

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

South Fraser Branch of BC Registered Music Teachers' Association

Wednesday, April 18th, 2018

Northwood United Church, 10am

Attendees:

Helga Murray

Leslie Chen

Sylvia Leigh

Esther Neufeld

Calla Strain

Sharon Poon

Berva Warkentin

Paulette Nielsen

Christy Kuettel

Dianne Szarapka

Catherine Bundt

Carmen Roberts

Léa Tsui

Marlene Bartsch

Phyllis Heppner

Wendy Chan

Colleen Branson

Kamela Christaki

Jennifer Condie

Welcome: New member – Art Zhang

Correspondence: A thank-you card was received from Darlene Brigidear, expressing appreciation for the basket and for our support after Dave's passing.

Minutes of the January 17th meeting are posted on our website.

Moved by Sharon Poon, seconded by Marlene Bartsch to adopt the minutes as circulated.

Treasurer's Report: Sylvia Leigh

The proposed budget for 2018-2019 was presented.

Moved by Sylvia Leigh, seconded by Calla Strain to accept the budget as proposed.

Business:

1. September 2018 BC Piano Competition: Kevin Thompson (read by Leslie Chen)

Things are falling into place very nicely for this event. The date is **Saturday, September 22, 2018**. This will be a fantastic opportunity for you as teachers to recommend to your students and friends, a local, high quality and inexpensive afternoon and evening of young pianists competing to represent BC at the National competition in July of 2019 in Manitoba. Please take one of the posters and put up in your studios and a few handouts as well.

South Fraser has a rep in this competition, first time in 10 years!! Emma Hoglund. We are working to have her come and play a 30 minute recital before lunch at the June meeting. Not confirmed yet, as she may be in Montreal at the CMC finals.

This is a big event and well worth supporting. The deal with BCRMTA is South Fraser gets to keep 50% of the profits! We will only need to sell 150 tickets to break even, everything above that will become profit.

Semi-finals 1:00 – 5:00

Finals 7:30 – 9:30

Location is **White Rock Baptist** Church, 1657 – 140 Street, Surrey. This church has theatre seating, so all seats have a great view of the stage. We will be bringing in a Fazioli grand for the students to play on.

We have ads in the April and September program magazine for the White Rock Concert series. There are 800 avid concert goes here that could be a big draw for the competition.

Tickets for **students** are:

Semi-finals \$15

Finals \$20

All day \$30

Tickets for **adults** are:

Semi-finals \$20

Finals \$25

All day \$40

Tickets will be available at the June meeting for presales. If you would like to pre-sell some to you students, you can get them in June. Also at the door on September 22 starting at 12:30.

2. Professional Development: Helga Murray

I would like to step up and organize some Pro-D events this coming year, and would like to ask two or three people to join me. I have lots of contacts. It is super important for our branch. It is not only important to us as teachers, but it will also bring in more members who don't normally come to our meetings. If anyone would like to join me in helping, that would be great. If you can contribute ideas as to clinicians – we also have lots of people in our branch who can be our resources – please E-mail or call me if that's something you'd like to get involved in.

3. June Luncheon: Helga Murray

We will be having a luncheon at our June meeting, on June 20th at 10:00am. We are hoping that Emma Hoglund will be able to perform for us that day. We are going to ask for \$5 per person for the luncheon. We can work on some ideas for the roundtable discussion. Sylvia Leigh has offered to collect donations for the festival scholarship fund, as the Senior Festival can really use some financial help. Sylvia can write you donation receipts at that time.

4. Announcements:

a) Aria Music Studio:

Are you having trouble finding students & want a steady income? Is your home limited in studio space? Are you tired of dealing with business administration & just want to focus on teaching? Aria Music Studio is looking for teachers (new or experienced) that can teach private piano lessons both on the elementary and or intermediate levels for the fall 2018-19. Please contact Andrea Mesana at ariamusicstudio@gmail.com for more details.

b) Experienced pianist wanted for church services:

South Fraser Unitarian Congregation (SFUC) is looking for an experienced pianist for occasional Sunday afternoon services (12:30pm – 2:45pm) held at Sunnyside United Church (15639 24 Ave). The remuneration is \$75 per service. For details and other information, please contact Sylvia Zeelenberg at 604-502-0686 or ask Leslie Chen.

c) Free Pedagogy Seminar/Workshop:

Esther Neufeld will be hosting a seminar/workshop on the RCM Pedagogy Certificate Program in her home on April 25th at 10:00am. Please contact her if you'd like to register.

Committee Reports

1. Website Report: Kevin Thompson (read by Leslie Chen)

The web site is coming along nicely. Festival events are updated. I am in the process of creating an event for the BC Piano Competition, which will have all this info.

I was just sent the membership list from Joyce Jansen, our provincial Registrar and I ended up moving 20 of our members to 'inactive'. These are members who have not renewed their membership. I think a few may yet still come in. But as we stand now, the email listing goes out to 94, this includes all registered members as well as our life members (retired), STA and associate members.

2. Strings Festival: Rick Dorfer (read by Helga Murray)

On February 11 and 12, we welcomed around 75 performers representing four teachers to our festival. The festival was adjudicated this year by Sharon Stanis, who is the second violinist with the Lafayette String Quartet and an Artist-in-Residence at University of Victoria.

The festival took place at St John Presbyterian Church, (side note - I just googled the church name, and on the google search you can see a picture of one of our performers!).

The students enjoyed the energy that Sharon injected to each adjudication. It has been great talking to each student about what they learned from participating in the festival.

At the Gala Concert, we presented \$1300 in scholarships to 9 students (in the junior, intermediate and senior divisions) and 3 trophies in the primary division.

I would like to thank everyone from the branch for their support and guidance through this transition year for the strings festival.

3. Junior Festival: Christy Kuettel

Despite a few challenges and a few curveballs, the Junior Festival went pretty well.

One of the greatest privileges was working alongside you. It was truly an honour to get to know you better and feeling the community.

Thank you for your group effort for this event. It was wonderful.

Our adjudicators for next year will be Jean Brown and Bernie Duerksen.

If you want to join our team, come talk to me.

Discussion:

- This year, entries were down almost 100.
- Perhaps we can do more to promote the festival to our students.
(E.g. We can all think of one teacher and reach out to them.)

4. Senior Festival: Leslie Chen

We had a successful Intermediate/Senior Festival here at Northwood from February 26th to March 3rd, with 196 entries from 19 teachers. Donna Symons and Dr. Corey Hamm were our adjudicators this year and they were both excellent! We received very positive feedback about both of them from students, parents, and teachers.

We also received very positive feedback about our festival from both adjudicators – especially from Donna Symons, who had been here to adjudicate before. Donna expressed that she LOVES our festival and how it’s run – including the encouraging and supportive atmosphere, the kindness, helpfulness, and thoughtfulness of all our branch members who helped out, and the fact that it was the *teachers* who helped out with the duties throughout the festival. She also loved the look of our program, adjudication sheets, and especially our certificates (special thanks to Wendy for designing them!).

Our two Celebration Recitals had a total of 43 performances. Over \$3000 was given out in scholarships. Thank-you to all the scholarship donors, and to those who sought out sponsors for the festival! These donations are extremely important to us, as we will talk more about, in a moment.

A big thank-you to my fellow committee members: Maureen Hollins, Dianne Szarapka, Debbie Nagy, Jane Hou, and Wendy Chan. An especially big thank-you to Wendy Chan for taking on the task of doing the combined festival programs, as it is a tremendously time-consuming job squeezed into a short period of time! Thank-you to Colleen Branson and Jennifer Condie for help on the pianos and the church (respectively). And thank-you to both Maureen Hollins and one of her students’ mom, Mrs. Sirbu, for doing the receptions for the Celebration Recitals. (Mrs. Sirbu offered to make all the cupcakes for both recitals!)

I’d like to share two other pieces of information from Donna Symons:

When Donna heard about how Barbara Siemens was unable to adjudicate on the first day of our Junior Festival the previous week, she said if something like this happens again in the future, we can phone her and she would be happy to come out and step in last minute. (She would ask her husband, Raul Velasco, to take her students for the day.)

Since Donna and Raul are both RCM examiners, Donna wanted our members to know that they do mock exams for students. They have found that students' marks go up on the actual exams after they take mock exams. They live in North Vancouver, so if it's just for a single exam, the student can go to their studio. If you have multiple students (for half a day), they could come out to Surrey. All details, logistics, and teacher's needs will be worked out with the teacher who is interested.

Now, back to our senior festival:

Even though the festival ran well this year, we are not doing so well financially. I'd like to call up Dianne Szarapka to give a short report on this.

Dianne Szarapka's report:

Years ago, the Senior Festival and the Junior Festival used to be together. We always basically broke even because the Juniors had so many more entries (because you can fit more students into the amount of time compared to Senior students, whose pieces are longer). When the festivals separated, the Junior account was very flush, while the Seniors needed help from the branch.

If the Junior Festival makes more than \$2000 at the end of the festival, anything more than \$2000 goes back to the branch.

For the Junior Festival:

In 2016: it held its own with a balance of \$1800 (no excess).

In 2017: it had a surplus of \$1400, so the branch got \$1400.

This year: it again held its own with \$1700.

After comparing and analyzing, I've noticed that every second year, the Junior Festival makes money. It may have something to do with having to buy more supplies (e.g. certificate seals) every second year. If this stays on track, we should be good for 2019.

As for the Senior Festival:

2015: we had a contribution from the branch of \$2000.

2016: branch contribution of \$1500.

2017: branch contribution \$2300.

2018: branch contribution of \$2500.

The way it's going, we are going to deplete this festival fund! Something needs to change.

The Senior Festival's biggest expense, after paying for the adjudicators, is the scholarship awards. In 2018, the adjudicators were paid \$3100; scholarships were just over \$3000. This year, we had donations of over \$1150. The branch contributes one dollar per entry (and we had 196 entries). We brought in \$1400 for the scholarships. Of the \$2500 the branch contributed to us this year, \$1600 was needed for scholarships and \$900 was needed for the running of the festival.

Speaking of the running of the festival, there were some extra expenses this year: insurance for the pianos (\$500 divided between the two festivals); an extra piano tuning for the second week; the programs were increased in cost; scholarships were up \$375...etc.

Just as an aside, we have been paying our adjudicators \$60/hour since 2014. Before that, we paid them \$150 per session.

These are all things that are going to be coming in the future, so we need to think about how we can make more money – increasing the program fees, entry fees, or donating more...etc.

This morning I got a phone call about the pianos. Pianos are a big expense too. Each festival paid \$900 for Tom Lee's pianos (that's \$1800). Shelley Gimbel from Tom Lee phoned and said she might be able to get us the pianos for free – not every year, but almost for sure for 2019!

Discussion:

- One of the easiest ways to raise more money is to put more students in the festival!
- The fee we pay for Tom Lee's pianos is just for the moving. They don't charge us for the actual rentals.
- This is the first year we bought insurance for the piano rentals, but it is necessary!
- It would be more expensive to go through our BCRMTA insurance for the piano insurance.

4. Festival Review:

a) Festival Syllabus:

After the Festival ended, some of us (Festival convenors and a few committee members) got together to discuss things that could be improved upon, for the two Festivals. This boiled down to two main areas: reviewing the festival syllabi to see if any rules needed to be clarified and made the same across the two festivals, and coming up with a new model for assigning duties.

We went over the syllabus carefully, and we didn't think there was anything major to be changed in the rules. We have clarified our rules in the senior syllabus to match the junior syllabus, but other than that, there was nothing major. (Just to clarify: students who receive a Gold need to have played in *two* solo classes in order to play in the Celebration Recital.)

Our rules are as minimal as possible, and we stand by these guidelines. We *implore* the teachers to read the syllabus before entering students in the festival. Individual teachers are responsible for making sure their students' parents understand and follow the rules.

Because it is important that each teacher is aware of this responsibility, in order to submit the festival Teacher's Form online, you will need to check off a box that says: *"I have read the Syllabus and understand the rules. I am accountable for informing my students and their parents of the rules in the Syllabus."*

Discussion:

- For the Senior Festival, students are allowed to enter one piece (instead of two) if they wish, but only students who have entered two solo pieces and received a Gold will be invited to perform at the Celebration Recitals. → Some teachers feel that this rule has not been clear, so we will need to spell it out more clearly in the syllabi. If they had known that students could enter just one piece, they would have entered more students. (At one point, the rule used to be that students were required to enter two pieces.)
- The Junior Festival still has the rule that all grades (other than Preliminary) are required to enter two pieces! → But we want the two festivals to have the same rules, so this will need to be clarified in the syllabus.
- There used to be a consideration for students who could not perform on a Saturday due to their religious beliefs that they would be exempt from having to perform in the Celebration Recitals. Is this still the case? → No.

- Are students allowed to enter only ensembles and no solo pieces? → Some teachers feel that students should be allowed to enter just an ensemble and be eligible for awards. They would have entered students who wanted to do just an ensemble in the festival. → Perhaps we need a different structure for awards for ensembles? → Perhaps instead of scholarships, we can do a trophy with a plaque with the winners' names on it (so it's less expensive).

The Senior Festival will be March 4 – 9, 2019.

The Junior Festival will be the week before.

b) Festival Duties: Sharon Poon (and Kevin Thompson)

Please see the "Festival Duties Proposal" PDF.

Discussion:

- Some teachers feel it is not necessary to change the name from "duties" to "assistant."
- A survey will be sent out to the membership regarding this proposal.

Dianne Szarapka moved to adjourn the meeting.

Adjournment