

# Dorothy Jones: A teacher's teacher

If you have doubts about the adage that teachers are born and not made, perhaps the story of On Top of the World resident Dorothy Jones will change your mind.

As strange as it may sound, Dorothy began her teaching career while she was still in kindergarten in rural Ontario.

Every day after school, she would rush home, not to play with dolls or skip rope, but to teach her 3-year-old brother everything she had learned at school that day.

If you are wondering about her effectiveness as a teacher, consider this. Two years later, on his very first day of school, Dorothy's brother was promptly moved ahead from kindergarten to grade one. On his second school day, he was moved ahead again, this time into his sister Dorothy's grade two class!

From that auspicious start, Dorothy never looked back.

She progressed quickly through elementary school, high school, teacher's college and then to the University of Western Ontario, where she met the man she would spend the rest of her life with. Maestro Don Jones was auditioning singers for a part in the musical "Iolanthe." Dorothy likes to say that she got both the part and the conductor that day. They have been happily married ever since.

After teaching for a few years, Dorothy stayed at home to raise the couple's two daughters, Beth and Sharon.

When Beth begged her mom for violin lessons, Dorothy decided upon the Suzuki Method of musical instruction. It was a decision that took Dorothy and her family on a 30-year adventure of epic proportion.



Dorothy Jones' book of teaching memories spans three decades.

## Getting to Know You

A monthly feature about the people in your  
On Top of the World community

by John Koning

The Suzuki Method is a musical instruction technique that promotes immersion over examination.

Founder, Dr. Shinichi Suzuki, noticed how joyfully and naturally children learned their mother tongue. On the contrary, he observed many young children who were being discouraged by the harsh examination structure of traditional musical instruction. He decided to develop and teach a system that favored listening over reading – a system where children learned through example and familiarity.

To use his own words, "I believe that a human being

is formed through the great activity of life, through absorbing from the environment."

Dorothy signed her two children up as the first children in Ontario to be taught the Suzuki Method. After the birth of their son, David, Dorothy became a Suzuki teacher instead of returning to the classroom. It was a career move that took her to Japan to meet Dr. Suzuki and to learn from the man whose genius brought a new face to musical instruction.

During one of her visits, Dorothy was encouraged by Dr. Suzuki to start a Suzuki school in their home city of London, Ontario, and to de-

velop a new musical instruction program for babies.

Dorothy, with her daughter's help, founded the Suzuki Early Childhood Education (SECE) Baby/Toddler program and has enjoyed tremendous international success with it.

Dorothy and her daughter, Sharon, have traveled extensively as they train teachers who, in turn, deliver the program to eager parents and their children. The program was enthusiastically supported by the Suzuki family and has spread like wild-fire.

In 2010, Dorothy received the highest honor of the Suzuki Association

of the Americas. She was celebrated in front of 1500 delegates with the "Building Community Award" for her work as founder and first proponent of SECE.

She was heralded as the "Heart of Suzuki Early Childhood Education."

After many thousands of miles and countless airports and hotels, Dorothy is now ready to stay closer to home.

Does that mean this teacher, trainer, lecturer and author is ready to retire?

Not on your life! Dorothy will follow in her mentor's footsteps, and teach until she is no longer able.