

# QUAVERS

## Kitsap Music Teachers Association Monthly News

*October 2020 News Digest - Find Full Event Details at our Website, [kitsapmusicteachers.org](http://kitsapmusicteachers.org).*



### **President's Message: What will the storms of life bring you?**

Wasn't our summer just glorious? In fact, I have been amazed at the wonderful weather since March, when quarantine began. For me and my family, it has been a lifesaver. But now we are heading into fall, and inevitably, colder, windier, and wetter weather. UGH. But if we really had perfect weather all the time, we wouldn't appreciate it fully, would we?

I find wind rather fascinating; we can't even see it, but it is so powerful! Did you know that the presence of wind creates strong roots in trees? They need that resistance to be strengthened. In essence, wind is wind insurance for a tree! *But*, you may say, *a little wind is fine, but the wind brought us all that darn smoke!* And what finally brought relief from the smoke? Rain! Around here, rain is looked upon with contempt, but in many places (like say, the Sahara... or Arizona) rain is considered a wonderful blessing! Just imagine what our peninsula would look like if it rarely rained? So rain, like wind, is something that we may grumble about, but it produces beautiful results.

So what does all this weather have to do with us? It is a good reminder for us that our resilience is strengthened by challenges; we grow and blossom from difficult circumstances--if we choose to. That really is the key. We could take everything we have been through this year, scowl about it, and wish to forget it--OR we could find the good, find the lessons learned, find the ways we have grown. Might as well go with the latter! For example, I have learned to connect more effectively with those that live far away from me, I have worked on being

more expressive with my eyes (while wearing a mask), and I have come to appreciate mountain biking--a great social distancing activity!

One last thought about the weather: the sun will still come out. Through this pandemic, and the upcoming rainy season, it will come out. If you don't believe me, make note of each day that you see sunshine for the next few months. I have done this in past years and have been amazed at how sunny our PNW winter actually was! Let's look on the bright side, both figuratively and literally.

### **Laura Meredith**

President, Kitsap Music Teachers Association

## **From the Vice-President: Meeting News**



Hello, KMTA! Happy to be back on the board, serving as VP! Jane has lined up some awesome things for us this year, and this month is no exception! The University of Idaho Chapter will be giving us a presentation that we ALL can benefit from, entitled: "Parental Fitness: Training Parents to Become Practice Partners at Home." These presenters were featured on MTNA's virtual conference last spring, and they'll be recapping their talk for us "live" and answering our questions via Zoom. I don't know about you, but I definitely have some parents who could use some pointers. Looking forward to seeing all of you. Our U of I presenters will be starting at 11am following our business meeting on Friday, October 9th.

### **Melanie Stroud**

Vice President

## **A Personal Invitation: Virtual District IV Conference, this Sunday October 4**

As the presenter for the Virtual District IV Conference, I'd like to extend a special invitation to my own Kitsap County Chapter members to join me in this virtual conference. Because the conference is online, no travel is required. You can "attend" from the comfort of your home. The registration is inexpensive--WSMTA members pay \$15.00 for the entire day (from 10AM-3PM). Clock hours are available for public school teachers.

The conference takes place on October 4. The first session from 10AM-Noon



explores some of the influences that may have been instrumental in allowing Debussy to realize his compositional goals. The information is broad based and examples will come from Debussy's instrumental, vocal, and piano works.

The afternoon sessions from 1-3PM are all about efficiently managing some of the non-musical aspects of running a teaching business.

Follow these links for more information:

Conference website: <https://sites.google.com/view/districtivconference/home>

Registration for conference:

<https://sites.google.com/view/districtivconference/home>

Hope to see you "there!"

Joann Richardson, NCTM

## Piano MAP 2021

As you all may have speculated, the 2021 Music Artistry Program will be quite different from what we have been doing in the past. Here are three options WSMTA is offering: 1) live, in person events (as long as all the health guidelines set out by WA State are followed) 2) live virtual events (such as Zoom) 3) Pre-recorded virtual events (YouTube video submission.) Due to the complexity of too many uncertainties, our KMTA board made the decision that Piano MAP will offer only options #2 and #3.

The state chair Stephanie White wrote, "Between the two virtual event options presented, the live event fits best with the normal MAP experience, so this would be our preference. Visiting artists will not be able to respond directly to students with the YouTube submission format, and will only respond with written comments on evaluation sheets. However, we do want to give chapters flexibility to do what is the best, most workable solution for them."

In the past, our chapter has been one of the largest in MAP participation, serving about 200 students and 3-4 visiting artists in 10 days. We also have used a variety of venues, including private studios and churches. Not knowing if churches will be open to outside groups, and with different comfort levels for opening studios to other teachers, it will be impossible to plan for in person events at this point.

I already hear the groans and sighs from some of you, and I truly understand the agony. You will receive a brief survey in the next couple of days. Please respond as soon as possible. Upon receiving your response, I need to contact our visiting artists. More than ever, communication will be a very important factor for success in MAP 2021.

More details will be on your way, so stay tuned!

Sun Gamble  
KMTA Piano MAP Chair

## Strings MAP 2021

As Sun has described in the previous article, MAP will indeed be different this coming year. As for the KMTA strings community, we have a smaller (although growing!) number of teachers and students to maneuver, so we can be a bit more flexible with planning. Here's what we know: Strings MAP is scheduled for Friday and/or Saturday March 5 and 6. I received a message today from our visiting artist, Elizabeth Stuen-Walker of Bellingham, who is looking forward to working with our students!

Here is our plan:

- 1) If a church becomes open and willing to host non-members, if local regulations allow and appropriate COVID protections can be 100% followed, and if this happens within a reasonable time frame to allow for adequate planning (by mid-January), an in-person event will be held.
- 2) If any of the above qualifications are not met, then Strings MAP will take place online, using either Zoom, video submissions, or a workable hybrid.

Look for more details soon, in an email seeking your input and estimated potential student participation.

During this tough time, more than ever, students can really use the support and encouragement provided by this event. And--if we end up with option #2, I believe we can even reach more students than usual, as we offer convenient and expanded online options.

I ditto what Sun said, "stay tuned!"

Melanie Kurtzbein

KMTA Strings MAP Chair

## Voice MAP 2021

Voice MAP will be held on Feb. 7 this year, with visiting artist Leischen Moore from Pacific Lutheran University and the Lovetri Institute. I currently plan to host the event in my studio, should our guidelines allow, or move to zoom if necessary. Please email me if you have any interest in entering students in the voice MAP this year!

Melanie Stroud  
KMTA Voice MAP Chair  
[melaniejoymusic96@gmail.com](mailto:melaniejoymusic96@gmail.com)

## KMTA Partner Teachers Needed

Have you been an active member of KMTA for five years or more? If so, please consider volunteering to be a KMTA Association Partner— KMTA needs you!

The purpose of the KMTA Association Partner program is to facilitate the integration of new members into the association for the mutual benefit of the new member and the association.

As an association partner, you would be paired with a new member in order to help the new member feel at home within our chapter by:

- Inviting the new member to the monthly meeting and introducing the new member to other KMTA members
- Providing assistance and answering questions concerning any procedures that may be required for participating in student and teacher activities of KMTA.
- Encouraging active participation by the new member.

It is the one-on-one personal relationships that we form that often make us feel the most welcome when we join an organization. I hope you will take part in this program — it's a great opportunity to meet someone new and make them feel welcome.

Joann Richardson, NCTM  
[organistjoann@gmail.com](mailto:organistjoann@gmail.com)

## Tech Review: Blue Yeti USB Microphone

USB microphones can be plugged directly into computers, tablets and even smartphones to substitute for the very basic onboard microphones that come with these devices. Standalone mics capture a wider range of sounds, with richer bass and fuller treble. They are especially helpful when making music over Zoom, Skype or Facetime, because these apps often distort musical sounds in transmission.

A couple years ago, I was researching consumer-grade USB microphones that would work with the iPad for some personal recording projects. I put the Blue Yeti microphone on my birthday list, but life got busy and it stayed in the box until March 9, 2020, my first day of teaching lessons online! I am so thankful it was on my shelf, ready to go and easy to use, with either my desktop computer or my iPad.

*I have included some links to [bluemic.com](http://bluemic.com) and Amazon in the rest of this description in case you want to read more specs and reviews for yourself.*



I chose the [Blue Yeti](#) (pictured to the left, currently \$129.99) in the first place because Blue is one of the most popular microphone brands used by people making spoken-word podcasts. The company's entry-level mic is the [Snowball](#) (\$49.99), and it is optimized for vocal audio. Since I wanted a good mic for recording music, I was directed by online reviews to the Yeti instead. It was a little more expensive but... I got it as a birthday present! There's now a model between the Snowball and the Yeti called the [Yeti Nano](#) (\$99.99) that I probably would have chosen if it was available back then. The Yeti is chunky and solid; about 8" long (12" including the stand), 5" across and weighing a little over 1 pound.

A [special adapter](#) is needed to use USB microphones with iPads or iPhones. The adapter end plugs into the same jack as your charger cable. (see photos below) The microphone runs off the power supplied through the USB connection from your computer or tablet; no power plug or batteries needed! Just make sure your tablet is charged up before extended use, because the mic will draw power from the tablet battery.



Once you plug in a USB microphone, your computer should detect it and apply the correct settings to start using it immediately. Other controls are located on the back side of the microphone (left). I use the **cardioid pattern** ("heart-shaped") setting for uni-directional sound capture. If I were recording an ensemble in a room, I would choose either the stereo or omnidirectional setting to capture sound from multiple directions. The **gain** boosts the treble end of the signal and I learned quickly not to turn it up too high!

This chart (click photo to enlarge) came with the microphone to help me learn about the options and decipher the symbols. You can experiment to see what sounds best to the person on the other end, just by turning the Pattern dial on the microphone.

PATTERN MODES	PATTERN SETTING SYMBOL	SOUND SOURCE & DIRECTION
<b>CARDIOID MODE</b> Perfect for podcasting, Twitch streaming, music recording, voice overs and instruments. Cardioid mode records sound sources that are directly in front of the microphone, delivering rich, full-bodied sound.		
<b>STEREO MODE</b> Uses both the left and right channels to capture a wide, realistic sound image—ideal for recording acoustic guitar or choir and immersive experiences like ASMR videos.		
<b>OMNIDIRECTIONAL MODE</b> Picks up sound equally from all around the mic. It's best used in situations when you want to capture the ambience of "being there"—like recording a band's live performance, a multi-person podcast or a conference call.		
<b>BIDIRECTIONAL</b> Records from both the front and rear of the microphone—good for recording a duet or a two-person interview.		

You can plug headphones into the bottom of the microphone, which usually gives cleaner sound quality than using your computer speakers when you are working with a student.

The microphone comes with a sturdy tabletop stand (topmost photo), but I have attached it to a microphone stand in my studio. I just took it off the tabletop stand and screwed the mic stand connector into the matching hole in the bottom of the microphone--like mounting a camera on a tripod.

There may be other USB microphone options in this price range, but the Blue Yeti is top-rated and I've been happy with mine! Do you have a birthday coming?? :)

--Jane Melin, Technology Chair

## Do you have info to distribute to KMTA?

Please send all communication items (website updates/documents, email blasts, Quavers articles, etc.) to Melanie Kurtzbein: [kurtzbein4@gmail.com](mailto:kurtzbein4@gmail.com) . Plain text in an email body and image files work best.

**Quavers** articles should be submitted at least 3 days before the end of the month.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Next KMTA General Membership Meeting via Zoom:  
Friday October 9, 2020

Instrumental Teachers Virtual Ensemble videos due  
October 15.

### MORE FROM KMTA

*For the latest information on upcoming events, watch for email alerts to items posted on our [News](#) page.*

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