



Sharps & Flats



An Official Publication of the Florida Federation of Music Clubs

Theme: "Music Gives Wings to the Intellect and Flight to the Imagination"

Song: "There's Room for Everyone in This World"

Message from FFMC President, Lisa Smith:



Well, Spring has definitely sprung! The year started off with the FFMC Collegiate Vocal Competition held at the First United Methodist Church in beautiful historic downtown Gainesville on January 30, 2026. We had eleven entrants (although sadly, we lost one competitor to sickness) this year. Five women and five men competed hailing from FSU, Stetson, UF, and Santa Fe College and one from as far as New York University! Many thanks to the team that helped make this event possible this year: Connie Lill, Cheryl Poe, Lisa Moore, Suzanne Carpenter, Linda Blessing as well as the Suwannee District Junior Board officers and much appreciation to

the numerous sponsors/senior clubs that have contributed and continue to contribute financially to support these talented vocalists.

February is the month of our Federation Festivals held all over the state. Historically, Florida has had the most Festival adjudications in the nation, with only Utah coming close to our numbers. We are a strong state in the National Federation of Music Clubs and we continue to see exponential growth. One of the primary reasons Florida has continued to flourish in this area is the FFMC State Junior Convention competition which will be held in Tampa, May 8-9, 2026. Festival teachers if you have not attended this event with your students, please consider taking that leap, you won't regret it! Unfortunately, the deadline for participation has already passed as of this newsletter as it has always been March 10th but please consider this for next year – it is highly motivational for everyone who attends. Florida has many talented musicians and teachers and this event showcases that!

Mark your calendars now for the 106th FFMC Spring Convention in picturesque Niceville, FL June 18 -20. Sharleen Williams and her team in the Choctaw Bay Club and Capital District are working diligently to ensure we have a magical experience on the Emerald Coast. The event will be held at the Best Western Niceville – Eglin AFB located not far from Destin, FL. For further details, please see the official call in this publication. This particular convention is also referred to as our "Senior Convention." The district presidents, national board members, member of the year, and Florida Fellows will be honored during the convention. Each senior club should send its club president and

treasurer as well as any club members who are curious as to what goes on administratively at the state level. All members are invited and encouraged to attend this event as all meetings are completely open to the public. The Junior Division meeting at 8:30am Friday morning is the meeting where all things Juniors are discussed and voted on. If you are a teacher member, this meeting is most likely the meeting you will want to prioritize so you can hear what concerns, new rules, etc. will be addressed. Seriously consider attending this convention as it is always fun and informative and you get the opportunity to once again mingle with your highly fascinating musical colleagues! Hope to see many of you there.

Lisa Smith, FFMC President 2025-2027

Junior News

FFMC State Junior Ambassadors

Attention all FFMC Junior members! FFMC is looking for enthusiastic candidates to become FFMC State Junior Ambassadors this upcoming year 2026-2027. Teachers, please let your Juniors who qualify for this know about this occasion to help out the state organization. Junior membership is required and your responsibilities will include assisting the Junior Convention Committee the weekend of FFMC State Junior Convention. Examples of possible duties include greeting visitors and students, assist at the information desk, and provide support in distributing trophies and ribbons at award ceremonies. All outgoing ambassadors will be required to be present at the meeting for incoming officers. This opportunity is open to students in grades 8 – 11. You can receive community service hours for volunteering at this event. For more information and the application form go to this link:

https://www.ffmc-music.org/files/ugd/86815e_eb3728694f1d498e8f5ed446ff9758ed.pdf

Juniors, bring your completed form to the info desk at the FFMC State Junior Convention in Tampa, May 8 – 9, 2026. We are fortunate this year to have Harmony Senior Music Club President/St. Johns District Junior Board Chair, Ludi Mocke, as well as members of the St. Johns District Junior Board providing support, planning, organizing and helping with scheduling our FFMC State Junior Ambassadors. Many thanks!

FFMC Junior Convention

All things **Junior Convention** from Emi Stefanov, Jennifer Guzman and Esther Umansky-Roth:

The **FFMC Summer Music Camp Scholarship Award** is available to junior members currently in grades 9, 10 and 11 who plan to attend a Florida summer music camp. Interested applicants should be prepared to submit an essay and can find the application along with instructions on the [FFMC website](#) under the Junior Convention tab. Submit the application form and essay by **4pm on Saturday, May 9** of the FFMC State Junior Convention to the information desk.

The **FFMC Junior Convention** is fast approaching! Please remind students they will need to sign in upon arrival, wear concert attire, and have original scores (no photocopies!). Any digitally downloaded scores **MUST** include a printed proof of purchase receipt (the confirmation email which shows repertoire title and date purchased). iPad and other electronic devices with downloaded scores are not permitted for use without written prior consent from FFMC Junior Division Chair (Esther Umansky-Roth).

Periodically check the [website](#) and/or information desk for Irene Muir nominations.

Piano Concerto II-A, II-B, III-A, III-B, Senior and Violin Concerto III & Senior have final rounds! Once your audition is complete, be sure to check whether you've advanced as a finalist.

Teachers, please be sure to read the [Junior Procedures Manual](#) (available on FFMC's website under the About Us tab) for memorization requirements and all rules and regulations! You are responsible for making sure your students know when to arrive, how to sign-up and check in for their events, and that they are fully prepared with the correct materials and are ready to participate with confidence and professionalism.

There are no practice rooms available!

FFMC 106th Spring Convention



OFFICIAL CALL
FFMC 106th Spring Convention
June 18 - 20, 2026 – Niceville, Florida
Local Hosts: Capital District and Choctaw Bay Senior Club

NFMC dignitary Linda Maurhoff, NFMC Northeast Region Vice President, will be joining us this year.

Convention Theme: “Celebrations: USA 250 years, NFMC 128 years, and FFMC 113 years”.

An official name badge is necessary for attendance of all FFMC convention functions.

REGISTRATION FEES

- Member Registration: \$50
- Non-Member (Guest): \$15
- Student and Junior Member: FREE

ON-SITE REGISTRATION HOURS:

Thursday, June 18th, 2pm- 5pm
Friday, June 19th, 8am – 3pm
Saturday, June 20th, 8am – 10am

HOTEL LOCATION: Best Western Niceville – Eglin AFB, 106 Bayshore Dr., Niceville, FL 32578

Room Reservation: CALL THE HOTEL DIRECTLY 850-399-3460 or use this registration link: https://www.bestwestern.com/en_US/book/hotel-rooms.10416.html?groupId=8V4YK4G6. Indicate group rate \$169/night.

Group rate will be honored for guests who wish to arrive Wednesday, June 17th and/or stay through Monday, June 22.

Complimentary Breakfast for all registered guests during your stay.

Cutoff Date for group rate: May 28, 2026

HOTEL AMENITIES: Free parking, Internet, fitness center, outdoor pool, electric car charging

HOTEL RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE: The hotel does not have a restaurant or lounge but there is a Ruby Tuesdays next door.

FFMC 2026 Junior Composers Contest Winners

Our Junior Composition event had total of 17 entries.

The state winners listed below were forwarded to the Southeastern Region.

Congratulations to these talented students and their teachers!

Junior I (ages 9 and under)		
<i>Student Name</i>	<i>Composition Title</i>	<i>Teacher Name</i>
1 st David Adeleye	Rage	Katherine Hintz
2 nd Ryan Li	Haunted	Ruby Lee
Junior II (ages 10-12)		
1 st Sead Laganin	Running in the Dark	Katherine Hintz
2 nd Abigail Adeleye	Enchanted Forest	Katherine Hintz
Junior III (ages 13-15)		
1 st Titus Tedder	Ballade in E Flat Major	Vickie Stake
2 nd Abigail Huang	Nocturne in C Minor	Scott Cohen
Junior IV (ages 16-18)		
1 st Rishi Iyer	Piano Concerto #1	Kay Lang
2 Anshita Sahu	Tantsevat (Russian Dance)	Katherine Hintz

Submitted by Lisa Moore, FFMC Junior Composers Contest Chair

Angie Greer Music in Poetry Award Winner

Lucy O'Leslie is the winner of the Southeastern Region Angie Greer Music in Poetry. Her teacher is Amy Duncan.

She read her poem at the NFMC Founders Day Celebration.

Her poem "Pitch and Rhythm" was featured in *Junior Keynotes*, Winter 2026 edition.

FFMC 2026 Voice Competition Winners

Female

1st Place \$2,000
Nicole Van Esselstyn
2nd Place \$1,500
Elisabeth Lundstrom
3rd Place \$500
Ava Moorea Neary

Male

1st Place \$2,000
Hank Evans
2nd Place \$1,500
Safin Karim
3rd Place \$500
Jackson Roberts



Lisa Smith, FFMC Voice Competition Chair

FFMC 2026 Essay Contest Winners

7th - 8th Grade		
Award	Student Name	Teacher Name
1 st Place (\$150)	Skylar Choi (Orlando)	Enoch Wong
9th – 12th Grade		
1 st Place (\$150)	Titus Phillips (Winter Garden)	Amy Duncan
2 nd Place (\$100)	Hadassah Cowart (Pensacola)	Ed Varela

The theme for the 2026 FFMC Essay Contest was “Music is ...Our Constant Companion”. We had only 4 juniors submit essays for the FFMC Essay Contest this year, representing four teachers from across our state. I would like to thank all teachers and students who participated in the essay contest this year and encourage all our teachers to consider engaging your students in the Essay Contest next year.

Submitted by Amy Duncan, FFMC Essay Contest Chair

FFMC Classical Ballet Awards

THE DR. ISABELLA LAUDE DANCE PLAQUE AWARD

The Dr. Isabella Laude Dance Plaque is awarded biennially at the state convention to the senior club doing the most to promote dance.

Schedule a dance program for your senior club now and become eligible TO WIN this plaque
PLUS \$100 CASH!

So please include dance in your club programs!
(Next award given in **2027.**)

Eligible programs include international, classical, folk, or modern dance programs; awarding prizes or scholarships to dance students, having dance exercises, book reviews or other types of programs promoting dance.

DEADLINE: APRIL 15, 2027

Send report of your dance program to **FFMC Dance Chairman, Dr. Monica Laude, before April 15, 2027:**

to address on FFMC website:
<https://www.ffmc-music.org/classical-ballet-award>
or via email:
mlaudelaw@gmail.com



2027 FFMC FRANCES RANDS BEERY BALLET AWARDS

LIVE AUDITIONS

**Saturday, April 17, 2027 10:00 am
Lakeland, Florida**

Male and female ballet students between the ages of 12 and 18 are invited to apply for the 2027 FFMC Frances Rands Beery Ballet auditions.

Awards available: First \$750, Second \$250, Honorable Mention \$25

Students must perform two dances including one *en pointe* combination from classical ballet performed in leotard and one variation in costume (contemporary or original), plus demonstration of basic techniques.

Winners also receive a plaque and a sketch of the career of Frances Rands Beery, an international premier ballerina, who was a member of the Lake Wales Music Club and Dance Chairman of the Florida Federation of Music Clubs. The awards were endowed in her memory by Lake Wales Arts Council.

Entry fee and completed application must be sent to the chairman, Dr. Monica Laude,
postmarked no later than March 1, 2027.

Address can be found on form on FFMC website:

<https://www.ffmc-music.org/classical-ballet-award>

Contact Dr. Monica Laude for more information at (863) 455-9941 or send email:

mlaudelaw@gmail.com



Auditions will be held at the
Highland School of Dance
6929 Old Highway 37
Lakeland, FL 33811



NFMC Dance Awards – Spread the News!

Let your junior members know: NFMC offers recognition for dance performance.

Two age divisions: Junior I: 11 to 14 years old and Junior II: 15 to 18 years old
Download [JR 17-1-1](#) for additional information here. Entry fee: \$10.

First and Second Place awards for Ballet and Dance Styles – apply by **May 1**.
Dance Styles: Jazz, Tap, Contemporary, Modern, Hip Hop, and Ballroom.

To enter, the student submits two performances: Ballet & one Dance Style or two Dance Styles.
Upload also the Repertoire list with names of the dances, the composers, and durations.

Name of Dance, Composer, # of Minutes

- 1.
- 2.

* * * Attention: Senior Clubs: Let's All Promote Dance! * * *

Did you know, clubs that support dance and especially any that help find dance students to audition for the NFMC Dance Awards, will be recognized with a special NFMC Certificate? Download Form [JR 17-4-2](#).

Be sure to submit by **May 1** deadline.

Submitted by Lisa Moore, NFMC Dance Awards Chair

NFMC Sacred Music Program

The Orlando Music Club received a Honorable Mention and a \$100 award in the 2025 National Federation of Music Clubs (NFMC) Sacred Music Program for its presentation “Reverent Reflections.” According to the NFMC Arts Division Sacred Music report (May 2025), Sacred Music reports were received from nine states representing twenty-seven clubs nationwide, recognizing outstanding efforts in promoting and preserving Sacred Music.

Also recognized were NFMC members who have served as church musicians for more than 50 years. A total of 46 members from reporting states were honored. Congratulations and thank you to the following members from Florida (10): Trudy Ann Hom, Kathryn Rogers, Jerry H. Rodgers, Lisa Moore, Kim Michel, Theresa McRee, Vickie Stake, Susan Reed, Joan Cordell, and Myrtle Edwards.

Clubs belonging to the Florida Federation of Music Clubs (FFMC) are encouraged to apply for the NFMC Sacred Music Award. The application form may be downloaded here:

<https://www.nfmc-music.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/AR-11-1.pdf>

Important: Club Presidents who wish to apply must email the completed application form to FFMC Sacred Music Chair **Shuyi Yang** (classicalpiano2019@gmail.com) no later than **April 1**. Clubs submitting applications may also include **photos of their Sacred Music events**.

Submitted by Shuyi Yang, FFMC Sacred Music Chair



FFMC Outreach Project

Growing Skills, Ensemble Learning, and Big Milestones Ahead

The Caring and Sharing Clarinet Crew continues to thrive this season thanks to the generous support of the Foundation for the Promotion of Music (FPM) and the Florida Federation of Music Clubs (FFMC). Their support has made it possible not only to launch the afterschool clarinet program, but also to ensure its continuation through the spring semester. We are deeply grateful for all the support that sustains this growing program.

Based at Caring and Sharing Learning school in Gainesville, Florida, the Clarinet Crew has continued to grow as instruction has been thoughtfully restructured to strengthen both individual musicianship and ensemble skills. The Clarinet Crew now meets one day each week as a full group, focusing on listening across the ensemble, learning independent parts, and developing the skills needed to play together as a cohesive unit. A second weekly session is dedicated to small-group instruction, where students receive more focused support on technique, tone production, music reading, and foundational skills.

This balance has accelerated both confidence and progress. Students recently enjoyed performing for friends and family at the school's Winter Spectacular holiday performance, marking an exciting milestone in their musical journey. Sharing their music in a live performance setting reinforced teamwork, focus, and pride in their accomplishments.

Looking ahead, the Clarinet Crew has begun preparing for the Spring Spectacular, working toward an ensemble set of three songs that will showcase their growth—from early music book pieces to more familiar and popular repertoire. The spring performance will also highlight their developing ability to play in three independent parts, demonstrating both technical advancement and ensemble awareness.

Adding to this exciting year, several Clarinet Crew members have been invited to participate in the Young Annasemble Orchestra, an ensemble of approximately 20 student musicians. The season will culminate in a combined performance with the main Annasemble Orchestra (approximately 50 members) in May at the University of Florida Auditorium, honoring the founding director and co-director for their 28 years of service and dedication to youth music in the community.

From first notes to full ensemble collaboration, the Caring and Sharing Clarinet Crew is growing as confident young musicians—made possible through FPM's continued support and belief in music education.

Submitted by Clarinet Instructor: Kemberly L. Moody

ST JOHNS DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS



JR BOARD INAUGURATION



PHOTO BOOTH MEMORIES FROM FESTIVAL



The St. Johns District Festival processed 1,225 festival entries during the month of February—a milestone that would not have been possible without the generous support of our host churches in Palm Coast and Jacksonville.

We extend special thanks to Deermeadows Baptist Church, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Riverside Presbyterian Church, and Hodges Blvd Presbyterian Church for opening their facilities and supporting this important event.

Our sincere appreciation also goes to the many teachers who faithfully fulfilled their monitoring duties, the judges who care deeply about the future of music education, and our dedicated board and junior board members. Their collective commitment and service made this year's festival a great success.

FFMC Donations Welcome!

DONATIONS WELCOME! Your contribution keeps music alive!
From scholarships, to competitions, to performances - you will directly impact the performing arts!

Link: <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/donation-form/donate-to-ffmc>

Thank you for your contributions!

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District and Senior Clubs Presidents – We would love to hear about your activities and programs. Send in your club news for the next issue of Sharps and Flats to Wanda Louie, editor

wpiano23@gmail.com

Deadline is August 30, 2026