

S P R I N G 2 0 1 2

# SDMTA Newsletter

South Dakota Music Teachers Association  
An affiliate of Music Teachers National Association



## President's Message

### Sharpen Up in the Summer

With your change in schedule, and hopefully a little extra free time, summer is the perfect time for sharpening your piano skills to keep ahead of your students. With thirty minutes a day you can bring back your old college skills or add new ones you always wanted to try. With increased ability in technique, reading, rhythm, expanded repertoire, or even jazz improv, you will feel more confident about assigning more challenging music to your students, or taking on a higher level of student. Here are a few suggestions:

Play through an entire set of piano repertoire or method books, book one through whatever, and never look at your hands. Focus entirely on how you are reading (strategic eye movements), confident sound, steadiness, and musicality. This exercise can raise several important skill levels all at once.

Work on the hardest repertoire that your students worked on over the past year or two. Take a few lessons if needed to feel that you can do anything your students can do.

Relearn all major and minor scales and cadences, and practice them in fun patterns, such as scales in octaves, sixths, and tenths. Turn cadences into flowing improvs. Learn the fingering for playing a chromatic scale in consecutive minor thirds with each hand.

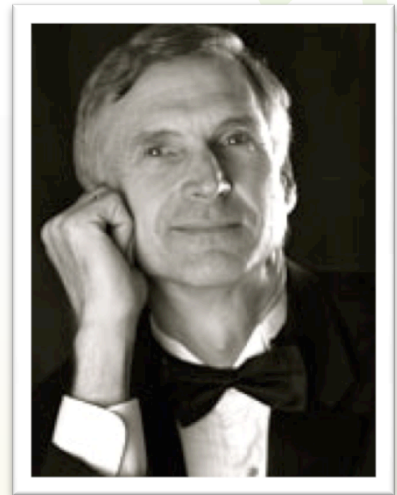
Work through an etude book such as Czerny, Hanon, Cramer, or even Chopin. Don't hurt yourself, but have a good workout each day.

Find a good introduction to jazz, such as Janeen Larsen's excellent [Jazz Piano: A Primer for Classical Pianists](#), and teach yourself some basic jazz improv. Then teach that to your students in the fall.

Order a book of popular music that you might be embarrassed to admit you like, and play it all. As a teenager I used to play through books of Beatles and Tijuana Brass songs instead of my lesson material, and it probably helped my reading and adaptability a lot. (But don't tell anyone I did that.)

Or last, get out that dream piece you always assumed you could never play (Chopin Scherzo? Beethoven Sonata?), and chip away at it measure by measure. I did that once with Rachmaninoff's Third Concerto a few years back, and found that measure by measure I could play the whole thing - at a very slow tempo. There is great satisfaction, and a rise in confidence, in facing down a daunting piece.

Whatever you do over the summer, make improving your piano skills part of your plans.



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Newsletter editors  
Marcela Faflak & Bethany Foote

## Competition Report

We will be having two new competition chairs this fall. Thank you to Colleen Tucker (Composition Chair) and Lisa Grevlos (Vocal Chair) for the time they have given to these positions. Joseph L'Amour has agreed to take over the Composition Chair and we are still looking for someone to chair the vocal competitions. If you would be willing to do this, please contact Marilyn Schempp, Competitions Coordinator.

The Special Needs category has been dropped since we have not had any entries since this category was started.

Please note that we will no longer accept emailed entries to the chairs. We are going back to having them sent through regular mail. This will be more efficient for the chairs since the checks and applications will arrive at the same time.

Also notice that MTNA national has made a change in the membership deadline. The deadline for MTNA competitions is now 3:00 PM Eastern Time on September 12. Current active membership dues must be paid prior to accessing the student competition applications. In order to conform with the national guidelines, our membership deadline will also now be September 12, 2012.

Because SDMTA has a small membership, it is important that each member do their part to make the state conference run smoothly. During the conference we need not only a site host and chair people to run the competitions, but members to be monitors, sit at the registration table, work at the IMTF luncheon, provide snacks for the hospitality room, etc. The \$35 conference fee is extremely minimal when you look at the cost of attending other conferences. That conference fee and student registrations help make it possible for us to hold our state conference each year. Members attending the state conference should register whether they are coming to hear only one of their students compete or coming for the whole 3 day conference. In addition, each member attending should be willing to help in some way at the conference, such as monitoring a competition or sitting at the registration desk. On the conference registration form you will be able to check in what way you would be willing to help. The Executive Board feels this is extremely important to the success of our conference and for our state to be able to continue to hold these conferences. Without our state members helping both physically and financially, we may no longer be able to hold these conferences.

The SDMTA Competition Handbook and application for 2012 can be found on the SDMTA website.

Marilyn Schempp  
SDMTA Competitions Coordinator

## Board of Directors

President: John Walker  
1st Vice-President: Susanne Skyrn  
Immediate Past-President: Marcela Faflak  
Treasurer: Cheryl Koch  
Secretary: Danie Crowley  
2nd Vice-President (Membership): Yvonne Lange  
Certification: Katie Miller  
Competition Chair: Marilyn Schempp  
J. Earl Lee Foundation: Susanne Skyrn

### LA presidents:

Marcela Faflak, Aberdeen  
Lois Darrington, Brookings  
Beth Neitzert, Huron  
Beverly Groth, Rapid City  
Kristin Pater, Sioux Falls

### Appointments and Committees:

Conference Site Co-Chairs: Symeon Waseen (BHSU),  
Janeen Larsen, Susanne Skyrn  
Conference 2012 Committee:  
Marilyn Schempp, Competitions Coordinator  
Yvonne Lange, IMTF  
Cheryl Koch, Conference Booklet  
Cheryl Koch, Registration  
Kay Fischer & Susanne Skyrn, Booklet  
Advertising  
Foundation Committee: Susanne Skyrn,  
Arlene Krueger, Cheryl Koch  
Nominating Committee: Susan Keith Gray,  
Susan Winters, Diane Ketel  
Newsletter Editor: Marcela Faflak & Bethany Foote  
Community Outreach: Susan Keith Gray  
Composition Competitions: Colleen Tucker  
Commissioned Composition Committee:  
Robert Vodnoy, Anna Vorhes, Jim MacInnes  
Archives: Cheryl Koch  
Grants and Publicity: Susan Keith Gray  
Website: John Walker

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## Local MNTA Reports

### Aberdeen Area

The Aberdeen Area Music Teachers Association met eight times during the school year. In August we had an organizational meeting. We then attended the violin and cello recital by Caroline Faflak and Seth May-Patterson of Seattle, Washington. In September we discussed beginner piano method books. In November, Eugene Geinger, pianist, and Dr. Robert Vodnoy, conductor, spoke to our group on Franz Liszt. Later we listened to the rehearsal of Geinger with the Aberdeen University and Civic Symphony, as they played Piano Concerto No. 2 and Totentanz by Liszt. In December our piano students performed piano music at Lakewood Mall. The January program was Organ Registration presented by Sonya Kempf at Zion Lutheran Church. In February Dr. Marcela Faflak worked with piano students at the NSU Piano Day. The March program was a report given by Kay Fischer on a Dr. Scott McBride Smith piano workshop she had attended. We ended the year with a talk given by Dr. Wendy van Gent who teaches music education at NSU. The newly elected officers for 2012-2014 are President, Dr. Marcela Faflak and Vice President, Marilyn Gibbs. Yvonne Lange was re-elected as Secretary-Treasurer.

Kay Fischer  
AAMTA President

### Huron Area

The Huron Area Music Teachers Association (HAMTA) had a very productive 2011-2012 season. Our membership list includes Beth Neitzert, Beverly Bigge, Brenda Ruedebusch, Laurie Hamm, Barb Valer, Kristi Kattner, and Cathy Ramsell. Honorary members are Don Nelson and Gen Kahre. New members are Eric Bliss and Geri Peterson. We held meetings in September, October, December, February, and April. After regular business was concluded at each of our meetings, we discussed "How to Organize the Presentation of a Piece". The music discussed was predetermined by level and genre. After one of the HAMTA members performed the piece, we had an open discussion regarding ideas on how to teach the technique and style of the music. The HAMTA Boy's Recital was held in October where nearly 60 boys performed solos and ensembles in a program titled "American Traditions". During the holiday season, each teacher programmed individual studio recitals at local nursing homes and within their churches. The Junior Music Festival in March was a great success with a large number of students participating in piano, violin, fiddle, guitar, and voice events. The 2012-2013 season will kick off with a Girl's Recital in October titled "Classics". Our officers for 2012-2013 are Beth Neitzert, president; Beverly Bigge, secretary; and Laurie Hamm, treasurer.

Beth Neitzert, HAMTA President

### Black Hills Area

January 2012 through June 2012 News

- January 19, 2012 - BHAMTA business mtg followed by presentation by Dr. Symeon Waseen on the topic of Teaching Improv and Composition in the Private Piano Studio
- February 4, 2012 - Duet Extravaganza - well attended by both students and audience- five difficulty levels - six clavinos loaned by Batchelders Plummer Piano - set-up platform/stage in center of Rushmore Mall, Rapid City
- February 21 and 23, 2012 - Group Piano Recitals two Southern Hills recitals held at BH Piano Gallery and one Northern Hills recital held at BHSU
- BHAMTA Music Festival - Location: BHSU Meier Hall Students in Levels II through VI performed 3 pieces for a judge, took a written theory test and played for an open recital
- BHAMTA is sponsoring an end of the year activity for students, families, teachers and the public: Drum Circle led by Dr Jim Gardiner Held at BH Piano Gallery May 12, 2012

Officers for the 2012-13 and 2013-14 years will be

President: Jim Margetts,  
Vice-President: Symeon Waseen  
Secretary: Nola Culver  
Treasurer: Janeen Larsen

### Sioux Falls Area

Sioux Falls Chapter has had an eventful year with some great educational programs throughout the year. Dr. Paul Wirth came to give master lessons as well as a workshop entitled Gravity Based Technique for our October meeting. His energy and enthusiasm as well as knowledge were a great inspiration to those who attended. We also had over 500 students participate in our local contest held in March at Augustana College. We are planning to bring a nationally renowned teacher, Theresa Bogard from the University of Wyoming to our area for a workshop in April 2013. She has given her presentation at the National Conference and has agreed to come to Sioux Falls and give her presentation as well as do some master lessons the weekend of April 12-13. Look for further information to follow.

Our officers for 2012-2013 are  
President: Kristin Pater [ckpater@svtv.com](mailto:ckpater@svtv.com);  
Vice-President: Julie Melik-Stepanov [kjmlik@q.com](mailto:kjmlik@q.com);  
Secretary: Lisa Roers [slor@sio.midco.net](mailto:slor@sio.midco.net);  
Treasurer: Mary Hunter [mary@hunter-family.com](mailto:mary@hunter-family.com)



Schedule:

**Thursday Nov. 1** – collegiate, string, brass, and woodwind competitions; piano masterclass with guest artist Eugene Gienger; board meeting; evening BHSU faculty recital including the world premiere of the SDMTA Composition Commission *Five Moments* with Nancy Roberts and Symeon Waseen.

**Friday Nov. 2** – vocal competitions; professional development day; Independent Music Teachers Forum; banquet and general membership meeting; guest artist concert featuring “Dakota Pianist” Eugene Gienger.

**Saturday Nov. 3** – piano competitions; piano masterclass

Conference facilities:

BHSU faculty, students, and Black Hills Area Music Teachers members are excited to be hosting the SDMTA conference this year. We know you will enjoy our beautiful conference facilities, and all competitions will be conveniently held in one building. Spearfish has many motels and excellent eateries available for teachers and students. Discover more information on BHSU and Spearfish at <http://www.bhsu.edu/> and <http://www.cityofspearfish.com/>

Artist:

SDMTA is pleased to announce that “*Dakota Pianist*” Eugene Gienger will be the guest artist for the 2012 conference in Spearfish, SD. During an extensive concert tour of the USA, an Ohio critic declared him “a five-star concert pianist...incredibly moving for the audience”. He has recently been re-awarded a Touring Artist's Grant from the South Dakota Arts Council which will enable him to be heard in concert across South Dakota. Since being named a Touring Artist with the SDAC, he has given acclaimed concerts, lectures and master classes across a wide area of South Dakota, including Rapid City, Hot Springs, Custer, Marvin, Chamberlain, Wessington Springs, Aberdeen, Pierre, Huron, Spearfish and Sioux Falls, including presenting Beethoven's Emperor Concerto with the Black Hills Symphony Orchestra and performing at the Governor's Awards in the Arts banquet. He joined the staff of the International Music Camp during the summer of 2011, on the border of North Dakota and Canada, of which camp he is an alumnus. He has been re-engaged by the International Music Camp for the summer of 2012, as well as by the Black Hills Symphony for a performance of Brahms' Piano Concerto No.2 in 2013, and also in the 2012-2013 season he will present the world premiere performances of “Eurydice and Orpheus” by Northern State University compose Dr. William Wieland, dedicated to Eugene Gienger. The South Dakota Arts Council has awarded Mr. Gienger an Artist Fellowship to further his recording activities for 2012-2013. He has been invited to perform in Oregon and Australia in 2013. Following his performance of Beethoven's Emperor Concerto with the Black Hills Symphony on a Yamaha concert grand (on loan from Yamaha Artists' Services in New York City), a member of the audience purchased the piano to keep it in the local community, and it is now available for performances throughout the five-state region as the Regional Concert Grand Piano. Mr. Gienger was invited to perform the official dedicatory recital on this piano in September 2011 at the Elk's Club in Rapid City, SD.

Since accepting a piano position in Australia in 1978, DAKOTA PIANIST has lectured in piano at both The University of Queensland (with tenure), and later in 1997 and following years at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University in Brisbane. He has found greatest renown as a teacher, however, in working with gifted young children in an

independent practice in Toowoomba, Queensland, where he developed a unique method of teaching piano technique and ear-training to the very young. His teaching activities have produced first prize-winners of many local, state, national and international piano competitions, as well as producing important piano teachers in Australia, the United States, England, Taiwan and Germany. Mr. Gienger is the author of *The Mechanics of Piano Technique* (1980), which he uses in his work with students.

Highlights of his highly acclaimed piano concerts include performances and lectures on all 32 Piano Sonatas of Beethoven, many first performances and recordings for the Australian Broadcasting Commission (and other radio and television stations) of piano works written for him by prominent Australian composers Colin Brumby, James Penberthy, Philip Bracanin, Andrew Schultz and Philip Mayers, performances with chamber groups including The Petra Quartet, The Mayne String Trio, The Paradise Quartet, The Chamber Strings of Toowoomba, Toowoomba Choral Society, and Haydn Society of Queensland, performances with orchestras: the Minnesota Orchestra, the Bismarck/Mandan Symphony Orchestra, the Queensland University Musical Society, and the Queensland University Symphony Orchestra, the Black Hills Symphony Orchestra, the Aberdeen University and Community Symphony, and Huron Symphony, performances with prominent instrumentalists and singers, and performances at the International Piano Competitions of Sydney and Moscow (Tchaikowsky Competition). DAKOTA PIANIST has also re-invented the salon recital on the Australian and USA musical scenes, performing scores of solo recitals in this format, before smaller audiences in the more intimate atmosphere of the home, and achieving renown for the eloquent spoken program notes which have become a regular feature of these home recitals.

His large repertoire spans all styles and periods and includes several dozen piano concerti. He has performed widely in the USA and Australia, and also in Canada and Russia. DAKOTA PIANIST holds honors degrees in piano performance from the University of Minnesota and Indiana University, where he was named personal teaching assistant to Menahem Pressler of the world-renowned Beaux-Arts Trio. His recordings include “Virtuoso Praise” on the Salt of the Earth label, “Home Recital I,” “Bach to Penberthy,” and “A Bit of Bach and Lots of Liszt” (with “Even More Liszt”), and “My Favorite Liszt—Dakota Pianist” in honor of the International Year of Franz Liszt 2011, the 200th anniversary of his birth.”

Professional Development Day:

Professional development day will include “A Performer's Perspective on Teaching Beginners” by Eugene Gienger and a lecture on jazz pedagogy by Janeen Larsen. Workshops by our members will round out the day. If you wish to present a session, submit proposals for 30-50 minutes. Support for information technology will be available to those who indicate equipment needs in their proposals. Please submit proposals by July 15 through e-mail or regular mail. Please state your name, other participants, Phone # and e-mail, title of workshop, length, equipment needs, and a one-paragraph description of workshop, and how it will be of education interest to our department. The conference committee will select the workshops to be given and inform participants by the end of summer. Send proposals to: John Walker, Conference Chair, [John.Walker@SDSTATE.EDU](mailto:John.Walker@SDSTATE.EDU) South Dakota State University, Lincoln Music Hall, Room 111, Brookings, SD 57007, Tel: 605-688-4229

## Foundation Report

The South Dakota presence at the 2012 National Conference in New York City was limited but enthusiastic. Members John Walker (President), Susanne Skyrn (President-Elect), Arlene Krueger and Donna Schwartz (SFAMTA President) attended the conference and enjoyed many educational workshops and presentations, as well as the cultural bounty offered by the city of New York.

We opted not to name an MTNA Fellow this year, but are looking forward to honoring Fellow nominee Marcela Faflak at next year's conference in Anaheim, CA. A native of the Czech Republic, Dr. Marcela Faflak is a graduate of the Conservatory of Music and Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, Czech Republic. Previously she taught in the music schools in Prague and at Concordia College, Moorhead, MN. She is active as a performer, accompanist, and adjudicator in the upper Midwest and in the Czech Republic. She has been a member of Northern State University's music faculty since 1996, where she teaches Applied Piano, Piano Pedagogy and Keyboard Literature classes. Currently she

serves as a past president of the South Dakota Music Teachers Association

The Music Teachers National Association Foundation Fellow program offers a meaningful method for honoring deserving individuals while supporting the efforts of the MTNA Foundation Fund through a donation to the Foundation Fund in an individual's name.

Each year new MTNA Fellows are recognized at the MTNA National Conference. Fellows receive a complimentary ticket to the Gala, an attractive MTNA Fellow certificate and pin. Also, new Fellows are prominently recognized on the Foundation Fund website and their names will appear on a plaque located at the MTNA National Headquarters. A press release will be sent to media outlets selected by the Fellow.

We are well on our way to raising the \$1000 necessary to name Marcela our 2013 MTNA Fellow. Contributions are always welcome, as we must raise the balance by the end of the calendar year. You may send your contribution to MTNA Foundation at 441 Vine St., Ste. 3100 Cincinnati, OH 45202-3004. Please make your check payable to MTNA Foundation Fund and indicate in the memo line that it is to be used for the South Dakota Fellow Fund.

## Meet a Member



**Name:** Symeon Waseen

**Home:** Spearfish, SD

**SDMTA member since:** 2011

**Born and raised:** Barnum, MN

**Education:** B.M. in Composition and Piano Performance: University of Minnesota, Duluth. M.M. Composition: Bowling Green State University. D.M.A. Composition: Eastman School of Music.

**Current Job:** Assistant Professor at Black Hills State University

**Favorite Composers:** Beethoven, Bartok, Schoenberg, Stockhausen, Cage, etc. too many to list!

**Favorite Pianists:** Glenn Gould, Bill Evans, Ursula Oppens

**Most Influential Musicians/Teachers:** [Thomas Wegren](#), [Robert Morris](#)

**Hobbies/Activities:** Fishing, computer gaming, exercise

**Why I like SDMTA:** It is a great opportunity for our students to make music with their peers.

## Editor's Info

*Please send any additions, corrections or comments to:*

*Marcela Faflak [faflakm@northern.edu](mailto:faflakm@northern.edu) or Bethany Foote [footeflutes@hotmail.com](mailto:footeflutes@hotmail.com)*

## Newsletter Deadlines

*Winter:* January 15

*Spring:* May 15

*Fall:* September 15