



*A Message from your President:*

**Winding Down/Winding Up**

One recital down, one to go. At this time of year I ask my husband not to ask too many things of me as I am in harvest. Being a farmer he quite understands what harvest time means: There are those times when one just needs to be left alone to carry on the responsibilities of getting things ready and harvested - er, performed - that is, finishing up the goals that were set at the beginning of the teaching year. My students seem to look at recitals from a different point of view as in, "Do I have to perform? Do I have to memorize it?" They don't always see it as setting a goal and achieving that goal like we teachers do.

What does this have to do with NDMTA? We teachers need to be setting goals for ourselves to become better teachers for our students. One of the most pleasant and actually cost effective ways to learn to be a better teacher is to plan to attend the NDMTA Conference in Bismarck/Mandan, June 21 and 22, and the NODAK Competitions on the morning of June 23. Wynn-Anne Rossi, our out-of-state clinician, and our own Beth Klingenstein will give us wonderful creative ideas to carry back to our studios to excite our students and give them new reasons to continue their music studies. There is the opportunity to 'talk shop' with other teachers from around the state and learn from them. Arlene Gray and the Bismarck/Mandan MTA are working hard to make the arrangements so that everything moves smoothly for us. So now, lessons may be winding down for you, but NDMTA is winding up for our state conference in Bismarck. Do plan to attend! It should be on the top of the "must do" priority list of every professional independent music teacher. There is always something new to be learned.

**State Conference - Student Composers**

We have seven student composers for the composition master class with Wynn-Anne Rossi on the Friday of the NDMTA State Conference (June 22). There is room for a couple more so if you haven't contacted me with students to participate in this extraordinary experience, let me know as soon as possible. I would like to send a list of the students to Wynn-Anne by June 1<sup>st</sup>.

**New York, New York**

How was New York? It was over the top! Wow! What a privilege it was to represent North Dakota at the MTNA Conference! The Conference hotel was located within walking distance of Central Park, Rockefeller Center, Times Square, the major shows, 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. etc. Unfortunately I didn't get to see all of the above but my husband did while I was in meetings at the Hilton, bragging about our great state. We had most evenings off and I did walk through Times Square a few times and see a show. By the time we left we even had our favorite restaurant. I have never seen so many yellow cabs concentrated in a square mile! Traffic is totally crazy - two lane narrow streets - only the fearless would attempt driving in New York. But there was nothing fearful about walking down the streets and enjoying the sights of New York. Security was everywhere and so were the tourists and suits walking to and from their jobs. It was a magnificent mix of humanity. I thank the NDMTA for making it possible for me to attend this conference. It was a wonderful time!

# **MTNA Conference Report – New York 2012**

**Kathleen Johnson, President**

## **Meetings! But First an Interesting Anecdote**

Before I get into the nitty gritty I must tell of an extraordinary experience. I went to a luncheon and arbitrarily sat beside a teacher and in our conversation found out she was the Ohio State MTA President. The extraordinary thing was that she taught elementary music in Langdon for a year and a half when she was first out of college – she was from Moorhead. Out of the 2000+ teachers at the National Conference, I happened on one who taught school in Langdon – how rare is that? Okay, now the official report.

## **Saturday**

### **Professional Studio Institute**

Saturday I went to the all day Professional Studio Institute led by Beth Klingenstein, Scott McBride, and Lee Galloway. They covered everything from writing your studio documents, to the finances, curriculum, legal issues, marketing etc. Everything you ever needed to know about setting up and maintaining a professional music studio was talked about. Both Scott and Lee made references to Beth's book "The Independent Piano Teacher's Studio Handbook" in that they endorsed it as being the 'must have' for any teacher starting and maintaining their teaching business. Beth is a treasure in our state – how lucky we are to have her as a member of our state association!

## **Sunday**

### **Carnegie Hall Royal Conservatory Achievement Program**

The Carnegie Hall Royal Conservatory Achievement Program (CHRCAP) sponsored a luncheon, a cocktail reception before the Conference Gala, the State Presidents Reception and had numerous showcases throughout the Conference. They were the major sponsor at the MTNA Conference – they put out a lot of dollars. Of course we are all grateful, but in return for that, there is a push for all of the states to adopt the CHRCAP as their official teaching/testing program. The luncheon that I mentioned above, where I met the Ohio State President, Judy Atherton Bebe, was sponsored by the CHRAP. Ohio MTA has adopted the program and so Judy and I had much discussion on the pros and cons. For those of you that aren't acquainted with the CHRCAP it is the national program that is used in Canada. It is very well put together and graded. It is a matter of pride for the student to say he/she has finished up to a certain level - is a bit like going from grade to grade in school. I talked to the Illinois state president to ascertain if Illinois had thoughts of adopting this program. This is important for North Dakota because we buy our Music Rally program from Illinois. I don't think we need to worry yet, but the CHRCAP isn't going to go away. The most important plus of the program that I see, besides the fact that it is well put together and honed by years of experience with its use in Canada, is that it would make tests and levels consistent nationally – become a national standard here in the U.S. as it is in Canada. That could be a good thing for our students. There is much food for thought here. More information is on the web site <[www.TheAchievementProgram.org](http://www.TheAchievementProgram.org)>.

Sunday morning I went to the Frederick Harris Music showcase because they are the publishers of the Celebration Series that is a resource supporting the Carnegie Hall Royal Conservatory Achievement Program. I wanted to find out more about the program. I also went because Marvin Blickenstaff was the presenter. There is always something new to be learned from the affable Mr. Blickenstaff. However it would take a little more study of the program than an hour with Mr. Blickenstaff could provide to understand the Conservatory Achievement Program. I think one would just need to jump in and use it.

### **The Conference Will Come to Order**

MTNA President Ben Caton opened the 2012 Conference with a welcome, greetings from the New York State President, overview by the conference chair, and recognition of guests. The keynote speakers were Melvin Stecher and Norman Horowitz who gave us an entertaining overview of their career as duo pianists and owners of a piano teaching studio that led to the recent establishing of the New York International Piano Competition for 15-18 year olds. This is a no elimination competition in that every entrant plays his whole program. This competition also includes duo playing. The session was ended with the performance of one of the winners of the New York IPC.

### **MTNA Distinguished Composer Of The Year Recital**

M. Shawn Hundley was honored as the MTNA Distinguished Composer of the Year for 2012. His piece, "A New American Ballad", is a solo piano work commissioned by the Florida State MTA and performed by Rose Shlyam Grace. After the performance of the piece, Mr. Hundley was interviewed on stage by Ann Rivers Witherspoon, chair of the MTNA Commissioned Composer Program.

### **More Commissioned Works – In a Collaborative Way**

Melody Bober and Kevin Olson were each asked to write a high intermediate piece to be played by two different sets of three instruments i.e. two composers, two trios, two ways. Melody wrote "Suite in Season" and Kevin wrote "Urban Legends". Each piece was played in the original arrangement and then the instruments were switched out with a different group. This was to activate creativity in teachers to use whatever instruments they had available to use in collaborative playing with their students. A single piece can work many different ways. Great idea! Let's get students playing together!

### **National Winners Perform in Beautiful Ballroom**

There is something magical about listening to beautiful music in a beautiful room. The Trianon Ballroom is a sumptuous gold and blue room with huge chandeliers hanging from the ceiling and walls lined with crystal sconces. The performances of the national winners of the MTNA Junior string, woodwind and piano competitions, the Chamber Music String, and Chamber Music Wind Competitions, and the Elementary and Junior High Composition Competitions were held in this beautiful room. Composers represented in the winning performances included Hindemith (chamber string), Maslanka (chamber wind), Kodaly (Junior string), Poulenc (Junior wind), and Ravel (Junior piano). Both the winning compositions were for piano and performed by their young composer. The performances of these young people were wonderful!

### **West Central Division Meeting**

The West Central Division Meeting was led by Tim Shook, WCD Director. News affecting our members includes the renewing of NCTM Certification every year, Foundation Fellow program is paperless, encouragement to leave a legacy in your will to the MTNA Foundation.

Marianne Bryan, who represents the WCD on the MTNA Board, reported that the MTNA Board responded to the outcry from the MTNA members in the discontinuance of certain competitions and are working to respond to the needs of all independent music teachers by implementing a new program, "One for All". It is an initiative to expand MTNA core programs and services to its non-piano members. They make up 12% of the membership and are being underserved by the association. Ms. Bryan went on to report that for piano teachers, MTNA has a broad and vital program for the piano members who don't enter competitions. On the other hand, MTNA does not have the same benefits for the non-piano teachers who do not enter students into national competitions. She said the association will devote more of its attention and resources to investigate, develop and ultimately implement a more comprehensive program for all teachers.

Suzanne Schones reported on percentages of members of each state that are nationally certified and North Dakota is #13 on the list. New applicants will complete the Teacher Profile and the submission process online now. Renewal is easily done online annually at a cost of \$15 per year.

## Monday

### Tidbits from the Keynote Address

Benjamin Zander, a professor at the New England Conservatory of Music and conductor of the Boston Philharmonic, was the speaker for the Keynote Address. It was outstanding! He had us up on our feet, laughing and having a good time. He also gave us much food for thought.

From my notes:

We can either see failure, or radiate possibility: Two salesmen went to Africa to sell shoes. One called home and said, "Hold the shipment of shoes, they don't wear any shoes". The other one said, "Glorious opportunity – they don't wear shoes!" See possibility in every circumstance.

Benjamin relates a classroom technique that allows students to envision their own futures: all students in his class receive an A if they write him a postdated letter relating "the story of what will have happened to you by next May that is in line with this extraordinary grade." Give children an A not to live up to, give an A as a possibility to live into.

Celebrate the mistake – you can't learn without mistakes. Say, "How fascinating", and swing your arms above your head. The student is learning.

The secret of life: It's all invented!

"Zander's Road to Damascus": The conductor of an orchestra doesn't make a sound – everything is dependent on making others see the possibility. We are all conductors. When we sit with a child, we are the conductor. It matters who we are being, as teachers, all the time, not just the time with the student. Life is not a rule but a possibility to live into. In life we have three choices of response: resignation, anger or possibility. We can resign ourselves to it, be angry about it or conduct it!

Highly recommended reading: The Art of Possibility by Rosamund Stone Zander and Benjamin Zander.

### Foundation Fund with Joan Reist

Joan talked about awards, composer commissioning, grants. She advised us to check out the state association grant – not many states apply for it and the chances of getting one are good.

Legacy Society: no minimum any longer, can designate an annuity, insurance policy or use a percentage of the above.

Fellow: Anyone can contribute except the person receiving. This year there were 38 fellows which is a record.

### Summit For MTNA Leadership

There has been a lot of dissatisfaction from certain members with the national leadership that started with the resolution last fall to drop certain competitions (resolution was rescinded). That resolution was a bit like something hitting the fan and from the emails, from members, that were sent to state presidents and others on the national board in December, January and February, one could discern there were other long standing disagreements with the national office that came to a head. These emails contained accusations that our national leadership was irresponsible financially and other little things that irritated certain members such as the letters CEO attached to our Executive Director, Gary Ingle's title. So, for the first two hours of the Summit the MTNA President, Ben Caton, Gary Ingle and the MTNA attorney and the auditor meticulously went through the finances and explained the need for trust in the MTNA Board of Directors, who are our elected representatives. They emphasized there always has been transparency in all financial doings. The good news is that financially the MTNA, with its tightening up the numbers of staff in the national office and responsible financial policies, has regained the ground it lost and is now in good shape. The Summit may again be held in the fall in Cincinnati with the MTNA affording the cost.

In our State Presidents Advisory Council (SPAC) meeting, there were a number of resolutions submitted anonymously that had to do with the dissatisfactions of the national leadership which were addressed in by Gary Ingle and Ben Caton in the first two hours. Most of these resolutions were petty and not researched for factual information. One even suggested that the MTNA headquarters should move to a smaller town and use lower paid staff. There were more than a few of us that were turned off by the anonymity and frivolity of those resolutions. A motion made by the Nebraska State President that any resolution not signed should not be considered was seconded and passed. Amen!

A resolution submitted by Colorado to recommend the Leadership Summit be held separately from the MTNA National Conference was passed, and motions to put SPAC minutes on line and hold SPAC phone meetings as needed throughout the year were passed.

Kathleen Theisen, Connecticut State President was reelected to serve as the SPAC Chair for 2012-13.

In the States by Size Meeting, which for ND included AR, DC, MT, NM, and SD we talked about issues in our states. Membership aging, lack of attendance at State Conferences by members, web sites, state competitions, use of membership list were among the items brought up and discussed.

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### Conference Gala

The Conference Gala was held in the beautiful Trianon Ballroom of the Hilton. Preceding the Gala was a cocktail reception sponsored by The Carnegie Hall Royal Conservatory Achievement Program. We met the North Dakota Foundation Fellow, Sara Bloom and her husband Wally at the reception and accompanied them to a table in the Ballroom. Also sitting at our table was Beth Klingenstein and the South Dakota President, Dr. John Walker and guest. It was a very festive occasion and the Ballroom was quite crowded with round tables. We watched with pride as Sara Bloom made her way to the front stage to accept her Foundation Fellow Award. North Dakota: We did good!

### Tuesday

#### Master class with Menahem Pressler

Menahem Pressler, one of the world's most distinguished and honored musicians conducted a master class with students playing Schumann, Brahms and Beethoven. Observation as I am listening to sounds of teachers conversing around me: the MTNA Conference on the East Coast of U.S. brings in lots of people with accents and conversations in foreign languages. ☺

### Annual Meeting

At the annual meeting, President Caton with MTNA Executive Director and CEO, Gary Ingle again went over the problems of the past year having to do with finances and the report was that MTNA is again on solid footing financially due to the national office cutting corners and staff and the better economic atmosphere in the U.S.

The Division election results were announced and some of the Association Awards were presented i.e. 50 year members, Collegiate Chapter of the Year, Local Association of the Year, etc.

## **Independent Music Teachers Forum**

The presentation on Wellness by Gail Berenson focused on the teachers serving as role models for our students and the need to pay attention to the body/mind, time management, technique in playing, and injury prevention. She stressed taking advantage of the MTNA's Annotated Wellness Bibliography which can be found on the MTNA website under 'member resources'.

The second half of the hour was 'To Market To Market' by Martha Dudgeon. She gave many ideas to market your studio and yourself through brochures etc, sign in front of your house, yellow pages etc, business cards, internet, long-distance teaching using Skype, You Tube videos, Facebook groups, and LinkedIn. She stressed the importance of communicating with the parents through Email and studio websites as a way to keep students long term.

## **Winners Concert**

The national winners of the MTNA Young Artist Performance and Composition Competition performed in the Grand Ballroom. I lost my program so can't elaborate on this concert.

## **Wednesday**

### **Composition Session: Studio Composition Camps**

Diane Higgins uses the summer to teach students composition through the genre of Day Camps. Through power point she showed her set up of piano, keyboards, computers etc and how she organized the day. She advertises 6 months in advance and each session is 2 1/2 hours Monday thru Thursday with a pizza party on the last day. She charges a fee of \$250 per student and offers 7 camps in June. Two sessions are offered per day, 1-3:30 p.m. and 6-8:30 p.m. and each will include both older and younger students together. She gave a day-by-day account of what the goal of each session is. If anyone is interested, I can copy the hand out that she gave to us. It was an excellent hand out with lots of information. You also can visit her website at [www.higginspianostudio.net](http://www.higginspianostudio.net).

### **MTNA Awards Brunch**

The Conference ended with the Awards Brunch on Wednesday. There were numerous awards given at the brunch including the MTNA Teacher of the year who was from New Jersey and Distinguished Composer of the Year. The installation of the 2012-2014 Division Directors was held. The new West Central Director is Timothy Shook. An overview of the 2013 Conference was given, which will be at Anaheim, California, and the Conference was closed by Ben Caton, MTNA President.

## **Overview**

As the representative from North Dakota at the Conference, most of the sessions I attended had to do with the official business of the MTNA. I tried to cover as many portfolios as possible such as Foundation, Independent Music Teachers Forum besides the business meetings and formal sessions of the Conference. There were also many, many sessions on every possible interest one might have as pertains to the teaching of music. There were so many ideas, so much creativity! Unfortunately there just wasn't time to take all the different sessions in. I was able to take in a few of these sessions (which I mentioned above) and was like a kid in a candy shop trying to decide what to choose – everything was enticing! I've been teaching for 40 years and I still learned a lot of ideas to bring back to my teaching. I also know that there will be many new ideas to bring back from the NDMTA State Conference. Make it your priority to be there. Thanks again for letting me represent North Dakota at the MTNA Conference!

WYNN-ANNE ROSSI TO BE FEATURED CLINICIAN AT  
NDMTA STATE CONFERENCE, JUNE 21-23



The North Dakota State Conference on June 21-23 will feature Wynn-Anne Rossi, a nationally acclaimed composer who has composed many of the student pieces we teach our students. Wynn-Anne brings expertise in the art of teaching composition to students and working with students on many levels. She will be presenting four workshops for us at the Conference which are titled and described below. Her resume says the following:

“Wynn-Anne Rossi is a nationally acclaimed composer whose works have reached audiences throughout the United States, Europe and Australia. She has over 70 publications (Boston, Alfred and FJH Publishing), and her commissions have included works sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts, Minnesota Public Radio and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. Wynn-Anne has a specialty for bringing the art of composition to young musicians. She has been teaching composition residencies in Minnesota schools since 2003, inspiring hundreds of teenagers to write their own music. She has also written two comprehensive series which encourage young pianists to compose: “Music by Me” (FJH) and the new “Creative Composition Toolbox” (Alfred). Wynn-Anne enjoys lecturing throughout the country on a variety of subjects. Her education includes theory/composition at the U of Colorado, jazz at the U of Illinois, choral conducting at Harvard and coaching under Pulitzer Prize recipient Aaron Jay Kernis. For more information, visit [www.rossi-music.com](http://www.rossi-music.com) or Wynn-Anne Rossi Music on facebook.”

Wynn-Anne Rossi’s sessions are as follows:

1. Teaching in the Age of Communication and Information

We live in an era of exponential change and short attention spans. With access to limitless information and world communication, we are surrounded by computers, cell phones and constant banter on Facebook and Twitter. America will never be the same. Neither will piano instruction!

Fast-paced learning has affected the brain itself, and as teachers, we must learn effective ways to keep passion for the piano alive. This session focuses on practical ways to successfully adapt to this new age. Discover simple ways to use technology and innovative ways to inspire your students.

## 2. Creative Play

Play is the most effective way we learn as children. How can play help us teach in the piano studio? "Playing the piano" can often feel like "working the piano" as students progress to higher levels. This session focuses on creative ways to interact with your students. Mix it up and learn to be spontaneous! Playful interaction mixed with lively materials can lead to a lifelong love of music.

## 3. Composition Toolbox Showcase

Get out the hammers and nails! It's time to teach theory through practicing theory. Writing music is the most inspiring and practical way to learn the nuts and bolts of music. In this session, Wynn-Anne will present "Creative Composition Toolbox", a 6-book series that introduces students to the art of original composition. As your students "learn by doing", they will delve into new realms of personal self-expression while growing in musical self-esteem.

## 4. Student Composer Masterclass

Learn by doing is the philosophy behind original composition. This session takes a different approach. Learn by watching! Discover tips and tools of teaching composition as Wynn-Anne interacts with student composers and their music. Wynn-Anne has been teaching students of various levels to compose for 25 years. Each year, she presents composition residencies in the Minnesota public schools, sponsored by the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra and the Cowles Center for Performing Arts.

Mark your calendars for a fun, good, and in spite of ourselves - learning time with Wynn-Anne Rossi in Bismarck!

**Kathleen Johnson, CTM**

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# Inspiring Music and Musicians

North Dakota Music Teachers Association Annual Conference June 21, 22, 23, 2012  
 Bismarck State College, Bismarck, North Dakota

## Registration

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ Member Y N  
 E mail \_\_\_\_\_

<u>Registration:</u>	Non-member	Member
Full Conference	\$100__	\$80__
Thursday, June 21	\$ 50__	\$40__
Friday, June 22	\$ 60__	\$50__
First time attendance, full conference only	\$ 50__	\$40__
Student, full conference only	\$ 40__	\$30__

<u>Meals:</u>		
Board Lunch, Box lunch		\$ 8__
Thursday Social, Baked potato bar		\$12__
Friday Luncheon, IMTF Luncheon, Box lunch		\$10__
Friday Banquet, Buffet meal		\$22__

**Workshop Sessions: Included in registration**

**Evening Concerts and NODAK Competition: Included in registration**

Evening Concerts: open to public and guests with ticket

Thursday, Dr. Dianna Anderson, solo piano	\$5__
Friday, Commissioned Composer, Mary Leaf, varied artists	\$5__

Late registration fee (postmarked after May 25) \$15\_\_  
 Total registration enclosed \$\_\_\_\_\_

Mail completed form and check payable to NDMTA before May 25 to:

Arlene Gray  
 4525 Camden Loop  
 Bismarck, ND 58503

Phone 701-250-0860

Note: Requests for refund must be submitted in writing to Arlene Gray and postmarked no later than May 25. A processing fee of \$15 will be assessed for all refunds.

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Motel Reservations must be made in advance. Rooms are being held under Music Teachers Association:

Location	address	phone	room rate	deadline to hold
AmericInn	3235 State St.	250-1000	one-\$69.30, two-\$75.30, 3-4-\$81.30	May 23
Select Inn	1505 Interchange Ave	223-8060	single-\$71.10 double-\$80.10 B'fast inc	June 7
Comfort Inn	1030 E Interstate Ave	223-1911	single-\$77 double-\$83 B'fast inc.	June 6
Days Inn	1300 E Capitol Ave	223-9151	one-\$99.95 two-\$139.95	June 14
Ridge Motel	2630 Old Red Trail Mdn	663-8686	one-\$69, two-79, three-89, four-99	June 7

Be aware the McQuade Tournament is this weekend and many hotels are already booked. We requested an educator discount for the conference. Taxes will be added to the above quotes.