

Pick up photo from last issue

President's Message

by Charles Turon

Statistics from our recent survey suggest that a majority of us are long-time members of FSMTA: 50 percent of those who responded have been members for twenty years or longer and 78 percent for ten or more years. These data speak well of the lasting value of FSMTA to our members, who both benefit from and contribute to the association for many years. These numbers also underscore the importance of one of the four goals we have set for this biennium-out-reach.

There are two reasons outreach is important. Any healthy organization thrives on new blood. Not only do new members give us a larger population to share the workload, they often bring with them fresh, innovative thinking. More often than not, these new ideas are accompanied by a surge of energy that can be contagious, invigorating an entire group.

Outreach is also important because FSMTA affords the kind of support non-members ought to know about. We have many reasons we belong to FSMTA - networking with other teachers, enhanced opportunities for further training, enhanced opportunities for students, among many others. Perhaps this is the question we should ask ourselves: do my non-member colleagues know what I know about the benefits of membership in FSMTA?

There are three groups of teachers (and

prospective teachers) to whom we should reach out: college students, independent teachers and college teachers. Each group has its own needs and stands to benefit from FSMTA in its own unique way.

For college music majors, involvement in a professional organization is a natural

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extension of their education. There are many other benefits as well: students may be mentored by FSMTA teachers and enter a limited number of students in Student Day, they enjoy many of the same benefits of membership as an active member at a much reduced rate, and they are eligible for various grants and awards. For students in colleges that do not yet have collegiate chapters, student membership in a local association is another option that provides many of the same benefits.

The second group of teachers we need to reach out to are independent teachers in the field who are either unaware/marginally aware of FSMTA or unaware of the provisions allowed for the non-degreed teacher. A glance at the MTNA membership application form reveals that Florida

is one of the few states that has "special" membership requirements, meaning that members must either have earned a music degree or successfully move through our provisional process. Although our state is in a minority, we believe having such requirements is one way to promote professionalism. We must be sure that professionalism is not perceived as elitism, however. There is no reason any teacher who genuinely aspires to membership cannot achieve it, and it is up to each of us to invite and welcome all such teachers.

The third group of teachers includes those who teach in colleges and universities. Although college teachers do not face the challenges of eligibility that independent teachers sometimes do, they may be less likely to see the personal benefit of membership. For these teachers, understanding the opportunities for student competitions, the opportunity to establish and maintain contact with other college teachers, and the example of professionalism that membership in FSMTA represents are a few of the benefits we want to make sure they understand.

What can we do to reach out to our fellow teachers? It begins with attitude. Put yourself in the shoes of the teachers you know who might need some education or encouragement regarding joining a professional organization like FSMTA. Help promote the understanding that FSMTA is for

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MTNA Competitions Deadline

Carol Payne, VP for MTNA Competitions, would like to remind everyone that the deadline for entry is Sept. 14. Entries are to be made online at www.mtna.org; click on MTNA, then on Competitions. Directions are there. An application will be sent the "old fashioned way" by request by calling MTNA at 888-512-5278. Composition entries need to be received by Sept. 14 as well. Please see the April/May issue of the American Music Teacher for rules and more information.

The competitions will take place at F.S.U. on Friday, Nov. 12 during the State Conference. Teachers and guests are welcome to attend the competitions as all contests are open to the public. There are three levels: Junior, Senior, and Young Artist, with divisions in piano, strings, winds, guitar, percussion, chamber music, and voice.

Conference 2004

Exciting Sessions scheduled for 2004 Conference

FSMTA members can look forward to a variety of interesting sessions at Florida State University in November. Our members will be presenting topics about both teaching and performing. We have returning sessions from Anne Garee in the piano workshop and Karyl Louwenaar on the beautiful collection of early keyboard instruments. Other subjects include Piano Rags, Composition strategies, Piano Etudes, Twentieth Century music for both teaching and performing, and an interesting travel experience in Serbia. We will also have the FSMTA sessions that members have enjoyed each year, such as the Independent and College Teachers Recital, current information on Arts Advocacy, and the Independent Teachers Forum. The state level of the MTNA competitions will take place on Friday, November 12th, and are conveniently located at the School of Music. Members can attend and hear performances by the most talented students from all over the state. Further information is in the Conference brochure. Plan to attend and have an enriching, exciting time!!



AirTran Airways, a sponsor of our FSMTA State Conference, has generously contributed two round-trip tickets to travel between any domestic AirTran Airways destinations (travel to be completed by Dec. 15, 2005). A drawing will be held at the Last General Session of the conference on November 14 in Tallahassee, and the lucky person whose coupon gets drawn doesn't even need to be present to win!

It's very easy to enter. Simply clip the coupon printed in this newsletter, fill out the information, and send it with a check to the address listed below. Or, go on the FSMTA website and follow the State Conference links to download the coupon. You may reproduce the coupons and enter as many times as you wish. The cost is \$10 for three entries if postmarked by Nov. 1, 2004, and then \$5 per entry at the State Conference, where you may obtain coupons at the Hospitality Room. There must be one coupon for each entry, each containing the required information.

Send entry coupons and a check made out to FSMTA (please do not send cash) to:
Carol Payne
1014 Magnolia Lane
Gulf Breeze, FL 32563

Any questions? Please e-mail Carol Payne at Canticle80@aol.com or call: 850-932-9815.

President's Message

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all studio teachers, not just piano teachers. Offer to mentor teachers who do not have degrees, but would like to explore provisional membership. If there is a young teacher who is prevented from joining because of the dues, consider developing a program through your local association which would waive the first year of dues for qualified candidates.

When we consider our demographics, we are confronted with the proverbial question - is the glass half-empty or half-full? Should we celebrate the fact that many of our members stay members for so long, or should this fact motivate us to be reaching out to more teachers who have never belonged? The answer, as is so often the case, is both.

Hurricane Charley

As this issue is being prepared, our state is in the midst of the aftermath from Hurricane Charley. Our thoughts and prayers are with all who were affected. The recovery from a storm of this magnitude will be quite lengthy — we encourage all of who were spared from the devastation, to consider how we can best assist those who were not.

FSMTA 2004 Conference
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Tickets are good for 1 year

Flatau named as MTNA Foundation Fellow

In recognition of her substantial contributions to MTNA and its affiliates, the North Dakota Music Teachers Association has named Carole Flatau a 2005 Foundation Fellow. Carole spent much of her professional career in Florida. From 1985-2000, she held memberships in both NDMTA and FSMTA, and served FSMTA as membership chairman. During her fifteen years as resident of Florida, she was director of Keyboard Publications for Columbia Pictures Publications and Keyboard Editor for CPP/Belwin and Warner Brothers. She was national Public Relations Chair and Chair of the Exhibitors Committee for MTNA. In addition, she has presented numerous pedagogy workshops and music industry seminars throughout the United States and Canada, and is a frequent contributor to prestigious music journals.

After returning to North Dakota, Carole has reestablished her teaching studio, is involved in freelance editing and public relations work, and continues to volunteer her services to a large number of community organizations. She is committed to service, and her influence is widespread, making her a perfect candidate for MTNA Foundation Fellow.

Carole will be honored at the 2005 National Conference in Seattle in April. Friends and colleagues are invited to join in the celebration. Members of FSMTA can contribute to the MTNA Foundation Fund indicating on the memo line of your check "Carole Flatau Fellow". Send to MTNA, 441 Vine St., Suite 505, Cincinnati, OH 45202.

Around the State...

District II: *Bettina Flory, President*

Honors Piano Camp sponsored by the NFMTA, Gulf Coast Community College and Florida State University Panama City was a grand success. It was held July 12-23 and this year featured not only Professor Leonidas Lipovetsky but also Jazz pianist Marcus Roberts. Mr. Roberts worked one on one with the students interested in learning Jazz improvisation. Jim Sims from the Steinway piano gallery generously provided the pianos for the camp. Next year, we are pleased to announce that both Professor Lipovetsky and Mr. Roberts plan to teach at the camp. The dates are July 11-22. Contact Bettina Flory director 850-784-1419 floryhome@knology.net

District VI: *Duncan MacMillan*

FSMTA District VI (Broward County, Miami-Dade, Palm Beach County and Treasure Coast MTAs) held our annual Enrichment Day August 13th at the First Presbyterian Church of Pompano Beach. Dr. Kevin Orr, University of Florida, was our guest workshop presenter and spoke on "The Musical Intermediate".

2004 Young Musician Competition

On May 15, 2004 Lynn University hosted its 2004 Young Musician Competition for Pianists in the Amarnick-Goldstein Concert Hall on the Lynn University campus in Boca Raton. Eight finalists, age 12-17, were invited to perform in the event. They came from Jacksonville, Longwood, Sarasota, Miami, Wellington, Cooper City, and Boca Raton. The competition jury consisted of Dr. Claudio Jaffe, Dean of the Lynn University Conservatory of Music, Ms. Lisa Leonard, faculty and staff pianist at Lynn University, and Mr. Alexander Tchobanov, Lynn University alum and member of the Lynn University Music Preparatory faculty. The competition coordinator was Dr. Roberta Rust, Artist Faculty—Piano at Lynn University.

There were three cash prizes, \$500, \$200, and \$100 and the first place winner will appear as soloist with the Lynn University Philharmonia Orchestra, Albert-George Schram conducting, at its Nov. 12, 2004 concert in Boca Raton. The winners were:

1st place winner Christopher Armstrong (Miami 17 yrs. old)

Teacher: Adam Alexander Wegrzynek

Work performed: Prokofiev Concerto No. 1

2nd place winner Sabrina Fernandez (Boca Raton 15 yrs. old)

Teacher: Phillip Evans

Work performed: Schumann Concerto in a minor (3rd movt.)

3rd place winner Justin Snyder (Sarasota 16 yrs. old)

Teacher: Charles Turon

Work performed: Khachaturian Concerto (1st movt.)

Lynn University will hold a Young Musician Competition for String Players in the spring of 2005. For information, please contact Dr. Claudio Jaffe at Cjaffe@lynn.edu.

Three Students Receive StAR Awards

MTNA has announced that two recent graduates from Florida schools have received Student Achievement Recognition (StAR) Awards. In addition to the Florida graduates, another StAR Award winner from Georgia has chosen to locate in Florida and will be joining FSMTA. As StAR Award recipients, Otto E. Garcia, a graduate of Florida Atlantic University, Heather Mitchell, a graduate of Rollins College, and Joy Ustry, a graduate of Shorter College have been offered one year of free membership in MTNA, FSMTA and their respective local affiliates. StAR Awards are given to outstanding music students who intend to teach professionally in an independent or collegiate music studio. Faculty and administrators select recipients on the basis of excellence in academic achievement, successful teaching experience and demonstrated leadership abilities. Congratulations and welcome!

Requiem for An Orchestra

by David Dubal

When I learned that the San Jose Symphony had gone bankrupt and closed its doors, I thought immediately of my students at Juilliard. At a time when symphonies nationwide have been struggling, the death of this orchestra means my students have one fewer place to find work. But my sadness goes so much deeper. There

is one fewer place for pianists to exhibit the glory of a Beethoven concerto and one fewer place for the country's flutists and cellists to practice their art. Another cultural institution has passed away. Another American town lacks the exquisite mechanism that is the symphony orchestra, surely one of the highest manifestations of Western culture.

There are always individual reasons why a particular symphony fails: from fiscal mismanagement to a too small endowment. But the fundamental weakness in all cases is external, the result of our society's devaluing all types of classical culture, including serious music. When an orchestra dies, it is like having an artery torn from the heart of a community. Losing a symphony means losing jobs, losing first performances of works of living composers, and losing the communal warmth of hearing together the sheer tonal magnificence of such an ensemble. It means losing opportunities for a child to be struck by the timbre of a bassoon, oboe or violin and it means losing

members of the orchestra who are out in their communities teaching the young. The three B's—Bach, Beethoven and Brahms no longer vibrate their spiritual energy to the community.

For many Americans the arts are elitist, obsolete productions of white European males. (Isn't rap music equal to Bach?) The result of all this political correctness is that the humane arts have almost been marginalized out of existence.

What about our founding fathers? What a cultivated band of revolutionaries they were! Each of them sophisticated, and often elaborately educated. All were highly expressive writers. Benjamin Franklin not only pursued his scientific bent, he also com-

posed! Francis Hopkinson, another signer of the Declaration of Independence, proudly dedicated his beautiful songs to George Washington. Washington took time to make certain his niece had the finest piano teacher in Philadelphia. And Thomas Jefferson delighted in practicing his violin.

I have always fancied that Jefferson's "pursuit of happiness" meant pursuing the pleasures of the mind and heart: his violin playing, his designing his own home. I love what John Adams wrote: "I must study politics and War, that my sons may have the liberty to study mathematics and philosophy...in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry and music."

After the Civil War, things cultural sped up considerably. At the 1867 Paris cultural Exposition, everyone was enraptured with the piano made by the New York based Steinway & Sons. That same firm in 1872 brought to America the great Russian pianist Anton Rubinstein, who stormed the continent with 215 concerts in 241 days, traveling from New York City to the mining town of Central City, Colorado.

Other cities were not to be out done by New York. The wealthy across America founded libraries, museums and orchestras, laying the foundation for the fine arts to flourish. Everywhere there was a burst of civic pride—nothing pleased Andrew Carnegie more than bringing Tchaikovsky to New York to conduct the inaugural concert at his new music hall in 1891.

J.P. Morgan told his men to collect the valuable and beautiful. At the Pierpont Morgan Library on Madison Avenue in New York, one can see and study the autographed manuscripts of many music masterpieces. If you want to see the manuscript of Beethoven's Emperor Concerto or Liszt's Piano sonata, it is there for you. Morgan didn't care if five or 500 people a decade would see the works; he preserved them for us.

In the great wave of American immigration from the mid 1800's until the 1920's, the poor and tattered Europeans came to America in droves. Some of their dream was to give their children the finer things in life, including a piano and piano lessons. Indeed, a house was not a home without its piano in the parlor. In 1910 in the United States alone, there were 370,000 pianos produced by more than 300 different manufacturers. By the middle of

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In June 2003 the Florida Philharmonic of Ft. Lauderdale, one of the finest professional orchestras in the South filed for bankruptcy and dismissed its eighty players. A year earlier, the San Jose Symphony, an orchestra similar in size and artistic caliber and also located in an affluent city, closed its doors. At the time David Dubal, distinguished pianist, author, Juilliard professor and syndicated classical music broadcaster, wrote a penetrating article on the demise of the San Jose Symphony that appeared in the San Jose Mercury news and later in the Juilliard Bulletin. That article could as well have been written about the Florida Philharmonic, and it is here reprinted with the kind permission of Professor Dubal. Because of space limitations, the article has been somewhat abridged. *Donald Waxman*

World War I, the phonograph had already overtaken the sales of pianos. By the Depression, only 33 piano firms remained. World War II took care of many of the rest.

It takes a concerted effort by society to support the performing arts, but where are the true patrons of the arts today interested in the welfare of our young talents? Where are the people who contribute with or without tax breaks? What do you think of the fact that the United States gives less money to the arts in a year than Austria gives to the Vienna State Opera in a season?

Then there are our schools, many of which no longer provide any arts education. Decades ago, many public schools had music theory classes and symphony orchestras as well as marching bands. My high school in Cleveland was one of those. It had a terrific orchestra which played the classical repertoire, and an excellent chorus, as well as courses in music appreciation and music theory and harmony. I realized how much times had changed when I visited the school eight years ago. At that time, I

was inducted into my school's Hall of Fame (a nice idea) for my life work in classical music. I gave a speech to the student body, then was asked to perform. I remembered the school had excellent grand pianos. I was led, instead, to an electric keyboard. The school no longer had a piano.

At too many schools, the situation is much worse. Public schools are often scary, violent and sadistic places to spend most of childhood's waking hours. Such an environment is hardly conducive for the arts, let alone elementary literacy. To care for serious music or poetry to like Brahms, or Keats and Shelley, is not cool. Youngsters who do care may find themselves jeered at, laughed at, or even beaten up.

The arts never had it easy, but once they were held in awe or, at the very least respected. The novelist Katherine Anne Porter put it well: "There was the unchallenged assumption that classic culture was our birthright: the belief that knowledge of great art and great thought was a good in itself not to be missed for anything "

As Americans, we will have to decide what will ultimately be important to us.

Do we really care about saving our art museums, symphony orchestras and dance companies? We feel helpless. We are exhausted from thinking about an always increasing list of problems. Worst of all, many problems - like terrorism aimed our way - don't seem solvable. So what is important about the fate of a symphony in San Jose?

America is at a cross roads in history. But this is for certain: We are living in a culturally precarious time. In the 1980's Gore Vidal wrote: "Our century will be more noted for what we managed to lose than for what we acquired.The century is ending not so much without art as without the idea of art.

In the new millennium, will we continue to produce vulgarity and uniformity and scientific "advances" offering evermore seductive promises? Or will we provide an environment that could produce great - and new - artists for the spiritual nourishment of the human race?

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Proposed Bylaw Changes

Rebecca Micha, Chairperson

Bylaws and Constitution Revisions

The Executive Boards of FSMTA and FSMTF approved several recommendations at their Summer Board meetings that require changes to the FSMTA and FSMTF Bylaws. The following changes will be presented and voted upon by the general membership at the 2004 Annual Conference in Tallahassee.

1. Proposed change to FSMTA Bylaws **Article XII Section 1.**

Delete the word "resolutions" from all places that it appears. The new wording will read: "Standing committees shall be Archives-History, Arts Awareness Advocacy, Budget, Certification, Constitution and Bylaws Revision, Conference, Editorial, Ethics, FSMTA Teacher Awards, Independent Music Teachers Forum, Membership Examinations, Foundation Rep-

resentative, Taxation and Licensing and other such committees deemed necessary by the President or Executive Board."

This change would allow the President-Elect greater flexibility in appointing the member who will read the final resolution at each Annual Conference.

2. Two changes are proposed regarding the **classification of Senior Members.**

A. Proposed change to **Article V Section 8.**

Change requirements and discount of dues for Senior membership. The new wording will read: "Senior membership shall be open to active teachers seventy (70) years or older, at a twenty-five percent (25%) reduction in dues."

B. Proposed change to **Article VII Section**

The new wording will read: "Dues for Senior members shall be three-fourths (¾) that of Active members."

An ad hoc committee chaired by Vice-President of Membership Marc Hebda recommended these changes to bring FSMTA policies in alignment with MTNA policies. MTNA currently offers a 25% reduction in dues to senior members. MTNA policy also raised the "senior" status to 70, rather than 65. Therefore the FSMTA Executive Board recommends the following:

a) The discount for Senior member dues be decreased from 50% to 25%

b) The age threshold for Senior member status be raised from 65 to 70

c) Those members who currently enjoy Senior member status under the present FSMTA by-laws be "grandfathered" in

d) That the above go in effect for the 2005-2006 fiscal year.

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Membership Update

by Marc Hebda, Vice President of Membership

Since the previous newsletter, FSMTA is very pleased to welcome the following new members.

<u>Local</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>E-mail/Telephone</u>
UPMTA	Bezas, Cindy	4197 Grandchamp Circle, Palm Harbor, 34685	csbezas@csbezas.com 727/781-0650
GMTA	Klein, Edward	3541 NW 35th Place, Gainesville, 32605	vdagvlc@yahoo.com 352/380-0294
BCMTA & PBCMTA	Pike, Van Philip	3350 NE 16 Terrace, #1, Pompano Beach, 33064	vanppike@yahoo.com 954/786-8415
VCMTA	Serra-Brooks, Beverly C.	2056 Anne Circle, South Daytona Beach, 32119	
PBCMTA & TCMTA	Soriano, Maribel	PO Box 9135, Port St. Lucie, 34985-9135	772/336-2198
PRMTA	Sawyer, Janet	2134 Gerard Court, Port Charlotte, 33952	janetsawyer1@comcast.net 941/766-0870
JMTA	Schreck, Joy	8461 Thomas Trails, Bryceville, 32009	dnjschreck@aol.com 904/879-1229
SMTA	Spaulding, Randall L.	3342 Glouster Street, Sarasota, 34235	randy118@comcast.net 941/951-0743
TALLMTA	Tung, Chia-An (Victor)	1624 Eagles Landing Blvd., #90, Tallahassee, 32308	victorttc@hotmail.com 850/893-9495
PBCMTA	Whiting, Laura	16223 SW 99th Place, Miami, 33157	litlemspig@aol.com 305/238-7288

LOCAL MEMBERSHIP CHAIRS

For those of you who are attending the conference in Tallahassee, there will be a meeting for the Membership Committee - watch for upcoming details. In addition to reviewing the application process and discussing member retention, Betty Hines, Provisional Member Chair, will be in attendance to review and answer all of your questions about provisional membership. Be sure to purchase your raffle tickets at the door for a cup of coffee and a donut! Please register your attendance by contacting me at either mjbh@istal.com <<mailto:mjbh@istal.com>> or 850/907-0218.

"FSMTA 101: An Introduction for the College Student" CONFERENCE SESSION

Please encourage any college students that you know to attend our second annual session. This is part of an initiative to recruit college students to learn about the benefits of FSMFTA and become members of our association. All students attending this session should register Friday morning, November 12, at the registration desk to receive a free one day pass for conference events on Friday. In order that I may be prepared for these registrants, please notify me at mjbh@istal.com or 850/907-0218 if you know of anyone who will be taking advantage of this opportunity.

Proposed Bylaw Changes

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3. Proposed changes to the **FSMTF Bylaws** would bring them into agreement with the FSMTF Articles of Incorporation. The changes would be:

A. Add **Article IV section 2**, to read "For stimulation of musical interest among the lay public, the sponsorship of meetings for study, discussion and evaluation, and the sponsorship and presentation of music recitals and concerts.

(1) All monies that are donated to FSMTF for one of the above purposes will be announced to the general membership.

(2) Individual members, local or district associations, or FSMFTA may apply for grants based on one of the above purposes.

(3) A timetable for distribution would be established between the donor and FSMTF President.

(4) The donor may elect to establish an endowment, using only interest for grants, or the donor may elect to give a one-time-

only donation to be used for a specific event within a specified time frame."

B. Renumber the current sections in Article IV.

1. The present Section 2 would now become Section 3
2. The present Section 3 would now become Section 4
3. The present Section 4 would now become Section 5.

Newsletter Deadline Sept. 10

Contact information changes?

Marc Hebda,
Membership Chairman
7801 McClure Dr.,
Tallahassee 32312-8094
(850) 907-0218
mjbh@istal.com

2004 FSMTA Conference features Commissioned Composer Clara Shore

by Carol Comune

Commissioned Composer, Clara Shore will debut her Composition at the 70th FSMFTA annual Conference in Tallahassee. Her work entitled, "Petite Messe" for SATB and Orchestra/Keyboard will be featured at the Second General Session on Saturday, November 13th at 3:00 PM, 2004. The "Petite Messe" text follows the traditional Latin Mass: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus and Agnus Dei.

I encourage all who attend this year's conference to mark on your calendars this prestigious event. "MTNA is dedicated to encouraging the creation of new works by American composers and annually assists its affiliated state associations with the generation and performance of new music through the MTNA Composer Commissioning Program". As Composer Commissioning chair, pianist, teacher and composer, I believe it is my responsibility to increase the awareness, growth and spirit of new music. It is an honor to be part of the process and to recognize such prolific composers of our time.

Clara Shore, the second woman to earn the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Composition from the Julliard School (1984), has received critical acclaim for her works, with reviewers from the New York Times, New York Post, Boston Globe, Washington Post, and others hailing her works as "provocative"... "immensely dramatic"... "romantic to the core".

I had the privilege in meeting Ms. Shore early this summer, discussing her ideas and the inspiration of her work. She is a marvelous spirit, vibrant, passionate and extremely excited about this project.

I hope you will join in this enthusiasm for nurturing new music. We appreciate Ms. Clare's commitment and are thankful for her contribution to our conference.

Dates & Deadlines

September 1 - Applications and guidelines for the 2005 MTNA Grant Program available.

September 10 - Newsletter Deadline

September 14 - MTNA Competitions, deadline entry*

November 11 - Foundation Gala

November 12 -

MTNA Competitions*

November 11-14 - FSMTA State Conference*

February 1 - Deadline for applications for the 2005 MTNA Grants

February 4-5 - Winter Board Meeting

April 2-6 - MTNA National Conference • Seattle

May 20-21 - FSMTA Competitive Events

*See article in this issue

Arts Awareness and Advocacy

by Betty Price, Chairman

As we begin another school year the problem of funding for the Arts is again a major concern. The following letter to the Editor published in the Sarasota Herald Tribune, nearly a year ago, describes so well why and how we should be advocating for the Arts.

Arts an Integral Part of Community

The August 4 editorial commenting on state budget cuts and their effect on the arts ("Arts aren't alone") correctly asserts that dance, music, theater and other arts organizations suffer together with their audiences, but misses the larger point. The arts are an integral part of our community's health, and their well-being should not be placed in false opposition to other high-priority programs.

The Herald Tribune's assertion that arts groups "will be directly competing for money" with education, public safety, health care etc. posits a conflict that does not exist. This "somebody must lose" philosophy underpins a shortsighted (and outdated) view of what comprises a viable community. Those seeking to sustain the health of the body politic during difficult economic times should strive for better methods than simply lopping off those limbs whose value is not immediately quantifiable. Rather, we must search for solutions that keep our community intact, refusing all suggestions that we should sacrifice ourselves piecemeal until the good times return.

The Sarasota Ballet of Florida has, from its inception, demonstrated an unwaver-

ing commitment to the community, through its educational programs, most notably Dance-The Next Generation, the recipient of a national "Coming Up Taller" award from the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities. Through the generosity of founding principal patrons Martin and Betty Danto and other donors, DNG has used the principles of dance instruction to provide at-risk children with discipline, self respect and critical thinking skills that prepare them for college careers. To speak of arts organizations, then, as if they exist outside the fabric of our community is unhelpful to those seeking solutions to budget problems and destructive to those who benefit from the arts' place in our community.

Robert de Warren
Artistic Director/CEO
Sarasota Ballet of Florida

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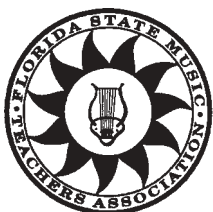
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MTNA

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