



ANN ARBOR  
SCHOOL FOR THE  
PERFORMING ARTS

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# Spring 2009 Newsletter

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## Highlights:

🎵 **AASPA Summer Offerings include camps for vocalists & instrumentalists, jazz, piano, Future Broadway Stars and classes for Music Play, Kinderstrings, Keyboard Musicianship Club, adult piano & violin and more**

🎵 **Don't miss our next Brown Bag Lunch Concerts in April & May**

🎵 **Learn more about the AASPA Behind the Scenes and meet our staff and Board of Directors**

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## AASPA Summer Offerings

With spring barely making its appearance, it's hard to believe we're already looking ahead to summer, but plans are well underway for our summer course offerings. We are offering flexible options for students of all ages, from Music Play classes for toddlers and preschoolers all the way up to group piano and violin classes for adults. Our year-long private lesson programs will continue through the summer, but we are also offering a summer sampler of 6 lessons for students wanting to try a new instrument or for those looking for a refresher course. There are several options for students interested in sum-

mer day camps: Music Explorers offers a full- or 1/2- day option for instrumentalists and vocalists ages 7-13 with week-long sessions in June and July. Music Explorers will give students an opportunity to play fun games, work in small and large ensembles, play fun games, take private lessons/theory/ear training/music history classes, play fun games, and play fun games! Two sessions of Jazz Camp, also offered in June and July, are highlighted by combo performances at the Ann Arbor Summer Festival and the Ann Arbor Art Fair. For youngsters interested in beginning piano and violin (new or returning students), we

are offering Keyboard Musicianship Club and Kinderstrings, which will meet every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon in July. Sarah Malick (see Faculty spotlight, p. 2) will be teaching a morning Piano Camp for 7-13 year olds in early July and will offer individual and group instruction with a focus on famous piano composers. Our Future Broadway Stars Camp introduces musical theatre to kids through song, dance and drama games and will meet for a week in July with sessions for 4-6 year olds and 7-13 year olds. Please visit our website for detailed course descriptions, pricing and class schedule: [www.aa-spa.org](http://www.aa-spa.org).

## AASPA Offers Email Registration!

In an effort to make the registration process more convenient for our students and teachers, we are implementing an Email registration form. Simply email [info@aa-spa.org](mailto:info@aa-spa.org) to request a form or visit our website: [www.aa-spa.org](http://www.aa-spa.org). You will still need to submit your payment in person, via the mail or with a credit card

over the phone, but you will be able to send your contact information and lessons/class selections electronically, which saves paper and automatically inserts your information into our registration database. This solution is just a stepping-stone toward offering a complete online registration process, including



online payment options, which is one of our intentions as we make plans to redesign our website this summer. We welcome your feedback about the form and hope it works for you!

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## Spotlight on Sarah Malick, Faculty Piano Teacher

Sarah Malick maintains the largest private lesson studio at the AASPA, where she has been on faculty since 2003. She teaches over 40 students, both privately and in our Saturday Keyboard Musicianship Club classes. Sarah first started teaching as a young high school student and with the exception of a short break during her undergraduate studies, has been teaching piano lessons ever since. When asked about the beginning of her teaching career, Sarah remarked, "I can't remember a time when I didn't want to teach the piano, so I started as soon as I possibly could." Sarah explained that she was most influenced as a musician by her maternal grandmother, who was a classically trained pianist and who encouraged Sarah in her daily practice habits. Sarah shares an Alma Mater with her grandmother, both

of whom attended Ithaca College in NY, though when her grandmother graduated in 1922, it was a small music school called the Ithaca Conservatory of Music. Sarah is often requested as a teacher for young piano students, and she herself said her "favorite part about teaching younger students is watching and observing them grow and blossom with each passing year. Every child is so unique and precious and they possess as many different gifts and talents as there are flowers. Much like a flower, the young students starts out lessons as a tiny bud full of potential, yet not knowing so much as how to even touch the piano with a proper hand position. Then, after a few short



Sarah Malick with her Saturday KMC Class

years, with practice and perseverance, they have developed to the level of performing a complicated Bach Minuet in a formal recital. Wow! This is remarkable!" Sarah's advice for every student: "If you practice, practice, practice you will make progress! Just as everything in life takes work and discipline, becoming a musician is no different. The more you play the better your playing will become and the more you will enjoy it."

*"I can't remember when I didn't want to teach the piano, so I started as soon as I possibly could."*

—Sarah Malick,

Faculty Piano

Teacher

## Open House Busy Despite Blustery Winter Weather



Shar Music was one of the many vendors displaying their ware and giving kids the chance to try out instruments at the Open House.

It seems like every major event was threatened by a snowstorm this past winter! Saturday, February 17th was no exception, but there were many adventurous music lovers that braved the snowy roads to come out for our Open House and Try-It Day. All classes and lessons at the AASPA were open for observation that

day, and we hosted several area music vendors in order to give students the opportunity to try out new instruments. Thank you to Julie's Music, Music Man from Brighton, Mickey Richard from Oz's Music and Shar Music for sharing their time and products with our students.

Look for the next AASPA Open House before our Fall 2009 session begins.



Many youngsters were eager to try the instruments on display in the lobby.

# Shopping at Hiller's Benefits the AASPA

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As you all know, these are difficult times, particularly for non-profits who struggle to raise the necessary funds to keep programs strong. The AASPA is no exception, but you can help out the School simply by going grocery shopping! We are participating in a Scrip card program with Hiller's Market, which is located in the Arborland Shopping Center. How does it work? Step #1: Obtain a Hiller's Scrip card from the School. Step #2: Take your card to the Hiller's Customer Service Desk and put as much



money as you would like on the card. Step #3: Use your card just as you would a credit card to pay for your purchases. 5% of whatever you spend will be donated to the School. It's that easy! After the first use, you may put money on the Scrip card at the checkout lane – just be sure to let the cashier know before your order is rung up. If you shop at Hiller's anyway, please consider getting a Scrip card. There is no ex-

tra cost to you – just the price of your groceries – and every dollar helps the School. For those of you who may not know, Hiller's will also discount your purchase by 5% if you are a student, faculty or staff of any college or University (including U of M, Eastern, WCC) as long as you have ID. Please stop at the school office, or let your student's teacher know that you would like a Scrip card, and we will get one to that teacher. We will also arrange to have cards at orchestra rehearsals. Thank you for your support!

## Brown Bag Lunch Series—NEW!

We have been in our new home since mid-October and really appreciate having our own space. We have found that the open space, used at lesson times as a waiting area and on some days as a teaching space, also serves beautifully as a small performance venue. In addition to holding several student events in the AASPA space, including a jazz clinic and vocal & in-

strumental showcase recitals, we have started the "First Friday Brown Bag Lunch Series" to make performances by our faculty members accessible to the Ann Arbor business community and beyond. Our February and March recitals brought in great crowds, and we received positive feedback about the faculty performances. We hope many of you will be have to

opportunity to attend our upcoming concerts in April and May, held on the first Friday of each month from 12:00-1:00 p.m.. These performances are free of charge, and you are invited to bring a lunch to enjoy along with the music.

Don't forget to spread the word to anyone you think may be interested in attending!

## Behind the Scenes at the AASPA

With all the students in the various programs at the AASPA, it is an ongoing challenge to keep things running smoothly at the School! Here's a little behind the scenes information to give you some perspective on how the school operates: Stephanie Weaver, our President, is responsible for working with our board, staff, and faculty members in determining course offerings and making decisions about the direction of our

programs. Emily Perryman, our Student Services Manager, acts as a liaison between students, faculty and staff to coordinate schedules and orient students and parents to the programs available at the School. All financial matters for the AASPA are handled by our Business Manager, Marlene Ruuskanen, who processes registrations, tuition payments, payroll and accounts payables. Our Board of Directors works tirelessly

to secure funding and increase the public awareness of the school (see article p. 4). Last, but not least, our dedicated faculty members bring their expertise and enthusiasm to each of the programs they teach.

On behalf of everyone that keeps the AASPA running smoothly, we would like to thank our students and parents, who have chosen make the AASPA their musical home!

**Mark your calendars for**

**upcoming Brown Bag**

**Lunch Recitals:**

**April 3rd, 12:00 p.m.**

**May 1st, 12:00 p.m..**

*If you plan on picking up some*

*take-out on your way to one of*

*the recitals, please consider*

*supporting our friends and*

*neighbors at the South Main*

*Market or Happy's Pizza,*

*which are nearby the School.*

### Administration

Dr. Stephanie Weaver,  
President

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Marlene Ruuskanen,  
Business Manager

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## About the AASPA Board of Directors

There is another layer behind the small but mighty administrative staff at the AASPA, and that is the Board of Directors. The Board is responsible for the fiscal well-being of the organization, the hiring of the President (currently Dr. Stephanie Weaver), and general oversight of the organization's operations. It is made up of a group of dedicated volunteers from various parts of the community, united in their passion for the School and making sure it continues to be here to serve its students and faculty. The Board currently meets once a month. The primary focus of the Board at this time is raising the funds necessary to keep the School going, as tuition revenue alone cannot cover all overhead expenses, as well as keeping up with scholarship requests. A large

part of the School's mission is to offer quality music education to all who seek it, regardless of ability to pay. The Board is dedicated to trying to provide as much scholarship funding as possible to those who need it. The Board's biggest accomplishment this past year was mounting a capital campaign to raise the funds to transform a bleak basement into our wonderful new space. This is the first time in its history that the School has had a home all its own. The Board was able to enlist the aid of some generous individuals in the community, as well as the Benard L. Maas Foundation and the Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority. The School also received amazingly generous cash and in-kind donations from laborers and

unions in the area who gave much time and energy to the project. The Board is currently working on a plaque to be placed in our waiting area acknowledging all those who donated to our home. In these difficult times, the Board continues the fund-raising efforts needed to meet scholarship requests and to build a solid foundation on which the School can continue to grow.

### Board of Directors

Barbara Kramer (Chair)  
Warren J. Widmayer (Vice-Chair)  
Mark Baily (Treasurer)  
Sally Vandeven (Secretary)  
Matthew Engelbert  
Roy Muir  
Joe O'Neal  
Dennis Powers

## Meet Our Board Members

**Barbara Kramer**, Chair. An employee of the University of Michigan Hospitals, Barbara was an administrator at a community music school in New York City and is the parent of two former AA-SPA students and the spouse of a current adult student.  
**Warren Widmayer**, Vice-Chair. Warren is an attorney with a love for all styles of music. He too has been an AA-SPA parent and is a long-time student of the School himself. He is currently a member of our adult jazz ensemble.  
**Mark Baily**, Treasurer. A Commercial Lender and Vice-President of Bank of Ann Arbor, Mark works tirelessly along with Marlene to keep the books in order

and finances running as smoothly as is possible for any arts organization in these times.  
**Sally Vandeven**, Secretary. Sally is also the parent of two former AA-SPA students and is a musician herself. She was instrumental in helping form a community orchestra in Dexter and was a valued member of the search committee for our new YSO director.  
**Matt Engelbert**. Matt is an AA-SPA parent. He is a lawyer and agent and serves as Director of the Benard L. Maas Foundation.  
**Roy Muir**, Development Committee Chair. Roy is an experienced fund-raiser with a love of the arts who has

helped many other local non-profits. He is a retired AVP for development at UM and currently a senior consultant for a national consulting firm for non-profit philanthropy.  
**Joe O'Neal**. Joe is the owner of O'Neal Construction in Ann Arbor. He helped find our new home in the heart of Ann Arbor, and he oversaw the construction required to create our new teaching and performance spaces.  
**Dennis Powers**. Dennis is also an attorney, who relocated to Ann Arbor from Boston where he was a strong supporter of the Boston Symphony.

## Volunteer Opportunities

We would like the AASPA to be a place for the whole family to participate in keeping music alive in the hearts of our students. Do you have any special skills or talents you are willing to share towards this goal?

Email us at [info@aa-spa.org](mailto:info@aa-spa.org) to let us know how you might like to volunteer.



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