

# COPPER COUNTRY SUZUKI NEWS

## January 2012

### CALENDAR

- Jan. 2 Lessons resume
- Jan. 5 CCSA Board Meeting – Chapel of St. Matthew, 7:15 p.m.
- Jan. 14 Tuning workshop, 3:00 p.m. MTU Band Room
- Jan. 17 Musical Tuesdays at the Portage Lake District Library, 10:15 a.m.
- Jan. 28 KYSO Performance at Heikenpaiva – Finnish American Heritage Center, 11:30 a.m.**

### Faith

After almost 20 years of teaching music to children, I've been thinking lately about what factors into the success of keeping children engaged in the study of an instrument. Why is it that some parents are able to keep their children in violin lessons from age three through college and some don't last six months or their children quit when they reach high school? There are a lot of unhappy people who "used to play the violin." I hear many, many stories of parents whose adult children call to complain "why did you let me quit?" forgetting the foot stomping and eye-rolling inflicted on their parents every time they were told to practice; the tantrums at lessons, the refusal to let go of mom's hand, misbehaving at group class. It's actually quite amazing that anyone studies the violin (or viola or cello or piano) at all. While it's true that some children take to their instrument immediately; this is much more an exception than a rule. For parents, I think it boils down to *faith*. Faith that your child will benefit from studying an instrument, faith that they will eventually appreciate all the effort, faith that some day that e-string won't squeak quite so badly that they will actually finish Book One. (There are over twice as many Suzuki Violin Book 1s sold as the other nine books combined). One of the many definitions of the word *faith* is "Belief that does not rest on logical truth or material evidence." Is it logical to drive 30 minutes to your child's violin lesson and have them roll around on the floor for 25 minutes, ask for a prize and then take a bow? Is it logical to play "Twinkle" 700 times? Is there material evidence that your child will actually learn to play the viola with some proficiency? Albert Einstein defined insanity as "doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result." I think you could possibly say that about taking a three year old to their violin lesson week after week and expecting them to behave or pleading with your teenager over and over to practice and expecting them to suddenly *love* playing their cello. Yes, this probably seems a little crazy! But we do this anyway because we

have faith that we are doing the right thing. The truth is that with the right environment and a lot of patience eventually they *will* behave and that e-string won't squeak and if you stick it out long enough they'll be making music that will move you to tears and in that instant you'll forget all that *bad stuff*. This is all well within the realm of possibility! Your children will become better people for it, happier adults, patrons of the arts, and yes, they will eventually appreciate your efforts. Hang in there. Your child *can* become an accomplished musician and actually enjoy making music. You just have to have a little faith.

Happy Music Making!

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- **SAVE YOUR ECONO RECEIPTS.** One very simple way to help with our fundraising efforts is to save your Econo Foods receipts. **Econo Foods will donate 1% of all sales (excluding tax and gasoline) for receipts that are turned in and 5 cents for every Our Family product label.** All you need to do is save your Econo receipts and Our Family labels and give them to your private instructor.
- **Saturday Workshops** – This year, the CCSA will begin providing workshops on Saturdays on a number of different topics; from fiddling to vibrato and more! The first one is Saturday, January 14 at 3:00 p.m. in the MTU band room. CCSA Instructors will talk about instrument tuning and maintenance. This workshop is aimed at CCSA students in book 2 and up and all CCSA parents.
- **Good News** – The CCSA was just awarded a \$7,500 grant from the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs. This grant will allow us to further our scholarship program and continue the many services that the CCSA provides.
- **Great performances last month!** The CCSA had several performances in the month of November and December. I have heard many, many positive comments from community members. The attendees at the Little Brothers Thanksgiving Dinner were exceptionally appreciative. You really helped brighten their day. Thanks for everyone who took part!