



## Teaching, Collaborating, Performing *...and All that Jazz*

PMTA Conference 2012

Spring Edition 2012

Issue No. 31

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*Local Association News will be updated soon on the website. Be sure to check back!*

## Don't forget!

Register now for the PMTA Conference at West Chester University, June 8-10.

You won't want to miss a minute!!!

## The Savvy Music Teacher Website Masterclass - coming to the PMTA Conference!! Call for Websites!!

Don't miss this chance! The dynamic *Savvy Musician* author David Cutler and PMTA's 2012 commissioned composer will provide an in-depth look at how websites of select participants can be transformed to get unprecedented results. To be considered for this FREE professional evaluation, submit your website to Conference Chair Elaine Friedlander at [elaine.friedlander@verizon.net](mailto:elaine.friedlander@verizon.net)



David Cutler

## *From the President's Desk...*

Dear Colleagues,

What a thrill it was to be at the MTNA Conference in New York City this year. How inspiring, rejuvenating, and validating it was to be surrounded by 2400 like-minded musicians! I came back full of new ideas and techniques to further both the musical and business aspects of my studio. What was perhaps the most gratifying feature of the entire conference was to recognize that we are not alone in our continual quest for improvement and inventiveness within our respective fields. It was also a pleasure to be able to spend some personal time with the many PMTA members who attended the conference.

As State President, I attended a Leadership Summit, along with various other state related meetings at the MTNA Conference. I am happy to report that Pennsylvania stands out as a leader among states of all sizes in terms of the offerings we provide for our membership! Our new website with its Professional Teacher Referral Service, the depth and breadth of our conferences, our digital newsletter, as well as our eblast format were held up as a model for other states to emulate.

Since becoming State President, I have come to realize that one of the most important elements of our professional organization is communication. Communication between states, communication between Local Associations, and most of all, communication between our members. It is through communication that we are able to stay abreast of current trends, educate ourselves, and refine our teaching techniques. As wonderful as all of our digital communication tools are, however, there is nothing more stimulating or exhilarating than personal interactions.

As it happens, Pennsylvania has a fantastic communication opportunity coming up at our State Conference at West Chester University, June 8-10. INVEST IN YOURSELF and register now for this outstanding event!!! The time and money involved in this endeavor will reap rewards you cannot even begin to imagine.

Make time to be inspired and edified by Sally Bonkrude's essential and motivating address. Experience nationally acclaimed jazz pianist clinician, Bradley Sowash, and discover how to add improvisation to your studio. I'm sure you remember the dynamic and entrepreneurial artistry of David Cutler from our Bedford Springs conference. As our Commissioned Composer for 2012, we are excited to hear the world premier of Cutler's American Music Roads Scholar for our guest artists -the acclaimed piano duo of Anderson & Roe.

This is only a smattering of the wide and varied topics being addressed at this year's conference. Check out more clinicians and workshops on our website at [www.pamusicteachers.org](http://www.pamusicteachers.org).

It is a well-known fact that even when schedules and finances are tight, we find a way to manage items we deem a priority. As a dues paying member of PMTA and MTNA, you have taken an important professional step forward. Now it is time to invest in you, by attending our State Conference!!!

We wear many hats as music teachers beyond the obvious. In addition to being accomplished performers and educators, we play a vital role in developing and shaping the cultural and emotional lives of our students. How many children will recollect teachers from elementary school long after they have children of their own? I guarantee you, however, they will all remember and appreciate the music teacher that showed them the path to self-confidence, poise, passion, and life-long involvement with the musical arts. This is the real value of our State Conferences - they help us improve ourselves so we can better invest in the future!

I look forward to seeing you at West Chester University in a few weeks!

Sincerely,

Dr. Gilya Hodos, NCTM

## MTNA COMPETITIONS UPDATES

Complete information about the MTNA performance and composition competitions can be found at <http://www.mtna.org/programs/competitions/>. For those who have previously entered students in these competitions, please note the following changes:

The deadline for all applications is Wednesday, September 12, 2012 at 3pm Eastern Time. Previously the deadline had been at midnight. The new afternoon deadline will allow for correction of computer and web glitches that can't be immediately fixed after hours.

Current active membership dues for MTNA, or a non-member teacher fee, must be paid PRIOR to accessing the on-line student competition application.

### Highlights of MTNA Composition Competition Changes

These changes to the Composition Competition process will begin with the fall competition:

1. The MTNA is no longer accepting scores by postal mail. All scores must be submitted as PDF files. Handwritten manuscripts can be scanned into a computer and saved as PDFs. Notation software, such as Sibelius and Finale, can easily save files directly as PDFs. This will save a significant amount in mailing costs and at the same time, eliminate the possibility of lost scores, which often causes significant delays and added expense.
2. The application and PDF score must be submitted online. All winners will be notified online at the MTNA website, as well.
3. Additional Score Requirements:  
The PDF should be printable on 8.5 x 11-inch letter-sized paper.  
PDF Score must be legible, and may be computer generated or in the composer's handwriting.  
Measures of the composition must be numbered, preferably at the beginning of each system.  
All materials must be labeled with the name of the composition, the name of the student and the category (Elementary, Junior, Senior, Young Artist).  
The score must not include teacher name or any reference to school/institution, biography or picture of student.  
No recordings of the score will be accepted.
4. Judges will provide comments online and these can be accessed and printed out at the end of the competition. They will not need to be mailed to the teachers. I will continue to send award certificates and checks by mail. I believe that "Participant" certificates have been eliminated.

#### A Personal Suggestion:

I tried scanning a handwritten composition to create a pdf file. My computer/printer defaults to 200dpi. I found that increasing the resolution to 300dpi (if available on your system) creates a nicer copy. (This is, of course, unnecessary in Finale & Sibelius.) The latest versions of Sibelius (v. 6 & 7) and Finale (v. 2010, 2011, and 2012) easily create excellent PDF files. They offer a "File/Save as pdf" function.

The PMTA Keystone Composition Competition (held in the spring) will probably make similar changes, which will be announced later in the year, once we see how the MTNA event goes.

Please check the MTNA website for more information. If you have any questions, I will try to answer them. Please feel free to call me or email at your convenience.

Warren Magid, MTNA/PMTA Composition Competition Chair

## ARTS ADVOCACY & AWARENESS

Don't miss this valuable article on a subject important to all of us!!

### Music Matters

Spring has brought an unusual profusion of e-mails to my inbox about arts education, the value of the arts, and arts advocacy. I would like to share some of the most interesting with you. But first, a bit of history.

In 1988, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) sent Congress a report entitled *Toward Civilization*. It found that the arts in America's schools were in jeopardy and made a series of recommendations for improving arts teaching and learning.

In 1989, Pres. George H.W. Bush and the nation's Governors agreed on a set of education goals, but excluded the arts. Advocates united in a nationwide campaign to have the arts added to the goals, and in 1991, the arts were included in the National Assessment of Educational Progress, with a national assessment scheduled for 1996.

Over the next several years, continuing advocacy achieved progress on several fronts, including the formation of the Arts Education Partnership Working Group (eventually renamed the Arts Education Partnership, or AEP), the addition of the arts to the core subjects in the National Education Goals during the Clinton Administration, and the arts included as a core academic subject in "No Child Left Behind" during the George W. Bush Administration.

A recent survey showed that 81 percent of likely Pennsylvania voters felt that arts education should be included in a K-12 curriculum. National polls show that people overwhelmingly believe that the arts are necessary for a well-rounded education. Yet, over the past several years, policies enacted in Harrisburg have not reflected the value that Pennsylvania citizens place on the arts, and we again need strong advocates for the arts.

The membership of PMTA knows that music matters or we wouldn't be in the profession. But if you want evidence-based studies to support that view and help you advocate more effectively, the AEP has a wonderful bulletin (Sept. 2011) titled [\*Music Matters: How Music Education Helps Students Learn, Achieve, and Succeed\*](#). The bulletin is available as a free download. The AEP reviewed an extensive body of research to identify evidence-based studies that document student learning in and through music, so you can learn about specific studies that show, for example, that music instruction fosters superior working memory, cultivates better thinking skills, increases average SAT scores, advances math achievement, and much more.

AEP has a number of other interesting publications that can be found under the Publications tab on their website <http://www.aep-arts.org>. While many of these speak to arts education in schools, we know that "arts education" also takes place in our studios, so the information is pertinent for private teachers as well.

While AEP's Music Matters gives us ammunition that we need to be effective advocates for the arts, a report released in March by Pennsylvania's Education Policy Leadership Center (EPLC) about the Arts and Education Initiative (AEI) tells us about the state of the arts and arts education in Pennsylvania in a report titled *Creating Pennsylvania's Future through the Arts and Education*. Links to the report and to a press release concerning the report were posted in March on PMTA's website. If you missed it, look under the News & Events navigation button for the Music Advocacy page or go to <http://www.aei-pa.org> to access both the press release and the report itself.

Over the past year, the EPLC conducted the AEI study (don't you love all of these acronyms!) to look at current state policies that impact the arts and arts education and to solicit input from a variety of arts organizations. The report emphasizes that all citizens, regardless of age, should have access to the arts and to cultural experiences and urges state policymakers to make access to high-quality, comprehensive arts education a priority for K-12 students in Pennsylvania.

The report makes a case for the importance of the arts, both intrinsically and in terms of what it teaches us about creativity, innovation and imagination - skills that are crucial in today's economy. It also speaks to the economic impact of the arts, discusses public policy, arts advocacy, and includes nearly 40 recommendations for policymakers to improve support for the arts. The report urges PDE (Pennsylvania Department of Education) to take a stronger leadership role in the arts by reestablishing at least one full-time staff position dedicated to arts education. Amazingly, there is currently no one on staff at PDE who is dedicated to arts education. This is down from seven professionals supporting arts and humanities instruction in the schools in the 1970s.

The report notes that budget cuts are not the only problem. "A review of legislation introduced in recent years reveals practically no interest by state lawmakers in arts and arts education issues." Clearly, there is work to be done.

And finally, two further reports are worth checking out. In March, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) published a report based on four longitudinal studies that focused on the potential effects of involvement in the arts by students from the lowest quarter of socioeconomic status. The study found that these at-risk students who are involved in the arts, either in or out of school, do better across-the-board academically, have better workforce opportunities, and are more active and engaged citizens. The report is titled *The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth*. You can access a press release and get a pdf download at <http://www.nea.gov/news/news12/Arts-At-Risk-Youth.html>

Unfortunately, another report published two weeks ago by the U.S. Department of Education, Arts Education in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools: 1999-2000 and 2009-10, shows that equity gaps remain in the availability of arts education for all students. Schools with a higher concentration of students in poverty are less likely to offer arts education - the very students who have been shown in the NEA report to benefit significantly from engagement with the arts. You can read about, and access, this study on [ARTSblog](#).

You may not have time to wade through the studies, but the press releases give a good précis of what is contained in each study. How should we use this information? Speak with parents, school board members, local, state, and federal policymakers. Write to your local paper. Advocate for the importance of the arts!!

April 30 is Arts & Culture Legislative Visits Day. Check out [Citizens for the Arts in Pennsylvania](#).

Lois Svard  
PMTA Board Member for Arts Advocacy and Awareness  
Professor of Music Emerita  
Bucknell University

*Don't forget to vote for the Bylaws Revision  
when you register for the Conference!!*

### **Regarding emails from PMTA...**

*Help us keep our records up to date by notifying PMTA of changes in your email address. Remember, if you 'unsubscribe' from the PMTA Newsletter, you will no longer receive any email communication from PMTA. If you are stop receiving emails from PMTA, make sure your server has not blocked the address. Merely add "[info@pamusicteachers.org](mailto:info@pamusicteachers.org)" to your mailbox. Please pass on this message to your local colleagues!*

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