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A Very Successful Conference

From the 2012 OMTA Conference Committee

The OMTA conference at Skamania Lodge was a great success, with a record high attendance, a memorable series of presentations, and a spectacular view of the Columbia Gorge. A big thank you goes out to everyone involved.

Stephen Beus' concert was described as "electrifying," "stunning," "phenomenal," "inspiring," and "lyrical." Beus also received praise for his other sessions, specifically for his encouraging manner and insights in the master class and for the informative, well-organized presentation showing the different ways Bach ornamented the same melody.

For many people, Alan Walker's lecture on Liszt was the best talk they had ever heard and others called it "superb," "eloquent," and "fascinating." One person said Walker's presentation "... completely changed my concept of Liszt as a human being and philanthropist." Others said they were inspired to begin teaching Liszt to their students.

Forrest Kinney's two talks were not the typical showcase presentations. As one member put it, Kinney "had the temerity to be honest: 'We are preparing our students for jobs that don't exist.'" Many members wrote that Kinney's ideas were "innovative," "practical," and "of great value to our profession." Kinney himself was described as "exuberant," "engaging," and "charismatic." One teacher said, "I no longer feel intimidated by teaching

improvisation and arranging."

Although Kinney, Beus, and Walker received the majority of glowing reviews, other presenters received their share of kudos as well. Many members were gratified by Geneva Wright's tribute to Florence Chino and were glad that masterly teaching had been recognized. Rhonda Ringering and her distinguished panel received praise for the "effective" and "hugely important" discussion of ethics and integrity. Leonard Richter's ideas about teaching talented students found a receptive audience when he worked with students or answered questions with Stephen Beus. Many found Cynthia Irion's talk on sight reading to be fascinating, saying they had discovered a new way to think about the skills involved in sight reading. Margaret Littlehales and her troupe were labeled "fun."

And finally, in what is surely a first in OMTA history, a tech talk received a standing ovation: the audience cheered Ramona Goddard for her humorous and clear explanation of the terrific online syllabus registration she is developing for OMTA. She demonstrated that her system will save us hours of work and reams of paper. Brava, indeed!

2013 OMTA Conference

June 27-30

**The Riverhouse Resort and
Conference Center, Bend, OR
Featuring Dr. Peter Mack**

President's Corner



Adaptability and OMTA

Summer is ending and one of the things I'm going to miss is my summer reading. My tastes tend to be eclectic and this summer my books ranged from *Passage of Power: the years of Lyndon Johnson*, which I found absorbing, to *The Hunger Games*, which I read to find out what the teens are so into.

Recently I read a book that seems relevant to OMTA. It's called *Learning from the Octopus: how secrets from nature can help us fight terrorist attacks, natural disasters, and disease*.

You may be wondering what octopi and terrorist attacks have to do with OMTA?



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The answer is that for any animal species or country or organization such as OMTA, it's all about how best to survive and thrive. According to author Rafe Sagarin, the key is to sense changes in the environment and then make necessary adjustments that are not necessarily perfect, but good enough. And usually, the best solutions come not from the top, but from the "troops on the ground."

This past summer at the state conference OMTA made a start at being adaptable. Fifty leaders from around the state gathered for a Long Range Planning Session to discuss how OMTA is faring. They identified problems, proposed goals, and articulated visions for an energized and vibrant OMTA in 5, 10, or 20 years.

We are beginning to address some of the issues that were raised at the planning session and to work toward realizing a few of the terrific ideas that were proposed. It's all very exciting. (See the article on page 3 for a summary of this special meeting.)

OMTA is perfectly constituted to be highly successful at adapting to change. We have several hundred teachers interacting with thousands of students, parents, and schools. That's a lot of data points. If we all communicate with each other and share what works and what doesn't, if we support each other and generously help other teachers be successful, and if we are brave in the face of change, then OMTA is sure to grow and our students to thrive.

Have a great year of teaching.

Dr. Bonnie Esbensen
President, OMTA



Dr. Bonnie Esbensen
Long Range Planning Session Chair



On June 27, 2012, the night before the state conference opened at Skamania Lodge, fifty OMTA leaders, including district presidents, state officers, state committee chairs, adjudicators and invited guests met to discuss the health of the organization.

There were two questions on the table: 1. How is OMTA faring now and specifically what is going well and what is not; and 2. What do you hope OMTA will be like in 5, 10 or 20 years?

Some of the concerns that were brought up dealt with organizational issues the board will handle on an individual basis. However, there were two overarching larger problems that the group identified as serious and needing action.

Lack of Visibility and Credibility

The group felt that, *in general*, the public is unaware of the existence of OMTA. In addition, other music organizations that might be expected to know and work with us are unaware of OMTA. The public does not understand the quality of OMTA's programs and teachers. The public does not understand the benefits of music study. The status of music teaching is devalued in our society.

Solutions

A few of the many solutions proposed by the group included: 1. Get grants for marketing, 2. Hire a marketing director, 3. Place ads in parenting magazines, such as those found in pediatrician's offices, 4. Make use of school open houses, 5. Strengthen connections with public school music teachers.

Declining Membership and Lack of Participation by Members

The group pointed out the difficulty of recruiting both beginning and established

teachers. The youth membership is declining. The number of active members is declining. A smaller percentage of members help and work on organizational jobs. Lack of status for music teaching results in fewer people choosing to become music teachers and thus fewer potential members for OMTA.

Solutions

Again, many solutions were proposed. A few of them were: 1. Offer one-year trial memberships, 2. Develop mentoring programs, 3. Develop more collegiate chapters, 4. Offer a non-syllabus route for provisional members, 5. And reinstate state certification to encourage participation in conferences and other OMTA activities.

The Future

The group's vision for the future of OMTA included, of course, the elimination of all the problems. In addition, there were hopes for more diversity of genres and peoples, greater collaboration with other music groups to promote music and music study, and innovative uses of the internet and digital media, such as virtual ensembles and greater interactions between teachers and students. Music will be as important in schools as sports in our vision.

This meeting was just a start, but it generated a lot of excitement and enthusiasm for making OMTA even stronger. We should begin now to work on increasing our visibility in the community and increasing our membership.

My thanks to Fern McArthur and Pauline Eidemiller for their help organizing and leading this special session. 



Dorothy Fahlman, NCTM
Project chair



OMTA's Mission Statement, October, 1997: "The Russian Cultural Exchange Program was initiated in October, 1997. The purpose of this project is to develop an on going exchange program that would foster international friendship and understanding and broaden musical knowledge by forming ties with music teachers and students of the state of Oregon and the state of Krai, Russia."

A set of more than four exchanges have occurred. It was stated by the OMTA Board that this project was one of the most creative and valuable OMTA has sponsored. Equal donations from OMTA, Portland Khabarovsk Sister City Association and the Portland State Piano Recital Series launched this project.

In reading Nicholas Reynold's article which follows (page 5) and rereading the original mission statement, it is apparent this program has been and will continue to be a success. 

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Tickets at the door.



State News *An Ambassador to Russia*

Nicholas Reynolds
Student correspondent



While many college students spend their spring break sleeping in, visiting friends or family, or traveling to some tropical paradise, I spent my vacation in a different paradise: Khabarovsk, Russia. Thanks to the generosity and hard work of Bella Sheykman and my former OMTA piano teacher, Shirley Brendlinger, I was invited to give a series of performances in Khabarovsk as an ambassador.

One of my flight transfers was at the Beijing airport, where I had more than enough time to discover that the airport's music was on a 46-minute loop. I lapsed in and out of sleep, listening to Bach, Beethoven, and Chopin played on traditional-sounding Chinese instruments. In contrast to Khabarovsk's bitter cold, at my host's home I found a warm hug, a welcoming apartment, and a fresh pie. I quickly began to refer to Irina as my "Russian grandmother."

My first of three recitals was at the Khabarovsk Art Museum in a naturally lit art gallery where a number of chairs were placed in a semicircle around a Yamaha concert grand. Following an introduction by Irina, I played a set of Rachmaninov



Nicholas' performance at Slava's birthday concert

pieces, followed by an early Beethoven Sonata and the Gershwin-Wild transcriptions. When the performance was over, I was given a bouquet of flowers and a number of young piano students came to offer their compliments and to pose for pictures with me. I felt like Van Cliburn, sans the height and blond hair.

While there are different levels of formalities required in concert settings, I am most comfortable performing without a jacket or tie. For two of my concerts, I was required to wear a tuxedo, which to my amusement my hosts called my "costume." Despite the Russian culture's more conservative approach to concert dress, their reception was far from conservative. Their appreciation took the form of synchronized rhythmic clapping, reminding me of high school pep assemblies.

Irina was the wife of the late pianist Slava Sobolevsky, whose birthday I helped celebrate during my second performance. This concert was held in the beautifully ornate Philharmonic Hall. I played Rachmaninov and Gershwin-Wild on their Steinway piano in the first half, concluding with a song written by Slava titled "Irina," after which I was warmly received and given

(Continued on next page)



Alexander, Irina, and Nicholas (left to right)





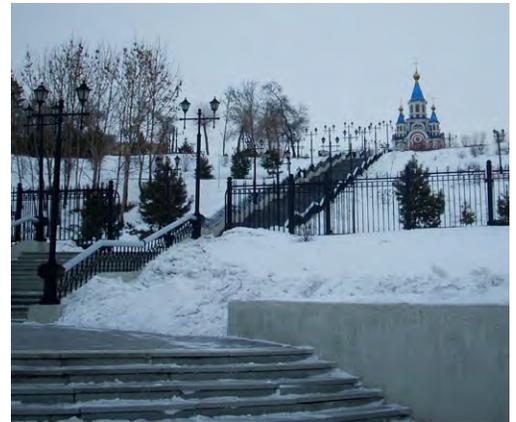
Nicholas and Antonina after performing Piazzolla's Oblivion

an honorary plaque and a recording of the Khabarovsk Philharmonic. The second half of the concert consisted of performances by a number of different musicians and recorded clips of Slava were projected onto a screen on stage. I was honored and humbled to be a part of this touching event. It was evident that Slava Sobolevsky had a profound impact on many lives, and the people of Khabarovsk have a great deal of love for him. My final performance was at a conservatory for pre-college students where I played Rachmaninov and Gershwin-Wild, followed by questions from the audience.

The people of Khabarovsk were gracious and generous, and their passion for music was apparent. Even with my terribly limited Russian — I had a small phrasebook and dictionary — the Russians were very pleased to hear me greet them in their own language. I was treated as a

guest of honor and my hosts saw that all my needs were attended to. The people of Khabarovsk have invited me to return for performances next spring, and I am eager to visit the beautiful city and spend time with its people once again.

Thanks to OMTA for wonderful programs, opportunities, and support during my pre-college years. The services for students are paramount in training them for the future. Although I am not yet finished with my collegiate experience, my career as a musician has already begun thanks to organizations such as the OMTA. Without the OMTA's past involvement in the Portland-Khabarovsk exchange, my recent trip would not have been possible. 🙏



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State News *Support our 2012 Foundation Fellow Nominee*

Fern McArthur, NCTM
OMTA Past President



Pauline Eidemiller, NCTM

Remember to lend your support for our 2012 Foundation Fellow Nominee, Pauline Eidemiller, NCTM. OMTA is in the process of raising \$1,000 in Pauline's name to have her recognized at the National Conference in March and to help fund the benefits offered to MTNA members through the Foundation. For more information about these benefits, visit www.mtnafoundation.org.

The Fellow program began in 2000, and OMTA has participated since 2008 with our first

Fellow Virginia Buhn, NCTM. Since then we have honored NCTM's Mary Hulme, Arlette Irving, Joan Gathercoal, Jean Proctor (posthumous) and Geneva Wright.

Let us continue to acknowledge our members for their inspired and selfless service.

If you would like to donate, you can do so online at the Foundation site or www.mtna.org Please remember to designate your donation for Pauline's nomination. Donations can also be sent to MTNA headquarters. Indicate Pauline's name on the memo line of your check and send to:

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District News *Central Oregon*

Kathy Gault, NCTM
Correspondent



Greetings from Central Oregon, where the warm, sunny weather continues long into fall. We begin our new teaching year with a fresh slate of officers:

Kathy Gault, NCTM, President
Judy Kamperman, President-Elect
Patti Petersen NCTM, Secretary
Jean Shrader, Treasurer

Our year of programs and workshops is still shaping up, but we are already looking forward to hosting Gary Ruppert for a program on Communication, in November. For this coming year we are changing up our schedule a bit further, moving our Ensemble Festival back to fall, and holding a Romantic Music Festival in February, replacing the Baroque Festival for this year.

Due to press of end-of-year activity, we did not get a report in for the June issue, so we would like to share some photos from our final events of the 2011–2012 teaching year. Our June presenter was the delightful Diane Baxter, who shared some of her fascinating research on the music-brain connections. Our final event of the year was Ensemble Festival, which included students, teachers, family and friends. Many of our members were able to attend the outstanding OMTA state conference at Skamania Lodge, and other events as well, including Portland International Piano Festival, classes by Forrest Kinney, and more.

For this coming year we are changing up our schedule a bit further, moving our Ensemble Festival back to fall, and holding a Romantic Music Festival in February, replacing the Baroque Festival for this year. Our Students' Choice concert was so popular that we will do it again this year, though moved from fall to late spring. Central Oregonians like to move quickly and keep things lively, so we continue to experiment with our scheduling and events. We hope you enjoy our sharing them with you here in *Music News*. 



Diane Baxter adjusting a 'brain cap' during her talk on music-brain connections.



Three generations at the piano, C.O. Ensemble festival



Ensemble Festival singing sensation: 'Quinn & the Aunts'



Sextet! C.O. Ensemble Festival



Beverly Mayhew, NCTM



We are pleased to announce that Linda Scott, R.P.T. (who presented at Portland Piano International) will offer her workshop, “Three Diagnostic Tools for every Pianist to Know” at our October 1 meeting. OMTA members from other districts are welcome. Non-members are also welcome, but will be charged \$10. Contact Beverly, 503-364-0370, if you have any questions. 

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In Memoriam

Deborah Rarick O'Donnell



Deborah Rarick O'Donnell, NCTM, died suddenly on July 7. As a piano and voice teacher, she was an active and long-time member of OMTA Linn-Benton district and held many offices. She joined MTNA December 1, 1969. Debbie was always willing to lead singing at conferences. She was part of the Linn-Benton group that studied Baroque dancing with Faye Knox. At one OMTA conference, she, along with Laura Zaerr, Joan Gathercoal and Jean Proctor, danced the Gavotte to French Suite No. 5 (G) by Bach. She will be remembered as a generous and cheerful friend and teacher.

Forrest Gathercoal



Although not a member of OMTA, Forrest Gathercoal, husband of Joan Gathercoal, was very special to our membership. He passed away on August 9. He was slated to be a presenter at the state conference this past June, but his illness made it impossible for him to travel to Skamania. There were many inquiries from those who had been looking forward to hearing his talk but were disappointed to find his name missing from the program book. We had hoped that he would recover fully and be able to present his talk at next year's conference, but that was not to be. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that contributions be sent to the OSU Foundation, 850 SW 35th Street, Corvallis, OR 97333-4014 for the College of Education in the name of Forrest Gathercoal. Online condolences may be directed to: www.mchenryfuneralhome.com





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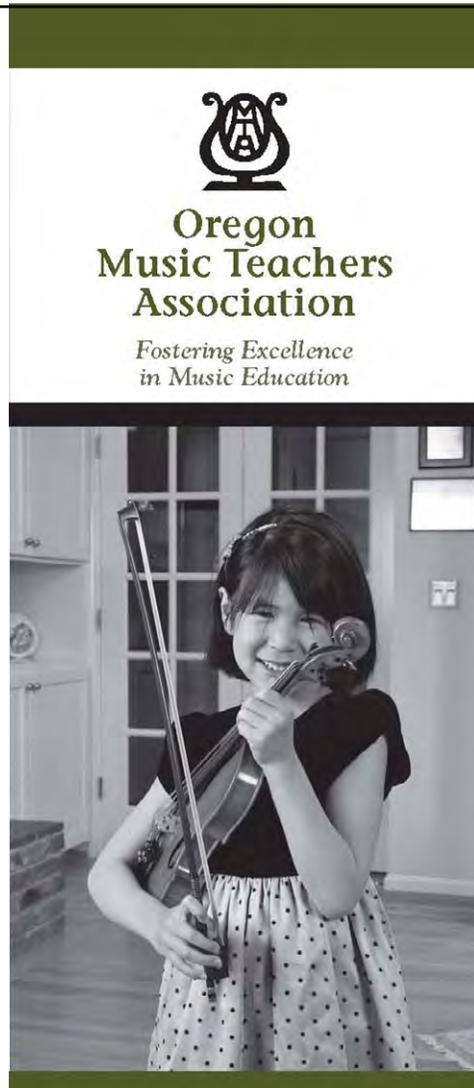
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1/4 column ads (and articles about events which require an admission fee or tuition):

\$15.00 for members
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Larger ads at a proportional cost.
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Publication dates and deadlines are listed below.
Submitting material before deadlines is always helpful and appreciated.

Thank you.
Linda Hansen, *Music News* Editor

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Jan	Dec 10	June	May 10
Feb	Jan 10	Sept	Aug 10
Mar	Feb 10	Oct	Sept 10
Apr	Mar 10	Nov	Oct 10
May	Apr 10	Dec	Nov 10

The Oregon Music Teachers Association, Inc.

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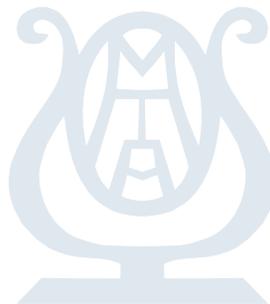
are usually awarded in May or June and should be ordered three weeks in advance of the time the teacher wants to give them to students. You may pre-order via e-mail.

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4. All orders must be received by Robin Power, OMTA Administrative Assistant.

*For more information, contact Robin Power,
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Additional Study Guides



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For more information,
contact Ed Davie and ask for an explanation sheet.

PIANO SYLLABUS AIDS (2006–2010)

Copies of rhythm-reading and sight-reading examples used during Syllabus exams for Levels 1 – X in previous years are available for reference in preparing students for their exams. **These are not the examples currently being used during exams.** If you would like to have a set, send a check (to cover copying and mailing costs) made out to Lisette Sage, 15240 SW Obsidian St., Beaverton, OR 97007-8949.

Available sets are 2001–2003, 2004–2006, 2006–2008, and 2008–2010 at \$4.00 for each set. Please be sure to specify which set(s) you are purchasing.

The following materials are privately produced by some of our members for your benefit: *Opus*





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<http://www.oregonmta.org/directory-local.html>

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If you have moved or changed your e-mail address or phone number.

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Receive periodic OMTA news and a listing of OMTA members' e-mail addresses.

Contact Robin Power
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