

Dear Michigan Federation of Music Clubs Members, Colleagues, and Friends,

First, thank you for the privilege to serve as your state president.

We have so very much to be proud of in Michigan. While at the National Federation of Music Clubs Conference in June and the NFMC NE Region Conference in July, Michigan was praised for our work in leadership, communications, and technology.

Congratulations to MFMC Communications and Senior Club Reporting Chair, Elizabeth Wooley, who secured 100% reporting from Michigan Senior Clubs. Thank you, Senior Club Presidents, for your continued dedication to bringing professional programs, student and junior scholarships, and local camaraderie to your clubs: Thank you for communicating your work to us.

Next, congratulations to MFMC Festival Chair, Katherine Nold, who works tirelessly to assist with new Federation and Festival teachers and juniors, and as importantly, works to secure a place in Michigan for juniors transferring from other Federated states. Junior membership both nationally and here in Michigan continues to grow as we offer more scholarships and awards than any other professional and philanthropic music organization.

NFMC is in the Festival Online Management System testing phase. They secured the same website technology team to create and implement the new system. While it is in the final testing phase, it will be available to all Festival Chairs AND teachers within one year – last target date is September 2019. NFMC and MFMC both have a direct link to the site, which will become live as each state is released.

Looking forward, our new Junior Festival Records Chair will work throughout this year to enter your students' names, contact information, and Festival records, eventually, their full history. Once online, you will simply go to the Festival Online Management System link, use a series of pull-down menus for your student's entry. The system will maintain the records, allow you to select the event and class, and the system offers your required choices and a space for your elected composition. It worked perfectly at the NFMC Conference. We will love it!

Speaking of Awards and Scholarships, please check the NFMC and MFMC links as there are many opportunities for your students and juniors. For Senior Clubs, there are program incentives and performance opportunities for your clubs, too. MFMC Activity Chairs and District Presidents are here to assist you. More importantly to you, Michigan is not fully utilizing the amazing opportunities available especially at the collegiate level. More on this soon.

We could not do all that is needed without your support:

Saying "Thank you" to Sandra DeRemer is simply not enough for all she has done for MFMC. Sandra, who recently "retired" as three-time MFMC Treasurer, one-time Finance Chair, and still serves as the MFMC Northeast District President, met with me and MFMC Finance Chair Sandra Nye this month to review current and project the financial future of MFMC. It is hard to believe that years ago, she did all for what we now have four members do. Please take time to thank her as she is one of a kind! Please contact me if you have professional accounting and/or bookkeeping experience as we would love you to join this outstanding team.

We are also pleased to announce the nominations of an MFMC Second Vice President, Festival Records Chair, Brass and Percussion Award Chairs, as well as several other Chair invitations under consideration. These dedicated and experienced Federation members will be officially announced on the MFMC website once Board approved. We are so very excited to have them join our team.

On a very sad note, many Michigan Senior Club members pass away this year – more than any other Federated state. It is important for you to honor their work, dedication, and legacy. Further, it is important you continue their work in leadership, membership, and financial support to the projects closest to their hearts. We are indebted to their vision and mission.

As you know, Michigan took a bold step and followed NFMC's lead in securing a new technology design for our website. We are the innovators, linked directly to National, where several other states and regions are now following our lead. However, we continue to have important goals toward continued membership growth and financial security. Here are a few items. More information is forthcoming on the MFMC website.

1. Please join us on Saturday, September 8th in Lansing for an MFMC Leadership Education Seminar. This has been the most requested support item by Senior Club Boards. All MFMC members are invited; however, our goal is to have representation from every Senior and Junior Club. Topic items include leadership, bylaws, membership, programs, and awards.
2. The MFMC Annual Convention is a long-time, traditional favorite in Michigan. However, the increasing cost has greatly limited our ability to travel to all areas of the state. After lengthy negotiations with several hotels and conference centers throughout the Southwest District, it was decided we would return to the Ann Arbor Regent Hotel and Conference as they continue to provide us with the best financial package in a lovely setting with outstanding rooms and other amenities. We are now working with the hotel and a new caterer, who are addressing the needs of our members. Your input is important to us, which is why we have taken this bold move. Ann Arbor Regent wants us to make them our “home.” However, the hosting District Committee will continue to support with their local talent, registration, and advertising. Let’s give it a try!
3. Michigan Junior Festivals: We are actively searching for another Festival site OR TWO in Southeast Michigan. Our growth is causing our Festival sites to bust at the seams, working our volunteers beyond expectation. These dedicated teachers are second to none preparing students, planning the event, executing memorable experiences for these children, celebrating the awards, and then while still exhausted, begin planning the following year’s Festival. You are an inspiration!
4. Awards News: The MFMC Awards will now be held on a single day in a centralized location so that all MFMC teachers, students, and juniors have access to state awards. While the initial goal was to maintain the financial security of these Awards for future generations, this important move will also ensure that our members have equal opportunity.
5. We would also like to reinstate the Festival State Day. We are looking for input on this from Festival site chairs and leaders. Your input is important to us.

6. Federated Teachers: Our second most requested item comes from teachers from other states who are looking for Michigan teachers for their transferring students. The MFMC website offers a MFMC Federated Teachers page. With your membership this year, please include your name, studio town, instrument(s), and your website link.

Finally, I look forward to attending your District meetings. Please feel free to contact me at any time. Your input is important to me!

Thank you for all you do.

Laurie M. Marshall

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