

Aber Suzuki Center



University of Wisconsin
Stevens Point

AMBASSADOR

MAY 2015

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, May 17, 2015

Central Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra
Concert
Michelsen Hall, 4:00 pm

Saturday, May 23, 2015

Tween/Teen Bowling Night
Point Bowling
5:00 & 7:00 pm

Saturday, May 23, 2015

Cristian McDonald, Piano
Senior Recital
Michelsen Hall, 7:30 pm

Monday, June 1, 2015

American Suzuki Institute
Application due

DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

By Pat D'Ercole

As I sit to write this column of the year, the melodies of the Festival Concert are still playing in my mind. What a wonderful concert our musicians played! And what breadth and depth there is to our program! Eleven facets of the ASC program offerings were presented, from the preschoolers in the Suzuki Early Childhood Class to the newly formed adult chamber ensemble, from the bowed strings to the plucked strings and now even our first Suzuki flutist. All played with the beautiful tone and sensitivity that characterizes the performances of Suzuki students.

As I have done in years past, the May Director's Column is an "annual report" of the activities of the Aber Suzuki Center. So here is a quick review of the year:

Musicians played in 24 ASC monthly recitals, 4 festival concerts, the Music of the Masters' program, 4 senior recitals and a recital performed by the Class of 2015. Our ASC students played in approximately 20 community concerts/events from Art in the Park and Panacea, to nursing homes concerts, to Red Kettle Campaigns, to entertainment for association meetings, to all three area high school musicals, the Central WI Youth Symphonies, to the national anthem for the Women Pointers, to the professional musical organizations of the Monteverdi Chorale, the Wisconsin Master Chorale and the Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra. It is apparent that ASC musicians share their talents and give back to the community!

This year the Aber Suzuki Center was cited twice for its contributions to the community. First at the October Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra concert, the Aber Suzuki Center was honored for its contributions to the orchestra over the last 40 years. In celebration, two ASC alumni were invited to perform with the CWSO as soloists. The second honor received was from the Stevens Point Area School District. ASC was cited at the January school board meeting for its contributions to helping the district meet its mission.

We also had other "firsts" this year. We welcomed Dr. Merietta Oviatt as our new viola/violin teacher and Sarah Lange as our new Suzuki flute teacher. We began an adult chamber ensemble, a "Seniors' Recital" by the current graduating class and a senior recognition ceremony at the Festival Concert. We have also started a Tween/Teen Club and assisted in the formation of the Central Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra Program.

Our faculty has hosted three Open Houses and our offerings in Marshfield have expanded to include viola, cello and harp. Overall, our enrollment has increased by 8% this year. Moreover, we have completed work on our strategic plan that you can read about on page 5 of this issue. Thanks to the success of the Music of the Masters Fund Raising event, the American Suzuki Foundation has provided \$8000 in need-based scholarships. \$2,000 has been awarded in merit scholarships (see the winners in this issue), and over \$1,700 has been given in new student referral rebates. In addition, we received an additional \$500 from the COFAC Michelsen Hall seat-naming campaign to award as need-based scholarships to ASC families.

The best statistic to tell, however, is the countless numbers of hours ASC musicians have practiced in their lessons with ASC faculty or at home with their parents--hours that are spent mastering their instrument. They have learned how to breathe, how to bow, how to pluck and how to give sound meaning and form. They are learning or have learned that the process for producing a work of art in sound is the same process for making their lives a work of art. The best statistic to tell is the number of challenges overcome, the discipline that has developed, the attitude that has changed, the beautiful heart that has emerged. That is the real story, the only one that really counts and the story that only comes into being with the passing of time, reflection and perspective.



PROGRAM REMINDERS

Summer can be a great time to make phenomenal progress in your music development. Usually, there's more free time to practice so you can really focus on progressing through the Suzuki repertoire or taking what you already know to new levels of musicianship. It's also a great time to explore other styles such as jazz, fiddle or improvisation. To protect the investment of time and money that you made this past year, everyone should take some lessons. Even Aaron Rogers doesn't stop practicing in the off-season and his is longer than yours is!

Summer lessons forms are due May 8 with payment. Forms and payments submitted after May 8 will incur a \$15 late fee.

Tween/Teen Bowling Registration and payment is due Monday, May 18. Please pay in the office or to your teacher. If you prefer to pay by credit card, stop in or call the office. \$9 per person includes pizza, soda, shoes and 2 games. The event will be held Saturday May 23rd at Point Bowling (2525 Dixon St.) Tween bowling (10-12 year olds) will be from 5:00-7:00 and Teen bowling (13+) will begin at 7:00.

American Suzuki Institute and Taste of ASI applications are due on or before June 1. Reserve your place now! The Taste of ASI lets you experience the institute at half price. This may be the only year it is offered. The week of July 19–July 26 has classes in Violin, Piano, Harp, Voice and Suzuki Early Childhood Education. July 26–Aug. 1 has classes in Violin, Viola, Cello, Bass, Piano, Guitar and Suzuki Early Childhood Education. See the April edition of the Ambassador for frequently asked questions or call the Suzuki Office 715-346-3033. Registration forms for the Taste of ASI are in the ASC Announcements for May 10 and hard copies are available in the waiting room. An application for full participation in ASI is on the website at www.uwsp.edu/suzuki

Summer's Ahead!

By Mary Hofer

Imagine if our children did not hear or speak the entire summer. We would never even consider such an idea!

The year has been so productive. We have watched our children grow and achieve new musical abilities, then along comes summer and we stop practicing, listening and sometimes even playing or singing. I remember when I taught school, the fall was always a time when teachers would spend several weeks reviewing and trying to help students remember concepts and skills they had learned the previous year. The same thing often happens with our music lessons, but musicians also lose muscle memory and agility. Here are a few great ways we can keep up our skills and even move ahead as we begin summer.

The importance of listening should never be underrated. This weekend I had the pleasure to be reminded of the value of listening. The first example was of Huba, a young student that sang the boy soprano part of the *Chitcheater Psalms* with the Monteverdi Chorale. After the concert many people said to me "What a tal-

ent that boy is.” “What beautiful tone that boy has.” “He sounds like an angel.” Well, he did sound beautiful! But, his mother also told me he listened over and over to many different recordings. He memorized the music and learned all of the Hebrew words. (Oh, my gosh! Isn’t that amazing that he can sing in Hebrew?) It’s not amazing. It is Suzuki!

The second example is the senior recital of my student, Austin. Following the recital many people said, “Wow! That is incredible. He sang for almost an hour straight, and he remembered all his words and stayed with the accompanist!” “He is so expressive.” Amazing? Not to Suzuki parents and teachers. Austin has learned his Suzuki lessons well. When he wants to sing a song he listens unceasingly. He has learned that knowing and internalizing the music allows him to perform and make the music his own. The more he listens the more he wants to sing the music.

The third incident happened on Sunday night when, out of the blue, a former student that is working on producing a vocal CD called. Kayla said “Thank you for teaching me to listen. That Suzuki background has made me such a discriminating listener of tone in producing this CD.”

When Dr. Suzuki created his mother-tongue method he had studied how children can learn by listening. He also knew that if given the technical skills combined with listening, children and adults can internalize the music and form an image of making the music. Imagine if our children did not hear or speak the entire summer. We would never even consider such an idea. I cannot encourage parents and students enough to keep playing recordings over the summer. Before the “summer vacation trip” really begins make sure your “car” has your music in it. Make a play list of songs or pieces your child will be learning in the future. Keep the music playing; give your child something to aspire to. Hearing the music is one step closer to wanting to make the music.

An institute experience can inspire the student, reinforce old skills and teach new ones, recharge the parent and, all in all, make for a fantastic memory. This spring I was fortunate to attend a *Songs for Sharing* in Mexico City. This experience for vocalists is much like an Institute. Students came together to make music for an entire week. They had private, small group, and large group lessons. The joy of singing together every day was infectious. The growth that students experienced both as soloists and within the groups was mar-

velous. Watching the students sing and make music reminded me of the positive power of the institute experience. Seeing the parents all communicate and enjoy watching their children was so uplifting. This year the American Suzuki Institute has a great deal for first time participants- *A Taste of ASI*. Check it out with your teacher. For those that have already attended, bring a friend and come again.

DON'T FALL BACK! Summer's ahead!

Local Mom's Recommendation: Stay in the Dorms

By: Becky Alexander*

Our first Institute experience was four years ago, when my daughter was 6 years old. Alexandra had been studying in Marshfield (where we live) but we always wanted to be a part of the Aber Suzuki Center experience. Our first lesson with Ms. Jenny was in May of 2011. We were ready to put the miles on the van.

Attending the week-long summer Institute was, of course, part of that experience. Because Alexandra was so young, we decided we would stay at home, forgo the dorms, and maybe save some money. Boy, was that a mistake! Awake at 6:30 am, in the van by 7:00 am, and falling back asleep just as we were pulling into the parking lot on the campus, was how we began our mornings. We pretty much went from class to class and then back home. I felt like we were missing something, but we did the same thing the next year in order to save money. It wasn't any better the second year.

Our third year (last year) I was determined we would stay in the dorms and am so glad we did. What a difference! Not having to make the drive each morning, we were able to relax and walk to class in five minutes. We were able to eat with new friends (and the best part was I didn't have to cook!). We went swimming two times and met some new friends there. Kayaking, the talent show, and just riding our bicycles around the campus were some highlights for Alex. For me, one of the highlights was just sitting in the dorm and listening to all of the beautiful music being practiced through the summer air! (Truth be told, I only have about 4 more years to have this special one-on-one time with my daughter. After that, she'll be a teen and sprouting her wings to independence.) We talked, we played, we had fun!

We felt more connected with everyone and everything by staying in the dorms. I highly recommend the "locals" consider doing so this year. You will not regret it!

*Becky Lee is the mother of Alexandra Lee (age 9, violin). The Lee's live in Marshfield, WI.

Can't afford to stay in the residence halls, but still want to commute to ASI? See Lynn Karbowski in the Suzuki Office for her personal tips on how to attend ASI on a shoe-string budget.

25 REASONS **YOU** WILL WANT TO ATTEND THE AMERICAN SUZUKI INSTITUTE

1. Discover fresh insights and new approaches to your instrument and music through study with expert clinicians.
2. Work with teachers of national reputation.
3. Realize substantial improvement and confidence on your instrument in a short period of time for all students— pre-twinklers to advanced.
4. Experience the balance between time spent playing your instrument and play (free) time.
5. Make friends who are kindred spirits.
6. Meet families and teachers from many states and foreign countries (In 2014- 32 states and 6 foreign countries were represented).
7. Receive fresh motivation and renewed excitement about playing and practicing.
8. Be immersed in a nurturing, positive atmosphere where individual value and potential is recognized.
9. Attend inspiring performances.
10. Feel the exhilaration of playing in an orchestra or play duets with advanced students.
11. Develop the essential skills of ensemble playing through chamber music
12. Learn and be inspired by hearing a wide variety of levels of playing on your instrument.
13. Perform in instrument-specific group festival concerts of 50-200 performers.
14. Be surrounded in a nurturing, positive atmosphere where individual value and potential is recognized.
15. Teens—have fun in teen dorm.
16. Parents— get fresh ideas of how to practice and motivate.
17. Parents and/or grandparents—take advantage of quality time with your child. Create lifetime memories in an environment free from the stress and distractions of home and work.
18. Parents—Find support and new solutions in helping your child through outstanding parent lectures/discussions offered throughout the week.
19. Visit many of the beautiful recreation areas as well as the parks and nature trails of the UWSP campus and the city of Stevens Point.
20. Take advantage of child care offered through the University Child Learning & Care Center.
21. Visit the UWSP Continuing Education site for classes for the non-Suzuki sibling.
22. Teachers—build camaraderie and connections within your studio by having your students attend ASI and room together in the same residence hall wing.
23. Teachers—get re-inspired by attending one of the many teacher training classes offered.
24. Try out a new instrument with one of our on-site luthiers, who also provide basic services to keep your instrument sounding its best.
25. Experience a well-organized and planned event. ASI has had the most practice in planning an institute since it was the first institute outside of Japan and the model for all others held today.

For more information go to:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/suzuki>

Aber Children's Merit Scholarship Winners Announced

The American Suzuki Foundation is pleased to announce the following winners of the Aber Children's Merit Scholarship. These children and their parents had to complete an application and write an essay to answer this question: "Please tell us why your Suzuki lessons are important to you." Congratulations to the following students:

Alexandre Lee, Violin
Megan O'Brien, Voice
Jane Story, Violin
Bennett Story, Violin
Marco Kurzynski, Violin/Piano
Zsanna Bodor, Violin/Voice
Bánk Bodor, Violin/Viola
Huba Bodor, Violin
Brandon Whalley, Piano
Samantha Carlson, Piano

ASC Faculty Makes Progress on Strategic Goals

In addition to giving weekly lessons, group lessons and preparing musicians for recitals, the ASC Faculty have been very consistently working to accomplish the goals included in the ASC strategic plan.

The following are the goals that were accomplished for 2014-15:

1. Group lesson and theory models have been researched by surveying other comparable Suzuki programs.
2. All ASC written and web-based materials have been updated to better educate the public regarding availability, eligibility (age, geography) and commitment including an FAQ page.
3. Policies and procedures were created for choosing events to which we are invited to play.
4. In all ASC communications, (Ambassador, announcements, website, Facebook, enrollment forms, evaluations, etc.) reference to children and family, when in regard to being an ASC enrollee, have been changed to include adult students.
5. In Fall 2015, the Suzuki Early Childhood Ed. Class will be offered in collaboration with Head Start for Head Start families. In addition, a grant was solicited and awarded for \$2800.
6. Offerings were expanded in Marshfield to include harp, cello and viola. \$10,000 grant was awarded by COFAC to cover the start-up costs.
7. The Central Wisconsin 6th Grade Honors Orchestra event scheduled for February 2016 has been expanded to include the Marshfield and Wisconsin Rapids string programs in addition to Stevens Point.
8. A Tween/Teen club will begin in May 2015, and the February parent meeting each year will focus on topics of interest to parents of tweens and teens.
9. Acknowledging that institute participants have a lower dropout rate, an incentive for ASC students to attend ASI was created.
10. Because the Aber Suzuki Center does not receive state funds and is dependent upon tuition, leadership continues to explore every

avenue to bolster other funding sources in an effort to keep programs accessible and sustainable.

ASC Received \$2800 from Women's Fund of Portage County

The Aber Suzuki Center in collaboration with Head Start and the Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra has received a grant from the Women's Fund of Portage Co. to fund one semester of Suzuki Early Childhood Education classes (SECE) with the Early Head Start program of Portage Co. The classes will be held in the fall for the Early Head Start participants and the preschool- age children and their parents. The grant will cover the cost of the class to the participant including the book, CD and tuition. It will be held at the Noel Fine Arts Center and will run from September to December 2015. Additional grants are being solicited to fund the program for the remainder of the year.

"This is a great way to expand our mission – to nurture, educate and inspire students, parents and teachers to incorporate the philosophical principles and music education methods of Shinichi Suzuki into their lives," said director Pat D'Ercole. "Every child deserves the chance to have music in their lives. This class allows that to happen and because it doesn't require instruments for everyone, it's affordable. Parents, too, will learn how to observe their child's growth and become aware of new parenting skills. It's a win-win."



My Musical Life

By: Supriya Keefe

Chords, notes, melodies and sounds,
This is what I hear as I walk through life.
Rhythms, thumps, bangs, and flashes,
My heart pounds to the sound of crashes.
Strums, dynamics, groove, and movements,
I sway to the sound of excitement.
Piano, violin, drums, and cello,
These are the instruments that fill my life
-oh, this, my musical life

STUDENT NEWS

Lucas Chan was awarded 1st Place at the state competition for the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), in the banking and financial systems division. He will attend the FBLA National Leadership Convention from June 29-July 2 in Chicago.

Caleb Thomas, Josie Reeve and Roisin Willis performed at the Washington School Talent Show on

April 22. Lucia Stephani performed her violin at her school talent show on January 30.

Jacque Wille performed with the Waupaca Oratorio Chorus and Orchestra on April 12 and with the Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra on April 18 and 19.

Congratulations to the following students who participated in the State WMTA Solo and Ensemble Contest at UW-Stevens Point on May 3: Joshua Dvorak, Alyssa Eiden, Sawyer Eiden, Karli Johnson, Marco Kurzynski, Michael Reeser, Frederick Van Tiem and Roshini Traynor.

Alexandra Lee performed pieces from book 2 as the pre-concert entertainment at the Madison Elementary School Grade 3 and 4 Vocal Concert in Marshfield.

Good luck to the ASC students who will participate in the String Badger State Auditions of the Wisconsin Music Teachers Association on May 16 at UW-Oshkosh: Anna Hahn, William Hahn, Max Malek, Lucia Stephani, Carolyn Storch and Julia Storch. Ms. Novak, Mr. Yang and Mrs. Karen Stephani will be their collaborative pianists for this event.

Kate Young has been accepted in the Blue Lake Summer Camp.

Thanks to the teens and tweens who volunteered their time at the ASC Festival Concert on April 26 at Ben Franklin Junior High School: Revyn Abbott-Beversdorf, Natalie Berk, Trevor Bezella-Bond, Koppa Bodor, Emma Dorshorst, Alyssa Eiden, Sawyer Eiden, Lydia Ensminger, Tom Felt, Anna Hahn, William Hahn, Caitlin Johnson, Carlos Koehn, Maddie Koehn, Rachel Marten, Hope Mahon, Lily Mahon, Max Malek, Richard Meilahn, Megan O'Brien, Barrett Severson, Tori Tillotson, Dinesh Traynor and Luke Vayder.

FACULTY NEWS

Jenny Burton was a violin clinician at a workshop sponsored by the Madison Suzuki Strings on April 18 and 19.

Ms. Burton, Mr. Yang, Ms. Novak and Mrs. Hofer will assist with the Non-Keyboard Badger State Auditions on May 16.

Merietta Oviatt performed with the Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra on April 18 and 19.

WORKSHOP OPPORTUNITY

Interested in Fiddling? Check Out this Workshop

Harald Haugaard, one of Denmark's most renowned fiddle players and founder of Haugaard's International Fiddle School held annually in Breklum, Germany, will be starting an American version to be held at West Denmark near Luck, Wisconsin. Joining Harald will be two fantastic teachers and musicians, Hanneke Cassel from Boston, MA, and Antti Järvelä from Finland. This is an opportunity not to be missed. It will be an intensive study for people of all ages who share an interest in music based on Scandinavian and Anglo/Celtic traditions. There couldn't be a more beautiful and fitting setting than historic West Denmark, on Little Butter-nut Lake, near Luck, Wisconsin. Haugaard's West Denmark Fiddle School begins Sunday evening, June 14 and concludes on Thursday evening, June 18 with a final Fiddle School Concert. More information can be found about this exciting event at:

www.westdenmark.net.

GRADUATES

Tony Garbacz, Piano Book 1
Anna Hahn, Piano Book 2
Trevor Carlson, Piano Book 3
Samantha Carlson, Piano Book 3
Franklin Meadows, Cello Book 1
Yvonne Chen, Violin Book 1
Roisin Willis, Violin Book 2
Tam Doan, Violin Book 2
Jane Story, Violin Book 3