

Overcommitment keeps students from piano lessons; others experience lifelong benefits of piano study

For some, music is a way of life. That is, they couldn't imagine life without it. And for others, music is put on the back burner, so to speak. It's an added commitment they just don't seem to have enough time for.

Specifically, private piano instruction in Holyoke has seen a transition over time. A few are still in love with the instrument and the passing on of their piano knowledge, yet the piano seems to be a vanishing art form, or at least something completely different from what it was a century ago.

"It is this disappearing thing," said Sharon Strauss, a piano teacher of 16 years.

Since moving to Holyoke a few years ago, it has not been hard for Strauss to fill the 10 piano lesson slots she has allowed herself, with several more on a waiting list. Yet she acknowledges a "self-perpetuating cycle," where teachers cut back when they have no students and students quit when they can no longer find a teacher.

Dynamics of piano industry in transition

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