
PASS IT ON!TM

The Journal of the Children's Music Network (CMN)TM

ISSUE #18 FALL 1994



SCENES FROM THE NATIONAL GATHERING

(PAGES 12-13)

AN INTERVIEW WITH NATE LALIBERTE:

TWELVE YEAR OLD ORGANIZER OF
"THE CHILDREN OF WAR BENEFIT
SHOW"

(PAGE 6)

Photo: John Ewing



**1994 DIRECTORY CORRECTIONS,
LOTS OF SONGS,
AND MUCH, MUCH MORE**

FROM THE EDITORS

By now members should have gotten a letter announcing the opening for the position of *Pass It On!* Editor. While computer know-how with a publishing program is necessary, once again the crucial issue of values comes to the CMN forefront. In our search for new editors, as in our discussions of the various projects that have been considered in the past, we strive to assure fairness and equality to all of our members. This journal, the main means of communicating and networking with our membership, must be the embodiment of these values. So, WANTED: someone who would enjoy the challenge of maintaining the values of the Network while dabbling with desktop publishing. It is fun, and we'll help you get started!

-- Andrea and Ron Stone

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Dear *PIO!*,

I am responding to your editorial in *PIO!* Issue #17. I have found in my work with kids both the negative evidence of how people treat each other in today's world and also the flip side -- when people really get to know and respect each other. Because some of the work I do is in "tough" urban schools and community settings, I've become very interested in combining my artistic side with teaching values. Many kids today have no idea that there is any other way to behave than what they see all around them -- especially on TV.

I believe that promoting the business aspect of this kind of work and the actual message of the work go hand in hand. Because of the positive values that we want to teach, it is important to promote the business end so that we get

to do it.

Sincerely,
Ann Shapiro

Dear Bob,

I just read your editorial in the '92 (!) issue of *Pass It On!* You ask for answers to your question. (What can we do about the awful super-patriotic songs children sing in assemblies and elsewhere?). Here is an attempt: 1) We must sing better songs. What is better? That's a lifetime job. 2) We can tell stories about old songs. I often sing "The Star Spangled Banner," telling how it was the top "hit" of 1814, first sung by an actor friend of the author, standing on a stool in a Baltimore tavern. A printer had copies selling on the streets next day and, in a few weeks, copies were up and down the coast. 3) We can ridicule silly lyrics and tunes, but understand why they are what they are.

Pete Seeger

Dear *PIO!*,

In response to your editorial in the most recent *Pass It On!*, I, too, have come to the conclusion that many of today's children lack a solid understanding of basic morality. The more I perform for schoolchildren, their parents, and their teachers, the more I wonder what good it will do to teach them the curriculum basics if they don't also learn moral basics.

It's my belief that, since more and more parents have less time to be with their children, the schools are being forced into having to do more of this kind of "extra-curricular" teaching. For that reason, I as a performer and recording artist have been moving more in the direction of counselor and parent to my audiences. A book by Steven Covey titled "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" has given me many song and discussion ideas.

Jonathan Sprout

PASS IT ON!™

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Editorial Staff:

PIO! Mailing Address & Editors-In-Chief:

Andrea and Ron Stone
Box 307
Montvale, NJ 07645

Coordinating Editor:

Bob Blue (CMN Phone Contact)
77 Belchertown Rd #43
Amherst, MA 01002
(413) 256-8784

Bio Editor:

Phil Hoose
8 Arlington St.
Portland, ME 04101

Calendar:

Ruth Pelham
Box 6024
Albany, NY 12206

Historian:

Lisa Garrison
213 Berkeley Pl.
Brooklyn, NY 11217

Kids' Chorus Editors:

Spencer and Stephanie Stone
20 Bayberry Dr.
Montvale, NJ 07645

and

Hannah Hoose
8 Arlington St.
Portland, ME 04101

New Sounds Editor:

Sandy Byer
26 Bain Ave.
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M4K 1E6

Radio Editor:

Jamie Deming
84 Cove Rd.
Oyster Bay, NY 11771

Regional Reports Editor:

Katherine Dines
2605 Essex Pl.
Nashville, TN 37212-4121

Song Selection:

Editor: Joanne Olshansky Hammil
11 Marshall Terr.
Wayland, MA 01778

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CMN: Who We Are

Since time immemorial, people have been seeking out others who want to sing together and swap songs. In the 1980's, like-minded music educators, parents, performers, radio hosts and others who cared about the quality of children's music found each other and began to build this network. We share not only songs, but our concerns for the empowering ways that adults and young people can communicate through music.

What brings us together are our shared values. The Children's Music Network exists to support the creation and dissemination of life-affirming, multi-cultural musical forms by and for young people. Our values include cooperation, diversity, the building of self-esteem, respect and responsibility for our environment and an understanding of non-violence and social justice.

Our membership includes music educators, performers, songwriters, music listeners of all ages, parents, media people and those involved in all levels of the teaching, recording, promoting, distributing and singing of children's music. Diverse in age, ethnicity and geographic reach, the Children's Music Network is committed to being an important social force in the 1990's as a positive catalyst for education and community building through music.

—Sarah Pirtle, Founding Editor

SINGING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN: ANOTHER TOOL FOR COUNTERACTING PREJUDICE

by Adrienne Hoskins

Songs are a powerful tool for children's self-reflection and expression, for learning about others, for processing experiences, and for empowering children to create solutions to problems. I began thinking about the power of song messages only after years of working with issues of prejudice or negative bias in children's books. I remember the moment a light suddenly went on which linked my work in children's literature with children's songs. While leading group singing in a kindergarten classroom, I began the song MY MOM GAVE ME A NICKEL TO BUY A PICKLE. One child asked, "What if the mom didn't have nickel? If she was homeless, she might not have a nickel." (Our school rented rooms in a church which served as a homeless shelter at night.) We stopped singing and started talking. Another child, who lived with his dad, was uncomfortable about the "mom" part. That discussion inspired my intent to examine the lyrics of children's songs in the same way children's books are being analyzed for their inherent messages and biases.

First came a look at my own song history. My childhood resonated with the sound of my mother's voice. She sang during daily chores and sang four children to sleep every night. There were story songs and lullabies, rounds and harmonies. From her I learned the songs my grandmother had sung: hymns and popular songs

of their day such as I DON'T WANT TO PLAY IN YOUR YARD or WHAT HUE SHALL MY APPLES BE. Solemn songs with cautionary messages such as LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE or THE LITTLE PHILOSOPHER were meant to warn children not to stray from the virtuous path. Tuneful instructions, as in "Cover you mouth with a handkerchief, whenever you cough or sneeze . . ." were our piano pieces. The indelible songs, however, were what my mother and her sister still call "sob songs." The strongest was PICKANIN'.

PICKANIN'

Lilac trees a-bloomin' in the corner by the gate . . .
Mammy in her little cabin door . . .
Curly-headed pickaninny comin' home so late
Cryin' 'cause his little heart was sore.
All the children playing 'round
Have skins so white and fair . . .
None of them with him will every play.
But mammy, in her lap, takes the weeping little chap
And croons in her kind, old way;

CHORUS:

Well honey, jest you stay in your own back yard,
Don't you mind what 'em white chiles do
What show you suppose they's a-gwine to gib
A black little coon like you?
So stay on your side ob de high boa'd fence
An' honey, don' you cry so hard
Go out and play jest as much as you please
But stay in yo' own back ya'd!

Every day the children as they pass old mammy's place,
Romping home from school at night or noon
Peering through the fence would see that eager little face,
Such a wistful, lonesome little coon.
But one day that little face
Was gone forever more;
God had called the dusky little elf . . .
But mammy, in her door,
Sits and rocks as oft before
And croons to her old black self:

CHORUS

I hesitate to memorialize the lyrics of a song like this in print. Yet, as with classic children's books now recognized as racist or sexist, this song illustrates negative bias in music. PICKANIN' is a clear example of condescension and

(continued on page 19)

MAKING CONNECTIONS WITH TEACHERS

by John Farrell

What do singers and musicians have to offer teachers and children? How can songs and music fit in with what they are doing in their classrooms? Why should program planners invite us into their communities? Here are some thoughts on how to answer these questions. When a school or other organization makes a decision to hire a performing artist or group they are hoping that the service will be worth the commitment on their part. They are electing to give to us something; no one seems to have enough of these days -- time! They want to receive something of value that is compatible with their goals as a community. We can offer them service of tremendous educational value. We are able to reach kids and get them to feel, think, participate, cooperate, and express themselves. These are only a few of many good reasons to invite us into schools but we can go further and make connections with what teachers are trying to achieve in the classroom.

Teachers are a very practical group who want to get maximum utility from their time and resources. They want to know how they can use new experiences to help their students. The potential for using songs (and storytelling) as part of an instructional program is limitless. Most kindergarten and many first grade teachers realize this and make songs and storytelling a regular part of their program. Two of the reasons they do this are 1.) because they and their students love it and 2.) because it works so well. The relationship of #1 to #2 is not a coincidence.

When I've asked teachers in workshops how many of them learned the alphabet by singing, nearly all of

them raised their hands. This is quite incredible when you think about it. The letters of the alphabet are the foundation of all our written language and almost everyone learns them by singing. How come we don't teach more strategies and skills to all grade levels using songs and stories? I know I'm preaching to the converted but it's important that we remind ourselves and others that music is not a frill, not something to simply entertain children or keep them busy, but rather a valuable teaching tool that has yielded phenomenal results, not the least of which is that millions of readers and writers started out as singers.

Here are some points to emphasize when talking to teachers, administrators, and program planners about how singing, music and storytelling can be beneficial to them. I've also included examples of some activities I use.

Singing is a great warm-up

Starting an activity or a lesson with a song allows everyone to participate in a group activity that has low risk. The group supports all the members so no one is alone when singing. It doesn't matter if you don't get it exactly right because no one will be singled out for making a mistake. Many students who otherwise have difficulty expressing themselves orally have no trouble singing or moving with the music. For them this is an effective style of communicating and learning -- one that is too often overlooked.

We listen differently when music is involved

When music is involved we use a different part of our brain to process the message. For some of us introducing music is the equivalent of turning up the volume or adjusting the lights to the proper brightness. In other words, music turns our brains on in a special way that helps us

focus. We listen differently. There are several books and articles on this subject including "The Everyday Genius" by Peter Kline and "Accelerated Learning", by Colin Rose. Both of these books extol the benefits of using music to teach. Schools have achieved remarkable results just by playing music in the hallways and classrooms. (In the studies, it was Baroque music.)

In addition to using music to help us relax and focus we can also use music to practice listening skills. When we ask children to listen for something specific like certain lyrics in a song, we are "setting a purpose" for the activity. This is an important instructional strategy used in teaching students to read and comprehend. Using echo songs which ask children to repeat after a lead singer, is an example of a listening activity you can do. Students don't have to know the song but do have to listen carefully before responding. You can use the echo technique with most simple songs. I use my own and traditional songs and also write songs with students which involve using an echo.

Songs connect with themes

The thematic approach has long been popular with primary teachers and is being more and more widely used on all levels now. In early grades certain themes such as *friendship*, *growing*, *sharing*, and *animals* are fairly universal. Choosing songs that fit a theme is a good way to make a direct tie-in with what is being taught. Whenever I visit a school or a classroom one of the first things I do is look around to see what they're working on. I try to do songs and stories that fit well with their themes. For example, if the board is filled with artwork that shows plants and animals growing and the students

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CHILDREN OF THE EARTH

music by Glenn McClure & Wes Kennison
words adapted from words by Chief Seattle
© 1991 Glenn McClure

Glenn adapted words by Chief Seattle who wrote a letter in 1854 in reply to President Franklin Pierce's offer to buy a large tract of land from the Native American People. The letter is a poignant, environmental commentary and copies can be ordered through Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition, 760 North First Street, San Jose, CA 95112. Glenn created this beautiful, moving song from those ideas and it can be heard on his recording **The Great Garbage Concert**. To contact Glenn about his songs and recordings, write to him at Box 293, Geneseo, NY 14454.

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics are written below the notes, and guitar chords are indicated above the staff. The score is divided into several sections: a main verse, a chorus, and a final verse. The lyrics are: "We are children, We are children of the earth. We are children, we are children of the earth. And when the mother cries, so cry her children. We are children, we are children of the earth. Oh, teach your children, all we taught ours. that the river is sacred. This is the hour. And". The chords used include Em, A, D, G, Bm7, Dmaj7, and D7.

Em A
We are child - ren, We are child - ren of the
D Em
earth. We are child - ren, we are
A D CHORUS
child - ren of the earth. And
G A D Bm7
when the moth - er cries, so cry her child - ren. We are
Em A D VERSE
child - ren, we are child - ren of the earth. Oh,
Dmaj7 Em D
teach your child - ren, all we taught ours. that the
Em A D D7 (to the Chorus)
riv - er is sa - cred. This is the hour. And

ADDITIONAL VERSES:

Teach your children all we taught ours...
That the mountain is sacred. This is the hour.
That the wind is sacred, this is the hour.
That your people are sacred. This is the hour.

"THEY DESERVE AS MUCH AS ME"



Nate with comedian Sam Kilbourne
Photo: John Ewing

AN INTERVIEW WITH NATE LALIBERTE Conducted by Phil Hoose

On a sticky Saturday evening last June about a hundred people made their way to the Portland (Maine) High School auditorium for "The Children of War Benefit Show," organized by a 12-year-old musician named Nate Laliberte to raise money for young people from the war-torn nations of Bosnia and Ireland.

The program featured jugglers, comedians, a bagpipe player, a stage show and a Haydn trio. By evening's end, more than \$2,000 had been raised for two non-profit organizations with work with Irish and Bosnian children.*

Nate was moved to act first by reading a series of books about the Holocaust, and then by seeing televised scenes of war in Bosnia. He felt an overwhelming need to help ease the suffering of people his own age. Starting in January, Nate and his mother, Caroline Greenleaf, spent nearly six months finding sponsors, locating a hall, raising funds, arranging publicity, booking acts, and rehearsing. Nate, an outstanding

violinist and fiddle player, performed with his chamber group, The PenLaMar Trio.

Helping people he doesn't know is nothing new for Nate. He began playing violin at nursing homes when he was five. At six, he became a hospital volunteer. Now, as part of his home schooling program, Nate works with pre-schoolers in a day care center. But the Children of War Concert was something new: here Nate found a way to use music--something he loves deeply and which is a part of his everyday life--as a tool to heighten awareness that others need help.

In this interview, Nate Laliberte discusses how and why they organized the concert, what went right and wrong, how he found organizations to work with, and what it has been like to meet children from nations at war. He also discusses how the event has affected his thinking about what young people can do to cause change, and talks about his life as a musician.

Nate is a slender, thoughtful boy whose brown, curly hair is often concealed inside a New York Yankee ball cap. In talking with *PIO!*, he took plenty of time to answer all but the most routine questions, making sure he said exactly what he wanted. During breaks, Nate sometimes rose to fire imaginary pitches--lefthanded--at hapless Red Sox batters.

*(Editor's note: Concert proceeds went to the Veterans For Peace's Children of War Project, which raises funds to transport severely wounded children out of war zones, and to the Maine Irish Children's Program, which each summer brings Catholic and Protestant families from Belfast, Northern Ireland, to Maine "so they can learn there are many more similarities than differences.")

To support these organizations, and for more information, contact:

Veterans For Peace, Inc.
Children of War Project
PO Box 3881
Portland, ME 04104

Maine Irish Children's Program
PO Box 3122
Portland, ME 04014

PIO!: What instruments do you play?

NL: I play the violin, the saxophone, the drums, and I fiddle around on the piano a little. Violin's my main instrument. I started playing when I was five. One thing I love about it is that you can play so many kinds of music with it, like jazz, country, blues and classical. I don't want to just play classical music, and not know what other music is like. I really want to know that.

PIO!: How will you go about broadening your knowledge?

NL: I've already taken some classes in jazz. I've gone to some workshops for country fiddling. When I go to bed sometimes I listen to country music and I hear the violin in the back.

PIO!: Who are your favorite fiddlers?

NL: I really like Isaac Stern and Itzhak Perlman. I don't know a lot of country fiddlers yet.

PIO!: Have you competed in violin contests?

NL: Yes, I won the Farmington Fiddle Contest and came in third in two others. For me, classical comes first, though, and fiddling is a side order.

PIO!: Do you have personal goals as

a musician?

NL: Yes. I'd like to play a lot more chamber music. I love doing it. But beyond that I'm still just becoming a musician.

PIO!: How do you practice?

NL: Right now in the summertime I get up around ten. I do about 45 minutes then and later in the afternoon I do another 45 minutes. I try to build up my practicing time during the summer. When I have a competition coming I practice a lot more, but I want to change that because I think I should always be practicing about the same amount, steadily and happily, no matter what. I don't think competitions are music. I like music to be for enjoyment, and not for competitive reasons, or for money. I mean it's always nice to get that extra \$25 or something, but I don't think music should be based on money. It's for happiness.

PIO!: How did you get the idea to do the Children of War concert?

NL: Last winter I was reading about the Holocaust. I read about 4 or 5 books. And as I was reading I realized that although they were writing about a different war, the same kinds of things are happening now to kids. The same mental things and sometimes the same physical things like sniper fire and shrapnel. It really, really got me mad to see that kids on all sides of these wars were dealing with things that they weren't responsible for.

PIO!: Why were you reading all those books about the Holocaust?

NL: At first I was just curious. Then once I asked my mother, 'Why do people keep writing about this and wanting to remember it if it was so horrible?' And she said, 'It was such a terrible thing we don't ever want it to

happen again.' That really opened up my eyes. I wanted to learn more and more so that I would never, ever try to do something like that--I mean I would never do something like that right now--but maybe the world would change me and I really want to learn what happened so that I would never do anything like that. And so that I could help other people who might do something like that.

PIO!: Was there any one of those books that changed you the most?

NL: Yeah, it was called Upon the Head of the Goat. It was about this family. The main character, a girl, told about the hardships she went through in the ghetto that she didn't deserve, and about how the Germans treated her. They took away her home and killed her brother. It was terrible.

PIO!: How then did you first become aware of the problems in Bosnia?

NL: I was watching television. The news reports showed thousands of kids in Bosnia, in Sarajevo, in former Yugoslavia, who were being wounded and were without anesthesia. I made that connection.

PIO!: It's horrible.

NL: It is. They don't deserve it. Later on I met a kid named Edin who was the only survivor in a group of about 20 kids who were supposed to be evacuated. He had shrapnel in his spine and a bullet in his right leg with no anesthesia for about four months. He was sort of glazed over. You can tell he's still recovering. He's very subdued. You can just tell.

PIO!: How did you translate these feelings into deciding to organize a concert?

NL: I started to feel that I wanted do

something. I didn't know exactly at that point what I wanted to do but I had two ideas: a food drive and a benefit concert. I called UNICEF because my mother said they helped children. But they were too big. They were in New York and I couldn't meet with them personally. It was always on the phone. They sent me all these packages. I had to write a letter describing my idea. After they didn't respond to my letter I got their phone number from information. Then UNICEF hooked me up to another phone number. Then they sent me a little package saying how nice it was what I was doing. But they couldn't help me organize a benefit concert; they were too big. And the other thing was UNICEF only offered food supplements. I decided that the benefit concert would be a better idea because I could raise more money and help the children more through a concert. And I didn't know how we could get the food over there. I thought we could do more with money.

PIO!: There were a lot of other things you could have done to raise money, like organize a bake sale or a garage sale. Did the fact that you were a musician cause you to put on a concert? Did you see yourself performing?

NL: Oh yeah. I'm in a trio called the PenLaMar Trio. It's our names. The cellist's name is David Penner and my name is "La" Liberte and the pianist is Martell. Pen-La-Mar. It sounds cool. Get it?

PIO!: I do.

NL: Anyway, that was the first thing that came to mind because we're all kids. And we had seen Radical Radio, which is like a big stage show for kids, and it was fun. We wanted the concert to be fun for people. No matter what race or age you are,

music is something that's shared around the world. It's fun. Then we turned to Veterans For Peace.

PIO!: How did you find them?

NL: My mother found out that they were a national organization with headquarters in Maine. So we went over there. They were much easier to work with. They helped us find where the money could go. If we had worked with UNICEF maybe the money would have gone to pay for their day-jobs. With Veterans For Peace we knew the money was gonna go toward the kids. I really wanted that.

Then we hooked up with The Maine Irish Children's Program. Last summer I had met a kid named Wayne who was staying with a friend of ours. It gets together Protestant and Catholic kids and makes them see eye to eye so they know what they're fighting against. We wanted to help both organizations since they both help kids. I wanted to promote not only immediate relief, but an effort to establish a long term plan for peace. This group, and the Maine Irish Children's Fund do that.

PIO!: I know your mother was very much involved in the concert. How did you two divide the work?

NL: I did posters and helped stuff programs, and I came up with some of the ideas. I called my Haydn trio. I was practicing Haydn right up until the concert. My mom did most of the marketing and she called the other performers because she knew them. Also, my mom did a lot of the bargaining. We got the piano free. It would have cost \$200. I'm not that good at bargaining.

PIO!: Who did the publicity?

NL: Since I was a kid, I did a lot of the TV and newspaper interviews to

help get people to come. I think it helped that I am a kid.

PIO!: Why?

NL: A lot of grownups do a lot of things. So if a grownup does something it doesn't seem as big. It seems serious. But if a kid does something for other people, people realize it's important.

PIO!: How much money did you have to raise to put on the concert?

NL: We kept our budget to \$1,700.

PIO!: Where'd you get it?

NL: Kidstuff, which is a kids' retail clothing shop, gave us \$1,000. That really helped us. Then we got some money from a man named Harper Sibley and from Deering Ice Cream. We called them and asked. My mom made a lot of those calls while I was in school.

"It really, really got me mad to see that kids on all sides of these wars were dealing with things that they weren't responsible for."

PIO!: Did you want to make the calls yourself?

NL: It was really hard for me to do it. The concert was on June 18 and school got out on June 8 so I was studying hard for final exams. I did not get much time to work on the concert until school was out. I did most of the work at the beginning. Then after my mom saw that I was really serious, she said, 'I want to do this with you. It can be a mutual effort.' We worked it out as we went along so it was a fair deal.

PIO!: Did you get to meet Bosnian kids?

NL: Oh yes. I went to a picnic at Fort Williams when all the Bosnian kids--no, I have to be careful not to just say 'Bosnian'--Bosnian and Serbian and former Yugoslavian kids got together. Those people feel very strongly that it's not just 'Bosnian.'

It was really an experience because you could tell that they had seen so much. They were still just recovering. There was one kid that hadn't even been hurt but he was still recovering from the shock of what he had been through. You could tell.

PIO!: How could you tell?

NL: He was a very nice kid, but when there was any violence he would step back. Once we were wrestling and I accidentally caught his leg and he fell. He kind of shook his head. I felt really bad. It was a mistake to catch his leg; I just reached out to pull him over but he fell. I said, 'Oh, God, I'm so sorry.'

PIO!: Those things happen so fast, though; it's hard to really control everything.

NL: I know. I was just messing around.

PIO!: Did you find it easy to treat them as regular kids, or did the fact that they were survivors of something horrible cause you to treat them differently?

NL: The first time I saw them I really wanted to ask them questions but I realized they were just normal people from another part of the world. I didn't want to seem to them like just another news person. I knew I shouldn't ask them, 'Oh, did you see any bombshells?' and all that kind of stuff. I decided to just hang out and I figured the news would come as we hang out more.

PIO!: Did it?

NL: Yeah. It's not like we had this 'Good Talk,' you know, but one boy told me that he saw many aircraft carriers and planes shooting guns and everything.

PIO!: Have you managed to make any close friendships with those kids?

NL: I've tried to get together with Ashmere. I really do want to get together with him and be a friend, not just a 'Helper' or something like that. Time has been a problem. Another issue has been trying to do something that he'll like. I don't think he'll want to go to a baseball game or something like that. He doesn't like baseball.

PIO!: Does he like soccer?

NL: Yes. And he's very good at it. But there aren't a lot of soccer matches around here and I'm not really into it. I'm trying to find something we can do together.

PIO!: Looking back, how do you think the concert went?

NL: I think it went really well but I wish more people had come. We got about 100 people and the room seats about 500. After the concert I got really disappointed because I thought we could have marketed better.

PIO!: What would you do differently now that you've done it once?

NL: I don't know...I thought it was a really great concert. And I think my mom did a really great job. Maybe we could have put it on a better weekend. The Maine Gay Men's chorus was performing that night. And the National Veteran's Parade. So many things were happening that night. And it was hot. But, I guess things are going on every night.

PIO!: That's true. It's hard to get a hundred people to attend the event you organized instead of what they were going to do instead. And you got a great article in the paper. What was it like for you to be in the auditorium while the concert was going on?

NL: I felt really, really great. I loved the applause after people did their acts. It wasn't like this (does a skinny little clap). It was like this (does a full-bodied clap). The sound just went over the crest of what a big audience sounds like. It wasn't like a couple of people clapping. I hate that sound.

PIO!: Did you feel proud of yourself?

NL: Yes, I did. And I felt really proud of my mom. And I want to thank the Veterans for Peace and the Maine Irish Children's Program. They are really great organizations. They both deserve so much credit for what they're doing. I wish they'd get more publicity so they could grow bigger.

*"I haven't just raised money,
I've raised attention."*

PIO!: What was it like for you to perform when your time came?

NL: Oh I loved it. And I think we did a good job. We played the Haydn Piano Trio in G major. I wasn't nervous, not too much. It's easier for me to perform in a trio. If I mess up hopefully the whole trio won't mess up. I love playing chamber music. I love it so much that it's very easy for me to perform it.

PIO!: How much money did the concert make?

NL: We were able to give each

organization \$947. Plus we have about a hundred dollars more in donations.

PIO!: Do you have any plans to do anything else like this?

NL: Yeah, I think next April we may do another concert like this. We'd stick with the same two organizations because they helped us out so much.

PIO!: What have you gotten out of this experience?

NL: I've learned that kids can really do something. And that if kids do just a little thing for even a little community cause then maybe the world could be a better place. Maybe our generation could see peace. It's made me open my eyes more. I've gotten so much out of this. I haven't just raised money, I've raised attention. I want to show others that they can do something, because they can; cause I did it.

PIO!: Do you really think that any kid could do what you did?

NL: Yes. I'm a regular kid. If every regular kid could do something, maybe our generation could see peace.

PIO!: Nate, let me press you a little bit here. Isn't it possible that you are extraordinary? Not everybody spends their time reading books about the Holocaust at your age. You have remarkable musical ability and the self-discipline to practice an hour and a half a day. And you had an extraordinary helper in your mother.

NL: Okay, If I am then I want everybody to be extraordinary.

PIO!: I ask you this because I've heard other young activists who have done important things say 'I'm just a regular kid, if I could do it anyone can

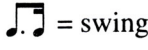
(continued on page 11)

READ A BOOK TO ME

words & music by Tom Pease
© 1989 Peaseblossom Music

This fun song about reading can be heard on Tom's delightful recording, *I'm Gonna Reach*. Tom says, "The best things we do as parents are singing and reading with our children. This song celebrates reading and turning off the TV, that thief of quality family time." When Tom performs this song he inserts different poems and has the audience sign the chorus. To contact Tom about his songs and recordings, write to Peaseblossom Music, 6580 County K, Amherst, WI 54406.

Intro

 = swing G

D

Read - a read - a read - a read - a book to me ___ may - be

C G G7

One with some pic - tures that I can see ___ oh, how 'bout a good one like

C G D G

Win - nie the Pooh ___ you ___ read it to me ___ an' I'll read it to you ___

I went to school the o - ther day ___ I could - n't be - lieve ___ what ___ my

teach - er did say, said "I'm send - in' notes home to your fam - i - lies ask - in'

ev - ery - one ___ to un - plug your T. V.'s." Oh_ (2.)

Chorus:

G D

Read - a read - a read - a read - a book to me ___

C G

Read - a read - a read - a read - a book to me ___

Read - a read - a read - a read - a read - a read - a read - a read - a read - a

read - a read - a read - a read - a book to me

We moaned and groaned, "this can't be right
 What are we gonna do with our days and nights?"
 My teacher said we might find it kinda' neat
 But how am I gonna live without Sesame Street?
 (Chorus)
 I went home and gave them the news
 I guess I was hoping they would refuse
 But Mom pulled the plug and said, Let's try.
 It's only for a week." And I began to cry.

But we sang and told stories, some fun and some scary
 Checked out some books from our library
 I read them aloud to my sister and brother
 Everytime I finished one they wanted another
 (Chorus)
 Back at school, you shoulda' heard what the kids said
 Talking all about the books they read
 Some were 'bout monsters, some were poetry
 Oh, oh, oh, I'll give you one from our family.

Poem:

My brother thinks he's a dinosaur
 We said "No you're not!"
 And he tried to ignore us
 He went to the corner and sat on the floor
 He sat and he sat 'til he got so sore
 Now he says he's a Rearsasaurus
 (Chorus)
 Now that week is long gone and our TV's plugged in
 and sure we watch it every now and again
 But mostly we read to ourselves and each other
 And after bedtime I read under the covers
 (Chorus)

(cont. from page 9 ...INTERVIEW)

do it.' It's made me wonder if it's always true, and if maybe it puts some pressure on people to feel they have to do heroic things by themselves. The one thing that just about every young activist I've met had in common with one another was someone else who believed in them and supported them: a strong friend, a parent, a teacher, a religious leader, a coach--someone so they didn't have to be alone. Some support.

NL: People do need support. Even in the period at the beginning when

my mom wasn't helping, she was supporting me. I came up with the idea but I didn't do it alone. I think I could have done it alone, but I don't think I could have done the best I can with this concert. I had help.

PIO!: Maybe one of the best talents a person can develop is the ability to ask for help...

NL: I really agree. I could do some parts of it but not others. My mom is a good negotiator. It took both of us to make this concert happen. She has the technical knowledge and I know what kids will like. I have kid

knowledge.

PIO: What else is needed to encourage other kids to reach out?

NL: I think showing that kids can do something, like this concert. I took the first step, and I think other kids can take the second step. I stepped over the ledge and started something and I hope that other people will start more things. I think I showed them that someone can do something.

PIO: You sure did that, Nate. Thanks so much for talking to us.

NL: Thank you for asking me.

THE 1994 NATIONAL GATHERING



FRIDAY NIGHT GROUP SONGWRITING...



AND SONG SINGING



A QUIET MOMENT
REBECCA SCHWARTZ WITH A DREAM CATCHER MADE AT A WORKSHOP



NONA BEAMER TEACHES



AND WE FOLLOW ALONG



A PRESENTATION BY ELLA JENKINS



SINGING ALONG WITH ELLA



A PRESENTATION AT ROUND ROBIN



WORKSHOP ON AFRICAN DRUMMING



WE TRY WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

PETALUMA, CALIFORNIA

THE KIDS' CHORUS

IT'S ALRIGHT TO BE LAST

words & music by Liora Goldensher, age 6
© 1994 Liora Goldensher

Liora wrote this wonderful song and her father, Vince O'Donnell, taped and transcribed it at *PIOs* request. Liora says: "I was standing on line at school one day and this song just POPPED OUT of me!" To contact Liora about her song, write to her at 10 Leighton Rd., Newton, MA 02166.

Chorus

C Dm F C G Verse 1

It's al - right to be last some - times it has to hap - pen If you're

C G7 C G F G7 C G7

last in line in the new school build - ing, some - times it's kind - a good. 'cause the

C G7 C Dm G C

line lead - er has to know the way, through the whole en - tire — build - ing and

G7 C F C

you don't know the path - ways through the buil - ding. —

[Chorus]

Verse 2 C G C G C

If you're last in line, to eat your can - dy brush your teeth

G F G7 C G7 C G7

some - times it's kind - a hard, 'cause you're watch - in' all those kids eat - in'

C G G7 C G7

all that can - dy, and you just want some too. Hoo!

[Chorus]

[Chorus]

NEW SOUNDS

New Sounds listings are coordinated by Sandy Byer. These are **not** reviews, but announcements about our current members' latest recordings. Only members' names are featured in the heading, though others may be on the recording. Send your information to Sandy at: **26 Bain Ave., Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4K 1E6.**

ALCAZAR PRODUCTIONS A Wonderful Life

Jessica Harper makes quite a splash with this debut album of bouncy, pun-filled originals. This is an exceptional collection of songs that will be enjoyed by the whole family. Jessica delivers an album filled with warmth and wit about the tiny joys of parents and children that's sure to be a perennial favorite. Cassettes are \$9.98 and CDs \$11.98 each. Available from Silo-Alcazar by calling 1-800-541-9904.

JENNY ARMSTRONG Dancing And Dreaming

Jenny's newest release is a delightful compilation of upbeat, danceable fiddle tunes with guitar, banjo, bass and piano. The lullabies feature Jenny's daughters who "sing beautifully and with the same confidence and clarity that is so compelling in their mother's music." The lullabies are sure to send you drifting into dreamland. Cassettes are \$10.00 and CDs \$15.00 each + \$2.00 s+h. Available from Jenny Armstrong, PO Box 6264, Evanston, IL 60204.

KATHERINE DINES Hunk-Ta-Bunk-Ta-Boo-2

This latest recording of 12 original songs by Katherine will have you tapping your toes and singing along. Written from a child's perspective (ages 4-8), songs vary widely in style, are fun to sing, easy to learn, and encourage an appreciation for our world and one another. Cassettes are \$12.00 inc. s+h. available from Katherine Dines, Sherrill and Weir, PO Box 121722, Nashville, TN 37212.

CATHY FINK & MARCY MARXER Nobody Else Like Me

The second in Cathy & Marcy's "Help Yourself" series on A&M celebrates the diversity of children. Cultural, linguistic and physical diversities are handled joyfully with songs like "Walkin' On My Wheels" and "I See With My Hands." Plus Fred Small's "Everything Possible." Songs in 6 different languages, and a fabulous kids chorus.

Cassettes are \$11.00 and CDs are \$16.00 each inc. s+h. Available from Community Music, PO Box 5778, Takoma Park, MD 20913.

MARC & CAROL (FINKELSTEIN) Everyday's A Holiday

This collection of comical, but informational songs about the holidays we celebrate in America is perfect for students from Kindergarten to Grade 3. Lyrics are included. LPs and cassettes are \$10.95 each and are available from Melody House Inc., 819 N.W. 92nd St., Oklahoma City, OK 73114 or by calling 1-800-234-9228.

MONTY HARPER Making Tracks To The Library

This 15-minute cassette contains four songs, each of which was inspired by one of the past four Oklahoma Department of Libraries' summer reading program themes. Cassettes are \$5.00 each inc. s+h. Available from Monty Harper, 700 West Scott #206, Stillwater, OK 74075-5017.

FRED KOCH Did You Feed My Cow?

Experience the classic songs of Ella Jenkins with the musical artistry of Fred Koch on this recording appropriate for preschoolers up to grade 3. LPs and cassettes are \$10.00 each. Available from Fred Koch, 911 Woodland, Lake Bluff, IL 60044.

GAYLE (GAIL LISSAUER) The Dinosaur Stomp and Other TykeTunes

Gayle's first tape of children's music is a lively and highly interactive recording ideally suited for the two-year-old to early grade school age group. Simply produced with voice, guitar, and a few added touches, all the songs are thoroughly kid-tested. The songs on this tape can easily be used to facilitate such activities as movement, singing, dramatic play, and the improvisation of new lyrics. Cassettes are \$8.00 each plus \$1.50 s+h. Available from Gail Lissauer, 4119 E. 5th St., Long Beach, CA 90814.

MAUREEN SCHIFFMAN A Warm Summer Evening With Maureen & Coco

Travel with Maureen and Coco through a video musical jamboree filled with 45 minutes of songs, stories, and puppets, as they perform in a lively outdoor concert, and journey to a farm. Videos are \$18.00 each plus \$2.25 s+h. Available from Maureen Schiffman, 24472 Bonnie Brook, Novi, MI 48374.

NANCY STEWART Little Songs For Me

This special collection of 32 favorite songs for young children, is a wonderful way to share music and teach colors, shapes, and numbers. The kit includes a 40-min. cassette; lyrics, chords, and activities; ready-to-cut felt shapes, felt board and ideas. \$20.00 + 8.2% tax for WA residents. Available from Friends Street Music, 6505 SE 28th St., Mercer Island, WA 98040.

VITAMIN L (JAN NIGRO) Every Moment!

This new recording includes 12 new songs by Jan Nigro. A variety of musical styles are used to present these songs which explore ideas and issues that are meaningful to the "in between" age group of 7-12 year olds. Cassettes are \$9.95 from Lovable Creature Music, 105 King St., Ithaca, NY 14850.

REGIONAL REPORTS

CANADA
Sandy Byer
62 Bain Avenue
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M4K 1E6
(416) 465-2741

The economy in Canada is still really hurting, and there is not a lot going on at the current time.

MID-ATLANTIC

Dave Orleans
130 W. Clearview Ave
Pine Hill, NJ 08021
(609) 435-4229

The Mid-Atlantic Region has had no activity this summer and fall. Contact Dave Orleans for information about future activities.

MIDWEST

Reid Miller
Box 178
Blue Mounds, WI 53517
(608) 437-3388

The Midwest region hosted its first Gathering July 24-26 at McKenzie Environmental Education Center -- about 24 miles north of Madison. The gathering was a big success -- full of workshops, round-robins, circle singing and more -- with an emphasis on the environment and peace. There were also workshops led by kids for kids, with much of the focus on what's important about children's music.

NEW ENGLAND

Helen Stein
PO Box 950
Amherst, MA 01004
(413) 256-1380

Nothing to report.

NY METRO

Barbara Wright
80 Harvard Dr
Hartsdale, NY 10530
(914) 948-0569

This region will be holding a Regional Gathering in 1995. They are always looking for new members, so please feel free to pass along CMN information to anyone you know in the area.

NORTHERN CAL

Lisa Atkinson
1655 Montemar Way
San Jose, CA 95125
(408) 266-2987

Lisa Atkinson has put all of her energy into the National Gathering in October. Hope everyone enjoyed it!

SOUTHEAST

Katherine Dines
2605 Essex Place
Nashville, TN 37212
(615) 297-4286.

Meetings occur regularly the first Wednesday of every month from 12:00 - 1:00 pm at the Nashville Entertainment Association; 1007 17th Avenue South; Nashville, TN. We are having a blast . . . sharing stories, poems, songs, finger games, Signs, and other tools of our trade at our SONG SWAPS. These occur every three months. Some CMN members continue to work collectively and independently on: a direct mail piece to advertise product; shared mailing lists; cooperative tours and bookings; purchases of sound equipment; putting together a live radio show; opening up various venues for performances of children's music; establishing a suggested rate or trade options for our performances; increasing our membership to reflect more diversity; and, in general, getting the work out! For more information, contact Katherine, or Rachel Sumner at (615) 352-0104.

SOUTHERN CAL

Marcia Berman
13045 Mindanao Way #1
Marina Del Ray, CA 90292
(310) 821-1216

This region has no formal plans for the next few months. Most of the energy in the area has gone into

preparing for the Gathering in Petaluma.

WESTERN MASS

Debbi Friedlander
PO Box 950
Amherst, MA 01004
(413) 256-1380

We had a regional gathering on October 1 from 2-4 at the Crocker Farm Elementary School on Rte. 116 south of Amherst center. We are changing from monthly meetings to a schedule based on feedback from those who attended the October meeting. If you have questions or suggestions, please contact Debbi, or Bob Blue at (413) 256-8784.

ANNOUNCEMENTS**GOLD MEDAL WINNER**

The 1994 National Parenting Publications Awards has awarded CMN member Bonnie Phipps & The Elastic Band the Gold Medal for their 4th album, "Monsters' Holiday." Congratulations, Bonnie!

WANTED!

Phil Hoose is looking for kid-written parodies of the "Barney" theme song for a project he is working on. Please send to Phil at 8 Arlington Street, Portland, ME 04101.

SUMMER JOB OPENING!

Folk musician / song leader / counselor wanted for camp position from 6/16 - 8/20/95. Salary negotiable, minimum age is 20. Send resume and cover letter to: Interlocken, RR 2, Box 165, Hillsboro, NH 03244, att: Judi Wisch. Call: (603) 478-3166.

FOREVER SONG

music by Sarah Goslee Reed

words adapted from poem by Michael Waldecki

© 1993 Sarah Goslee Reed

This is the first song on Sarah's wonderful recording **Magic Pockets**. She was inspired by Michael Waldecki's poem, printed below, and adapted the words for her spirited song. To contact Sarah about her songs and recordings, write to her at 944 EAsT High Street, Mount Vernon, OH 43050.

Fast 4/4

E E A B7 E

Chil - dren sing for the time we bor - row sing sing oh chil - dren sing.

E E A B7 E

Sing for the good of ___ to - mor - row sing sing oh chil - dren sing.

E E A B7 E

Chil - dren sing for ___ stars and dreams _ sing sing oh chil - dren sing.

E E A B7 E

Sing for blues skies and streams _ sing sing oh chil - dren sing.

A B A E

Sing for me, sing for you. _____

A Bsus4 A B E

sing for rea - son in the things we do. _____

2nd time:

Children sing for love and a smile: sing sing oh children sing.
Sing forever that's a very long while: sing sing oh children sing.

Children sing for the time we borrow: sing sing oh children sing.
Sing for the good of tomorrow: sing sing oh children sing.

FOREVER SONG

by Michael Waldecki

Children sing
For the good the future may bring.
Sing for the spring.

Children sing
For the love that is everything.
Sing for love.

Children sing
For a dream.
Sing a flowing stream.

Sing for me,
Sing for you,
For reason in the things we do.

Children sing
For a sky of blue.
Sing to the stars.

Sing for what is His,
Sing for what is ours,
Sing forever.

(cont. from page 4... CONNECTIONS)

have seeds growing in cups I know they've been talking about growing so I sing songs like Tom Hunter's "Seeds", or Dave Mallet's "Garden Song", Raffi's "Everything Grows", and the traditional "Oats, Peas, Beans, and Barley Grow." After I choose a song or two I usually ask them to teach me one that they like to sing. This allows them to be proud of what they already know and also feel the rewards of being "the teacher." Likewise, when telling stories, I choose stories that correlate with their work or I try to find a way to put something they are doing into the story. Students and teachers appreciate it when we pay attention to them. We all do!

Songs are effective in introducing themes to upper grade students as well. A theme that middle school teachers appreciate is peer pressure. Singing Bob Blue's song "Courage" is a great way to begin a discussion about this subject. Even the "coolest" sixth and seventh graders can relate to how it feels to be the one who has been left out or hurt. Listening to and discussing this song can give them an opportunity to think about how they treat one another.

Songs and Whole Language

The term "Whole Language Philosophy" has received a great deal of attention during the 80's's and 90's and has become part of the teaching style in many classrooms. It is difficult to get a consensus on exactly what "Whole Language" means but it's easy to recognize that many teachers are looking for new and better ways to teach. I've talked with hundreds of these teachers and been the beneficiary of their enthusiasm and experience. Here are some of the attitudes they bring to their classrooms. They love books, love language, are willing to try new things, and believe strongly that

students can think, comprehend and express themselves on a level much higher than what standardized assessments might indicate. These teachers believe in reading to children of all ages at a level higher than they can read themselves. Whole language teachers look for rich language experiences that will motivate students and excite them about learning. Singing, song writing, and storytelling are activities that fit perfectly in a whole language approach. Here are some ways you can appeal to whole language teachers.

Suggest to teachers that they have beginning readers "sing and read" by following along on a chart as they sing the song. This is a fun way to introduce or reinforce the concept that print has meaning. If teachers choose a "song of the week" and print it on the board or a chart, then each day they can sing and read that song. If they do it on a chart they can accumulate a library of songs in print. There are also many songs available in published picture books.

Whole language teachers do lots of writing activities with students of all ages and abilities. Writing songs and writing new verses to existing songs are activities they can use. Even if students can't spell or write they can work in a group to create lyrics and feel the joy of being writers. The traditional song "Down by the Bay" is one that young children enjoy making up new rhymes for.

I wrote a song called "I Like Ants" which I use as a starter with early grades when doing this type of activity. The song involves naming an animal and then adding a line which tells something about that animal. One of the verses goes like this:

I like lions. (echo)
I like their frizzy hair. (echo)
I like penguins. (echo)
They're so debonair. (echo)
I like peacocks (echo)

And porcupines too (echo)
(Porcupine stew?)
I like animals (echo)
And I like you and you and you
And you and me a lot too!

Using my song as a model, students make up their own verses. After they create one or more verses they can illustrate the lyrics and make a book. Making your own books is another popular whole language project.

Song writing activities are effective with students of all ages not just the youngest. Some older students may write original lyrics and music or they can use existing melodies with new lyrics. A music teacher or visiting artist can also help create the music. An exercise that ties in nicely with science units on the environment is writing additional verses to Bill Oliver's song "Habitat." This can be done as a cooperative learning activity and may require brainstorming and research by the group. For a social studies connection try singing or listening to Tom Chapin and John Forster's "Family Tree" and then invite students to write new verses about unknown and exotic sounding places or create verses based on what they know of their own family histories.

Here are some other ways teachers can use songs and music: to teach content like historical and mathematical facts, to practice spelling using songs like B-I-N-G-O, to learn new vocabulary words, to build background for reading and writing by using songs to introduce topics, to stimulate discussions about values, to introduce students to other cultures, etc. These are just a few ideas about how to promote the value of using music, songs, and song writing in the classroom. If you're interested in making connections with Language Arts teachers, learn about local, state, and regional reading and whole language conferences. Teachers who attend these conferences are very receptive to new

ideas for using music and other creative arts in the classroom. They can be helpful in getting artists invited into the schools and making connections between artists and school program planners. When you're in a school ask a reading teacher for information about state and local chapters of the I. R. A. You can also write to them at: **International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware 19714.** Find out where and when their conferences and local meetings are and let them know about your work. ♪ ♪ ♪

(cont. from page 4... PREJUDICE)

represented a degree of illumination in its time, it now appears intolerable, and I wonder as I read over the lyrics 30 years later, how I have internalized its language and message about African-American people.

Piqued by examination of my own song background and automatic song choices, I embarked on formal research into other teachers' song choices -- what songs they choose, why, and how they use them with young children. I was curious to see to what extent other teachers were paying attention to song content. It seemed to me more difficult to develop criteria for analyzing bias in children's songs than in books. Books have illustrations, character development, situations and plot, whereas a song's impact is contained primarily in its lyrics.

I wondered whether teachers used singing to help children understand and respect who they are. Songs can encourage children's identification with and understanding of those who are different. Did teachers understand this? My feeling was that if educators don't consider content in the lyrics of songs they sing with children, they inadvertently introduce and perpetuate existing biases. If teachers could learn to examine song lyrics for bias, they'd have one more

powerful tool for helping young children negotiate their way through a confusing world of unexplained ambiguities and inequities.

Through research I quickly discovered how many teachers shared my concerns. The Children's Music Network, for instance, has its roots in this kind of awareness. Many CMN members talked with me or responded to my questionnaire as I gathered a large body of teachers' anecdotes and song preferences, all testimony to a keen interest in using songs as tools for developing children's positive self-concept and positive image of people different from themselves. I collected a rich supply of ideas concerning how to use songs with young children, based on two fundamental objectives: to infuse into song repertoire the songs which children already know, in order to smooth the transition from home to school, and to honor the child's cultural background in new song choices, with an awareness that every individual belongs to a group with a culture.

The teachers I spoke with use songs in the classroom to bridge differences in ability, family structure, gender, class, culture or race and to build a feeling of togetherness and belonging. Actively reaching out to children's families in resources for song material was highly recommended; involving the child in the process of collection and sharing seems to make it most meaningful of all.

Teachers I talked to perceive bias in songs as a very real problem. There are many songs they choose not to use at all, most frequently because of perceived racist or sexist messages in the language. They are quick to improve language in songs which they consider otherwise positive, and they attempt to empower children by encouraging their involvement in this process. When a song seems unfair or oppressive to any group of people, teachers don't necessarily advocate

censorship. As one songwriter/educator put it, "We just need to reframe it, see who wrote it and discuss why they might have chosen the words they did. Usually biases are the result of ignorance and there's nothing wrong with being ignorant, just with being close-minded!"

Song-writing with children, in its simplest forms (zipper songs or re-writing lyrics to a favorite tune), is one of the solutions teachers use to salvage "flawed" songs and to give children a real voice. Children like to make up songs, and this technique has the advantage of allowing us to learn more about individual children, through listening to what they're saying and observing what's important to them.

Many songs were objected to by teachers because of their inherent racism, sexism, or ageism, and others because they described harming or killing animals (such as "Little Bunny Foo Foo" or "Little Cabin in the Woods"), because they glorify war (military or patriotic songs), or because they are Christian holiday songs and children's exposure to these is already maximized by their status in the dominant culture. There were objections to safety rules or behavior being taught through intimidation ("Ten Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed" or "Santa Claus is Coming to Town") and to money being held up as the source of happiness ("Hush Little Baby, Don't Say a Word").

Over and over again, "Ten Little Indians" came up as the example of a racist song. Many teachers said they do use this song, because of its benefits as a counting song (it counts forward and backward), but that they always change the words first, substituting the word "Indians" with something meaningful to the children at the time, like "fingers" or "dinosaurs."

Another example is "A, Alligators All Around," an alphabet song which uses "imitating Indians" for the letter "I," while every other letter is represented by an object. The song comes from Maurice Sendak's book of the same name, in which the illustration shows a child dressed up in a feather headdress, "playing Indian." One teacher commented, "I use this song intentionally to point out the disrespect toward Native Americans. We make up our own verse for 'I,' eradicating 'imitating Indians.' One year, the kids wrote something about igloos for the alternative. The following year, a boy pointed out that was still Native American and substituted 'imitating ivy grow.'"

Sexist messages were easy to uncover in teachers' song repertoires. One teacher stated, "I particularly dislike 'Three Little Ducks,' the version where the mother duck can't get them to come back but the father duck calls them . . . 'quack quack quack' and three little ducks come running back. This is pretty insidious stuff about the ineffectual mom, but what does it say to the many kids who have no dad?"

"The Farmer in the Dell" was mentioned by many as a biased song which they sing in spite of its sexist slant. In this old favorite, "the farmer takes a wife (whose identity is defined only by her relationship to him) and his wife takes a child, which reinforces the common stereotype that a woman's primary, correct and natural task is to be a wife and mother." Teachers who sing this song stipulated that its words first be altered to be more inclusive: in the 1990s, half the time the farmer takes a husband. Roles and gender are switched around with the help of the children, so that any farmer might choose any partner. One teacher said, "I always choose female 'farmers' as often as I do male farmers. Then we'd sing 'the farmer takes a husband.' I think it's good for kids to

change songs and improve them. First, it challenges their ingenuity with rhyme and rhythm but, second, it enhances their understanding of the folk process. We all own these songs, after all. It's not as if we're rewriting a Beethoven sonata."

Another example often cited was "Wheels on the Bus." One teacher commented, "Actually, I hate this song, but kids come to school singing it so I use it, and now I find it's a way to bring up gender differences and roles. The Daddy can go 'kiss kiss kiss,' the Mama can go 'read read read,' the Teenager can go 'shh shh shh,' or whatever they want!"

"Last Night I Had the Strangest Dream" was a favorite of many teachers, but the phrase ". . . and the room was filled with men" is replaced with ". . . filled with women and men," to be more inclusive. This change, on the other hand, was objected to by some because the first phrase reflects historical reality in political peace negotiations, which have commonly been conducted by rooms full of men. This is a clear example of how personal a process this is. If children can be brought into the discussion, they learn not only about issues of fairness, but about changes in historical perspective and differences of opinion. Children also illuminate new perspectives for us.

One of the most controversial songs discussed was "The Old Woman Who Swallowed a Fly." Some regard it as disrespectful to older people ("it views our elders as decrepit and simple-minded") while many praised it for its silliness and repetition. "I sing this with kids all the time. It has such a great sense of humor. Would it make it a different song if it was a young woman or a middle-aged woman? Old isn't a concept we want to exclude." The sentiment here seems to be that we all need to beware of "the Politically Correct Police: Next thing we know kids will

have to say, 'Let's go play Cowpersons and Native Americans.'"

A lot of "flawed" songs are sung after first being laundered by the teacher for biased language: switching genders and universalizing male designations. Most teachers I talked to, however, think it's essential that children be involved in a dialogue about songs perceived as unfair. Flawed songs should be teaching tools. Children can learn from this process to recognize bias and apply that understanding to other songs and to other areas of their lives.

As we help children identify and counteract bias in songs, we still need to carefully scrutinize songs ourselves to insure they provide children with positive images and accurate information. Teachers questioned their own abilities to evaluate a song for cultural bias when they're not members of the targeted group. Clearly, we all need to help each other in order to identify cultural authenticity for songs. But always, the irrefutable response has been that children's songs -- if they are thoughtfully selected and used in the classroom -- can open children's eyes to bias, can build bridges between cultures without distortion, can support mutual respect and appreciation, and can help preserve the integrity of all cultures.

Songs and music may still be one of the most obvious and accessible means of infusing a multicultural element into early childhood programs. If songs from middle class, European-American traditions (old English folk songs) outweigh other influences as they so often do, then we must all be aware that children who are outside of the norm struggle against a feeling of invisibility because of race, ethnicity, gender, class, family style or ability. At the same time we must be clear that, for children of the dominant culture within that norm, it can be dehumanizing to experience their

heritage as the standard by which others are measured and to feel that they are superior only because they are more visible and not because of anything they have done to achieve this visibility.

The responsibility of adults in the lives of children is to be aware of the power of messages that songs carry and to look at those messages. We

can, in paying close attention to what we are telling children in the songs we sing together, be willing to learn how they are actually internalizing these messages. Although our song choices might not change the world overnight, they can affect attitudes and so influence the future.

I encourage educators and musicians to continually collect a useful song

vocabulary which models respect for people of different fortune, abilities, sexuality, age, gender, ethnicities, and cultures. Out of my research with teachers of young children came a rich supply of multicultural songs which do this, many of them written by CMN members. I offer my song list and I invite you to share yours, so that we may keep on exploring and passing them from voice to voice. ♪

DIRECTORY CORRECTIONS

The following entries were listed incorrectly in the 1994 directory. Please note these changes:

Bartels, Joanie (213)934-1256
419 N. Larchmont Blvd. #13
Los Angeles, CA 90004

P/SW

The Magic Series cassettes; Simply Magic video series.

Big Round Records Inc 603-623-1458
/Peggosus 603-225-8986
Paul W. Hodes
185 Elm Street, Manchester, NH 03104

P/SW/PR/Record Co.

BUELL, Uncle Ruthie 213-870-4180
1731 S. Sherbourne Drive,
Los Angeles, CA 90035

Host and producer, Halfway Down the Stairs weekly radio program. Concerts (storytelling and songs) for children, adults, families. Workshops for parents, teachers, mental health professionals.

TAKE A LITTLE STEP (LP & cassette);
CHANUKAH AT HOME (LP, cassette &
CD); newly released THE MYSTERY OF
TIME (mostly for adults; cassette & CD).

Cooperman, Joellyn 310-472-7612
1478 North Kenter Ave.,
Los Angeles, CA 90040

Please note correct phone number above and delete work phone number.

Fink, Cathy & 301-434-1181
Marxer, Marcy Fax: 303-445-0939
Community Music, Inc.
9428 Curran Rd., Silver Spring, MD 20901

Please delete manager: Jeri Goldstein and number. Above phone # is the correct #.

Olshansky/Hammil, Joanne
11 Marshall Terr. 508-358-5213
Wayland, MA 01778

Not all directories had complete phone #.

Riddell, Cecilia 310-833-3234

Please omit PhD after name.

WORKING TOGETHER 610-527-6629
Joni Carley Yamaguchi
c/o The Banner Project
Diamond Rock Road
Phoenixville, PA 19460

Children's radio magazine show on RADIO
FOR PEACE INTERNATIONAL which is
heard around the world. Seeking material.

Two cassettes available from The Banner
Project: COLORS THEY ARE
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KIDS.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SEEGER HONORED AT KENNEDY CENTER

CMN-er, Pete Seeger was recently named one of the winners of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts 17th Annual Honors for 1994. Honorees were saluted at the Center's Opera House in December. Congratulations, Pete!

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

The North American Folk Music and Dance Alliance will be holding their Seventh Annual Conference on February 16-19, 1995 in Portland, OR. For information, call (919) 962-3397.

The National Association of Independent Record Distributors and Manufacturers (NAIRD) will be holding their 23rd annual convention on May 10-14, 1995 in San Francisco. For information, call (606) 633-0946.

CMN PHONE CONTACT

If you have any questions about CMN or how to become a more active member of your region, please contact **Bob Blue at (413) 256-8784.**

JOHNNY GOT A GUN

words & music by Tom Paxton
© 1993 PAX Music

It's hard to find a song about such a frightening topic as this that is not "preachy" and that will make a serious impression on 'older' kids. Tom has done it – powerfully and superbly! Social Studies teachers have said this song spurred some real consciousness-raising sessions in their classrooms. To contact Tom about his songs and recordings, write to PAX Music, P.O. Box 19, East Hampton, NY 11937.

Am G

1. John - ny's mom and dad both worked long hours — And they
John - ny was ele - ven, but they had no no - tion Of what

F E Am G

worked _ on the week - ends too John - ny got pushed and
John - ny was — go - ing through

C G C E

John - ny got robbed And they made him feel chick - en to run

Am G F E

Big kids picked on John - ny ev - ery day 'Til John - ny went and got him a

1. 3.

Am G F G Am G F F G Am

gun

2. 4. 5.

Am C G F

walls John - ny was a - fraid of dy - ing young Ev - ery - bo - dy he

E Am G F E

knew had guns So John - ny got a gun And ev - ery lit - tle thing looked

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of nine staves of music. The first staff has a melody line with lyrics underneath. The second staff continues the melody and includes a double bar line with repeat dots. The third staff continues the melody. The fourth staff continues the melody. The fifth staff continues the melody. The sixth staff is a bridge section with a different chord progression. The seventh staff continues the melody. The eighth staff continues the melody. The ninth staff continues the melody. Chord symbols are placed above the staff lines. The lyrics are written below the notes.

1. 2.

Am G F G Am G F G Am

cool

3.

Am G F Guitar tacet Am

cool and his feet don't reach the floor

Johnny got a gun, he didn't bring it home
 He covered it with rags and dirt
 On his way to school he looked both ways
 Then he slipped it under his shirt
 Johnny was afraid of going to school
 There was always trouble in the halls
 Fights in the boys' room, guns in the lockers
 Little kids bouncing off the walls

Refrain: Johnny was afraid of dying young
 Everybody he knew had guns
 So Johnny got a gun
 And every little thing looked cool

First time Johnny flashed his gun
 Everybody backed off fast
 Everybody treated him differently then
 Johnny felt safe at last
 Johnny had a gun and everybody knew
 Everybody left him alone
 Till he bumped a kid who was coming down the stairs
 And the kid had a gun of his own

Kid hit Johnny, Johnny went down
 Kid had something to say
 Kid pulled his gun but Johnny shot first
 And Johnny blew the other kid away
 Police came and they took away his gun
 Said he wouldn't need a gun any more
 Took him to the station, sat him in a chair
 And his feet didn't reach the floor
 And his feet didn't reach the floor

Johnny had a hearing, pled self-defense
 But the prosecutor said, "No way"
 Judge said, "You're eleven, but kill like a man,
 And you're gonna have a long, long stay
 Johnny's mom and dad still work long hours
 Then they knock on the prison door
 They sit with Johnny in the visitor's room
 And his feet don't reach the floor

Refrain:
 Ending: And his feet don't reach the floor

ZE TSE-TSE FLY

words & music by Jan Harmon

© 1985 Jan Harmon

Jan was a prolific songwriter and extremely talented musician who wrote terrific songs and rounds for both children and adults. Some are hilarious and some poignant and beautiful; some very simple – as the round below – and some most complex and sophisticated. Jan tragically lost a long battle with leukemia in 1993 and many of us miss her deeply. Her music and spirit live on and I'd like to share one of her very clever rounds here that has been enjoyed by singers of all ages. When the four parts are going, you can actually hear the buzzing of tse-tse flies! To learn about more of Jan's songs, books and recordings, contact her son, Scott Prentice, P.O.Box 2508, San Rafael, CA 94912.

4 part round:

1. 2.

Be - ware of ze Tze - tze fly! Ze eet - zy beet - zy Tze - tze fly!

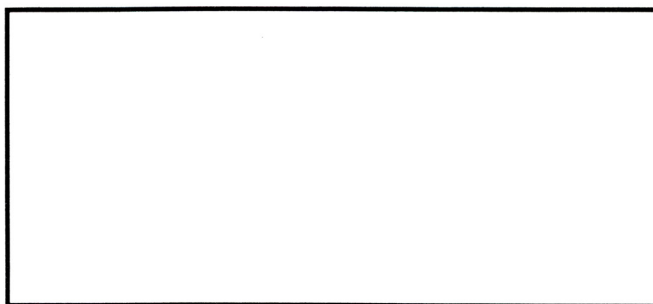
2. 4.

Eef you see ze Tze - tze, bet - ter run ze oz - er way! Be -

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Please circle one: RENEWAL NEW Is this a change of address?: YES NO

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(If you wish to be part of the Southern California Region & receive add'l info on S. Cal happenings and the S. Cal newsletter, "In The Works": send an additional \$5.00 to S. Cal CMN, 1544 S. Point View St., L.A., CA 90035.)

DIRECTORY LISTING

Please supply the following info for inclusion in the directory.

Important Note: CMN will only enter your first 50 words for questions 2-4 and will not write listings from your promo!

1. Circle letter codes that apply: Distributor Educator Performer SongWriter YoungPerson PARENT PRoducer Agent RecordCo SToryteller Media Other:
2. Describe your work or interest in children's music. Please note fluency in Sign Language or in a language other than English.
3. What are you seeking from other network members?
4. List any resources (records, books, etc.) you have available, include prices.