

# HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY

2016 March Newsletter

Donovan Piano Studio

## Important Dates:

March 1	Tuition due	Sunday
March 5	Plymouth State U. Contemporary Music competition	
March 6	MVMTA Recital	Sunday
March 17	Happy St Patrick's Day!!	Studio open
March 27	Easter Sunday	
April 1	Tuition Due	Sunday
May 11-13	Guild Auditions	Atkinson, NH
<b>June 18*****</b>	<b>Spring Recital UU Church</b>	<b>Haverhill</b>

## Plymouth State University Contemporary Music Competitions, Saturday, March 5<sup>th</sup>.

Congratulations to **Nhan Nguyen** who was awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> place!!! He performed Phantasie Variations op.12 by Brahms. It was a high level of talented group of high school pianists and I am very proud of Nhan. We enjoyed a day long festival of recitals, competitions and master classes.

**MVMTA Recital** March 6 Congratulations to **Melhem Antar** who performed the Rondo Alla Turca from Sonata K.331 by Mozart and **Siuyan Tran** who performed the first movement , Allegro non troppo, from Sonata op 49 no 1 by Beethoven. . It was a beautiful day at the Wilmington Arts Center and outstanding performances from Melham and Siuyan.

## National Guild of Piano Teachers Auditions: May 11-13

I will send out the exact date and time for your audition as soon as it come to me. Students should be reviewing ALL their audition pieces along with scales & cadences at home every day. They should practice with the music open to correct and again by memory. Parents can help by asking to hear the pieces.

**Spring Recital: The date is set for Saturday, June 18<sup>th</sup>.** The recital will begin at 5:30 with an award ceremony. The student recital will begin approximately at 6:00pm followed by a reception to celebrate my 40<sup>th</sup> year of teaching piano. Tickets for the recital will not be sold at the door this year but are available in advance for \$10.00 at the studio beginning May 1<sup>st</sup>. There is no limit to the number of tickets you may buy.

**Special note to parents:** We have a very busy recital season coming up. You can help ensure your child's success by doing the following things:

- 1: Be sure that students arrive on time for their lesson with clean nails cut short & with all the materials necessary for their lesson.
2. Encourage the student to read over the instructions in the notebook daily.

3. **Daily practice is a must!** Better progress is made by short daily progress than by one or two longer practices during the week. Make out practice charts & post them where the whole family can encourage the student to practice.
4. Provide a quiet, comfortable practice space for your student with a working instrument.
5. Ask to hear the music being performed for guild & for the recital. Arrange home performances for family & friends.

***The best thing you can do is to encourage, encourage, encourage!***

**Prepping For Performance project** Please remind your student that they can earn points by finding the composer of the week on the studio website ([donovanmusicstudios.com](http://donovanmusicstudios.com)) by giving home, church and school performances and for the months of March and April I am giving bonus points for memorizing recital and guild repertoire and for being the Piano Maestro Star Student of the Week.

**Piano Maestro:** Students who have an ipad available to them for use at home should be spending 10 minutes daily on the piano maestro app and completing their home challenges each week. This app is an excellent tool for sightreading, rhythm and playing the piano in an ensemble setting.

**Summer Classes:** I am now putting together my summer schedule. All students are required to take at least five (5) classes during the summer session. If you have specific times/days or weeks that you prefer, please let me know.

**Tuition** The 9<sup>th</sup> tuition payment is due on or before April 1st. Please try to get your tuition payments in on time. If you have not paid your tuition due on March 1<sup>st</sup> by 3/8, please include a \$10 late fee.

**Piano Monster Festival 2016** Plymouth State University is sponsoring the 20<sup>th</sup> annual Junior and Senior Monster Festivals June 22-25 ( Senior-grades 8-12) and June 26-29 (Junior grades 5-8) . Partial scholarships are available. I have informational pamphlets available at the studio.

### **7 Easy Things Parents Can Do Right Now to Extend Their Child's Musical Life**

Many parents find small ways to help their children with school homework each day. They also may know the basics of how to help their children with things like swinging a baseball bat, throwing a football or swimming. But when it comes time to playing a musical instrument, many students quit too early because their parents have no idea how to help even the slightest bit. Whether your child has just come home with their instrument for the first time or they have been playing for a while, there are a few things you can do *right now* in order to ensure your child continues their successful study of music for years to come.

Here are seven things you can do today to help your child continue to succeed in music:

1. **Dedicate 10 - 45 minutes for practice time daily.** Calm the house down and make the home quiet for 10 minutes, or at least dedicate a “practice zone” somewhere in your house. You would want it quiet and calm for homework — this is no different. Keeping a set time every day helps solidify a routine, and **treating music as a core subject is key. Value what your child is doing for those 10-45 minutes each day.**

2. **Listen to something beautiful with them.** Find some music that includes the instrument that your child plays and listen to it with them while you make dinner or in the car. Pandora, Spotify, and YouTube are great ways to listen to some of the masters play. If your kids play baseball, you play catch with them. If they play a musical instrument, you listen to music with them.

3. **Check their posture.** Poor posture will lead to bad playing, which will most likely lead to quitting (and a few muscle aches). It only takes a few minutes to learn what good posture is for playing an instrument and help your child solidify it as part of their routine. A quick glance once in a while during your child’s practice is all it takes. Consider placing a large mirror in their practice space so they can check their posture consistently.

4. **Maintain a well tuned instrument.** An acoustic piano should be tuned at least once a year. There should be plenty of light along with a chair or bench at the proper height. Keyboards should be 88 keys in length and touch sensitive.

5. **Buy a Play-a-Long CD.** Find a recording of a piece your child is playing so they can play along with it. It’s a lot more fun that way! There are also [jazz improvisation CD](#) accompaniments to have fun with, and [SmartMusic software](#) that has a ton of accompaniment tracks for your child to perform with. A less affordable option is to find free sheet music and accompaniments online.

6. **Know when your child needs a break.** Studies have shown that sometimes a break is just what you need to wake up your brain. If you see your child getting frustrated or bored, insisting that they “fight through it” isn’t always the best strategy. Allow them to take a break and do something fun for a few minutes then go back to practicing. The break is also a good time to listen to some music (see #2)

7. **Be there.** Be present, if you can. Sit and watch your child make music and support them. If you can’t physically be there, ask them how they are doing with their music from time to time; ask them what they like to listen to and what they like about music class. *Be there.*

A successful musical life is developed one day at a time with small successes. Parents are extremely busy, but not too busy to pay attention to the items above. You may not know all the details necessary to help your child with every aspect of their daily practice, but treating their practice as a crucial part of their growth will ensure that they grow up to be amazing human beings.

Happy March Birthdays to:

**Connie Moll (3/3)**

**Clair Mulcahy (3/27)**

**Melhem Antar (3/29)**