

GCMTA NEWS



From the President

Happy September! By now you are probably full swing into your teaching year. I had my first full week of lessons a couple of weeks ago, and it was great catching up with my students, hearing about their summers, etc.

The University of Georgia will present their third annual Piano Day on Saturday, September 19! The registration deadline is September 12. This FREE event is for high school pianists grades 9-12. Parents are welcome to attend and observe as well. Students have the opportunity to perform in master classes for UGA piano faculty, hear student performances, and attend various sessions with UGA students and faculty. Come learn about life as a college music major!

For information and registration, go to <https://music.uga.edu/uga-piano-day>.

Questions? Contact Grace Huang (email grace.huang@uga.edu)

Our first meeting is Wednesday, September 23, at 9:45 A.M. at PianoWorks. You will want to be there for at least two reasons. First, our very own Cathy Thacker, NCTM, will be our speaker. Second, long time GCMTA member Lois Simon is liquidating her studio and will have, in her words, a LOT of music. She is donating it to GCMTA teachers.

I'll see you on the 23rd!

Kimber Kwiatkowski

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NFMC NEWS - MUSIC IN POETRY

Teachers, your NFMC students are eligible to enter the Angie Greer Music in Poetry contest. It is named for our own GA gal who was instrumental in making GA one of the biggest Festival states in the US. Details can be found under 'Junior' at [NFMC-music.org](https://nfmc-music.org). Deadline is November 1. Here's something to encourage writing:

Get Your Rap On!

Yo! Yo! Listen up, don't miss the beat,
November 1 is comin'—quick on its feet!
Got a poem in your head? Let the words fly,
Any genre's welcome—give poetry a try!

Rap it, rhyme it, make it sing, 🎵

Funny or serious—bring your thing!

The Angie Greer Music in Poetry Award
Is waiting for entries—don't make it hard!

👉 Just **five bucks** to enter your creation,
So grab that poem and join the celebration!
November 1—yeah, that date is real,
Don't wait till Halloween to seal the deal!

Go to [NFMC-music.org](https://nfmc-music.org),
Find the entry info—get on board!
At least 8 lines of any style you choose—
Write that poem... you've got NOTHING TO LOSE! 🎤

Questions - bndhughes@comcast.net
Am I am available? You bet!!

AFTER GLOW!

You are invited... please plan on coming **AFTER** our September 23 meeting to "Jam and Toast", 1120 Peachtree Industrial Blvd #214, Suwanee, 30024. This is to promote friendly relations among our members for some Casual Conversation and Connection. It will be a **GLOWing** time of Communication and Camaraderie. You gotta eat lunch anyway, so let's do it together!

NOTE: **Making new friends is not just about improving your quality of life; research shows that strong social connections & community are associated with longevity and reduced risk of illness (such as anxiety, depression, diabetes, dementia, and heart disease). So come and make a new friend - it's good for your health!**

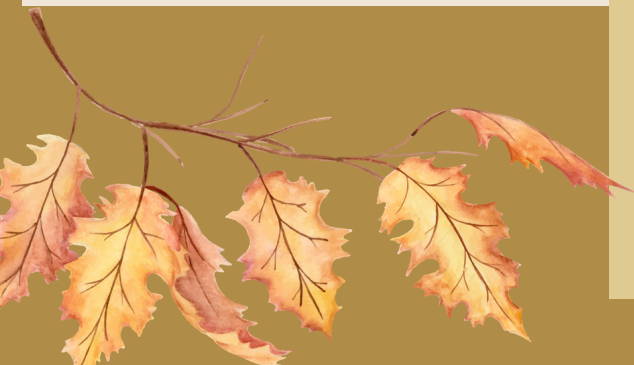
SEPTEMBER MEETING

Our first meeting of the year is September 23, 2026. GCMTA member Cathy Thacker will be presenting Middle Movement Syndrome. For competitive students, first and last movements tend to be where we focus. Like middle children, middle movements tend to be a bit under noticed. We will get compelling reasons to start taking notice of these often neglected gems.

Please be sure to arrive by 9:45 a.m. to grab a drink, visit a few minutes, and listen to a musical performance by one of our members. Our business meeting starts at 10 a.m., followed by our scheduled presentation. You won't want to miss a minute!

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to YU PARK from Suwanee who teaches piano! We are certainly glad to have new members join us. Do **YOU** know of someone **YOU** can invite to our meetings? There will be a prize for anyone who brings a potential new member to our September meeting! We have seven prizes ready. Do we need to have more available for those who will invite another?



MED/PED SCHOLARSHIP

Do you have any seniors considering a degree in Music Education or Pedagogy? Please check our website for information on applying for our scholarship. The deadline for application is May 1.

HOSPITALITY

Please sign up to help bring refreshments to our GCMTA meetings!

<https://m.signupgenius.com/#!/showSignUp/10C0848ACA92AA5FD0-64907620-gcmta?useFullSite=false>

Please contact Sarah Peterson with any questions.
Petersonmom6@gmail.com

FESTIVAL INFORMATION

West Gwinnett Federated Chairs - Rebecca Bonam at rbonam@bbclilburn.org & Susan Andrews

Festival Date: February 27th, 2027

Location: Berean Baptist Church, Lilburn

Events: Piano, Voice, Instrumental (mainly flute,) and Music Theory

Central Gwinnett Federated Chairs - Kathy Dawal at kdawal81@gmail.com & Lisa Ogg

Festival Date: March 20th, 2027

Location: First Baptist Church, Lawrenceville

Events:

North Gwinnett Federated Chairs - Young Lee at eyoung20@gmail.com and Eunji Kwon

Festival Date: March 6th, 2027

Location: First Baptist Church, Duluth

Events: Piano, Ensembles/Concertos, Voice, Music Theory

Virtual Federated Event Option - Kathy Dawal, Melissa Slocum

Festival Date: March 22nd, 2027 - Video Submission Upload Deadline

Location: online only, no competition available for High School

PLEASE record these dates on your calendar now, and **PLEASE** pass your District date along to your studios NOW. Calendars continue to fill up quickly for our busy students and it is far easier to set aside the day now than to be frustrated with conflicts later. Remember that if you enter students into your District Festival, you are required to work the day of your District Festival. If you have questions, please contact your District Chair.

CERTIFICATION

Thinking About Becoming a Nationally Certified Music Teacher?

MTNA Certification provides music teachers with an opportunity to demonstrate professional excellence and reflect on their teaching practice.

For independent teachers, the MTNA certification process consists of **five Teacher Profile Projects**:

1. Teaching Philosophy
2. Repertoire Analysis
3. Present Your Teaching
4. Professional Teaching Environment
5. Professional Business Practices

Where do I start?

Start by familiarizing yourself with the five projects, reviewing the requirements, and considering which areas you may already have materials or experience for. You don't have to complete everything at once—developing a realistic timeline can make the process much more manageable.

Next issue: We'll take a closer look at Project 1: Teaching Philosophy.

Questions or interested in learning more?

Yanni Chan

Certification Chair

Learn more: MTNA Professional Certification — certification.mtna.org

JR./SR. SCHOLARSHIP

Jr./Sr. Scholarship is set for Saturday morning, April 17, 2027, at PianoWorks. Dr. Vicente Della Tonia, Jr., will be the judge. Registration is online, and the firm deadline is March 19, 2027; please see the website at <https://gcmta.org/home/index/student-activities/juniorsenior-scholarship> for the information and repertoire requirements. This is a reminder that students must participate in at least one other GCMTA-sponsored event during the school year to be eligible.

If you have questions, please contact Cathy Thacker, NCTM, Chair, at <mailto:csbt88@gmail.com>.

HELP WANTED

Digital Resources creates and updates web forms, coordinates website changes and additions, and communicates with our web master. We also help with research into online items we need to consider and care for our new Dropbox library. We are looking for someone to work as an assistant. Your role would be to get familiar with our online activities and serve as a backup for the Digital Resources chair as needed.

If you are comfortable working in these areas, or would like to learn how to do it, please contact Kathy Dawal directly by text or email.



TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Please submit your nominations for our 2027 Teacher of the Year! We have many wonderful and deserving teachers in our organization. You will find all the information about the nomination process on our website. The deadline for submissions is December 31, 2026.

Our Teacher of the Year for 2026 was presented to Rebecca Bonam at our May meeting. If you missed it, you can find an article and pictures on our website.



CENTRAL FEDERATED FESTIVAL UPDATE

The Central Federated Festival will be held at the Lawrenceville First Baptist Church on March 20, 2027. Our next deadline is to submit our student rosters to the state. You will find instructions and the deadline in this newsletter.

This is a good time to check your students in Vivace. Add new students, archive ones you no longer teach. If you have just moved into the Central District, we will be setting you up with Central in Vivace, but you can be adding and archiving students in the meantime. The information will move with you into Central.

WEBSITE ADJUSTMENTS

This year we made extensive website changes to make our website easier to use. Now with every event, you will see all the deadlines placed together towards the top of the page, with additional information below. When you need a deadline, you will no longer need to scroll through the whole page, but can find it quickly.

Over the past few years, we have also tried to move all our forms online instead of having to mail or hand deliver registrations, etc., by our midnight deadlines. This has made it possible to edit your forms, entries, and lunch orders right up until the deadline.

Do you have questions about an event, a meeting, how to send payments? If you check the website first, you may find that all your questions and some you hadn't yet asked are answered without having to wait for a reply from your event chair person.

Make our website your first stop for all things GCMTA!

NOTES FROM YOUR AREA FEDERATED CHAIR

Thank you to everyone who turned in your Sr. Club dues on time so that our treasurer could take care of payment and registration for all three of our districts.

Important Changes:

1. Our GCMTA Executive Board voted to increase the Student Registration fees to \$30/student for the first event, and \$15/student for a second event. This is because venue rental costs went up significantly this year, and because our State and National organizations are also raising their per student fees.
2. The GCMTA deadline for new teachers to join a Sr. Club/District (Central, North, West) is November 30th, 2026, for the upcoming Festival season. Processing the memberships, dues, and getting access to the bulletin all require time. We will not deny any teacher membership or access to a Festival, but additional fees may be required and access to a Bulletin may be affected.

Updates from our **National Federation of Music Clubs (NFMCC)**:

- The online Bulletin has been updated to include more of the rules and information you need to register students for festival events. You can find the online bulletin by logging in to your Vivace account.
- **PLEASE double check your student records in Vivace** now for accuracy. Teachers are responsible for names being spelled correctly and birthdates being correct. The following information is in the Teacher's checklist from National:
 - **Archive** all students who are no longer studying with you. (This should only be done once a year at the end of the Festival year. Please make sure it is done after July 1st and prior to the beginning of the school year so that transferring students can be added to the new teacher's studio list.)
 - **Review** each student record and make sure that the "Name for Official Documents" is completed if the student does not wish to use the First, Middle, and Last Name in the student information tab. Example: Will Baggaley instead of William Therian Baggaley
 - Make sure you have accurate information for each of your new students. Verify this with the parent: Date of Birth and Full Name. Ask if the student has a different name that should be listed in "Name for Official Documents."
- Going forward, any changes to Birthdates will require a **copy of a Birth Certificate** or other proof of birth document sent to National. They will not allow changes anymore without that documentation. **So, Please Be Accurate when you enter student information into Vivace the first time.**
- **Student Certificates and Vivace Comment & Rating Sheets**
 - Student Certificates (Participation, Superior, etc) should be kept by parents/students as proof of participation in a Festival. These, along with comment and rating sheets should be kept by parents as proof of participation, proof of ratings, and proof of districts and levels in case of student transfers. Please stress the importance of keeping these documents with your studio families.
 - All **Comment & Rating Sheets are to be printed from Vivace**, not filled in by hand from blank sheets. From NFMCC: "Note: The rating sheet is to be printed from Vivace because it contains all verified information. A rating sheet with information added by hand is NOT official although we know that sometimes this has to be done on the day of Festival."

Updates from our **Georgia Federation of Music Clubs (GFMC)**:

- They are anticipating a \$1/student increase in fees for next year
- All questions regarding Festivals should go to your chairperson(s) first. Please do not email board members directly with your questions. If your chair person does not know the answer to a question, they will forward your question to the appropriate person at the state.

NOTES FROM YOUR AREA FEDERATED CHAIR (CON.)

Jr. Club Rosters and Payment are Due October 15th

Now it is time to compile our Student Rosters and submit our Jr. Club Registration form and fees online.

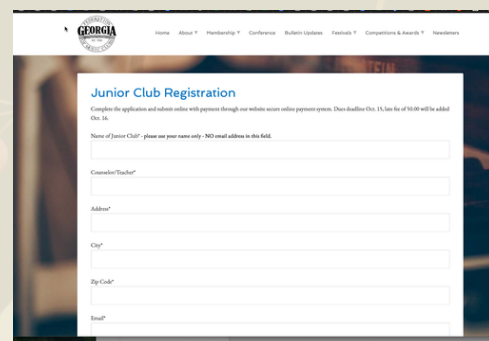
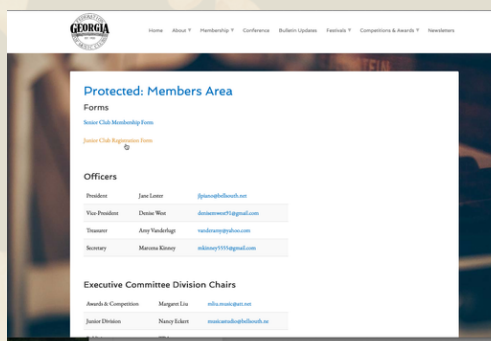
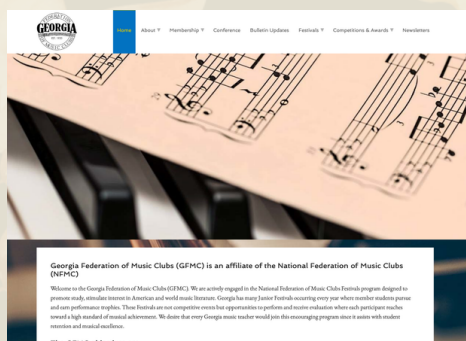
All Jr. Club Registrations are due no later than October 15th, 2026. Registrations received late are automatically assessed a \$50 late fee.

Please follow the steps below to register your Jr. Club for your District (West, Central, or North Gwinnett). I have also created a brief video tutorial for you if you prefer to see the steps in video form. (It is 7 mins) <https://vimeo.com/1114384039/6fed74f247?share=copy>

2. Select 'Membership' and drop down and click on 'Membership Area' (the password is georgiapeach). This is the screen you should see.

3. Select the link for 'Jr Club Registration Form.' This is the form that should be on your screen.

1. Go to <https://georgianfmc.org>



4. Complete the online form

- o the name of the Junior Club is your studio name or your name (whatever you have used in past years)
- o enter your name for Counselor/Teacher
- o enter West, Central, or North Gwinnett for your GFMC Senior club
- o enter West, Central, or North Gwinnett for the Festival in which your Jr. Club members participate
- o enter one student name at a time (alphabetically) and click Add New to continue entering student names for all students who will be participating from your studio
- o your total fee will be automatically calculated, so click on 'Proceed to Payment Screen' to make a secure Credit Card payment for your Jr. Club Registration

5. You will receive a confirmation email from GFMC with your payment and roster listed. You are to forward this to your festival chair. No handwritten or typed rosters to your chairman are acceptable.

6. **You must FORWARD both your payment receipt email and your Jr. Club Roster email to your festival chair.**

That's it! Your Jr. Club will be registered. **Remember that the deadline to register your Jr. Club student rosters and payment online is October 15th, 2025.**

If you need more information or instructions, please visit <https://gcmta.org/home/index/student-activities/federated-festival/nfmc-membership>

Thank you for participating in NFMC Festivals!

MUSIC DAY

We are excited to announce our upcoming **Music Day**. This event gives students an opportunity to perform, gain valuable audition experience, and demonstrate the skills they have developed through their music studies.

☀ Who Can Participate?

- Open to **all students through 12th grade**
- **Students must be currently studying with a GCMTA member**
- **All instruments and voice** are welcome
- Students may participate **in person or virtually through video submission**

📌 Information and Registration (Both In-person & Virtual)

Please review Rules, Procedures, & Guidelines before registering.

Please take note of the following updates for this year's festival:

- **Date:** Saturday, November 14th, 2026
- **Location:** First Baptist Church of Duluth
- **Registration Period:** From September 1st to October 16th, 2026
- **New Entry Fee per student: \$30 per event and \$20 for any additional event.** Zelle payment or send check postmarked no later than October 21st, 2026

🎭 Virtual Performance

For all teachers with students participating in the Music Day Virtual event, please check the October newsletter for specific directions for how to record performances, name the files, and upload them to our Dropbox library.

- **A filled-in rating sheet and printed copy of music submission deadline:** November 7th, 2026
- **Video submission deadline:** November 10th, 2026

🏆 Awards and Recognition

Outstanding performers will be recognized and awarded based on their performance and adjudicators' evaluations. We encourage students to prepare carefully and perform to the best of their ability.

⚠ Important Highlights

- An **email receipt** will be sent after registration is completed. **Please keep your receipt.** It contains an **edit link** that allows you to make any changes to your registration **until the registration deadline on October 16th, 2026.**
- **No requests for schedule changes after the schedule is mailed out. However, students are allowed to change from In-person to Virtual performance (not vice versa) until November 10th, 2026 (last Tuesday before Music Day).** Contact Kathy Dawal to arrange: kdawal181@gmail.com

Additional details and all forms (Registration Form, Lunch Order Form, a parent letter, rating sheet, and video submission instructions) will be found on the GCMTA website.

We look forward to your participation and to making this year's Music Day a meaningful and rewarding experience for all of our students. Thank you to our teachers for your continued support, dedication, and commitment to music education!

Serene Lee, Music Day Chair

GCMTA THEORY EXAMS

GCMTA Theory Exam Information

Exam Fee: \$15.00 per student

Exam Administrator: Rie Hosoi, 678-596-0401, riehosoi@yahoo.com

Registration Deadline: October 1, 2026

*Registration for the **GCMTA Theory Test** is only available **online** at GCMTA's website: <http://georgiamta.org/>

*Students may take the same exam or the next level. Sample exams can be found on the GCMTA website.

Georgia Auditions Theory Examination: GATE

Passing the GATE exam, or exemption from it, is required in order for students with an OP rating to move on to Regional or State Auditions. This exam is given in conjunction with GCMTA Local Auditions. Click here for [date and location information](#).

THE ONLY OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENTS TO TAKE THE GATE IS AT LOCAL AUDITIONS.

Exam Fee: \$15.00 per student

Exam Administrator: Rie Hosoi, 678-596-0401, riehosoi@yahoo.com

Registration Deadline: January 15, 2027

Registration for the **GATE** is only available **online** at the [GCMTA website](#).



- All teachers who enter students in the Music Day are expected to **work on the day of the event**. If a participating teacher is unable to work on the event day for a valid reason, an exemption contribution will apply: **Half day \$50 & Full day \$100**. Teachers requesting an exemption must **notify Music Day Chair, Serene Lee (naeb22@att.net) and send payment by Zelle or a check to the GCMTA treasurer, Nancy Morris, no later than October 23rd, 2026.**

MTNA FOUNDATION AND GMTA AWARDS

What are **MTNA Foundation** and **GMTA AWARDS**? These two entities play a significant role in our organization as they serve to honor, reward, and award the talents and hard work of musicians, young and old alike. Additional information about MTNA Foundation can be found at

<https://www.mtnafoundation.org/> and GMTA Awards at <https://georgiamta.org/grants.php>

The MTNA Foundation funds programs that nurture the creation, performance, study, and teaching of music. GCMTA's budget designates \$75 yearly towards this cause. GMTA, our state organization, raises funds at the state conference through the sale of raffle tickets, and one lucky member will win a hydraulic piano bench donated by PianoWorks!

Of particular note is the **MTNA Foundation Fellow** which honors members who have made significant contributions to the music world and the music teaching profession. This program supports the efforts of MTNA through donations to the MTNA FOUNDATION FUND in an individual's name. Our very own Susan Andrews received this honor in 2011, and GMTA has honored many in our state with this designation.

Click here to understand the many facets of MTNA Foundation!

https://www.mtna.org/MTNA/Engage/Awards/MTNA/Engage/MTNA_Awards/Awards.aspx?hkey=18b9de87-99ab-40d2-813e-0183394475ff

GMTA Awards, similar to MTNA Foundation but at the state level, encourages the creativity, performance, study, and teaching of music. GCMTA contributes \$75 annually towards this fund. GMTA raises funds at the state conference through the sale of raffle tickets, and winners choose from a variety of great donations from local associations across the state.

Of particular interest to teachers are the **GMTA Grants**. Four \$400 grants are given annually to active GMTA members and collegiate members. Funds may be used for student instruction or professional development. The deadline to apply is **Monday, September 14**. <https://georgiamta.org/grants-active.php>

Other GMTA Awards are **The Betty Nolting Award in Composition**, **The Joan Broadhurst Award in Piano**, and **The GMTA General Award Fund**. Click here to learn more about each of these:

<https://georgiamta.org/grants.php>

GCMTA Donation for GMTA Awards Raffle

We are collecting items to go in the GCMTA basket which will be donated to the GMTA Awards Raffle on Saturday, November 7 at the state conference held this year in Valdosta. We plan to have two baskets. One will include childrens' books about music and musicians which a teacher can have accessible for children to read. The second will have a gardening theme and include such items as gloves, a trowel, and even garden-themed music. **If you have something you would like to donate, please bring it to our September and October meetings.** Be sure to register for the conference and buy some raffle tickets so you have a chance to win! <https://georgiamta.org/conference.php>