

# Noteworthy

A publication of The Wednesday Morning Music Club (Austin)

Website: [musicclubaustin.org](http://musicclubaustin.org)

April 4, 2018

## 5 Reasons Why Music Boosts Brain Activity

Music has been known to affect those with dementia and Alzheimer's, but why it has an effect on these patients has not always been clear – until now.

A recent study shows that dementia and Alzheimer's patients can recall memories and emotions, and have enhanced mental performance after singing classic hits and show tunes from movies and musicals — a breakthrough in understanding how music affects those with dementia and Alzheimer's.

Researchers determined the effect music has on dementia patients, by leading half of the participants through selected songs while the other half listened to the music being played. After the musical treatment, all participants took cognitive ability and life satisfaction tests. These tests showed how participants scored significantly better when being lead through songs, rather than only listening.

Here are five reasons why researchers believe that music boosts brain activity:

### 1. Music evokes emotions that bring memories.

Music can evoke emotion in even the most advanced of Alzheimer's patients. Neurologist Oliver Sacks says that, "Music evokes emotion, and emotion can bring with it memory... it brings back the feeling of life when nothing else can." By pairing music with every day activities, patients can develop a rhythm that helps them to recall the memory of that activity, improving cognitive ability over time.

### 2. Musical aptitude and appreciation are two of the last remaining abilities in dementia patients.

Linda Maguire, lead author on the study, wrote, "Musical aptitude and music appreciation are two of the last remaining abilities in patients with Alzheimer's." Because these two abilities remain long after other abilities have passed, music is an excellent way to reach beyond the disease and reach the person.

### 3. Music can bring emotional and physical closeness.

In the later stages of dementia, patients often lose the ability to share emotions with caregivers. Through music, as long as they are ambulatory, they can often dance. Dancing can lead to hugs, kisses and touching, which brings security and memories.

### 4. Singing is engaging.

The singing sessions in the study engaged more than just the brain and the area related to singing. As singing activated the left side of the brain, listening to music sparked activity in the right and watching the class activated visual areas of the brain. With so much of the brain being stimulated, the patients were exercising more mind power than usual.

### 5. Music can shift mood, manage stress and stimulate positive interactions.

The Alzheimer's Foundation of America has an entire web page dedicated to music therapy in Alzheimer's patients. They say that, "When used appropriately, music can shift mood, manage stress-induced agitation, stimulate positive interactions, facilitate cognitive function and coordinate motor movements." This is because music requires little to no mental processing, so singing music does not require the cognitive function that is not present in most dementia patients.

Dr. Jane Flinn, a researcher from George Mason University, says that the study should encourage caregivers.

*"The message is: do not give up on these men and women. You want to be performing things that engage them, and singing is cheap, effortless and engaging."*

From <https://www.alzheimers.net/2014-07-21>



# President's Message

Janie Keys

*Outreach and music: Good works*

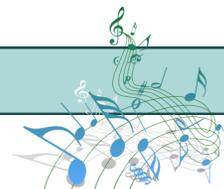
Some of our members do volunteer work in retirement and long term care centers. They bring music to those residents, and many times the music reaches those with dementia or Alzheimer's. Carolyn McColloch is one such member who plays for singalongs at Beth Israel. She relates her experience with enthusiasm. "It is so meaningful to them and gives their caregivers some respite. In the past, one woman burst into tears as we were singing 'I Remember You Always.' Singing triggers memories, and Ann (we never know last names) remembered something from her past. The volunteers lead the songs, and sometimes everyone ends up dancing!"

Music Outreach Co-Chair Charles Palmer reported there were eight members who filled out the music outreach form. In the space of a year, the total number of volunteer hours given by those members was 412.(!)

Member Joy Gooden alerted me to an organization called SWAN SONGS. This non-profit group began in the early nineties when Austin musician Christine Albert and psychotherapist Gaea Logan began organizing private concerts for those who were terminally ill or nearing the end of life. This group "brings to the home or health care facility intimate personalized concerts that enable the patient, family and friends to focus beyond the illness and come together through the medium of music." All styles of music are offered. Find out more about this very worthwhile organization by going to <http://www.swansongs.org/>

*Looking ahead:* Don't miss the **Pops program on April 4th**. Elizabeth Lerner, Co-Chair of Hospitality Committee, would like for you to know there will be something different this year: a new seating arrangement instead of tables. Light refreshments will be served in the adjoining room after the meeting. Please plan to join us for lemonade and cookies. For a preview, go to <http://www.kmfa.org/events> (choose classical live). The updated program will be emailed to you, along with parking information, the day before the program.

## Events Calendar



**Metropolitan Opera in local Cinemas** - <https://www.metopera.org/Season/In-Cinemas>

**Mar. 31 @ 11:55 PM**

*Così fan tutte* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. A winning cast comes together for Phelim McDermott's clever vision of Mozart's comedy about the sexes, set in a carnival-esque, funhouse environment inspired by 1950s Coney Island—complete with bearded ladies, fire eaters, and a Ferris wheel. Manipulating the action are the Don Alfonso of Christopher Maltman and the Despina of Tony Award-winner Kelli O'Hara, with Amanda Majeski, Serena Malfi, Ben Bliss, and Adam Plachetka as the pairs of young lovers who test each other's faithfulness. David Robertson conducts.

**Austin Ballet** - [balletaustin.org](http://balletaustin.org)

**Apr. 6 & 7 @ 8:00 PM, Apr. 8 @ 3:00 PM** – The Long Center

*Exit Wounds: Sharing Stories of Courage*. World premiere commissioned by Dr. Beverly Dale. When loss rips through you—and when life takes from you—transcendence requires courage. In this most personal of works, Stephen Mills explores what it is to acknowledge human fear, yet ultimately choose courage. *Exit Wounds* explores situations in Mills' life in which he witnessed acts of courage that altered his personal perspective. Chapter 1: FIELDS, choreography by Stephen Mills, music by Graham Reynolds; Chapter 2: FOUR MORTAL MEN, choreography Stephen Mills, music Claude Debussy; Chapter 3: TRUTH REVEALED BY TIME, choreography by Stephen Mills, music by Joby Talbot and Bryce Dessner.

**La Follia Austin Baroque** – [lafollia.org](http://lafollia.org)

**Apr. 7 @ 8:00 PM & Apr. 8 at 3:00 PM** – Redeemer Presbyterian Church, 2111 Alexander Avenue

*Concertos* by J. S. Bach featuring **Anton Nel**. The fifth and final concert in La Follia's all-Bach concert season features the incomparable Anton Nel performing on harpsichord. Featured works with Mr. Nel are the *Triple Concerto* and the *Harpsichord Concerto in E Major*. Stephen Redfield, concertmaster, will perform the *Concerto in A minor*. Marcus McGuff, Baroque flute, and Mr. Redfield will join Mr. Nel on the *Triple Concerto*. All works are accompanied by the La Follia String Ensemble.

**Austin Chamber Music** – [austinchambermusic.org](http://austinchambermusic.org)

**April 7 @ 7:30 PM** – First Presbyterian Church, 8001 Mesa Drive

*Ardent Aries – Saturday Synchronism Concert*. Program: *Piano Trio No. 44 in E Major* by Joseph Haydn; *Chaconne in C minor for Violin and Piano* by J. S. Bach/arr. by Felix Mendelssohn; *Trio élégiaque No. 2, Op. 9*. Featuring Sandy Yamamoto, violin; Amy Levine-Tsang, cello; Michelle Schumann, piano.

**Austin Symphony** – [austinsymphony.org](http://austinsymphony.org)

**April 13 & 14 @ 7:59 PM** – The Long Center

Beethoven's *Fifth*. Hear one of most recognizable pieces in the classical repertory, Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5!* This is one you don't want to miss. The evening will begin with an upbeat piece written by American composer Michael Torke. The ASO will then play Leonard Bernstein's *Serenade*. ASO Music Director, Peter Bay, had this to say about the piece, "Perhaps his greatest concert work!" It was inspired by Plachetka's *Symposium*. Guest violinist Vadim Gluzman will return to Austin to perform the *Serenade* after his monumental performance of the Tchaikovsky *Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35* in 2013 when he received standing ovations between movements and then a record breaking 4 ovations!

**2018 Giving Day** Please consider donating on Thursday, April 5, between 8 AM and 8 PM, to Opera in the Ozarks by way of North West Arkansas (NWA) Gives. Go to [www.nwagives.org](http://www.nwagives.org) and select Opera in the Ozarks at Inspiration Point. If the 5 states of South Central NFMC raise \$7,000, then NWA will add a \$400 bonus.

# ABOUT OUR PERFORMERS

## **Silver Strings Orchestra – Catherine van Zanten, director**

Catherine plays violin with the Balcones Community Orchestra, the Cat Mountain String Quartet, and Round Rock Symphony (she is a past member of their Board of Directors). She has played with the New Orleans Summer Pops, the Lake Charles Symphony, the Acadiana Symphony, the Memphis Symphony, the Baton Rouge Symphony and Jackson Symphony as well as with the Austin Civic Orchestra and Austin Philharmonic. She is the director of the Silver Strings Orchestra which plays weekly concerts in area retirement homes, hospitals, and churches. She studied at the Juilliard Preparatory School, at the University of Illinois and with Franco Gulli at the Accademia Chigiana in Siena, Italy. Catherine has a Bachelor's and Master's of Music in Violin Performance. She has taken Suzuki teacher training and teaches Suzuki and traditional violin and viola in her home studio.

## **Suzy Gallagher, soprano**

I have a degree in Secondary Education with credentials in Math, English, and Speech from Loyola in New Orleans. Later I added Library Science certification and finally a Master's degree in Computer Science from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. I came to Austin in 1988 to teach Computer Science at the University of Texas. Twelve years later I left UT. In the meantime my husband, Kit Thompson, and I had opened our own business and worked together every day. We retired in 2007. Finally life began for us. We joined WMMC in 2008 and have been singing our way through life ever since.

## **Kit Thompson, tenor**

Kit Thompson was born in Wink, Texas, grew up in Midland, and first came to Austin in 1959 to attend The University. He dropped out fairly quickly. After learning better, he returned to UT in 1964, graduating in 1968 with a Bachelor's in Anthropology and minor in Geology. He has remained in Austin since, working in sales, photography, manufacturing and banking. A lifelong interest in music began to blossom in 2007 with retirement, when he joined the Dell Tones (JCC) and WMMC, and began learning to sing. He eagerly continues to progress, with much yet to learn. He thanks all of you for your support and encouragement.

## **Marcia Edwards, reader**

My education includes a B.A. in French from the University of Illinois, an M.A. in Teaching English as a Second language from UCLA, and a Ph.D. in Linguistics from UT Austin. George and I have been Austin residents since 1983, and our 2 children were born and raised here. I have loved to read since I was in elementary school, and I was thrilled when both of our children took to reading with enthusiasm. I hope that WMMC members enjoy the inclusion of poetry in our programs as much as I do.

## **Sarah Harriman, reader**

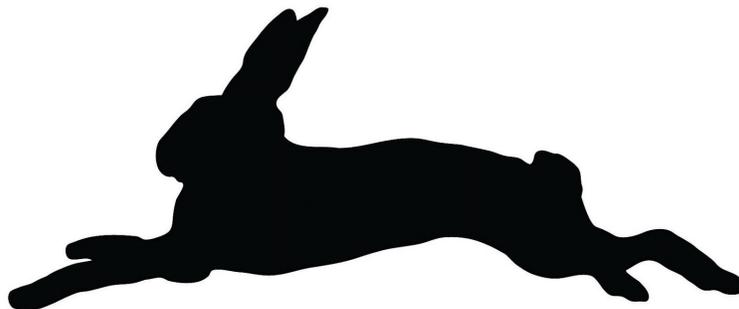
Sarah was raised in Wichita Falls and graduated from Texas Technological College (before it became Teas Tech University) with a B.A. in Government. In her professional life she was an administrative assistant. Work was interesting but allowed her time to pursue her interest in Scottish County Dancing. She plays viola de gamba, but still doesn't like practice. Sarah feels continued learning is very important as we grow older so her most recent diversion is African hand drumming. It keeps her humble and entertained.

## **Charles Palmer, baritone**

Charles is a native Austinite, former Peace Corps Volunteer and retired government employee. He holds a BA and MA degree from the University of Texas and a PhD in Latin American Geography from the University of Florida. He has lived for extended periods of time in Bolivia, Colombia, Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Charles' musical experience includes singing in church choirs and in several civic choruses in Austin. He studies voice with Professor David Small of the University of Texas Butler School of Music and performs regularly with his pianist friend and colleague, Kathryn Govier, at retirement homes and similar venues in the Austin area.

## **Kathryn Govier, piano**

I started music lessons at age 4 and "cut my eye-teeth on Bach." I was lucky to have a piano teacher who stressed the classics. I earned a Bachelor of Music, piano major (1971), and I've used my skills as accompanist and collaborator as well as soloist. I work with Charles Palmer through the Butler School of Music Outreach Program giving retirement home programs. My professional job was teacher of the handicapped. I spent 3 years in Marrakesh, Morocco, working with handicapped children as Peace Corps Volunteer (1987-1990). I love living in Austin with many wonderful cultural events to attend and participate in.



# POEM FOR THE DAY

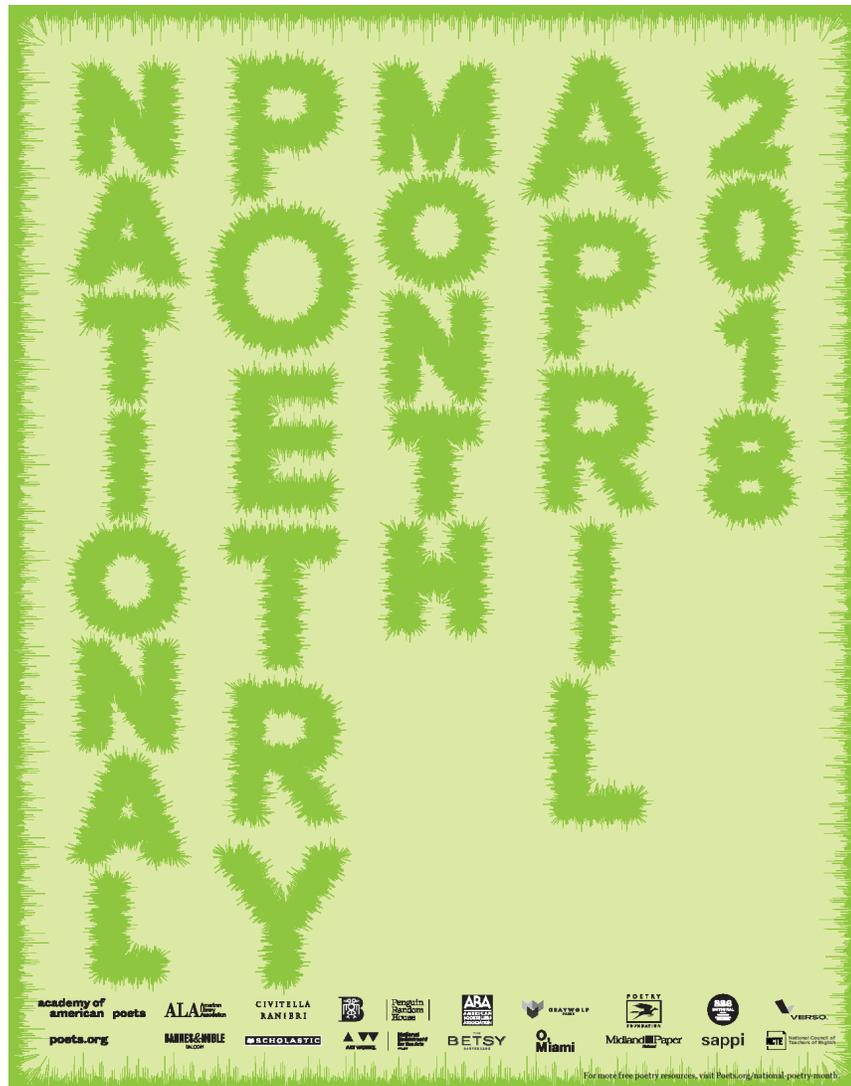
The Daffodils by William Wordsworth (1770 – 1850)

I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils,  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the Milky Way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay:  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they  
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee,  
A poet could not but be gay  
In such a jocund company  
I gazed, and gazed, but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought.

For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.



## April is National Poetry Month

National Poetry Month began in 1996 and is organized by the Academy of American Poets as a way to increase awareness and appreciation of [poetry](#) in the U.S. The Academy of American Poets' website [Poets.org](#) serves as a hub for information about local poetry events during the month. Since 1999, National Poetry Month has also been celebrated each April in Canada, where it is sponsored by the League of Canadian Poets and organized around a different annual theme.

If you would like to receive a daily poem in your inbox, go to [poem-a-day@poets.org](mailto:poem-a-day@poets.org). On weekdays, new previously unpublished poems are featured—accompanied by commentary by the poets. On the weekends, classic poems are highlighted.

The 2018 National Poetry Month poster—left—designed by American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA) Medal and National Design Award-winning designer Paula Scher, celebrates typography and is suggestive of concrete poetry and Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*.