "The Magic of Imagery" explored the use of extrinsic devices to enhance students' understanding and interpretation of the music they are learning. Using many musical examples, she discussed four different types of imagery that we as teachers could use: 1) Sound and Word Imagery, 2) Dance and Movement Imagery, 3) Story-Telling and Instrumental Imagery, and 4) Art Work Imagery. With the first type, Sound and Word Imagery, Catherine explained how sometimes what we are trying to convey to students is difficult to explain or notate but is easy to demonstrate by singing, even if you don't feel like you have a great voice. Making up words to sing with the melody can be very beneficial to students in helping them learn the rhythms, shape of the phrase, aural memory, and more. Catherine focused on using dance and other types of movement in lessons for the second type, Dance and Movement Imagery. She showed some examples of how you can use movement to help students feel rhythms better as well as working on pulse, ritards, and transitions in a piece. Next was Story-Telling and Instrumental Imagery where Catherine explained how to incorporate stories about the music or suggest different types of instruments for different pieces or musical lines to increase students' understanding of a piece. Lastly, she talked about Artwork Imagery, using many examples from her Museum Masterpieces to illustrate the connection between visual art and music. In summary, using a combination of these imagery tools can be an inspirational and fun way to help students better understand music.



Membership Awards

By Corinne Nustad

It is with great honor that I announce, in this newsletter, the members who received certificates of those who started their relationship with NDMTA in the years 2013, 1998, and 1973.

There were no 10 year certificates to award, but there were 3 who became members in 1998. Monica Wolff and Nancy Harsch, from FMMTA, received the 25 year certificates, but were unable to be at the conference. Amy Mercer, also a member of FMMTA, received her 25 year certificate at the conference. Amy continues to have a state board position, and has been a presenter at other conferences.



There were 4 recipients of the 50 year membership awards. Ellen Croy, member of Northwest MTA, and Sharon Wesbrook, Detroit Lakes, were unable to be at the conference. Two past presidents of NDMTA, Priscilla Keogh, Badlands MTA, and Beth Klingenstein, Bismarck Mandan MTA, received certificates for outstanding work in those 50 years.

We congratulate all of those members receiving the certificate of years of membership, and encourage all members to continue to give of their effort and time for such a great organization!!

50 Year Members, Left to Right:
Beth Klingenstein and Priscilla Keogh,
Lisa Schuler (Membership Chair)

IMTF Luncheon, Beth Klingenstein on Self-Care for the Independent Music Teacher

By Vangie Johnson Parker & Lisa Schuler

NDMTA hosts the Independent Music Teacher Forum Luncheon at each state conference. The attendees enjoy a lunch, fellowship, the passing of the Foundation Fellow basket to raise funds for the Fellow, and a presentation on a topic suitable for the independent music teacher. This year was no exception. After the meal, money was collected to honor Dr. Robert Groves, the 2024 Foundation Fellow nominee, and a presentation was given by Dr. Beth Klingenstein, "Self-Care for the Independent Music Teacher".

Beth's presentations are always packed with useful information. She started the presentation by offering a handout with 41 links to websites that will help support self-care for teachers. If you would like a pdf of this handout, you may email her at beth.klingenstein@ndus.edu

She encouraged us to take time in our daily lives to consider the following:

Emotional and Mental Health:

- Practice Gratitude! Happiness has less to do with the situations we are given and more to do with how we deal with them.
 - Begin a gratitude journal.
 - Say "thank you" often and express the need to receive gratitude in return.



- "Attitude trumps circumstances". She shared a personal story of her health crisis as a child and how she handled it with a positive attitude, but her sister who also suffered a health challenge, didn't handle it well. They led two very different lives because of their attitudes. Beth testified how a gratitude journal has helped her, it even improved her marriage.
- Have reasonable expectations for our

students, families, and ourselves.

- Try to be less self-critical.
- Keep things in perspective. Another quote was stated, "Happiness allows us to choose "this" or let go of "that".
- Treat yourself to books, hobbies, experiences, playing instruments, bird watching, or anything else that brings joy.
- Nurture social wellness. "Time spent with friends is time well spent."
- Lessen your screen time being it breaks down connection with others.

Physical Health:

- Be sure you are getting enough sleep! Your enhanced mood, energy, and problem-solving skills are just a few benefits from a good night's rest.
- Exercise: A combination of walking, stretches, yard work, aerobic activities, and strength training can give you the tools to help fight or prevent cancer and other illnesses. Physical activity improves mood and helps ensure enough energy to do the things you enjoy doing. Remember...sitting and being idle is considered the new "smoking" in regard to your increased chances of disease and death.
- How about moving around during your lessons? Stretching and dancing with your students is a great way to stay active. Fun for everyone!
- Diet and nutrition: It's best to minimize saturated fats, soda/sugary beverages, salt, and ultra-processed foods. Consider consuming more fresh fruits and vegetables.

Financial Health:

- Be sure you are charging professional rates.
- Be proactive in raising rates on a regular basis and to explore other sources of income.
- Learn from financial advisors such as Dave Ramsey. Such advisors can help you with establishing an emergency fund.
- Save 3-6 times the amount you make in a month.
- Advisors suggest putting 10-15 percent of

each paycheck into your retirement fund...the earlier the better!

- Always pay yourself first and then the rest of the monthly income pays the bills. Beth went into more detail about financial tips but insisted on people meeting with a financial advisor for good financial health.
- Learn the best possible ways to market your studio.
- Consider developing a website.
- Budget carefully and stick to your budget.



Professional Health:

- Publicly acknowledge, participate, and make the most of MTNA and what your local associations have to offer.
 - Network with other teachers
- Continued education
 - Take time for professional development. You can charge for this time off ...with pay. Just be sure to inform your students and parents regarding your activities during those times.
 - Show your value and pride with others through a good resume and keeping it updated.
 - Be professional learners by pursuing conferences, research topics, and have the mindset to grow and experience.
 - To avoid teacher burnout, remember that change is good.
 - Investigate starting music camps, composition, RMM programs, festivals, etc.

- Always seek new materials and approaches to teaching.
- Advocating for the arts also keeps professional health alive and well.

Business Health:

- Keep a neat and well-organized studio. You might want to research clutter control for hints on how to keep your space organized and at top efficiency.
- Create and stick to a firm studio policy. It will save you much time and stress down the road.
 - Beth reminded attendees that we are not obligated to teach difficult students or deal with difficult parents. Let them go to lower stress.
- Carefully consider and focus on good time management. Check out the MTNA website/ Business Digest for more ideas.
- Learn to manage your time better with apps, have lesson swap lists so families can swap themselves and maybe cut stressful events in your studio.
- Local associations can have a program on time savers.
- Don't overload your workday.
- Learn how to appropriately say "no" and "yes" when asked to do things from others.
- Schedule paid breaks for conferences and vacations. Teachers deserve a paid vacation.
- Set business hours so phone calls and emails are only answered during those times.

Beth Klingenstein ended her presentation with her take away: "A lot of our health is within our own power to control". She left the group feeling empowered with many tools to help with self-care and she gave all those in attendance a gratitude journal, encouraging everyone to write their blessings of each day in it. Thank you to Beth for her wealth of information given to the IMTF event!

The Dickinson Press included an article on the NDMTA Conference in their May 17, 2023 issue of their newspaper. Copy and past the link in your browser to read the news:

<https://www.thedickinsonpress.com/community/the-66th-annual-ndmta-state-conference-will-showcase-music-education-excellence-in-dickinson>

**The Dickinson
Press**

Session V: MTNA “Hidden Gems”

By Corinne Nustad

Beth Klingenstein, PhD, NCTM

The MTNA Website is: <https://www.mtna.org>

Explore-Contact us (MTNA Staff)

This is Beth’s introduction to her presentation. If you ever have the opportunity to contact the staff, you will find them to be so very, very helpful, and personable, and ready to assist you with anything!!

The areas in Beth’s presentation were:

1. Student Opportunities – you will find these in the pull down tab under “Learn”. The most surprising to me were the websites for kids, which included symphony excerpts, assignments, games, theory, and more. Under “Join+Renew” tab for members only, you will find the Music Achievement award, Music Study Award and Studio Festival. Did you know that MTNA will print out certificates in each of these categories for your studio? Under “Engage” is the MTNA eFestival and Competitions.

2. Teacher Opportunities – pull down tab under “Learn”, “Find a Teacher”, “Explore”, and “Join+Renew” researches several support areas. Under the MTNA Foundation (<https://www.mtnafoundation.org>) you will find information on MTNA Grants, under the “Learn” tab, studio resources, COVID toolkit, copyright information, webinars (plus archives), the AMT (plus archives, and many business resources. Under MTNA Certification: <https://certification.mtna.org> and “Engage” you will see several other resources.

3. The last 2 categories were titled “Commercial Benefits”, member only, (“Join+Renew”) and “Benefits for State and Local Associations” (“Connect”).

Teachers: Take the time to review all of these benefits! They are very user-friendly! Let’s take advantage of all the resources provided freely for us!

MTNA Competitions

MTNA State Performance Competitions will take place on Saturday, October 21, 2023 at Valley City State University. Registrations are open now and will close September 13, 2023.

Please see [MTNA.org](https://www.mtna.org) for guidelines and rules about Performance, Composition and Chamber Music Competitions.

As always, I would like to invite any of our membership to help me in Valley City that day. Door monitors and time keepers are always welcome and needed! Sue Nagel, nagstur82@gmail.com or 701-361-0193.



Entry information for all competitions can be found on the MTNA website, <https://www.mtna.org/MTNA/Engage/Competitions/Competitions.aspx>

NDMTA Annual Business Meeting June 8, 2023

Recorded by Lisa Schuler, filling in for Sheryl Kjelland

President Tamara Bertram called the meeting to order.

Roll Call proved there was a quorum.

Agenda: Michael Langer moved to accept the agenda, 2nd by Lisa Schuler, motion carried.

Secretary Minutes: Lisa Schuler read the minutes from the 2022 Business Meeting. Michael Langer moved to approve the minutes with corrections, 2nd by Amy Mercer, motion carried.

Treasurer Report: Michelle Kallod went over the highlights of the budget. She showed the losses from last year and the loss in the 2023 conference budget. A discussion was held, and the board will implement some remedies for the coming year. Kathie Johnson moved to approve the 2023-2024 budget, 2nd by Anne Morris, motion carried. A discussion followed about the possibility of having state conferences every other year at Popplers Music Store in Grand Forks in conjunction with their fall piano workshop. This would greatly reduce conference costs, providing more money the following years at the usual conference rotation sites. Lisa Schuler offered to meet with Popplers owner, Joshua Gratton about this idea. Kathie Johnson moved to have Lisa explore the possibility of having the 2024 State Conference at Popplers in the fall of 2024. 2nd by Alice Pekarski, motion passed.

Vice President Report: Michael Langer announced to the membership that he is moving to South Carolina and will be leaving his position on the board.

President Report: Tamara Bertram shared that she attended the MTNA Summit but did not go to the national conference being she is pregnant. She will continue to work on the endowment project for scholarships. She will be looking into updating the NDMTA website.

Conference Report: Priscilla Keogh reported that there are 32 people registered for the conference. 32 were at the IMTF Luncheon and 39 are signed up for the banquet. There is a financial loss on running the conference this year even though Dickinson State University does not charge anything to host the conference. More registrants would have paid for the conference. She hopes NDMTA can find ways to attract more attendees at future conferences.

Foundation Update: In the absence of Dianna Anderson, Vangie Johnson Parker reported that prior to the conference, \$349.50 had been raised for the 2024 Foundation Fellow nominee, Dr. Robert Groves. The IMTF Luncheon collection added \$480.00, making the current total \$829.50. NDMTA needs to raise \$1,500 by January 7, 2024. Members are encouraged to keep giving to honor Dr. Groves and to support the MTNA Foundation program.

Nominating Committee: Priscilla Keogh offered that Lisa Schuler be nominated for the position of Vice President of NDMTA with the understanding she will continue into the presidency in 2024. Michael Langer moved to nominate Lisa Schuler for Vice President, 2nd by Kathleen Johnson, motion carried. Tamara Bertram thanked Michael Langer for his service on the board and wished him well with his new position in South Carolina.

Installation: President Tamara led the installation for Lisa Schuler and gave her the traditional red rose.

Adjournment: Michael Langer moved to adjourn the annual business meeting, 2nd by Amy Mercer, motion carried.

Executive Board Meeting Minutes, June 7, 2023

Recorded by Lisa Schuler, filling in for Sheryl Kjelland

President Tamara Bertram called the meeting to order.

Roll Call: Tamara Bertram, Lisa Schuler, Michelle Kallod, Vangie Johnson Parker, Amy Mercer, Anne Moris, Kathleen Johnson, Priscilla Keogh, Michael Langer, Sheryl Doctor, Eileen Geske, Don Geske (guest), Corinne Nustad

Agenda: Michael Langer moved to approve the agenda, second by Priscilla Keogh, motion carried

Officer's Reports

Secretary Minutes: Vangie Johnson Parker moved to approve the minutes, 2nd by Anne Moris, motion carried.

Treasurer Report: Michelle Kallod has been paying bills, taking care of competition stipends, prepared the budget, updated the job description, and prepared a donation receipt for the IRS. Currently account totals are Checking \$25,683.13, Saving \$15,191.31, CD \$10,658.89.



Vice President/Commissioned Composer Report: Michael Langer has done all the needed preparations for the Commission Composer Premier to be held at the conference. The 2023 Commission Composer is Lisa Bost-Sandberg. He will be leaving his position of VP/Commission Composer and will facilitate the transition to the next VP. He shared a list of composers to consider for commissioning in 2024. Michael has also obtained gift cards for door prizes at the conference. The 2024 composer will be chosen during new business.

President Report: Tamara has been busy preparing for the conference. She's had correspondence with Mary Beth Shaffer from

West Central. She's prepared the paperwork for the endowment through the Community Foundation.

Committee Reports

Conference: Priscilla reported that everything is in place for the conference. The Popplers Competition was successful with very talented students. She shared the conference schedule and session topics. Catherin Rollin, clinician, has been very good to work with. Popplers is the lone vendor for the conference. There are 32 registrants for the conference.

Advertising: Anne Morris sent advertising letters to prospective advertisers. She's received one check and many replies about advertising. She would like the board to consider going to a digital directory. Anne is planning to resign from her position in June of 2024.

Certification/Service to the Profession: Amy Mercer solicited nominations for the 2023 Service to the Profession Award. The ad hoc committee selected the recipient and Amy has picked up the award to be given at the conference.

Competitions: Sue Nagel has secured Saturday, October 21st for the MTNA Competitions at VCSU. Sue needs help in running the competition. She would like a volunteer to contact her. She asked if mileage would be compensated for the person who comes to help.

Directory: Michelle Schumacher reported that she continues to make changes for the next directory. She encouraged members to renew their memberships by August. Local Presidents were reminded to send her an updated list of officers by August.

Foundation: Dianna Anderson reported that \$349.50 has been raised so far for Dr. Robert Groves, the 2024 Foundation Fellow Nominee. In Dianna's absence, Vangie Johnson Parker will pass the Foundation basket at the IMTF Luncheon.

Historian: Di Wu printed photos for the scrapbook. Di Wu will be stepping down from this position being she is moving to China. Tamara Bertram has offered to get the scrapbook up to date until a new historian can be found.

IMTF: Lisa Schuler has been in communication with Beth Klingenstein, presenter for the conference luncheon. Being Lisa is the lone active member of LAMTA, she asked that LAMTA be removed from the IMTF rotation. She suggested that Dickinson could be added to the rotation. After some discussion, the rotation schedule was tabled until the next board meeting. Minot has the next two years. Lisa has updated the IMTF job description.

Membership: Lisa Schuler continues to input memberships, sends welcome letters to new members, and posts on the NDMTA Facebook page. The membership totals for 2022-2023 were 50 regular members, 31 senior, 6 student and 7 new members for a total of 94 members. Lisa has the 10-year, 25-year, and 50-year membership certificates ready for the conference banquet. She emphasized the need to generate more young members to give energy to the organization.

Newsletter: Michelle Kallod published the Feb. newsletter. In May, she sent an email reminder about the conference. She continues to add new member contact information to the newsletter email distribution list. The deadline for the next newsletter is July 15th. Michelle requested members to write articles on the conference sessions for the August newsletter. People are to send her pictures from the conference.

Nominating: Priscilla Keogh announced that upon the resignation of Vice President Michael Langer, the committee will nominate Lisa Schuler at the business meeting.

Popplers Competition: Tamara Bertram has organized the Popplers Competition and has been in communication with the participants and teachers. She will meet with treasurer, Michelle Kallod, about the prize money for the competitors. Next year, Tamara would like to offer a Popplers semifinal round in 2 venues across the state or do a pre-selection that is by video submission.

Rally: Sheryl Kjelland reported that there were three Music Rallies held this past school year. LAMTA in Dec. 2022 and UVMTA and FMMTA in April 2023. Students were in Levels 1A-9. Rally registrations totaled \$2,175.00. Rally expenses totaled \$2,021.91. Other expenses included \$520.00 for the tests from IMTA, \$26.76 for printing and postage, and the remainder from the rallies. Rally profit equaled \$154.09.

Technology: Kathleen Johnson reported that she worked with Heidi Leben on adding the Popplers Competition application and updating the State Conference registration forms on the website. She also changed Tamara Bertram's email address. There were issues with some lost emails, which made the process frustrating, but everything was completed.

Old Business

The start of a virtual local association idea hasn't sparked interest yet in ND. Tamara has the endowment fund set up. She and Michelle Kallod will figure out the amount that will be put in the endowment. The endowment will be used for scholarships. The scholarships will go to students entering college for piano pedagogy and instrumental studio teaching. The board will approve the investment amount at the next board meeting.

New Business

There was a discussion on conference attendance and rotations. Vangie Johnson Parker moved to investigate a new plan of action for conferences.



Lisa Schuler will meet with Popplers for the possibility of having an August conference in conjunction with their fall piano clinic. This would help financially and maybe increase attendance. 2nd by Sheryl Doctor, motion carried. There was a discussion about the NDMTA website. Vangie Parker moved that Tamara experiment with a new, more modern looking website. Priscilla Keogh gave a 2nd, motion passed. The website could be running in 2024. Michael Langer led a discussion on the 2024 Commissioned Composer. Vangie moved to ask Isaac Lovdahl (NDSU) to be the 2024 Commissioned Composer and if he doesn't accept the invitation, the 2nd option will

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

be Katie Rolf (VCSU) 2nd by Anne Morris, motion carried. Michelle Kallod presented the budget for 2023-2024. Michael Langer moved to approve the revised budget, 2nd by Amy Mercer, motion carried.

Local Association Reports

Badlands: Cheryl Doctor reported that Badlands MTA is ready to host the 2023 State Conference. They are estimating about 25 registrations as of June 3rd. They are hoping for more. The group has discussed and have a consensus to ask the board to consider having the state conference every other year.

FMMTA: Vangie Parker reported they've had several meetings on Zoom with the topics of "Things You've Always Wanted to Know and Can Now Ask", "Improvisation in the Classroom with Amy Mercer", "How Music is Chosen for Festivals, Performances, etc." FMMTA ended in May with a Spring Brunch. The local held its annual Music Rally in April. There is a concern with the rising cost of doing the Rally.

Bismarck: Michael Langer reported that he will be moving to South Carolina. Jennifer Flores of

Bismarck will be taking over his position of president of BMMTA. Their last meeting was a presentation by Michael's pedagogy students.

Greater Grand Forks: Tamara Bertram reported that the group hosted a guest artist from Milan, Italy. It was a successful masterclass and concert. There is a very low attendance of members at their meetings.

Langdon Area: Lisa Schuler reported she submitted a nomination for the Service to the Profession Award and has prepared a silent auction item for the conference.

Northwest: Ellen Croy reported that Northwest MTA is an inactive group and has been for many years now. She will not be attending the conference but sends her regards for a wonderful time of learning and fellowship.

Upper Valley: Sheryl Kjelland reported that Upper Valley held their annual Music Rally on April 15, 2023, with 40 students involved in Park River.

Adjournment: Priscilla Keogh moved to adjourn the meeting, 2nd by Anne Morris, motion passed.

(E. Orukotan, continued from page 1)

West Fargo earned a spot as one of six finalists in the junior age bracket or woodwinds. He represents the West Central Division, an area that extends from North Dakota and Minnesota south through Kansas and Missouri. He first won the state category earlier this year and in February discovered he won the regionals.

"I was surprised. I knew it was people all over the nation and I didn't think I'd be good enough to win," he says, sitting in his school's band room.

Orukotan flew to Reno with his father, Moses, on Thursday. The competition is on Saturday and on Sunday the winners play for everyone.

His dad plays a little piano and his mom sings, but the band is in his and his brothers' blood. His older brother plays trumpet and his younger brother is set to play trombone next year. Orukotan only picked up the saxophone when he started the 6th grade. Now he plays in the school's jazz band and concert band.

"I really loved how it sounded," he explains. "The sounds you make with this are better than all of the other instruments. It's not too low, not too high."

He's drawn to jazz saxophonists like Charlie Parker, Cannonball Adderly, Sonny Rollins and Phil Woods, but at this weekend's competition, he'll play a concerto by Jascha Gurewich, "Aria" by Eugene Bozza and a sonata by Johann Sebastian Bach.

Shortly after he started playing, Orukotan signed up for lessons from Russ Peterson, who teaches at Concordia College and plays in the Fargo - Moorhead Symphony Orchestra and Post-Traumatic Funk Syndrome.

"I have been working with Enoch for two years and have seen amazing potential in his playing," Peterson says. "Competitions are a great motivator to work up a difficult program and keep you excited. Enoch is playing three difficult pieces that I normally assign to college students. He has really risen to the challenge."

It's a challenge the young student is up to.

"He gives me motivation to one day be as good as him. Maybe better," Orukotan says. The teacher keeps pushing him, having recently assigned his pupil "Scaramouche" by Darius Milhaud and "The Carnival of Venice," by Frederick Hemke. "Again, these are pieces I would only give to college students," Peterson says.

Orukotan wants to keep playing after high school. Having heard Peterson's tales of playing around Europe and using music as a universal language,

the student wants to follow in his teacher's steps and play in Germany.

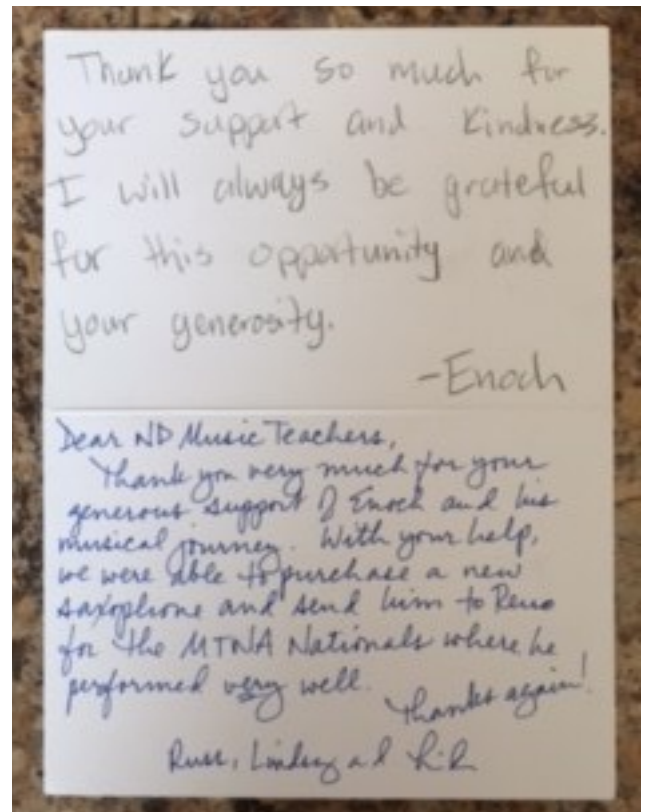
"I have a lot of work to do to be a real jazz player," he says, explaining he needs to learn more about improvisation.

This weekend, however, he's just focusing on the music in front of him. To combat nerves, he plans on just keeping his eye on the music and letting his hands do the talking.

Even if Orukotan doesn't take home top honors, he's already won something.

To make sure he'd be able to make it to the competition, Peterson started a fundraiser. The amount made not only paid for transportation, but also covered a new saxophone for the emerging artist. "I was really excited. I felt like I really outgrew the other one," he says.

"I was not totally surprised when I heard Enoch won the regional division of MTNA," Peterson says. "He is very talented and playing extremely well,. The truth is, I don't even care if he goes to Reno. The growth I have seen in him working up this program is worth it. Competitions are more about pushing you to do your best than what some judges say after you play. That being said, go get them Enoch!"



Thank you note from Enoch to NDMTA

Service to the Profession Award

By Amy Mercer

The NDMTA Service to the Profession Award for 2023 was awarded to Kathleen Johnson. She was nominated by Lisa Schuler who wrote the following:

On behalf of the Langdon Area Music Teachers Association, I would like to nominate Kathleen Johnson, NCTM for the 2023 Service to the Profession Award. She deserves this award for the four reasons shared in this letter.

Reason One: Kathleen Johnson is an outstanding teacher and learner, and has molded her students to do the same. She has affected my musical life, and others, in many ways. This special teacher taught me piano lessons while I was in elementary and high school. She also mentored me when I taught piano lessons to a student during my junior and senior year. After graduating from UND and moving back to Langdon, she again mentored me while starting my own piano studio. I know she would have mentored anyone in my position. We need to be grateful for mentors!

Kathleen Johnson taught music in the classroom and then ran a very successful piano studio in Langdon for over 40 years, with her students performing in numerous recitals, piano rallies, and competitions. In the 1970's, she was participating in the NDMTA Music Rallies. She took her students, including me, to various locations in the state, so that we could learn from that program. She kept her students participating in the rallies until she retired. She also adjudicated for the Music Rallies and Federation Festivals. She was a great teacher, but she also loved learning, going on to get her masters later in life. Good teachers seek professional growth!

Reason Two: Kathleen initiated a local association in Langdon, ND. In 1990, Kathleen invited area piano teachers to charter a local association for NDMTA, hence the Langdon Area Music Teachers Association was established. She was a true leader in forming LAMTA. Once we had our officers and host rotations decided, we were off and running. We started holding a Music Rally every year, an annual Honors Recital, themed recitals, we welcomed guest clinicians to work with our students, and had area teachers give programs at our meetings. She paved the way, and LAMTA kept on course. LAMTA was awarded the MTNA Local Association of the Year in 2003. It is amazing that a small chapter in a rural town stood out to the national association!

Reason Three: Kathleen Johnson has been influential at the state level. She has held many positions on the NDMTA executive board. The ones that come to mind are Secretary, Certification Chair, President, Foundation Chair, and she has been our Technology Chair for many years. She has also been involved with updating rally testing. She has been a Foundation Fellow. Kathie is to be commended being she has been retired from teaching for several years now, yet she is still very active in keeping NDMTA on track for success. She has always tried to make LAMTA and NDMTA the best it can be. Great leadership leads to a great organization!

Reason Four: Kathie has been instrumental in her church and community. She has been an organist at United Lutheran for what seems like forever, and she accompanied the church choir for probably 40 plus years. She had her students play in church, she taught others to play the organ, and she started and still directs the contemporary praise band at United. Many of the band members are her former piano students, now in their 40's and 50's. She paved the way for the next generation. She was also an accompanist for the local arts council community theatre, community choirs, weddings and funerals. She has always shared her gift of music with others.

I would not be the piano player, performer, accompanist, and teacher I am without Kathie. LAMTA and NDMTA would not be where they are today without Kathie.

Congratulations to Kathleen Johnson!

