

Music improves community

"Music is the chalk to the blackboard of life. Without it, everything is a blank slate," said Lexi Carter. I find this to be a good opening, because it shows how important music is.

"Without music, life would be a mistake," said Fredrich Nietzsche.

"Music can wipe away the dust in everyday life," said Berthold Auerbach.

"Music is important. It says things your heart cannot say any other way, and in a language everyone speaks. Music crosses borders, turns smiles into frowns, and vice versa," said Dan Rather, formerly of CBS News.

Music is such a powerful force. It creates deep emotions in humans. In one of our Philomusica early childhood classes, we had a 2-year-old child, who sobbed his heart out when we played the excerpt of "The Swan" from the "Carnival of the Animals." Music lends itself to relaxation, stress relief and health therapy — and the connection between music, body and soul has even been shown to improve physical and mental health. Nursing homes and hospitals verify its healing powers, and there is good science behind the use of music to arouse dormant memories even in those whose minds are failing.

Music helps to carve



Nicolette Bischof

Soapbox

brighter attitudes. Those who pursue musical education have more optimism toward the future, watch less TV and show lower use of alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs. They also exhibit the desire to develop individual abilities and are generally quite disciplined.

Recent research suggests exposure to music may benefit a child's reading age, IQ, and the development of certain parts of the brain. The human brain has been shown to be hard-wired for music. There was a remarkable difference that I noticed between two adults who began piano lessons. One was a total beginner and the other had played in her childhood. The latter excelled at a much faster pace.

May 6-13 has been declared Music Week by the National Federation of Music.

Philomusica will present its first annual "Colorado Association of Music Proficiency" on May 12 at the University Center of the Arts from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Our stu-

dents are looking forward to playing on the Steinway Grand piano. They have been diligently preparing, and they are so excited to showcase the music to their parents, their adjudicators and the public. Everyone in the community is invited. There is no fee to attend.

The students will range from young children to teenagers playing the piano, violin, flute and guitar.

Other recitals will also be taking place in the Philomusica Recital Hall during the month of May. Students are also preparing to play for an examiner for The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, who is flying in from London for the event.

Carolyn Nelson, President of the Federation of Music, writes, "I encourage members to appreciate the musicians and music present in the community during this special week.

"Encourage music on the street, music in the park, music in the media, music in the schools, music in veterans' and nursing homes, music in the concert/recital hall, music wherever there is someone to listen. Your home, school, community, and nation will be better for your effort."

Nicolette Bischof is a music instructor in Fort Collins.