



# Saskatoon Music Festival

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Submit name suggestions to  
[newsletter@saskatoonmusicfestival.com](mailto:newsletter@saskatoonmusicfestival.com)

Deadline March 31, 2016

Winning entry will receive a  
Prize of 2 passes to the 2016 Music Festival

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Photo Credit: Stephen Nicholson

*We followed the local and provincial road to  
the national festival and finished on top.*

Left to right – name, discipline, & national placement –  
Abby Fuller, Brass, 3<sup>rd</sup>; Brendan Catalano, Woodwinds,  
2<sup>nd</sup>; Godwin Friesen, Piano, 1<sup>st</sup>; Griffin Hewitt, Musical  
Theatre, 3<sup>rd</sup>; Bryan Allen, Percussion, 1<sup>st</sup>; William Boan,  
Strings, 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Wow! Congratulations! Did you know Brendan  
Catalano, Godwin Friesen, Bryan Allen, and William  
Boan are all from our Saskatoon festival? Stay tuned for  
our 2016 success stories!!

The next two pages tell of the journeys of Godwin,  
William, and Bryan as described by themselves.



*The Value of the Festival  
&  
An Innovative Drive to Get  
There  
By Godwin Friesen*

It hasn't been long since I first played in the Saskatoon Music Festival in 2012, but since that time, I have been significantly impacted and shaped by these experiences. Before 2012, my only experience in festival was in a few classes for original composition, so it was only in the last four years that my participation was really about the performance. Having chances to perform has been one of the most effective ways for me to learn about my playing and grow as a musician. It is in performance that my music making is most real, and because performing requires so much concentration and being in the present, areas to improve become clear and inspire more preparation. The festival is so good for this, and when one concentrates on the learning that can come out of it rather than the marks or results, the experience is very positive and edifying.

The music festival is a learning experience, and that's what is so important about it. For younger musicians, the festival may be the biggest performance they have to prepare for, as it often was for me. But over time I have realized that the festival is really more of a stepping stone than a final destination. Rather than being the main purpose of one's preparation, it is to be an assistance and contribution to the continual preparation of music. Adjudicators are there to encourage and inspire musicians, and there is always a freedom to make mistakes – as long as you learn from them. Because of the learning that can come from the festival, and the great opportunity to perform, the music festival has been very valuable to me.

I am reminded of my second year of music festival, when we lived outside of Saskatoon, so most of my classes were in the Sask Valley Music Festival. The day before my first class, it snowed so much that huge drifts blocked the driveways and prevented us from leaving home. In a final desperate attempt, we called up a neighbour from a nearby farm who showed up on a snowmobile, and we rode to the festival across the snow drifts. That day contained some of the most fun performances I had ever done. (Photo Credit: Stephen Nicholson)

*Can It Get Much Better Than This?!*  
&  
*A Call for More Percussionists*  
By Bryan Allen

The Percussion family has many instruments, most of which are very expensive,



preventing many young percussionists from owning their personal gear. I am extremely thankful for the Provincial and National festival for providing the instruments, along with adequate practice space and time.

After so much moving, and the spending of money and energy, there is almost no better feeling for me than having the instruments set up before me, ready to play. Having been finished school for a year now, it becomes more difficult to fit in regular practice time, and to have specific goals to be working towards. This festival allowed and forced me to make room for these, and the preparation for this summer helped me maintain the purposeful feeling I have as a musician, a feeling that sometimes gets lost since finishing school and moving to Saskatoon.

As a percussionist, the orchestral world sometimes takes over the perception of what percussion performance is. This causes people to think that the typical stereotypes of percussionists are true, (that we don't have to be very musical or have to do a lot) and this furthers the struggle to be seen as equal to any other classical musician. Being given the opportunity to perform the repertoire that I have dedicated a rough 6 years to, to an audience other than family, friends or other percussionists was quite special. Not to mention that it was my favourite Canadian concert hall! I had performed on that stage with an orchestra before, but never a marimba solo. Performing one of my favourite Canadian compositions on my favourite instrument, in my favourite hall. Can it get much better than that? I am very lucky. Now for the future, I only hope more percussionists register to provide a more intense, competitive environment! (Photo Credit: Stephen Nicholson)

*Music Soloist = a Team Sport? & The Rewards of Performing*  
By William Boan

(Photo Credit: Stephen Nicholson)



August of 2015 marked my second time going to compete in the national music festival of Canada. Having just spent a summer at Meadowmount, a string camp located in the beautiful Adirondack Mountains of New York, I was feeling (somewhat) ready to perform.

Going to nationals is quite the hassle. The whole thing is only feasible because of the hard-working administrators and volunteers. And once all the details are sorted out, you still work for months, honing your pieces to perfection, then you take a flight to another province, you spend a few days there (wondering whether to practice hard or just take it easy), then finally, you get up in front of the judges and play—half a year of work for 45 minutes of glory.

But it's definitely worth it. First of all, preparing to perform at a national level is of course a rewarding experience. Working toward perfection is how one grows, especially if it is under the guidance of fantastic pedagogues, like my teacher, Professor Robert Klose. And the process is even more enriching when it is alongside a superb accompanist and truly collaborative artist—such as Bonnie Nicholson. Pushing oneself to new heights in one's playing is hard work, yes, but I believe it's essential to one's mental and artistic well being. In a way, I suppose musicians are like sharks—if we stop moving forward, we die.

But even better than avoiding this artistic demise; I got to spend nationals with Team Saskatchewan—Bryan Allen, Brendan Catalano, Godwin Friesen, Abby Fuller, and Griffin

Hewitt (and honourable members Maria Fuller, Ying Tan, and Sherry Sproule). Let me tell you, we had a great time. Whether we were meeting up for brunch, getting lost in Edmonton, or giving each other standing ovations after every performance, it was truly unforgettable. Music isn't often considered a team sport, but maybe it ought to be.

### *President's Message - Cassandra Stinn*

As I write this submission to the Music Festival's first official newsletter, I can't help but reflect on the flurry of activity that is already taking place to prepare for the 2016 Festival. Adjudicators are being confirmed, students have been registered, sponsors are finalizing their vital contributions, and the scheduling weekend recently concluded in a flurry of post-it notes and cue cards. It really begs the question of what gets everyone so excited about the Music Festival. I think the answer is ultimately simple: Music Festival creates a community based on our shared love of musical performance, music education, and shared musical experiences.



There exists a unique opportunity for parents and students to be a part of the larger community during our Festival weeks, and all that one needs to do to seize it is to **take a few extra moments**. If your child is scheduled to play in the morning, consider booking the morning off work and staying after his or her class to listen to a few other students. If he or she performs in the evening, consider bringing some friends and family, and making an evening of it. The adjudicators we bring in for Festival are always masters of their craft, and students, parents, and even teachers young and old can benefit both from listening to their peers perform, and hearing the comments adjudicators have to offer the students they hear.

More than learning, this also fosters the idea of supporting fellow young musicians. As students attend the Festival year after year, they'll begin to see familiar faces – and it's a beautiful thing when students are able to listen to one another year after year as well! Especially in the current hustle and bustle era we live in, it is so very valuable to remember to slow ourselves down and make time for connection with other people. So many lifelong friendships can begin during festival week, but only if we make the time to nurture them intentionally!

So on behalf of the Saskatoon Music Festival Committee, I wish you all the best in your preparations for our 2016 Festival, and wish to remind you to take some time to make the Festival week special, both for those performing, and those spectating. Years from now, it's the relationships formed, lessons learned, and special Festival traditions (doughnuts, anyone?) that are most fondly remembered by every student of music. Yes, it's a competition – but it's so much more than that! See you soon!

### *Executive Director's Message - Darren Schwartz*

Each year after the festival is over I post a message on my Facebook page letting my "Friends" know what I learned during the festival. With the dawn of a newsletter for the Saskatoon Music Festival I thought it might be best to reflect on why I love the festival and what I believe the bigger meaning of the Festival is and why I'm involved. I hope that new people and returning veterans will agree with my following thoughts.

What did I learn this year? I learned that Saskatoon has some fantastic talent, superb teachers who know how to balance the good with the bad, parents who realize that a trip to DQ after a performance is part of the experience, grandparents who love you and are so proud of you no



matter how things went, and adjudicators who come to us from out of province and offer us their snapshot opinion for the brief time they are here. All in all I think the Festival experience does prepare us for the real world - as adults, things are not all rose-coloured and beautiful, sometimes we will be called to task for things that we haven't done correctly - Festival prepares us to learn how to take criticism and roll with it.

Wishing all our participants for 2016 a superb festival experience. Take pride in the hours of practice you have put into learning your pieces and songs, and I hope the feeling of accomplishment keeps you motivated no matter how the placement works out. It's hard to understand now, but the people that have "grit," that is, the ability to always keep working hard no matter what, do turn out to be the most successful in life.

*Editor's Note - Jane L. Smith*

The Saskatoon Music Festival Committee is delighted to publish our very first newsletter. We hope you will find the newsletter interesting and informative. Suggestions, comments, and submissions are welcome and may be submitted at any time by email to [newsletter@saskatoonmusicfestival.com](mailto:newsletter@saskatoonmusicfestival.com).



There are common themes throughout the articles – the rewarding hard work and wonderful real life and music learning of preparing and performing festival pieces and of working on the festival, the friendships built, the synergy and wonder of teamwork. Come see for yourself. Become a participant, a volunteer, an audience member, or a sponsor. We would love to have you.

Enjoy!

*The Festival De-mythed Part 1*

*Programming - From Participant Entry to Printed Program*

*220 volunteer hours of music-based, child-centered, detailed work*

written by Jane L. Smith as told by Marilyn Whitehead and Penny Joynt

Ever wonder how approximately 2300 individual participant entries go from computer to a specific date, time, and place in a printed program? As Marilyn Whitehead, programming chair, puts it, "It's like putting a giant puzzle together." After listening to the explanations, I would say that puzzle must be at least 5000 pieces. It takes about 15 volunteers approximately 220 hours in total to get part of the job done. The Executive Director, Darren Schwartz, also puts in many hours.

A printout of all entries is given to the programming committee. The 541 printout sheets are then separated by discipline - piano, strings, vocal etc.

Errors in the entries are corrected first. A volunteer knowledgeable in the discipline checks the spelling of each composer and his work. The programming committee is ever so grateful to all who pay particular attention to the detail of the spelling of composer and piece names

when registering for the festival. Did you know capitalization changes depending on the language of the piece title? There are normally 2 or 3 errors per printout page.

500 or so cards are then made up – one for every class in the festival and any playoffs necessary to decide multi-class scholarships. Each card has the number and name of the class, the number of performers, any scholarships available for the class or combination of classes, and the number of minutes required to run the class. This minute total is the tricky part. Volunteer music teachers figure out how much time is required to play each piece entered, the time for the performers to get to the front and return to their seats, the time for tuning if necessary, the time for adjudicating, and the time to present scholarship certificates if any. In addition, if there are more than 10 performers, the class is split into sections. A card is needed for each section with all the information listed.

“Shuffling” the cards comes next. The piano discipline cards are grouped by age and by the need for two pianos. There is a different piano adjudicator for each age group. The cards are also sorted by discipline – strings, woodwinds etc. There is a different adjudicator for each discipline.

“Laying out” the cards follows. The cards must be placed in time slots (day, am, pm, evening) and each adjudicator given the 6<sup>th</sup> session off. Efforts have been made this year to have everyone off at the same time, which facilitates the work and number of volunteers needed to support the festival. The progress is also child-centered. For example, great effort is made to not have as many performers under 12 years of age performing in the evening. Fun is said to be had as the volunteers “negotiate” with each other over which class and discipline gets to have what time period in Quance Theatre.

The Executive Director then takes the volunteers’ work and over many more hours puts it together with all the other elements that form the program. A rough copy of the final program is made. The volunteers are each given a part of the rough copy to proof. Then it’s off to printing.

And voila! The beautiful professional program is ready for the hands of our performers, adjudicators, volunteers, sponsors, and audience members.

The committee invites all music knowledgeable people to come join the fun of puzzle making. There are never enough hands.

(Photo left to right – Marilyn Whitehead, programming committee chair, Penny Joynt, programming host & volunteer, Cassandra Stinn, President, Bonnie Nicholson, programming volunteer. Photo credit: Jane L. Smith)





*Marilyn Whitehead, Programming Chair*  
*The Good Feeling of Giving Back*  
Written by Jane L. Smith

40 years ago, someone asked Marilyn to join the Saskatoon Music Festival committee. She soon took on the role of Programming Chair. She continues in the role today and still says that it gives her a tremendous sense of accomplishment. That speaks very highly of programming since her music accomplishments are great. Music has in fact been an integral part of Marilyn's life since childhood. Her childhood home was full of music. She continued her studies in young adulthood earning her credentials to teach, direct, and perform. Now, many of her

students in voice, piano, and choral work have won provincial and national awards. Her vocal group The Fireside Singers has delighted audiences for many years.

Volunteering to program the Saskatoon Music Festival was not only a way to give back but also a way to contribute to making the festival both professional and performer centered. Not to mention the fun of working together with like-minded and gifted people to put together the many pieces of the programming puzzle. Marilyn also gives yearly scholarships.

Marilyn's face lights up as she speaks of the growth of performers as they focus and prepare for the festival and of how the competition draws the best from the performers. They learn to not only gracefully accept praise but also constructive criticism when they have given their very best – a very valuable life lesson.

Thank you Marilyn!

*Penny Joynt, a Past President*  
*and a Long Time Programming Contributor*  
*Invaluable Skills*

Written by Jane L. Smith

30 years ago, "someone made" Penny join the Saskatoon Music Festival committee. Today, she is still very active and says she has never regretted her involvement. Penny speaks warmly of the people she has met and the different skills she has developed along this journey. She has even been the Executive Director of the National Music Festival for a period of 7 years.

Penny is also a very qualified teacher of piano and musical theory. Penny began her musical journey as a child and finished acquiring her teaching credentials when her youngest child went to school. Pride is evident in her voice when she speaks of her students and especially those she has inspired to teach music. In fact, at one point, all the music teachers in one of the provincial registered music teacher branches were all her former students.



Penny speaks about the many benefits for performers in the festival. She talks about the confidence it builds not only as concerns music but for the rest of life as well. The skill of being able “to be in front of people” is an invaluable life skill.

Thank you Penny!

*Committee Members*  
*Margaret Caldwell*  
*A Beautiful Fit of 55+ years!*  
Written by Jane L. Smith

55 years ago, Margaret began volunteering with the Saskatoon Music Festival. It was a beautiful fit and a “natural thing” to become involved with the Saskatoon Music Festival. Indeed it was! For Margaret began music lessons at 6 and started singing in public at 11. She became a music teacher, sang in choirs, and directed many child and adult voice and hand bell choirs. In fact, oftentimes she would begin as a singer and be asked to direct. Her choirs performed in the festival and Margaret often adjudicated in other festivals.

So, organizing the Christmas Carol Festival seemed natural. There were 1½ hour performances with audience sing-alongs each night for about a week. Then it was on to being in charge of Scholarships. Margaret ensured the right scholarship was given at the right time at the right place to the right person. With scholarship contributors often giving specific instructions as to how to give them out, the job is a lot harder than it may sound. She also contributes yearly scholarships and a trophy is named after her. Margaret was also often an adjudicator’s assistant. It certainly wasn’t hard to know what the adjudicators wanted in an assistant, since she had adjudicated herself many times.



Margaret speaks warmly of the people she has met volunteering for the Festival and one is still a close friend after all these years. Pride is evident as she speaks of the many times her choirs won.

Problems with her hip have slowed her down, but she still plays piano for a choir in her building and stills calls the Saskatoon Music Festival committee members to remind them of our meetings. The warmth in her voice and the clearness of her message are remarkable enough for even my husband, who normally forgets to pass on messages, to remember! She keeps a log of when and whom she calls and with whom she left a message if necessary.

Her attention to detail and quality continue to be evident even after 55+ years!

Thank you Margaret!

*Discipline Treasures*  
*Musical Theatre*  
*The Drama of Singing a Story*



A call for submissions. If you or someone you know is a part or an audience member of musical theatre, write or invite him/her to write or

request an interview to talk about their love of watching or acting and singing a story and how the festival helps develop these and other skills. Submissions, suggestions, interview requests, or questions can be sent to Jane L. Smith at [newsletter@saskatoonmusicfestival.com](mailto:newsletter@saskatoonmusicfestival.com).

*The Magic of Corporate Sponsorship*

*Kiwanis*

*They just keep on giving!*

Written by Jane L. Smith



Kiwanis is dedicated to supporting youth. The Saskatoon Music Festival is one of the recipients of this amazing dedication. Over \$1000 worth of scholarships are given out each year in virtually every discipline of the festival. Whenever a scholarship seems to be lacking in a discipline, Kiwanis are more than willing to help. When technology was available to facilitate the workings of the festival, Kiwanis gladly stepped in. Supporting another music organization led to yet another way for Kiwanis to support the festival.

As Terry Ross, the Chair of the Saskatoon Kiwanis Foundation, tells it, a need for a new venue to hold the festival's Musical Theatre was expressed during a meeting of the Registered Music Teachers' Association (RMT). (Kiwanis gives a \$1000 scholarship to a Fine Arts Student in Music and \$3000 in bursaries to the RMT to divide up amongst families, as the RMT feels appropriate.) This conversation led to an exciting new partnership with Kiwanis. I am not sure who was more pleased- Kiwanis or the festival committee. A problem was solved for the festival and Kiwanis got a new project to support.



Not only did Kiwanis find a venue, they pay for it each year. But it doesn't end there. Kiwanis provides all the volunteers to work the door, the parking lot etc. According to Terry, the volunteer sheet fills so fast; he finds a way to divide up the work so more can volunteer. A free will offering is taken at the door to help cover costs. Any profit goes back to the festival in scholarships.

Terry bubbles over with excitement when he talks about Musical Theatre. He finds it so entertaining since the students are in costume and act out their song as they sing. The audience also usually knows the song. So come on out and watch and listen. (Dates and place are listed on the last page.) You will be impressed!

Thank you Kiwanis for your enthusiastic support! It is greatly appreciated.

(photo of Terry Ross)



*Blast from the Past*  
*A Tilted Piano for the Senior Competition?!*  
*Joyce Wilson remembers*  
 Written by Jane L. Smith

As Secretary-Treasurer of the Saskatoon Music Festival from 1981-1991, Joyce Wilson directed a team of dedicated volunteers. Her greatest challenge was dealing with last minute changes and details. One such challenge happened one day just before competition. Joyce entered the senior piano room and noticed the 9 foot grand piano was on a tilt!

It was missing one of the wheels. No one seemed to know the location of the missing wheel so Joyce called in one of her sons. He measured the other wheels and found a board of the same height to level the piano. The tuner arrived and the competition went off without another hitch. Now that is thinking outside the box!

Joyce sang soprano for 44 years in the University Chorus and inspired a love of music in her six children. Some have played in the symphony and youth orchestra. Now how would you describe a day in your home when you can hear all six children practicing their instrument at the same time – a violin, a bassoon, a flute, a cello, the piano, and a trombone? I would venture a guess that most of us would call this noise. Not Joyce. To her, “It was heaven!” And she was listening closely because she would call out to a child if he or she played a wrong note. Supporting her own children and others in their music development was the reason Joyce got involved with the Saskatoon Music Festival.

The almost year long job and countless hours were well worth it. She enjoyed the power and accomplishments of teamwork and the satisfaction of successfully problem solving. Best of all was the focus and discipline learned by the participants.

Thank you Joyce!

*Festival Dates 2016*

|                                |                             |                              |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>Schools</i>                 | March 15 - 17               |                              |
| <i>Heart of the City Piano</i> | Tues. March 8 <sup>th</sup> | McClure United Church        |
| <i>Bands</i>                   | April 11 - 15               | Cathedral of the Holy Family |
| <i>Kiwanis Musical Theatre</i> | April 18 - 21               | Lighthouse Victory Church    |
| <i>Piano III</i>               | April 17 - 25               | McClure United Church        |
| <i>General</i>                 | April 27 - May 3            | University of Saskatchewan   |
| <i>Kinsmen Competition</i>     | May 3                       | Quance Theatre, U of S       |