

AMBASSADOR

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

December, 2011

Upcoming Events

*See p. 8 for the many upcoming
December Holiday performances*

Saturday, December 10, 2011
Marathon, 9am - Noon

Sunday, December 11, 2011
Solo Recitals
Michelsen Hall, 12:30, 2:00 and 3:30 pm

Saturday, January 28, 2012
Marathon, 9am - Noon

Saturday, January 28, 2012
Solo Recitals
Michelsen Hall, 2:00 and 3:30 pm

Sunday, January 29, 2012
Roscar Duo Recital
Michelsen Hall, 2:00 pm

Saturday, February 4, 2012
Roscar Duo Recital
First Presbyterian Church, Marshfield, 2:00 pm

Saturday, February 18, 2012
Marathon, 9am - Noon

Sunday, February 19, 2012
Solo Recitals
Michelsen Hall, 2:00 and 3:30 pm

From the Director's Desk

By Pat D'Ercole

The holiday season is upon us. How do I know? Just look around. Just last week the city of Stevens Point kicked off the season with the Holiday Parade and a visit from Santa. We hear the strains of familiar tunes, read the verses of greeting cards, see decorated houses, shop for special gifts for special people and maybe even watch a TV holiday movie or two. Nearly every institution – religious, civic, economic, educational – does their part to add to the atmosphere at this time of year. We are inundated by messages that are meant to encourage us to get into the holiday “mood,” – to be generous, joyful, loving, hopeful, peaceful and to recognize the humanity that we share. Sometimes the motives or the logic behind the messages might be questionable, but who wouldn't want a world that's more generous, joyful, loving, hopeful, peaceful, and that recognizes humanity as one family? In fact, we often lament the fact that these messages and this focus on the positive only lasts from Thanksgiving to Christmas. Why can't we pretend that it's Christmas all year?

Two thoughts occur to me as I write this. One is that we who espouse the Suzuki philosophy could take a lesson from this time of year so as to implement what we believe with more purposeful intention. Just like the commercials we see and hear or the decorations that now are in the stores before Halloween, we could be more deliberate in enriching the environment with

music and with examples of people making music so that we increase the desire of our children to continue to study. We could be more deliberate about taking our children to group lessons, marathons, recitals and concerts, helping to create a vision in their mind of what they can accomplish either for their own pleasure or professionally. And it's never too early to begin. Just like we would never wait until a child is three or four to let them hear the sounds of their mother-tongue, we can begin to enrich the musical environment as early as possible. And while it may take a little planning to do this, in the end, it makes the job of being the practicing parent a lot easier when the student is motivated and willing.

Secondly, we in the Suzuki movement enhance the environment with music and music-making because we believe that by hearing and playing music beautifully we learn sensitivity to that which is beautiful in music, in our world and in others. We believe that we can enrich the environment not only with music, but with our example—by how we talk to one another, how we anticipate the needs of another, how we treat each other. We believe that children learn not so much by what we say as by what we do. We strive to be an example so that the children see us live those messages of generosity, joy, love, hope, and peace. To quote Dr. Suzuki, "The foundation of education is to carefully raise children with the ability to be fine human beings." I guess we Suzuki families *can* have the holiday atmosphere all year long.

On behalf of the Aber Suzuki Center faculty and staff, best wishes for a happy, blessed holiday season and a healthy 2012!



Music Reading

By Dave Becker

Ear training is one of the hallmarks of the Suzuki approach. Beginning Suzuki students become familiar with how a piece of music sounds and how to play it long before they see what the printed music looks like. Similarly, by the time

most children learn to read their native language they have already developed a sizable working vocabulary and a reasonably good sense of grammar and sentence construction simply by imitating what they hear around them.

According to Dr. Mary Lou Shiel, in her treatise, **Eye Before Ear or Ear Before Eye**, "... the ears are at the height of their powers until 7-8 years of age, and then seem to start on a slow decline." Regarding visual skills Dr. Shiel wrote, "... the ability to decode written script either for speech or music is not found in the young child but has to await the development of higher brain function in the older child. In fact a child is usually 7-8 years old before he can do this decoding with any ease and has to be trained continuously for 3-4 years before he has such fluency in this field that he is regarded as literate." So there is a strong argument for stressing the development of the dominant aural sense in early music training.

Students with more "traditional" music training are often confronted with trying to read musical notation long before basic postures and good playing habits are established. It is a classic case of trying to do too many things at once and not being able to focus on perfecting one aspect of a process before adding something else to the mix.

Every teacher has his or her own idea of when it is appropriate to begin teaching a particular student how to read music. Many factors in addition to the student's age must be taken into consideration to evaluate reading readiness. Is the student physically well set up on the instrument? Have basic skills, like drawing a straight bow or maintaining a relaxed, natural hand shape, become habitual enough to enable the student to focus on music reading without significantly compromising his playing potential?

Developing Reading Skills

Students feel a real sense of pride when they start reading music. It is a passage into another phase of their development when they can personally begin to claim more responsibility for the learning process. And it is so exciting to have the key to unlock all of the wonder and beauty of written music.

There are many excellent books that use a clear and systematic approach to teaching a solid understanding of musical notation. Some books, like Joanne Martin's **I Can Read Music** (available for violin, viola and cello), treat the learning of pitch and rhythm separately. Other books, like the **Doflien Method**, integrate the learning of pitch and rhythm simultaneously using short pieces and exercises. In addition to books there are numerous commercially-produced teaching aids that can reinforce music reading skills like flash cards, note-finders, magnetic music boards and games like Musopoly and Master Musician.

Basic music reading is far less complicated than learning to read a spoken language. Suzuki parents who have no musical background but have an interest in learning how to read music might be interested in a book called, **Learn to Read Music** by Howard Shanet. Mr. Shanet, who was an associate professor of music at Columbia University in the 1960s, claims that, "*In two hours* you can read through this book and understand the principles involved in the reading of music. *In two evenings* you can learn to read practically any melody and pick it out on the piano by doing the clear and simple exercises." Mr. Shanet's book is geared for adults and he says that his book, "... will **not** make you a wizard at the piano or any other instrument but **will** teach the notation of music to those who have never known it before."

In the introductory remarks for his book Mr. Shanet wrote, "I believe with my teacher, the late Serge Koussevitzky, that music is for everyone. Music reading is a fundamental skill which should be taught to all children in elementary schools, just as arithmetic is taught. If it is not – and apparently thousands of adults ... have missed it – then we have to do something about it."

Tips for Successful Music Reading

1. Keep the Beat – Nothing is more important than maintaining a steady pulse and playing the correct rhythms along with that pulse. Sure it's nice to play all of the right notes too, but if you don't count carefully, particularly when playing with an ensemble, you will soon be

so lost that all of the right notes in the world won't get you back on track.

2. Look Ahead – When we first start reading music it is all we can do to identify each note and rhythm as it comes along. As your reading skills improve it is possible to keep your eyes moving slightly ahead of what you are actually playing. This helps the brain and fingers prepare for what lies ahead and enables you to avoid some of those BIG SURPRISES.

3. Think in Groups – Beginning music readers look at, and process, one note at a time. When you become more comfortable with music reading you will be able to look at a group of notes and identify them as a pattern that you've played many times before. Good sight-readers can glance at an entire measure of music and instantly sense the best fingerings to use and how to execute the rhythms.

4. Know Your Scales – Scales and arpeggios are the basic building blocks of music. Learn how to identify key signatures and which scales they represent. Regular scale and arpeggio playing in all keys establishes motor memory of the fingerings and finger patterns needed to play a piece in a particular key.

5. Read a Lot – Every time we read music with which we are not familiar we are honing our reading skills. The more music we are exposed to, the better we get at translating musical notation into sound.

6. Attend Concerts and Listen to Recordings – When we hear a wonderful performance by a fine artist we are storing up knowledge about how to interpret a particular composer's music or music from a specific period. Understanding stylistic nuances like what kind of articulation to use in certain musical figures or what tone color to strive for, helps us go well beyond simply playing the notes on the page.

Really great sight-reading is kind of an art in itself. Some musicians develop their reading skills to such an extent that they can deliver a reasonably polished performance of a difficult piece of music the first time they play it!

Happy Reading!



The American Suzuki Foundation Wants YOU!

The Aber Suzuki Center (ASC) has associated with it a nonprofit foundation called the American Suzuki Foundation (ASF). The ASF is based in Stevens Point and exists for the purpose of financially supporting the ASC, primarily by giving scholarships to ASC children. The goal is to allow all children – not just those who can afford it- to study music, if they desire.

The Foundation (ASF) Board is a group of mostly Suzuki parents who believe in the vision of making the world a better place one child at a time. Our main source of funding for need-based scholarships is the annual Music of the Masters event.

The ASF Board is now seeking to expand in size, under the concept that many hands make light work. We meet once per month (not in summer), with the major jobs being 1) contributing to the preparation for the Music of the Masters event, and 2) giving away scholarships. Please consider volunteering for this most rewarding role.

To volunteer to be on the board of the American Suzuki Foundation, please contact Pat D'Ercole.



Central State Chamber Orchestra To Present Holiday Concert

The Central State Chamber Orchestra will play a holiday concert on Saturday, December 10, 2011 at 2:00 p.m. at the Lincoln Senior Center located at 1519 Water Street in Stevens Point. The concert is open to the public with a \$2.00 free-will offering admission to benefit the Lincoln Center. A reception will be held immediately following the concert.

The concert will open with the Concerto Grosso Opus 6, No. 6 by George Frideric Handel and will feature violinists Michael Josephson and Wade Dittburner and cellist Emily Clay as soloists. The orchestra will also play works by Elgar, Pachelbel, Britten, and Leroy Anderson. The Earth

String Quartet with Wade Dittburner and Erik Sands on violin, Teddy Schenkman on viola and Emily Clay on cello will also perform a movement from Dvorak's well-known "American" quartet. The program will conclude with a traditional holiday sing-along.

The Central State Chamber Orchestra, in its 13th season, is made up of advanced, junior high and high school-aged string players from central Wisconsin. The CSCO's music director and founder, David Becker, is a faculty member at the Aber Suzuki Center at UW-SP.



The Aber Suzuki Center has a New Video

The Aber Suzuki Center has a new video on the website. You'll recognize a lot of the faces and one of them may be yours! This three minute video explains the Suzuki philosophy and the program offerings at the ASC. It's an excellent introduction for people wanting to know more about us. To find the video go to the ASC webpage, point to "Aber Suzuki Center" on the banner, then select "ASC home" from the drop down menu. Or use this url: <http://www.uwsp.edu/suzuki/Pages/default.aspx>



The Music of the Masters Dinner A Resounding Success

Thanks to all ASC families who contributed in any way to make the Music of the Masters Dinner on Nov. 12 a resounding success. Whether you brought your child to play in one of the performing groups, volunteered to be a photographer, supervised the warm-up room (which was spotless when we were finished—thanks!), purchased raffle or dinner tickets or encouraged someone you know to do so, or opened the door to a sponsor, the American Suzuki Foundation is grateful. The final tally has not been completed, but it seems as though the profits will be

as good, or better, than last year and that means more scholarship funds for those who need it.



Thanks also go to the ASC faculty for preparing and leading the students in their performances. A very special thank you goes to the American Suzuki Foundation Board who worked so very hard to organize the event this year. The members are Karen Harms, pres., Diane Sands, vice pres., Kaushalya Iyengar, sec., Andy Felt, treas. Orsolya Gosztory, Daniela and Brian Kurzynski, Claudia Trimarco, Dean Jeff Morin and Pat D'Ercole. The ASF would also like to acknowledge the contributions of Christine Kancler, and CJ Robinson and Bobbie Erwin from the Dean's office.



Aber Suzuki Center Celebrates 45 Years on June 2, 2012

(Ed. note: Mark your calendar for June 2nd. We're going to have a party to celebrate our 45th birthday! We sent out over 760 Save-the-Date cards to alumni – both students and parents. This is our third installment on the history of ASC.

Up until 1974, the Suzuki program at UWSP was part of the campus laboratory school which was then housed in what is now Old Main. This was an elementary school run by the Education Department of UWSP with grades 1-8. In 1974, the school was closed and the parents of students in the Suzuki program were insistent that the Suzuki program continue. The program did continue under the auspices of UWSP and was named the American Suzuki Talent Education Center or ASTEC for short. At the same time, the American Suzuki Foundation was established by a board of 25 members, mostly parents, to see to it that that ASTEC did continue with or without University support. Thanks to Chancellor Dreyfus, ASTEC remained a part of UWSP and continued to thrive, adding teachers and students and outreach to Marshfield, Waupaca and Wisconsin Rapids. In 1979, the program was moved to what became known as the "Suzuki House." This was the house used by home economics students during the 1950-60s. In the early days, the dining room served as Miss Aber's office and the living room was her studio. The four bedrooms upstairs also served as studios. The southeast bedroom has a claim to fame. When Dr. Suzuki came to the American Suzuki Institute for two weeks in 1976, he slept in the southeast bedroom. In those days, ASTEC did not have full use of the house. There was a hallway door to the kitchen which was kept locked because the kitchen area and family room were the offices of the Women's Resource Center.



**Composer of the Month
Johann Frederick Burgmüller**

By Ann Marie Novak

Johann Frederick Burgmüller was born on December 4, 1806. Although Johann was his first name, he was known as Frederick. His father, who was a director in the local theater, encouraged both of his sons to follow their hearts in the study of music. Both Frederick and Norbert were lucky in this regard, because their grandfather did not support or encourage their father to pursue his interest in music and the theater.

Frederick and Norbert both studied music with fine teachers throughout their formative years. Both went on to teach, perform and compose. Frederick settled in Paris, while his younger brother remained in Germany. Frederick taught many students and he wrote a great deal of piano music for those students. Some of his compositions were designed to be played as salon music, while others were written as etudes for his students. Many of the etudes continue to be taught as standard piano repertoire. In fact, two of his compositions, *The Limpid Stream* and *Arabesque*, can be found in the Suzuki literature.

Frederick's brother, a fine composer in his own right, died at the tender age of 26. This loss devastated Frederick and affected his writing and teaching for some time. Schumann and Mendelssohn both lamented the death of Norbert and felt that the musical community had not suffered such a great loss since the early demise of Schubert.

Frederick lived out his remaining years in and around Paris, composing and teaching for most of that time. He died in 1874, but he left us with many beautiful pieces that are both charming and accessible to many students.

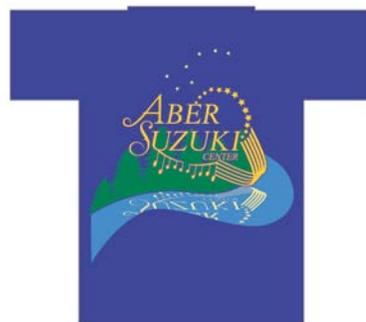
Sources:

- 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.



**The T-shirts are Coming!
The T-shirts are Coming!**

Well, at least the order forms will be here. Watch for them in your teacher's studio beginning Dec. 5. All order forms must be returned to the ASC Office (or the waiting room payment box) **on or before December 23rd**. Payment in full must accompany all orders, or the order will not be filled. If you are paying by credit card, please be sure to include your account number, card type (Visa, Mastercard or Discover), expiration date, and your name as it appears on the



card. By signing the bottom of the form, you authorize us to charge your purchase to the card on the form. We do not keep credit card information "on file."

The cost for each shirt is only \$5.75, and we plan to distribute the orders at the January 28th Marathon.



Teresita Marchel to Give Senior Violin Recital

Teresita Marchel will present a Senior Violin Recital on Sunday, Dec. 18 in Michelsen Hall at 4:30. She will be performing the entire *Concerto in a minor* by Vivaldi, the first movement from Lalo's *Symphonie Espangole*, *Variations on a Theme by Corelli* by Kreisler, *Meditation* from Thais and Copeland's *Hoedown*. Mr. Yang will be the collaborative pianist. Assisting on violin will be Teresita's sisters, Maria and Christina. They will join Teresita in an arrangement of Gounod's *Ave Maria* for 3 violins and the theme from the movie *Master and the Commander* arranged for three violins by Teresita. Maria Marchel will also play the first movement of the Brahms Sonata in A major. All are invited to attend. A Reception will follow.

Earth Quartet to Perform In Recital December 17

The Earth Quartet will perform a concert Saturday December 17, at 7:30 in NFAC 221. Featured on the program will be Dvorak's *American String Quartet* as well as works by Mozart, Shostakovich, Borodin, Gershwin and Queen. The Earth Quartet is: **Wade Dittburner, Erik Sands, Teddy Schenkman, and Emily Clay.**



Roscar Duo Recitals

Rosalie Gilbert and Oscar Soler (the Roscar Duo) met at the Cleveland Institute of Music during their undergraduate studies, and have been playing together ever since. Their upcoming recitals in Stevens Point (January 29th) and Marshfield (February 4th) will be their premier performances in Wisconsin. They will present a program of "miniatures" for violin and harp. Many of the pieces feature limited pitch or thematic material, and all of the pieces are short – five minutes or less. With both duo and solo music by composers like Debussy, Bartok, and more, this concert promises fun for everyone.

Free and open to the public, the Roscar Duo Recitals will be held Sunday, January 29, 2:00 pm, NFAC Michelsen Hall, and Saturday, February 4, 2:00 pm, First Presbyterian Church, Marshfield.



Student News

Revyn Abbott-Beversdorf, Tuvshin Anderson, Alyssa Kirsling, Landry Kirsling and Desiah Melby performed at the Veteran's Day Concert at Amherst High School on Friday, November 11. The group was conducted by Jennifer Burton

The following students performed at Holiday Fest on Saturday, November 12 at St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Stevens Point: **Richard Meilahn, Megan Resch, Cierra Shaver,**

Kassidy Martin, Yuling Sun, Faith Kluck, William Hahn, Anna Hahn and Dane Chung. ASC parent Cindy Kiepert and ASC faculty members Jennifer Burton and Tim Mutschlecner also performed at the event. This 2 ½ hour performance was part of an annual fund raiser that provides food baskets for needy families in Stevens Point and Plover.

Jacque Wille performed with the Wausau Symphony orchestra on October 29 and 30 .

Grace Olson marked her book 1 violin graduation on Thursday, November 17 at a home concert in Amherst. She performed 15 pieces from book 1 for her family and friends.

These students participated in the annual Fall Festival sponsored by the Stevens Point Music Teachers Association at UW-SP: **Anna Hahn, William Hahn, Faith Kluck, Rachel Marten, Thomas Meronek, Grace Olson, Cierra Shaver, Hope Stephani, Lucia Stephani, Carolyn Storch, Julia Storch, Jace Yesse, Colton Thielman, Tatum Thielman, Anna Vandehey, Annette Vandehey and Olivia Vandehey, Lydia Ensminger, Victoria Miller, Emma Nelson, Zoe Sell, and Olivia Yang.**

Marcy Kirsch and Mike Thielman performed on the informal adult recital on Saturday, November 19 in Tom Yang's studio.

ASC Piano students performed at the Piano Halloween Recital October 29 in Michelsen Hall:





Upcoming Community Performances

ASC Students will be performing at the following events:

Thursday, December 8, 6:30 pm and Friday, December 9, 2:00 pm REACH Theater Presents *Little Women* at Celebration Church, Stevens Point. Admission is free - donations appreciated. ASC Students will perform during intermission

Saturday, December 10, 2011, ASC Voice Students to perform at Victorian Christmas at 11:00 and Dolce Strings at 2:15 - 2:45 pm at Church of the Intercession Episcopal Church.

Saturday, December 10, 2011, CSCO Presents Annual Holiday Concert, 2:00 pm, Lincoln Center

Saturday, December 17, ASC's Earth Quartet will present a recital at 7:30 pm, NFAC 221

Sunday, December 18, Teresita Marchel will present her Senior Recital, 4:00 pm, Michelsen Hall

Sunday, December 18, ASC's Cello Choir, under the direction of Tim Mutschlecner, will perform at Edgewater Manor, 7:30 pm

Students taking lessons in Amherst will take part in the Amherst High School Holiday Assembly, Wednesday, December 21st, 1:15 pm.

Tuesday, January 3, ASC Students will perform at the Boys and Girls Club Art Show to be held at Mark Motors, Plover



Faculty News

On November 5, **Tom Yang** was a guest clinician and performer at a piano workshop for the New Ulm Suzuki School of Music in New Ulm, Minnesota. As part of the workshop, he and his wife Jenni performed The Story of Babar, a monodrama (words by Jean de Brunhoff and music by Francis Poulenc) for narrator and piano.

Jennifer Burton, Dave Becker and Dee Martz performed with the Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra on December 3 & 4.

Jenny Burton was a violin clinician at a weekend workshop at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb on November 5.

Ms. Burton coordinated the string component of the Fall Festival sponsored by the Stevens Point Area Music Teachers on Saturday, November 19 at UW-SP.



November 2011 Graduations

Megan O'Brien, Voice Book 1
Michael Wallace, Violin Book 2
Lydia Ensminger, Voice Book 1
Craig Felt, Violin Book 7
Antony Van Tiem, Violin Book 9
Elisabeth Mahon, Cello Book 2
David Kingston, Violin Book 2
Samantha Carlson, Piano Book 2
Dinesh Traynor, Violin Book 7



From all of us to all of you:
Happy Holidays!