Report on NVMTA General Recitals of 2023-24

for the Membership Meeting on February 28, 2024

By Chris Kies

I have been a co-chair of this event since September of 2023 along with co-chair Marjorie Lee. In February of 2024, Mary Voutsas took over Marjorie’s role in this event. I am fond of saying that I am the co-chair with a lower case c, since Marjorie and Mary (the Co-Chairs with capital C) have had, and will have for this year, the larger tasks of typing up the programs, communicating with teachers about details and creating the barcodes for the online programs that the audience can access for their information and reading pleasure. My job has been to be the “master of ceremonies” at the actual recitals, and this has been a pleasant and not too taxing job.

I was out of town for the first recital on October 15, 2023, but I was there for the November 18th and February 4th recitals. Both of those latter two recitals were very well attended, with the participation resulting in two consecutive recitals of just under one hour each in November and three such recitals in February.

All the students and teachers who participated this year should be congratulated on their uniformly excellent performances and teaching which was evident in all the recitals I observed.

The church in Reston is a good location, and the piano did not take too much moving to put it in place for the recitals.

One of the difficult tasks for my co-chairs has been to make an ordering of the repertoire for each recital. This takes a bit of time as the repertoire is so varied with many different levels of difficulty and different ages of the performers. Marjorie did an excellent job with that, and we had the full range on both occasions, from Liszt Hungarian Rhapsodies all the way down to 16 bar pieces for 5-year-old students.

One problem we had in February was that not all the parents and students stayed at the venue through to the end of their own hour-long recital as the guidelines call for as a minimum of courtesy for the other players. Many did stay, but I think I will have to emphasize this point at the next recitals before the music begins.

It was refreshing to have, on the two occasions I was there, participation by string playing students, and I hope that we can encourage more of that sort of thing going forward, i.e. students playing instruments other than piano for the sake of everyone’s education etc.

One other problem that Marjorie encountered, I believe, was that some of the NVMTA teachers waited until the very last minute to sign up for the recitals, even changing certain details beyond the posted deadline which made information gathering difficult. We need to emphasize to the membership that the deadline is important to observe so that the co-chairs can put together the programs with relative ease.

Report respectfully submitted by Chris Kies, 2.26.24