

# **PASS IT ON!**<sup>®</sup>

The Journal of the **Children's Music Network**<sup>®</sup>

ISSUE #54

Fall 2006



## ***Crossing the Cultural Divide: CitySongs Kids***

Photo: CitySongs Notes

### **Inside...**

- Nona Beamer, the 2006 CMN Magic Penny Recipient ■
- More About PA Systems ■ Advice on Getting School Gigs, Agents, CD Reviews ■
- Early Childhood Rhythm Stick Mania ■ Eight Great Songs ■



# About The Children's Music Network

## Who We Are

CMN is an international organization with members and regional chapters in the United States and Canada, and connections with people throughout the world.

Our membership, diverse in age and ethnicity, includes

- music and classroom teachers • full-time and part-time performers • songwriters • youth advocates • librarians
- day care providers • song leaders and choral directors
- music therapists • educational consultants and trainers
- radio and TV program staff • therapists and social workers
- clergy • medical care providers • families

CMN was founded in the late 1980s by a small group of educators, performers, social workers, librarians, parents, and others who believed in the transformative power of music in children's lives—in their homes, schools, and communities.

## What We Do

We seek to be a positive catalyst for education and community-building through music. We inspire and re-energize each other for our work supporting the creation and circulation of life-affirming, multicultural musical forms by, for, and with young people. We meet and stay in touch to share songs, skills, resources, and ideas about empowering ways adults and young people can communicate through music. And we have fun in the process.

## Our Principles

We recognize children's music as a powerful means of encouraging cooperation, celebrating diversity, enhancing self-esteem, teaching peace and promoting nonviolence, growing environmental awareness and responsibility, and advocating for social justice.

## The Board of Directors

Ellen Allard, Peter Allard, Pam Donkin, Johnette Downing, Frank Hernandez, Phil Hoose, Bonnie Lockhart, Ruth Pelham, Terri Roben, Mara Sapon-Shevin, Barb Tilsen, Barbara Wright, Leslie Zak

With deep appreciation, we acknowledge

Sarah Pirtle	(1987-89)
Andrea Stone	(1990-93)
Joanne Hammil	(1994-97)

for their tireless work and dedication to the growth and cohesion of CMN.



## **PASS IT ON!**

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## IN THIS ISSUE...

### Features

- Singing Is Belonging: CitySongs Kids—  
An Interview with Helen Kivnick ..... 2
- A Musician's Guide to PA Systems, Part II ..... 6
- "Keep Your Love":  
An Interview with Nona Beamer ..... 14

### Columns

- Music with Older Kids: Musical Success  
with Special Needs Kids ..... 8
- Media Waves: Embracing Gutenberg ..... 10
- Music in Bloom: Rollickin' Rhythm Sticks ..... 20
- Marketing Matters: Getting the Gig, Part I  
—Schools ..... 24
- Flambeau: Working with Agents ..... 28

### Short Reports

- A Personal Note from the PIO! Editor ..... 1
- The 2006 CMN National Conference ..... 5

### Songs

- "Erase Racism" ..... 4
- "Hey Everybody" ..... 9
- "Courage" ..... 12
- "Pūpū Hinuhinu" ..... 16
- "Dìu Shǒu Juàn" ..... 19
- "Pumpkin Patch" ..... 23
- "Let's All Sing for Martin Luther King" ..... 27
- "When I Get Mad" ..... 30

### Departments

- Announcements ..... 10, 11, 31, 33
- New Sounds ..... 32
- Letter to the Editor ..... 33
- Regional Reports ..... 34
- How to Submit ..... inside back cover

### CMN BUSINESS OFFICE

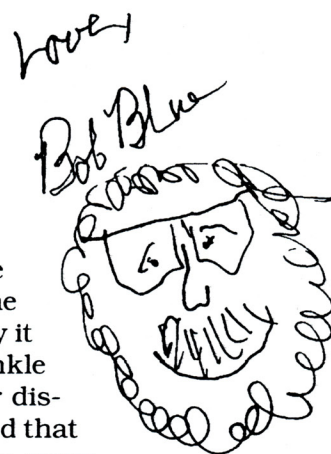
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## A Personal Note from the PIO! Editor

by Nancy Silber

It is with a heavy heart that I write this piece today, because this will be the first issue of *PIO!* published after the death of Bob Blue. A CMN founder, former *PIO!* editor, and constant *PIO!* contributor, Bob played a crucial role in the development of this journal, and with his on-going column gave great pleasure to many of its readers. The process of writing became more and more difficult for Bob—even from the moment I first became editor in 2001—and he often suggested/requested that he end his column. Being a big Bob Blue fan, I always responded with a plea that he continue and would try to help him by suggesting topics on which to write. Without a given topic, the effects of the disease made it so difficult for Bob that he couldn't seem to find his way through, and he would give up on his column in despair. My ideas were never as good as his own, but I suppose it was his innate sense of giving and support that enabled him to pull it together when fulfilling my lowly column topics. He acknowledged this working relationship when he began his column after having learned that he was to be CMN's 2004 Magic Penny recipient: "When Nancy Silber suggested that for this *PIO!* I write a column about myself, my eyes lit up. That's one of my favorite subjects!" And for me, this is one of my favorite all-time opening lines. To this day it makes me laugh out loud and picture the twinkle in his eye; and in true Bob Blue fashion, after displaying an unabashed healthy egotism, he ended that column by bestowing the Magic Penny Award on every CMN member.



Multiple sclerosis has also played a terrible role in my personal family—my grandfather died of its awful devastation in 1929. Like Bob, my grandfather Joseph Wise was clever and had a way with words; he often sat in at New York's famous Algonquin Round Table with members and friends such as writers Dorothy Parker, Harold Ross (founder of *The New Yorker*); columnist Franklin Pierce Adams (F.P.A.); Harpo Marx; and playwright George S. Kaufman. F.P.A. published a diary (written in the old-time style of Samuel Pepys) of all his comings and goings with the literati and *Who's Who* listees, but here was his entry on Monday, May 5, 1929: "So home to supper, and there come a message that my dear friend J. Wise had died yesterday, which is the saddest news ever I heard, and I thought how of all the nicknames we ever had for him the one that endured was Dear Friend, which many persons used to call him." I use this quote now because I think it expresses what all of us felt when we heard the awful news in March. While we may not have overtly called Bob "Dear Friend," we all felt this sentiment in our hearts. We will miss him, remember him, continue to sing and enjoy his songs, and always celebrate his brilliance and his loving contributions to CMN and the world of children's music.



Bob's song "Courage" is on page 12.



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# Singing Is Belonging: CitySongs Kids

## An Interview with Helen Kivnick

conducted by Sally Rogers

I met Helen Kivnick when I was a student at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. Like Helen, I was developing a love for traditional English ballads. I think we met at a song swap at the legendary Ark Coffeehouse. Years later, building on her musical interests and commitment to community, Helen founded the after-school children's chorus, CitySongs, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1992. She did it in part to keep a promise she made to political activists and cultural workers in South Africa where she was a Kellogg Foundation Fellow between 1983 and 1986. Her project there focused on the role of singing in the black South African culture. She found that song knit communities together and gave them strength despite the oppressive conditions under which they survived in a way that is unprecedented in our own culture, or most any other. Singing was an integral part of daily life for these people. Her work culminated in the book *Where Is the Way: Song and Struggle in South Africa*, published in 1990 by Penguin, and inspired her to found this unusual performing group, CitySongs Kids.

CitySongs was established through the University of Minnesota where Helen teaches. She had a notion that music could be a transformative experience for at-risk urban youth. But she realized the work would require more than just a music director and a rehearsal space. CitySongs was established as a performing group for kids in grades four through eight. The students come from diverse backgrounds with a wide variety of talents and needs. Administration of the group includes a social worker as well as a music director and many volunteers to make sure rehearsals and

performances go smoothly. Outreach is constant among the kids, their parents, and their communities. The results are astounding, and the chorus has continued for fourteen years.

CitySongs Kids is much more than just a chorus. (You can learn more at their Web site, <http://citysongs.umn.edu>.) The following interview sheds light on its purpose and its success in hopes of inspiring others to create such projects in their own communities.

\* \* \* \* \*

**PIO!:** *Helen Kivnick, so nice to have you talk with me about CitySongs. I'm just wondering, first of all, if you could tell us who you are, and why you happen to do CitySongs. What organization is sponsoring this, and how are you affiliated with it?*

HK: Really, we sponsor ourselves. And we raise money from many, many, many different sources every year. We are administratively housed in the University of Minnesota School of Social Work. That's entirely because I'm on the faculty there. Our literature says this: "CitySongs is jointly sponsored by the University of Minnesota School of Social Work, College of Human Ecology; the Hallie Q. Brown-Martin Luther King Center; and the Rondo Education Center." All of that is true in the sense that they were all involved in helping us get started. The School of Social Work, where I have a full-time job as a faculty member, provides administrative office space and utilities without charging us anything, which is actually invaluable.

What's complicated about CitySongs, among other things, is that we really have three pretty separate-seeming missions that fit together and that are important

to have together. One of them is healthy youth development, the second is artistic achievement, and the final one is community vitality through diversity.

**PIO!:** *How did you happen to found CitySongs? How did you come up with this idea?*

HK: For me it's a confluence of three things in my life, which are: healthy psychosocial development, and social justice race relations, and the importance of being involved in the arts—involved in the participatory arts.

**PIO!:** *But why did that end up focusing on children? It could have been families, or it could have been seniors: you work with old people also.*

HK: It was just after the South Africa project, and it was being in a country where singing is part of everything. And it's so clear that in communities where people sing...It's not that they don't have any problems, but there are a lot of things that are right that you would expect not to be right, and a whole lot of it has to do with singing.

When we moved to the Twin Cities I spent the first year trying to make contact with everybody who was a singer and musician and involved with kids and seniors and people of any sort. And it wasn't just me. I mean, I was sort of leaning in a direction, but what it became had to do with what everybody who was interested enough to be part of this planning group made it become.

**PIO!:** *And how many are on your board and staff?*

HK: Well, that's changed enormously. So now we have eight board members, and they change all the time.



The paid staff varies, too. We have an operations manager who does all of the booking, all of the office work, the Web site, the PR, and the correspondence. And that person also winds up always being an additional adult body at rehearsals. At the moment that's a full-time position. The music director is a three-quarters-time position at the moment.

**PIO!:** And "music director" means she conducts...

**HK:** She conducts the choirs; runs the rehearsals; creates lead sheets from CDs, which she then makes into tracks from Band-in-a-Box; and stuff like that. She arranges for guest artists and sometimes writes some of the music. She works with music volunteers from the School of Music or other community music volunteers. She solicits a lot of gigs, and she does all the vocal training and the individual vocal coaching.

**PIO!:** And that's Cheryl Reeves right now?

**HK:** Yes, that's Cheryl Reeves. Cheryl is wonderful. Cheryl used to sing with Sounds of Blackness, which is a large contemporary gospel group in the Twin Cities that came out of Macalester, and they win Grammys all over the place. She also is a masters-level music teacher who left the public schools after, I think, fifteen years.

We have a social work and education director, and at the moment that's a three-quarters-time position. That person is responsible for somehow creating social work education activities and experiences for both groups and individuals. These happen during the rehearsals to enable kids who often do not have particularly supportive families nor prior experience singing to participate in a program that requires that the kids give twenty performances a year. That means you have to be on stage, and you have to be appropriate, and you have to be at rehearsals, and you



Photo: CitySongs Notes, Fall 2005

Helen Kivnick (back row, second from the right) with Joseph Shabalala, members of Ladysmith Black Mambazo, and CitySongs kids, 1996

have to be on time, and you have to be dressed appropriately. The social work and education director is also the person who coordinates all of the other volunteers. Part of the way that we are able to be effective with very difficult kids is that we try to maintain a one-adult-to-four-students ratio in all activities. That means we have a lot of volunteers who are anything but reliable.

**PIO!:** So your volunteers are mostly university students who get credit for this?

**HK:** It depends a lot: often they get credit, but often they don't. We're in our fourteenth season. They're not necessarily from the University of Minnesota. We've also had volunteers from Macalester, from Hamlin, from Augsburg, from St. Kate's, from St. Thomas, from the community in general. Oh, and from Cretin-Durham Hall High School, and Music Tech, or McNally Smith College of Music.

We try to say that we require a minimum one-semester commitment, because it's really hard on the kids when the volunteers leave. The volunteers' motives for volunteering vary, and where they come from varies. Now, they also sometimes stay for years on end! And we have people who write us donation checks now who were volunteers ten years ago and who remain in love with the program. We've had undergraduate students who've been volunteers who have decided to become teachers after

volunteering, which is really very exciting.

**PIO!:** So tell me about the kids who come into CitySongs. How do they find out about it? Do you go search them out? Are they from all over the Twin Cities, or from a certain area?

**HK:** At the moment we work with kids between grades four and eight, and that age is welcome. There is no charge to be part of the program. Realistically, you have to be there to participate. As transportation becomes more and more of a problem, almost de facto, participation gets limited to kids who go to schools that are within walking distance of the rehearsal site. Right now we rehearse in a school building that houses six different schools, and a lot of our kids go to one of those six programs. But they really come from all over. We've had kids who carpooled from churches in Minneapolis, in [the outlying suburbs] White Bear Lake and Apple Valley.

They also find out about us a million different ways. When each season starts in the fall, we send out fliers to the schools. We make presentations in school classrooms, sometimes in school assemblies. We often try to have the kids record public service announcements on local radio stations. But we also put out fliers through churches, and, as we've been around a lot, there's a whole lot of word of mouth. So there

continued on page 36 ➡





# ERASE RACISM

words and music by Sam Davis and Helen Kivnick

"Erase Racism" has been recorded on a CD: *Erasing Racism CitySongs 1998-2002*. You can hear it by going to the CitySongs Web site (<http://citysongs.umn.edu>) and clicking on "CitySongs Listening Studio."

With conviction ♩ = 100

## chorus

We must e - rase rac - is - m right down to the bone. We must e - rase \_\_\_\_ it, in  
 all its ug - ly forms. We must e - rase the binds that di - vide all hu - man - kind. We must e -  
 lim - i - nate all hate and il - lu - mi - nate our minds! It does - n't mat - ter a - bout the  
 col - or \_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_ your \_\_\_\_ skin. It does - n't mat - ter what sit - u - a \_\_\_\_ tion you're in. \_\_\_\_  
 It does - n't mat - ter a - bout the way you \_\_\_\_ walk \_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_ talk. The  
 on - ly thing that mat - ters is the char - ac - ter with - in.

## Chorus

We must erase racism right down to the bone.  
 We must erase it, in all its ugly forms.  
 We must erase the binds that divide all humankind.  
 We must eliminate all hate and illuminate our minds!

## Verses

1. It doesn't matter about the color of your skin.  
 It doesn't matter what situation you're in.  
 It doesn't matter about the way you walk or talk.  
 The only thing that matters is the character within.

2. It doesn't matter if your skin is black or white.  
 It doesn't matter if you're red, yellow, or brown.  
 And even though you think you're right, there are times  
 when you're also wrong.  
 Because we're all in this human race and somehow we got  
 to be strong. (to chorus)

3. It doesn't matter about the way you wear your hair.  
 It doesn't matter which designer clothes you wear.  
 Just be the best that you can be and together take a stand.  
 I know we can make it, oh yes we can make it,  
 If we all join hand in hand. (to chorus)

4. Repeat verse 1





## **16th Annual National Conference**

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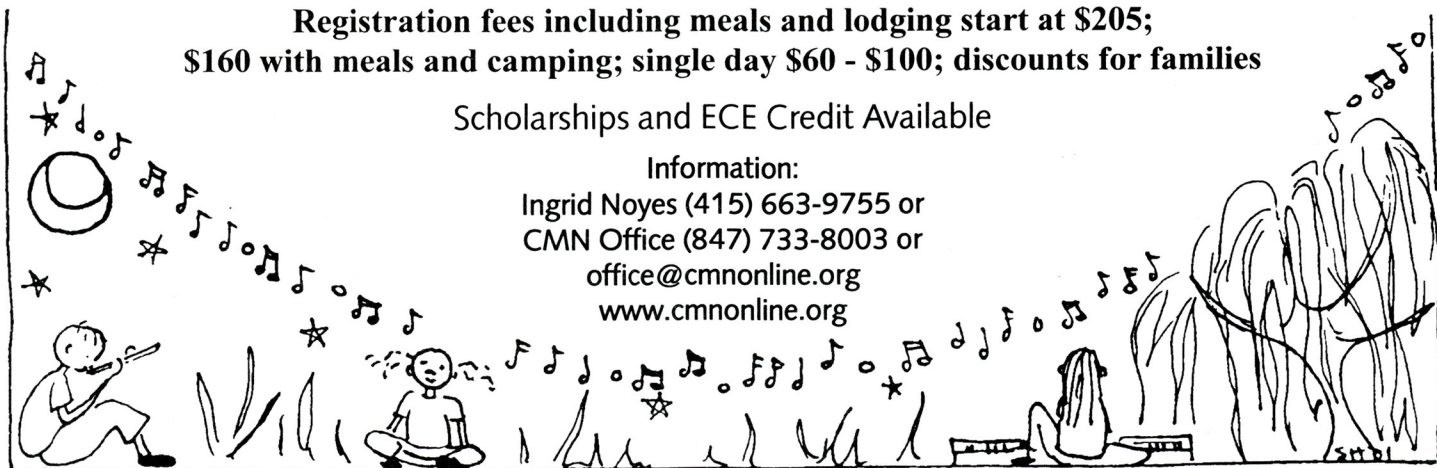
International Songs and Games; Circle-time Songs; Singing with Older Children; Songs in Spanish  
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# A Musician's Guide to PA Systems, Part II

by Steve Schuch

*Noise proves nothing; often a hen who has merely laid an egg cackles as if she had laid an asteroid.*

—Mark Twain

**T**he first part of this article (*Pass It On!* #52/#53, Winter/Spring 2006) gave a general overview of PA equipment, set-up, and care (and included an explanation of PA terms). In this part, I'll address several areas of frequent concern and describe a number of my favorite "gear" choices. Some of the best products are made by companies that spend more money on sound engineering than they do on clever advertising.

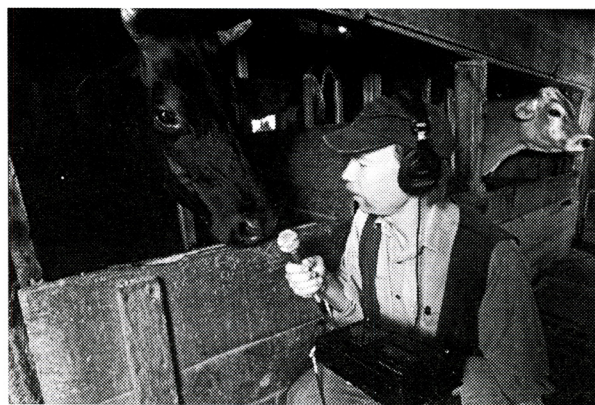
## Speakers

There are entire books and engineering courses devoted to designing PA speakers. The choices (and marketing hype) go on and on. For now I'll just note that clarity and quality matter more than sheer volume. The pattern control on PA speakers is very important to how/where you plan to use them. No one design is best for every situation. The recent Bose system, for example, has an unusually wide dispersion pattern. While some musicians love how well they can hear themselves, that wide dispersion is a nightmare in echoing gyms, and it limits the speakers' "throw" in outdoor settings. On the other hand, a very narrow dispersion also has its drawbacks. For most school assemblies, a horizontal dispersion of around 90 degrees and vertical of 40–60 degrees seems to be a good compromise.

## Stand 'em Up

When taking a group photo, everyone needs to "see" the camera in order to be clearly visible. The same thing goes with PA speakers. Always raise the main speakers above the level of people's heads out in the audience. That way no one is in the acoustic "shadow" of the people in front of them. In some settings it helps to angle the speakers slightly downward as well as in toward the center. That way, more of the sound goes directly into the audience instead of bouncing around off the ceiling and back walls. (K & M makes some ingenious attachments to adjust speaker angle. I'd be glad to show these to you.)

While carrying a 20- to 50-pound speaker is easy for most people, hoisting it up onto a speaker stand can be hard. An easier way to do this is for one person to hold the speaker by the handle parallel to the floor, while a second person inserts the pole into the base of the speaker. Then gently tip the speaker and stand upright into the desired position. If working by yourself, set the speaker on its side on a table or bench, insert the pole, then tip up into position. For really heavy speakers,



*Steve Schuch uses a quality mic to get the best tone possible.*

consider crank-up stands.

## Speaker Placement

Each room and space is different acoustically. Allow time to experiment with speaker placement and EQ. In general, aim the main speakers into the audience, not at you and your microphones (leads to feedback problems) or the walls and ceiling (wastes power and muddies the sound). In an intimate setting, you might place the main speakers 5–10 feet off to either side and still hear enough from them that you won't need monitors. In larger settings, you might set the main speakers 15–30 feet off to the sides, and then angle them in toward the center of the audience. Be cautious about placing speakers against a wall or in corners. This can increase undesirable reflections and "boominess" in the lower frequencies.

A "walk about" in the audience area while playing a CD of music similar to your live show will tell you a lot about the room and speaker placement. Be aware things will change when the room fills up with people. So experiment, listen, and then adjust as needed.

Always work with the main speakers first, before making decisions about monitor speakers. For a small show, you might not need monitors at all.

## Avoiding Feedback

The best way to avoid feedback is by choosing speakers and microphones carefully, placing them correctly, and doing a thorough sound check. Determine the point at which feedback occurs before the audience arrives, then keep levels below that point during the show. Use mixer EQ and graphic equalizers to reduce the problem frequencies. The swept mids on better mixers are very helpful here. If howling/hum begins at any point:

1. Pull down master volume and/or Monitor volume at once.
2. Mute any mic channel not being used.
3. Set speakers farther away from microphones, use



more directional mics that are more resistant to feedback, and/or position them closer to singers/instruments so you don't have to turn up the gain as much.

4. If feedback is a frequent problem, consider one of the auto feedback controllers made by Sabine or DBX.

### Steve's Personal Picks for a Music PA

In this section, I'll describe some specific favorites that offer good sound quality, durability, reasonably light weight, and flexibility from one venue to another. A storyteller might need less and a band would need more.

#### *Outlet Tester*

These devices run about \$8 at most hardware stores. Make sure an outlet is properly wired and grounded before risking your show and safety. If it isn't, alert the school and try to find another outlet that is.

#### *Furman Power Conditioners*

Most folks know to protect their home computers with a surge protector. The same is true for sound equipment. The better ones not only protect you and your equipment from electrical spikes and surges, they also improve the sound quality. I especially like the Furman PM8 Series II and Furman Power Factor Pro. These conditioners help eliminate unwanted hums (as will using quality cables and a good mixer). They give an accurate readout of current voltage, and even store extra power for peak demand.

#### *Speaker Closeup: FBT Maxx Series*

These come in different sizes, both powered (with amplifiers already built in to each speaker) and unpowered versions. The FBT Maxx 2A amplified model is only 25 pounds, and the Maxx 4A only about 35 pounds. Both work well for assembly performances up to 300. The larger 4A is better if you play in a band, need more bass, or plan on using it outdoors for large groups. FBT makes another powered speaker, the Jolly 8 BA, that weighs in at only 15 pounds. Other manufacturers of powered speakers include Mackie, EV, and Yorkville. EAW and KV2 Audio make some of the best powered speakers on the planet, but be prepared to pay more in dollars and weight.

#### *Mixers*

The choices here are endless: powered, unpowered, with digital effects, faders versus rotary knobs, etc. My own preference is usually to put the amp in the speakers and go with a high quality unpowered mixer. More money will get you a cleaner sounding mixer, more flexible EQ, better durability, and hopefully a well-written owner's manual. Mackie makes several small mixers that do well on all these counts. Take a look at their 1202 VLZ Pro (smaller than a phone book) and their newer Onyx 1220. Allen & Heath makes the

PA-12 mixer—my personal favorite—for under \$700. A lot comes down to what level of control (and complexity) you want. Be sure to practice working with a new mixer before using it in your first performance.

There are also mixers that include a built-in amplifier, sometimes even digital effects, and a mini graphic equalizer. The main advantage here is the ease of setup and breakdown. But most of these are entry-level products. Exceptions include the excellent Dynacord Powermate series (a German subsidiary of Electro Voice) and Allen & Heath powered mixers. These can give ten to twenty years of service, compared to one to three years for cheaper brands. The Yamaha EMX series is a couple steps down from these, but is still much better than Behringer and other entry-level products.

#### *Cables*

Be they ever so humble, good quality cables are your friends. Avoid cheap ones that pick up stray noise, develop intermittent loose connections, and lose signal strength. I'm particularly fond of Whirlwind and Pro Co's excellent quad cables. Treat them well, and they'll give many years of trouble-free service.

#### *Microphones*

The main thing is to match the quality of microphone to the system as a whole. The classic Sure SM 57 and SM 58 are good, durable mics for guitar and voice starting at under \$100. The Beta versions are a step up in sound quality and resistance to feedback. For the best sound, consider quality condenser mics. Most of these require a mixer with phantom power. I'm especially fond of the Audio Technica Artist Elite series (great value for the money) and Neumann KMS 105 (outstanding vocal mic). Foam windscreens are helpful if you're ever playing outdoors or if you work very close to your vocal mic.

#### *Mic Stands and Speaker Stands*

Buy a cheap stand and you'll get to do it again—and again. Invariably it will strip or break, usually at the most inconvenient time possible. Buy a good one and it may well last your lifetime. I love Ultimate Support speaker stands and their customer service. The K & M mic stands they import from Germany are also exceptional.

*If you don't live it, it won't come out of your horn.*

—Charlie Parker

Equipment options go on and on. But in the end, remember, it's still about the music and the soul of the performance. You'll find more suggestions and links at my Web site. Please drop an e-mail or give a call if you have additional questions.

*A former Audubon naturalist and Peace Corps volunteer, Steve lives on a farm with his wife and various creatures. He is a noted recording artist, author, and performer in schools, town halls, and symphony halls. You can contact him through his Web site at [www.NightHeron.com](http://www.NightHeron.com).*





## MUSIC WITH OLDER KIDS:

### Musical Success with Special Needs Kids

by Joanie Calem

**T**his past school year I had the opportunity to teach in a local charter school for students grades one to eight who had been diagnosed with ADHD or Asperger's syndrome. My son had started at this school in September, and when I discovered that they did not have a music teacher or a program, I volunteered, and that eventually turned into a paying job. Because of the nature of the student population, I was not expected to stick to a curriculum, and because the school had no money to invest in anything, I was left to my own devices and encouraged to be creative. The principal would greet me most days with, "May the force be with you!" and a quick review of who was bouncing off of which walls. Attention spans were certainly an issue, and neurological overload was a real challenge, because music can often be too loud and too chaotic for children with Asperger's. But working with rhythm and providing them with something to do with their hands somehow became a surefire solution for getting us all moving in the same direction.

I found that a number of the songs were real hits, especially when kids got to accompany the songs with shakers or Orff-style hand motions. To my surprise, historical or traditional songs, modern songs, and some folk dances went over very well. Some of the traditional folk songs that got everyone singing were: "Train Is A-Comin" (I change it to a seasonal zipper song); "Rattlin' Bog" (a serial additive song like "There Was a Tree"); "Dem Bones;" "Sing Noel;" "We Shall Overcome."

Some well-liked historical songs were: "Follow the Drinking Gourd;" "Paddy Works On the Railway;" "Drill Ye Tarriers."

And some folk dances that went over big (though in some of the classes we had the "Oooh, I can't be next to a girl" syndrome) were: "Rig A Jig Jig;" "Seven Steps;" "Cedar Swamp."

"What A Wonderful World," made famous by Louis Armstrong, was the school favorite, I would say, because just about everyone knew it somehow, if only from its recent re-appearance in the Dreamworks movie *Madagascar*. Two classes used it as a songwriting project, rewriting the lyrics and inserting the things that they feel make the world a wonderful place. We discovered incredible poets among some of the kids who got into trouble the most at school and who were considered to be particularly out of control. And they received the accompanying benefit of raised self-esteem from gaining higher respect from the teachers, who suddenly learned of talents they didn't know the kids had.


A number of songs by CMNers were big hits: "Hey Little Ant" by Phil Hoose; "So Long Mom" and "Listen to Me" by Bill Harley; "So Many Ways to Be Smart" by Stuart Stotts; and "Namaste" by Joanne Hammil. They also liked "Walk A Mile" by Jay Mankita.

Rhythm in clapping games and call and response songs like Ruth Pelham's "Hand-Clapping Band," "Shoo La Loo," "Here Comes a Bluebird," and "All Around the Kitchen" were successful. We used games like "Echo the Rhythm" and "Pass a Rhythm," and did drum circles using Remo's Sound Shapes. (Check them out; they come in different shapes and therefore have different sounds. You can set them up like



a steel drum band with different shapes doing different rhythms.)

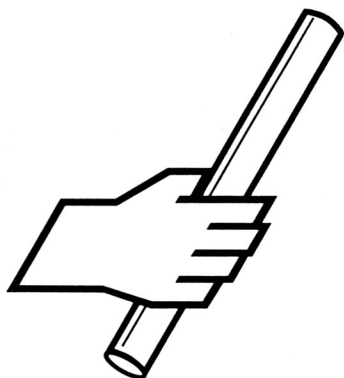
But what everyone seemed to enjoy the most were songs and games using Boomwhackers, which, to my surprise and happiness, did not become weapons even in this population. Boomwhackers are colored light plastic tubes, which, when struck on the floor, produce musical tones. They come in varying sizes (with varying colors to match), and thus a set can be tuned to a pentatonic scale or a diatonic scale. We used them as accompaniments to folk dances, learning A and B sections of a dance by either dancing solo or with a partner with the Boomwhackers. We did rhythm circles using a pattern like *play—rest—pass—switch* or *play—play/play—pass—switch* (ta ti-ti pass switch) and other rhythms before the Boomwhackers were passed around the circle. We separated into "chord" groups for a number of two-chord folk songs and played simple accompaniments. We used them in pentatonic arrangements as accompaniments to some of the songs listed above. We played listening games with a song I wrote called "Hey Everybody" (see page 9) where everyone received two different Boomwhackers and had to play their note/color in the right rhythm at the right time.

In short, we all had a great time. Personally, I walked away with a much better sense of what middle schoolers, in particular, are interested in musically and what a school can provide. School-time music is not going to provide the music that these kids are listening to on their iPods, but current music is strong on rhythm (obviously), and my parting thoughts to the school were that they need to establish an instrumental program. Then they could watch their students blossom into the amazing percussionists that I suspect most of today's young teenagers innately are. 



# HEY EVERYBODY

by Joanie Calem  
© 2000



This is a Boomwhacker play-along song Joanie has used in the school where she teaches. For those who are not familiar with Boomwhackers, they are light plastic tubes of various lengths and colors. When struck on the floor, they produce musical tones, one tone to a color. The colors sung in the lyrics correspond to the notes that the Boomwhacker colors play.

With a swing ♩ = 130



Hey ev - 'ry - bo - dy, list-en up! List - en for your note.



List - en for your rhy - thm, list - en for your co - lor, list - en for your note.

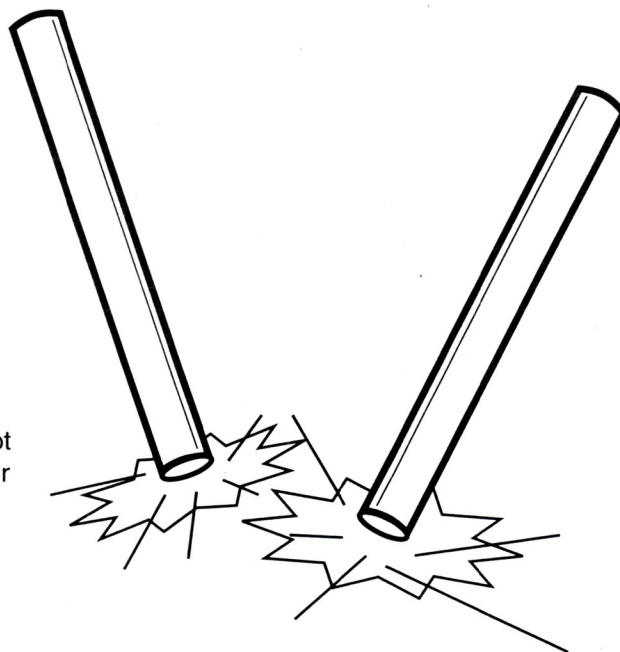


Pur - ple red, pur - ple red. dark green, yel - low, dark green, yel - low.

Hey everybody, listen up! Listen for your note.  
Listen for your rhythm, listen for your color, listen for your note.  
Purple red, purple red. dark green, yellow, dark green, yellow.

How we played it:

As we sang the refrain, everyone kept a steady beat either on the ground or playing both Boomwhackers in the air. When we got really good, we did various patterns during that part, like "floor floor, air" or "floor, air, floor." We played each two-note pattern for four measures at the end before repeating the refrain and then changing the color/note combination and the rhythm. After we got good with two notes/colors we played with three, then four. (Never got to five!) We eventually did the song calling out note names rather than colors.



Joanie Calem is the Songs Editor for Pass It On! She solicits, edits, engraves, and researches the songs.



## Media Waves

### Embracing Gutenberg

by P. J. Swift



In this increasingly wired and wireless media world, there remains a place for the printed word. The joy of sitting down with a newspaper or curling up with a book has never been surpassed. Sure, the Web has audio, and streaming, and vivid, interactive graphics. But you know what they say about radio—it beats TV because the pictures are better. The same can be said for the images we weave in our minds through print.

Print for a targeted audience makes even more sense. For instance, ask your local paper for a mention of your new CD release and chances are you'll be buried in one sentence of the Styles section, right next to the society blab. But do the same for your local parenting newspaper—that free community paper that lets families know what's going on in your area—and you might be invited to be the focus of an article. And you'll be reaching exactly the people who care about kids.

But how do you get your CD reviewed in these papers? What makes a reviewer single out your new CD for printed praise? For those answers and more, I asked Fred Koch from Chicago, who writes reviews for *Chicago Parent* and *Parents' Choice*, and John Wood from Los Angeles, who writes a syndicated column for an association of parenting newspapers called *United Parenting Publications*. I also tapped Lynne Heffley, who has covered children's music for the *Los Angeles Times* for nearly twenty years and has been one of the primary reviewers for the audio candidates for *Parents' Choice*. Collectively, these reviewers have over sixty years' experience in presenting the best of children's music to the print audience. They also have a lot of advice.

"Good children's music, regardless of type or style, should offer young listeners the same high-level production values, polished musicianship and well-crafted lyrics that adults expect, as well as content that's appropriate to target age levels," says Lynne Heffley. "Good children's music doesn't lecture, patronize, or pander. When it's bad, however, it is very, very bad: a wince-producing mess of sugary sweetness; canned, synthesized pop blandness; nerve-plucking loudness; or cynical attitude."

Reviewers often have to wade through mounds of product to find those high-level offerings. "The most startling thing that I came to realize when I started reviewing for *Chicago Parent* magazine in 1997 was that the children's music market is over saturated with product!" laments Fred Koch. "I never really had a clue as to how many people were out there producing music for children. Being involved in the industry as an artist/clinician at the time, I thought I had a handle on who was doing what in the children's music field. So please understand that if a reviewer does not choose your music to review, it often is simply because it is impossible to get to all product that deserves recognition. I cannot state this enough—it is very competitive out there!" Lynne agrees: "I can only review a small percentage of what I receive."

This competitive environment is a two-edged sword. Fred notes, "Because of my work as a reviewer, K-4 music educator, and performing artist/producer myself, I have listened to an enormous amount of

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to be read  
by  
CMN members  
upon request.

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If you know someone who is interested in children's music and reads Braille, contact the CMN office to have us send them a copy.



children's audio over the years. As a result—and there are two ways to look at it—either my standards have risen or I've just become really picky about what I will recommend. For a CD to get my attention, and I know this is all very subjective, it has to say something in a unique and refreshing way. It has to demonstrate that time and effort has been put into every detail from the songwriting and musical arrangements to the artwork and accompanying booklet. And that is not to say that I don't love traditional approaches to music for children because, for instance, there are many straight-ahead folk-oriented CDs that I admire, but there has to be that intangible spark for me—no matter what the musical style."

And yes, you can judge a book by its cover. Or rather, a CD. "A cover speaks volumes to me," says John Wood, "and honestly, I have set a CD aside for awhile because of the lack of forethought regarding the cover art: first impressions are important. Conversely, some companies or individuals have great covers and weak or overly recycled material."

How you approach a reviewer is important, too. Some prefer significant advance notice. "I like a two- to three-month lead time prior to the release of a new CD," notes John Wood. "In the submission packet, I prefer background material, price, CD only, contact info, and release date. I'm not really interested in publicity pictures per se. I usually scan the cover art or pull from a site for print purposes."

Often, a publicist will help you put your best foot forward. Fred advises, "Put as much money into promotion as humanly possible. I know it is sometimes hard to evaluate how effective hiring a professional PR person can be, but I do know that what you are paying for is not just the fact that they are sending out all the material. You are paying for the connections these folks already

have. A good PR person, because of their established relationship, can get your CD through the door and into the ears of reviewers and writers in a way that you or I can't. And if your music is a cut above the ordinary, you have a chance to get some good press. I am still amazed how even some of the brightest of children's music artists do not understand the importance of getting some help with the promotion. It can make a huge difference."

In addition to the CD packet, a gentle "nudging" e-mail often works. John states, "As with anything else, there is a protocol. Try to engage the reviewer in some way—usually e-mails are the best—and develop some sort of a rapport." Fred likes e-mails too, but notes, "Do not expect a reply from everyone you send your materials to—some reviewers won't even let you know that a review has been written."


And be patient. "Know when to call off the dogs when someone tells you that a review will not be forthcoming," pleads Fred. "Though this has happened only a few times with me, it is fruitless for you to try to get a reviewer to review a project when they've already said, 'no.' Some folks have thought that if they become confrontational about it, it will change my mind. Would that work on you?"

In the end, have some perspective on the situation. Remember that you can't please everyone, even among reviewers. "My friend Lynne Heffley at the *Los Angeles Times* and I agree on a lot of CDs but we disagree on the merits of others," John admits. Yet John, Lynne, and Fred all contend that you should do your best to create a quality product. "Simply put, the best children's music—through the quality of its instrumentals, melodies, lyrics, and vocals—shows respect for children and for the adults who listen with them," Lynne notes. Take care and the world will (eventually) notice.

And remember to focus on what brought you into field in the first place. "Find enjoyment in sharing your music with children," states Fred. "That's the most important thing."

#### **To get your CD reviewed in print and online:**

- You can contact Fred Koch at [fred@bestchildrensmusic.com](mailto:fred@bestchildrensmusic.com); and check out his Web site, [www.bestchildrensmusic.com](http://www.bestchildrensmusic.com).
- John Wood can be reached through [john@kidzmusic.com](mailto:john@kidzmusic.com); his Web site is [www.kidzmusic.com](http://www.kidzmusic.com).
- Lynne Heffley can be reached through [lynne.heffley@latimes.com](mailto:lynne.heffley@latimes.com).

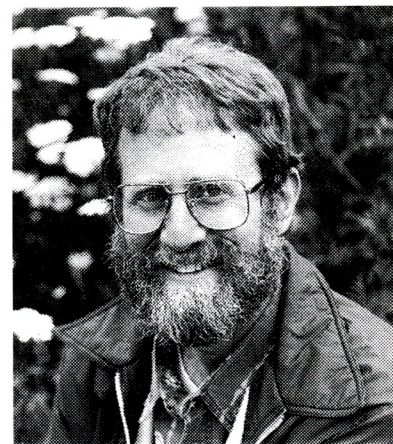
*P. J. Swift often curls up with a good newspaper and a warm guinea pig in Santa Cruz, California.* 

### **In Memoriam**

Bob Blue

Massachusetts

March 2006



*photo: Ann B. Morse*

**Bob Blue, 1948–2006**



# COURAGE

words and music by Bob Blue

© Bob Blue

"Courage" was first printed in *PIO!* back in the days when our journal was simply a newsletter and included songs published in handwritten form. Because this song is such a CMN favorite and so brilliantly written, we felt it warranted another printing. "Courage" is an example of Bob Blue's genius and his ability to cover a profound concept by presenting it in a seemingly simple form. What appears to be merely a children's song about junior high school friends and social groups turns out to be about a much deeper and tougher topic. You can hear a stunningly beautiful and moving version of this song—from the CD *The Best of Bob Blue*—under the antibias category of the Peace Resources Page on the CMN Web site, [www.cmnonline.org](http://www.cmnonline.org).

Reflectively ♩ = 50

1. A small thing once hap - pened at school that  
 2. The thing a - bout Taft Jun - ior High is,  
 3. In one class at Taft Jun - ior High we  
 4. The world was a - ware of this hell, but

brought up a ques - tion for me.  
 se - crets don't last ver - y long.  
 stud - y what peo - ple have done  
 how man - y cried out in shame?

And some - how it forced me to see the  
 I act - ed like noth - ing was wrong when  
 with gas cham - ber, bomb - er, and to gun in  
 What he - roes, and who was to blame? A

price that I pay to be cool.  
 I saw Di - ane start to cry.  
 Ausch - witz, Ja - pan, and My Lai.  
 stor - y that no one dared tell.

Di - ane is a girl that I know. She's  
 I know you un - may der think that I'm cruel. It  
 I don't pro - mise to stand do what I learn. Some -  
 I can to

strange, like she does - n't be - long.  
 does - n't make me sit ver - y proud.  
 times I just there and cry.  
 not let it hap - pen a gain,

I don't mean to say that that's wrong. We  
 I just went a long with the crowd. It's  
 The whole world stood id - l - y by to



# Courage

continued from previous page

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are written below the notes, and chords are indicated above the staff. The score is divided into several systems, each with a key signature change indicated by a sharp sign (#).

Chords: D, G, G7, C, G, C, G, G/F#, Em7, Bm7, A7, Dsus4, D7, D7, C, G.

Lyrics:

don't like to be with her though. school. burned.  
sad, but as you the have in - to no - cent at  
watch as the the in - no - cent at

And so, when we all made a plan  
You can't pick the friends you pre - fer.  
Like ro - bots o - bey - ing some rule.

to have this big par - ty at Sue's,  
You fit in as well as by you the can.  
A - troc - i - ties done the mob.

most kids in the school got the news,  
I could - n't be friends with the Di - ane  
All in - no - cent, do - ing their job.

but no one in - vit - ed Di - ane. (The)  
'cause then they would treat me like her. (In)  
And what was it for? Was it cool? (The)

to care for all wom - en and men. I'll start by in - vit - ing Di - ane. —

1. A small thing once happened at school that brought up a question for me,  
And somehow it forced me to see the price that I pay to be cool.  
Diane is a girl that I know. She's strange, like she doesn't belong.  
I don't mean to say that that's wrong. We don't like to be with her, though.  
And so, when we all made a plan to have this big party at Sue's,  
Most kids in the school got the news, but no one invited Diane.
2. The thing about Taft Junior High is secrets don't last very long.  
I acted like nothing was wrong when I saw Diane start to cry.  
I know you may think that I'm cruel. It doesn't make me very proud.  
I just went along with the crowd. It's sad, but you have to in school.  
You can't pick the friends you prefer. You fit in as well as you can.  
I couldn't be friends with Diane, 'cause then they would treat me like her.
3. In one class at Taft Junior High, we study what people have done  
With gas chamber, bomber, and gun in Auschwitz, Japan, and My Lai.  
I don't understand all I learn. Sometimes I just sit there and cry.  
The whole world stood idly by to watch as the innocent burned.  
Like robots obeying some rule. Atrocities done by the mob.  
All innocent, doing their job. And what was it for? Was it cool?
4. The world was aware of this hell, but how many cried out in shame?  
What heroes, and who was to blame? A story that no one dare tell.  
I promise to do what I can to not let it happen again,  
To care for all women and men.  
I'll start by inviting Diane.





We are pleased to announce that the 2006 recipient of CMN's Magic Penny Award will be Nona Beamer. An extensive interview with her was published in *Pass It On!* #17, Summer, 1994. For those CMNers who

were not members back then, we have reprinted a long excerpt from it, here, in this issue. Phil Hoose, who conducted the interview in 1994, sent this statement:

*"Of all the interviews I've ever done for Pass it On!, none was more memorable than the conversation below with this year's Magic Penny Award recipient Nona Beamer. Always I had the feeling that I was in the presence of someone who had altered the very history of the place where we were talking. She listened very carefully to questions, and often answered with stories. She was profound, passionate, and funny. Nona's unforgettable presence and the insights she offered, coupled with the sheer, soft beauty of our setting, made this an exchange I will long remember."*



## **"KEEP YOUR LOVE"**

### **An Interview with Nona Beamer**

conducted by Phil Hoose

**A**n interview with Nona Beamer does not begin at once. First there are papayas to cut and spread out on the table, pineapples to sample, children to discuss, Hawaiian plovers—streamlined shorebirds who will soon take flight for Alaska—to admire as they feed on the lawn. Hers is a wide, often smiling, freckled face with strong cheekbones, framed with still-black hair. She listens attentively, laughs frequently, corrects mispronunciations gently, and, as often as possible, answers a question with a story.

Winona Kapuailo-hiamanonokalani Desha Beamer is a renowned teacher, composer, choreographer, historian, and originator of Hawaiiana, a word she coined in 1948 to mean "the study of the very best in Hawaiian culture." She has spent nearly sixty years studying and transmitting the beauty and complexity of her Hawaiian heritage. Singing to and with children is the very heart of her work.

Nona grew up on Hawai'i, which is also known as the "Big Island," the easternmost and by far the largest of the 132 islands in the Hawaiian chain. It is an island formed of still-active volcanoes. It is a land of black lava, whose coastline is cut with thousand-foot waterfalls and fringed with beaches of black and green sands which were formed instantly when glowing rivers of lava hissed into the Pacific. The city of Hilo, where Nona grew up and lives now, is located in the rain shadow of the giant, still active volcano Mauna Loa. One of the wettest cities on earth, Hilo is also the world's orchid capital.

The Big Island provided the stage for the most telling early encounters between indigenous Hawaiian people, who had first reached the islands from eastern Asia perhaps 1,500 years earlier, and white explorers. It was at the island's Kealahou Bay that captain James Cook, the renowned British circumnavigator who "discovered" Hawaii in 1778, was slain the following year in a skirmish over a boat.

Cook's crewmates returned to England with stories of an island paradise centrally located in the Pacific. Almost overnight Hawaii became an important Pacific base for trading ships and whaling vessels. Within a few decades the cooperative subsistence economy which had been developed in harmony with a Pacific island ecosystem was transformed into a forced economy of trade.

Foreigners carried diseases that halved the native population by 1820, as well as guns and metal tools that were quickly employed by chiefs and kings. In 1819 a civil conflict arose between native Hawaiians faithful to traditional beliefs and those favoring the new, white ways. Using weapons provided by whites, the reformers prevailed. Within days, temples were torched and the old religions forbidden. Coincidentally, in that very same year of 1819 the first missionaries to Hawaii—a group of militant Calvinists who could not accept the Congregational Church's ever-relaxing stand on the doctrine of predestination—set sail from Boston. They arrived in a sweltering Pacific climate wearing long-sleeved New England woollens. The Hawaiians they met were in an historic moment of instability, their entire belief system having collapsed just months before. The Christian soldiers sized them up as bewildered primitives and set about the century-long work of purifying them of sin.

First they sought to scrub from Hawaiian customs, poetry, games, chants, and dances the sin they detected everywhere. They were especially shocked by the slow, swaying hula, through which much of the long and magnificent history and culture of Hawaii was transmitted.

A century later, when Nona Beamer grew up, Hawaiian culture was still under attack, now often by disheartened Hawaiians themselves. Children were taught to look forward toward an Americanized future, not backwards toward their

Photo above: Nona at the family concert after the 2003 CMN National Conference in Los Angeles; by Ingrid Noyes.



kings and queens. Most children went to English schools, where the teaching of Hawaiian was forbidden or simply neglected.

Born in 1923, Nona was raised by her grandmother, Helen Kapuailohia Desha Beamer—whom she called “Sweetheart Grandma”—in the time-honored Hawaiian tradition of *hanai*, a sort of informal adoption. At that time Hawaiian traditions were quietly maintained by an underground of families, usually led by determined women like Sweetheart Grandma. Seating the members of her family before her on rows of mats in her living room, Sweetheart Grandma taught them the many chants and stories and subtle varieties of hula that she knew. Transfixed from the start, Nona absorbed all she could of her grandmother’s remarkable knowledge. Soon she was more than a student. Nona performed her first hula in public at the age of three, and by eleven was teaching hula in her mother’s Waikiki studio.

As a schoolgirl, Nona repeatedly challenged her school’s anti-Hawaiian policies, demanding explanations and teaching chants and hulas to her friends. After graduating, she created her own course of Hawaiian study at Barnard College and then returned to Hawaii and took over her mother’s Honolulu dance studio, where she conducted teacher workshops on how to transmit Hawaiian culture to children.

Along the way she also became a very famous entertainer in Hawaii. She has produced many records and videos and has organized countless productions of Hawaiian dance. (She recognizes nearly 250 varieties of hula.) She taught movie stars such as Mary Pickford, Jane Russell, and Sonja Henie how to approximate Hawaiian movement before a camera without embarrassment. Her two sons, Keola and Kapono Beamer, also became famous by playing traditional Hawaiian instruments in somewhat

contemporary arrangements. Their album *Honolulu City Lights* is far and away the best selling recording in the history of Hawaii.

Above all, Nona Beamer has sought to preserve her culture by using music to teach children. At her studio, and in classrooms wherever she goes, children surround “Auntie Nona” as soon as they see her. They pull at her muu muu and fling their arms around her neck and run their fingers through the wreath of flowers in her hair. And they learn. Through her music, her stories, the chants and dances, Nona passes to them the love and pride that Sweetheart Grandma gave to her. And the flame of Hawaiiana grows brighter.

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**PIO!: Please tell us about the Kamehameha Schools, which, as I understand it, were set up to educate children of Hawaiian blood. Is that right?**

NB: Yes, there is a boys’ school and a girls’ school. They were founded in the 1880s and are maintained through the income of the estate of Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop. She was the last descendant of the Kamehamehas, beginning with the kings, one through five.

**PIO!: You’ve taught there for many years. Did you also attend?**

NB: Yes, from seventh grade on. Before that I had gone to an English standard school in Honolulu. My great-grandfather had gone to the trouble of building a home near Honolulu so that all the children in our family could leave the Big Island to go to an English school. I come from a long line of students from Kamehameha. My grandmother was in the first graduating class for girls. My parents met as students there. I entered in 1935.

**PIO!: If your great-grandfather insisted on an English grade school for you, why didn’t he object to the “Hawaiian” high school?**

NB: We wish that the school’s theme was to preserve Hawaiian culture,

but the school’s theme is “to produce good and industrious men and women.” That’s a carryover from the missionary days. I think the Kamehameha School was the first Hawaiian institution to formally say, “No language, no culture.” We did have our staple food, poi, once a week, but *that* was it. We learned everything else in an English way: how to set the table, which fork to use, how to hold a teacup. To a lot of us, this wasn’t sufficient. We wanted language and culture and chant and dance. Along these lines I was expelled twice for being “willful.” I wanted to see the Princess’s will establishing the school: I asked the principal and the trustees, “Did this princess say in her will that Hawaiians would not be taught their language? Or their chanting? Or their dancing? We were told that it was the Princess’s wish, in her will.” So I said I wanted to see the will. They were puritanical and narrow. Very conservative.

**PIO!: That’s one expulsion—tell us about the other.**

NB: I started a Hawaiian club at Kamehameha when I was twelve, in my first year there. And I got expelled for that, too. We wanted so badly to be Hawaiian. My friends kept asking me, “Can’t you teach us how to chant, can’t you teach us something about the Creation Chant of the Hawaiian people?” Well, I had come from a big family, and we were used to talking together, dancing together, singing together in our home, so I had some knowledge to share. I had been teaching informally since I was very young. I was the oldest child in my family, and I had cousins, too, that I had to supervise. I told them stories. The best ingredient of a big family is storytelling. I would come home, change into my play clothes, and we would go out. We’d have a snack and a rest period. We’d lie out on the lanai, and look up at the clouds and make up stories about the shapes until the children were asleep.

*continued on page 17 ➤*





Nona wrote this lullaby as a hula dance in appreciation for the shells so ever-present on Hawaii. Hawaiian pronunciation is similar to Spanish. The rhythm of the songs echoes the rhythms of the waves on the beach, and, obviously, the rhythms of the hula dance. Sing it with your classes and dream of peaceful Hawaiian beaches.

*\*pronunciation: Poo - poo*

Pū - pū hi - nu - hi - nu, pū - pū hi - nu - hi - nu -  
hee-noo hee - noo poo - poo hee - noo hee - noo

e, o ke ka - ha - kai, ka - ha - kai e, Pū -  
eh o kay kah - hah - keye kah - hah - keye eh poo -

pū hi - nu - hi - nu e. Pū - mo - e, e.  
poo hee - noo hee - noo eh poo - mo - eh, e.

*\*a is ah as in paw, e is eh as in hey, i is ee as in she, o is oh as in no, u is oo as in shoe (more pure oo than ewe)*

**Text:**  
Pūpū hinuhinu,  
pūpū hinuhinu e,  
o ke kahakai,  
kahakai e,  
pūpū hinuhinu e.

**Literal Translation:**  
Shell shiny  
shell shiny  
of the oceanside,  
oceanside  
shell shiny

**Poetic Translation:**  
My shell so shiny,  
my shiny little shell,  
I found you by the  
seashore,  
my shell, shiny shell.

**\*Pronunciation:**  
poo-poo hee-noo-hee-noo  
poo-poo hee-noo-hee-noo eh  
o kay kah-hah-keye  
kah-hah-keye eh  
poo-poo hee-noo-hee-noo eh

Pūpū hinuhinu,  
pūpū hinuhinu e,  
e lohe kakou e,  
pūpū hinuhinu e.

Shell shiny  
Shell shiny  
listen we  
shell shiny.

My shell so shiny,  
my shiny little shell,  
we hear the sound of the sea,  
my shell, shiny shell.

poo-poo hee-noo-hee-noo  
poo-poo hee-noo-hee-noo eh  
eh low-hey ka-ko eh  
poo-poo hee-noo-hee-noo eh

Pūpū hinuhinu,  
pūpū hinuhinu e,  
e moe, e moe,  
e moe, e.

Shell shiny  
shell shiny  
sleep, sleep  
sleep.

My shell so shiny,  
my shiny little shell,  
to sleep, now to sleep,  
to sleep, to sleep.

poo-poo hee-noo-hee-noo  
poo-poo hee-noo-hee-noo eh  
e mo-eh, e.

\*a is ah as in paw, e is eh as in hey, i is ee as in she, o is oh as in no, u is oo as in shoe (more pure oo than ewe)





In fact, I had started teaching professionally in my mother's studio just a month or so before. She had opened the studio in Honolulu in 1927. She taught hula, Hawaiian dancing, and chanting. I started teaching in the summer of 1935, just before I became twelve years old. My first student was Mary Pickford, the movie actress. My mother was ill that morning, so my father took my sister and me down to the studio. We opened the studio and looked at the appointment book. It said: "8:00, Mary Pickford." Then my father said, "Have a good day," and left.

**PIO!:** *What was Mary Pickford like?*

NB: Oh, she was lovely; sweet and gentle. She had very soft hands. We were trying to do "To you, Sweet-heart, Aloha." [Sings it, completely, and with tender expression.] She was very dear. And her feet were tiny. In fact, my eleven-year-old feet were bigger than hers. She helped me get over the shyness of teaching someone outside my own family.

**PIO!:** *When did you first know you wanted to teach Hawaiian culture to children as a profession?*

NB: That same autumn. The very first day of school at Kamehameha I saw a notice on the bulletin board: "Any girls interested in teaching Hawaiian children at the Kaka'ako Mission School please sign up." I signed up. I said to myself, "I know how to teach. Why, just last month I taught Mary Pickford."

The next week we went down to the mission school and met these little children. They were very poor. They really didn't know much about sanitation. There were running sores and scabs of impetigo on their arms and legs.

I began storytelling, and chanting, and writing songs. I had started out by chanting about this little bird [chants ko-lea, ko-lea] and the children would huddle up and

whimper. They were frightened because, as city children, they hadn't heard chanting. So I added notes and made it a song, and I thought, "That's the way to reach these children: sing to them."

Actually it started while I was bathing the children. So we were given big washtubs and big bars of soap, like tar soap, vile-smelling brown cakes of soap. It wasn't a task that I particularly liked, so I began singing to myself as I scrubbed their hair and feet. [sings] One by one they'd leave the other two lines and come join my line, because I was the singing lady. Before I knew it I had a long line of children to bathe. That's what started me singing to children.

**PIO!:** *Was this the first time they had heard melody?*

NB: Oh yes. They were little kids. And poor. Maybe some of them had been to church. Only now are we beginning to develop that area of town.

**PIO!:** *You have also studied Hawaiian culture academically, haven't you?*

NB: Yes, I had a Guggenheim Fellowship to Barnard and a foreign student scholarship to Columbia. I wanted to get a degree in Hawaiian Culture. No such thing at Barnard. The anthropology that I could get a degree in required me to study four years of German. I said, "I don't have time." I didn't have time to study Indian or Polynesian either. I had to go home and earn a living. So I just carved a niche out for myself. Here in Hawaii, at the university, the regents said they couldn't grant me a degree because there was no way I could earn a living in Hawaiian culture. And I've made a living in it all my life. They had no foresight that there was real educational value in the culture. There's lots of educational value in all cultures if we just have the eyes to see it. They were too busy trying to suppress our culture, too busy trying to change us. We have to be what we are: Hawaiians.

**PIO!:** *When you got home, how did you set about earning a living and making your own way?*

NB: I started by going back to my mother's studio. At the beginning, her students were from all the local families in Waikiki. Then the tourist industry began to build up in the '30s, and Pearl Harbor gave Hawaii more recognition in the '40s. The studio grew like Topsy. Then when I came home from college I knew I had to teach and I had to help my mother. My father wanted to retire and move back to Hilo, to ranch. So I took over the studio. My mother handed me the keys and kissed me goodbye. I was twenty-four. But now I wasn't nervous.

Then I started teaching at Kamehameha in 1949. They had no Hawaiiana department until I got one started. I fought for twenty years to get the trustees to include a preschool. I said, "The culture has to be taught *there*, down in the early years, not as a pre-college course for Hawaiian seniors." It was dreadful. Now all grades are getting Hawaiian culture. I used to be the only one teaching it. Now there is a department of twenty-five.

**PIO!:** *What is your teaching methodology like? Suppose we were in one of your hula classes at the studio.*

NB: First we had an orientation. We let the children get to know each other. All the families were sitting around. We taught children and the parents, too. Establishing good feelings was first. Then determining how to teach a particular group. If there were boys in the class, we would gear in a little more rhythm and a little more action, maybe. If there were teenaged girls, there would have to be some sweetness and glamour, because they wanted to be beautiful. If they were mamas and papas, maybe we would teach them some songs and dances that the King Kalakaua and Queen Liliuokalani did.

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**Interview: Nona Beamer**

➔ *continued from previous page*

**PIO!:** *I noticed today when I was at a bookstore chain a big "Hawaiiana" department. I understand you coined the word. How did that happen?*

NB: Well, I was working with a group of teachers—I have done teacher workshops for nearly sixty years now—and I wrote on the board one day that we were going to study Hawaii'ana and I underlined it. "Ana" is like measuring the very best of everything. We were going to teach the very best of the literature, songs, dances, chants, and poetry of Hawaii. I meant it not to mean "a collection of," but rather "the best of."

**PIO!:** *It's amazing, isn't it, how recent the history of Hawaiian settlement is, when you compare it to the mainland. Captain Cook didn't arrive here until the American Revolution was well underway. If you started learning Hawaiian culture at age three, you've been witness to nearly a third of the time since Europeans arrived.*

NB: It's true. My parents actually knew Queen Liliuokalani. Especially my father. I so wish I had. She died in 1917. And I was born in 1923. My parents tell charming stories of her waving from an open surrey. Once my father saw the tips of her fingers coming out of her gloves as she waved. And he went home crying to my grandmother that the Queen was so poor that she couldn't buy new gloves. Of course that was the English style.

**PIO!:** *I have been reading as much as I can about Queen Lili. What a remarkable woman. She was queen at the time Hawaii was annexed by the U.S. and taken over by a small junta of sugar growers, backed by a few boatloads of soldiers. The remarkable thing to me is that during the eight months she was imprisoned, she spent much of her time writing 200 songs and chants. Have those songs been important to your work?*

NB: Her life has been important and inspiring and educational to me. Not just from the standpoint of what a wonderful woman she was but because she shared her feelings and her tenderness and her compassion. Even after they imprisoned her

she wrote "The Queen's Prayer," in which she asks for forgiveness for those who were unkind to her. So much of her life involved music, and teaching, and children. All my life I have taught Queen Lili's songs and music to children.

**PIO!:** *Was ever a time when all trace of Hawaiian culture was almost lost forever?*

NB: Yes. King Kalakaua who became king in 1874 and ruled until 1891 gave it resurgence and renaissance. He was noted for his revival of the Hawaiian culture and customs, and the hula. The Merry Monarch Hula Festival, a magnificent festival of dance that occurs on the Big Island each May, is named for him. After his death the culture just had to stay alive underground. A lot of the families practiced it underground, sometimes not even openly in their own homes. My own family is an example: there was my grandmother in 1902 beginning to teach and my mother in 1927.

**PIO!:** *So the Beamer family really were pioneers.*

NB: Yes, I think so. We loved the history. My first excitement in being Hawaiian was through the chants. We didn't know anything about ourselves until we learned the chants. I had learned some of them as a girl, but there were many more. I just finished volume two of a collection of chants for University Press and in September I'll begin volume three. The focus of volume three is now going to be my students who are composing new chants and teaching in a more creative manner. Now the culture is flourishing. Did you get to see the Merry Monarch Festival? That is the most stunning example of the resurgence of our culture. The pride. Oh, the love that comes right across through these young students. Their faces are alive and their bodies are alive. It's such a heartwarming thing to see. They are living the resurgence. I'm just one of thousands of others in the same predicament.

**PIO!:** *Surely your work has influenced the grade school curriculum in Hawaii.*

NB: I think it has had some impact. Teachers workshops were my forte. My idea was that the way to reach the children was in the classroom. So many teachers, not having had any Hawaii'ana, would ask me to do these workshops in order to bring information to the children. I did many, many teacher workshops on the islands, and on the mainland, too. I was doing California workshops forty years ago.


**PIO!:** *How do you connect, or how do you feel your work connects with the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement?*

NB: Well, I was on the Native Hawaiian Study Commission ten years ago when this issue first came to the fore. And the mandate was to study the needs and the concerns of the Hawaiian people. We found first that there was a psychological hurt that had occurred at the period of contact [with whites] when the culture was suppressed. That this hurt was carried over from generation to generation. That we were feeling it today. That we were crying for the same things that our great-grandparents cried for: to have our identity and to have some self-determination. I think the general desire is—much like the [American] Indian culture—to have a nation within a nation. We can work within the framework of the United States, but we must keep our identity, as the Indians have. The Maoris want to keep their culture. It's much the same with native cultures all over the world.

**PIO!:** *When you think about cultures around the world, what do you think is so special about being Hawaiian?*

NB: The reputation of Hawaii precedes it as being a very warm and loving place. And this spirit of aloha is very real. I think that has permeated the world. Perhaps we have gained a reputation for warmth and friendliness and being a loving people?

**PIO!:** *More than perhaps.*

NB: [warmly] I think so too. 



# DÌU SHǒU JUÀN

## Chinese children's game

Laura Koulish learned this song/game from Qin Zhu, who teaches music at the San Francisco Chinese-American International School. It is a well-known favorite, sung by children throughout China.



### Transliteration:

Dìu shǒu juàn, dìu shǒu juàn,  
qīng qīng dī fāng zài xiǎo péng yǒu dī hòu miàn.  
Dà jiā bú yào gào sù tā.  
Kuài kuài, kuài kuài zhua zhu tā.  
Kuài kuài, kuài kuài zhua zhu tā.

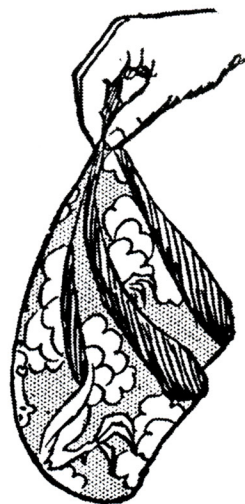
### Translation:

Drop the scarf, drop the scarf,  
Quietly put the scarf behind somebody.  
Everybody, don't tell him or her.  
Hurry up, hurry up, catch him or her.  
Hurry up, hurry up, catch him or her.

Children sit in a circle with their hands behind their backs. One child goes around the circle, holding a scarf. The child drops the scarf in back of a child in the circle (after "péng yǒu dī hòu miàn"). That child picks up the scarf and runs after the original scarfholder, who tries to run back to the place where the chaser was sitting. The game starts again with the new child circling with the scarf.

### English Pronunciation:

Dee-oh shoh joo-ehn, dee-oh shoh joo-ehn,  
Cheeng cheeng duh fuhng tsai  
shee-ow puhng yoh duh hoh mee-ehn.  
Dah ji-ah boo yah koh soo tah.  
Kwahee kwahee kwahee kwahee jooah joo tah.  
Kwahee kwahee kwahee kwahee jooah joo tah.





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# Music in Bloom

## Rollickin' Rhythm Sticks

by Marie E. Hopper

It's time to explore the wonderful world of rhythm sticks in the early childhood music circle. While some folks might be concerned about the wisdom of putting sticks into the hands of young children, we hope to dispel any concerns you may have in the following few paragraphs.

For this column, I put together a panel of experienced rhythm-stick instructors: Joanie Calem (JC), Amy Conley (AC), Pam Donkin (PD), Carole Peterson (CP), Kathy Reid-Naiman (KR-N), Tina Stone (TS), Becky Wellman (BW), and myself (MH). A series of questions were posed and the answers compiled. And, with a stick roll, please, here are the tidbits of wisdom you have been waiting for!

### What kinds of rhythm sticks do you use?

**JC:** I bought simple ones from Rhythm Band Instruments, and fluted ones as well that I call "guiro sticks," and bring them out when I bring out the guiros.

**AC:** I use two kinds: 6" natural wood and also red plastic LP Rhythmix ones (plain and fluted), which are much easier to wash.

**CP:** I use economy claves from Rhythm Band Instruments. They are shorter, fatter, and seem to make children less inclined to see them as weapons than true rhythm sticks. My fours and fives make their own out of 1" dowels, cut in 9" lengths, which they sand and paint.

**KR-N:** I use a variety. With babies I use 6" smooth dowels that are easy to hold; for older children I like the longer ribbed ones.

**TS:** It depends. With toddlers and preschoolers, I cut down 6' x 1/2" pine dowels into 6" lengths, and sand and urethane them, keeping them all a neutral color (to prevent the "I want the red ones" syndrome). With kindergarteners, I use 6' x 1" pine dowels, cut in 7" lengths. For my own use, I invested in a single pair of rosewood claves that I use when establishing a rhythm.

**BW:** Use the little ones. The big ones may be cheaper and more accessible, but it's too easy for little people to take someone's eye out. The little sticks are more appropriate for their hand size and abilities. I've found that I have a decrease in accidental head trauma since using them (although I can't say as much about the purposeful acts).

And Pam and Marie use 12" standard sticks in which one is smooth and one is fluted.



### What makes a good "rhythm stick" song?

We all agreed that almost any song with a good strong beat and clear instructions works as a stick song. Sometimes a song will be obvious, such as those that refer to banging, tapping, rubbing, etc. Other songs might invite the children to play one way, listen for a cue, and then play in a different way. Songs with clear contrasts are also fun and a great way to reinforce the concepts of fast and slow, loud and quiet, stop and go. We also like songs that we can sing while playing the sticks rather than using recorded music.

### Why use rhythm sticks in early childhood music?

The number one reason? Because the children just *love* them! Rhythms sticks are fun and easy. They are wonderful tools for helping children feel a strong, steady beat and to begin to internalize that beat. As we all know, research continues to show that children with a strong sense of the beat are more likely to be strong readers, less accident- and injury-prone, and more physically coordinated. Using rhythm sticks helps to reinforce those skills and more. In addition, using sticks in a music circle creates a musical community with everyone playing an instrument together or marching around the room in a parade. Sticks also expend a lot of energy, making them a great activity on rainy days. Amy sums it up nicely: "Kids love them because they can use their imaginations while also getting great practice in rhythm development. They are simple enough for even babies to use. I've seen one-year-olds tapping sticks to the music."

### What are one or two of your favorite stick activities?

**KR-N:** I like to use spoken nursery rhymes to show parents that they already know a bunch of songs to use with sticks. We play the imagination game—make bunny ears, kitty cat whiskers, elephant tusks. Make alphabet letters—e.g., X, T, V—and then share with a friend to make other letters such as W and A. Our sticks become imaginary musical instruments such as the violin or the big bass drum.

**CP:** "Weather Rhythms" from my *H.U.M.—Highly Usable Music* CD. It goes through different kinds of weather (sun, rain, snow, etc.) with different tapping patterns for each. "Red Red Robin Stick Dance" from my *Stinky Cake* CD and Hap Palmer's "Woodpecker" in which kids must echo back the pattern they hear played to them.

**JC:** (See the song "My Old Horse Dan" at the end of the column.)



**BW:** I basically use only two songs/rhymes with the kids I currently see. (They're under three and have special needs.) The first is a little tune that I wrote during a boring meeting with which the kids can take turns with each other or with me to decide how we are going to play them (up/down, loud/soft, on the floor, on our shoes, like a T, on the sides, behind our back, etc.). The words are:

Click your sticks. Click your sticks.

You can click them all day. You can click them any way.

Click your sticks. Click your sticks.

The other rhyme I use is "Shoe a Little Horse." The kids love this one. A favorite game I played with the children when I was in a non-special-needs setting was "Switch." The kids pair up and sit facing each other. One child gets sticks while the other plays eggs (or some other shaking instrument that uses both hands). Everyone plays their sticks or eggs while the music is heard. When the music stops, they switch instruments with their partner. I put on some speedy classical music. It's interesting to watch the kids try to motor plan how to change instruments, decide if they shake or click, and get excited about switching.

**TS:** We like to sing "This Old Man." I learned this method at a workshop led by CMN's Kathy Lowe, and it's a favorite. Most kids know the song, and that's half the battle. Another favorite is "Let's Tap Our Sticks Together" by Marie Cass Beggs. (See lyrics and rhythm suggestions for these songs at the end of the column.)

**AC:** I like to sit on the floor and do different things with the sticks, such as hammer the nail, saw the wood, play the drums, play the violin, roll the dough, be a bunny (ears), make a square (partners) or triangle. We make up verses as we sing a song.

**PD:** I like to first beat them on the floor with abandon, then lift them up in the air, then repeat. I also like to show the main beat of the song, the macrobeat, then show the in-between microbeats. I also like to copy what the children are doing.

**MH:** My two favorites are "Wheels on the Bus" and "Recycle." We use our sticks to make the wheels go round, tap for the horn beep, rub for the change clang, with more verses freely added. "Recycle" is so simple yet so popular. This is one song the teachers report back that they hear all day long.

**How do you respond to "But they are so dangerous! Won't they just hit each other with the sticks?"**

Tina's answer sums it up best: "Humbug!"

We all agreed that with proper directions *before* putting the sticks into the children's hands, safety is rarely an issue. In fact, I think that one of the most impor-

tant skills we teach with the sticks is how to extend the understanding of one's physical space and how to coordinate your use of space with other people's use of the same space.

Kathy states, "Some children will use them dangerously if not given direction. Our job as teachers is to give them the tools to make them want to use them safely. If someone is worried about using real sticks, they could start by using fake ones such as small tightly rolled newspaper or cardboard tubes."

Setting the stage with clear, concise, age-appropriate directions is key to using the sticks safely. And using a song to establish good parameters makes it all easier.

**Finally, what are some of the tips and tricks to using rhythm sticks successfully?**

**KR-N:** Keep the stick part of your program short; two or three songs or activities are enough to make it fun but not so long that they will be bored. At the first sign of trouble or boredom, start planning to put them away. Try not to make it obvious that you are removing them because of the perceived problem; rather, make it look like you wanted to end the stick session anyway.

**CP:** I tell my students that once they have their sticks, they must find a safety zone. Holding one stick in each hand, they slowly swing their outstretched arms like a helicopter. If they can touch someone, it is *their* job to move to where they cannot. It works like a charm, standing or sitting.

**JC:** I have the kids sit with their legs in front of them open in a V, and they play in between their legs. That way there is no accidental hitting of someone else's legs, or smashing someone else in the face.

**TS:** *Rumble*—Because all they want to do is play the sticks as soon as possible, I allow them to get their "ya-ya's" out by having a rumble. Using my doumbek, I initiate a "drum roll" and say very slowly, "Every---body---*rumble!*" As long as the drum is playing, they keep on playing, but when it stops, they do, too. Kind of like freeze dancing but without sticks.

*Countdown*—Discuss what a countdown is (5, 4, 3, 2, 1, zero). We will play and play and play until we get to the word "zero," then we *stop!* Teachers are astounded.

*Willaby wallaby woo*—Rather than have ten kids all run up at once when the activity is done, I utilize this tried and true song, which provides practice in listening/rhyming/taking turns/safety.

Willaby Wallaby Wannie—please bring your sticks up, Danny.

Willaby Wallaby Waiden—please bring your sticks up, Jaiden.

Etc.

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## Music in Bloom

➡continued from previous page

**MH:** In my classes, we have a “ready position” for our sticks. This position changes for each song and helps cue which song we are singing that day.

So as you can see, rhythms sticks with young children are easy to use, educational, and best of all, fun. Go out and get your sticks and have a blast!

• • • • •

### My Horse Old Dan (unknown)

#### Verse 1

Old Dan has two ears, (*Play rhythm until “two ears,” when you put sticks up near your ears.*)  
Old Dan has two eyes, (*Play rhythm until “two eyes,” when you put sticks up near your eyes*)  
Old Dan has one mouth with many, many, many, many teeth. (*Play rhythm until “one mouth,” when you put one stick up near your mouth; then play rhythm until “teeth,” when you show long horse teeth.*)

#### Verse 2

(*Rhythm and movement as above*)

Old Dan has four legs,  
Old Dan has four feet,  
Old Dan has one tail with many, many, many, many hairs.

#### Verse 3

(*Play slowly on first line, slightly faster on the second, fast on the third.*)

Old Dan can walk, walk,  
Old Dan can trot, trot, trot, trot.  
Old Dan can run, run, run, run for many, many, many, many miles.

### This Old Man (traditional)

(*Start singing with sticks silent*)

This old man, he played one, (*Simultaneously call out and tap “one”*)  
He played nick-nack on my thumb. (*Show thumb*)  
With a nick-nack paddy whack (*Tap sticks together*)  
Give a dog a bone, (*Tap sticks on floor*)  
This old man came rolling home. (*Roll sticks around each other*)

...then go up to ten, at which point you finish with:

I think this song's about to end.  
With a nick-nack paddy whack  
Give a dog a bone,  
This old man came rolling home.

### Let's Tap Our Sticks Together

by Marie Cass Beggs

(*Speak together*)

Let's tap our sticks together (3x)  
Because it's fun to do.

(Repeat)

Then “zip” in anything you want (e.g., shoe, knee, head); use sound dynamics (e.g., play loud/soft/fast/slow).

Get practice “crossing the midpoint” by having players tap on L toe/R toe/shoulder, etc.

To add gross motor movements, zip in a variety of actions. Some examples:

- Stand up and tap your sticks, stand up and tap your sticks, stand up and tap your sticks my friends. Stand up and tap your sticks.
- Jump and play your sticks, jump and play your sticks, jump and play your sticks my friends. Jump and play your sticks.
- March and play your sticks, march and play your sticks, march and play your sticks my friends. March and play your sticks.

Then, to help transition back to the circle—

Let's march back to the rug, let's march back to the rug, let's march back to the rug and sit right down again.

Let's march back to the rug, let's march back to the rug, let's march back to the rug my friends, and sit right down again.

Finish up by singing, Let's tap our sticks together. etc.

#### Panelists:

**Joanie Calem** has been teaching music since 1983, first just teaching piano, but then doing preschool teaching and programs.


**Amy Conley** is a Music Together director and a teacher and performer for families. She lives in Milford, New Hampshire.

**Pam Donkin** is a children's performer and a songwriter/recording artist. Her music is used in preschools and elementary schools and has been approved by the Child Advocacy Council.

**Carole Peterson** has been whacking kids with wooden sticks for sixteen years and they keep coming back for more! OK, seriously, Carole has been teaching Active Music for Kids through her company Macaroni Soup! for sixteen years and has recorded four CDs.

**Kathy Reid-Naiman** is a full-time children's performer and singer, and plays many stringed instruments. She presents workshops and keynote addresses, teaches music classes for young children, and is a frequent teacher at folk music and dance camps in Canada and the United States.

**Tina Stone** is a singer/storyteller working with young children and families; a music specialist at child centers; and a workshop presenter for parents and teachers.

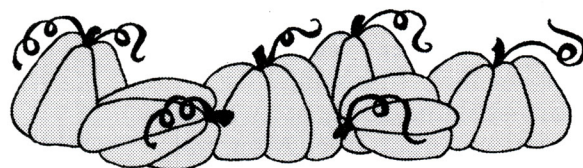
**Becky Wellman** is a singer/storyteller/songwriter/workshop presenter/keynote speaker/school age teacher/wife/mom. She works in center-based child care with infant through school age populations and performs as well at libraries, festivals, family concerts, and other venues. 



# PUMPKIN PATCH

words and music by Fran McKinney  
© 2005

This song was born on a field trip to the pumpkin patch with kindergarten students with special needs. Back in the classroom, I cut out paper pumpkins to match the sizes in the song and glued them in sequence from left to right, with a hay wagon in the middle. I showed the children how they could "read" the picture by pointing to the pumpkins from left to right as they sang the song. The use of artwork and the song stem from my emphasis on language development for my students with language delays, focusing on size and position.



With a bounce ♩ = 120

**chorus** D A last time to tag

We're go - ing down the road in the pump - kin — patch, —

G A D **verse** G D

pump - kins — ev - 'ry - where. —

1. Pump - kins on the left, and  
2. Pump - kins that are big, and  
3. Pump - kins grow - ing up, and

G D G E m7 A

pump-kins on the right, pump-kins hea - vy, — pump - kins — light. — (We're) to chorus  
pump-kins that are small, pump-kins short and — pump - kins — tall. — (We're)  
pump-kins grow-ing down, pump-kins grow - ing — from — the — ground. (We're)

**tag** G A G A G A D

pump-kins — ev - 'ry, — pump - kins — ev - 'ry, — pump - kins — ev - 'ry - where.

## Chorus

We're going down the road in the pumpkin patch,  
Pumpkins ev'rywhere.

## Verse

1. Pumpkins on the left, and pumpkins on the right,  
Pumpkins heavy, pumpkins light. (To chorus)

2. Pumpkins that are big, and pumpkins that are small,  
Pumpkins short and pumpkins tall. (To chorus)

3. Pumpkins growing up, and pumpkins growing down,  
Pumpkins growing from the ground.

## Final chorus and tag

We're going down the road in the pumpkin patch,  
Pumpkins ev'ry, pumpkins ev'ry, pumpkins ev'rywhere.



# Marketing Matters

## Getting the Gig, Part I—Schools

by Billy Grisack ("Mr. Billy")



I love working with kids so much I would do it for free. In fact, that's how I got my start—singing at my son's kindergarten class for free. After many free fun filled appearances in my son's classroom I began getting calls from other schools and PTOs asking what I charged for assembly concerts. "Wow!" I thought. "You mean I can get paid for this?" So here I am, years later, a professional children's singer. It's my full time business: an enjoyable and rewarding one, yes, but a real business nonetheless. Being self-employed with a career you cherish is priceless, but it's a daunting task seeking consistent gigs that generate a positive cash flow. So, where does a children's performer find work? Well, for myself, I have broken it down into three categories: schools, libraries, and special events. You can break this up into other categories—like preschools, birthday parties, keynotes—but I like to keep it simple, so I try to fit all the subcategories into three main groups.

To kick off this three-part gig-seeking series, let's begin with a place where most kids already are: school. I mostly work in elementary schools, but I don't see any reason why the following ideas and information shouldn't work just as well marketing your services to middle schools or high schools. This is a very exciting series! In the past, all of the opinions, tips, and advice I have offered were strictly my own, but this time I have personally interviewed every children's performer who would talk to me and asked CMN members to fill out school marketing surveys. What follows should

be of interest to everyone who hopes to tackle the school marketplace. Let's begin with a question...

### Why Hire You?

Before you even consider working in schools, you need to think about what you have to offer. What type of program suits your skills? Some possibilities are assemblies, workshops, classroom visits, or an artist in residency. Please remember that it's hard to market anything that there is no demand for. The most important truth that I have learned is that to be marketable in educational venues, you must tie in your programs to school curriculum or themes. Find a way to show teachers how your program will complement and enhance what their students are learning or how you can help teachers meet their

goals and objectives. Strictly from a marketing perspective, it's best if you can show how your programs can help improve test scores. Although my "Six-Traits of Writing" programs make up over 80 percent of my school bookings, it is a great idea to offer as many different programs as you can. Patricia Shih, author of *Gigging: A Practical Guide for Musicians*, offers sixteen programs with topics that range from social justice to holidays (and just about everything else in between). Even if you decide to specialize in one or two areas, it's a good idea to offer the same program in different age-appropriate flavors. My writing assemblies are offered in K to two, three to six, and one-size-fits-all versions. This is also a great strategy to increase the number of shows you can do at each school location. I used to offer only one show for the entire student body, but now I ask them to split up the school into two or more sections and offer a discount for additional shows. Be aware of school schedules. Based on my interviews, most everyone agrees that assembly programs should run about forty-five minutes (the length of a typical class). Be careful when booking residencies that last for days or weeks (forget what the PTO or administrators tell you): many teachers are hard pressed to fit your program into their already overbooked schedules. Next question...

### Who Is Your Target Audience?

Before you can fill up all the dates in your calendar, you need to figure out who your target audience is. Even though the kids are your "end users," you can't market your services to them. This is a tricky business. It seems that every school has a different point of contact. How do you know if you should target your marketing efforts to the principal, PTA/PTO, enrichment coordinator, reading specialist,



photo: Billy Grisack

"Mr. Billy" and performing students at the Purdy School in Wisconsin Rapids.



or cultural arts reps? There is no magic solution, but based on my recent research, your best bet are the leaders of the school parent teacher organization. Unfortunately, that information is almost never publicly listed anywhere. Steve Roslonek agrees that the difficulty is finding the right person with whom to talk. It's ten times easier if you have a referral from a parent or teacher at the school. One problem is that, typically, PTO reps are not full-time PTO reps. It's not like they have an office where you can call them. Their contact info is their home phone, and the schools, for good reason, don't want to give out a PTO rep's home phone. So the school secretary will say, "Just send your packet in and we'll make sure she/he gets it." Then they put the packet on top of a stack of a hundred other packets and you never hear from them again.

If you plan to direct market to schools, here is an option that works well for me: I simply call (or e-mail, if you can find the e-mail address) each school at which I would like to work and ask these three simple questions:

- 1) Does the school ever book assemblies (or residencies or whatever)?
- 2) Who is in charge of scheduling programs? (write down the name)
- 3) Ask for a number (or extension), e-mail, mailing address; and while I'm at it, I get the school fax number (it may come in handy later).

Most important, I *never* try to sell them anything at this time. Just get the correct contact information and call the right person at a later date.

You can also market your services to schools indirectly. Indirect marketing can include joining organizations such as the NAEYC or speaking and presenting workshops at PTA, ASCD, principal, and

other education conventions/conferences. I have also secured many bookings by appearing at the local reading council meetings. Once you have your programs ready to go and you know who to talk to, it's time to ask yourself...

### Now What?

It's time to decide what types of marketing materials and methods you will want to use. The most commonly used materials are listed below with the average rating (and occasional comments) given by the kind folks who participated in my surveys:

- **Business cards:** 4 "Indispensable!" (Jackson Gillman has the best business card I've ever seen: they're like a mini brochure. Ask him for one—they're cool!)"
- **Brochures:** 4 "If you set it up right, a nice trifold is like a mini Web site; you can include information and photos."
- **Photos:** 4 "Give these away to kids after concerts; they have contact info on them...consider it an 8 x 10 glossy business card." "Offering these for free at my product sales table ups product sales."
- **Web site:** 4 "Your Web address should be printed on everything!"
- **CD:** 4 "A commercially released CD can help show new clients you are professional and committed. Here is where those award stickers really come in handy."
- **DVD/Video:** 3 "Ideally, you should have some live footage of the same type of program you are offering to the school. Pro releases are not as important with video. Post short clips on your Web site."
- **Signs:** 3 "Mainly for booth advertising at trade shows."
- **Cold calling:** 3 "This can work well, especially if they're a past client."
- **E-mails:** 4 "This is especially useful for filling in the schedule on an out-of-town job." "E-mail surrounding schools to let them know you are in the area and offer them a deal."
- **Mailings:** 4 "Color postcards can be the backbone of your advertising scheme."
- **Fax:** 1 "Only fax something that's requested. Unsolicited faxes are a terrible thing to do."
- **Speaking/workshops:** 4 "A highly effective way of generating interest. It's like live auditioning."
- **Paid advertising:** 1 "It's not great, but it can help."
- **Agents:** 2 "With a few exceptions, most people I have spoken with have not had the best experiences with agents. Commissions can range from 10 percent to 30 percent. There are certain parts of the country (New York or California?) where working with an agency may be desirable, or even a necessity."
- **Other Ideas:** "A toll-free demo phone number where people can call to hear a sixty-second sampler of music." "Performer showcases for parks and recreation departments, performing arts organizations, and libraries."

### Know Your Local Time Tables

One of the most important things to remember is that in most states, schools have hot and cold booking seasons. I call this "Booking Time Tables." Keep a log as you book shows. After a few seasons, patterns will begin to emerge. This will save you time and money in the future. For example, I find that it's basically a complete waste of time for me to book any school shows in July and December. May, June, September, and October are very hot for me. Carole Peterson and others feel that in late spring

*continued on next page* ➤



## Marketing Matters

➡continued from previous page

you need to book for fall, but in fall you should book for winter and spring. No matter what the month or season is, the best time to book a school program is at the end of a successful show. While you're there and they love what you did, book them for same time next year.

### What About Sales?

One bad thing about working in schools is that the environment isn't conducive for CD sales. The kids don't usually have the money, and the teachers are on a schedule and don't expect to be making purchases. So what's a poor recording artist to do? It's best to set up some kind of agreement with the school beforehand; maybe send a flyer, a sample CD, or e-mail that can be passed around. Then, if you are really lucky, someone will actually take orders before you arrive, and you can fill them the day of the assembly. Here is another way to generate CD sales at school assemblies that works for me: I create a flyer with a game (puzzle or word search) and follow-up activities that the teachers and students can do after my program. On the back side of the sheet, I put a CD order form. I put the flyers on all the chairs set up for the teachers before the show. They always take them! Best of all, during the show you should mention—tactfully, and usually in the form of a song introduction—that you have CDs. Try something like, “Here’s a song from my first CD” or “When I was recording my second CD, I wanted to write a song about....” At the end of the show I give out my Web address and tell teachers that I have CDs with me or they can order online.

### Don't Take My Advice

Before we go, I will share words of wisdom from some of our fellow performers. I asked, “What advice, if any, would you give someone who is getting ready to book their first or ten thousandth school show?” Here

is what some folks had to say:

#### Carole Peterson

- Make a list of what your needs are (room set-up, electricity, table for sound equipment, etc.) and make sure they are okay with it, then include it in the contract.
- If you don't already charge mileage, start. Gas isn't getting cheaper.
- Call a few days before the booking to go over details, changes, arrival times, directions.

#### Jack Pearson

The school market goes up and down. Right now it's pretty much down where I live. It's tied to state funding. There are always some active PTAs that pick up some of the slack, though. I'd say by way of advice to keep current on what schools are looking for. Ask them.

#### Steve Roslonek

I have never really developed learning guides for teachers. If I were doing it all over again, I'd probably spend more time doing that.

#### Jackson Gillman

Solicit feedback, coaching, directing, and constantly fine-tune your performances. Get your act together as much as possible on low-profile gigs before selling yourself for prime time.

#### Mara Beckerman

Sometimes I get a call from someone who is looking for something, but I'm really not the right fit for what they want. I used to have this thing in me that said, “I can be whatever you want.” While sometimes that worked in my favor, at other times it was the wrong thing to do. Now I say, “Sorry, I'm not right for this.” Then there are times when I just am not available for a booking. Sometimes we can reschedule it, but sometimes they need someone for that specific day and time. I have always kept a file of

other performers I respect and enjoy. So when I can't take a gig I recommend someone else. People are always grateful for recommendations, fellow performers appreciate passing their names out, and more often than not this generates more work my way eventually. “Paying it forward,” I suppose.

#### Kathleen Gibson

What pitfalls should other performers avoid? Thinking they will make a profit in the first five years.


After you read this column I urge you to take a look at these awesome books:

- *Gigging: A Practical Guide for Musicians*, by Patricia Shih
- *How to Make Money Performing in Schools*, by David Heflick
- *Assemblies! Assemblies! Assemblies!* by Kryssy Hurley
- *Guerrilla Music Marketing*, by Bob Baker

### That's All, Folks!

Well, there you have a short course that should help you get started or motivate you to go back to school(s). I hope that you share this column with others in the field (old dogs and newbies, too). If you would like a text file of this feature suitable for e-mail distribution, please e-mail me at [hello@misterbilly.com](mailto:hello@misterbilly.com). Keep the dialog going; we have barely scratched the surface here and there is so much more we can share. Speaking of sharing, the next step is to explore the world of library bookings (summer reading programs and year round events). Any ideas?

Happy marketing!

In addition to writing and recording rock 'n' roll children's CDs, Billy Grisack (aka Mr. Billy) performs assembly concerts, presents workshops, and teaches through artist-in-residency programs at over three hundred schools all around the U.S.A. annually. He lives in De Pere, Wisconsin, with his wife, two children, and various animals. 



# LET'S ALL SING FOR MARTIN LUTHER KING

words and music by Paul Mahdavi-Bernstein

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I was inspired to write this song after listening to John Fahey's instrumental "March! For Martin Luther King." As an elementary school music teacher, I use the song as a springboard for discussion about Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy of using nonviolence as a vehicle for social justice. I have had children perform this for Martin Luther King Day celebrations and as a part of peace education curriculum. For performances, I sometimes assign solos to the older children in the school chorus for the verses and/or the bridge.

March-like

Chorus:

1. Let's all sing for Mar-tin Lu-ther King. Let's all sing for Mar-tin Lu-ther King. He  
 2. Let's all sing for Mar-tin Lu-ther King. Let's all sing for Mar-tin Lu-ther King. He

helped make our laws be-come fair, a leg - a - cy of peace that we share.  
 saw through the col - or of skin; He taught us to look more with - in.

Let's all sing for Mar-tin Lu-ther King. Let's all sing for Mar-tin Lu-ther King.

bridge

In - te - gra - tion, — not seg - re - ga - tion, — is what he was fight - ing for, but he

did it peace-ful - ly and he worked to e - ven the score.

Let's all sing for Mar-tin Lu-ther King. Let's all sing for Mar-tin Lu-ther King.

1. Let's all sing for Martin Luther King. (2x)  
 He helped make our laws become fair,  
 A legacy of peace that we share.

2. Let's all sing for Martin Luther King. (2x)  
 He saw through the color of skin;  
 He taught us to look more within.

Let's all sing for Martin Luther King. (2x)

Bridge

Integration, not segregation, is what he was fighting for,  
 But he did it peacefully, and he worked to even the score.

Let's all sing for Martin Luther King. (2x and fade)



# Flambeau

coordinated by Johnette Downing

Recently on the CMN e-mail discussion group, I read a post by Patricia Shih with regard to managers and booking agents. The list was buzzing with questions and answers on this topic and I thought Flambeau, a column devoted to professional development, would be the perfect place to explore this issue in greater detail.

## Working with Agents

by Patricia Shih

*Performing artists often want to find an agent to take over the difficult and tedious job of finding work. There are pros and cons of working with agents vs. self-booking. The following is an excerpt from my book Gigging: A Practical Guide for Musicians (Allworth Press, New York).*

### What Is an Agent?

An agent is someone whose main function is to find the artist work. S/he promotes the artist through the mail, by phone, and at show-cases; negotiates fees, with the low limit set by the artist; writes the contracts; makes up schedules and tour routing; and follows up on any problems that may arise. A good agent will smooth the way with most aspects of a booking, from making sure all your needs are known to the producer, to getting directions to the gig and arranging hospitality and lodging. A good agent will have a list of, and will solicit, appropriate venues for you, and hopefully think of others that may be unusual or creative that you may not have thought of. Many venues will not even consider booking an artist who doesn't have an agent. Having an agent is perceived as being more professional and genuine, and an agent often has more clout. It leaves the artist free to work on his art instead of running that part of the business.

An agent could work alone or as part of the staff of a larger agency. The agent could work for the one act solely or could represent a "stable" or roster of artists. There are advantages and disadvantages to all these scenarios. The solo agent will likely be on a lower level than one

who is part of a bigger agency. This may mean that he is hungrier and may work harder as the sole proprietor of his own business. He may have more flexibility, be easier to contact and hold responsibility for all the details of getting the booking. On the other hand, he may not have the support and resources of an agent within a larger organization. This is the same good/bad situation with an agent who reps just one act as opposed to having a roster. If you are the only act an agent reps, you will get all the attention, time, resources, and energy. On the other hand, if you are part of a stable, you won't get as much personal attention, but the burden of working enough to support an agent is shared too. You get the idea. Another advantage to being part of a roster of artists is that if you have a good agency with a stellar reputation, work regularly comes to that agency, and its reputation will also shine on you. Sometimes smaller agencies will want only one of each kind of act—one country artist, one singer-songwriter—so the acts don't compete or conflict with each other. Larger agencies might prefer to specialize in a style, like all rap or country artists, repping several in the same genre so they can recommend an alternative if the one requested isn't available.



### How to Find, What to Expect

Do you know other artists and acts who are similar to yours who have a support team? Maybe you could approach their agent to convince her to take you on as well. Eventually you need to invite her to a live gig so she could see for herself what an amazing live act you are. Usually an established agent will only consider a new act if 1) the act already has a fairly large following, an established reputation and a "buzz;" 2) the act is willing to tour and otherwise work its butt off; 3) the act is earning enough money to make her percentage worthwhile; or 4) the act is so fantastic and has so much potential that the rep can't say no and wants to get in on the ground floor with them.

If you don't know similar acts who have someone working for them that you like, then you have to start casting around. Good sources, especially for those starting out, are friends and family. Personally, I always prefer working with people I know, or who are recommended by someone I know who can vouch for them, over a perfect stranger, unless they have a sterling reputation. You are going to be working very closely with your agent and you need to be able to trust him. In many ways, it's just like a personal relationship: if you don't feel you can trust your entire professional life with someone, I say *don't continue with it*.

If you are at the beginning of your career, do you have a friend or family member you trust who has a good business sense? Of course it doesn't hurt if they know the music biz, either. I know many acts who are repped by a wife, husband, sibling, good friend—someone who believes strongly in what the act is trying to achieve and who loves their music. Someone like this will learn as they go, and you hope they will stick by you and vice versa. The caveat here is if you start off being repped by a friend or family



member, try not to lose sight of the fact that you care about this person and that, first and foremost, you have that personal relationship. If you can keep the business and the personal stuff separate, that is 100 percent the best way to go.

But, after you get to a certain level you will want professional representation. Look in the phone book and trade magazines; go to conferences and network, network, network. Start with the smaller agencies, which may be hungrier and more willing to gamble on an unknown, until you make a name for yourself. Research the reputation, the history, and the roster of the agencies you are interested in. Once you have narrowed down the most likely ones with the best fit to your kind of act, invite them to your gigs and showcases. Don't be discouraged if few or none of the agents you have invited show up. Keep plugging away, keep inviting them. Once they see your name enough and if you can create a "buzz," sooner or later they will come. If you get more than one offer, pick the one with whom you feel you can foster the best relationship. Your research will come in very handy at this point. Also, do not be discouraged if you can't get an agent interested. There are so many excellent musicians and not enough agents in the industry, so don't take it too personally.

Once you find someone capable (and that certainly is *the big criterion*), you will need to negotiate terms. Agents take anywhere from 10 to 35 (but usually 15 to 20) percent of the fees from the bookings they actually get you. Their percentage hurts less if you look at the fact that they only get paid when they get you work. For those that charge at the higher end of the scale, you will have to determine how good the agent is to be worth that (how much work they get you); how much you can afford to give up out of your fee; how much you want to work with them; what services you are



Patricia with young friends Keshia and Michael


photo: Martin Stone

getting; the quality and locations of the gigs they get that you couldn't get yourself; and how hungry you are to work, period. Also make sure you ask about "charge backs," which are any expenses the agency incurs on the artist's behalf that they turn around and charge the artist. Some have this policy, some don't. You will need to look at the *total fee*, not just the commission. Later, when you're a big star, you might want to renegotiate your contract down to a lower percentage. Many agency contracts start off with a one- to three-year term, as it takes some time and a lot of work to launch a new act. After that it may be one-year extensions.

Agents may want an exclusive contract. An exclusive simply means that you will work with only them in that capacity. There are deals where one agent will rep you throughout a region, so you can be repped in another region by someone else. Or you may have an agent who wants to rep you exclusively nationally and internationally. This agent had better get you enough work so you don't need to turn elsewhere. Or the agent might only have an exclusive

with you in one market—e.g., the educational scene—and you are free to work with others in the public arena. Personally, I have repped myself for so many years that I prefer non-exclusivity when it comes to agents. When one agent doesn't get enough work, I have found that the more agents working on your behalf (up to a point, of course) the better. But in these cases, it is imperative that there is constant, precise communication between the agents and the artist so there are no accidental double bookings.

Whether you do it yourself or have someone else book you, it is just about the most important part of your business life, and therefore you should learn as much about it as you can. CMN is a wonderful resource for this and many other topics— isn't it one reason we're all a part of this amazing group?

*Singer-songwriter Patricia Shih is a twenty-year veteran of children's music and one of the early members of CMN. TV personality, author, recording and touring artist, Patricia has recently established a music business consulting practice.* 





# WHEN I GET MAD

words and music by Sandy Greenberg  
© 2002 Sandy Greenberg



When I was asked to do a keynote program for a "Peaceful Schools" day at a local school, I wanted to have a song about the escalation of conflicts and how to avoid it; so I wrote "When I Get Mad." My daughter Lise Cormier and my longtime friend and co-writer Rose Vaughan helped me to match the melody to the feelings in the song. So far, I've used it from primary (kindergarten) to grade six. I teach the kids the chorus, getting them to repeat every phrase ("When I get mad," etc.) until the phrase "We've got to stop before it gets to that," which I ask them to sing along with me. When we sing "stop," we put our hands out, palms forward, like a stop sign.

With a strong beat ♩ = 92

*chorus (last chorus increase tempo to end)*

When I get mad, you get mad-der, and when I yell, you yell

loud-er. I'm a-fraid you'll hit and I'll hit back. We've got to

stop be-fore it gets to that. 1. You would-n't let me play with you; you

e-ven took my ball. You said you did-n't like me an-y-more.

First I was sad, then I got mad; want-ed to e-ven up the score. But when I get



# When I Get Mad

continued from previous page

## bridge

F m (Dm) B $\flat$  (G) E $\flat$  (C) B $\flat$  (G) E $\flat$  (C) C (A) *bridge (If I)*  
 lis-ten \_\_\_\_ to you and you lis-ten \_\_\_\_ to me with an o-pen heart, do you think  
 F (D) D (B) G (E) *D.S. al coda*  
 we could be friends a - gain, rea-dy for a new start? \_\_\_\_ 'Cause when I get  
 C m (Am) G (E) C m (Am)  
 that. We've got to stop be - fore it gets to that.

## Chorus

When I get mad, (echo: When I get mad)  
 You get madder, (You get madder)  
 And when I yell, (And when I yell)  
 You yell louder. (You yell louder)  
 I'm afraid you'll hit (I'm afraid you'll hit)  
 And I'll hit back. (And I'll hit back)  
 We've got to stop before it gets to that.



## Verse

1. You wouldn't let me play with you; you even took my ball.  
You said you didn't like me anymore.  
First I was sad, then I got mad;  
Wanted to even up the score. But (to chorus)
2. I asked you, "Why?" and you said I had called you names  
And when I was playing games, I left you out.  
I'm sorry that I hurt you, I'm glad you told me so.  
It's better when we talk instead of shout. 'Cause (to chorus)

## Bridge

If I listen to you and you listen to me  
 With an open heart,  
 Do you think we could be friends again,  
 Ready for a new start? 'Cause (to chorus)

Last chorus: speed up and repeat last line.



**The CMN Logo:**  
**Wear It, Carry It,**  
**Play It, Mail It**

## Shop the CMN Store

Items showing the CMN logo are usually sold at national gatherings or may be purchased by contacting CMN member Ellen Greist at [vger42@aol.com](mailto:vger42@aol.com) or 203/248-4727

Check the CMN Web site for color photos of each item:  
[www.cmnonline.org](http://www.cmnonline.org)

Minimum order \$6

Shipping and handling:

\$3 for orders up to \$50, \$5 for orders over \$50

### T-SHIRT

Adult sizes M, L, XL \$15  
 Adult size XXL \$17  
 Kids' sizes XS, S, M, L, XL \$10

### TOTE BAG \$12

### POSTCARDS

Single, \$.50  
 Pack of 10, \$4  
 Pack of 20, \$6

### IRON-ON TRANSFERS

Large, \$2  
 Small, \$1  
 Page (2 lge., 4 sm.), \$6

### KAZOOS

Single, \$1  
 10-49, \$.80 ea.  
 50 or more, \$.70 ea.



## New Sounds

compiled by Joanie Calem



*Note: These descriptions of new releases are sent in by the CMN members mentioned, but they may have been edited by Pass It On! staff for style consistency or length. The materials have not been reviewed. In addition to the sources listed, many recordings are available at local independent children's book and record stores.*

### ANNA STANGE

#### **Miss Anna's Music Class, vol. 2**

This is Anna's second CD, geared for three- to eight-year-olds. It contains twenty-eight tracks, twenty-three of which are traditional songs that seem to have flown beneath the radar for countless years but are universal and touch the child within us all. Anna sings and accompanies herself on banjo, guitar, and mountain dulcimer, with a guest appearance by her daughter Nikita on flute on one track. Of the five cover songs, one is CMN member Bruce O'Brien's classic "Owl Moon."

*CDs are \$15 and come with a copy of the board book Mary Wore Her Red Dress by Merle Peek when ordered directly from Anna at 13125 S. Winchester, Blue Island, IL 60406. They are also available through [www.CDBaby.com/all/annastange](http://www.CDBaby.com/all/annastange) for \$16, but do not contain a book.*

### DANNA BANANA aka DAN COHEN

#### **Bananukah!**

Bananukah! is a brand new album of Hanukah songs with a twist. Dan Cohen does a lively, interactive show of the story of Hanukah through song, and this recording tries to keep the feeling of the show. Of the eleven tracks, two are original songs and nine are traditional folk songs that encourage "frenzied singing and dancing." Dan sings and plays the guitar, and is joined by his ace band featuring Katie Cosco on piano, Bill Ruyle on drums, and Norbert Stachel on percussion.

*CDs are \$16.99 and are available from [www.onesoulonline.com](http://www.onesoulonline.com).*

### STEVE SONGS aka STEVE ROSLONEK

#### **Marvelous Day**

This is Steve's fifth album, and it has seventeen fun-filled tracks. Most of the songs are originals, and three were written with the help of classes with which Steve sang. Incorporating pop-rock, reggae, a little country flavor, some southern soul, and some soft songs, Steve is backed up by a number of friends on guitars, woodwinds, keyboards, brass, and electric guitars. From silly songs to songs about heroes, this CD covers what it is to have a marvelous day.

*CDs are \$15 and are available from [www.stevesongs.com](http://www.stevesongs.com) and from [www.cdfreedom.com](http://www.cdfreedom.com).*

### MONTY HARPER

#### **Paws, Claws, Scales and Tales**

Monty's latest CD for elementary-aged children starts, "It's all about a bond of love" and features ten original pet songs. While some songs, such as "Dog Books" and "A Pet Like That" feature well-known pets from children's literature, others introduce new characters such as Eleanor Gerbil, Fred's Frog Flippy, and Lucinda, the hungry alligator in "It's Hard to Love a Reptile." Monty's daughter, Evalyn (four years old at the time), co-wrote and sings on "Humming Bird Hum," and his wife, Lisa, lends her beautiful voice to "Villa Villakulla Hula." Two songs feature guest musicians Steve Rashid, Jim Cox, and Don Stiernberg. The CD also includes two danceable bonus songs, and it contains many extra features accessible by computer, such as printable lyrics and chords, and podcast episodes detailing Monty's creative process.

*CDs are \$15 and are available from Monty at 2419 N. Monroe, Stillwater, OK 74075; or from [www.CDBaby.com](http://www.CDBaby.com), [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), and (soon) iTunes music store.*

### KATHY LOWE

#### **Above Water**

This CD contains eleven original songs on the themes of nature, love, and peace, which were recorded while being sung into the overflow valve of a one-million-gallon water tank. The sound captures the reverb chamber just above the water inside the tank. Also, reverberated water condensation drops got recorded serendipitously on each song. The vocal tracks were then taken to a studio where Kathy was joined by friends on bass, recorders, percussion, and violin. The project is reaching all age groups as a vehicle for relaxation and peaceful expansion.

*CDs are \$17.50 and are available from Kathy Lowe, 26 Otterville Rd., New London, NH 03257. A twenty-eight-minute DVD with six songs and relaxing footage of nature is also available for \$17.50, or both CD and DVD for \$27.50.*

### NANCY RAVEN

#### **Watersongs—Flowing From Seas and Rivers**

Nancy has been singing folk songs from around the world for fifty years for school assemblies, libraries, preschools, radio, and TV. This CD is a collection of twenty water songs that she has sung throughout her career, including traditional American songs and songs from Hawaii, Australia, and England. Some are work songs, some lullabies, and some just for fun. Nancy sings and plays guitar, accordion, harmonica, cuatro,



ipu, and ganza. She is joined by numerous friends helping out with both instrumentals and vocals. The CD is geared for ages five and up.


CDs are \$20 (inc. s+h) and are available from Nancy Raven at [nancyraven@sbcglobal.net](mailto:nancyraven@sbcglobal.net) and [www.lizardsrockmusic.com](http://www.lizardsrockmusic.com). CDs are \$15 at performances.

## Other Resources

### LOU STRATTEN

#### *Hello, I'm Sir Fretterick*

In this new book, Lou Stratten invites us to join our friend Sir Fretterick on an interactive journey exploring the world of diversity, families, friends, our environment, and our world. Children are invited to rhyme, pick out colors, find letters, count, and discover new words. This book is a helpful tool for introducing a family member, friend, or child to the world of disabilities, or just plain differences, with respect. The book is for preschool and early elementary children. It is written by Lou and illustrated by Lou and Sal Denaro, a puppet designer who has worked with Jim Henson and other production companies.

Books are \$9.99. They are available from [www.loustratten.com](http://www.loustratten.com) and in California at Nana's Garden in Los Angeles and The Village Bookstore in Pacific Palisades. 

## Letter To The Editor

Dear PIO!,

I heard this old Yiddish tale, and want to "pass it on" to the CMN community in support of the power of music and the good work you are doing in the world.

A famous rabbi traveled to teach in a village that was very interested in his ideas. This was going to be a very big event, and each Jew in the community made great preparations, pondering what question he or she might ask the wise man. When the rabbi finally arrived, after the initial welcome, he was taken into a large room where people gathered to ask their questions. There was tremendous anticipation and excitement all around. The rabbi walked silently around the room and then began to hum a tune. Before long, everyone started humming along with his soft voice. As people became comfortable with his song, the rabbi started to dance. He danced everywhere in the room, and, one by one, every person danced with him. Later in the night, the rabbi gradually slowed the dance and eventually brought it to a stop. He looked into everyone's eyes and said gently, "I trust that I have answered all of your questions."

Joanne Hammil,  
Watertown, Massachusetts



## CMN Internet Services— Helping Build Community

### Have you checked the CMN WEB SITE lately?

The Web site team is continually expanding existing features and developing new ones. We update about once a month, so look in often for the latest events information and new material.

### NEW

In the members section, we've started posting **MIDI files** for the songs in *Pass It On!* to help you choose them for use and learn them.

### NEW

Johnette Downing has created the new **Music Mania** page filled with fun music games, puzzles, and how-to activities just for kids.

### Don't have Internet access at home?

Free or low-cost services are often available at libraries, Internet cafés, universities & colleges, copy centers such as Kinko's, airports, hotels.

**Our online  
services have  
greatly expanded.**

**These tools can connect  
us with each other &  
with a wider circle of  
people interested in  
children's music.**





## Regional Reports

compiled by Leslie Zak

*In addition to the reports found here, you may be able to find more recently updated information about regional activities on the CMN Web site ([www.cmnonline.org](http://www.cmnonline.org)).*

### CANADA

Ros Schwartz  
171 College Street  
Kingston, ON K7L 4L9  
Pager: 866/804-9871  
[ros@dancinginthewind.ca](mailto:ros@dancinginthewind.ca)

The Canadian CMNers are planning to have a song swap in mid-January, 2007, organized by Kathy Reid-Naiman. Liz Benjamin has found that she does not have the time and energy she would like to put into CMN, so she has resigned as regional co-representative. Ros will continue.

### GREAT LAKES

Joanie Calem  
4890 Sharon Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43214  
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[jcalem@columbus.rr.com](mailto:jcalem@columbus.rr.com)  
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[lesliezak@columbus.rr.com](mailto:lesliezak@columbus.rr.com)

Great Lakes again joined the Midwest region for a conference in the Chicago area in June. (See the Midwest report.) Besides scheduling song swaps in members' houses over the winter and spring, we filled the Live Arts stage at Columbus [Ohio] Comfest '06 for a CMN performance with the audience singing along.

### MID-ATLANTIC

Jenny Heitler-Klevans  
7426 Barclay Road  
Cheltenham, PA 19012  
215/782-8258  
[jenny2kind@comcast.net](mailto:jenny2kind@comcast.net)

The Mid-Atlantic region had a meeting and workshop on April



30, 2006. Invited guest Sue Ribaud from the New York Metro region joined us for an informative and fun workshop on international music for young children. Sue taught us songs from Liberia, Zimbabwe, Spain, Ukraine, Ireland, and Puerto Rico. There were lots of singing games and dances. We all had fun and learned some new songs that we'll be able to share with others. It was a small group, but there were several newcomers who plan to join. Yummy food was enjoyed by all. Jenny Heitler-Klevans was re-elected regional rep.

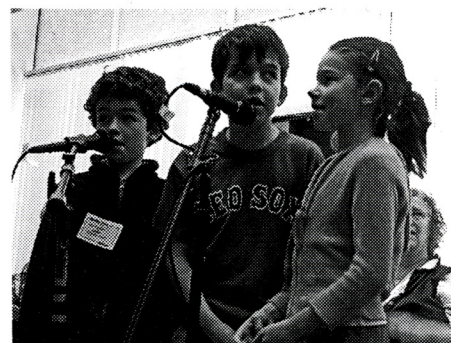
### MIDWEST

Candy Heitner  
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Chicago, IL 60643-2526  
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and  
Carole Peterson  
706A North Western Avenue, #A  
Park Ridge, IL 60068  
847/384-1404  
[macaronisp@aol.com](mailto:macaronisp@aol.com)

More than twenty adults and three children came together on June 3 in Mt. Prospect, Illinois, for the Midwest/Great Lakes Regional Gathering '06. We sang, laughed, and learned in three workshops: Active Songs and Fingerplays facilitated by Anna Stange, Joanie Calem, and Carol Peterson; Early Elementary Music with Tom Pease leading; and Preschool Music with new member Jeanie Bonansinga.

The Midwest Region held its annual meeting, at which Candy Heitner and Carole Peterson were elected co-reps for '06-'08. Discussions focused on what members want from CMN, and the presence of children at CMN gatherings. We also began plans for two winter song swaps in Illinois.

In the round robin we shared seventeen great songs. After dinner, a



*The Pavao children leading "The Magic Penny" at the New England Folk Festival*

rousing public concert for families brought the day to a close. Big hugs and thanks to all who brought food, songs, and energy.

### NEW ENGLAND

Amy Conley  
102 Elm Street  
Milford, NY 03055  
603/249-9560  
[amy@amyconley.com](mailto:amy@amyconley.com)  
and  
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and  
Jessamyn Stylos-Allan  
217 State Street  
Northampton, MA 01060  
[jessamyn@stylos.net](mailto:jessamyn@stylos.net)

We held our regional gathering in March 2006 at the Pioneer Valley Cohousing Community in Amherst, Massachusetts. As we grieved the recent passing of Bob Blue, we were able to find some comfort that day within our CMN community and in singing many of Bob's songs. We enjoyed some great workshops led by Dagan Julty, Andrew Oxman, Kim Wallach, Janet Beatrice, Lindsay Adler, and Steve Blunt. We elected three people to share the job of CMN representative: Amy Conley, Sandy Pliskin, and Jessamyn Stylos-Allan. Thanks to John Porcino for arranging the great location in his community. Please contact Sandy Pliskin if you would like to lead a workshop for our gathering next spring.





photos: Amy Conley

*New England CMN members present "Family Song Swap" at the spring 2006 New England Folk Festival in Natick, Massachusetts*

In addition, CMN had a presence at the New England Folk Festival in Natick, Massachusetts, on April 22. A family song swap, attended by many enthusiastic people, was led by Nancy Hershatter, Kim Wallach, Sandy Pliskin, Fran Friedman, Terri Roben, Jackson Gillman, Anne Marie Forer, and Amy Conley. We will do this again in the spring; please contact Amy Conley if you would like to help lead.

Two spring song swaps were held in Nashua, New Hampshire (thanks to Steve Blunt) and Arlington, Massachusetts (thanks to Liz Buchanan). If you would like to organize a song swap or party or house concert this year, please contact one of the reps listed above as soon as possible so we can get the word out for you. It would be great to spread these around New England throughout the year.

#### **NEW YORK METRO**

Sue Ribaud  
520 East 76th Street, #10C  
New York, NY 10021  
212/737-5787  
suerib@nyc.rr.com  
and  
Steve Zelin

855 Ninth Avenue, #2B  
New York, NY 10019  
646/267-2217  
steven@stevenzelin.com

The Metro New Yorkers met May 21 at Nancy Silber's home on Long Island for what is becoming an annual spring gathering. We had time for a round robin and to split into two break-out groups, one for K-3 songs, the other for tips on making and marketing CDs. After electing co-reps for the next two years, Sue Ribaud and Steven Zelin, we talked about plans for the fall, perhaps bringing in a featured presenter. Steven Zelin offered to host a song critique group at his apartment in Manhattan on the second Sunday of every month at 2:00 P.M. Contact Steve for details.

#### **NORTHERN CALIFORNIA**

Lisa Atkinson  
317 West 41st Avenue  
San Mateo, CA 94403-4305  
650/574-2709  
latkinson@rcn.net

Northern Cal is happy to host the national conference again this year, and we are being very busy bees making ready for you all. Can't wait to see you!

#### **PACIFIC NORTHWEST**

Bonnie Messinger  
4648 SW 39th Drive  
Portland, OR 97221-3923  
503/768-9065  
abalonekidz@attbi.com  
and  
Greta Pedersen  
PMB 252  
19363 Willamette Drive  
West Linn, OR 97068  
Day: 503/699-1814  
Eve: 503/699-0234  
greta@greta.net

Currently, all is quiet on the Northwestern front. Our meeting several months ago at the home of Bonnie Messinger in Portland, Oregon, was a wonderful collection of musicians, teachers, youth, and young-at-heart. At press time, we are thinking about having another get-together in the fall. Check the CMN Web site for details.

#### **SOUTHEAST**

Marie Hopper  
P.O. Box 5715  
Greensboro, NC 27435  
336/375-3861  
hopperme@earthlink.net  
and  
Kari Thomas Kovick  
199 Running Cedar Road  
Floyd, VA 24091  
540/745-7331  
kariok@swva.net

The Southeast held a small but lively regional gathering on June 24 at the Benjamin Brand Library in Greensboro, North Carolina. We shared songs, food, games, and door prizes. There was a quick demonstration of ways to use an iPod in the classroom and recording with GarageBand.

#### **SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

Linda Kay Johnson  
11830 Juniette Street  
Culver City, CA 90230  
310/827-3589  
Kylerkay@aol.com

There is no news to report from this region. 



## CitySongs Kids

►continued from page 3

are little kids who have been waiting since they were four to be able to be in CitySongs. Also, because of the mental health, social work, youth development component, and because I teach at the U., there are a lot of students of mine who are doing internships in the social service system who refer kids. So child protection social workers sometimes have kids that they know like to sing, or homeless shelters or battered women's shelters will refer a kid who they know likes to sing.

The other place where we get kids is at performances. You can't perform with us until you know the music, but you can join whenever. So when we're functioning that way, performances are always the best place to get kids.

**PIO!:** *And you perform where?*

**HK:** We perform in a variety of kinds of settings. We, ourselves, sponsor two full-length concerts a year. There's one around the winter holidays, and one sometime in May. Each of those is a full-length one- or two-set concert featuring CitySongs. And it's free to the community. We usually get an audience of about two to three hundred people. For all the other events, we're invited to perform. We try to do at least half of them in grassroots community agencies, organizations, or community settings so that the kids are shining in their neighborhoods. They are able to provide live music with inspiring messages in neighborhoods that don't get a whole lot of live music. It also allows the kids to shine in front of their friends, and it's not a big schlep for their families to get there. It's wonderful in battered women's shelters, for instance, to have the kids sing. And the kids in those shelters *really* love it.

We also perform at university and college events, and that has to do with the arts achievement part of

the mission, but it also has to do with the healthy development part of the mission in that kids who spend time on college campuses think of themselves as college-bound much more readily than kids who never see campuses. So whenever we perform at a university or college, we make sure that the kids get a tour of some facility on campus, and that they get some kind of briefing from the organization who has invited them, like the Africana Student Association, or the College of Human Ecology Alumni, or the University of Minnesota Foundation high-roller donors.

For the healthy youth development part of the program, we try to do a certain number of gigs each year in mainstream, corporate, nonprofit, or public government-type settings: again, thinking that it's really important for the kids to have some kind of inside view of what goes on at General Mills, what happens inside American Express, what kinds of jobs do people have, what kind of offices do they work in, who are the people who work in those offices.

It's also a good thing for the folks who work in those places to have an opportunity to interact with kids whom they may usually think of with pity or fear; but they don't usually know them. And they certainly don't think of them primarily

with respect!

Then we really try to do a few really large-scale events each year—I mean large-scale political-type events—for big exposure. So we have sung at governors' inaugurations, we sang at the Million Mom March, the Children's Defense Fund annual dinner/banquet. We did a road trip one year to a farm community in western Minnesota; that was really quite a trip. And preparing the kids for that was just fascinating.

**PIO!:** *What did you do?*

**HK:** Well, we talked a lot about what it's like to live on a farm, because they were going to be staying with farm families.

**PIO!:** *Oh, they stayed overnight even.*

**HK:** Oh, yeah. Two nights! So the farm families were worried about, "Do they know how to use a fork?" The kids were worried about, "Do they have a bathroom inside?"

**PIO!:** *It's hard to imagine that in this day and age two communities could be so ignorant of each other.*

**HK:** Right! But guess what? Some of those kids have stayed in touch with those families, which just totally blew me away. The kids came back making a big distinction between what they describe as inside

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the house animals and outside the house animals. For some of them the highlight of their year was watching a piglet be born or learning how to hold it so that it doesn't pee on you. [laughs]

One of the more exciting projects that we were involved in for a long time is something called Public Achievement, which is a citizenship skills development program that comes out of the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University. What underlies that is the notion that participating in government and in civic affairs requires learnable skills that we all used to learn as a part of growing up in a community. The college students learn how to be public achievement coaches for the kids. They are taught by their teachers to lead groups of kids over the course of a semester to discuss issues of personal concern to them. In groups ranging from two to six kids, they identify some issue that they really care about and they all agree to work on. Then, over the course of the semester, they study it and decide what about it is most important. They then design some way to take public action on that issue, and do it.

Now, usually Public Achievement is done in school settings over an entire academic year. When we've done it, it's been over one semester, and we do it after a CitySongs rehearsal on a particular evening. The kids' projects are really amazing.

**PIO!:** *Your kids do these projects?*

HK: Well, the college kids coach groups of CitySongs kids. But they have to do a project. One year there were two little girls whose project was voting. They created a leaflet about the importance of voting. There was one group that did a video on respect for women. One of the projects, which really stays in my mind, was done by a group of older kids. They were interested in teaching important lessons to

younger siblings. This group wrote and performed two skits. They realized that the skits were neat enough to be seen by more than just the CitySongs and St. Kate's community who were at the final presentation. So they contacted the neighborhood cable company and had somebody come out and film them, and they were broadcast on the neighborhood network for the next year.

**PIO!:** *Oh, how cool!*

HK: Some of the language and the topics of the films completely blew me away. The first topic was, "How Do You Teach Little Kids Not to Get In the Car with A Stranger Who Says, 'I'm Your Aunt's Best Friend.'?" The other one was, "How Do You Stop Your Friend from Succumbing to Another Kid's Temptation to Do Drugs?" In the skit were two friends in the lunchroom at school. An older kid came up and offered them drugs. One said no immediately, and then there was one who was waffling, and she succumbed and went off with the guy with the drugs. And she looked over her shoulder and said to her friend, "You're not going to tell my mother about this, are you?" And the friend said, "Yes, I am." And the one who was walking off with the druggie said, "I thought you were my friend." And the final line of the play was, "That's why I'm going to tell your mother."

**PIO!:** *That's great.*

HK: Right.

So this is what Public Achievement is about. It encourages kids to conceptualize issues that they care about in terms of action they can take.

**PIO!:** *And empower them to do it.*

HK: ...and then take the action.

**PIO!:** *Wow. And that's all beyond the singing.*

HK: Well, sometimes singing is part of it. There was a group that

was interested in girls and respect in junior high school, and they wound up doing a skit and a dance to Aretha Franklin's "Respect," and then that became part of the spring concert.

There was one year where one of the groups wrote a poem about friendship, exploring relationships among junior high school girls. They wound up creating a lovely poem that they performed as part of the spring concert. So, yes, it's on top of CitySongs, but it's not unrelated.

**PIO!:** *And how do you make time to do that? How often do you rehearse?*

HK: We rehearse twice a week. The rehearsals are two hours and are pretty carefully scripted to involve social work education time, music rehearsal time, dance time, movement time, and down time. We're forever taking kids in and out to have one-on-one time with social work, staff, or individual vocal coach time. There's also an hour beforehand of supervised homework, and quiet games, and quiet socializing. I mean one of the big things that we learned pretty early was: what we want CitySongs to be is open to lots of different kids and to involve very different kinds of kids who otherwise wouldn't meet each other. There is the bonding that takes place from singing together and making a great sound together, but they don't really get to *know* each other. So it's important to have some time where they can actually just quietly hang out and *get* to know each other. We've evolved into having what we call "power hour" for the hour before rehearsal starts when kids can hang out and do supervised homework. There are games to play, there's usually a craft project, there's a snack.

**PIO!:** *Do you find that the kids from various communities actually do use that time to get to know one another, or do they stay pretty separate in their communities?*

*continued on next page ➡*



## CitySongs Kids

➤continued from previous page

HK: They absolutely use that time to get to know each other. The most different kids that we get are some pretty upper-middle-class white kids and some new immigrant kids of color from a variety of different communities, and some really poor ghetto kids. And they don't always become friends, but they certainly always have to do things together, and they learn about each other. And, yeah, they *do* use that time.

**PIO!:** *And do they get a chance to socialize together besides their time with CitySongs, or does that pretty much not happen?*

HK: Well, no, it *does* happen. And that's one of the parts that's very exciting when we look at things happening that are *great*.

For the past, maybe eight, years, we've done a joint concert every year with the St. Paul Talmud Torah Choir. That emerged because the older sister of one of our kids had to do a some kind of community service, and thought, "Wouldn't it be neat to have the CitySongs choir sing with the Talmud Torah little kids choir?"

**PIO!:** *Which is a...?*

HK: ...a Hebrew day school choir.

And, if we're going to do that...We really don't do anything halfway, and we *really* don't do anything that doesn't have to do with all three of the missions. So, the easy way to do that kind of performance is to bring the two groups of kids together, and we do a set for the audience, and then they do a set for the audience. And we each learn some song together that we do together at the end. In fact, what we've evolved into is we have one or two joint rehearsals ahead of time where half the rehearsal time is spent doing small group exercises with mixed groups between the two schools, and then rehearsing doing songs together where we've had two of your songs to work on,



Photo: CitySongs Notes, Fall 2005

CitySongs children perform

and you've had two of our songs to work on. So a big chunk of the performance is us doing stuff together, but the kids actually really know each other. It's always very exciting to me to see who winds up making friends from the other group. I'm often totally astounded to see who among our kids that I would have thought would be the *most* put off by the Talmud Torah kids wind up going on fishing trips with them, or, "You know, he can't go the concert today because Sam's family is going to their cabin on the lake and they invited him to go with them." Wow! You go!

**PIO!:** *So you do it every year now with them?*

HK: We've been doing it every year, yeah.

**PIO!:** *So some of these kids get to renew relationships with each other as long as they stay with the chorus.*

HK: Or beyond if they choose to. And some of the kids do choose to.

**PIO!:** *So, after they're in eighth grade, do any of them stay on as volunteers?*

HK: Increasingly, not really. What we discovered was volunteering because you're reluctant to leave home isn't really volunteering. Volunteering means that you're a volunteer *staff member*. And if you've been used to being a kid leader, and part of being a kid leader involves rebelling against staff, it's very hard to come back as a staff member. So what we've moved to was, "We'd love to have you volunteer, but you have

to be out for at least six months having other experiences." There are relatively few kids who choose to come back after that. What also often happens is that some of the kids really have terrible behavior problems. Some of them are emotional behavior problems, meaning diagnosed emotional behavior: kids who are in educational behaviorally disturbed classes, or in special education programs, or kids who've been referred by the courts. We often have kids who are part of us as an alternative to being in jail. That was truer when we had an older kids choir. When it became clear that we needed more social worker time, the only way we were going to be able to afford to do that was to cut down the number of choirs. So we cut down to the little guys choir, and we expanded its age group a bit. We've actually learned a whole lot, and we've weathered some really scary...

**PIO!:** *...financial crises?*

HK: Oh, I'm not talking about financial crises. Financial crises are different. I'm actually talking about emotional behavioral crises, like a parent coming in and beating the hell out of his kid in a rehearsal where other kids can see. Or, for me, the only time in my adult life that I've ever been hit deliberately by another adult was in a CitySongs rehearsal where a mother came in and punched me out in front of a group because she really thought I was being disrespectful to her when I told her that she couldn't take over the rehearsal. Or we had a video



artist who was making a film with the kids, and some of the kids came home and told their parents that we were doing X, Y, and Z in the film, and the parents got very upset and objected, and essentially threatened to take over the rehearsal. That one we handled really well, and agreed that we needed to talk about this, but we also didn't need to destroy the rehearsal for the purpose of talking about it, so we could set a meeting. Everybody did a lot of work before the meeting, and what wound up happening was that the filmmaker talked about everything that was part of the film. And the parents who had gotten very upset at this thing were pretty embarrassed and said, "If you had told me that *this* was followed by *that*, and this was how they were going to be put together in the film, I never would have got upset in the first place." They also all regarded it as an interesting experience to have to talk about what was upsetting them, and to have to listen to what the other person said, and to realize that maybe they had gotten more upset than they needed to.

**PIO!:** *Were the problems more from the middle class families, or from the city families?*

HK: City families.

In many ways a whole lot of this is sort of what's traditionally considered women's work or parent's work, and so nobody values it enough to pay for it. But if society is set up so that women don't do that on an unpaid basis, it doesn't get done for kids. And we're seeing the results, I think. *Somebody* has to do the emotional support work, structure, being there for kids, and stability for the community if you're going to have a stable community. And, guess what? If there isn't anybody doing it, you don't have a stable community. And you have about a generation and a half that a society can tolerate before it potentially falls apart irretrievably.

**PIO!:** *Where are we now?*

HK: In *my* mind, we're very close to irretrievable, which is why we're working so hard.

It's exciting to listen to the kinds of comments that the kids make when things go well. At the end of the year we do these open-ended interviews with them. External people come in and talk to the kids and ask a list of questions. The kids are encouraged to talk, and they write down everything they say. Comments include things like, "I learned you can learn from mistakes." Now that's one of the most important lessons you can learn in life.

**PIO!:** *And a mistake is not usually something as simple as singing a bad note?* [laughs]

HK: There's no calibration of how serious a mistake is. Being told you're singing a bad note is as bad as being told that you've just killed your kitten without meaning to do it; or that you've just badly injured your baby brother; or that you've enraged your father when he's drunk. And if they're all equally terrible, you can't hear that you've done anything wrong. And so either you try nothing, or you *will not* hear that you've done anything wrong, which means it's impossible to learn to do anything better.

Those of us who grew up in reasonable homes, or in school systems where the teacher has had enough time to pay attention to kids learning things, take for granted that you do things wrong, and you learn what's wrong with them, and then you learn how to make them right. But if you don't have anybody from whom to learn that someplace, it's not surprising that you don't know how to do this.

**PIO!:** *So what are some of the clear successes you've experienced?*

HK: Well, the group always sounds a whole lot better at the end of the year than they sound at the beginning of the year. The kids all spend time with kids who are different from them. They also all

learn music in languages different from what they're used to speaking. They learn how to make sounds different from what they're used to making. They often say things at the end of the year about liking best the songs that they hated the most at the beginning of the year, and that took them the most work to learn to do right, which is very exciting to hear.

We've been around long enough that we have kids who are in college who hold us responsible for their being in college. And kids who are musicians who hold us responsible for their being musicians. We have kids who go on to audition for—and make—professional kids theater and vocal, stage, and dance performance companies.

We get notes from teachers all the time about how it seems pretty clear to them that the kid doing well academically has to do with something happening at CitySongs. And the kid will say in class, "Gee, we sing a song about this." And then get up and sing about it.

We get notes from audience members all the time. We pay to have the cable network film our spring concert, and then they broadcast it at weird hours throughout the rest of the year. And we always get a few letters from somebody who's seeing it at three o'clock in the morning when they can't sleep, saying, "Oh, it suddenly made my life worth living. And I decided that rather than kill myself, I would go volunteer at a shelter." That's good! [laughs]

**PIO!:** *And these are things that you didn't plan on at all. It's not part of your agenda.*

HK: Things that I think we've learned...We've learned a lot about how you run a rehearsal to maximize healthy youth development as well as maximizing the quality of vocal performance. One of our big successes in my mind is that we've articulated five action prin-

*continued on next page* ➤



## CitySongs Kids

—continued from previous page

ciples according to which everybody—whether you're a musician, or a social worker, or an unpaid volunteer—has to do everything that you're doing with the kids.

**PIO!: What are those principles?**

**HK:** One is called "adults to trust," and that has to do with being trustworthy and consistent. Rehearsals are held when we say they're going to be held, and you don't have the option of not showing up as an adult. And you don't have the option of being late without letting people know. Especially for these kids, that's a big deal for them. And for many of them it's the first time in their life that, when you say you're going to be there and you're actually there, that actually happened. I mean the kids are often really unreliable in their behavior and at least part of that is defensive against being disappointed.

So consistency is one. Another one has to do with adult attention. And that has to do both with adults paying attention to who *you* are, and calling *you* by name, and recognizing *you*, and knowing who *you* are, and recognizing when you are feeling bad and caring about it, and recognizing when you are feeling good and caring about it.

The same-generation version of that is mutuality of peer relations and belonging. Kids need to be encouraged to be nice to each other, and to recognize that they have the power both to be nice to each other and to be mean to each other and that they have to stop themselves from being mean to each other. That there are also consequences, and they have to be able to make it right. But also that they have to be able to belong to something that stands for something positive when there are so many opportunities for them to belong to something that stands for something negative.

Then there's the whole notion of

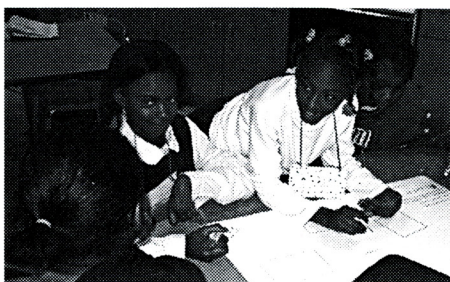


photo: CitySongs Notes, Fall 2005

*Abreya, Jasmine, Kiandra, and Amoni working on a project during Power Hour*

balancing challenge and repetition in activity with achieving mastery. And that's where simply shouting on pitch isn't the same thing as singing. There are many different styles of singing. There's a balance between repeating something until you know it, and challenging yourself to do better than you can do now.

And then the last one is what we call connections or linkages between settings. The idea there is another way of saying, "It takes a village..."; that, because the communities are so separate, it's really useful to a kid to have experiences in one setting reflected in another setting. So we have a lot of contact with parents. And we encourage parents to let us know when something good happens in a kid's school, so if I heard during the day that so-and-so won an award at school, I can say when they walk into CitySongs, "Gee, I hear you won an award today!" I mean that's like having their success reflected all over their life.

**PIO!: Do you think that CitySongs could be a model for other such courses? Or is its success peculiar to being here?**

**HK:** The parts of it that can be a model are doing a singing program according to these guiding principles. And what I mean by that is that's the model of doing any kind of activity-based program that also is supposed to be a healthy youth development program. And I think that it can be a terrific model. It's

certainly not a cookbook that everyone can follow easily. And it's really, really, really hard work. The adults who work in it have to be willing to grow and learn, and that's hard work for all of us.

**PIO!: This is learning and changing.**


**HK:** Right!

**PIO!: Not just the kids, but the staff as well.**

**HK:** Right. I've had staff members who say to me, "Adults don't apologize." Now that may be true, but CitySongs adults do apologize when they make mistakes or when they hurt people. And then they change their behavior so that that doesn't happen again in the future.

**PIO!: Do you have any words of wrap-up and wisdom that you want to share?**

**HK:** You know that there's a quote from an old rabbi that my father always used to use that says, "The job isn't yours to finish, but you're not free to quit." [laughs]

*After a lengthy career as a touring musician, songwriter, and recording artist, Sally Rogers is now a music teacher in Pomfret, Connecticut. She is a longtime CMN member.* 

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- ✓ be clear, concise, and reasonably well written...
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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 as space permits.

### Deadline for Winter/Spring 2007 issue:

Except for regional reports, all materials must be submitted by **October 15, 2006**

### Deadline for Fall 2007 issue: May 4, 2007

**Send lesson-plan ideas and all articles, photographs, artwork, and captions to:**

**Nancy Silber**

*PIO!* Editor  
16 Plymouth Road  
Port Washington, NY  
11050  
nsms2@aol.com

**Submission via e-mail or disk is preferred.**

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Songs should be submitted in lead sheet format if possible; also send an MP3 file or a recording (a home-grown cassette tape is fine).

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### Send songs to:

**Joanie Calem**

Songs Editor  
4890 Sharon Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43214  
jcalem@columbus.rr.com

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305 Dickens Way  
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**Letters to the Editor may be sent to:**

**Nancy Silber**

*PIO!* Editor  
16 Plymouth Road  
Port Washington, NY 11050  
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