Suzuki Stories from the Past: Nancy Pederson

Nancy K. Pederson was the Assistant Division Head of the Suzuki Program from 1977 – 1992. In that time, she developed and expanded the Suzuki Piano Department, designed a parent education program for new Suzuki parents and worked closely with Mark Bjork to build the Suzuki program into one of the largest and most reputable programs in the country. A graduate of St. Olaf College in church music and organ, Mrs. Pederson initially worked as an organist and choir director. She first heard about the Suzuki method in 1967 when her husband, Bruce attended an informational meeting about the Suzuki method led by Mark Bjork at the Wayzata school their children attended. Mr. Bjork was working in the school district at the time and was spreading the word about the Suzuki program he was starting at MacPhail.

Although skeptical about the Suzuki approach at first, Bruce and Nancy enrolled their 5-year-old son Noah in violin lessons with Mr. Bjork, and several years later, their daughter, Sarah began lessons when she entered kindergarten. The Pedersons attended weekly lessons with Mr. Bjork and group classes on Saturdays for many years.

The Pederson family attended the Suzuki Institute at Stevens Point, WI (now the American Suzuki Institute) in the summers, where Mrs. Pederson was first introduced to the Suzuki Piano method from Constance Starr, who along with her husband, Bill Starr were among the pioneers of the Suzuki method in the United States. Nancy was intrigued about applying the Suzuki violin concepts to teaching piano. She began teaching a few neighborhood children in her home. The following summer, she took Suzuki teacher training with Constance Starr. Mrs. Pederson’s students gained recognition for playing at a high level, and she was soon invited to teach at the Stevens Point Suzuki Institute alongside Constance Starr.

Nancy Pederson quickly developed a full Suzuki piano studio; at first, she said she would take no more than 12 students, then 24, then 30. By the time Mark Bjork invited her to teach at MacPhail in 1977, Nancy’s studio had grown to 60 students, and 58 of the students followed her to MacPhail.

In 1981, Nancy was accepted as a registered Teacher Trainer for the Suzuki Association for the Americas (SAA). She conducted teacher training for Suzuki Institutes and workshops throughout the United States and Canada. She was a key teacher and mentor for several teachers in the MacPhail program, including Nancy Daley and Beth Turco. She has been a presenter for several SAA National Teachers Conferences has been a contributor to the SAA Journal.

After leaving MacPhail in 1992, Mrs. Pederson established an independent piano studio where she continued to work with students, parents and teachers. She is now retired, but the legacy of her commitment and devotion to Suzuki teaching is long-lasting and memorable. Her own words remind us of her profound love of teaching and of the importance of music in our lives:

"Looking back over my experiences with families who have been part of my life for so many years, I am awed and so grateful for the wealth of love and care, insight and growth that are integral to our musical involvement. My dream for my students is that music will be available to them at all times for pleasure and comfort, for sharing with others or for playing alone. When we discover that no matter how busy we are music has an important place in our daily lives then we have made a lifelong friend of music as well as many lifelong friends among music lovers."

-Nancy K Pederson, May, 1997
Have you been reminiscing about playing your Suzuki pieces?

Bring your instrument and join our group classes to play your Suzuki favorites!
Led by Mark Bjork!

Saturday, January 6
9:30 am – 11:00 am

Florence Center, De LaSalle High School: String Play-Ins during group classes

Free and open to alumni string students and faculty
Email SuzukiDept@macphail.org to reserve your spot

MACPHAIL SUZUKI ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES $5,000 MATCHING GIFT

The Bjork/Pederson Suzuki Student Scholarship Fund was established in 1994 by the MSA (MacPhail Suzuki Association) and honors Mark Bjork and Nancy Pederson for their years of teaching and work in establishing MacPhail’s Suzuki Program. Today, in celebration of the Suzuki program’s 50th Anniversary, the MSA will match all gifts to the Bjork-Pederson Scholarship, up to $5,000. Our goal is to raise the $25,000 needed to permanently endow the fund making it possible to award a scholarship annually to a student/s in the MacPhail Suzuki program to help defray tuition costs. This would provide much needed support to students with financial need in our program.

Please make your gift to the Bjork/Pederson Suzuki Student Scholarship Fund today! MAKE SURE TO ENTER “SUZUKI SCHOLARSHIP” IN THE “COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS” FIELD.

https://secure.acceptiva.com/?cst=348a71
Come and celebrate the MacPhail Suzuki Program 50th Anniversary!

Mark Bjork founded the Suzuki program in 1967 with just a few violin students, after seeing the Suzuki Violin Tour Group from Japan during one of their first international tours to the United States. In 1974, Nancy Pederson began a Suzuki piano program at MacPhail and became the Suzuki Associate Director. The two worked together to build one of the most reputable Suzuki programs in the country. Today the program features lessons in 7 instruments (piano, harp, guitar, violin, viola, cello, and flute) and has more than 700 students.

We hope current and former Suzuki students, teachers, parents, family and friends can come together to celebrate the rich history of our program.

We’ll gather the weekend of January 5 and 6, 2018 for some fun events. Mark your calendars now! Included will be:

**Friday, January 5, 6:00 pm, Antonello Hall:** Suzuki Department recital featuring current students and recent grads
- Come and listen to current Suzuki students of all instruments and levels perform solos
- Reception to follow provided by the MSA
- Free and open to the public (no reservations required)

**Saturday, January 6, 9:30 -11:00 am, De LaSalle High School:** String Play-Ins during group classes
- Bring your instrument and join our group classes to play your Suzuki favorites!
- Free and open to alumni string students and faculty
- Email SuzukiDept@macphail.org to reserve your spot

**Saturday, January 6, 7:00 pm, Antonello Hall:** Suzuki 50th Anniversary Gala Alumni Benefit Recital
Featuring performances by MacPhail Suzuki Alumni.

**Tickets:** $25 adults, $15 youth (ages 6 through 18), $5 for current Suzuki students
Tickets may be ordered by calling 612.767.5250 or by stopping by Student Services. Advance purchase is recommended. All tickets are general admission. Seating is subject to availability. Any net proceeds from ticket sales will fund the Bjork/Pederson Student Scholarship Fund.

### Out and About 12/9/2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups assigned</th>
<th>Venue Name and Address</th>
<th>Performance Time</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Teacher(s) attending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(29) Alison’s 9:00, 10:00 and 11:00 Classes</td>
<td>Presbyterian Homes Johanna Shores 3200 Lake Johanna Blvd. Arden Hills 55112</td>
<td>10:00-10:45 am</td>
<td>More Info to come</td>
<td>Alison and Katie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(27) Susan’s 10:00 and 11:00 Classes Kamini’s 11:15 Class</td>
<td>Providence Place 3720 23rd Ave. S Minneapolis 55407</td>
<td>10:00-10:45 am</td>
<td>Performance on north side 2nd floor. There is a north elevator to take.</td>
<td>Susan and Kamini</td>
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<tr>
<td>(28) All Cellos</td>
<td>MacPhail Center for Music Gary Sipes Space</td>
<td>10:30-11:30 am</td>
<td>Unpack in US Bank Lobby</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(27) All Violas</td>
<td>Senior Sunrise Living 2555 Snelling Ave. N Roseville 55113</td>
<td>10:30 – 11:15 am</td>
<td>Teacher should check in a desk Dining Room</td>
<td>Margaret and Linda And Ruth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(28) Beatrice’s 9:15, 10:00 and 11:00 classes</td>
<td>Vernon Place 5250 Vernon Ave. S. Edina, MN 55436</td>
<td>10:30-11:15 am</td>
<td>Lounge that is right at entrance</td>
<td>Beatrice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joy’s 9:15, 10:00 and 11:00 class Heather’s 10:00 and 11:00 class</td>
<td>Tower Light 3601 Wooddale Ave S. St. Louis Park</td>
<td>10:00-10:45 am</td>
<td>In space to right after enter buildings front entrance.</td>
<td>Joy And Heather</td>
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Upcoming Events

Join us to hear the sounds of the Suzuki Faculty playing their favorite Suzuki Pieces. Come listen to your teachers perform pieces for students and families.

Friday, December 1, 2017
6 p.m., Antonello Hall
Free Admission

Faculty performers include: Annette Lee, Beatrice Blanc, Andrea French, Nikki Lemire, Kamini LaRusso, Mark Bjork, Linda Trygstad, Joy Moeller, Heather VanderLey, Beth Turco, Nancy Daley, Sarah Kang, Alison Fahy, Tamara Gonzalez and Christy Libbus!

Nick Trygstad, professional cellist and former Suzuki Cello student, will be a featured soloist to celebrate our 50th Anniversary on this recital!

The Suzuki Faculty present this recital as a fundraiser for the Suzuki Bjork/Pederson Scholarship Fund. Suggested donations $10/Adult, $5/Student. Please make checks payable to MSA. Please join us after the recital for a reception in the U.S. Bank Lobby.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Natalie Christ, Suzuki Piano Student, completed 400 consecutive days of practice!

Oskar Colon, Suzuki Piano Student, completed 1000 consecutive days of practice!