

WKSA Summer Newsletter

July 28, 2007

Alternative Strings Summer Jam to Perform at Gallery Walk—August 24th!

Rock, Renaissance and Fiddling! Nearly every Friday morning this summer, 20+ WKSA students have been playing alternative styles music and instruments, and having a lot of fun! Come hear their final concert as a part of the Hays Arts Council Gallery Walk on **Friday, August 24th, 6:30-7:30pm** at the old Tumbleweed Crossing Quilt Store (1010 Main St.) All four classes will be performing, both acoustic and electrified music, for Gallery Walk participants. Many thanks to our class instructors and assistants (Shelly Wolf, Shawn Demuth, Jordan Bollig, Jay Miller, Leslie Watson) and Special Thanks to our summer program sponsors: Yamaha Strings, Shar Music, Midwest Music, Inc, and Midwest Energy Community Fund.

Renaissance Group Heads to KC RenFest

The Alternative Strings Renaissance Group are off to the Kansas City Renaissance Festival on Saturday, September 1st to entertain fair-goers as costumed troubadours! Keep an eye out for pictures of fun and frolic on the WKSA bulletin board this fall! Special thanks to Melanie Folkerts for costuming assistance!

Summer String Exploration Class fun for all

This summer WKSA offered a four-day course for K-3rd graders to experiment on string instruments. Each day, eleven students received a hands-on group lesson with a different kid-sized instrument (violin, viola, cello and bass). The students had a great time, and we hope to see some new faces in our fall pre-orchestra program! Special thanks to KC Strings who generously provided the instruments, to Mr. and Mrs. Wolf (Shelly's mom and dad) who transported the instruments from KC to Hays, and to John Davis (KC Strings Salina rep) who returned them to KC for us!

Cody Custer Receives Suzuki Training

This summer, WKSA sent staff member Cody Custer to a 10-day training on Suzuki philosophy and teaching methods (for Suzuki Book I) at the Ottawa Suzuki Institute. He's come back with lots of new ideas and enthusiasm which he'll be bringing to his new WKSA role as Director of the Pre-Orchestras. Feel free to ask him what he learned!

Pre-Orchestra Information Night—Thursday, August 30th

Do you know a family who might like to start their child on violin, viola, or cello? Encourage them to come to the WKSA Information Night on Thursday, August 30th, 7pm, in Malloy Hall. We'll be explaining the WKSA program and Pre-Orchestra class requirements, allowing children to try out different instruments, measuring them for proper instrument size, registering for the Fall Pre-Orchestra class, and answering parents' questions. Pre-Orchestra class is open to string students beginning as early as Kindergarten.

New this Fall!

MEET THE ORCHESTRA: A PRE-SCHOOL MUSIC EXPLORATION CLASS

Trumpets, violins, flutes, drums, and a funny guy waving his arms around...Come meet all the instruments and players of a symphony orchestra in this fun-filled musical exploration for pre-schoolers aged 4 and 5 years old. During this ten-week class, children will be introduced to basic music concepts such as pitch, tempo, dynamics, rhythm and tone-color as they learn about the brass, string, wind, and percussion families and their leader, the conductor. Age-appropriate discovery through games, singing and movement will be featured.

Saturday mornings, September 15th – December 1st, 2007, 10am-11am, FHSU Malloy Hall
Cost: \$60; Class size—5 min/12 max; A parent is expected to attend classes with their child.
Instructor: JoAnn Jordan. Contact Cathy for registration forms.

WKSA Director Assignments for this Fall

Advanced Orchestra—Matt Means
Intermediate Orchestra—Shawn Demuth, assisted by Jordan Bollig
Beginner Orchestra—Co-Directors Alex Heisler and Leslie Watson (Assistants TBA)
Pre-Orchestra I—Cody Custer, assisted by Cathy Drabkin
Pre-Orchestra II—Cody Custer (Assistant TBA)
Guitar Class I—Jason Kucerik, assisted by Albert Kraus
Guitar Class II—Jason Kucerik, assisted by Albert Kraus

Exploratory Hour Classes and Ensembles for the Fall

We're working hard pulling together another fun selection of classes and ensembles for this Fall's Exploratory Hour. Here's what we've lined up so far. Complete details will be in your fall enrollment packet, which will be mailed out in early August.

String Rock Band (string & guitar players!)*
Fiddling I and II
Percussion Ensemble
Jazz Improv Ensemble
Chamber Music Ensembles
Basic Drumming

Computer Composing
World Music
Basic Music Skills
Homegrown Instruments
Deserted Isle Playlist

***News Flash!** Yamaha Strings has just given permission for WKSA to continue borrowing their electric string quintet through our fall season...string rockers will be able to continue playing on these very cool instruments!

Program/Policy Changes for Pre-Orchestra this fall

We'll be trying out the following changes this fall—feel free to contact Cathy if you have any questions!

1. The Pre-Orchestra Class will be split into two groups this fall (Level I and Level II), according to students' current skill level. Students in Level I will focus on learning to hold their instrument and playing beginning songs—no previous experience is expected. Level I will progress at a slower rate than previous semesters, with a stronger focus on mastering the basics. Level II students should have mastered the basic instrument hold, and will focus on continuing technical development and note reading skills necessary for moving into the Beginner Orchestra.
2. For both levels, a parent is required to participate with their student in both the group class and the private lesson. This teacher-student-parent relationship will increase parents' ability to assist their child with home practice and their child's chances of success. Parents will be expected to be active class participants (as directed by the instructor), including learning to play the songs themselves on their child's instrument.
3. Private lessons for Pre-Orchestra I students will last 20 minutes. Private lessons for level II students will last 30 minutes.
4. Students of both levels will be strongly encouraged to purchase and listen to the Suzuki book music (available on tape or CDs) on a regular basis.

Advanced Orchestra to Include Winds/Brass this Year!

We're pleased to announce that the WKSA Advanced Orchestra is expanding to include wind and brass players this year. This fall, the ensemble will be playing the first movement of Mozart's Symphony No. 25 in g minor—a great piece of music (you'll recognize it from the *Amadeus* movie!) High school wind/brass players will be invited to audition for the group—if you know anyone who may be interested, have them give Cathy a call!

Individual Music Books for Guitar Students

Due to increasing costs of music purchases, WKSA will not be able to provide individual copies of music books for Guitar Class students. Students will be asked to purchase their own books, which will be used for both group classes and private lessons. (We expect to use the same series we've been using for the past few semesters).

First Day of WKSA—Saturday, September 15th

Mark your calendars for the start of the WKSA Fall season—Saturday, September 15th. Registration packets will be sent out during the first part of August, with a requested return date of September 4th. If you know of someone we should invite to join WKSA, give me a call and I'll send them a packet too! Please note: due to conflicts with a number of our student instructors and FHSU marching band rehearsals, the ensemble/class times this fall will run from 9:15am to 12:15pm. (We expect to revert to our normal 9am-12noon schedule in the spring).

First Day's Tentative Schedule:

8:30am Auditions (to be scheduled for new students or those wanting to be considered for next level orchestra)
10:00am Parent and student meeting, Malloy Hall, Room 115
10:30am All groups rehearse
11:30am Welcome Back Picnic (on the grassy area behind Malloy Hall)

Opening Day Picnic—Volunteers Needed

To kick off the fall WKSA season, we'd like to host a Welcome Back picnic for all students, their families, and staff. Volunteers are needed to help plan and organize this event. The picnic could be a combination of potluck, donated food, and purchased items (we have a small budget to help cover the main costs). If you can help organize things, please contact Cathy Drabkin (623-4187; cadrabkin@fhsu.edu)

Goodbye Lianne!

As many of you know, WKSA staff member Lianne Zwenger moved to Greeley, CO this summer with her husband Sam to start a new adventure of schooling and music. She leaves a big hole in the Hays music community, and will be greatly missed! We wish her well, and hope to hear news once she's settled into her new community.

Good Luck Shelly!

Congratulations and good luck to Shelly Wolf, longtime WKSA staff member, who has accepted a teaching position as Orchestra Director in Hutchison. Shelly will be teaching several 6th-8th grade orchestras, and assisting with the Hutchison High School orchestra. We know she'll do a fabulous job, and hope to see her in Hays once in a while!

Congratulations Ben Morris-Cline

Ben Morris-Cline was named the new chair of the FHSU Music Department this spring, replacing Matt Means who valiantly served as Acting Chair for two years in a row. While he won't continue directing ensembles in the Academy, Ben will be running the FHSU String Pedagogy class for WKSA student instructors. We're glad he's keeping a hand in WKSA activities, and wish him luck in his new position.

Fall Solo Contest Dates Set

We are again hosting the WKSA Solo Competition this fall, when students are encouraged to play a solo before our judge(s) for a chance to perform (the same piece) as a soloist with the Advanced Orchestra in the spring. Like last year, all students who participate in the first level of the competition will receive a prize, and will be entered into a drawing for a \$25 Hastings gift certificate. Four students, one each from the Beginner, the Intermediate, the Advanced orchestras and from the Guitar II class, will be selected to perform with the Advanced Orchestra in the spring.

November 3rd First Level of Competition—Solo may be played with or without music
February 16th Performance with Advanced Orchestra—Solo must be played by memory

Last year's winners may participate in the first level of the competition, but may not win a performance with the Advanced Orchestra two years in a row. All participating students must be WKSA members in good standing. All Solo winners must be able to commit to the date of the Advanced Orchestra performance in February! Registration forms will be given out in September. In the meantime, start thinking about (and practicing!) the solo you'd like to play!

Parents Coffee Concerts

Here's a new idea we're trying out this fall—once a month we'll run an informal recital where students of any level can play a piece that they're working on in front of fellow students and family. (Coffee and refreshments will be provided). Participation and attendance is voluntary. Students sign themselves up if they want to play on a particular month's recital. They can play all or just part of a piece that they're working on. They can play with, or without, an accompanist. (Even rank beginners are invited to participate—perhaps demonstrating a particular skill they've mastered). We hope that these casual events will: 1) give students a venue for sharing and taking pride in their accomplishments; 2) give students a way to "practice" performing in a non-stress situation; 3) increase students' comfort in playing before their peers; and 4) promote a spirit of encouragement and support among students of various levels.

WKSA Receives Another D'Addario Grant

We're pleased to announce that the D'Addario Foundation for the Performing Arts has awarded WKSA a \$2,500 grant for general support of our 2007-08 activities. This is the third year for WKSA to receive the award. In addition to the grant, D'Addario has given WKSA a \$1,000 credit to be used for D'Addario products! (D'Addario is the maker of fretted and bowed instrument strings and various musical instrument accessories.) The D'Addario grant represents one of several sources of outside income that WKSA will seek this year to support our Saturday morning programs.

WKSA and SAI Receive Grant for *String-a-Palooza!*

WKSA and the FHSU chapter of Sigma Alpha Iota received a \$1,250 grant from Sigma Alpha Iota Philanthropies, Inc. (a national music fraternity) to run *String-a-Palooza!*, an expansion of WKSA's annual String Fair. The event, scheduled for the morning of Saturday, November 10th in the FHSU Memorial Union, is designed as a music fair for families with young children. WKSA staff and SAI members will be working together to develop activities such as an instrument petting zoo, musical story hour, musical games and crafts, performances by WKSA ensembles, free group lessons, and demonstrations of various instruments (including a troubadour harp and viola da gamba). WKSA is delighted to be working with SAI to offer this fun-filled event to the Hays area community.

Parent Committees for Fall

WKSA staff is doing a lot, but we've discovered we can't do it all! We need your help with some of the non-teaching activities of WKSA. We'll be sending around a sign-up sheet in the fall, but if you know you have an interest in any of the following, please let me know now!

Snack Shack Coordinator—Purchase snack items for the WKSA Snack Shack, sign-up parent workers, restock supplies as necessary.

Socials Committee—Help plan and organize various WKSA socials, including picnics, holiday parties,

Program Ads Sales Coordinator—Help coordinate ad sales for our Winter/Spring Concert programs

Spring Tour Committee—Help plan the big tour...concert options, recreation/entertainment activities, lodging and food options, etc.

WKSA Office!

Starting this fall, WKSA will have an official office upstairs in Malloy Hall. I'll be setting office hours and passing out new contact info once school begins. In the meantime, feel free to contact me the usual ways!

Hope everyone is finding a way to stay cool for the rest of the summer! Please let me know if you have any questions/concerns about any of the above. We're looking forward to a great season!

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**Watch your mailbox in early
August for Fall WKSA
Enrollment Forms!**
Please return at your earliest
convenience!