



## STUDENT NEWSLETTER **Oct 09**



CSM Director Kennedy

### **Bring a Friend Week—**

The week after Halloween, (Mon, Nov 2– Sat, Nov 7) is Bring a Friend Week. Each student should bring a friend to share their lesson with! For the friends, we will have a **Free Music Lesson drawing and for our students, who bring a friend, we will allow them to enter our Music Question of the Month drawing TWICE!** We will also have a few other surprises! Bring a Friend week is a great opportunity to begin building a peer group that will be supportive to our students' music endeavors. With a supportive peer group, students are more motivated to play and practice. Better yet if our student's friends start playing too, pretty soon our students and their friends will be playing together and creating for themselves many future hours of positive, active entertainment and social networking. Music is a great way to bring people together. Bring your friend to your lesson Nov 2-7th!

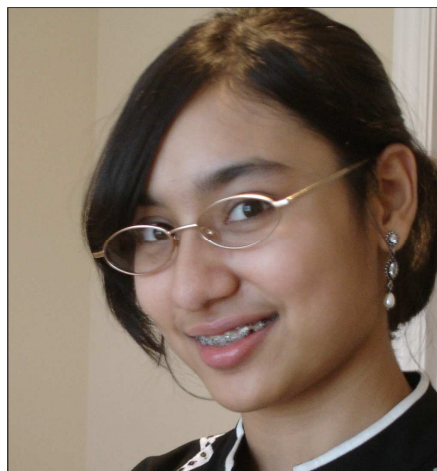
### **MUSIC QUESTION OF THE MONTH**

Each month we will ask a different question. Tell your teacher the correct answer and you will be entered in our monthly drawing and receive a prize at our next recital! **October's Question:**

**Name the highest and lowest instrument in an orchestra.**

### **STUDENT ACHIEVERS**

Samah, Age 13, is September's Music Question of the Month winner. She and her committee of Ms Joanne and Ms Lavonne came up with 5 songs with the word rain in them. She studies violin and piano at the Champaign School of Music. Lessons are really enjoyable because her teacher makes learning a fun thing to do. She also likes the environment, teachers' caring attitude, and the instruments she plays on. She's made rapid progress since she started due to her daily practice schedule. In addition to her lessons at the Champaign School of Music, she plays in her school orchestra and sings in chorus. Samah's favorite food is Chocolate, chocolate, chocolate! In addition to music, she loves to hang out and chat with her friends.



**(217) 359-0541**

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## CHAMPAIGN SCHOOL OF MUSIC ARTICLE

### The Importance of Listening

When I first ask my students what they think their most important tool is when it comes to playing the guitar, I get a variety of answers. Frequently replies range from “My Guitar” to “My Hands” to any other number of things. The answer I am looking for when I ask this question is very logical and when I tell my student there is invariably a “well duh” type moment. The answer I am looking for is, “Your ears!”

It is surprising when you consider how much we take our ears, the most important tool we have for interpreting and experiencing music, for granted. Without our ears there would be little point in performing music because much of the experience surrounding it would be completely lost on us.

The next inevitable question for the student concerns their listening habits. “How do you listen to music?” I ask. “Do you have music in the background when you are doing your home work?”, “Do you listen to it while in the car?” The general response I have gotten from most of my students is that they generally combine their listening time with some other activity.

This tendency is understandable as we all have busy schedules. We are used to hearing music as background noise, whether its in an elevator or grocery store, music takes a back seat to our other senses in our day to day life.

It is important to recognize this and make a clear distinction to yourself as to what “Active” and “Passive” listening are. When you are listening passively you might from time to time notice something in the music and consider it, but overall it gets very little of your attention. In active listening all of your attention is focused on the music and you are thinking very deeply about it. Some of the things you should be thinking of during this process include, “Do I like this? If so, why? If not, why not?” “How would I classify this music?” “What similarities does this have to other music I am familiar with?” The list of questions is endless.

The reason why this activity is so essential lies in the ear issue I mentioned at the beginning. Our ear is our most important tool as a musician so it stands to reason that we want to make it stronger. The process of active listening engages our ears in a, what is to most, relatively unfamiliar way. You can compare it to the physical development and training of a runner: a runner may use his or her legs all day for general transportation purposes but when he trains for running he uses a specific group of activities (exercises) to strengthen his leg muscles (tools).

The stronger your ears become the more you will appreciate music, I guarantee it. There are many ways to do this but I believe that taking the time to understand that there is a difference between the Passive and Active listening is an essential first step.

By Ian Murphy, Guitar Faculty

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Oct

Music Get Together, Friday, Oct 16 @ 6pm & 7pm.

#### Nov

Bring a Friend Week, Mon, Nov 2– Sat, Nov 7

Thanksgiving Break, Wed, Nov 25– Sun, Nov 29

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