

AMBASSADOR

Aber Suzuki Center

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
College of Fine Arts and Communication
inspire, create, achieve

May, 2010

Upcoming Events

Saturday, May 8, 2010

Solo & Ensemble Concert, 2:00 and 3:30 pm
NFAC Michelsen Hall

Saturday, May 8, 2010

Central State Chamber Orchestra Concert
7:30 pm, NFAC Michelsen Hall

Sunday, May 9, 2010

Piano Festival Concert
NFAC Michelsen Hall

Tuesday, May 11, 2010

Parent Education Session
"You Decide the Topic"
7:30 pm. NFAC 144

From the Director's Desk

By Pat D'Ercole, Interim Director

As I sit to write this Director Column, the Festival Concert is a day away and it's hard to believe we are coming to the end of another academic year. As a child I used to get exasperated with hearing my parents exclaim yet again, "My, where did the time go!" Now I find the same thought crosses my mind more times than I'd like to admit. Time, it seems, speeds up as the glow of one's birthday candles burns brighter.

Looking back over the year, the families and faculty of the Aber Suzuki Center have been busy. We've had given 20 solo recitals, 14 outreach concerts, 8 senior recitals, 8

marathons, 2 festival concerts, 2 Central State Chamber Orchestra concerts, a chamber music weekend and a faculty recital. No wonder time goes by fast!

Speaking of concerts, one of the highlights of my year is the spring Central State Chamber Orchestra concert conducted by Mr. Becker. It is always an inspiration to hear the lush tone and precision that he coaxes from these high school players. The spring concert is on Saturday, May 8 at 7:30 in Michelsen Hall and is not to be missed. This year, the CSCO is collaborating with others on two of its selections. The high school dancers from the Point Dance Ensemble founded by Pam Luedke will dance to a piece called *Choreography* by Norman Dello Joio. The dance was choreographed by Ms. Luedke who is also the founder of the ensemble. ASC soprano, Kelly Tillotson will also assist in the program singing *Evening Prayer* from the opera *Hansel and Gretel* by Humperdink.

I would like to strongly encourage all ASC families to attend. This can be an especially effective opportunity for motivating your child. The CSCO concert and the Piano Festival Concerts (Sunday, May 9 at 2:00 and 3:30, Michelsen Hall) can provide the vision for you and your child of the musical heights that can be reached with perseverance and dedication to practice. Concerts such as these reveal the pleasure that one can have as a player and give to the members of the audience. Here's a chance to see the long view, to get a glimpse of how music can enrich one's lifetime.*

But "My, where did the time go!" is probably the sentiment of many a teacher and parent as we not only have seen another year go by, but realize that fourteen of our ASC seniors will join the ranks of ASC alumni. By the time you read this they will have played their last Festival Concert. Watching them perform brings back memories of those early recitals when they were 4 or 5 years old and playing *Twinkle*. Where did those 12 years go? Please know that once an ASC family, always an ASC family. Nothing

warms a teacher's heart more than hearing about the good things you are doing, both musical and non-musical. We'd like you to stay in touch. We'd also like to brag about you in our Alumni New column and other publications. Know that you're always welcome to come back and join us in marathons too!

While we will miss these students musicianship and personalities enriching our studios, the bright side is that ASC will be able to accept many new students. Because of our highly experienced faculty and a proven method of instruction, the Aber Suzuki Center has a very low dropout rate. Thus, the only way we get openings is when students graduate or families move out of the area. For every hour of instruction that becomes available by a graduating senior, two or three beginners can be accepted, provided that the teacher doesn't have a large number of students who need longer lessons. The long and short of this paragraph though is to spread the word that we do ANTICIPATE OPENINGS IN THE FALL.

Have a great summer, keep practicing and don't forget to register for the 40th American Suzuki Institute!

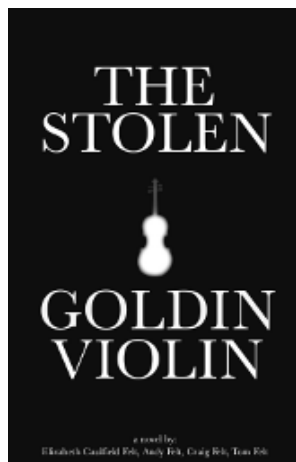
*Daniel Coyle, in his book the *Talent Code*, cites research that shows that students, who, at the beginning of their musical career, think they will continue to study through high school or a lifetime (the long-term), outperformed the short-term commitment group by 400%. "The long-term commitment group, with a mere twenty minutes of weekly practice, progressed faster than the short-termers who practiced for an hour and a half." (Coyle, p. 104.)



The Stolen Goldin Violin is Now Available!!

Get the mystery that everyone will be talking about. American Suzuki Institute started out quietly for teenage violinists Bayly, Hunter, May and Sebastian, but it soon turns into a wild ride.

Bayly Hall, age 13, is getting her first full-sized violin. Her parents have consented to buy a Goldin, one of the most expensive and impressive violins in the world. Hunter Petersen, age 13, is back for his sixth year at the American Suzuki Institute. May Wong, age 12, has never been to a music camp before and is nervous that she might not be good enough. Sebastian Phelps, age 12, of Stevens Point, is from a large, musical family.



When Bayly's Goldin violin disappears, Hunter, May and Sebastian vow to help Bayly find the thief. However, institute is only a week long. Will they have time to compile the clues and solve the mystery? Will Bayly get her violin back? Join Bayly, Sebastian, Hunter and May in their week at the American Suzuki Institute as they race the clock and learn about life, music and being detectives.

This is a great book for Suzuki students getting ready to attend American Suzuki Institute for the first time, as well as for those children who have been many times. Readers will know what to expect from their institute experience - what the schedule is like, what classes are like, and what fun they will have.

The Stolen Goldin Violin was written by ASI attendees Elizabeth, Andy, Craig and Tom Felt. The idea started on a family camping trip with everyone contributing ideas. Elizabeth wrote most of the story during the National Novel Writing Month, with Craig as musical expert and Tom as fellow writer.



Books are available in the ASC office for \$6.50 (tax included). They will also be sold before and after the Saturday, May 8 recitals, before and after the CSCO Concert that evening, and before and after the Piano Festival Concert on May 9.



Letting Them Go ... Ready or Not: A Suzuki Mom's Retrospective

By Carrie Duffield

They are ready. Maybe I am not. If you know me, chances are you also know my two very tall, big smiled, blue-eyed Suzuki kids, Jane and Will. For seventeen years, our lives have been shaped by the Suzuki method and the fine faculty at the Aber Suzuki Center. This is a monumental spring for me as a parent: my daughter just performed her senior recital at Oberlin College; my high school son is giving his senior recital next week. In the midst of all this, I've been asked to write a reflection snapshot for the Ambassador.

When I took Jane to her first violin lesson at the Suzuki House, I was not worried about where I might be when she was in college. We simply practiced, and moved through the Suzuki repertoire, my children graduating from books, me passing through new phases of parental competence.

I am not a musician and I started this motherhood thing very late in life. Growing up, my father used to drive us an hour each way to go to the Detroit symphony once a month because he enjoyed the music. I started clarinet in fourth grade but when the band teacher smashed an ornery boy's forehead into the blackboard three times, my mother took me out of band.

Over the years, I've become a believer in Dr. Suzuki's philosophy. I've put considerable effort into learning to become the third side of the Suzuki triangle. How do you practice with your children? Each practice session at home was an attempt to recreate the learning space of the lesson. Ideally, the child offers effort, curiosity, creativity, a desire to please, and beautiful tone. Ideally, the parent offers praise, pride, guidance and an evolving ability to mentor a successful human being. However, in our house, practice often got interrupted to go pick flowers to decorate my daughter's living room concert stage. Or to run outside to play for the ducks on the pond or for the big rock on the lawn. In the dead of winter, six-year-old Will got to set his violin down to accomplish triple flips on the big bed before mastering another few measures. We had card games, we had flashlight performances. Sometimes practice was satisfying; sometimes it was hard, sometimes it took all of my patience.

But each week, we could go to the lesson and get re-inspired to practice. My kids' Suzuki teachers have been wonderful role models: kind, persistent, giving, and incredibly hard working. From them, I have learned the importance of finding creative ways to say basically the same thing. How many ways have I heard teachers ask a student to play with a straight bow? Dozens. We are lucky enough to have teachers who understand that each child is different, who will try everything, will wait for years if necessary, working toward the magic moment when the skill is comprehended. I think that communication with other people can be incredibly difficult; my Suzuki experience has taught me that communication requires patience, humor, creative energy, non-repetitive repetition, and an understanding of the person I want to understand me.

It's easy to feel that the role of a Suzuki parent is nothing more than that of logistics coordinator. And that's certainly part of it. Many of my fondest Suzuki memories are set

in the car, en route from school to lessons. Back when I still controlled the music, we listened to the Suzuki repertoire daily. We spent hours in our car, our mini universe, with my two sopranos singing in the back seat. I've attended talks at Institute where the teachers emphasize that the child should be totally responsible for bringing their music and instrument to each lesson. Probably I should have done this. But, hey, we were all in this together. If someone remembered the rock stop, someone remembered the signed permission slip, someone remembered the Leaf Collection, someone got the clean gym clothes out of the dryer to bring on Mondays, someone remembered to bake Pie for Pi day in algebra and someone else found a suitable size box to get the pie to school, we were doing well.

Doing well indeed. Our Suzuki program is set up to allow students to climb from success to success, both within the Aber Center and in the greater community. As my children grew more competent and confident, our composite schedule became tighter—Dolce Strings, two orchestras, chamber music, band, voice lessons, Honors orchestra, oboe lessons, electric guitar, State Geography bees... I found myself with children that wanted to do everything, children that were qualified to do everything.

The kid's Dad moved through many stages of their Suzuki lessons. From amused and proud to jealous he never had those kinds of lessons as a child. At this point, I think he's arrived at some perception that his children have a musical gift and why would they ever want to do anything else. Chuck listened. He was strongly disapproving when Will and I fought about up bows and down bows. I'd get a stern head shake to remind me to be more creative.

My daughter has always been my son's best practice partner. I can hear her now as she'd come to our rescue, "You two are acting silly" and work out the impasse with her brother. When he was real little, she'd play a favorite game of find the hidden toy. She'd play forte, in tune, and with correct rhythm when he was close to the hiding place. She could get him to do correct repetitions on his little violin if he hid the toy for her to find. They'd duet. As they got older, she'd arrive for the rescue to play the rough spot different ways and ask, "Do you like it better this way or this way?"

I miss those beginning Suzuki lesson stages when my small daughter would climb the Suzuki house stairs to show Mr. Becker how well she learned the new song. And, I will miss this later stage as my six foot five son approaches Mr. Becker's lesson with absolute faith that his teacher can fix a technique problem in his advanced repertoire.

The Suzuki experience must be different for every family. It has been a part of our family for so long that I don't actually know how we would have turned out without it. It's nice, though, to have a daughter who comes home from college to practice in her old spot in the living room. "Does it sound better like this or like this?" she asks her brother, genuinely wanting his advice and input. I've gained music, and the Suzuki community, and the experience of learning along with my children.



We're Listening! Thanks for your Input

A Strategic Planning Report

This past month Chris Sadler gave his report of the focus group meetings to the faculty and staff. He and Kim were both very impressed with the maturity and dedication of our students and the appreciation and commitment of the parents. The good news is that we are doing a lot of things right.

Among the aspects of ASC that you like are: an outstanding faculty, Suzuki friends/community, it's fun, the events offered, the Institute, the Ambassador, studio whiteboards.

Why are you in Suzuki? Answers included: got interested from siblings, a parent enrolled them, teaches how to manage time, teaches discipline, like the student-parent-teacher triangle, Suzuki make you smarter, Suzuki makes you nicer, gain self esteem, gives opportunities.

What might change? Suggestions included: more summer activities, marathons, music activities combined with social activities, mentoring programs-- student to student and parent to parent, parent meeting place during marathons, a Suzuki T-shirt, master classes, parent bulletin board, Suzuki garage sale,

Where do we go from here? Many of the focus group suggestions fit in with the top three priorities the faculty and staff decided at the beginning of the planning process, i.e. community, curriculum delivery and recruiting. At our last faculty meeting three short-term community goals and one medium-term goal were identified and action steps were decided for the next six months. By June, you will see part of the ASC bulletin board that will be devoted to notices by parents and for parents. In addition, space will be reserved each month outside of Michelsen Hall during marathons for parents to socialize and share their ideas about Suzuki parenting. By September, the Aber Suzuki

Center will have a T-shirt available for purchase. Watch for the option to order on your fall enrollment form.

We also decided to research group lesson/marathon formats used by other Suzuki programs around the country. Each faculty member has identified two programs that they will interview over the summer regarding their group lesson format. That information will be collated in August. During the fall semester we will experiment with some of the ideas we have discovered and create some of our own. Once options are formulated in the spring of 2011, we will come back to you to ask for your input. The hope is to begin implementation for the 2011-12 school year. Other goals will be prioritized as the present ones are accomplished.

Many thanks to all of you who participated in the focus groups, and to those who have stopped by my office to share their ideas. We appreciate the time and effort that all ASC families have invested, and continue to invest, to make the Aber Suzuki Center the outstanding program that it is.



Aber Children's Scholarships Awarded

The American Suzuki Foundation Board selected five families to receive the Aber Children's Scholarship for 2009-2010. Decisions were based on careful consideration of essays submitted by parents and students, teacher evaluations, and teacher comments. This scholarship was created by Margery Aber to recognize students and their families who exemplify the Suzuki philosophy. Award recipients represented all instrumental programs offered within the Aber Suzuki Center from which applications were received.

The Foundation is pleased to make the awards to the following families and students:

- The Chan Family, Lucas Chan, Violin and Viola
- The Van Tiem Family, Antony, Natalie, Frederick and Tatiana, Violin, Viola and Cello
- The Kurzynski Family, Marco Kurzynski, Piano and Violin
- The Carlson Family, Trevor and Samantha Carlson, Piano
- The Harmon Family, Sarah Harmon, Violin

Congratulations! We also thank all the families who took the time and effort to apply for this scholarship. There were many wonderful applications, and the decisions were

difficult to make. We applaud the accomplishment and commitment of every family and student, and we encourage all Aber Suzuki Center families to apply next year!



Lydia Anderson and Zachary Markman Present a Joint Senior Piano Recital

Lydia Anderson and Zachary Markman will present a joint senior piano recital on Sunday, May 16 at 7:00 pm in Michelsen Hall, located in the Noel Fine Arts Center on the UWSP campus. Their program includes solo piano works by Bach, Bartok, Chopin, Gershwin, Mozart and Paderewski. Zak will also perform a blues improvisation and the two pianists will team up to play Johannes Brahms' Hungarian Rhapsody No. 5 in F-sharp minor for piano four-hands. A reception will follow the recital.

Zak and Lydia have studied piano for almost eleven years at the Aber Suzuki Center with Tom Yang. They have been active performers in the Aber Suzuki Center Solo Recitals, at the Music of the Masters Dinners and in the district and state auditions of the Wisconsin State Music Association and the Wisconsin Music Teachers Association.

Both Lydia and Zak have had successful careers in academics, sports and music at Amherst High School where they will graduate as valedictorians.

Both students will begin pre-medical studies this fall. Zachary will attend the University of Wisconsin – Madison and Lydia will attend Princeton University.

Everyone is welcome to come to this recital to enjoy and celebrate the musical accomplishments of these two fine students.



ASC Parent Education Sessions

All Aber Suzuki Center parents are encouraged to attend the Parent Education Sessions which are offered to you free of charge! Join the May session, "You Decide the Topic", **Tuesday, May 11, at 7:30 pm in NFAC Room 144.**

Need a Summer Practice Partner?

Clarissa Grabber, a UWSP music student, is offering to coach practice sessions for violin and piano students over the summer. She has four years of teaching experience and is interested in working with students of all ages. For more information, contact Clarissa Grabber at 608-512-3226 or cgrab968@uwsp.edu.



Student News

Emily McIntee, a junior at Pacelli High School, has been selected to perform with the 2010 Sound of America Honor Chorus. She is the daughter of Thomas and Diane McIntee. Emily is one of many high school and college students across the nation who has been chosen for their musical ability and character to perform with the 2010 Sound of America Honor Chorus. This organization will tour across Europe and perform at several prestigious concert halls in Europe including Frankfurt, Venice, La Chaux de Fonds, Paris, and Luxembourg. The tour serves as a once-in-a-lifetime experience for the students, as they not only get to experience the glory of Europe, but are able to do so and give a concert every other night on the tour.

She has been active in choir groups since fourth grade and attends weekly voice and piano instruction in Stevens Point. She is currently a soprano student of Mary Hofer through the Stevens Point Suzuki Program. Emily has been a three year member of the Wisconsin School and Music Association Honors Chorus; she has received first places at District and State Solo and Ensemble competitions. She is a piano student of Mr. James Luepteu.

The Sound of America is a nationally recognized tour that has received recognition from former Presidents George W. Bush, Ronald Reagan, George Bush, and current Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. The organization will celebrate its 34th anniversary this year. The 2010 23-day tour departs in July.

Congratulations to the following students for their great performances in the Community Theaters Production of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory: **Michael Treder** (Charlie), **Alexa Haynes** (Virooka), **Natalie Leek** (Violet).

Congratulations to **Joe Dickinson** for his fine job in playing the role of Ali Hakim, in the Marshfield Senior High's production of Oklahoma.

Congratulations to **Kelly Tillotson**! She will perform in the American High School Honors Performance Series at Carnegie Hall. She is a member of the Honors Choir, first soprano part. The program is June 23-27 in New York City with a performance at Carnegie Hall on June 26. Kelly was invited to audition after receiving an Exemplary Soloist Award for a vocal solo at WSMA State, 2009.

Kelly was also chosen to participate in the 2010 WSMA High School Honors Project as a member of the Honors Choir in Madison, WI.

We are so proud of all of these voice students and their special achievements.

Violinist **Jonathan Cochrane** performed three solos on April 24th at a Musicales, a fundraiser for the American Red Cross. \$10,000 was raised to assist local families affected by disasters within Waushara, Green Lake and Marquette counties.

Jonathan Cochrane was also accepted into the Wisconsin All-State High School Honors Orchestra.



Faculty News

Pat D'Ercole team taught the Suzuki Association's new course entitled *Suzuki Principles in Action* on Mar. 1 and 2 in Wheaton, IL. She was also a clinician at the Illinois Valley Community Workshop in Oglesby, IL on Mar. 27th. April 10-19 she traveled to Tainan City, Taiwan to do teacher training and work with Kindergarten violinists.



April 2010 Graduations

Frederick Van Tiem, Violin Book 4
Paul Beshire, Cello Book 2
Emily Karbowski, Cello Book 3
Sophie Emerson, Piano Twinkles
Natalie Van Tiem, Cello Book 6
Lucas Chan, Viola Book 7



Have a Safe and Happy Summer!

The next edition of the Ambassador will be published October, 2010

