
PASS IT ON!TM

The Journal of The Children's Music Network

ISSUE #28

Winter 1998



Barbara
Skolnick Rothenberg

Inside...

- Using Music to Help Children Think About Social Issues ■
 - New Songs to Sing, Sign, Play ■
 - 1997 National Gathering Photos & Round Robin ■
-

INTRODUCTION TO EDITORIAL

by Bob Blue

The theme of this winter issue of *Pass It On!* is "Children's Music and Social Statements." One of the reasons we first formed The Children's Music Network was that we cared about what children learn about the social and political world through their musical experiences. Not surprisingly, several members of our network have a lot to say about this, and they offer you a lot to think about.

In the following editorial, Joanne Hammil, who has done a mountain of work as songs editor for *PIO!* and as president of CMN, helps us focus on the role music can play in helping children think about social issues.

Looking ahead, our spring issue will focus on ecology, on how music can be a force in making sure children understand and appreciate "this pretty planet" they live on.

EDITORIAL

by Joanne Hammil

There is a distaste for "preachy" songs among many people who are involved in children's music. Songs that tell kids what to do or how they should feel often seem heavy-handed. Children relate well to songs that "tell it like it is," not like it should be. Exposing problems as they are, whether with humor or poignancy, often leads children to think more clearly about solutions. Preaching about problems tends to turn children off and can even lead them to rebel against what they "should" be doing, in order to feel their independent power.

Where is that fine line between a preachy song and a song with a message? How do we write and choose songs that promote our val-

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



ues of peace, social justice, and cultural and environmental awareness without becoming preachy? Even more tricky, what ideas are we planting in children's minds if we talk about real problems like prejudice and stereotyping and sing about them to children who are being raised in healthy environments where they have not (yet) encountered those prejudices?

I struggle with these issues. And I appreciate the struggle others go through in this realm. I'll try to articulate my concerns here, and I invite a dialogue, perhaps via our "Letters to the Editor," about this challenging aspect of children's music.

There are many wonderful songs that tackle difficult issues, and there are many wonderful ways that songwriters have chosen to expose them. Some songs simply tell a very personal or specific story that the listener can empathize and perhaps identify with, gaining insight and strength both from the honesty of naming the issue and from the recognition that others have the same feelings. Others expose the larger picture with anger or tenderness, giving the listener an awareness of a problem or stating a shared wish for resolution through joint efforts that can inspire us all. Some songs wake us up to a difficulty through their humor, whether outlining a difficult family situation, exposing a typical interpersonal-relationship struggle, or expanding our awareness of a problem in the world

Continued on page 30 ➡

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 June 14, October 4, and February 15.

PASS IT ON! TM
is the journal of

THE CHILDREN'S MUSIC NETWORK

A Not-for-Profit 501(c)3 Corporation
©1997 The Children's Music Network
All Rights Reserved

THE *PIO!* VOLUNTEER STAFF:

EXECUTIVE EDITOR and CURRICULI! CURRICULA!:

Bob Blue
170 E. Hadley Road, #82
Amherst, MA 01002
413/256-8784
bbblue@k12.oit.umass.edu

ASSISTANT EDITOR:

Susan Keniston
1951 Branciforte Drive
Santa Cruz, CA 95065

INTERVIEW EDITOR:

Phil Hoose
8 Arlington Street
Portland, ME 04101
phoose@tnc.org

SONGS EDITOR:

Joanne Hammil
11 Marshall Terrace
Wayland, MA 01778
JHammil@aol.com

RADIO WAVES:

PJ Swift
305 Dickens Way
Santa Cruz, CA 95064
pickle@well.com

DOWN TO THE HEART:

Ruth Pelham
P.O. Box 6024
Albany, NY 12206

REGIONAL REPORTS EDITOR:

Katherine Dines
2605 Essex Place
Nashville, TN 37212-4121
kdines@nash.mindspring

NEW SOUNDS EDITOR:

Sandy Byer
26 Bain Avenue
Toronto, Ontario
CANADA M4K 1E6

LETTERS EDITOR:

Pete Seeger
P.O. Box 431
Beacon, NY 12508

EDITORS EMERITI:

Andrea & Ron Stone (1991-95)
Sarah Pirtle (1987-90)

PRODUCTION EDITOR:

Caroline Presnell

LAYOUT & DESIGN:

Jan Graves/In Print
Skokie, IL
847/982-0302
Fax: 847/982-1214
JanPrint@aol.com

Contents

IN THIS ISSUE...

Features

An Interview with	
Barbara Skolnick Rothenberg	2
What is Kids' Music, Anyway?	5
Controversial Songs in	
Holiday Programs	8
Taking a Break	12
Big Ideas for Little People	15
Thanks, Teach!	16
Let's Sing Together!	18
Reflections of a Rookie	19

Columns

CMN National Gathering Photos	20
Radio Waves	21
Curricula! Curricula!	24
Down To The Heart	25
1997 CMN National Gathering	
Round Robin	26

Songs

"Open the Window,	
Let the Dove Fly In"	6
"Pratelstvi"	9
"Welcome Back"	10
"Let Peace Begin In My Heart"	14
"Stand By Your Child"	22
"I Sign Like This"	28
"Down And Out"	34

Departments

Letters to the Editor	23
New Sounds	31
Regional Reports	32
How to Submit	inside back cover

CMN BUSINESS OFFICE

*for membership and
subscription information:*

Caroline Presnell
Office Manager
The Children's Music Network
P.O. Box 1341
Evanston, IL 60204-1341
U.S.A.
847/733-8003

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...

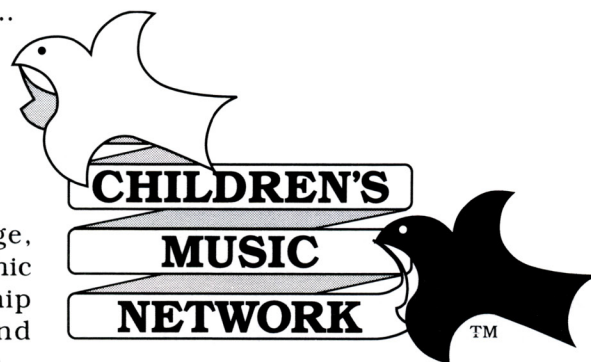
We recognize children's music as a powerful means of encouraging cooperation...celebrating diversity...building self-esteem...promoting respect and responsibility for our environment...and cultivating an understanding of nonviolence and social justice.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Lisa Atkinson, Bob Blue, Katherine Dines, Lisa Garrison, Joanne 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 Barbara Skolnick Rothenberg

by Bob Blue

Barbara Skolnick Rothenberg is a second-grade teacher at the Crocker Farm Elementary School in Amherst, Massachusetts. One might say she was "born to teach." Her maiden name, Skolnick, is Russian for *schoolteacher*. She has been honored as both the Walt Disney American Early Childhood Teacher of the Year and the Massachusetts Social Studies Teacher of the Year, and she was named a World of Difference Teacher by the Anti-Defamation League, which cited her dedication to creating a non-biased learning environment. Her work brings her to universities throughout the United States, where she shares her love of teaching and especially her ways of integrating music into the curriculum.

I was privileged to spend some time in Barbara's class, and I got to see the many ways she makes music part of her classroom. She plays guitar and sings. She teaches her class many songs. For children in Barbara's class, music is a natural part of the school day. I had already known about Barbara's reputation as a teacher who uses

music to enhance her lessons. I was delighted by her way of making her classroom musical. When I asked her whether I could interview her for *Pass It On!*, she was eager to share her experiences and insights with fellow members of The Children's Music Network, as, in her words, "so many of the CMN people are an inspiration to me."

* * * * *

PIO!: *As a teacher, you start each day singing "The More We Get Together" with the children—sometimes in English, sometimes in Spanish, Hebrew, Japanese, or other languages.*

Barbara: Yes. That song and its message are important in my class. I believe it's important to establish a spirit of community in the classroom, and that song helps to build that spirit.

PIO!: *What is your thinking about the variety of languages you use?*

Barbara: I have found that singing in many different languages is a wonderful way to celebrate the rich experiences of my students. For some of the children I teach, English is not their first language. I want children to become familiar with the sounds of other languages. I hope to encourage a spirit of community that stretches way beyond the classroom. I'm constantly searching for new ways to say "good morning" to the children. Every time I meet someone who speaks a language I haven't yet encountered, I ask how to say "good morning" in that language. Then I teach it to my class.

PIO!: *Do the children actually learn all these ways to say "good morning?"*

Barbara: Most do. We are in school 180 days. There are a lot of opportunities to hear these greetings. I pronounce the words as faithfully as I can, then point to our world map and ask the children which language they think I'm using and where it is spoken. Children enjoy trying to pronounce words in another language and locating on a

map the countries where that language is spoken. And who knows? Maybe some will travel to some of those countries or meet people from the countries we learn about. This is one way of opening a window into the world. We've sung songs in Spanish, Japanese, Khmer, Hebrew, Chinese, and more, including American Sign Language. Signed interpretation is a beautiful and expressive way to portray the message, emotion, and rhythm of a song. The children know that signing is another vehicle for communication, which brings us closer to understanding each other.

PIO! : *Auditory learners—children who learn best through what they hear—probably thrive in your class.*

Barbara: I think all teachers hope that all children are thriving in our classes. I hope that I'm providing the best possible program for each learner, taking into account the many varieties of learning styles. I try to have a well-balanced program that gives children the opportunity to grow academically, socially, and emotionally. I try to recognize each child's personal learning style and strength and to find the most effective way to involve the child in his/her educational program. An environment that offers a variety of learning modalities recognizes learners as individuals. That's the kind of environment I strive for.

PIO!: *Could you talk about some of the ways you have been recognized for bringing music into the curriculum?*

Barbara: Several years ago, my class sent the United Nations a videotape and a "big book" we created. It was a videotape of the children in my class singing and signing a selection of songs. The songs stressed friendship, cooperation, peace, global harmony, recognition of cultural and physical diversity, and the universality of the human spirit. Our project was selected to be on display for the United Nations' "World Children's Day," and it was also included in their travel-

NOTE FROM PHIL HOOSE

After eighteen interviews (the first was in the spring of 1991), I have to take a leave from this space for this issue and perhaps the next. Mainly, I need to concentrate on a research-intensive book I'm writing about young people in U.S. history. I'll be back as soon as I can. We're lucky—and I'm grateful—that Bob Blue has volunteered to conduct the interviews until I can return. Many thanks, Bob!

ing exhibit. Another musical project was the filming of a public-service announcement that was aired on our local cable network. The American Heart Association had created an excellent, developmentally appropriate antismoking campaign, complete with musical accompaniment. We sang their song, "Smoke Is No Joke"—with gusto, I might add. We also sing annually for a community event called International Sunday. This is a local event that recognizes the many people from all over the world who are now living in or visiting our community.

PIO!: *This is above and beyond what happens in the average elementary-school class. You really let children know that they can make a difference.*

Barbara: They can make a difference. The good news is that there's a lot of great teaching going on throughout our country. Luckily for the children, there are many caring and dedicated educators and many enthusiastic, energetic young teachers just entering the teaching profession. Teaching is a precious partnership. We have the profound privilege of working with the children of our nation's parents. Together, teachers, parents, and other members of the community help each child realize what she/he can do, can reach, can accomplish, because they have the power within themselves.

PIO!: *I heard from another teacher that you were the force behind changing the logo of the Massachusetts Turnpike.*

Barbara: The sign for the Massachusetts Turnpike used to bear a logo that had a Pilgrim's hat with an arrow going through it. We talked about stereotypes in class—about how inappropriate it was to imply that the Native Americans attacked the Pilgrims. The children in my class wrote letters to the local newspaper, the governor, and state representatives about this issue, and their letters were quite influential. The turnpike sign was changed. There is no longer an ar-

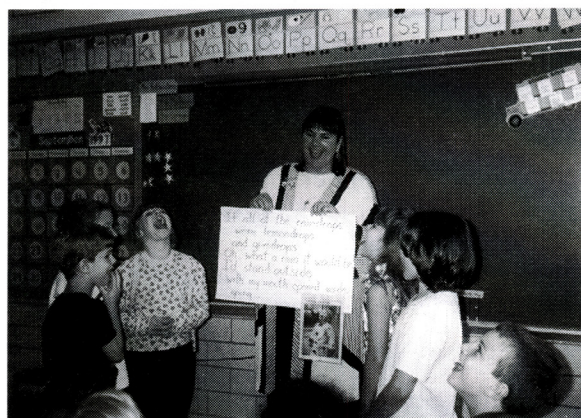
row going through the hat.

PIO!: *You're educating young activists.*

Barbara: I try to foster a climate wherein our students, our young citizens of the world, respect and care about each other. I hope they see themselves as valuable contributors. I hope the children in my classes feel that they have the power to effect a change, whether it be at a local level or global. I believe it's important to make sure children know that their thoughts are worth expressing—that it's possible to have an impact.

PIO!: *How do you decide which songs to use in your class?*

Barbara: We are fortunate to have so many talented songwriters who have written important songs for children. I've used songs by Red Grammer, Sarah Pirtle, Ruth Pelham, and many other songwriters. I've used Red Grammer's "The ABCs of You" and "I Think You're Wonderful," Sarah Pirtle's "Colors of Earth" and "There Is Always Something You Can Do," Ruth Pelham's "Turning of the World," and many other songs that say important things to children. The songs of Peter, Paul, and Mary have provided special inspiration to me. "Puff, the Magic Dragon" is always quite popular, as is "Don't Ever Take Away My Freedom." I look for songs that build self-esteem, songs that give messages I think children need to hear. And they've got to be singable and enjoyable. I reinforce a wide variety of social and academic skills through song and rhythm. Many songs have patterns that are predictable. Song lyrics can build confidence in children who are just learning to read. Music is a fabulous vehicle to teach all kinds of basic skills. I use song lyrics to teach alphabetical order, punctuation, capitalization, contractions, spelling, rhyming,



syllables, and comprehension. The children sing and learn.

PIO!: *What kind of reactions do you get from parents, administrators, and others involved in children's education when they hear how much you use music in your teaching?*

Barbara: I feel fortunate to be teaching in a school system that values a multitude of approaches to learning and teaching. I've gotten lots of support for my use of music. The music I select complements our curriculum. It's woven throughout all subject areas. The children are learning basic skills. Choral reading and singing promote a positive group spirit. The children experience identification as valuable group members. Either individually or through cooperative learning teams, children can become lyricists and create additional verses to existing songs. Their contributions are validated each time the song is sung. Some parents have told me that, when their children brought home song lyrics from class and were singing with enthusiasm at home, that prompted them to go out and buy a particular cassette or CD.

PIO!: *Do you sometimes invite other people to come in and sing for or with your class?*

Barbara: I love to have people come in to sing with my class. Jackie Pack is a singer and songwriter who came in and did a wonderful presentation for the children. The children have sung with Sarah

continued on next page ➡

Interview: Rothenberg

➤ *continued from previous page*

Pirtle, and that was very special. She brought all of her instruments, and the children had a great time. These are the kinds of experiences that the children will cherish long after they leave second grade.

PIO!: *Sarah will love to hear that.*

Barbara: She's wonderful. And I welcome any opportunity to have guests come and sing for and/or with us.

PIO!: *Other CMN members?*

Barbara: Of course. We'd be delighted and honored. Amherst, Massachusetts, is a wonderful destination.

PIO!: *What are some songs you have decided not to teach your class, and why not?*

Barbara: There are so many wonderful songs that I never settle for mediocrity. There are so many songs with great messages, and there are so many songs that lend themselves so nicely to curriculum, whether it's science, social studies, or teaching punctuation, and I use those songs.

PIO!: *Are there sometimes children in your class who are not interested in music? What do you do then?*

Barbara: What do I do then? (Smile) Some children, of course, are more musically inclined than others. And some are more open to singing and participating. Some children who are not interested in the singing part really get into the percussion or other musical instruments. So children who may not want to use their voices will be very happy using their hands to shake maracas or to use drums. There are always alternatives to singing. There is always the need for audiovisual "tech" assistants. Some children might want to be the "pointers," who track the words on the charts as we sing. People who may not start out wanting to use their voices may enjoy pushing the button to

make the tape start going. I try to involve everybody. After awhile, I find that most children join in, as they gain familiarity and feel confident about the lyrics and tunes.

PIO!: *You seem to have known right from the start that you wanted to be a teacher.*

Barbara: Yes, right from the start.

PIO!: *Were there other lines of work you thought about, or tried?*

Barbara: (Laughs) Actually, not at all. I always wanted to be a teacher.

PIO!: *In what ways do you connect with the music teacher in your school?*

Barbara: As the sayings go, "Two heads are better than one," and, "The more, the merrier." We are all resources for each other. Talking to the music teacher, colleagues, friends, and parents, I'm always learning new songs. We're in a sharing profession. We recognize that we all have something to contribute and to share with each other.

PIO!: *Could we roll back the clock a little? Who were some of your early influences? Who got you interested in music?*

Barbara: There was always music in my home during my childhood. My dad, who is now 82, plays the oboe. I remember falling asleep to the sound of his chamber music group meeting in our living room. My mom was always singing and was conscientious in exposing my two siblings and me to a variety of musical genres, one of them being show tunes. My summer camp experiences greatly influenced the kind of music I became very fond of and still love today. There, I was introduced to the music of Peter, Paul, and Mary, the Kingston Trio, and Joan Baez. When I was in fourth grade, my parents took me to a Pete Seeger concert at Spring-



field College. I remember feeling that my family represented both the youngest audience member—me—and the oldest—my parents.

PIO!: *Who inspired you to use music so much with your class?*

Barbara: I was inspired and energized by many wonderful teachers I've had. And I continue to be inspired and energized by many wonderful colleagues I have the good fortune to work with. My elementary music teachers taught me songs from very traditional music books. There were some great songs in them. I used to love the all-school assemblies, when all of our voices would blend together.

PIO!: *When and where did you learn to play the guitar?*

Barbara: My parents bought me a guitar shortly after the Pete Seeger concert in Springfield. The first song I learned was "This Land Is Your Land," and then I graduated to "Gypsy Rover." My dad also brought home a Burl Ives songbook for me. I had learned about six chords and, like magic, I discovered that I could play 50 songs. My fingers hurt so much at first. I couldn't understand how people could play guitar, sing, and still be smiling.

PIO!: *As you learned to play, did you have any thoughts of making a career of music?*

Barbara: Actually, in fourth grade I was already planning on becom-

continued on page 35 ➤

What Is Kids' Music, Anyway?

by Ed Kohn

Last summer I played a gig for families, accompanied by my son, Ben, on keyboard. After our set, a woman asked if I had any albums for sale. "Sure," I replied. "Would you like my kids' tape or the one for adults?" "What's the difference?" she asked.

Uh oh. There was that question again. I've heard people talk about kids' songs containing simple lyrics and lots of repetition, and I could figure out for myself that adult songs might contain more subtle references than what you'd use for kids, but that seemed to address only the most superficial aspects of the music. I didn't know how to respond to her, but I set out to find an answer I could use next time.

Certainly most of the world's most popular songs have not contained lyrics beyond the comprehension of the average six year old ("She loves you yeah, yeah, yeah/She loves you yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah."). Blues historian Albert Murray has even gone so far as to say that, in blues music, the lyrics are of little consequence. In *Stomping the Blues* he says, "The truth is that when a singer likes the tune he is likely to proceed as if any words will do." He adds that most of the fans of the old blues singers—Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith, and others of that generation—probably understood only a small portion of what they heard. They'd have been appalled if they'd understood much more.

The point isn't that blues singers are casual about their lyrics, but that a song, by definition, is a blend of music and lyrics. Which of the two takes precedence over the other is a matter of the individual song and the style it falls into. So, in a roundabout way, I'm trying to point to the impossibility of labeling

songs that are simple lyrically as "for kids" and the more complex ones as "for adults." It just isn't so.

Nor could I point to the seriousness of the lyrics. Consider "Puff, the Magic Dragon" or "The Unicorn," two songs that kids enjoy, but that really flourished in the adult market. Or, for kids, look at some of the songs by CMN songwriters with themes of loneliness, friendship, nuclear disarmament, or jealousy. No, there don't seem to be any discernible differences in the range of themes between children's and adults' music. It must be something else.

I believe the world is home to a wonderful repertoire of songs.

Some of those songs seem to gravitate toward adult audiences and some toward kids, but most good songs are enjoyed by both audiences.

Perhaps it's the rhythms, I thought. Maybe there's a learning process that happens through life that allows adults to appreciate more sophisticated rhythms than their uninitiated younger counterparts. In the middle of considering that possibility, I attended a wedding and observed how (as always) the youngest kids were the first to hit the dance floor. I guess they understood rhythm.

Still no closer to an answer, I read a piece about pop artist Billy Joel, who noted that, although he's been in the music business most of his life, he still can't predict the popularity of a song. Music is such a visceral thing; though you might evaluate how well constructed a song is, you can't anticipate how it will be received. I'd suggest the same is true for who will listen to it—kids or adults, or both.

I write lots of songs, and I continue to be surprised at the adults who

enjoy what I conceived as a "kids' song" and the kids who like my "adult songs." Maybe my own ignorance is responsible for my failure to recognize the difference, but I don't think so. I believe the world is home to a wonderful repertoire of songs. Some of those songs seem to gravitate toward adult audiences and some toward kids, but most good songs are enjoyed by both audiences. A good melody and rhythm accompanying a catchy lyric is simply irresistible to the human soul. (Bad songs and those that are thrust upon us via promotions are different.) If you look at the music that survives—the music of *The Nutcracker*, any of dozens of Christmas carols and other holiday songs, ballads, blues songs, campfire songs—I think you'll find that most of them transcend not only time, but the generations as well.

So, what's my conclusion? For the reasons outlined here, I'm finally coming to the conclusion that, whether writing or listening, I need to pay more attention to what I consider to be good songs and less to whether I think they were written for kids or adults. The differences don't exist so much in the songs themselves as in their presentation. Of course, many artists, like the currently popular Sugar Beats—who have successfully repackaged adult hits from another era, for kids—apparently figured this out long ago. Perhaps I'm just a bit slow. I have wanted there to be a simple, definable difference between songs for kids and those for adults, so I'd know what to do when I sit down to write for one audience or the other, but it seems there isn't one. There are songs; find the good ones, and an audience—of any age—will listen. **✶PIO!**

Ed Kohn writes songs and spends too much time thinking about simple questions in Windsor, Massachusetts, where he lives with his wife, Valerie, and two sons, Ethan and Ben.



OPEN THE WINDOW, LET THE DOVE FLY IN



word & music by Elise Witt

adapted from the spiritual "Open the Window, Noah"

©1997 Non Si Sa Mai Music

Elise led us all in this beautiful call and response song at the National CMN Gathering in Nashville in October. The power of the words and the music had us calling for a full reprise at the closing circle! There is a version of the original spiritual "Open the Window, Noah" from the Sea Islands and one from the mainland. Elise used the last line of the original spiritual as inspiration to write this wonderful new song that is now the title cut on her latest recording, ***Open the Window***. It's a great sing-along and included on the facing page are the simple harmonies she teaches audiences to add to the refrain. To contact Elise about her songs and recordings, write to her at P. O. Box 116, Decatur, GA 30031.

chorus:

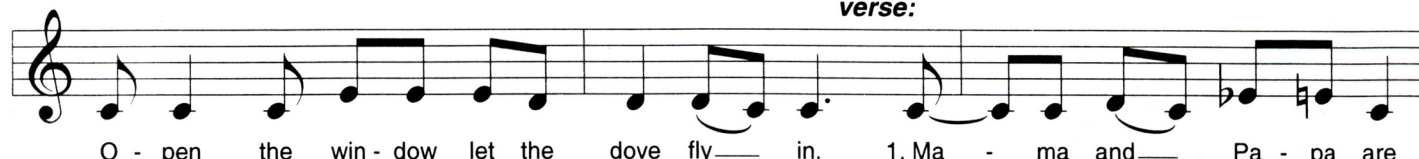


O - pen the win - dow chil - dren, O - pen the win - dow now; —

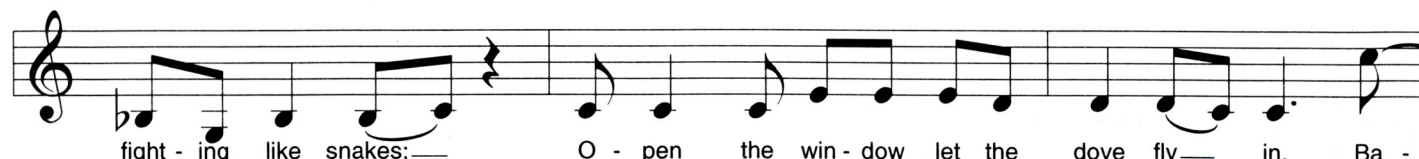


O - pen the win - dow child - dren, O - pen the win - dow let the dove fly — in.

verse:



O - pen the win - dow let the dove fly — in. 1. Ma - ma and — Pa - pa are



fight - ing like snakes; — O - pen the win - dow let the dove fly — in. Ba -



— by is a - cry - in' like her heart will break. — O - pen the win - dow let the dove fly — in.

Open the Window...

➔ continued from previous page

*some suggested harmonies:

O - pen the win - dow let the dove fly in.

O - pen the win - dow let the dove fly in.

O - pen the win - dow let the dove fly in.

O - pen the win - dow let the dove fly in.




chorus:

Open the window children, open the window now;
Open the window children, open the window, let the dove fly in.

1. Mama and Papa are fighting like snakes
(open the window, let the dove fly in)
Baby is a-crying like her heart will break
(open the window, let the dove fly in) *(chorus)*
2. Neighbors lock their doors, build fences so high
Don't see what's to discover on the other side
3. Borders 'round countries, borders 'round the sky
The only border close you in is the border 'round your mind *(chorus)*
4. Some people have money, some people have none
What's the use of money if your heart's gone numb?
5. This big old world is in a great big mess
Let's open the window, find peace and rest *(chorus)*



 Joanne Hammil is the Songs Editor for Pass It On!. She solicits, edits, researches, and computer engraves the songs. She is an educator, performer, and songwriter, and is a board member of CMN.

Controversial Songs in Holiday Programs

by Seabury Gould

Each year, as the days of autumn shorten and winter approaches, those of us who are music teachers for children in schools need to determine which songs the children will sing in their "Christmas Program," "Holiday Program," or "Winter Assembly." The choices we make have the potential to land us in the midst of controversy, as my experience last December will attest.

One of the schools where I am music teacher for kindergarten through third grade is Monica Ros School, in Ojai, California. The administrators, teachers, parents, and children there appreciate my work, and I am very grateful to be working there. It is a private elementary school that has very little ethnic diversity, although it is in a town that has a significant percentage of people of Mexican or Central American heritage.

For their performance in the school's holiday program last year, the third graders were allotted time to sing three songs. The general guidelines were that one song would be a well-known Christmas carol and the two others would be in the spirit of the season (perhaps a Hanukkah song, a winter song, or something else appropriate).

At the 1996 CMN national gathering in Petaluma, California, I had heard José-Luis Orozco perform "Pancho Claus" (by L. Guerrero). It was delightful and hilarious, and I was looking forward to teaching it to the third graders, as I thought it would be a humorous and entertaining song for them to perform in the holiday program. With this in mind, I had suggested that

they sing "Joy to the World," "Pancho Claus," and "I Want to Live" (by Lanny Kaufer). Not surprisingly, "Joy to the World" was not considered a controversial choice. However, I ran into trouble with the other two songs.

"Pancho Claus" has lyrics that begin with, "Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the casa," then go on in a similar "bilingual" vein and end with, "And I heard him exclaim as he drove past the porches, 'Merry Christmas to all, and to all buenas noches!'" As it turned out, the third-grade teachers expressed concern about this song because it seemed to "make fun" of Mexicans or Hispanic culture, and the teachers and school director were afraid parents would be offended by the song.

In my opinion, "Pancho Claus" is a funny song, especially delightful when performed by Sr. Orozco. However, in a situation where white children would be singing it with their white music teacher to a virtually all-white audience, it was seen as asking for trouble and not politically correct. (If a Hispanic musician had performed it, it would've been okay.) To me it seemed that the song would have been fun and an opportunity for cultural diversity in the holiday program. A Guatemalan friend of mine suggested that it wouldn't have been a problem if people had had a real respect for Hispanic cultures.



Seabury Gould celebrating with children

Sometimes one chooses to take a stand and rock the boat, and at other times it seems wiser to be adaptable, collaborate appropriately, and look for positive alternatives.

In the end, "Pancho Claus" was rejected as controversial. In its place, I accompanied the children on the traditional folk song, "Show Me the Way" ("I went down in the valley to pray ..."). Although quite different, it was fine: a beautiful pentatonic melody and reverent text.

The other song I'd suggested, "I Want to Live," is a poignant and powerful song written by Lanny Kaufer. (I performed it at the CMN national gathering in 1995, and it was later printed in *Pass It On!*.) It's been a hit with children at three schools where I teach. It's very moving to hear them enthusiastically sing,

I want to live to see my life unfold,

I want to live until my story is told,

I want to give all I've got to give,
I want to live, I want to live.

This song became controversial for a different reason: The mother of a child in the third-grade class had cancer, and there was concern that

it would be too upsetting for her to come to the holiday program and see her daughter sing, "I want to live; I'm so happy to be alive," and so on. I felt that the teachers' hearts were in the right place, but that their caution was excessive. I am quite aware of tragedy and fear in regard to cancer, as both of my parents died of it, and my wife has had it. And I felt that this song would have been inspiring and

uplifting. But, as someone remarked to me, it can be frightening for people to have—or witness others having—strong feelings in public.

So, "I Want to Live" was replaced with the great song, "Light One Candle" (Peter Yarrow), which includes some of the history of Hanukkah and a rousing chorus ("Don't let the light go out!"). The third graders did a wonderful job singing it. Apparently nobody was offended by any of the songs; on the contrary, everyone seemed quite pleased.

I heard later that the mother in question loves the song, "I Want to Live," and said that her kids sing it

often. In hindsight, it seems it might have been a good idea for someone who knew her to ask her about the song before we rejected it.

It is interesting to me how the perspectives of various people in a community or school interact or complement each other. I can understand classroom teachers or a director of a school not wanting angry parents criticizing them for some song in a holiday program. Generally people are quite supportive of my work and my choice of songs in the schools where I teach. I try to find or create harmony and balance with the various perspectives—the children's, my own, the

other teachers', parents', and so on. Sometimes one chooses to take a stand and rock the boat, and at other times it seems wiser to be adaptable, collaborate appropriately, and look for positive alternatives.

To paraphrase a line from a song by Sally Rogers, "We will be team players growing wise and strong, in the name of all of our children."

PIO!

Seabury Gould is a singer, musician, recording artist, music teacher, storyteller, father, and musical director of a community theatre group in Ojai, California.



PŘÁTELSTVÍ

(Friendship Song)

traditional: Czechoslovakian canon

This simple and beautiful 4-part canon can be sung equally easily in the original Czech language or in the exactly scanned English printed below the Czech. The quick entrances (after just one measure) of each of the parts add a delightful complexity and drive to the music that enhances the joyous sentiments of the lyrics.

4 part round:

I	II	III	IV
Přá	tel	ství	je
Sing	of	friend	ship,
ja	ko	zla	tá
shin	ing	gold	en
Brā	na,		
treas	ure,		
Vnas,	jen	vnás	je
Friend	ship	is	the
od	te	brá	ny
key	to	love	and
			klíč.
			joy.

Czech:

Přátelství je jako zlatá Brāna,
Vnas, jen vnás je od te brány klíč.

English:

Sing of friendship, shining golden treasure;
Friendship is the key to love and joy.

WELCOME BACK

words & music by Jon Gailmor
©1996 Green Linnet Music



Jon wrote this wonderful, affirming song at the request of a friend who asked if he would consider writing a song about a child of a gay father. The poignant and very real description of emotions in the beginning of the song and the kick-it-up joyful emotions in the chorus combine to masterfully express the difficulties and hopes of this family experience. It can be heard on Jon's recording **Childish Eyes**. To contact Jon about his songs and recordings, write to P.O. Box 65, Lake Elmore, VT 05657.

(capo 4)

freely

verse:

1. When I was just a wee one, my dad - dy held me tight I
felt so warm in those big arms es - pecial - ly in the night; But when I turned e - le - ven it
all be - gan to change Hugs were hard for my old man, the guy was cold and strange. I
could - n't un - der - stand it his love was out of reach but then one day we start - ed walk - ing
miles a - long the beach; I'd ne - ver seen my dad - dy cry 'til he o - pened up that day at
first I did - n't know how to feel but now I'm proud to say

Welcome Back

➔ continued from previous page

chorus: A

My old man is a gay old man Wel - come back Dad - dy

wel - come back Loves me more than a - ny pa - pa can

Wel - come back Dad - dy wel - come back Out from the clo - set Dad's so free

Now he can be him - self with me I'm so glad my

dad - dy's back in my life. I'm so glad my daddy's back Feels so good to

have him back I'm so glad he's back in my life.

1. When I was just a wee one my daddy held me tight,
I felt so warm in those big arms, especially in the night;
But when I turned eleven it all began to change,
Hugs were hard for my old man, the guy was cold and strange.

I couldn't understand it, his love was out of reach,
But then one day we started walking miles along the beach;
I'd never seen my daddy cry 'til he opened up that day,
At first I didn't know how to feel but now I'm proud to say...

chorus:

My old man is a gay old man—welcome back Daddy, welcome back.
Loves me more than any papa can—welcome back Daddy, welcome back.
Out from the closet Dad's so free, now he can be himself with me
I'm so glad my daddy's back in my life.

2. I know they'll call him names now, they'll curse him long and loud,
We'll have to hold each other up against the ugly crowd;
We're ready for the struggle, together for the ride,
If people only knew him they'd see the man inside.

My mama's sad and angry, she'll need some time to heal,
It hurts to have your bubble burst (I know how she feels);
Well maybe they'll be friends again somewhere along the way,
I love my mama, hope she'll smile when she hears me say...

ending:

I'm so glad my daddy's back
Feels so good to have him back
I'm so glad he's back in my life.



Taking a Break

by Cathy Winter

Most of us draw on internal resources, built up over years, to do what we do with children's music. We are like irrigation projects hooked into old aquifers, tapping into deep roots to come up with nourishment for wide fields. How do we keep the waters circulating so they don't become depleted or stale?

Some of us function as our own office managers, booking agents, program coordinators, and grant writers, in addition to the actual work of creating and performing programs of value to young children. Others hold down full-time jobs, squeezing in time for concerts and programs around crowded schedules. We do all these things with varying degrees of security and support in our lives. We push ourselves to improve programs, to offer more variety or more depth.

Should you decide you are draining out more than you are able to pull back in, what do you do? How do you decide it is time to regroup? How is that possible if your income and a big piece of your internal identity are tied up with trying to be a resource to a wide community of people?

Earlier this decade, I had been trying for several years to figure out what to do next with my music. By the fall of 1995, most of my work meant weekends in the car, several two- to four-week tours during the year, teaching lessons in the evenings, and spending hours on the phone taking cues from my computer screen. I was spending 10 times as much time in the car and on the phone as playing. I returned from a four-week tour to the Midwest, where I had had great visits with friends and enjoyed most of my gigs. I had a reasonable, though not stunning, amount of money for my time; but I was exhausted, sick

of the highway, and didn't even want to get in my car to go get groceries.

I'd been weary at the end of other tours, but this was different. I wasn't excited about playing my music in far-flung places any more. In fact, I didn't want to pick up anything with six strings on it. This was more than temporary tiredness. Burnout had finally hit down in the lower recesses. I thought, I could be practical and ignore it, dig in deeper, try to come up with a new plan, search my inner soul for some creative direction that would solve some problems. I didn't do that. I decided to shut the system down, slowly, with no new direction in sight.

I had done this once before, when a musical partnership of seven years had come to an end. I had fed myself with some serious piano lessons and two years of music courses at the local university. While I was dismantling the one, I had put myself on foreign but interesting ground and brought in different kinds of inputs as I waited for a fresh, internally generated direction to arise. I had learned about composition, theory, and ear training and had written a duet for two cellos. Songs and playing guitar had cycled back around into my work life after a few years, rejuvenated from a break and new musical experiences. As I found myself repeating this process of closing down one set of life choices to open up others in a quieter space, it should have felt familiar and reassuring. It did not.

In early 1996, when the time to initiate bookings for the rest of the year came along, I kept the computer off, except for e-mail to friends. I took advantage of a mentoring program sponsored by my local league of arts, to observe some school residencies and structure a new one with the help of an observer/mentor. Spring was busy, with several two-week trips away. I remember thinking how glad I was

that I wasn't really trying to do bookings, because there wasn't enough time.

An agent in England had set up a three-week tour for me in May. All I had to do was drive (on the left), play music, and occasionally be a tourist. This was touring at its best. Still, life in one place, dinner at home, and working in my garden all held more appeal than the quaint stone walls and buildings of the English countryside. Gigs in England are still connected by highways, and I had grown tired of a car

and a tape player for company. It was the last full-fledged tour I had set up. I wasn't planning another. When it was over, I gulped, got on the plane, and headed for home.

During an elementary-school songwriting residency that June, I started feeling frustrated. The time was too short. I didn't really know what the teachers wanted, even though I always made sure the time was valuable for the students. Some classrooms made me wish I could be in third grade again, while others made me grateful for having survived childhood. What made the difference? I wanted to know the students better, to understand more of the teachers' world. I really

In the busy spin of overlapping deadlines and erratic calendars, it is often easy to lose sight of our most precious resource—our deepest, oldest, musical selves.

This is the part of our hearts that played melodies over and over on some instrument long before our feet could reach the floor from the kitchen chairs.

didn't know enough about what was going on in schools, and I was tired of trying to figure out everything myself. I wanted to be learner.

In the fall of 1996, I enrolled in a graduate course in the reading department, charging the tuition on a credit card and squeaking through by giving some concerts and teaching guitar lessons while I discovered the world of 1990s electronic libraries and academia. In public school and college I had been a chronic underachiever, but the standards I have set for myself as a musician are so much higher than what college professors now expect, even from graduate students, that grades and papers were easy hurdles, augmenting the rhythm of taking in new information and building up new kinds of thought processes. I'd been carving out my own agenda for years; this was no different.

Then in December my mother had a massive stroke, making the winter stressful with worry, change, travel back and forth to Florida, and an endless round of logistics as my brother and I worked to bring her up north to live with a caretaker. I took out student loans and enrolled in three courses for the spring of 1997, two on teaching reading and writing in the elementary grades and one on social issues and literacy. Glimmers of ways to combine working with reading, writing and music were beginning to percolate.

Periodically I would stop to appreciate that, even though it had been a hard year, I had been home, surrounded by support, rather than on the road. School had been a well-balanced, constructive distraction from dealing with this major change in my family structure. I was tremendously grateful for my own internal sense of timing, my willingness to stop when I was not enjoying my work enough. Every wave of identity crisis has been paired with a deep internal sense



Photo: Nancy E. Zucchini

Cathy Winter takes a break

of relief. I've begun learning to play the accordion. I've written a fairy tale. In learning about how children really learn to write, I am discovering new paths and modes for myself as a writer. I am learning about the processes of writing—what they really involve, not only for young people, but for all of us as lifelong writers.

By the summer of 1997 my mother was settled into a two-family house with a live-in caretaker. We were getting along well for the first time in my life. My partner, my stepson, and I (and our dog) were living upstairs from her. I had started an assistantship in the School of Education, making loans for school no longer necessary.

I am now a teaching artist in the schools and a guitar teacher for several hours per week. I have occasional concerts for children and adults scattered through my schedule. I haven't paid as much attention to my accordion as I would like, but I just discovered how to play scales on the bass. I can't say I'm doing a great job of juggling all this, and I can't say exactly where it will all lead, but I have a clear sense of being in the right places, doing the right things.

In the busy spin of overlapping deadlines and erratic calendars, it is often easy to lose sight of our most precious resource—our deep-

est, oldest, musical selves. This is the part of our hearts that played melodies over and over on some instrument long before our feet could reach the floor from the kitchen chairs. It is the after-midnight or just-after-dawn place where time disappears and we entertain ourselves with words, music, and ideas as we let our hearts and minds wander. That is the place we draw on when we find joy in music, for ourselves or for others. When we are doing work we love, we need to ask if that work is nourishing or draining our own creative spaces. Is it adding to the overall quality of our lives? If not, we need to find a way to change it.

The most important voice is your own. If you cannot hear it, you need to change something. The most important person to please—personally, musically, and creatively—is yourself. If the balance has tipped so that you're not as excited as you used to be, step back to see what you need. Not everyone needs stark breaks with their work, but we all need to regroup periodically in various fashions. Seek out someone whose work interests you. Pick up a new instrument. Take a course in something unrelated to your work. Take a vacation. Stay home. Call your best friend from high school or your favorite relative. Plan a month or two with no gigs. Take a part-time job doing something else for awhile. Decide to enjoy your full-time job completely for six months. Make time to volunteer in a project you care about. Go work on the sloop *Clearwater* or the Haw River Festival. Fix the trails in your local mountain range. Visit your nieces or nephews. Go hear live music. Treasure the gifts you bear, but remember, you can only give away what runs easy through your life.



Cathy Winter is a guitarist, songwriter, and singer who lives in Schenectady, New York. Her work life is currently undergoing constructive catharsis.



LET PEACE BEGIN IN MY HEART

(Shay Shalom Yathil Bay Libee)

words & music by Emily Fox

©1991 Emily Fox

Emily wrote this beautiful song of peace and respect for our differences during the Gulf War. She says that "the word 'shalom' means not only 'peace', but also 'wholeness'". Singing the chorus in English, Hebrew, and Arabic is a powerful experience. The lovely, yearning melody adds intensity to the words that call for peace in all of our hearts. To contact Emily about her songs and recordings, write to 455 E. 31st St., Eugene, OR 97405.

chorus:

Am Dm G C

Let peace be - gin in my heart, Let peace be - gin in my heart, Let

F E E7 Am

peace be - gin in my heart so I be - come the word sha - lom.

verse:

C G Dm F

1. When I face a - noth - er with a dif - ferent point of view,

E Am E Am

may I re - mem - ber the words of this song and list - en as I wish they'd do.

chorus for Hebrew and Arabic:

Am Dm G C

Shay sha - lom yat - hil bay li - bee, shay sha - lom yat - hit bay li - bee,
Lee yab(a) dah salamoonee fee kal - bee, lee yab(a) dah salamoonee fee kal - bee,

Am E Am

shay sha - lom yat - hil bah li - bee so I be - come the word sha - lom.
lee yab(a) - dah salamoonee fee kal - bee so I be - come the word sa - laam.

Big Ideas for Little People

by Patricia Shih

Can young children grasp complex social issues? Can they not only grasp, but actually profoundly understand, feel deeply, and care enough about these issues to try to effect change, however small? Can we, as entertainers and educators, help children feel empowered so they believe they can bring about change? And is music an effective tool for teaching social issues?

When I first ventured into kids' music years ago, I didn't know the answers to any of these questions, but I did know that I definitely did not want to do what was then typical kids' music—songs about animals, counting, and such. I entered the schools with the idea that kids could learn about important social issues through song, just as I had learned about peace, racism, unity, and more when I was young, through the folk songs of Bob Dylan; Peter, Paul and Mary; and Joan Baez. I still remember how profoundly their meaningful songs touched my heart and mind and actually shaped my attitudes and thoughts about the world. Back then, as now, the primary criterion for performing in schools was that the material be educational. Well, I reasoned, what is more educa-

tional than teaching children about the wider world around them, while trying to empower them and instill some sense of self-esteem at the same time?

We all have observed how kids—even very young ones—can absorb ideas from songs. After all, how did most of us learn our ABCs? By singing them first. I remember learning how to spell *encyclopedia* at the tender age of four because Disney's Jiminy Cricket sang the song that spelled it out, and the song made it easy to grasp a very sophisticated and complicated word. Indeed, it has been proven in studies that children actually learn academics better and more quickly when music is used.

But could most kids learn about social issues that way, too? Would they even like and be open to songs that contained social statements or "messages"? Could I write songs about issues and ideas that were geared to 4 to 12 year olds? Not knowing the answers, I was naturally filled with trepidation when I presented my first showcase to kids and PTA parents. To my surprise, the PTAs ate it up and the kids loved it. I saw back then that there was a hunger for songs of substance, as I now believe there always has been and always will be.

Of course, I don't believe there is anything "wrong" with children's music that is not about an issue,

such as songs that are just for fun or that teach academic subjects. Nonsense and fantasy songs, lullabies, and music about their small world are beloved by kids, as well as by us big kids. But after all, a steady diet of just one kind of food is pretty boring and not very nutritious. The same is true of music, for all ages. It can play such a very important role in a person's life, giving nourishment for the mind and soul as well as simple joy and fun.

We, as adults and educators, should concern ourselves not only with *what* our children are being taught, but also with *how*. Music is such a great vehicle for teaching anything, because it is such a heart- and mind-opener. It is an especially good vehicle for children, because they naturally love to sing and dance, and also because they are so open to ideas. I have found that teaching kids about social issues through music is ideal, because if you can touch their hearts, you've got a direct link to their minds. Getting kids singing about an issue gets them feeling and thinking about it. A key component of live performance is getting the kids actively participating through singing, movement, songwriting, sign language, and so forth. Get them doing. From that point on, it's a short step away to

continued on next page ➤

Let Peace Begin in My Heart

➤ *continued from previous page*



chorus:

Let peace begin in my heart, let peace begin in my heart,
Let peace begin in my heart so I become the word shalom.

1. When I face another with a different point of view
May I remember the words of this song and listen as I wish they'd do. (chorus)
2. When I feel wronged or hurt and anger befriends me
May I speak out against what is unjust and then express my grief. (chorus)

3. When I talk to my children with words I wish them to hear
May my heart remain open to what they think and what they fear. (chorus)

4. When I hear of different nations or people taking sides
May I always keep respect for their humanity inside. (chorus)

chorus in Hebrew:

Shay shalom yathil bay libee, shay shalom yathil bay libee
Shay shalom yathil bay libee, so I become the word shalom.

chorus in Arabic:

Lee yab(a)dah salamoon fee kalbee, lee yab(a)dah salamoon fee kalbee,
Lee yab(a)dah salamoon fee kalbee, so I become the word salaam.

Big Ideas for Little People

➤ continued from previous page

getting them to act on issues. Teachers and parents are great aids to this, if they can follow up concerts or tape listenings with discussions and/or projects that reinforce and enhance the lessons of the songs. It is my hope that the songs are a starting point—a spark for further teaching and inquiry.

There is always the concern that children should be protected from certain harsh or controversial realities of life (e.g., don't teach them about homelessness and hunger or its causes; stay away from issues of sex like AIDS or homosexuality). Of course performers for kids have to be particularly mindful that their material is age-appropriate. But even after we determine that a song is suitable, there can be controversy.

For example, I had written a song to teach children about homelessness. It sparked a debate in the pages of a national folk music magazine. A reader wanted to shield her child from such unpleasantness; she proclaimed that her young child would cry if she learned that there were some people who were homeless. But I have seen that children, rather than feeling helpless and simply sad, react in a way that makes me realize they feel they can do something about such problems. I believe songs about the real world teach compassion and involvement, as well as stimulate creative and critical thinking in children. And if her child *did* cry after the song, she could first congratulate herself for raising a sensitive and compassionate child. Later, she could use this opportunity, at a quiet moment, to explain homelessness, its causes, and what people could do to better the world. In this way, music can be a teaching tool, like literature.

Finally, performers who choose to



Patricia Shih with some powerful people

tackle social issues need to be aware of how well they communicate. I have run into problems once or twice when performing a song about the importance of following rules while also questioning authority—about not following a leader blindly, but learning to think for oneself. Some principals and teachers have felt threatened by this song because they've missed the introduction or not understood the lyrics well. It is my job, as a performer who espouses bringing people together (not alienation and anarchy), to communicate these ideas clearly. When this otherwise worthy song flopped, I obviously had not communicated clearly enough, so my listeners had gotten a different message from what I was trying to impart. It is crucial to performers of songs with social statements that the messages get through correctly. It could be the delivery, or it could be the song itself that interferes with communication.

Teaching children about social issues through music is enormously edifying to the performer, while also being a valuable contribution in the school and the home. Beyond entertaining, artists are educating and touching the next generation, and, by doing so, they are helping to change the world. **✶P!O!**

Patricia Shih wrote her first song at age 12 and hasn't stopped since. She performs extensively for audiences of all ages.

Thanks, Teach!

by Bruce Phillips

My big sister was a straight-A student, first-chair clarinetist, National Honor Society member, and Young Republican. My mother, having recently returned to work, was already receiving raises and promotions at J. C. Penney & Company. My dad, a creative soul, worked as a display artist at local clothing stores and was instantly proficient at any visual art medium that came his way. I was 11. I excelled at nothing.

I was the smallest kid in my sixth-grade class, an affliction made worse by the fact that it was the one thing grown-ups consistently noticed about me. Adults, especially teachers, made me very nervous. When one of them addressed me, my face turned red, my eyes turned downward, and my brain turned off. The same things happened when I was called on to talk in class. My school hours were spent trying to avoid attention—trying to be invisible. My original plan had been to continually look busy. Mrs. Thompson, my sixth-grade teacher, in an attempt to be sensitive to my shyness, stopped calling on me early in the school year. This left me free to stare at the weather or create some wonderful adventure in which I was the hero. Eventually, recess or some other activity would interrupt the routine. Music hour was one such "interruption."

Once a week the music teacher dragged a huge upright piano, mounted on casters, into our classroom and passed out songbooks. She introduced us to "This Land Is Your Land," "Ol' Dan Tucker," "America the Beautiful," and some postwar show tunes. Some kids sang, some didn't. I sang. I'd like to say that I sang for the pure joy of it, and in fact it was fun, but the truth is that I had quickly deter-

mined that participating in this activity reduced my chances of being singled out by the music teacher. Most of the other boys looked down on this singing stuff and were encouraged, by name, to join in. I certainly didn't want to attract that kind of attention.

One winter day, as we passed our songbooks to the front and I lapsed back into my own world, watching the snow form wave-shaped drifts in the empty field outside, I was jolted back into the classroom by the sound of my name.

"Bruce." It was the voice of the music teacher. "May I see you in the hall?"

I couldn't answer. I stood and walked slowly toward the door. I was both startled that she knew my name and frightened by the possibilities of this hallway meeting. My face burned, and I'm sure I was visibly shaking. What had I done?

"Hi, Bruce." Her friendly tone was reassuring. "I've started a boys' chorus in the seventh and eighth grades, and I'd like you to be a part of it." Before the meaning of this had fully penetrated my consciousness, I looked up from the floor to see her pleasant, genuine smile.

"Why?" I asked—an uncharacteristically courageous question.

"Well, because you have such a nice singing voice." Her tone suggested that it had been an unnecessary question.



"Okay," I said, quickly, but quietly. My answer took me by surprise. It had always been my policy to turn down any offer from a grown-up. I knew, somehow, that this was more important than a cookie or a ride home from school. As she gave me the details about rehearsal days and times, I listened with my whole being. I didn't know what this all meant, but it kind of felt good, and I wasn't about to let it get away.

For the next two days, I could think of nothing but the experience of being part of the seventh- and eighth-grade boys' chorus. I fantasized that they would welcome me and be grateful for my presence in this prestigious ensemble. When the day of my first rehearsal arrived and I entered the gym, most of the boys ignored me. Those who spoke at all told me to "get lost" or "go back to the kiddie room." Prior to the music teacher's invitation earlier in the week, I would have been devastated. I admit to some disappointment, but I was not disheartened. I had learned, from a most reliable source, that I had a good singing voice, and no one could take that away from me.

Singing now became my favorite pastime. I sang on the way to school and while I stood, isolated, in right field. I sang around the house, and my family started to take notice. (My sister once compared my voice to Ricky Nelson's. There could be no greater compliment.) We had an old fold-up record player and two little yellow records by Mary Martin. These became my favorite possessions. I sang along with *The Mickey Mouse Club*, especially *Spin and Marty*, and started watching *Sing Along with Mitch* on Saturday nights with my parents. I sang



as I rode my bike around the neighborhood and while I delivered newspapers. I sang until I ran out of songs, then I started making up my own. I had fallen in love with singing. And it felt great.

I'd like to say that this immediately erased my shyness, raised my self-esteem, and gave me confidence. But that didn't happen. However, the joy I derived from school music programs and activities gave me courage I may never have found any other way. School became bearable—at times even fun. In fact, my involvement in music and theater may very well have kept me from quitting school in my teens. It took me a few years, a failed attempt at college, and a pocketful of odd jobs before I realized that singing could be as rewarding in my adult life as it had been in school. I now have, perhaps, the greatest job in the world—sharing my love for singing with young children.

I wish that that elementary-school music teacher (I'm sorry to say that I don't remember her name) could know what a huge impact her gesture had on one sixth-grade boy's future. If, just once in my career, I'm able to pass along the gift that she gave me, I can imagine no greater level of success.

Thanks, "Teach." **✶PIO!**

Bruce Phillips is a performer, teacher, songwriter, and recording artist who sings at schools and social service agencies in Tucson and throughout the West.

Let's Sing Together!

by Liz Benjamin

One Thanksgiving, a long time ago, my mother put a cassette tape recorder on the dining table, pushed the button, and just let it record whatever happened. This was after my brothers and I had grown up and left home, so it was just my parents and my aunt and uncle gathered together. At one point during the meal (after the turkey and trimmings had been cleared away, before the pies were brought out), my mother moved to the piano, which was right next to the dining table, and started playing songs and singing, urging the others to join in. My dad, aunt, and uncle sang with her, songs from the *Fireside Book of Favorite American Songs*. They sang "Frankie and Johnnie," "Midnight Special," "Shoo Fly, Don't Bother Me," and "The Streets of Laredo," and on they went. When they had sung enough to feel really good and maybe not quite as stuffed as they had been, they settled down to eat—and complain about—the pie, which was from a store. This tape recording is one of my treasures.

I was not surprised that my mother encouraged, even badgered, the others at that Thanksgiving table to sing together. Many evenings, after a long day of working as a nurse and being a 1950s-style wife and mother besides, my mother gathered anyone she could find—children, adults, babies, neighbors, and even Mopsy, our dog—to sing together. She believed that the family and extended family that sings together then loves, laughs, works, and copes together much better, with a finer spirit, than they otherwise would.

You don't need a piano, or any other instrument, for intergenerational singing. I learned many wonderful rounds, among them

"Go to Joan Glover," while washing the dishes at my British friends' home. I learned old songs, like "Let Me Call You Sweetheart" and "I Told Every Little Star," from my mother while learning from her at the same time how to dust properly or how to iron a handkerchief. I wonder what songs my brothers learned while mowing the lawn or shoveling. The sex roles were more rigid then, so maybe they learned different songs as well as different skills.

There is nothing like intergenerational singing to shorten a long car journey, particularly one involving traffic jams or lots of rain so that no one has had the exercise they need. You can take along rhythm instruments for fun. I was just given an "egg" shaker, and I really love the sound. But the singing is what matters.

From grown-ups, children can learn songs that they don't necessarily understand, but that will be educational to them in years to come when they reflect on the words. For example, I think of how mystifying it was to sing "Love, O Love, O Careless Love" as an eight year old, wondering what it meant to wear one's apron high or low!

More formal intergenerational singing happens in places of worship, in the performances of church choirs or when the congregation sings a hymn or a round. It also happens at camps, where the folks around a campfire watch the sparks fly up to meet the stars and sing something truly beautiful, like "The Ash Grove," or something totally silly, like "Do Your Ears Hang Low?" It is only through singing with adults that children can learn the oldies, the goodies. They don't hear too much of them on the radio any more or see them on music



Liz Benjamin bridges generations

videos! Sometimes when I get a short earful of what some of the teenagers around me are listening to, I worry about the next generation not having any really singable songs in their lives.

We have so much to learn from each other, so much to feel together. Three year olds and teenagers and all the children in between are writing beautiful and meaningful songs, some to old familiar tunes to which they put contemporary words, and some with lovely new tunes of their own. My nephew is one of the teenagers singing with Village Harmony, a Vermont-based chorus which sings mostly shape-note and Balkan music. The young people write many lovely songs in these styles as well. While passing on our old favorites, whether in the car, paddling a canoe, or sitting on a pew or the old comfy couch, let's take the time to hear the new music from the young folks around us. There can never be too many good songs to sing together. **✶PIO!**

Liz Benjamin is a mother, grandmother, aunt, friend, minister, contradance caller, and all-the-time singer who enjoys her life in Ottawa, Ontario.

Reflections of a Rookie

by Anarella Cellitti

My good friend Susan Hopkins invited me to attend the recent CMN National Gathering near Nashville, Tennessee. Because of our friendship and my trust in her, I said, Why not? Now I'd like to share some of my first impressions.

When Susan picked me up at the airport (*Mil gracias!*), I also got to meet Joanne Hammil, who rode with us. It was interesting to hear them talk about CMN's philosophy and direction. Yet, as I listened, I began to question my decision to attend this "thing." I come from a world of "conferences," and somehow the word *gathering* seemed strange to me. I thought, What am I doing here? I'm not a musician! I'm not a writer! But then, I *am* adventurous.

Even though I was feeling kind of out of place and did not know anybody, I attended some of the board of directors' sessions on Friday. I began to see how important CMN and the national gathering were to the people at the meeting. I saw a lot of friendliness and affection; it seemed as if everybody knew each other. That afternoon, when the

workshops began, I chose one that looked interesting. I met the leader, Tom Hunter, and we all sang many songs and had a good time. I was surprised and impressed, because in my world of conferences you do not have a good time—you *learn* and no *fun* is allowed.

Believe it or not, I am a shy person, so as I went to some of the other things that were planned, I continued to observe and to look for where I belonged. But I guess people were as curious about me as I was about them, because it didn't take long to start making friends. I volunteered to help with the sales tables, but I really found my calling in the quilt-making corner! Sally Rogers was excellent in helping me to be part of that; she was gracious in encouraging everyone to make their pieces be just what they felt they needed to be.

So I had found one thing I could do, something that made me feel part of the group. Now my task was to learn some music and enjoy it. Learning music can be hard for me, but fortunately many people there knew that some attenders were perhaps hard of hearing or might have eliminated the artistic component from their lives. They made it easy to be part of the music, with very simple choruses and lots of smiles.

Then there was dancing, which was great, since I love to dance. Whew! I got my share of aerobics for a week! Even when I couldn't dance any more, it was still great to see how total strangers were coming together through music, singing, and dancing. It made me think that if we have some chanting, singing, and dancing at international, national, and community *peace* talks, we may get many situations resolved. Maybe musical activities should be on the agendas of corporate executives. It's possible that if music is included in more classrooms and homes, we will have fewer problems with children. If

this happens—Who knows?—we as people may be more inclined to like ourselves and each other better. From now on in my daily prayers, I'll include something like, By the way, God, let more music into our lives.

So I became a philosopher and started looking at the value of music.

The Saturday-night round robin was another wonderful surprise. I was a chicken and didn't sing, even though I sing in the shower and every morning (Susan Hopkins can verify this), but I was pleased to listen to others and clap, dance, and "woo" along. I went to bed early, though I know many people stayed up til 3AM.

The last day was very special for me. I had become a part of the group, though don't ask me when. New friends were calling me by my name. I had cried, laughed, sung, clapped, danced, and given my opinion on stuff I knew nothing about. I'd promised to keep in touch with people I'd met. All in all, I was very glad I'd come to this "gathering." My only regret was that not many Latino musicians were there to share and exchange songs from Latin America; maybe next time someone will attend who can bring in that element.

Now I am an official CMN member, and for the next gathering I will know what I am getting myself into: a weekend of fun, dancing, and singing with a group of special, crazy, open, creative, noisy, and uninhibited people. What a treat!



Anarella Cellitti is a native of Venezuela who currently works in the Department of Early Childhood Education at Texas A & M University, Kingsville, Texas.

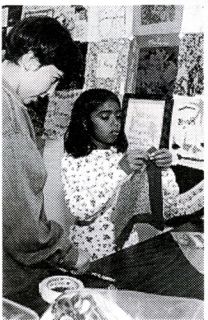
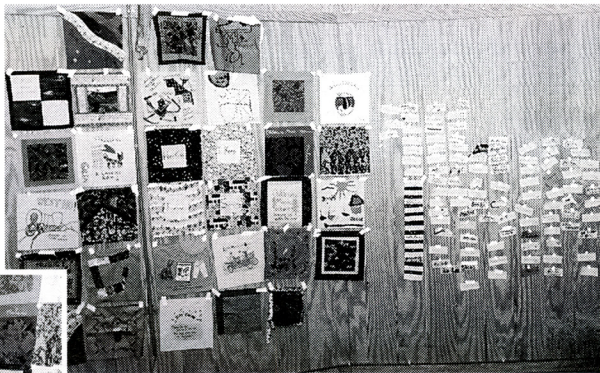
Minutes of national CMN board meetings are available to be read by CMN members upon request.

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.

CMN National Gathering

Dickson Tennessee, October 17-19, 1997



Photos courtesy of Allen Zak

Radio Waves

by PJ Swift

Pandora's Box

I don't know a children's radio producer alive who doesn't care about the content and messages of his or her programs for children. Even commercial children's radio, which exists to sell advertising and not to educate per se, makes efforts to bring positive and progressive messages to children. Of course, *how* progressive is another matter. They don't want to alienate those consumers, after all.

Public-radio programing has made many memorable attempts at making social statements to and with kids. In recent memory, two stellar East Coast series, WNYE's *Mike and Me* and Jamie Deming's *Kids Alive*, created numerous programs to help make children more aware of social issues such as AIDS and homelessness. Kathy O'Connell's *Kids Korner* and WNYC's *New York Kids* still feature call-in programs, targeted at older school-age kids, which never shy away from the controversial topics that are on kids' minds.

It's sad that the issues that we consider crucial to building character are often the very issues that cause the most controversy. People get really touchy, especially when it comes to their children. In fact, people get touchy even if it doesn't involve their children. I once read a Russell Hoban story on the air, about brother and sister woodchucks and their daylong "fight." The "fight" consisted of a few harsh words (e.g., "fuzzy face") and a decision to play apart—until they realized how much they needed each other. In the end, brother and sister make up, and they invite each other to their "forts."

No sooner did I finish the story than I got a call from an irate listener. "How dare you insinuate that brothers and sisters fight?" she



asked. I stifled the urge to query, "What planet did you drop down from?" and said instead that I thought that I was reading an important story. "Well, not to me," she said, and hung up. Imagine the kinds of calls I would have received if I had tried to explain AIDS.

So I keep these issues in a kind of Pandora's Box, and I open that box with a lot of forethought and care. In my experience, most of my fellow radio producers do likewise. Here are two guidelines that I use.

ALWAYS BE MINDFUL OF THE AUDIENCE

Because my listeners span a broad range of ages, I am particularly sensitive to bringing up facts that may be overwhelming to young children. This is not to say that I shy away from issues. But there are ways to bring them up, ways to make them comprehensible to young children. For instance, to show about the life of Martin Luther King, Jr., I focused on the importance of treating everyone equally, as well as on the wonderful history and songs from the Civil Rights Movement. I did not dwell on (but did mention) King's violent death.

I guess what it comes down to is asking myself, How would I, as a parent, want a four-year-old Chloë or a six-year-old Max to hear about this for the first time? And I trust that the parents in the audience will take up the ball and elaborate in ways that they feel are appropriate.

Of course, if my audience were made up of preteens and teens, I would jump in with both feet. Teens struggle with these issues every day. They need—indeed, they have a right to—a forum for their ideas and questions. One of the best examples of such a forum is Ellin O'Leary's *Youth Radio* on KPFA (and occasionally on NPR). The program features uncensored commentary and news reports by teens, for teens. It's not for everyone, but then, what teenage medium is?

TRY NOT TO PREACH

Preaching is the easy way out, and it's the easiest way to turn off your audience. The way to avoid preaching is to let the kids tell the story or, better yet, to let the story tell the story. To me, the best example of a program that didn't preach was *Ghetto Life 101*, an independent series heard on NPR. Producer David Isay went to one of the most troubled housing projects in Chicago and found two preteens who were willing to interview their peers. David provided the kids with all of the equipment they needed, including professional microphones and high-end tape recorders. He came back a few weeks later and helped the young people to edit the tape and construct a comprehensible introduction to their world.

To do this, David had to put aside his preconceived notions of what the program should be and let his young subjects highlight whatever they felt was important. In the end, what made the series so riveting was the true dialogue of these children—what they said, and what they didn't say. Without the use of the words *poverty* or *despair*, the message came through loud and clear.

I guess that's my goal, too. When I open that Pandora's Box, I want to hold my listeners' attention, no matter what their age. Beyond that, I want my listeners to take these important messages to heart. I want them to embrace these ideas, to consider them, and to grow.

The old adage that "children learn what they live" also applies to the media they listen to or watch. By treating difficult issues with respect and care, we radio producers hope, by example, to create a world of caring and respectful people. That's not a bad goal for each one of us.

PJ Swift produces several radio programs—sometimes serious, sometimes frivolous. **★10!**



STAND BY YOUR CHILD

music by Billy Sherrill and Tammy Wynette
 words by Phil Hoose
 (parody of the original: Stand By Your Man)
 (copyright permission pending at press time)

This great parody by Phil became the CMN anthem at the National Gathering in Nashville last October—with its country flavor fitting for our location and its “right on” lyrics for our value-oriented network! We encourage members to use it at regional gatherings and other places to let people know about the excitement of The Children’s Music Network. To contact Phil about his songs and recordings, write to 8 Arlington St., Portland, ME 04101.

verse:

1. Sometimes it's hard to be a par-ent, _____ Giv-en all the
 2. You love to sing, so you've kept sear-chin' _____ For a place where

trash kids hear and see; _____ Songs that sell them,
 songs grow from with - in; _____ And since you love them,

songs that tell them _____
 yes, real - ly love them, real mu - sic's on - ly on C D.

2. _____

chorus:

— you have dis - cov - ered C M N! _____

Stand by your child and give them songs worth sing - in'; _____ Good friends for
 Stand by your child, give back the joy of sing - in', _____

when they're feel - in' up - set or blue or lone - ly; _____
 Let's make this net-work grow like

wild _____ Stand by your child. _____

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

We have just come home from the gathering at Camp Garner Creek. It was a great experience. From the time we were greeted by Caroline Presnell until we left on Sunday, we felt we were with family.

In addition to making many new friends, we came away with some wonderful ideas to share with children. We will spend next week in White Springs, Florida, at the State's Rural Folklife Days. Last year, some 5000 children came to learn of the old time ways, and to hear stories and songs from us. Thanks to CMN this year, we will be "new and improved."

Thanks for everything.

Aunt Peggy and Jay Smith
Jacksonville, Florida

Stand By Your Child

➤ continued from
previous page



1. Sometimes it's hard to be a parent,
Given all the trash kids hear and see;
Songs that sell them, songs that tell them
Real music's only on CD.

2. You love to sing, so you've kept
searchin'
For a place where songs grow from
within;
And since you love them, yes, really
love them,
You have discovered CMN.

chorus:

Stand by your child and give them
songs worth singin',
Good friends for when they're
feelin' upset or blue or lonely.
Stand by your child, give back the
joy of singin';
Let's make this network grow like
wild—
Stand by your child!

Dear Editor:

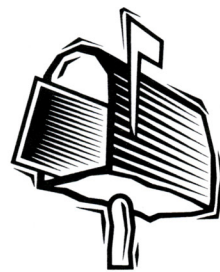
Four years have passed since I attended my first annual gathering. Each year when I received notice in the past, either the date or the location was not feasible. Likewise with the regional meetings. I was feeling frustrated but unable to do much about it. Well, all that changed with this year's location being in the Nashville area (relatively speaking, that's close to Ohio). The dates crunched my schedule a bit, but I decided to ignore that. I am so glad I did, for in spite of being tired and overwhelmed with things—and who isn't?—going to the gathering means these four things to me: Friendship, Discovery, Inspiration, Rejuvenation.

Friends Whether you have been to a gathering before or not, you will make new friends and connect with old friends, and what can be better than that?

Discovery You will learn songs and dances and stories, all apart from the workshops! Then those workshops will add to the list and you will come away with not only new material and concepts, but with some understanding of yourself and why you are so committed to children and music and stories.

Inspiration It will strike you on the way home (or in the middle of the night when you should be sleeping) and you will continue to do whatever it is that you do in a new and better way. You will branch out and grow! And you will feel rejuvenated! No doubt you will be exhausted when you get home. You will spend a month or more listening to the tapes and CDs you brought home. You will forget the tunes and signs to some of the songs you heard. But you will be very glad you went, and you will be anxiously awaiting your return next year. Thank you CMN!!

Sincerely,
Sarah Goslee Reed
Mount Vernon, Ohio



Dear Editor,

The Marcia Berman Fund for Music and Young Children has produced two concerts (one free to the public), a CD and a cassette of my songs (most of them no longer available), and plans for a video with highlights from the concert.

A big surprise at the Saturday concert (September 27, 1997, in Santa Monica) was when Evo and Jemmy Bluestein sang a short, delicious song by Malvina Reynolds—"Artichokes." You may recall that it ends with the line, "Enough left over for a google birdy nest." It has always felt complete, but Evo and Jemmy wrote two verses, and they are a perfect fit. Here they are for everyone to savor:

Verse 3:

Boil it up or steam it 'til the whole
thing is soft.

Another way to tell is when the
leaves come right off.

Munching on the leaves is just
the first part,

Some people's favorite is the
artichoke heart.

(Chorus)

Verse 4:

If you're cooking up an artichoke
and it's taking too long,

Just think about Malvina and
sing this little song.

After a while, your artichoke is
done.

Who'd 'a' thought a thistle could
be this much fun!

(Chorus)

Love,

Marcia Berman
Marina Del Rey, California

P.S. And Jemmy's tag: Viva los artichokes! **VIVO!**

Curriculi! Curricula!

by Bob Blue

Music teachers and classroom teachers often spend a lot of time picking out songs to teach their classes. Some of the songs are just plain fun to sing, like "John Jacob Jingleheimer Smith" or "Bingo." But some of the songs they select give children messages teachers hope they'll internalize. Young minds can be impressionable, and teachers, many of whom have a sense of mission, want to deliver certain messages in a way that reaches deep inside children. Music can do that in a way that spoken lessons often can't.

We don't want to brainwash children, but we do hope they'll end up with some of the attitudes we hold dear. My elementary-school teachers taught me many songs, but the only ones I can think of that delivered messages were the patriotic songs. I learned that I lived in the greatest country on earth and that one of the great things about it was our ability to win wars. I no longer think that; I think I live in a country that, like all other countries, has its strengths and weaknesses. And I don't like war. But back when I learned those songs, they made me think this country was the best one by far.

As a teacher, I taught children many songs that contained messages. I didn't like teaching the patriotic songs I'd learned, but there were plenty of others that strongly suggested how children ought to think about various issues. Children in my class learned "Walk a Mile" (by Jan Nigro), "Under One Sky" (by Ruth Pelham), and many other songs that I hoped would serve as guidelines for them in deciding how to think about people and the world.

I was lucky: Where I taught, no one

required me to teach children about the rockets' red glare or the bombs bursting in air. I would have strongly objected to that; I'm a pacifist, and I didn't want to teach children songs that seemed to glorify war. Instead, I taught them songs that glorified what I wanted glorified: concern for the environment ("If I Were a Tree," by Dave Orleans), cooperation ("Somos el Barco," by Lorre Wyatt), nonviolence ("There Is Always Something You Can Do," by Sarah Pirtle), and many more.

I knew two patriotic songs I felt comfortable teaching to children. One was "America the Beautiful," by Katherine Lee Bates. She was a teacher in Wellesley, Massachusetts—the same town I taught in—and her words described what I actually do love about where I live—the "purple mountains' majesty" and the "amber waves of grain." The other was "This Land Is Your Land," by Woody Guthrie. Some of the verses of that song take stands on political issues. I used a verse Pete Seeger added, about the importance of preserving the natural environment. The song has some lines that lean to the political left, but none of the parents or administrators objected to my use of it.

***Young minds can be
impressionable, and
teachers, many of whom
have a sense of mission,
want to deliver certain
messages in a way
that reaches deep
inside children.***

I don't like the way some songs were used to influence my thinking as I was growing up. Songs meant a lot to me, and I took the lyrics very seriously. I sometimes



modeled my personal life on the lyrics of Broadway show tunes and rock-and-roll songs, some of which gave me advice I now consider bad. And the patriotic songs I learned got me thinking and feeling things I really had to work to overcome, things that were not really in my heart.

As a teacher, I've always felt lucky to be in a position to influence the way children see the world. I've also been aware of the responsibility I've had. If I plan lessons and choose songs designed to get children to think and feel the way I do, I'll be doing to them what was done to me. So instead we talk about the songs I teach them. For example, I ask them what it means to sing, in Ruth Pelham's words, "We're all a family under one sky." Are we really? What does that mean? Are there ways in which we're not all a family?

We want to pass on the values that are important to us. But one of the values I consider important is freedom of thought. So passing on other values has to be done carefully, with respect for what's going on inside the minds of the children we teach. **YIP!**

Bob Blue is a father; former elementary-school teacher; volunteer elementary-school teacher; and writer of songs, poems, plays, stories, and articles.

Down To The Heart

By Ruth Pelham

In my high-school chorus, the director taught us each to catch a quick breath if we ran out of air while we held the long, sustained notes in Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus." We were assured that the powerful, brilliant sound of the choir wouldn't change, that it would stay the same while the many active voices covered for the few that had dropped out for a second or two while a singer took a breath.

A very different lesson about dropping out is embodied in a story that I like to tell, which I've adapted from *Horton Hears a Who*, a book by Dr. Seuss. In my version of the story, the Heys living in Heyville face impending doom, and they must shout to save themselves from the bullies who unknowingly will destroy them because they are tiny and can't be seen. All of the Heys fervently shout out together, except the silent Hey, who lazily rests in the sun, thinking, "The other Heys are all shouting loudly enough. My voice won't make a difference!" The Mayor of Heyville then coaxes and convinces the silent Hey to add its voice to the group, and those two acts, one by the mayor and one by the silent Hey, make the critical difference between life and death for the inhabitants of Heyville.

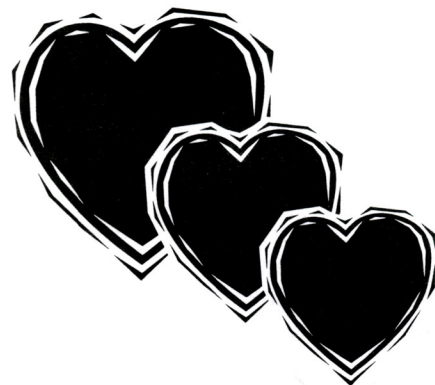
In this story, the silent Hey is portrayed as lazy and selfish, more focused on fulfilling its own needs than on helping the town survive. However, it is possible that behind the Hey's appearance of laziness and selfishness, there is a scared and vulnerable Hey, who holds back from making its voice heard because it truly believes that its voice is ineffective, unimportant, and not needed. It is possible that the silent Hey has never before been asked to raise its mighty voice

or exercise its fierce power, and it lacks the confidence and experience to know what to do. Feeling intimidated by the scores of seemingly powerful and courageous Heys, the silent Hey withdraws further into itself and takes on a protective persona of aloofness and indifference, which the other Heys interpret as laziness, selfishness, and perhaps arrogance.

Regardless of what impression the silent Hey made upon the Mayor of Heyville, the mayor did not give up believing in the Hey's true potential of being a strong and responsible member of its community, but instead persisted in coaxing and convincing the Hey that its voice was urgently needed. The mayor's unwavering support and encouragement gave the Hey the strength it needed to change its perception of itself and find the courage to act powerfully. By not ignoring or rejecting the silent Hey, the mayor's compassion and generosity of spirit helped bring forth the crucial voice that was needed to save the town.

The collective voice of The Children's Music Network articulates an empathetic way of being that is much like that of the Mayor of Heyville. Our way is one of inclusion, of making the circle wider, of believing in the combined power of our voices, and of encouraging each other to speak out and act boldly, with love and compassion. Like the Heys in Heyville, each voice in The Children's Music Network is a potential roar that can bring about profound healing and transformation in our personal lives, in our diverse communities, and in the world.

When we hear about the magnificent work that our members do as parents, educators, performers, librarians, therapists, or students, we are hearing the powerful roar of our network. When we experience the inspiring events of our national and regional gatherings,



we are hearing the powerful roar of our network. When we read the descriptions of our members in our comprehensive *Membership Directory* or hear the voices of our members speaking eloquently in the pages of *Pass It On!*, we are also hearing the powerful roar of our network.

The roar of The Children's Music Network has sustained itself for many years through our ongoing hard work of raising our powerful voices, each in our own way, and encouraging others to raise theirs. Thankfully, The Children's Music Network incorporates the ways of both the Mayor of Heyville and my high-school choral director. If ever we doubt that it is okay for us to stop and catch our breath when we have run out of air, let's remember the breathing lesson of that choral director, who assured us that the powerful, brilliant sound of the choir wouldn't change if a singer or two dropped out long enough to take a breath. Let's also remember that, when the fear and vulnerability of the silent Hey in each of us blocks out our powerful roar, like the Mayor of Heyville we will coax, convince, and stand by each other as we find the courage to raise our mighty voice again. **PSIO!**

Ruth Pelham is a founding board member of CMN. Based in Albany, New York, she is a performer, educator, songwriter, and speaker; and she is the director of Music Mobile, Inc. Please send your comments to her c/o Down to the Heart, PO Box 6024, Albany, NY 12206 or via fax at 518/462-8714.

1997 CMN National Gathering Round Robin

On Saturday night at the 1997 CMN National Gathering in Dickson, Tennessee, children and adults each had a chance to present a song or story for the entire group of participants. The idea of the round robin is for people to share songs within a non-pressured and supportive atmosphere that especially reflects the goals and visions of CMN—cooperation, empowerment, valuing diversity, environmental awareness, nonviolence, and social justice.

This year's round robin was inspiring and as usual was great fun! Here is a list of the songs that were sung. Feel free to contact the presenter if you want to learn the song or need more information.



PRESENTER.....	SONG TITLE	COMPOSER
Janice Buckner	Forever Family	Janice Buckner
Rachel Sumner	Friends	Rachel Sumner
Claudia Nygaard	The Evergreen	Claudia Nygaard
Susan Keniston	Sharing & Cooperation	Susan Keniston & Kids
Wiley Rankin	Happy Blues (Rewrite)	Wiley Rankin
Sarah Pirtle	Walls & Bridges	Sarah Pirtle
Tyler Dean	Bebopin' Butterflies	Jan Dombrower
Seabury Gould	A Drum	Trad.
Joyce Rouse	Energy Tango	Joyce Rouse
Adam Miller	Ten Cents A Ride	Joyce Woodson
Ramona Gonzalez	(Untitled)	Camelia Qabazard
David & Jenny Heitler-Klevans	All Over This World	David & Jenny Heitler-Klevans
Jason Sumner, Alex Rouse, & Thomas Robertson	Lullaby	Thomas Robertson
Leslie Zak	Que Lindo El Parque	Unkown; arr. by Leslie Zak
Andy Morse	Sticky, Icky Bubble Gum	Chris Putella
Ann Shapiro	Bald Headed Boys	Ann Shapiro
Kevin Shearer	Believe In Yourself	Kevin Shearer
Laura Ashkazari	Come to Learn with Hungry Monster	Laura Ashkazari
Norma Roberts	Let's Go Trick or Treating	Norma Roberts
Joanne Hammil	I Can't Sing	Joanne Hammil
Robert Davis	There's a Hole in Daddy's Haircut	Robert Davis
Bonnie Lockhart	Earthworm Dance	Nancy Schimmel
Holley Howard	Spendin' Time With You	Holley Howard & Paula Jones
Jane Timberlake	Just a Little Bit Longer	Jane Timberlake
Judy Pancoast	Swimmin' In Jello	Judy Pancoast

Jan Dombrower	Loving Time	Jan Dombrower & Dave Wurts
Justin Sumner	Joe's Got a Head Like a Ping Pong Ball	Unkown
Bruce O'Brien	Owl Moon	Bruce O'Brien
Sandy Byer	Our Land	Sandy Byer
Bobbi Bernstein	When You're Smiling	Unkown
Stuart Stotts	Love in Any Language	Stuart Stotts & Tom Pease
Lisa Atkinson	Mom's Taxi Takes a Day Off	Lisa Atkinson
Sarah Pirtle	My Roots Go Down	Sarah Pirtle
Leni Siegel	I Had An Old Coat	Paul Kaplan
Tom Hunter	I Need to Hear Your Voice	Tom Hunter
Barbara Tilsen	Song of Life	Barbara Tilsen
Sarah Goslee Reed	Katydid Waltz	Sarah Goslee Reed
David Schurer	Singing La, La, La	David Schurer
Bob Blue, with Phil Hoose & Nancy Hershatter	Rachel	Bob Blue
Elise Witt	Open Window	Elise Witt (Adapted from the spiritual)
Les Julian	Chrysanthemum	Les Julian & Bill Flowerree
Lisa Hill	Don't Call Your Mama	Lisa Hill
Karlo Silbiger	The Cow Song	Uncle Ruthie Buell
Bill Flowerree	Halloween	Bill Dougal
Bonnie Lockhart	The Witch Song	Bonnie Lockhart
Monty Harper	Imagine That	Monty Harper
Mary Lafleur	I Love You 100	Mary Lafleur
Tom Pease	Zaminamina	Unknown; arr. by Tom Pease
Sally Rogers	Piece by Piece	Sally Rogers
Nancy Hershatter	Branching Out	John Gorka
Aaron Fowler	Room Mom	Aaron Fowler
Judy Nee	The Earth Is Our Home	Judy Nee
Ingrid Noyes	Spring!	Ingrid Noyes
Jackson Gillman	More Better Than Me	Jackson Gillman
Larry Long	Food Fair	Larry Long
Phil Hoose	Hey, Little Ant	Phil & Hannah Hoose
Dave Kinnoin	For Every Child, A Better World	Dave Kinnoin
Katherine Dines	Wings	Katherine Dines

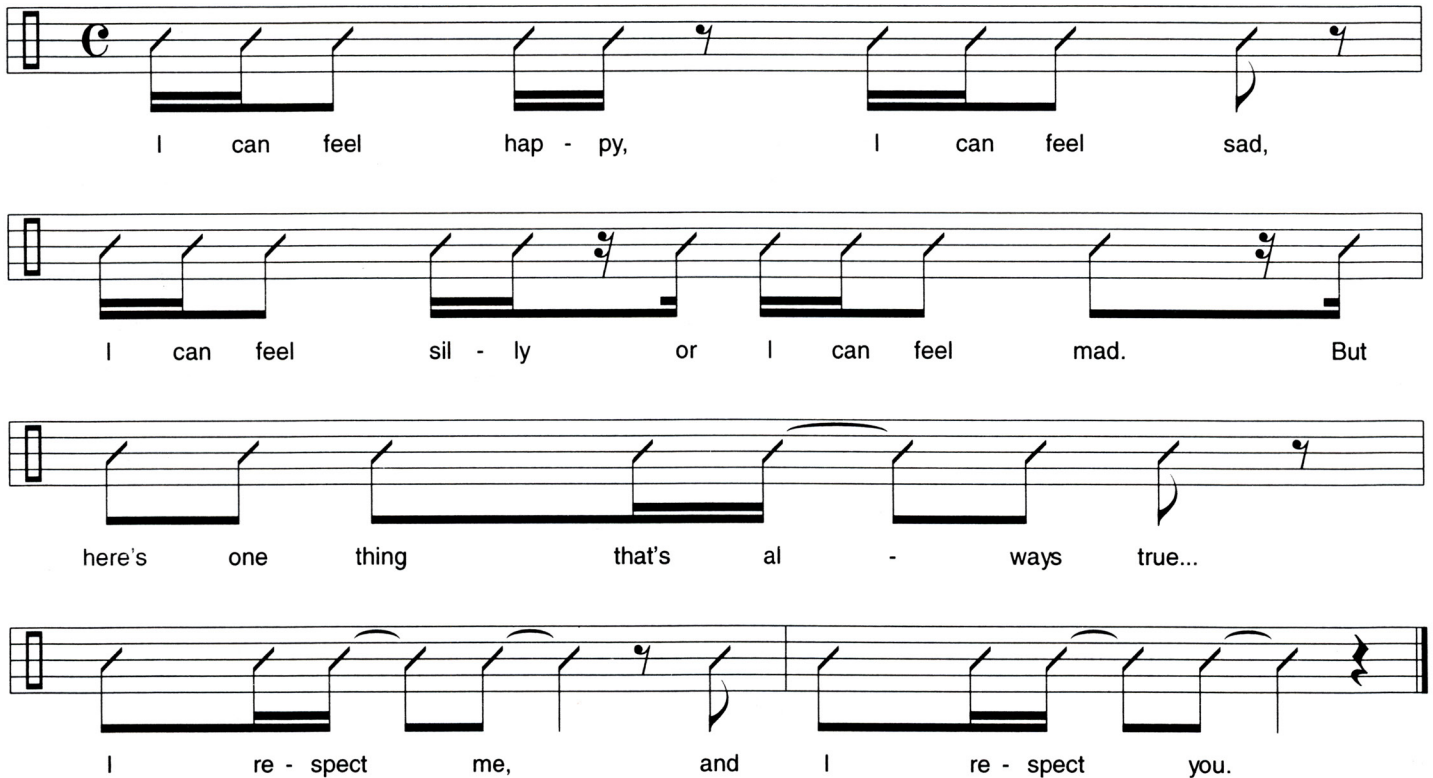
**Start making plans now to come to the
1998 National Gathering October 16-18 in the New York Metro area.**

I SIGN LIKE THIS

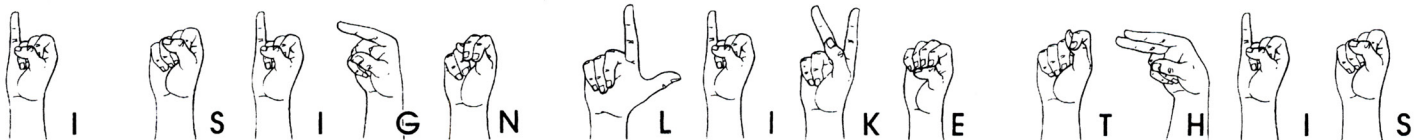
by Gaia and Ed Tossing
©1995 Gaia & Ed Tossing

At the Midwest Regional CMN Gathering last July, Gaia not only demonstrated signing songs but also brought her Hands of Light Sign Choir. This choir of mixed hearing and deaf, adults and children, was truly spectacular. We all learned an enormous amount about deaf communication and musicality while at the same time were tremendously entertained! They sang and signed very rhythmic, full-body choreographed "dances of the hands," portraying the meaning of the lyrics in American Sign Language while the music pumped through the air—a moving and inspiring experience. We even passed a balloon to understand the strength of feeling the vibrations from the music. This rap is one that Gaia uses in school/family programs herself to teach some basic signing concepts. It can be heard and seen on her recording and video ***Sing 'n Sign for Fun!***. The illustrations below come from her accompanying songbook and were drawn by deaf artist Diana Bonadurer-Sullivan. To contact Gaia about her songs and recordings, write to Heartsong Communications, P.O. Box 2455, Glenview, IL 60025.

RAP: chorus:



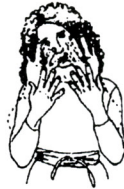
I can feel hap - py, I can feel sad,
I can feel sil - ly or I can feel mad. But
here's one thing that's al - ways true...
I re - spect me, and I re - spect you.



I Sign Like This

➔ continued from previous page

CHORUS:



Signs: I Happy Sad
Lyrics: I can feel happy. I can feel sad.



Silly

Mad

One

I can feel silly, or I can feel mad. But here's one



Thing

Always

True

thing

that's always

true . . .



I

Respect

Me

I

respect

me;



I

Respect

You

and I

respect

you.

chorus:

I can feel happy, I can feel sad,
I can feel silly, or I can feel mad.
But here's one thing that's always true...
I respect me and I respect you.



1. Sometimes I am feelin' strong
And nothin' scares me all day long.
I touch my shoulders and make two fists
To show I'm brave, I sign like this.....



2. Sometimes I don't feel so great
And I don't want to participate.
I curve my hand, give my mouth a twist
to show I'm grouchy, I sign like this.....



3. Sometimes there's no one around
And a good time friend just can't be found.
I draw my finger down across my lips
to show I'm lonely, I sign like this.....



4. Sometimes all my energy
Explodes into activity.
I spread my fingers and roll my wrists
To show I'm excited, I sing like this.....

Editorial

➡ continued from inside front cover

through wit or fancy. There is no one formula for a “good” song, and certainly there is no universal agreement on which songs are “good” and which aren’t.

There are songs, however, that make me bristle with discomfort in their efforts to deal with hard issues. They seem to fall into two categories: First there are songs that “talk down” to children, as if they couldn’t possibly know what’s right. These songs tend to take on the voice of an adult telling children what they should do to be good or helpful to society, ignoring the respectful assumption that children (and adults) *are* good and that we can find solutions by figuring it out together.

The second category is songs that, in the spirit of modeling open-minded thinking, actually reinforce negative values by assuming that most people have those negative values. These songs can insidiously reinforce the very stereotypes they try to correct, just by naming them.

It is the latter category that I find most disturbing. For example, I have heard very well-meaning teachers and performers sing songs about children with disabilities in which each verse describes a child with a different disability and then concludes with something like, “But she’s a person too! And I can still be her friend, even though she’s in a wheelchair! Yay me!” The self-righteousness aside, by naming the “lesson”—that this girl in a wheelchair is a person worthy of friendship—we suggest the opposite. If we state that something should not be a problem, then we are teaching that it usually is. To say, “Hey, it’s okay for boys to be ballet dancers!” we are telling kids that most people think that’s not cool.

I’m not saying it’s easy to negotiate that line between assuming a healthy viewpoint and naming a real problem within our society’s not-so-healthy viewpoint. But being mindful about how we model inclusiveness will help guide us all to create and sing songs that children can truly learn from. We want to share the joy of inclusiveness, not the charity of it.

How do we write and choose songs that promote our values of peace, social justice, and cultural and environmental awareness without becoming preachy?

Is my criticism akin to the excessive sensitivity of the “politically correct police?” Should we avoid singing “We Shall Overcome” because it reveals that there is usually a problem with Blacks and Whites together? Of course not. That is a powerful, visionary song that not only opens the doors to learning about history, but gives people a shared vision of an end to racism. That song does not isolate one oppressed group and “preach” how that group is just as worthy as the next. It simply puts out an inspiring dream for all of us.

Can we sing songs about people in wheelchairs or families with two dads without being offensive? Of course! One of the most effective ways we learn is to hear one person’s story. A song about one specific child in a wheelchair that helps the listener understand that child’s own feelings and thoughts can do much more to break down stereotypes than a song that states that we should be open-minded. A song that details a family involving

gay parents is more likely to affect prejudice than one that says we shouldn’t tease kids with gay parents. If we treat complex issues with respect for their complexity, then, whether we are singing about a shared, general vision or one person’s struggle with a difficult situation, we can help each other think about our attitudes and actions.

We all have different tastes in songs and choose different styles of teaching and performing. I’m sure that there are some songs that I feel comfortable with that others might find preachy, and vice versa. I am moved by certain kinds of songs, so I let my tastes determine what might move the children I work with. Others choose differently. I feel strongly, though, that when choosing songs we need to be conscious of our roles as teachers, in the true sense of guiding children to learn rather than lecturing to them. This will help us best promote the values we hold dear.

In the end, there is no one rule of thumb for doing that. We all have to select the songs that “feel right” to each of us. For me, I simply know that if a song feels preachy or makes me uncomfortable when I sing it with children who have not yet been tainted by the prejudices it names, I won’t use it. When I write songs, my guide is both my own respect for the children I imagine I’ll be singing with and my own knowledge of how I learn and grow best when I hear songs and ideas. To paraphrase a good guiding rule, “Sing unto others as you would have them sing unto you.” **PSIO!**

Joanne Hammil is a music educator, performer, and songwriter. She directs five children’s choruses in Massachusetts and presents concerts and workshops nationally. She is a board member of CMN and the Songs Editor of Pass It On!

New Sounds

compiled by Sandy Byer

Note: These descriptions of new releases are sent in by the CMN member(s) mentioned, but they may have been edited by Pass It On! staff for style consistency or length. The materials have not been reviewed.

ROUNDER RECORDS: THE ALAN LOMAX COLLECTION

Caribbean Voyage: Brown Girl In The Ring

In 1962, on the islands of Trinidad, Tobago, Dominica, St. Lucia, Anguilla, Nevis, and Carriacou, Alan Lomax discovered a developed tradition of game and pass-play songs. This recording features 62 songs which he collected, sung mostly by young girls. Many of these songs were recorded in the schoolyard, where they accompanied games which involved dancing, jumping rope, or other rhythmic play. Pantheon Books is simultaneously publishing *Brown Girl In The Ring: An Anthology of Song Games from the Eastern Caribbean*, collected and documented by Alan Lomax, J. D. Elder, and Bess Lomax Hawes. This companion volume features the music and lyrics to 68 songs, with instructions for related games and a history of each song. In addition to personal essays from Lomax, Elder, and Hawes, the book includes curriculum guidelines for teachers. This CD and book should be readily available from retailers.

BILL HARLEY

There's A Pea On My Plate

Bill's newest recording is filled with his trademark humor, joy and musicality. Possibly Bill's best recording, it was produced by Grammy-nominated Marcy Marxer. Styles vary from rock and roll to folk to world beat, New Orleans (a remake of the call and response tune "Don't You Just Know It," West African (a sweet ver-

sion of a circle dance song from Ghana called, "Tue, Tue"), and a nod to country and western with "A Cowboy's Life."

**Editor's note: See words and music in Fall 1995 Pass It On!*

Cassettes are \$10.00 each, CDs are \$15.00 each plus \$3.50 s/h and are available from Round River Records, 301 Jacob St., Seekonk, MA 02771 or by calling 800/682-9522.

CRAIG TAUBMAN—CRAIG 'N CO.

My Newish Jewish Discovery

This is Craig 'n Co.'s follow-up album to the Parents' Choice Gold recording, *My Jewish Discovery*, and demonstrates their versatility with a range of musical styles. The album celebrates the links everyone shares with their family, friends, and community. The 13 cuts on the album have a wide appeal but focus primarily on Jewish life and history, including the songs "Four Corners" and "Family Tree," and the Chanukah-themed "Candle In The Middle."

Cassettes are \$9.98 each and CDs are \$14.98. Both are available from Borders Books and other retailers.

AMY CONLEY

Grow Your Own Music

School-tested for over 10 years, this collection of 22 traditional and original action songs/dances and rest songs is perfect for preschoolers. There is a smooth blend of guitar, hammered dulcimer, banjo, fiddle, and concertina on this recording. Lyrics and activity instructions are available.



Chrome-only cassettes are \$10.00 each plus \$1.50 s/h, and can be ordered from Amy at 27 Highland Av., Milford, NH 03055 or by calling 800/474-3055.

AMY BYER

Lookin' Good

Geared to kids between 7 and 16, this recording features 12 songs, eight penned by Amy herself. The title song, "Lookin' Good," is a self-esteem building pop single. Other songs are self-affirming, such as "I Believe In Me," while "Step By Step" is a pop/dance tune focusing on the choice to wait to be sexually active. A portion of the proceeds from this album benefit Songs of Love, a nonprofit organization devoted to writing and recording personalized songs for chronically or terminally ill children and teens.

Cassettes are \$7.99 each and CDs are \$10.99 each. They are available from Amy at 11301 W. Olympic Blvd., Suite 482, West Los Angeles, CA 90064.

STEVE KOKETTE

Sign Songs

This is a thoroughly engaging music/storytelling video produced by Steve Kokette for both hearing and hard-of-hearing children. Humor is the primary ingredient in songs such as "Rhino," "My Mother's Snoring," and "Alligator Rag." Written and performed by Ken Lonnquist and John Kinstler, the upbeat songs offer creative, irresistible word play for expanding vocabularies in both spoken word and sign language. There is also an accompanying songbook.

Video cassettes are \$22.50 each and songbooks are \$14.00 each inc. s/h, and are available from Aylmer Press, P.O. Box 2735, Madison, WI 53701.

LYLE COGEN

My Name Is Lyle

Smile, sing, dance, and enjoy the essence of this gem of a collection that features clever original songs

continued on next page ➡

New Sounds

➔ continued from previous page

and classic favorites. Amusing animated voices and sound effects make the variety of musical styles on *My Name Is Lyle* kid-friendly. She uses a lively bluegrass style for "Three Green and Speckled Frogs," and a gospel inflection for "This Little Light of Mine" blended with "There's A Little Wheel Turning In My Heart."

Cassettes are \$9.95 each and CDs are \$14.95 each plus s/h, and are available by calling 888/FUN-SONGS.

KATHLEEN GIBSON

Rocking Chair Love

"Mama, tell me another story. Tell me a true story about you and me." Thus begins an endearing tale of a precious legacy. Simple shared moments of tenderness weave a special quilt of love to warm your heart. This early reader is sure to be a cuddle time favorite with parents, grandparents, and children, and it includes a read-along cassette with story, traditional lullabies, and activities encouraging family togetherness, communication, and creativity.

Cassette and book set are \$12.50 plus s/h and are available by calling Rompin' Records at 888/280-4JOY.

JULIE THOMPSON & BROWNIE MACINTOSH

A Pirate's Life For Me

Have you ever wondered what life was like on a pirate ship? This exciting, fact-filled voyage follows a crew of pirates as they work, fight, loot, and play on the high seas. You'll even meet famous pirates of fact and fiction. The 40-minute audio cassette contains an entertaining narration with special guest Tommy Makem, plus 11 rowdy sea songs performed by the authors.

This book and cassette package costs \$13.98 and is available by calling Charlesbridge Publishing at 800/225-3214. **PI!**

Regional Reports

compiled by Katherine Dines

NEW YORK METRO:

Nancy Hershatter
760 Bronx River Road
Bronxville, NY 10708
914/237-4010

or

Barbara Wright
116 Westchester Avenue
Pound Ridge, NY 10576
Day: 914/764-5484
Eve: 914/764-7613

New York Metro is delighted to be hosting the 1998 National Gathering in New York City, October 16-18. We are already looking for volunteers for committees to work on the gathering! Various types of help are needed, and we look forward to working with you. Please contact Nancy Hershatter at the above number to volunteer.



We are also doing a workshop/song swap at the New York State AEYC (Association for the Education of Young Children)

on Saturday morning, March 29, 1998, in Saratoga, New York. We invite everyone to attend. For information on the conference, please call 800/246-AEYC.

MID-ATLANTIC

Dave Orleans
130 West Clearview Avenue
Pine Hill, NJ 08021
Day: 609/768-1598
or
Eve: 609/435-4229

There was no news to report as of this writing.

MIDWEST

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

The 1998 Midwest Regional Gathering is already gearing up. It will

meet May 1-3 at Powderhorn Park in an inner-city neighborhood of Minneapolis, Minnesota. It is scheduled earlier than in recent years so that on Sunday, after our usual workshops, round robins, and musical jams, the gathering can connect with and move into the May Day Parade and Festival coordinated by In the Heart of the Beast Puppet and Mask Theatre. This unique community pageant of hope and transformation includes giant hand-made puppets and floats and other masked and costumed creatures. Plan now to attend and bring friends.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Lisa Atkinson
317 West 41st Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94403
650/574-2709

Northern California is looking forward to three more weekends of song swaps! Although these are tentative dates, plans are being made for the following weekends in 1998: February 22; March 21, at the Santa Rosa Folk Fest; and May 10 at the Berkeley Free Folk Festival. Call Lisa for more details.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Dave Kinnoin
P.O. Box 3890
South Pasadena, CA 91031
626/441-6024
Fax: 626/652-1024

There was no news to report as of this writing.

NEW ENGLAND

Nina Fischer
35 Gardner Street
Arlington, MA 02174
781/648-8533
Fax: 781/648-2824
E-mail: Nina @matchups.com
or
Cindy Mapes
108 Adena Road
West Newton, MA 02165-1620
617/527-4858
Fax: 617/527-1666

The New England Regional gathering has been scheduled for Saturday, April 4, 1998, again at the Clark Street Elementary School in Worcester, Massachusetts.

One suggestion from past gatherings was that we have a "round robin." This year, we would like to extend the gathering into the evening, so that we can have more song-sharing time. We would start with a shared meal, and move into a song swap. We need volunteers to help with planning and running this section of the event. If we decide to expand our schedule, we would also need to find another space (not the school) in which to hold the dinner/song swap—so we are especially interested in hearing from Worcester area folks who have access to a church hall or other site.

We are also looking for people with input and energy to help with overall planning. We welcome your ideas for workshops and need people to facilitate sessions. Please send suggestions directly to Nina or Cindy. THANKS!

SOUTHEAST

Katherine Dines
P.O. Box 121722
Nashville, TN 37212
615/297-4286

E-mail: kdines@mindspring.com
or

Rachel Sumner
217 Silo Court
Nashville, TN 37221
615/646-3220

E-mail:

rachel@jackatak.theporch.com

Although the southeast region is still reeling from the effects of hosting the 1997 Annual Gathering, we are also basking in the appreciation we received from people, and were glad to have had the opportunity to share this corner of the country with so many CMNers who managed to make the trek.

As of December 3, we are back to our usual meeting time: 12:00

noon the first Wednesday of every month, at the Imagination Crossroads toy store (behind the Donut Den In Green Hills).

CANADA

Sandy Byer
26 Bain Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M4K 1E6
Canada
416/465-2741

The Canadian region has been meeting three times a year—once in the fall, winter, and spring—for an evening song swap. We last met on September 23, 1997, and shared some wonderful songs, singing games, and rhymes. We are planning a longer gathering on Saturday, February 7, 1998, from 12:30 PM to 5:00 PM. This will be a potluck lunch as well as a song swap, so bring some food to share as well as your songs, rhymes, games, and stories. The venue is yet to be decided. Call Sandy Byer for further information.

NORTHWEST (Forming)

Greta Pedersen
19363 Willamette Dr. #252
West Linn, OR 97068
503/699-1814
Fax: 503/699-1813
E-mail: accentm@teleport.com

or
Bonnie Messinger
11790 SW Belmont Terrace
Beaverton, OR 97008

503/641-8580

E-mail:
steve.mullinax@worldnet.att.net

Southern Oregon sub-region

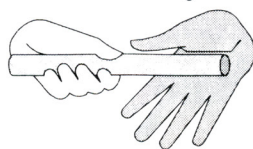
Denise Friedl Johnson
709 Faith Avenue
Ashland, OR 97520
541/482-4610

Southern Oregon had a potluck dinner and song-sharing gathering on November 8, 1997. Eleven adults and four children attended. There was lots of good food and there were good songs. We heard an adaptation of Oscar Brand's "When I First Came to This Land," using sign language, and a song written by the children and performed with frog puppets.

We are continuing outreach to new members, and our goal is to become an official region in 1998. Winter and spring events are in the planning stage, so watch your mail or call Denise, Bonnie, or Greta to become more involved.



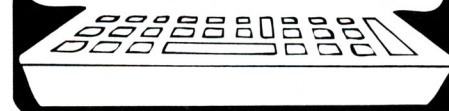
The Hand to Hand Program is underway!



This is a CMN outreach program, in which CMN veterans recruit new members through personal contact, with the aid of "Hand to Hand Kits." These kits include membership forms, flyers and an issue of *Pass It On!* If you want kits, contact Caroline Presnell at our national office at 847/733-8003. In this way, we'll be a-doubling soon!

CMN now has a Website, thanks to Monty Harper and PJ Swift. The address is: <http://www.cowboy.net/~mharper/CMN.html>

If you are a CMN member and would like to link your site to ours, please contact Sally Rogers (salrog@neca.com) or PJ Swift (pickle@well.com) to find out how.





DOWN AND OUT

Tyler Dean, age 11

©1997 Tyler Dean

Tyler, who delighted everyone at the National Gathering in Nashville with his wonderful singing and personality, wrote this great catchy, poignant song on the plane flying from California to Nashville! He says "The words 'down and out and out and down' have been going around in my head for a long time—since I was about 5—and I knew I wanted to write them into a song someday." To contact Tyler about his songs and music, write to him at 135 B St., Hayward, CA 94541.

chorus:

When you're down & out— and out & down and you don't know what makes the world
— go 'round, and you don't know what's wrong with your day;
— When you're down & out and out & down and you don't know what makes the world
— go 'round and you want to know— what's wrong right a - way.

verse:

1. Some-times you feel— like— end - ing your life but deep down in your
heart you know it's wrong; then you think— a - bout all the
good times you have had;— then you re - a - lize— your life is
strong. And now I'm as hap - py as can be.

Down and Out

➤ continued from previous page



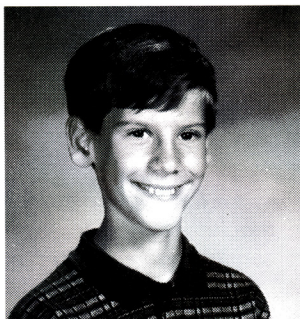
chorus:

When you're down and out
and out and down
And you don't know what
makes the world go 'round
And you don't know what's wrong
with your day;
When you're down and out and out
and down
And you don't know what makes the
world go 'round
And you want to know what's wrong
right away,

1. Sometimes you feel like ending your
life
But deep down in your heart you
know it's wrong;
Then you think about all the good
times you've had
Then you realize your life is strong.
2. When I was small my life was very
good
But now that I am older life is tough;
Hormones and homework and don't
forget divorce;
When they sneak up on you life is
rough.
3. Here is my point: if you can't take it
any more
And you need to get some help
instantly—
I suggest you get a counselor—at
least that's what I did
And now I am as happy as can be.

ending:

And now I'm as happy as can be.



Tyler Dean, age eleven

Interview: Rothenberg

➤ continued from page 4

ing a teacher. I never
thought my career path
would involve music as
much as it does. I enjoy
producing school musi-
cal productions with
my classes. I'm glad I
learned how to play gui-
tar. It's been a real asset
in my teaching.

PIO!: *What kind of music did you prefer as
you were growing up?*

Barbara: As I was growing up, I
loved show tunes, but with my
dad's chamber music, I developed
an appreciation for baroque music,
chamber music, sonatas.

PIO!: *Now, a large part of our generation
rebelled, and the music we chose to listen
to became part of that rebellion. Did you
participate in that at all? Was there a point
at which you liked to listen to noisy, angry
musicians your parents didn't like?*

Barbara: There was a lot of music
that both my parents and I appre-
ciated. But I felt that they always
respected the music I listened to. I
never got the feeling that they were
putting down the music I listened
to.

PIO!: *So there was no "What's the Matter
with Kids Today?"*

Barbara: I didn't really experience
that with my parents. I guess I feel
pretty lucky. And I hope I'm doing
the same thing for my children.
Although, if you ask my children,
maybe I'm not.

PIO!: *They would say that rap or alterna-
tive rock is acceptable at home?*

Barbara: I make it a point to listen
to the music my own children lis-
ten to. My husband and I have a
15 year old and a 12 year old. So I
do listen to the music, and a lot of
the music that I listen to is really
wonderful. I'm learning about that
through them.

PIO!: *So music has played an important
role in your parenting, too?*



Barbara: I was a teacher before I
was a parent. So my children
greatly benefited from that. Be-
cause I was exposed to so many
songs and songwriters through my
research as a teacher, my children
benefited from hearing all these
great people. And I must say, be-
cause of that, my children really
have developed an appreciation of
great music.

PIO!: *What do you hear from any of your
former students? Do they stay involved in
music?*

Barbara: I have actually heard that
some of my students are in the
music industry. I don't take any
credit for that.

PIO!: *Why not?*

Barbara: Maybe that was their des-
tiny...

PIO!: *They were destined to have a second-
grade teacher who got them involved in
music.*

Barbara: I'd like to think that I
helped to bring out special talents
they had. Children have so many
influences that can affect the
course of their lives.

PIO!: *It's really possible for a teacher to
destroy a child's interest in something like
music, and you don't do that. You do the
opposite. I think you should take some
credit.*

Barbara: (Laughs) Okay. I've done
musical drama in my class as well,
and I did hear that one of my former
students is now with the National
Shakespeare Company. I just hope
that whatever I do for the children,

continued on next page ➤

Interview: Rothenberg

➔ continued from previous page

I'm helping them to be good listeners, to make good decisions, and to be good citizens of their community and of the world. And if they're singing while they're doing it, that's fine.

PIO!: *You seem as if your mind is totally absorbed in the education of children. Could you tell us a little bit about the roles music plays in the rest of your life? And what other interests do you have? I heard that you were the founder of the Amherst Community Theatre.*

Barbara: Yes. The Amherst Leisure Services also recognized the abundance of talent in our community and provided funding and resources for an annual show.

PIO!: *I know what Amherst Leisure Services is, but could you tell our readers?*

Barbara: It's a town organization that provides the citizens of our community with a variety of options, of things for people of all ages to do in their leisure time. There've been a number of shows that I've been involved in, but also that my whole family's been involved in. There's one show that all four of us were in—my husband, myself, and our two children.

PIO!: *What was that?*



Barbara Rothenberg and son Jeffrey in *Sound of Music*

Barbara: We were all involved in our community's production of *The Sound of Music*. My son helped in ushering and selling refreshments. My husband was a baron and I was a nun—a singing nun. My daughter had a part as one of the goatherd children. It was a wonderful experience.

PIO!: *Any other musical activities?*

Barbara: I used to sing with the Sweet Adelines, a women's barber-shop chorus. I just loved those ringing chords in the four-part harmony. I recently became part of a local staff singing group. We're going to be singing at the high-school senior dinner if they let us (Laughs), or at their first bake sale.

PIO!: *Do you have any idea why so many classroom teachers don't use music as much as you do?*

Barbara: There are many wonderful classroom teachers, each one bringing special strengths to the classroom and wanting to share what he/she enjoys most. For example, there are many teachers that I admire for the fabulous science experiments they do with their students in class. And the children are very excited. That doesn't mean children are more excited about science experiments than music, or vice versa, but we all bring our interests and strengths into the classroom, and I admire those teachers who can spark interest and enthusiasm in children toward a variety of subjects. I think that's what makes the world go 'round. We have to recognize and value our diversity.

PIO!: *So, somewhere along the line, if children are lucky, they'll end up with a Barbara Rothenberg.*

Barbara: Well, I also think if they're lucky, they'll get to be with a teacher who does lots of science experiments. There are children for whom that's very important, and just as I may be proud that one of my students is now touring with the National Shakespeare Com-

pany, I'm sure the teacher who does all the science experiments would be real proud if one of her/his students won the Nobel Prize. I guess I'd be proud if one of my students won the Nobel Prize, too, but I suppose we have to recognize that we all do different things to spark interests in children.

PIO!: *You've provided lots of advice and inspiration for many teachers. Could we close our interview with some words from you for teachers who are thinking about ways to integrate music into the curriculum?*

Barbara: If you are a teacher who likes to use music in the classroom, luckily for you, you don't also have to write the words to the songs and compose the songs, because there are lots of people out there who have done that for you. So you can go to any of your local children's bookstores or libraries and browse through the many wonderful tapes and CDs there are and find songs that could go along with units you're teaching. There are songs about anything from A to Z. And many of these cassettes and CDs have song lyrics on the back, or on the jacket. So you don't even have to type it. You can just copy it (enlarge it, of course), and you have readymade song-lyric sheets to use in the classroom.

PIO!: *What about teachers who are insecure about singing?*

Barbara: The beauty of the tape cassette player is that one need only slip in a tape, and, at the push of a button, someone else is doing the singing. So even a teacher who is not inclined to use his/her own voice can expose children to great songs. But you'll have to try it out. As Lorre Wyatt says, in "Let It Be Your Lullaby," "You'll never know 'til you try." **PIO!**

Bob Blue is a father; former elementary-school teacher; volunteer elementary-school teacher; and writer of songs, poems, plays, stories, and articles.

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
170 E. Hadley Road, #82
Amherst, MA 01002
413/256-8784
bbblue@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 of the song (home-grown is fine).

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

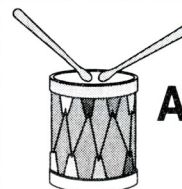
Copyright dates should be noted; copyright ownership remains with the author.

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 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.

THANK YOU CMN CORPORATE MEMBERS FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!

Arcoiris Records, Inc.
Berkeley, California

Camp Tawingo
Huntsville, Ont., Canada

Gymboree Family Clubhouse
Burlingame, California

Interlocken International Camp
Hillsborough, New Hampshire

RAS Records
Silver Spring, Maryland

Rounder Records Corp.
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Troubadour Records, Ltd.
Vancouver, B.C., Canada



CALL FOR NEW RELEASES!

Send notification of your new recording to...

Sandy Byer

New Sounds Editor
26 Bain Avenue
Toronto, Ontario
CANADA M4K 1E6

CALL FOR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR!

Letters to the Editor may be sent to...

Pete Seeger

Letters to the Editor
P.O. Box 431
Beacon, NY 12508

CALL FOR RADIO INFORMATION!

Children's radio news and information should be sent to...

PJ Swift

Radio Editor
305 Dickens Way
Santa Cruz, CA 95064
pickle@well.com



The Children's Music Network
P.O. Box 1341
Evanston, IL 60204-1341
U.S.A.

Address Service Requested

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 458
Evanston, IL 60204

DATED MATERIAL

M E M B E R S H I P F O R M

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES AND ANNUAL DUES ☐ New ☐ Renewal

(Classifications and rates as of 1/11/97; subject to change without notice.)

Check one...

- ☐ **Libraries and Schools: \$25** (CAN\$35 Canada; US\$30 other international)
Contact name listed, but not cross-referenced in the CMN directory.
- ☐ **Individual or Family Membership: \$35** (CAN\$45 Canada; US\$45 other international)
Typically individual performers, songwriters, teachers, parents, etc.
No business name will be cross-referenced in the CMN Directory.
- ☐ **Small Business and Nonprofits: \$60** (CAN\$80 Canada; US\$70 other international)
The business name (or promotional name of a person) will head the directory entry. One individual's name will be listed separately with a cross-reference to this business entry.
- ☐ **Corporate Sponsor: \$150** (CAN\$200 Canada; US\$155 other international)
Typically multi-performer producers, record companies, distributors, etc. One individual's name will be listed separately with a cross-reference to this corporate entry. *You are listed in every issue of Pass It On! as a corporate member.*
-
- Number of **additional individuals** (other than the contact person) to be listed and cross-referenced to your main directory entry. Typically these are other people who are associated with a business or corporate membership, but names may be added to any category.
@ \$5 per name: \$ _____
-
- ☐ Donation to **Scholarship Fund** \$ _____
- ☐ Please contact me about Membership Scholarships.

Total
Enclosed \$

ABOUT YOU...

Your Name(s):

Contact Person for a business/corporate/institutional membership.
This is the individual who will also be listed separately and cross-referenced to the main business or corporate entry:

Any additional persons(s) you wish to list who will cross-reference your main directory entry (see "Additional Individuals" at left):

Your complete mailing address:

Your day and/or evening phone(s) as appropriate:

Day phone (____) ____-____ Evening phone (____) ____-____

Fax line (____) ____-____

E-mail and/or Web Site _____

Your closest or preferred CMN region (check one):

- ☐ Canada ☐ MidAtlantic ☐ Midwest
☐ New England ☐ NY Metro ☐ Northern California
☐ SouthEast ☐ Southern California *More are being added as we grow!*

If you would like to receive mailings from additional regions other than your own, please also underline the appropriate region name(s) above.

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. We'll contact you later for directory information.

Thank You!