



S P R I N G 2 0 1 7

Arizona Suzuki Association

Newsletter



Keys to Cultivating a Nurturing Environment By Alysa Call

Piano Teacher and Guest columnist

As a Suzuki parent and piano teacher, I have seen that a positive environment can work wonders for the student's motivation and ownership. Below are some principles and actions that may be helpful in this pursuit of a nurturing environment. (Continued on page 2)

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Save the Dates

WVYO Summer Camp	June 5-11, 2017
Chaparral Suzuki Academy	June 14-17, 2017
Curry Summer Music Camp	June 18-July 8, 2017
ASA Workshop	October 20-21, 2017



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1. Elevated Listening

Principle: Children and adults elevate their linguistic abilities by listening to more advanced speech. The same principle is true with acquiring the language of music. If students listen to musical language that is more complex and nuanced than their current level, this listening will elevate their musical expression and processing.

Action: Purchase the digital recordings for several repertoire books ahead (advanced and intermediate levels) and put them in your listening rotation.

2. Best Equipment Possible

Principle: Listening to music and playing our instrument is much more motivating when we have good speakers and instruments. In the case of an instrument, we can only progress as much as our instrument allows us to...how can we learn to play with a nuance or velocity that our instrument cannot produce?

Action: If you have the funds available now for great speakers and an upgraded instrument, do it now! If not, start saving now for an upgraded instrument or speakers.

3. Diverse Exposure

Principle: You never know where a child's passion will be. If we expose children to a wide variety of genres, they will be more likely to find genre of music that really motivates them. Finding a genre outside of classical music that they love can help fuel their progression. As a child, my motivation to learn Broadway music is what gave me the reading abilities to play Classical music.

Action: Listen to a wide variety of music. If the child expresses not liking a new genre, you can tell them that it's okay that they don't like it, but that you will still listen to it sometimes to give it a chance because they may grow to like it with time.

4. Live Musical Experiences

Principle: Live music impacts us deeply.

Action: Take your children or encourage the parents of your students to take their child to a live music event (diverse genres) at least twice a year.

5. Linking the Repertoire

Principle: Linking the repertoire forward builds vision by referencing the connections with the current piece and the wonderful pieces that students will play in the future. Linking the repertoire backwards builds confidence by connecting the current piece with skills already mastered in earlier pieces.

Action: Build vision and confidence by linking the current piece to past accomplishments or to future dream pieces.

6. Celebration Rituals and Recognition Programs

Principle: When students know that there will be a special ritual (i.e. book graduation recital+party) when they accomplish a goal, they are more motivated to reach the goal and to feel deep satisfaction upon accomplishing the goal. In addition to book graduation rituals, I have a program that maps out the goals in my program and students receive a decorative key to display on a board as a symbol of their accomplishments.

Action: Develop rituals to celebrate major accomplishments (i.e. special book graduation concert+party with friends, a special activity together upon completing a reading method book or giving a special symbolic item upon reaching goals).

7. Social Experiences

Principle: Parents, teachers and students enjoy the journey more when they have friends on the path with them.

Action: Cultivate friendships with other parents, colleagues, and students on the same path of valuing music education and character development.



Summer Suzuki Opportunities

Summer Institutes:

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



Curry Summer Music Camp at NAU

Summer 2017

Senior Session: June 18 - July 1 (entering grade 9 - 13 in Fall 2017)

Junior Session: July 2 - 8 (entering grade 7 - 9 in Fall 2017)
www.nau.edu/cal/curry

IN THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC AT
 NORTHERN ARIZONA
 UNIVERSITY

The West Valley Youth Orchestra

Is sponsoring

WVYO Chamber Music Summer Camp with

Quartet Sabaku.

The dates will be June 5–11, 2017, in Goodyear Arizona. Please go to www.wvyo.org for more information.

June 14-17, 2017

Location: St Luke's Episcopal Church, 2000 Shepherds Ln, Prescott, Arizona
 The Chaparral Suzuki Academy fills a need within the Arizona community for an affordable Suzuki style camp for violin, viola, and piano students. The classes offered stimulate and motivate our students while reinforcing the skills developed in the normal course of study at home. We are a SAA approved summer institute. The academy is aimed towards ages 6 – 12. Some students younger than 6 can be accommodated if you contact us directly.



Deadline: The registration deadline is May 1 or, if full capacity is met, earlier. Questions? Contact Laura Tagawa, Director at chaparralsuzuki@gmail.com

ASA Fall Workshop

October 20-21, 2017

Join Suzuki students and teachers from around the state for an exciting weekend of learning from some fantastic guest performers and teachers!

Located at Orangewood Church in Phoenix

Guest Teachers:

Gail Acosta, violin

Diana Parmatier, cello

Gail Acosta, Violin, Viola, Suzuki in the Schools Teacher



Gail A. Acosta, violin, viola, a native of Indiana, began her musical studies at the age of 8. Coming from a family of violinists, she was awarded scholarships to Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan, University of Illinois String Festival, Miami University in Ohio, Bay View Chamber Music Festival, the University of North Carolina-Greensboro and the University of Southern California. A B.M. was awarded from UNC-Greensboro where she studied with Marla Mutschler and performed with the Greensboro Symphony Orchestra. Ms. Acosta was also awarded the Tom J. Stone Award for performance excellence and was winner of the University Concerto Competition. The University of Southern California granted her a teaching assistantship to study with Eudice Shapiro and perform with the USC Graduate String Quartet coached by Gabor Rejto. Her M.M. *summa cum laude* was completed in 1981 and she was honored the String Chamber Music Ensemble Award for 1981. As an active performer, Ms. Acosta has performed with the Santa Barbara Symphony, The Orchestra of Santa Fe, New Mexico, Mozart Camerata, the Los Angeles Philharmonic Green Umbrella Series, the Ernest Bloch Music Festival, Oregon, the Ojai Music Festival, California, Burbank Philharmonic Orchestra, Gold Coast Chamber Music Festival, California and La Folia Chamber Ensemble. An avid teacher and supporter of music education for young students, Ms. Acosta has taught across the United States at many major string workshops and universities. She is a member of the American String Teachers Association, Suzuki Association of the Americas and Musician's Union Local 47. Gail Acosta lives in Valley Village, CA, where she is Suzuki String Coordinator at Evergreen Music Conservatory, maintains a private studio of violin and viola students, coordinates and teaches the Kindergarten/1st Grade Suzuki String Program at Colfax Charter Elementary (180 little violinists!) and is an Adjunct Violin/Viola Professor at Glendale Community College. She also makes her home in Valley Village, with her husband, Jerry and 18-year-old son, Michael.

Gail Acosta lives and teaches violin and viola in the San Fernando Valley near Los Angeles. She is a Suzuki String Coordinator at Evergreen Music Conservatory, teaches the Kindergarten/1st Grade Suzuki String program with 180 children at Colfax Charter Elementary School, and is an Adjunct Violin/Viola professor at Glendale Community College in CA. An avid teacher and supporter of music education for young students, Ms. Acosta has taught across the United States at many major string workshops and universities. She makes her home in Valley Village, CA with her husband, Jerry and 18-year-old son, Michael.



Diana Parmetier, cello

Diana Parmeter received her M.M. in cello performance from Rice University. After several years of extensive orchestral and chamber music performance, she began teaching cello in 1995 and was on the faculty of the Merit School of Music and the Waldorf School, both in Chicago. Diana started her Suzuki training there in 1998 and returns to CSI every summer, even after relocating to California in 2006. Diana currently maintains a studio of about 30 cello students, and although she has taught private and group lessons at all levels, she specializes in teaching beginners.



PPG News

Graduation auditions were held March 4 in conjunction with each student participating in a master class taught by Linda Nakagawa of Sacramento, California. The 21 graduates received trophies at the graduation concert, which was April 1, 2017, at My First Piano in Mesa. Graduates ranged from Book 1 “Christmas Day Secrets” through International Level V “Sonata K.330 by Mozart.”

The end of the year “just for fun” event is a “Feel the Music” tour at the Musical Instrument Museum along with an opportunity to perform there. 54 students and 43 parents will participate on April 29.



Finding the Joy in Repetition

By: Kylie Ahern

Violin Teacher and ASA Board Member

“You must get tired of hearing and teaching the same songs every day!” said a parent to me after their child’s lesson. Yes, it is true that I hear many of the same Suzuki pieces every day. However, is it true that I feel tired of hearing and teaching the same pieces every day? Am I tired of reminding my students to all do the same things every time they start a new piece? Am I tired of correctly anticipating the same mistakes that will happen in the first weeks of learning?



Yes, it is true that Suzuki teachers must be prepared for constant repetition. We spend time each lesson reviewing old pieces to reinforce past skills. We often teach the same tricky preview spots to new songs. We remind our students to do the same things each lesson: practice, listen to your CD, try this new spot five times each day, etc. But does it get old?

As adults, it is easy to forget the joy in doing the same things repetitively. We begin to feel like our schedules are full of tasks we must accomplish – waking up early, going to work, grocery shopping, paying bills, making dinner. When we think of life as ongoing tasks, it is easy for us to feel tired and to lose the joy in life’s activities. It is important as teachers that we do not bring this feeling of weariness into our lessons with our students. Kids are filled with enthusiasm, energy, and a beautiful love for life. Life is a new adventure each day for a child. They do not know (or care) that we taught Andantino ten times in one week. That student is simply excited when he or she is able to learn Andantino for the first time. Seeing a child’s excitement for learning something new never gets old for me. Even as I hear the same tune over and over, I love to see the student’s excitement and feel their quiet victory in accomplishing new skills and new music.

When teaching, Dr. Suzuki said, “I am mentally preparing myself for the five-year-old mind. I want to come down to their physical limitations and up to their sense of wonder and awe.” I think if we as teachers begin to forget our child-like sense of wonder and awe in our lessons and with the Suzuki repertoire, we will not be true to Dr. Suzuki’s vision and we will not be helping make the world a better place.

In the end, I turned to the parent and said, “Yes, I do hear and teach the same songs each day, but it never gets old. To me, each song feels like a new experience with a different student. My students’ joy helps remind me of the excitement in learning something new!”

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