

a publication of the Denison University Suzuki Program

*“Musical ability is not an inborn talent but an ability that can be developed. Any child properly trained can develop musical ability, just as all children develop the ability to speak their mother tongue.”*

*--Shinichi Suzuki*

#### April Groups:

April 13  
--Palmer Piano  
April 21  
--Flute  
--Piano  
--Violin  
--Cello  
April 28  
--Goodwill  
Ambassadors  
Tour

*Check with your teacher for specifics.*

## Summer Lessons

by Kaitlin Moore

It is hard to believe that summer is approaching us so quickly! I am sure that many of you can agree it has been a fantastic but busy school year. I always look forward to summer lessons. When I was a child, I loved going to lessons in the summer. I remember going to my teacher's house and having lessons in the backyard on warm summer afternoons. For me, summer lessons were a time to let all of my worries go, and to really enjoy making beautiful music. Summer lessons also gave me an opportunity to play different types of music besides my usual repertoire.

I miss those years of my life sometimes, but then I realize that you never get too old to take lessons! As a matter of fact, I have been doing some reflecting on a keyboard that has been in its case since my college piano class. Although that class wasn't a positive experience, I am giving it another try! I look forward to taking piano lessons with our very own Mrs. Kirsh this summer!

I have encouraged all of my students

to take summer lessons. There is something to be said for continuing lessons over the summer. It is not simply to "maintain" what you have learned. Summer lessons help to continue that love and fire for wanting to play beautiful music. For many families, it is a time to really devote the care and time towards an instrument.

Summer lessons benefit the student, the family, and the teacher. I am hoping to have some lessons outside, when the weather is appropriate. I can't imagine not seeing my students over the summer! Give yourself the gift of summer lessons and most of all, make beautiful music from your heart!



## Summer Lessons: Fun and Benefits

by Jim Van Reeth

Spring flowers are popping up and the summer heat will be here before we know it. Spring semester individual lessons will end between mid-April and mid-May. And even though group lessons and Program Recitals will finish in May, individual lessons will continue after the end of the spring term and throughout the summer months.

Soon your teacher will hand out a summer lesson schedule and a lesson registration form. Be sure to sign up for as many lessons as you can. Summer lessons are fun and have excellent benefits. Here are just a few:

- Learning knows no season. Summer lessons and practice keep finger, bow and breathing techniques fit and moving forward avoiding the Fall rebuilding period that is inevitable if lessons stop

- Teachers will be more relaxed and easy-going
- Longer days and lack of school homework means the possibility of more practice time and the possibility of learning or refining more skills
- Summer lessons provide a great opportunity to bring a friend to a lesson so they can see exactly what you do in Burton Hall for thirty minutes to an hour every week
- Summer practice time is the perfect time to invite a Suzuki friend over for a practice play-date or a practice sleepover. Maybe you can play a piece over the phone for you teacher or leave it on their voicemail during the party
- Parking is much, much easier in the summer

## Goodwill Ambassadors Tour

Saturday,  
April 28  
Paramount  
10:15 a.m.  
(flutists and  
pianists)  
and  
Kendal  
1:30 p.m.  
(strings)

Performance attire:

- red DUSP shirt
- black pants/skirt
- black shoes
- black socks

*Program Recital*  
May 6  
3 p.m.

*Burke Recital Hall*

*“Part of playing an instrument comes from sharing the music we make with others. Seeing and feeling the support of a friendly crowd makes the experience all the more pleasurable.”*

*--Jim Van Reeth*

## Music makes Memories for All

by Audrey Severson

“That was wonderful!” “Are you coming back again?” “I really enjoyed that!” These were among many comments coming from a group of people we, as Denison Suzuki students, were able to go and encourage with our music during a Goodwill Ambassador Tour. What an inspiring, fun and fulfilling time it is to prepare pieces together to share. And then to be kept on your toes the day of, excitedly waiting for it to be your turn! Not only this, but we are rewarded with sweet treats at the end of this experience. To really top the

day off, however, is the time, while enjoying our sweet treats, to walk down memory lane with the residents. Oh, the fascinating stories you hear...of the instruments they played while they were younger, or their funny experiences at lessons, or where they grew up...on a farm, in a small town, or floods they experienced! These have been some I have been privileged to enjoy. What a fun opportunity it has been to be able to participate in an event such as the Goodwill Ambassador Tour! See you at the next stop!

## Practicing on Vacation: Try Something Different

by Robin Brown

Whenever I would go on short vacations (month or less) when I was a Suzuki student (age 6 to 16), I took my violin. I always had good intentions of practicing, but to be completely honest, sometimes I wouldn't get around to playing. But other times I did practice on vacation, and those are good memories! I remember playing violin on vacation for my grandparents in Wisconsin and Michigan, even playing in a London hotel and having people throw British currency in my violin case! There was a whole year when I was 12 years old that my family travelled in Central and South America and we couldn't take my violin. I missed my violin very much. As soon as I got back home, I took lessons again and got back to practicing. It felt so good to play violin again after being away from it for so long. If you can take your violin on vacation, do it! You will very likely find an appreciative audience wherever you go, you might find other people to play music with, and...you could make a little money on the side!

## A Spring Suzuki Check-list

- Send in registration for the institute of your choice.
- Check other activity schedules in preparation for signing up for summer lessons.
- Order a Suzuki parent book to read during spring break.
- Make copies of your listening CD for both vehicles.
- Have your piano tuned, check the size of your child's instrument, and check the size of your child's Denison University Suzuki Program shirt.

## Our Mission...

...to create a  
positive musical  
learning partnership  
among  
faculty, students,  
and their  
parents/practice  
partners  
by following  
the philosophical  
principles and  
educational  
methods  
developed  
by

Dr. Shinichi Suzuki  
so that children  
can grow into  
loving  
and  
respectful  
individuals  
who will have  
a positive effect  
on their world.

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# Wait, Wait... Don't give up NOW!

by Maryfrances Kirsh

BJ refuses to get in the van. Isn't that silly? What dog doesn't just LOVE to go for rides?? Nothing will get him to go inside. I've tried dog biscuits, the other dog's ultra tasty food, and even raw hamburger!! He gets close to the van and plops his bottom down on the garage floor. He's a 100 pound collie and he's not moving (which is another reason he's so big!)

Dr. Susan Prescott, Lexine's mom, is BJ's doctor and is very intrigued by this behavior. As a last resort, she gave me a pill to give BJ two hours before his visit to her hospital. The pill made him very mellow and content, but he still wouldn't get in the van. I took Shepherd, my older and wiser collie, instead. Dr. Prescott sent her assistant back home with me thinking that we just needed more hands. Nothing Lori or I did could get BJ in that van.

I was very embarrassed and a little sad. First of all, I know it was a mistake to let this go on for so long. Second, BJ and Shepherd are my companions and I just assumed that BJ would want to come along with me for a ride. BJ follows me around everywhere in the house. When I play the violin, he's right there on my feet and when I play the piano, he knocks my hands off the keys so I'll pet him. Finally, he just doesn't believe me when I tell him that riding in the van is FUN. I am his mom—he should believe me!

As I was sitting there on the steps in the garage staring at my dog, it occurred to me that BJ is acting a lot like students I've taught over the years who wouldn't play for me in their lessons. They either come to their lessons and refuse to play once they arrive, or their parents have a hard time getting them into THEIR van! I had a student once who yelled, "I HATE VIOLIN! I HATE VIOLIN!!" all the way up four flights of those Burton Hall stairs.

It's embarrassing and it makes us feel sad. We want our children to have this gift we're giving them and we want them to enjoy it as much as we do. But it doesn't always work out that way. There are times when students just don't feel like it. They're tired. There are too many stairs. They're shy and don't want to disappoint their practice partners. They're not sure what we want from them. They were playing with their friends and didn't want to stop. The piano is big and makes too much noise. The violin hurts their necks. There are so many possibilities as to why they refuse to play and they're not always able to tell us the reasons.

The best we can do is keep trying different things. Maybe not dog food and raw hamburger, but certainly something fun and tasty. We can keep our eyes and ears open for any sign of what bothers them. If it's a rush to get to lessons and tempers flare, find another time. If I need to close my eyes so that the student will play for me, no big deal. We shouldn't lower our standards of teaching and learning, but we can certainly try unconventional methods to get around the problem.

The final solution for BJ was a higher dose of the sedative, a front loader (just kidding), and a ride in that van every single day, even if it's just to go around the neighborhood. The best solution for our children is to get them to listen to the recording and play every single day and praise, praise, praise them. They'll get past this bump in the journey and so will you.

