

**Suzuki Association of Indiana  
News**

*Volume 3, Issue 2: October 2014*

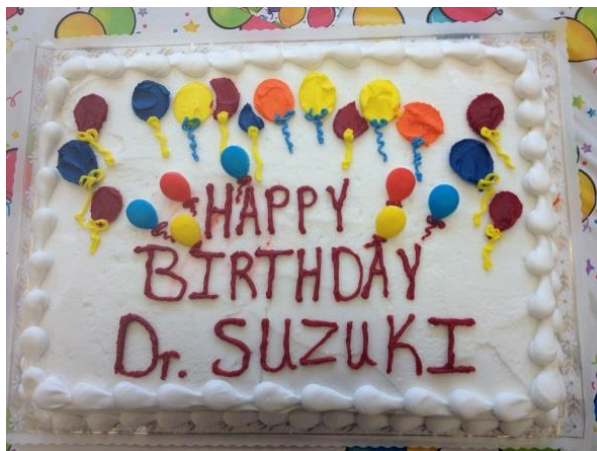
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2014 Suzuki Central Indiana Dr. Suzuki Birthday Play In

It was a beautiful fall day - perfect weather to celebrate the birthday of Dr. Suzuki in Central Indiana. Young students of all ages, violinists, violists, cellists, pianists and harpists gathered with their families on Sunday, October 19 at the Unitarian Church in Indianapolis. We had ten Suzuki teachers present: Jillian Chrisman, Sharon Neufeld, Sarah Beck, Candida Wiley, Meghan King, Ann Sloan, Stephanie Hall, Liz Efroymsen-Brooks, Emily Thompson and Kyoko Tanno. The event ended with a performance of the Bach Double by the teachers (one of Dr. Suzuki's favorite pieces)—and, of course, everyone sang Happy Birthday. We enjoyed lots of music plus cake and some presents! ~Liz Efroymsen



Above left: the birthday cake; right: a student plays along, using early childhood instruments shared by Liz Efroymsen-Brooks.



Left: the cello students led by Liz Efroymsen-Brooks. Right: Stephanie Hall and student.



The combined string group.



Playing the Twinkle Variations together.

## Website and Logo Update

IndianaSuzuki.org is up and running! Thank you to everyone who voted in the domain name poll. This has been a long time in coming, and I think it is going to make a big difference for our public visibility. I am slowly building the site as I have time, and will be continually updating it with our events and information. I would like to include your scheduled public events on the events page, so please send me all the details (Date, time, address, etc.). Also, I am in need of high quality photographs of students and teachers. Let me know if you have any other ideas about the structure or content of the website.

The logo contest for students concluded this month. Due to the small number of entries (total of four), we decided to continue the design search by reaching out to the larger community for ideas. We would like to recognize the hard work and creativity of Emma Sofianos and Julie Nicklin (Honorable Mention award), and Gabrielle Pritt and Grace Sheridan (Participant award). Attached with the email for this newsletter is the Logo Search announcement and guidelines for your consideration and distribution. You have until the end of the year, but consider Dr. Suzuki's advice: if you think of it, do it right away!

*~Emily Thompson*

## Indianapolis Baroque Plays Bach and Vivaldi

The Indianapolis Baroque Orchestra is going to play concerts in January that will be fun for students and their families, especially violin players, to attend. We will be performing Vivaldi's Four Seasons and also featuring a concerto competition winner from IU Bloomington's Early Music Institute who will be performing the Bach A Minor Violin Concerto. She is AMAZING! Below are the dates. If people would like to inquire about group rates, or you would like to inquire about a runout performance that weekend in your area of Indiana, let me know. I am always more than willing to come to a group class to talk about how Baroque instruments and bows work if anyone is interested.

*~Rachel Gries, brqvla@aol.com*

**January 15, 2015 7:30 PM**

Christel DeHaan Fine Arts Center

**January 16, 2015 7:30 PM**

Indiana Landmarks Center

## Lessons are for the Parents

“This is primarily a parent education class”—these were the words of Dorothy Jones when she was describing the Suzuki Early Childhood Education (SECE) classes. Dorothy, along with her daughter Sharon, developed the program, so they should know. I was doing my second year of training in Waterloo, Canada and these words really struck me. I had to rethink my concept of this Suzuki class and, in some way, of all Suzuki classes and lessons.

It is a well-accepted fact that Suzuki teachers are inspired to develop the whole child—not just to make little instrument performers. But where do the parents stand in this “educational” process, besides being the all-important practice partner at home? As a teacher, we all see many different styles of parenting, from the overbearing tiger mom to the laid back permissive dad. There are parents who sit too close and try to run the lesson. There are parents who fall asleep in the chair or spend the lesson time on their computer. We are not trying to change parenting styles, of course, but we can change the quality of interaction between parent and child.

In many ways, I believe, we have to nurture the parents as well as their child. One of the first suggestions I make to parents of young children is to use a soft voice, soft hands when helping and use positive words instead of the “don’ts” and “nos” that come so readily. I have to reassure parents who want to pressure their child to be competitive with other students that their child will grow and progress in their own time. I have to pass along suggestions as to how to make practicing more interesting. On a few occasions (we have all had to do this) I have had to ask a parent, very gently, not to speak to the child during the lesson time. That’s a hard one.

In my Early Childhood class (called Suzuki Steps) I have had parents who have become mortified that their child would not sit still or would refuse to play an instrument, or walk around the room instead of participating in the circle. Well—we are dealing with a class that has many 2 year olds! It is my job to assure these parents that children learn by watching as well as participating. For new children it is natural by children to be shy and hide behind Mom’s skirts or in Dad’s arms. They’ll come out when they are ready! Often it is hard to understand why a child can’t keep a beat or why they won’t sing in front of everyone (when they sing ALL THE TIME) at home. This is all part of the preparation for being part of a group class when they take an instrument. It is preparation for listening to good tone or taking turns or wielding a mallet. But an infant or toddler does not have these skills—Mom or Dad have to be very patient and show them many times.

I am a former Suzuki parent and I have to admit that my son’s teacher had to tell me to sit back and observe! I was a little reddened but grateful for the lesson! I learned many things from my childrens’ Suzuki teachers—and I say “Thanks!” ~Liz Efroymsen-Brooks

## Studio Stories

*The following stories were sent by Jillian Chrisman.  
Thank you, Jillian, for giving us a look inside your teaching life!*



This picture was taken at my student Aidan Weiss's Minuet Recital. Also pictured is his pianist, Tom Roberts, and I. Aidan thought it would be fun to wear a Hawaiian shirt and not be so serious, so I brought leis for all to wear. I like to have my Book One students play a Minuet Recital. It is a nice stepping stone toward a Book One recital in which the student plays most of the Book One songs. Tom Roberts also played with us at the Indianapolis-Central Indiana SAI October Play-in on Oct. 19th.

This is Kurt Watkins, and he is 17 years old. He won first place in his age division at the Riley Days Fiddle Contest. This is his third time competing so he is very happy to have kept trying! The Riley Days Festival (first weekend in October) is in Greenfield, just east of Indianapolis. There are three age divisions: 10 & younger, 11 - 17, and 18 & up. Cash prizes are awarded, with lowest cash prize being \$20.00 and the highest cash prize \$175.00! So it'd be great for other students to know. It's always a fun time.



Every now and then a meaningful note comes along and this one came in after the last recital. I think this note can be said for all of us. This parent 'gets it' and has a beautiful heart to write such a note.

The Chrisman studio had a wedding recital just last Saturday. Typically it is a recital in the form of a wedding, minister included! However, this year we just had lots of music. The older students learned traditional wedding tunes such as Trumpet Voluntary, Jesu and Pachelbel's Canon. The wedding recital included Suzuki review songs as well as two Book One level pieces, Ode to Joy and Fanfare Minuet. Each processional was played once all the way through. Then two mothers and younger girls processed twice for each processional, holding bouquets of silk flowers, so that the older students could get the feel of when to stop the music. The students sounded really nice. I was so proud of them!

The Chrisman Studio has also recently developed a Families of Chrisman Studio facebook page. Studio families are readily joining this and the response has been good.

**Email Subject:** Wedding recital thanks

Dear Jillian,

Thanks for a beautiful wedding recital. I was able to sit back, relax, and enjoy the sounds of beautiful music! The students did a great job with all the music but I especially enjoyed Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring.

I also appreciate that you are helping the students develop the discipline that is needed in all aspects of their lives by asking them to learn new music and practice, practice, practice. It's become so easy to just give up on things that we don't get right away or that don't come easily. But violin is challenging and requires mental stamina to break through the frustration of missed notes and tough passages.

Thank you for giving them opportunities to perform in public and take on new challenges.

Jennifer

*To share your studio's stories, send them to [emilythompsonviolin@gmail.com](mailto:emilythompsonviolin@gmail.com) for future issues.*

**Connect with the SAI**

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/SuzukiAssociationIndiana>

**Website:** <http://www.indianasuzuki.org/>

**Send comments, events, photos and articles to Emily J. Thompson:  
[emilythompsonviolin@gmail.com](mailto:emilythompsonviolin@gmail.com)**