

a publication of the Denison University Suzuki Program

Suzuki Talent Education

There will be an informative meeting on

Saturday,
November 10
9:15 a.m. - 11 a.m.

in the Burke Hall of
Music and Arts
Rehearsal Room

for those
interested in
learning about

Suzuki Talent
Education

and observing the

Denison University
Suzuki Program

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*"By helping our
children
learn
to be
self-disciplined,
we are also
helping them
learn
how to become
independent
of us
as,
sooner or later,
they must.
And we are
helping them
learn
how to be
loving parents
to children
of their own."*

--Fred Rogers

American Suzuki Institute Experiences

By Kyle and Tyler Otterstedt

KYLE: This summer I went to Stevens Point, WI for the American Suzuki Institute. Mr. Jim asked me to write about what I did there. My favorite part of it was the talent show. It was so funny! First, one of the instructors did funny sound effects on his violin (I wish I could learn how to do some of them!). Other acts were by students singing, doing karate demonstrations, all kinds of things. My favorite act was Harry Potter's Puppet Pals. Barry Bonds as a Suzuki guitar student was pretty funny, too.

In the afternoon, Suzuki families could use the Univ. of Wisconsin-Stevens Point indoor swimming pool. It was awesome! This pool was huge and had the highest diving board I have ever seen. I jumped off over and over (until my mom made me stop!).

In my masterclass I met Robert from Chicago. He and I had every class together so we got to be friends. I had ice cream every day in the dining hall. It was great! I will go again sometime.

TYLER: There is so much I could say about ASI. There's the food, classes, dorms but probably my most favorite thing is the people. It's amazing to meet kids from all over the globe that can challenge you to play your best. It's extraordinary to see people in first grade playing the Vivaldi Concertos. It's also amazing to see people from California and Japan or even some from Stevens Point. All the teachers also can be fun and exciting and can help you greatly. The friendships you make there are unbreakable. I think it's more fun to be challenged by kids all over the country.

Another fun thing is all the recreation that is at Stevens Point. There is a swimming pool, baseball and football fields and a basketball gym. It's so much fun! Also, there are recitals and talent shows that can be really funny. I would totally recommend ASI as the greatest institute ever!

International Suzuki Piano Committee Visits Columbus

Seven Suzuki piano teachers and SAA representatives from five countries met in Columbus in September to prepare the latest edition of the Suzuki piano repertoire. They had three main goals for the weekend. First, they wanted to change some fingerings that have been puzzling us for years. Second, they wanted to return some pieces to the way the composers had originally intended them to be played. Third, they wanted to add some more contemporary pieces to the books. These changes had to be made while honoring the history and purpose of the Suzuki philosophy and also representing the wishes of Suzuki piano teachers all over the world. It was no small task.

The weekend went smoothly thanks to a number of local Suzuki piano teachers who provided transportation, meals, entertainment, and a little peace and quiet at the end of the long days. One of our program's parents came to the rescue when the representative from Australia arrived but her luggage, and her blood pressure medication, did not. This parent, a pharmacist, did a little research on the U.S. equivalent and was quick to offer a few days of medication until the luggage arrived. Her efforts alone made the teacher feel better.

It was fun to sneak into the meeting to fix coffee or prepare a snack and listen in on their discussions. There were no flying objects or raised voices among these great educators; just friendly voices and kind words. And just like ordinary parents, at the end of the day the discussion turned to how to get their kids to practice!

Program Recitals:

•October 14•

•November 11•

•December 9•

*Candlelight
Walking Tour
Encore Performance
and
Chamber Concert*

Sundays

3 p.m.

Burke Recital Hall

Each student is invited to perform in at least one program recital per academic year. Space is limited, so please speak with your teacher about this opportunity.

The Kirsh-McCarroll Piano Group Classes discussed two composers in September:

Wolfgang Mozart was born in Austria in 1756 and composed his first Minuet when he was around five years old. He said, "Composing is not very difficult for me. I simply copy down the music as it is in my head."

Johann Hummel was born in Pressburg in 1778 and began playing the violin and piano when he was around 6 years old. Mozart was impressed with his playing and invited Hummel to be his student.

*Do you know any pieces by Mozart and Hummel?**

Rosin Basics

by Jim Hostetter
The Loft Violin Shop

Rosin, known as colophon to luthiers, or makers of stringed instruments, is made from treated pine sap or resin. Resins from over 110 different pine trees from four different continents can be used to make rosin.

There are different colors of rosins. Resin that is generally harvested in the late winter or early spring makes a light amber colored rosin. This rosin tends to be harder and used for the higher stringed instruments. Resin that is generally harvested in the summer or fall makes a dark and sometimes almost black rosin. This rosin tends to be softer and is preferred for use by the lower stringed instruments.

- "Jade" is the only green rosin on the market and does not use any metallic additives.
- Gold rosin actually has real gold in the resin mixture. It is supposed to produce a warm, clear tone.
- Rosin with silver in its mixture tends to produce a concentrated, bright tone that reacts well when higher positions are commonly played.
- Lead-Silver rosin is slightly softer than other rosins. It tends to promote a clear and warm tone.
- Copper is one of the most common additives to rosin and can be used to aid beginners' tone production as it helps to produce a warm, soft tone.

There is no difference between rosins for violin, viola, or cello. The players of those instruments generally prefer rosins of the hardness (or softness) best suited for their particular instrument.

Rosin for the bass should not be used by any other instrument. It is MUCH softer than other rosins and if it is not cared for properly, it can melt in the heat!

Remember to always treat your rosin with great care as it is very fragile. It is not necessary to scratch the surface of the rosin to "get it started". Apply rosin to your bow every day in the way that your teacher prefers. Rosin makes the bow hairs sticky and helps them to pull on the string to produce sound. Touching the rosin, bow hair, or the strings near the bridge with fingers lessens the ability of the rosin to stick to the hair.

Regular dustings of the rosin dust from your instrument with a soft cloth will help to preserve its finish because rosin sticks to that, too. Too much rosin built up on the strings can affect the sound. Wiping the strings with a soft cloth will help to prevent this build up.

Ultimately, rosin choice is an issue of personal preference. The additives and colorings used in rosins will all combine to make each rosin brand feel unique. The rosin that comes with rental instruments from The Loft is selected with students in mind. If you have questions about your rosin, ask your teacher or come see us at The Loft.

Editor's note: When I first started playing the violin, I noticed that I felt like I had a cold every time I played. After learning more about rosin, I realized that being allergic to pine trees had something to do with my cold symptoms. The Loft suggested I switch to a rosin with less dust and the symptoms went away. MFK

The Denison University Suzuki Program Website contains the current group and event schedule as well as other helpful information. If you have any comments or suggestions about the website, please email Mary Hawkins at hawkinsm@denison.edu

www.denison.edu/suzuki

Spooky Suzuki Harvest Celebration

October 27
2-4 p.m.

... a biannual tradition of costumes, games, music, and fun...

Parent volunteers are needed, so please see your teacher!

We're also looking for a "corn hole game board" and bean bags.

(And if you have no idea what a "corn hole game board" is, be sure to come to Spooky Suzuki to find out! 😊)



Suzuki Summers

by Mary Hawkins

I love Suzuki summers because the days and nights are so much more relaxed than during the school year. For most kids, there is no school (no homework, no tests) during the summer and not as many organized sports or other extra-curricular activities that require time and attention and create a jam packed schedule for families with multiple siblings. We have found summers are a great time to make some real progress on our instruments.

In the beginning of the summer, my children (Nick age 10 & Paul age 8) and I attended the New England Suzuki Institute (NESI) for a week. The institute is held at St. Josephs College, a small school on the shores of Lake Sebago about 20 miles West of Portland, Maine. We all loved this institute for various reasons. Nick and Paul loved it because of the activities available at the college when you are not in class or practicing your instrument. You can swim, fish or go boating in the lake (I noticed many families brought kayaks or canoes), use the indoor pool and climbing wall, play soccer on a big field and ride bikes or scooters around the campus. They also enjoyed having their own key to our dorm suite (which we shared with a family of pianists from Connecticut) and their own meal ticket which entitled them to some great food. They made friends quickly and I was soon abandoned in the cafeteria and left to make my own friends to share meals with.

One of the reasons I loved NESI is because it is a safe environment where my kids can easily navigate the campus and find their way to their classes. The quality of the faculty (many from the Boston area) and enrichment courses offered is another real draw for me. I also really enjoyed getting to know the other families we met. This institute attracts people from all over. There were several families there from

California this past year. Another highlight for me is the contra dance and lobster bake held on a hill overlooking the lake. The students who participated in the fiddle class during the week provided the music and the rest of us learned the steps needed to participate in a contra dance after feasting on lobsters, mussels and corn on the cob. Everyone was sad when the week was over and a few kids started circulating the idea that the institute be extended next year to allow more time for recreational activities and more time to prepare for final performances. Although the costs of lodging and meals can be expensive at summer institutes, we talked with many families that were camping nearby and I even saw an RV in the parking lot with a young Suzuki student practicing inside. There are many creative ways to make a summer institute work for your family.

Another highlight of our Suzuki summer in Maine was the opportunity afforded my kids to perform (and get paid for it!) in the courtyard of a gourmet food store during the lunch hour on a sunny Saturday in August. The shop owner, a Suzuki mom, wanted to highlight young musicians in the area as well as teach youngsters about business. Nick and Paul signed a contract and, highly motivated by the \$60 they were promised, began practicing duets and polishing their repertoire. Nick continued to work on the fiddle music he learned at institute so he could perform those pieces as well. They played for 2 ½ hours, had a steady and appreciative audience, earned some good money and had as much free lemonade as they could drink!

Now we are back to school (and homework and tests) and sports and another 9 months of craziness. Many days, it is a struggle to fit in even a bare bones practice. I can't wait for next summer!

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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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Practicing What We Teach: Teachers' Experiences in Continuing Education

Flutin' in the Mountains by Linda Habig

Driving through magnificent mountain vistas in August, I was excited to be heading to Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts to "Suzuki Flute in the Berkshires" for my Book III Teacher Training. What a gorgeous and lofty setting, high in the mountains, at an historic, beautiful and renowned liberal arts college! This turned out to be a magical learning and Suzuki "family" experience, with just 30 young flute students, teacher trainees and faculty. Three elements combined to make this Institute beneficial and inspiring for me.

1. Teacher training. Observing the teacher trainers work with students in master classes provided many great ideas for me to bring back to my students. And the specific Book III sessions trained us in hundreds of specific points to use in teaching techniques and pieces. For example, our trainer deconstructed how to teach students to play pianissimo (very softly), and advised not to ask students for this dynamic level until they reach Book III, given the embouchure challenges involved. Another example was our teacher's emphasis on short cadenzas in some of the Book III pieces, and how to start our students on these free-form sections in a musical way.

2. Personal improvement in my flute playing. Each year that I have taken teacher training, I have been delighted with the many ideas that help me improve my personal flute playing. For example, discussion about body position pointed out to me that I have too much stiffness in my right arm and shoulder while playing. So now I'm working hard to remedy that! There was also a lively discussion among teachers about tonguing styles, and whether "forward tonguing" (tongue against the lips) was more effective than "back tonguing" (more traditional tongue against teeth).

3. Inspiration and Suzuki Family Spirit.

With a small group of students and faculty, this Institute instantly took on a warm, family atmosphere. That was enhanced because all of us stayed in a quaint, old, very small dorm that had been a small hotel, right on the Williams College campus. There was no TV, no air conditioning, yet there was a charming old dining room and big front porch where we all ate and "hung out" together. Late in the evening, students congregated on the porch and spontaneously started playing Suzuki songs, one after another! And one 6 year old student wandered into the dining hall one night during dinner, with flute ready, looking for her teacher; she wanted to learn the next 4 measures of "Long, Long, Ago" so that she could play with a new-found friend. Magical! More inspiration came from the master classes held on the stage in historic Bernhard Hall. With old burnished wood, fabulous acoustics, and exuding old New England, this setting inspired students and teachers alike. Everyone who played in this venue sounded terrific.

With lots of learning, personal improvement, and inspiration, I look forward to teacher training at a Suzuki institute every summer!

***Mozart:** Minuet, Piano book II and Violin Book VII,
Arietta in Piano book II, Sonatas in Piano books V-VII,
Concerti in Violin books IX and X
Hummel: Ecossoise in Piano book II