



Letter from the President

It's amazing to think that in just five years, the Downers Grove Music Club will hit the century mark. Yet, our organization continues to thrive and to enjoy strong roots in the community.

Moreover, our music club remains true to its historic values: we're still very passionate about the musical arts and the key role it plays in the vitality of our community.

This issue of our newsletter highlights a number of the ways DGMC works to engage local artists and support music education in our schools. From our Spring House Benefit Concert (raising support for student music education), the Piano Festival Honors Recital and the Rising Stars Concert (showcasing talented student musicians), the Celebrate Spring! Concert (part of our free public concert series sponsored jointly with our partner, the Downers Grove Public Library), to the recent award of numerous music scholarships and private-lesson awards by DGMC to worthy students, our music club has been quite busy!

As we approach the century mark, it is interesting to think about *how we connect to music* has changed over the years. Today, most young adults listen to music through ear pods on their smart phones. I wonder if a 100 years ago, our DGMC founders were concerned how technology – radio and early phonographs back then – might diminish the bonds between music and community. We don't know for sure what sparked DGMC's formation nearly 100 years ago, but it's clear that DGMC has made strong contributions in championing community music engagement over its entire history.

Our heartfelt thanks to our many members, friends and generous supporters who have helped sustain DGMC's work! Without your support, none of this would be possible.

Tom Ewing, president

Spring House Benefit Concert

DGMC hosts two fund-raisers annually, both in the form of house concerts, which provide a very intimate atmosphere for both performers and listeners. As with the Fall House Concert held last November, our March 18th Spring Benefit was again sold out to an appreciative audience of DGMC friends and members whose generous donations go 100% to support the DGMC Rising Star and College Music Awards.

The event featured the artistry of (clockwise from top right) Michèle Leks (violin), Philip Okunev (violin), Carolyn May (flute), Julie Spring (harp) and Chris Garofalo (piano). The [concert program](#) and the [event photos](#) are available online (click the links to view).

We are very grateful to the artists who donated their time and wonderful talent, as well as the donors who generously supported



this event and make our student education awards program possible. With the success of the two benefit concerts, we are able to fully fund our student awards program again this year. 🎵

2022 Piano Festival & Competition Honors Recital



DGMC has a long history of supporting student music education in the community. We sponsored our first student Piano Festival 79 years ago to challenge and encourage local student musicians. It's also been a tradition for top-ranked participants to perform at the annual honors recital. In 1965 a competition level was added to the Piano Festival to provide cash awards.

This year's Honors Recital returned as a live, in-person event. It was held at the Downers Grove Public Library on Sunday, March 13, 2022.

Congratulations to all the students who participated for your hard work! Many thanks also to all the volunteers and judges who worked diligently to make this year's Piano Festival & Competition a success. Finally, we deeply

appreciate The Family of Beatrice L. Chiswick and the Rotary Club of Downers Grove for again funding the Junior and Senior Competition First Place Awards. The students who received cash awards are:

Junior Competition	
Kevin Xue	First Place, \$300 Award, Beatrice L. Chiswick Scholarship Fund
Nicole Sun	Second Place, \$150.00 Award, DGMC Music Award Fund
Mia Qin	Third Place, \$75.00 Award, DGMC Music Award Fund
Senior Competition	
Edie Park	First Place, \$500.00 Award, Rotary Club of Downers Grove
Pierre Hanlet	Second Place, \$250.00 Award, DGMC Music Award Fund
Mary Kish	Third Place, \$125.00 Award, DGMC Music Award Fund

Rising Stars Concert

The 2022 Rising Stars Concert was held on Tuesday, April 5, 2022 at 7:00 pm at the Downers Grove Public Library and featured the 2021 DGMC Rising Star recipients, two first place 2022 DGMC Piano Competition winners, one DGMC String Lesson Award winner and a Downers Grove South High School jazz combo.

We were blown away by the amazing talent of these young performers, but don't take our word for it! You can view the performance online [here](#).

The concert was opened by a *Jazzy Prelude* performed by the Downers Grove South High School jazz combo, Zach Gresik, leader. Rising Stars performers were: Norah Zimolzak, cello (2021 DGMC Private Lesson Award Recipient) accompanied by Charlotte Ewing on piano; Kevin Xue, piano (2022 DGMC Piano Festival First Place Junior Competition); Ethan Weingust, bassoon (2021 DGMC Rising Star Music Award Recipient); Cameron Hejny, B-flat clarinet (2021 DGMC Rising Star Music Award Recipient) accompanied by Elizabeth Vaughan, piano; Melissa Parkinson, double bass (2021 DGMC Rising Star Music Award Recipient) accompanied by Connie Lyda, piano; Edie Park, piano (2022 DGMC Piano Festival First Place Senior Competition); Penny Ham, flute (2021 DGMC Rising Star Music Award Recipient) accompanied by Elizabeth Vaughan, piano;



Clockwise from left, Cameron Hejny, Francesca Korbitz and Edie Park

Isaac Hsu, cello (2021 DGMC Rising Star Music Award Recipient) accompanied by Maggie Chen, piano; Philip Okunev, violin (2021 DGMC Rising Star Music Award Recipient) accompanied by Chris Garofalo, piano; Francesca Korbitz, flute (2021 DGMC Rising Star Music Award Recipient) accompanied by Elizabeth Vaughan, piano. Congratulations students – your performances were all truly amazing! 🎵

2021-2022 Club Year Draws to a Close in May

The DGMC is presenting its final program, *A Mother's Day Serenade*, on **Sunday, May 8th at 2:00 pm** at the Downers Grove Library. This concert features the Korbitz family – Angela (soprano), Ron (guitar) and Francesca (flute) – with a special treat by mother/daughter piano duo, Louise and Noelle Kelly and special piano accompaniment by Chris Garofalo.

The program includes a set of love songs for soprano and guitar; a set of Renaissance pieces played on lute guitar; a song for flute, soprano

and piano; songs for soprano and piano by Poulenc; and music for flute and piano. The concert is part of the Concert Series that we co-host with the Downers Grove Public Library.

Finally, our final Board Meeting of the year will be a Zoom meeting held on Monday, May 16th at 10:30 am. Traditionally, this meeting is open to all members. If you are a member and are interested in participating, please contact Tom Ewing for a zoom link. 🎵

Student Music Awards

Truly one of our joys is to encourage youth to discover and develop their musical talents. Each spring, the Downers Grove Music Club presents a number of Rising Stars Awards (\$400 each) and College Music Awards (\$1,000 each) to deserving music students in their senior year at a District 99 high school who are planning to attend college in the fall following graduation. These monetary awards are given to students at each District 99 high school in the areas of Band, Choir and Orchestra. The recipients are selected based on the merit of their musical accomplishments. The goal of this music award is to recognize and reward those students who have worked very hard and have achieved a high level of accomplishment as a musician. This year's Rising Star and College Music Awards recipients have been chosen and will be announced at upcoming awards nights or concerts at the two District 99 high schools.

Our high school music awards are funded by our benefit house concerts. 100% of the proceeds from our benefit concerts go to the awards. In addition, all musicians who perform at our benefit events donate their time.

Thanks to the Shelby Bulut Memorial Fund, DGMC also presents Private Lesson Awards to 5th –7th grade students enrolled in the Orchestra program in District 58. The Private Lesson Music Award this year have been awarded to 7 students pictured at right.

The award amount is approximately \$360 per student, to cover the typical cost of 12 private lessons. Many deserving 5th, 6th and 7th grade string students applied by submitting their written application to indicate their interest in pursuing private lessons.

The award winners were selected based on their demonstration of hard work so far and their eagerness to challenge themselves going forward. The hope is that once these students have been introduced to private lessons, they will continue beyond the initial 12-week period to enjoy many years of music excellence.

2022 Private Lesson Music Awards		
SCHOOL	GRADE	STUDENT NAME
Pierce Downer Elementary School	6th	Addelynn Amidei
Whittier Elementary School	6th	Andre Cheng
Whittier Elementary School	6th	Caroline Foster
Lester Elementary School	5th	Mari Sharkey
Indian Trail Elementary School	6th	Samuel Martincic
Hillcrest Elementary School (will attend O'Neill)	6th	Wil Thacker
Fairmount Elementary School	5th	Leah Lopez



Clockwise from top left: District 58 Orchestra teacher Lisa Rose with Addelynn Amidei, Andre Cheng and Caroline Foster; DGMC's Gloria Salazar with Mari Sharkey; DGMC's Tom Ewing with Wil Thacker and Samuel Martincic; and Leah Lopez with DGMC's Gloria Salazar.

Congratulations to all the talented students who won DGMC student music awards. 🎵



Celebrate Spring! Concert

Charlotte Ewing, VP of Artistic Development, put together a great program on April 24th to celebrate “Earth Month.” What better way to celebrate than with a collection of beautiful music performed by DGMC musicians and friends.

The free public concert was well attended and featured the artistry of Charlotte Ewing, piano; Les Trois Medemoiselles Musicales

(Nancy Kandl, flute; Janet Zuffa, clarinet; Jacqueline Jellison-Landis, oboe); Emily Fallert, flute; Robert Gordon, oboe d’amore and Chris Garofalo, piano.

The [event photos](#) and [video performance](#) are available online (click the links to view). 🎵

CONCERT SERIES

All Concert Series programs are held at the Downers Grove Public Library unless noted otherwise. Reservations are recommended via our website or by calling the library at 630-960-1200. Concerts are open to the public, and with the exception of our fundraising House Concerts, all of our music programs are free of charge.



A Mother’s Day Serenade Sunday, May 8, 2022 at 2:00 pm

Soprano Angela Presutti Korbitz, guitarist Ron Korbitz and flutist Francesca Korbitz will be featured in this concert presented by DGMC musicians. [RSVP](#)



Dave Rudolf’s Beach Party Sunday, June 12, 2022 at 2:00 pm

Do you want to lie back and soak up the vibe of beaches and warm winds? Then come join Dave as he performs tunes by Jimmy Buffet, Harry Belafonte, and more. Beach attire encouraged. [RSVP](#)

Election of officers

The positions open for election for the 2022-2024 term are treasurer, VP artistic development and member-at-large. The nominating committee (Chris Garofalo, chair, Gloria Salazar and Rich Penner) has proposed that the current officers in these positions be nominated for re-election. They are: Charlotte Ewing

for VP Artistic Development, Janice Sleeter for Treasurer and Rich Penner for Member-At-Large. Voting will be conducted via an electronic ballot emailed to all members on May 1st. Balloting is open until May 15th. Please remember to vote! 🎵

West Towns Chorus Goes “Hollywood” for Annual Spring Show



There won't be anything trivial about the West Towns Chorus Spring Show that will take place on Sunday, May 15, this year. Despite the fact that trivia will be an element of the proceedings, one might say that the concert will be “significantly syncopated” and “musically memorable” – anything but trivial!

West Towns Chorus (WTC), the 2021 Illinois State District Champions, is a group of several dozen men who sing Barbershop tunes, in genres from pop and rock to ballads, folk, patriotic numbers, and more. Directed by Carrie Marcotte of Bolingbrook, this year's Spring Show will feature a variety of hit songs from movies, Marcotte explained. The repertoire will include “Be Our Guest” from “Beauty and the Beast” and “Do You Hear the People Sing?” from “Les Misérables,” among other popular tunes.

Musical numbers will be interspersed with trivia questions for audience members. Prizes for the most correct answers will be awarded at the end of the show.

Also performing in the program is the Naperville Men's Glee Club under the direction of John Rakes of Warrenville. The Glee Club will present a selection of numbers including George and Ira Gershwin's “I Got Rhythm,” and Michael Engelhard's “I Will Sing,” according to Director Rakes.

The quartet “Center Ring,” the 2019 Illinois District Quartet Champions, will also be featured. “Center Ring” is comprised of lead Ben Dirks of Elburn, tenor Craig Hall of Channahon, bass Andy Isbell of Bloomington, and baritone Patrick Henders of Lindenhurst.

The Sunday, May 15th concert will be held at 3 p.m. at Trinity Green Trails Church, 2701 Maple Ave. in Lisle. Tickets are \$18 if purchased in advance and \$20 at the door. For more information, or to purchase tickets ahead of time, visit westtowns.tix.com, or call 630-201-5544. Seating is general admission.

To learn more about joining the chorus, which rehearses at 7 p.m. on Monday nights in Downers Grove, contact WTC member Bob Nicodem at 708-337-3895. 🎵

ORGANIZATIONS and EVENTS

Downers Grove Choral Society is in its 63rd season. For more information, visit www.dgcs.org.

Grant Street String Quartet: This quartet was formed in 2010 by four professional musicians in the western suburban area of Chicago. For more information, visit www.grantstreetstringquartet.weebly.com.

PianoForte Studios: Thomas Zoells, Director, and Owner of the PianoForte Chicago piano store. For information, visit pianofortechicago.com/concerts-events on upcoming piano concerts at the PianoForte Studios, 1335 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago. You can also call for information at (312) 291-0000.

Sinfonietta Bel Canto with Dan Pasquale D'Andrea, Artistic Director/Conductor. For more information or to learn about upcoming events, visit www.SinfoniettaBelCanto.org or call 630-384-5007.

West Towns Chorus: Chartered in 1948, the group is one of the premier men's a cappella choruses in the Chicago area. For more information is available at www.westtowns.org. 🎵