



The Bellonion

n. A musical instrument, invented at Dresden in 1812, consisting of twenty-five trumpets and two drums, which were played by machinery.



September 2011

Volume 15, Issue 1

YOUR BOARD WELCOMES YOU

Dear Chapter Members,

Keep an eye on the **Clarion** in coming months, as our chapter will be featured soon.

We have an exciting year ahead, and with a little inspiration and elbow grease from all, we will have plenty of opportunities for growth in our students and ourselves as teachers and musicians.

I just saw the line-up for the **Bellingham House Concerts** and it is fabulous!

Also keep an eye on the progress of the November 5th **Arts Extravaganza**, under the leadership of Debra Chang. There will be a job for everyone as we seek to bring our scholarship fund back up to a healthy level.

We can all play a part in

designating **Ford Hill as a Foundation Fellow** at the national conference in March (in New York city!) by contributing to the MTNA Foundation Fund in his name.

Don't forget to put Oct. 15th's **District Conference** in Marysville on your calendar. Let's carpool together to see what District VP Nancy Heyer has put together for us.

We hope to see you all at the Sept. 15 **chapter meeting** to kick-off our year together...

We are reviving **TEACHER FEATURE** so that we can learn from each other, cross-pollinate so that each of us will be stronger. We are asking every member to contribute something at least once during the year. You can send in a quote, 1 or 2 sentences of an idea, teaching tips, favorite websites,

books you have learned from, recordings you have appreciated OR give a 10-15 minute sharing at a monthly meeting – any gift you would give, we would be happy to receive! Send your submissions to Dorie.

Your presidents, Barbara and Lorraine

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Calendar of Chapter Events

Thursday, September 15 10-Noon	Monthly Meeting at The Amadeus Project 1209 Cornwall
Saturday, October 15 9:00 am-4:00pm	District I/II Conference Marysville United Methodist Church 5600 64th St NE Marysville, WA
Nov. 5 7-9 pm	Arts Extravaganza Heiner Center

DON'T MISS THE DISTRICT CONFERENCE!

Save the date! On Saturday, October 15th from 9 am to 4 pm, District I and II will be holding their annual conference at the Marysville United Methodist Church, 5600 64th St. N. E. in Marysville, WA.

This year's focus is "Building Blocks for Strong Students and Successful Studios" and will feature popular clinician and superb pianist Yelena Balabanova. The interactive workshop will prove invaluable

for both new and experienced teachers. Yelena says "...my workshop will focus on how to teach healthy technique and artistic interpretation as a unity, plus many practical tips."

The day will also include a masterclass and an afternoon discussion group focusing on building and maintaining a successful studio practice. Lunch will be provided.

Look for more information and on-line registration very soon!

Call for Masterclass participants! We need a mix of elementary, intermediate and advanced students to perform for Yelena. Time slots will be 15 – 20 minutes. (Maximum of 5-6 students) There is no charge for students or their parents. Contact Nancy Heyer at theheyers@msn.com.

The Bellonion is published monthly. Please submit information relevant to the Chapter and its members you would like considered for inclusion by the 5th of each month to Dorie at dorieg33@comcast.net. We will be including more information of use to all and about ourselves as a group.

PLEASE READ!!!!



September Program “How to Help Your Students Select a Piano”

Presented by Oscar Spidahl of Sherman Clay, this program is designed to:

- a) Demystify pianos.
- b) Offer simple guidelines to teachers for understanding the differences in piano design and quality, and cost to benefit ratios. Included will be simple ways to test pianos for touch and tone responsiveness and material quality.
- c) Help the piano teacher engage more fully in the long term goals and vision of each individual student and their family by matching the proper piano to that vision.
- d) Add depth of knowledge to the individual piano teacher/artist (J.S. Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelsohn, Chopin were all deeply interested in pianos and helped friends and relatives by either selecting or advising in piano selections).

c) Help teachers build enthusiasm for piano playing, by being of better service to individuals and families who need expert assistance with their piano selection.

d) Provide resources to teachers and families, including checkpoints, standards and references.

e) Create an opportunity for teachers to both question and comment.

BIOGRAPHY

Oscar is a graduate of The Evergreen State College with a concentration in music. He has been active as a composer and pianist. He studied piano as a private student of Randolph Hokanson at the University of Washington.

Oscar has taught piano, choral music, theory and composition; directed the music program at The Lowell Whiteman School in Steamboat Springs CO, taught

choir at the Olympia Waldorf School and was Adjunct Faculty at The Evergreen State College, teaching class piano. He has given diverse performances of 20th century music as pianist with the Olympia Chamber Orchestra, and collaborated with violinist Randal Johnson as Duo Dolce, performing the violin sonatas of Mozart and Beethoven . His work as a jazz pianist has included extensive performances with piano and bass duo at various Seattle venues.

A co-founder of Piano Lovers Club, Oscar currently enjoys teaching a select group of adult piano students, and works closely with piano teachers and students, helping them select quality pianos. He recently completed refinishing his 6'2" 1921 Steinway. In April 2011, he performed a complete solo piano program for the Sherman Clay Lunch-time Concert Series, featuring the piano music of Enrique Granados and Isaac Albeniz.

Arts Extravaganza Scholarship Fundraiser

Our Goal

To raise **at least** \$400 by presenting a concert on Saturday, November 5 from 7 - 9 PM at the Heiner Center at Whatcom Community College.

About the Concert

This will be a fun and entertaining multi-arts extravaganza that includes live music, poetry and storytelling, visual art, dancing, and other performing arts. In keeping with our chapter mission statement, it will be an educational, all-ages event designed to promote art and music in community. We will showcase performances by chapter members and other talented artists and performers in the community who are willing to support us gratis.

Publicity: Press releases, posters, email, word-of-mouth. We welcome suggestions for a catchy name for our event. We need someone to design a poster.

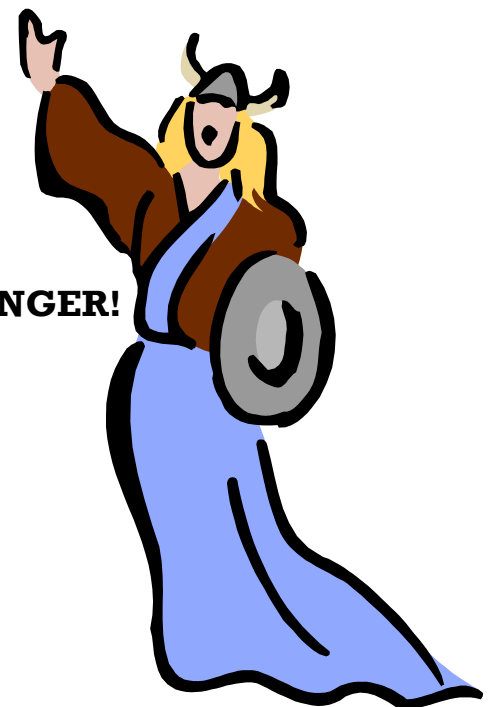
Printing: We need someone to print posters, tickets, and programs and to help distribute them. This project can be divided among several people.

Ushers: We need a few ushers. This is a good opportunity to recruit student volunteers. We might consider creating a Music Service award for students.

TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER!

Performers: We are seeking artists to provide live music in a variety of musical ensembles and styles, visuals, theater, spoken word, and dance/movement. If you need a venue to perform, this is a great opportunity! We want to showcase our talented chapter members and friends. We invite all our chapter members to perform!

\$12 adults, \$8 students, \$30 family, 5 & under free; no one turned away for lack of funds.





TEACHER FEATURE-MY TWO CENTS WORTH *by Barbara Borries*

As we spent the summer relaxing and re-energizing for the coming year of teaching, hopefully we've also been planning and assessing.

I read two books about developing musical children. Although they were written for parents, they provide excellent yardsticks to measure ourselves as teachers.

From *Your Musical Child: Inspiring Kids to Play and Sing for Keeps* by Jessica Baron Turner, here are some practical steps you might take in order to evaluate a potential music teacher:

~Trying to reach a teacher by phone will tell you a lot right off the bat. Is he accessible? Does he respond promptly? A request for a brochure and references will let you know if the teacher is organized, professional, and able to get information to you in a timely manner.

~In the initial phone conversation, learn as many facts as you can. Your face-to-face meeting should allow you to focus more on interpersonal style and teaching techniques than logistics.

~During an in-person interview, talk with the teacher about your child's learning styles. Notice if the teacher seems interested, receptive and will take this into consideration. Ask questions to help you gain a better understanding of policies, expectations, behavior management style, musical orientation, and more.

Some questions to ask:

1. What musical styles do you teach?
2. Do you use certain books and materials? What are they?
3. Do you always choose the music your students are learning to play or do they help?
4. At what point might you invite a child to help select music?
5. How do you address ear training in lessons?
6. How do you handle scheduling conflicts? Are you available for make-up lessons?
7. Do children sing in your class? In what context? With solfege?
8. Do your classes include games or movement activities?
9. Do children perform for each other in your lesson? How do you help them overcome shyness?
10. Do you hold recitals? How do you prepare children for them?
11. Do your students learn to improvise or compose music? How do you approach those activities?
12. Do you have any special rules for student conduct in your music lessons?

13. How do you reward student progress?
14. How do you let children know you want them to do something differently during class?
15. What is your policy and approach to practice?
16. What do you do if you think a child isn't practicing enough?
17. How do you see the parent's role in music lessons and practice?
18. How do you prefer to communicate with parents?
19. Do you give progress reports or evaluations at certain times?
20. Am I welcome to observe lessons?
21. What do you think about piano competitions?

The mediocre teacher tells.
The good teacher explains.
The superior teacher demonstrates.
The great teacher inspires.

~William Ward

SCHOLARSHIP BASKET



Thank you to the following members who contributed to our Chapter Basket for the State Conference in Yakima~

Kagari, Karen, Nancy, Barbara, Don, Andrea, Patricia, Mary, Debra, Janice, Annie, Melanie, and Jessica.

You all helped to make it a great success!





Mission Statement

Our purpose is to promote the art of music and its appreciation among the people of this community; and to provide opportunities for the advancement of musical knowledge through educational activities.



Announcements

National Guild of Piano Teachers
Auditions will be held in Bellingham in May 2012. If you are interested in having students participate, contact Mary Walby, chairperson, at 527-9626, or mwalby27@hotmail.com before the end of September.

Are you thinking about **certification**? How about swapping and sharing ideas and tips to improve your teaching? Join us at the mini meetings. Contact Jessica Hensey if you are interested. jessica.hensey@gmail.com

Teachers Needing Students
Jessica Hensey
Victoria Ebel-Sabo

Concerts

Songs of Hope
A Benefit Concert
for Japan Earthquake Relief
September 22 at Noon
Daniels Recital Hall
(5th Ave. & Marion in Downtown Seattle)
Akiko Kinney (piano) and Fumi Tagata (soprano) will be performing Japanese art songs. Along with the Japanese drum group, Toru Takemitsu
FREE ADMISSION-Donations Accepted

TWO TIMES TWO on TWO BY FOUR
Keyboard Friends Piano Concert
Ford Hill and Jeffrey Gilliam, Victoria and Dan Sabo
October 2, 2011, Sunday, 3:00 pm
The Amadeus Project
\$15.00-Adults, \$12.00-Seniors,
\$10.00-Students, \$5.00-Youth (under 18)

Member Birthdays

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|-----------------|---------------------|
| Sue Gault | August 20 |
| Barbara Borries | August 22 |
| Lorraine Earle | August 23 |
| Ginny Snowe | September 20 |

