

a publication of the Denison University Suzuki Program



**Sara, Oliver,
Emma, Jeannie,
Gavin, Anna,
Connor,
Mackenzie,
Madison, Emily,
Margo,
Charlotte, John,
Lienne, Gabe,
Isabel, Kelly,
Orson, Josie,
Michaela, Aaron,
Danny, Rick,
Myles, Jaime,
Alexa, Cheri,
Ellie, Matthew,
Molly, Wanling,
Sierra, Caleb,
Sabrina, Jerry,
Albert, Rafi,
Cierra, Davis,
Christopher,
Peter, Sophia,
Amelia, Peter,
Xiao Ling,
Scottie, Kyle,
Tyler, Max,
Ashley, Audrey,
Sophie, Alex,
David,
Maryanne,
Richard, Sarah,
Jimmy, Timothy,
Ana, Daniel,
Winona, Daniel,
Ruby, Asia,
Lauren, Autumn,
Joshua,
Madeline,
Veronica,
Maxfield, Chris,
Maura, Grace,
Andrew, Melissa,**

The Granville Christmas Candlelight Walking Tour

A Denison University Suzuki Program Tradition

Each year, on the first Saturday of December, the village of Granville ushers in the holiday season with the Granville Christmas Candlelight Walking Tour. Throughout the day, the village hosts performances by area musical groups. The concerts are usually listed in the Granville paper the week prior.

Jim Van Reeth directed his first Walking Tour performance in 1995, when he began teaching Suzuki violin at Denison. There was no official Suzuki program at the time, but he and Suzuki piano teacher, Caryl Palmer, both taught on the third floor.

Anna Rosenfeld has performed in the most Walking Tour concerts of any current student. She will be seated in the Concert Mistress spot this year.

Students used to announce each piece and say a few interesting facts. This was to make the concert longer because we could only play a few pieces.

The Suzuki cellists joined the performance in 1997.

Maryfrances Kirsh began accompanying the Denison Suzuki String Ensemble at the Walking Tour in 1998. She, too, wondered at first about the "Walking" part of the performance. She wasn't sure she could accompany a group of strolling strings without a strap for her keyboard. She was relieved to hear that the audience did the walking.

It was so warm in 1999 that attendees were wearing shorts and eating ice cream. The next year it snowed during our concert.

The Denison Suzuki Strings used to perform at 8 and 8:30 in the evening. With so many young performers, we were all happy to be able to move to an afternoon performance.

The Denison Suzuki Pianists joined the Walking Tour performance in 2002. This year they will be joined by the Denison Suzuki Flute Ensemble.

We are fortunate that Centenary United Methodist Church invites us back each year to perform in their sanctuary. During the couple of years they were remodeling, we were able to perform across the street in the First Presbyterian Church's sanctuary and were not left out in the cold. It snowed those years, too.

The dress rehearsal on the Friday evening before the concert is a very exciting and important time for us. We are all able to see how it will come together in the very same space where we will perform. The rehearsal is long, but worth the effort on everyone's part. At Friday night's rehearsal, the church pews are usually empty. It is exciting to walk in the next day to find them all filled.

The Denison University Suzuki Pianists and Flute Ensemble
will perform on Saturday, December 2nd at 2:30 p.m.

The Denison University Suzuki String Ensemble
will perform on Saturday, December 2nd at 4 p.m.

Centenary United Methodist Church
Granville, Ohio

**Catherine, Erica,
Kate, Zoe,
Lincoln Bailey,
Allison, Billy,
Miranda, Claire,
Jacqueline
Penny, Emily,
Eric, Alyssa,
Zac, Kalki,
Olivia, Conner,
Veronica, Sarah,
Henry, Eli, Kevin,
Amy, Lucy,
Maddie, Ava,
Olivia, Madison,
Merrick, Ben,
Jacob, Cora,
Becky, Maria,
Emily, Maria,
Lexine, Susan,
Catherine,
Michael, Eva,
Jacob, Charlie,
Abby, Peter,
Jacob, John,
Piper, Grant,
Matthew, Claire,
Mattney**

“My favorite part about being a Suzuki violin student was the people I got to hang out with.”

*Daniel Kirsh,
former Suzuki
violinist and
Aviation Major
OSU*

A Student's Perspective on the Suzuki Experience

by Anna Rosenfeld

How has Suzuki influenced my life? Well, I honestly can't say for sure, it's all been small things that have so far seemed irrelevant. Certain things happen that make me realize, "Hey, I can do that." I'll have to start at the beginning to really pick them all out.

I started Suzuki violin when I was really little, around six. It was all started when I sat in on Ally Skapik's, my best friend's music lesson. I knew at once that's what I wanted to do. So when mom picked me up that day I told her, "I want to take violin lessons, and I want to take lessons from Ally's teacher, Mr. Jim." That's how it started: I started taking lessons from Mr. Jim, with the butter-box violin and those round pieces of cardboard you find on wire hangers as my bow, learning "up like a Rocket," and how to "sniff" my butter-box onto my shoulder. Then I received my first violin; a quarter size: the first thing I did when I took it out of the case was drop it bridge side down of the wood floor! Thankfully, nothing broke.

From there I learned how to read and identify the black dots on the page and the right fingers for each string and note. I dived into Book 1 with gusto. Three long years later, I finished it and moved on to Book 2. It seemed like forever, but I finally made it. I truly struggled my way through the first book, but after that everything became much easier.

When the school offered orchestra in fourth grade, I jumped on the opportunity. Problem was all we did that year was learn to read music, so I was bored and ended up showing off for my classmates what I could do. I skipped orchestra in fifth grade. I rejoined afterwards because it gives me the chance to play everyday, even if it wasn't private lesson material. It was all easy stuff, still is, but that's because I've taken the chances to join orchestras at summer camp and local events and the school program is required for entry.

I learned how to read music early; now I find sight-reading music easier and easier each time: I often find myself being the only one playing my part during orchestra rehearsals when we try new music. At Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp, I was the section leader for the second violins in the advanced orchestra because I sight-read the audition pieces well and play my scales with confidence.

I have learned to prepare my solos and ensemble parts. To learn the pieces in question, I like to find recordings and listen to the interpretations of the performers; that way I know what I'm doing and can help the others who don't. When I encounter a difficult section, usually after being prodded by my teachers, I take out my metronome to correct styling and timing, a tuner for intonation and pitch, or I use different rhythms clear up the knots and finger tangles.

I always have two goals when I play with a group; first, I know what I'm doing, and if I don't know exactly how to fix it; either by listening, rhythms, metronome, tuner, or repetition. Second, I make sure I have fun; all my musical activities I chose to do and I want to make the best of the experience as possible for me and for the people with me. All of this has helped me survive the various groups I've been involved in, even if I don't get the main part, or if I'm at the back of the section. Over the years I've been playing I have been in many solo recitals, OMEA Competitions, various ensembles during group lessons with Mr. Jim and Dr. Carlson, a quartet, trio, and duet with Mrs. Larson, fiddle camp in Montana, Suzuki Institute, Newark-Granville Youth Symphony Orchestra, the Masterworks Orchestra at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp, the International Youth Symphony Orchestra at Blue Lake, various school activities, and all the Suzuki events for the past ten years. And I have happily survived them all by using what I've learned in the Suzuki program here at Denison.

One more comment before I finish is that I have done everything because I like to and enjoy it. Not all of it has been easy coasting, but concentration, elbow grease, and tears. I still have problems, like the confidence in my sound, using the entire bow, and my intonation makes people cringe. I don't think I will become a professional musician, but I keep playing because I love to make music, to have a hobby of my own, to do something that someone else doesn't, and to be able to partake in the different experiences that come with it.

Suzuki Teachers Look Back on Being Students

Creating Memories with My Mother by Rebecca White

It is hard to imagine who I would be today if I had not grown up as a Suzuki child. All of the experiences I had playing the violin helped to form who I am today and when I think back to those times, my mother is at the heart of every moment. I cannot reminisce about my Suzuki childhood without mentioning my mother.

What stands out in my mind were our early morning practices. My mother practiced with me every morning. Even at 6:30 am, I remember her encouragement and patience (I remember me being tired!). Now that I am a practicing parent, I can appreciate how hard this was for my mother. But nevertheless, she persevered!

I also remember our car rides to and from private and group lessons. That long 45 minute drive, each way, helped to bring us even closer together and we would talk and I would tell her about school and friends. I had her undivided attention and at the time I didn't fully understand the significance of that time together, but I know now how important that simple drive helped to mold our relationship. These memories may not be filled with fun and excitement but they leave me with a feeling of love.

One of my favorite memories was taking the train from Chicago to Colorado for a Suzuki summer institute. The institute was great, I learned a lot and made friends, but wow did my mother and I have fun on the train ride. Some other great memories I have were getting to perform each year at Orchestra Hall in Chicago with my Suzuki group and performing with a tour group at a Yellowstone Park in Wyoming. Once again, the common denominator was my mother. She was always there supporting me and cheering for me. Now that I am a Suzuki mother, I marvel at all the patience, dedication and time she put into me and my Suzuki experience and I wonder how she made it so easy.

Moms, Dads and Practice Partners, your efforts with your children are for their benefit. You are shaping young minds and their experiences and creating favorite memories for them. Whether they remember making friends in group class, having a great solo experience, going on a tour with the performing group, or just riding in the car with you to class, these experiences will help to form who they will become.

Homage to a Great Suzuki Teacher: Ruth Jeanne by Robin Brown

Ruth Jeanne, my first violin teacher, was an exceptional musician and a wonderful human being. Along with teaching violin using the Suzuki approach, she led string chamber, marimba and recorder ensembles. Slight of build and about 5 feet tall, I'll never forget her impeccable tympani playing with the Licking County Symphony Orchestra, her head just rising above the drums.

She taught violin at her house on Silver Street in Granville from about the 1960's through the 1980's. I remember our group lessons - 10 of us in a circle with five of us beginner violinists and our moms playing alongside. Ruth had us sing a lot and practice rhythms with our hands, voices, and bows. I remember doing a lot of bow hold exercises -

"helicopters," "elevators", etc. In private lessons, my favorite times were when Ruth accompanied me on piano.

Ruth wrote the dates when I started each piece in Suzuki Book 1 - I was in Book 1 for over two years and I started at the age of six! Ruth was very patient, kind and calm. Her approach was "slow and steady wins the..." music in this case. This is a lesson I am still learning myself and hope to impart to my students.

Ruth gave me and many other students (e.g., Paul Richards, professional drummer and drum instructor, Richard Marshall, violist with the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra) a lifelong love and joy of music, and we are forever grateful.

Program Recitals
Sundays at 3 p.m.
Burke Recital Hall

December 10

*"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

**Suzuki Piano
Workshop
Featuring
Mary Craig Powell
January 13 and 14,
2007
See your teacher for
details.**

a publication of the
Denison University
Suzuki Program

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.

For more information about our program, please contact:

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co-director

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Getting It Right – The First Time

By Caryn Wiegrand Neidhold

To the parent:

This task that we have taken on can sometimes seem overwhelming. We ask so much of our children in music. We must understand their frustration thresholds, motivate them, challenge them, and teach them on a daily basis. It is our job to make sure we understand the teacher's instructions and then find 10,000 ways to help our children during the week. We are the keepers of the flame and we are on the front lines. It is our responsibility to ensure that the students get it right the first time.

Practice Travels

by Lucy Dickson

"When I want to do something fun for piano practice, I pretend that I go somewhere to give a performance or teach a piano class. So far I have gone to Great Britain, Italy, and Kentucky. I'm only in each place for one night, and I get to spend the night in that country after my performance.

We have a pretend audience, and they get to ask questions and ask for encores. One time somebody asked about the two different endings in "A Short Story" so I had to play both endings. Another time someone in the back row couldn't hear me too well, so I had to play louder. For encores, they usually ask for review songs like "Christmas Day Secrets" or "Lightly Row." We have a lot of fun going to different countries."

To the student:

Believe your teacher! If your teacher wants you to do something a certain way, it is because he or she has years of experience, remarkable powers of observation, and an amazing ability to hear music. Your teacher only sees you 30 to 60 minutes a week. The rest of the week it is the parent and student's responsibility to practice the way the teacher asks.

Believe your parent! Your parent may not be able to play your instrument nearly as well as you, but she or he has remarkable powers of observation and an amazing ability to hear music. Olympic athletes don't try to coach themselves. They know that their coach can observe things about their performance that the athletes themselves can't see. Why should music be any different? Your parent is your own personal coach. Take advantage of it!

Caryn Wiegrand Neidhold has been an active Suzuki teacher since 1987. In addition to teaching violin and viola students, she is a violist with the Reno Philharmonic and Chautauqua Symphony Orchestras. She is also a Suzuki cello and violin mom.

This article was reprinted in part from the Summer 2004 edition of the American Suzuki Journal.

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Being a Suzuki Student

By Kalkidan Aseged

Being a Suzuki student is a wonderful experience for me. First of all, I am blessed to have a magnificent violin teacher. She is the best teacher in the world. She makes violin playing so much fun! The way she teaches the basics, complex areas, and even ring tones makes me want to take lessons every day! Her advice and encouragement lets me achieve my goals as a violinist. I am proud to be a Suzuki student and I love it!!

Group class is so much fun! You get to play old and new songs. I think that group class helps us kids to relate and communicate with others. I also like group class because we really get an extra half-hour of practice with even more fun! Most importantly, it helps us understand the pieces of music, dynamics, ring tones, and who wrote the pieces. I really enjoy group class and I hope you enjoy it, too.