

The Friday Morning MUSIC CLUB



137TH SEASON

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A Well-Tuned Team

Mary Alice Davidson

In early 2022, Nan Cooper stepped down from her position as FMMC's Orchestra Manager to attend to family matters in Florida. Nan had held that key position since 2008, the same year she joined the club. To build on Nan's long tenure in this important position, Angelina Wong volunteered to assume that post just after Nan's departure (see page 3).

From an audience's perspective, symphony orchestras can appear as well-oiled machines, with musicians working together to create beautiful music under the direction of a conductor.

In reality, making that seemingly flawless performance happen requires months of work, not only from the players, but also from the orchestra's conductor and manager.

For FMMC's Avanti Orchestra, the key players in this scenario are Music Director and Conductor Pablo Saelzer, who will step down from his post at the end of this season, and the Orchestra Manager, formerly Nan and now Angelina.

The 14-year partnership between Pablo and Nan actually started by coincidence. In 2004, Pablo moved to the Wash-

ington, DC, area and eventually joined the faculty of the Levine School of Music. Nan always loved music, so, in her 40s, she decided to learn the violin as a hobby and began taking lessons at the Levine School. "Since Pablo was new, he was given the new adult students," says Nan, "including me." She also held a management position with USA Swimming.

It was during these lessons that they began talking about the management side of the orchestra when Pablo was selected as Avanti's conductor beginning with the 2005–2006 season. When the current orchestra manager, Adrienne Paiewonsky, stepped away, Pablo asked Nan to take over.

Throughout her years of service, Nan assumed myriad tasks behind the scenes. The responsibilities of the orchestra manager range from recruiting orchestra personnel, interacting with venue staff, negotiating contracts, and shepherding soloists.

In collaboration with Pablo, Nan scheduled concert dates, prepared the program and cover art, and oversaw the stage design and set-up. She also repro-

duced and distributed practice parts to the orchestra, including bowings by Pablo. While players brought their own stands and lights to rehearsals and concerts, ever resourceful Nan took on the tasks of setting up the seats for rehearsals and even providing delicious homemade snacks to the group during rehearsal breaks.

"A major responsibility is acting as a liaison between the conductor and the players, says Angelina. "While many people have Pablo's contact information, the Orchestra Manager is the point of contact." Pablo had found that managing the orchestra personnel was a "headache," and Nan took on more and more of that responsibility. "It was a collaboration," according to Pablo. "If there were artistic details, check with Pablo; if there were administrative issues, see Nan."

"Pablo was very organized," adds Nan, "but he needed to concentrate on the artistic vision for the orchestra, and you

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From left: Pablo Saelzer, Julian Rhee, and Nan Cooper celebrate following his performance with Avanti Orchestra as the 2018 JIC first-prize violin winner.

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Arioso Chorale: Introducing a New Singing Group

Peter Baum

With the completion of the season's first concert, the Chorale is moving back into the 19th century and preparing a work by Giacomo Puccini. While Puccini is most remembered for his many operas, his first major non-operatic work was the *Messa a 4 con orchestra (Messa Di Gloria)*. First performed in 1880, it sat effectively unknown and unplayed until 1952. Even today, it is a rarely performed work from a truly

gifted composer. In addition to this main work, Paul has programmed Vaughan Williams's *Serenade to Music*.

Two soloists will be on stage for the Puccini. Tenor Alan Palacios Chan and bass Robert McDonald have agreed to participate and will also sing other numbers including the "Sanctus" from Gounod's *Messe Solennelle* and "Votre Toast" (the Toreador Song) from Bizet's *Carmen*.

This concert will also mark the first performance of the Arioso Chamber Singers. This small group is made up of 16 singers from within the main Chorale and will specialize in a cappella music. Their initial offering will be Poulenc's *Un soir de neige* (Night of Snow).

The concert dates are Thursday, January 26 and Saturday, January 28, 2023 starting at 8:00 PM in the sanctuary of the Church of the Reformation located at 212 E. Capitol St, NE. 🎧

A Well-Tuned Team...continued from page 1

can't do both." She has a lot of respect for Pablo and his efforts to let instrumentalists know that he was looking for players that would not just "drop in" and to set expectations for musicianship. "You could hear the difference," Nan says.

"I never would have lasted for 18 years if the partnership between me and Nan was not solid," says Pablo. "If she had not helped me, I would have quit long ago. Our skills are complementary."

Achieving the orchestra's goals, however, is a team effort, according to Pablo, Nan, and Angelina. Two important parts of the Avanti team have been FMMC board members Anne Zim and Joanna Taylor.

As FMMC's treasurer, Anne worked with Nan to fine-tune budget matters and

contractual agreements. Anne would make suggestions, but Nan was very conscientious about making sure Avanti's operations were within budget. "I've always been a big supporter of the orchestra," says Anne, "and Pablo and Nan brought Avanti to a different level." While Nan handled logistics with the venues, she also graciously resolved issues with orchestra members as well as with the FMMC board. "I have worked with three other wonderful Orchestra Managers over time," says Anne, "but none could hold a candle to Nan."

Joanna Taylor currently serves as FMMC's Outreach Director and Administrative Coordinator. She is also a cellist and performs with Avanti. Joanna assisted Nan from the start by proofing programs

before Nan sent them to the printer, reviewing mails and notes to players before they were sent, substituting for Nan when she was away, and helping with whatever needed to be done. Most importantly, says Joanna, she provided "moral support" when Nan needed it.

The overall result is that the current members of the Avanti Orchestra are loyal supporters of the total package. Pablo has been able to concentrate on the orchestra's artistic mission while Nan, and now Angelina, ably shoulder myriad details.

That cooperation is what keeps Avanti and its audiences humming. 🎧

A Special Opportunity

Angelina Wong stepped into the Orchestra Manager's role with Avanti shortly after Nan Cooper resigned. She already was an archivist with FMMC, but the manager's role was a new position for her. Nonetheless, she had been involved with many aspects of music for years.

Angelina's music career began in high school as a piano student. Why? "Piano was the only instrument I could learn without being required to purchase the instrument," she says. Realizing her musical potential, her teacher recommended she join the Montgomery College (MC) Chorus, which eventually led to a music major in vocal performance.

In 2016, Avanti Conductor Pablo Saelzer asked some MC singers to support Arioso Chorale for *Die Fledermaus*. Subsequently, Angelina received a follow-up email from Chorale Chair Peter Baum, which included the chorale's schedule. She wasn't singing with any groups at the time, nor taking voice lessons privately, so she joined Arioso and became an FMMC member in 2019. Currently she sings with the National Philharmonic Chorale and has resumed private lessons to hone her talent as a soloist.

When Angelina volunteered to take on the Orchestra Manager's position, she was completing a Master's in Library and Information Science as a gateway to becoming a better music archivist for FMMC. Angelina has applied her archival skills in many ways that benefit FMMC, including adding

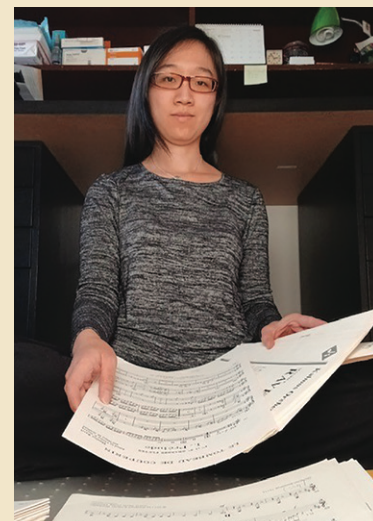
hidden Composers Group recordings and programs to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library's DigDC digital portal. "I've developed administrative musical experience through the archives that I can apply to Avanti," she says.

"I honestly hadn't expected my responsibilities to be so numerous when I volunteered for the position, Nan and Pablo have been vital in guiding me since they know the players and overall operations so well."

In addition to the many roles defined by the past and current Avanti team, the Orchestra Manager also doubles as the Avanti's Music Librarian, which uses skills Angelina already has perfected. One of her tasks was to organize the orchestral scores in the FMMC Archives. "I'm responsible for checking out music from the FMMC Archives, making purchases when scores or parts are not in the library, delivering the music to the conductor, distributing parts to the players, collecting and organizing those parts at the end of concerts, and returning the music to the library."

Still, Angelina realizes that the primary point of her position is to be a liaison. She is not just the contact point between players and the conductor, but between anyone trying to reach the orchestra, including venue staff, musicians, and audience members. "I basically answer anything that is related to the orchestra but not necessarily related to music," she comments.

"Angelina is a fast learner and a hard worker," says Pablo. "She has helped with every task related to processing the com-



Angelina Wong reorganizes the scores used by Avanti orchestra musicians.

positions and organizing concerts."

Angelina views creating the concert program as another key part of her position. These documents are retained in the FMMC Archives and represent Avanti to the audience. It's important to her that the programs reflect exactly what the audience sees and hears on stage and provide up-to-date information on all aspects of FMMC.

As Orchestra Manager, "I've learned so much more than the average singer would know, such as how to set up an orchestra stage and tune sections to create a balance of sound. I am in an extremely beneficial position where I can make acquaintances with very supportive instrumentalists."

Her most memorable moment so far? "Whenever I can sit behind the orchestra and watch Pablo conduct, that's special." 🎧

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If you shop Amazon, don't forget to use Amazon Smile. It is a simple way to support FMMC every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop, AmazonSmile will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to FMMC.

Here's how:

- Open the Amazon Shopping app
- Navigate to the main menu (≡)
- Tap on Settings and then select "AmazonSmile"
- Select Friday Morning Music Club.

You can follow the on-screen instructions to turn on AmazonSmile on your phone.

From the Foundation Director

Grace McFarlane

Happy New Year!

At the start of 2023 I look back on the successes achieved in the past year. It was a busy year, with both the WIC and JIC competitions as well as winners' concerto performances with the FMMC Avanti Orchestra and the National Philharmonic Orchestra. I look forward to a new year of musical enrichment, collaboration and engagement. Our faithful, dedicated members and friends have supported our events with enthusiasm and a spirit of volunteerism, helping to fulfill our mission to sponsor these competitions which provide invaluable opportunities for our talented aspiring winners, and to kickstart their careers as they grow from talented young musicians into distinguished professional artists.

The Foundation Board is working hard to accomplish our mission as we prepare for the 2023 WIC Voice Competition next May 27 & 28. We look forward to welcoming our distinguished panel of

judges – Sylvia McNair, Aprille Millo and Antony Walker. Our Competition Chair, Chen-Li Tzeng, continues to send out promotional materials, and inquiries, and applications have started to come in. The application deadline is February 15, 2023, after which the preliminary judges will begin the process of evaluating all the submissions to select the 16 semifinalists who will be invited to compete next May. We confidently anticipate another exciting competition this year.

The FMMC Foundation continues to rely on the generosity of our patrons and supporters. We welcome personal and corporate donations to support our competitions. If you are interested in learning more about ways to contribute, or to make a donation in honor/memory of someone, or if you might like to sponsor a specific prize, please contact me.

I wish you a very Happy New Year 2023, filled with joy, peace, good health, and continued opportunities to collabo-



rate and share the wonderful gift of music. It is an honor to serve in my role as Foundation Chair. I continue to be grateful for the committed Board of Trustees with whom I am privileged to collaborate. 🎵

Grace

Ross-Roberts High School Competition For Woodwinds, Brass, and Percussion • March 18, 2023

Applications are now being accepted for the Ross-Roberts High School Competition for Woodwinds, Brass, and Percussion. The competition will be held on Saturday, March 18, 2023, from 9 am to 4 pm at the Lutheran Church of the Reformation, 212 East Capitol St NE, Washington, DC 20003.

The application deadline is February 25, 2023. Apply early. The number of spaces is limited.

For additional information and application forms visit www.fmmc.org or contact highschoolwind@fmmc.org.

Encourage Your Students to Apply!

FMMC members are cordially invited to help as host/usher/check-in throughout the day of the competition and/or be audience. Please reply to the chairs contact: highschoolwind@fmmc.org 🎵

Happy New Year!

High School String Competition Winners

Jeongseon Choi

We had another great on-line competition this year. Winners are Daphne Wen, violin (first place); Anderson Bernal, bass (second place); Joshua Thrush, bass (third place); Elizabeth Wnek, violin (HM). A million thanks to the wonderful judges: Wonju Kim Cole, violin (Baltimore Symphony); Mark Pfannschmidt, viola (National Philharmonic); Sedoo Park, cello (Baltimore Symphony). 🎻



Daphne Wen



Anderson Bernal



Joshua Thrush



Elizabeth Wnek

Volunteers Needed

Start the new year with a resolution to give back to your club.

We need volunteers for the following positions:

Yearbook Editor

Assistant Treasurer

(must be willing to assume duties of treasurer after one year)

Finance Director

Website updater

Outreach participants 🎻

Membership Update

Renewing Member

Pamela Broene, Solo flute,
Silver Spring, MD 20901

Jonathan Sanford, Chorale Bass,
Washington, DC 20002

New Members

John Paul Barringer, Chorale Bass,
McLean, VA 22101

Molly Fisch-Friedman, Chorale
Alto, Washington, DC 20008

Judith Levens, Associate cello,
Bethesda, MD 20814

Lisa Rarick, Chorale Alto,
Odenton, MD 21113

Marta Spangler, Chorale Alto,
Washington, DC 20003

Kathryn Tobias, Chorale Alto,
Cheverly, MD 20785 🎻

FMMC Concert Calendar - January and Early February 2023

Thursday, January 5, 1:00 pm at Strathmore Mansion

Composers Concert

- AN-MING WANG: Two piano pieces: *Crab walk*; *Wondrous Wave*. **Jeongseon Choi**, piano.
- LI-LY CHANG: Three piano pieces: *Nature Explorer*; *A virtual journey*; Impromptu No. 1. **Li-Ly Chang**, piano.
- JONATHAN NEWMARK: String trio. **Michael Casassa**, violin; **Jonathan Newmark**, viola; **Valerie Matthews**, cello.
- JOHN HILTMEN: Selection TBA.

Friday, January 6, 12:00 noon at St. George's Episcopal Church

- MOZART: Sonata in B-flat Major, K. 570. **Charles Timbrell**, piano.
- VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: *Songs of Travel*. **Ben Wallis**, bass; **Jang Yoo**, piano.
- LOWELL LIEBERMANN: *Night Music*. SAINT-SAËNS: *Tarantella*, op. 6. **Susan Hayes**, flute; **Albert Hunt**, clarinet; **Barbara Peterson Cackler**, piano.

Sunday, January 8, 3:00 pm at Collington Retirement Community

- YSAÏE: Solo Sonata No. 2 "Obsession." **Makiko Taguchi**, violin.
- VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: Six Studies in English Folksong. REBECCA CLARKE: Passacaglia on an Old English Tune; *Lullaby*. **Bonnie Cohen**, viola; **Barbara Peterson Cackler**, piano.
- BEETHOVEN: Quintet in E-flat Major, op. 71. **Teri Manolio** flute; **Susan Ashmore** (guest), oboe; **Andy Tangborn**, clarinet; **Leila Duman** (guest), bassoon; **Ken Hawes** (guest), horn.

Sunday, January 8, 7:30 pm at Riderwood Community Chapel

- MOZART: Sonata in B-flat Major, K. 570. **Ryan McNamara**, piano.
- ARENSKY: String Quartet No. 2 in A Minor. **Robyn Tessin**, violin; **Julia Moline**, viola; **Valerie Matthews** and **Taka Ariga** (guest), cellos.

Friday, January 13, 12:00 noon at St. George's Episcopal Church

- BRUCH: *Romanze*, op. 85. **Bonnie Cohen**, viola; **Jung-Yoon Lee**, piano.
- DVOŘÁK: Four Romantic Pieces, op. 75, B. 150: I. Allegro moderato. KREISLER: *Liebesleid*. MOZART: Sonata for piano and violin No. 26 in B-flat Major, K.378: I. Allegro moderato. **Jian Song** (guest), violin; **Yuri Chayama**, piano.
- JOSEPH FENNIMORE: *Foxtrot*. **Paul Leavitt**, piano.

Thursday, January 19, 12:00 noon at Fairfax Old Town Hall

- BEETHOVEN: Sonata in A-flat Major, op. 110. **Simon Finlow**, piano.
- Women Composers Through the Centuries: LAITMAN, CHAMINADE, POLDOWSKI, LEHMANN, SCHUMANN, STROZZI. **Nancy MacArthur Smith**, soprano; **Barbara Peterson Cackler**, piano.
- MIKE MOWER: *Deviations on "The Carnival of Venice"*. **Gwyn Jones**, flute; **Rosanne Conway**, piano.

Friday, January 20, 12:00 noon at Live! at 10th & G

- CASSADO: Suite for solo cello. **John Kaboff**, cello.
- SCHUBERT: Sonata in G Major, op. 78, D 894. **John Sutherland Earle**, piano.
- FINZI: Five Bagatelles, op. 23. **Kayondra Reid**, clarinet; **Bora Lee**, piano.

Thursday, January 26, 8:00 pm in The Church of the Reformation

Arioso Chorale, Paul Leavitt, director.
Soloists: **Allan Palacios Chan**, tenor, and **Robert McDonald**, bass

- PUCCINI: Messa Di Gloria. **Allan Palacios Chan** and **Robert McDonald**.
- VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: *Serenade to Music*
- GOUNOD: Messe Solennelle – "Sanctus." **Allan Palacios Chan**.
- BIZET: Carmen – "Votre Toast" (Toreador Song). **Robert McDonald**.
- POULENC: *Un soir de neige* (Introducing the Arioso Chamber Singers)

Saturday, January 28, 8:00 pm in The Church of the Reformation

Arioso Chorale, Paul Leavitt, director.
Soloists: **Allan Palacios Chan**, tenor, and **Robert McDonald**, bass

- PUCCINI: Messa Di Gloria. **Allan Palacios Chan** and **Robert McDonald**
- VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: *Serenade to Music*
- GOUNOD: Messe Solennelle – "Sanctus." **Allan Palacios Chan**
- BIZET: Carmen – "Votre Toast" (Toreador Song). **Robert McDonald**
- POULENC: *Un soir de neige* (Introducing the Arioso Chamber Singers)

Thursday, February 2, 1:00 pm in The Mansion at Strathmore

- PROGRAM TBA

Friday, February 3, 12:00 noon at St. George's Episcopal Church

- MOZART: Sonata in D Major, K. 311. **Joan Mizrahi**, piano.
- REBECCA CLARKE: Selected songs. **Gail Collins**, mezzo-soprano; **Barbara Peterson Cackler**, piano.
- DEBUSSY: Sonata for cello and piano. **John Kaboff**, cello; **Simon Finlow**, piano

Thursday, February 9, 3:00 pm at Ingleside at King Farm

- MOZART: Sonata in D Major, K 311. **Joan Mizrahi**, piano.
- HERMAN BEEFTINK: *Birds*. **Gwyn Jones**, **Laura Benning** and **Cindy Rugolo** (guest), flutes.
- BRAHMS: Piano Quartet in C Minor, op. 60. (1) 3rd movement (Andante); (2) 1st movement (Allegro non troppo). **Renee Roberts**, violin; **Paul Schaaf** (guest), viola; **Max Weiss** (guest), cello; **Felicia Weiss**, piano.

Friday, February 10, 12:00 noon at St. George's Episcopal Church

Composers Concert

- SHARON GUERTIN SHAFER: *The Soul of Things*. **Mandy Brown**, soprano; **Sharon Guertin Shafer**, piano.
- STEVEN SCHWARZ: *Strange Attractors*. **Steven Schwarz**, piano.

Venues

Church of the Reformation

212 East Capitol St. NE
Washington, DC
(Metro: Capitol South or Union Station)

Collington Retirement Community

10450 Lottsford Rd.
Mitchellville, MD

Ingleside at King Farm

701 King Farm Blvd.
Rockville, MD

Live! at 10th & G

945 G St. NW
Washington, DC
(Metro: Gallery Place 9th St. exit or Metro Center)

The Mansion at Strathmore

10701 Rockville Pike
N. Bethesda, MD
(Metro: Grosvenor)

Old Town Hall, City of Fairfax

Corner of Main St. (Rt. 236) & University Dr.
Fairfax, VA

Riderwood Community Chapel

3110 Gracefield Rd.
Silver Spring, MD

St. George's Episcopal Church

915 N. Oakland St.
Arlington, VA
(Metro: Virginia Square GMU)

A Message from Pablo Saelzar

Dear Club Members, as announced in the last Newsletter, this is my last season as Music Director and Conductor of Avanti. I thought it would be good to share with you part of the letter I wrote to the players in Avanti, the Orchestra of the FMMC, and extend my gratitude to all of you.

Dear Avanti,

After considering it for some time, I have decided this will be my last season as music director/conductor of Avanti. This is, for me, the end of an exciting and beautiful journey with you.

The down time imposed by the pandemic, as for many, had for me a silver lining. I had the time to stop and think about how I feel about being an orchestra conductor. It became clear to me that my main interest regarding conducting is the pieces themselves which make up the symphonic repertoire. Not all of them, but the ones I personally find fascinating, moving, and relevant. Conducting Avanti, amongst other things, has afforded me the opportunity to dig deep into these works under the exciting pressure of an upcoming concert. I have enjoyed every minute of studying, preparing, and rehearsing. On the other hand, I have come to understand that being an orchestra conductor is not a role I wear comfortably.

At the same time, this down time gave me an opportunity to re-evaluate my interests and priorities. At some point during this process it became clear to me that there are a couple of avenues I want to explore and others I want to revisit, all which will of course, make demands on my time. I strongly believe that a dedicated group like Avanti deserves a conductor willing and able to put forth their best. It became clear to me that I am not at that place anymore. So, it is time for me to step down and let the group find a new, inspired conductor.

It has been one of the great honors of my life to have had the opportunity to be entrusted to lead and to develop this ensemble. I love the players in Avanti and have tremendous respect for your commitment. I am happy and satisfied with the work I have done with Avanti since 2005. I sincerely believe that the orchestra is in a very good place. It continues to attract new talent and has a good reputation amongst musicians in the area.

I am the conductor I am today thanks to the many hours in which you put your talents in my hands.

I would like to add that I am not stepping down to take the same position with another orchestra. I sincerely want to pause and contemplate my future.

I thank you for your loyalty, support, and enthusiasm.

Sincerely,
Pablo



Friday Morning Music Club
755 8th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

From the President

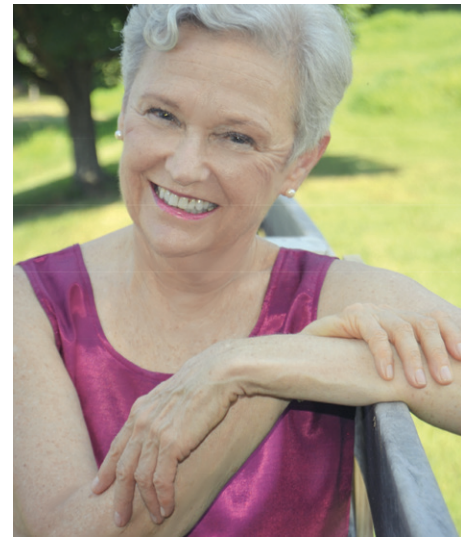
Leslie Luxemburg

The recent performances at Live at 10th & G on Friday, November 18th are proof positive of the current status and high caliber of the Friday Morning Music Club. The well-balanced program crafted by venue chair Yooni Lee allowed each of the performers to excel. The musicians, Bonnie Cohen, viola, Albert Hunt, clarinet, and Daryl Yoder, baritone, were all at the top of their game. Both pianists—Yooni Lee who accompanied the first two groups, and solo artist Topher Ruggiero—played with great artistry and professionalism. I was gratified to hear this delightful program. My only concern with the program was the size of the audience. Our in-town venues continue to have an issue with attracting robust audiences. I strongly encourage FMMC members to make a bigger effort to support their hard-working colleagues!

Speaking of dedicated efforts on behalf of our organization, January seems a good

moment to give a special shout out to our new Orchestra Manager Angelina Wong and our Chorale Chair Peter Baum. These vital arms of the FMMC would not function so smoothly and with such competence without the ongoing and behind-the-scenes efforts of both Angelina and Peter. Their attention to all the arrangements and other aspects of what goes into producing these concerts allows the conductors to concentrate on producing the best musical experience possible without getting bogged down in administrative details. I would be most remiss if I didn't also mention the amazing work done by Nan Cooper on behalf of the orchestra for so many years. While we miss Nan's unassuming efficiency, we are so grateful to Angelina for ensuring continuity in this position.

Please make the start of the New Year a time for those of you who have not been involved in FMMC activities



or performances on a regular basis to add this to your list of New Year's resolutions. Definitely a win-win situation! 🎵

Leslie