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President's Notes

Susan Atkins, NCTM, VMTA State President

Dear VMTA Members,

At our State Conference last fall, I attended the IMTF meeting. Gabriella Ryan led a productive session and we discussed many issues relating to independent music teachers. One of the problems we talked about was losing talented students who quit for no apparent reason. In fact, I related a story about a young student who, without warning, indicated her intention to quit. That's when I gave her the "Lecture." You know the one. That's when I tell her how talented she is and she shouldn't give it up. It didn't work. She was gone the following week.

Since then, I've come across two articles that address the topic of talent vs. work. It turns out that a lot of research has been done which shows that work is more important than talent.

The first article focused on two studies involving school-age children, both led by Carol Dweck, a professor of psychology at Stanford University. The details can be found at inc.com. Both of these studies attempted to identify middle-school age children and their attitudes toward school. One group believed that their talent was fixed and there was nothing they could do to improve their performance. The other group believed that growth could occur and that if they worked at it, they could improve their performance. Guess which group was more successful at the end of their senior year in high school? That's right—the group that valued work.

The second article talked about "grit" and how to encourage it in your students. "4 ways to go for grit over grades this year," by Brad Griffin, can be found at fulleryouthinstitute.org. This involves more than just telling your students to "try harder."

Who knew that hard work was more important than talent? Thomas Edison once said, "Genius is one percent inspiration, ninety nine percent perspiration". Does it apply to music? Don't our students need talent to be successful? We could argue that the greatest musicians were identified as talented individuals early on. But, let's face it, how many of us are teaching child prodigies?

Here's what I got out of it:

1. The student has to have a passion for music. This is where you might have to let go of "classical music."
2. The student must have goals. We, as teachers, can give our students goals with the help of studio recitals and VMTA events. Children by nature have difficulty visualizing an event in the future, so we have to help them get there, step by step.
3. The student has to practice, it has to be a challenge, and there will be failures along the way. We all gain much more satisfaction when we accomplish something that was hard rather than something that was easy.
4. Quitting is not an option. This is where you've got to get the cooperation of the parents.
5. Give the student feedback. Don't say "you're so talented!" Say, "you really worked hard this week and I see improvement in this area!"

How has this worked out for me? I had another student who, in January, was making noises about quitting. She just didn't see how she was going to be able to stick it out through the rest of the school year. Instead of emphasizing her talent, I emphasized the hard work necessary to achieve her goals of completing the VMTA testing and performing in upcoming piano festivals. I gave her a step-by-step plan and a time-line. In addition, I reminded her of the trophies awaiting her at the end of the school year for her efforts. Then, every week, I praised her for her effort and gave her the credit for improving her skills through practicing and persevering. The result was a happier student who stopped complaining about piano lessons. She no longer wanted to quit. She's on her way to achieving her goals and I can just see her parents beaming with pride when she takes home the trophy.

Now it's your turn: Do you have lessons learned as a music teacher? Send them to me and I'll put them in the next *NewsNotes*.

By the time you read this, we'll be looking ahead to the State Conference at George Mason University, October 26-28, 2017. A big shout-out to Elizabeth Caluda who is working hard on preparations. I hope to see you all there, and be sure to attend the IMTF meeting! ■



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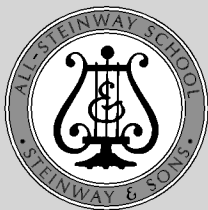
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VMTA CONFERENCE—SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE...

Elizabeth (Beth) Caluda, President-Elect

“Something for Everyone...” is the focus of this year’s VMTA Fall 2017 Conference and Competitions to be held Oct 26-28, 2017 on the campus of George Mason University in Fairfax, Va.

You spoke and we listened. Ingrid Clarfield has agreed to be our Conference Artist!! She will be presenting a Pedagogy Lecture-Recital, a Masterclass with students of various ages and abilities, and a Showcase of her publications with Alfred Music. Alfred has graciously agreed to fund that presentation in part.

Other suggestions from last year’s conference evaluation will be implemented as well, including a less crowded schedule and ending the conference late Saturday afternoon to accommodate those of us who are also Church Musicians.

Session proposals are being accepted for the Fall 2017 Conference:

- Sessions are usually 50 minutes in length, including introduction, closing remarks, and Q&A
- Membership in VMTA or MTNA is not a requirement
- All selected presenters will receive free conference registration
- Include the following information when submitting the proposal:
 - Contact mailing address and e-mail
 - 250-word proposal (full description of the proposal)

- 35-word session description (that will appear in the program book)
- 35-word bio for each presenter (that will appear in the program book)
- Equipment needed for the presentation
- Photos should not be submitted at this time
- **The deadline for submitting a proposal is 5:00 PM Eastern Daylight Savings Time, June 1, 2017**
- Proposals may be submitted online or by mail to:

Elizabeth Caluda
Shenandoah Conservatory
Shenandoah University
1460 University Drive
Winchester, VA 22601
ecaluda@su.edu

Other MTNA activities in our region this year and next:

- The MTNA 2017 National Conference was held in Baltimore, MD March 18–22—a good time was had by all who attended
- The winners of the Fall 2017 competitions will proceed to the Southern Division Competitions to be held in January 2018 and hosted by Liberty University in Lynchburg, VA.

I look forward to seeing you at these events! ■



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At Virginia Tech, our piano students graduate with many varied musical experiences, including:

- performing as soloists
- accompanying singers and instrumentalists
- playing in the pit for shows
- gigging at local restaurants
- working at local churches
- performing with the symphony orchestra and the wind ensemble
- learning to teach piano and set up a studio business
- learning how to record

Our students have gone on to graduate studies in music at schools like the Eastman School of Music and Indiana University. Some tour the world and music direct shows on Broadway, or have private teaching or recording studios. Others are dentists, doctors, engineers, and math teachers. All of them will always carry music in their hearts.

Our goal is to help you find your path in life.

Faculty: Dr. Tracy Cowden (Eastman School)
Dr. Richard Masters (Eastman School, the Juilliard School)

Visit: performingarts.vt.edu

Certification Profile: Lynne Mackey, NCTM

by Anne James, NCTM



“Most thoughtful teachers and players are doing the same thing. No matter what level of student, learning to play is establishing an emotional connection to music. It seems important to tap the student’s imagination and help the student develop a vocabulary of sounds. The whole idea is to connect with people without words.”

These words distill some of Lynne Mackey’s teaching philosophy acquired through her experience teaching at a number of Virginia colleges and universities. Currently a faculty member at Mary Baldwin University, the Staunton resident is the immediate past president of the Harrisonburg Music Teachers Association as well as a member of the Charlottesville Music Teachers Association, where she helps with yearbook ad sales. She also coordinates Virginia’s MTNA Young Artists Piano, Strings, Wind and Chamber Music competitions.

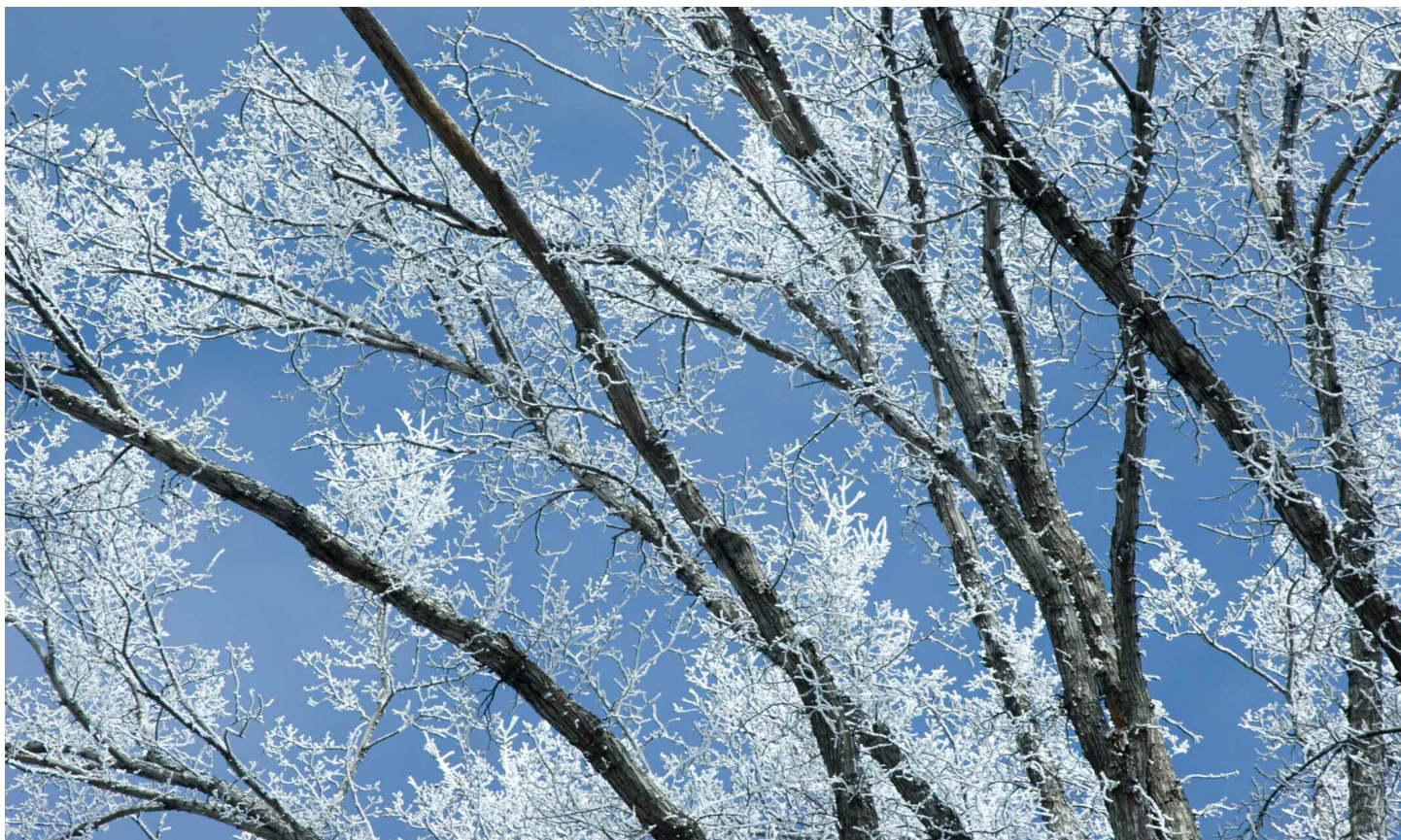
An active recitalist, Mackey is on the Artists Roster of the Virginia Commission for the Arts. This funding subsidy program offers matching grants to venues around the Commonwealth that couldn’t otherwise afford to bring in artists. “I developed five touring programs around themes such as ‘Music of Spanish Influence’ or ‘The Romantic Spirit.’ It’s important that the programs

reach the audience. A piece more than ten minutes might be too challenging for a local recital. I book all the programs myself. I love playing modern music—I have an interest in Messiaen, for instance.” In addition to the subsidized performances, Mackey plays in many other venues, as well as outreach performances. She practices several hours a day when actively performing: “I’m not a pianist who doesn’t need to practice.”

“Learning good mechanics reduces the amount of wasted time in reaching the musical goal. You develop a toolbox and use them. It’s important to be flexible. If you try it out at tempo and it doesn’t work, you have to throw it out and look for another approach. Things that work work right away. Everybody has some kind of technical challenge. It’s a pretty athletic business. Strength is using your body right. Once you determine the musical goal, pianists will find there’s more than one way to get there. It’s a constant discovery.”

A Michigan native, Lynne Mackey earned a Bachelor of Music degree at the University of Michigan, a master’s degree at Juilliard under Earl Wild, and a doctorate in piano with a minor in composition at Eastman, where she studied with David Burge.

In 2015 Mackey decided to become certified. “I had thought about certification earlier, but as I became more involved in my local association and in the MTNA I found holding up these standards meaningful. It has meaning to be part of helping to promote standards of excellence.” ■



Minutes

VMTA GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING OCTOBER 29, 2016 SHENANDOAH UNIVERSITY, VIRGINIA

President Susan Atkins called the meeting to order at 8:49 a.m.

1. Agenda approved as written.
2. Minutes from the July 18, 2015 Conference at Wintergreen Resort, VA were recently sent out via email, approved as written.
3. Officer Reports:

A. President – Susan Atkins

- Attended the Southern Division Competitions John O’Conor’s student won the Senior Division.
- Attended the Leadership Summit in Cincinnati, OH and was refreshed with ideas.
- MTNA’s membership is up, but VMTA’s membership is down.
- Will be attending the Southern Division Competitions in January in Columbia, SC.
- MTNA is working on updating their website.

B. President Elect – Elizabeth Caluda

Thank you for all your support with this year’s conference. We will have the conference and competitions in the fall for 2017, location TBD. Please fill out surveys.

C. VP Membership – Rebecca Wallenborn – Report for 2016–2017

Our current membership totals 773 comprising of 30 collegiate members, 164 senior members and 579 active members – a difference of 99 members from last year. The collegiate numbers have held steady with an additional new member; the senior membership has increased from 153 to 164, and active members are down from 675 last year to 579 this year—a difference of 96. VMTA chapters now number 11, down one from past years’ total of 12. Our ranking in the nation went up a spot from #6 to #5 for total MTNA members and 41 new members joined VMTA this year (10 students; 6 collegiate teachers and 25 independents).

VMTA Membership Statistics (provided by MTNA) 665 female, 108 male.

Age Statistics:

19 years and younger	1
20–29	41
30–39	94
40–49	117
50–59	153
60–69	187
70–79	106
80–89	43
90+	2

90% of our membership hold bachelor’s, master’s or doctoral degrees and independent teachers make up the lion’s share of our membership numbering 628; 88 collegiate teachers, 27 student teachers and 30 teachers participating in commercial studios, public and private schools, and retirees.

Our teaching groups are as follows:

Keyboard	615
Strings	60
Voice	34
Winds	28
Brass	3
Percussion	4
Miscellaneous	31

D. Secretary – Laura Cardin – Nothing to report

E. Treasurer – Mun Lee Han

- As of October 25, 2016 - Checking = \$30,078.53 Savings = \$17,044.11 CD = \$4,276.61
- The 2016-2017 budget was presented. All were in favor of the budget.

F. Certification – Diane Perett

- As of September 30, 2016, 100 out of 750 members nationally certified (13.3%), making our national ranking 33rd. Six members will be receiving pins on Saturday during the state conference. Three other members are in the process of completing certification at this time. We have been ranked in the 30’s for a while. Diane would like us to have a goal of getting into the 20’s. We could achieve this by having two members in each chapter become Nationally Certified.
- Certification Lunch today. Tracy Cowden is our Southern Division Commissioner and will be coming to our lunch.
- If anyone does not have a pin, contact Diane.

G. Local Associations – Roma Scriven will be taking over for Donna. Local Association Presidents and representatives met on Friday, shared and discussed ideas and concerns. The main concern for our chapters is membership. We shared workshops and events.

H. Past-President – Paulo Steinberg – Will be on sabbatical from mid-December through mid-August. He will be performing in concerts around the world and also relaxing.

4. New Business / Announcements

A. New IMTF Chair – Gabriella Ryan – Members met on Friday to discuss several topics. We will take an anonymous state-wide survey and discuss at next year’s conference. Think of projects that we could do as a group and let Gabriella know.

B. Jeanette Winsor, editor of NewsNotes – Deadline for the Spring issue is March 1, 2017.

(continued on page 6)

Minutes... (continued from page 5)

C. 2017 MTNA Conference – Baltimore, MD. Take advantage of the National Conference being on the East Coast. You can call MTNA and mention that you need a roommate and they will help you. There are members who are taking a train. Come to the Southern Division meeting at the conference.

D. 2018 Southern Division Competitions – MLK weekend at Liberty University, Lynchburg. VMTA is hosting the event. We will be forming a committee to organize the event. Saturday, Sunday and half-day on Monday.

E. Website – A committee has been formed to look into updating website to include online registrations for VMTA events.

F. Audit Committee – looking for people who like numbers. Committee needs to be formed by May. This would be done over the summer. The end of the fiscal year is June 30 and will need to be after that date. Local Association Chair to email the Chapter Presidents - Chapter Presidents need to ask or volunteer a member to be on the committee and let the President know.

G. Clarification of VMTA advertising policy. You can buy and ad in *NewsNotes*. We do not sell our membership list, but we will send out an advertisement for you.

From our general business meeting in 2013, it was stated, *“Advertisers who are selling products and wish to e-mail VMTA members will be charged \$25 for VMTA member advertisers and \$125 for non-member advertisers per distribution. Advertisers will not receive email addresses. VMTA will distribute their ad electronically.”*

H. New Theory Chair – Barbara Danyi of Hollins University (Danyibj@hollins.edu). She will be rewriting Levels P-2B and will be updating test 1.

I. FTC ruling email will be sent to the Local Presidents. Have this posted at your meetings.

Barbara Moore moves for adjournment, approved.

Meeting adjourned at 9:49 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Laura Cardin

Members present:

1. Corky Sablinsky
2. Lisa Stogoski
3. Barbara Moore
4. Alisa Bohon
5. Lynne Makey
6. Joyce Woods
7. Roma Scriven
8. Lynne Kessler
9. Lynn Kleisler
10. Jeanette Winsor
11. Rene Johnson
12. Tonya Menard
13. Lacey Johnson
14. Noriko Donahue
15. Gabriella Ryan
16. Paulo Steinberg
17. Betty Ann Spiers
18. Susan Atkins
19. Laura Cardin
20. Becky Wallenborn
21. Diane Beyer Perett
22. Lee Ann Dransfield
23. Kimberly Ryan
24. Elizabeth Caluda
25. Lois Broadwater ■

ADVERTISING INFORMATION FOR VMTA'S *NEWSNOTES* AND YEARBOOK

Please send your electronically* prepared ad, a check made payable to VMTA, and the completed form to: Agnes Wan, 219 River Point Drive, Suffolk, VA 23434, pianoatjubilee@gmail.com.

Ads may also be submitted via e-mail (stuffed or zipped if necessary) to Rose Brown, *NewsNotes* Graphic Artist, at design@rosebrown.com. Call Rose at 571-276-7577 (cell) if you have any questions about preparing your ad or submitting your ad electronically.

*Any combination of QuarkXPress (preferred), Illustrator, InDesign, PhotoShop, and PDF files are accepted. Do not send Microsoft Word or Publisher files. Include all fonts and imported graphics if you send native files.

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‡Combo 1: Yearbook and one issue of *NewsNotes*; Combo 2: Yearbook and two issues of *NewsNotes*.

AD DEADLINES

July 15—Fall Issue *NewsNotes* & Yearbook

March 1—Spring Issue *NewsNotes*

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Virginia Music Teachers Association

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Virginia Beach, VA 23464-3730