

Aber Suzuki Center



University of Wisconsin
Stevens Point

AMBASSADOR

FEBRUARY 2014

Upcoming Events

Friday, February 14, 2014

Ciana Rose
Senior Voice & Piano Recital
Michelsen Hall, 7:30 pm

Saturday, February 15, 2014

Marathon, 9 am – noon

Saturday, February 15, 2014

ASC Faculty Recital
Michelsen Hall, 7:30 pm

Sunday, February 16, 2014

Solo Recitals
Michelsen Hall, 2:00 and 3:30 pm

Saturday, March 8, 2014

Marathon, 9 am – noon

Sunday, March 9, 2014

Solo Recitals
Michelsen Hall, 2:00 and 3:30 pm

Saturday, April 5, 2014

Marathon – Piano Only
9 am – noon

Saturday, April 5, 2014

Solo Recitals
NFAC 221, 2:00 and 3:30 pm

Saturday, April 26, 2014

Marathon – except Piano
9 am – noon



From the Director's Desk

By Pat D'Ercole

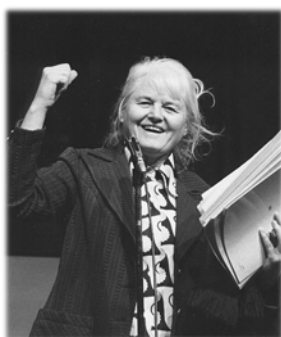
OK. I can't put it off any longer. My director's column must be written tonight. But there's so much news to tell you I'm having a hard time knowing where to begin! I keep having this little debate in my brain. "Should I tell them or shouldn't I tell them? "What order should I put the news items in?" "What's most important for them to know?" "If I tell them everything will they read it all?"

All right. I've got it! It doesn't have to be "either/or". It can be "both/and". Instead of dividing my column into two i.e. top and bottom, I'll divide into two columns! That way you can read the one that might catch your attention first. This is it in a nutshell-- February is going to be a busy month and with activities we've never done before!

A faculty recital will begin the centennial celebration of the birth of ASC's founder, Margery V. Aber. February 15 is Miss Aber's actual birthday so to kick off the celebration the ASC faculty will present a recital for you on Saturday, February 15 at 7:30 pm in Michelsen Hall. This is your chance to come and be inspired by your teacher's artistry, to hear the essay of the winner of the Margery Aber Essay Contest (see contest rules below) and to have some of Miss Aber's favorite reception delicacies. Read more about it in the article below.

Another way to celebrate Miss Aber's contribution to the Suzuki world is to embark on 100 days of practice without missing. February 15 will be the starting date for all of us. Miss Aber made a special certificate for those who accomplished that feat and those students who achieve 100 days of practice will receive one of those certificates, complete with her famous stick-figure drawings.

Miss Aber was one of the very first Suzuki pioneers in the US and so she used monthly recital programs as a means to educate about the Suzuki philosophy. So beginning with the February program, we will reprint one of her reflections on the back of our recital programs. It will be a great way to get to know her.



We're so sure that you will benefit from the American Suzuki Institute that we're offering you **Cash for Camp!** Do the things you normally do as a Suzuki student (like practicing, listening, performing) and we will give you \$100 to attend ASI. That's right--\$100! (See p. 6 for more information.)

The American Suzuki Institute (ASI) was the first Suzuki summer camp of its kind outside of Japan. Because of Margery Aber's vision, the ASI is considered by many to be the "Suzuki mecca" of the world. Last year alone we had people from 36 different states and 6 foreign countries. It used to be that almost every ASC student attended, too. It's a great opportunity to be taught by teachers from all over the world and to meet families from all over the country. It has always made me a bit sad though, to hear participants and parents alike tell me how ASI is the best institute of any they've attended, how much they look forward to coming year after year because their child makes so much progress in one week, how the motivation from this one week of camp lasts them for 6 months, or how ASI is such a "magical" place -- an environment where everyone believes in the potential of each person and where everyone treats each other with respect. Why would that make me sad? Because only 34 of ASC's 270 students are getting that same advantage of being motivated, nurtured and inspired.



Finances may be part of the reason for not attending, but that's why we're offering the rebate. You'll only have to pay for tuition—not the registration fee and not travel costs or meals or housing like out-of-towners do. Maybe you think you can't take a week off of work. Well, we have an answer for that too—if your child is an independent practicer and 13 years old, he/she can stay in the teen dorm without parents just like they would do at any other camp. The teen dorm has full time camp counselors, teen dorm dances, a waterpark field trip and pizza party -- all fun while improving your music skills too. If your child is under 13, perhaps grandma or grandpa might enjoy spending one-on-one quality time and agree to attend with them. And some people think the institute is for advanced students or only those who are highly motivated. On the contrary, the American Suzuki Institute isn't just for those who are already motivated and advanced. Rather, it's the place



to become motivated and advanced from Twinklers all the way to beyond the books.

If any of this has intrigued you, 1) visit our new, better-than-ever website (www.uwsp.edu/suzuki/asi) which is now ready for viewing. 2) Read *Two Weeks a Year, a Lifetime Impact*, Emma Rommel's college application essay in this Ambassador to find out what ASI meant to her and still means to her. (Emma is from Milwaukee and spent 12 summers at ASI.) 3) If you're still not sure this experience is for you, talk to people who have attended. Now's the time to begin to make plans, save money and work to get your \$100 rebate!

Other topics in this month's Ambassador - an excellent article by Ann Marie Novak on the nurturing environment and review, more information about the Faculty recital, the Margery Aber Essay contest rules, a challenge to practice 100 days, the Cash for Camp rules, the Composer of the Month and student and faculty news including the winners of the Composer Contest. Enjoy!



The Nurturing Environment: A Recipe for Growth Inside and Out

By Ann Marie Novak

Why do we celebrate so when a child is born? For one thing, we celebrate the miracle of new life, and for another, we celebrate the delightful bundle of potential that we can hold in our arms. At that moment in time, the future is unknown and the present is full of excitement and anticipation of what is to come. We never know just what a child will learn, or to what *degree* a child's various abilities will be developed. What we *do* know is that *every child can learn*¹; children are wired to absorb things from their environment. Everything from smiling at mom, to mimicking sounds and words, to drawing with a crayon, to playing Twinkles...these are all possibilities if they exist in the child's environment. Exactly what a child will learn depends on what is available to him/her and, to a certain extent, what is encouraged. The degree to which a child's abilities will be developed depends on a number of factors: effort, interest, support, and physical and intellectual capacity, just to name a few. Each child is like the seed that Dr. Suzuki correlated to ability.² The child (like the seed) is predisposed to learn (develop), but what and how he/she actually develops

depends to a certain extent on the conditions under which the child is raised. If the seed is watered and fertilized and given plenty of light, it will develop into a strong plant or tree. Likewise, if the child is placed in a positive, nurturing environment and given plenty of love and encouragement, as well as the necessary tools for learning, he/she will develop into a strong being with a noble heart. Add music and excellent instruction into this mix and that same child also will develop into a fine musician who can both participate in and appreciate musical endeavors.

Another important parallel to the seedling's growth process is the fact that children do not always show outward signs of growth. During these times, we can easily be fooled into thinking that the child is not learning or growing at all. However, like the seedling growing roots underneath the surface (where the growth is not visible) the child's energy may be turned toward strengthening his/her "roots" in order to allow further outward growth in the near future. Sometimes, in the midst of great effort, we forget that not all growth shows on the outside. The larger and finer the plant or tree, the stronger and more complex the root system needs to be to support it properly. Likewise, the more advanced and stronger the player becomes, the larger and more complex the foundation must be in order to support those abilities properly. A weak root system or foundation can lead to a breakdown in the whole system...something we, as teachers try to prevent by teaching (both the child *and* the parent) carefully and thoroughly every step of the way. One way in which we can help to strengthen the "root" system is to be sure to provide enough review time in both lessons and practice. Another way we can make use of this "growing under but not upward" time is to have a great deal of FUN in your practicing! That's right, this is the perfect time to play lots of review pieces and enjoy playing a great range of dynamics or different articulations, etc. More than anything else (except perhaps listening), review helps to solidify and strengthen the child's musical and technical foundation. And review done in a positive and nurturing environment is one of the most important activities we can pursue with our students/children.

Do you know who was absolutely GREAT at having fun with review? Miss Aber! She used to challenge students to a race around the "Suzuki House" (at the corner of Main and Reserve St.) in the middle of a lesson! She also was known for having students stand on a small elevated "stage" in her studio when she was asking for a BIGGER sound...and then a bit taller structure

for an even BIGGER sound! Miss Aber might have been the Queen of fun in lessons, but she also was one amazing violin teacher, and a great friend. If you want to know even more about her, read the books in the waiting room OR have a chat with Miss Jenny or Miss Pat (they both took lessons from her!). Maybe you'll want to enter our essay contest about Miss Aber.

Anyway, if you still find yourself having a hard time keeping review fresh, take a look (or look as a special project with Mom or Dad) in the parent handbook under "Review" or under "Practicing". There you can find a number of games and activities that can put a little spark in review time. Parents, if you've tried all of those and you need something new, try coming to a parent meeting, speaking to your teacher, getting involved with the blog, or contact one of the parent mentors listed on the cover of this year's Directory.

¹ Shinichi Suzuki, *Nurtured by Love: The Classic Approach to Talent Education* (2nd ed.), (Athens, Ohio: Ability Development, 1983), p. 3.

² *Nurtured by Love*, p. 45



Two Weeks a Year, a Lifetime Impact

By Emma Rommel

If you're looking to find God or Tao or the meaning of life, all you have to do is attend the American Suzuki Institute (ASI) in Stevens Point, Wisconsin, a music camp for kids studying the Suzuki method. I've studied violin for thirteen years, attended this summer camp for twelve, and I've concluded that what goes on in central Wisconsin every summer for two weeks is pure magic. Music - anything from "Go Tell Aunt Rhody" to Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E Minor - fills every nook and cranny of the campus. Four-year-olds play their Suzuki kazoos under sprawling trees while teenagers play complicated chamber music and goof off in the halls between classes. Teachers from across the country gently but persistently correct bow holds and tune strings while parents diligently take notes in the background. Most of my peers know that I'm a dedicated violin player, but few know how important this camp has been in shaping me as a person.

For some, playing violin may seem like unnecessary work during an already-too-short summer. To me, it's paradise. I've made three months of progress in two weeks, I've learned pieces I'd never heard of but end

up loving, and I've met some of the most talented, kind, and cheerful people in the world. Some of my fondest memories were made at camp: eating Captain Crunch right out of the box in the dorm hallway with the other kids and their parents during my first years, receiving a standing ovation after performing Shostakovich's 8th Quartet (it was meant to be his suicide note- you're gonna want to look this one up), and dancing the skin off the bottoms of my feet at the teen dorm dances. However, the most special memory I've made at ASI happened just this past summer at the final concert and proved to me how profound an influence this camp has been in my life.

The violin festival concert happens on the last night of camp. All the students are herded into a vast auditorium and we work our way through the repertoire from the most advanced pieces down to the easiest. So, naturally, the final piece on the concert is the first one you learn as a Suzuki kid: "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star". Now, this being my final year as a camper at ASI (I fully intend to return as a counselor), I was pretty emotional already. But, as I looked out on the crowd of students in front of me, some of them only four years old and therefore just beginning their time at ASI, I was totally overcome with bittersweet nostalgia. A combination of memories from summers past and the sound of hundreds of violins playing together caused me to burst into tears. I realized how much of an impact this camp has made on me - I've learned the value of determination, teamwork, and true love for what you do. I've become more accepting because of all the new people and ideas I've been exposed to, and I know ASI has had the same effect on many of my fellow campers. The legendary cellist Pablo Casals once remarked, "Perhaps it is music that will save the world", and seeing what goes on at ASI makes me think that he was right. Differences don't matter at camp because everyone is connected by a passionate love for music; I'd be willing to bet that Mitt Romney and Barack Obama would be close friends if they had grown up attending ASI together (ok, maybe that's a bit of an overstatement). I don't think my parents knew what they were signing me up for when they shipped me off to ASI when I was five years old, but I'm sure glad they did. Not many people would guess that my experiences in a small city in central Wisconsin would have such an impact on the person I've become, but I can guarantee that I wouldn't be the same without my beloved ASI.



ASC Faculty Honor the Centennial of the Birth of Margery V. Aber with a Recital

To honor our founder, Margery Aber, on the 100th anniversary of her birth, the Aber Suzuki Center (ASC) will present a faculty recital at 7:30 pm on February 15, 2014. The recital will take place in Michelsen Hall in the Noel Fine Arts Center on the UWSP campus. Margery Aber believed that birthdays were for giving gifts, not just receiving them, so every five years, on her birthday, she shared her musical gift by giving a recital for the Stevens Point community. Since her death in 2001, ASC faculty members have kept Ms. Aber's tradition alive.

All are invited to join the ASC faculty on February 15 as they celebrate Ms. Aber's birthday with a concert and a reception featuring some of Ms. Aber's favorite desserts. Pre-concert music will be provided by the Dolce Strings violin ensemble. Some of the music featured on the recital includes Debussy's *En Bateau* arranged for harp and violin, a piece for guitar entitled *Jorge do Fusa*, Brahms' *Concerto in a minor* for Violin and Cello, Op. 102, a violin/piano arrangement of the *Nocturne in c# minor* by Chopin, and the *Bugler's Holiday* arranged for three violins and piano. In addition, selections by Schuman, Mahler and Fine will be sung with choreography by ASC voice students. During the recital the winner of the ASC Margery Aber essay contest will read his/her essay about Ms. Aber's life and contributions. ASC faculty who will be performing are: David Becker, Jennifer Burton, Pat D'Ercole, Rosalie Gilbert, Mary Hofer, Tom McComb, Tim Mutschlechner, Ann Marie Novak, and Oscar Soler.

The concert is free and open to the public, however free-will donations of any amount will be gratefully accepted to help the Aber Suzuki Center endow the director's chair.



Margery Aber Essay Contest Rules

1. This year, we will be honoring the 100th anniversary of Margery Aber's birthday, February 15, 2014. We will have several events during the year to commemorate the founder of the Aber Suzuki Center. The essay contest will help us kick off the event. Miss Aber LOVED children and was one of the American pioneers of the Suzuki movement.

Our students can honor her memory by reading about her and writing some thoughts about her. The articles inside the binders in the waiting room will help you with your research. You can also go online to find more information. She is famous around the world so it will be easy to find material.

2. ASC students of any age can write a short essay about Miss Aber.
3. There is no minimum or maximum length for the essays.
4. Works can be hand written or written on a computer.
5. Deadline: Friday, February 7, 2014 at 8:00 pm. Put them in the envelope outside Ms. Burton's studio, Room 146. Please include your name.
6. Articles will be considered property of the Aber Suzuki Center and may be published on our website or in the AMBASSADOR.
7. The judges will look for essays that show why Miss Aber inspires you or what did Miss Aber do for Suzuki students in the world. The essay that most effectively shows either or both of these will be the winner.
8. The winning article will be featured on the ASC faculty recital on Saturday, February 15. The winning author will also receive a copy of Miss Aber's book, *Hip, Hip Hooray!* and a \$50 Visa gift card.



We Dare You to Practice 100 Days in a Row!

That's right! Think you can do it? Each year at the American Suzuki Institute we honor students who have practiced 100 days, 200 days, 1 year and all the way to 12 without missing a day! We even heard that violinist Rachel Barton Pine didn't miss a day of practice until she was a teenager and then she just started over again.

In celebration of Miss Aber's centenary, the faculty thought it would be fun to challenge our students to practice for 100 days, one day for each of Ms. Aber's 100 years. In addition, students who complete 100 days will receive a certificate especially designed by Miss Aber for her students with her signature stick-figure drawings. You'll also be able to check it off on your *Cash for Camp* activity sheet toward your \$100 rebate to attend ASI. When you come to camp you'll be able to join the 40 or so students who walk across the stage at the Talent Show. Best of all, though, is

the progress you're sure to make due to consistent practice. For parents, the pay-off is that there is no longer any argument IF your child will practice, and when you can find the same time each day, there won't even be an argument about when it will take place!

As with any new habit, the hardest part is the first 3 weeks. Once you get past that, it just keeps getting easier. The only rule is that you play or sing or practice at least one piece every day. Lessons and marathons count as practice. If you forget, just start over again.

If you start on Miss Aber's birthday, February 15, and practice 100 days without missing you'll reach your goal on May 25. Good luck, everyone!



\$ Cash for Camp \$

As mentioned in the Director's Column, we're so sure that you will benefit from attending the American Suzuki Institute that we're offering you **Cash for Camp!** Do the things you normally do as a Suzuki student (like practicing, listening, performing) and we will give you \$100 to attend ASI. That's right-- \$100!

[Click here to print your copy of the Activity Sheet.](#)



Composer of the Month Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778-1837)

By Ann Marie Novak

Johann Hummel was born into a musical family on November 14, 1778. His talent became evident to his family early in life; by the age of 4, he was already playing the violin very well and was reading and writing music. He began teaching himself to play the piano. Upon observing this, his mother likened him to the very popular Wolfgang Mozart, and suggested to her husband, Johannes, what a wonderful piece of good fortune it would be if the young boy could somehow study with Mozart, who was in his thirties at the time. When Johann was 8 years old, his father was offered

the position of conductor and concertmaster of the Theater of Vienna; his father accepted the position, and soon the family was off to a new and exciting life in Vienna. Frau Hummel's dream of little Johann studying with the great Mozart was about to come true. In fact, Mozart was so impressed with Johann's piano playing and understanding of music that he decided to have Johann live with him and he would teach him free of charge. This arrangement lasted for 2 years, at which time Mozart decided that it was time for his prized pupil to embark on his first concert tour. Johannes took time away from his position at the Theater to make the tour with his son. They travelled all over Europe, and were well-received virtually everywhere they went. The tour was put on hold briefly when Johann contracted smallpox; fortunately, Johann recovered relatively quickly, and they were able to continue and complete the 4 year schedule.

When Hummel was 15, he thought it was time for him to make a life for himself. He decided to remain in Vienna, and he began to take piano students in order to pay the bills. He taught by day, studied scores and composed by night, and he took advantage of the rich musical life of Vienna whenever he could. He briefly took organ lessons with Haydn, who warned him to not spend too much time on organ technique, since it might interfere with his spectacular piano technique. He had an on and off friendship with the aging Beethoven, and he rubbed elbows with the wealthy and noble members of Viennese society. He became concertmaster to Prince Esterhazy at Eisenstadt in 1804 (the aging Haydn was still the head of all musical endeavors at the court until his death in 1809...at which time Hummel took over) and remained there until 1811, when, for reasons unknown, he was dismissed. Fortunately, he had kept up his contacts in the musical world of Vienna, so when he returned there, he was able to gain audience for his works through the theaters. In 1814, his new wife, herself a singer, convinced him to return to concertizing throughout Europe. He did this very successfully for several years.

In 1819 he became Kapellmeister at Weimar, where he settled in happily. He conducted the opera there, but he did not write much theater music. Because he was a Catholic at a Protestant post, he was exempt from writing the sacred music that came with the position. The one part of the job that gave him much freedom was the 3-month leave that he was allowed each year. He used this time to concertize, compose and to write piano arrangements for foreign publishers. This served to establish him as one of the most

important figures in composer-publisher relations and a leader in the fight for the right to copyright protection. He continued to be well-received in his concertizing until around 1830, when the newer, flashier style of the romantics became the craze of the times.

He ceased to tour in 1834, and he continued to compose until the end of his life. He died a wealthy man, (which is rare for a composer of that time) but he also left *us* richer, mostly in his piano compositions, chamber music, and of course, his celebrated Trumpet Concerto.

Sources:

Kendall, C. W. (1985). "Stories of Composers for Young Musicians". Kendall.

Randel, D. M. 1996. "The Harvard Biographical Dictionary of Music". Cambridge and London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.



Student News

Craig Felt presented an outstanding senior violin recital on January 26 in NFAC 221.

Thomas Meronek was awarded the Eagle Scout Award on Saturday, January 25 at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Stevens Point.

Emily Horgan sang in the high school chorus for the Vivaldi Gloria at the concerts given by the Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra on December 7 and 8.

Jacquie Wille, Lucas Chan, and Antony Van Tiem performed with the Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra on December 7 and 8 at Theater@1800.

Hope and Lucia Stephani performed in a musical at St. Bronislaw Church. Their mom, Karen Stephani, directed the musical.

Alexandra Lee performed 30 minutes of violin music as people were entering the holiday concert in Madison Elementary School in Marshfield. She also played for senior citizens with her Girl Scout troop.

The following students performed at the Boys and Girls Club Annual Art Competition at Mark Motors on January 2: **Anna Hahn, William Hahn, Faith Kluck,**

Annina LeCapitaine, Sharon Roark, Aiden Simons, Hope Stephani, and Lucia Stephani.



The winners of the Composer Contest were: 1st place - **Elijah Vang** with 63 entries, (Mr. Soler), 2nd place - **Evelyn Burch** with 30 entries (Mr. Soler), 3rd place - **Drew Bandy** with 25 entries (Ms. Burton), and 4th place - **Madelyn Andreae** with 20 entries (Mr. Soler). Congratulations!! The winners were announced at the January Marathon pizza party in front of 157 students and parents.

The following students attended the Suzuki Association of Wisconsin's Winter Retreat in Madison, January 17-19: **Lucia Stephani, Hope Stephani, Carolyn Storch, Julia Storch, William Hahn, Anna Hahn, Barrett Severson, Gwenyth Severson, Revyn Abbott-Beversdorf, Max Malek, Alexandria Lee, Todd Niles and Troy Niles.** Not pictured: **Annabelle Niles, Malia Niles, Timothy Niles, Trenton Niles, and Dexter Schumacher.**



ASC cellist **Natalie Van Tiem** was the Junior Division winner of the Wisconsin Cello Society competition held on Sunday, January 26th. She performed the first movement of the Shostakovich Cello Sonata, and the Gigue from Suite No. 3 by J. S. Bach.

Natalie Reichl, Trevor Bond, and Sadie Bender also attended this year's UWSP Cello Day, which was co-directed by Lawrence Leviton and Tim Mutschlecner.

Dinesh Traynor will be playing violin with the Suzuki Youth Orchestra of the Americas during the Suzuki

Association of the Americas conference in Minneapolis during the Memorial Day weekend.

Roshini Traynor was selected to play on the viola master class at the Suzuki Association of the Americas conference in Minneapolis during the Memorial Day weekend.

The Aurora String Quartet made up of **Lucas Chan and Roshini Traynor** on violin, **Antony Van Tiem** on viola and **Natalie Van Tiem** on cello will perform on the chamber music master class at the Suzuki Association of the Americas conference in Minneapolis during the Memorial Day weekend.

Roshini Traynor participated in the Walgreens National Concerto Competition held in Chicago on December 28, 2013.



Faculty News

Jennifer Burton, Oscar Soler, Dave Becker and Pat D'Ercole volunteered their time to teach at the Suzuki Association of Wisconsin's Winter Retreat, January 17-19 in Madison. The retreat was attended by 110 students from the state including 18 students from the Aber Suzuki Center. Ms. Burton served on the planning team for the retreat.

Jennifer Burton received the Sensei Award for Leadership and Caring from the Suzuki Association of the Americas at the retreat on January 17-19. Ms. Burton also performed with the Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra on December 7 and 8.

Ann Marie Novak and Jenny Burton conducted a group of students at the Boys and Girls Club Art Competition at Mark Motors on January 2.

Pat D'Ercole taught the SAA's *Every Child Can!* course at the Suzuki Association of Wisconsin's Winter Retreat.

Ann Marie Novak attended the Wisconsin Music Teachers' Association Convention on November 6-8 2013 in Appleton. As a District co-chair in the organization, her role was to learn the usage of the new database program which will be put to use for the spring 2014 auditions. She is responsible for both using the

software and for teaching other members in the Stevens Point district to use it as well.

Tom Yang was a clinician for the Suzuki Winter Festival, January 17-19, held at Denison University in Ohio.



December 2013 Graduations

Berit Borgnes, Piano Book 1
Gina Chung, Violin Book 4
Maya Horgan, Violin Book 2
Emily Horgan, Violin Book 6
Lola Jagoditsh, Piano Book 1
Marco Kurzynski, Piano Book 5
Trent Miller, Piano Book 2
Niav O'Neill, Piano Book 2
Jon Peck, Violin Book 9
Jonah Price, Violin Twinkles
Dinesh Traynor, Cello Book 8
Havilah Vang, Violin Book 7



January 2014 Graduations

Anna Hagen, Piano Twinkles
Frank Hagen, Piano Twinkles
William Hahn, Cello Book 2
Christina Marchel, Violin Book 6
Jon Peck, Viola Book 5
Josie Reeve, Viola Book 3
Dexter Schumacher, Violin Twinkles
Gwenyth Severson, Violin Book 1

