
PASS IT ON!TM

The Journal of The Children's Music Network

ISSUE #25

Winter 1997



Also...

- Parents' Musical Influence ■ Six Songs to Sing & Play ■
- 1996 National Gathering Round Robin ■ Growing CMN ■
- New Recordings ■ Music & Families ■ And More! ■

INTRODUCTION TO EDITORIAL

by Bob Blue

Success breeds success. Because of the excellent focus articles people have written for *Pass It On!*, because of the quality of the contributions of the regular staff, and because of the skill of Jan Graves and Caroline Presnell, *Pass It On!* continues to grow. It is a major benefit of membership in CMN. Parents, educators, performers, songwriters, and radio producers can find inspiration and information in it to help them get on with the delightful work of bringing music to and out of children.

I decide, somewhat arbitrarily, on a theme for each issue, and as I ask people to write focus articles, I suggest perspectives that relate to that theme. The fall issue focussed on the roles of performers, and this winter issue focuses on the roles parents play in encouraging their children to use music. The spring issue will focus on ways to help children write songs. It has been gratifying to find that as *Pass It On!* grows, my task is less one of CONVINCING people to write articles; people write because they see that *Pass It On!* plays an important role, and they sincerely want in on it.

Daphne Petri has become an important member of CMN, through her work on the board of directors, her planning of the 1995 national gathering, and her positive spirit. Her editorial reminds me of CMN member Tom Hunter's song, "Rock Me to Sleep."

Editorial

by Daphne Petri

Recently rehearsing for a concert, I introduced a lullaby, and what I said made us cry: "This is a lullaby written by Joannie and her six-

Bob Blue is a retired teacher, volunteer teacher, and writer of articles, stories, musical plays, and songs.



year-old son. It has in it the wisdom of the mother and the brightness of the child. We can relate to this song, as lullabies are present in every culture, and universally understood. They are the first songs we learn and the last songs we forget."

Why did this move us? Our tears came from the place of the mother and the child, and the deep recognition of those intimate moments of receiving the gift of song. The lullaby is our true grounding in song—the music of the intimacy of parent and child.

Think of it: your head is on the pillow, you have had a full day, and now it is time to let go and relax into your body. The sound of one soft voice, from someone who loves you, floats a song into your heart. A song that may help to heal you even if you are yearning, or unsettled. A song that brings a smile to your face, brings closure to the day. Or simply a song to say, "I love you, and you will be safe tonight." This is an intimate and powerful gig! And it is often delivered by someone who sings for no one else.

The intimacy is enhanced by the heightened level of listening. A child listens to the song and receives it. It is not background music that the child can choose to hear or not hear. It is a song being sung to the child and for the child. The infant receiving a lullaby learns to listen. I remember knowing that my day-old baby, as she looked up at me, was really listening to me, to my

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Articles in this journal do not necessarily represent the views of The Children's Music Network. Members are invited to send songs and articles for publication directly to the appropriate editors, but we can not guarantee publication. It is helpful if you let an editor know in advance that you plan to submit an article. Published three times a year; deadlines are July 1, November 1, and March 1.

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WHY THERE IS A CMN...

In the 1980s, like-minded teachers, performers, songwriters, radio hosts and parents who cared about the quality and content of children's music found each other...and established a group of dedicated individuals that soon became The Children's Music Network—"CMN"—a nonprofit association that now has members across the United States, Canada, and elsewhere.

Our shared values bring us together. We believe that quality children's music strengthens an understanding of cooperation, of cultural diversity and of self-esteem...

and that it enhances children's thinking skills and feelings of empowerment.

WHO WE ARE...

We are diverse in age, ethnicity and geographic reach. Our membership includes full-time and part-time performers... professional and amateur songwriters...classroom teachers and music educators...record producers and distributors...broadcasters...parents, grandparents and children.

We believe in the power that songs and stories have to not only entertain, but also to inspire, inform and enlighten.

WHAT WE DO...

We meet and stay in touch to share songs and ideas about children's music...to inspire each other about the empowering ways adults and young people can communicate through music...and to be a positive catalyst for education and community-building through music.

Our members work to support the creation and dissemination of life-affirming, multicultural musical forms for, by, and with young people.

OUR PRINCIPLES...

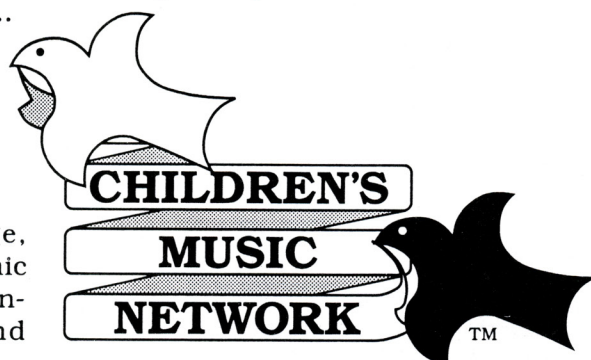
We recognize children's music as a powerful means of encouraging cooperation...celebrating diversity...building self-esteem...promoting respect and responsibility for our environment...and cultivating an understanding of nonviolence and social justice.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Lisa Atkinson, Bob Blue, Katherine Dines, Lisa Garrison, Joanne (Olshansky) Hammil, Phil Hoose, Susan Hopkins, Bonnie Lockhart, José-Luis Orozco, Suni Paz, Ruth Pelham, Daphne Petri, Sarah Pirtle, Sally Rogers, Barbara Wright.

IF YOU'RE NOT A MEMBER...

...we'd love to have you join us! Please fill out the membership application on the back cover, or write or call our business office (address just to the left) for more information.



An Interview with Ruth Pelham

Conducted by Phil Hoose

Ruth Pelham is a singer, songwriter and educator who brings the world a radiant and encouraging vision of social change. Pete Seeger has called her "one of America's greatest songwriters" and he sometimes says she's an even better song-leader. Born in 1949, Ruth grew up in Brooklyn as part of a family of four that loved to sing together. In the summers her counselors taught her the inspiring folk music of political activism. At the University of Wisconsin during the late sixties, she began to write and lead her own songs, and to develop a vision of how her art might work to bring people together. After graduation, Ruth found her way to Albany, New York, where, in 1977, she founded a remarkably effective neighborhood program called the Music Mobile. Nearly two decades later, she remains its director and its heart.

The Music Mobile itself is a colorful van, gaily decorated with children's drawings, which tours Albany's inner-city neighborhoods. Its instantly-recognizable theme song invites children to gather at a school or playground or park for singing and instrument-building activities. But that's just the start. Ruth's program also invites neighbors to recognize the value of sticking together, of caring for one another, of sharing with one another their hopes and fears. The program has steadily expanded to include programs for senior citizen centers and nursing homes. Ruth has taken the Music Mobile vision to the bottom of the Grand Canyon, the Soviet Union and other stops throughout the world. The program offers a model for trans-

porting education beyond the classroom and into the common gathering places of everyday life.

Ruth's songs have been recorded by dozens of artists, including Holly Near, Pete Seeger and Ronnie Gilbert. Her performances are so involving, that, in a way, there is really no such thing as a Ruth Pelham "concert." Song by song, Ruth works away at the wall between audience and performer until it simply dissolves. She makes us provide the words to her "zipper songs," and gets us to repeat the lines to her "echo songs," and invites us to help her make up new lines on the spot to old songs we all know by heart. Above all, she leads us in her heart-filled anthems like "Under One Sky" and "Look to the People," whose magnificent choruses leave us no choice but to sing.

Ruth is a founding member of The Children's Music Network, and remains very active on CMN's board of directors. Her board colleagues know her as a thoughtful and creative builder, a detailed minute-taker and a world-class hugger. Ruth spoke with *Pass It On!* in October by phone from her home in Albany, New York.

* * * * *

PIO!: So who sang to you when you were little?

RUTH: My mama and my papa...they sang individually to me and my sister, and we all sang together. I have terrific memories of that.

PIO!: What's the first song you can remember one of them singing to you?

RUTH: I remember them singing, "Roll the ball to Mommy, she'll roll it back to you." You'd sit on the floor, and you'd roll it, from me to my mom, and my mom would roll it to my sister, and my sister Diane to my dad, and we'd just go around the room, singing the song, and...it was like a zipper song. I guess

that's my first zipper song (laughter)...But I also remember singing these little English ditties that my father would teach us, because he was from England, and he always had these really amusing songs that, as I have grown up, are not really as funny as I thought. One was about, like, Anne Boleyn, with her head tucked underneath her arm. We sang that with great gusto in the car.

PIO!: This was in Brooklyn?

RUTH: I grew up in the Crown Heights, or Flatbush, section of Brooklyn, about four blocks from Ebbets Field. I lived on the same block for seventeen years, in a neighborhood that was mixed but mostly Jewish. I lived on one side of the block for about six years, and then we moved across the street. The street was just a terrific place to be. There were lots and lots of kids on our block—lots of families. Brooklyn was the kind of place where there were all kinds of street games to play. There was stoop ball, and stoop base, and Capture the White Flag. And life happened a lot in the street, with a lot of stoop-sitting, and everybody knowing everybody's business, and looking out for each other, and it was like the streets became an extension of where you lived. I loved that. But we traveled around New York a lot. My parents were folk music buffs. I mean they really loved not just American folk music, but a lot of international music. So they would take us to the Brooklyn Academy of Music for a Spanish dance recital, or to the Moysiev to see a Soviet ballet troupe. We were exposed to a lot of international culture.

PIO Were both your parents born in this country?

RUTH: My mom was born here and my dad came here from England. He was born in 1908, and he came here from Leeds when he was about twenty years old. He always talks

about how poor his family was materially, but how much they had in the family. He says his mother wrote poetry, and that they all sang together a lot. He has a wonderful voice. He's eighty-eight years old now, and he still sings the songs that he sang back when he was three years old. They still tickle him. And he's a bit of a ham; he goes to Gilbert & Sullivan elder hostels and gets to perform some of these Gilbert & Sullivan songs. And he's real eager to show them off.

PIO!: What kind of work did he do?

RUTH: He was an antique dealer. He built up his business from absolutely nothing. He came to this country and he washed windows in hospitals...odd jobs. I look at my dad having the stamina to do that, and having the guts to do that; it's really inspiring me to see somebody start something from absolutely nothing. I think he had an eighth grade education. He developed himself into one of the most well-read, worldly people I know, with just a vast amount of knowledge and information, warmth and wisdom. His antique shop was in Manhattan, at a great location, on the corner of 59th and 3rd Avenue. My mom helped him run the shop. It was in a wonderful, wonderful spot. Right across the street from Alexander's and Bloomingdale's, just upstairs from the Horn and Hardart. He had a big sign that said "Gilbert Pelham Antiques." I often took the train from Brooklyn to Manhattan to meet my parents for dinner, or sometimes we'd go to the theater. I really loved it that my parents' business was in Manhattan, 'cause it put me there a lot. I traveled on the trains in New York all the time. I took piano lessons up on like 105th Street when I was about twelve. It was a long ride. The trains were fascinating places, 'cause there were all kinds of people on those trains And I was always really fascinated by the people, and just by the energy of it.



Photo: Drea Leanza

Children sing and play their homemade Guitar Boxes with Ruth next to the Music Mobile van

PIO!: How 'bout your mom? What's she like?

RUTH: She died in 1987. She had a really good sense of humor. She was a woman who, I think, was a feminist back before the second wave of feminism really came up. And my mom had a real vision of women being strong, being capable, being competent, and was able to maneuver in her world to make things happen, which I always admired, and there are times when I go through my own life, where I just feel my mother in me, so much, in terms of going about, doing things well, taking care of details. She was wonderful at taking care of details. And a very organized person, and a dancer. Besides working with my dad, she was a dancer.

PIO!: A dancer?

RUTH: She went to Brooklyn College and she was a physical education and dance major. She loved to use her body and feel the strength of her body. She played tennis, and she skied, and she was a swimming instructor. She went to camp with us in the summers. She would be either head counse-

lor or waterfront counselor, so that we could go to camp. That's the only way they could afford to get us there. After she died, we went through a whole bunch of boxes and papers, and came up with Playbills with my mom's picture as part of a dance troupe she belonged to that actually performed on Broadway. It was amazing to me. I had never seen these Playbills. But she just had a real playfulness about her. She loved to dance with us—just goof around. We'd start tap dancing, grab a broom, and just kind of make a show of it.

PIO!: A father who loved to sing and a mother who danced. Did you have performance fantasies as a girl?

RUTH: Great question. I used to do this routine. We had a two-story house, and there was a big staircase that went up—well, it seemed big to me, anyway. And I'd pretend I was Loretta Young. She would wear those elegant dresses, with the wide, wide skirts. I would come down as Loretta Young, and introduce myself, and sometimes I'd

continued on next page ➤

sing, and then I'd go back up the steps again, and then I'd do it again. Later I was Judy Collins, coming down the stairs.

PIO!: Was the summer camp you mentioned a big part of your life?

RUTH: It was a big part of my life. Camp Well-Met was a Jewish Federation camp, and people came mostly from the New York/Connecticut area. And it was a progressive camp, which meant that values there were fairly unmaterialistic—were more in terms of community, in terms of appreciating nature. It wasn't particularly competitive. We went back year after year after year. There was a tremendous amount of singing there. And the singing there totally captivated me. I was deeply exposed to folk music and political music and songs of the Civil Rights movement. I mean we listened to Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger songs, and I learned Phil Ochs songs and Tom Paxton songs, and songs of the Labor movement.

And they would attract counselors that could really support the values of the camp. And of course, they had everybody singing along with them, and that is one of the most joyful, powerful memories I have of camp. You know, a hundred people, every night before dinner, gathered in front of the dining hall to sing for twenty minutes. I mean we learned about things through those songs that I never learned about in school. About people. About feelings. About emotions. About viewpoints of life. And I cherish that, because I don't know where else I would have gotten that. You certainly didn't get it in your history class.

PIO!: Was there any one counselor who served as a model for you as a song leader?

RUTH: Absolutely. Ann Adler. She was short...(laughter)...and I am short. And every night, seven nights a week Ann led what we called "round-up," which was group singing. She had a Martin

guitar that looked huge to me at that time, when I was going into the sixth or seventh grade. I would hang out at her shack, where she lived, because I was itching to touch the guitar. She'd tell me what the songs meant, and just let me let out the feelings I had in response to the songs. After that summer my parents got me a forty-dollar Harmony guitar, and a few songbooks, and I sat on the floor just about every night with my mom, learning where to put my fingers until it felt like the guitar became an appendage of me. And I was also very shy.

PIO!: Really?

RUTH: Yeah, it's interesting—the way your perception of yourself is the same as or different from what other people hold of you. I remember being a real quiet kid, and feeling inadequate, and feeling like I was kind of like a creep, and just not knowing where I belonged, and feeling scared of people. And on the other hand, I also remember having a sense of humor. I remember that year in summer camp, people always hanging out on my bed, and they'd call me "The Professor," 'cause we'd have these conversations about things. And I was voted "Miss Popular." And I don't remember the feeling that went along with that. I most remember feeling unpopular. And frightened.

PIO!: Like maybe they've got it wrong. You're leading this double life—popular on the outside, creep on the inside. How could they be so fooled?

RUTH: If they only knew me...

PIO!: Boy, have I been there.

RUTH: I mean, I think all of us have been there, but you think you're the only one. And that's a real painful place to be, where you feel like you're hiding something about who you are, and you don't even know your own self, or what you're hiding, but you just feel like that. I have made a huge effort to figure it all out and go beyond being shy. I

didn't want to be shy. Being shy meant that you were pretty invisible. And it didn't allow me to be visible to my own self—not knowing who I was. And I think when we don't know who we are, it's pretty impossible to be our potential. Now when I work with kids, I'm real aware of the quiet part of kids, and how to bring kids out of that, because I remember the pain of that, from my own childhood, and my own teenage years, and my early adult years, too.

PIO!: When did you first really start leading songs, and moving people through music?

RUTH: I went to the University of Wisconsin during the sixties, which was like an extension of Camp Well-Met in a way, but now the power of one voice leading a song could move thousands of people at the same time, with everybody's voices blending. And I felt like I was in a really wonderful environment. It was a very progressive campus. And every day, there was something going on there, whether it be student strikes, even bombings.

PIO!: I remember the physics building got bombed there...

RUTH: I remember my house shaking from the bombing. And I remember Kent State. I mean, I remember all of that, and I remember the riots that happened, and the tear-gassing that happened, and all of that caused me, and I think all of us, to really look deep inside and say "What are your values? What do you believe in? What kind of world do you want? What do you stand for? Are you gonna stand for what you believe in? What are you gonna do about this? And how do you change that?" And those questions, coupled with the power of the music, saying "Yeah! We can do that! This is wrong! Here's a vision of how things could be!"

PIO!: Can you remember the first time you

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WHAT DO I DO?

words & music by Ruth Pelham

©1982 Ruth Pelham

Ruth's beautiful, moving song gives both children and adults strength in facing sadness and hard times. It acknowledges our pain and it also gives us some simple, true answers that provide real comfort in their honesty. It can be heard on her recording *Under One Sky*. Ruth is a master of interactive "zipper" songs (new words or phrases are "zipped" in and out), and this one is no exception, as she often has people make up their own verses to personalize this poignant song even further. See more information about her work in the interview beginning on page 2. To contact Ruth about her songs and recordings, write to her at P.O. Box 6024, Albany, NY 12206.

1. What do I do — when — my sis - ter — is cry — ing?

What do I do? I don't know what to say — You take your

sis - ter in your arms — and you hug — her. You take your

sis - ter in your arms — and you love — her.

5. Yes, you can climb in - to my arms — be - cause I love — you.

1. What do I do when my sister is crying?
What do I do? I don't know what to say.
You take your sister in your arms and you hug her;
You take your sister in your arms and you love her.
2. What do I do when my brother is crying?
What do I do? I don't know what to say.
You take your brother in your arms and you hug him;
You take your brother in your arms and you love him.
3. What do I do when the whole world is crying?
What do I do? I don't know what to say.
You take the world into your heart and you love us;
You take the world into your heart and you love us.
4. What do I do when I am crying?
What do I do? I don't know what to say.
You go deep into your heart, love will find you;
You go deep into your heart, love will find you.
5. What do I do when I am crying?
What do I do? I don't know what to say.
Well, you can climb into my arms and I'll hug you;
Yes, you can climb into my arms and I'll hold you;
Yes, you can climb into my arms because I love you.

A Family Under the Influence

by Andrea F. Stone

The conductor lifted up his baton and as he gave the downbeat, music filled the room! For the first time in almost thirty years, I was part of that music. There is something so thrilling about being a part of this group phenomenon—about adding a harmony to the emerging sound. As we played, I found that somehow, I had gotten more proficient in sight reading as I had gotten older. The conductor held the final fermata, and the piece came to a close.

What a kick! Why had I waited so long to join a community band? I had always thought that one day when I retired from work, I would have the time to again play in a band. Why, even in my mind, had I put it off as something to do so far in the future?

Before the conductor selected the next piece, he commented on how well the new baritone sax player had sounded. I must have glowed with pride! For sitting two seats away from me, was my fifteen year old, baritone sax-playing son! He is the one responsible for bringing this new joy into my life!

This past summer, Spencer decided that he wanted to find a job and take a computer course not offered in his school. Thinking that this might turn out to be a rather dull summer for him, I encouraged him to find a band that he might join to enhance the social aspects of his summer plans. So when I drove Spencer to pick up his music in late June, a member of the band enthusiastically persuaded me to join with him. The thought had never entered my mind! What instrument would I play? In high school I had played the oboe, but after all these years, I could never get my embouchure back.

Well, there was that old alto saxophone sitting in our back closet. I had played the sax through seventh grade when my music teacher strongly suggested that I switch instruments, since I was one of twelve saxophones, and he had no oboes. I guess I could pick it up again. Sure, I'd try.

And there I was, years later, as an adult, sitting at my first rehearsal. The next day, we boldly played our first concert with the Saddle River Valley Concert Band, in a local park, as fireworks filled the sky, accenting our rendition of "The Star Spangled Banner!" Independence Day, 1996! All of a sudden, playing in this band has become an important part of my life! Every Wednesday night, my son and I trek out to another rehearsal. No matter how tired I am from the long day's work, or how much my head throbs with the tensions of the day, I look forward to that night out.

Once there, all my cares seem to disappear. On the way home, we laugh about the jokes made by the conductor, and kid each other about losing our places during "The Irish Washer Woman." My husband and younger daughter support our endeavor by traipsing all over the county to listen to us play at various concerts. Perhaps next year, when Stephanie is old enough to join, I'll hear the conductor comment on her trumpet contributions. Music is again a common language in our home.

How did we get here? Adolescent children tend to find their own forms of musical expression. Usually, it ends up being whatever type of music is most cacophonous to the older generation. How is it that as a family we can take such delight in sharing this art form? I often wonder if it isn't because of

our early involvement with The Children's Music Network. Although we are not as active in CMN as we once were, music played an important role in our lives when our kids were young, and so did CMN. From listening to a local college radio station's Sunday morning children's show, we found our way to concerts by performers of children's music. Often these performers were members of CMN.

It wasn't long before we were attending our first gathering and coming home with such new songs as "Walk a Mile in Your Shoes" and "Dreams of Harmony." Our collection of tapes began to fill our walls, and our circle of new friends filled our hearts. We were hooked!

We had hit upon a source for wonderful children's music not easily found in the local or chain music stores. As a family, we got involved! As a family, we volunteered to do various tasks for CMN. And it was as a family that we benefitted from our involvement with CMN, not only in a musical sense. Our children

learned about giving of yourself for a good cause. They learned about doing things together as a family. The values prevalent in CMN became a reality to our kids. They felt valued by and important to the Network. Their world expanded beyond our town, and so did their friendships. They kept in touch with people from all over the country and of all ages. Their self-esteem was fortified by these friendships. CMN provided such a crucial foundation for our children's development, and music was just the framework.

Listening and singing was only a part of the music that filled our house. When the kids were still very young, maybe five and seven, they wanted to take piano lessons. Then



Steph picked up the guitar, and before long instrumental music lessons were offered in school. We had budding sax and trumpet players in our midst. Middle school offered our children their first opportunity to play in a band—to participate in that incredible phenomenon of building a sound as a group. My husband and I sat through many holiday concerts of neophyte musicians—a joy only parents and grandparents can truly appreciate. Next it was high school marching band, and we found ourselves freezing in the November night air at Giant Stadium as our son's band took the field to compete. Prepared with hand-warmers and noise-makers, we clapped the cold out of our fingers with an enthusiastic show of support.

Spencer now has a midi keyboard hooked up to our computer and he works at composing short pieces and adding harmonies to songs he already knows. This summer, he plans to tour Europe with The American Music Abroad Honors Band program. Stephanie is learning trombone in addition to trumpet and guitar, and she is looking forward to being a part of the high school marching band next year.

We now talk about the future: college selection, majors, college expenses...

We talk about how music will play a part in our futures: will the kids choose a college (or will they be chosen by a college) with a strong music department? Will they be able to make some extra spending money with their music? Will I someday play first sax in my community band? While the answers remain to be seen, we know that music will continue to be an important part of our lives as individuals and as a family. We will be ever grateful that by some coincidence, many years ago, we somehow bumped into The Children's Music Network. **✶PIO!**

Occasional Songs

by Nancy Schimmel

Long, long ago, before free-ways, there were funny four-line shaving cream advertising jingles, one line per small sign, along the sides of roads; and the traffic moved slowly enough so passengers could read them: "Statistics prove...near and far...that people who drive...like crazy, are.—Burma Shave." After my mother and father and I got tired of playing Pinky-Stinky, we would make up Burma Shave jingles. We did it just for the fun of it. A few good ones we remembered, but mostly they were discarded like used tissues.

Before the invention of throw-away handkerchieves and throw-away cups, people wrote throw-away songs (and poems). There was even a name for them. They were called "occasional songs." Not that they appeared occasionally, but that they were written for a particular occasion and were not expected to last beyond it. Now we throw everything else away, but we have the idea that each song we write should be deathless. This can stop us before we start.

I just went to a bridal shower where the hostess, Candy Forest, asked the bride to tell the story of how she and the groom met, and then Candy asked each of us to write a

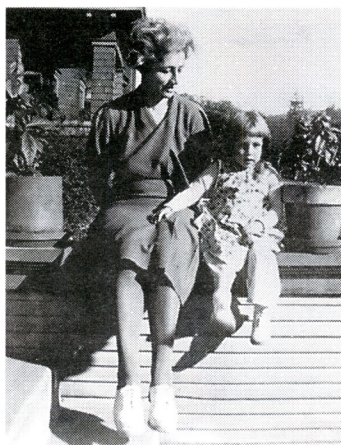
poem or verse, inspired by the story or not, as we wished. We copied what we came up with on clean sheets of paper, and they went into a pretty folder as a memento for the bride. None of them was terrific, but, all together, they captured the spirit of the occasion.

When I told my friend Bob that I was going to write an article called, "Occasional Songs," he immediately had an example, too. He was riding on the bus, seated on his electric scooter, while a little boy was having a tantrum. The mother looked too tired to cope, so Bob started singing: "There's a guy in the back of the bus, sitting on a funny-looking thing. I don't understand why, but he's starting to sing. I don't think I have a chance to understand why. But I'm so busy looking at him, that I'm not gonna cry." The boy was fascinated. Bob got others singing with him. They won't remember the song, but they will all remember how it turned an annoyance into a happy occasion. (This is one of the great functions of art: turning annoyances into, if not happy occasions, at least material.)

With children, it is probably a good idea just to enjoy what they produce, without making a permanent record of it to embarrass them with later, unless they themselves realize they have a hot one, and want to save it. That way, they are safe to fool around. And all artists, as well as all children, need to fool around. A lot.

So you and/or your kids can make up a first-day-of-school song, a what's-outside-the-car-window song, or a having-the-flu song. It may not last. It doesn't need to. Then, if you do want to make up a song that lasts, you will have had all that practice. **✶PIO!**

Nancy Schimmel learned songs and songwriting from her mother, Malvina Reynolds, and storytelling from her father, Bud Reynolds. Nancy is writing lots of gardening-related songs these days.



Nancy Schimmel and her mom



THE CHANGES THAT WE MAKE

words & music by Kevin McMullin
©1995 Kevin McMullin



Kevin sang this inspiring song at the Midwest Regional CMN Gathering last summer in Wisconsin. His thoughtful words are empowering for individuals and for communities, and the chorus (with echo lines for the audience) creates an exciting atmosphere of hope and commitment. To contact Kevin about his songs and recordings, write to him at N2538 Winselman Rd., Sorona, WI 54870.

chorus:

leader: I'm gon - na change some things I do. Not too

audience repeats: I'm gon - na change some things I do.

man - y just a few And if you make some chang - es

Not too man - y just a few And if you make

too then the chang - es that we make will change the world.

some chang - es too chang - es that we make will change the world.

verse:

1. One but - ter - fly flaps its wings in the sun. Does - n't real - ize what it's done to the

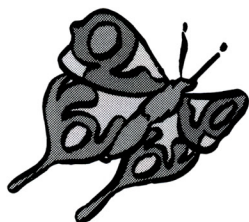
wind that's just be - gun But I know there's more than just one but - ter - fly and

so do all the breez - es in the sky, in the sky. I'm gon - na

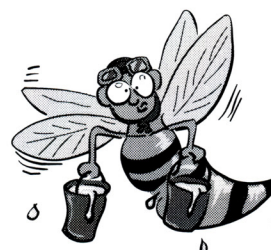
chorus:

chorus:

I'm gonna change (*I'm gonna change*) some things I do (*some things I do*)
Not too many (*not too many*) just a few (*just a few*);
And if you make (*and if you make*) some changes too (*some changes too*)
Then the changes that we make will change the world.



1. One butterfly flaps its wings in the sun
Doesn't realize what it's done to the wind that's just begun;
But I know there's more than just one butterfly
And so do all the breezes in the sky, in the sky.
2. One honeybee can only fly a little way
Doesn't make much in a day, doesn't get much time to stay;
But I know there's more than just one honeybee
To sweeten up the world for you and me, you and me.
3. One grain of sand is so small it can't reach
Past the next one on the beach—you can say the same of each;
But I know there's more than just one grain of sand
So who can tell me where the dune began? Where it began?



Parents— An Important Musical Influence

by Lisa Silver

Parents play a major role in the development of children's appreciation of music. I know this from personal experience. Music has always been an important part of my family. In fact, when I was growing up in a family of four, music was kind of a fifth family member. Some of my earliest memories are of listening to Burl Ives records with my brother, and learning the words to "How Much Is that Doggie in the Window?" from my mom. Since I was a child in the 1950s, this was long before CDs and cassettes, but the scratchy old 45s sounded just fine to us.

It seemed only natural to be surrounded with music, since my

father was a high-school music teacher. I remember attending my father's concerts and falling asleep in the front row while the band was blaring. And I remember being five years old and shouting out with pride, "That's my daddy!" when he stepped up to the podium to conduct the opening notes. (A fine way to begin a concert, I thought, and it got a good giggle from the audience!)

We had an upright grand piano that I was always allowed to tinker around on, and my father would sometimes bring home school instruments on loan, for my brother and me to have fun with. Back then I just assumed that music was a big part of everyone's family. One day my dad brought home a violin, and I was hooked! I started taking violin lessons when I was around seven, and from that point on, my life had a clear focus. I fell in love with classical music and went on to play the violin in school orches-

tras, community symphonies, and eventually at the University of Michigan School of Music.

While I was developing my skills in classical music, I was also walking around with a tiny transistor radio glued to my ear, and I played it softly next to my pillow every night. (This was before the era of huge boom boxes). Now, my dad was an opera lover, and while I'm sure he was not thrilled to hear the pop music of the early sixties, neither he nor my mom complained when my brother and I wanted to listen to top-40 radio in the car or at home. I have no doubt that my parents' encouragement and open-minded attitude about all styles of music influenced my decision to center my life around music.

I have been a professional musician in Nashville for nearly 25 years, during which I have had

continued on next page ➡

many creative opportunities and challenges. In the past five years I've been in the middle of my most important creative opportunity and challenge of all: raising my daughter. I again get to learn, from a parent's perspective this time, about a parent's role in a child's musical development.

I've noticed that the car cassette and CD player are important tools I use in my child's musical devel-



opment. Although I often prefer to listen to talk radio in the car, when my daughter Olivia is in the car with me, we listen to music constantly, as we have from the time she was an infant. When she was very small and starting to get fussy in the car, the right tape popped in at just the right time could make all the difference between a calm or crazy ride! And as she's been growing, I've seen how she learns through repetition. She will find a new favorite song from time to time and request it over and over again, what seems like hundreds of times, until she knows every word and every note.

I've enjoyed slipping in a few of my old favorites from my childhood, watching her add them to her growing repertoire. (It's really a kick to hear her shouting out "Day-o! Me say 'Daayy-o!'") I'm selective about the music I make available to her, because I've seen what close attention she pays to the lyrics. She asks lots of questions about the meaning of lines and words, and I'm seeing what an important influence song lyrics can have on a young child. She takes everything literally, and if a line or word doesn't make sense to her, or if she hears a figure of speech or colloquial phrase,

I have to go to great lengths to explain it to her satisfaction.

To me, there is something comforting in listening to children's music. In these times of too much TV, too many movies and videos (there's certainly an abundance of it in our household), and of growing up too fast, there's an innocence in hearing Danny Kaye sing "The Ugly Duckling" or Raffi sing "Baby Beluga." This will probably be lost once a young child starts listening to pop radio or watching music videos. I think I'll feel a bit sad when my daughter thinks that "There's A Hippo In The Bathtub" is too "babyish" for her! Now, don't get me wrong; as I've said before, I certainly loved pop radio as a young girl, and my first memory of pop music was hearing "Hit the Road, Jack!" by Ray Charles, when I was around eight years old.

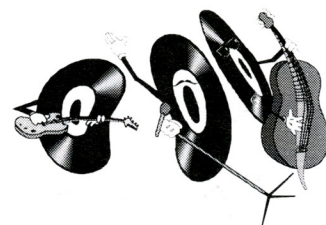
But I'm hoping I can fill my daughter's ears for a few more years with positive children's songs that are funny, that teach and inspire, and that are performed in a variety of musical styles. Then perhaps she will develop a well-rounded appreciation of music and keep that childhood innocence a bit longer. I figure she's got plenty of time to hear songs about obsessive relationships and love gone wrong.

Growing up in the musical environment that I did, I believe in the importance of learning the basics of music, reading notation, and understanding theory. But being a parent, I have to be careful not to let my daughter think I'm actually trying to teach her anything (unless she asks), or she'll balk at it. So from time to time, we draw in a workbook that shows musical symbols and notation, and so far she thinks it's fun. I'm trying to make instruments available to her, and although I don't have a selection of school band instruments for her to choose from, she has a small guitar and a keyboard. Of course the keyboard has so many cool sounds

and pre-recorded demos, sometimes those things intrigue her more than just "tickling the ivories." Well, after all, it is the nineties.

With the ever-present threat of music disappearing from the public-school curriculum and local symphony orchestras always perilously close to the endangered-species list, I think it's even more essential these days for parents to encourage their young children to listen to and enjoy all kinds of music. I hope I can be as positive a musical influence for my daughter as my parents were for me, and as tolerant of her musical tastes.

I'll give you an update in about eight years, when she's carrying a boom box around the house. If I'm lucky, she'll be listening to the Beatles! **YIP!**



Lisa Silver, mom, studio musician, vocalist, children's record producer, and Grammy-nominated songwriter, lives in Nashville. You may write to her at silver@nashville.net.

**Is this your last
issue of
Pass It On!?**

**Check your
membership
expiration date on
the mailing label.
The next issue,
to be mailed
in May,
will go to current
members only.**

An Unsung Hero: My Dad

by Rick Scott

Sometimes I pretend I'm a bird. I have a favorite perch that I hang out on so I can look down on things and get the overview. It's a little trick my Dad taught me, though I'm not sure he's aware of that.

This imaginal exercise works for many situations. Whenever I feel overwhelmed or uncertain, feel the need for a new look at life, I fly to my perch and get some perspective.

And what do I see from my lofty loft? I remember sitting spellbound at age seven, watching Mary Martin perform Peter Pan on Broadway. After the show we walked smack dab into a twenty-piece Salvation Army Band, which was almost drowned out by a woman preaching gospel to sidewalk sinners while being heckled by the locals. It all seemed magnificently theatrical to me.

A few years later, I saw Theodore Bikel singing in Yiddish, a language that was foreign to me, yet completely understandable through his expressive voice and his stage savvy. I began to understand how music could transcend all languages, and I started to seek it out.

Both of these events had been made possible by my dad. He had bought the tickets, and, even more important, he had gone with me. He also had bought me my first and second guitars. Looking back, I realize that there's quite a list of gifts he gave me that directly relate to my life and art.

As I stare down from my perch, two other memories poke out that now seem as important as all the others put together. Thank goodness for my bird-view, because I might not have noticed these with my feet on the ground.

The first occurred when I was about ten, when my older sister and her friends were learning the latest dance steps. They would put records on and practice for hours. As "little brother," I was severely discouraged from taking part in the activities. Naturally, this made me want even more to learn to dance, but, by myself, I didn't have a clue where to begin.

It was pure misery. I was sulking mightily one evening when Dad came into the living room. He put



Rick Scott and his unsung hero

on some Harry Belafonte and asked me to dance with him. Twice, I responded with an emphatic "NO!" It seemed completely weird to dance with Dad, and besides, I didn't know how. But in the end, his mischievous persistence won me over.

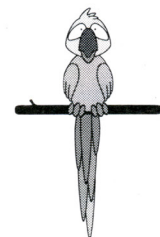
His instructions were simple. We stood facing each other and held hands. "Now let's walk and listen to the music." (He had turned it up very loud.) We walked around the livingroom, and on completion of our second lap, Dad took a sharp left into the hallway, half dragging me along. It was starting to be fun! We sashayed into the kitchen,

around the table in both directions, and right out onto the back porch. I was being very mindful of the music, and I started making little skips and slides to look good (and to avoid the furniture).

Well! Then we danced up the stairs like Fred and Ginger. We went through the bathroom, the bedrooms (Dad waited on the floor while I did a quick solo on my bed), and then back down into the living room for the grand finale. The music ended just as I finished a twirl. It was perfect. Since that moment, I've considered myself a pretty good dancer.

The second event happened one evening in our car. It was dark and rainy. I sat next to Dad in the front seat, watching the light from the streetlamps reflect off the wet windshield. I got lost in it. "Y'know, Dad," I said, "It's like we're swinging through the air by holding the beams of light from the streetlamps. Each lamp has one beam that comes straight to us. As we get closer, the beam gets shorter and shorter, 'til we get past it and the next beam picks us up. It's like the car is flying on light beams!"

Dad was quiet as he examined my idea. "That's wonderful!" he cried, after a moment. "What a beautiful way to see things!" He praised me on and on about how perceptive and clear I was. It made me feel proud and grownup. I felt that I had had a very adult conversation with him about a thing called imagination. It has changed the way I look at things to this day. Did I tell you that sometimes I'm a bird? **YIP!**



Rick Scott has been a professional entertainer since he was fifteen years old. Now forty-eight, he is the father of five and grandfather of two. His latest album is Philharmonic Fool.

CMN 0343



LITTLE RABBIT AND RED BIRD

words & music by Barbara Tilsen
©1996 Barbara Tilsen



Ever get upset by the popular children's song/finger play "Little Bunny Foo Foo"? Barbara's original story-song/finger play is the perfect antidote! This engaging piece has the same hold on children but the ending is satisfying and inspiring, leading children to think about real solutions to disturbing feelings and behavior. To contact Barbara about her songs and recordings (she has also written a new version of the chant "Three Little Monkeys"!), write to her at 3220 10th Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55407.

(NOTE: Most of the words below are spoken in rhyme. The underlined words are sung; see music on facing page. Pacing is important: a steady, driving rhythm in 4/4 time on all the spoken parts builds the energy and intensity of the story. Slowing down each time for "he cried, 'cause he was all alone" helps make this story-song work very effectively. Adding hand motions that are naturally suggested in the lyrics is also very effective—see some suggestions next to lyrics below.)

Once little rabbit went hopping through the woods
Poking and teasing whoever he could
He was feeling so **mad**, the rabbit said
"I'm gonna bop somebody on the head."
He saw a little mouse scurrying by
He reached right down and poked her in the eye
Then he hopped and he hopped all the way home
And he stopped—and he cried—'cause he was all alone.



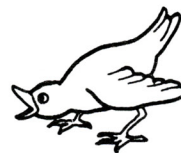
(2 fingers, pointer & middle, up in the air hopping)
(poking in the air with pointer fingers)
(both hands in fists up in the air)
(one fist striking down)
(2 fingers making running motions)
(etc)

Again the little rabbit went hopping through the woods
Poking and teasing whoever he could
He was feeling so **mad**, the rabbit said
"I'm gonna bop somebody on the head."
He saw a little spider weaving his web
He reached right out and broke all the thread.
Then he hopped and he hopped all the way home
And he stopped—and he cried—'cause he was all alone.



Again the little rabbit went hopping through the woods
Poking and teasing whoever he could
He was feeling so **mad**, the rabbit said
"I'm gonna bop somebody on the head."

Then the little rabbit heard the Red Bird sing
He jumped up high and bopped her on the wing
"Stop!" sang the bird, "This really must end
Hitting's no way to make a friend
If you feel angry, then use your words
And I'll be your friend," sang the wise little bird.



Now the little rabbit plays under the trees
He says what he feels, doesn't hit or tease
Red Bird flies singing her song—"Hm, hm, hm"
And the little rabbit hops and hums right along—"Hm, hm hm!"

(hook thumbs, flap hands for wings)
(leave 1 hand up in the air; bring the other down underneath with fingers up for ears for the little rabbit humming along)

What Songs Say

by Nancy Silber



"A sea scout is a good scout, so give a sarcy way!" This is the final line from the chorus of a song that we campers sang (boisterously) almost every day at Tanager Lodge, a very small Adirondack camp north of Lake Placid. I never quite knew what a "sarcy way" was, but, since we all sang these words with gusto, I assumed it was a combination of "saucy" and something sailor-like. Years later, my fellow campers and I were surprised to learn that the actual lyrics were, "so give us our

seaway!" How and what we sang were quite close to the actual import, but still, it wasn't exactly correct.

Thirty years ago, my brother enjoyed singing the latest Beatles' song, "My Bonny Love." Never heard of it? Maybe you know it by its other title, "Can't Buy Me Love." I think we all can recall such moments in our lives. As a music teacher, I am often struck by similar mistakes from my students (grades 1-3), mistakes that could never have occurred to me! After I moved from the city, I knew I was truly in the "burbs" when a student sang about the "bog down in the patio." Evidently, a patio was something she knew more about than a "bog down in the valley-o."

These stories are amusing, but they also raise two interesting issues: first, how to teach a song, and second, whether songs are sometimes

better put off until children are older. How important is it, anyway, whether children understand every single word, as long as they get the gist? For me, it is very important! I find that children take unfamiliar words and transform them into familiar ones that often take the meaning of the song into faraway places. Take this true story as a case in point: My daughter came home from kindergarten, week after week, singing the same verse and chorus from "The Gypsy Rover," the same song which she sang every week in her music class. Here is our conversation. I'm the questioner:

"Is there more than one verse to this song?"

"Oh, yes, there are lots of verses!"

"Can you sing another verse?"

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Little Rabbit and Red Bird

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Red Bird's verse--



Stop! sang the bird, this real-ly must end. Hit-ting's no way to make a friend. If

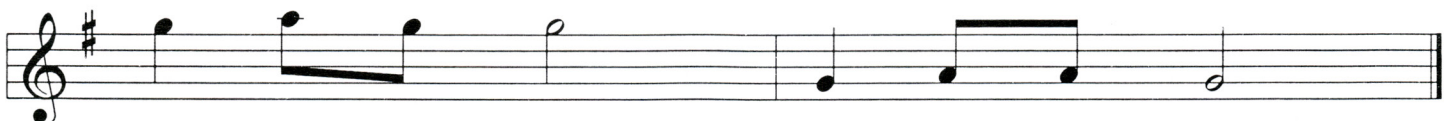
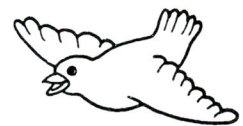


you feel an-gry then use your words, and I'll be your friend, sang the wise lit-tle bird.

final verse--

Red Bird:

Rabbit:



Hm - hm — hmm; hm - hm — hmm.

"No, I can't remember any of the other verses."

"Can you tell me what happens in the other verses? What the story or the song is about?"

"I'm not sure, but I think it's about a man named 'Rover.'"

Either my daughter is too young to understand this song, or the music teacher has not done a complete job. Students should understand what they are singing! Peter Amidon (of the Amidon Family in Brattleboro, Vermont) has a wonderful way of engaging children while preparing them to understand a song. Before singing "Go Tell Aunt Rhody" Peter tells the story of Aunt Rhody to his students, without alluding to the song. At the end of his sad tale of the old grey goose, he sings the song. The children sing with him, full of feeling and comprehension of the words, which, when you think about it, are quite foreign to today's urban child. Try this yourself with your own songs. I have, and it works beautifully.

I enjoyed what Raffi said (*Pass It On!*, #22) about his song "Baby Beluga." Phil Hoose asked "Why don't you talk about the plight of the whale?" Raffi's response was, "If I'm writing a song for a three-year-old about a beautiful baby beluga, the child comes to love that creature. What you love you naturally want to protect." In other words, Raffi took a grown-up issue, wildlife preservation, and presented it in a form a three-year-old could understand.

Taking this further, can young children really comprehend what they are committing themselves to, when they pledge allegiance to the flag? Aren't we doing the same thing when we have children singing along in songs with political messages? And I wonder if even a nonpolitical song, such as "The Gypsy Rover," is so wonderful that it is worth teaching to kinder-



Nancy Silber and four of her students playing a stone-passing game during their Native American feast—an annual event in the second grade curriculum.

garteners who don't have a clue what it is about, but have a wonderful time singing it. I am sure there are more age-appropriate songs that would have the same appeal.

On the other hand, there are times when lack of understanding is unavoidable. Any school that has mixed-age singing assemblies, for example, ends up having younger children singing older-aged songs. We also include children in adult rituals. From church on Sunday to Passover Seder, we find children singing along with grown-ups, not comprehending, but viscerally connecting to the ritual.

Clearly I am ambivalent about the importance of age-appropriateness. When I say "age-appropriate" I don't mean that uncomfortable or complex issues should be avoided. However, I try to choose songs that are within the grasp of each age group. For instance, I find that "If You Miss Me at the Back of the Bus" is a good choice for very young children, when we discuss the Civil Rights movement. Any child can identify with Rosa Parks and can understand how the bus boycott achieved its nonviolent goal. "We Shall Overcome," while it is a wonderful song to sing, has abstract

words that are truly beyond young children.

After having been surprised by these misunderstandings in my music room, I am now listening more closely in advance and trying to head them off. Obviously, I can't control everything my students hear. In today's global community, with the influence of mass media, we teachers and parents are having to answer many difficult and troubling questions from children. When it is my choice of song and subject, however, I hope to present songs that are comprehensible, enjoyable, top quality, and that make for great singing! Wish me luck. **PIO!**

Nancy Silber is a music teacher, performer, and songwriter. Nancy, husband Norman, and six-year-old daughter Meeka thoroughly enjoy music and often sing together in the car and at home.



Joanne (Olshansky) Hammil is an educator, songwriter and performer. She directs four children's choruses and presents concerts, residencies, and teacher workshops. She is the President of CMN and the Songs Editor of *PIO!*



LOTS OF WORMS

Patty Zeitlin
©1963 Bullfrog Ballades

Patty's wonderful song about worms (and respecting nature) has delighted many thousands of children and adults for years. Ironically, when she first wrote this in 1963, the radio station refused to play it, saying that singing in a "blues" style for children was not appropriate. Furthermore they said that kids can only sing in high tones so it was useless as a children's song anyway. We're all so glad that she didn't believe them! Several people have added verses, including Faith Petric's great addition which is printed below. It can be heard on two of Patty's recordings: *Castle In My City* and *Spin Spider Spin*. It is also included in her excellent resource book: *A Song Is a Rainbow*, about music, movement and rhythm instruments and young children. To contact Patty about her songs and products, write to her at 12233 Ashworth Ave. N. #40, Seattle, WA 98133.

Blues, ♩ = 132

Well, there are lots of worms way un - der the ground, lots of worms that

I've nev - er found, I'll bet they're 'way down there a - dig - gin' a - round,

'way un - der the ground. I dug the ground.

1. Well, there are lots of worms way under the ground,
Lots of worms that I've never found;
I'll bet they're 'way down there a-diggin' around,
'Way under the ground.
 2. I dug the biggest hole I ever did dig,
The biggest hole, it sure was big!
And when I got to the bottom, you know what I found
'Way under the ground?
 3. I found a worm to go on a fishing pole,
Down in the bottom of that deep, dark hole,
But I left him alone 'cause he liked his home
'Way under the ground.
 4. I found an old sow bug curled up like a ball.
He didn't move from there at all.
So I left him alone 'cause he liked his home
'Way under the ground.
 5. I found a bumpety bug with big black dots,
Thirty-three legs and twenty-two spots,
But I left him alone 'cause he liked his home
'Way under the ground.
- (Repeat Verse 1.)
- extra verse by Faith Petric:*

Remember, for worms, we must take care
The food we eat up here in the air
Grows in the soil that the worms prepare
Workin' under the ground.

(Verse 1. sung as a chorus)



1996 CMN National Gathering Round Robin

For a total of six hours on Friday and Saturday nights, children and adults each had a chance to present a song or story for the entire group of participants at the 1996 CMN National Gathering in Petaluma, California. The idea of the round robin is to have people share songs within a non-

pressured and supportive atmosphere that especially reflects the goals and visions of CMN—cooperation, empowerment, diversity, environmental awareness, nonviolence and social justice.

This year's round robin was tremendously inspiring and reflected the very best of what CMN is all

about! Here's a list of the songs that were sung including the names of the presenters plus the titles and composers of the songs. Feel free to contact the presenter if you want to learn the song or need more information.



National Gathering News October 25-27, 1996 — Petaluma, California

Due to publication deadlines, this issue doesn't include a report on the *great!!!* event.

Look for news, more photos, memories, in the spring issue.

Start making plans now to come to the

1997 Gathering
October 17-19 in Nashville, Tennessee

FRIDAY'S ROUND ROBIN

PRESENTER	SONG TITLE	COMPOSER
Linda Book	A Heaven For Hamsters	Linda Book
Jackson Gillman	The Friendship Seed	Jackson Gillman
Noah Tenney	Backward ABCs	Tom Lucas
Gerry Tenney	Haunted House	Gerry Tenney
Bob Burns & Nellie Nosbisch	The Hoot and Annie Song	Bob Burns
Judy Nee	The Pirate Song	Judy Nee
Christa Miller	Fire My Soul and My Spirit	Christa Miller
Mary Miche	Spiders and Snakes	Gerry Axelrod
Pam Donkin	E.W.O.P.	Pam Donkin
Nancy Schimmel & Fran Avni	Bring Back The Bat	Nancy Schimmel & Fran Avni
Jessica Levin	Daddy I Want a Motor Home	words: Jessica Levin
Sandy Byer	Every Step I Make	Sandy Byer
J.R. Dunlap	Caprice	Luigi Lagonti
Faith Petric	Sing In the Spring	Utah Phillips
Oklin Bloodworth	Baby Elephant	Oklin Bloodworth
Benjamin French	Nostalgia In Times Square	Charles Mingus
Keith Clark	Ishi, the Last of the Yahi Tribe	Keith Clark

SATURDAY'S ROUND ROBIN

PRESENTER	SONG TITLE	COMPOSER
Lorna Kohler's workshop group	various rounds	Trad.
Juan Sanchez	La Muralla (The Wall)	Nicolas Guillen
Jane Timberlake	Same and Different	Jane Timberlake
Ramona Gonzales	Rusi Kosi	Bulgarian
David & Jenny Heitler-Klevans	Love Makes a Family	David & Jenny Heitler-Klevans
Beth Miller	The Owl	unknown
Suzi Schuenemann	Puzzle of Life	Suzi Schuenemann
Chloe Friedl-Johnson & Chloë Ludwig	Circle Game	Joni Mitchell

Betsy Rose	Spirited Child	Betsy Rose
Anne Barlin	Hello Rain	Marcia Berman
Jackson Gillman	Pigs!	Bob Blue & Beethoven
Good Times Review	Gonna Have Some Fun Tonight	Noah Budin, J.R. Dunlap, Ben French, Jessica Levin, Emma O'Brien & Broegy Pease
Joanne (Olshansky) Hammil	Don't Give Me A Label	Joanne (Olshansky) Hammil
Norma Roberts	This is Your Birthday	Norma Roberts
Nina Ryne	Please Don't Stare	Nina Ryne
Greta Pedersen	Walk Lightly On the Earth	Greta Pedersen & Pam Donkin
Emma O'Brien	The Prune Song	Trad.
Tristan Falek	A Boy and A Bear	Bonnie Lockhart
Sally Rogers & Maya Rogers-Bursen	Chocolate	Sally Rogers
Bobbi Bernstein	We All Need Each Other	Bobbi Bernstein
Bonnie Messinger	Scary Things	Patty Zeitlin
Sarah Atkinson	Where Is Away	Lisa Atkinson & Mrs. Pillsworth's 3rd grade
Ruth Pelham	What Do I Do	Ruth Pelham
Denise Friedl-Johnson	Rain Song	Denise Friedl-Johnson/Trad.
Emily and Chris Reinacher	Hand in Hand	Tom Hunter
Bob Blue, J.R. Dunlap, Ben French, Rachel Owen	Nostalgia in Times Square	Charles Mingus
Cappy Israel	Golden Rolling Hills of California	George Schroeder
Karen Broder	All Girl Family	Karen Broder
Karlo Silbiger	The Garden Song	Uncle Ruthie Buell
Kathy Miller	Red Goes the Vine	Dave Bevena
Bruce O'Brien	Little Bitty Frog	Ken Lonnquist
Larry Long's workshop group	Why Not Me, Lord	Larry Long & Mrs. Elmore's 5th Grade
Barbara Tilsen	Daughtersong (Molly's Song)	Barbara Tilsen
Susan Keniston	Blushing Meditation	Susan Keniston
Elida Ickes	Many, Many Cows	Anna Lee Scully
Christopher Smith	The Golden Gate	Christopher Smith
Ingrid Noyes	Cars	Ingrid Noyes
Bob Blue & Phil Hoose	I'm Not Scared	Bob Blue
Sarah Pirtle	Hannah's Bat Mitzvah Song	Sarah Pirtle
Tom Pease	Tail Bone	Tom Pease & Stuart Stotts
Ray Frank	The Miller	Patty Zeitlin
Lisa Atkinson	California Is Her Name	Lisa Atkinson
Freesia Raine	The Wisest One	Freesia Raine
Julie Chilton	Foolish Questions	Unknown
Steven Snyder	Pescador	Trad.
Jan Dombrower	Do I Feel Sad	Jan Dombrower
Lorna Kohler	El Sol, La Tierra	Lorna Kohler
Jacki Breger	La Llorona	Mexican Folklore
Bruce Phillips	Vulture and the Gull	Bruce Phillips
George Kincheloe	We Will Sing	George Kincheloe
Seabury Gould	Time to Believe	Lanny Kaufer
Eric Dash	I'm a Mess	Eric Dash
Tim Cain	Old Tree	Tim Cain
Jim Corbett	Happiness	Jim Corbett
Joe Eding	Somewhere Over the Rainbow	Harold Arlen
Wiley Rankin	Happy Blues	Wiley Rankin
Debbie Chew	Big Bear Christmas Hug	Debbie Chew
Ernie Noyes	Either or Both	Phoebe Snow
Bob Reid	Connection	Bob Reid
Pete Seeger	Cuh-ray-zee English	Josh White, Jr.
Pete Seeger	Walking Home	Pete Seeger

Curriculi! Curricula!

by Bob Blue

We all have memories of our elementary-school principals. I remember Mr. Chase, and the main thing I remember about him is that it was not considered a good idea to do something that could get you sent to the principal's office. Years later, as a parent, I listened to "Free to Be You and Me" with my children. On the record was a story about a little boy named Dudley Pippin, who cried when he was talking to the principal of his school. The principal gently encouraged the boy to go ahead and cry, and the story ended with Dudley walking with the principal while the principal played a tune on the flute.

At other times in this column, I've told you about teachers and artists-in-residence who have been working to keep music alive in the elementary schools, and to make it thrive. But I haven't mentioned the possibility that people in administration could be part of that quest. The story of Dudley Pippin was, after all, just a story. Real principals often choose or are required to subordinate music to the aspects of school curriculum that are more conspicuous on achievement tests.

But not Miriam Kronish, principal of the Eliot School in Needham, Massachusetts. An example of Miriam's outlook is the story of a parent who was considering moving to Needham and called Miriam to find out about the Eliot School. Principals, especially in the college-laden Boston area, often have to present themselves in ways that assure parents that they're preparing children for the Ivy League. Miriam, when asked what she considered to be the most important subject, answered, "Music." Not reading, writing, or 'rithmetic. Mu-

sic. That family ended up moving to Needham and becoming part of the Eliot School community. And I'll bet the children in that family did learn to read, write, and compute. Maybe they even went to Ivy League colleges. But in elementary school, they learned to express themselves through music.

If you're an elementary school teacher, imagine going to a job interview with Miriam Kronish. Since you're reading *Pass It On!* right now, I suspect that you're already a believer in the importance of music. But jobs and job interviews may have trained you to lay low. Maybe once you are hired, you can smuggle music into your classroom in a way that reassures the powers-that-be that you're only using music as a tool—that you're still teaching "the basics."

But if you want to teach in the Eliot School, I recommend a different approach: Let Miriam know all about the different ways you use music to enhance curriculum. In fact, let her know about ways you use music for music's sake. There's no need to be subversive about music in the Eliot School. The chances are that Miriam will accept your ideas, celebrate them, and add her own. And, yes, she really is a public school principal.

While it's true that she's a rarity, she's not alone. My celebration of Miriam Kronish is also applause for the many other educational leaders like her around the country and around the world who know how important music is and work to make sure it flourishes in school.

That being said, let me tell you about some of the teachers Miriam has hired. There's Jo-Anne Bagley, a kindergarten teacher, who uses songs to prepare children to read. Joan Bush is a first-grade teacher whose entire teaching day is filled with music. Mariella Allard, also a first-grade teacher, does a musical play with the primary classes every year. Second-grade teacher

Patty Connolly is a choreographer, dancer, and teacher. Mary Barrett, a third-grade teacher, is a poet, and some of her poems become songs. Cindy Wankowicz, a fourth-grade teacher, is a vocal soloist and accomplished pianist and flutist. Fourth-grade teacher Diane Fraggos is an accomplished vocalist. Fifth-grade teacher Cora Crowe dances in the halls and in the classroom every day. The health and physical education teacher, Jodi Michna, uses music in her program. You don't exactly have to audition to teach in the Eliot School, but you certainly don't have to hide your enthusiasm about music.

A boy named Jason sent a letter to Miriam, thanking her for opening his world. He had been a shy child, and, largely through music, Miriam and Jason's teachers had encouraged him and enabled him to express himself.

Some of our childhood dreams are much grander than what we end up doing. Miriam, who had had a childhood dream of becoming an elementary-school principal, did end up becoming one and making that role far grander than many dreams. Miriam had once considered becoming a concert pianist, but for the sake of Jason and many other children and teachers, I'm glad she chose to become an elementary-school principal. She's made that role far grander than many dreams. **✶P!O!**

Bob Blue is a retired teacher; a volunteer teacher; and a writer of articles, stories, musical plays, songs, and a book.

(Editor's note: Starting with the spring 1997 issue of Pass It On!, I would like to use this column to be more specific in highlighting ways music is used in the elementary-school curriculum. Please let me know of projects, units, lessons, and rituals that you've seen, planned, and/or experienced. We can all benefit from each other's successes.)

Radio Waves

by PJ Swift

It's A Family Affair

One of the joys of parenthood is sharing a favorite activity with your child—helping her see the beauty in a well-flown kite or a well-climbed tree, helping him enjoy Beethoven and Louis Jordan. So I guess it's inevitable that I wanted my own kids to love radio as much as I do.

They don't.

It's not for lack of experience or exposure. Max literally teethed on the mic stand, and Chloë was put on tape as soon as she could coo. This is not to say they don't like radio—most kids do. They just don't like it as much as I do.

Most kids' radio producers who also are parents have had similar experiences. Jeff Brown, producer of *We Like Kids*, works at a public station in Juneau, Alaska. His daughter, Callie, started accompanying him to the station soon after she was born. Now four years old, Callie is quite familiar with the tools of broadcasting—almost casual. "She will wander off when I'm on the air, and then she'll wander back in and climb on my lap. She really knows the station, and knows when she's on the air."

Jeff has found ways to incorporate Callie in his broadcasts, both for a general audience and for kids. "If I have to do an hourly newscast with a weather report, I'll let Callie give the weather. I'll say 'the forecast for today is ____' and then turn the mic over to her, and she'll say, on cue, 'rain.' It's a predictable forecast for Juneau, but it works."

Perhaps inspired by this experience, Jeff has handed the "audible" parts of his local kids' program over to kids, and has gradually put himself in the background. "I'm rarely heard on the radio during the program anymore; the kids do most of

the talking. I only plan part of the show, and then let it flow. I feel like I have very little control over it, and that's kind of fun."

Gary Nosacek, the producer of the long-running *Secret Clubhouse* on WYMS-FM in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, happens to be the father of five kids. Gary has used several of his own kids in his weekday broadcasts. He has a special tradition for his children, where they're allowed to be a "DJ for the Day" on their birthdays. His daughters, Angela and Elizabeth, ages fourteen and twelve, get to "take over" the station on that special day, doing the engineering (coached by Gary and his co-host, Peter Zehren) and picking out the songs. "Peter and I are the crossing guards and the traffic cops" on those occasions, helping the kids keep some semblance of order and balance. Do they ever embarrass their dad? Gary thinks that "I embarrass them more"

It's a real challenge measuring your needs and the needs of your program against the needs and desires of your kids. That's been my experience using my eight-year-old daughter, Chloë, on my local program, *World Kids*. With all the objectivity a mom can muster, I still must say that Chloe is very talented—and very unpredictable. I used to tape her two twenty-minute "Porporating News" segments (that's her own name for "Breaking News"). But now, she comes to the station and presents her stream-of-consciousness live. That means that whatever she thinks, she says. And whatever she says goes right out on the air, with no

"take backs." When Chloë has the mic, I find that it's very hard to be both producer and mom. As a matter of fact, for the first five minutes of her "stories," I'm in a controlled state of panic. Yet, I've found that if I keep myself in check and let her have the freedom to say what she likes, she usually comes around to presenting something more original, more true, and more entertaining than anything I could ever script. Her segments, without a doubt, are the best part of my program.

But I know Chloë's cooperation won't last for long. She just doesn't see radio the way I see it. I have to remind her of her fans to get her to go with me each week. And soon, all of the pulls of Saturday in Suburbia will have their way.

Paul Butler has lived through this experience with his two daughters, Nicole and Jessie. For several years, the girls were the hosts of a national program called *Kids Clubhouse*. Paul says that "they had fun at it, but eventually it became a chore." Now in their teens, Nicole and Jessie look back on those times with great affection. In fact, although they have access to tapes at home, the girls will make time just to turn on the radio when their old programs are broadcast on WNYE-FM, and chime in with the punch lines of their old jokes.

So did Nicole and Jessie get the radio "bug?" Paul thinks they did, in a way. "You can't live with a storyteller and not become a storyteller, on some levels, yourself." Maybe that's true. The things I'm teaching my children have less to do with the *how* of my radio dedication, and more with the *why*. Art is art, after all.

Let them find their own voice, and their own art. **✶10!**

PJ Swift and her somewhat dedicated radio co-host, Chloë, can be heard every week on *World Kids* in Santa Cruz, California.





HARRIET TUBMAN

words & music by Lillian A. Torrey, age 9
©1995 Lillian A. Torrey

Lillian sang this terrific, original song at the New England Regional CMN Gathering last spring. Her musicianship as a singer and a songwriter left everyone spellbound and excited! The energy and drive of the rhythmic chorus had us all singing along with her in full, inspired voices. This song won a prize in the 1995 Martin Luther King Arts Contest in the city of Cambridge, Massachusetts. To contact Lillian (who is now 11 years old) about her songs, write to her at 128 Pearl St., Cambridge, MA 02139.

♩ = 120
with a swing beat--

chorus:

Am E Am₃ 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

Lis - ten to my sto - ry 'bout a wo - man sav - ing slaves from slav - er -

E 3 Am E Am₃ 3 3 3

y. Her name was Har - riet Tub - man With the

verse:

1,2,3,4 3 E 3 3 Am 3 3 3

heart to set her peo - ple free! 1. In the mid - dle of the night she woke -

Dm 3 3 Am 3 3 E 3 3 3

— up with a dream, she thought "I got - ta get my peo - ple free." She

Am 3 3 Dm 3 3 Am 3 3 1,2 3 3

gath - ered up some slaves and sent them out a-walk - ing, she said "Come fol - low

E 3,4 G E 5 3 3 E 3 3 Am

me!" get them to the prom-ised land. heart to set her peo - ple free!

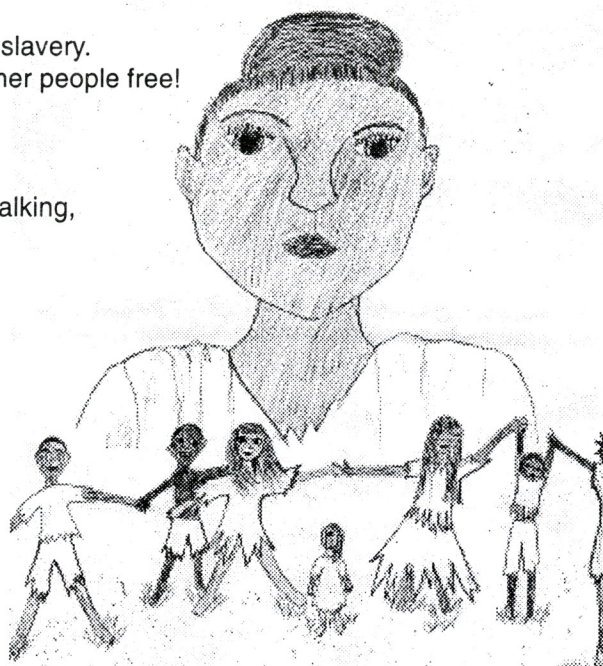
Harriet Tubman

➔ continued from previous page

chorus:

Listen to my story 'bout a woman saving slaves from slavery.
Her name was Harriet Tubman, with the heart to set her people free!

1. In the middle of the night she woke up with a dream,
She thought "I gotta get my people free".
She gathered up some slaves and sent them out a-walking,
She said "Come follow me!"
2. She sent them on the underground railway,
A dangerous journey far away.
A star in the sky would lead them north,
They would walk by night and sleep by day.
3. People would help them on their journey,
Reaching out a helping hand.
Safe and warm until the sun is setting,
To get them to their promised land.
4. People should learn about that great woman;
She risked her life for young and old.
She's a hero to some of us children,
Her story must be told!



Harriet Tubman and the freed slaves
by Lillian A. Torrey

TUMBA, TUMBA

traditional: Palestinian



In this country, we seem to know many more rounds from Israel than from other Middle East countries. Here is a beautiful, spirited Palestinian round that all ages enjoy. It makes a nice pairing with one of the more familiar Israeli rounds for a presentation in school or choral concerts. It is one of 340 terrific rounds (new and old) found in *Rounds Galore!*, collected and edited by Sol Weber. For more information about this wonderful resource (which includes many rounds by CMN members!) contact Sol at 25-14 37th St., Astoria, NY 11103.

3-part round: each part 2 times

I

Tum - ba, tum - ba, tum - ba tum. Tum - ba, tum - ba, tum - ba tum.

II

La - la - la - la - la - la, la - la - la - la - la. La - la - la - la - la - la, la - la - la - la.

III

Tum - ba, tum - ba, tum - ba!

New Sounds

by Sandy Byer

JOHN GAILMOR

Childish Eyes

This recording, to a great extent, is a reflection of what kids have taught Jon in the last nineteen years. The silly rantings in "Stagger Them Cantaloupes," the name calling in "Geek Mythology," the independent spirit of "Backhoe Girl," and the wondrous attraction to the nighttime sky, "Moon of Mine," are all integral parts of being young. Cassettes and CDs are available from Softwood Recordings, PO Box 65, Lake Elmore, VT 05657.

LAURIE VELA (LAURIE'S STORIES)

Sports Shorts: The Other Olympics

The latest in Laurie's series contains stories, rhymes, and songs dealing with alternative Olympics. This forty-five-minute tape has four stories, two songs, five rhymes, and five reports. A large booklet, "Color Dream, Color Team," and a small booklet, "Can You Call A Ball," are made to accompany the tape.

Cassettes are \$8 each, large booklets \$2 each, and small booklets \$1 each. Add \$3 for s+h. Available from Lauries's Stories, Box 2211, Aptos, CA 95001 or call 800/ABC-4974.

PHIL, HANNAH, SHOSHANA, & RUBY HOOSE

The Hoose Family Live

The Hoose family brings you live performances of eleven songs and a duck joke, each celebrating the joys, sorrows, tactics, and sheer velocity of family life, as well as showing the special connectedness of a family band. Most of the songs were written by the family members, alone or in collaboration. Sample titles include "It's Christmas and I'm a Jew," "Hey Little Ant," "Kid Talk," and "I Know Math."

Cassettes are \$10 each plus \$1.50 s+h. Available from Precious Pie Music, 8 Arlington St., Portland, ME 04101.

KATHLEEN GIBSON

Free the Trees, and Zibber Bibber

Zibber Bibber is a delightful storybook and tape package celebrating the differences among people. **Free The Trees**, also a storybook and tape package, celebrates the environment. Both storybooks are printed on Kenaf, environmentally friendly paper that has been designated the best nonwood paper by the USDA.

Each book and tape package lists for \$12.50 on the Rainbow Readers label, and is available from SILO Music and 888/FUN-SONGS.

ELLA JENKINS

Songs Children Love To Sing; Holiday Times; Early, Early Childhood Songs; and Jambo and Other Call And Response Songs And Chants.

Smithsonian Folkway recordings celebrated their four-decade relationship with Ella by releasing four new CDs. **Songs Children Love To Sing** features seventeen tracks specifically selected by Ella that are

especially popular with children. It includes "Miss Mary Mack" and "This Old Man." **Holiday Times** incorporates songs from many cultural holidays, such as Chinese New Year, Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanza, and other winter holidays. **Jambo** features twelve call-and-response songs with simple rhythmic sounds and lyrics (some in Swahili). **Early, Early Childhood Songs** includes classic songs with simple lyrics, repetitive phrases, and rhythmic qualities that make them a good first step into music for the very young.

All are available from Smithsonian Folkways Recordings at 800/410-9815. Their website is <http://www.si.edu/folkways>

CHARLOTTE DIAMOND

Diamonds and Daydreams

This is a recording of eighteen songs that focuses on families around the world. They come from Charlotte's childhood, her experiences as a parent, and her hopes for the future. The melodic lullaby, "An Eriskay Love Lilt," hails from Scotland, and the songs "Suo-Gan" and "All Through the Night" are Welsh. The songs will appeal to all ages and offer daydreams for kids and families to grow on.

Cassettes and CDs are available from Hug Bug Music, 650 Garrow Dr., Port Moody, BC V3H 1H7 CANADA, or call 604/274-8216.

CANDACE KREITLOW & HOLLY (GENERATIONS)

Dream Maker

Candace Kreitlow and her daughter Holly have teamed up to produce this album, which includes thirteen of their favorite songs. The songs all underscore the connections we all share with one another. They were chosen for their melodious and harmonious strength. Instruments include guitar, harp, banjo, bells, lap dulcimer, hammered dulcimer, and mandolin.



Tapes are \$10 each and CDs are \$15 each, plus \$1.50 s+h, and are available from Generations, PO Box 113, Mazomanie, WI 53560-0113 or call 608/795-4680.

CHRISTOPHER SMITH

The Golden Gate

Christopher's newest release contains fourteen original family-oriented songs inspired by his own family. Sample titles include "Fishin' In the Tub," "There's a Hole in My Smile," "Come to the Sandbox for Tea," "Lotsa Latkes," "Gross Baby Song," and more. Instruments include guitar, dobro, mandolin, dulcimer, keyboards, celtic harp, recorder, bass, and drums.

Cassettes are \$10 each plus \$2 s+h. Available from Small Time Productions, PO Box 2712, San Anselmo, CA 94979.

SARAH PIRTLE

Linking Up!—Building the Peaceable Classroom Through Music and Movement for Ages 3 to 9

Sarah has used her twenty-five years of experience in schools writing songs, affirming diversity, and teaching conflict resolution to create a wonderful recording of forty-six songs that she's written and collected. Half the songs are bilingual in Spanish, including "Dilo/Talk To Me," and "Step by Step/Paso A Paso." The rich vocals and lively piano playing of Roberto Diaz create an outstanding sound. Educators for Social Responsibility is also publishing a book by Sarah with 150 activities, song lyrics, and wisdom about teaching social skills like cooperation through music.

Cassettes are \$10 each, CDs are \$15 each, and the 250-page book is \$20 plus s+h. Available from the Discovery Center, 63 Main St., Shelburne Falls, MA 01370 or call 413/625-2355. **\$10!**

Kids' Chorus

by Jenny Shih

What Music Means to Me

by Benjamin Buland Bath (age 8)



Hello, my name is Benjamin Buland Bath and I want to tell you what music means to me. For some reason music has always been a part of my life. When I was three and a half I began taking cello lessons. At the age of four, I went to see the opera *The Magic Flute* at the Met in New York City. At the age of seven I saw *HMS Pinafore* at the Longy School of Music and ever since then I've been singing "When I Was a Lad." At the age of seven I was in an opera called *Treasure Island* and that was fun. But now, back to the main topic, "What Music Means to Me." Well, music means making people happy and it also means hard work and it means joy. And I find that it can lift your soul and give you a thrill.



I like playing the violin. It is very special to me because my dad plays the violin too.

Alexandra Rice (age 7)

Welcome to the Membership/ Outreach Committee

by Bonnie Lockhart

We're talking a lot about outreach these days. CMN board discussions are bubbling with suggestions to boost membership and income, from hiring professional consultants to accessing corporate gifts. And while I think we should be open to all creative proposals, I'm convinced our finest resource is you, me, us. That's because our daily work brings all of us, more or less, to scenes like these:

A gifted presenter is wrapping up her maracas after a particularly inspiring musical inservice for teachers at your school. It's amazing how she's gotten this whole faculty to sing and dance together; and she's deepened everyone's understanding of cultural issues without a single grumble from the chronic complainers about "politically correct" workshops. You want to connect to this woman, to express your gratitude and in some way acknowledge the affinity between your work and hers....

With the last note of your signature song, you finish a remarkably magical performance. The babies cried and the schoolbells rang; but the children's rapt attention, their spirited singing, cooperation and innovation, and the mercifully in-tune and beautiful piano, have transported you all. You're left with a powerful feeling of "Yes!" And what's more, the beaming smiles and warm comments make it clear that the feeling is mutual. A third grade teacher, her room parent in tow, approaches you with hearty enthusiasm. "We'd love to keep a piece of you here! We know you won't be back this way for a while, but isn't there something we can

do to keep this alive? How can we find more wonderful songs like yours, and get the support we need to use them in our classrooms?..."

The last campfire of family music camp dwindles to embers with the last chorus of "Goodnight Irene." The parent on the log next to yours expresses your own good feelings. "I love these campfire singalongs and the whole experience of putting music at the center of our family life for a week. I wonder how we could renew this before next summer, get in touch with other parents who enjoy this, and find the support to keep our family life musical...."

It's the outreachable moment. It's the time when you can ask, "Do you know about The Children's Music Network?" and do a service both for your companion and for our organization. You can tell about *Pass It On!*—all the methods, materials, and inspiration you find in its pages. You can tell about how national and regional gatherings boost your morale, repertoire, and exposure. You can talk about how being connected to CMN restores your courage and energy in this upside-down world where both music and children are held in such low regard. And you can hand out (or mail out) our new one-page information sheet about CMN.

But before I urge you to order, and at all times carry around, copies of this fine document, let me speak to some possible doubts. Are you like me? Do you question the sort of market-driven compulsion to expand, expand, expand? Isn't the intimacy and immediacy of small schools, small classes, small groups something we value in our network as well?

I'm as likely as the next person to argue that small is beautiful. But as I've come to understand the price we pay for our low numbers, I believe that growth is essential to our survival. We simply can't afford our lifestyle. Rather than pruning back

the high production values of this admirable organ, *PIO!*, or cutting back on the frequency and impressive, labor-intensive orchestration of our wonderful gatherings, why not involve more members? A larger membership ameliorates our problem on two fronts: we have a larger base of volunteers on which to draw, and we expand our dues income, allowing for more paid office and administrative hours.

Before I joined the board, I was oblivious to our budget woes. Now I want to share the knowledge: board members agree that we're just a few calories away from burn-out crisis. Longtime volunteers (you've seen their names repeatedly in these pages) just can't keep up the energy. We're running on a deficit, and we need to expand our income to keep *PIO!* circulating (such a beautiful journal, so few subscribers!), to pay administrative help to coordinate new volunteer effort, and to relieve the generous and weary longtime volunteers.

So that's where you come in. Write Caroline at the Evanston, Illinois, address on this *PIO!* Get your own stack of CMN literature and schlep it around to those concerts, workshops, and camp reunions. (Or, better yet, get a single original and make your own copies.) Include our flyer when you mail you lead sheet to a fellow performer. Hand a flyer to that prolific twelve-year-old songwriter who wants to know where to publish and perform his remarkable songs. Copy a few choice sentences and the CMN address when you make your next posting to your on-line educator's forum. Shouldn't your library subscribe to *PIO!*?

Let us know what you're doing! Write an article, or a brief letter, and tell us about how you brought someone to CMN. What do you need to support your efforts? More or different literature, a slicker brochure, recruitment role play, a CMN Webpage? Can you offer help with

these or other suggestions? When such a strong and well qualified membership committee (all of our members) gets active, our money/energy problems can certainly be solved. But on an even more triumphant note, we can reach, support, and learn from more of the many parents, performers, writers, teachers, promoters and kids who share our passionate commitment to well-made, thoughtful and empowering music for all children. And that's got to make this world a better place!

You can respond to this article by writing to PIO!, or you can contact Bonnie directly by snail mail or e-mail. Bonnie Lockhart, 1032 Winsor Ave., Oakland, CA 94610 or bonnie!@ousd.k12.ca.us **PIO!**

Announcement

by Katherine Dines

THIRD COAST CMN 1997 NATIONAL GATHERING!

Nashville, Tennessee, and the Southeast Region of CMN are the lucky hosts of next year's national gathering October 17 to 19. We hope to involve more people in the area who aren't usually able to afford travelling far. Of course, we're already counting on all those who have attended national gatherings in the past.

Camp Garner Creek, a lovely site run by the Nazarene Church, is about 1.25 hours from Nashville. It offers all sorts of accommodations, from tent and RV camping, to dorm-style buildings, all the way to full-linen-service motel rooms—right on site. There are hiking trails, and even an enclosed swimming pool! The weather and fall foliage should be at its prime, and we are already in the process of planning some wonderful events. Tell your friends! **PIO!**

Regional Reports

by Katherine Dines

NEW ENGLAND

Bob Blue
77 Belchertown Road
Apartment 43
Amherst, MA 01002
413/256-8784

or

Nina Fischer
35 Gardner
Arlington, MA 02174
617/648-8533

The New England Region will have its annual gathering at the Clark Street Elementary School on May 3, from 9:30 to 4:30. The format we used in March, 1996—starting with a round robin and then deciding on and selecting workshops—worked well, and we will use a similar format this year, with one modification: we will start with a tentative workshop schedule and amend it based on participants' suggestions.

SOUTHEAST

Katherine Dines
2605 Essex Place
Nashville, TN 37212
615/297-4286

or

Rachel Sumner
615/646-3220

We continue to meet monthly from 12:00 to 1:00 at a new "old" location, Imagination Crossroads toy store. There are plenty of places to park, a gourmet lunch place, a bread store that serves great sandwiches, and a Chinese restaurant—all in the same shoppette. So bring your lunch and join us. Anyone traveling through is always welcome to attend. Several CMN members presented music workshops at the Tennessee Association of Young Children conference, which was unfortunately during the CMN national gathering in Petaluma! Next

year, the gathering will be right here in Tennessee, the third weekend in October. Start saving your pennies—er, dollars, so y'all kin come 'on down!

CANADA

Sandy Byer
26 Bain Avenue
Toronto, ONTARIO M4K 1E6
CANADA
416/465-2741

The Canadian Region seems to have a small and enthusiastic core group that has found great satisfaction and many new songs in meeting together. We plan to meet in late November, 1996, and late March, 1997. For more information and specific dates contact Sandy. We are also looking to encourage more people to get involved in our region. If you can help, contact Sandy as well, particularly those of you in other parts of Canada.

MIDWEST

Bruce O'Brien
604 Newton Street
Eau Claire, WI 54701
715/832-0721

or

Kristin Lems
221-C Dodge Avenue
Evanston, IL 60202
847/864-0737

Enthusiasm and membership is growing in the Midwest! Kristin Lems, regional co-representative, has produced a great regional newsletter, "Raised Up Singing." The latest edition contains a song, a finger play and two feature articles contributed by Midwest members. Yay Kristin!

We have warm and wonderful memories of our Midwest regional gathering in Wisconsin last July. Plans are underway for a gathering to be held July 11-13, 1997, in either the Chicago area or again in Fall Creek, Wisconsin. Stay tuned. Stay in touch.

continued on next page ➤

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Lisa Atkinson
317 W. 41st Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94403
415/574-2709

Thanks to all the people from Northern California who came to Petaluma to make this year's gathering such a success! A series of five local song swaps will be held throughout the coming year, as well as a state-wide gathering. Regional members will be receiving a postcard in the mail with more information on the coming events.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Dave Kinnoin
P.O. Box 3890
South Pasadena, CA 91031
818/441-6024

On Tuesday, October 29, we met at the California Plaza in downtown Los Angeles for our bi-monthly workshop/songswap. Sandy Byer, storyteller/songwriter/singer extraordinaire from Toronto was our workshop leader. She was already in California for the Gathering in Petaluma. We had an intimate, attentive, and enthusiastic group to hear Sandy tell stories and share anecdotes and teaching strategies. We sure lucked out to have her with us!

NORTHWEST (Forming)

Bonnie Messinger
11790 Southwest Belmont Terrace
Beaverton, OR 97005
(503) 641-8580

Inspired by the recent national gathering in Petaluma, we are resolving to get more members. Because of great travel distances, members in southern Oregon, greater Portland, and Seattle are planning individual song swaps and recruiting activities for each area. We will also get together as a region, but less frequently. Bonnie Messinger and Greta Pedersen are planning a song swap in the Portland area for Saturday, March 1, from 1:00 to 4:00. The specific lo-

cation is undetermined at press time, so call Bonnie at 503/641-8580 or Greta at 503/699-1814 for information.

METRO NEW YORK

Barbara Wright
80 Harvard Drive
Hartsdale, NY 10530
914/948-0569

After February 1:
P.O. Box 389
Pound Ridge, NY 10576
Tel: same

New York Metro has two very exciting events planned for May. The first will be on Saturday May 3 at the N.Y. state AEYC conference in Binghamton, New York. There will be also be a song swap from 3:00 to 4:30. The second one will be on Saturday May 17 at Roberto Clemente State Park in the Bronx. A wonderful day full of songs, workshops and typical—or not—CMN spirit is sure to be had by all.

Please contact Barbara Wright no later than January 31, if you are interested in presenting workshops at either of the gatherings, so that they can be planned accordingly. Better yet, call Barbara soon at the above number if you'd like to attend either event, or for more information on how you can participate.

MID-ATLANTIC

Dave Orleans
130 West Clearview Avenue
Pine Hill, NJ 08021
609/768-1598 days
or
609/435-4229 evenings

After a few years of inactivity, the Mid-Atlantic Region held its first gathering, a "Fall Overnighter." It was graciously hosted by the Garden State Discovery Museum in Cherry Hill, N.J., September 28 and 29. About fourteen CMNers, past CMNers, and interested non-CMNers took part in the event, which began with a potluck dinner. A round robin followed in front of

an audience of about thirty parents and children who were attending the museum. There was lots of getting to know one another, idea-sharing, song and resource swapping, and even a little sleep.

This represented a wonderful start for the region and the consensus was to try to host another gathering again early next year. Look for information on a winter gathering at the end of February or beginning of March. **PIO!**

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I've just finished reading my first copy of *Pass It On!* (Spring 1996). What a treat! I love the song, "Take Good Care of Each Other." It's easy to sing and has a great message. I'm sure we will sing it often next year.

Sincerely,
Linda Purdom

Dear Editor,

My issue of CMN's *Pass It On!* came in today's mail. It looks really great and again, my thanks for your invitation to write that little piece. Bob Blue, Susan Keniston, and Jan Graves did a fine job of editing and layout. Many thanks to all who make this magazine possible.

Sincerely,
Tish Steinfeld

Dear Editor,

I absolutely love, love, love *PIO!* It's the greatest. Better every issue, but each one perfect in its own right. I gobble it up quickly and then digest it very slowly.

Sincerely,
Kristin Lems

Minutes of national
CMN board meetings
are available to be read
by CMN members
upon request.

Interview: Ruth Pelham

➤ *continued from page 4*

ever led a group of people in song and just having it work?

RUTH: Yeah, in Madison. It was one of those life experiences when you go, "Huh! Wow! Really? Me?" One of the first songs I ever wrote was called, "A Crack in the Liberty Bell." I remember singing it for some of my friends, and I had my head down, being kind of shy, and some one said, "Boy, that's a really good song! Sing that again!" So I did. Then someone said, "Let's all sing it." And it had a really strong chorus. The chorus went, "I think there's a crack in the Liberty Bell. Lincoln's face is getting rusty in the wishing well." Then my first memory of leading songs where people really paid attention to them was here in Albany, in 1974 or 1975, when I was real active in the Women's Movement, and I was a part of a theater group—an improvisational theater group called Full Circle. We were doing a presentation at a Women's Day rally in the park here. So, just a few hours before the rally I wrote a song called "Broomstick." That afternoon, I got up on the stage and sang it, and really wanted people to sing with me. They really did, and it was wonderful and exhilarating.

PIO!: How did the Music Mobile get started?

RUTH: It was sort of a fluke. I went to music school for one year in Madison and while I was there I got this image of bringing music to people in communities as a way of validating, affirming, empowering the individuals within them. But I didn't have any form for that, it was just a very vague concept. So, I moved to Albany in 1973 because there was a program at Russell State College called Creative Arts and Human Service that sounded like something that would help me realize this concept. After about three months I realized that I was

really tired of being in school. I wanted to get on with my life. And I remember when I first came to Albany, I had an image—almost like a hallucination—pass through me. It was a picture of a van, moving through the neighborhoods...

PIO!: A van dream?

RUTH: I really mean this. I was with my mother. And it was strange—it was almost like a dream. And I had not had that happen before, and it hasn't happened since. I stayed around Albany for four years, teaching at an early childhood/parent cooperative school and doing some theater, and then I decided to leave town. It occurred to me that I didn't have any money, so I went to the arts office to see if they had a job for me, and they said no. On Memorial Day weekend I went down to the C.E.T.A. office, which was a federally funded program. They said, "Well, you're eligible to apply but we don't have any jobs. Come back in August." And I thought, August? I want to be gone by August. So I said, "Well, no. I have a program that needs to start now." It sort of popped out of me, and they said, "Well, what program is it?" And I said, "Well..." and I thought to myself, and out popped "The Music Mobile."

PIO!: You said those words?

RUTH: I said those words. I said, "The Music Mobile." And they said, "Well, what do you do?" I thought, what *would* I do? I said, "Well, I go to parks and playgrounds and work with kids." And they said, "Well, what do you do with the kids?" And I said, "Well, I sing." And then I thought, I don't know if singing could hold kids for a full hour. I gotta do something else. So I said, "And we make musical instruments out of recycled materials." Back in 1977, that was a thoroughly radical notion. And they said, "Gee, that sounds really great! You should really talk to the people at the arts office." It was synchronicity, because I had a meeting

with them the very next day. And then I said, "Should I write a proposal?" Of course I had never written a proposal before. And they said, "Yeah, write a proposal." And I said "Okay." And I left thinking, what am I doing? What am I gonna write? What is this? I was excited, and nervous, and I remember staying up that night, and the whole concept of the Music Mobile flowed out of me onto paper. And I still have that proposal, and I read it every now and then, and I'm amazed that it is now what it was meant to be then.

PIO!: What a great story...

RUTH: It gets better. I went to the arts office with my proposal, and I was hired on the spot. I was given a \$300 supply budget. I was given a salary of \$101.18 a week, and I was told that I needed some kind of jingle that they could use for public service announcements on the radio—could I have that in the next two days? And that I was to be out on the street on July 5, and by the way, they would get me a van. And I said I didn't need a van. I'll just use my little Toyota. They said, "No, no, you need a van." And Sandy Feister, the director of the arts office, picked up the telephone and called up the commissioner of public works and said, "Harry, I need a van." It came in six weeks. Until then I just went out on foot with a guitar around my neck. And I had two people that were helping me. We would just wander the streets for a good hour, telling people to come on over to the neighborhood park. We'd have an instrument and say, "Here's what we're going to make."

PIO!: A lot of people just don't have the confidence to go to a neighborhood, or go to a park, and say, "Everybody come," and then deal with what they expect will be a lot of sass, or a lot of testing of limits, or worse. But you pulled it off.

RUTH: I was really open to the

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Photo: Jim Collins

Ruth in concert at Clark Street Developmental School in Worcester, Mass.

people I met. I mean, I think that's so important where it's the circle of people. It's not the other, it's not the stranger; it's embracing. I had to walk up to people I didn't know, and say what I was gonna do, and explain it, and introduce myself, and to go on faith that I was gonna get an answer back. 'Cause I'd never done anything like that, I mean, just to go up and say, "Hi, I'm Ruth Pelham, and I'm going to be starting a program called the Music Mobile, and I'd like to come to your neighborhood and gather kids and come and sing and build instruments—you know, really learn about each other, and be together. My attitude embraced the people that I was talking with and said to them, "I need your advice. Would you give me your advice? Can you help me?" And just about every interaction that I have ever had has always been with the attitude that the person I am talking with is part of the program. When I go to the recycling center and I pick up the boxes for the guitar boxes we make, I want those people to see an example of the guitar box, and I want them to know that 250 kids that week are going to make

the instruments. I tell them, "This couldn't be without you", so that they feel they're part of it. I think anyone doing that street-based work has to have a real loving heart for people, and a openness to people, and a feeling that we're all on the same side.

PIO!: *It sounds like you succeeded in getting a lot of people involved right from the start.*

RUTH: I talked to everyone...I called up city agencies. I said what I was going to do. Could they suggest people who might be community leaders within the neighborhood that I could talk to? I followed my gut; I followed my logic of what I thought I had to do to make contact with neighborhood people, to be sure that they were the ones that were making the good decisions and suggestions of where to go, rather than me making those decisions. I mean, I made the decisions, but they were all very much based on a lot of talking with people.

PIO!: *What was your goal? What did you want to accomplish out of this?*

RUTH: I wanted to have children

to be able to get involved in participatory activities, and do things together on the street, where they would feel really, really good about themselves—where they would feel proud to be part of their neighborhood—where they could help each other—where they could experience a feeling of joy—where parents could bring their children and leave their children. I wanted parents to get a break for awhile and to know that their kids were going to be getting a really wonderful dose of love, of caring, of learning. And I wanted to create an experience in the neighborhood that would help people come together.

PIO!: *Has the community helped you raise money to keep Music Mobile going?*

RUTH: Oh yeah. Once back in the early days of Music Mobile, around 1981, we were really running out of money. I even mentioned in one of the neighborhoods that I didn't know if we'd really be around any more, because there just wasn't any money. About five days later, I get this telephone call. This little, young voice says, "Ruth, do you want to come and get the money now?" And I said, "What are you talking about? What money?" He said—I don't remember his name now: I think it was Steven—and he said, "Well, you know, the money for the Music Mobile. We collected it, so come on over and get it." And I got there, and they had gone door to door, collecting money for Music Mobile in a big can very much like the drum they had just learned how to make at that "final" session of Music Mobile.

A little later, I took about eight of them with me to a hearing where we applied for a community development block grant through a federal funding program. The press was there. And it was packed, 'cause everybody was applying for grants—all the community agencies. And these kids went right up to the front, and I had my guitar, and we sang probably about three

songs. And one by one, they went up to the microphones and asked for \$36,000, and said what they loved about the Music Mobile. It made every paper. I mean, it was just exciting to see kids really asking for something that they loved.

But we got turned down. The kids were really upset about that. And we talked a lot about what do you do when someone says "no." Do you keep going or do you give up? And they said, "No, you can't give up!" I said, "No, you can't give up!" So we took the next step, and we did a whole appeal with letters, and the kids wrote letters, and neighbors wrote letters, and we wound up with a \$12,500 grant.

PIO!: *Have you had to make any major changes to the structure of Music Mobile over the years to keep it going or make it more effective?*

RUTH: After that C.E.T.A. money ran out I formed a nonprofit organization. There had to be funding if I was going to continue, and a nonprofit organization seemed the best way for us. And when we started fundraising, and applying for grants from different granting organizations, my concept of how Music Mobile really impacted people, impacted neighborhoods, developed tremendously. In the early years, I would write a grant proposal to the New York State Council on the Arts and they would say, "Well, this isn't really an arts program, this is a delinquency prevention program." So, I'd go to delinquency prevention and I'd say, "We're applying for this grant," and they'd say, "Well, that's really an arts grant, and as a matter of fact, it's really an education grant." I'd say, "Well, we've been to the Arts Council, and they told us to come here," and I mean, it went on and on like that. Well, in fact, Music Mobile touches all of those areas, recreation, delinquency prevention, dealing with substance abuse, dealing with at-risk kids. I think the power of the Music Mobile program

is that all these things are integrated. The concept is very broad. And I think my skills have sharpened. Now when I go to the neighborhoods, with the van playing the Music Mobile theme song, I'm able to bring out a lot more. By now, so many people know about us. Grandparents, shop owners, stoop-sitters—it seems like everybody knows the Music Mobile.

PIO!: *Sing us the Music Mobile song, will you?*

RUTH: (sings) "Come along, sing a song. It's the Music Mobile. Have fun, build a drum. It's the Music Mobile. If you're a kid, bring a friend to the Music Mobile. It's a treat on the street. Be the beat of the Music Mobile." I mean, I can go into the bank and people start singing the song. Or I'll go into the drug store, and there's somebody who's twenty-two years old, and they say, "Oh, aren't you the Music Mobile lady?—Why, I remember coming to the Music Mobile when I was seven years old, and you were over in the park on Oak Street, and remember, we made those jingle sticks?" The other morning I'm walking and I hear this yelling across the street, "Hey, it's the Music Mobile lady!" And I turned around, and I grinned, and there were ten kids, all kind of elbowing each other. And I said, "How ya doing?" They said, "Okay." I said, "You goin' to school?" They said, "Yeah, goin' to school." Then they all started to sing the Music Mobile song.

It's been amazing at times. One time I was driving around one of the neighborhoods, and I see this guy sitting on a stoop, really drugged up. He gets up and flags me down, and he came, just about wobbling up to the van. He could hardly walk. And I thought, "Oh, my gosh, do I really open my window?" Then I thought, "Open the window. You definitely will open your window." And I opened the window; I was scared. And he said,

in his half-drunk voice, "I remember you. Do you remember me? I came to the Music Mobile when I was a kid. We made instruments. Good to see you again. Remember me?" What he wanted from me was acknowledgment, recognition. Seeing me drive by triggered for him a wonderful memory as a kid. We chatted for a little while, and my fear had gone away. I feel protected in my beingness as the Music Mobile.

PIO!: *How do you deal with the danger of working in rough neighborhoods?*

RUTH: I've at times walked up to people and I've thought, "Oh, gosh, am I really gonna talk to that person?" because my own fears come up. And I say, "Ruth, be careful."

But I think anyone doing street-based work has to have a real loving heart toward people, and an openness to people, and a trust that people are there and we're all on the same side.

PIO!: *Do you have staff to help you now?*

RUTH: Connie Neal has been working with me full time in the office for about three or four years. She and I put together a 32-page activity book that gets distributed to 3,000 people at the end of the summer. The themes are recycling, cooperation, being a good citizen, being a good neighbor. One section of the book has drawings that kids in the parks have made. So, when these get distributed, the kids get a reflection back on their own art work, their own thoughts, their own ideas. And we bring these to family centers, to libraries, to the banks, to health care centers—everywhere. And there's always a press release that goes with it. You asked me before, "How do people know about Music Mobile?" People know about it because we get great press. And that's been true for twenty years; it's the kind of program that seems to attract interest

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and attracts warmth and affection. People who came when they were children are coming now as parents or grandparents, and bringing their kids.

PIO!: *The first quote in the Music Mobile brochure is from Pete Seeger. He says, "The Music Mobile is a great thing for all. There ought to be one in every city in the nation." Well, why isn't there? How replicable is it? How much of the Music Mobile's success is the blueprint and how much is your distinctive, open personality and musical talent?*

RUTH: I'm glad you asked me that, because I've given a lot of thought to what makes the Music Mobile work. Part of it is that I'm stubborn, I'm persevering. I plow through hurdles because I believe in the concept. I think the concept *must* be replicated, but not always necessarily the way I do it. When I see kids sitting on a street corner, I can't understand why people aren't out on the streets all the time. Why aren't they teaching kids in *their* environment? I mean people are learning things all the time. Kids are learning really horrendous things. So I would really like to see, within the world of education, a real branching out to the street, where, yeah, kids are in school, but what happens when kids are out of school? There's music on the street, there's science on the street; there's math on the street. You know, where you learn architecture, and in architecture, you learn how to use your eye to look at things. Times are urgent. There's so much negativity.

PIO!: *How much does the particular form, the structure you've given to Music Mobile mean to its success?*

RUTH: For twenty years, I've been going out on the street. It doesn't matter that I have a van, you just need to have a way of engaging people. You need to have a way of saying, "Hi! Would you like to come and be part of this experience that we can create together?" The people who come to the Music Mobile define a lot of what it is. And yes, it's



Photo: Georgette Bacon

Ruth talking with Louise White after a "Songstories: Contemporary Images of Aging Through Song" concert at a senior citizen center

defined by me, because I am the energy behind it, but sometimes I think, people ought to just come out on the street...

PIO!: *Just do it.*

RUTH: Just do it! I really mean that. It sounds incredibly simplistic. And granted, a van playing a theme song is a very good attention-getter. But before I even had a van, I went around with a guitar around my neck. And, you know, maybe you have a tambourine in your hand, and you bang the tambourine to make noise to get people's attention. And you'd say, "In twenty minutes, we're gonna be meeting at such-and-such place, and here's what we're gonna do, and do you want to come and be a part of it?" And it could be music, it could be constructing sculpture out of things you find around your neighborhood. So in my view of it, I always wonder why there's not more stuff going on in the street.

PIO!: *Twenty years into this, do you find yourself working more with teachers and schools, trying to help others do the Music Mobile curriculum or programs?*

RUTH: Definitely. I do lots of work in the schools, and I do lots of work in conferences, doing presentations that are based on my work with the Music Mobile. All around the country. For instance, I sometimes describe the strategies that I've developed as an educator that give kids the opportunity to take negative behaviors and turn them around into kids being proud of who they are, instead of getting yelled at. We hardly ever have trouble in the Music Mobile—even in neighborhoods that are supposed to be "dangerous." I've seen so many situations that could be thought of as negative turn into incredibly positive scenes.

I've had visions of doing a national tour with the Music Mobile, going from community to community, and having activities that build on each other from city to city, linking kids from one city with another. I'm eager to work with people from other cities, to parks departments and school staff, recreation staff, where I'm able to bring to them a real comprehensive training. Not just in the songs and the instru-

ments, but also in the how-to's of working with kids—how do you create a welcoming environment, where kids can flourish, where you create positive, creative environments. I think some of the materials we use are definitely replicable. I now have a book out about our program with photos, and instructions for the instruments.

PIO! *In a way, you've even take the Music Mobile to the Grand Canyon, right?*

RUTH: I've spent a fair amount of time working with the Havasupai tribe at the bottom of the Grand Canyon in Arizona. I've worked with the children of the tribe and the adults of the tribe since 1986, and have done exchanges with kids in Supai and kids here in Albany, so that they can better understand what life is like in a big East Coast city, and what life is like living in the middle of the Grand Canyon. And that's pretty exhilarating work; and then going to the schools, and as part of my assembly program, talking to kids and singing with them songs that children of the Havasupai tribe have written about stopping the uranium mine that's threatening their sacred land. And it's a way of really breaking down stereotypes. It's a way of bringing environmental issues to kids through a real-life situation.

I feel like the Music Mobile has many different avenues. We do a lot of song writing with the kids. We're in the middle of a song writing project with kids from three different housing developments, where the kids are writing songs about what it's like living in their neighborhoods, and how it feels to walk up the hill to go shopping in a neighborhood where there's guns and weapons, and talking about people sticking together. There's one song I love. It's called, "Neighbors Helping Neighbors." It's this really beautiful, beautiful melody that goes with the kids' words about when you're in trouble, you

talk to your neighbors. And that song came out of situation where within one family, one of the younger brothers was in a train accident and lost his legs, and months later, one of the older brothers—drowned. And that family was devastated, and the kids in that neighborhood were devastated, and the song writing became a way for the kids to really help deal with their feelings of loss and grief and fear. And thinking in those times, we've got to turn to each other.

PIO! *Do you also work with older people?*

RUTH: I do, and I love it. I go to senior centers and nursing homes, do concerts and when time permits—a number of years ago, probably a good twelve years ago, I would go to the nursing homes and senior centers and interview people, and then, based on those interviews, I would write songs reflecting back my impressions and the stories I would hear.

PIO! *I wonder if one of my favorite of your songs, "The Activity Room," came from those interviews?*

RUTH: Definitely.

PIO! *It's just a great song. The ear you have for language—the way people talk—it's just really wonderful.*

RUTH: Some of that ear comes from being around so many different kinds of people. You know, on a typical day, I can go to a teacher meeting at 8:30 in the morning and talk about the [artist] residence that we're going to do. By noon I might be at a Rotary Club luncheon, and lead them all in song. And then I get to go out to the street in the afternoon and be with the kids on a street corner, or an empty lot, and later I'll go off to a family shelter and sing that night.

PIO! *I'd like to know more about Ruth Pelham the musician. When you perform or lead songs it all seems so natural and inviting that one can overlook your musicianship. I heard you play piano at someone's house one time, and you're re-*

ally good. And I've played some of the songs that you've written on guitar, and they're really interesting musically. Accessible, but interesting.

RUTH: Thanks, I do appreciate that. My first piano teacher was a real mentor for me. She gave me a passion for the details of music—for a phrase, for an idea, to make it all seem like a wonder. Then I went to music school for one year after I graduated as a French Literature and Philosophy major. And I was really completely absorbed in music theory. It was so interesting to me. I had known nothing about it.

PIO! *You seem especially good at writing anthemic songs, songs that sound big with melodies that can carry universal themes.*

RUTH: I think of the melodies that I write as having pretty classical structures. I can imagine some of them, like "I Am A Woman," or "Wings of Time" being arranged in an orchestral arrangement.

PIO! *Would you like to hear them performed by an orchestra?*

RUTH: Yeah, I would. I hear "Wings of Time" with a Brahms kind of theme. Recently I put a piano setting to Robert Frost's poem, "The Road Not Taken." I will record it on my next recording. I love the way it sounds. And I love the piano, and as I said, I love the details of the music. So, when I'm crafting a song, I know people say that they're kind of simple songs, but not in a derogatory way at all.

PIO! *What do you think of Ruth Pelham the singer?*

RUTH: I think of myself as someone with "a people's voice." That I have the kind of voice that, when people hear it, I hope people don't say, "Wow, she's got a great voice, I can't sing." Instead, I hope that my voice carries with it a sense that, you know, here's my voice; it's pretty regular, so come on and join in and sing with me, 'cause my

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voice is certainly not any better than yours.

PIO! *What's it been like for you trying to get your songs out there in the children's music industry?*

RUTH: Well, like a lot of people, I think my songs are good and important and I want them to be heard by as many people as possible. I think in order for me to "make it big," for any of us to do that, there's a huge amount of time and energy that has to go into that. So far I've chosen to spend my time and energy working in a very grass roots kind of way, because it feeds me as a human being, and it feeds me as a songwriter, as an artist, as an activist. And as I get older, I think, well, gosh, you know, I would really like my recordings distributed far and wide, and I would like to do a lot more recording. And I have tried to reach a broader audience. But then I think that when that goal comes from your ego and it's all about making it big, you can trip over your own two feet. I mean, I want to follow my own heart—but, this is being so vague.

PIO! *It was a vague question, and your openness is really helpful. I think a lot of people who use their art to try to cause positive changes, and yet who also find themselves in a competitive commercial marketplace, can feel pretty conflicted. A lot of us feel that way.*

RUTH: Your ego makes you want to be known by everybody. But I've seen so many of us in The Children's Music Network feel so badly, trying to shape our futures according to the children's music industry. Trying to "make it" can make you feel small and insignificant. It makes you feel like you never do enough. And with media growing as it is, with the Internet, cable—I mean, if you don't have a TV show, you don't have a radio show, where are you? That can feel devastating, and I, like so many of us, have gone through lots of topsy-turvy emotions.

PIO! *Do you see any way out?*

RUTH: I guess I hope that my growth in the industry can happen in the same kind of loving way that the Music Mobile has grown. And I would like that growth to happen. I have a concept for myself doing a TV show. And I have pictures in my head of all kinds of video projects. After two decades as an educator and performer, I'm speaking at more concerts, doing more keynotes, doing a lot more festivals, a lot more concerts. I'm eager to do more of my adult music, to play more in concert halls. I believe in what I write. And I often think about the power of a song. And what I really want is for my songs to touch the lives of more people. What I believe is that the work that I do, the songs that I write, have their place in the world. I want to help them find it. **PIO!**

Editorial

➡ *continued from inside cover*

words and my song. Her whole being was receiving my song. She was learning the joy of listening to love sing itself.

What else is exciting about lullaby-singing is that many parents who think they can't sing, do sing lullabies to their children. They know that it is the love and the mood that they are expressing. The time is joyful; they can experience the power of singing without critics.

The world needs lullabies and lullaby time so badly. Small children need to hear and feel the reassuring love of a grown-up. As they grow older, we can think the time of lullabies is over, and yet those minutes at the end of the day can offer the same reassurance that the songs once offered. This is a busy time we all live in. I know that too often I feel the urge to rush

bedtime and get on with it. But I make myself turn and go back. What did I think I was getting on with? What could more crucial than those five minutes of talking or singing with my daughters? Maybe I think I'm too tired—that I need that lullaby time for myself. But I remind myself to give to my children now, because they deserve my time and my songs.

Where, other than at home, can we use lullabies? Children's performers often perform with and for children at the peak of their busy days. Everyone is revved up. Yet during that time, I have seen second graders settle into "Somos el Barco"—settle into the gentleness of that song. Once, I noticed that several children closed their eyes as they sang. That moment was a great reminder that children's attention does not need to be "captured" by loud, active songs. There must always be space for the quiet music that will bring the child back to the calm wisdom that the lullaby teaches, and the soothing and heightened listening the lullaby elicits.

As CMN members, we are all somehow involved in children's music, and we all ought to stop and think about quiet times and the lullabies in our lives. As parents, we know that early singing is a wondrous and special gift for small souls. As our children grow, we still need to connect with them as the day ends. We need to listen to each other. As teachers, perhaps the lullaby can be useful to focus and calm children. For performers, who may find themselves trying to "capture the attention" of young audiences, there may be an opportunity to step back and try a lullaby.

Share a lullaby with a child or a friend. Learn them and pass them around. Listen and be soothed. Listen and...listen and...lis..ten... and...li... **PIO!**

How to Submit Something to ***Pass It On!***

CALL FOR ARTICLES!

PIO! always needs stories from members about what they're doing and how they're doing it!

All the articles in this issue were contributed by your fellow CMN members... who invite you to share *your* stories, too! After all, that's the whole point of CMN.

All we ask is that articles...

- ✓ address topics of interest to CMN members, and that, in some way, they relate to CMN's mission...
- ✓ that they be clear, concise, and reasonably well-written...
- ✓ and that they be between 900 and 1800 words long.

Articles should not promote a particular person, performing group, or product.

Please tell us if your article has been submitted for publication elsewhere, or if it is a reprint.

We welcome photos and graphics, which will be published if space permits.

Submission via E-mail or disk is preferred.

Send articles to...

Bob Blue

Executive Editor
77 Belchertown Road, #43
Amherst, MA 01002
413/256-8784
bblue@k12.oit.umass.edu

CALL FOR SONGS!

Most of the songs published in *PIO!* are contributed by your fellow CMN members.

Please—share *your* works with us, too!

In every issue of *PIO!* we try to include...

- ✓ A song written by a young person...
- ✓ A song representative of cultural diversity...
- ✓ A song written by people from various parts of the country, or the world...
- ✓ A song on a topic that is in some way representative of CMN's mission.

Songs should be submitted in lead sheet format if possible, and should be accompanied by a cassette tape recording or "scratch track" of the song.

Each submission should include a title, and should properly credit the author(s).

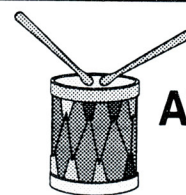
Copyright dates should be noted; copyright ownership remains with the author.

Submission implies that permission to print has been obtained from all authors (although you will be contacted should your song be selected for publication).

Send songs to...

Joanne (Olshansky) Hammil

Song Editor
11 Marshall Terrace
Wayland, MA 01778



ATTENTION: KIDS!

We want your contributions. Send us your songs, artwork, or letters related to children's music.

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Check one...

- ☐ **Individual or Family Membership: \$35** (US\$40 Canada: US\$45 other international)
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- ☐ New England ☐ NY Metro ☐ MidAtlantic
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Tell us about your interest, work or involvement in children's music
(About 30 words or less for the membership directory):

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Finally, please mail this application with a check or money order for your membership category plus any additional cross-reference listings (sorry, no purchase orders or credit cards) to The Children's Music Network at the address above.

Thank You!

CMN 0366