

Suzuki Association of Indiana (SAI)
Third Annual Meeting
July 12, 2014
Evansville, Indiana
University of Evansville

Liz Efrogmson-Brooks, SAI President, opened the meeting commenting upon how she and Jillian Chrisman began to talk about forming a state association and then how Dawn Evans joined in as well. Indiana can continue to develop by strengthening connections throughout the state. She thanked Maria Mastropaolo and Sarah Pearce for being the hosts for today's meeting.

Introductions/Attendance

Rachel Gries comes from Greenwood, just south of Indianapolis. She teaches violin and viola. Liz teaches her son cello. She has received training through book five

Candida Wiley comes from Indianapolis. She has a home studio and teaches in public school, violin and viola. She has received training through book eight in violin.

Dawn Evans (Vice President of SAI) is from Bloomington where she maintains a private home studio. She has received training in books one through four, ECC (Every Child Can) and SPA (Suzuki Principles in Action).

Martha Nyatawa comes from Terre Haute. She teaches all strings, piano and voice

Mary Todd is from Fort Wayne and teaches at Oak Farm Montessori and has about 20-25 students at that location. She teaches a total of 57 students. She has trained in Columbus, OH with Mary Craig Powell.

Emily Thompson (Media Secretary of SAI) was recruited by Mary Todd to become a Suzuki teacher. She has studied with Mimi Zweig at Indiana University and also with Christine Feltig. Her husband teaches violin and orchestra at Indiana Wesleyan. She has started the Indiana Wesleyan Suzuki Players and is an adjunct professor there.

Diana Hummel (Treasurer of SAI) is from Bloomington today and will be from Richmond in two weeks as they are moving there! She teaches violin, viola, cello & bass. She has received training in books one through ten.

Carol Dallinger (Honorary Board Member) is the violin professor here at the University of Evansville and is a Suzuki Teacher Trainer. She has been teaching at the U of E since 1972.

Jillian Chrisman (Secretary of SAI) resides in Indianapolis on the east side. She maintains a home studio of about 33 violin students.

Emilie Grondin (Board Member) attended via skype from Mishawaka. Her daughter, Elizabeth, studied with Carol.

Jenny Wingert is from Evansville and teaches cello and enjoys including the Suzuki philosophy in her lessons. She has received training in books one and two and the SPA course.

Maria Mastropaolo (Board Member) teaches violin at the University of Evansville. She has completed all levels, a practicum, SPA and level 2 of EC education

Sarah Pearce (Board Member) teaches with Maria in the Suzuki Violin Program at U of E. She has received training and has completed a practicum, SPA course and ECC

Liz Efromson-Brooks (President of SAI) is from Indianapolis. She has received training in all ten books. She has also done a practicum, SPA course and ECC

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

National Conference: Liz attended and reported that the workshops were great. She received our SAI certificate of affiliation at that time. Topics such as how to collect dues, code of ethics and retaining membership was discussed. Utah held this very first meeting for affiliate chapters. Jillian gave each attending member a color copy of the certificate. She will mail all members a certificate as well.

E-Newsletter: Emily changed it to quarterly (January, April, July, October/November). She encouraged us to share anything teacher related, local upcoming events or something you've done already. Emily stated that teacher contributions can be even just a short paragraph. She requests that any articles or paragraphs for the e-newsletter be sent ONLY by e-mail. In between issues she offered to send out short/quick announcements to everyone. Liz encouraged us to send in pictures and thought we should send our e-newsletter to SAA (Suzuki Association of the Americas). Liz suggested sending in a pic of a student graduating from a book.

Emily reported that the **facebook** page gets very little use

Drop Box was discussed. It is a shared file for all of us to use. We can review past e-newsletters and other items of interest that are stored there. Emily said we can send her pictures via drop box or email.

Website: Emily suggested that if we want a website that we can sign up for a monthly hosting with bluehost.com as it was the least expensive at \$5.95 a month, and charging \$10.00 for the domain name. It is a 24 month contract. We would need to come up with a domain name, one that would be helpful yet separate us from the Suzuki motorcycles. Emily added that besides the domain name, the website will also have a set of key words (beyond the domain name) that will guide people to our site and that motorcycles should not be a problem. Dawn suggested SuzukiAssociationIN. Others made suggestions. It was agreed that we'd need to get everyone's ideas on this and eventually decide on a domain name. Liz encouraged everyone to think of three domain names during our lunch break. A VOTE was taken on whether to have a website or not and all members present voted yes.

Carol added that when children are posted on a website that you need to get the parents' permission. She recommended that we have a general release form and have each parent sign it. Liz mentioned that the website could have a bio on each teacher and list the board members.

Treasurer's Report: Diana stated that as of July 1, 2013 our balance was \$348.00. During the course of this year we brought in \$1,135.00 and had expenses of \$506.62 which left a remaining balance as of July 1, 2014 to be \$976.38.

For SAI functions, we need to have a photo release form. The internet has downloads for this. Carol mentioned that U. of E. gives a release form to the parents at the beginning of each year.

Board Members and Honorary Board Members: Carol mentioned that it would be good to have the honorary board members' expectations written down so that the position can be more knowledgeably considered. Emily noted that two thirds of the membership is needed to accept a new board member. Dawn also noted that honorary board members and their roles are not discussed in the by-laws. Carol suggested that we peruse the SAA by-laws for definitions and guidelines regarding honorary board members.

SAI has invited Diane Schroeder and Carol Dallinger to become honorary board members. They have both accepted the invitation! Mrs. Schroeder is a former SAA board president. Her daughter has studied with Professor Dallinger and has earmarked donations specifically toward the Suzuki program here at U. of Evansville for a number of years.

SAI Programs should list board members and SAA logo.

Officer Installation: Liz noted that we need to look into the process of changing officers next year. Carol suggested having a president-elect in which the past president stays on board to help the current president. Jillian suggested that each officer make a task list, not for the by-laws, but just for incoming officers so they are more informed of the specific tasks of their office. Carol asked if officers can change to another office. It was agreed to check our by-laws and SAA's by-laws in regards to this possibility.

October Play-Ins: Liz noted that play-ins of any size can be organized for SAI's October Play-Ins. Studios may do this individually or the play-in may be coordinated with several studios or teachers. Rachel added that the kids get excited about playing together and encouraged us to make it a fun and festive atmosphere. It was also suggested to take lots of pictures and send them to Emily.

International Violin Competition of Indianapolis (IVCI –or go to violin.org): Carol suggested that we check into their schedule and see what is going on there. It may be possible for us to meet and attend things together as an SAI function. Jillian added that the competitors are scheduled to play around the area for schools and groups and that perhaps we can schedule a competitor to play for the SAI students and teachers. Candida and Jillian agreed that they'd approach Glen Kwok, president of IVCI, about coordinating something. Liz mentioned that the live streaming of the competition was very popular. We will also plan to ask Glen (at a later date, after the competition this September) to be our guest speaker for the fourth annual SAI meeting next year in Indianapolis as he has a Suzuki background.

SAI Fourth Annual Meeting is to be held July 11, 2015. The theme will be Suzuki Steps with Liz providing a demonstration. It was noted, with Emily's assistance, that the later July dates conflicted with IAM Festival in Indianapolis and with SAI members attending Stevens Point.

SAI Logo: A committee was formed consisting of Rachel Gries, Maria Mastropaolo, Jillian Chrisman, Emilie Grondin, Sarah Pearce, and Emily Thompson. Jillian mentioned that the Utah Suzuki Association is willing to help guide us through the process. The logo contest is for parents, students and teachers of Indiana. Logo designs by someone not residing in Indiana will be considered by the committee on a case by case basis. The logo design contest will also serve to raise awareness of SAI.

Building Parent Membership: Liz said that we need to start focusing on encouraging parents to join. She suggested checking into associate fees for SAI. Jillian mentioned that this would be a good time to ask our parents how SAI could best serve them and their children. This would give us better insight. Then, if possible, we could promote these ideas to encourage memberships. Rachel and Emilie mentioned that SAA has a parent forum on line.

Monies to SAA – Liz mentioned we need to find out how much of our monies need to go to SAA

Suzuki Early Childhood Education – Liz stated it is a great way to get a two year old started. Maria added there are Taka rhythms in the background of the songs/poems and that there are A weeks and B weeks so every other week is built upon review. SECE (Suzuki Early Childhood Education) provides specific training. It is not a franchise. It requires training through Sharon or Dorothy Jones, who developed this class. There are five stages of training. Maria and Sarah are currently working on completing stage two. Liz calls her SECE class Suzuki Steps.

Graduation Process: This typically happens in three ways 1) home graduation 2) play 2 or 3 strategic pieces publicly 3) a video can be sent to another teacher for review. Liz sent a tape to Emilie for review. “Using the SPA course descriptors to grade a graduation is tremendously helpful.” Emilie stated. She also found it helpful to give general suggestions as well as specific ones for each piece. It was generally agreed upon that these descriptors should be front and center when a student’s playing is assessed. Emilie mentioned that we spent a lot of time discussing this last year and nothing came of it. Dawn suggested we set up a committee. Rachel Gries volunteered to listen to viola submissions and to help out if needed on violin submissions. Lastly, SAI as a group could possibly use SAA’s certificate that is provided for graduation recitals.

Guest Speaker – Carol Dallinger, Violin Professor and founder of the Suzuki Violin Program at the University of Evansville.

Prior to college, John Kendall showed her a film of Suzuki students that demonstrated unbelievably high ability of playing violin. She went on to get two performance degrees. She arrived at U. of E. in 1972 to be part of a string quartet. During the early years the preparatory department was larger than the music school of Evansville College. The Suzuki program became an extension of the preparatory school. Also, in 1972, she attended teacher training at Stevens Point, WI and met Dr. William Starr of Knoxville. She came back and started with just five students – all children of music dept. faculty. “But,” she added, pointing her index finger upward, “it only took one student who did really well, then it was word of mouth.” And the program grew.

Over the years, policies and presidents changed. Carol discussed many of these changes and how she persevered. She told us to “keep records of everything, EVERYTHING”. It was a matter, at one point, of finding one piece of paper, years old, that saved her job.

Her work was divided between playing in the symphony, teaching symphony #2, and teaching music history. College enrollment grew in the 70’s and she had 35 Suzuki students.

Eventually the prep school was closed and the youth symphony disbanded when those in charge either lost interest or their children were no longer in the program. That was a great sadness. Before it closed, Carol was privately informed that the preparatory school files would be destroyed. She saved the (now) Suzuki school's existence by saving those files. And, it was in those files that she found that paper that saved her job.

In 1982/83 she became a teacher trainer and began to provide long term teacher training to her students at U. of E by making it part of the curriculum. She feels long term training is more realistic. Prior to providing long term training, she called her class "orchestra/string pedagogy". She simply changed the title to "Performance and Suzuki Pedagogy". Over the course of three years, the students could be trained in all ten books.

Becoming a teacher trainer back in the 80's was a fairly casual process. You needed three letters of recommendation and then the trainers took a vote. Carol commented, "As hard as the new system is, it's FAIR." And she is satisfied that a fair system is in place.

In the early years of the teacher trainer process, everyone was divided into two basic camps 1) some wanted to include everyone who felt the desire to teach and become a trainer, which is the basis of Suzuki philosophy, and 2) those who felt strongly about some kind of certification. Carol was torn between the two camps. She didn't feel comfortable excluding, but didn't want just a bunch of hot shot players either. Of course, that's when the term "certified" stopped being used and the term "registered" was preferred instead. More recently, the SPA course and the practicum were developed to create stepping stones in teacher development.

Carol supports the "Certificate of Achievement" so that teachers can distinguish themselves in their Suzuki careers. She mentioned that the caliber of the teachers' playing ability is much higher now than when it used to be, especially now that the video process is in place.

Current tuition/fees for lessons were and still are based on community income vs. making a living as a teacher. Carol was careful to not price the tuition too high. She wanted families of a variety of income levels to be able to participate. Carol stated there were many things to consider when deciding on how much to charge such as materials for office, travel, phone, printing, utilities, pianists AND benefits. At U. of E. the Suzuki Violin Program is responsible for funding their own benefits. The program has two contracted positions. The budget is decided in October of the previous academic year. "SAA has really tried to make teaching a career industry. Forty years ago, wives taught in their living room." stated Carol.

The Suzuki House at U of E was opened in 2006 to provide space for private lessons. Monthly recitals are held elsewhere as part of their program. Graduation recitals with about five students or so, is done during group lesson time. There are solo recitals at the end of each semester on four or five consecutive evenings.

The program does have a handbook of policies. One policy, informally stated by Carol, is "no call, no show, no make-up". Summer lessons are held. There is a Parent Education class for fourteen weeks. The parents learn the Twinkle rhythms, basic bow hold, violin hold and all the twinkle variations. The parents perform all the twinkles together at the end of the semester. This gives them a heightened sense of what their children will be experiencing as they learn and perform. The new students start by

attending group lessons only for thirty minutes. It was mentioned that Alice Joy Lewis has a seminar for new parents. "As Suzuki teachers, we are an adjunct to the families." said Carol.

Group lesson attendance is expected. One private lesson and one group lesson is required of the students per week. Carol recommended that those of us with smaller studios conduct group lessons similar to a play-in so that all levels are covered. Students with varying abilities and ages enjoy playing together.

The Suzuki Violin Program of University of Evansville holds their Suzuki weekend workshop every spring during the first full weekend of March. This year it is March 6 – 8. It may be that Terri Einfeldt, guest clinician, will be able to have a teacher only session this year.

The discussion ended with the acknowledgement that Jasper, Lafayette and Evansville needs a violin teacher.