



# ARIZONA SUZUKI ASSOCIATION

## NEWSLETTER

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

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### The Group Experience: An Important Component of Developing a Musician

by Dr. Louise Scott, NAU Professor of Violin, Emerita, ASA Board Member, SAA Registered Teacher Trainer

*Learning with Other Children is one of the special features of the Suzuki approach. In addition to private lessons, children participate in regular group lessons and performances at which they learn from and are motivated by each other. Here are some thoughts on the importance of the Group Experience from Dr. Louise Scott.*

- String players are soloists, chamber musicians and orchestral performers. The group experience provides an opportunity to refine all categories of performing.

- The group experience develops the ability to play one's part while LISTENING and RESPONDING to others. It is one of the most important abilities and must be trained early and continuously.
- The group experience provides an opportunity to become aware of the elements of a musically pleasing performance and provides a medium to practice and refine the execution of these elements.

The elements of a pleasing performance that are developed and reinforced in group are:

- Proper posture and position
  - Group sound based individual contribution
  - Playing the correct notes with excellent pitch
  - Playing with correct rhythm and tempo
  - Ability to respond to changing tempi, dynamics and articulations
  - Musical appreciation
  - Sensitivity to playing with others
- Review  
Fluency is developed by performing what has become easy and natural. Repetition of pieces played by memory leads to fluency, confidence and refinement.
  - Preview  
Children learn easily from each other and are motivated to learn pieces and progress by hearing and seeing other children play. Learning takes place through modeling and observation.
  - Performing  
Performances of group provide motivation, goals for success and are always a learning experience.

## ASA Fall Workshop 2023 Recap

**By Dr. Laura Tagawa, ASA President and Violin Teacher**

ASA held its annual Fall Workshop in Phoenix this past October. Over 65 students and their families attended the workshop. Guest teachers Gail Acosta (Violin, Los Angeles), Mary Beth Tyndall (Cello, Tucson), Dr. Louise Scott (Violin, Flagstaff), and Joshua Pierce (Guitar, Phoenix) inspired us all! Violin, viola, cello and guitar students from around the state gathered for classes with Arizona Suzuki teachers and guest teachers for a day filled with playing music together! Saturday workshop classes included master class, repertoire class, fiddle with Taylor Morris, orchestra with Amy Bennet and drumming with Folade. The day ended with a celebration concert with students and teachers performing songs together. On Friday, Dr. Louise Scott offered a violin/viola masterclass open for students to attend with their teacher. Dr. Scott offered both students and teachers great playing tips and pedagogy insights. Watch our website and newsletter for more info about this year's workshop. We look forward to seeing students and teachers there!

*Enjoy the ASA Fall Workshop 2023 photos!*



Left, Drumming Enrichment with Folade. Right, Fiddling with Taylor Morris.



Left, Orchestra with Amy Bennet. Right, Violin group with Gail Acosta.



Left, Guitar group with Chris Dorsey. Right, Cello group.



Left, Guitar Master Class with Joshua Pierce. Right, Cello group with Mary Beth Tyndall.

## The Piano Guys Concert Experience

By Nathan Davies-Venn, Suzuki Violin Student

On Friday, September 22, I and 7 other violinists accompanied the Piano Guys during their Phoenix Concert at the Arizona Financial Theater. This was a unique experience different from all the others I previously participated in. Prior to this, I was not familiar with the Piano Guys' music; all I knew was that they had performed in town about six years ago with another set of older students from my violin studio.

A week prior to the performance we received a message from our violin teacher that the Piano Guys were going to be in town and that we would be accompanying them on one of the songs they would be playing called "Beethoven's 5 Secrets". At first, when I received the sheet music I felt relieved that my skill level was equal to the task since we only had two days to learn and memorize the music. We had two days to learn the song and memorize it and then five days to rehearse the song together and play it in unison. When the day arrived to perform the song, I was calm and confident that our teachers had prepared us well and that we'd do fine.

When we arrived at the venue, we had to go through a security check before entering the main building. After that, we were directed to our dressing room to get ready for the sound check with the Piano Guys. During the sound check, we were introduced to a big stuffed giraffe named Geoffrey. Geoffrey was our stage manager, who had a face that said, "That was good but you can dig down deeper and give a little more". He's always the first off the truck at every Piano Guys concert. The Piano Guys helped us with things like where we needed to stand on the stage and rearranging our relative position for a better setup. The Cello player named Steve came over and introduced himself to us and he told us about a "sickness" called orchestra face and made my brother who was also playing with us the orchestra police. What is "orchestra face," you might be thinking? Well, he got us to realize that sometimes when we play as musicians, we can get so consumed by what we do that we completely forget about the message we convey to the audience with our facial expressions. My brother was assigned the job of orchestra police to ensure that we all smiled during the performance. During the actual concert, my Suzuki training helped me gratefully as the numerous times I had performed in recitals made me quite comfortable even in front of a crowd that large. Our performance of "Beethoven's 5 Secrets" went well, we even received a standing ovation at its conclusion. During the intermission, we got to meet the Piano Guys, and we all got signed autographs.

The Piano Guys experience has probably been one of the best experiences I have ever had. It was a great opportunity to perform with such a well-known group. Their music was more creative than other renditions of popular songs. I especially enjoyed their rendition of "Fur

Elise Jam” and Steve on his Cello, imitating sounds of various animals, vehicles, and other situations. The creative use of their instruments and their renditions of different songs inspired me to try new things on my violin when I got home. It inspired me to be more creative and to improvise more. This experience has definitely inspired me to work on becoming a better violinist and a more creative and expressive musician overall.



Suzuki Violin students perform with the Piano Guys in Phoenix last September.

## News from Around the State



### Dorsey Guitar Studio Performs at Summit School's Lotería Night

The guitar students of Dr. Chris Dorsey performed favorites from the Suzuki guitar repertoire along with classics like “La bamba” and “La cumparsita” for Summit School’s Lotería Night in celebration of Spanish and Latin American culture.

Summit School, a preschool through eighth private school in Phoenix, has hosted Dorsey’s guitar studio since

2001. This school year, he began a new classical guitar program for all students in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade at Summit School with an approach based on the Suzuki in the Schools philosophy.

### Schreiber Studios Performs Christmas Community Outreach

Schreiber Studios played Christmas Community Outreach Performances in Flagstaff. The outdoor photos are performances of different groups playing at Heritage Square in downtown Flagstaff in front of The Giving Machine and the indoor photo is a group performing at Highgate Senior Living Center in Flagstaff.



Schreiber Studios perform at Highgate Senior Living Center, left, and Heritage Square, right, in Flagstaff.



Schreiber Studios perform at Heritage Square in downtown Flagstaff.



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- \* Renewing and joining are easy! Visit the ASA website and click "Join ASA"

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*Don't hurry, don't rest  
– without stopping, without haste –  
carefully taking one step forward at a time  
will surely get you there.*

*- Shinichi Suzuki*