

The Bellingham Music Club
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Trinity Lutheran, 119 Texas



The Newsletter of the Bellingham Music Club

Making history

Several current board members have worked tirelessly for the BMC for years now, and they believe the board needs new blood. The BMC is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization with no paid staff. That means members must step forward and pitch in. Do you know anyone who has the organizational skills and some time to help the BMC achieve its important mission of fostering and encouraging the growth and development of music appreciation and performance in the community?

The Bellingham Music Club is at the crossroads. In recent years, it has expanded its student competitions, added the Night Beat series, and increased its membership significantly, thanks in part to the extra visibility of our Centennial Gala and this exceptional season. Soon, the **Nominating Committee** will recruit new board members to lead the club for the next two years. Our biennial election of officers will take place on April 6, immediately preceding a Wednesday morning concert featuring the winners of our Western Washington University Awards.

Several ideas are under consideration for a possible remaking of the club in order to keep up with changing times. For example, the board now meets in the morning of the third Wednesday of the month, but it could meet in the evening instead so that working people could serve on the board.

Should the Bellingham Music Club continue to sponsor its Night Beat series, designed to attract younger members? Can we find a new, larger venue, equipped with enough seats, plus a good piano and theatrical lighting to accommodate programs such as "A Swell Party"? Should the BMC continue to be a membership organization with annual dues, or might it prosper as a subscription series? These are issues that a new executive board likely will face in 2016 and 2017. If these possibilities interest you, you might be a natural for the board.

The current board will appoint a Nominating Committee at the next board meeting on Jan. 20. The committee will present its recommendations to the full membership on March 2, with the elections taking place on April 6, when nominations from the floor also will be accepted with the prior consent of any nominee.

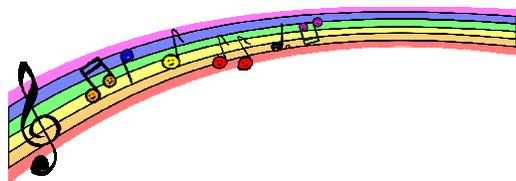
The positions on the board that will be open are: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and membership chair. Please contact president Kristin Van Schelt with your ideas and the names of potential nominees: (360) 676-4118 or klvanschelt@gmail.com.



BIRTHDAYS ARE SPECIAL! Aren't we lucky to be able to celebrate the BMC 100th birthday together this year at one of our favorite venues, **Lairmont Manor** in Fairhaven/Edgemoor?

We are planning a **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION TEA** with music, of course, from 2-4 pm on **Sunday afternoon, Feb. 21, 2016**, for you, BMC members. We are limited to 80 people so please make your reservation at either our Dec. concert (TODAY) or by contacting President Kristin Van Schelt directly.

Don't wait until our next February 3, 2016, program! Questions? Please talk with Gail Haines, who oversees this unique event.



Board Notes

As we embark on our second century, the **BMC Program Committee** will gather for its annual meeting on Feb. 24 at 10:30 a.m. to plan the 2016-2017 concert season. President Kristin Van Schelt and program chair Isabelle Cormier welcome your suggestions and comments. Let them know of ideas or requests for this 101st season, or your interest in helping as a presenter.

BMC will not present a concert in January, but our **high school awards auditions** will be open to all. The vocal competition will be on Jan. 15, the piano competition on Jan. 22, the instrumental competition on Jan. 29 and the string competition on Feb. 19. Auditions will be from 5 to 8 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church, 119 Texas St. Winners of the piano and vocal competitions will perform at the Feb. 3 Wednesday morning concert at 10:30.

Welcome new members: Janey Bennett, George and Nancy Gale, Robert Harris, Karen Kaufmann, Martha Lazich, and Celeste Shipp. **Thank you** for your additional donations: Karen Berry, and Mary Jane & Dick Vetter. Need to top off your tax deductions before year's end? Consider giving to the BMC!

Letters to the editor

"Thank you to the BMC for presenting Night Beat with Martin Kuuksmann and Jeffrey Gilliam. It was simply sublime. We are incredibly fortunate to live in a small corner of the world full of inspired and inspiring musicians."

— BMC member Mary Passmore

"The Singing Revolution," a movie about Estonia's peaceful break from communism, is available from Netflix. Martin Kuuksmann, the bassoonist who performed for the Bellingham Music Club in November, says he is in it — if extremely briefly both as a boy singer and orchestral player. Released in 2006, but filmed as early as the 1980s, it is a stunning and memorable movie. It surely made an impression on him, and shaped his career and his outlook on life.

— BMC member Patricia Hiss

Orcas Island Chamber Music Festival is looking for a new executive director. The festival attracts world-class musicians to 10 or more concerts across a three-week period during the summer, plus four salon concerts throughout the year. It also has a strong music education program. The annual budget is about \$500,000. The festival was founded 19 years ago by Aloysia Friedmann and Jon Kimura Parker, who continue to serve as artistic directors. For details visit www.oicmf.org/employment. Candidates may contact Pamela Smith at atpamela@oicmf.org or at Orcas Island Chamber Music Festival, P.O. Box 646, Eastsound, WA 98245.

— Joyce Stone, OICMF manager

Happy Holidays and Best Wishes for 2016!



Find everything about the BMC on our website www.bellinghammusicclub.org

Contributions or corrections? Contact the Newsletter Editors:

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“There will be no more music in our schools”

By Mark M. Schlichting

Scary thought, huh? But, it almost happened in the spring of 2010 when the Bellingham School Board tearfully chose to drop the **5th Grade Strings Program** from the curriculum due to a shortfall in state funding. All music participation in our schools would be negatively impacted as a result, but several elementary schools with active PTAs did not take the board's decision lightly, and they began to offer their own strings programs without the district's help.

Enter, the Bellingham Public Schools Foundation (BPSF) whose goals are founded on a “one school-house” approach: we need to provide the same educational opportunities for ALL students in our schools regardless of any socio-economic demographics. Under the capable leadership of Executive Directors Gennie Clawson and Kim Lund, the group was able to begin the task of helping to fund the program and to get it back. Also on board with the project were Tom Kunesh with the Bellingham Band Boosters, Todd Guiton with the Bellingham Music Coalition, and Karen Berry with the Bellingham Festival of Music. Each was raising funds with their organizations to keep the 5th Grade Strings Program alive!

The “end run” was made by Dr. Michael Aaron Copland,* assistant superintendent of the Bellingham schools, who formed a Visual and Performing Arts Committee (VAPA) comprised of school administrators, teachers, parents, and citizens, which met several times in the spring of 2014. They all agreed that the arts definitely needed to have renewed attention in our Bellingham schools, regardless of the state funding shortfalls. As a result, 5th grade strings returned in the 2014-15 school year as an after-school activity, and it is now back as part of the daily elementary curriculum in 2015-16!

This goes to show what a community such as ours can do to keep the arts very much a part of our children's lives!

Inspired by the renewal of the strings program, the Bellingham Public Schools Foundation (BPSF) last summer began collecting instruments that were gathering dust in Bellingham homes. Woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments were also very much welcomed in addition to strings! Call Executive Director Kim Lund at 676-6479 to find out where to take your instrument donation, and it will soon be placed into the hands of students in our Bellingham schools music classes. Not only is this the right thing to do, but your donation can be taken as a tax deduction because the BPSF is a 501(c)(3). (When President Kristin Van Schelt heard that the BPSF was collecting these instruments, she immediately donated her clarinet!)

On A Final “Note,” Here Is a 5-Minute Thrill For All of You!

Please Google: “How Music Benefits Your Brain,” or simply type it into your browser bar. The top item on your search list will be a TEDEd video on YouTube that will both entertain and enlighten! Click on it, watch it, and then share it with your friends and family! In a brief but concise way, you will witness scientific proof that music participation is important to our children and to all of us in that it broadens every aspect of the way we think and learn, the way we behave, and the way we interact with others! Amazing!

** Dr. Copland's daughter, Katherine Copland — a New York opera diva — will perform for our Bellingham Music Club in June 2016! Check the schedule, and be sure to be there! This is not to be missed!*



Jeffrey Gilliam Piano Scholarship

(Excerpt from WWU Foundation Insider, November 2015)

Jeffrey Gilliam, who performed for the BMC with bassoonist Martin Kuuskmann in November, held a four-year named scholarship as an undergraduate at the University of Rochester's Eastman School of Music.

"It was The Wilson Scholarship – I still remember it," Gilliam said of that early-career gift that gave him a sense of identity, consistency, achievement and security throughout his college career. "It didn't even cover all the tuition, but I liked having that scholarship for four years. I kept in on my resume for a long time."

Now, with a generous estate gift, Gilliam, currently a professor of music at Western Washington University, is creating a similar opportunity for others: The Jeffrey Gilliam Piano Scholarship Endowment Fund will support multi-year scholarships – renewable for up to four years – that will bring promising young pianists to Western. Just as significantly, its establishment marks the first scholarship of its kind for the College of Fine and Performing Arts.

"We have several endowed scholarships – the Arthur Hicks, the Ford Hill, the William Sanford," explained Gilliam, "and we use them to offer students as generous a reward as we can for their freshman year. But compared with that first year, most of our students get less assistance as they excel through their education, and that just seems so wrong. My dream with this gift is that there will be enough in the endowment to award a new, multi-year scholarship every year. If there's enough funding collectively for that, that would be great."

In reaching his decision, Gilliam was inspired by his good friends and committed philanthropists Sibyl Sanford and Ford Hill. The latter is a WWU music associate professor emeritus who has been a valuable mentor to Gilliam. "I've watched various scholarships and the Sanford Hill Piano Series come to life," said Gilliam, "and I started wondering what can I do?"

Feeling appreciated by Western and wanting to show his appreciation in turn, Gilliam is establishing a legacy that will ultimately prove trans-formative for the music department and the university as well as for the students who will receive this scholarship. It's also a lovely gesture of faith in Western's future, a gesture that Gilliam says "just feels right." Or, to quote Sibyl Sanford when Gilliam first told her about his plans: "Jeff! This is HUGE!"

Upcoming events

Whatcom Symphony Orchestra, joined by the Bellingham Children's Choir, will present "Ham for the Holidays," with traditional orchestral and choral favorites arranged by Scott Henderson, at 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 6, at Mount Baker Theater, 104 N. Commercial St. Tickets are \$34 or \$39. .

Tenor **Gabriel Gargari**, who won a WWU Award from BMC in 2005, will be the guest soloist when the **Whatcom Chorale** delivers a Latin beat with seasonal works by Argentine composer Ariel Ramirez. Feel the jubilant rhythms and the ardent reverence of a South American celebration on Sunday, Dec. 13, at 3 p.m., at First Congregational Church, 2401 Cornwall Ave. Also on the program is the world premiere of Scott Henderson's *Shepherds' Dance*.



The **Bellingham Festival of Music** will feature BMC award winner pianist **Cole Anderson** at its sixth annual Welcome Home Concert on Saturday, Jan. 2, at 7 p.m. at First Congregational Church. Cole and his wife Siyuan Li brought the house down when they played Ravel's *La Valse* at the BMC Centennial Gala last June. Cole studied with Nancy Bussard until leaving Bellingham. Come and start your new year with some beautiful classical music and support this young rising star. Admission will be free for students. A \$15 donation to BFM's Music In the Schools Programs is suggested for adults.

The **Skagit Opera** will present Mozart's *Così fan tutte* in a concert version at Lairmont Manor on Sunday, Jan. 17, at 3 p.m. The cast will include Christina Kowalski, Sarah Mattox, Jenny Shotwell, Stephen Rumph, Jose Rubio and Michael Drumheller. Tickets for \$100 include a champagne and tea reception with the artists. For tickets send a check to Skagit Opera, P.O. Box 1756, Mount Vernon WA 98273 or call (360) 610-7249 to charge tickets. This will be during football playoffs, but last year's performance sold out. Get your tickets early!



Karen Berry presents

**Jeremy Berry, viola
and
Michael Refvem, piano**



Dec. 2, 2015 — PROGRAM

Romance

Max Bruch
(1838-1920)

Suite hébraïque, for viola and piano

1. Rhapsodie

Ernest Bloch
(1880-1959)

Morpheus

Rebecca Clarke
(1886-1979)

Cello Suite no. 3

1. Prelude

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Sonata

1. Impetuoso
2. Vivace
3. Adagio allegro

Rebecca Clarke

**Jeremy Berry and Michael Refvem
play an expanded program on Night Beat
Thursday, December 3, 7:30 PM**
at First Congregational Church,
2401 Cornwall Ave. in Bellingham.
\$15 tickets are on sale today in the lobby
and at the door before the concert.
Free for students accompanied by an adult.

BMC PRESENTS **Night Beat**
Centennial Season

Biographies



Photo credit: Jeff Fasano

Violist Jeremy Berry is a three time winner of the Bellingham Music Club Nicholas Bussard Competition between 2001 and 2003. Jeremy was born in Bellingham, WA, and began his viola studies with Elizabeth Stuen-Walker at the age of 5. He has participated in a variety of summer festivals, including the Perlman Music Program, The Aspen Music Festival and School, The Verbier Academy, Kneisel Hall, Youth Orchestra of the Americas, and the Sarasota Music Festival. Solo experiences include a concerto performance with the American Youth Symphony and the Bellingham Festival of Music as well as receiving first place in the Marrowstone Music Festival Concerto Competition. Jeremy holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Juilliard School, where he studied with Heidi Castleman and Misha Amory. In 2014 Jeremy Berry graduated from the Colburn Conservatory of Music where he received a Professional Studies Certificate and an Artist Diploma studying with Paul Coletti. As a founding member in 2011 of the Caldore String Quartet, Jeremy is making a career in chamber music. He is currently a visiting assistant professor at Stony Brook University.



Michael Refvem enjoys a multifaceted career as pianist, harpsichordist and chamber musician. He appeared with the Bellingham Festival of Music, Icicle Creek Center for the Arts Winter Piano Institute, Marrowstone Music Festival and Prague Music Performance Institute and Festival. Michael studied under Zenon Fishbein and André-Michel Schub at the Manhattan School of Music where he received a Master of Music in 2014. Originally from Sammamish, WA, Michael is also an alumnus of Western Washington University, where he studied with Jeffrey Gilliam and graduated in 2011 with a Bachelor of Music. He is currently staff collaborative pianist for the Department of Music. Upcoming performances include the New York City premiere of Roger Briggs' Impromptu at Manhattan School of Music's Lives of the Piano lecture/concert series, and the first Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto for Lake Union Civic Orchestra's 2016-17 season. Also under development is a recording of the solo piano works of Bertil van Boer Sr., which will be released on the Naxos label.
