



Gateway Arch East

Music Teachers Association

November and December 2025 Newsletter

gatewaymusicteachers.org

Letter from the Editor

Hello, friends!

Welcome to the November **and** December newsletter. Thank you for your patience. There is so much exciting information in this newsletter; you're all doing amazing work and I love seeing what you are up to!

The Schubertiade on Oct 17th was successful, and Joan Witte was kind enough to write an update on how it went. Please find the update below!

Things have been a bit unrelenting lately, so I have not been able to put together a reflection and summary about the ISMTA Conference, but we had a great time and I was so happy to see so many of you there!

I can hardly believe the Christmas season is here. We have an exciting Christmas party at Gill's this week, so please check that out and enjoy the festivities. I hope you all have a happy holiday season, and a lovely winter break!

Joe

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Upcoming GAE Events

Friday, December 12

Christmas Party

Gill Cerbin generously welcomes us back for a Christmas party of treats and reading festive duets starting at 10am! Please RSVP to Gill if you plan to attend.

February

AIM Theory Examinations

Details coming soon!

Saturday - Wednesday, March 21 - 25

MTNA 2026 National Conference

This conference will be in Chicago! Find out more here:

<https://www.mtna.org/MTNA/Engage/Conferences/Conferences.aspx>

Saturday, March 28

Masterclass

Put the polishing touches on pieces for AIM exams in a masterclass with Dr. Pei-I Wang from Millikin University! Please invite parents and teachers alike to join us at 2pm.

Member Spotlight: LeAnn Halvorson

LeAnn Halvorson has been teaching since 1980, so this is her 45th year of teaching piano, and she still really enjoys teaching, which is a good thing as her studio is approaching 50 plus students. Currently, she's serving as Independent Music Teachers Forum Chairman for Illinois State Music Teachers Association. A new local chapter has been formed in Illinois, "Virtual Illinois Music Teachers Association, a.k.a, The Village." She is also serving as Secretary/Treasurer for VILMTA and will be co-chairing the e-Festival this Spring with other board members. The Achievement in Music program in ISMTA has always kept her busy for Gateway Arch East MTA. Deb Meier and LeAnn co-chaired AIM for 18 years for the exams held at SWIC. Now, she's scheduling the Theory Exams in February and printing the exams for both Theory and Performance for the students taking exams at SWIC. Along with teaching, she has enjoyed creating music products which truly helps students understand music better for Music Perceptions. There are currently over 60 products in the Music Perceptions online store, and LeAnn has been branching out into other areas, too. Sheet Music Plus and Sheet Music Direct have digital download books and sheet music that she has written. SuperScore Music has books and sheet music that she has written for the iPad app SuperScore. Rounding out activities for LeAnn are playing for church services 3 to 4 weeks each month and playing handbells once a month at her own church. Oh, and let's not forget the dog walking. She has a 3 year old dog, Wilson, who is walked over 3 miles most days!

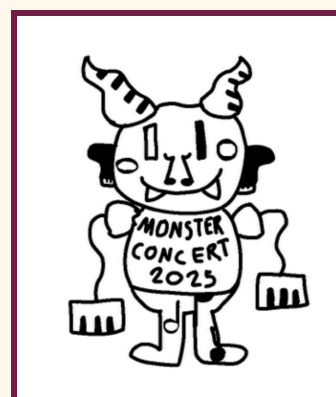


News from Members

Gill Cerbin visited Germany, Austria, and the Czech Republic, this summer and was excited to see (pictured in order) the home of Beethoven in Bonn, Mozart in Salzburg, churches Haydn had worked in Vienna, and the statue of Dvorak in front of the concert hall in Prague. Everywhere she went, she was blown away by the beauty of the buildings and the culture.



Karen Koch's student, Brody Mitchusson, won the Monster Concert Tee Shirt Design contest for the upcoming Monster Concert sponsored by St. Louis Area Music Teachers Association. His design will be on the front of the tee shirts of all the participants in the Nov 15 concert. Brody completed Level 6 in AIM this past year.



Sharon Voss has an exciting Monarch Butterfly raising hobby, and this season, she released 111 butterflies!



Several of **Gill Cerbin**'s students won Gold awards at the Arch Cup competition at Webster University in October.

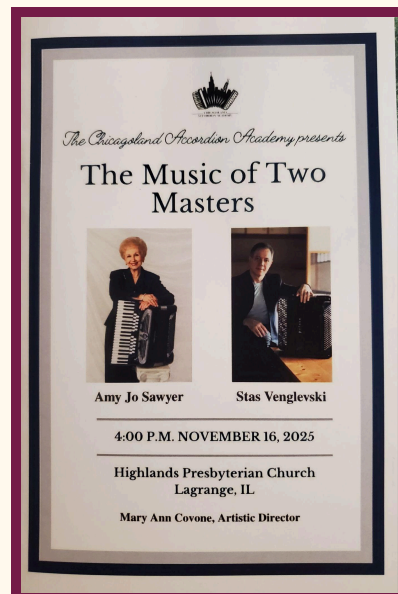


Sharon Voss's student, Estelle Limbach, took 2nd place in the SIYAO Junior II competition. **Robert Raymond's** student, Aaron Hong, won first place in the SIYAO Junior I competition. Congratulations to Estelle and Aaron!



Sharon Voss also invited the Suzuki concerto competition winners to Powell Hall for The Lion King in Concert. After the concert, they were given a tour of the newly renovated backstage and spent time talking to Sam Hollister about the preparation involved in conducting a movie score.

Amy Jo Sawyer received a special award from the Chicagoland Accordion Academy on Nov 16 in Lagrange, IL. The event was titled "The Music of Two Masters" which honored Amy Jo and Stas Venglevski, both longtime composers for accordion repertoire. Students (young and old) of the Academy performed music written by Stas and Amy Jo. The final compositions were performed by the accordion orchestra. Amy Jo arranged a medley of well-known Christmas songs entitled "A





Swingin' Touch of Christmas". Pictured from left to right is Mary Ann Covone, director of the Chicagoland Accordion Academy; Joan Sommers, accordion instructor from Kansas City, MO; Stas Venglevski; and Amy Jo.



Schubertiad Update

A small group of GAE members enjoyed a Schubertiad and tour of the Schmidt Art Center at SWIC on October 17.

Joan Witte performed three selections on the lever harp: *For the Beauty of the Earth* arr. By Daniel Burton, *Aquatinte No. 1* by Bernard Andrés, and *Amazing Grace* arr. by Richard Kingsmore. She also shared some information on how the harp works and how the pedal and lever harps differ.



Gill Cerbin played four piano solos by Chrissy Ricker: *Shine* and *Wanting* from Rock On! Volume 2 and *Unrequited* and *No Mas* from Rock On! Volume 3. Some of these are on the list for the Mid-America Music Association Festival and are a hit with her students. She closed our program with the beautiful early twentieth century pieces *La Sarabande* and *Chanson du chasseur* from the collection *L'Almanach aux images* by Gabriel Grovlez.

Following the recital, everyone enjoyed a tour of the current art exhibition by the Gateway East Artists Guild.

Free Piano

If you are interested in a free piano, Cindy Vaughan's sister is giving her one away. Please contact her:

Email: luann.wasser@att.net

Phone: 618 698 7341

She lives in Swansea, just off Rt.159.

Thanks for your help with this. She'd be delighted if she could pass it on to someone who wants it.



November 2025
GAE Treasurer's Report

Account balance 11/xx/2025	\$6,957.19		
	2025-2026 Budget	November 2025	YTD
Memberships	\$165.00	\$0.00	\$140.00
AIM Entry Fees	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Yearbook Ads	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$75.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$2,215.00	\$0.00	\$215.00
EXPENSES			
AIM Expenses Total	\$1,530.00	\$200.00	\$200.00
AIM Medals	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
AIM Misc. Supplies	\$30.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
AIM Pins	\$173.75	\$0.00	\$0.00
AIM Printing & Mailing	\$65.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
ISMTA Student Foundation	\$281.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Student Award Checks	\$525.00	\$0.00	\$200.00
SWIC Foundation Arts Fund (donation for use of facilities)	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
AIM Syllabus for New Members	\$30.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
ISMTA Foundation Fellow Donation	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$105.00
Member of the Year Conference Expense	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Miscellaneous	\$25.00	\$0.00	\$61.73
President's Conference Expense	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Printing/Mailing (yearbook, newsletter, other besides AIM)	\$25.00	\$0.00	\$10.86
Programs (includes May 2025 McKendree donation for use of recital hall)	\$900.00	\$0.00	\$325.00
Teacher's Assistance Fund (partial dues scholarship for new members and partial reimbursement of first time certification fee)	\$140.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Website Expenses	\$468.95	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$3,318.95	\$0.00	\$702.59