

Suzuki  
Piano  
Basics  
foundation News

*To facilitate, promote, and educate the public on the way of teaching and playing the piano taught at the Talent Education Research Institute in Matsumoto, Japan by Dr. Haruko Kataoka*

*Please Teach  
How to Practice*

**By Haruko Kataoka**

From the Matsumoto Suzuki Piano Newsletter

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Translated by Chisa Aoki and  
Teri Paradero

Edited by Karen Hagberg

**Piano Basics  
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**Next Deadline: February 15, 2019**

Teachers of most subjects generally define a task, with care from the outset, and then show how it must be done in order to achieve certain results.

Cooking shows on TV for example, begin with the gathering and preparation of the ingredients. The instructors detail various things, such as how to cut and otherwise prepare the ingredients. Then they explain what kind of heat to use, whether high or low, and the length of cooking time, whether to sauté quickly or slowly. These are crucial 'must do' instructions at specific points in the preparation in order to end up with a delicious dish. They explain in a gentle way that can be easily understood.

Such a process influences how we live. We see the same process in the world of sports, where the "what" and the "how" are explained in specific detail.

Why is it not so, however, in the world of classical piano music? I feel it is because basic fundamental issues are not sufficiently explained and taught to beginners. Students are simply told at lessons to practice well until the next lesson, and when they return home they are left to practice willy-nilly, however they can, when left to their own devices.

What happens to students who are not taught what and how to practice? What would be the result of such practicing if it is bad practice? The more students continue to practice badly, the worse they become. Continuing in this way for several years, the poor student will be in a nearly irreversible condition.

I have been teaching for many years now and have given lessons to various and numerous students. I witnessed many students in nearly irreversible condition not only here in Japan, but also in other places: Europe, America, Canada and Australia. I do not think there are teachers with bad intentions. There isn't a single person who would intentionally teach their students to be really poor players. So what is the reason for these bad results?

Europe, the birthplace of classical music, has a long history, and over that long time they came to believe that only those who were born with musical talent could be successful in classical music. This rigid way of thinking is the culprit.

Dr. Shinichi Suzuki's wonderful belief was that all children possess exceptional potential. His thinking was that if children are exposed to the right environment they can perform with great musicality just as the way they learn their mother tongue by being surrounded by those who speak their language. He believed this is the way to develop ability in the arts. In contrast, those

with rigid thinking who do not believe in children's potential may not have had the opportunity to research how children learn when they are beginners.

Dr. Suzuki always said, "Let's listen to the recording and memorize the piece. After you memorize, we can start the real work of studying the piece and learning how to practice the piece." This is exactly the case. Memorizing a piece, in terms of cooking, means you have just gathered the ingredients for a recipe. Nobody assumes that you have finished cooking at this point. It is from this point that you learn to put together the ingredients step-by-step until you have a final dish.

Similarly, in the study of music, what comes after memorization is what is important. This is when you learn how to use your body to produce a specific tone or how to use your fingers to produce tone quality or color. This is the most crucial part of music study. Any listener will delight in a polished piece that comes from the heart as the result of such vital practice.

Teachers are mentors to students. Teachers, having knowledge of a variety of things, must be able to teach how to practice a difficult passage, what to do to achieve a crescendo, what to do to sing out the melody, or how to play the accompaniment. In any case, please learn **how** to practice. It is a waste of time merely to tell students to practice, practice, practice.

The thing that I reflect upon most when thinking of the many years of teaching is how important it is to teach children how to practice from the very beginning with tenacity. When very young children are taught to practice small parts slowly, many times repeatedly, they mature into adults who are able matter-of-factly to use this ability to practice effortlessly. This is a task that is too difficult if students are asked to practice this way when they are already playing advanced repertoire. I cannot emphasize enough how important the beginning is when it comes to learning or teaching. If children are taught correctly from the very beginning, ability can be relied upon throughout life.

On the other hand, with improper teaching from the beginning the resulting ability can lead to a lifetime of suffering. I am always haunted by this. It is not the children's fault. It is the responsibility of adults, especially teachers. Because teachers are around children, we have to roll up our sleeves every

day and always endeavor to research how to teach how to practice. Not only students, we teachers must study every day. If we wish to preserve our beautiful, natural earth for posterity, we must, one-by-one, change the way we think.

### ***Note from the Editor***

The teachers who attended the General Membership Meeting of Suzuki Piano Basics Foundation in Louisville last August discussed an ongoing issue: how to attract new teachers. They came up with a couple of very good ideas: 1) Create a modern-looking web site that will link directly to the site we already have that would appeal to new teachers and 2) write stories of how we became involved with Suzuki Piano Basics and publish these in our newsletter.

Both really good ideas!

But now I am appealing to those who were present at the meeting and to all other of our members: **please follow up on these good suggestions.** Do not simply come up with ideas and expect them miraculously to happen.

We have been searching among our membership for someone willing to create such a web site for a while. Now we have the Chair of our Board of Directors, Bruce Boiney, who is stepping up to do it. Bruce is eminently capable of creating the web site we want (check out his own amazing web site at [www.suzukipiano.com](http://www.suzukipiano.com)), and he is appealing to our membership for volunteers to serve on a web site committee. There are those of you whose input in this project will be invaluable, and those of you who have said you want to see such a web site materialize. So please step up and contact Bruce ([boiney@me.com](mailto:boiney@me.com)) to give him your support in this effort. We cannot expect Bruce to do this job in a vacuum.

As for the second good suggestion, I have received no stories for publication. Where are they?? This newsletter could be so much more meaningful to all of us if we all participated in its production. I have appealed for articles many times over the years and have had very few submissions. I want to hear from you. We all want to hear from you! So what was it that brought you into the Suzuki Piano Basics way of teaching? Please think about it and write it down and send it to me ([khagberg1943@gmail.com](mailto:khagberg1943@gmail.com)). I am not the only one who would find your story really compelling.

Let's look forward to the New Year with renewed commitment to this wonderful organization!

Karen Hagberg

# ***Teaching Video Website Redesign***

I am pleased to announce that with the assistance of East Carolina University's Mediasite Administrator Jarrett Shafer, Dr. Kataoka's teaching video website will soon have a more user friendly appearance. The home page will feature Suzuki Piano School book covers 1 - 7 as entrances to Dr. Kataoka's student lessons on pieces from each book. Once you enter Book 1, for example, the Dr. Kataoka's teaching videos should appear in the same order as the

pieces are listed in Book 1. Almost all lessons in this ongoing effort have been created by digitizing VHS recordings of Dr. Kataoka's teachings donated by SPBF teachers and parents. Hopefully, once Carol Wunderle (captions and content assessment) and I (VHS transfer to digital files) finish processing the VHS cassettes, a comprehensive Suzuki Piano School library of Dr. Kataoka's digital teaching videos of Books 1 - 7 will be available. I will announce the completion of the redesigned web site sometime in early 2019. SPBF is grateful for the media expertise and technical support East Carolina University provides for Dr. Haruko Kataoka's legacy and the Suzuki children, teachers, and parents of the world.

Ken Wilburn, SPBF Web Editor

## ***ATTENTION MEMBERS***

Next Scholarship Application Deadline for the  
August 2019 Suzuki Piano Basics Teacher Research Institute in Sacramento is

**June 15.**

Please contact Hannah Hall, Scholarship Chairperson  
([correctthecause@gmail.com](mailto:correctthecause@gmail.com))

or download application materials from our web site  
([core.ecu.edu/hist/wilburnk/SuzukiPianoBasics/](http://core.ecu.edu/hist/wilburnk/SuzukiPianoBasics/))

Funds are available to assist both new and experienced teachers to attend this event

# ***Piano Basics Foundation – General Meeting***

## ***August 3, 2018***

***Louisville, Kentucky***

### **Attending:**

Karmalita Bawar  
Janet Kaido  
Bruce Boiney  
Hannah Hall  
Barbara Brown  
Linda Nakagawa  
Renee Eckis  
Carol Novak  
Jacqueline Graham  
Patricia Pritchard  
Jane Guerin  
Shelley Sparks-Munson

### **Secretary's Report**

Karmalita Bawar read the August 13, 2017 minutes. Bruce Boiney approved the minutes. Carol Novak seconded the motion.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Linda Nakagawa gave her report (2018 report attached).

### **Nominations**

Nominations were compiled by Ann Taylor (absent) and presented by Renee Eckis:

Renee Eckis – President  
Jacki Block – Vice President  
Linda Nakagawa – Treasurer  
Karmalita Bawar – Secretary  
Shelley Sparks-Munson motioned to accept the slate of officers and Janet Kaido seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

### **Scholarship Committee Report**

There was no recipient in 2017. One recipient in 2018 who was unable to attend a Piano Basics Workshop so it wasn't used. Shelley Sparks-Munson and Bruce Boiney suggested

scholarship recipients should be a member of Piano Basics Foundation. Dues could possibly be required with application. Anyone who doesn't receive the scholarship could receive a refund.

### **Unfinished Business**

Promoting Piano Basics Foundation membership to studio families. Membership is beneficial to families:

- Parent education and resources
- Articles by Dr. Kataoka on website and in their hands (their own copy of the printed newsletter)
- Upcoming events listings
- Supports and underwrites future workshops and airfare for visiting Japanese teachers
- Supports teacher development

Encouraging New Teachers to Join Piano Basics Foundation. Renee Eckis noted that many Piano Basics teachers are over 60 years old.

Linda Nakagawa suggested SAA Teacher Trainers should be the frontrunners for promoting Piano Basics Foundation, as they are by far receiving the most exposure to new Suzuki Piano teachers. She also suggested Piano Basics Teacher Trainers (those who teach students and other teachers in workshops) are second in the responsibility to recruit new members. We are the model for our students and as such, we need to continue to have lessons and be a member of the Piano Basics Foundation.

Discussion ensued regarding university pedagogy and recruitment topics. Members wondered how prevalent Suzuki Methodology is represented in higher education. Members recalled how many of us didn't start with two grand pianos, so we should be sensitive to younger, interested teachers when relating our own beginnings to them.

Bruce Boiney articulated that we need a way to identify and promote new teachers. Two considerations were: start-up stories in the newsletter; and a teacher's forum.

Janet Kaido suggested newer teachers have a mentor. Linda Nakagawa suggested we each consider writing a little article about how it was when we started teaching.

### **Website Report**

Bruce Boiney said, under webmaster Ken Wilburn's suggestion, we will update our website. We will have a link to the old website which we continue to be maintained by ECU. Bruce Boiney needs to form a website committee. Any member who wishes to be on this committee should contact Bruce Boiney.

Website future content ideas:

- Attractive design
- Digital newsletter
- Lesson videos
- Educational supplements, resources for parents, links to supplies
- Music links
- Upcoming events with photography and video promotion

·History/Education

·Separate Parent and Teacher chat rooms

### **New Business**

Membership Fees Proposal. International membership fees will increase to \$60/year, and Canadian membership fee will remain at \$40/year. Unanimously approved.

Matsumoto, Japan 10-Piano Concert on April 28, 2019. Deadline for teachers with students attending and student applicants is August 25, 2018. Deadline for teachers without students attending is November 15, 2018. All applicants must contact Dr. Karen Hagberg by the deadline dates.

Summer 2019 10-Piano Concert in Sacramento, California. Linda Nakagawa will make this announcement in a few weeks. It is not yet determined whether or not there will be a concert in the summer of 2019.

Summer 2020 Workshops. Due to the Summer Olympics in 2020, the Japanese teachers will not travel during the summer of 2020. We are unsure if they would attend a February 2020 Teacher Workshop at this time.

Linda Nakagawa motioned to adjourn. Bruce Boiney seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Karmalita Bawar.

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# ***Suzuki Piano Basics Foundation 2018 Annual Report***

***January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018***

<b>Starting Balance:</b>	<b>\$16,445.26</b>
Income:	+\$19,399.59
Expenses:	<u>-\$15,333.9</u>

**Ending Balance:        \$20,510.92**

## **Expenses**

Legal/Accounting  
\$692.00  
Supplies  
\$65.78  
Materials  
\$4,365.00  
Postage  
\$1,942.73  
Printing  
\$1,668.73  
Travel  
\$5,396.52  
Compensations  
**Total \$4,500.00**

## **Income**

Dues	\$9,340.00
Donations	\$965.00
Travel	\$3,600.00
10-Piano	\$3,000.00
Memorial Fund	\$525.00
Scholarship Fund	\$140.00
Bert Mayers Memorial	\$145.00
Materials	<u>\$1,684.59</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$19,399.59</b>

## **Cash On Hand**

Donations:	+\$5,208.00
Memorial Fund	\$2,230.05
Japan 10-Piano	-\$3,000.00
Scholarship Fund	\$1,235.00
Bert Mayers Scholarship:	\$ 615.00
General Fund:	\$8,222.87

**Respectfully submitted by Linda Nakagawa, Treasurer**

## ***Suzuki Piano Basics Foundation: The People***

Here is a list of persons responsible for the various workings of our organization. Please feel free to contact any of us with your questions and concerns or to volunteer your help. We always welcome written input from any and all of our members to share in this newsletter. What is on your mind? Don't put off writing that article!

### **Board of Directors (serving 3-year term beginning August):**

Bruce Boiney, Chair (term ends 2020)  
Patricia Pritchard, Recording Secretary  
(term ends 2020)  
Hannah Hall (term ends 2019)  
Connie Snyder (term ends 2020)  
Linda Nakagawa (term ends 2019)  
Karen Hagberg (term ends 2021)  
Keiko Ogiwara, Honorary Life Member

### **Nominations Committee:**

Ann Taylor, Chair

### **Officers:**

Renee Eckis, President  
Jacki Block, Vice President  
Karmalita Bawar, Secretary  
Linda Nakagawa, Treasurer

### **Scholarship Committee:**

#### **Newsletter:**

Karen Hagberg, Editor  
Teri Paradero, Design & Layout  
Teri Paradero & Chisa Aoki, Translation  
Linda Nakagawa, Printing and Mailing

#### **Membership Services:**

Linda Nakagawa, Directory Editor  
Linda Nakagawa, Educational Materials Order Fulfillment Manager

### **New Web Site Development Chair:**

Bruce Boiney, Chair

### **Suzuki Piano Basics Web Site:**

Prof. Kenneth Wilburn, Web Master  
Carol Wunderle, Content Editor

If you would like to assume responsibility for any part of the workings of the Suzuki Piano Basics Foundation, or if you know someone who would, please contact our Nominations Committee Chairperson, Ann Taylor, before June 15. Current contact information for all persons listed above may be found in our directory.

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**Welcome,  
New Family Members:**  
(see hard copy)



# ***Piano Basics Foundation*** ***Upcoming Workshops/Events***

**February 14-18, 2019**

**Orange County, California**

Suzuki Piano Basics Teacher Research Workshop  
With Keiko Ogiwara and Keiko Kawamura  
Contact Rae Kate Shen, 909-794-9461  
[raekshen@ymail.com](mailto:raekshen@ymail.com)

**July 22, 2019**

**St. Louis, Missouri**

St. Louis Suzuki Piano Basics Workshop  
With Rae Kate Shen and Bruce Anderson  
Contact Patty Eversole 314-837-1881  
[paeversole@yahoo.com](mailto:paeversole@yahoo.com)  
<http://stlsuzukipiano.tripod.com/>

**April 28, 2019**

**Matsumoto, Japan 10-Piano Concert**

Leave April 11; Return April 29  
Teacher registration deadline: November 25  
Contact Karen Hagberg, 585-978-0600  
[khagberg1943@gmail.com](mailto:khagberg1943@gmail.com)

**August 2019 (dates tbd)**

**Sacramento, California**

Suzuki Piano Basics Teacher Research Workshop  
With Keiko Ogiwara and Keiko Kawamura  
Contact Linda Nakagawa, 916-422-2952  
[g.nakagawa@comcast.net](mailto:g.nakagawa@comcast.net)

**June 15, 2019**

**Sacramento, California**

**Deadline for Scholarship Applications for August workshop**  
(see announcement on page 4)



**The events listed above are for the information of Suzuki Piano Basics Foundation members and others. Suzuki Piano Basics Foundation does not endorse, sanction, or sponsor events.**

To add or change items on this list and on the Suzuki Piano Basics website, contact  
Karen Hagberg ([khagberg1943@gmail.com](mailto:khagberg1943@gmail.com), 585-978-0600).

## Suzuki Piano Basics

### Crossword Challenge

