

# WSMTA NEWSLETTER



January 2023

## Upcoming Events & Deadlines

Thursday Jan. 12, 9:30 AM  
**Meeting & Program:**  
**'Refresh and Renew your Students and Recitals with these Favorite Duets,'**  
**Rita Brown and Lynette Zelis**  
Trinity Episcopal Church

Thursday Jan. 19, 9:30 AM  
**TIE Meeting**  
Home of Linda Krueger

Thursday Feb. 2, 9:30 AM  
**Meeting & Program:**  
**'AIM Performance Judging Session,'** Janna Williamson  
and Debi Inch  
Trinity Episcopal Church

Thursday Feb. 9, 9:30 AM  
**Teacher Performance Group**  
Home of Mark & Karin Edwards

Thursday Feb. 23, 9:30AM  
**West Suburban Joint Chapters Workshop**  
**'How to Build Technique and Musicality from Scratch and Practical Teaching'**  
Dr. Jeff Kleinsorge

Thursday Mar. 2, 9:30 AM  
**Meeting & Program:**  
**'Lecture Recital on the Music of Florence Price,'** Lia Jensen  
-Abbott  
Trinity Episcopal Church

Saturday Mar. 4, all day  
**AIM Performance Exam**  
Wheaton Conservatory

Friday Mar. 10, 6:30 PM  
**AIM Honors Recital**  
Windsor Park

March 25-29  
**MTNA National Conference**  
Reno, Nevada

## From the President...

Dear Members,

Earlier this month, I hosted my students and their families at my home for our first Christmas Piano Party since the pandemic. It was wonderful to see families connecting with each other, students playing the piano for each other, and everyone enjoying music, food, and good company.



It got me thinking about how fortunate we are as music teachers. Yes, I know there are weeks where the fingering of a student's triads and inversions is all wrong, and although we spend lesson time to make sure it is fixed and understood, the student arrives at the next lesson with the exact same wrong fingering. Then, there are those lessons where students are shocked to find out that they were supposed to complete page 43 of their theory book even though it is clearly written in their assignment notebook. There will also be times when we have to bend over backwards to convince a student that dynamic contrast really would make the piece more interesting.

However, even during those times when students aren't progressing musically quite as quickly as we would like, we have an amazing opportunity to be a trusted adult in their lives. Many of us see students weekly for years and maybe even decades! Lessons aren't just a place to grow musically, they are also a chance for students to tell us how hard their week was, to tell a funny story that happened to them that week, to share things they are learning at school, and to gain confidence and perseverance.

I just received a thank you note from a student which started like this, "You are a great teacher and very funny (this is a voluntary letter, although my mom DID tell me to write you a letter)." When I read it, I couldn't help laughing! Our students may not always express their appreciation very well, but I am grateful that as music teachers/life coaches/mentors, we have an opportunity to be there for them. I would encourage each of you to take a moment as we start the new year to reflect on all the growing and learning that has already taken place in your studio this year. All those little victories are a great motivation to press on!

I wish you all a restful and reenergizing holiday season. I will be looking forward to reconnecting with everyone at our next chapter meeting on January 12. (Don't forget - it's the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month!)

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!  
Janel Greaves

## **January Meeting & Program – January 12, 9:30am**

### **‘Refresh and Renew your Students and Recitals with these Favorite Duets,’ Rita Brown and Lynette Zelis**

After playing through hundreds of volumes of duet repertoire, we have found the collections that will enrich your teaching and enliven your spring recitals! We have duets from elementary to advanced levels, from a wide range of styles and time periods. Even if you have never taught duets, you don't want to miss this session. The fun of duet playing will be enjoyed by all. If you have any duets that you just love, please feel free to bring these to this session and share in our Q & A at the end. All of the music presented and discussed will be listed for you on a handout and these are all currently in print!

**Rita Brown** is a nationally and state-certified independent piano teacher who has taught piano for over 50 years. A graduate of Illinois Wesleyan University, she received a Bachelor's degree in Music Education and a Master of Music in Piano Performance. She completed a portion of her graduate work at Louisiana State University. At Wesleyan she became a member of the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi and in her graduate studies she received the Eli Whitney award. Her teachers have included Marjorie Kingland, Dwight Drexler, Anna McGrosso and Gellert Modos.



Mrs. Brown taught vocal music, grades one through twelve, in the public schools as well as piano for the preparatory program at Elmhurst College. Rita was a member of the madrigal group, the Elizabethans, and is currently an active member of Sigma Alpha Iota, performing regularly for the chapter. She has served the Illinois West Suburban chapter as certification chair and AIM, theory and performance chairman. Rita has presented programs on duets, and on AIM repertoire and theory. In 1997 she was elected Member of the Year.

Rita was an original member of the Illinois State Theory Committee which began in the 1990's and has also worked on repertoire revisions. She has been State Theory chairman since 2004 and is currently working on revisions for the AIM Syllabus. Rita has required her students' participation in the AIM exams for decades because she truly believes in the benefits those students receive from the program. It has been an honor to work on the theory exams.

Rita is married to her husband Jim. They have three adult children and five granddaughters. Her granddaughters participate in many sports including soccer, volleyball, and basketball. She loves to attend as many of their athletic events as possible. In her spare time, she enjoys playing bridge and traveling with her family and friends.

**Lynette Zelis** is the owner of Noteable Notes Music Academy in Wheaton and Bloomingdale IL, where she teaches private piano lessons, and maintains studios for 25 other music teachers.



She is a guest lecturer at Wheaton College where she will be teaching the Piano Pedagogy course to music majors. She is currently the Achievement in Music (AIM) Theory coordinator for the West Suburban Music Teachers Association.

Lynette is the past Director on the board for the Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) where she oversaw music teachers in the East-Central division (Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio) and is past-president of the Illinois State Music Teachers Association (ISMTA).

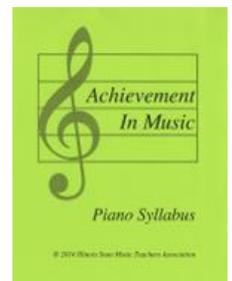
Lynette has been teaching piano in Wheaton since 1987. Lynette is permanently certified by the ISMTA & the MTNA. She was chosen as an ISMTA Fellow in 2019. She is a frequent judge at numerous piano competitions and piano festivals. She was one of only five teachers in the country to win the 2001 Group Piano Teachers Award from the Music Teachers National Association and the National Piano Foundation. She has served as the Achievement in Music (AIM) State Repertoire Chair, AIM Performance Chair, vice president, president and treasurer for the West Suburban Chapter. She was awarded Member of the Year for WSMTA in 2002.

Lynette has written numerous new music reviews for the American Music Teacher and previously for Clavier magazine. Lynette is also a member of the Illinois Music Association - IMA - where she judges at the annual competition and the RCM where she enters students for yearly evaluations.

Lynette received her bachelor of music degree from Hope College, MI, in piano performance and pedagogy. She went on to Northern Illinois University to study with Donald Walker, earning a Masters of Music and a Masters of Arts degree in piano performance and pedagogy. Lynette continues to perform as a soloist, accompanist, and chamber group musician.

## AIM Performance News

Now that we are finished with AIM theory and getting close to 2023, please remember the following dates for AIM Performance exams:



- Exams will be held on Saturday, March 4 at Wheaton College
- The deadline for enrollment is February 1
- All judges must attend the mandatory meeting on February 2
- The deadline for requesting repertoire substitutions for pieces not on the AIM syllabus is January 15. To submit a piece for consideration, send a scanned copy of first and the last page of your requested piece with Level and List (A,B,C D) information to Stephanie Myers.
- The deadline for level 12 repertoire approval is 5 months prior to the exam date and teachers must use the specific form linked here: <https://ismta.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Level-12-Program-Approval-Submission-Fillable.pdf>

If you are interested in AIM, but have never entered students in exams before, you are encouraged to enter students in levels 1A, 1B, 1C or 2 at our March date. Please contact Linda Krueger to discuss mentorship.

Lastly, please note that the new ISMTA website has AIM information gathered at this page: <https://ismta.org/aim/>

Janna Williamson, AIM Performance coordinator

## West Suburban Music Teachers Association Meeting Minutes – December 8, 2022



Janel Greaves called the meeting to order at 9:32 am on Zoom.

No monthly music was heard. The minutes of the November 3, 2022 meeting were read by Dr. Anne Marie Kuhny. A motion was made to accept them as read by Liz Mackenzie and seconded by Diane Lindsay.

Treasurer Diane Lindsay reported that the account balance.

A TIP was offered by Kathy Sbarboro about ways to include intermediate theory in all lessons. She suggested using AIM workbooks, even for students that aren't in AIM, or Keith Snell. Even when taking a theory break, her advice was to talk about theory related to each piece. Examples include discussing keys, chords, scales, cadences, and more. Sometimes this is put in homework and sometimes is done in the lesson. It can also be done as a group activity.

Linda Krueger reported that there were no new members in attendance.

### **Upcoming Events/Reminders:**

December 18- signup deadline for CAMTA Sonata Sonatina Festival

January 12 – Rita Brown & Lynette Zelis –  
Refresh and Renew your Students and Recitals with these Favorite Duets

January 15- AIM Repertoire Approval

January 19 – TIE meeting – Linda Krueger

February 2 – AIM Judges Meeting

February 9 – Teacher Performance Group

February 23 – Joint Chapters Workshop with Dr. Jeff Kleinsorge at Trinity Episcopal Church  
“How to Build Technique and Musicality from Scratch” and “Practical Teaching”

March 4 – AIM Performance Exam

April 16 – Student Recital- Coordinator Dr. Anne Marie Kuhny

April 23 – Berkley-Pendell Competition

### **New Items:**

No additional announcements were made.

A motion to adjourn was made by Linda Krueger and seconded by Liz Mackenzie.

The monthly program was given by Susan Osborn entitled Imagery and Artistry: How to Improve Piano Lessons by using Visual Images.

Anne Marie Kuhny, WSMTA Secretary

## Quote of the Month

'After silence, that which comes nearest to expressing the inexpressible is music.'  
— Aldous Huxley



## From the Editor

The WSMTA Newsletter is published monthly September through May, with one summer issue in July. The deadline for newsletter submissions is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication. For example: the September newsletter deadline is August 15 and is published by Aug. 20. Articles must be 'print ready' when submitted.



This newsletter is sent via the WS Google Group, [wsmta@googlegroups.com](mailto:wsmta@googlegroups.com). You must subscribe to the group in order to receive it and other important communication from our group. Past issues of the WSMTA Newsletter are available on the WSMTA website, [www.wsismta.org](http://www.wsismta.org).

Kathlyn Sbarboro, WSMTA Newsletter Editor

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