

Minutes of ASTA MD/DC Board Meeting, January 30, 2011, 7:00 p.m.

The home of Catherine Stewart

Present: Catherine Stewart, Lori Barnett, Lorraine Combs, Mary Findley, Doree Huneven, Leah Kocsis, Daniel Levitov, Jaque Lyman, Marissa Murphy, Sachi Murasugi, Mark Pfannschmidt, Jean Provine, Ale Schneider, Paul Scimonelli, Marion Spahn, Lya Stern, Loren Westbrook

1. Goals and direction for the Chapter: President Cathy Stewart expressed appreciation to everybody for their hard work over the past year or so. As we have done so many new things in the past few years, it is time to assess and consolidate. What is working, what do we want to change, what do we want to keep and improve?
2. Producing a handbook of reoccurring events: Julia Chitwood, a new board member, will work on the handbook and take over the weekly email.
3. Producing a policy booklet: Paul Scimonelli and Dorée Huneven will work and report on this at the next meeting.
4. Reaching out to public school string programs: Marion Spahn, Public Schools Liason, reported that she had met with Scott Herman from Montgomery County. Teachers seemed willing to receive help from us but were not so willing to come out to attend our events. We are thinking of extending a hand in other Maryland counties. Marissa Murphy said that the Washington County area already has in place some activities that we could work through. Lorraine Combs talked about a past program in Anne Arundel County run by the Annapolis Symphony where private teachers volunteered to go into schools on a regular basis to help class string teachers.
5. Scholarships: Daniel Levitov said that Marissa Murphy and Jim Kelly gave a recital to collect money to start a scholarship fund. \$335 was raised. It was suggested that we organize a concert series to add more money to the fund. Another idea was to make it possible to contribute small amounts online, and to add the possibility of a small contribution on the application for the Annual Meeting/Dinner in May. Paul Scimonelli said he has various other methods for fund raising which were successful at Landon School. It was agreed that scholarships would be based on financial need and student interest, not necessarily on performance standard. There are still many problems to solve in the area of creating an application. Dan agreed to work on the application and a thank you letter to contributors. Also, if payment was to be made directly to the teacher we might then need to send out 1099 Tax Forms as a statement of earnings. It was generally agreed that the first step is to obtain funds and then find a way to select candidates and award the scholarships.
6. Treasurer's report: *Note: MD/DC members may request the Treasurer's Report from Jean. Contact her privately.* Jean Provine reported that funds are healthy and holding steady. We are spending about what we are bringing in. We most of our recent events have either made a slight profit or broken even and we can absorb a loss.
7. Membership Chair's report: Ale Schneider reported that membership numbers are steady and have risen slightly since last year from 235 to 242. There is now an up-to-date list with corrected email addresses. We have printed postcards to hand out in shops to advertise the chapter. Cathy urged everybody to find one new member to bring to the Annual Meeting/Dinner.

8. *Stringendo*: Lorraine Combs said the dark appearance of artwork in recent issues has been discussed with the printer and she received several suggestions from him for avoiding this problem. Lorraine urged future contributors to convert any pictures to “grayscale” before submission. She will do this herself if contributors do not know how to do it. Cathy read the names of the board members who will contribute articles for the next issue. Contributors were reminded that any formatting they do will not necessarily show up that way when the issue is printed.
9. Online application and payments: Jean Provine said it is hoped that we can find an affordable way to have both online applications for events and the option of online payments through a PayPal account. Dan hoped that advertisers could also pay online. Opening a PayPal account and placing a “pay here” button on the website is not difficult; but developing an online application form that would be useable for all events with varying fields is more difficult. Jonas Music Services quoted us \$500 for the creation and addition of this page to our website. They would “redo” the page at our request for each event, turning fields on and off as needed for each event, which would cost about \$25–\$35 each time, and would take 2 to 3 business days to complete. Applications would go to the event organizer in the form of a spreadsheet. The cost of PayPal would be 2.2% + \$0.30 per transaction. The money could be directly deposited into our account from the PayPal account and the report sent to whoever the “owner of the account” (someone who will be a member for some time) designates—normally the Treasurer. It was decided to continue working on the details.
10. Fiddle Day It was thought that this successful event should be repeated yearly.
11. Instrument repair workshops: Paul Scimonelli said the workshop day was successful in Salisbury last fall. He, together with Dalton Potter, would like to repeat this type of day in Frederick county.
12. Historical Performance Workshop: Dorée Huneven said the presenters now have a publicity person working for them who might be able to help with advertising if we repeat this next year. Some people thought the timing of the event limited the number of participants since it missed the Autumn issue of *Stringendo* and happened too soon for the Winter issue. Some thought it could have been more teacher-oriented. Dorée is not sure she wants to be the permanent chair if this event is put on again next year.
13. Dueling Fiddlers Workshop and Concert last November was organized by Ronald Mutchnik. He sent an email report offering to chair the event next year. Lorraine Combs said it was fabulous and we definitely should do it again!
14. Solo Competition: Marissa Murphy reported that this ASTA National Competition happens every two years. We hope to get more interest, especially amongst the cellists.
15. Mark Wood Workshop: Catherine Stewart reported that this is scheduled for March 26–27, 2011, and is our second workshop for this event. This is being presented in conjunction with MCYO, Potter’s Violins and Black Rock Center for the Arts. The main event for students is on Saturday and the teacher workshop is on Sunday.

16. ASTACAP Exams: Lya Stern said the winter exams are scheduled February 20. So far, 69 students have applied. The deadline is April 21 for the spring exams on May 21. Lya was concerned that the requirements available on the national website were now only available to ASTA members and that they were difficult to find. She would like to attract more string teachers to ASTA and also be able to reach non-ASTA members. She wants to do a presentation about the exams for our chapter in the fall of this year. (*Lorraine Combs has since put the requirements on our MD/DC website for the convenience of everyone.*)
17. Board resignation: Sadly, Leah Kocsis will be resigning from the board. She is going to be very busy with a new baby and forming a new community orchestra in the Silver Spring area! Her board replacement is Julianna Chitwood.
18. All-State Orchestra auditions: Cathy reported that Ronald Mutchnik has promised to approach the people who run them. It is felt by many string teachers that their requirements need revision and that their selection of members is inconsistent. Several members volunteered to help with this.
19. A trip to Paris? Cathy hoped that we might get some members to participate in a trip to Paris with string buyer David Basch. Besides getting to look at a lot of French violins, and attending master classes and concerts, of course there would be sight-seeing, eating and generally having a good time together.

Minutes submitted by Jean Provine, Treasurer, ASTA MD/DC Chapter