



Jane Leeson-Jackson died on September 20, 2018, of cancer. She died at her home in Federal Way, Washington, with her husband Geoff and long-time friend Susan Jacoby at her side.

PIFR has world-class musicians as faculty and attracts musicians who strive to perform at a very high level. That is what inspired Jane. She loved to play and performed in recitals, chamber music groups, symphony orchestras, pit orchestras for ballet and musical theater productions, and even in workshops and house concerts with her husband who sort-of plays viola.

But there was another side to Jane. She had been trained as a music therapist and worked in state hospitals. She had experience in finding a way to reach people through music in a fundamental way. As a private teacher, she had a young student who was on the autism spectrum. This is what the girl's mother had to say about Jane:

“We met Jane in the fall of 2011 when our 10 year-old daughter decided she wanted to play the flute. Grace has autism and for the first few weeks of band, she couldn't grasp how to get a sound out of her flute. In desperation, I called a local music store and asked for recommendations for a private flute teacher. Jane was such a God-send for our family. She had experience with special education students and was the perfect match for us. Under Jane's instruction, Grace's musical skills improved and Grace played in the school band and sometimes church orchestra throughout high school. Jane also taught Grace piano. She was so patient and kind. I hope we were able to convey to her what a blessing she was to our family. Music gave Grace a way to belong to a group and was her social connection through her school years.”

These parents were as happy for their daughter as other parents are for their children who have the talent to gain admission to major conservatory programs. It provides another perspective on the power of music to transform lives.

Written by Geoff Jackson