



# SUZUKI FLYER



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## Welcome Back!

Welcome to all the new students and welcome back to all returning students! I hope that everyone has enjoyed their summer and have found some time to keep their skills polished. This will be an exciting Suzuki year with many exiting events planned. Our first lesson of the school year is a Group Lesson on September 14, 2007. We will meet at Hidenwood Presbyterian Church Music Room from 4:30pm to 5:30pm Books 1 – 3, and 5:10pm to 6:15pm Books 4 & up.

The Suzuki schedule of lessons/performances/events for 2007 –2008 has been mailed out with this newsletter. It is also available on our website at [www.elliottfamilyquartet.com](http://www.elliottfamilyquartet.com)

Please be sure to keep your Suzuki calendars and follow the dates for lessons/groups/recital etc. It is no fun to be in the wrong place when the calendar spells out where you should go on specific dates. Check the schedule with your own personal schedules so that conflicts may be brought to my attention. If there are any conflicts where you already know you will miss a lesson or recital, please let me know in advance.

### Enclosed please find the following:

1. **A registration form.** Please update your information such as address or phone numbers. Write "same" if there is no change.
2. **September invoice** which is due at your first lesson in September. The annual registration fee is also included in each invoice. The \$30 fee is applied to your membership with the Suzuki Association of Americas.
3. **Two 2007-2008 Suzuki Violin Calendars.** Outlines all lessons, group lessons, recitals, workshops, and other activities. (1 magnet, 1 paper)
4. **Lesson day & times are listed on each invoice.**

## Studio Activities

### Lessons:

Attendance and participation are very important factors to the progress of students. Students are expected to be present at their scheduled lessons except in cases such

as illness or other extenuating circumstances. Refunds are only give for excused absences and will not be given for lessons casually missed.

If I need to cancel a lesson because of a conflict with a performance, I will try to offer a make up date. The make up lesson will not be required. If a student can not make up the lesson, or I can not offer a make up lesson, a refund in the form of a credit towards the next month's tuition will be given.

### Group Lessons:

I don't think most parents realize the value of having students attend group lessons. While both fun and motivating, group lessons help reinforce individual lessons and provide valuable opportunities for children to observe and learn from other children at slightly different skill levels. Group lessons allow students to work alongside others who share common repertory, musical skills, and aspirations. Social interaction and the opportunity to play as a group are important features that make private lessons productive and satisfying.

Group lessons & recitals provide an opportunity for students to perform for others on a regular basis, enabling students to develop musical fluency. They learn to feel at ease when playing for others. Group lesson attendance is required in the same way that attendance is required in the private lesson. The fee for group lessons is added to your tuition. Beginners are not charged for group lessons, but should be taken to the lesson to observe and listen.

Oftentimes group lessons will only be for students preparing for a group performance. At those times, only the students participating in the performance need to attend. Non participating students will receive a credit on their invoice.

### Recitals:

Recitals help students gain confidence performing as soloists. Recitals are an important part of the learning process, as they give the student further incentive to study by making him/her set and attain a goal within a certain timeframe. All students are expected to participate in the recitals. Students who participate in the recitals make more progress than those who do not. Recital fees are added to the tuition. If a student has an extenuating circumstance that prevents them from

participating in the recital, a credit will be issued to their invoice for that month.

### Young Artist Showcase Performance

This year I am very excited that our studio will have the opportunity to perform as an ensemble in a pre-concert for the Virginia Symphony at the Ferguson Performing Arts Center in Newport News. This performance will be on May 4, 2008. Students who participate will receive complimentary tickets to the Virginia Symphony concert on that day.

It is important that all participating students attend the rehearsals outlined in the rehearsal schedule for this event. A copy of the [rehearsal schedule](#) is posted on the website. A hardcopy of the schedule will also be provided to students.

Students are not required, but are highly encouraged to participate in this event. Ensemble skills are an important part of studying an instrument. Students also get a chance to practice their music-reading skills. There is no fee for this event. However, there may be a small fee for the extra rehearsals.

## Other Suzuki Activities

### Suzuki Teachers Association of Hampton Roads (STAHR):

STAHR is an organization formed by local Suzuki teachers from Hampton Roads. They organize numerous enriching Suzuki events for students and parents, which are held in Norfolk and Newport News. STAHR membership is recommended but not required. Families, who are certain that they will participate in STAHR events, should consider becoming a member. Membership is \$20/year per family.

Benefits are; Free participation in STAHR performances, Newsletters and periodic reminders of upcoming events, Updated information about Virginia Symphony events for youth, Occasional discounted tickets, and a Family discount for the annual Suzuki Violin Workshop.

Non-members are asked to pay a \$10 fee per event. See the enclosed [STAHR newsletter](#) for more details

## Staying Motivated

Sometimes students lose their motivation to practice and start entertaining the thought of quitting. First of all, it is up to the parents, not the student to make the decision that quitting is not an option. Sticking to it when it gets rough helps children to learn how to take on and overcome other challenging obstacles in their life. And that sometimes to get a desired result, it takes hard work and determination.

There are many things we could be doing to keep students motivated. Parents may find that reading the Suzuki Association of America Journals, which are included with their membership, can be inspirational. There are many articles written by Suzuki parents and teachers, about how to deal with difficult situations. Also talk to other parents in the studio. Many parents have valuable tips about practice and staying motivated.

One of the best things parents can do to keep students motivated is to keep their child involved in performances. Most students are motivated by performances because they feel a sense of accomplishment. And they see the result of the hard work of practice. They can also be motivated simply by seeing others perform music that they haven't learned yet.



### Practice:

Practice everyday! Regularity is vital. Dr. Suzuki said that we should practice on all the days that we eat. For many years I took that literally. But after a while, I began to feel that every student deserves at least one day off a week. So my personal philosophy is that students should practice 6 days a week. But I will accept no less than 5 days a week.

Practice should include; scales, review, sight-reading or etudes, and work on current piece. Books 4 & up students, should have the [Kreutzer Etude](#) book (Galamian edition). Books 2 & 3 students should have [Wohlfahrt Op. 38](#). Book 1 students need [Essential Elements 2000](#). Pre-twinkle students need [I Can Read Music](#) by Joanne Martin.

- ✓ Don't waste your practice time by allowing your child to argue with you!
- ✓ Set a regular time each day for practice so that your child will expect it. It will be much easier for you later on.
- ✓ Reward your child for practice with incentives such as stickers, prizes, etc.
- ✓ Mistakes are ok. We learn from mistakes, it is not the end of the world.

Last year, the Suzuki Workshop gave us a chart that compared practice time to rate of progress. Here it is!

### Practice Time

20 mins, 2 or 3x per week  
20 mins daily  
½ - 1 hr daily  
2 hrs daily

### Rate of Progress

4 years per book  
2 years per book  
1 book per year  
2 books per year

This only applies to efficient practice, which means practice time that is used wisely and not wasted!

### **Mastery:**

I can't say enough that we should be more concerned with **HOW** our children play vs **WHAT** they play. When I see parents so caught up in what piece their child is on, I feel sad that they are missing out on helping them learn to take the small steps necessary to carefully master each piece. No one wants to listen to a piece that is riddled with inaccuracies and mistakes. Help your child learn to practice carefully and slowly to get it perfect. Don't be so concerned with how long it takes them to master a skill. If given ample time, the skill will come. Move in small steps so the student can master the material with a total sense of success.

### **Memorization:**

Once music is memorized, students can focus better on the specific skills necessary for playing the piece. If memory is a problem, be sure that the student is consistently practicing using **repetition** of trouble spots. It is also vital that students are **listening** to their pieces daily. Rate of progress is positively correlated to the amount of listening done. Learning takes much longer if students aren't listening to their piece.

### **Review:**

Follow the Suzuki repertory sequence so that each piece becomes a building block for the careful development of technique. Constant repetition of the old pieces in a student's repertoire is the secret of the ability to perform with ease. Review raises one's ability by making pieces easier to play.

After a student has learned a piece, they should practice by comparing themselves to the CD and try to play along with the CD. This reinforces musical rhythm, tone, and musicianship. Simply learning the notes of a piece does not mean that a student is finished with the piece, this is just the beginning of the mastery process. Many parents think that "going to the next piece" means becoming more advanced. However, this is far from the truth. Fine ability is created with the older pieces; this is how the ability to play well will grow.

## Workshop Scholarship Fund

The annual Suzuki Workshop will be held on February 29<sup>th</sup> – March 1<sup>st</sup> 2008 at Hidenwood Presbyterian Church in Newport News again this year. This is a huge advantage to our studio since we are already familiar with the church from our recitals and group lessons.

At the workshop, students enjoy the freshness of being around different students and teachers for 2 days. Oftentimes, hearing advice from another teacher is all it takes for a concept to finally "stick". Students also enjoy making new friends and watching others perform at their

level and beyond.

Some of the parents that have attended the workshop in the past felt it was such a rewarding experience that they wished every student could benefit. They came up with the idea of starting a scholarship fund. I think this is a great idea! Therefore this year, I will be including a section on each invoice that indicates how parents may donate to this fund. It doesn't matter how little you donate, with everyone's help, we may be able to raise enough to send 1 to 3 students to the workshop on a scholarship!

## Local Orchestras

The Peninsula Youth Orchestra and Sinfonia will be having an open rehearsal is 5:30 p.m. September 10, 2007. Auditions for the orchestra will be held the following week. Rehearsals are held at Crittenden Middle School in Newport News. For more information visit their website at [www.peninsulayouth.org](http://www.peninsulayouth.org) .

Other popular orchestras in the area are, The Bay Youth Orchestras - [www.bayyouth.org](http://www.bayyouth.org) in Norfolk Virginia, and the Williamsburg Youth Orchestra - [www.wyomusic.org](http://www.wyomusic.org) in Williamsburg Virginia.

## Items for Sale

I have several used items that I am will be posting on the internet for sale. Before I post these items to the general public, I would like to advertise the items to my students. Here they are:



1. Three portable [Manhasset Voyager](#) Music Stands with the [stand tote bag](#) included. Paid \$35 for stand and \$15 for the bag. Asking \$30 for both

2. A ¾ size [Ewa Maestro Chinese](#) violin with oblong case and bow. Paid \$400 asking \$150.



3. A ¼ size [Conrad Pfeifer SV500](#) violin with nice oblong case. Bow needs to be replaced. Paid \$200, asking \$75.



4. A cute 1/8 size [H. Siegler HS20](#) violin with case. Bow needs to be replaced. Paid \$150, asking \$75.



5. A 1/8 [German Wolfgang Cello](#) with bow and soft case and bow. Paid \$800, asking \$450.



# Get to Know our New Students!



We have 7 new students this year. **OMG!!**

## Artie & Mia Hill:



Age: *Mila – 3 years old*  
*Artie - adult*

Length of Study: *2 months*

Current Book: *Pre-twinkle*

## Crystal Collins:



Age: *13 years old*

Length of Study: *3 years at school,*  
*2 months Suzuki*

Current Book: *Suzuki Book 1*

## Skylar Crawford:



Age: *12 years old*

Length of Study: *2 yrs off & on*  
*2 months Suzuki*

Current Book: *Suzuki Book 1*

*(Sorry, I forgot to take your photo!)*

## Marshal Padilla:



Age: *13*

Length of Study:

Current Book: *Suzuki Book 4*

*(Sorry, I forgot to take your photo!)*

## Rebecca Foster & Jordan Winn:



Age: *Jordan 2 years old*  
*Rebecca – Adult*

Length of Study: *Starts in September*

Current Book: *Suzuki Book 1*

## Welcome Back to:

**The Meiss Family!!** Those of you who have been around for a while may remember the Meiss girls, the moved away a several years ago. But they have moved closer to the area now and are living in Elizabeth City, North Carolina. I am delighted to have them back in the studio! Susanna is now 14, Esther is now 12, and Lydia is now 8.

## Goodbye to:

**Daven Ralston** graduated this year and is now attending the University of Virginia. We will miss her immensely.

**Benjamin Coaili** is moving to Bradenton, Florida. We will all miss his powerful playing.