AFMC August Newsletter 2022

AFMC Conference

Saturday, September 10, 2022
Second Presbyterian Church – Room 62
600 Pleasant Valley Drive, Little Rock, AR  72227
10:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

It’s been too long!

Yes, we have had zoom meetings, two zoom conferences, a zoom convention, and even a zoom Jr. Honors Recital. I am grateful for these technological advances....but I am zoomed out!!  September 10th is our first in-person AFMC Conference in three years. It is exciting and important to get to be together and I hope you are making plans to come! We will have a business session and training events for club officers, chairs, festival teachers, and news about NFMC. Dr. Chris Thompson will lead a memorial service and we will be inspired by hearing two of our young award winners, S. Riley Brule, the first winner of the Gloria F. Grilk Arkansas Young Woman Composer, and Brandon Foley, the Yick Scholarship Award Winner for 2022.

There will also be a Silent Auction (please bring a nice item) and some moments sprinkled throughout the day for fun, sharing, and reflection about our purpose and work in AFMC. I want to urge all members, club presidents & officers, AFMC Chairs and festival teachers to attend. It’s been too long! If you have not received an official call for the conference, copy the registration form on the back of the newsletter, print it out, fill it in and send to me.

Updates soon on our AFMC website:  http://arkansasfmc.org
55th ANNUAL YOUNG ARTIST TOUR
Shaina Martinez, Soprano
Mary Scott Smith, Piano

Schedule of concerts and contact information

Thursday, September 8, 2022, 7:00 P.M. Fine Arts Center, University of Arkansas at Monticello, 346 University Drive, Monticello, Arkansas, 71656, (870) 460-1060, Frank Ferguson, frankferguson1951@gmail.com

Friday, September 9, 2022, 11:00 A.M. Trinity United Methodist Church, 1101 North Mississippi Street, Little Rock, 72207, (501) 666-2813 Little Rock Musical Coterie, Suzanne Babbie, suzebabbie@suddenlink.net

Sunday, September 11, 2022, 2:00 P.M. Central United Methodist Church, 2535 W New Hope Road, Rogers, AR 72758 Bella Vista Andante Music Club. Betty Pierce, President; (479) 621-3414 bettylpierce@outlook.com The concert is sponsored by Dr. Stephen and Mrs. Susan Shambarger Goss in memory of Susan's mother, Mary Shambarger.

Monday, September 12, 2022, 7:30 P.M. Mabee Fine Arts Center, Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, Arkansas, 71998, (870) 245-5129 Dr. Ryan Lewis, Chair; lewisr@obu.edu

Tuesday, September 13, 2022, 7:00 P.M. Stilwell Humanities Music Hall, Texarkana College, 2500 North Robinson Road, Texarkana, Texas, 75599, (870) 773-1118. Shelly Brown, President; AR-TX Connections Music Club. (903) 824-0501; shelly@arkansasfmc.org

All concerts are open to the public free of charge.
George Keck, phone (870) 403-2951
George Keck, Young Artist Presentation Chair
Shaina Martinez, has been hailed by the Washington Post for her “piercing, muscular soprano” and recognized by Opera News for having "an attractive soprano".

She has performed Giannetta and covered Adina (L’Elisir d’Amore) with Opera Maine; Countess (Le Nozze di Figaro) with SAS Performing Arts Co.; Violetta (La Traviata), Susannah (Susannah) and Donna Anna (Don Giovanni) with Lighthouse Opera Company; the title role in Viardot’s Cendrillon with City Lyric Opera; Violetta (La Traviata) with MassOpera, Cio Cio San and Kate Pinkerton (Madama Butterfly) with Florida Grand Opera; Fiordiligi (Cosi fan tutte) and Saffi (Der Zigeunerbaron) with Manhattan School of Music; Salud (La Vida Breve) with The In Series, and Zweite Dame (Die Zauberflöte) with the Siena Music Festival.

As an active competitor she has received 1st place from the 2022 Lyra New York International Art Song Competition, 2022 Dorothy Lincoln-Smith Voice Award (DC Chapter), 2022 SAS Performing Arts Vocal Competition, 2021 National Federation of Music Clubs Young Artist Competition, 2019 Eisenberg-Fried Concerto Competition, 2019 Russell C. Wonderlic Competition, and 2019 Talents of the World International Competition; 2nd place from the 2022 Southern Illinois Young Artist Competition, 2019 Opera NEO Voice Competition and MIOpera Vocal Competition; 3rd place from the Washington International Competition, the XXI Concurso Internacional de Canto Lirico, and Alan M. & Joan Taub Ades Competition; and was a finalist in the 2022 Loren L. Zachary Society Vocal Competition, 2022 Vero Beach Opera Rising Stars Competition. She was a semifinalist in the 2021 Met Council Auditions and 2022 Elizabeth Connell Prize. She holds a Bachelor’s degree from University of Maryland and a Master’s degree from Manhattan School of Music.
Mary Scott Smith

Mary Scott Smith, pianist, is in frequent demand as both a soloist and an accompanist. She recently retired as a full-time Professor of Music at Texarkana College but remains on staff as the piano teacher and accompanist for the Texarkana Regional Chorale. At TC, she was the recipient of the 2009 Texarkana College Endowed Chair Award for Teaching Excellence and served a term as President of the Texarkana College Faculty Association.

She founded the TC Music Series and still performs often on campus concerts. Additionally, Mrs. Smith is a founder and principal keyboard player with the Texarkana Symphony Orchestra and has been a featured concerto soloist. She is a frequent Texas Two Year College All State Choir accompanist and has also accompanied the Rhode Island All State Choir, ACDA choirs and various All State and All Region choirs. Professional memberships include the Music Teachers National Association, through which she holds national certification, the AR-TX Music Connection and the Texarkana Music Teachers Association. She is also a member of the Sue Sanderson Garden Club.

Mrs. Smith attended The Eastman School of Music and Florida State University where she received a Masters degree in Piano Performance. She has been on the music faculty or staff at The University of Arkansas, The University of Rhode Island, The University of Tampa and Hillsborough Community College, Tampa. Mary Scott is married to Dr. C. Jack Smith and they attend Williams Memorial United Methodist Church.

We hope you will make plans to attend one of the concerts near you. Encourage your club to go as a group, take some of your students, or invite music-loving friends to join you! Arkansas is the only state in the NFMC that has an actual tour of the Young Artists each year. The talent is always impressive and hearing these young artists gives us an insight into the important work of NFMC.
S. Riley Brule

Announced as the first winner of the Gloria Febro Grilk Arkansas Young Woman Composer Award

Riley Brule is a recent graduate of Henderson State University with a Bachelor of Music in Composition degree. Riley has been composing since high school, after several years of piano and voice lessons, as well as participating in extracurricular performances and marching band for all of her high school and middle school career.

Riley's mother, Robin Brule, is an alumnus of Henderson State University. After meeting Henderson's lovely music faculty, Riley decided to attend as a Piano Performance major. In the Spring of 2019, Henderson hired Mr. Don Colquitt, the band director of Fouke High School in Fouke, Arkansas. Mr. Colquitt regularly commuted to Henderson's campus to hold private lessons with the composition students.

Riley will be attending the premier Pacific Northwest Film Scoring Program in Seattle, where she will pursue a Master's in Music in Film Scoring.

The piece submitted by Riley is entitled “Ori and the Blind Forest”, written for a wind and brass quintet. A video of a performance of the piece by the Henderson Faculty quintet will be played at the AFMC September 10th Conference.

Riley was presented with the Arkansas Young Women Composer Award on August 2, 2022 by Gloria Febro Grilk and Kathie White at the home of Kathie in Hot Springs.
Junior Composer’s Corner

Linda Kennedy, Chair

Summer has flown by, and here we are at the start of a new school term – a time that always holds so much promise! As we set up our events and lesson plans, let’s not forget to include the creative area of composition. Our annual Junior Composer Contest will be coming up in January with a deadline of January 15 for online submission. The time to begin the process with your students (or a select one or two!) is now. Just as fine wine and cheese take time to become their best, so does a creative idea. It needs time to simmer and brew.

I hope some of the ideas I’ve shared with you this past year have been helpful. I want to share another today, one I got from William Gillock many years ago when I asked him where/how he came up with such special ideas for his pieces. He said he was often captivated by a little chord progression or melodic snippet of a piece to which he is listening and would work at writing a piece utilizing that idea. At that time he was composing a piece based on a chord progression deep in a Saint-Saens piece to which he had recently listened.

So, when I have a student who is not able to come up with an idea on his/her own, I often ask, “Is there a spot in any of your pieces that when you are playing it, you have that moment of thinking, ‘I LOVE this part’?” As musicians I’m sure we have all experienced those moments. For a student, that spot can be just the springboard needed to get the creative process going. I hope you’re trying some of my tips and would love to hear from you as to how your creative efforts are going. You can reach me by email (PianoLK@aol.com) or by text at 501-516-4963.

Creatively yours,

Linda Kennedy

AR Jr. Composers Chairperson
Attention Festival Chairpersons!

As you all know, we are required to be part of the Vivace online system in order to be able to participate in the 2023 Festival year. Anyone who has not onboarded with Vivace for their 2023 festival will not be Federated.

Three of the festivals in our state have onboarded with Vivace already - Andante, Hot Springs, and Jonesboro. Yay! This is a reminder to the rest of you to send in those applications! It can take 2-8 weeks once you have submitted your application until you have successfully onboarded with Vivace. You will need to complete this process BEFORE your teachers can register their students for the 2023 Festival. So, depending upon when your registration deadline normally is for your Festival, you probably need to submit your application SOON.

I have been given the current application form that I would be happy to forward to you upon request. Here is my email address- mandentp@gmail.com

Once you have submitted it, there will be tutorial videos you can watch and you will have an online meeting with the National Admin for Vivace. Once they have gotten you started I will be your onboarding coach, so you can email me with questions you have. Hope to hear from you soon!

Mandie Poemoceah
A Hot Week in Them Thar’ Hills...
or How I Found Opera and Learned to Love It

By Frank Ferguson, Parliamentarian of AFMC

I have long heard about Opera in the Ozarks through the Monticello Music Club. Our club contributes support to IPFAC and OIO and includes an OIO report each year during a club meeting. But, not being more than a casual opera fan, I never made a priority of attending a program or participating in Federation Days. Laura and I have always enjoyed Opera Workshops and Music Theater productions presented by the School of Music at the University of Arkansas at Monticello, touring musicals in Little Rock, and thrilled to the vocal gymnastics of the NFMC Young Artist vocalists who would sing amazing arias from the opera repertoire on the annual Young Artist tour. But Opera in The Ozarks was low on our “bucket list”. That changed after I started reading Opera in the Ozarks newsletters and realized that we might be missing out on one of the best kept secrets in Arkansas. We put it off no longer. We made plans to attend Federation Days this summer.

I must confess that our granddaughter, Swayzee, has had a drug problem since she was about three years old. Whenever there was a concert or musical production close by she would get “drug” to it by us! Since a trip to Federation Days would be a first for us I invited her to come along. Now 12-years old, she didn’t hesitate!

We decided it would be interesting and helpful to attend the Opera Talk at the Point for Sondheim’s “A Little Night Music” before the show. Even at 7 o’clock in the evening the heat was oppressive. We found a seat under the small shade cloth and despite the heat were not disappointed. We met two of the singers and got an artist’s insight into the characters and the production. We also learned that many of the singers have not ever had a chance to sing opera roles in their musical training. They come to IPFAC, and pay tuition to experience as many different aspects of opera production as they can. Singing roles, sets, costuming. And they get to perform with a truly professional orchestra. Those musicians, I learned, come from all over the country. Many come back year after year for the experience. Other than the heat, even Swayzee enjoyed it. We watered up and took our seats in the theater.
The orchestra was warming up. I could tell we were in for a treat. These guys and gals have some chops and can PLAY! The show was fantastic! The professional orchestra performed flawlessly! And those voices! Oh my! Breathtaking is the only way to describe their singing! “Send in the Clowns” brought tears to my eyes! I have never heard it sung better. Although more akin to musical theater there couldn’t have been a better show than “Night Music” to reintroduce us to opera.

Swayzee’s favorite show happened the next day. After our luncheon we were entertained with a wonderful production of Pinocchio. She insisted on having her picture taken with the “bad guys”. That evening we were thrilled to see Mozart’s Cosi fan tutte. A scene from this opera was Swayzee’s first introduction to opera several years ago at UAM. When Laura asked her after the performance what she liked best about the Mozart 5-year old Swayze responded, “I liked when they were having their conversation together!” Well, they had several of those in the full show. While the show ran past old folk’s bedtime, it was another thrilling and amazing production.

Despite the heat and the late hours, a first timers trip to Inspiration Point and Opera in The Ozarks will not be their last!

(Right) A Photo of Frank’s granddaughter, Swayzee, with some of the characters from her favorite opera, Pinnochio.
FEDERATION DAYS REPORT 2022
Judy Rownak, Arkansas OIO Trustee

Federation Days in Eureka Springs is one of my favorite times of the year. The only way it could be better is if YOU had been there! It was so good to see friends that I don’t get to see very often and celebrate the end of another successful season for Opera in the Ozarks. It is so exciting to think about our bright future.

This year the operas were Mozart’s Cosi fan tutte, A Little Night Music by Sondheim and Puccini’s La Rondine. We also saw Pinocchio, the children’s opera that traveled all over NWA for the enjoyment of hundreds of children and adults. All the music was so beautiful, and the singers, orchestra, and costumes just get better every year. I sure hope you can join us next year for Elixir of Love, Orpheus and the Underworld, and The Tender Land.

I serve on OIO’s Governing Board and am Arkansas’ representative and Chairman of the Trustees. We hold meetings during Federation Days and three other times during the year to discuss the business part of what makes the operas happen. As you might imagine, it takes a lot of people, plans, and money to be successful every year.

During Federation Days we have beautifully decorated luncheons and a banquet, great speakers, entertainment by the wonderful singers, a silent auction, and a very meaningful Memorial Service. Our South Central Region covers Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas and Missouri. During our time in Eureka Springs, we meet as individual states and in larger groups to share ideas on how our Music Clubs can be more successful. Won’t you think about joining us for all, or part, of Federation Days next year?

Opera in the Ozarks 2023 Season

The Elixir of Love by Donizetti
Orpheus in the Underworld by Offenbach
The Tender Land by Copland

Federation Days - July 19—21 2023
Betty Pierce (left) and Kathie White were presented with the **OIO Servant Leadership Award** on July 23rd at Federation Days. The two were nominated by Gloria F. Grilk for serving OIO and representing Arkansas through service. Betty is the President of the Andante Music Club in Bella Vista and Kathie is the AFMC state President.

Several AFMC members attended Federation Days and had a grand time. We are part of the 5 state membership of the South Central Region comprised of Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Missouri, and Arkansas. In the photo from left to right: Bill Stephens, Jimmie Stephens, Kathie White, Betty Pierce, Frank Ferguson, Judy Rownak, Dr. Alice Martin, (front left) Carolyn Walker, Mary Ellen White, Laura Ferguson, and Janet Parsch. Also attending was Gloria Grilk. We were the hosts this year and Betty, Carolyn, Jimmie, and Bill helped with registration. Thank you!!!

Hot Springs Music Club received a plaque for sponsoring a “Night of Opera” during Federation Days. The club gave $300 to OIO. Dr. Thomas Bolton is the President of the Club.
AFMC Conference Registration
September 10, 2022

Name _________________________________ E-mail:____________________
Address __________________________________________________________
City _______________________________ State____________Zip___________
Club _____________________________________________________________
Club office _______________________AFMC Chair _____________________

Luncheon Choice:  Boxed lunches delivered from Tazikis. Please choose one:

____Chicken salad sandwich: scratch made chicken salad with mixed lettuce & to-
tato on toasted wheat bread with a fruit cup, chips, & a cookie

____Mediterranean salad: mixed lettuce, garbanzo beans, red peppers, red onion,
tomatoes, roasted pecans, feta cheese, balsamic vinaigrette, pita bread chips, & a cookie

____Dietary Restrictions: Please list: _____________________________________

Silent Auction Fund-Raiser: All Board members are asked to contribute a mini-
mum of one item or pay $10.00. The silent auction items are not “yard sale” or gag gift
quality, but items that someone would be worth at least $10.

_____ Yes, I will bring an item for the fund-raiser.

_____I will donate $10 for the Silent Auction. $__________

Registration Fee: $5.00  $__________

Lunch Fee: $14.00  $__________

I wish to contribute to AFMC.  $__________

Total  $__________

Make checks payable to AFMC. Please send registration form and check to:

Kathie White
125 Larkspur Court
Hot Springs, AR 71901

Registration Deadline: Friday, September 2, 2022