



Suzuki Association of Indiana News

Volume 5, Issue 4

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FROM THE EDITOR

Spring is here in Indiana, and despite the unpredictable weather, nature continues to expand with the smells of earth, sounds of birds, and new intensity of color and texture. Not only is the season beautiful in itself, but the surrounding growth inspires enthusiasm and ideas for months to come.

This is the best way that I could describe what you are about to read. Not only do we have an increasing growth and connection between the members of the Suzuki Association of Indiana, but we have an ever-increasing number of events, opportunities, and great insights to share.

Much thanks for this goes to our SAI Secretary, Jillian Chrisman. She has personally organized and reached out to others to make many of the following events come together. She has served as the secretary of our organization from the very beginning stages, and as we are concluding the fifth year of the Suzuki Association of Indiana, the vision and work of this founding leadership is starting to bear fruit.

At the annual meeting on July 8 in Evansville, Jillian's long-extended term of secretary will expire and the best way we can recognize her work is by continuing the progress and promise of this group. Jillian has done much of the heavy lifting of developing the role and getting the organizational structure in place, and if you are lucky enough to be elected to her position, you will get to benefit from the work she has already done. To find out more about the basic duties of the SAI Secretary, please email Jillian at j2chrisman@comcast.net.

Best to you all! I hope to see you at some of the events listed below! One more thing: if there is something you would be excited to attend but can't make it this time, why don't you organize something exciting in your area? There are always more parents, teachers, and students out there waiting to meet and share music with you. I'm attaching the updated member directory for you to start connecting with other SAI teachers...and start thinking who could be added in to that list in the upcoming year.

Emily J. Thompson

INDY ARTS AND MUSIC FESTIVAL

Dear SAI members,

As directors of the Indy Arts and Music Festival, Scott Kolman-Keen and I would like to issue a personal invitation to all of you to send your students, encourage parents to take Every Child Can, and personally observe the Indiana Suzuki Institute. Our Institute is in it's 8th year, and each year it has continued to expand and improve. Initially IAM was developed to serve the Suzuki students of Indianapolis and Indiana because many of us had difficulty encouraging parents to leave the state for an institute experience. However, over the years the quality of our program has attracted students from states as far away as California, Nevada, Texas, Pennsylvania, Florida, and the territory of Puerto Rico. We have enrolled international students from Canada, France, Peru, and Malaysia. This year the Peruvian group is planning to return, and we are expecting students from Israel. If members of the Suzuki Family come these distances to experience our institute, our students right here in Indiana should definitely take advantage of the opportunities IAM provides.

IAM offers several advantages over other institutes. First, it has always been our goal to keep costs low. Our most reasonably priced institute program, \$195, is literally the lowest tuition in the nation. For those students in the Indianapolis area, no housing cost is involved so this is truly an exceptional value in musical growth and experience. In addition to the traditional courses included at Suzuki Institutes (semi-private lessons, group classes, and theory), we offer rarely available extras including, two levels or orchestra, jazz, handbells, fiddling, composition, gymnastics and visual arts to name only a few. Also, for working parents, supervision is available through college students who don't just "babysit," but who

will attend lessons and classes then practice with your children. Teens ages 13-17 may attend without parents by joining our Teen Group. (Only \$20 for the entire week- includes extra Teen activities as well.)

Finally, because the Indiana Suzuki Institute was developed for Hoosier students, we want to give priority to your students' choices of classes. With students planning to attend from Peru and Israel this year, it is extremely important that we get Indiana's students registered early before preferred classes are filled. Please tell parents to visit indyamfest.org to learn more about the IAM Festival and register early for reduced rates and priority class options.

Ann Sloan

Scott Kolman-Keen

Co-directors Indy Arts and Music Festival

SUZUKI FAMILY ORCHESTRA

The Suzuki Family Orchestra will again occur on the first Saturday of June! Please save that date if you are thinking of joining in on the fun. This year we will do the first movement of the Bach Double and a string orchestra version of Seitz Concerto No. 2, 3rd movement. This is such a nice opportunity for students to perform the Bach Double with orchestra! Of course having teachers join on either solo part or orchestra part is welcomed. Cellists and violists (teachers and their students) please join us! Each participating teacher will receive \$25.00 as a thank you. Please contact Jillian Chrisman for parts. Students may play one or both of these pieces.

Rehearsals - all participants must attend at least one rehearsal. It is preferable that students attend two.

Friday, May 5, 7:30 p.m. - Gethsemane Lutheran Church, 6810 E. 10th St., Indianapolis, IN

Friday, May 19, 7:30 p.m. - Irvington United Methodist Church (UMC) Parlor Room,
30 N Audubon Rd, Indianapolis, IN 46219

Saturday, May 3rd, 10:30 a.m. - Irvington UMC Sanctuary

Performance is May 3rd, Saturday, at approximately 11:20 a.m. in the Irvington UMC Parlor Room.

UPCOMING PLAY-INS

There will be an **Invitational Play-In on May 5th, from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.** at Gethsemane Lutheran Church located at 6810 E. 10th Street, Indianapolis, 46219. This is going to be back-to-back with the first rehearsal for the Suzuki Family Orchestra, in case you are interested in both activities. Here is the violin repertoire list provided by Jillian Chrisman for the May 5th play-in. Please contact her with any questions.

Book One

Twinkles
Song of the Wind
Go Tell Aunt Rhody
May Song
Long, Long Ago
Allegro
Allegretto
Etude
Minuet II
Minuet III
Gossec Gavotte

Book Two

Chorus
Long, Long, Ago & Variation
Waltz
Witch's Dance
Lully Gavotte
Minuet in G

Book Three

Bach Minuet
Gavotte in G Minor
Bach Bourree

Play-in at the Park. Associate member Carolyn Wyatt (mother of two Suzuki children) and Jillian Chrisman will host a play-in on June 25th at 3:00 at Broad Ripple Park. It will be near the playground with play time afterwards. Bring a lawn chair and snack and enjoy conversation afterwards while the children play on the playground. There will be no rain date. If it is cancelled - it will be cancelled by 1:00 and posted on the SAI Facebook page as such. The play-in list for violin is as follows. There may also be a cello play-in if there are interested students; in which case, please contact lefroymsn@gmail.com for a cello repertoire list.

Book One

Twinkles
Lightly Row
Song of the Wind
Go Tell Aunt Rhody
Long, Long Ago
Allegro
Perpetual Motion
Etude
Minuet II
Happy Farmer

Book Two

Musette
Long, Long, Ago & Variation
Witch's Dance
Lully Gavotte

Book Three

Gavotte in G Minor
Bach Bourree

Book Four

Seitz 2, 3

PARENT/TEACHER TALKS

The next Parent/Teacher Talk will be May 21st, 3-4 p.m. at the Panera Bread located in Greendale Centre, 789 US 31 North, Greenwood, IN 46142. This location is easy to reach and is just south of the County Line Rd & US 31 intersection. Rachel Gries and Jillian Chrisman will host this meeting. The topic will be “Encouraging Practice at Home.” Jillian will give an overview of Edmund Sprunger's book entitled *Helping Parents Practice: Ideas for Making it Easier*.

Teacher members are encouraged to ask their studio parents for ideas on this topic. Associate members are encouraged to bring ideas from their home practice experiences to the talk or post to Facebook as well. If you would like to engage more on Facebook with the SAI, home practice tips and questions would be a great discussion topic for your posts and comments.

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

Here are the notes from the last Parent/Teacher Talk from Jillian Chrisman:

On Wednesday, March 8th, Jillian and Meghan met for lunch along with Carolyn Wyatt, parent and associate member of SAI. It was a delightful time of conversation without an agenda. We discussed having children around the age of 10-12 begin taking partial responsibility of their practice and lesson assignments. We also discussed the importance of the relationship with the parent (Suzuki Triangle comes to mind) and the communication between parent and teacher. Meghan holds conferences with her parents and she finds this to be very valuable.

Future SAI projects were discussed that Jillian plans to address the board about, specifically having a picnic play-in at a park this summer (Broad Ripple park was recommended), and bringing in a clinician for a master class in the fall and adding a play-in to that event as well. Also, last year, Meghan and Jillian coordinated a play-in at the state fair (free tickets to all participants and parents as well as parking passes!). There was a good response for this and the parents involved said they'd like to do this again. Meghan will start working on the fair date. Jillian and possibly Marilyn Watkins will work on a picnic play-in date. If anyone knows of a good clinician to bring in for a fall master class, please let Jillian know. Thanks!

MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY STRING CAMP

Manchester University will be holding its 3rd String Camp for students in 5th - 9th grades.

Manchester Youth String Camp

For students who play violin, viola, cello, or bass, who have completed one year of study, and who are able to read music.

Location: Cordier Auditorium on the campus of Manchester University

Dates: Sunday, June 25 - 28, 2017

Check In: Sunday, June 25th, Noon - 2 pm

Final Concert: Wednesday, June 28th, at 7:00 PM

Cost: \$300 for residential students

\$200 for commuter students

Instructors: Robert Lynn, Elizabeth Smith, and Linda Kummernuss

Questions: Contact Scott Humphries at [260-982-5331](tel:260-982-5331) or by email:

cphumphries@manchester.edu

To register online: link.manchester.edu/summercamps

The Youth String Camp is supported by the Manchester Symphony Orchestra

SAI EVENTS

SAI Annual Meeting

Saturday, July 8, 2017

University of Evansville, Evansville, IN

Contact Maria Mastropaolo, mm9@evansville.edu, for information

July 16-21 (Teacher Training July 15-23)

IAM Festival, Indianapolis, IN

indyamfest.weebly.com

Dr. Suzuki Fall Play-Ins

It is a tradition for the SAI to host play-ins around the state in the fall to commemorate Dr. Suzuki's birthday (October 17, 1898)

In central Indiana, there will be one held in the Indianapolis Artsgarden (date TBA).

If you are having one or would like to organize one in your area, please let us know and we will be happy to help.

TEACHING TOPIC: NOTE READING

How to Teach Music Reading

By Sarah Pearce

Around the time my students start Twinkle, I introduce the letters of the music alphabet. I created and laminated several sets of colored cards that we use to play these games, modeled after the games in *No H in Snake* by Michiko Yurko. We arrange the letters in order, mix them up and arrange them in order again, say them forwards and backwards, and make towers of letters from A to G. Once the student is comfortable doing these games, I move to the floor staff. I created a giant staff out of a sheet of poster board and electrical tape. The letter cards fit nicely on the lines and spaces. We take turns throwing bean bags on the staff and naming the letters on which they land. Over time, I ask the student to remove letters from the staff and eventually the staff is blank. If the student can easily name the notes on the blank staff, we move to flash cards.

I usually ask my students to order the *Traficante Violin Flash Cards* from sharmusic.com and we begin with the 1st position A string 'yellow' flash cards. Taking just a few at a time, I instruct my students to say the note name, say the finger number and string, and then play the note on their violin. The thing I like most about these flashcards is the clear answer on the back, making it easy for the parent to know if their child is correct.

Ideally at the same time as these flashcards, I am also working with the student on fingerboard geography. We again start with the A string and I have each student play each note on that string with the Variation A Twinkle rhythm, at the same time they say the name of the note they are playing. We work up to saying all the notes in the A major scale (up the A and E strings, and back down again). Once that is easy, I have them add saying the sharps where appropriate (C#, F#, and G#) for the scale. The next step is then to add 'natural' after each other note. I realize this sounds cumbersome, but once we get to more advanced finger patterns with flats, knowing where the natural notes are is a big help. Once that is easy, we play "Find the note" --'Using what you know from your scale', I say 'Find the note "B". Find "F#". Find "A"'. Hopefully, the student is able to find each note out of sequence.

Many months later, having worked through all the yellow flashcards and having found all the notes on the violin, we move on to the first volume of *I Can Read Music* by Joanne Martin. Often the note reading is quite simple for students after all the prep work, and we begin to focus more on reading rhythms. As a former Suzuki student myself, I know how easy it is to 'fake' one's way through reading music and so I make all my students count out loud while they play the rhythm exercises. For me, that is the only way I can make sure they are actively counting themselves. This also ensures they can keep a steady beat while reading rhythms. Sometimes this can be quite challenging for students, in which case either I or the parent count with them until it gets easier. I've found that the more a student struggles to count out loud, the more important it is for them to be able to do it! As we get further into the book I start clapping to the beat while they play and soon we alternate between clapping and counting out loud. After completing the

first volume of the reading book, we move onto the 2nd volume! After they finish that book, I tend to use various paths depending on the individual student. Some books I have tried are very dry or too simple for that stage. Other music is too difficult at that time. I haven't yet found a single book that will fill in the gap for each and every student between Volume 2 and more advanced music.

Sometimes, although I follow these steps and have a devoted parent, a student still struggles with reading. Currently I am working with a student who has trouble determining which notes belong to which string. As we work during the lesson, the student seems to remember. But then the next week we are back at square one—mom confirms this is how it is when they practice at home. Every. Single. Time. Reading was becoming a thing of dread and I had to do something. I conferred with my fellow teacher, Maria Mastropaolo, and upon her suggestion began a new approach. I brought in different colored highlighters, photocopied the reading page for the week, and asked him to assign one color to each string. I colored the notes on each reading exercise according to the colors he chose, and had him play. It was almost like magic. I'm not quite sure what it was about the color separation, but that seemed to remove so much tension from his reading that it was like a potion straight out of Harry Potter. We've been doing that for a few weeks now, and I have started asking him to help me highlight the lines. It does seem to add extra work each week—copying the lesson and highlighting—but I really don't mind in the least. I also don't mind if we need to use this method for the next few months or longer. I realize we need to find the right balance between having the colors help just enough and becoming dependent on them, but for now he no longer dreads reading and our lesson atmosphere has improved immensely.

I hope these suggestions prove helpful. These are the things I have developed to help my students learn to read printed music.

Developing Note Reading Skills

By Linda Kummernuss

I begin with a set of music alphabet cards I made from poster board, magic markers, stencils, and clear contact paper. Each lesson I take a few minutes to do something related to note reading, starting with the 2nd or 3rd lesson.

I have 5 sets of these alphabet cards, each in a different color. We lay them out end to end noting that as soon as we get to "G", the alphabet starts all over again. Then we talk about how the notes go higher in pitch as the alphabet goes forward (A, B, C,...), and the pitch goes lower when the alphabet goes backwards. Glissandos, played up high, then down low, with the student reaching for the ceiling, or the floor, help the student to distinguish between pitches going up, and pitches going down. I also use the alphabet cards to teach the names of the strings, and to show how the notes lie on each string.

I have also made a staff that uses pennies for notes. At first, we just identify notes as being on a line, or on a space. Next, we name the lines and spaces. Then, one string per lesson, we lay out the notes on each string (with help from the alphabet cards) and talk about how the notes look on the staff, the finger needed to play the note, and the actual name of the note.

Then, again only one string per lesson, I drill the student on the notes of a string. I usually use the Mississippi Hot Dog rhythm. I have the student play the rhythm on the note I name. If I'm drilling the notes on the E string, I usually just go back and forth between E and F# until the student easily plays those two notes. Then I add the G#, and mix up the three notes. Then I add the high A. I do not do 4th finger at this time (violin & viola).

By the time we have gone through each of these steps, the student is playing all, or most, of the Twinkle variations. Then I use the Mississippi Hot Dog Lonely Hamburger Band, followed by the Mississippi Hot Dog Happy Hamburger Hoe Down books. The next book is the Doflein Method which reviews the notes learned in the first two books...but with a twist. We learn about regular size notes and time signatures. The duets help with intonation and counting. As students move into Suzuki book 4 I use my copy of Fun With Positions, 2nd – 5th, by Avsharian, and an ancient position book: Maia Bang Violin Course, book 3 – The Positions. This is in addition to their Doflein Book. By using MY books, I can help them in reading the positions, and they are getting practice sight reading.

Forgetting a book, or forgetting to practice a note reading assignment, does not get a student out of reading for me at each lesson. I pull out something from my bag for them to read, if needed.

Developing Music Literacy in Suzuki Students

By Jillian Chrisman

As you know, students vary in note reading ability. Some students are quite good while others struggle. Our brains are not wired the same way! With the struggling students I try to take baby steps, hitting some kind of note reading each lesson. With students who read notes more easily, I let them determine their pace - as accomplishing the reading assignment isn't an issue. I think recognizing differences is vital. Raising a student's note reading ability should be a gentle process for the weaker note reader and a joyous one for the more agile reader.

Here are the books I've found that work well:

The 'I Can Read' volumes one and two by Joanne Martin – I use this the most. I'm sure many of you do too. It is a GEM! It progresses so simply and with explanation that I am comfortable with students moving ahead without me. Little students love having something to put on the music stand. They feel much more grown up!

'The ABC's of Violin' series by Janice Tucker Rhoda – she presents little studies for the student to acquire the needed skill that precedes each song. I really like her song selections too and have chosen some of them to be group pieces at recitals/performances. I have used nearly all of her volumes at some point. I met her long ago in Chicago at a national Suzuki conference. She was delightful

For the older, more advanced student, there is a new Wohlfahrt studies book by Rachel Barton Pine (with DVD) that is very nice! I generally use Wohlfahrt for late book three and up.

And lastly, I really like Barbara Barber's 'Scales for Advanced Violinists'. It is the least intimidating scale book I've seen. The title compliments the students right off the bat and again, they feel accomplished just by having a book such as this.

On occasion, and this is pretty fun, I assign a review song to be played backwards. It's fun to see them furrow their brows as at first they think they can 'hear' the song backwards. The good thing here is that if they can't figure out a note, they can play the song from the beginning and figure it out. I have not used this idea consistently enough to say it works great but it is fun! I have learned that if a student is not reading well by the Bach Double, well, reading just gets painful...

Other than these books, I incorporate non-Suzuki pieces such as traditional wedding music (they all love Pachelbel's Canon), fiddle tunes, Irish tunes, and ensemble pieces. Each year we have a duet recital and they learn to play a duet with another student. On the duet recital I also include ensemble pieces. This year we are playing a student version of 'Eine Kleine Nachtmusik' and 'Swan Lake'. The romanticism is throwing them for a loop! Oh the nebulosness of not having a super clear pulse and many accidentals! I've realized I need to introduce more styles to them. The parents either enjoy hearing these two classic pieces or they confess they don't know one or the other. So I'm glad to be exposing them to these classics.

To conclude, I've always been a strong reader and a weaker by-ear player, although being a Suzuki teacher has improved my ear tremendously. My husband, also a professional violinist, doesn't care for reading and it is common knowledge in his family that note reading is not a strong point. Once, I received a call from my Chrisman niece's violin teacher in Lafayette (years ago). She was at a loss as to how to help my niece be a better reader. I confess to you now that I told her it was genetic and wished her luck! But now, I think I would have told her to be patient and consistent. My niece's sister, by the way, studied piano. Her teacher went full tilt into only reading and all reading – convinced that sister would become a good reader. All she became was very frustrated. She is a piano teacher now.

All students play differently and with different levels of ability. I think note reading is the same way. I strive to keep note reading consistently in the lesson. It is another facet to being a musician. I've learned to appreciate what is done well and to be compassionate and patient with the areas of struggle. Raising a literate musician is a responsibility I feel strongly.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

The next quarterly newsletter is coming out in July, and will be based on the annual meeting news from July 8th. Watch for more information and registration for the 2017 meeting and 2017-2018 membership year. Any announcements or events submitted between newsletters will be forwarded out immediately to the member email list.

Connect with the SAI

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

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

Email: indianasuzuki@gmail.com