

QuickTime™ and a
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are needed to see this picture.

*“The process is far more important than
the end result.”*

Dr. Shinichi Suzuki

Denison University Suzuki Program Spring 2005

Denison Bluegrass Weekend

More than 70 area violinists participated in the Denison Suzuki Bluegrass Workshop in February. The workshop was fun and informative and the Suzuki performance, which kicked off the final concert of the weekend, was energetic and exciting! A huge THANK YOU to Dr. Andy Carlson and Jim Van Reeth for providing this learning opportunity to Suzuki students.

Upcoming Events:

Vail Series Performance

The final Vail Series performance of this academic year features Pianist Andre Watts. He will perform in Swasey Chapel on Saturday, April 2nd at 8:00pm. The Vail Series has again provided us with some free tickets for Suzuki students and their families. Please let your instructor know as soon as possible if you would like to attend.

Goodwill Ambassadors Tour

Stop #2 of the Goodwill Ambassadors Tour will take us to Chapel Grove Inn, a nursing home and assisted living facility located in Heath. Performance time will be 3:00pm on Saturday, May 7th. Your instructor will provide further details about the rehearsal schedule. This event is for all Suzuki students and we encourage you to help spread the joy of music to others in our community.

Recitals

The final **Program Recital** of the spring semester is Sunday, April 17th at 3:00 in Burke Hall. **Piano students of Caryl Palmer** will perform in their spring recital on Friday, May 13th at 7:00pm in Burke Hall.

Summer Institutes

Suzuki Summer Institutes are weeklong summer camps for Suzuki students and their practice partners. This is an opportunity to learn from master Suzuki teachers, meet other Suzuki families and spend some quality time with your kids. A six hour class called Every Child Can is also offered for anyone (and highly recommended for practice partners) wanting to learn more about Suzuki philosophy. While there are Suzuki Institutes around the country (and around the world), we are fortunate to have the Capital Suzuki Institute in Columbus. You can commute each day or stay the night in dorm room style accommodations (or any other accommodations you choose). Alternatively, you can plan a family vacation to an interesting place (i.e. Alaska, Colorado, New England) around a Suzuki Institute. More information about Suzuki Institutes is available on the Suzuki Bulletin board (3rd Floor of Burton Hall) and at suzukiassociation.org or ask your teacher.

Summer lessons

Individual lessons continue during the summer, however, there are no group lessons or recitals and the number of weeks taught varies by instructor. Your instructor will let you know the dates he or she will be teaching.

Looking for Suzuki Instructors

Due to growing interest in the Denison University Suzuki Program and a long wait list, we are currently looking for additional piano, violin and cello instructors. We are conducting a nationwide search for qualified Suzuki teachers and have posted an ad on the Suzuki Association of America web page. To be considered for the position, candidates need a Bachelor's Degree, Suzuki training and, preferably, Suzuki teaching experience.

Suzuki suggestions

Thanks for all the fantastic Suzuki Suggestions! So far, we have been able to respond with a coat rack in the hallway, additional Goodwill Ambassador Tour stops, and candy in the hallway (yum. yum!!). We were unable to coordinate a Bruce Irwin Fiddle workshop this year but did offer the Bluegrass Workshop as an alternative. We are currently working on a budget for next year which will not increase the Suzuki fees and hope that this effort will help all families in the program. Finally, we would love to offer T-shirts for 101 days of practice and welcome any design suggestions. Please keep the suggestions coming!

Suzuki Thoughts... from students and their practice partners.

Bridge Repair

By Karen Lepper

A loud *crack* came from the other room. It was Saturday evening, and my son, preparing to practice once more before the Bluegrass fiddle workshop the next day, was tuning his violin. My first thought was that a string had broken and that hopefully one of the teachers would have a replacement available on Sunday. But then Peter called out "my bridge broke!" Oh no!! I had no clue what to do. There would be no chance of getting it fixed before the workshop. I called Jim Van Reeth, Peter's teacher. He said he'd bring a full-size violin to the workshop that Peter could borrow, but Peter was accustomed to a 3/4 size, so I was still hoping there was some other solution.

The bridge was broken cleanly in two parts. Jim suggested that I try gluing it -- if it didn't work, we'd be no worse off than we already were. The break was horizontal, across the narrowest part of the bridge. I used wood glue, and held the two halves together tightly for several minutes. I left it until the next morning, when I loosened all the strings, set the bridge in place, and carefully tightened the strings again. Amazingly, the bridge held. I was worried that it would snap again, but not only did it hold up throughout the workshop the next day, but for several days after, until I could get in to have it repaired.

Peter was able to participate in the workshop as planned. I was nervous about trying to repair something like this, but found it easier than I expected. Just so long as I don't find myself having to glue the violin itself some day!

Choosing a violin

By Anna Rosenfeld

Getting a new violin can be a very exciting experience; just playing new instruments and getting a feel for something new and the prospect of performing on a better instrument gives someone an exhilarating feeling. But it can also be exhausting, grueling, time-consuming, expensive, and overall a pain in the neck (and arms).

When Mom and I went into the Loft Violin Shop, we didn't really know what we were doing, but we got some help picking out a price range and a couple violins to try. We spent two long hours just looking at several violins and were allowed to borrow two for a week. The following trip we took Mrs. Larson with us to try out some more. In much less time, with her expert advice, we played at least three times the number of instruments than on the first day. We'd try out new violins as fast as they brought them in, which wasn't snail pace: pick up violin, play scale, yes or no, pick up another violin, play scale, etc. Deciding on an instrument is a very personal decision. We were searching for something with a clean, clear, open tone, but we always listened for aberrations or faults, is it easy to play, is the tone pleasant, a consistency throughout the notes and strings, not scratchy, screechy, or muted sounds, easy to tune-stuff like that. We also looked at wooden bows because the carbon-fiber bow I used didn't sound quite right with the upgraded instruments. There was a lot to test out there; lighter or heavier bows, varying balance points, and the fact that different bows sounded different with different violins gave us more to focus on. We brought two more back home, and went in a third time to try again with Mr. Jim to help us. Overall, I think we exhausted their entire stock of violins in that price range in three weeks. We went back home with one old violin and a new one and finally decided on the older one.

I am happy with the decision we made and we wouldn't have been able to get anywhere without the help of my teachers and the professional staff at the Loft.

And Finally

Please feel free to contact Jim or Mary with any ideas, questions or comments. We look forward to working to develop the music, minds and hearts of all those in the program.

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