

Dear Sarah,

Thank you so much for your invitation. It was very nice meeting you.

Did you mean \$200 or \$2000? If the fee is \$200 it would not be possible for me to consider playing for this concert.

Sincerely,

xxxxxxxxxxx,

Dear xxxxxxxxx,

Yes, we did mean \$200.

My intention in sending this follow-up email is not to change your mind. Frankly, we know that our audience is given a gift each time an exceptional artist agrees to share his or her music. We wish we could pay fees that reflect our love for music and our respect for artists of your caliber.

Since 2002 we've given over \$25,000 to our artists. Every penny that comes into our organization goes back to our artists. Eileen and I take nothing and put more dollars and time into this labor of love than seems rationale to many people. And yet, we are finding company in this seemingly irrational effort – artists who could be earning ten times what we are able to give them continue to say yes and then ask if they can come back for another and yet another season.

Why do these intelligent, witty, well-spoken and amazing artists join us on Sunday afternoons for three or four hours? Eileen and I would like to think that our vivacious personalities attract talented individuals who just love to hear our three minute speeches, watch us pour cider, and eat our chocolate covered strawberries – but alas we'd be mistaken.

At the end of one of our concerts, the artist moved away from the piano, looked at the audience and said, "I love to come here because of you. I can feel your warmth and appreciation and it makes all the difference."

Our audiences are not rich, they can afford the \$5 admission and we would never ask them for more. But their love of the arts and understanding of music is as sophisticated as those who can pay an \$85 admission fee.

We are confident that our effort is worth millions and our artists are worth ten-fold that amount. But on these Sunday afternoons, we throw rationality to the wind and we make miraculous music together just because it feels so good.

Warmly,

Eileen & Sarah