



# In Tune with NFM

April 2026

National Federation of Music Clubs



*Shower your community with music!*

## Message from the President

This season of renewal and growth invites us to celebrate the joy of fresh starts and the chance to rejuvenate our minds and spirits.

If your state has an annual meeting, be sure to invite one of our amazing **Young Artist** winners to perform. Even if you don't have annual meeting, please consider it. No matter how simple or small, being together will bring huge rewards to your state organization.

This year, our **National Music Week** celebration is May 3-10 and the theme is **Music...is our Constant Companion**. Ask your Governor and Mayor for a Proclamation, download the coloring page, spread the word throughout your community and state – and Celebrate! I will look forward to seeing your photos and programs.

*This newsletter is so full of exciting information that some browsers will truncate it. If you don't see the "in closing" section at the bottom, click on the link your browser provides to view it in its entirety!*

*Please invite your club and state members to register [online](#) to receive this newsletter directly or share with [this link](#).*



### Register Now for NFMF Conference 2026: Sonoran Summer Sounds in Scottsdale!

The National Federation of Music Clubs will gather June 9–13, 2026, in beautiful Scottsdale, Arizona, at the Embassy Suites by Hilton Scottsdale Resort for a conference centered on inspiring performances and the vibrant musical culture of the Southwest. The week begins with a special excursion to Organ Stop Pizza, home to one of the world’s largest and most celebrated theater organs. Attendees will enjoy a lively luncheon concert featuring this remarkable instrument, followed by a visit to First United Methodist Church of Mesa for a demonstration of its magnificent pipe organ by Dr. Valerie Harris along with the Orgelkids tabletop demonstration organ. See how this FAMA grant-funded project is used to inspire the next generation of musicians!

The concert lineup highlights the rich cultural heritage of Arizona. Morning Star Native American Ensemble will present an engaging program of traditional Native American music and dance, offering a meaningful glimpse into the artistry and traditions of the region’s Indigenous peoples. Pasi3n Fusion, an all-women’s mariachi trio, will bring energy and color with their vibrant performance, blending beloved mariachi traditions with contemporary flair and celebrating the strong Hispanic influence in Arizona’s musical landscape.

A featured highlight of the conference will be a recital by acclaimed Navajo pianist and composer Connor Chee, sponsored by Alfred Music. Internationally recognized for his ability to weave Native American themes with classical piano traditions, Chee’s music—featured on the NFMF Festival Bulletin—has inspired students across the country. His performance, along with the unique musical experiences throughout the week, promises an unforgettable celebration of artistry, culture, and connection in the heart of the Sonoran Desert.

Cheryl Langley, *Convention Chair*

[Register for Conference](#)

[Hotel Reservations](#)

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## America’s 250 Celebration Award Contest

Celebrate America’s 250th Anniversary with a program, performance, presentation, composition, or anything else that highlights American music during the month of July. This contest is open to ALL Members of the NFMF: Juniors, Seniors, Student Collegiate, or clubs and states. Be creative and **CELEBRATE AMERICA!**



**CONTEST**

**CELEBRATING AMERICA 250!**

**N**ow is the time  
**F**or a  
**M**usical Heritage  
**C**elebration!






For all NFMC Sr, Jr & Student Collegiate members  
 Contest dates: July 1 - July 31, 2026  
 Submissions due by **AUGUST 10**  
 \$250 prizes will be awarded for winning Jr and Sr programs



Go to [nfm-music.org](https://nfm-music.org)  
 to submit your club, state, or personal  
 Celebrating America performances, programs,  
 or compositions

[Click here for requirements](#)

[Click here to submit entry](#)

**Connecting Across the Keys: NFMC at the 2026 MTNA Conference**



It was a privilege for the **National Federation of Music Clubs** to be part of the exhibit hall at the **2026 MTNA National Conference in Chicago**. This landmark event, celebrating MTNA's 150th anniversary, provided a wonderful opportunity to connect with dedicated educators, composers, and artists in sharing the many ways NFMC supports American Music — from our Festivals program to our many scholarships and awards. We enjoyed meeting so many colleagues, and we look forward to the continued collaboration that strengthens our musical community.

**Enjoy some highlights from the Conference!**



## Division Reports

### American Music Division

Ruth Morrow, Chair



I wish to announce the winners of the Professor R.A. Schramm Parade of American Music for 2026. I received 13 entries from all over the United States. The programs, publicity, pictures, and entertainers were amazing!

1st Place- \$300 -Waco Euterpean Music Club, Waco, Texas

2nd Place-\$200- Gwinnett County Music Teachers, Gwinnett County, Georgia

3rd Place-\$100- Fargo- Moorhead Area Music Club, North Dakota

3rd Place \$100-Ponca City Federated Music Club, Ponca City, Oklahoma

#### *Honorable Mentions:*

Andante Music club, Bella Vista, Arkansas

Fort Worth Euterpean Music Club, Fort Worth, Texas

MacDowell Music Club, Madison, Wisconsin

Musical Art Society, Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Scherro Music Club, Norfolk, Virginia

The Morning Etude Club, Ellisville, Missouri

The Music Club of Greenville, South Carolina

Thursday Music Club. Grand Forks, North Dakota

Warren Music Club, Warren, Ohio

April is the month to prepare the reports due to the American Music Division in May. Please send in your American Music, Folk Music, Just Jazz, and American Women Composer Reports. April is also Jazz month so let's hear all those blues numbers!

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## National Music Week

Kathie White, Chair

National Music Week is near and hopefully your club already has exciting plans in place for **May 3-10!** The theme "**Music...is our Constant Companion**" has certainly been a good one! It has already inspired over 60 Juniors to submit essays back in January for the Jr. Essay contest. I am now looking forward to May and hearing about our music clubs' expansion of that theme throughout the nation!

Remember our purpose is to take music out of our clubs and into our communities! We want to share the power of music to promote understanding, friendliness and sympathy among all people. In today's world, this is needed more than ever!



It's not too late to explore or use the resources available on the NFMC website to give ideas and materials for your celebration. Some of the resources available: [AR 12-2](#) Mayor's Proclamation, [AR 12-3](#) Governor's Proclamation, AR 12-8 Kid's Coloring Sheet of the theme, [AR 12-7](#) NMW Theme Poster.

## National Music Week Reports

**Local Clubs – by June 1:** We would love to read about what your club has done during NMW! Please send the National Music Week Club Report (AR 12-1) to your state's NMW chair along with programs, photos, etc. Be sure to give credit to NFMC on all your printed materials. Newspaper clippings must include the name of the paper, date of article, and city. Underline in red each mention of National Music Week and National Federation of Music Clubs.

**State Chairs – by June 10:** State NMW Chairs will compile all information on form AR 12-5 and make recommendations for awards based on quality and amount of participation. These reports must be postmarked and sent to Regional Chairs. The Regional Chairs include Southeastern Region: Bobette Spear; Northeastern Region: Paula Kudelko; and North and South-Central and Western Regions: Donna Kinslow. Club Award Certificates will be sent this summer to state presidents. The awards can be either mailed to the club presidents or presented to the state club recipients at the fall meeting. I am planning to compile a list of winners and to share some of the wonderful activities representing the 2026 NMW theme in my next article in the fall!

If you are a Jr. Counselor or Jr. Club Sponsor, begin thinking of ways now to encourage your juniors to consider writing an essay for next year's theme: "Music...is a Never-ending Tale". If you are a state or club president or program chair, begin thinking now of ways to interpret that theme for May 2-9, 2027.

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## Membership & Education

Natlynn Hayes, Chair

I hope this will help states that have new clubs wanting to join this time of year. I had a very wise Past State President mentoring me as I navigated being a State President. Whenever I had a question, her first response was, "Have you checked the

Manual?" Of course, I hadn't. I just wanted her to answer me. Was it hard? Yes. Did I learn? Definitely!

Now, we have the Bylaws, Standing Rules, and Manual, all on line in Publications, under Administration. You can find most everything right there, but you have to check it out. A couple of things that I would like to bring to your attention since it seems to come up multiple times in social media concerning dues payment.

The Bylaws in ARTICLE XII. FINANCE, SECTION 3A, states:

\*Membership dues and fees shall be paid through the State Treasurer who shall immediately forward the national dues and fees to the Office Manager.

NFMC goes through the State Treasurer because every state organization and local clubs have their own dues amount. National dues are the same across the board, within each level of membership.

Coming back to the new clubs joining NFMC for the first time, the Bylaws in ARTICLE XII. FINANCE, SECTION 4C, states:

\*Senior Organizations joining the Federation for the first time after April 1 shall have their dues credited to the following fiscal year.

I would encourage you to check out the NFMC Bylaws for yourself.

**HAPPY SPRING!!!**

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## **Arts Division**

**Ellen Leapaldt**, Chair

As April 1 arrives, the beginning steps of reports for Arts Division have begun too! The awards for: Music Outreach, Ethnic Performance (Jr and Sr), Celebrate Strings (Jr and Sr), and Choral Music. Reports using the AR forms are due to your state on April 1 and then move on to Regional or National. Sacred Music is the exception with report date of May 1. Check page 12 of the competitions and awards chart for form numbers.

May 3-10 is National Music Week with the theme: "Music is...our constant companion" National Music Week has been celebrated by NFMC for over 100 years. Some ideas for your celebration: put posters in public spaces, mention the celebration in church bulletins and newsletters, give recitals in public spaces and invite everyone, ask your students to announce it at their schools, create games about music that is consistently on your mind or play list! Celebrate all the music that you love and the NFMC programs that encourage your involvement! After the week is complete, report your activities using [AR 12-1](#).

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## **Public Relations Division**

**Julie Watson**, Chair

Spring is here by the calendar, hopefully the weather will agree. This is also the time that we (National) want to hear about your club year! Most club reports have a deadline of April (1 or 15). Some of which could potentially earn your club money for great programs/activities! See page vii of the manual for a list of all the due dates. (search Manual on the website for quick access).

Have you signed up for our NFMC Conference in Scottsdale June 9-13? We would love to see you there! We have many great things planned! Speaking of which, do you know a business, publisher or composer that would want to get their name out and help support our convention? The advertiser/media kit can be found on our website - but you'll have to be quick - today is the deadline!

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## **Student/Collegiate Division**

**Sheila Shusterich**, Chair

It's April Fool's Day! Hope you're having fun! Students love this day and, as I recall, playing practical jokes on their teachers, as well!

I am happy to report that we had a good Student/Collegiate Award season and checks are being delivered to our winners. However, it seems no matter how hard we try, there are still awards in this division that have no entrants. I guess we need to widen the circle! Talk up the Federation with everyone! You never know who might learn of the NFMC awards at a time when it could mean either continuing with one's education, or pausing to work in order to have the needed funds. As the former U.S. Senator from Minnesota, Paul Wellstone said, "We all do better, when we all do better." So, spread the word about our awards! Today, tomorrow and always!

Speaking of awards, this academic year we have a new chair for the Frances Nelson Tuba Award. This \$800 annual award is now chaired by Dr. Zach Marley, a low brass artist and teacher equally versed on all low brass instruments. Dr. Marley has been very successful in international competitions including the prestigious Leonard Falcone Artist Tuba Itec Artist Tuba competition, the Rich Matteson Jazz competition, and the International Women's Brass Solo competition. Zach can be heard on many recordings and through LowBrassU. He has reached many musicians through LowBrassU with millions of views across platforms. Dr. Marley is an avid performer and is the bass trombonist for the Fargo Moorhead Symphony Orchestra and JazzMN. Zach is the instructor of tuba and euphonium at Lawrence Conservatory in Appleton, WI. We are pleased to have Dr. Marley as one of our S/C Chairs. Thank you for serving the Federation!

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## Competitions and Awards

[Lucinda Lear](#), Chair

There is a book in my library titled, "[When All Else Fails, Read the Directions](#)". Whenever I had questions about something I was trying to put together or figure out, inevitably my husband would ask, "Did you read the directions?"

The [C&A Chart](#) is put together in such a way as to have Directions right at the beginning, after the cover page. These are important to note and read. However, one of the other informational pages is at the end and that is the Table of Contents. We will be striving to change this page so that it is right after the Instructions. Too often, people (whether on Facebook or with magazine articles) neglect to read to the end. Therefore, we plan to revise the chart so that it will begin with Instructions, then have the Table of Contents, then list each of the age categories of awards starting with our Adult, then Student/Collegiate, then Juniors and ending with the Club Awards. Within each age category there are Annual and Biennial awards and that is how the chart is organized. We want to make the [C&A Chart](#) a resource and reference for all to use and have and hope this will help.

Take time to peruse the chart. Review all the applicable awards for you or your students. Contact the chair of those awards for details and application instructions. Be proactive and avoid having to say, "I didn't know" whether it is about an award or a deadline or a requirement. Read the directions first and plan to succeed!

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## Junior Division

[Lori Jessen](#), Chair



The end of the NFMC year is in sight...Festival season is drawing to a close; most of the award deadlines have passed and winners are being selected; and we are

gearing up for the Conference in Scottsdale.

Part of being division chair is the promotion of NFMC. To this end, I was part of the team that manned the NFMC exhibitor's booth at the MTNA Conference in Chicago in March. We met so many wonderful people! Some of them hadn't ever heard about NFMC and were thrilled to learn of all the possibilities we offer. Some were current members and came to offer input. But one of the most common comments was how Festivals was a much-loved part of a teacher's studio.

Students are excited to work towards their cups. They enjoy the music from the Bulletin. And teachers especially appreciate how the Festivals program is for every student, providing a performance opportunity that is not a competition, but rather a quest to perform their very best and make a magical musical moment in time. It was such a blessing to hear all the positive remarks about NFMC and how many were so very happy to see us there at MTNA. Working together with other music organizations strengthens the musical fabric of America.

We need the power of music to help bring peace "to the inner life of our nation," especially in this banner year of celebrating America's 250th birthday. Remember to reach out if you need help, have questions, or have input to offer. Hope to see you all in Scottsdale!

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## **Festivals**

**[Debbie Wisler](#)**, chair

Celebrating Achievement in NFMC Festivals Debbie Wisler, National Festivals Chair NFMC Festivals recognizes musical achievement through Federation Cups and Honorary Certificates. Cups are earned every few years through a point system based on Festival ratings. Honorary Certificates celebrate consecutive superior ratings, with new certificates possible each year.

Dawn Steggerda's been busy processing the many President and Grand Cup applications, while my inbox has been filling with dozens of 12 yr + certificate applications. What a wonderful view we have of the success of NFMC's Festivals! This year has brought many impressive accomplishments. A few notable honorary certificate highlights:

Isabelle (VA) — 12 consecutive superiors in two events

Parker (FL) — 12 consecutive superiors at age 15, including four years in the highest Piano Solo class

Katherine (VA) — 12 consecutive superiors at age 75

**We celebrate all performers and their teachers! Their achievements reflect dedication and remind us why we do what we do year after year.**



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## **Dance**

**[Lisa Moore](#)**, chair

Please help spread the word about "DANCE AWARD" [JR 17-1](#)

**May 1** is the magic deadline for submissions. Students are asked to prepare two recordings (MP4 format). Entry fee is \$10. Repertoire list of the pieces should also be uploaded. Include: Names of Dances, Composers & durations.

[Dance Requirements form](#)

[Dance Awards Online Application](#)

## Junior Club Achievement

[Virginia Feitelson](#), chair

### Calling All Junior Counselors!

Gather your achievements and help me display the wonderful work Junior Clubs are doing across the nation at this year's NFMC Conference. You may create your own poster (letter size, portrait orientation), or simply send me your photos with a few details and I will gladly place them into a template and create a poster for you. Please email me your posters and information before June 1<sup>st</sup> [vfeitelson@gmail.com](mailto:vfeitelson@gmail.com) (Make sure to obtain permission if any students appear in your photos). I look forward to sharing and showcasing the many ways NFMC Juniors are making a musical difference in their communities.

As the club year comes to a close, one meaningful way to show appreciation to your club officers and members is by giving them an official NFMC Junior Club pin. This is something they can wear with pride as a reminder that they are truly valued members of the NFMC national organization.

\*\*Don't forget to complete and email me your [JR 1-1](#) form by **May 1**, to receive an award of merit.

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## Angie Greer Poetry Award

[Debra Hughes](#), chair

*This is to honor our many Juniors who perform at NFMC Festival and to remind them of the Angie Greer Poetry Award which is available to give a voice to their music experiences.*

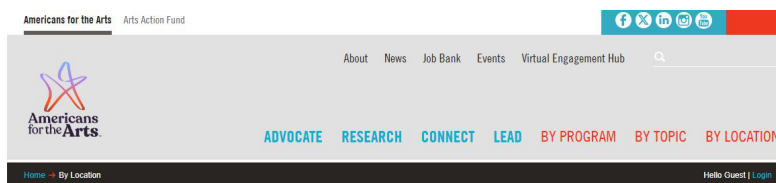
### Federated Festival Beauty

Charming, eager musicians gather near,  
scores in hand, young spirits so dear,  
Shining with practice, hope, and might,  
before the judges their notes take flight.  
One by one Juniors bravely perform,  
as their memory of scores swarm.  
Some are nervous, others' hearts race,  
hopeful courage shows in every face.  
Oh, what a superb and splendid day -  
young artists performing their own way.  
American music, proud and strong,  
lives on through every song.

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## Arts Advocacy

[Valerie Harris](#), Chair



Want to find out what's happening in your state? Check out [Americans for the Arts](#) organization under "locations" to see legislation, arts advocacy organizations, fun

fact sheets, philanthropic efforts and more in YOUR STATE!

## In Closing

*Music is bursting forth all over!*



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