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2016-2017 Board

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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**September 18** — Steinway Pianos Documentary (page 3)

**October 8** — Jill Timmons Workshop (page 3)

**October 15** — Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza (page 3)

**November 10-13** — Adjudications with Jamila Hla Shwe  
(page 6-7)

**November 11, 7:30 pm** — Stephen Drury Piano Recital (page 4)

**November 12** — AMTA Competition (page 5)

**March 18-22, 2017** — MTNA National Conference in Baltimore,  
Maryland (page 5)

**Spring 2017** — AKTA Piano Solo & Ensemble Ribbon Festival  
(date TBA)

**May 6-7, 2017** — Alaska Piano Competition, University of Alaska  
Anchorage [www.uaa.alaska.edu/music](http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/music)

**AKTA Board Meetings:** Fridays mornings, September 30,  
October 28, November 18, January 27, February 24, March 31,  
and April 28. Meetings usually begin at 9:30 a.m., except on  
workshop dates when they will follow the workshop. Call or  
email a board member to confirm the time and location. All  
AKTA members are welcome to attend.

**Thank You to our  
Sponsors!**

AKTA wishes to extend our heartfelt thanks to the following individuals and businesses for their support of our 2016 Alaska Conference. We had a fabulous event on August 5th and 6th with presenters Bruce Berr and Jennifer Merry. Over 20 piano teachers attended, and everyone appreciated the great facility, door prizes, coffee, lunch, and conference packets.

- Alaska Music and Sound
- Sheet Music Plus
- David Chiu
- Sis's Deli
- The Music Man
- Saint John United Methodist Church
- Dan McElrath
- Great Harvest Bread Company
- Kaladi Brothers Coffee
- Anchorage Convention and Visitor's Bureau
- Dr. Bruce Berr and Jennifer Merry
- AMTA and MTNA

## **AKTA President's Letter**

Dear Fellow AKTA Members,

Welcome to another year of piano teaching. The beautiful weather this summer has brought a warm upbeat attitude into my musical life.

For me this summer was a time of reflection and major closet cleaning. It ended with an amazing Local/State Conference featuring Bruce Berr and his wife, Jennifer Merry. WOW!! What an incredible, down to earth, talented couple.

Though I have been teaching for 25 years, I was reminded of some very basic teaching concepts that for me, over the years have slipped to the sidelines. It was time to clean out and reflect on what I'm doing in my studio. What are my goals for my students? What can I improve on? How can I get back into the groove with my students and be the best that I can be for them?

I spent a couple of weeks going through every book, paper, game, studio policy, etc. in the studio. Total clean out!!! If you are looking for books I sent a large box to Title Wave.

The conference also allowed me to reconnect with long time fellow teachers/friends in town and to meet some new teachers from our states other communities. It was an amazing, fun and heart warming experience.

So... what can I do for AKTA? What can AKTA do for you? We are still here, alive and well. We are smaller than we once were but still filled with the goals of creating excellence in Piano Teaching.

Do you have a workshop suggestion? Are you in need of students?

Check out our website, [pianoakta.org](http://pianoakta.org). Monthly meetings are open to the whole organization and happen on the last Friday of each month at 9:30am. Currently we are small enough that we hold these at one of our board members' homes. Call a board member and we would be happy to go with you to the meeting.

Happy Teaching,

Gretchen Thomas  
AKTA President

## **Do you have openings in your piano studio? Join the AKTA "Find-a-Teacher" page**

[www.pianoakta.org](http://www.pianoakta.org)

AKTA's "Find-a-Teacher" page gives potential students and their families a way to find local piano teachers, and create more business for our studios! AKTA hopes that all current members will add their names and information to this page. This will help local music stores, families new to the area, and anyone interested in piano lessons find the right teacher for local students. Please use this private link to fill out your information: [http://pianoakta.org/add\\_teacher](http://pianoakta.org/add_teacher)

## Events

*AKTA recommends these local events to our members and their students.*

### **Steinway Pianos Documentary September 18, 2016, 2:00 pm free admission**

"Note by Note," a documentary on the making of Steinway pianos, will show on Sunday, September 18 at 2:00 in the Sydney Lawrence Theatre at the Anchorage Center for the Performing Arts.

### **Choosing Your Best College or University: What Every High School Musician Needs to Know Lecture and duo concert with Jill Timmons October 8, 2016 free admission**

Music educator Jill Timmons will be in Anchorage October 8th to present her new book, *The Musician's Journey: Crafting Your Career Vision and Plan*. Her workshop and masterclass are sponsored by Classic Pianos. The first 50 people to register will receive a signed copy of the book!

Getting ready for college applications? Thinking about a career in music or maybe just continuing your musical studies? Lost in a maze of applications, auditions and financial aid paperwork? Want to improve your chances of getting into the college or university of your choice? With 30 years in higher education, Dr. Jill Timmons guides students in preparing for a professional life in the music industry. In today's marketplace this means working as an entrepreneur. It also means having the right professional training as you prepare to enter higher education.

Timmons will present a workshop exploring what the current professional marketplace requires, what kind of high school training will insure a successful college or university application, and how best to navigate the maze of grants, scholarships and financial aid.

Whether you are considering a music major or simply including music study as part of your four-

year degree program, you can find effective ways of continuing your love of music making!

Workshop Schedule: Saturday, October 8, 2016  
Praise Temple  
822 E. Loop Avenue, Government Hill  
Anchorage, AK 99501

9:00am – Check-in/coffee

10:00 – 11:30am – Timmons Lecture

11:30am – 12:30pm – Terrall/Carney Duo  
(Music for Two Pianos)

12:30 – 2pm – "Café Luncheon" free of charge

2:00 – 4:00pm – Timmons Piano Master Class

4:00pm – Closing Remarks. Q and A. Book signing and dessert will be held across the street at Classic Pianos. All are welcome!

Seating may be limited for this free event. To register, contact Trish Allen, 907-529-4690 or [steinwaypianogallery@ak.net](mailto:steinwaypianogallery@ak.net).

### **Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza October 15, 2016 St. Mark Lutheran Church free admission**

The Anchorage Chapter of the Alaska Guild of Organists (AGO) would like to invite your students to a "Pedals, Pipes and Pizza" event to learn more about the organ. The workshop will be held on Saturday morning, October 15, 2016, from 10:00am to 12:00 noon at St. Mark Lutheran Church on Lake Otis Parkway (across from Lake Otis Elementary School). There is no charge for the workshop – admission is free!

Our presenter will be John Zimmerman, an accomplished organist, recitalist and pianist (as well as pilot). The students will have a chance to explore the workings of the organ as well as play under John's supervision. The event will conclude with pizza for lunch.

Later that afternoon John will give an organ recital at First Presbyterian Church, 616 W. 10th Ave (on the Park Strip) at 3:00 pm. Students, their teachers and parents are invited to attend, and the event is free to all. If you have questions, please contact Carolyn Nickles, AGO Dean, 907-345-3224 or [c.nickles@yahoo.com](mailto:c.nickles@yahoo.com).

## Events, continued

*AKTA recommends these local events to our members and their students.*

### **The People United Will Never Be Defeated!**

**Stephen Drury, piano**

**November 11, 2016, 7:30 p.m.**

**UAA Recital Hall, Fine Arts  
Building**

**\$25 Adults / \$15 Students**

One of the most magnificent piano works of the 20th century, this “tour de force” is a theme and variations of epic proportions frequently compared to Beethoven’s Diabelli Variations or J.S. Bach’s Goldberg Variations. Taking his theme from Chilean worker’s song, American composer Frederic Rzewski crafts 36 variations exploring a variety of music styles from neo-romanticism to jazz and the avant guard. Commissioned for the celebration of America’s Bicentennial.

## Dr. Bruce Berr Composition Festival and Competition Results

This past summer, renowned pianist and teacher Dr. Bruce Berr once again offered AKTA students the opportunity to submit their original compositions in a festival and competition. Dr. Berr reviewed written compositions and sent individual comments to each participating student. After the initial festival level, students had the option to revise their compositions based on his comments, and submit them to the competition phase of the event. Dr. Berr gave additional comments to these students and chose winners in each age group. Winners were invited to perform their compositions at the AKTA conference in August.

Thank you to Dr. Berr for giving our students this opportunity, and to Cindy Epperson for organizing the festival!

### **Primary Winners**

**1st Place:** *The Raven’s Secret*

by Fiona Gehrke Teacher: Alla Artemyeva

**Honorable Mention:** *Wake Up, It’s Christmas Morn!*

by Callie Giesell Teacher: Connie McFarlane

### **Elementary Winners**

none named

### **Junior/Senior Winners**

**Honorable Mention:** *Russian Pas de Bourée*

by Micaela Moreau Teacher: Sharon Theroux

**Honorable Mention:** *Agrodolce*

by Erica Buller Teacher: Sharon Theroux



# Alaska Music Teachers Association

## AMTA President's Letter

September 2016

Greetings to AMTA Members!

As I write this, the rain continues to fall as do the outside temperatures, the hours of daylight, and the leaves. Most of us have started teaching and have tackled the piles of unfiled music and paperwork necessary to keep organized. The students arrive each day with various excuses for not practicing or stories of school day activities – or both! As piano teachers, we are involved not only in the musical training of children, but are weekly observers of their growth as musicians and as human beings. What a responsibility! What a gift!

It was wonderful to see the members who were able to attend the recent AKTA/AMTA Conference in Anchorage. Anchorage Keyboard Teachers did an outstanding job of planning and organizing this great conference and Dr. Bruce Berr and his wife, Jennifer Merry were terrific presenters. It was gratifying to meet and hear the students who performed in the master class as well as those who performed their own compositions. Lunchtime provided a forum to meet and converse and an opportunity to get to know one another better. Our current membership statewide is 51 and, with 20 teachers in attendance, we had nearly 40% of our members at the conference which is an amazing figure.

Next on the schedule for AMTA are the Performance and Composition competitions. The deadline for entry is September 14, 2016 and registration is done on line via [www.mtna.org](http://www.mtna.org). The Alaska performance competitions are scheduled for November 12, 2016 at the UAA Arts Building and attendance is open to the public. Please contact me at [epperson@gci.net](mailto:epperson@gci.net) for more information about this event.

Additionally, I'd like to encourage anyone who has never been to an MTNA National Conference to consider attending. This year's conference is to be held in Baltimore, Maryland March 18-22, 2017. Go to [www.mtna.org](http://www.mtna.org) to register or just to find out more information about the conference.

Finally, I was recently asked by MTNA leadership to share my experiences as an MTNA member and its influence on my life and career and have included my thoughts below. I would love to hear from any of our Alaska members with their particular experiences as a member of MTNA as well.

*“Compared to many of my colleagues, my journey with MTNA has been atypical in several ways. Although I began college as a music major, my college education ended with a degree in nursing—a profession I practiced for many years. In 1986, due to a series of life events, I decided to begin teaching piano and joined MTNA almost immediately after attending a workshop sponsored by the local MTNA affiliate. From the very beginning, my membership in MTNA has provided opportunities for my growth and development. As I have participated in local and state events, I have learned how to choose repertoire, how to organize my studio, and best of all, I have become a better teacher. Over my 30 years of membership, I have met many wonderful teachers and musicians, attended and organized conferences, have become Nationally Certified, and have become a contributing member through ongoing leadership in the organization. I can't imagine a teaching career without membership in MTNA.”*

Best wishes to all of you in the coming year!

Yours,

Cindy Epperson, NCTM

Alaska State Music Teachers President

## News from Unalaska

We've got 26 students in the UNALASKA program this year, as our dear mentor graduated from high school on May and I inherited the six students that wanted to continue. It was he, in May, that won the Hearts and Hands Project's \$1000 mentor scholarship, for his service to the community and private students through his music. We have now raised the bar on community service and mentorship even higher. The principal has already given us the go ahead for our Senior Center Lunch Concert, where we will bus the students from school to the senior center to play for the elders,

have lunch with them, and get to know a wonderful part of our community. We plan to present this program in early December, and again this spring. Community service is part of our plan this year. It's awesome what one can do when they serve music throughout the community.

Other than that we are pushing harder to (privately) publish one piece per month each, with awards for our star composers at the end of the year. We're raising the bar high in lots of ways this year, which has made it fresh for the teacher AND the students.

Best wishes to all of you and hope to see you soon!

Lynda Lybeck-Robinson



## AKTA Adjudications

Dear AKTA Member,

The AKTA Board is once again excited to offer Fall Adjudications to its membership. The adjudications will be held from Thursday, November 10<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, November, 13<sup>th</sup>. Our adjudicator this year is Jamila Hla Shwe from Fairbanks. She adjudicated for AMTA in 2010 and we decided to invite her back again. She will be available Thursday-Sunday but since Friday is an in-service day with ASD, we hope everyone will take advantage of this free day for their students.

If you are interested in participating in this event, mail your completed adjudication registration form (on the following page) with a check payable to "AKTA" to the above address no later than **October 16<sup>th</sup>**. Be sure to list your three (3) choices for days and times.

Teachers purchase blocks of time (15 minutes/\$15, 25 minutes/\$25, or 35 minutes/\$35) during which their students perform 2 pieces of contrasting style for an adjudicator to hear and write comments about. One piece should be "recital-ready" and

memorized, while the other piece should have all the notes and rhythms learned, but can be "in progress" and needing additional refinement. The adjudicator works with the student at the piano during this mini-lesson and provides written comments for the teacher to share later with the student. Parents and interested parties are welcome to attend. Teachers may want to group their early beginners (E1 and E 2) in more of a class-like arrangement. These students play one piece and there will be no written comments on the performances. If you are interested in doing such a class, please contact Dean Epperson for rates and scheduling information. All students receive a ribbon for participation.

Adjudicators are chosen for their teaching skills, their musical and pianistic knowledge, and their ability to work with students in a positive and constructive manner. For teachers who are unfamiliar with the adjudication process, you are welcome to attend and observe free of charge. Please contact me first if you would like to observe. This is a great educational experience for both students and teachers and I hope to see many of you participate.

Dean Epperson, AKTA Adjudications Chair

**Anchorage Keyboard Teachers Association**  
**ADJUDICATION REGISTRATION FORM**

Please return this completed form no later than October 16, 2016  
Send to: **Dean Epperson -- 6901 Round Tree Drive -- Anchorage, AK 99507**  
Include **one check payable to AKTA** with this form.

1. My students will require:

\_\_\_\_ periods of 15 minutes @ \$ 15.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ periods of 25 minutes @ \$ 25.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ periods of 35 minutes @ \$ 35.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ **Total # of students/Total student fees = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (a)**

2. Teacher Conference time with adjudicator—**Not Required**

15 minutes @ \$15 \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (b)

**TOTAL FEES TO AKTA (add lines a, b) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

4. Total Teacher Conference and Student Adjudication time is:

\_\_\_\_\_ hours \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

5. \_\_\_\_\_ My check, payable to AKTA, is enclosed.

6. \_\_\_\_\_ I will be present during my students' adjudications and will act as monitor.

\_\_\_\_\_ I can't be present but I will appoint another responsible person to act as monitor.

7. Of the dates and times available for adjudications, I prefer:

(See attached times adjudicator is available)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

8. The individual student evaluation forms for my students will have all required information completed in advance, and will be arranged in the same order as the students are to be adjudicated. I will also furnish a master list (or program) of my students with their time allotments and repertoire for the adjudicator.

9. My current year dues for AKTA, AMTA and MTNA have been paid.

Member's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Member phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

10. For questions, call Dean Epperson 346-4565 or e-mail to: [depperson@gci.net](mailto:depperson@gci.net)