



# ARIZONA SUZUKI ASSOCIATION

## NEWSLETTER

FALL 2023

[azsuzuki.org](http://azsuzuki.org)

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## Are You Listening?

by Alice Vierra, ASA Board Member, SAA Teacher Trainer

Imagine trying to learn a language, a first language or a secondary one, without hearing it? I am trying to learn Spanish now as another language and although I can sometimes understand what is written I know that I have not acquired the correct accent. I have not heard the language for long enough or early enough in my life to be able to speak it correctly. If I moved to a Spanish speaking country I would pick it up much faster. So it is with the Suzuki Method. Suzuki called it the 'Mother Tongue' method as he noticed that all children learn their native language and since music is a language why not try the technique for learning music. You can see now how the listening component is so important.

As parents we are always concerned about our child's progress: are they learning the bow hold, have they memorized the song, are they playing in tune, do they practice enough, and how is their tone? Do we ever ask - are they listening enough? When they are learning a new

piece they only hear themselves playing the melody. If they listen to the recording they hear the following as well: a renowned professional playing the melody, the harmonies from the piano accompaniment, the dynamics, the musicality, the tempo, the style, and in that way they become immersed in the piece. Suzuki asked for immersion in the listening experience.

So, how do we fit in listening into our daily routine, as it is not usually a part of regular practice. For my family when my three children were growing up we pushed the on button for the CD in the boombox at bedtime. They played three different instruments so that meant three different CD's. We also listened in the car quite often. When I was driving we always had music on whether it be Suzuki CD's or the classical music station. Christine E. Goodner, author of *Beyond the Music Lesson: Habits of Successful SUZUKI families* offers the following ideas:

Play the CD in the morning as children are getting ready for the day.

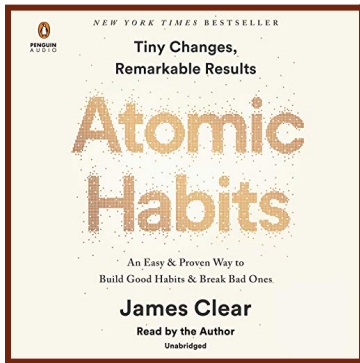
Use it as a soundtrack while doing other activities like playing or reading.

Hit play at the same time as another activity such as, every time dinner is being prepped the music comes on.

Some other sayings I have heard as I taught at various Suzuki Institutes across the country are: listen like a maniac, listening is worth a thousand dollars of music lessons, listen to relax or change your mood, children who listen are not held back, listen and dance along, listen and draw to the music. In my studio I encourage my students to listen to Suzuki recordings but also other classical music as well. Imagine trying to describe the taste of chocolate ice cream. It is hard to explain in words! You really just need to taste it. That is what listening to classical music is - you immerse yourself in it by hearing and experiencing it. Attending a live classical music concert..... orchestra, chamber music, a program at church..... is another way to experience music. When I was a ninth grader and had years of lessons and playing in school orchestra, I went to a string quartet concert. The performers were the faculty members of the music camp my parents and teacher were considering sending me to that next summer. I sat on the front row with some friends and was immediately moved by the music. It was a spark that set me on a path of pursuing music and becoming a professional musician. Most musicians can tell you about when they had a spark that set them on their path if you ask them.

My daughter studied violin from age four through one year of college but developed a playing injury, stopped playing and changed her major. For many years it seemed she was no longer engaged with classical music but just this past year she decided to attend the local symphony with a friend who was also interested and they went four to five times during 2023. I know her ears still remember how to ascertain the form, harmony, melody, and nuances in the music she hears. She is able to enjoy music again. So I ask you as parents and as a family to “Listen like a maniac” and it will pay off. The Suzuki recordings are still available as CD’s but also at Alfred.com, iTunes, and Amazon Music. I have included below a playlist of some of my favorite classical music pieces. Also ask your teacher for a list of their favorites.

J.S. Bach	Orchestral Suites, Solo Cello Suites, Sonatas and Partitas for solo Violin, Magnificat, Brandenburg Concertos, Lute Suites
Beethoven	String Quartets Op. 18, Piano Sonatas, Symphony No. 6 (Pastorale), Sonatas for Piano and Cello, Violin Concerto
Brahms	Symphony No. 4, String Quartets, Trio for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano, Academic Overture
Chopin	Nocturnes for Piano
Elgar	Enigma Variations, Cello Concerto
Holst	The Planets
Mozart	Symphony No. 40, String Quartets
Puccini	‘Nessun dorma’ from the opera ‘Turandot’
Prokofiev	Peter and the Wolf
Rachmaninoff	Symphonies and Piano Concertos
Schubert	Quintet (The Trout), Symphonies
Tchaikovsky	Symphonies 1 - 6, Swan Lake, Violin Concerto
Vivaldi	The Four Seasons, Gloria in D Major



## BOOK CLUB

### *Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones* by James Clear

**Review by Dr. Samara Humbert-Hughes, ASA Board Member**

In his book, *Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits and Break Bad Ones*, James Clear outlines practical steps to help the reader reach desired goals in life. Though not directly Suzuki Method or Philosophy or music related literature, Clear's book still resonates as something that is applicable to us as musicians, teachers and for our students. As I read through the book (and took notes!), I was consistently mindful of how Clear's suggestions might be applicable to my own practice habits and how I might work with his concepts to help my own students build their practice habits.

Throughout the book, Clear takes us through many steps and concepts of habit formation with one of the foundational concepts being that by changing your behavior and subsequently building habits, we are also changing our identity of who are/who we will become. In addition, one of the chapters I especially appreciated was called "Motivation is Overrated; Environment Often Matters More" which, as you can see by the title, we know is a key component to our Suzuki Philosophy. Another chapter I found particularly interesting was "The Truth About Talent (When Genes Matter and When They Don't)." In this Chapter, Clear describes that we should focus our habit building behaviors in such a way where genetics are in our favor. For example, someone who is 6 foot 2 inches might be more successful at being a basketball player whereas someone who is 4 foot 2 inches might be more suited to be a horse jockey.

Clear's book is easy to read, understand, and provides practical advice for anyone who wishes to begin building a new habit. In his Appendix, Clear provides additional resources regarding habit formation as it relates to the topic of "business" and "parenting." Though not directly a book about music/practicing, Clear's tips and advice is highly applicable to our music studios. I highly recommend this read!

*Dr. Samara Humber-Hughes has been teaching strings since 1997 and has taught in several locations including Oregon, Louisiana, England (UK), South Carolina, and Arizona. She has been teaching the Suzuki Method since 2002 and has degrees from Arizona State University (BachMusEd), University of Oregon (MM, DMA), and the University of Phoenix (MBA). Dr. Humbert-Hughes currently teaches public school orchestra for Chandler Unified School District and runs a private violin/viola studio. Dr. Humbert-Hughes enjoys playing in the Symphony of the Southwest and hanging out with her husband and her dog, Pringles.*



## Fall Workshop 2023

Registration available at [azsuzuki.org](http://azsuzuki.org). Early bird deadline is Sept 9; regular deadline is Sept 16.

**What:** ASA Fall Workshop

**Who:** Suzuki violin, viola, cello, and guitar of all ages and levels

**When:** Saturday, Sept 23, 2023 from 9:00am-3:00pm

**Where:** Orangewood Church, 7321 N 10th St, Phoenix, AZ 85020

**Why:** Play music together and have fun!!!

### Schedule:

- 8:30 am Arrive and Check-in (you will receive your schedule for the day)
- 9:00 am - 12:00 pm Classes
- 12:00 pm Bring your own lunch and eat in the courtyard
- 12:35-12:50 pm Lunch-time fiddle concert featuring Patrick Clark in the courtyard
- 1:00 pm Classes
- 2:00-3:00 Workshop Celebration Concert

**Classes:** Students will have a Master Class (semi private lesson), Group Class (Suzuki Repertoire, see review lists), and Orchestra (Bk 2 and up) or Enrichment (Bk 1) Class.

**Meet our workshop guest teachers! Gail Acosta (Violin/Viola), Mary Beth Tyndall (Cello), Louise Scott (Friday Master Class), Amy Bennett (Orchestra), and Patrick Clark (Fiddle).**

Please visit the ASA website for full Bios.



## INDIVIDUAL SESSION WITH DR. LOUISE SCOTT FRIDAY September 22 from 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm

TEACHERS: Would you like another opinion about how to fix your student's position, solve technical issues, work on a problem spot or any other question related to teaching?

STUDENTS: This session is a master class with Dr. Louise Scott. Each student will play for Dr. Scott and stay to observe other students.

Sign up for an individual session with Dr. Louise Scott, NAU Professor of Violin, Emerita

- Session will last no more than 20 minutes.
- Any age or level is welcome to sign up.
- Limited to the first 8 students/teachers who sign up.
- Teacher of the student is required to attend.
- Students are encouraged to stay for an hour to observe other students.

FEE: \$20 per student. Teachers are invited to observe for free.

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: September 16. [azsuzuki.org](http://azsuzuki.org)





# FALL WORKSHOP

**September  
23, 2023  
(SAT)**

**9am-3pm**

**Orangewood  
Church  
7321 N 10th St.  
Phoenix**

*Suzuki Violin, Viola, Cello and Guitar students are invited to attend the 2023 ASA Fall Workshop. Classes include master class, group class, fiddling and orchestra or enrichment. The day will end with a workshop concert. Come join us for a fun day filled with music and friends!*

*Visit the ASA Website for more info.*

*[azsuzuki.org](http://azsuzuki.org)*

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## Institute Success!

by Dr. Samara Humbert-Hughes, ASA Board Member, SAA Teacher

*Please read the following interview about my students, Emma and Eden Grimes, their brother Nathan (who studies classical guitar with Chris Dorsey), and their recent experience at FSI (Fairbanks Suzuki Institute). For those who have never attended a Suzuki Summer Institute, it is usually a five day, intense learning week with your instrument. There are classes for students and parents and many other activities to take part in at the Institute or in the area where the institute is held. Emma and Eden have been students of mine for a little over a year now. Emma plays violin and Eden has just recently switched from violin to viola. Suzuki Institutes are posted early Spring each year on the Suzuki Association of the Americas webpage ([www.suzukiassociation.org](http://www.suzukiassociation.org))*

### **1. Please introduce yourself and your children and tell us how long you have been involved with the Suzuki Method:**

My name is Beth Grimes, my daughters are Emma and Eden, and my son Nathan is 12. I have been involved with the Suzuki method since I was a girl, and my daughters began at ages 4 and 3 respectively. They are now 13 and 8. Nathan began guitar at age 7.

### **2. What is the name of the institute you attended and where is it? How did you get there?**

We have attended FSI- Fairbanks Suzuki Institute for 5 years. My children were born in Alaska, but we currently snowbird between Alaska and Arizona. This summer we drove to Alaska with a travel trailer and camped.

### **3. What was your daily schedule like at the institute? Where did you stay while you were there?**

Emma: My first class of the day was at 9:30am. I had five hour-long classes each day plus additional recital and concert attendance and participation. Master class, Repertoire, Fiddle, Technique, and Dalcroze were in my schedule.

Eden: I had Master class at 8:30 am each morning, then I played with friends during lunchtime. After lunch I had two more classes.

Nathan: I had 4 classes each day: Dalcroze, Repertoire, Master class, and World Rhythms.



#### **4. What did your children learn from the institute? What did they enjoy the most at the institute?**

Emma: I learned a lot about polishing my piece. Articulation is key. Each note is important.

Eden: My fingering for Minuet 1 got way easier with the coaching Ms Judy showed me.

Nathan: Mr Steve worked with me a lot on my right hand technique. I most enjoyed my repertoire class where we all worked together as a group on pieces. Performing with such a big group of guitarists is inspiring.

#### **5. What sort of growth did you see from your children as a result of attending the institute?**

Emma: Fiddle class was a highlight for me. It's not every day a fiddle teacher from Chicago dances across the stage in chicken PJ's.

Eden: My favorite part of Institute was Ms Judy. She is really good with little kids, and makes sure we laugh at every lesson.

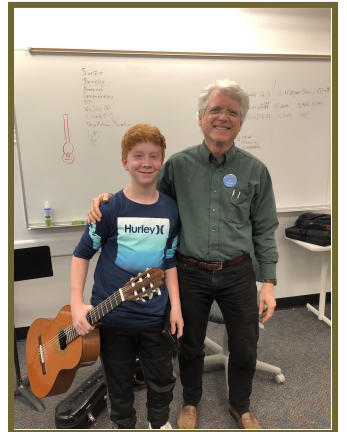
Nathan: I love social settings and thrive with connection. Institute is an opportunity for me to connect with amazing teachers and budding guitarists.

#### **6. Any other comments you'd like to add about attending Suzuki Institutes?**

The children come away from Institute with renewed enthusiasm to play and perform their instruments. Emma was chosen for the Honor recital, and was greatly encouraged by the feedback she received. Eden loves class time with friends; made even more transformative by Ms Ann's bow butterfly finger puppet.

Our experiences at FSI have encompassed all the emotions of a full and taxing week of classes, pressures, surprises, camaraderie, and achievement. Each year we have grown personally and musically. Who wants to join us next year?

*Enjoy the Institute photos from Beth Grimes!*



## Suzuki Homestay in Modern Times

by Christi Elie, ASA Board Member, SAA Teacher

Suzuki culture includes many vibrant traditions that enrich the lives of Suzuki students. The homestay is one such tradition that opens doors for students to travel from home to special training opportunities and performance experiences while enriching not only traveling Suzuki family, but also the Suzuki host family. The following is an interview with the Gerard Family, who opened their home on short notice to host a Suzuki Flute student (and her adult sister), enabling her to participate in an important ensemble that introduced Suzuki Flute to the National Flute Convention.

### Parents Q&A

*Q. As Suzuki parents, how many children do you have, who all in the family studies Suzuki, and which instruments do they play?*

A. We have three children: a nine year old girl, and two boys ages seven and four. Our children take Piano, Violin, and Voice Suzuki lessons.

*Q. Do you consider yourselves to be a normal suburban family?*

A. We live in Gilbert, Arizona, and yes we consider ourselves a regular family living in a suburban area. Dad - Andrew works mainly from home for a company in town, Godaddy, he is a software engineer. Mom - Sonja works part time as a Nurse Practitioner and mainly takes care of the house, meals, kids school routine, and Suzuki after school activities.

*Q. With less than a week's notice, what went through your minds when you first heard that there was a Suzuki Flute student traveling with her adult sister from Kansas to Arizona for the National Flute Association Convention who needed a homestay in order to participate?*

A. My first thought was what a great opportunity for a 17 years old girl to participate in a National Convention. I thought this might be very important to this student otherwise she would not commit to traveling so far from home. I asked Andrew if there is an opportunity to help this young girl, then shouldn't we try to get involved? When the date was getting closer I mentioned to Andrew, I think it is time we commit otherwise she won't be able to do this trip. Andrew looked around and said "Well the house looks clean to me, let's host two students from Kansas."

*Q. Were you nervous at all to welcome complete strangers into your home? Did it help that they were a Suzuki family?*

A. Initially we were all nervous to meet new people but we warmed up to them very quickly. As an exchange student myself I have been in that situation many times where I have been hosted by different families and knew how the girls would be feeling too. It

definitely helped that we were Suzuki families, it was a nice ice breaker to get to know them and also introduce our children and their Suzuki experiences.

*Q. How many days did you host them for? Was it a rewarding experience for your family?*

A. We got to host them for three days and we all enjoyed getting to know both girls. The kids loved having visitors and showing them around the house and their toys. They even asked them if they could skip the conference and stay home and play games with them.

*Q. What were the extra demands on your family's schedule?*

A. We mainly were able to do breakfasts together all the days and some other meals throughout. The girls told us they loved visiting In and Out burger so we enjoyed taking them there.

I would drop them in the morning at the convention center and later they decided to try the light rail coming back so then I picked them up at the light rail station in the evening.

*Q. In the end, did your family feel like you made new friends?*

A. Yes we enjoyed having them and getting to know both girls. We definitely made new friends and will look forward to meeting them if we were to visit around Kansas City.

*Q. After this experience, do you think you would enjoy hosting another Suzuki homestay in the future?*

A. Yes, our family would enjoy hosting in the future, Suzuki friends or students.

### Kids Q&A

Josephine

*Q. What did you like best about having Anahi and Alexa in your home?*

A. I was excited to meet new people at my house. I got to show them my room and my big lego land with all my lego sets.

*Q. Did you enjoy having more girls in the house?*

A. Yes, that was very nice.

Anderson

*Q. Did you play any games with Anahi and Alexa?*

A. Yes, I played chess and we did a puzzle together.

I also got to show them my room and some of my snake toys.

Q. *Would you like them to come back to visit sometime?*

A. Yes, we had fun playing.

Zachary

Q. *Did you get to show any of your toys to Anahi or Alexa?*

A. Yes I got to show them my room and all my stuffed animals. I got to play chess with Alexa and do a puzzle with her too.

Q. *What would you like to do if they came back to visit?*

A. I would like to do another puzzle with Alexa.

## News from Around the State

Arizona Suzuki Voice Teacher Kari Weldon and Suzuki Voice students had the opportunity to participate in the Suzuki Voice Workshop in Poland June, 2023. *Enjoy the photos!*







## ARIZONA SUZUKI ASSOCIATION

[azsuzuki.org](http://azsuzuki.org)

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- \* Teacher and Family Memberships available
- \* Teachers listed in the Teacher Directory
- \* Receive ASA Newsletters and event announcements
- \* Renewing and joining are easy! Visit the ASA website and click "Join ASA"

[azsuzuki.org](http://azsuzuki.org)

*Music exists for the purpose  
of growing an admirable heart.*

- Shinichi Suzuki