

# Musical Notes

Vernon Community Music School  
Spring, 2022

## Celebrating 40 Years in the Smith House

1981

*"Dear Friends of the Music School:*

*In the five years since 1976, the Vernon Community Music School has evolved to the point where it needs more space, better facilities, and a degree of permanence and stability that is no longer possible in Hut K-8. We have examined many alternatives and have reached an agreement with the College Council to build on the campus of the Kalamalka Centre".*

*The target for our building fund is \$400,000 and we are now approaching Corporations, Foundations, and the Vernon Community for their cooperation. All donations will receive receipts for income tax purposes..." - Olive Woodley, Chairman*



March 16th, 1982—Vernon Daily News

1982

*"I would like to outline for you the approaches that the Board of the Music School is making to the problem of the future location of the Music School. At this point the public may be somewhat puzzled by our ambivalent actions, on the one hand fund raising for a building on the College site, and, on the other, approaching the City to rent the Smith House, possibly with an option to buy.*

*Our first consideration is that we have some place to function as of September 1, 1982. So we have approached DND and have permission to stay in K-Hut, if necessary. The drawbacks are well-known to you all; lack of space for our expanding programs, having to move out every summer, and the isolation. But, at least, we will not be out on the street.*

*Our approach to the City to RENT the Smith House was designed to help us over this interim period. We feel that it will provide a much better facility than does Hut K8.*

*Originally the City countered our request to rent with a proposal that we buy...We have not offered to buy it. It would be necessary to occupy it for some time to judge whether it would be suitable in the long term.*

*So, it sounds as if we are considering buying it, and, at the same time, planning to build at the College. This is what I mean by our ambivalent actions. We have to pursue two courses to protect our future." - Olive Woodley*



## Celebrating 40 Years in the Smith House...Continued



SMITH HOUSE — MUSIC CLASSES WILL BE YEAR ROUND

### Music school bids for the Smith House

The Vernon Community Music School has signed an option to purchase the Smith House heritage site from the City of Vernon.

Negotiations are continuing on financing the purchase.

Music School Building Fund Chairman Alice Klim said in press release issued recently that plans for the school to build a new facility near Okanagan College have

Klim said the Smith House is a good location for the school and will be a community asset.

The house is on a regular bus route making it convenient for students. It will also be open year round. Classes could start in September, the time the school staff hopes to occupy the building.

The school's current quarters at the Army Camp must be vacated each summer to make way for the annual summer cadet training.

July 15th, 1982—Vernon Daily News

*"The Vernon Community Music School has signed an option to purchase the Smith House heritage site from the City of Vernon.*

*Negotiations are continuing on financing this purchase.*

*Music School Building Fund Chairman Alice Klim said in press release issued recently that plans for the school to build a new facility near Okanagan College have been cancelled.*

*Projected cost for the new school was \$400,000 while the 80-year-old mansion on 32nd Ave., with renovations, should cost about \$300,000.*

*Purchase price from the city has not been announced, but it was advertised at \$225,000 last month.*

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So much can happen in 40 years. In 1982 the historic Smith House was purchased using donations and money fundraised for the Vernon Community Music School. Since that time, our school has grown to provide space for 22 teachers, countless private/group lessons and programs, families and students. Generations of families have come through these doors.

We are in the process of collecting images of students and events throughout the years to help celebrate the 40th anniversary. If you have any photos you would like to submit, please send them to [vcms@shaw.ca](mailto:vcms@shaw.ca).



Left to right: Denis Letourneau, Walter Burton, Imant Raminsh, Margaret Burton, 1978

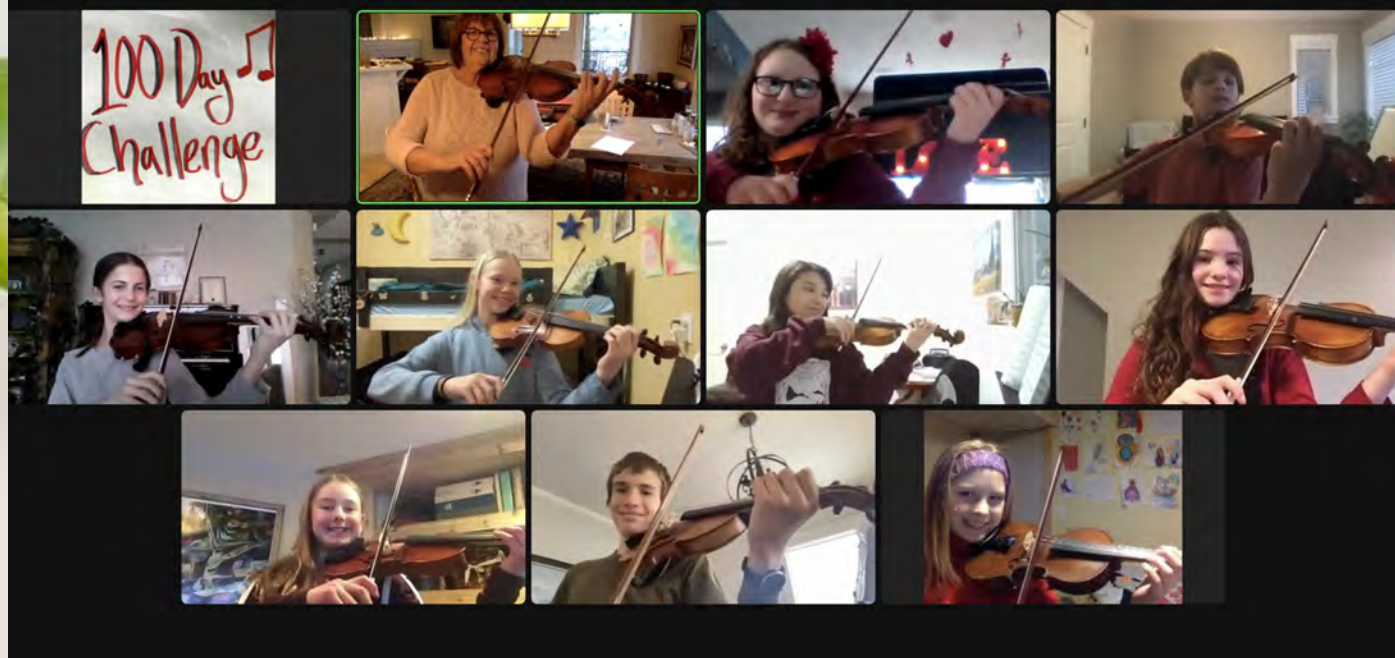




Top row, left to right: Meizie McGrew, Kathryn and Victoria Reynolds  
Bottom row, left to right: Bev Martens, Chloe Butler, Simone Oakden

## 100 Days of Practice Challenge

It's full steam ahead for the 100 Days of Practice Challenge. Congratulations to everyone who is still going and has been working hard to get a practice in every day. Teachers are noticing a great improvement and confidence levels are increasing as pieces start to sound stronger. How great is it to see all of these smiling faces!? We love our students!



Top row, left to right: Bev Martens, Akasha McCleary, Hugh Weathermon  
Middle row, left to right: Anya Massa, Rosie McLean, Aya Swerdelian, Claire Weathermon  
Bottom row, left to right: Juliette Rowe, Owen McNeill, Evy Erikson





Meet Carole Ruth's student, Daphne Letourneau. She is 5 years old and a very bright and a very serious practiser! She is doing very well and works very hard in her lessons, and is an absolute delight to teach. Daphne's grandfather Denis Letourneau, and her grandmother Susan Letourneau, were both original teachers here at the Music School when we first opened our doors back in 1976. This is Daphne's first year of lessons with Carole, welcome to the Music School, Daphne!



Get your tickets to the second NOCCA concert of the 2021/2022 season! Friday, March 25th at 7:30pm, enjoy the Canadian Guitar Quartet at the Vernon and District Performing Arts Centre. "The Canadian Guitar Quartet made one of the greatest New York City debuts of any artistic ensemble in decades at the 92nd Street Y'Art of The Guitar Series...STUNNING!" - Don Witter Jr, New York City Classical Guitar Society

Tickets available at [ticketseller.ca](https://ticketseller.ca) or by calling 250-549-SHOW.



### **Congratulations to Julien Haynes**

Julien Haynes was just accepted into the Aspen Summer Festival on a fellowship, studying with Masao Kawasaki, a violin/viola teacher at Julliard.

Following completion of his Bachelor's Performance degree in violin, Julien is currently at the University of Victoria, working on his Masters Performance degree in viola.

Julien studied violin at our VCMS from age two through high school graduation.

As a community we at the Vernon Community Music School participate in the satisfaction of Julien's accomplishments, and we wish him well in this adventure of excellence. Bravo, Julien!





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COLUMBIA

## BC Arts Council: - Masterclass Series 2021-2022 Project Assistance: Professional Arts Training

In February we had our second Masterclass in a series of classes that we have received funding for from the BC Arts Council. Aljoša Jurinić is a professional concert pianist from Croatia, now living in Toronto pursuing a DMA at the University of Toronto. He is established on international stages and world piano competitions, and is hailed as a startlingly subtle and visionary pianist with a rare blend of charm and mastery. The Music School collaborated with the North Okanagan Community Concert Association (NOCCA) to bring Aljoša to our community and it was a wonderful opportunity for three piano students; Veronica Ociepa, Teslyn Bates, and Jaeden Izik-Dzurko.

For three hours, Aljoša spent time with each student going through their selected pieces and providing advice, encouragement and suggestions on how to improve their playing. Not only is Aljoša Jurinić incredibly intelligent and thought provoking, but his character and the way he interacts with others with respect and appreciation is outstanding.

Thank you so much to Aljosa for spending time with our community. We hope to see you again!



Professional Concert Pianist: Aljoša Jurinić



## Okanagan Symphony Orchestra's Musical Siblings—Angela Zeng and Holly McCallum

Last month, Angela Zeng and Holly McCallum performed in the OSO Concert as guest artists with the OSO and OSYO playing side-by-side. Holly and Angela have both been winners of various scholarships at the Music School and have spent countless hours learning and practicing with Morna over the years. After the Musical Siblings concert experience, we asked Angela a few questions about her practice and some tips that might help current Music School students.



### **When did you start to play the cello? Do you also play other instruments as well?**

I started taking cello lessons with Morna Howie about ten years ago when I was seven years old, and got inspired by my brothers who both played violin and piano. In my earlier years I also took piano and voice lessons at the music school.

### **What does an average practice session look like for you? And how often do you practice?**

An average practice session starts with technique first; so I pick a key for the week and focus everything around that. I play four octave scales with different bowings to challenge myself (4 to a bow, 8 to a bow, 16 to a bow, all in one bow, stopped bows) and play the thirds, sixths, octaves and arpeggios to go along with that key. After scales I get into my studies, usually learning a new etude each week. Once I feel warmed up, it always depends on how much time I have during my practice session; some days I may only have an hour in which I will then only play one piece and focus on something specific in it: certain sections, shifts, intonation, or memorization. If I have more time however, I like to work through each piece I'm preparing and make sure to practice everything that I had noted from my lessons.

The best tip for practicing is to note down the tips and pointers you were given in that week's lesson so you can work on them and avoid having to spend more time on them in the next lesson. I usually go home after school and allow for some down time before getting my cello out to practice. I totally understand motivation differs day to day but right as competition and festival season rolled around, I would practice everyday for four hours each day. On days when I couldn't gather myself to practice for four hours though, one hour would be better than none. Remember, it's always the quality of your practice session, not the quantity.



**What is some of the best advice you have been given about practicing? From your cello teacher? And other people?**

I noticed that my teachers had a notebook specifically for my lessons, where they would write down what I completed, what I needed to work on, and what I had due for next week's lesson; whether it be fixing something about my posture or having a piece memorized. I began to learn that even my teachers write things down and that I shouldn't have to be embarrassed about needing to note a few things in a notebook or in the music. Being in school and taking music lessons can be a challenging thing to balance and we aren't expected to memorize everything that is said during our lessons. Taking notes is so important because not only can we look back on our lessons, but we retain all the information we write down much better.

Another piece of advice that I owe much of my cello playing to is that we can use cellphones and technology to our advantage. When I was younger, my mom would sit in on my lessons and record the entire cello lesson. It was quite extreme but if you aren't one for writing notes and rereading them after, watching a recording of the lesson is even more beneficial. Not only can you see what your teacher does again, but you can watch yourself as you play. You are able to notice much smaller things that you wouldn't notice when you play such as a sneaky banana thumb or high shoulders.

**Are there any pointers or tips you would give to someone just starting an instrument?**

There aren't many pointers I could give to anyone just starting out because trust me, I understand how frustrating it is to not understand something quickly. I am quite happy to share that The Happy Farmer from Suzuki Book One had seven year old me in tears, to the point where I wanted to give up and quit. I was told to just push through. Learning an instrument is so tricky because not only will you have your wins, but you will most definitely have some losses. I can't count on one hand the amount of times I struggled with cello, but the most rewarding part of it is the times where you get the concepts or you play all the notes. It's going to be the little wins in music that help you persevere, so just look forward to the little victories.

**What did you learn while playing with the OSO in February?**

Playing with the OSO this past February has given me the experience of a lifetime. The one thing I learnt from the ability to perform with a professional orchestra is that you have to get up there and do it. Take every chance you get to perform because not only have I become more confident in performing for others, but I've noticed my confidence growing in other areas. I had my doubts at the beginning of this season because of how nerve wracking it is, but you have to realize that everyone around you just wants to see you do well and succeed. No matter how terrible you think you performed, it is so much more impressive that you got up on the stage to perform. I've heard this advice from so many teachers and other people, but playing with the OSO has finally made me realize that it is true! Not only was it so amazing that I got to be treated as a guest artist with our professional orchestra, but I am so lucky that I learnt this important lesson.



Angela Zeng



### **What are some of the memorable ways people closest to you have shown their support as you developed as a musician?**

My parents have always pushed me to continue on with cello, even when I felt like I had hit a dead end. I would not be where I am today without their poking and prodding about practicing, but I cannot thank them enough for doing it. "Go practice" are the words of death for every young musician but now I appreciate everyone who said it because they were right. Practicing makes such a difference. Along with my parents who were my backbone, music teachers are also your biggest supporters. They only want the best for you, and I can't express my gratitude for my cello teacher Morna who was there for me every step of the journey. Music has created so many long lasting connections in our community, and it truly is so beautiful because of that.

*Angela Zeng is a grade 12 student at Kalamalka secondary. She has been playing cello for ten years and was recently a guest artist with the Okanagan Symphony Orchestra in February. We caught up with Angela to ask a few questions about her musical journey. Thank-you, Angela!*

### **Guitar Corner**

Introducing Sean and Jeremy Fehlauser, and Seamus Powell, long time students of VCMS guitar teacher, Ken Scott.

All three of these young gentlemen have been composing their own music for some time now and continue to develop their guitar skills and creative musical ideas!

Sean's music is a blend of many different styles, from Rock to Caribbean influence, Jeremy's is very much complex and deep art-rock, and Seamus has a great instinct for catchy pop stylings.

Sound clips from recent in-studio recitals will be up on the VCMS Facebook page!

Bravo Guys!



Sean Fehlauser



Jeremy Fehlauser



Seamus Powell



★ ★ ★ Wall of Fame ★ ★ ★

**In February the Music School hosted the Vernon Registered Music Teacher's Piano Festival—congratulations to all our students who participated in the event. This was the first in-person Vernon RMT Festival in two years, we are so proud of our students who played in front of a live, albeit small, audience!**

Congratulations to the students of Geoffrey Barker for performing at the Vernon piano festival over this past weekend. They have hard work in preparing their pieces have really taken their playing to the next level:

- Finn Daniel
- Grayson Daniel
- Sefton Ansdell
- Ryan Ansdell
- Zeke Martyn
- Brody Martyn—winner of the Grade 2 award
- Coby Martyn—winner of the Sharma award

Also, congratulations to the following students of Daisy Penner who participated in the piano festival:

- Daelyn Humphreys—winner of the Grade 1 award
- Cole Humphreys—winner of the Grade 4 award
- Jim Boyd



Cole and Daelyn Humphreys



Jim Boyd





## Nature's Fare Community Give Back Program

Are you wondering what to do with all of your Nature's Fare receipts you're collecting? Bring them by the Music School! As part of the 3% Club, 3% of the total money calculated on the receipts comes back to the Music School, and in turn goes into our programs. It's a win-win situation, thank-you so much to everyone who has brought their receipts in! To date, we have raised \$4,887.03 to go towards programs throughout the school. Wahoo!



**Okanagan Symphony Orchestra**—Mark your calendar for Saturday April 2nd, 7:30pm, at the Vernon and District Performing Arts Centre. Singer-songwriter Alex Cuba is a Latin Grammy and Juno winner who is influenced by his Cuban roots, but not tied to tradition. His music has been described as “getting a coat of sunshine applied to your eardrums”. Come and immerse yourself in his guitar wizardry and soulful vocals as he shares his dynamic musical vision with us all. We all need a coat of sunshine!

Purchase tickets at [www.ticketseller.ca](https://www.ticketseller.ca) or call (250) 549-SHOW