

Lethbridge Branch of ARMTA Minutes Thursday, September 12, 2024, Casa Meeting Room

Check out the Lethbridge Branch website for updates and information regarding upcoming events and meetings at www.lrmta.com

Brad called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. in the Meeting Room at Casa and welcomed those participating. There were 12 members present: Betty Jo Radley, Linda Dickey, Christine Rogers, Honorary Branch Member Marilyn Sinclair, Brad Parker, Lavinia Kell Parker, Cheryl Emery-Karapita, Carmen Letourneau, and Lorrie Wittke. Carolyn Herrington, Martha Renner, and Brenda Lockmuller joined online. Thank you to Brad for facilitating attendance at the meeting by Zoom. Erinn Roberts sent greetings and apologies for being unable to attend the meeting.

Linda moved the acceptance of the agenda, seconded by Cheryl. Betty Jo moved the acceptance of the May minutes as circulated. Seconded by Lavinia. All in favour, carried.

Christine gave the Treasurer's report. The account balances as of September 6, 2024, are, Awards Account: \$5,338.11, and Operating Account: \$1,823.63. Items of note:

- Brenda will continue as second signer for our cheques at this point until Brad can complete his U.S. paperwork.
- **MOTION:** Christine made a motion to approve the extra funds needed to cover the cost of refreshments for the June Community Recital. Seconded by Betty Jo. Discussion and comments followed. We authorized \$75 in an online motion last May, and the total amount came to \$121.24. Brenda has already been reimbursed for the full amount. Betty Jo commented that since we don't usually provide refreshments at our Branch recitals, she isn't in favor of offering them at community recitals. Brad questioned whether Casa has any restrictions on refreshments being offered at their venues. Christine will double check the contract conditions. [Upon review of the most recent Casa venue rental, no mention of catering or food restrictions was found.] Brenda brought up hygiene concerns about serving finger foods. She recommended we provide as many single pre-packaged items as possible for future events. The motion to approve the extra funds was voted upon. All in favour. Carried.
- The lost awards cheque has been rewritten and cashed after the 6-month stale-dated waiting period.
- Christine reported that we have a very healthy balance in our operating account and since we are a non-profit group, we should think about how to use between \$800 and \$1000 over the coming year. Possibilities include contributing to our awards account, presenting a workshop or other event, or contributing an amount to Keys to Piano for a clinician from outside Alberta. Discussions will take place at future meetings.

Christine moved the acceptance of the Treasurer's report as presented. Seconded by Linda. All in favour. Carried.

Next, Christine presented the Branch's Annual Financial Summary which appears at the end of these minutes. The outstanding voice workshop honorarium has since been cashed and will be noted in next year's financial records. A big thank you to Deanna Oye and Linda Dickey for acting as auditors during the summer!

MOTION: Christine moved that the 2023-2024 Annual Financial Summary be adopted as prepared. Seconded by Carmen. All in favour. Carried.

Christine reported on Secretary items. The Branch address list, email contact list, and website teacher listings have all been updated. Please report any new information or changes by contacting our Branch email address with your request. lethbridgebranchofarmta@gmail.com A brief discussion followed regarding booking the Casa meeting room for our monthly meetings. Currently the meeting room is booked for September, October, and November. It was decided to book the room for the remaining meetings of the year. Christine will take care of the arrangements.

Christine reported on the following winners of the Lethbridge and District Music and Speech Arts Festival awards that we sponsor, and passed around thank you cards that we received:

- Deserving junior pianist: Lauren Churchward
- Deserving senior pianist: Erin Falkenberg
- Deserving brass or woodwind player: Bentley Togo
- Deserving string player: Evan Sanden
- Deserving voice student: Taisia Ceban
- Doreen Laing Memorial award for a deserving junior pianist: Gabriel Morgado
- Doreen Laing Memorial award for a deserving senior pianist: Bethany Aleman

Carmen gave a report on the ARMTA Board Meeting which took place this past weekend. Thank you to Carmen for representing us at the provincial level!

- The **Strings Competition** deadline is October 1st and there is a category for Junior and Senior students <https://armta.ca/provincial-strings-competition/>
- The **Piano Competition** deadline is December 15th. <https://armta.ca/provincial-piano-competition/>
- **Music Conference Alberta** is happening October 25/26th in Edmonton. This year, there are reduced rates (20% off) for ARMTA members. Early Bird Registration ends October 4th and discounted hotel rates are available until September 24th. At MCA, there will be a **Piano and Violin masterclass** with some amazing presenters. Applications are now being accepted to participate and deadline to apply is October 4th. More information is on our website in the events tab. <https://armta.ca/upcoming-events/#!event-list>
- **ARMTA's Annual General Meeting** will be in Edmonton on Friday October 25th at 12:00. Lunch is free for all members, but they must pre-register before October 17th. It is a hybrid meeting and members can also register to participate online. When they register, a zoom link will be emailed to them.
- **Always available for branches:**
 - Continuing Education Funds: \$400 per branch. Contact Deanna Oye to apply for funds. Deanna.oye@uleth.ca
 - Recognition Fund awards for students: \$850 for smaller branches and \$1500 for Calgary and Edmonton. Contact Lorrie Wittke if you have questions. Lorrie99@telus.net
 - Needs-based **Bursaries** are available for their students if they are struggling financially. There is also a Newcomer Bursary for students who have financial need and have been in Canada less than 12 months. Information can be found on our website under the Scholarships tab.

Christine reported on advertising and social media. She is updating our free listings on Yellow Pages online and Kijiji. She has been sharing information and events on Facebook periodically.

Brad reported that the Music at Noon series starts up next Tuesday, September 24th. Performers featured that day are Brad Parker, Janet Youngdahl, Adam Mason, and the U of L Singers. Brad will prepare a complete calendar of recitals and arrange for the dates and performers to be circulated. Music at Noon recitals are scheduled for Tuesdays at 12:15 p.m. in the University of

Lethbridge Recital Hall. Complete information for Music at Noon:

<https://www.ulethbridge.ca/fine-arts/study/music/concerts-and-recitals> Information regarding University of Lethbridge Fine Arts events can be found here: <https://www.uleth.ca/fine-arts/event-season> Ticket information for events can be found at the following link: <https://uleth.universitytickets.com/>

Brad also reported that the University will once again offer a free workshop for students participating in the Lethbridge Music Festival. It will take place at the U of L on **Saturday, February 8th, 2025**. Registration in advance will be required. More information will be circulated closer to the date. Lethbridge Piano Intensive will be offered once again the 2nd week of July and a similar vocal program is in development.

Christine reported on 2 upcoming events that might be of interest to members:

- [Performing Arts Centre Advocacy Group](#) Update Meeting: September 25th, 7:00 p.m. Casa. RSVP to lethbridgepacag@gmail.com
- [APTA](#) Conference: Friday and Saturday, September 27 & 28: membership \$45 [Annual Conference](#), [Holiday Inn & Suites](#), Leduc
Dr. Pamela Pike, Professor of Piano Pedagogy from Louisiana State University. Our concert will feature 4-handed repertoire from the duet team of Janna Olsen and Leanne Regehr. Our own Brad Parker is doing a session!

Martha Renner gave a short proposal on a possible voice workshop on October 5th. A discussion followed and members decided to explore the opportunity. The conversation will continue by email to make arrangements. During the discussion the question of whether we can receive e-transfers came up. Christine will look into the possibility. [Upon inquiry, our community account does not include free e-transfers, so we would be charged \$2 for sending or receiving an e-transfer.]

Christine reported that information sheets and resources for teachers can be found on our website at www.LRMTA.com under *Information/Members-Teachers*.

Christine has updated our member listing poster. A discussion followed about using the new branding for the poster. ARMTA is in the process of creating a Canva Team account with access to all resources needed to develop materials, including templates. Carmen will check into details.

Christine relayed information from ARMTA archives convenor Yvonne Boon inviting branches to contribute items to the provincial archives. Brad is interested in helping to review our records to see if we might have anything to submit.

Christine reported on the recent [Pass Early Music Festival](#) which took place in August in Lethbridge at Southminster United Church. Several members spoke of their positive experiences participating in the workshops and attending the evening concerts. Christine will write a letter of support from our Branch for them to use when applying for funding. A short discussion followed about possible ways we could support activities to give students opportunities to play the harpsichord, and hopefully generate some interest in next year's Festival.

Christine presented a proposal from piano students Jerry Wang and Lisa Mo about volunteering to help students with their practising. Further discussion and information gathering will take place before sending information out to teachers.

Our Canada Music Week (CMW) Recital will take place on Saturday, November 23rd at 2:30 p.m. at the Lethbridge Public Library. Betty Jo will collect the names of students. Please contact her

at bettyjoradley@gmail.com by Friday, November 15th with submissions. Please include student name, composition, composer, grade level, length of piece and whether the student's performance would make a suitable beginning or end to the program if applicable. **Compositions must be by Canadian composers.** Brenda will prepare the program. Christine will prepare a poster for circulation. CD's and Canadian Music from Doreen Laing's collection will be set out for students to take. Lorrie will arrange for CFMTA CMW pencils and Betty Jo has the quilted banner. Lorrie, Christine, Brad, and Betty Jo will be in attendance to help. We will need someone to play for the singing of O Canada to begin the program.

The deadline for our Branch awards submissions is Monday, October 3rd. Megan Wittig and Christine will put together all the information and will send it out shortly.

Coffee and Conversation will take place on Thursday, October 10th at 10:00 a.m. at the home of Marilyn Sinclair at 335-20th Street North. For more information email Betty Jo Radley at bettyjoradley@gmail.com

Next followed a discussion concerning the latest developments with our Branch's exploration of ARMTA's new branding. In summary, new ARMTA branding was developed during 2021-2022 and launched in April of 2022. Since then, the Lethbridge Branch Executive has been leading an exploration of issues that were identified surrounding the process by which the new brand was developed and the communication of that process and its progress, the perceived intention behind the development of the new branding, as well as the consequences and effects of the new branding on our local Branch. We have engaged in conversations with ARMTA executive members as we have navigated our way through this exploration, and have provided opportunities for our Lethbridge members to receive information, engage in discussion, and provide feedback.

Carmen reported on the latest updates from ARMTA regarding branding. In regards to all visual and media communication, ARMTA maintains brand standard adherence. This means that in order to comply with their guidelines, we can no longer use any materials that display the historical Lethbridge Branch logo and will be required to use ARMTA's brand and logo on all materials moving forward. Our quilted banner can be displayed at local events as a historical piece. Our historical logo can be retained on an "about us" or "our history" page of our website. Our stand-up banner can no longer be displayed—we will have the opportunity to replace it by using funds made available from ARMTA. The ARMTA webmaster will assist with our local website conversion. On Saturday, September 7, the ARMTA Board voted to update the Policies and Procedures with the following addition:

Action: 1. Brand Adherence - Policy and procedure recommendation: Promotional material of any kind (provincial, branch, member level) will be created within the ARMTA Canva Teams subscription. Branches, convenors, etc. will have access. Subscription is funded through Publicity Convenor.

Questions followed the report. Carmen will check into the deadline for applying for funds from ARMTA to create new materials. [Information from the ARMTA Administrator indicates we have until March 31, 2025.] Each member was given the opportunity to make final comments as we complete the exploration of issues identified surrounding ARMTA's rebranding. Betty Jo commented that she didn't understand why we couldn't use our historical logo on materials for our own events that are unrelated to and unsupported by ARMTA. Brenda expressed continuing concerns regarding our loss of autonomy as a branch to decide the identity we would like to create in our community, the lack of effort on the part of ARMTA to consider more of a compromise with the Lethbridge Branch after it expressed its concerns, and the direction ARMTA is moving with the adoption of this policy. She feels that ARMTA is taking the approach

of a corporation rather than a non-profit organization. She indicated that she would accept the outcome but isn't happy about it, and although she has lost a little bit of faith in ARMTA, she expressed her gratitude for the members of our local group and their communal efforts to provide opportunities for students and teachers. Martha expressed her agreement with Brenda's idea that people and the opportunities we offer are more important than branding. She encouraged members to continue to work together to preserve the great spirit of our group in the music community as we move forward. Lorrie commented that our history has not been lost and is still with us and we will honour it on our updated website. Betty Jo emphasized that we are a local, distinct group from other ARMTA branches. We have our own style and she hates to lose it. We are hard workers and we deserve to recognize and celebrate that at our own events. Marilyn spoke of reminiscences during a recent visit with former ARMTA president Nathene Arthur, and encouraged members to celebrate our significant contribution as a branch to ARMTA. Carmen recognized that our relationships with each other and what we create as a branch are important and recognized. Lorrie relayed that our contribution as a branch has been acknowledged over the years by comments she has heard from ARMTA executive members. Christine read prepared written comments which appear at the end of these minutes.

The following update to our Branch awards policy will be tabled to the next meeting.

PROPOSED POLICY: In the event of late or lost award submissions which are discovered after the award amounts have been disbursed, every effort will be made to work out a solution with the Branch and the teacher, so that the student will not suffer the consequences. In the event of an error by the Awards Convenor (or Committee) or Branch, the Branch will cover the cost of the award either from the Operating account or the Awards account as appropriate, to be decided by the President, Treasurer, and Awards Convenor on a case-by-case basis. In the event of an error or omission by the submitting teacher or the student's parent(s), the following are examples of solutions that might be applied. Other solutions agreeable to the Branch, the Awards Convenor, the teacher, and the parent(s) will also be considered, once again on a case-by-case basis. 1) The teacher will be responsible for covering the cost of the additional award, 2) The parent(s) will be responsible for covering the cost of the additional award, 3) The teacher will submit the student's mark for the following year.

CFMTA's Branching Out theme this year is: **Choose Your Own Adventure:** Raise awareness of your local music teachers' branch by:

- Creating an event unique to your location
- Participating in existing community events to include a musical element
- Sharing your music, your way
- Using your imagination and resources

Our next Practise-a-thon will be held in February 2025. To raise money for our annual awards program and for the Lethbridge Music and Speech Arts Festival awards that we sponsor, we hold a Practise-a-thon every two years. Students set practise goals with their teachers, solicit pledges, and then attempt to reach their practise time goals and win prizes. Prizes, including gift cards and concert tickets donated by community sponsors, are awarded for the most hours practiced in 4 age categories as well as for the most money raised. 100% of the money raised through the Practise-a-thon goes directly to the awards program. Any expenses are covered from our operating account. This will be the last Practise-a-thon that Christine will organize for our group. If anyone is interested in shadowing her this year with the aim of taking over the project, please contact her at c4rogers@telus.net.

The Provincial Round of the CFMTA Young Artist Piano Competition will take place March 2025. Following that, branches will have the opportunity to host the winner as part of the Young Artist Tour. Carmen moved the adjournment of the meeting, seconded by Cheryl.

Our next meeting will be Thursday, October 3rd at 10:00 a.m. in the meeting room at Casa. An online Zoom option will be made available.

Minutes prepared by Christine Rogers
Other items of note:

The [Lethbridge and District Music and Speech Arts Festival](#) dates are March 31-April 11, 2025. General Manager is Jaimee Jarvie. If you have any comments, feedback or suggestions regarding the Festival phone: (403) 381-6512 or email: generalmanager@lethmsf.org

Our local RCM Rep is Monica Baczuk: 403-942-4321(h); 403-715-6051(c.) monicab1961@hotmail.com and our Provincial Rep is Derek Chiu: derek.chiu@rcmusic.ca. Please visit our website (www.LRMTA.com) regularly and notify Christine if you would like any updates for your listing.

ARMTA: Certificates of Insurance for events: if the place you are holding an event requires a COI, you may request one from the Marsh certificate team at winnipegcertificates@marsh.com and cc danielle.blaich@marsh.com. Include your name, the date and location of event, mailing address of the party requesting evidence of your coverage. Please allow 24 to 48 hours to have your request processed.

Christine Rogers: Personal response shared at meeting regarding ARMTA's new branding

I am disappointed by this final communication and action by ARMTA—I had held out hope for some degree of compromise from ARMTA with regard to using our historical Branch materials internally and within our local community. I would like to offer a few comments and have prepared them in writing so that I could choose my words carefully. I share these remarks to explain why I felt it necessary to guide our Branch in an exploration of the concerns raised surrounding ARMTA's rebranding. I think the reason that I care so much is because of the values I hold and the strength of my convictions about how I see ARMTA's purpose which have grown over the years I have served our local branch.

It may seem that I am opposed to the new branding or that I don't like change. I have no issues with the new brand itself and I have helped facilitate several changes for our Branch over many years. But I do continue to have concerns about the creation process of the new ARMTA brand, the lack of opportunity for branch or member contribution to the process, the degree to which the brand is being emphasized, the strict adherence policy being implemented, and the amount of time and resources being spent on it. All of these concerns indicate to me a new direction for ARMTA, which is not supported by ARMTA's current stated aims of promoting the love of music and the facilitation of education and performance events.

First, I would like to say I have great regard for any individual who takes on volunteer leadership roles. I continue to be grateful to the ARMTA executive members as well as the ARMTA Administrator, and acknowledge their efforts and their intentions for the good of ARMTA.

Through exploring these issues, I have developed a deeper understanding of the values that have guided me during my 40 years as a member of our Branch and my 35 years in various executive roles. Communication has been the main pillar of my volunteer career. I have strived to help provide clear, accurate, and timely information for members and their students so that they can take advantage of opportunities for growth and learning. I have also strived to help create opportunities for all Lethbridge members to contribute to important matters, regardless of

whether they are able to attend meetings. I have also found it important to emphasize the value of compromise, to accommodate differences of opinion and encourage creative problem-solving.

I don't believe that the development of the new ARMTA brand should have moved forward without at least some meaningful consultation with branches and individual members, even if it meant more work and a longer timeline. I also don't agree with the extent to which ARMTA is emphasizing its new branding by adopting a strict adherence policy with little effort at compromise with our Branch after several communications of our concerns and wishes to combine use of our local branding alongside ARMTA's when appropriate.

The amount of funding budgeted for the rebranding was \$9000 (annual report 2022). This is just shy of the total amount spent on the most recent occurrences of the four competitions ARMTA sponsors: Piano, Strings, Voice and Student Composer competitions. It is also 3 times the amount spent on continuing education grants for branches last year.

I see ARMTA primarily as a service organization supporting its teachers and their students by providing and facilitating opportunities for learning and performance. CFMTA's slogan as stated on their website is: "providing leadership in music education across Canada." I do not believe that the promotion of ARMTA through branding should be a priority for ARMTA. I would rather see ARMTA use its resources to raise its profile in the community, attract new members for the organization, and attract new students for teachers, through providing more opportunities for learning and performance, as well as more scholarships and bursaries, not only for its members and their students, but also for the broader private music teaching community. ARMTA's insistence on strict adherence to the new brand would only make sense to me if we were a business focusing on profits and satisfying our shareholders. I feel this is out of step with a non-profit association like ours whose stated aims are to promote the love of music and facilitate opportunities for education and performance.

Of course, organizations evolve over time, but once changes are proposed or envisioned, a review process providing opportunities for input from the membership should take place to make sure that the new direction reflects the views of the majority of the members. The broader ARMTA membership deserves the opportunity to provide feedback for such a marked change in focus.

I want to thank all of the Lethbridge branch members who have been involved in this exploration of ARMTA's rebranding and its consequences for the Lethbridge Branch, and especially thank Carmen as our ARMTA rep for her efforts to understand these issues and engage with ARMTA Executive members. My intention has been to bring to light important issues and facilitate opportunities for exploration of these concerns. Thank you for this time to share my comments. It will provide closure for me as we complete the exploration of these issues and move forward into the coming year. I will continue to focus my energies on our Lethbridge Branch aims of providing leadership in private music education in our community by facilitating opportunities for learning and performance for our teachers and their students, as well as the broader community.

Respectfully, Christine Rogers

Lethbridge Branch of the Alberta Registered Music Teachers' Association

Financial Summary: August 1st, 2023 – July 31st, 2024

INCOME

Branch Member Dues	\$888.94 (includes ARMTA online service fee deduction)
Branch Recitals/Silver Collection	\$477.20 (donations/contributions at the door)
Workshops	N/A
Other (total \$7235.00)	
• Donations for Doreen Laing's Music	Deposits \$814+\$315+\$250+\$506=\$1885
• Music Awards Donation Deposit	\$250.00 (Awards donation from Isabelle Slater)
• Little Lethbridge Opera Theatre Grants	\$2500.00+\$2500=\$5000.00 (from City of Lethbridge)
• CFMTA Branching Out	<u>\$100.00</u> (Feb. Recital at St. Michael's Health Care Centre)
INCOME TOTAL	\$8601.14

EXPENSES/DEBITS

Bank Charges (\$4.95/month)	\$59.40
Rentals/Recitals (\$533.29)	
• Canada Music Week Recital 2023	\$77.70 (Casa Community Room and Conservatory piano rental)
• March 3 Recital and Rehearsal	\$140.70 (Casa Community Room and Conservatory piano rental)
• June 8 Recital	\$118.65 (Casa Community Room and Conservatory piano rental)
• June 8 Recital Refreshments	\$121.24
• Canada Music Week Recital 2024	\$75.00 (Public Library Rental for November 23, 2024)
Workshops (\$425.00)	
• Voice Workshop Clinician Fee	\$200.00 Cheque NOT CLEARED
• Voice Workshop Pianist Fee	\$150.00
• Voice Workshop Venue Rental	\$75.00 (Public Library April 27, 2024)
Advertising	\$56.22 (Brochure printing)
Copies/Printing	\$64.55 (UPS Store)
Fundraising Expenses	N/A
Examiners' Lunch	N/A
Website	\$27.47 (HostGator domain name renewal: LRMTA.com)
Donations	\$75.00 (to ARMTA Recognition Fund, Doreen Laing memorial)
Other (total: \$7229.50)	
• Transfer to Awards	\$250.00 (Isabelle Slater awards donation)
• Little Lethbridge Opera Theatre	\$2500.00 + \$2500.00 (City of Lethbridge Grants)
• May Meeting Rental	\$31.50 (Casa Community Room)
• Lethbridge Music Festival Awards	\$875.00 (Awards in memory of Doreen Laing)
• Transfer to Awards	\$1010 (donations from sale of Doreen Laing's music)
• Sept.-Nov. 2024 Meeting Rental	<u>\$63.00</u> (Casa meeting room for monthly meetings)
EXPENSES/DEBITS TOTAL	\$8470.43

BALANCES on July 31st, 2024

Operating	\$2028.58
Awards	<u>\$5338.11</u>
TOTAL	\$7366.69

NOTES:

- We used a 1-hour rental credit for the Casa Community Room from the Young Artist Recital (the room was not properly set up when we arrived) for the Canada Music Week Recital rental Nov. 25, 2023
- The cheque for the Voice Workshop Clinician (\$200.00) has not yet cleared
- I wrote \$267 instead of \$276 for cheque no. 261 and consequently wrote cheque no. 262 for \$9.00 to make up the difference