

**NORTH DAKOTA MUSIC TEACHERS  
ASSOCIATION**

**Newsletter, February 2010**

**Arlene Gray, President**



*A Message from your President:*

Dear NDMTA Musicians and Friends,

This winter is another chilly one with much, too much, snow. The new Directory is complete in spite of nearly a full week without power. The talk of floods has us wondering what Mother Nature will bring this spring. North Dakota is a beautiful state in all seasons, yet we do not enjoy the serious damages from ravaging flood waters.

Weather concerns us since it dictates our activities. Even the January NDMTA Board meeting was cancelled because of the severe snow storms and high winds, making it unsafe to travel from our homes. Technology is wonderful, but it cannot subdue weather conditions. Our state organization remains durable in spite of challenges.

This week our first Teacher of the Year, Sharon Wesbrook, lost her husband. We extend our sympathy from this organization to Sharon. She has served this organization and music students with warm encouragement and expertise for many years. Her enthusiasm and love of music are apparent in the music students coming from her studio.

My reservations are in place to attend the National Conference as your representative. I shall be attending meetings and sharing insights in the May newsletter. Please be sure and clear October 2010 for the NDMTA Conference. Dickinson members are well into the preparations.

May your students be prepared for the Festivals, Recitals and Auditions coming up this spring.

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**Penelope Simons, Competitions Chair Report, Division round of the MTNA competitions  
University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri, January 15–17, 2010.**

The results of our North Dakota winners and representatives are as follows:

Senior Strings: Melanie Due (Grand Forks; teacher Dan Scholz, Winnipeg) did not attend.  
Senior Piano: Leo Thorp (Grand Forks, teacher Gloria Bethke) was not placed  
Young Artist Woodwind: Hannah Porter (Bismarck, Flute; teacher Mary Posses, Kansas City) was awarded an Honorable Mention  
Young Artist Strings: Caitlin Benson (Fargo, Cello; teacher Erik Anderson, Minot) was not placed.  
Young Artist Piano: David Holler (Drake; teacher Penelope Simons, Minot) was not placed.  
Chamber Music Ensemble: Gold Star Quartet (Fargo; teacher Matthew Patnode, Fargo) was awarded an Honorable Mention.  
In addition, our member Eileen Geske was present at most of the piano performances.

The standard of many of the piano entries was phenomenal. Players in the Junior level were playing such pieces as Prokofiev sonata #6, the Liszt *Grandes Etudes de Paganini* #6, and the Balakirev *Islamey*. It was a pleasure and a privilege to see and hear these amazing young people. Piano playing is very much alive and strong in the West Central Division. This area includes North and South Dakota, Minnesota, Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, and Colorado. Congratulations to these dedicated players and their teachers.

Winner of Junior Piano was Jeff Zhang (Minnesota), teacher Alexander Braginsky; Alternate was Chung Man Kim (Kansas), teachers Wha-In Lee/Jack Winerock.

Winner of Senior Piano was Chelsea Wang (Iowa), teacher Ksenia Nosikova; Alternate was Dominic Cheli (Missouri), teacher Zena Ilyashov.

Winner of Young Artist Piano was Alec Tauscher (Kansas), teacher Jack Winerock; Alternate was Kit Loong Yee (Missouri), teacher Wei-Han Su.

It will certainly be an exciting final competition at the National Conference in Albuquerque!



Gold Star Quartet  
(Chamber Music  
Ensemble)



Hannah Porter (Young Artist Woodwind)



Caitlin Benson (Young Artist Strings)



Leo Thorp (Senior Piano)



David Holler (Young Artist Piano)

## **MTNA Competition Connections: In the Beginning**

Each year, there are a number of questions and misconceptions that arise regarding the MTNA Competitions. It is the competition committee's goal to help all MTNA members be more aware of this major component of our professional organization and the significance of the MTNA Competitions within the context of music education and student performance in this country, as well as to give more guidance through the participation process. To achieve this goal, we've developed a series of brief communications to explain, explore and guide teachers and students.

The theme of the first MTNA Competition Connection is PLAN AHEAD!

It is February, and may seem too soon to be thinking about MTNA Competitions. But, believe it or not, now IS a prime time to begin planning for your students to enter the MTNA Competitions. The entry deadline is always the second Tuesday after Labor Day, and entries may be submitted only online through the MTNA website. The next online entry deadline is September 14, 2010, for the 2010–2011 Competitions. Now is a logical time to begin reviewing repertoire possibilities for the Performance Competitions or to start composing for the Composition Competition. For many, the time between January and September is disrupted with summer breaks, vacations and other activities. We realize the September deadline may be awkward for some, but it is necessary, since the MTNA Competitions span a six-month period from the application deadline, through the state level competitions in the fall, the Division level competitions in January to the National Finals at the MTNA National Conference in the spring. Careful planning can alleviate a lot of the last minute stress as the entry deadline approaches.

Subsequent "connections" will explore suggestions about listing repertoire, hints on how to begin the compositional process with your students, rules, application process and other pertinent topics. Each "connection" will be archived on the MTNA website for future reference. If you have questions or need further explanation of something you read here, do not hesitate to contact us. We hope you enjoy this form of communication and that may benefit from the information.

### **MTNA Competitions Committee**

Linda Stump, NCTM, Director of Competitions

Sally Laird, NCTM, National Junior Performance Coordinator

Sigrid Luther, NCTM, National Senior Performance Coordinator

Jeanne Grealish, NCTM, National Young Artist Performance Coordinator

James Norden, NCTM, National Chamber Music Performance Coordinator

Roger Foltz, NCTM, National Composition Coordinator

## Foundation Fellow Report By Corinne Nustad

Ruth Stenson has officially become our 9<sup>th</sup> MTNA Foundation Fellow, thanks to the generosity of so many NDMTA members who contributed to the foundation in Ruth's name.

The MTNA Foundation's mission is to "advance the value of music study and music making to society and support the professionalism of music teachers". "Established in 1989, the Foundation Fund supports the educational endeavors of MTNA. Each year the fund provides teacher enrichment, local association and state affiliate grants, in addition to student competition and association awards." (MTNA Foundation brochure, "Working/Giving for a more Musical Tomorrow")

We are honored to have Ruth's life in the field of music and music education to represent NDMTA and MTNA. She devoted much time into being an organist, choir director, piano teacher, music director, accompanist for various churches and schools for most of her life. She held membership in the American Guild of Organists and was President of NDMTA from 1997-1999, as well as other various offices of our organization. Ruth was also active in Scouts and Community Concert Series Board, as well as raising 3 children with her husband Bob.

Sincere thanks to those who contributed to the Foundation Fund this year. Our state has been nationally recognized the last several years as having the highest percentage of our members donating, and also being number 5/50 for \$25 or more per person donating. We hope to continue these honors this year and in the future. Anyone who wishes to donate for next year's Foundation Fellow along with their annual dues, may do so by indicating on the memo line of your check that the donation would go towards NDMTA's next Foundation Fellow, Sally Rudolph.

Congratulations to the family of Ruth Stenson!



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Kayla Johnson, flute, *Casselton*  
Emily Custer, piano, *E. Grand Forks, Minn.*  
Andrew Budke, saxophone, *Fargo*

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## **MTNA Foundation Moment**

Dear Colleagues,

Now that the fall state conference season is almost over, it's not too early to start thinking about next year -- or for states with summer conferences to also look ahead. Several colleagues responded to my request for fund-raising ideas, and it's my pleasure to share them with all of you.

It was good to hear that each of the responding associations provides information about the FOUNDATION FUND for their newsletters. According to President Bonnie Kellert, tiny District of Columbia has no state conference, so relies heavily on this type of communication.

Newsletter articles are an excellent way to remind members of the programs and activities that the FOUNDATION FUND sponsors, and a great way to encourage members to join the growing list of contributors. It's also a convenient way to remind members and local associations that they are potential beneficiaries of the FOUNDATION FUND via Teacher Enrichment and Local Association Grants. In addition, each of the following associations has strongly supported the FOUNDATION FUND Fellow program.

Kathy Hammer reports that Colorado State MTA holds a silent auction at its state conference. Items to be bid upon come from local associations, where information regarding the FOUNDATION FUND is regularly shared. The state association has a budget item that provides an annual contribution to the FOUNDATION FUND.

According to Adrienne LeBlanc, Florida MTA solicits contributions for their nominated Fellows from local associations, which also hold fund raisers during the year.

Iowa MTA uses a time-honored approach to fund-raising -- passing the hat! Local association presidents receive -- and are asked to distribute -- emails regarding the FOUNDATION FUND to their membership. Occasional articles about the FOUNDATION FUND appear in the Iowa Music Teacher.

Both President Katherine Tobey and Foundation Chair Sarah Roy proudly reported that Louisiana's total contribution to the FOUNDATION FUND was a whopping \$1,704.55! This was a result of several strategies:

- Donations collected at the conference banquet and in the week following.
- A silent auction consisting of contributions from individuals and local associations.
- An annual Used Music Sale. FYI: purchasers can buy 10 pieces of sheet music, 3 books, CDs and other assorted items for the reasonable sum of \$1.00!

LMTA also offers a display of FOUNDATION FUND information at the state conference, encourages members to use the direct link to the MTNA website, and encourages members to contribute with their membership renewals.

South Dakota MTA holds an annual raffle, and as Susanne Skyrn describes, uses its Annual Traveling Plaque Award as a successful fund-raiser. Members are encouraged to nominate a "significant musical predecessor" via purchasing an unlimited number of \$5.00 tickets which include the nominee's name. The winning ticket is drawn at the IMTF luncheon at the conference, the winner's name is added to the plaque, which can be shared for a year by the nominee and the winner.

A "Chip in For the Foundation" cookie extravaganza is the brainchild of Wisconsin MTA's Gloria Grys. She offers freshly baked cookies to entice attendees of the state conference to the FOUNDATION FUND table and to encourage them to contribute. Coupled with their raffle, the association contributed \$805 to the Foundation.

Nebraska MTA, for the second year, took a page from Wisconsin's book and held a cookie sale -- during the conference and also during the state Festival, and the NMTA and MTNA competitions. NMTA also held a raffle, which included gifts from restaurants, music dealers, performing arts groups, and members, and proudly sent \$1,104.20 to the FOUNDATION FUND. NMTA has also had a real success in gaining support for our Fellows from family, friends, students, and other organizations of the nominees -- in addition to association members.

I hope these success stories will entice each state association to mount a fund-raising project, and that more associations will share their creative and successful ideas.

My thanks to the aforementioned folks and warm wishes to all for a wonderful Thanksgiving celebration.

Joan Reist  
Chair, MTNA FOUNDATION FUND



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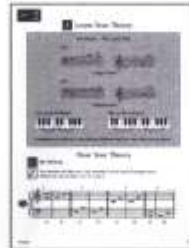
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