

July 2016 >>>

A publication of Sedona Charter School  
K-8 Tuition-free Montessori School

## Dreaming a Dream

This month's newsletter is all about our Strings Program. We want to take you on a musical journey from the past, through the present to the future. We hope you will pass this edition on to family and friends and share with them the dream we have of building a Performing Arts Classroom on our West Sedona campus.

In order for anything to become a reality, someone has to have a dream. We are so thankful that Bob and Terri Wentsch had the desire to make instrumental music a part of their classroom and worked to see that become a reality. See the article on page 3 for Bob's perspective and a mini-history of how the program grew from

infancy to what it was when Kristina Beachell came on the scene.

As a parent, you recognize what makes Sedona Charter School special for your family, whether it's the Montessori focus of education, the excellent student/teacher ratio, the family atmosphere, or our one-of-

a-kind Strings Program building character, perseverance and responsibility through music. Since we are not content to just keep doing what we've been doing, it's our dream to see this program grow even more, have a greater impact on our students and our community, and see our alumni excel not only academically but musically.

Hence, the need to build a Performing Arts Classroom on campus. Have you ever stepped foot in our current strings classroom? Did you know it's a converted garage space large enough for a VW bug that only holds nine students at a time plus the teacher? If we can develop a Strings Program as awesome as we have with those constraints, imagine what we could do with a fully functioning Performing Arts Classroom!

**DREAM with us and let's work together to make that dream come true!**



**Clarence Shaw:** violinist, conductor, teacher and visionary.

**His vision:** Create an elementary Strings Program so strong that our local high school would be compelled to offer a Strings Program of their own and create a youth orchestra that would make Sedona proud.



**our strings mission...** Sedona Charter School believes that the enjoyment, respect and knowledge of music and development of the skills necessary in creating and performing music enhance learning, develop critical life skills, enrich quality of life and nourish the human spirit. Therefore, our mission is to provide a foundation, at an early age, for lifelong engagement with music.



The First Evening with Strings  
May, 2013

## INSTRUMENT SPOTLIGHT

### SUMMER GOALS

Many of our students take home their violins and cellos to practice over the summer. We hope those instruments don't collect dust in a corner! Summer is a great time to hone skills and make room in your schedule for extra practice time. When it's too hot to be outdoors, practicing an instrument is a great way to spend indoor hours.

Parents, this is where you come in! It is the rare student who will voluntarily spend hours practicing during the summer. Here are a few tips to get your child to practice:

- Make it the first activity of the day after a good breakfast.
- Tie computer or TV time to practice time during the summer. 30 minutes on the violin earns your child 30 minutes of computer/TV time.
- Show an interest in the music your child is playing. Sit down and listen.
- Give your child "performance" opportunities over the summer, whether playing for visiting relatives or just for siblings—help them work toward a goal.
- Encourage your child to practice—you'll be amazed how fast 30 minutes goes by if practice is seen as an opportunity for growth rather than a chore.





## Cultivating the Desire for Music

“As one studies Montessori’s Great Lessons, for example the History of Writing, part of the lesson is for the child to develop an appreciation and thankful attitude for what his ancestors accomplished in the past to enable him to have the skills and abilities that may be taken for granted in the present. As I took part in the most recent Evening with Strings concert, I was thinking about how all this had come to be and how Great Lessons are developing around us slowly every day.

“Having been around Sedona Charter School for a while now, I’ve had the time to develop an historical perspective.... Everything begins with an idea and individuals with the tenacity and determination to see that the vision is brought into reality. Our current Strings Program is the beneficiary of such vision and determination.

“Growing up, I attended schools where the arts were an accepted part of my education. Wishing music to be a part of the children’s experience in our class at SCS, and knowing the benefits music adds to academic achievement, we’ve always done singing and recorders, but Terri and I wanted something more. Brass and woodwind instruments seemed a bit beyond students’ reach, but a Strings Program was definitely within our grasp.

### Classroom Strings Performance Winter, 2008



“Our first strings teacher in the late 1990’s was Eve Schenk, THE violin teacher in Sedona at the time and my private cello instructor. The program was voluntary and students had to rent their own instruments. When Eve and her family moved on, the violin program became dormant.

“As my cello playing progressed, I became a part of the Verde Valley Chamber Orchestra led by Maestro Clarence Shaw. At that time Mr. Shaw was not the close friend he is now, but a rather formidable conductor. Undeterred, Terri talked to him about teaching violin to our students and he agreed to lead our Strings Program.”



—Bob Wentsch

Mr. Shaw wanted to create such strong musicians that the local high school would be compelled to offer their own Strings Program and Sedona would have a showcase youth orchestra. He began teaching third years, then added second years, eventually requiring all LE students to participate. During these early years, violins were shared and students were given performance opportunities in the classroom from time to time. The first children who began studying with Mr. Shaw graduated from Sedona Red Rock High

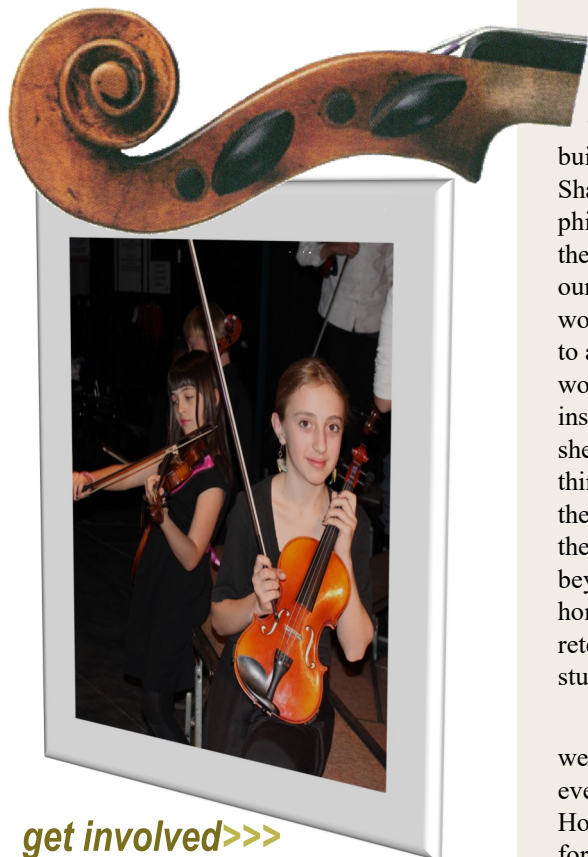
School this May as accomplished musicians — among them Peter and Cosmo. When Mr. Shaw’s family needed his attention, he wholeheartedly recommended Kristina Beachell to pick up where he left off and grow the program.

Kristina joined our faculty in February 2011 and the program continued to expand and grow with the implementation of the Suzuki teaching method, formal concert opportunities and the development of advanced and junior orchestras.



# WE ARE ONE WITH OUR INSTRUMENTS

## Growing the Love of Music



With each new teacher, comes a different approach and a renewed vision. Kristina Beachell was able to build on what Eve Shenk and Clarence Shaw started, bringing her own philosophy, approach and methodology to the table. She has succeeded in elevating our program to a whole new level, working tirelessly alongside Alice Madar to apply for grants so that each child would have access to his/her own instrument for the first time. In addition, she shared Mr. Shaw's vision to grow the third years' love of music so much that they would desire to continue playing in the Upper Elementary classroom and beyond. She has opened the program to homeschool students and increased the retention rate to include Middle School students as well.

We knew that many of our students were developing an appreciation for and even a love for playing the violin. However, what we could not have foreseen was the passion for excellence that Kristina brought and the infectious desire it produced in all of her students. "I had no idea" are the words that come to mind for many who attend our concerts. "I had no idea 6-year olds could play Led Zeppelin's *Kashmir* with professional musicians." "I had no idea 10-year olds could play *Danse Bacchanale* and send chills down my spine." "I had no idea 100 elementary students could play music so beautifully it made me cry."

With instruments of their own, students are now able to practice whenever and for as long as they desire; and we are seeing students excel and "fall in love" with playing their instruments. Older students are encouraged to continue in the program with opportunities to perform even more in both the beginning and advanced orchestras.

Anyone who has watched young children knows that if you put a violin and a bow in the hands of a 6-year-old child, you immediately have a sword and a shield! But Kristina's patience, quiet discipline and methodical approach has not only fostered a love of music, but a respect for instruments as well. She has successfully adapted the Suzuki method to a public school environment through the use of modeling, self-evaluation and fun games to achieve the goals of excellent posture, great technique and the ability to both hear and produce a rich tone. She has taught students to be serious about their instruments and serious about the music they create — and they all love being in her classroom, tiny as it may be!

With more and more Upper Elementary students continuing in their desire to play violin and growing in their abilities and love for music, we are more excited than ever about the future of our program. The more students learn, the more they want to learn, and the desire to be part of our Strings Program has been overwhelming!



**get involved>>>**

### Ways You Can Help

**Everyone working together  
will make our dream a reality**

- Share our Performing Arts Classroom page with your Facebook family and friends — <http://sedonacharterschool.com/music-building/>.
- Donate on our Performing Arts Classroom page—even a small donation will generate more donations.
- Volunteer to serve on the committee to relocate our playground.
- Talk with local companies about donating time, materials or money toward our project.
- Use amazon.smile.com and designate Sedona Charter School as your charity of choice. A percentage of your purchases will go to the school and be put toward our Performing Arts Classroom.



# Strings

## Catch the Vision!

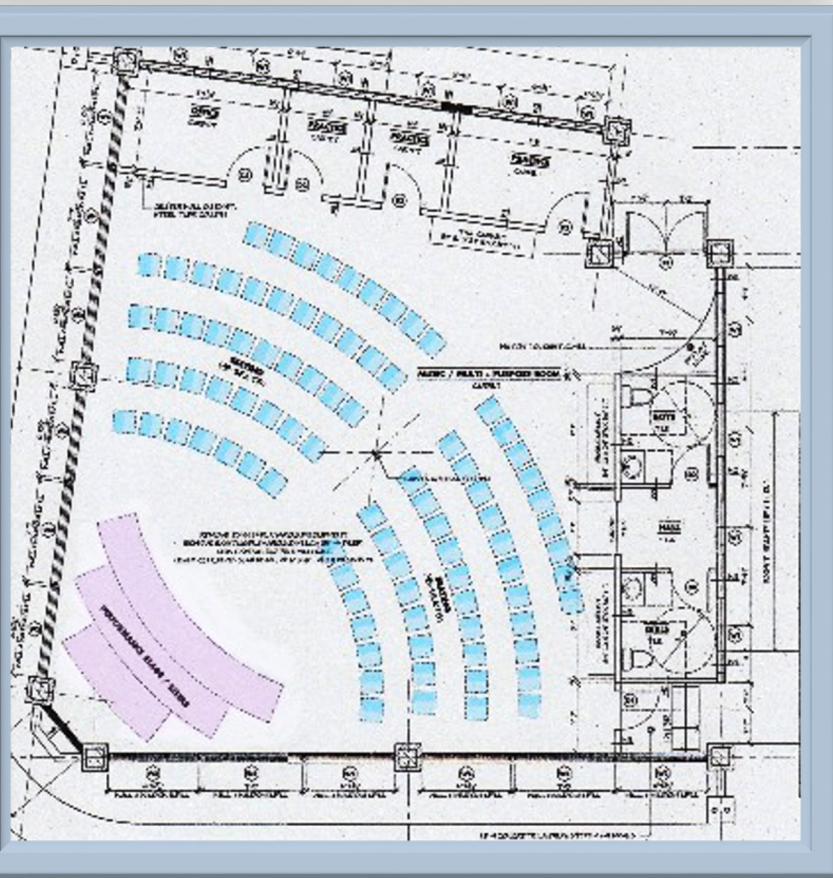
During the past 5 years that Kristina has been teaching at SCS, more and more students have committed to our Strings Program and continue playing not only violin but viola and cello through Upper Elementary and Middle School. With the increased numbers, students are fine tuning and honing their skills, taking advantage of more performance opportunities and generating a greater desire for others to be involved.



However, the more students we have, the more challenging life becomes in a 96 sq. ft. classroom space barely large enough to park a Volkswagen Beetle! Due to fire code restrictions and extremely tight space, only nine students, plus the teacher, are allowed in the room at one time. That's why we want you to understand our need and catch the vision for our new Performing Arts Classroom.

Located where the playground currently stands, this classroom will allow for larger groups of students to learn and practice at one time. With over 2000 square feet of teaching space, it will be a venue for classes, rehearsals and performances of all types, from music to drama to dance.

Imagine how we can grow our Strings Program with the right facility!



All of the constraints that currently exist will be loosened to create a world of possibilities and opportunities.

Yes, we have a GREAT foundation! We have committed staff, faculty, parents and students! What we need now is **SPACE!** Our goal is to raise \$125,000 to build a Performing Arts Classroom allowing our Strings Program to grow and expand and truly thrive.



## ask the students >>>

### KRISTINA

*Let's take a moment to thank  
an important person. Guess who?  
The amazing and talented Kristina! It's you!  
Not only do you teach us to play,  
but you inspire us every day.*

*We hope tonight was music to your ears,  
Thank you for helping us grow over the years.  
We may be famous violinists one day, who knows?  
If we are, it's because of what you've shown us to do  
with our strings and our bows.*

*We'll put away "shy guy" for the summer, but that's all,  
'cause we'll be back playing better than ever this fall.*

*To show you our gratitude for all that you do,  
enjoy this bouquet made special for you.*



—Zoe Griffey  
—Gabbi Garrison

Violin has shaped my life in so many ways. It has greatly enhanced my love of music. I now understand the language of music. I can play and express on my own as well as play and collaborate with other musicians. Kristina is the person who has brought music into so many kids' lives, including mine. She is very hard working and generous toward her students. All of the kids in the music program love her. If it were not for Kristina, I probably would never have considered playing a musical instrument. I hope that everyone will help to raise enough money for our music room so that we are not squished together like sardines in a can every time we go to practice.

It's pretty cool how she teaches us violin. For example — Arizona Cactus! It's like the root of the system. Miss Kristina spreads the learning starting with *Arizona Cactus* and it just gets bigger and bigger and eventually .... *Hot Cross Buns!*

—Fernando  
1st grade

I began taking violin in first grade, back when Mr. Shaw was still teaching. Playing with Mr. Shaw was enjoyable, yes, but I fell in love with my instrument because of Kristina. She taught me not only to play, but to feel the music. In order to feel music, you have to feel yourself. You have to tell an audience the story that the music tells without words, and to do that, you need to put everything you have into that piece, and every piece that follows. Sure, she taught me how to play the violin, but she also taught me about expression, and how to add meaning into everything that I do. Kristina has taught me the value of being a vulnerable human. My hands now have the ability to create something more beautiful than what meets the eye, and I will continue to grow and stretch that talent.

—Echo  
5th grade

—Emma  
8th grade





ask the parents >>>

# Strings

## WHAT IMPACT HAS KRISTINA HAD ON YOUR FAMILY?

Verde Valley Concert Association  
Scholarship Competition  
February, 2015

Winter Strings Concert  
The Master's Bible Church  
December 2013



Our  
students  
made a  
clean  
sweep and  
won at  
every level

Kristina is an amazing teacher, she just seems to have the right balance of being strict so the students listen to her. She helps them improve. She also has this wonderful sense of humor and this smile that's very infectious. Students leave with the desire to improve their skills and with a greater passion for music in general.

—Jodi W.

All the effort Kristina puts into teaching our kids shows at the performances and it shows when our kids are practicing. I know my daughter doesn't commit to a lot of things. Kristina's been able to keep her on track and cultivate this amazing gift that my daughter has.

—Dawn K.



Kristina also has this super power or magical gift where she gets just the right response from her students. And she doesn't even have to say anything, just one look and they understand what she wants from them. You can see that in the way they take lessons from her, and their performances are magnificent.

—Tara R.



We all have a lot of stories about Kristina because she really is that amazing. One of the things that I think is really impressive is that over the years they've gotten better and better and better. The kids are still new when they first start, but for some reason they don't sound new. What that tells me is that not only have our kids grown in the program, but Kristina has grown as a teacher. I love that we get to experience somebody who is continuing to grow in her craft. She's not just growing us, we're growing her.

—Kim W.





*Musical ability is not an inborn talent but an ability which can be developed.  
The potential of every child is unlimited. —Shinichi Suzuki*



## WHAT MAKES OUR STRINGS PROGRAM SO UNIQUE?

When prospective parents ask me about SCS (and they do), one of the foremost things that I mention as one of the school's great positives is our Strings Program. None of my children take private violin lessons, yet I have seen remarkable progress in their skills just from classroom time. Violin-playing has helped my children excel and fills them with a wonderful sense of accomplishment. They see the tangible results of all their hard work each time they play.

— Lucia. A.

My child feels completely empowered when he pulls out his violin to play. He loves that he can identify the parts and that he knows how to carefully care for it. He is learning self-discipline, responsibility, patience, greater concentration and perseverance. He is becoming more teachable. He is always so proud to show us his talents and this is quickly becoming one of them. He has taken his violin with us to Bluegrass Festivals and actually earned money showing off his skills.

— Kimberly T.



It was with the sincerest disbelief and sense of awe, that I witnessed my daughters' musical talents rapidly develop in a short period of time from absolute zero to impressively tuneful. I am amazed at the meticulous care they have for their instruments. I have watched with almost bemused interest as they place their violins in a safe place at home. And when getting the violins out to practice, that same extreme care governs all they do. This is not typical of my children, who usually are messy and clumsy with pretty much everything else, but not their violins. This tells me they are being taught exceptionally well and are learning a great respect for their instruments.

—Deborah D.

The lessons the children learn in violin class are much more than just a music class. The children are learning discipline, respect, personal boundaries, not just how to handle and play a violin.

— Amy T.



The great thing about this program is that kids experience the power of long-term practice and perseverance. In today's world of immediate gratification and endless entertainment options, it is so hard to get kids to understand the value of working hard over time to master a skill. During performances, the older students get to see the newer students perform, which reinforces how far they have come. They all come to realize they can always get better—there is always room to grow. The program also teaches teamwork, patience, respect, discipline, precision and focus.

I hope everyone at SCS realizes what we have and works hard to support and grow this program. It is almost unheard of for 1-3 graders to learn musical instruments in any school in the nation, and an elementary Strings Program is equally uncommon. We have a true teacher in Kristina. Unlike any conductors I have accompanied (and there have been many over the years), her main focus is the kids and not herself. That is rare. We are truly blessed.

—Jane C.





## Building a Reality

Anyone can dream, but it takes a community of people to make a dream come true. From our visionaries to the first strings teachers, from supportive staff and administration to parents and students willing to learn, we all play a crucial role in building this reality. With her infectious love of music and skills in adapting the Suzuki method to a public school setting, Kristina Beachell gives our students the tools necessary to succeed.

Our Strings Program is not simply an introduction to music — it is an in-depth, multi-year study of musical strings performance, beginning with Suzuki instruction for our youngest musicians. It has been intentionally designed to be a strings education unlike anything offered in any other elementary school across our nation. We hope you are able to see and appreciate the uniqueness of this program. As children experience working over time to develop a challenging skill, they learn lessons about the value of perseverance and hard work that will serve them well in all of life.

Every student in grades 1 to 3 participates in the program. In grades 4 to 8, participation is by choice. A majority of our students in these upper grades stay in the program and join one of our two orchestras. All of our strings students are given one of the school's own instruments to use for the year — to take home and practice, to take care of, and to play during concerts. These young musicians have small-group lessons twice per week during the school day, with orchestra practices before and after school.

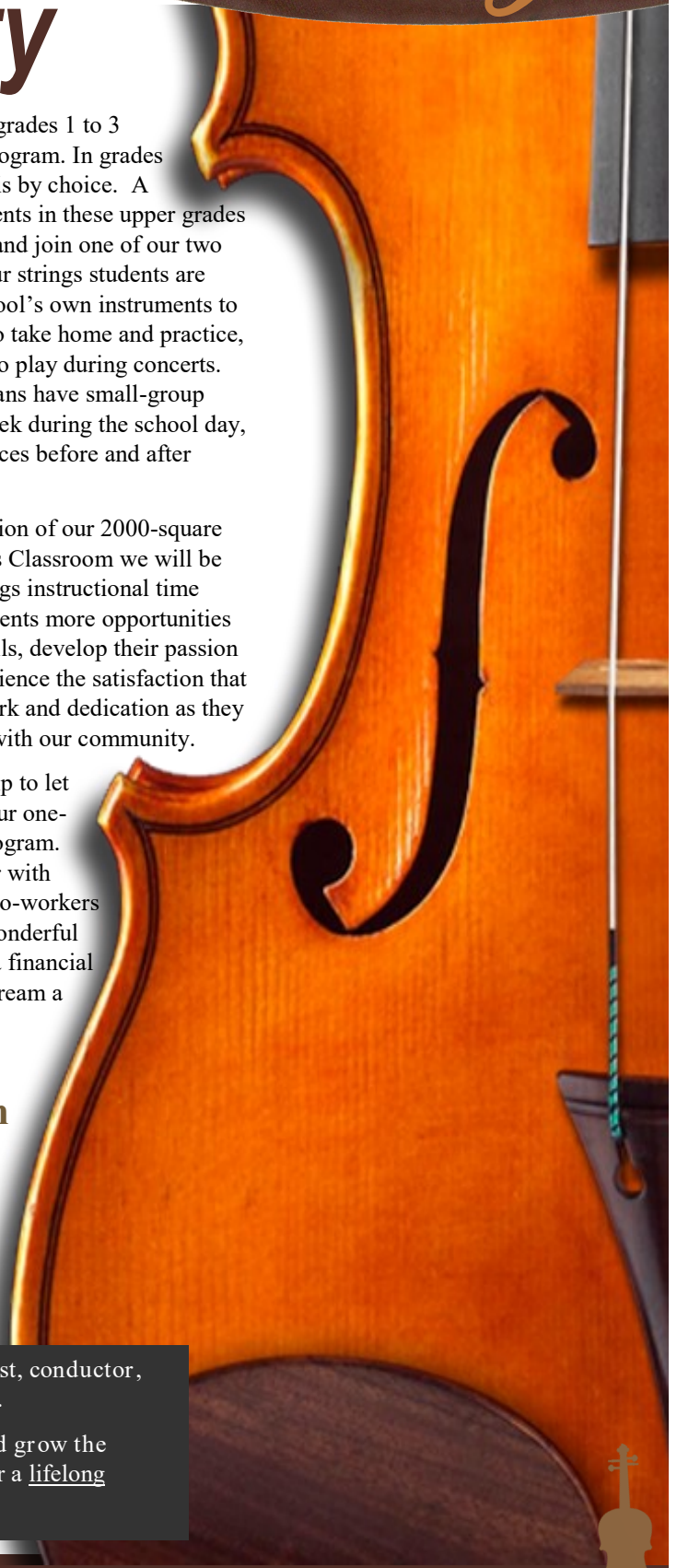
With the completion of our 2000-square foot Performing Arts Classroom we will be able to increase strings instructional time while providing students more opportunities to fine tune their skills, develop their passion for music, and experience the satisfaction that comes from hard work and dedication as they share their abilities with our community.

We need your help to let others know about our one-of-a-kind Strings Program. Share this newsletter with friends, family and co-workers and give them the wonderful opportunity to play a financial part in making our dream a reality.

**WORK with  
us to build  
this reality!**

**Kristina Beachell:** violinist, conductor, master teacher and mentor.

**Her mission:** Develop and grow the Strings Program at Sedona Charter School equipping students for a lifelong engagement with music.





*If a child hears fine music from the day of his birth, and learns to play it himself, he develops sensitivity, discipline and endurance. He gets a beautiful heart. —Shinichi Suzuki*

alumni news >>>

## Seeing Our Future

How far can the Strings Program at Sedona Charter School go? With increasing numbers of students starting their music education in first grade and continuing through high school and beyond, one can only imagine!

Our own Peter Hoyle and Cosmo Illenberger were among the first students that studied under Mr. Shaw and then with Kristina Beachell.

"I picked up the cello all the way back in 5th grade. Before that, I had played the piano as well as the violin, but nothing felt as good as playing the cello. The cello is a beautifully made instrument, and its beautiful tone inspired me to take my playing to the next level." That laid the foundation for a life-long love of music and a goal to make it his career.

"Getting together with other musicians to create beautiful music is one of the most amazing things I have ever experienced. There is nothing like being inside the orchestra and listening to it from the inside. Being able to float on a sea of music like that is the reason why I've stuck with playing music for so long," Hoyle said.

Peter will be attending Northern Arizona University in the fall majoring in music. His

goal is to earn his doctorate in music performance and teach cello at the college level.

Cosmo Illenberger also didn't realize the path his life would take when he began studying violin at Sedona Charter School.

"The Strings Program at Sedona Charter School has been crucial to my educational development, and my life has been significantly enriched by learning to play the violin. I attribute all of my musical talent to my upbringing through Sedona Charter School's Strings Program equipping me with a host of skills that I can use towards future success.

"In addition to playing the violin, I record and produce electronic music as a hobby. My goal is to make a career out of doing what I love to do, either being a DJ or producing for other artists."

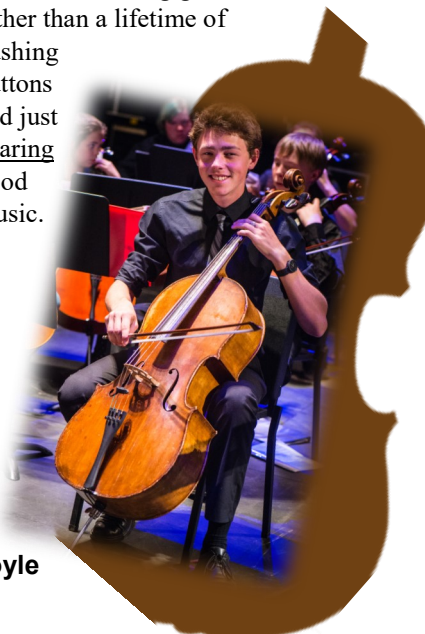
While Cosmo does not plan to major in music at the University of Arizona, he anticipates joining local ensembles and taking



**Cosmo Illenberger**

supplementary music classes to enhance his musical skills throughout his college years.

We are equipping students for a lifetime of making good music, rather than a lifetime of pushing buttons and just hearing good music.



**Peter Hoyle**

**Evening With Strings  
April, 2016**





# Strings

**First Concert  
December, 2012  
Sedona Red Rock High School Cafeteria**



**Spring String Fling, May 2013  
Sedona Creative Life Center**



## OVER THE YEARS

**Whole Foods Performance  
Spring, 2015**



**Emmy Award  
winning composer  
and performer,  
Edvin Marton,  
performed for,  
played with and  
inspired our  
students in  
October, 2014**

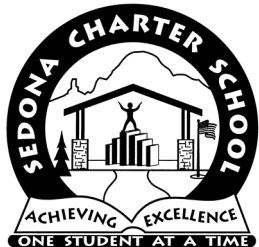




# Strings



contact us at 928-204-6464  
[www.sedonacharterschool.com](http://www.sedonacharterschool.com)



165 Kachina Drive  
Sedona, AZ 86336

## looking ahead

### August 2016

*Back to School Night*

*Parents Speak—Classroom Reviews*

*Alumni Highlights*

*Volunteer Opportunities*

## staff >>>

**Lower Elementary:** Bob and Terri Wentsch, Katarina Houser, Amy Tedrick, Dolores Biermann  
**Upper Elementary:** Lisa Hirsch, Bill Baker, Maija Alanen, Harry Buedel, Jacquie Randall  
**Middle School:** Jenn Jordan, Tim Marsh  
**Administration:** Alice Madar, Katie Austin, Noelle Reeves  
**Title I and Strings:** Teri Lechowski, Kristina Beachell  
**Special Education:** Lucy Schwill

**our mission...** *Our Montessori school challenges each child to achieve excellence through an individualized program. We inspire a passion for learning, instill a sense of personal responsibility, and cultivate a respect for the environment and involvement in the community.*

## You Can Make a Difference!

Often, the only feasible way our school can obtain new instruments or even hope to build a building is through the generous support of community members and friends of the school. Such generosity is rewarded by the gratification of supporting young artists and the thrill of following their progress.

However, a more tangible benefit does exist in that violins, violas, and cellos are worthwhile instruments and necessary to the success of our Strings Program. We welcome donations of any amount to help our dream of a Performing Arts Classroom become a reality.

Contact Alice Madar at the school for donation options or for ways you can help.

Visit <http://sedonacharterschool.com/music-building/> for more information.

