

Suzuki Association of Indiana News
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Editor: Emily J. Thompson

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Words from the President

Hello Indiana Suzuki teachers, students and parents!

It's been a crazy time with the holidays, snow and now trying to get back to "normal". I really would love to hear what everyone is doing in their studios and schools right now. And I would love to know what you all did over the last few months. It's important to touch base with each other.

As many of you know, I teach with the Indianapolis Suzuki Academy. We are in the final preparations for our winter concert which will be Sunday, January 26th at 4:00pm. The location is Broadway United Methodist Church in Indianapolis and all are welcome. Right now we have over 80 students in the ISA and all will be performing - from the early childhood classes (called Suzuki Steps), through beginning cellists and violins, viola, piano and then advanced cellos and violins. These fine musicians will be led by our faculty - Sharon Neufeld (violin and viola and also our director), Sarah Beck (violin), Kyoko Tanno (piano), Judy Ahring (piano), Karen Walls (violin) and Ruth Marshall (cello), plus myself of course. I will post pictures in the next newsletter.

My personal studio is comprised of twenty private Suzuki students, ages 3 and 1/2 to 17. I also teach Suzuki Steps classes twice a week, three cello group and I also coach two chamber ensembles. I am so happy that I get to combine my two passions - music and teaching! I am also happy that I get to work with other talented teachers and that we all share the same vision of building beautiful hearts.

Liz Efroymsen-Brooks

Suzuki Principles in Action

Indianapolis Suzuki Academy is proud to host a "Suzuki Principles in Action" (SPA) course on March 28-29. This course is a prerequisite for the SAA Certificate of Achievement, and Nancy Jackson (Assistant Director of the Western Springs School of Talent Education in Chicago) will be our instructor. From the SAA website: *"Suzuki Principles in Action (SPA) is a course designed to help teachers incorporate Suzuki's principles effectively in their teaching. The course focuses on how to teach, not what to teach. It allows for the sharing of ideas among all instrument areas. SPA is based on Dr. Suzuki's belief that knowledge is an important first step, but "knowledge plus 10,000 times" is what produces ability. This important principle, which teachers frequently explain to their students, applies equally to the art of teaching."*

Registration and more information can be found at: <https://suzukiassociation.org/events/32358/>. There are a maximum of 20 spots available for this course, so be sure to sign up now! Hope to see you there!

SAI Online Resources and Contributions

Emilie Grondin is involved with a committee through the Community Foundation of St. Joseph County that has developed a website as a resource for music teachers, students and parents. It is multi-faceted and includes topics ranging from purchasing an instrument, music technology, teacher directories, theory and much more. Some content is specific to the northern part of the state, but much is general. Check it out at www.MusicalMichiana.org.

Did you know that there is an online discussion forum specifically for Suzuki teachers at the Suzuki Association website? You can find it at this address: <https://suzukiassociation.org/discuss/teachers/> or by clicking on the "Discussion" tab on the top right of the home page. There is a forum just for teachers, one for parents, and a general Suzuki forum. This is a great place to discuss your teaching questions as well as share your experiences and insights with other Suzuki teachers.

New Book Recommendation

Liz Efrogmson-Brooks: Just ordered a book from Amazon called "Strings Attached" by Melanie Kupchynsky and Joanne Lipman, who wrote the book to honor their strict but passionate teacher (and Melanie's father). Not that screaming and yelling is exactly the Suzuki way, but the heart is there. From the description on Amazon.com:

If you're lucky, somewhere in your past is that one person who changed your life forever. The one who pushed you to dream bigger and to reach higher, and who set you straight on what matters in life. For Joanne Lipman and Melanie Kupchynsky, that person was a public-school music teacher, Jerry Kupchynsky, known as Mr. K a Ukrainian-born taskmaster who yelled and stomped and screamed, and who drove his students harder than anyone had ever driven them before. Through sheer force of will, he made them better than they had any right to be. Strings Attached tells the inspiring,

poignant, and powerful story of this remarkable man, whose life seemed to conspire against him at every turn and yet who was able to transform his own heartache into triumph for his students.

Strings Attached: One Tough Teacher and the Gift of Great Expectations is available on Amazon.com for 19.07, hardcover, and 11.99, Kindle edition.

Teacher Talk

Recently I have talked to several Suzuki teachers who have run into difficult parents, One difficult parent might be a bully - trying to tell the teacher how to run the lesson. Another parent might complain about groups and the necessity of playing with others. Some parents, being overstressed and overcommitted, might complain about having to buy nice clothes for their children to wear to a concert. I personally have dealt with these issues and also with the parent who hovers nearby and has a hard time sitting quietly and taking notes.

Have you had problems with a parent and what did you do? I think the SAI teachers could share some ideas and advice - I had one teacher trainer tell me recently that the Early Childhood class was a parent education class. How do you feel about that statement? I would love to hear your thoughts. ~Liz Efromson-Brooks

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**Send comments, events, and articles to Emily J. Thompson:
emilythompsonviolin@gmail.com**