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FALL NEWSLETTER 2009

Listed below are the various events available to my students. Students are encouraged to participate in as many of these events as they are comfortable doing. In the next month or so, we will plan which events each student wants to do. Check out the studio web site at <http://j-winsor.home.att.net> for calendar information and practice tips throughout the year.

STUDIO RECITALS: These are held in the studio once a month on Saturday evenings at 6:00, 7:00, and 8:00. Students perform when they are ready. These recitals give students a chance to try pieces in front of a friendly audience. (I want students to play any audition or competition pieces in at least one recital here before playing in front of a judge.) Fall dates: 9/26, 10/24, 11/14 & 12/19. In addition, we will do a recital at Beth Sholom Terrace, VB on Sunday, Sept. 27 at 2:00 pm. Plan on dressing up for this recital as our audience will be.

SOLO RECITALS: Adult and high school students have the option of performing a solo recital at the studio and may invite their own audience (25 maximum). Printed programs and a reception after the recital will be provided.

HYMN PLAYING FESTIVAL: Students prepare 2 hymns (memory is not required) for a judge. This will occur on Sat. November 21st at Good News Baptist Church, Chesapeake. The deadline for entry is Oct. 8th and the fee is \$8.

JUNIOR FESTIVAL: This occurs on February 20th & 21st at the Marsh School of Music, Virginia Beach. Students accumulate points toward gold cups and receive a certificate and judging sheet. Entry and Gold Cup fees total \$8. The deadline is Dec. 8th.

CITY-WIDE RECITALS: These are held two times a year on Sunday afternoons. Each participating teacher may enter 6 students. Each student is allowed to play one memorized piece. Families are invited and printed programs are provided. This year's recitals will be held Sunday, November 15th at Jordan Kitt's Temple

of Music, Virginia Beach and Sunday, February 26th at Second Presbyterian Church, Norfolk.

LEVELS OF PROGRESS: This event will be held on Sunday, March 7th and Sunday March 14th at the Temple of Music, Virginia Beach. (If we get bumped from this location, I will request ODU as our 2nd choice.) Students play 2 memorized pieces for a judge and receive a written comment sheet and certificate. The fee for this event is \$8.

ODU CLASSICAL COMPETITION: This is a national competition held at ODU. Students need my recommendation and will prepare 2 contrasting pieces from the Classical era. The first round will be held Saturday, 3/20.

HONORS RECITAL AUDITIONS: This is a competition for placement in the *Honors Recital* held on May at ODU. The auditions will be held at the Temple of Music, corner of Rosemont and Virginia Beach Blvd, Virginia Beach on Sunday, April 25th. Students competing must play *Levels of Progress* at a minimum of Level 4 and need my recommendation.

GUILD AUDITIONS: Students prepare from 2 - 20 memorized pieces to play for a judge. This is held the 2nd half of the month of June (after school is out) at the Temple of Music, Virginia Beach. Students receive a written commentary, grade, certificate and pin. They may also work for special awards such as the High School Diploma, Sonatina Medal, and Bach Medal. Fees vary based on what level and how many pieces the student plays. If you prefer a late May time, let me know and I will enter some students in the Norfolk center.

DAVID CARR GLOVER SCHOLARSHIP: This event is for students in grades 5 - 8 (Mr. Glover's favorite age of piano student). Students prepare 2 memorized pieces for 2 judges. Scholarship monies are to be used to pay for lessons, buy music, go to music camp, buy concert tickets, metronome, recordings, etc. The auditions will be held Saturday, April 17th at the Music Staff, Chesapeake.

VMTA THEORY, SIGHT READING AND KEYBOARD TESTS: Theory will be held at ODU on Saturday, January 23rd. Sight reading and Keyboard Skills will be held at the Temple of Music, Saturday, February 20th. These require long preparation, so a decision needs to be made by early November. The fee for each test is \$8.

EASTERN DISTRICT AUDITIONS: This is a competition held at Virginia Wesleyan College on Saturday, May 1st. Participants must have passed the required Theory and Sight Reading Tests. Winners at this district go on to the VMTA State Convention the following Oct./Nov. to compete at the state level. The fee for this event is \$15.

Dates, deadlines, registration chart and entry fees for these events will be in the *Winter Newsletter* and the studio web site. Feel free to discuss any of these events with me if you are interested in more information.

LESSON FEES: Lesson fees for this school year are as follows (starting 9/1):

30 minutes - \$19	75 minutes - \$45
45 minutes - \$28	90 minutes - \$54
60 minutes - \$36	

Fees are normally due the first lesson of the month for the month, though other arrangements may be made. If I have been given a 24-hour notice, lessons may be missed without financial responsibility. Make-ups will be scheduled at the convenience of both of us. The 24-hour notice is necessary so I can have time to utilize your time for a make-up time for someone else or to schedule a rehearsal. (Special consideration is given for sudden illness.)

The 60 minute (and longer) lessons are designed for the serious adult or high school student. 45 minute lessons are for the serious middle school student and 30 minute lessons are for the beginning student. If you have a question concerning the length of your lesson, feel free to ask. I expect students taking longer lessons to practice longer (next paragraph). These students will make more progress.

A common question is "*How often and how much should a piano student practice?*" My favorite answer is "***only the days you plan to eat and preferably for the length of your lesson***". (If you prefer, only the days which end in "y" also works for me!) I am aware that it is not always feasible to achieve this goal: try for a minimum of 5 days a week with your eye on all 7. I am also more interested in achieving results than clock watching. If you practice smarter, you will be able to accomplish more in less time! Check your notebook for practicing tips.

PRACTICE CHART: My ultimate practicing goal is for the intrinsic satisfaction in producing music to drive the student to practice. This often takes several years to become apparent to the student. In the interim, I have an extrinsic incentive for those who are interested. The students participating will be required to fill out a weekly practice chart. 5 days minimum are required each week in order to count (5 days = 5 points, 6 days = 6 points, 7 days = 7 points). 16 weeks of the 18 week-semester will be counted. (This allows for illness, out-of-town trips, crazy school schedule, etc.) A chart of all participants is kept on the studio bulletin board. At the end of the first semester, students who have earned at least 5 points every week will receive a small trophy. 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place trophies will be awarded to those with the top points. Students have a choice of a trophy or a composer statuette. A form will be sent home at the end of the semester so each student may make his/her choice. Congratulations to the Practice Chart winners last semester!!!! (Thanks to all of the parents who made it possible!) We had 12 1st Place Winners!!!!!!

1st Place Winners: Leah Drew, Elisa Slater, Nichole Dorobanov, Lizzy Moss, Kyra Montgomery, Samantha Riley, Ethan Martinez, Shirley Diec, Sebastian Pommerenk, Alexander Pommerenk, Thomas Chase & Paige Temples

2nd Place Winner: *Brittney Brakob*

3rd Place Winner: *Michael Salas*

Regular Trophies: *Gabi Martinez, Connie Owens, Bella Gonzalez, Sarah Drew, Erica Patmon, Jared Esteban, Seth Kinsey & Ryan Kinsey*

Honorable Mention: *Monica Slater, Rachel Salas & Ivana Kranarevsky*

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Nichole Dorobanov for being awarded a David Carr Glover Scholarship.

Erica Patmon and Nicole Dorobanov for Superior Plus ratings in their 15 pieces Guild International programs in June.

COMPUTER LAB: Students have the option of working with these programs on theory, sight reading skills, and music history either 30 minutes before or after their lessons. I will choose programs based on the student's skill level and any problems the student might be having. The extra exposure will allow concepts to become solidified. The computer lab fees are:

\$7/month (\$35/semester)

Each semester is 5 months (Sept. - Jan. and Feb. - June). The fees may be paid by the semester at the beginning of the semester or may be included monthly with tuition. If you are interested, fill out the registration form at the end of this newsletter.

MUSIC: I usually purchase any music needed by a student and then the student reimburses me. I will give you a warning if a large amount needs to be spent. Please let me know if you do not care for this arrangement.

REACHING ME: I do not answer the telephone during lessons or rehearsals. I am at TCC during the morning hours. The answering machine is on all the time or a message can be left with Mr. Winsor in the evening. The machine is checked often and calls are returned ASAP. You may also contact me via e-mail: j-winsor@att.net. E-mail is regularly checked early every morning and late at night. (Please, no phone calls before 8:00 AM or after 10:00 PM. E-mail 24/7.)

PARKING: Please park in our driveway. If you are staying for the lesson, try to park on the left side, especially if you are here for a 2:30 lesson (my side + closest to the door). Mr. Winsor parks on the right side of the garage. If the left side is blocked when you come in, go ahead and park on the right. (Mr. Winsor has keys to both cars!) During recitals, just park up the whole driveway, not worrying about blocking both sides. Try to limit street parking to in front of our house.

PLEASE WALK IN: When it is your lesson time (or whenever you have a child in my house), you may just walk in without ringing or knocking. That way, I do not interrupt the lesson I am just finishing.

SITTING ROOM LIGHTS: If you come in to wait on your student, feel free to turn on sitting room lights to serve your needs (no asking required).

WEATHER: If school is out due to snow or a hurricane, use your own judgement on whether to come to your lesson. Since there is a such wide range in what people consider safe driving conditions and varying distances for people to come, each needs to make that decision. I will be here for those who wish to come. Make-up times will be found for those who opt to not come. (I learned to drive in northern Ohio and am not going to make safe driving condition decisions for others!)

GLOVES: When the weather turns cold (45 F and below), please wear gloves to your lesson. Even young muscles become stiff when cold and it can take half of your lesson to warm up. (Expect to be given a hard time if you come in without them!)

PEDAL RUG: Students who are in their second year and higher of study will use the damper and soft pedals frequently. Consider putting a throw-rug under the pedals if the piano is on carpeting as over time, the heel will leave a worn spot on your carpet if left unprotected.

SHOES FOR PEDALING: The ideal shoe for successful pedaling is one with a thin sole. Please keep this in mind when purchasing dress shoes. I am aware that this is not the current fashion for ladies. The thick soles do not allow you to feel what is going on with the pedal and results in blurred sloppy pedaling.

CANCELLED DATES: I will not be teaching on the following dates this semester: Monday, Sept. 7 (Labor Day), Nov. 5 – Nov. 8. (I'm attending the VMTA state convention at Virginia Tech University), Wed. Nov. 25 - Sat. Nov. 28 (Happy Thanksgiving!!), and over the Christmas holidays Dec. 24 - 26 and Dec. 30 – Jan. 1. I will keep you posted as other dates come up for Hardwick Chamber Ensemble concerts.

CONCERT ATTENDANCE: Attending live performances is an excellent way to become a better musician yourself. Much can be learned in this way. Each semester, students who turn in at least 3 programs or ticket stubs of concerts they attended (symphony, opera, chamber music, solo recitals, choral concerts) will receive a *Certificate of Participation*. Check the *Virginian Pilot* on Thursdays, the Chesapeake *Clipper* and Virginia Beach *Beacon* for weekly events. You may subscribe to the Art Song Concert Update Calendar. Go to www.artsongupdate.org/calendar for information on how to sign up. They automatically send you calendar updates every Monday morning as well as notices if concerts are cancelled at the last minute. Several Tidewater arts groups send them press releases. Many of these concerts are free and open to the public or are available at a minimal fee. You will automatically receive *Hardwick Chamber Ensemble* notices.

PRACTICING FOR YOUNG MUSICIANS by Harvey Snitkin is geared for students age 9 and up. Students may borrow it for one week or read it here while waiting for siblings. Students who read it will receive a certificate as well as several practice tips. (It is available at *Barnes & Noble*.)

THE YOUNG MUSICIAN'S SURVIVAL GUIDE by Amy Nathan is geared for the high school musician and may be borrowed for a week or read here. Several top artists and high school music students give their tips on how they practice. (It is also available at *Barnes & Noble* - Oxford University Press - \$9.95. The 2nd edition of this book just came out – I have not read it yet.)

THE MAGIC TRIANGLE: Successful music study consists of three parts - the student, the parents, and the teacher. It takes all three parts working together to achieve a successful musical experience.

The student needs to practice daily. Most find it is best to set aside a regular time each day and make that sacred. Take a hard look at your schedule and see when you can get to the piano. It does not have to be the same time everyday. If you start school later in the morning, before school practice might be a good solution for you. The student should be responsible for bringing all music and the assignment notebook to the lesson as well as completing all the assignments.

The parents can help by showing interest and enthusiasm for their student's musical accomplishments. Please make sure your student has a good instrument which is kept in good repair and see that there is good lighting, a comfortable stool, and uninterrupted practice time. Remind your student to practice and if asked, please sit with the younger student during practice sessions early in the week. Even if you do not read music, you can be very helpful by reading the assignment notebook. Please get your student to lessons on time, to make the most of lesson time and try to be prompt with pick-up times. (Sometimes I need to leave immediately for a rehearsal/concert.)

The teacher should be available to discuss lessons with the parents. Parents are always welcome to stay for a lesson or to set a time to discuss the student's progress. I strive to set long and short term goals for each student. It is my job to recognize effort and to try to motivate and inspire each student. It is also my job to stay informed of new music and ideas. I accomplish this through attending conferences, workshops, reading periodicals and books, and by practicing and performing myself. I am the pianist for the Hardwick Chamber Ensemble and the Virginia Beach Chorale. I am active in several music teacher organizations: Tidewater Music Teachers Forum (past president), Scherzo Music Club (past president), Virginia Music Teachers Assoc. (past president), MTNA Southern Division Competitions Chair (past), and am certified through VMTA, MTNA and the National Piano Guild. I also give lectures and workshops on piano pedagogy topics and adjudicate competitions.

Hopefully all three of us working together will produce a musically successful year.

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You have earned a Practice Chart Award for this semester!!!! Please mark your choices and return it to me at your next lesson. You may have a trophy or you may choose a composer statuette. 1st place winners may pick 4 composers instead of a trophy, 2nd place winners – 3 composers, 3rd place winners - 2 composers and students who did 5 days every week may pick 1 composer.

YOUR AWARD: _____

YOUR CHOICE:

Trophy _____

Composer Statuette (Put a check beside the composer you want.) You might want to try to collect all of your favorites.

Bach _____ Beethoven _____ Brahms _____

Chopin _____ Liszt _____ Mendelssohn _____

Mozart _____ Debussy _____ Greig _____

Handel _____ Haydn _____ MacDowell _____

Rachmaninoff _____ Schubert _____ Schumann _____

Strauss _____ Tchaikovsky _____

Once you have a complete set of the composers above, you may start on another set which has other composers and conductors.

Joplin _____ Clara Schumann _____ Fanny Mendelssohn _____

Wagner _____ Verdi _____ Toscani _____