

Blueprint

Blue Tree Music Education Seasonal Newsletter

"We are so thrilled to have found Blue Tree! You have made it possible for us to enroll all of our children for private lessons, thanks to your sibling discount!"

- Blue Tree Family of Four



Blue Tree Expands Again!

Not just once more, but TWICE! We have truly outgrown our original floor plan, as we now have almost 170 students and are offering many different music education options alongside private lessons. What began as a humble music studio offering piano and guitar lessons to the Corcoran neighborhood and beyond, has now added violin, cello, voice, band instruments, group classes, a children's choir, theory courses, community events and more! We have families from all over the metro area, living as close as right down the street, to as far away as Woodbury. All of this unexpected growth meant that we needed more space, and the celestial timing was right when the corner storefront became available just as Blue Tree embarked upon a new and exciting relationship with our investor, Wakemup, Inc., founded by Blue Tree parent & friend, Patrick Jackson. "His daughter takes lessons at Blue Tree, and Patrick has seen this place really blossom," states Blue Tree Owner Rebecca Smith. She continues, "Wakemup, Inc. came into the picture right when we needed to expand. I look forward to seeing how we can continue to grow Blue Tree together."

After the corner space renovation was underway, an additional plan was outlined to expand our main area by adding two more private lesson rooms, which, once the school year started, were both booked every night of the week! Past "Kudos Korner" feature Jake Remus, along with his friend & colleague Brian Beckwith, hammered out those two new rooms in one weekend. The question now remains...how many more rooms will we need? It's a good problem to have!

Continued on pg. 4

Important Dates

- NOV 25-** Closed for Thanksgiving Weekend
- NOV 29** Weekend
- DEC 13** Mr. Anthony's Students' Holiday Guitar Recital 3:00 PM
- DEC 13** Blue Tree Songbirds Choir Winter Show at the MOA, 6:00 PM
- DEC 18** Parents Night Out! Movie: *The Grinch* 5:00-8:00 PM
- DEC 20** Blue Tree Songbirds Caroling Night, 5:30 PM
- DEC 24** Closed for Winter Break
- JAN 2** Open for the New Year!

STUDENT WORDS OF WISDOM:

Teaching a student about sharps using the theme from *Jaws* and she exclaims, "It should be a SHARK note, not a sharp note!"



*"Music begins where the possibilities of language end."
– Jean Sibelius*

Blue Tree Songbirds Choir!

Led by choir director Miss Vanessa Christian, Blue Tree's very own children's choir has begun! Blue Tree Songbirds is an all-ages children's choir that meets every Sunday night in our new corner space to rehearse and prepare pieces for events such as singing for the elderly at local care facilities, providing music for the holidays at the Mall of America (see pg. 1 for performance dates), neighborhood caroling and more.

Along with the help and talents of Miss Karen Massey, Miss Vanessa has high hopes for the choir – to grow, expand and even include students who might not be taking private lessons at Blue Tree. The idea that the Songbirds could reach out to the neighborhood and be a larger musical presence in the community is an exciting venture - that can come to life with more exposure and getting the word out.

Signup is quarterly, and the next quarter begins January 3, 2016. Cost is \$85 per quarter for current Blue Tree families and \$100 per quarter for non-Blue Tree families. Sign up your child for private lessons and get a \$15 discount on participation in the choir. Can't beat that!

Miss Vanesa and Miss Karen are enjoying teaching the kids holiday pieces to perform in December. Stay tuned for more!



**NEXT QUARTER SIGNUP
DEADLINE: DECEMBER 31, 2015!**



Miss Ari lives in Minneapolis with her boyfriend Kyler & their dog, Ghost. Her favorite thing about teaching at Blue Tree is working with the younger students just beginning piano.

Teacher Feature: Ariana Peterson

Early Childhood Piano Instructor Miss Ariana Peterson has been teaching at Blue Tree since January, 2014. Miss Ariana & Miss Rebecca met & developed their friendship while working together at Green Earth Childrens Academy, a nature-based preschool in South Minneapolis.

Ari's natural & soft nature with young children and her innate desire to nurture young learners is paramount to her success in her role at Blue Tree. A music lover (as well as one who loves to dance!), Ari is a favorite teacher to many Blue Tree students who are learning piano for the first time.

Alongside her talents with her students at Blue Tree, Ari is a student herself, pursuing her Masters Degree in Occupational Therapy. Already also a licensed massage therapist, it's no mistake that Miss Ariana's magic touch is on everything she does and everyone she meets.

What's happening next door?

What an amazing transformation the corner space has seen since we took it over in April! Thanks to the help of many friends, family and supporters of Blue Tree (and lots of carpet, paint & elbow grease), we transformed the empty retail space into a multi-purpose area to house Blue Tree's music & movement classes, our new choir, cello & violin lessons and more! The new space will also be utilized for upcoming recitals. Future plans for the space include a small retail & merchandise corner, expanded private lesson rooms, a teachers' lounge and a reception area. Also in the works are some fun summer camps that we will be offering in 2016 now that we have the room!

The current class schedule is going to be expanding soon. Right now, we offer a weekly music and movement class for children (up to age 4) and their caregivers every Saturday. This class is led by instructors Lori Vander Poel & Karen Massey. It's a 45-minute class that includes singing, dancing, instruments and even fun with a parachute! Here are the class dates for the rest of 2015:

FAMILY TREE MUSIC CLASS – No Registration Required!

Cost: \$10 at the door

Dates: December 5th, 12th and 19th

Time: 10:30-11:15 AM

Stay tuned for our new schedule for 2016 with the addition of new classes!



PARENTS NIGHT OUT!

Parents, need a night out? On the last Friday of every month, Blue Tree hosts an event for the kids! We serve pizza, watch a movie and do a seasonal art project. Cost is \$25/student (1/2 price for siblings). Just drop off your child at 5pm and come pick them up at 8pm! We promise they'll have a great time! Two teachers are always present for this event. Put it on the calendar!

What lessons do we offer?

PIANO: Rebecca Smith, John Altenbernd, Sara Duran, Kelly Van Eschen, Rachel Pedersen, Vanessa Christian, Karen Massey, Ariana Peterson, Eric Itzin

GROUP CLASSES: Lori Vander Poel & Karen Massey

VOICE: Vanessa Christian & Karen Massey

GUITAR: Anthony Novak & Jay Hurley

VIOLIN & CELLO: Olivia Quintanilla

BAND INSTRUMENTS: Eric Itzin



Continued from pg. 1

Blue Tree & Wakemup have also been working together to streamline our administrative duties, such as contracts, invoices and scheduling. Eventually, we will be in the position to have a true “front desk” but in the meantime, Wakemup’s involvement and passion in helping Blue Tree has been a true gift, and we are so grateful for Patrick and his vision. Blue Tree’s mission is to help each person discover their musical roots, and we have been able to reach more students than ever before! As they say, “Watch This Space!”



Student Spotlight: Max Ridenour

Max started taking piano lessons over a year and a half ago. In that time, he has flown through two lesson books and continues to learn very quickly, driven by his strong interest in playing. Given that he views looking at a piece of music as a fun challenge, it’s no surprise that he has already vastly improved his cold-reading ability.

Teaching Max is a joy, and his enthusiasm for playing makes me smile. For example, every time we switch between lesson books, a process that only takes a minute or two, he’ll quickly start performing a piece from memory, such as the famous “Carmen: Overture” from his recital last year or “Steven’s Universe,” a song he’s currently learning and has already mostly memorized.

When not playing piano in lessons, you can always find Max doodling on the white board, usually drawing some goofy video game character, proof that Max’s artistic capabilities have no bounds. At the rate he’s going, I sometimes worry that by the time he’s 15, he’ll be teaching me. Look out, world!

-John Altenbernd, Piano Instructor



Wakemup Inc.’s Patrick Jackson and his daughter Ella. A Northrop 1st grader, Ella is exceeding at piano with Miss Rebecca and guitar with Mr. Jay. She also is in the Songbirds Choir. Miss Rebecca got to know Ella and her family when she taught at Green Earth Childrens Academy, where Ella was a student. Patrick plays a big role in Ella’s musical success, helping her at home with practice and using positive reinforcement to develop her skills. Ella just graduated to Level 2A!

Kudos Korner: Phil Jakopin

We can’t thank Phil Jakopin enough for all of his dedication and help with Blue Tree’s expansion! Whether it was lending a hand to help with construction and painting or singlehandedly designing and building three original cubby benches for the corner space, Phil has been an amazing asset and a good friend to Blue Tree. Phil’s generous nature and infectious laugh make it a fun time whenever he’s around. We are so grateful for his skills and carpentry! Phil also helped with our carpet install. ☺

Both Phil and his daughter Audrey take private piano lessons at Blue Tree, and Audrey is also in the Songbirds Choir, all with Miss Vanessa Christian. Phil also recently took up guitar lessons with Anthony Novak.

THANK YOU, PHIL!



Upcoming Blue Tree Event!

Who doesn't love Valentine's Day? Instead of a Holiday party in December, we will be holding a special event at Blue Tree on Friday, February 12th, 2016 from 6pm-9pm to celebrate the theme of LOVE! Any current Blue Tree student who wants to may prepare a song including the word "love" and perform it at the event. We'll supply the stage with a full setup for guitar, cello & violin, vocal (yes, microphones!) and piano or keyboard. There will be a signup sheet when you arrive to guarantee your slot to perform, so come early! We'll be providing Valentine goodies & beverages for everyone, plus a complimentary gift bag will be given to all the students who attend. Attendance/performance is NOT mandatory (it isn't a recital, it's a party)! More details are forthcoming, but mark your calendars now so you can take part in this special event! There is no cost for the event, but charitable donations will be welcomed at the door, to help with wrapping up our final expansion at Blue Tree, which makes cool events like this possible. See you there!



Have you heard about our referral program? Refer a new student to Blue Tree for music lessons and if they sign up, receive ONE FREE LESSON for your child! Yes, it's that easy. Spread the word, and help Blue Tree Music Education grow to new heights!

blue tree music education

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