End of Year Reflections from the President

It's hard to believe it's May already, and the last concert series has arrived! This is the time of year when we have the pleasure of watching our children finish out their first year playing a new instrument, getting ready to join a new school and musical group, or even graduate from our high school. It is also a time of transition and change; an intense and magical time that's exciting and full of growth and love.

I'd be remiss if I didn't thank my incredible membership for all their support this year by joining FOM and donating their time and money to our organization. Every time we solicited volunteers; we had an overwhelming response of people wanting to help out. FOM is a wonderful and supportive community to be a part of, and as president it's my privilege to serve all of you.

In the process of planning for next year, we have realized that we have a few interesting openings on our



board. Some of my executive board members are moving onto other adventures leaving open the possibility of a new adventure for you! If you enjoy bookkeeping, you have the opportunity to become our treasurer. Our vice president position is available for someone that would enjoy learning about all aspects of Friends of Music and enjoys taking on different projects. We need a skilled editor to edit our newsletter-Notes. And finally, we are also looking for a tax accountant to help us at tax time since our lawyer/tax attorney of several years is retiring from this position as his child is a graduating senior. All of these positions come with support from the previous volunteers. The current board and I are incredibly grateful for their services and wish them the best. If you are interested, don't hesitate to contact any of the current board members if you see them or you can contact me at: <u>irossmanfom@gmail.com</u>. I will be happy to answer all of your questions or get you in touch with a person that will.

Enjoy the concert and the pleasure you gain tonight from hearing our talented musicians!

Have a wonderful spring and summer and I can't wait to see you in the fall.

Jodi Rossman

From The Director's Desk

Welcome to the final concert series of the school year! Our year has been filled with events, performances, guest artists and so much more. Spring is a time of renewal and I hope the music our students make for you is like a breath of fresh air.

There are many people to thank for the success this year has brought. First, the faculty and staff appreciate the dedication of our students. Their focus and willingness to learn about music inspires us each day. Community support allows us to create and offer a district-wide program that meets the needs of all our students. And we are so grateful to the Friends of Music, whose hard work and encouragement reminds us all that we can improve our students' experience by working together towards a common goal.

The music department welcomed several guest artists and teachers throughout the year across all grade levels and disciplines - in our elementary and middle school general music classrooms (SPAC Classical Kids program, the Bridge Arts Ensemble), choral program (guest conductor **Paula Brinkman**, a commissioned work - This Is What Sisterhood Means by **Caroline Mallonee**, FOM subsidized trip to Radio City Music Hall and "The Phantom of the Opera" on Broadway), jazz program (guest artist **Camille Thurman**), and our orchestra program (Ching-Chun Lai from the Crane School of Music).

We are sad to say goodbye to long time Iroquois teacher **Dee Steeley**. Ms. Steeley has been teaching for 26 years. Her choirs have been awarded Gold medals at NYSSMA, thousands of students have passed through her door in general music classes and a few years ago she helped create **Mezzo Voce**. Ms. Steeley's leadership and commitment to the department permeates everything we do here and we are grateful for her insight and talent. Best wishes on a lovely, relaxing retirement!

Special thanks go to **Tracy Koste**, music department secretary and **Maria Germain**, our district accompanist. All of us benefit from their professionalism and kindness. Thank you to the custodians in all our schools and especially to high school head custodian **Shawn King** and his staff, without whom much of what we do could not be accomplished.

Please enjoy this special time of year to reflect on the progress all our student musicians have made, and say goodbye to our seniors whom we wish the very best, we will miss you!



More From The Director's Desk

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■ Elementary Instrumental Recruitment Night

Please join us for a special parent night and informational meeting on **Tuesday, June 4 at 7 p.m.** in the high school auditorium. Students currently in **grade 3** (with an interest in orchestra) and students in **grade 4** (with an interest in band), along with their parents, are invited to attend. This night follows a week of instrumental demonstrations for students during the school day.

This is an opportunity to meet our elementary instrumental music faculty and learn more about our program, including the expectations and numerous benefits our program offers. An informational handbook is provided at the meeting for your review. This handbook will be a valuable resource for you and your student musician for years to come.

Additionally, parents may sign-up for individual student/parent/teacher conferences following the evening presentation. Please bring your calendar! Again, this is for all those interested in joining our elementary instrumental program in **September**. Orchestra is offered beginning in grade 4 and band is offered beginning in grade 5.

Summer Sonata Program July 15-25, 2019

The Nisky "Summer Sonata" music program is a fun, two-week camp designed for students who are already members of the NCSD bands, choirs, or orchestras. Eligible students who will be entering **grades 5-8** for orchestra, **grades 6-8** for band, and **grades 6-9** for choir are welcome. Made possible by the Friends of Music, this exciting opportunity is for students who enjoy music and wish to continue developing their music skills during the summer with Nisky faculty!

Students will further their musical aptitude and performing skills in both large ensemble and small group settings. Students will also discover music appreciation and knowledge through conversation and "hands-on" projects in: Musical Theatre, Music History, Music Theory, Jazz Improvisation, Opera, "Music Around Us," World Drumming and Music Technology.

Classes and ensemble rehearsals will be conducted **Monday-Thursday** from **9 a.m. to 12 Noon**, **beginning July 15**. Upon completion of the two-week program, students will present a culminating afternoon showcase for their family, friends, and community on **July 25** at **Noon** in the high school auditorium. All are invited to a light afternoon luncheon provided by the Niskayuna Friends of Music immediately following the afternoon showcase. **The program registration fee is \$250.**

Those students who are currently enrolled in more than one school ensemble (i.e., band, choir or orchestra) must select one ensemble they wish to perform with. Students involved in multiple ensembles should list their order of preference on the registration form.

Registration forms are available in the District Music Office or at www.niskyfom.org. The forms should be returned to your school music teacher or to the District Music Office at the high school.

Registration deadline is June 7.

SPOTLIGHT NOTES

Friends of Music is thrilled to welcome all of our new music teachers to the district. In this issue we highlight **Sarah Banker**, general music teacher at I**roquois Middle School** and general music teacher and choral director for **Hillside Elementary School**. Ms. Banker teaches music students from kindergarten through sixth grade, including a few sections of BOCES.



Ms. Banker, who is originally from Rotterdam, moved back to this area in the summer of 2017 when she began her position as general music teacher and choral director for Niskayuna School District. She began taking piano lessons when she was six years old. In elementary school she played clarinet in the band; in middle school she began singing in the chorus and in high school she learned alto saxophone which she played in the marching band. Ms. Banker also plays the ukulele. While in high school, Ms. Banker excelled in music, participating in All State for vocals and Area All State for clarinet. She credits her two fantastic music teachers at Schalmont High School for inspiring her to "want to be just like them ... to move students like they moved me". Ms. Banker also danced ballet, jazz and hip hop in elementary, middle school, and high school and ran cross country in high school.

Ms. Banker attended Nazareth College of Rochester, NY where she received a Bachelor of Music (B.M.) degree and Master of Science in Music Education (M.S.). Her primary focus at Nazareth College was piano and voice was her secondary specialization. While pursuing

her M.S., Ms. Banker was also a substitute teacher for Webster CSD and the elementary choral director for Plank North Elementary School in Webster, NY. After graduation, she spent two years in the John Walton Spencer School #16 of the Rochester City School District instructing Band, Chorus and General Music classes for grades K-8. She conducted "Blue Skies" at the Rochester Choral Fest in 2017.

Ms. Banker currently lives in Malta. She is thrilled to be working in Niskayuna, a district where music is so valued. She remarked, "The support here is unreal. My colleagues, and I say this very humbly, would do anything for me." She especially enjoys working with Niskayuna students. Ms. Banker continues, "The students respond so well to music and they are so excited about what I have to offer them." Ms. Banker's motto, "Be your own kind of beautiful", hangs on the wall in her room at Hillside. She explains that the students understand it to mean, "just be yourself, don't be afraid." Ms. Banker believes that music is a universal language and that everyone has something to offer musically. She advises students studying music to, "be confident in your ability, take a risk, step outside of your comfort zone – you can't go wrong. Music is everywhere; everyone can sing. It is a means of expressing yourself."

In the little free time that she has, you may find Ms. Banker participating in or training for a half marathon, practicing yoga, hiking or camping. She recently completed a half marathon in Syracuse! Ms. Banker also enjoys boating with her family on Saratoga Lake. Please extend a warm greeting to Ms. Banker when you next see her!

Kristin Bidoshi

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NOTES

Elementary Bands Perform Final Spring Concerts

The Fifth Grade Bands from across the district are preparing to perform their final concerts of the

year. The students have all worked very hard to develop their spring band pieces and are especially excited about performing and premiering an arrangement written by our very own **Mr. Pandori** (Glencliff 5th Grade Band). Mr. Pandori arranged a rockin' medley of "We Will Rock You", "Crazy Train" and "Iron Man" for the bands! This piece has been a favorite of the students and they are very excited to debut this fun composition.



Mrs. Kokernak, Mr. Lammly, Mr. Pandori

Hillside Elementary

Students are engaging in a wide variety of musical activities at Hillside Elementary School. Hillside students are learning several songs for their monthly Hello, Hillside! performances. For example, students performed the song What A wonderful World at their April celebration. They also created illustrations to accompany the lyrics which were featured at that celebration. Kindergarten and first graders continue to sing and dance to a wide variety of songs including Jim Along Josie. First graders are preparing for their play, Best Friends, to be performed in June. Second graders performed the musical, Sing Me A Story by Jill and Michael Gallina in April. Congratulations on a job well done, second grade! Second graders are also enjoying the unit, Peter and the Wolff, and continue to learn about instruments and instrument families. Third and fourth graders are excited to perform on their recorders. Fifth graders are discussing and listening to music from the Baroque, Classical and Romantic Eras and will later work on composition in the computer lab. Fourth and fifth graders are working hard in chorus to prepare for their spring concert. Come show your support on May 15th, at 7PM in the H.S. auditorium! Congratulations to all fifth graders who performed in the District Choral Festival in March! Thank you Niskayuna Friends of Music for your ongoing support of our music program!

Sarah Banker



Rosendale Band students at their first spring concert rehearsal

More Elementary School Notes

Birchwood Notes

Greetings family and friends! Welcome and a big thanks to **Tina Ferrara**, who has taken the role of Birchwood's representative to Niskayuna's Friends of Music organization for us.

Thank you also to all of us. The recent rise in district memberships to Friends of Music is taking place at...Birchwood!!!

Kindergarten music students are becoming experts at sorting and playing the percussion family. They can sing high and low. To end the year, each classroom will create a class rhythm book with every child contributing a short rhythm pattern to the book that they will read, clap, decorate, and take home.

Grade 1 is studying the string family and can follow a listening map to an orchestra piece. They really like their first class dance from Germany and will be bringing home their point sheets soon to proudly show you and perhaps hang on the refrigerator.

Grade 2 students have a Google Music Classroom online with songs, videos, and links. It can be accessed through their google drive in the Birchwood library website. For more information, please contact **Mrs. Johnston**: hjohnston@niskyschools.org

They are currently using a microphone and amplifier system purchased by Friends of Music for a special singing game that they love to play by hiding behind the piano and singing to their classmates.



Student singing "Who's Behind That Piano?" with microphone purchased by Friends of Music

MIDDLE SCHOOL NOTES

Middle School Chamber Strings players enjoyed performing at the South Concourse in Albany in March! NYSSMA organizes this event each year and invites districts to bring groups to play in celebration of Music in our Schools month. Students prepared a variety of musical selections for an audience of parents and passersby. Everyone was impressed with the students' talents and the students represented Niskayuna in a very positive way!

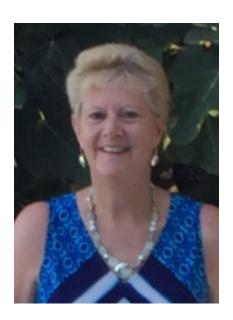
Brenda P. Hartman



Reflection on My Niskayuna Career

After 26 years of teaching, it is time that I begin to say an emotional farewell to my current and former students, families and colleagues. It has been an honor to have been a part of the Niskayuna Music Department for the past 26 yrs. and a member of the Iroquois community. I would like to thank the many students I have taught through the years for sharing their joy, laughter and musical talents with me and I value their continued relationships beyond Iroquois. The music faculty is an incredibly dedicated and talented group. I feel fortunate to count many members of the faculty as my lifelong friends. The Friends of Music organization has been so supportive in financially assisting 26 trips to NYC as well as many other events. Thank you!!!! I will hold a special place in my heart for all of you and thank you for allowing me to share my lifelong passion for music with so many incredibly wonderful people in such a wonderful place.

Always keep a song in your heart!



Dee Steeley

More Middle School Notes

Iroquois Middle School Grade 6 General Music



Iroquois 6th grade music class contains such units as: Steady Beat, Rhythm, and Tempo.



One of the best things about the middle school is seeing how friendships form from around the district among our fine musicians. There's always someone new waiting for you when you move up to sixth grade!



Sixth graders using their Chrome Books on the Dallas Symphony Orchestra website. They will use their review work of instrument families and new work in keyboard and electronic families to understand the voices of the Yamaha keyboard lab.

Holly Johnston

More Middle School Notes



Middle School Jazz Band performing at the District Jazz Fest at Proctors

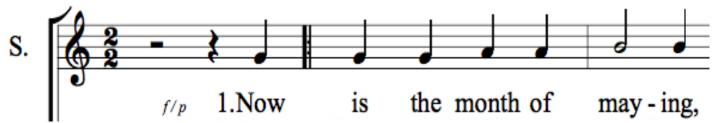


Middle School Stage Band performing at the District Jazz Fest at Proctors with guest artist Camille Thurman

Niskayuna Friends of Music is a wonderful organization of volunteers providing their time, energy, and funds for the Music Department. Would you consider joining at https://niskyfom.org/? You can also scan the following QR Code as a direct link to joining Friends of Music.



HIGH SCHOOL NOTES



(Excerpt above from "Now is the Month of Maying" by Thomas Morley)

Congratulations to Concert Chorale for earning a "Gold with Distinction" at NYSSMA Choral Majors on **April 17**!!! The group performed the first movement from Magnificat by J.S. Bach (a Baroque masterwork), "Stars" by Ēriks Ešenvalds (a contemporary piece with tuned water glasses) and "Ezekial Saw de Wheel" arranged by William Dawson (a good old American spiritual). Niskayuna hosted 17 other choruses during this festival who were all fantastically prepared and a joy to watch and hear. Choral music is alive and well in the Capital Region!

CHORAL UNIFORMS

Students in **Choir, Concert Chorale** and **Ladies First** will receive their order form for choral uniforms in the fall, upon returning to school.

Students in **Bel Canto Voices** and **Studio Singers** will receive their order form for choral uniforms in mid-May. Order forms and payment are due on **Friday, June 14**.

ALL USED UNIFORMS THAT WILL BE SUBMITTED FOR RESALE MUST BE DRY CLEANED AND TURNED IN BY FRIDAY, JUNE 14. Any uniform that is damaged or in poor condition will not be accepted for resale and will be discarded. Any uniform turned in for resale that does not have the correct paperwork attached in order to contact the seller will be donated to the Friends of Music.

~Outside Performances:

- ~Look for **Studio Singers** at the **Niska Day Parade** on **Saturday, May 18**. The students will be performing on a float generously provided by the town and will kick off the day on the **Craig School Grounds in the Entertainment Tent at noon!**
- ~On **Wednesday, May 22 at 7:00 pm.**, **Bel Canto Voices** will present their final examination quartets in Crossroads, before the concert. Students have been collaborating on madrigals and motets in Italian, French, German, Spanish and English.

Bel Canto Voices will once again provide music for the Memorial Day Ceremony at the high school on Friday, May 24 at 11:00 am.

~Studio Singers will present their final examination Cabaret Concert on Friday, June 14 at 1:15 pm. Please head towards the choir room to enter the auditorium through the backstage entrance. Students will perform duets, trios and ensembles from standard jazz, pop and musical theatre repertoire. All families, friends, faculty, staff and community members are welcome to attend. Please arrive a few minutes early to sign-in at the front entrance and receive a visitor badge if you are coming from off campus. We will enjoy a small reception together after the performance.

To the Niskayuna Friends of Music: **THANK YOU** for your continued commitment to our school music program. This year you were unbelievably generous with your time and funds in helping continue our **Choral Festival** and providing the dulcimer player as well as the commission of "This is What Sisterhood Means" by **Caroline Mallonee**, student scholarships, financial aid, and so much more!

More High School Notes

Thank you to the music faculty and staff, including our Director of Music, **Mr. Hughes** for providing our students with amazing opportunities that extend beyond the basics of music education. Thank you also to the entire Niskayuna faculty, staff, administration, families and community for their support. Another HUGE thank you to our music accompanists **Mrs. Maria Germain** and **Mr. Max Caplan**, who is filling in for **Mrs. Germain** while she is on maternity leave.

Please consider supporting the many local arts organizations that flourish during the summer months. Many of our students are participating in summer lessons, camps, classes, and other musical opportunities; we wish these students the best and congratulate them on their desire for extended study.

To all of the graduating seniors: we hope that the lessons in music and life that were learned while participating in your school's music program travel with you wherever you go, whether near or far. You will be missed and are always welcome back in the music wing!

Have an amazing summer and we will see you in September for a brand new repertoire selections, ample performance opportunities and unique musical experiences as pumpkins, apples, cinnamon and cloves make their way back onto our plates!

Christina Pizzino-Catalano



High School Stage Band at performing at Jazz Fest at Proctors with Guest Artist Camille Thurman



Studio Singers performing at Jazz Fest at Proctors with Guest Artist Camille Thurman



NHS Music Department SENIOR BANQUET

Our annual Senior Banquet will be held <u>Wednesday, June 5th, 5:30 – 7:30</u> at the MOHAWK RIVER COUNTRY CLUB. Seniors and their parents are invited to a special evening that includes great food, great friends and a fond farewell.

Please join us as we celebrate your many years of hard work and terrific music-making by completing the form below. Cost is \$25 per student or adult. Feel free to contact Eric Hughes (ehughes@niskyschools.org) with any questions or concerns.

******	somer sanquet
WHERE:	Mohawk River CC
WHEN:	Wednesday, June 5
	5:30-7:30

Student Name _____

Senior Banquet

Total: # _____ \$___

Number Attending: ____ @ \$25 each

WHAT:

Please make checks payable to: Niskayuna Friends of Music Due Date: **Wednesday, May 31st**

Mr. Pandori to Perform Solo Trombone Concerto

On **Sunday, June 2nd at 3pm**, there is an opportunity for our band students to hear a concert performed by the Capital Region Wind Ensemble. This concert will feature a wonderful work by Belgian composer, Bert Appermont. This full scale concerto for trombone will feature our very own band faculty member, **Mr. Philip Pandori**. The piece is entitled "Colors" – with four movements –Yellow, Blue, Red and Green – all based upon a single theme. The wind ensemble will also perform the original version of Vaughan Williams' English Folk Song Suite, Blue and Green Music by Samuel Hazo and Frank Ticheli's jazzy Blue Shades. This concert will take place at the Taylor Auditorium on the SUNY Schenectady campus.



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JAZZ FEST







JAZZ FEST







Student "Summer Sonata" Registration Form

Student Name:	
Grade in September 2019: Scho	ol:
Instrument/Voice: 1.	T-Shirt Size:
2.	Circle One: Adult Child
Parent/Guardian Name:	
Home Address:	
Home Phone #: Parent Er	nail:
Emergency Contact	
Name: Ph	one:
I wish to enroll my child in the Nisky Summer I required time commitment and program sched take place at Niskayuna High School, and that I conclusion of each day. I have secured needed and understand all school rules will apply while	lule. I understand all instruction will am fully responsible for my child at the transportation to and from the program
Parent Signature:Program Participation Fee: \$250	Date:

Please make checks payable to: Niskayuna Friends of Music

Registration and check due no later than **June 7th, 2019** to the District Music Office located at Niskayuna High School. Families will be contacted no later than **July 1st** with final details and assigned student lesson group.

Sample daily schedule from last year

SUMMER SONATA SCHEDULE 2018

General Schedule:

8:50-9:00 – Student arrival – Sign In – ORCHESTRA ROOM

9:00-9:25 – All Camp Choir – AUDITORIUM PIT

9:30-10:00 - Music Appreciation Class - BAND ROOM

10:00-10:45 – Large Ensemble Rehearsal – LOCATIONS BELOW

10:45-11:00 - Break for Snack - MUSIC HALLWAY

11:00-11:30 – Large Ensemble Rehearsals – LOCATIONS BELOW

11:30-12:00 – Outdoors/Closure Activity – AUDITORIUM SEATS

12:00 - Dismissal

Large Ensemble Rehearsal Locations:

Choir – Auditorium Pit

Band – Band Room

Orchestra – Orchestra Room/Choir Room