

World Percussion Network sparks student's interest

In the hours between dusk and midnight, Jonathan Singer, a 14-year-old percussionist from Farmington Hills, Michigan, can be found on the World Percussion Network. He may be chatting with someone in Paraguay, or participating in a discussion through one of the Forums, or downloading an article from a back issue of *Percussive Notes*, but chances are pretty good that if you're online, too, you will encounter this enthusiastic user of the WPN.

"I'm on for an hour or so a day, then a little more on the weekends," says Singer, a freshman at North Farmington High School. "I check my mail twice everyday on the WPN—when I get home from school, and before I go to sleep. Lots happens during those times."

Singer is unique in that he probably uses the teleconference feature of the WPN, which allows him to "chat" live with other percussionists who are online simultaneously, more than most routine users.

"As a student I always find speaking with teachers and other students to be real helpful! In lots of ways, whether it's a little technical glitch I'm having, or performance anxiety, long strings of conversations on the WPN are a great way to get a TON of insight from lots of people," he says.

Singer recently used the WPN to research the purchase of a marimba, through contact with other percussionists who provided him with names, addresses and phone numbers of company representatives, and through direct e-mail contact with marimba manufacturers. He also cites the Evelyn Glennie Music Library as a great resource for detailed information on any kind of percussion music.

Singer has been a member of PAS for a year. He began his percussion studies five years ago, and is currently studying with David Taylor and Julie Spencer. He says that his first experience on the WPN was "amazing."

"Actually, the first time I saw the names Evelyn Glennie and Rebecca Kite I practically fainted! But now I understand the greats in the percussion world are 'normal' humans, just like me," Singer explains. "I was really amazed at the amount of people participating in the forums, and also at all the files in the PN file library for downloading."

The new telnet access has also encouraged Singer and other percussionists to spend more time on the WPN.

"I tell everyone I talk to using a long-distance connection to use telnet. I find things go smoother this way...and I don't have my parents sitting next to me with a stop-watch!" Singer says.

Right now, Singer is looking forward to meeting—in person at PASIC '96—some of those people he's chatted with online. It will be Singer's first PASIC attendance, but thanks to WPN he's already personally involved with prominent members of the percussion community. ▀



Jonathan Singer