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NEWSLETTER

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR
DANA MARTIN STUDIO
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Publisher: Dana Martin

Contact info:
864 Wellington Way
Lexington, KY 40503
dana@danamartinstudio.com
859.552.4419

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KEYS | JANUARY 2021

WHAT'S NEW FOR DANA

Christmas was quieter this year. We spent Christmas day in Louisville with Andrea and Jonathan and the kiddos.

My dad and stepmom came for a quick visit. It was wonderful to see my dad and know that he's recovering from Covid. He's still on oxygen, but getting stronger

day by day. Their dog, Quincy and Bailey get along well together. Zeke just tries to stay clear of them both.

Jon-Michael and Tiffany and the girls couldn't come in this year, but we hope to see them soon. 🎵



Landree & Hadlee



Left to right from back: Jonathan, Megan, Evie, Andrea, Dana, Anthony, Ryan, Will, Natalea



Me and my dad



Jon-Michael & Tffany

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COMMUNITY

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

| | |
|-------------------------|------|
| SANDY STONE | 1.15 |
| KASI DEPEW | 1.26 |
| ADELAIDE AKHTAREKHAVARI | 1.30 |

IMPORTANT DATES

LESSONS RESUME
JAN 4

SPRING RECITAL
MAY 17

ONLINE REVIEWS

I would really appreciate a detailed review with specific reasons why you're happy to have me as your piano teacher. Just go to g.page/danamartinstudio/review. Thank you!

The more online reviews I have, the easier it is for potential students to find me.

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VOL 12 ISSUE 1

STUDENT HIGHLIGHT: ABBY GORDLEY



Abby

Meet Abby Gordley, seventh grader at Royal Springs Middle School in Georgetown. Her favorite subject is social studies.

Abby lives with her Nanny and Papa, her older brother Elijah, and four-pound Maltese Tink and Golden Doodle Reiko.

Some of her favorites are: *Vampire Diaries* (movie), pop music, Kentucky Wildcats, playing piano and running track. She recently ran a 5K, and her favorite place to vacation is the beach.

Abby says, "I love playing the piano for my Nanny and Papa. I'm an artist, and I have a very good style."

Abby loves life, and especially animals. She's always quick to greet Bailey and Zeke. We have lots of fun at lessons playing duets and laughing together. 🎵

WELCOME 2021!

I don't know anyone who's sad to see 2020 in the rearview mirror. In fact, I think most everyone would say, "Hello 2021; good riddance, 2020!"

I'm optimistic that 2021 will bring smoother sailing for everyone.

Our only live performance last year was on February 29. Sixteen students blessed the residents of Ashland Terrace with their piano playing and valentine cards.

When Covid reared its ugly head, I'm so grateful that we were able to pivot



immediately to online lessons without a hitch — except for a few technical difficulties now and then.

I'm extremely proud of the student response. Even though many of you were dealing with

"Zoom fatigue," you stuck with it, and continued your practice habits.

The 2020 Practice Competition was proof of this with over 23,000 practice minutes logged during the four-week competition in April!

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DANA'S PRACTICE TIP

BASIC TECHNIQUE FOR SCALES AND EVERYTHING YOU PLAY

I've been working on a Scale Mastery booklet to help my students learn to master scales with accuracy, speed and efficiency. The good news is that the techniques that work for scales also work for anything and everything you play.

Here's an excerpt from my booklet:

It's not just about what notes you play; it's about how you play them.

Having solid technique and form will improve your tone, speed, and help prevent injury.

Smooth Tone. Have you ever played scales (or any piece), and they just weren't smooth? Maybe you were playing all the right notes, but the rhythm was shaky, or some notes really stuck out instead of having a nice, even tone?

The goal is consistency, meaning you are able to play them with all the notes at a similar volume and at an even rhythm. That's what makes them sound silky smooth! And

it's one of the things that separates good pianists from great pianists.

Speed. Good form allows you to play fast. It puts the angles of your fingers, wrists, and elbows at optimum positions so there is the most efficient use of motion possible. Without good form, your scales will feel awkward and sloppy, because you'll have to contort your wrist at weird angles to reach the notes.

Once you master this form, you'll notice an immediate improvement in all your playing! Suddenly fast passages will be significantly easier to play, and you'll feel "at home" on the keyboard.

Injury Prevention. Piano injuries are more common than most people think. A lot of pianists get injured from repetitive motion (and there's a lot of repetitive motion in scales!).

Tension is what leads to injury. When you're playing tense, the tendons and ligaments in your fingers and wrists are constantly under strain, and eventually they will break down. That's the cause of injury. The key is to stay relaxed and tension free. Having good form will allow you to do that.

So, when you hear me say, "Tall, curved fingers!" remember it's to help you play with a smoother tone, speed and accuracy and to prevent injury. And it's important that you remember to practice this way when I'm not around to remind you.

Happy practicing! 🎵



WELCOME 2021! *(continued from p.1)*

Again you stepped up to the challenge for our 2020 spring recital and videoed your pieces for our first ever virtual pandemic performance in May.

Most students resumed in-person lessons in June, and I was so happy to see your smiling eyes (masks hid your beautiful smiles)!

Our summer group classes also had to happen online, and again, you were such troopers! Musical Jeopardy was a big hit with everyone who attended the Fiesta! summer classes.

We had to miss our fall performance, but we were definitely ready to play Christmas music when October rolled around.

I thoroughly enjoyed videoing you playing your Christmas pieces for the

recital, and especially loved playing the duets with you!

Even though we couldn't be together for the Christmas recital, our YouTube premier was a fun celebration! I loved that we could experience the recital together with comments and cheers from friends and family.

As we prepare for a new year, I'm optimistic about our future together. I'm grateful to have you in my life, and I'm counting my blessings. Many have had to endure much worse this past year. I'm proud to be with you on this journey. Thank you for your friendship and support.

A wise person once said, "When you're up to your eyeballs in manure, it means you're close to finding that pony!" 🎵

30-PIECE Challenge

This is our second year to introduce this fun challenge.

To make the list, students must play a piece for me with musicality (correct tempo, rhythm, dynamics and expression). Each piece must be at least 16 measures long (8 measures for beginner students).

It takes a little more time for students who are learning longer and more difficult pieces to check off a piece. We will add some shorter and easier pieces for these students so they can have some quick wins.

I'm so proud of all my students who are working diligently toward the 30-Piece Challenge!

Two students have surpassed the challenge so far: **Olivia Russell** with 39 pieces and **Joseph Reeder** with 34! Nearing the goal are **Adelaide Akhtarekhavari** with 26 pieces, and with 22 are **Grace Siguenza** and **Natalea Carey**, and **Trey Wells** with 20.

Nearing the second milestone are **Naa Enyonam Omane-Achamfuor** with 19 pieces, **Kasi Depew** 17, **Vivienne Schweighardt** 16, and **Ayanna Goines** 15. **Claire Dominick** has 13, **Evie Carey** 12, and **Alexandra Joiner-Garcia** and **Truett Black** each have 11.

Emily Harvey has reached the first milestone with 10. On the board are **Beatriz Bezerra** with 8, **Molly Matthews** and **Tanner Black** with 7 each, **Liya Paul** 6, and **Lexi Borck** 4 pieces.

Keep up the good work, students!