



Arizona Suzuki Association Winter 2008 Newsletter

Special Points of Interest

Past President's Message	Page 1
Pre-Suzuki Classes	Page 2
MAOT Winter Workshop	Page 3
News from around the State	Page 4
VSSA News	Page 4
Cello News	Page 5



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Message from the Past President, Deena Reedy

Introduction to Concert Hall Etiquette

by Deena Reedy, D.M.A.

Even though I now respect and pursue the Suzuki approach to teaching with great interest and enthusiasm, I did not have the benefit of a Suzuki education when I started taking music lessons. It simply wasn't available in my part of the world at that time. Although I started private lessons on piano at the age of 7, I didn't take an interest in the flute until I was 10 1/2 years old. Since I started rather late on the flute by Suzuki standards, I was very quickly involved in my middle school ensemble. One of the things we learned from the beginning in an ensemble setting, which we might miss as an individual student/ single recital participant, is the importance of having good concert etiquette or manners. Believe it or not, this can also help one as a performer, to do one's very best.

The most important thing I learned in my early middle school ensemble experience was the benefit of supporting other people and groups on the program. We were taught to understand that if we wanted to have an audience, we needed to be an audience for others. After all, who wants to perform for an empty room? Granted, we didn't have numerous other activities going on at the same time, as many students do today. However, in order to be fully committed to and focused on a good performance, students today must **make a choice when other events**

conflict with recitals. This commitment gives student performers a different mindset about the importance of the event itself, hopefully allowing them to truly invest in a meaningful and musical performance.

For the Audience

Along with just being present to support other performers, and to be supported oneself, some general **audience participation rules** should be followed at any concert. First, **turn off your cell phone, alarms, etc.** - anything that might distract the performer or audience from the performance. If you must take pictures, try to take them either at the very beginning or the end. Flash photos should only be taken with the permission of the performer, as this can be a tremendous distraction when one is trying to concentrate on all of the variables that go along with playing an instrument. Be sure to follow the guidelines published in the program, or announced at the beginning of the performance.

Next, **listen attentively** - being present is only part of the equation for being a supportive audience member. If you are able to listen to and observe something special in a friends' performance (whether it's about their excellent posture, great bow hold, or long phrases for a wind player), that kind of comment at the end is greatly appreciated by the student trying to learn from their performance. By giving performers the gift of your attention, you are showing them

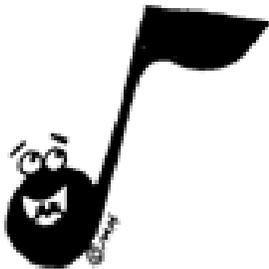
respect - this respect will then (hopefully) be returned to you. By giving your attention to the performance, you might also gain new knowledge of a piece you have never heard or get different ideas about how to present a familiar piece successfully.

Even smaller students can gain new insights at a recital, although they may not realize it at the time. Of course, for younger students, it's always a good idea to bring something quiet to occupy their minds/ bodies if they become fidgety. For example, bring some crayons and blank paper and have the youngster chronicle the recital goings-on through drawings. Perhaps you could even suggest that they focus on the posture that they see or the hand position of each student.

To clap or not to clap

When to clap (or not to) is the age old question at any concert. The best advice is to wait until others start clapping - at least you won't be the one leading the pack in the wrong direction, if it's not the right time:) Also, be sure to wait until all movements or parts of the piece are completed. Additional clues can include the answers to the following questions. First, has the performer released their ready/ playing position? Are they looking at the audience and smiling? If there are different movements listed on the program, have there been enough breaks/ silences in between parts of the piece to encompass all of the movements listed? Finally, as with movements, if pieces are listed on the program without

Message continued from page 1



space in between, this usually means the performer plans to perform them without applause until the end - even if the pieces are by different composers (especially common with vocalists). Looking for these clues will help the concert-goer to know when applause is appropriate and appreciated.

For the Performer

Rules of concert etiquette should also always include **guidelines for the performer**, to help ensure the best possible experience. **What to wear** should be considered carefully. The best advice is to "dress for success". Present yourself well, no matter what the occasion, and you will not go wrong. One of my college friends who happened to be an oboist, followed the philosophy of "look good, feel good, do good". It makes me laugh to think of it, but it really works! Also, **develop your own routine in consultation with your teacher, to prepare for each recital**, as this will de-

velop comfort and confidence. **Repetition** in practice and performance is the key!

Practice performing with and without an audience. Similar to working on and polishing a piece to play for your lesson, recital performance cannot become second nature unless practiced. Amongst many other differences - the unforeseen distractions, larger audience than in the practice room, different clothing than we normally wear - all take time to adjust to. Understanding that polished performance takes practice (and time), be sure to **be forgiving of yourself** if you don't meet your own expectations (or others). Each effort of performance can bring you closer to becoming more of an expert at presenting your abilities in the best light. However, I know very few people who come off the concert stage (professional or non-professional) who can say with absolutely no doubt that it was their best performance ever! No matter what happens in one performance, just **keep**

trying in the next! The trick about performing is that it will get easier the more you attempt it.

Interestingly, the hallmarks of good concert etiquette: attentive listening, respect for others, practicing often for polished performances and learning the routine of the concert hall go hand in hand with learning a musical instrument. Especially as Suzuki students, we must listen attentively to our repertoire, respect and process the comments of our teachers and parents, practice small segments often to eventually succeed in learning an entire piece, and formulate a practice routine that will help us succeed in our quest to learn more about our instrument and its repertoire. Good luck in your performance endeavors! Dr Reedy has published some of her recent articles on her website <http://web.mac.com/dreedy1> Check it out.

Pre-Suzuki Classes!

Have you ever wondered what you can do to nurture the musical growth of your child before Suzuki? Music Together classes can help the process. Music Together classes offer a lively but relaxed musical environment where young children gain experience through the joy of musical play. It is a great program to prepare children for studying Suzuki instruments. Parents can rediscover their own musical nature and create a musical home.

Music Together is a popular and highly commended early childhood music enrichment program for infants, toddlers, preschoolers and adults that love them. Music Together helps families rediscover the joy and importance of informal musical play and experience. It is a research based program built on the principle that we all are born with the innate ability to learn not only the language of our culture, but the music of our culture as well. It fits right in with Dr. Suzuki's philosophy. Yet, many adults cannot sing anything more than "Happy Birthday" and consider themselves to be unmusical. Research shows that this is due to lack of experience, not genetics. Music Together was developed by the Center of Music and Young Children in Princeton, NJ, and was launched in 1987. The program continues to evolve and expand through over a thousand centers throughout the country and world.

For more information and the location of centers near you, go to www.musictogether.com



Founded in 1995, the Music Academy of Tucson is dedicated to the development of ability in each student, fostering creative expression and promoting personal enrichment.

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News From Around the State

The Music & Dance Academy, celebrating its 13th Anniversary in 2008, provides comprehensive music education for all ages, fostering ability in each student and inspiring a learning community that embraces diversity. The Academy uses innovative teaching methods in strings, guitar, woodwinds, brass, percussion, piano, voice and dance. Academy students perform throughout the year in public recitals and Gala Concerts.

Each season the Academy offers the community workshops featuring nationally and internationally renowned artists and leading Master Teachers, Magic Rug Concerts, engaging and interactive musical concerts for families and children, and a Faculty Artist Concert Series. Committed to excellence in teaching, the Music & Dance Academy is a member of the Suzuki Association of the Americas and the National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts.

Summer Institutes:

Please check the Website www.suzukiassociation.org to find dates and locations of Summer Institutes. This experience can't be beat for bonding a family in the joy of playing instruments.

ASA 2007 Fall Festival

The Arizona Suzuki Association held its Fall Hoedown Festival at Orangewood Church on November 17, 2007. Brian Wickland shared his love and knowledge of Fiddling music with over 60 enrolled students. Besides fiddling, the participants enjoyed Suzuki Repertoire with violinists Margaret Hopkins from Maine and Laura Tagwa from Tucson, and cellist Linda Gashler from Gilbert. They also learned square dances from Chuck Hansen. Lunch time brought out the antics of authentically dressed cowboys and Buffalo soldiers. The day concluded with a Hoedown Square dance where part of the group danced to the square dance calling of Chuck Hansen while the other part played the music. Everyone had a chance to play and dance. **If you have ideas for next year's Fall Festival, please email Mary at marywilkening@cox.net.**

The PLACe Music Academy, 3101 W Peoria Ave, in Phoenix has an active Suzuki program. Teacher Lia Taylor writes:

“On December 14, 2007, about 20 violins played Christmas carols and Suzuki songs at Glendale Glitters. Connie Clemmons and I led the students together. At The PLACe Music Academy's semi-annual recital, 19 of Lia's students performed. The recital was this past weekend at the Church of St. Thomas More in Glendale. The kids played songs through Book 5, and one older student played "Meditation from the Opera *Thais*" by Massenet.

Two of my high school students are auditioning for the Regional Orchestra. Weekly, my students are participating in group class according to their level.”

Congratulations to Lia on her recent marriage! You can contact Lia at 602-678-5850 or millerlia@hotmail.com.



Valley of the Sun Suzuki Association (VSSA) will hold its Spring Workshop on Saturday, April 5 at 8:30—4:00 pm. The Theme will be Suzuki goes to Disney!

For the location and more information contact Kristine Ehlis 480-703-0452 kristinee@cox.net



ASA Cello News

Mary Wilkening, Litchfield Park

Mary Wilkening's West Valley cello students will present a recital on January 27. Seventeen students will play pieces from Suzuki Books 1 to 9. One student plays in the Phoenix Symphony Symphonette orchestra, and two play in the West Valley Youth Orchestra. One plays in the Pro Arte Orchestra in Anthem and another in one of the Mesa Youth Orchestras. Eighth Grader Sophie Welsh won second place in the Phoenix Youth Symphony Jr. High Competition in early January. She will perform Haydn's Concerto in C Major with the West Valley Youth Orchestra on April 20 at St. Thomas Aquinas Church in Avondale.

Linda Gashler, Gilbert

Linda Gashler is new to the Phoenix area. She has 12 students planning a March recital at the Place at Gilbert Nursing Home. The students want to share their talents with an appreciative audience. Linda teaches Group Lessons as a part of the VSSA program. She teaches a Suzuki Book 2 & 3 class with 6 students and a Book 1 Class with 4 students. She currently has 2 beginners, but would love to have a few more.

Pamela Richardson, East Valley

Pamela's students had a Master Class in December. They attend the VSSA Group lessons. Several students play in the new East Valley Youth Symphony.

Ann Peterson, Tucson

Ann Peterson has been working with her students in speaking rhythm patterns in two parts. She has also had a lot of success in having the students represent phrases in drawings and with objects like bean bags.

Mary Beth Tyndall, Tucson writes:

"My students and I are lucky to be a part of a wonderful musical community in Tucson where many people and organizations work hard to promote music education for young people. I can only list a sampling of these, and I'm sorry if I leave anyone out! To begin with, Lisa Reilly (Suzuki guitar) and Rebecca McKee (Suzuki violin, viola) teach a wonderful program for the very young called Music Together. Once in a while I am lucky enough to get a student referred out of their groups, and it is always a delight. Tucson Junior Strings is a great program of String Orchestra that has 6 different levels, and many of my students strengthen their ensemble and reading skills in these groups. The Tucson Philharmonia Youth Orchestra is the local youth symphony. Currently six of my students are in the cello section, and one of them, Nicholas Mariscal, will be playing the 3rd movement of the Kabalevsky cello concerto with them in March. Dr. Suzette Battan is their director, and a tireless advocate for music education in Tucson. The Tucson Civic orchestra, a fine amateur group, has a young artist's competition coming up in February and several of my students are busy polishing pieces from Goltermann on up to present for this event. Many school districts in Tucson still have orchestras!!! Yay!! I am grateful for this invaluable experience where my students contact their instruments on a daily basis and make friends at school with the same interest. Finally, I am very proud as a member of the Tucson Symphony of the many fine education programs my students are exposed to through the orchestra. For example, on February 2 my string quartet is presenting a "Just for Kids" concert featuring American music. Not only will the very young audience (target ages 5 and under) get to enjoy this free program, but one of my students, Levi Powe, (age 7) along with his sisters Carissa and Aliyah, (both violinists) will be featured playing "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot". On the other end of the spectrum, the TSO has a composition class on Saturdays called Young Composers for 6th graders and up, which two of my students, Ben Nead and Nicholas Mariscal are currently participating in. This wonderful class culminates in all students pieces being presented in May by either the TSO chamber orchestra or the TSO string quintet. For the first time this year a student piece will be played on a regular chamber orchestra subscription concert in March. Nicholas Mariscal's work Sic Transit, Gloria Mundi will be presented, and he wisely included a cello solo in this tribute he wrote to a family friend who passed away. Every year the TSO also sponsors a concerto competition, and this year my student Clark Evans won 2nd place in the under 14 division. All in all, I feel very blessed to be a part of the Tucson music ecosystem. I love all of my students and their families, and treasure the time we spend together each week. We all help each other towards our goal of promoting music as a beautiful part of life and the pursuit of happiness!"



ASA

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**See the Arizona Suzuki Association
Membership Directory Inside!**