



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:



Greetings, I hope this publication finds you all well rested and filled with optimism for the upcoming year. I am thrilled and humbled to serve you in my new capacity as Florida Federation of Music Clubs President. I am also grateful for the wonderful people who served before me to make this organization strong in promoting American music in our state and communities through the fostering of music education, sponsoring of musical events and artists, and by awarding scholarships to talented young musicians.

My focus for FFMC these two years involves increasing senior membership through incentives and multifaceted partnerships. For example, one of our most valuable resources and assets is our junior membership, yet often we underutilize their abundant and multifunctional capabilities. Our junior musicians benefit greatly from FFMC through our scholarships, performance opportunities, and festival adjudications but there are so many more ways to include them by actually engaging them in the activities and mission of this organization. Certainly, this can happen at the state level but it can and should also occur at the local levels. We need to focus on hands-on, age-appropriate, and interactive experiences for our juniors. For instance, each senior club and/or district could organize elections for creating a board of junior officers who could in turn help with the fundraising activities of the senior clubs, assist at musical events and concerts, meet to problem-solve or organize concerts at senior centers or other facilities in the community, and make posts on social media about the latest events of the senior club/district. Junior led initiatives build investment and ownership in the organization and potentially a future financial and leadership base.

Our state, districts, and senior clubs need to create tangible connections with our junior membership by involving them in as many events and activities whenever possible. This kind of partnership with our juniors fosters in them empathy, compassion, a sense of being part of something greater than themselves, and a feeling of empowerment when they see the mission of the group coming to fruition and realizing they are making a genuine contribution to humanity. I encourage senior club and district presidents to appoint a talented and capable senior member to oversee this kind of project. St. Johns District created a junior board through an election process back in 2017 with an appointed senior member chairperson who has been an amazing leader and the results have been awesome. As a result of this investment in its juniors, St. Johns has had an increasing number of returning young junior members who are now senior members.

At the state level, I envision FFMC having a more active social media presence that draws new people and members to our organization. While I personally admit I am not capable of making this happen with my limited knowledge, time, and skill set, I know a lot of brilliant junior members who are adept, knowledgeable, efficient, and experienced at navigating social media and creating content. FFMC needs to more fully utilize pertinent social media platforms in order to reach the masses and gain future senior membership and leadership.

There is enough room for each member in this organization to be included and valued for their unique qualities, talents and contributions, no matter what classification of membership. If we combine our talents and intellects, dream big and unite together there are a boundless resources and creative ideas which can propel us to new and immense heights.

I am always open to hearing ideas from any member of this organization at any time. I appreciate any and all constructive comments and suggestions. My email is: ffmcpres2025@gmail.com and for more immediate contact you can reach me by text at 904-307-8897. I am thankful for all of you.

Lisa Smith, FFMC President 2025-2027

Thank you to the FFMC Officers 2023-2025
for their dedication and service!

Claudia Brill, FFMC President
Christina Gant, FFMC Vice President
Philip LeGrand, FFMC Recording Secretary
Suzanne Carpenter, FFMC Treasurer

105th FFMC Senior Convention in Tampa

A Special Thanks to Bay Ridge District

Congratulations to Bay Ridge District for hosting a superb 105th FFMC Spring Convention held June 19-21 in Tampa. Convention Co-Chairs Petra Sussman and Michael Jorgensen and their team did a wonderful job in preparing an educational and musical experience for all who attended. We heard many outstanding young musicians perform throughout the weekend in the beautiful Friday Morning Musicale auditorium and we were treated to highly informative seminars from Dr. John Robison professor of Musicology at the University of South Florida on the "Life and Music of Indian Composer John Mayer" as well as a session by Mark Sforzini Music Director/Conductor/Composer on "Keeping Classical Music Alive and Thriving in the 21st Century." We were highly honored to have as our national guest, Deborah Freeman, NFMC President, who eloquently installed the new FFMC officers and gave an informative lecture on the importance of loyalty. The next FFMC Convention will be hosted by Capital District so please be on the lookout for more information concerning that in the near future.



NFMC President Deborah Freeman with FFMC President Lisa Smith



Florida Fellows induction ceremony. Back row left to right: Dr. Jerome Lowe, Lisa Smith, Jennifer Guzman, Claudia Brill, Suzanne Carpenter, and Connie Lill. Front row left to right: Wanda Sims and Cheryl Poe.



Past FFMC President Connie Lill, Lisa Smith and Gavin Taylor in the Friday Morning Musicale auditorium.



Lisa Smith, Dr. Jerome Lowe, and Connie Lill in Friday Morning Musicale auditorium.



Lisa Smith is explaining to newly inducted Florida Fellow and FFMC Parliamentarian Wanda Sims the significance of the concrete painted frog folk art piece that she won at the silent auction.



Gavin Taylor with FFMC President Lisa Smith in front of Friday Morning Musicale building.

Congratulations to the 2025 Member of the Year: MARGARET PROSSER, an avid supporter of NFMC, FFMC, and FMM in many ways. Her history with the NFMC, FFMC, and FMM goes way back. She was a junior member from 1958 to 1968 and performed on stage playing the piano.

After a career in the medical profession, Margaret retired and was asked to join the Friday Morning Musicale senior club in 2012. Her first position was as a greeter. Since then she has served as the

club's 1st Vice President and on two occasions President. She was Director-at-Large after that and now the club's 2nd Vice President. Her efforts in being involved were two-fold, to be a contributing member of the club as well as help preserve the historical integrity of the building.

Margaret helped organize two yearly fundraisers which raised money for the club activities as well as provide assistance with the building fund. In 2017, she was asked to be Secretary of the building management group. These Incorporators maintain the building, provide rentals of the building and pay the bills. Since there are no employees, volunteers run both the club and the building maintenance. This 98 year old structure requires a great deal of time and effort which she has enjoyed participating in. She has hired Restoration Specialists to maintain the historical character of the building. She has spent countless hours in this endeavor, doing some of the upkeep herself.

Margaret has attended one national convention, two state conventions, and also the annual FFMC Collegiate Vocal Competition previously held in White Springs. She has volunteered at University of Southern Florida when the junior members perform at the state festival.

So you could say this has been her project as well as giving her purpose in her retirement years.

Florida Fellows #57 – WANDA SIMS

Wanda Sims is our newest Florida Fellow! Wanda served as parliamentarian at the 105th FFMC State Convention held in Tampa, June 19 - 21, 2025. Connie Tuttle presented her with her medallion and pin.

As a professional registered parliamentarian, Wanda has experience serving as a parliamentarian and providing advice on parliamentary procedure, including marketing strategy, developing, revising, and amending bylaws, and conducting procedure workshops for local governments, civic organizations, and churches and overseeing elections.

She holds a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Spelman College, Atlanta, GA and a master's degree in organization development and human resources from Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD. In 2016, she retired from the Federal Communications Commission.

Performers at 105th FFMC Senior Convention



Derek Sung is a pianist who recently graduated from King High School in Tampa.



Abigail Huang -
Professional Title:
Pianist, accompanist,
composer



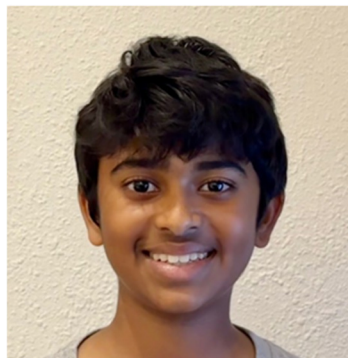
Artur Pessoa is a pianist and vocalist pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Commercial Music at Southeastern University in Lakeland, Florida.



Melissa Zhao, Junior Composer Contest - Class II Winner



Ruth Marie Morales is currently a Music Major at Southeastern University in Lakeland, Florida.



Akshath Anand is a seventh grader, and a dedicated musician and athlete from Tampa, Florida.

NFMC Biennial Convention - Austin: Howdy, Y'ALL.

Florida was well-represented at the 2025 NFMC Convention in Austin, TX. **Claudia Brill** attended as the Florida President. **Cheryl Poe** attended as NFMC Board member representing Florida. **Elaine Knight** was Board Member-at-Large. **Suzanne Carpenter**, who serves as the NFMC Treasurer, was on hand. Also in attendance was **Lisa Moore**, the NFMC Dance Award Chair. **Esther Umansky-Roth**, NFMC Southeastern Region Festivals Chair and FPMC Junior Division chair, joined remotely.

Everyone is invited to attend the upcoming 2026 NFMC Conference, to be held in Scottsdale, Arizona, June 9-13, 2026. Check out the special invite on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uXyUAXMzqjI>



FFMC Officers 2025-2027

FFMC elections were held in Bay Ridge District at the 105th FFMC Spring Convention in Tampa, hosted by Friday Morning Musicale, June 19-21, 2025. We welcome LISA SMITH as our new state President. Other elected officers are FFMC Vice President Lisa Moore, FFMC Recording Secretary Philip LeGrand, and FFMC Treasurer Suzanne Carpenter. The new team is eager to work toward the mission of our organization. We are here to support our teachers and our very gifted student musicians.

Lisa Smith began her musical journey at the age of 7. Her love for FFMC began when she first participated in the Suwannee District Festival in 1981. She participated from the ages of 7-18 in the Junior Festivals in Suwannee District and later St. Johns District as well as in the FFMC State Junior Convention. Since 2001, Lisa has devoted herself to the administrative sides of the Harmony Senior Music Club, St. Johns District, Florida Federation of Music Clubs and the National Federation of Music Clubs. She has served in many different capacities at the local, state and national levels including St. Johns District President, Harmony Music Club President, St. Johns District Treasurer, Harmony Music Club Treasurer, FFMC Vice-President, FFMC State Festivals Chair, FFMC Junior Division Chair, FFMC Archivist, Southeast Region Festivals Chair, National Festivals Chair and NFMC Board Member Representing Florida, and NFMC Board Member at Large. She is currently the National Federation of Music Clubs Lynn Freeman Olson Composition Awards Chair. Lisa is a Florida Federation of Music Clubs "Florida Fellow," National Federation of Music Clubs "Rose Fay Thomas Fellow," and National Federation of Music Clubs "Southeastern Region Fellow" (charter member). In 1995, she graduated *cum laude* from Jacksonville University with a Bachelor of Music degree in Piano Performance with Departmental Honors in Music Performance. She currently maintains private piano studios in both Jacksonville and Gainesville, FL.

Lisa Moore has held several offices at the local, district, and state level, and is now serving on the NFMC Board of Directors as Member-at-Large and also the NFMC Dance Awards Chair. She is now serving as the FFMC Composition chair, and also as Festival co-chair for Lake Central (Orlando). Former president of the Orlando Music Club, she is now its current treasurer. She was the FFMC Federation Cup Chair and the FFMC Financial Secretary. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemical Engineering and a Master of Business Administration in Management.

Philip LeGrand is the treasurer of the Capital District and the Choctaw Bay Music Club. He has served as Co-Chair of the Federation Festival since 2015 and has been FFMC Recording Secretary for many years. Philip served in the Air Force Civil Engineering for 27 years and retired as a Lieutenant Colonel. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Cincinnati and a Master of Science in Computer Information Systems from Boston University. He is the FFMC Bylaws Chair and NFMC Group Exemption Chair.

Suzanne Carpenter became a member of Florida Federation of Music Clubs (FFMC) in 1976 when her students first entered festival. She retired from teaching 44 years later due to the ill health of her husband. She has held several offices in the Suwannee District and in FFMC. She served as Gainesville Festival Chair, Gainesville Area Gold Cup Chair, and FFMC Financial Secretary. She has been FFMC Treasurer since 1999 and NFMC Treasurer for 8 years. She was named FFMC member of the year in 2002 and FPM Musician of the year in 2008. She is a FFMC life member, a Florida Fellow and Rose Fay Thomas Fellow. She has a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Wisconsin and a Master in Fine Arts degree from the University of Florida.

JUNIOR BILL - aka "the pink dues form"

A reminder to counselors (teachers):

October 1 is the deadline for Junior Club dues.

\$50 minimum for up to 16 students.

Please include an initial roster in ABC order.

The "fillable" **Junior Club Dues Form** is available online

Locate on the FFMC membership web page

<https://www.ffmc-music.org/membership>

Questions? Contact Suzanne Carpenter

Treasurer@ffmc-music.org

Senior Club Governance

The governance of your Senior Club has several key aspects which require the thoughtful consideration of the club leadership. The first is your club's bylaws. They should be current and reviewed every 5 years. Model bylaws are available both for non-profit clubs and for-profit music schools. If your club is incorporated, then the Articles of Incorporation are acceptable in lieu of bylaws. The next important item is each club should have an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the IRS. For the non-profit clubs obtaining charitable 501c(3) status is important, especially if you solicit funds. Having this status allows your donors to deduct their contribution from their taxes. Do you know if you have 501c(3) status? Obtaining it directly for your club can be a long, drawn-out process and be expensive. A much simpler method is to apply for 501c(3) status under the NFMC Group Exemption. Once your 501c(3) status is complete if you solicit funds in the State of Florida, you must be registered with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Affairs. The process is simple and requires an annual report. Do you have a solicitation number starting with CH....? The last item is obtaining sales tax exemption for your purchases. Again, you apply for this through the State of Florida. Your club secretary or treasurer should have copies of these important documents. If you have questions or need guidance and help, please contact me at pjlegrand@cox.net or 850.527.4200.

Philip LeGrand, FFMC Bylaws Chair and NFMC Group Exemption Chair

FFMC Junior Convention Updates

Exciting Updates for the 2025-2026 Festival Season!

I'm thrilled to kick off a brand-new Festival season and share some important updates with all of you. Listed below are a few changes and reminders you'll want to note regarding the [FFMC Junior Procedures Manual](#) and the [FFMC Junior Convention](#). The FFMC Junior Convention includes additional rules beyond the NFMC Festivals Bulletin. If your students plan to participate, please review the [FFMC Junior Procedures Manual](#) for complete guidelines.

Violin Solo–Violin Concerto Correlations

- **Junior 1-A:** Primary IV – Elementary III
- **Junior 1-B:** Elementary II – Medium II
- **Junior 2:** Medium I – Difficult I
- **Junior 3:** Medium III – Advanced I
- **Senior:** Difficult I – Advanced II

Solo and Sight Play Correlations

All students participating in **sight play at the state competition** must be registered **at the same class/level** as their corresponding solo.

Piano Solo–Piano Sacred Solo Correlations

A student must play one level below, the same level, or one level above their corresponding solo level.

Piano Solo–Collaborative Piano Correlations

Upon registering for the FFMC Junior Convention, teachers must **match the student's Collaborative Piano level** to the student's **Solo level**. This update does **not affect the choice of repertoire**, or Festival leveling, but helps us track each student's level progression year over year at the state level.

A Quick Reminder

Only pianos will be provided at the Junior Convention. Teachers and students should plan accordingly if their performance involves any additional instruments.

Popular Piano Solo and Sacred Music Solo events require memorization at the Junior Convention.

Best of luck to all students and teachers as we head into another fantastic Festival year!

Esther Umansky-Roth
FFMC Junior Division and Festivals Chair

NFMC Liability Insurance

Junior counselors (teachers): We encourage you to obtain NFMC liability insurance for your personal recitals, group classes, and other events associated with your studios.

District and Senior Club officers: All FFMC events must have NFMC liability insurance.

Check the FFMC website for the “current” insurance request form.

<https://www.ffmc-music.org/membership>

Fees chart will list the NEW single day rate and multiple day rate.

Deadline to submit requests for events September 1 – December 31, 2025: **August 15, 2025**

Deadline to submit requests for events January 1 – August 31, 2026: **December 1, 2025**

District and Senior Club Presidents and Treasurers must send in the signed disclaimer form to Linda Blessing, musicbless@aol.com Signature is to be notarized. This form must be filed every year to ensure that each event under FFMC auspices has liability insurance.

Reminder: If you have not yet sent it in, please do so promptly. Should the organization choose NOT to purchase this liability coverage, an event cannot be considered as having any connection to FFMC.

PLEASE NOTE: If not paid, the area will not receive any support from FFMC for the Festival or recording of Federation Cup Points.

No insurance = No points!

Linda Blessing, musicbless@aol.com

Liability Insurance Chair

NFMC Newsletter “In Tune with NFMC”

HOT OFF THE PRESSES: did you know – you can download the latest NFMC Newsletter, “**In Tune with NFMC**” to find out the latest happenings, complete with reminders about opportunities (and deadlines) for students, such as scholarships. Links to recent issues are found on the NFMC website:

<https://www.nfmc-music.org/about-us/monthly-newsletter/>

Members - you can request delivery straight to your inbox. [Sign up here](#)

NFMC Competitions and Awards

The National Federation of Music Clubs (NFMC) offers more than \$750,000 in competition and award prizes on the local, state, and national level. The Biennial Young Artist and Ellis Duo-Pianists competitions award a total of \$92,000 in awards and two years of performance bookings. Additional competitions are sponsored by the Federation in a wide range of categories, including voice, instrumental music, composition, dance, conducting, handicapped and visually impaired, and music therapy. Contact the chair of the competition for specific details.

NFMC also sponsors more than 38 annual and biennial awards for students desiring to attend the 20 sponsored Summer Music Centers. Refer to the NFMC Awards Chart (CA 20-1) on the NFMC website for more information. Here is the link:

<https://www.nfmc-music.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/CA-20-1-1.pdf>

NFMC Angie Greer Music in Poetry Award – DATE CHANGE

The NFMC Angie Greer Music in Poetry Award has a NEW deadline. This year, poems will be due **November 1, 2025**. That is three months earlier than last year, which is a **huge** difference. We want to get the word out now so that you can tell all of your juniors (students). The \$5 entry fee can be paid online at the time of submission. For eligibility and poem requirements, download [Form JR 12-1](#).

We hope to receive many wonderful entries! For more information, contact:

NFMC Angie Greer Music in Poetry Chair: Debra Hughes bndhughes@comcast.net

National Music Week Essay

2026 Theme: *Music...is our constant companion.*

Visit FPMC website: <https://www.ffmc-music.org/essay-contest>

Essay Contest chair: Amy Duncan ycmband@gmail.com

2026 Junior Composers Contest

A challenge for your young creative students! Junior composers through the age of 18 express their musical creativity by writing their own compositions. Entry fee of \$30 total is to be paid online at the time of submission to NFMC. Deadline is **February 1, 2026**. Entrants who wish to earn “Gold Cup” points pay \$6.00. Review details at <https://www.ffmc-music.org/junior-composers-contest>

Also review JR 7-1 for more information. Any medium is accepted (keyboard, voice, other instruments or any combination thereof). List of FPMC awards by age division (age as of March 1):

Class I (ages 9 & below)	1st Place \$100	2nd Place \$50
Class II (ages 10-12)	1st Place \$200	2nd Place \$150
Class III (ages 13-15)	1st Place \$400	2nd Place \$250
Class IV (ages 16-18)	1st Place \$500	2nd Place \$350

Questions? Email Lisa Moore, FPMC Composition Chair, at composition@ffmc-music.org

FFMC Outreach Project

Perhaps your local organization has an idea for a musical outreach project in mind? Consider submitting an application for a grant. This FFMC grant is for underserved elementary students to help with equipment and/or lessons with music, voice and dance. Download the application from the FFMC website.

Application deadline: October 15, 2025

<https://www.ffmc-music.org/about-us>

Submit application to: FFMC Grant Committee, PO Box 357275, Gainesville, FL 32635-7275

Or email application to: ffmcprez2025@gmail.com

Questions? Contact FFMC Grant Committee: (904) 307-8897 via text

NFMC Southeastern Region

Southeastern Region Summer Music Camp Scholarships

The NFMC Southeastern Region is having a 5 year campaign to raise \$100,000 for scholarships. They ask each member of a senior club in the Southeastern Region to give \$5.00 donation once a year for 5 years. The easiest way is to add \$5.00 to your annual dues to your local senior club. Contributions are welcome!

Read more about the Southeastern Region. Link to website: <https://www.nfmc-music.org/ser-home/>

Southeastern Region Fellows

<https://www.nfmc-music.org/ser-fellows/>

The Southeastern Region Fellows is an award given to those who donate \$500 to the Southeastern Region for the support of the summer music festivals. To qualify, you must be a member of the National Federation of Music Clubs, send \$500 to the SER Treasurer, fill out the application and send it to the SER Insignia Chair. The ceremony for the Southeastern Region Fellows will be in July every year at the Southeastern Regional Meeting at one of the festival locations. The recipient will be recognized at the Regional Luncheon of the National Federation of Music Clubs Convention/Conference in June every year. The first 50 donors will be charter members.

<https://www.nfmc-music.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/SER-Summer-Fellows-Application.pdf>

For more information, contact Ruth Morrow, SER Fellows Chair morrowrm@charter.net

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!

FFMC, Inc. is organized for charitable and educational purposes under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. All donations made to FFMC, Inc. are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE FLORIDA DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE WITHIN THE STATE OR VISITING THEIR WEBSITE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. 1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352) Consumer Services. Our registration number with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is CH12373.

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 November 1, 2025