

The CLARION

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Fall is definitely upon us. This is my favorite time of year with the brilliant colors of the fall leaves and the crispness one feels in the air. Fall is also a wonderful season for food.

There's apples and pears, squash and pumpkins, and the comfort foods such as stews and soups. Only a handful of people know this about me but I do love to cook. I'm not so good at the cleaning up part but cooking is very much a passion. I'm a fanatic about trying new recipes and gain a lot of satisfaction when all has come together to provide a very tasty meal. I do read the recipes but I don't always follow them precisely. Depending on the seasonings, I might add something with a kick just to spice it up a bit! Let's just say I like to put my own creative touches on dishes. One basic recipe can be turned into an assortment of tastes. Take pizza for example: Do you want red or white sauce? Meat or no meat? What type of veggies? The variety is endless.

Teaching can be the same way. We all have our own "recipe" for teaching but for a particular student we may need to tweak it a bit in order for the student to succeed. We also may need to tweak our recipe in order to continue growing as teachers. It doesn't matter if you have been teaching a couple years to thirty years, one can always learn and add valuable ideas to your studios. I was fortunate enough to have met a wonderful teacher in the Tri-Cities by the name of Eleanor Haney. Up until her passing, Eleanor continued to attend workshops and conferences when she was able. She used to say that

even if she only came away with one good idea that it was worth her time and effort to be there.

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BRAVO!

Changing of the Guard



Incoming WSMTA President Jani Peterson presenting plaque to outgoing WSMTA President Mary Kaye Owen.

Outgoing WSMTA President, Mary Kaye Owen was presented a plaque with gavel at the June 2009 Conference in Yakima. More than just a token of appreciation, this award recognizes Mary Kaye's many years of faithful volunteer work for WSMTA. Highly regarded as a consistently cheerful, generous, and hardworking member, she will continue to serve WSMTA as Immediate Past President on the BOD as well as an Education Board Member.



Olympia Harbor

FUTURE EVENTS

WSMTA Conference 2010 **OLYMPIA!**

It feels like time is flying by here in beautiful Olympia and June of 2010 is drawing closer everyday! Your 2010 Conference Co-Chairs were discussing ideas and plans yesterday to the back-drop of the Olympic Mountains in the distance! We do live in a place of beauty for sure.

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Conference 2010 Guest Artist



Jon Kimura Parker

We are thrilled, honored, and very excited to have Jon Kimura Parker as our guest artist next summer! The following is just the beginning in learning about Mr. Parker. In upcoming Clarions, I hope to introduce you to this wonderful performer who has so graciously accepted our invitation.

Mr. Parker is one of the world's leading classical pianists, playing as many as 100 concerts annually everywhere from New York's Carnegie Hall to London, Tokyo, Frankfurt and Tasmania. Mr. Parker is an *Officer of The Order of Canada*, his country's highest civilian honor and in November 1996 Parker received the *Governor General's Arts Award*, the most prestigious arts award in Canada.

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CLARION Contributors Notice

Articles must be submitted no later than the 1st day of the month preceding the publication date.

A helpful guide, covering CLARION format requirements is now available. Please contact the Editor before submitting articles.

ADVERTISING:

Advertising Request Forms are available from the WSMTA Executive Office.

Corrections

State Recitalist Competitions Mason County Chapter:

Unranked Honorable Mention:

Gabriel Kwong

Teacher: Gary Bensen

Editor's Correction Notice

Again, the Editor must apologize to Esther Warkov for inserting the wrong Piano Connection ad, this time in the Sept. CLARION. WSMTA sincerely appreciates the valuable service to the music community that The Piano Connection provides.

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome New Members!

Collegiate

Robert Christopher Hansler

Luke A. Stromberg

Ada June Zhang

Bellingham

Kathleen O'Rourke

Eastside

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Jeeyoung Park

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Eve M. Ragins

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Ruth Adair Boden

South King County

Melodie Waldron

Tri Cities

Chelsea S. Spence

John T. Spencer

Associate Members

WSMTA is pleased to have a growing number of Associate Members who actively support our organization. They are:

Bischofberger Violins
Cornish College of the Arts
Fandrich and Sons Pianos
Skelley Piano
Whitworth University,
WMEA

Recent College Graduates – WSMTA Wants YOU!!!

WSMTA is encouraging recent college graduates to become active members of a local chapter, WSMTA and MTNA. Through the investment funds, WSMTA is offering a rebate of dues to active members who graduated from college within the last two years.

If this applies to you, contact the Executive Manager, Judith Price, NCTM at WSMTAoffice@comcast.net, or 360-459-4338, for an application form.

MTNA Foundation Fund

I am the new chair for the MTNA Foundation in Washington, and here are some Important things I think you should know:

- 1) The MTNA Foundation supports a wide range of extremely important and worthwhile activities for students, teachers, and composers. There are grants available for teachers, chapters, and composers. The MTNA Foundation supports the wonderful MTNA Competitions—a tremendous opportunity for serious and gifted students.
- 2) There is a link on the MTNA website to the MTNA Foundation Fund, giving more detailed information. Look it up.
- 3) GIVE MONEY. Of COURSE there is a recession. Of COURSE things are a little tight. But giving to the MTNA Foundation is TAX DEDUCTIBLE and helps us each to ensure the future of music education in this country. And you will sleep better, knowing you have done your part to support this worthy cause.

*Robin Chadwick, NCTM
MTNA Foundation Chair*

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

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So I want to encourage all of you to participate in the workshops and programs your chapter or district are sponsoring. Plan on attending the MTNA Conference in March and also our State Conference in June. That's the benefit of belonging to a group of such dedicated teachers. There are so many learning opportunities around us throughout the year. Sharing our ideas and learning from each other is what makes us better teachers. No matter how perfect we think our recipe is for teaching we can always learn from our fellow teachers. Think of all the workshops as your own private cooking class! Can I add this or that to improve my teaching? Do I need a pinch of something to motivate my students? Can I stir in something new to make the music come alive? If we are not willing to experiment with new tastes, our palates can become bland. So too can our teaching. I challenge you to go out and learn something new about teaching. Add some new ingredients to create a "Recipe for Success" in your own studios.

*Jani Peterson, NCTM
WSMTA President*

FUTURE EVENTS

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WSMTA Conference 2010

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OLYMPIA!

Watch the Clarion in the upcoming months for hotel reservation information for the Red Lion Hotel, where our Conference will be taking place. We would love to have our initial 40 room block filled early, so that we have to request more rooms. The hotel property is a peaceful and restful setting to enjoy after all the work we will have finished as teachers during this year and coming year!

Please remember that we would love to hear from our members about creative teaching ideas/workshop themes that you would like to have considered for the conference. Proposals must be received by Nov. 10th and emailed to both Jan Rowen Music at: farrislj@yahoo.com and Cherie

Felts at: jscffelts@comcast.net. Please title the subject line "2010 WSMTA" to make sure that we recognize you and respond in a timely fashion. We are looking forward to the week of June 21st-25th and a wonderful time!

*Jan Rowen Music, NCTM
& Cherie Felts
2010 WSMTA Conference Co-Chairs*

Conference 2010 Guest Artist

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He has given command performances for her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the United States Supreme Court, and the Prime Ministers of Canada and Japan. Parker has recorded as guest soloist with André Previn, jammed in an impromptu concert with Doc Severinsen and the original Tonight Show Orchestra, and was a celebrity guest on the children's television program *Under the Umbrella Tree* on the Disney Channel.

Mr. Parker studied in his native Vancouver, BC with Edward Parker, Keiko Parker, and Lee Kum-Sing, and with Adele Marcus at The Julliard School. In 2000 he joined the faculty of the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University in Houston

2009 Outstanding Artist Competition - Nov. 6-8 Eastern Washington University, Cheney WA

The WSMTA Outstanding Artist Competition will be held on Friday through Sunday, November 6 - 8, 2009. It will be held at Eastern Washington University, in Cheney. For a map and driving directions, go to <http://www.ewu.edu/x7667.xml> (the University website).

There are two piano divisions. Students age 11-14 years of age will perform in the Junior Piano Division. The Senior Piano Division is for students 15-18 years of age. There is no charge to attend, and people can choose to stay for one or more performances throughout the weekend.

This will be a very exciting weekend of music - hope to see many of you there! If you have questions, contact me at swienty@clearwire.net.

Julie Swienty, OAC Chair

**2009 WSMTA/MTNA
Performance Competitions
Nov. 6-8
Whitworth University
Spokane, WA**

The deadline for student entries has passed, and we are well on our way to organizing another successful competition! Congratulations to all students and teachers who have entered. I know it will be a good experience for all involved! A reminder to all teachers: If you have not yet sent in your Teacher Entry Fees, please do so. Mail to Laurie Eash, 1924 S. Post St., Spokane, WA 99203.

As always, we can use much help! We need monitors, time keepers, and registrars for three exciting days. We also need refreshments. Please call or e-mail me to volunteer! (It is a wonderful experience you won't want to miss.) Call me at 509-747-6964 or e-mail: laurie52@aol.com.

*Laurie Eash NCTM, 2009-2010 MTNA
Performance Competition Chair*

EDUCATION

CERTIFICATION CORNER

Attention all Certified Members of WSMTA

Do you remember how it felt to become certified? Do you remember someone encouraging you and walking you through the process to become certified? We are looking for you!! We are looking for someone who knows and understands the importance of certification; who wants to help others; who wants to be our next Certification Chair. This is your opportunity to be a mentor. This is your opportunity to get acquainted with our members all around the state. It is your opportunity to provide a valuable service to WSMTA.

Give me a call or drop me a line if this important WSMTA Chair position interests you.

*Margee Webster, NCTM
Education Board Chair
509-534-9678 websterm@gonzaga.edu*

Young Composers Project

Exciting Changes Ahead for Young Composers Project

At its June 2009 Board of Directors Meeting, WSMTA made the following changes to the Rules and Guidelines for the Young Composers Project, effective in 2010:

A monetary award will be given to the first place winner in each level. The prizes will be as follows:

Primary/Elementary	\$25
Junior	\$50
Senior	\$75
Collegiate	\$100

Entry fees will increase in 2010, so that WSMTA can continue to attract high-quality judges by offering compensation more in line with the state adjudication program. Entry fees (per composition) for 2010 will be:

Primary/Elementary	\$15
Junior	\$20
Senior	\$25
Collegiate	\$30

Finally, computer - generated scores will be allowed for all ages in the Young Composers Project, effective in 2010.

The post-mark **entry deadline for the 2010 Young Composers Project** will be **Tuesday, February 16**. The complete set of Rules and Guidelines and official entry form for 2010 are available on-line at www.wsmta.net. Click on "Student Programs". If you have specific questions, please contact Krista Seely, YCP Chair, at ks88keys@gmail.com.

Please encourage your students to start working on their compositions this fall. I look forward to receiving another record-breaking number of entries in 2010!

*Krista Seely
Young Composers Project Chair*

ENRICHMENT



A Big Thumbs Up!

I had never given much thought as to how very much we use our thumbs, at least not until this sum-

mer. The Monday after State Conference I had joint replacement surgery on my left thumb to put some cushion where arthritis had produced a bone on bone condition. That was followed by a cast for four weeks and a splint for two more, which all immobilized the thumb. At this point it is physical therapy but not a whole lot of use just yet. Sometime try doing things without your thumb, or just notice how often it comes into play every day. A couple of things I needed daily and could not do were opening a jar or wringing out a dishcloth. Even getting dressed was a challenge. Of course playing the piano is still a right hand only experience.

Why this topic for a Clarion article? When I was in my teens, my piano teacher asked me if I had lead in my thumbs! I had no idea what she meant. As a teacher I know it was because of my thumb position. I had never been taught the correct position so I was playing with the entire thumb. Now it is another of those things I emphasize. In our September group lesson we talked about why the thumb position is so important and how to make sure we always use the correct position. After telling them about my summer experience and some of the things I could not do without the use of my thumb, we had a little relay. The students were divided into two groups (neither age nor level matter-ed) and they raced to complete four challenges without using their thumbs. I taped the thumb up against the index finger so they were not tempted to use it. They had to put on and button a sweater with 4-5 large buttons, tie a shoelace, drink some water from a paper cup and play a scale of their choice. They quickly figured they could do that last one using the two tetrachords! We used paper cups for sanitary reasons and to ensure against breakage. I put a towel on the floor for soaking up spills. I had them go back and do one of the activities with the use of their thumb and notice how much easier it was. After the relay they made a music book mark with some music themed paper, a piece of smaller, solid color cardstock on top of that. They made their thumb print in the center using stamping ink.

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Whidbey Island Verna Morgan	316 Gramayre Rd. Coupeville, WA 98239	360-678-2093 themorgans@cablespeed.com
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The words above the thumb print were.... *I am thumb body special*, and under the thumb print...*I am a pianist*. They punched a hole at the top and tied a ribbon through the hole. As a treat after our activity, I served thumb print cookies and punch. I am hoping this will help to serve as a painless reminder to use those wonderful thumbs correctly. Feel free to use and/or adapt any of these ideas in your own studio. Let me know if you have found other ideas that have worked for you and we will share them. A big thumbs up for all you sharing music teachers!



Doreen Slauch, NCTM
IMTF Chair

Arts & Awareness



"The Five Traits of WSMTA"

At the request of many who heard it, these are reflections on one year with WSMTA, from Dr. Balabanova's presentation at the WSMTA 2009 Conference.

What? It is October already? It smells like autumn, the leaves are changing colors, and students are settling into the fall schedule. It is a good time to look forward to an exciting new year of success and good music. For me it is also a good time to reflect on my first year with WSMTA.

I joined WSMTA last summer when I found out that my family and I were moving to the Seattle area.

Up 'til now, this was the third life-changing move for me. I call it "life-changing" because every time is entirely different. My first move was from Moscow, Russia, where I received my Bachelor and Master's degrees in piano performance and pedagogy, to the very small town of Blacksburg, VA. At the time, all I had was my hands and my mind--I was not allowed to bring any books or music scores out of the USSR, let alone a piano.

So I went to the Virginia Tech Music Department and said, "all I need is to play piano for a couple hours a day. Please, I'll play anything." After the audition the next day, they

offered me an accompanying and teaching position on the spot.

After five years in VA, my family moved to Colorado Springs, CO. Missing the students and community in Blacksburg, I decided to go back to school and enrolled in a DMA program in Piano Performance at CU-Boulder. I decided to do it the "Russian way", which is practicing six hours a day, and finished in five semesters. After that I dove into a heavy teaching schedule, chaired many CSMTA events, served as a MTNA competition Chairman, and generally tried to do it all.

And now, after 10 years in CO, I feel like opening an entirely new book in my life, which is called "Life in the Northwest".

I have to admit now I understand the meaning of the expression "Love at first sight", because I am in love with this state. When we look at a rock, it is easy to describe it: solid, grey, hard, small, sharp edges. But, how hard it is to describe a mountain! I asked many people what is their favorite thing about living here. These are some of the answers: beauty, rain, green, marine climate, water, mountains, the desert in the eastern portion of the state, golden-green wheat fields, orchards, fish, recreation. I also asked about the people and heard: outgoing, free-spirited, free expression, environmentally conscious, diverse. If I didn't know the name of this place is Washington, I would think it must be "in heaven".

In Colorado, I had the privilege of being a member of the Pikes Peak Music Teachers Association, which was chosen as the local chapter of the year in 2008. This year, the WSMTA was chosen the State association of the year. Congratulations to all of you on this great recognition!

It made me think of what qualities distinguish WSMTA teachers and drive you to excel? What motivates you and what can we learn from each other? I came up with five traits of WSMTA members.

First, you teach from the heart. Teaching, particularly, music, is a unique career; so unique that it is one of the few careers people say they *love* doing. But, I've seen very few people in my life profess their love for their job more than music teachers. Teachers can go on and on about their students like proud

parents. One time, somebody asked me: How many children do you have? Without pausing I said proudly, "35"! The look on that person's face was priceless. We're absolutely determined to be the best teachers we can because we are empowered with making a difference in the life of a student.

Second, you love what you teach - music! We are passionate about music, creativity, beauty, and we make it contagious!

I am sure that each of you has a great story how music has influenced your life. I would like to share with you my friend Greg's story:

Greg grew up in San Francisco, taking piano lessons, falling in love with music, and taking part in many competitions. The success was coming but his family discouraged him from making a career in music. He became a renowned chef, an owner of two restaurants and a gourmet catering business. At the time, he lived in the Rocky Mountain foothills in the picturesque town of Manitou Springs. Greg turned his garage into a storage room where he kept imported cheeses, frozen stocks, Swiss chocolate, and gourmet sauces. One night he heard a loud noise. A bear had broken into the storage room and was enjoying himself! Greg is a big man; he scared the bear away, but in the process he severely cut his right hand. Sitting in the ER, bleeding and crying, he realized that if his hand did not heal properly, he would never be able to play piano again. Now, he knew his life's purpose. Greg's hand healed completely. He sold the business and turned the storage room into a studio. Now he is a full-time teacher, and is finishing his Master's degree in Piano performance at the University of Denver.

Third, you are always learning. Sometimes music teaching seems like an exclusive club of experts. I think the best kind of teachers are those who share their secrets of success freely and also the ones that are not afraid to ask for help. If you have a problem you can't solve, there are always people who are happy to be asked for help, to share their experiences and ideas with abundance. This is exactly what I witnessed at the chapter meetings in Bellevue, Edmonds, and Seattle. The exchange of funny anecdotes, motivational stories, helpful tips and details, was inspiring and encouraging.

Fourth, you care about yourselves and each other. Our profession is a lonely profession. It is easy to get overwhelmed. We wear many hats: have children, care for family members, worry about the economy, politics, and choices our children make, all the while teaching our students with all the possible care and attention.

Recently I came across an article called "65 Things you should do now to avoid burnout." That title made me feel stressed right on the spot!

If passion is the key, then having fun is the way to activate that passion. When I observed many great teachers, they have something in common. They joke around a lot. They make fun of themselves. They make up lyrics to go along with the music played at the moment. They talk about their pets. They ask students what they did over the weekend and then make some fun (non-critical) comments on whatever they did. They smile and laugh.

Finally, the Fifth trait. It is the sense of community that WSMTA provides, meeting the needs of such a geographically diverse state and all the local chapters that provide friendship, support, continuing education, and social opportunities. I would personally like to thank teachers in the Eastside, Seattle, and Edmonds chapters for their warm welcome, their smiles, their hospitality, support, and for the encouragement they gave me as a new member of their group. The sense of belonging is so important. As a member of a group, I feel bigger and stronger, ready to be in charge of my students, my studio, and most of all my teaching.

We are leaders. We lead our students. We need to: give them positive energy; define vision for their success; care about them, their motivation, creativity, progress, and stability; teach them to balance activities, practice techniques, attention to the details; reward them for many things (progress, performance, discipline and attitude); make decisions in tough moments; be always creative and innovative in our teaching.

The one thing that is the most important to me as a teacher is always having a vision for my team: my stu-

dents and me. I want them to have a dream and work towards it.

10 years ago, in Colorado, I taught twin brothers, teenagers, who drifted off the path into skipping lessons, not practicing, hanging out in the streets with a wrong crowd, failing school. The strain on the family was drastic as the parents had high expectations for their children. Still, I felt that the boys needed music in their lives no matter what and continued to teach them something music related. After two years, they turned around. As a thank you gift, one of them drew a picture. It is called "On edge". It is a black and white drawing of a hand clutching the edge of a drop-off cliff as in one final, powerful push to climb up. The drawing consists of millions of teeny dots that start making sense when you look from a distance. Then you see the big picture.

Let's remember to see the big picture. As we start the new school year, let's remember the big picture of our collective efforts, inventing the musical future for our students, empowering and enriching their lives through music.

*Dr. Yelena Balabanova
WSMTA Arts Awareness
and Advocacy Chair*

CHAPTER NEWS

Spokane Chapter Cassandra Carr Workshops

Hey, you Eastern Washingtonians! If you haven't already signed up, there is still time to register for Dr. Carr's workshops, October 10, at Whitworth University Recital Hall.

Refer to your Sept. issue of *The CLARION* for specific details about the four workshops, scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to to 4:30 pm. Or, for more information contact Natalya Syropyatova at 509-487-9252 or syropyatovoleg@hotmail.com.

Kitsap Chapter Jody Graves Concert, Ensemble Workshop & Master Class in Poulsbo

For you wild Western Washingtonians, a reminder that Dr. Graves will be giving a concert on Oct. 16, followed by an Ensemble Workshop

and Master Class on Oct. 17. See your Sept. issue of *The CLARION* for specific details.

Concert tickets will be available at the door. More information about the Workshop and Master Class may be obtained by email from KMTA President, Patti Ray at onahappynote@comcast.net.

DISTRICT NEWS

District I & II Fall Conference

Saturday Oct. 10: 9:00am-4:00pm,
Marysville United Methodist Church,
5600 64th St. NE, Marysville, WA

Dr. Jody Graves
"Chamber Music & Accompanying"
Sharon Clark
"Pint-size Partners"
Master Classes - Dr. Graves

Open to WSMTA members, non-members, & students. For registration info contact:

Carol Hibbard, NCTM, Dist. II VP
hibbardbc@gmail.com
or *Sally Kirk Dist. I VP*
ctk@wavecable.com

BULLETIN BOARD

Dalcroze Society of America Northwest Chapter Celebrates 20th Year

2010 is the 20th year of the Northwest Chapter of the Dalcroze Society of America! Their 2009 - 2010 season presentations to put on your calendar are November 8 at the James Sales Elementary School in Tacoma, Feb, 7 at the UW Dance Dept., and April 25 at the University Heights Center in Seattle.

*Clock hours are available at the
November and February workshops.*

The Nov. 8 workshop is *Dalcroze: Movement for Musicians and Teachers*. The guest teacher will be **John Stevenson**, an internationally respected teacher of Eurhythmics.

For more information, go to www.dalcrozenwc.org or contact Dr. Julia Schnebly-Black at jsbamb@gmail.com

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Dates & Deadlines

Oct. 3: District IV workshop in Centralia. Dr. Jody Graves lecture on collaborative music and ensemble master class. Contact Dist. IV VP Elizabeth Sheppard for more info. (see WSMTA BOD listings)

Oct. 10: District I & II Conference, Marysville.
(NOTICE: The date was incorrectly listed in the Sept. issue as Oct. 9.)

Oct. 10: Spokane Chapter Casandra Carr Workshops at Whitworth U. (see articles in this & the Sept. issue)

Oct. 15: Deadline for dues for renewing members for Adjudications participation.

Oct. 16: Kitsap Chapter, Dr. Jody Graves in Concert. (see articles in this & the Sept. issue)

Oct. 17: Kitsap Chapter, Dr. Jody Graves Ensemble Workshop & Master Class. (see articles in this & the Sept. issue)

Nov. 1: Chapter Adjudication Preliminary Reports due.

Nov. 6, 7, & 8: MTNA Performance Competitions, Whitworth University.

Nov. 6, 7, & 8: WSMTA Outstanding Artist Competition, Eastern WA University.

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- ✱ **World Renowned Pianist at 2010 Conference** (page 1)
- ✱ **Attention All Certified Members; see CERTIFICATION CORNER** (page 4)
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- ✱ **WSMTA 2009-2010 Boards, Chairs, & Chapter Presidents lists** (page 4)

Visit your WSMTA website at : www.wsmta.net & see *The CLARION* in full color!