
PASS IT ON![®]

The Journal of the ***Children's Music Network***[®]

ISSUE # 69

Fall 2011

2011 Magic Penny Award Recipient

Joanne Hammil



Make Something Amazing

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- Music for Minors ■ Guitars in the Classroom ■
 - Creating a Community Chorus ■ Where are the Older Kids? ■
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About The Children's Music Network

The Children's Music Network celebrates the positive power of music in the lives of children by sharing songs, exchanging ideas and creating community.

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.

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From the Editor

We Can't Do It without You

by Hassaun Ali Jones-Bey

Feature articles in this issue of *Pass It On!* include interviews with Magic Penny recipient Joanne Hammil and Guitars in the Classroom founder and CEO Jessica Baron Turner, as well as a profile of the Music for Minors program and an account of writing songs with second graders. We're working to include more interviews in each issue as a result of your feedback and hope to do more to meet your needs in general. So please take a few moments after reading through this issue to send a message and let me know both what you think of what we're doing and how we might improve things. Letters to the editor are nice, but we don't need to publish your feedback, if you don't want us to. We do need to know what you think, however, to make this publication work for you.

This issue inaugurates a new column by behavioral psychologist and 2010 National Conference keynote speaker Pete Alsop. Peter's new column, Thoughts to Chew, is our second new column this year after Dave Kinnoin's Pro Song column, which we inaugurated in the previous issue. Many thanks to both Dave and Peter for helping to make *PIO!* more representative of the wide range of CMN member interests. You'll also notice in the staff box on the inside of the front cover that the Music in Bloom and Music with Older Kids columns say "this issue only" under the name of the columnist. Thanks to Liz Buchanan and Ingrid Noyes for providing those columns in this issue. If music for very young children or for older children is an interest of yours, please consider contributing a column for an upcoming issue, or even better, stepping up to take over the column on a regular basis. You don't necessarily have to write every column. Any combination of writing and soliciting appropriate columns based on your expertise and professional networks would be much appreciated.

Thanks again to Brigid Finucane, our brand new songs editor, as of this issue; oh yes, and to Jan Graves who actually turns all of the stuff we write into a good, solid professional looking magazine, and to many others too numerous to mention. But I will still mention Caroline Presnell, who was gracious enough to return from retirement at my request and take on the production editing. The most important folks in all of this, though, are you, the readers. So please let us hear from you. Your articles, opinions, suggestions, questions and comments are the bottom line. We can't do it without you. 



Make Something Amazing

An Interview with Joanne Hammil

Conducted by Sally Rogers

Joanne Hammil, the 2011 Magic Penny Award recipient, is a songwriter, performer, educator and choral director whose social and political beliefs intertwine with her musical life. Her respect for and belief in every person's "voice" makes her a beloved and wonderfully effective music educator who brings out the best in all her students, whether children or adults. Says Joanne, "Everybody has their own unique sound, whether their voice is considered a classically beautiful sound or not. All the voices together are what make something that we can't do on our own. That is part of my whole philosophy of living—that every culture is important, every individual difference is important, and we need to respect each one. We need to listen to each other, join forces and make something amazing that we couldn't do alone." Joanne is a composer, arranger and teacher of teachers who lives life to the fullest. In addition, she is a past president of CMN.



PIO!: You are such a gifted choral leader, among your many talents. Where did you receive your musical training?

JH: That's an interesting question, because I did have training in many different ways, but I really developed the way I teach music on my own. I consider myself so lucky to have been able to do that. I went to Smith College where I studied music. They didn't offer music education, so I majored in music, but that was after beginning in biochemistry. I loved chemistry. It's ironic, because my daughter is now a chemist.

PIO!: Amazing! But of course it is not that unusual for musicians to be scientists and for scientists to be musicians.

JH: Yes, there's often a connection between music and math, which is what I began to major in my sophomore year. Math problems were fascinating, like doing a great big crossword puzzle, but then at the end of my sophomore year I had an epiphany. The math professor was doing some fancy calculus equation on the board. He was getting all excited and said, "Now, look at the angle! Isn't it beautiful?" All of the students were exclaiming, "Oh, my gosh, yes, it's beautiful!"

and I was sitting there thinking, what the heck are they talking about? I could see that it was fun, but I really couldn't see that it was *beautiful*. Clever? Yes. But beautiful is what I'm learning in the music history class I'm taking for fun. Then the light bulb went on: Oh, my gosh! They think *this* is beautiful, I think *music* is beautiful. Maybe I could major in music! It hadn't occurred to me before that someone who didn't have a conservatory background could major in music.

PIO!: But you sure could sing in the playpen.

JH: Yes! My mother said that of her four kids, I was the only one who could content myself for hours sitting in my playpen singing to myself. So right from the start I somehow developed a deep respect for the depth and joy of the inner voice of each person, and a delight in being creative myself. Although I did not come from a musical or particularly cultured home life, my parents did get me piano lessons when I was six and, when I begged for it later, violin lessons as well. I also spent two summers at Interlochen Music Camp in Michigan as a young teen. Singing in choruses in high school and college was one of

my biggest joys, and it planted the seed for my future drive to create children's and community choruses so others could experience the phenomenal power of many individuals creating something beautiful together.

I'm also a child of the '60s. I developed a deep passion for folk music. Bob Dylan and Joan Baez and the burst of traditional and contemporary folk songs opened my mind to the history and power of song. The songs we sang through the '60s supporting the civil rights movement and protesting the Vietnam War are part of the foundation of my musical soul. I learned to play guitar on my own in the eighth grade, and performed in a twelve-person folk group throughout college.

PIO!: When did you start working with children?

When I had that great epiphany in college, I changed my major to music. It was great from then on. I just ate up all the music classes I could. I *loved* it, but when senior year came around, I didn't know what I was going to do after that year. I knew I didn't want to be a pianist and couldn't think how to earn a living as a composer. Yet I loved children, so I got a job as a music teacher in Concord, Massachusetts, with the agreement that I'd get my teaching certification at night school.

PIO!: And you received your teaching certification by an alternate route?

JH: Yes. I went to the Harvard Extension School for two years, until I completed the requirements. My first job was teaching elementary school music and also music therapy for deaf children, which was very unusual. In those days [1969–70] they had what we now consider a backward philosophy about deaf education, which was to integrate students into the regular classroom but not allow them to learn sign language. This program was in the public schools, but the



Joanne with one of her children's choruses

Photo by Michael Norman

children were isolated because they were profoundly deaf and couldn't hear or speak. They had big hearing aid boxes strapped to their chests, and they took classes separately with teachers who were trained to work with the deaf, but the teachers weren't allowed to teach them sign language. They had to try to get them to speak. I was hired to do music with them.

It was such an interesting, creative job. I ended up developing some really exciting ways, via music, to teach them to speak much better. The town of Concord actually hired me for the summer to write up the whole program in a booklet. I had taught the kids to read rhythms that they could play (and feel) on drums. Then I could teach them how to say their names and various phrases with the proper rhythmic cadence. They learned to tell the difference between very high and very low, and then how to ask a question by having their voice go

higher at the end. These small changes made them so much more intelligible. So, although I didn't believe in the philosophy of having to learn English without any sign language, it was really fascinating to develop that program while working with those wonderful kids.

PIO!: So you had a track record of developing innovative music programs before you ever started your own choruses.

JH: Well, in retrospect it was lucky that I didn't have those standard music education classes. I ended up merging my classical music training with my love of folk and rock music and with my beliefs in inclusiveness and the worth of every individual—which are *not* beliefs held by most classical musicians, who generally believe that only certain people are truly “talented” and should be encouraged to pursue singing or playing instruments.

So after my job in Concord, I got married and I joined my husband

in Rhode Island, where he was teaching at Brown University. I got a job teaching general music in grades four through six. I spent the summer before I started my new job asking myself, “What do children need to learn about music?” Instead of having someone tell me what you are supposed to teach and how you teach, I pared it down myself to what I deemed important. It started from there. I think my program is so successful today because I developed these ideas on my own. Over the years I've taken lots of graduate courses and workshops and trainings in music education of all kinds: Kodaly, Dalcroze, Orff, Suzuki piano, and improvisation. All of it has informed my teaching as well, but the core of my teaching remains what I developed on my own.

PIO!: Did you continue to teach music in the public schools?

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JH: I had a few different teaching jobs as I followed my then-husband to his various jobs. When we moved to New York I taught junior high general music and junior and senior high choruses, which I loved. Then when I had children of my own, I taught private piano lessons and did other smaller music teaching jobs for a few years so I could be home a lot with my kids.

When Adam was five and I couldn't find any good music enrichment program for him, I began the Choral Connection (my own community children's music program). I started writing songs for my own children and also for this choral program. Parents of the students kept telling me that my own songs were their kids' absolute favorites and that I should make an album. Eventually I made *Pizza Boogie* in 1990, and it is still my best selling CD.

Once I had an album and a lot of original songs, I began performing family concerts and school assemblies, and I expanded my community choral program with more groups until I had six choruses weekly. I made another CD of original children's songs, *The World's Gonna Listen!* I was also writing and performing adult songs in coffeehouses and teaching at various summer music institutes and presenting workshops around the country to music teachers.

PIO!: If your life were a pie chart right now, how do you see your time divided?

I never thought about that question, because it's been so different at different times in my life. I mean, when I was raising my kids, it was so much weighted towards my children. But these days I have the luxury of immersing myself in my work. Sometimes I think that's not so good, because I work all the time, but I do love it.

Even though my children are

grown now (they are thirty-four and thirty-two), they are always in my thoughts and at the core of who I am, but they don't consume me on a daily basis. I'm involved with my work, which covers so many aspects of music and music education; it's hard to sum it up. Like many of us, I wear lots of different hats to make music my career. I feel very lucky that I'm able to do that and make it all work. A lot of my time is spent with my choral work. I direct three choruses right now in the Boston area on a steady basis each week: two big children's choruses and an adult chorus with teens, called the Greater Boston Intergenerational Chorus.

PIO!: So there are no small children in that chorus?

JH: No, it's advertised for ages 10 to 110 to show there's no upper limit for membership, but you need to be at least ten to be in it. It's mostly adult music, with an orientation that works for teenagers, too.

PIO!: Do the younger kids have to be there with a parent or other adult?

JH: No. It's so funny...when I began an intergenerational chorus, which was fifteen years ago, my thought was that this was a wonderful opportunity for family members to sing together. But it's actually rarely like that. There are many teenagers who come and don't *want* their parents there. There are also parents of young children who come and want to get *away* from them for a night to have something for themselves. I do get a father and daughter or other combinations, or once in a blue moon a grandmother, a mother and a teen.

PIO!: Although it may be a great opportunity for teens, for example, to develop relationships with other adults than their parents.

JH: Absolutely, and vice versa. A lot of what I do is aimed at breaking down ageist barriers in my intergenerational chorus. So it's not exactly a typical chorus, even though in a concert we sound ter-

rific. We sing in beautiful four-part harmony, and we reach a very high level of musicianship for a non-auditioned chorus. I also take time to let people get to know each other and not be locked into stereotypes. In the middle of many sessions we'll play a little musical game of some kind. I've invented many of them for people to get to know each other. Some of the games were inspired by CMNers. So much of my work has been inspired and informed by, and has blossomed from, my connections in CMN.

PIO!: So tell me a little more about your other two non-auditioned children's choruses.

JH: The program is called "The Choral Connection." There are forty kids in each one, second through fourth grades. The children come from many towns.

PIO!: And you limit them to forty kids?

JH: Yes. I can't manage more than that in the way I run the choral program. They are not typical choruses. They are more like big music appreciation classes with an emphasis on singing. When you see a concert, you see a great children's chorus. They sing in two-, three-, even four-part harmony. But in our sessions together, we do a lot more than sing. We really explore music together. I've developed many games and activities for teaching them about melody, harmony, rhythm, timbre, form, and vocal expression as individuals and as members of a group, as well as vocal skills like breath control, projection, and articulation. We explore all different aspects of music through games, story songs, conducting, dancing, playing rhythm instruments, and all kinds of activities. When you put it all together, their understanding of music comes through in their singing. It's very exciting.

I give a lot of individual attention during the sessions, and I can't do that with more than forty. In our

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Namaste

Words and music by Joanne Hammil
© 2005 JHO Music

From Joanne: "All ages can learn to say 'hello' easily in fifteen languages by singing this song's chorus. I usually have choruses or groups sing this chorus (in three-part harmony) while walking around randomly and shaking hands with each other, then freeze positions while we all sing a verse. (I only have to call out the one phrase that will change—for example, 'we have different points of view'—for everyone to sing the verse together.) Then we move around happily greeting each other when the chorus begins again. On

the last three notes (the coda) we place hands together and slowly bow to each other or to an audience while singing 'namaste.' I chose 'Namaste' as the title because it's the most full and beautiful way to say 'hello.' While several languages have greetings that mean more than just 'hi' (shalom, aloha, etc.), 'namaste' incorporates the entire spirit of mutual respect of this song. It is a Hindi salutation that comes from Sanskrit and loosely means 'I greet and honor all that is best and most beautiful in you with all that is best and most beautiful in me; we are one.'"

verses

F B^b C F

1. I don't know your name, — we speak diff - 'rent lan - gua - ges;

F B^b C F

We may not be the same, — but I reach out my hand to you, and I say...

chorus

F B^b C F **coda** B^b C F

Part 1

Hi, ho-la, sa - laam, ko - ni - chi - wa, ni hao, buon gior - no, jam - bo. Na - mas - te.

Part 2

Bon - jour, sha - lom, pri-vet, na-mas - te. Na - mas - te.

Part 3

Gu-ten Tag, kal-i - me - ra, a - lo - ha, o - si - yo. Na - mas - te.

1. I don't know your name, we speak different languages;
We may not be the same, but I reach out my hand to you, and I say...

Chorus, Part 1

Hi, hola, salaam, konichiwa, ni hao, buon giorno, jambo.

2. I don't know your name, we eat different kinds of food;
We may not be the same, but I reach out my hand to you, and I say...

Chorus, Part 2

Bonjour, shalom, privet, namaste.

3. ...we have different holidays...

Chorus, Part 3

Guten Tag, kalimera, aloha, osiyo.

4. ...we wear different kinds of clothes...
(then sing chorus, all three parts together)
5. ...we have different point of view...
(then sing chorus, all three parts together)
6. ...we speak different languages...
(then sing chorus, all three parts together)

Languages in chorus lines:

Part 1: English, Spanish, Arabic, Japanese, Chinese-Mandarin, Italian, Swahili

Part 2: French, Hebrew, Russian, Hindi

Part 3: German, Greek, Hawaiian, Cherokee

Interview: Joanne Hammil

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concerts, every single child gets a solo, which sounds like a lot, but it works. It's very gracefully done. They learn to handle the microphones smoothly. If you see the performance, it's like little moments of grace popping out when you hear each voice individually. Forty children is a lot to work with in these ways. I have two choruses so I can accommodate more kids.

PIO!: I know your choruses are almost always filled. You also said that some parents sign their kids up when they're toddlers? Now that's a popular program!

JH: Even younger. Parents have signed their kids up when their children were *in utero*! It's really crazy, yet exciting.

PIO!: On a practical note, how have you managed to create this career that makes you a living?

JH: People pay tuition to be a part of the choruses. I rent space, currently at a church. I pay two assistants: a pianist and another assistant. That's a lot of kids to be responsible for and there's no school office to go to, so if something happens, you really need another adult in the room. There's a lot more infrastructure than you'd think to make these choruses run, besides the actual teaching, directing, and music preparation. So it is truly a business in that sense.

PIO!: Do the students sign up for a semester or for a whole year at a time?

JH: For a year. When I started it, it was by the semester, but since it's gotten to be a popular program, I don't need to do that anymore. It's easier for me if they sign up for the whole year.

PIO!: Do they pay up front, or by the month or year?

JH: They pay a deposit up front, but can make up any payment plan for the rest of the year. If anyone can't afford the fee, I offer them a

half price scholarship. I tell them, "Don't worry, there's a scholarship fund" (which of course, there isn't). I don't want anybody to be excluded. I want everyone to be able to do it, and I don't want them to feel like they're taking money away from me, if they need the discount. I offer half-price scholarships if someone needs it, or if that doesn't work, I offer full scholarships.

PIO!: When you started directing these choruses, was it on a wing and a prayer, or did you have backing?

JH: I didn't start out with the intention of running a business to make money. I started out looking for a music program for my son when he turned five, and I couldn't find anything. His preschool teacher at the time knew that I used to direct choruses because I would come into the preschool and do music with the children. She loved what I did and said, "You know, there's such a need for music enrichment around here. If you start a children's chorus I'll even accompany. We can meet in my basement because I have picnic benches we can use. I said, "Great, let's do it!" So I put together a program, which took a lot of work. Then I put out notices, and we had eighteen children the first year. After one semester, I moved to a rental space, because it was silly to have them squirming on picnic benches. Then it grew and grew over the years.

PIO!: Do you have any trouble with kids dropping out in the middle of a semester?

JH: No, only if somebody gets terribly sick or moves away.

PIO!: Do you conclude each semester with a concert?

JH: Yes. In the Choral Connection we have two concerts, one in January and one in May. So we have two full programs of material over the course of the year, and six programs of material over three years. From second to fourth grade, you see tremendous progress. It's such a gift to me to continue working

with these children for three years, to watch them grow musically and grow in self-confidence and self-esteem through the music.

PIO!: You must use a lot of your own compositions and arrangements?

JH: I do use a lot of my own songs, but I also use a lot of other people's material, including many songs by CMNers, traditional songs, and songs in many styles of music.

PIO!: Do you use scores much? Or do you teach a lot by ear?

JH: No, we don't use [scores], because they are second-, third-, and fourth-graders and I see them an hour a week, so I don't have time to teach them the skills they would need to read music. We learn by ear, and I give out lyric sheets. There are some kids who don't read yet, so they learn completely by ear.

I do a lot of workshops now for music teachers who are grateful for what I present because it works well, even though they are not always conventional ideas.

PIO!: Would you mind sharing some of your non-conventional ideas?

JH: Sure. For example, most music educators are schooled to believe that you should have your students sing only in their head voice, not in their chest voice. They learn that you should never go below about a middle C. They talk about it as if it is a horrible thing to do, that it will damage children's vocal cords. But I had been listening to music from all over the world while planning my programs. In many cultures, children sing in their chest voice and they sound beautiful. And they are not ruined. So while I think it is very important to develop the head voice, and it is important not to strain their voices down low, I definitely use material that explores both ranges in their voices. I think this whole head-tone-only philosophy is something that came down from the English choirboy tradition.

PIO!: Yes, I think it has a component of cultural snobbery to it.

JH: Yet that is the model behind American music education, which is one model, from one culture, and not, in my opinion, accurate as to how children should develop their whole vocal range. In fact, I teach them how to yodel, so that they can feel the difference between their chest tone and their head tone very easily. We sing some things a little low, and some high. I don't strain them, but I don't have that typical orientation that many music educators and choral directors have.

Another of my methods has to do with what one teaches when. A lot of music teachers are schooled that there is a sequence to teaching children how to sing on pitch; that they need to be able to match pitches and sing melodies in tune before harmony singing is introduced. I start with harmony singing right away in my choruses, and it is actually *through* harmony that children often learn about pitch. They learn much more quickly how to sing in tune when they feel that their voice is an important part of a whole and they need to blend in. I begin with very simple two-part exercises in rhythm and then in song. Those who come singing in a monotone learn to listen to themselves in relation to the other parts and begin to match their voice to their ear; they can't easily get away with just singing along at any pitch once they figure out their role in creating the whole sound.

PIO!: Harmony and polyphony are such an integral part of much of your writing and arranging, right?

JH: Yes. I have a passion for harmony, and especially polyphony, which brings out voices in equal ways, not just with one part having the melody and the other parts singing back-up harmony. I do believe that every voice is amazing and as important as every other voice. This is one way I diverge with some classical music teach-

ers. I believe every voice can grow and learn beautifully—that it's not about training to become a professional musician. It's about bringing out the joy of music and the creative voice in each person. That's my goal. That's why each child in my concerts gets a solo.

PIO!: Yes, and a chorus is one of the places where you really can honor the individual while simultaneously honoring the larger group.

JH: Exactly, and with polyphony, and rounds in particular, all the voices are equal. Each voice has melody *and* harmony. The voices intertwine in a most beautiful way that features everybody.

PIO!: When did you start writing rounds?

JH: A big part of my passion in music is writing. I dabbled in song-writing growing up. I wrote a doo-wop song for my boyfriend in eighth grade and a song about Columbus in third grade, but the first song I wrote as a young adult was a round. It happened in one wonderful year when my then-husband had a job in Paris for a year. It was our third year of marriage. It was the one year of my life when I didn't work. So I studied piano and dance at the Schola Cantorum, a conservatory in Paris. I took lessons, in French, with a French piano professor at the conservatory. I danced all morning and practiced on a rented piano all afternoon. It was just delicious!

When I was at my piano those afternoons, I finally had time to think. I was very immersed in classical music, and that's when I wrote "Canons are fun?" It's in Volume I of my rounds CDs and songbooks. Next I wrote a children's round, and I just kept writing—not a ton in Paris, but that is definitely where it began.

PIO!: I think it's amazing what you accomplished between Paris and your rounds recording project. How many rounds did you record exactly?

JH: Fifty-three. I have thirty-eight

more that haven't seen the light of day yet, so I'm dying to record volumes three and four.

PIO!: You always think big.

JH: I don't know about that, but if I'm ever itching to do something creative, writing a round is one of the first things I do. Of course, I write regular songs as well.

PIO!: That makes sense to me, because of your interest in math and science. Writing a round is like a puzzle.

JH: Exactly right. It's like a puzzle in seven dimensions, which I love. When I was recovering from brain surgery and I knew I was going to be fine [Joanne had surgery in 2009 for a brain tumor], what I did one day is write a round called "Ha-Hallelujah!" I had a great time writing it as a way to celebrate. My intergenerational chorus is singing it in their next concert.

PIO!: Great! But Jo, in addition to all your choruses, you also perform yourself, right?

JH: I do perform, and have given hundreds of concerts over the years. A few years ago when I was heading into brain surgery I knew I needed to cut back on performing. So I started doing more teacher workshops for music education organizations such as Orff, MENC, and Music for Minors. In addition to national conferences, different chapters hire me to come out for a day to teach. I also teach at summer institutes like Augusta [the Augusta Heritage Center in West Virginia], where this summer I'll be teaching a class on unique rounds and partner songs, and another on writing rounds and arranging harmonies—my first time for that one. I can't wait! I'll also be at the Ferry Beach center in Saco, Maine, for a week, teaching my choral arrangements at the Unitarian Choral Festival.

I take many kinds of jobs to patch it all together. I might be commis-

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Interview: Joanne Hammil
➡ *continued from previous page*

sioned to write a song for a school, or I might get a job doing a workshop for the clown-care unit at UMass, to train them in using songs in their work. A wide variety of jobs comes up, but the heart of my work is my choruses, workshops for teachers, writing and performing.

PIO!: How do you find time to do all the composing and arranging that you do, while also performing and doing so many other things? You need space to compose and arrange, I would think. At least, I know I do.

JH: You do!

PIO!: And during the time that you were ill, how did you manage?

JH: It was very hard, honestly. It's still pretty intense. I work way more than I want to. I'm sixty-three and I work all the time. That's the down side of this career. It takes an enormous amount of labor. I fit in my creative time in dribs and drabs. I don't do it nearly as much as I want to. My highest high is writing songs, and I rarely get a chance to do it. I do create a lot of choral arrangements because I need to keep giving my singers new repertoire. I love it, so I sacrifice other things. I don't do a lot of things in life that other people do, probably. It's not that I don't have a fun life: I do. I do a lot of great things with my many friends. I'm very fortunate to be able to make my living as a musician. But my life is indeed pretty packed.

PIO!: And CMN is another line in the counterpoint of your life, yes?

JH: CMN is a huge component of my life. It has been invaluable and wonderful and a blessing in my life.

PIO!: And you were in at the beginning?

JH: Maybe not at the very beginning, but I do remember Sarah Pirtle clinking her glass at a lunchtime [during a People's Music Network gathering] and saying, "Anybody who wants to talk about children's music, meet under that tree." It



Bonding at an early board meeting when children were serving on the board

Back row, left to right: Ruth Pelham, Joanne (Olshansky) Hammil, Phil Hoose, Andrea Stone, Bob Blue
Center: Sarah Pirtle, Ron Stone
Front: Lisa Olshansky, Spencer Stone, Hannah Hoose, Stephanie Stone

was very exciting to be there with Sarah and Ruth Pelham, Bob Blue, and Phil Hoose and to brainstorm about creating this new network. We started having gatherings that were small at first, but they mushroomed.

PIO!: Why do you think that it took off so well in the beginning?

JH: You know, I was surprised to find other people working in children's music who felt the way I did, and it was thrilling. We were all working in isolation. Then all of sudden, there was a peer group, not only of people immersed in children's music, but of people with the same values I had, trying to empower children to feel good about themselves through music and to have significance in the world, to actually be able to make a difference, and help them realize that through music. Here were all these other people doing that! It was so energizing. I think we didn't realize there were so many of us before. It was wonderful to have this

peer group and to start this unique organization that was working via consensus—as opposed to a hierarchy the way other organizations are run—having gatherings that were honoring every single person who was there, and truly enjoying what everybody did, whether it was a five-year-old or Pete Seeger. It was very exciting! Not to mention all the great repertoire we learned from each other. Some of my favorite songs we sing in my children's choruses are from CMNers. Just this year alone we are singing your [Sally Rogers'] "What Can One Little Person Do?," Phil Hoose's "I Know Math," Stuart Stotts' "So Many Ways to be Smart," Ruth Pelham's "Four Hands," and Bob Blue's "Grown Up World." At CMN gatherings we were all very excited about what each other was writing, because it was so different from the commercial children's market.

PIO!: When CMN started, I think it was primarily performers and songwriters. But one of the wonderful things that has hap-

pened is that it has attracted other people who work with children as well: librarians, teachers, day care providers, parents...

JH: We put out a big effort in the beginning to have teachers, librarians, camp counselors, parents and children themselves be really important members of CMN. That was one of our big goals: to make it very inclusive of anybody who cared about quality children's music. It became that, but I think it's a little less of that now.

PIO!: I think it has lost some of that, and I would love to see it move back in that direction. That has been one of the major discussions throughout the existence of CMN: do we want to be an advocacy organization, a performer's forum, or...

JH: Personally, I don't think we want to be any of those things exclusively. I think we want to be all of those things. Having a breadth of many kinds of members only strengthens the organization. In fact, in the beginning, we had a children's component of the board. My daughter, Lisa, was very involved in that. She was so imbued with the values of what CMN was that she had a stake in its well-being. Plus she had made many friends at gatherings and looked forward to coming every year.

PIO!: And your son, Adam, is now a musician.

JH: Yes, and he was influenced by CMN through my involvement over the years, even though he didn't go to gatherings because he was already a pre-teen with his own interests when they began.

PIO!: And you were the president and glue of CMN for many years. Weren't you instrumental in our search for Caroline Presnell?

JH: Yes. Before I was president, I worked closely with Andi Stone, who was the president of CMN for a few years after Sarah Pirtle. Then I became president, before Caroline was hired as National Coordinator. It was a very dicey time, because we were expanding in many ways. Sarah had brought us to fruition

with a really wonderful group of people to whom she had reached out. She started *Pass it On!* She and Ruth Pelham were very formative in establishing a philosophy for CMN in such a beautiful way. They honed the way gatherings were held. Then Andi Stone brought it to a broader national level. She worked hard to get CMN known out in the world within other organizations. She got Miriam Sherman and Marcia Berman from LA to come east to board meetings. They started a terrific chapter in California. So everything was growing, yet we didn't have an infrastructure to make it all work except for Andi and her husband, Ron, who did everything for awhile. They did *Pass It On!* They did all the office jobs. They organized the gatherings. Of course, many of us were helping, but still...

When it got passed on to me, we had one person, Marge Corcoran, whom Andi had hired to do some of the database work. During those years, we had grown to such a point that just running CMN took so much work. For a long time I was working about twenty hours a week just for CMN. We were incredibly lucky that Barbara Wright put us in touch with her friend Caroline Presnell. That helped so much! Then we hired a bookkeeper. In subsequent years, we hired someone to be the editor for *PIO!* and a graphic designer to take some of the burden off the board members and the president. We developed a bigger shared leadership. Those years in the early to mid-'90s were quite challenging, but also very exciting. It was way too much work for a volunteer board, but we knew it was also some of the best work we could ever do. We became so bonded with each other that it was a privilege as well as a labor of love to work together.

PIO!: What changes in CMN have surprised you over the years?

JH: What surprises me most is how




Caroline and Joanne 1996.
"It was a total pleasure working with Caroline right from the start." —Joanne

little CMN has changed over the years. I go to conferences now, and the same warmth, inclusiveness and shared respect for each other is still there. There are many points of view, but somehow the essence of what we started with is still there. It is heartwarming for me to think about that, because it could have changed dramatically with changing leadership. There have been many discussions about philosophies and directions. Some of them have changed, some of them for the good. Overall, the whole organization feels very much like it has the core of what it started out to be: a genuine network of sharing ideas, inspiration and songs so that we can bring more joy and thoughtfulness to children and empower them to be more themselves through music. All that has continued, and that's just wonderful.

PIO!: Thank you so much, Joanne.

Sally Rogers has been working with young people for nearly thirty years as a teacher, performer, parent, and teaching artist. She can be reached at sally@sallyrogers.com.

The interview was transcribed by Sally Rogers and Jenny Heitler-Klevans. 





Jenny Get Dressed

Words and music by Joanne Hammil
© 1987 JHO Music

Audiences will immediately be able to sing the part of Jenny in this song (during a performance) while you sing the part of the increasingly frustrated parent. Even very young children will smile with an understanding glee at the ending twist. Joanne describes one child's reaction: "A four-year-old boy once urgently raised his hand after I sang this in a concert, and when I called on him, he exclaimed 'Why didn't the Mom just say "Jenny, would you please get dressed when you finish that project?"' I said, 'What a great idea!' Ever since then I've told that little story after performing the song, and I muse, 'I wonder if Jenny could have said it differently too.' This has led to great conversations about the words and attitudes we use with each other, the word 'compromise,' and even discussions about how wars might be avoided if people stop just proclaiming what they want and instead try to talk something out with better words."

chorus (sung by children)

Chorus (sung by children) musical notation with lyrics:

1. Jen - ny get dressed in the morn - ing, Jen - ny get dressed at noon!
 2. Jen - ny get dressed for break - fast, Jen - ny get dressed for school!
 3. Jen - ny get dressed to go shop - ping, Jen - ny get dressed to go out!

Jen - ny get dressed for sup - per please, your clothes are in your room!
 Jen - ny get dressed to go out with me, you know that is the rule!
 Jen - ny get dressed for com - pa - ny you can't just laze a - bout!

chorus (sung by children)

Chorus (sung by children) musical notation with lyrics:

No Ma! No Ma! I want to be la - zy to - day! No Ma! No Ma! I'll stay in my 'ja-mas all day!

slowly, with a big sigh

Slowly, with a big sigh musical notation with lyrics:

4. Jen - ny stay in your pa - ja - mas, Jen - ny I'll let you be;
 Jen - ny stay in the house to - day; you can be la - zy and free.

last chorus, a tempo

Last chorus, a tempo musical notation with lyrics:

No Ma! No Ma! I think I'll get dressed to - day! No Ma! No Ma! I want to go out and play!



Verses sung by adult/parent

1. Jenny get dressed in the morning, Jenny get dressed at noon!
Jenny get dressed for supper please, your clothes are in your room!

Chorus sung by children

- No Ma! No Ma! I want to be lazy today!
No Ma! No Ma! I'll stay in my 'jamas all day!
2. Jenny get dressed for breakfast, Jenny get dressed for school!
Jenny get dressed to go out with me, you know that this is the rule!

Chorus

3. Jenny get dressed to go shopping, Jenny get dressed to go out!
Jenny get dressed for company, you can't just laze about!

Chorus

4. Jenny, stay in your pajamas, Jenny I'll let you be;
Jenny stay in the house today, you can be lazy and free.

Last chorus

- No Ma! No Ma! I think I'll get dressed today!
No Ma! No Ma! I want to go out and play!

Integrating Music and Academics: Guitars in the Classroom

By Leslie Zak

Jessica Baron Turner is the founder and CEO of Guitars In the Classroom (GITC), a nonprofit organization which, through “song-based instruction,” trains and equips classroom teachers and specialists to integrate music and music making with academics. Workshops are free to teachers, who learn to sing, play guitar, and lead songs with confidence, and to teach and facilitate the students’ own writing of educational songs.

Launched in California in 1998, GITC took off immediately from the pilot program, when twenty-seven people signed up, and is now in twenty-two states, with teachers active in thirty. The program was first introduced to CMN by Ingrid Noyes at the 2005 National Conference in Delavan, Wisconsin, and several CMN members are now active trainers in the program.

The lively Guitars In the Classroom website displays an impressive array of corporate and business support and partnerships (e.g., Playing for Change) and related projects, including the new *Green Songbook*, currently generating an enthusiastic buzz on the CMN members’ e-group.

The lynchpin of the GITC program is beginning guitar instruction made extremely easy, employing Jessica’s “Smart Start” method for beginners.

This conversation with Jessica, by phone and e-mail, found her in the Encinitas, California, home she shares with her teenage son Eli—an avid ocarina, ukulele, melodica, and guitar player—along with Homer, a friendly Shih Tzu; Peach, a leopard Gecko; and a spiny red-tailed uromastix (look it up) named Uro.



PIO! What is your “Smart Start” method?

JBT: It’s based on an open G (“slack key”) tuning, which makes playing guitar something anyone can do. A beginner can play simple songs before trying to handle the fret board. As a student advances, we add one string at a time to the fretting hand. Some of our people have found it so much fun that they’ve started gigging at a farmers’ market. The video is on our website.

PIO! How are you able to get guitars into teachers’ hands? Isn’t that an expensive proposition?

JBT: It is—but most of the corporations and businesses listed on our Web site are very important “in-kind” donors. And we have a recycling model for guitars from many manufacturers. We provide free loaner instruments to teachers, and because we assume the

responsibility for any damages, they can be more relaxed, knowing they’re not held liable. I find that teachers are highly organized, careful, and responsible people. We’ve had very few problems in eleven years.

PIO! You devote sixty to seventy hours a week to GITC and obviously feel it is a calling. What inspired you to this mission?

JBT: I was raised on Pete Seeger from the time I was six in Evanston, Illinois, which was a vocal, activist, humanist community. Families were entirely involved, and kids were raised watching voter counts on TV. The arts were totally integrated in elementary education. I came to believe that music is both #1, a basic birthright and #2, the most powerful mode for peoples’ social communication. It’s a modality that

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Integrating Music

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transmits history and culture and tradition and the essential human physical and metaphysical power to evoke emotion, raise awareness, and activate the human consciousness.

PIO! It's no surprise that Pete Seeger's name comes up—BTW, we're talking here now as he turns ninety-two; certainly more than a few CMNers share that same inspiration. What about his example directed you into schools?

JBT: He showed me that music is the most powerful tool I can put into peoples' hands. And I believe that the most powerful people are teachers. They truly have the ability to shape the future, and have the ability to do it well.

PIO! You've had eleven years at this stand. As a nonprofit, you must show quantitative and qualitative results. What have you been able to report with certainty?

JBT: First, a world of noise, pressure, the treadmill of modern life, making music is essential to *health*. It is restorative. We see it in the classroom: teachers at the end of the day are exhausted, but getting to their GITC class is the high point of their week. It makes community. They sing, play, write—and leave as if they've had a spa weekend!

Second, social change occurs on a lot of different levels, including how teachers feel about themselves as people. (One teacher told me that playing "sets her to rights.")

And, it opens gateways to effective teaching.

PIO! You have programs far and wide; you're preparing to launch in Hawaii. What keeps you going?

JBT: My peak childhood experiences were as a result of music being a given. Now in this time when music is commodified and arts education is being defunded, it is my consuming mission to make sure that music is alive in schools. It is a people's revolution—a fight to hold on to the best of ourselves.

PIO! Several CMN members—e.g., Bonnie Lockhart, Stuart Stotts, Ruth Pelham, Nancy Schimmel, Sarah Pirtle, Peter Alsop—are included in the *Green Songbook* along with Woody Guthrie, John Denver, Ziggy Marley, Michael Jackson, Joni Mitchell, etc. CMNer Monty Harper, whose "Wind Energy" song can be played with one GITC chord, says, "I can't believe I'm in the same book with all these people." What is the purpose of the songbook?

JBT: The purpose of this book is to share and to generate, through music, enthusiasm, collective wisdom and resources for living in balance with the earth. The songs dovetail with science standards and are meant to be interwoven into lessons or nature experiences to enrich and deepen appreciation and understanding.

PIO! How was the music chosen?

JBT: Each song encapsulates a songwriter's vision or teaching, and we chose positive and informative songs that address the ecotopics in the book. Every song chosen was simple enough musically, and arranged to be played successfully by beginning guitarists. Songs had to have very few and simple chords, and had to also be playable in standard tuning or Open G slack key tuning.

PIO! Will there be volume #2?

JBT: I don't know, but I hope so!

PIO! What drew you to become a member of CMN?

JBT: Mutual self-interest. We have trainers who are CMN members, and I wanted to offer possibilities for expansion of the GITC program and employment for other CMN members who might be interested. It's a very comfortable fit.

Leslie Zak, longtime CMN member and Great Lakes Region Co-rep, is a singer, actor, writer, and arts educator based in Columbus, Ohio. She has contributed several articles to PIO! and compiles the journal's Regional Reports. Leslie can be reached at lesliezak@columbus.rr.com.



BE A PIO! VOLUNTEER

Our wonderful little magazine is the result of a lot of volunteer effort from our regular staff. There are times when we'd like to have help with some smaller pieces or a one-time project. For example, could you

- Help to think up themes for *PIO!* and suggest good people to write feature articles about these themes?
- Solicit children's art to go with an article or theme?
- Transcribe the audio-recording of an interview into a text file?
- Coordinate a special project such as compiling a resource list on a particular topic?

We'd like to have a list of volunteers we could call on for such things, and if you'd be willing to be on that list, get in touch with the CMN office (see inside front cover for contact information). Let us know what skills you can contribute. Thanks!

Until Funding for Music Is Restored

By Sally Rogers

During my early years on the road, I would occasionally make it to the West Coast from my Michigan home. I performed concerts, but often the bread and butter of a tour was a series of school assemblies set up by communities that wanted a little something extra for their students. I saw firsthand what happened to the California schools when Proposition 13 was passed in 1978, cutting property taxes significantly. The result was a gutting of the state's schools. In the wake of Prop. 13, music, art and PE programs were cut or eliminated completely and class sizes increased to up to forty students in a classroom. The effects of Prop. 13 can still be felt in California, whose schools have never bounced back to their prize-winning past. Two committed women met in the late '70s to create a rich new music program in the Palo Alto area as a stopgap measure until funding for music in the schools was restored.

The women were Grace Johnston, with a BS in elementary education and a minor in music from University of Missouri, and G. G. Fitzmaurice, with a PhD in music education from Stanford University. Their vision was to create an innovative approach to music education in schools where no music program existed. They designed Music for Minors. At the core of this program are well-trained docents who visit grades K through three to teach music. Each year, more than 10,000 students in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties receive weekly sequential, standards-based music classes taught by volunteers who have gone through rigorous training so they can bring hands-on music experiences to students who would otherwise have none. Classes include singing, movement, theory, dance, musical games, and the use of rhythm instruments. Teachers rave about the program, as witnessed by Audrey Prouse, a

teacher at Sedgwick Elementary in Cupertino, California: "Great job and we look forward to next year! The students learn how music is tied to so much in life and the world, and it is a lot of fun!"

Docents must go through a thirty-four-hour college-credited training course, followed by an internship, before they can serve as volunteers in the classroom. The requirements are minimal: the ability to sing on pitch, good rapport with children, enthusiasm, and a willingness to learn. Classroom teachers, parents, musicians and retired professionals are among the volunteers willing to make a deep commitment to providing kids with a solid music education. Once they complete their training, docents teach a minimum of one thirty-minute music class per week during the regular school day for the entire school year. Some docents have been teaching with the program for as long as twenty years.

After docents are trained, their education does not stop. MFM offers workshops throughout the year to broaden the musical knowledge of its volunteers. MFM's students come from very diverse backgrounds, so workshops reflect that diversity. Upcoming workshops include "Holiday Games Around the World," "Spanish Songs and Activities," and "Drumming Rhythm Games." Workshops on the pedagogical approaches of Carl Orff and Zoltan Kodaly are also offered to docents, as well as the basics of classroom management.

MFM believes that music education is part of lifelong learning. In addition to the docent program, they also sponsor concerts of all kinds in the community. Some of these are fundraisers for MFM, but all of them have the overarching goal of nurturing the entire community with music. They understand the need for continuing advocacy for music in the schools in order to



Docent Randy Bicking at Baldwin Elementary, San Jose, California

All photos courtesy of Music for Minors

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Until Funding is Restored

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keep their organization strong. Their statement reads:

At Music For Minors, we believe that...

- No child should grow up without access to music education.
- Music is an integral part of culture, self-expression and joy.
- Music education, taught by qualified instructors and grounded by a standards-based curriculum, contributes to the development of creative, caring, discerning, knowledgeable, self-disciplined, and inquiring individuals.
- Music education helps children develop the cognitive and collaborative skills vital to learning, and facilitates healthy, culturally rich communities with engaged citizens.

MFM is able to cover some of the costs of training docents, classroom support, resources and materials by charging a small program fee of \$25 per class, per school, per year. For example, the cost for one class of twenty students would be \$500 per year, significantly less than the cost of hiring a certified teacher. Schools that can't afford



Docent Beth Nord at Taft Elementary, Redwood City, California



Signing singers at Montclair Elementary, Cupertino, California

the fees can apply for a discount that brings their costs down to \$100 a year for a class of twenty. All Title I schools pay only \$5 per student for an entire year of music. Among other things, these fees cover recruitment of volunteers, thirty-five hours of college-credited training for new music docents, the supervision and ongoing mentoring of docents, and the maintenance of three music resource centers for the exclusive use of docents. The centers contain musical instruments, CDs, books, puppets, and other visual aids to enhance young students' learning. Needless to say, the costs of the program are not covered by these minimal fees, so MFM does substantial fundraising throughout the year in addition to providing these valuable music education services. Fundraising includes community donations, and corporate and foundation grants.

Some might say a program such as Music for Minors does a disservice to certified music educators. Where is the incentive for a school system to hire trained, certified professionals if they can get a similar service virtually free? It may be creating a vicious circle: music programs are cut, volunteers replace music teachers, the economy improves,

but there is no incentive to reinstate the position of a paid music educator. Yet, in the thirty-five years of MFM's service to California's children, the teacher's union has never lodged a complaint. Susan Woods of Nimitz Elementary in Sunnyvale, California, says, "Children need music in their lives! I am thankful to have your program, which allows my students to have a regular music lesson each week. It motivates kids to think about music and how it plays a role in life!" Teachers, more than anyone, recognize the need for children to receive training in the arts. Teachers, like parents, always seek the best opportunities for their students, and MFM is a very rich addition to the depleted curriculum of underfunded California schools.


In addition to the docent program, MFM also supports a professional educator model. In the Redwood City School District, this program covers all second- through fourth-grade classrooms, and this year has been expanded to include fifth grade. They have also become the district-level provider of music in the San Carlos School District. Ten thousand children are reached annually through both programs combined. In both Redwood City

and San Carlos, the docent program continues to function alongside the paid instructor program in the earlier grade levels.

Internationally-acclaimed pianist and Van Cliburn Competition Gold Medalist Jon Nakamatsu (who happens to live in Santa Clara County) says, "Music and arts education for today's youth is not an option; it is a necessity....It is a conduit for expression, creativity, purpose, character development and accomplishment. It instills discipline through fostering challenges and achieving goals...Music for Minors is invaluable."

In these tough financial times, the communities served by MFM are very lucky to have such an inexpensive and high-quality solution to the problem of cuts in their school music programs. Without it, most of the children in these districts would have no music programming at all. In addition to music education, the program also builds community and support for the arts. Some districts have "graduated" from MFM and have gone on to reinstate certified music teacher programs. But there is still room for more volunteers.* Would that such a program were available across the nation! MFM could serve as a great model for other communities of dedicated volunteers. But I have to hope that in that not so distant future, our rich nation will find the funds to commit to strong arts education in *all* of our schools. Until that time, other communities can use Music For Minors as a model for their own stopgap music programs, bringing excellent training to hundreds of students in need of a song or three.

*Information about volunteering is at the MFM website, www.mfm.org.

Sally Rogers has been working with young people for nearly thirty years as a teacher, performer, parent, and teaching artist. She can be reached at sally@sallyrogers.com. 



Friends, Music, Learning

The 2011 CMN International Conference

September 16-18

From Fran Friedman and Sammie Haynes, Conference Co-chairs

Don't miss this annual opportunity to gather with old friends and make new ones, to sing and hear great music, and to learn a lot! For the first time, the conference setting will be beautiful Cape Cod in Massachusetts. The indoor and outdoor amenities of the Resort and Conference Center at Hyannis are enticing (get a preview at www.capecodresortandconference.com), and the weekend will have all of the familiar features and some surprises. The Workshop Committee has selected a stellar line-up of offerings in a broad range of interests and age group areas for our diverse membership.

Joanne Hammil, a nationally renowned music educator, performer, songwriter, and choral director from the Boston area, will be present to receive the Magic Penny Award for her lifetime contributions to children's music. Her songs have been performed and recorded by many artists and have been widely published, and her rounds have become standards in books and harmony circles. Joanne is a major figure in community and children's music, and is one of the CMN founders. The award program is always a highlight of the weekend. You won't want to miss it.

Our keynote speaker will be Barry Louis Polisar, a singer, songwriter, poet, and storyteller who has collected a number of awards for his children's music and books. He has performed and conducted writing programs at schools and libraries throughout the United States and Europe as well as at major arts venues and on television. He is a dynamic performer and presenter, and has been described as "subversively funny."

So start thinking about what song you want to share in the round-robin, and make sure you have a supply of batteries for whatever device you'll use to record the music you'll hear, so you can sing it all year.

Much more information about the weekend is on the CMN website, www.cmnonline.org, where you can register online. If you've never attended a CMN conference, here's your chance. Many people are working to make it a great experience for you. 

For information on placing a paid advertisement, contact the CMN central office.

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

The next issue, to be distributed in February, will go to current members only. If you have received an expiration notice, you can renew online.

THE CHILDREN'S MUSIC NETWORK 21ST ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 16-18, 2011

RESORT AND CONFERENCE CENTER
AT HYANNIS, MASSACHUSETTS



*A gathering for people who celebrate
the positive power of music in children's lives*

Magic Penny Award & Tribute to Joanne Hammil
*Music educator, performer, songwriter and choral director
for her lifetime contribution to children's music*

Keynote Presentation by Barry Louis Polisar
Award-winning musician, author, storyteller and poet

Over 16 hours of creative & practical **Workshops, Song Swaps,
Discussion Panels, & Master Classes** with a wide range of songs,
topics, & techniques for working with all age groups. For a full list,
see the CMN Web site, www.cmnonline.org.

Teacher credits & scholarships available

Early bird discount until July 15

For registration information:

The Children's Music Network

Phone: 339-707-0277 • office@cmnonline.org

Local area contact: Sammie Haynes: sammiekids@aol.com
and Fran Friedman 508-358-1614





News and Notes from the CMN Board

2011 is proving to be a great year in CMN. On January 1, we welcomed Jane Arsham to the role of Administrative Coordinator in our central office, and we officially said “Good-bye” to our long-serving Caroline Presnell, though Caroline continued to be part of the transition process and helped Jane ease into the job. With the turnover of coordinators, our central office also relocated to Arlington, Massachusetts.

Many projects that we have been working on for many months came to completion, with all of the wonderful sense of accomplishment that comes with that. Here is a sample:

1. Liz Buchanan and Jane Arsham worked together with graphic artist Joan Goodman to update the CMN brochure, incorporating the new mission statement, updated photos, our new central office address and phone number, and other details. We hope that you have had a chance to look at the new brochure, and more importantly, to hand it out to the folks in your world who just might be looking for CMN.
2. For a few years now we have been working toward creating videos of our conferences, and Liz Buchanan finally got our first one completed, which we hope you have had a chance to enjoy on our website. We are going to be expanding our video capability on the website, and we welcome any videos that members may take at various CMN gatherings.
3. The Membership Committee, headed up by Purly Gates, has restructured our membership tiers, offering more small business options and a whole list of flexible possibilities to make membership even more useful for schools and small businesses.
4. Our Fundraising Committee, under the wonderful leadership of Wiley Rankin and Anna Stange, has been busy brainstorming numerous “outside the box” fundraising ideas. Beyond the traditional ideas of fundraising concerts and regional events, Wiley and Anna have constructed a whole list of other suggestions, for instance: Do what you enjoy or do well. Their ideas include:

- | | |
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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> mini-concert | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> open class |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> open house | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> song swap |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> art exhibit | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> house concert |

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> book sale | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> music sale |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> raffle | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> silent auction |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> jam session | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> recording session |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> art sale | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> craft sale |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bake sale | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a carnival |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a play date | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a book reading/signing |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a workshop | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a white elephant or yard sale |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> beer-wine-cheese tasting event | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> music listening party (Similar to Avon or Tupperware: play CDs/DVDs of CMN artists, have all the artists' info available.) | |

Actually, the list of possibilities is limited only by your imagination.

5. Our newly formed Marketing Committee is refining two new marketing pieces: a “quick look at CMN” for teachers, and a slightly different one for children’s performers.
6. Liz Benjamin is serving as the chair of the Election Committee, with Susan Salidor, Laura DeCesare, Brigid Finucane, Mara Sapon-Shevin, and Leslie Zak helping her out. By the time you read this, the board and region elections will be done, and we’ll be in the process of welcoming our new board members and possibly new regional representatives. This will have been the first election that we have held online, with votes tallied anonymously.

As you can see, there is lots of good work being done by the board, and I must say that I find it both great fun and a source of great learning working with all of my fellow board members. And of course, we always welcome more volunteer helpers. The more the merrier, or, as Woody Guthrie used to sing, “but if we all work together, hadn’t oughta take long.” Our Action Core is always in need of folks to help us out with small, short-term projects that you can do from the comfort of your home. So if you happen to have a little spare time, let us know and we will happily give you a small, but very helpful, task for CMN.

We hope to see you all at the annual conference.

Joanie Calem, President
for the CMN Board



Breaking Things

By Mara Beckerman

Last term I decided to try something I'd never done before: write songs with my four second-grade classes. I've only been teaching music for about eight years now, and each day is a new experience for me in the classroom. I've written music myself, but I don't consider myself a major songwriter. I'm definitely more of a performer and interpreter of other people's material. But I decided I'd give it a try. I didn't have a lot of time, but I knew I wanted to have the children involved in as much of the creation as possible. I describe my teaching process in five steps.

STEP ONE: I began by teaching them how to read note values: whole note, half note, quarter note and eighth note. A storyteller by profession, I had created a story to teach this at a previous school. So I pulled that out of my trunk of treasures. They really enjoyed it. For the next couple of weeks after that (I see them once a week for thirty minutes only), we played with creating rhythms. In the end, each class created between two and four bars of different rhythms each.

STEP TWO: I brought in a number of Orff xylophones. This was the first time in my teaching career that I had had access to these fabulous instruments, but due to time, training and trepidation, I had not yet used them. I divided the kids up, about four to six kids on a xylophone. Each student was assigned one of the bars of rhythm that their class had created. Next, I assigned each student only a few pentatonic scale notes on their xylophone and basically said: Experiment and create a melody for your one bar. Each student was also given a small Post-it note to write it on. Different colors were assigned to the different bars of music.


STEP THREE: I took home all those Post-it notes from each class and played with them. I put one Post-it with another and tried out the sound. I swapped it, added another, and took away—just kept mixing them up until I came up with an interesting melody. I did this for a chorus and verse. I admit I did have to adapt occasionally, transposing a melody here or there, adding something to connect some of their melodies. I then brought the melody back in for the kids to hear. I stuck in some dummy lyrics with them occasionally. Each of the classes was very excited to hear what they had created.

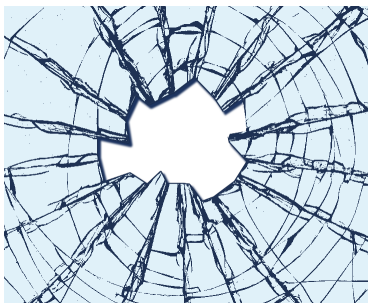
STEP FOUR: To choose a theme, I asked each class what they wanted to write about. I wrote out all their ideas on a large white pad. Each class came up with a lot of similar things, but enough were different to fill out the list. Then they voted, each student having two votes. I always have them close their eyes when voting. I feel this will be less intimidating for those who want to vote as they themselves want and not as their friends want. That generally whittles down the choices from fifteen to maybe five. We then vote once more, with each student getting only one vote.

To be honest, all four classes had pretty similar theme ideas: family, animals, sports, being nice to each other, school (hating or loving it), holidays—you get the picture. But a boy in one class suggested "breaking things." A number of other kids thought that was a great idea. "Oh dear," I thought, "now what have I gotten myself into?" Then I had a moment of inspiration: "Yes, maybe I *do* know how to work with kids!" Instead of slamming the idea down, I simply said, "Okay, give me some ideas of what you could say about breaking things if you were to write a song about it." Don't you know, those kids came up with some amazing things that were true, funny, and sad, and when it came time to vote on the final five, they voted unanimously for "breaking things."

STEP FIVE: Next I took home what they had given me and added lyrics to their melody. I came back in and presented the songs to each class. One wrote about family, one about holidays, one about pets and one about breaking things. The kids were incredibly excited and proud to hear their ideas, and sometimes even their names, in each of the songs. Each song was truly special, and the final performance was a great success.

I attended the CMN annual conference this past October and decided to sing "Breaking Things" at the round-robin. I was totally amazed, not only that people liked the song, but that I was also asked to submit it to *Pass It On!* Thanks. I hope some others out there will find something to glean from my experience.

For the past twenty-plus years, Mara Beckerman has been performing as a storyteller/musician as well as following her passion for educating children through the arts. Mara combines music, dance, drama and storytelling with curriculum in several preschools and elementary schools in the California Bay Area. She can be reached at mara@storysong.com. 



Breaking Things

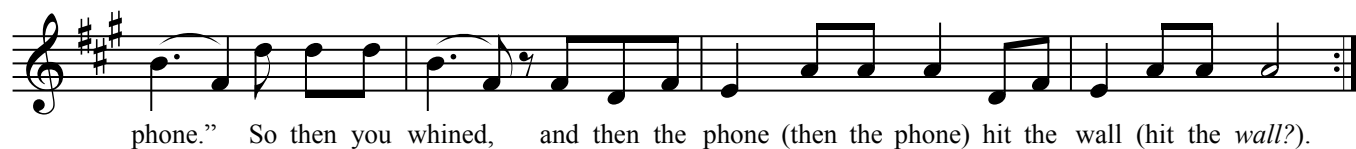
Words and music by Mara Beckerman

With thanks to Mrs. Cline and her second grade class at Carlton Elementary School

© 2010 Storysong Productions

Mara writes: "In January of 2010 I decided to try composing with my four second grade classes at Carlton Elementary School in San Jose, California. I had never ventured into this before. After I taught them about note values, the students created rhythm patterns, then composed small melodies for the rhythms they created, using Orff xylophones. I took

all their rhythms and melodies and found a way to combine as many of their ideas as I could into a single melody for each class. Next, we next talked about themes to write about. Each class came up with a different theme. They chose ideas that were important and of interest to them: holidays, family and pets. During my fourth class, however, a boy called out, 'How about "breaking things"?' My first thought: 'Oh dear. Now what do I do?' My second thought: 'OK. What sort of things would you say for such a topic?' Before I knew it we had a fabulous song, almost like a play, built upon true stories that many of the students shared." For more details on this curriculum contact Mara at mara@storysong.com.



bridge

So why is it that we all—en-joy stor-ies of things that break and an-noy? And

watch-ing them with our own eyes al-ways fills us with such—sur-prise?

verse

spoken: 3. So... im-ag-ine a show on T V: Ex-treme Break-ing, where no one

gets hurt. But each week (each week) big things break (BIG BREAKS!). *Announcer clears throat and says "Quiet on the set!"*

"This week our show is all a-bout drop-ping a two-ton weight on a

crash chorus

house." ("I sure hope it's not my house.") "It's not your house!" Crash. Smash. Crush.

Boom. KA-BANG! Blast. Bust. Break. Boom. AAAAA! Hit. Hard. Fall. Flat. KA-POW!

chorus

Zip. Zap. Zop. Zoood - ooo - oom. CRASHssssshhhhhh!!! I break things

when I'm mad, and when I break them I feel bad (real-ly bad). Some-times it's just an

ac-ci-dent; then I feel mad, bad, and sad (real-ly sad).

Fine count off D.S. al Fine

Real-ly sad. Real-ly sad. Real-ly sad. 1 - 2 - 3 - 4

Breaking Things

➡continued from previous page

Intro

My brother was just three years old.
He was angry during dinner.
So he banged his fist down on his plate,
And the plate lifted up,
And it flew thru the air. CRASH!



Chorus

I break things when I'm mad,
And when I break them, I feel bad (really bad).
Sometimes it's just an accident;
Then I feel mad, bad and sad (really sad).

Verse 1

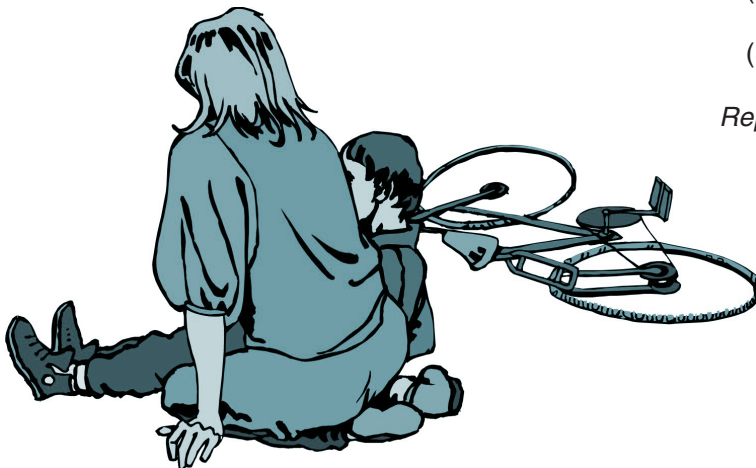
I had the glass tight in my hands.
I would wash it, make it all clean.
But it fell (but it fell)
On the floor (on the floor).
You asked Mom to play, but she said "No,
I'm on the phone." So then you whined,
And then the phone (then the phone)
Hit the wall (hit the wall?).

Chorus

Verse 2

Sometimes you break more than a cup,
Or a plate, or a phone—
Something worse (something worse)
Like your head (like your head).
So when riding a bike, a skateboard or horse,
Wear a helmet, don't be a fool.
'Cause getting hurt (getting hurt)
Isn't cool (isn't cool).

Chorus



Bridge

So why is it that we all enjoy
Stories of things that break and annoy?
And watching them with our own eyes
Always fills us with such surprise?

Verse 3

So...imagine a show on TV:
Extreme Breaking, where no one gets hurt.
But each week (each week)
Big things break. (BIG BREAKS!)
[Announcer clears throat and says, "Quiet on the set!"]
"This week our show is all about
Dropping a two-ton weight on a house."
(I sure hope it's not my house!)
"It's not your house!"

Crash Chorus

Crash. Smash. Crush. Boom. KA-BANG!
Blast. Bust. Break. Boom. AAAAA!
Hit. Hard. Fall. Flat. KA-POW!
Zip. Zap. Zop. Zoooooooooom!
CRASHssssssshhhhh!!

Chorus

I break things when I'm mad,
And when I break them, I feel bad (really bad).
Sometimes it's just an accident;
Then I feel mad, bad and sad (really sad).
Really sad. Really sad.
(spoken) Really sad.

(count off) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4

Repeat Last Chorus



Music In Bloom

For Early Literacy, Catch the Beat!

By Liz Buchanan

Ideas for working with younger children

In my experience, we preschool music specialists are often required to justify our existence. It should be enough that the kids have a really great time moving, singing and shaking shakers. But budgets are tight, and we'd better be able to show that our fans in preschool classes are also achieving important learning goals.

Luckily, research is on our side. While our students explore their musical intelligence, their new-found music skills also have links to early achievement in reading and other academic disciplines. Studies going back more than fifty years show a correlation between instruction in the Kodály music system, a folksong-based teaching method that originated in Hungary, and improvement in students' reading ability. Related studies of preschoolers found similar results, including one showing that children who participated in regular music sessions over the course of several months performed better on phonemic awareness assessments. In plain English, they were learning to read quicker.

There's also a multi-year study from Canada showing a positive correlation between students' ability to keep a regular beat and their ability to hear letter sounds and sound out multi-syllable words, as well as their overall reading ability. Learning about rhythm not only stimulates children's auditory sense, it enhances their understanding of the rhythm of language, or prosody. So let's get those kids dancing, marching, tapping and clapping! Not only will it increase their aptitude for all things musical—it might just make them better readers.

Catching the Rhythm

Rhythm comes naturally to many children from infancy—witness those adorable babies who bounce up and down to a catchy tune. In the classic songbook *Music for Early Childhood*, for which she was one of the editors, Gladys Tipton writes, "Whenever a child discovers a new and particularly appealing way of moving, he repeats it again and again, occasionally with such delight that other children cannot resist joining in. And so walking, running, turning, twisting, stretching, bending, jumping, sliding, climbing, stamping, rolling, skipping, going round and round, frequently accompanied by snatches of song made up on the spot, are natural rhythmic movements which every child sooner or later explores."

Organized singing and movement activities build on children's natural affinity with rhythm. Well-known songs such as "Clap, Clap, Clap Your Hands" and "Shake Your Sillies Out" are obvious choices, but clapping and moving to almost any song helps a child develop a sense of rhythm. Not every child will achieve this sense at the same time, of course, and recognizing that children enjoy moving freely in their own instinctive rhythms is important, too. But modeling rhythmic activities on a regular basis will eventually help children hear and feel the beat.

In addition to following a regular clapping pattern to a song, children can hone rhythm-keeping abilities through songs that call for a clapping/movement pattern at a particular moment. Such songs include "If You're Happy and You Know It," "Let Everyone Clap Hands Like This," and "Bingo." Or try

Ruth Pelham's "All a Family Under One Sky," which is often sung with a percussive clap-clap at the end of each line of the chorus. You probably have many others in your repertoire.

Here are some other songs and rhythm activities that I have found to be especially useful and engaging with young children.

Marching the Beat

Marching is an excellent way for children to internalize a 1-2 rhythm through the steady motion of their feet. Various marching songs are in the traditional canon of children's music: "The Noble Duke of York," "A-hunting We Will Go," "When Johnny Comes Marching Home" and "Father Abraham." Not surprisingly, many traditional marching songs have a military theme. One might also consider playing rhythm instruments to recordings of marches such as "Seventy-six Trombones," some arrangements of which incorporate John Phillip Sousa march tunes, or "MacNamara's Band."

Train songs are one of my favorite marching activities. "Little Red Caboose," for instance, can be done with shakers, sand blocks or tambourines (or a mix of various rhythm instruments) to emulate the "choo-choo" sound of the train. Children can do the song seated or make a line and become the train, speeding up and slowing down as the train leaves the station and enters the next one. Making the "whoo-whoo" whistle sound encourages vocalization and can sound pretty authentic with multiple-child "harmony."

Waltzing Into Fall

Dancing and singing in 3/4 time gives young listeners a distinct sense of a meter that differs from the 2/4 or 4/4 pattern. Songs in 3/4 meter lend themselves to motions such as swaying, floating or gliding, and are fun to do with scarves or streamers. You can choose songs about things that float in nature, such as leaves falling. Another great thing about 3/4 songs in the fall is that the names of the autumn

months are in 3/4 time. Songs are a great way to help young children learn what month it is.

So get out the fall-colored scarves and start moving. I have long used "Autumn Leaves Are A-falling," a traditional melody adapted by Terry Kluytmans for the KIDiddles website. Lois Birkenshaw-Fleming's book *Come On Everybody, Let's Sing* has a number of fall songs, including "October" to the tune of "Good Morning to You." You can also make up your own songs, in or out of the classroom. Take a traditional tune such as "Did You Ever See a Lassie" and write a fall verse. Here are words I wrote to that tune.

Oh, we're welcoming October, October,
October, oh, we're welcoming
October with colorful leaves,
With red leaves and orange and brown
and yellow! Oh, we're welcoming
October with colorful leaves.

Oh the leaves are all a-falling, a-falling,
a-falling, oh the leaves are all
a-falling when autumn winds blow.
So rake them, and rake them, then pile
them and JUMP! Oh the leaves are
all a-falling when autumn winds blow.

Any song that involves waving the scarf, dropping or throwing it in the air, and jumping is popular with the kids.

Chilly In the Morning

After scarf time, strike a beat with the rhythm sticks. My song "Chilly in the Morning" starts with random quick tapping to sound like teeth chattering, then invites regular tapping on the chorus, and a tap-tap response to each line of the verse.

Online link to mp3: <http://cmnonline.org/members/pio/songs/chilly-in-the-morning>

(Chorus)
It's chilly chilly chilly, it's chilly chilly,
It's chilly in the morning.

(Repeat)

It's cold (*tap-tap*) out there (*tap-tap*),
perfect for (*tap-tap*) a polar bear (*tap-tap*).

Put on a sweater (*tap-tap*), that's
better (*tap-tap*),
And a hat (*tap-tap*). How 'bout that?
(Chorus)
We're further (*tap-tap*) from the sun
(*tap-tap*).

That means (*tap-tap*) summer's done
(*tap-tap*).
That's the reason (*tap-tap*) I'm freezin'
(*tap-tap*).
Oh no—it's gonna snow!
(Chorus)

Chanting Macro and Micro Beats

Preschoolers aren't too young to start learning that music consists of sets of regular, consistent beats that can be subdivided. Don't attempt to explain, just do it. I have the children shake eggs while I play a drum in 4/4 time. I start on a slow pattern of tapping each quarter note, then subdivide to eighth notes, then sixteenth notes. When I stop drumming—ta-dah—the eggs stop, too. Then I might reverse: start with rapid beats, end with the slow-moving ones. This is a very popular activity.

You can also use chanted words to correlate with the beats. Have everyone sit cross-legged and use their legs as a hand drum. The adult leading the activity should think in terms of four counts, but have the children start by drumming their legs only on the "one" beat. At the beginning, beat each word slowly. The words to the chant go like this, with the drum beat coming on the numbers in bold.

Big Drum Big Drum Big Drum Boom Boom
1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4 1-2-3-4

This is followed by the "Little Drum" chant, which would involve beating the "drum" on the one and three beats. You started slowly, now the chant will go twice as fast.

Lit- tle drum-beat Lit- tle drum-beat Lit- tle drum-beat Boom-boom- boom- boom
1-2 3-4 1-2 3-4 1-2 3-4 1-2 3-4 1-2 3-4 1-2 3-4 1-2 3-4

Finally, the chant goes into the smallest components, the microbeats, in which every beat has a corresponding drum beat.

Monkeys swingin' in the jungle, oo-oo-ah-ah, oo-oo-ah-ah
Monkeys swingin' in the jungle, oo-oo-ah-ah, oo-oo-ah-ah

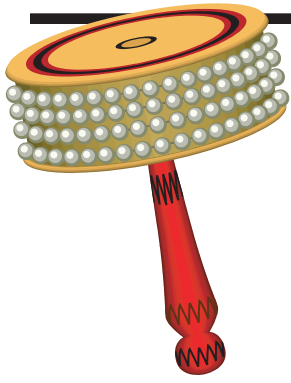
This same sequence can be done as a stomping/marching/dancing pattern:

Big stomp Big stomp Big stomp Boom Boom
Marching feet go Marching feet go Marching feet go boom boom boom boom
Monkeys dancing in the jungle (with lots of wild monkey dancing activities to the microbeat).
Return to the Big Stomp to slow everyone back down.

Next, try it with instruments. Have some children do the "Big Drum" beat on a gathering drum, followed by the second group doing the "Little Drum" beat on a smaller drums or tambourines, and the third group playing the microbeats with rhythm sticks or shakers. Challenge groups of older children to master playing all three patterns at once!

Liz Buchanan is a singer-songwriter and music specialist in the Boston area. This article is adapted from her master's thesis at Lesley University on the links between early childhood music and literacy. Liz can be reached at lizbuchanan26@gmail.com.

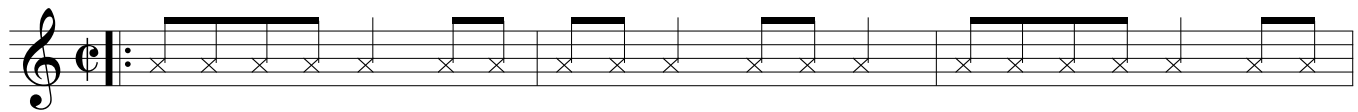




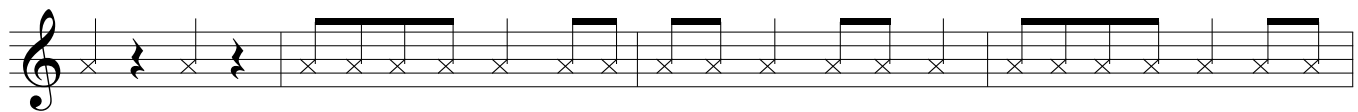
Gotta Get the Beat

By Pam Donkin
© 2006 Pam Donkin

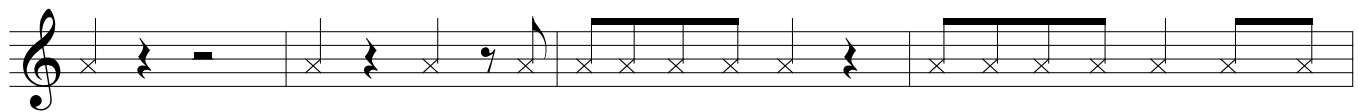
"Gotta Get the Beat" is a sassy, syncopated chant by Pam Donkin from her CD *A Hop, Skip and A Jump: Activity Songs for the Very Young*. Successive verses get longer and longer with the addition of body parts paired with humorous rhymes. This chant can be done in either a sitting or a standing position, with rhythm instruments or body percussion. Pam says, "Feel free to add more body parts."



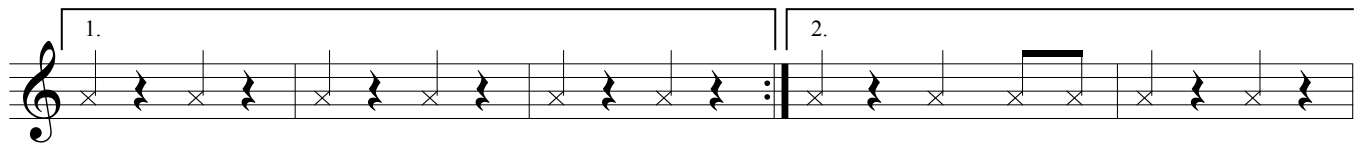
Got - ta get the beat, got - ta get the beat, get the beat, got - ta get the beat in your



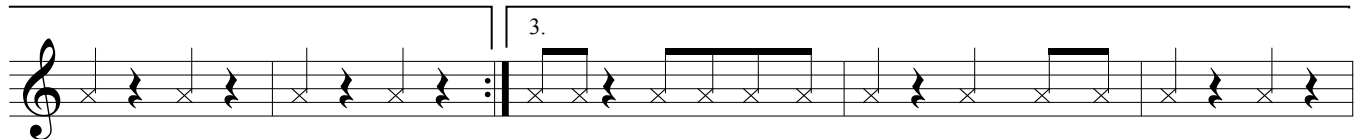
feet. Sweet! Got-ta get the beat, got-ta get the beat, get the beat, got-ta get the beat in your



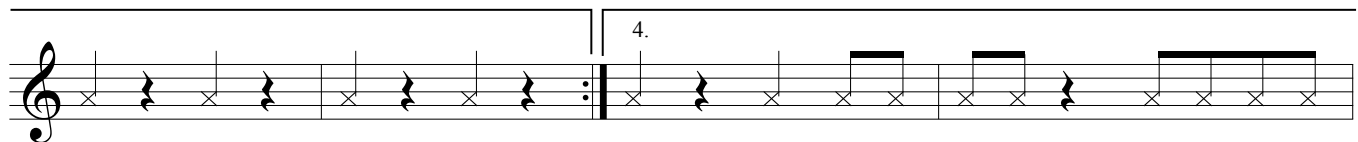
feet. Beat, beat, it's all a-bout the beat. Got - ta get the beat in your
v. 2-5 (on) _____



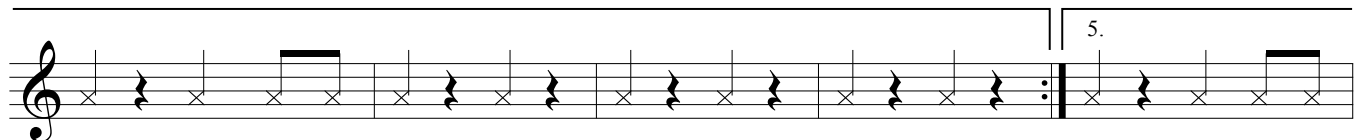
feet. Sweet! (One, two, three, four) knees, please, and your feet. Sweet!



(One, two, three, four) tum-my, hon-ey, on your knees, please, and your feet. Sweet!



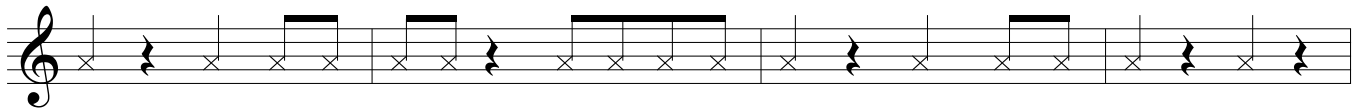
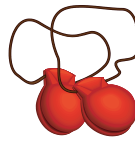
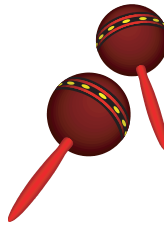
(One, two, three, four) cheek, eek, on your tum - my, hon - ey, on your



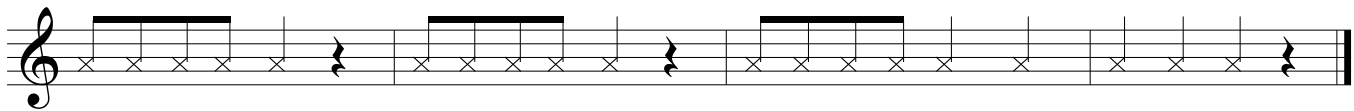
knees, please, and your feet. Sweet! (One, two, three, four) head, Red, on your

Gotta Get the Beat

continued from previous page



cheek, eek, on your tum-my, hon-ey, on your knees, please, and your feet. Sweet!



Got-ta get a breath, got-ta get a breath, got-ta get a breath right now. Uh-huh.

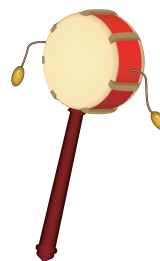
1. Gotta get the beat, gotta get the beat, get the beat,
Gotta get the beat in your feet. Sweet!
Gotta get the beat, gotta get the beat, get the beat,
Gotta get the beat in your feet.
Beat, beat, it's all about the beat.
Gotta get the beat in your feet. Sweet!
(One, two, three, four)

2. Gotta get the beat, gotta get the beat, get the beat,
Gotta get the beat on your knees, please.
Gotta get the beat, gotta get the beat, get the beat,
Gotta get the beat on your knees.
Beat, beat, it's all about the beat.
Gotta get the beat on your knees, please,
And your feet. Sweet!
(One, two, three, four)

3. Gotta get the beat, gotta get the beat, get the beat,
Gotta get the beat on your tummy, honey.
Gotta get the beat, gotta get the beat, get the beat,
Gotta get the beat on your tummy.
Beat, beat, it's all about the beat.
Gotta get the beat on your tummy, honey,
On your knees, please,
And your feet. Sweet!
(One, two, three, four)

4. Gotta get the beat, gotta get the beat, get the beat,
Gotta get the beat on your cheek, eek.
Gotta get the beat, gotta get the beat, get the beat,
Gotta get the beat on your cheek.
Beat, beat, it's all about the beat,
Gotta get the beat on your cheek, eek,
On your tummy, honey, on your knees, please,
And your feet. Sweet!
(One, two, three, four)

5. Gotta get the beat, gotta get the beat, get the beat,
Gotta get the beat on your head, Red.
Gotta get the beat, gotta get the beat, get the beat,
Gotta get the beat on your head.
Beat, beat, it's all about the beat,
Gotta get the beat on your head, Red, on your cheek, eek,
On your tummy, honey, on your knees, please,
And your feet. Sweet!
Gotta get a breath, gotta get a breath,
Gotta get a breath right now. Uh-huh.



Music with Older Kids

Creating a Community Chorus

By Ingrid Noyes

A firm believer in “summer vacation,” I generally wrap up my teaching schedule around May and tell all my students, “Have a nice summer; we’ll start lessons again in September.” So when one of my neighbors asked if I would do a summer music camp for the local kids, my first thought was, “How can I change the subject?” But after thinking about it, I got an idea. So I told her, “Tell you what. My cousin likes to take his horses and wagon in the local parades, and he’s asked me to come along and play music with him. Let’s plan on going with him for the Labor Day weekend parade, and we’ll get together the week before and practice some songs to sing.” Thus was born the Marshall Community Chorus.

We invited all the local families with kids, which in this tiny community is about half a dozen families. The first thing I decided was that this was not going to be a kids-only thing; I wanted the parents, too. I think we segregate kids from adults way too much in our society, and I’ve become a big fan of multigenerationality. (Yes, that is too a word. I just made it up.) So towards the end of August, we got together at my house and brainstormed some song ideas. We were looking for songs about cowboys, horses, or just good old American folk songs. I suggested several I thought would be good and made a note of the ones people responded to with enthusiasm. Then I invited anyone else to add to the list, and together we came up with a program that included old favorites like “Coming Round the Mountain,” “Clementine,” “Oh Susannah,” and “Buffalo Gals.” Someone suggested “Home on the Range,” and I remembered seeing that listed as a partner song with “Home in Montana,” so we did those two together. (I later shared this at a regional CMN gathering, where it was also received with much enthusiasm). We chose “Happy Trails” as our closing song, and it remained in all of our later performances, too.

So we started practicing. I invited anyone who played an instrument to bring it, and we would add instrumentation where we could. I played my little accordion, great for providing chords and melody on the same instrument. One of the dads brought his mandolin. I gave him chord charts and that’s all he needed to chop along and add some great rhythm. One of the moms said, “Too bad we don’t have kazoos, we could play instrumental breaks that way.” And I said, “Great idea! Let’s get enough for everyone; if ever there was an easy and affordable instrument, that’s it!” So at our next practice everyone got a kazoo, and we had so much fun with them that we almost changed our name to the Marshall Kazoo Band.



Getting six families’ schedules to mesh for rehearsals was no small task, so I recorded the songs at our practices and one of the moms offered to make enough duplicate CDs for each family to have one. This way everyone could learn the songs at home (or in the car or wherever) and one or two rehearsals were enough.

Per my cousin’s request, we all dressed in old-timey or western attire for the parade, piled into the wagon, and sang all the way down Main Street to happy, cheering crowds. The kazoos definitely put us a notch above your average chorus. Way fun! And another dad showed up with his clarinet, so we had clarinet breaks, too.

I thought that was going to be the end of the story, but it turned out to be just the beginning. One of the moms told me afterwards that this event made her realize how much music her kids were missing out on, and she signed them both up for piano lessons with me for the coming year. Someone who runs a local open mic came up to me after the parade and asked if we would come perform at the next open mic (we did). And then a few weeks later, a woman from the local disaster preparedness committee called me to ask if I would play music at their next event. I said, “You know, I don’t play out solo much, but I have this chorus...” So we performed there, too. For that occasion I rewrote the lyrics to an old gospel number, “Walkin’ in Jerusalem Just Like John,” a.k.a. “I’m Gonna Be Ready,” which are included at the end of this article.

By then we were having so much fun we wanted to keep it going. I got the brilliant idea of going Halloween caroling. We got together again and picked a whole new batch of songs, including parodies: “A-haunting We will Go,” “I’ve Been Working on my Costume,” “Frankentine,” “Frere Werewolf,” “On Halloween” (to the tune of “Down by the Bay”), “Fly Fly Witchy Witchy Fly” (to the tune of “Comin’ Round the Mountain,” and some other spooky numbers like “Skin and Bones” and “The Ghost of John.” Many of these songs I’ve learned from the CMN e-mail chat group, and, Halloween being my favorite holiday, I’ve learned them all well and love to share them.

So on Halloween we all met at the local store a little before dark, most of us in costume, and then walked to the nearest house and started singing. This was taken as a group trick-or-treat, so after serenading our elderly neighbor and her daughter, we all got treats, which we happily accepted. We repeated this at a couple more houses, and then went back to the store and sang for everyone there. It was a nostalgic event for me, as this is the community I grew up in. When I was a kid, we would go trick-or-treating here, partly on foot and

partly by car, but all here in our own home town. Times have changed; fewer full time residents live here now, and the kids have taken to going trick-or-treating in nearby larger towns, which I find kind of sad. So it was fun to revive the local trick-or-treat tradition, new and improved, with singing and kazoos.

We wanted to go Christmas caroling, too, which we've done here before by boat (it has become my favorite part of Christmas-time activities), but this year I got to go to Mexico for Christmas. So instead, we went New Year's caroling when I got back. We dressed in our best festive attire (Santa hats, etc.) dropped in at the local assisted living center, and sang "The Wassail Song," "Auld Lang Syne," "Dona Nobis Pacem," "Ring in the New Year," another round called "The Bells on New Year's Day," and a customized version of "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" ("We Wish You a Happy New Year"). Afterward we visited for a bit, and then moved on to the seniors housing complex to sing and visit there too.

Then my work schedule started going crazy and we took a break. Probably we'll repeat all of the above after the summer, or maybe another event will come up that will inspire us to get together before then. Meanwhile, I'm writing this article so maybe you will be inspired to create your own community chorus.

I didn't charge money for doing this, as these people are my friends and neighbors and I didn't feel like making it a "job." But I could have, and you can. If I had wanted to do that, I guess I would have asked for a contribution from each family, put out a basket for donations, or something like that. But it could be done any number of ways. I'll leave that part up to you. If this does inspire you to do something similar, let me know how it goes!

I'm Gonna Be Ready

(to the tune of "Walkin' in Jerusalem Just Like John")
Traditional, with new lyrics by Ingrid Noyes

We did this with very minimal accompaniment, and started in a low key to modulate up half a step for each new verse. You can see there's potential to add verses about fires, tsunamis, my hair some mornings, or any other disaster.

We know it's coming but we don't know when, (ready for the earthquake when it comes)
The San Andreas gonna shake again, (ready for the earthquake when it comes)
I hope my house don't fall in the bay, (ready for the earthquake when it comes)
But if it does, I'll be OK. (ready for the earthquake when it comes)

Refrain

Cause I'm gonna be ready, I'm gonna be ready, I'm gonna be ready,

ready for the earthquake when it comes.

(Then we go up a half step for the next verse: mmm-mmm)

The storm went on for days and nights, (ready for the darkness when it comes)
We lost the power, we got no lights, (ready for the darkness when it comes)
I don't have no generator, (ready for the darkness when it comes)
But they'll restore it, sooner or later. (ready for the darkness when it comes)

Refrain (ready for the darkness...)

(Then we go up a half step for the next verse: mmm-mmm)

It rained and rained and rained some more, (ready for the water when it comes)
The rain came under my kitchen door. (ready for the water when it comes)
Grab some towels, or we'll get drenched; (ready for the water when it comes)
Grab a shovel, let's get it trenched. (ready for the water when it comes)

Refrain (ready for the water...)

(Then we go up a half step for the next verse: mmm-mmm)

Disasters come in many forms: (ready for disaster when it comes)
Earthquakes, fires, floods and storms. (ready for disaster when it comes)
We'll help each other so don't be scared, (ready for disaster when it comes)
'Cause some of us are gonna be prepared! (ready for disaster when it comes)

Final Refrain

And I'm gonna be ready, I'm gonna be ready, I'm gonna be ready, ready for disaster when it comes.
I'm gonna be ready, I'm gonna be ready, I'm gonna be ready, (slow down, big finish) ready for disaster when it comes.

Ingrid Noyes lives in Marshall, California. She is the director of two music camps for old-time and bluegrass musicians. She also teaches private lessons in piano and stringed instruments, and teaches music at a summer camp for children of incarcerated parents. And she plays banjo, accordion, and guitar in a band that leads contra dances around the Bay Area. Ingrid can be reached at ingrid10@sonic.net. 





Fall's Falling

Words and music by Sammie Haynes
© 1999 Sammie Haynes

A walk on a perfect day inspired this song. Sammie remembers: "While walking with my dog one fine autumn afternoon we chanced to hear geese honking. As their honks grew louder we looked up to see what really was quite a sight: the chevron—a capital V. On our walk home I wrote the song. It came easily as I sought for all simple signs of fall falling upon us here in New England. The song works well with preschoolers in particular as they become aware of the seasons, and there are plenty of hand motions to be enjoyed along with it. CMNers might like to know that I recorded this song in B; however, it is transcribed in C to make things a bit easier. You can capo it and play it out of the G formation, which is what I do."

F C G C F

When the leaves turn col - ors, —
When the gar - den flow - ers —

C G C

— come fall - ing down,
— bow their heads down,
you'll know fall's fall - ing, — fall-ing all a - round.
you'll know fall's fall - ing, — fall-ing all a - round.

F C G

And the squir - rels scur - ry,
When the school doors o - pen,
scam-per up and down,
child-ren run - ning 'round,
you'll know fall's fall - ing,
you'll know fall's fall - ing,

C F C

fall-ing all a - round.
fall-ing all a - round.
And the geese fly south — in a cap-i - tal V;

G C

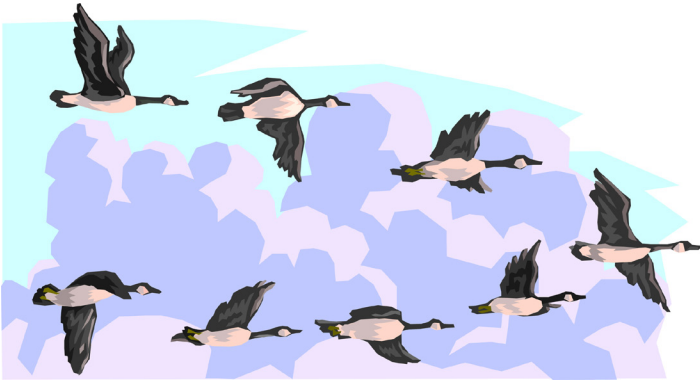
with their honk-ing and flap - ping, — they're a sight to see. And the an - i - mal

F C G C

ba - bies — are told by their moms, "Come get some sleep now, — fall's fall-ing down."

Fall's Falling

➡continued from previous page



Verse 1

When the leaves turn colors, come falling down,
You'll know fall's falling, falling all around.
And the squirrels scurry, scamper up and down,
You'll know fall's falling, falling all around.

Refrain

And the geese fly south in a capital V,
With their honking and flapping, they're a sight to see.
And the animal babies are told by their moms,
"Come get some sleep now, fall's falling down."

Verse 2

When the garden flowers bow their heads down,
You'll know fall's falling, falling all around.
When the school doors open, children running round,
You'll know fall's falling, falling all around.

Refrain



Thoughts to Chew

Where Did All the Older Kids Go?

By Peter Alsop



When I was a kid and anyone in my family had a thought, it would form in their head and come immediately out of their mouth. So one of the skills I'm still working on while becoming an adult is the art of reflection: chewing on one's thoughts a bit before sharing them with others. I've also learned about the importance of taking action after chewing something for a while. Some people are excellent at chewing. They chew—and chew and chew and chew—and nothing much changes. Taking action is about finding what comes next, about not feeling helpless, about believing that there are solutions to the difficulties we face. Taking action after chewing on our thoughts is how we make effective changes in our world.

A thought I've been chewing on lately is something we discussed at the latest Gathering of Children's Artists held at my home in Topanga, California. The topic was "Elementary School Kids and Digital Media: Where Did All the Older Kids Go?" I had noticed that the age range of my family concert audiences seemed to be dropping. There were less seven- to eleven-year-olds and lots more one- to six-year-olds. And it wasn't just my audience: other performers reported experiencing the same thing. Personally, I miss the seven-to-eleven years set at my concerts. Nothing's quite as sweet as the raucous laughter of that age group when I mention underwear or boogers. Three-year-olds don't laugh like that at underwear and boogers; they just look at me like, "Yeah? What's your point?"

At that gathering someone mentioned that an elementary school they visited was afloat with stickers distributed to advertise the Disney tween-stars Justin Bieber, Hannah Montana and the Jonas Brothers. Is a fun piece of kid culture being eroded away to the beat of drums and adolescent sexuality? Each year hundreds of thousands of well-meaning parents buy iPods and other personal listening and gaming devices for their kids. Some folks say that mass marketing pop music to elementary aged kids erodes the innocence of their childhood. Hmmm? Isn't that what they used to tell us when we listened to rock and roll?

Maybe corporate music for kids is more about increasing consumption and profits than it is about helping kids learn new ways to cope with life's travails. And maybe bringing live music into schools and day care centers is more about helping kids experience the importance of group fun and family and community than

continued on next page ➡

Thoughts to Chew

➡continued from previous page

it is about making money. But if we actually listen to some of Hannah Montana's lyrics, there are some solid messages lurking there under the huge production budgets. I'm betting that Justin Bieber's seven-year-old fans will still laugh at boogers and get hooked by stories and songs about their own seven-year-old experiences in school. My concern is that if those fans don't ever come to live concerts designed for kids their own age, if they never hear stories or songs on the radio that incorporate their seven-year-old questions and world view, then where and when will they feel affirmed and okay about their seven-year-old selves, as they jump right into preadolescent dating behaviors and drama?

The virtual world of technology takes up a bigger and bigger slice of our kids' waking hours every year. And it's not just kids' music: it's computers and games and television. And it's not only kids who fall into the black hole of MySpace and Face Book and LinkedIn. Most parents today grew up with technology themselves. It gives us huge benefits, and at the same time it creates fewer opportunities for kids and parents to experience important skill-building interactions with other real live emotional, intellectual and physical human beings (including our relatives).

So how do we set boundaries with this juggernaut? What kind of action can we take to make a difference? Some of us just "wish" it would all go away. My CD *Grow It At Home* has a song called "Wish" that speaks to this.* Here's an excerpt:

Kid: Wish I could save the animals, I'd save a polar bear!

I'd keep him in my bathtub and I'd brush his hair!

Kid: Wish I could drive Dad's car! I could drive you to the zoo!

Kid: Wish I could play guitar. I wish our wishes would come true!

Chorus Oh-oooo! I wish! (I wish!) Oh-oooo! I wish! (I wish!)

Kid: I wish God would hear us wishing, up in Heaven where He dwells.

Peter: Y'know, somewhere I heard "God helps those who help themselves,"

'Cause when we wish and wish, and we get no satisfaction

Then something needs t' change, we gotta take some action!

So when I wish for something, I take out my mirror.

I can see who needs t' help me, yeah, couldn't be much clearer!

Kid: 'Cause sittin' here and wishin', it's a really big distraction!

Peter: Stead of sittin' here and wishin', let's get up and take some action! C'mon!

One of the ways kids' artists can take action is to raise the bar for ourselves: to boost the value of what we deliver to our audience. Since most of us don't have the financial resources of a Disney company, we can make sure that the content we're communicating has deeper value. Let's address some of the myriad issues facing families today with our own stories or songs. How about presenting concrete examples of some practical options in a verse or two that families might find helpful? We know that one in three young women under the age of eighteen and one out of five little boys experience some form of sexual abuse. We know that one out of four homes struggles with active alcohol addiction. That's a lot of kids who need help.

Doing what we do gives us a rare opportunity to quietly and gently drop some healthy living skills into the family framework with our music and stories during a live performance. Let's send something useful home to folks who feel stuck and overwhelmed. If we make that extra effort when we put our show together, we may help someone over one of the roadblocks that families face daily.

Mom and Dad stressed out? Of course! So I sing "Pat Your Daddy On the Knee" and say "kids are not responsible for taking care of grown-ups, but it sure helps to give your grown-ups a hug once in a while." Kids afraid of going to sleep at night? I sing "What If?" Let's make up some silly stuff to keep our brains from feeling frightened when there isn't any real danger. We each have our own stories. Let's write songs about them, so we can spread that information to others who could use the help. Your song can inform me about what you do when you're feeling stressed, and I can try that technique out for myself. Write about what your parents did that taught you some helpful lessons. How about things you learned the hard way? Have you discovered new ways to cope with old problems and difficulties? Sing an alphabet song and make up an introduction that addresses how a little kid might feel starting out with A-B-C, but feeling unsure if they're going to make it through to the X-Y-Z. When grown-ups sing songs with insight about the feelings that go through kids, it helps every child feel more accepted and okay. It gives their inner feelings a voice. And isn't that the extra value we want?

*© 2010, Moose School Music (BMI)

This kind of work requires us to make a commitment to our own self growth. We can't pass a skill on to others if we don't have that skill ourselves. We call it "elementary school" because kids exemplify the elements of who we all are. The more I'm in touch with my own elementary feelings, the better I'm able to relate to what goes on in a kid's world and the better I am at helping parents understand how to show up for their kids and themselves.

If Disney's tween-stars addressed more of this stuff in their songs, I wouldn't be nearly as concerned about the impact of virtual media on our kids. Kids need love, understanding and lots of live human connection with loving adults. One hopes those adults understand that music is not just a commodity to buy, but something we can learn to do ourselves so we can share it with our kids.

Peter Alsop has a PhD in educational psychology and has worked as a New York City school teacher and as the director of a residential treatment center for emotionally disturbed adolescents. He has also produced songbooks and twenty award-winning albums. He is a father and grandfather. He can be reached at peter@peteralsop.com.



Regional Reports

compiled by Leslie Zak

Please refer to the sidebar on page 33 for contact information. In addition to the reports found here, you may find more recently updated information about regional activities on the CMN website (www.cmnonline.org).

MID-ATLANTIC

The Mid-Atlantic region has been keeping pace with our goal of scheduling a regional event every other month.

December 19: We held a fun "Holiday Happening" event at a colorful, cozy, kid-friendly storefront called Peekaboo Alley in Jenkintown, Pennsylvania, a space provided by owner Beth Fox. This festive get-together was a joint effort between CMN and the Children's Music Experience (under the leadership of Peter Moses), which is a regional service of music and song enrichment for kids at preschools and day care centers.

February 12: We staged a wonderful "Double-Whammy Workshop" at the Creative Living Room in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, featuring the workshops "Find Your Voice," led by singer extraordinaire Allison DeSalvo, and "Rattle, Bang, Boom!: Rhythms, Instruments and Music of the World," led by master percussionist Bill Marconi. Allison guided the group through the exploration of sound, breath and vibration as a fun and creative way to connect with yourself and others. Sharing more than fifty instruments from all over the world, Bill invited us all to experience the rhythms, sounds and music from early civilizations to modern times, bringing out the little drummer boy/girl in all of us. We topped off the afternoon with some jamming and song-swapping. Extra kudos to Mary Shapiro, who trekked all the way up from the nation's capital to be with us.

April 3: We delighted in a song swap entitled "April Foolishness: From the Sublime to the Ridiculous." With a special emphasis on the

humorous, it was a great opportunity to share our favorite fun/funny songs. This event was hosted by new CMN member Robbi Kumalo (with the able assistance of her two young daughters) at her studio in the little town of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. One of the day's memorable highlights was the plugged-in puppetry of Gene Galligan, who was also inspired to join CMN.

June 11: We launched a joint effort, in Maplewood, New Jersey, with the New York Metro region, at the kind request of their regional rep, Beth Bierko. Many of us had fond memories of our last regional collaboration at the same site: the Ethical Culture Society of Essex County. This time around, we called the day "Musical Fun and Games." Nancy Hershatter led the workshop "On Beyond Raffi: Songs and Games from the American Folk Tradition," and David C. Perry presented "Vibrant Visuals: Using Pictures and Props to Spice up Your Music." We also enjoyed a potluck meal and a round-robin concert.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

At time of this writing, CMNers of Northern California were planning to hold a song swap and potluck June 12 at the home of Andrea Gaspari in Lafayette.

NEW ENGLAND

In the spring, we celebrated one of our favorite days of the year: the CMN New England Annual Gathering. There were people present we'd met at our first gatherings, as well as newcomers—including nonmembers—who fit in with us like hands

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2011 New England Annual Gathering



Photo by Janet Beatrice

Jeff Warner is making his "limberjack" dance while singing "Buffalo Gals."



Participants in a game during Sarah Pirtle's "Talk It Out" workshop included (left to right) Nyanna Susan Tobin, Pat Sorn, Sarah, Tim Seston, Nancy Fiske, and Sandy Pliskin.

Photo by Janet Beatrice



Joanne Hammil leading the closing; behind her: Tim Seston and Nancy Fiske

Photo by Sammie Haynes



Photo by Sammie Haynes

Jackson Gillman facilitating a workshop



Photo by Janet Beatrice

Gigi Weisman (left) and Joni AvRutick (right) play together during the round robin.



Photo by Janet Beatrice

In her workshop on kids and self-esteem, Fran Friedman (left) teaches a game. Pat Sorn (middle) is playing the cloud and Carolyn Whitmore is playing a six-year-old.



Photo by Janet Beatrice

Enjoying "That Funky Drumming" workshop led by Bob Bloom are (left to right) Alex Andrews, Peter Sheridan, June-Ruth Canonico, Tina Stone, and Diana Kane.



Photo by Sammie Haynes

Sarah Pirtle leading the opening

Regional Reports

➤ continued from page 31

in gloves. In fact, three of them became members then and there.

We were delighted to introduce and welcome another newcomer, Jane Arsham, the new CMN administrator, who was instrumental in making the gathering a success. She jumped right in and helped with everything. Most impressive, she gave out an envelope-stuffing job during our business meeting, and the job was done by the end of the gathering. Now that's efficiency! Jane also brought a special guest: the new CMN bookkeeper, Janet Simpson. Sarah Pirtle kindly substituted at the last minute for an absent and sick Laura Deutsch to lead the opening in movement and song, getting us in the right frame of mind for the day ahead. Renowned traditional music expert Jeff Warner offered a keynote address filled with music, history, anecdotes, beautiful instruments, and a little dancing by his limberjack.

Then workshops, lunch and more workshops, on topics like self-esteem, performance, drumming, and using music to help kids learn to talk things out instead of fighting them out. Big thanks go to workshop leaders Jeff Warner, Fran Friedman, Jackson Gillman, Bob Bloom, Sarah Pirtle, and Betsy



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Zahniser. After our business meeting and the rousing round-robin, Joanne Hammil, who is to receive CMN's 2011 Magic Penny Award, led us in a beautiful closing with some help from Martha Leader and Tom Smith. (Joanne also handled the sales table.)

What a pleasure it was to spend time with old friends and new friends. We are certainly looking forward to meeting with these folks again and the rest of CMN at our Twenty-first International Confer-

ence in Hyannis, Massachusetts, for a whole weekend full of the very same kind of joy, love, and song.

GREAT LAKES

Ohio CMNers, performing under the CMN banner, were featured on the program at the kids' tent at the Central Ohio Folk Festival in May. Later that month, Joanie Calem, Lisa Heintz, and Leslie Zak led a family sing-along at the children's book store Cover to Cover in Columbus, Ohio. This was a pilot program which we hope will be evolving into a regularly scheduled event.

And CMN took the solar stage at Comfest 2011 in June for a rousing family concert. This was our eighth appearance at this benchmark three-day community "Party with a Purpose" event in Columbus, Ohio. CMN is now deemed a "must-have" presence by the festival organizers.


We are planning fund-raising activities and brainstorming new ways to physically connect with our far-flung membership and, we hope, to grow in numbers. 



Photo by Sammie Haynes

Jackson Gillman's Workshop: (left to right) Sandy Pliskin, Janet Simpson, Tina Stone, Joanne Hammil, Martha Leader, Nyanna Susan Tobin



Wintertime

Words and music by Joanie Calem
© 2002 Joanie Calem

Joanie wrote this song a few years after she moved back to the US from Israel. Her children had not seen snow in Israel, and were always enchanted (and are to this day) by the sight of snowflakes drifting slowly down. They often took family walks in the woods behind their house, looking for signs of wildlife, and (other than the bears) the song chronicles one day's walk. When Joanie does this song with groups of children, she has them sleeping during the chorus, and then waking up and silently moving like the animals described in the song. Her son has since corrected her erroneous assumption that skunks are awake, and also explained that bears do not actually sleep for the entire winter...

refrain E m G M7 E m E m C E m

Win-ter-time is cold time, slow time, snow time, win-ter-time's the soft time of ____ the year.

A m G C A m

1. Rab - bits hop ____ through the cold, dig - ging up their sum - mer gold.
2. Squi - rels jump from branch to limb, climb - ing trees with shim - my shim.

verse A m G C G

Hop and jump all the day, they aren't both - ered by the gray. ____
Bu - sy all year 'round, ____ nice warm nests a - bove the ground. ____

A m G C A m

Cardi - nals chat - ter in the trees, find - ing win - ter's nuts and seeds.
Pos - sums, skunk, ____ and rac - coon, all are friends of win - ter's moon.

A m G C G

All their oth - er bird ____ friends flew ____ down south 'til win - ter's end. ____
Prowl - ing 'round in mud and snow, the cold just makes their thick coats grow. ____

Wintertime

continued from previous page

Win-ter-time is cold time, slow time, snow time, win-ter-time's the soft time of ____ the year. 3. Now

bears are a diff - 'rent sto - ry. When they hear the North Wind's song, they

climb in - to their caves, _____ sleep a - way the win - ter long.

Refrain

Wintertime is cold time, slow time, snow time,
Wintertime's the soft time of the year.

1. Rabbits hop through the cold,
Digging up their summer gold.
Hop and jump all the day,
They aren't bothered by the gray.
Cardinals chatter in the trees,
Finding winter's nuts and seeds.
All their other bird friends
Flew down south 'til winter's end.


2. Squirrels jump from branch to limb,
Climbing trees with shimmy shim.
Busy all year 'round,
Nice warm nests above the ground.
Possums, skunk and raccoon,
All are friends of winter's moon.
Prowling 'round in mud and snow,
The cold just makes their thick coats grow.



Refrain

3. Now bears are a diff'rent story.
When they hear the North Wind's song,
They climb into their caves,
Sleep away the winter long.

Refrain

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

Pro Song

With a Little Help from My Friends

By Dave Kinnoin
© 2011 Dave Kinnoin

The nitty-gritty of professional songwriting

Our smart CMN pal and sterling songwriter Monty Harper sure came in handy to me several months ago when I was writing what is proving to be a very profitable song about my dog Lulu called “My Dog Brings Out the Best In Me.” I had fallen in love with a first version of the first verse, and by golly, I wasn’t going to let it go. Oh, how I loved the sound of the words with the melody! The prosody was magnificent. The lines had a certain spin I adored. I sang it over and over again and was amazed at my genius. Only problem, Monty explained, was that it didn’t set up my hook.

“Yeah, but it sings so wonderfully.”

“But it doesn’t set up your hook.”

I hated him for a moment. He was right. I struggled and struggled and finally fixed it...with a little help from my friend.

A *hook* is (usually) your title. It’s imperative that you make the listener hungry for it. It needs to make perfect sense and flow easily with no awkward phrasing required. Often the hook is used more than once in the chorus, and the line leading up to it is called the *catapult* line because it launches right into that chorus. In the case of my song, my hook was at the end of each verse. No matter where your hook is, it must be preceded by a great catapult line. Many writers take great delight in having the chorus or hook have different meanings as the song progresses.

Here’s the lyric Monty saved my butt on:

My Dog Brings Out the Best In Me

words and music by Dave Kinnoin
© 2010 Song Wizard Music (ASCAP)

Verse one

I lose patience, act the fool.
Someone’s sweet nose keeps its cool.
I take a new look, and I see
My dog brings out the best in me.

Verse two

When I’m tempted to do wrong,
Someone’s big eyes keep me strong.
We must be proud of what I’ll be.
My dog brings out the best in me.

Bridge

There are roads that could be taken,
But I’m feelin’ beat.



Four paws mark the trail.
One wag of that tail,
And I’m back on my feet.

Verse three

We get achy in the joints
And this old life disappoints.
We keep on hangin’ happily.
My dog brings out the best in me.

(repeat bridge)

Verse four

When we’re nappin’ side by side,
And we’re driftin’ deep and wide,
We’re goin’ somewhere wild and free.
From now till we’re a memory,
My dog brings out the best in me.

Key of C

Intro: | C Am | Dm7 G | C Am | F Fm |

Verse 1: | C | E7 | Am | C7 | F Fm | C A7 | Dm7 | G G+ |

Verse 2: | C | E7 | Am | C7 | F Fm | C A7 | Dm7 G | C |

Bridge: | E7 | Am | Dm7 G | CMaj7 | Ab Bb | Eb Ab | F7 | Bb Bb+ |

Verse 3: | C | E7 | Am | C7 | F Fm | C A7 | Dm7 G | C |

Solo over bridge: | E7 | Am | Dm7 G | CMaj7 |

Vocal in: | Ab Bb | Eb Ab | F7 | Bb Bb+ |

Verse 4: | C | E7 | Am | C7 | F Fm | C A7 | Dm7 G | Em A7 | C | Dm7 G |

End: | C Am | Dm7 G | C Am | F Fm | CMaj7 ||

Here is the original verse one:

When there’s nowhere left to go,
I’ve been laid out blow by blow,
I feel a warm chin on my knee.
My dog brings out the best in me.

This would have been a good verse if the hook were “My Dog Comforts Me.” The day I wrote it, I’d been getting whapped on a business deal I was trying to make, I was having limited success on some parenting issues, my body hurt, and, well, I was feeling kinda sad and lost and lonely and worried. I was so enamored of the original first verse I paid no attention to the fact that



it didn't support my hook. Monty had the objectivity I lacked, and he boldly told me. I love people like that. After I got the song just the way I liked it, I was aghast that I had made such a rookie error on that first verse. We all go nuts once in a while, I guess.

I chose the chords I did because they seemed to lend themselves to the lighthearted yet adventuresome nature of the story. The G augmented chord at the end of verse one leads nicely into the C chord. When I got to the end of the bridge and found myself on a B \flat chord, I decided to go to the B \flat augmented chord, which has an F \sharp in it. I ascended from the F natural (in the B \flat chord) to the F \sharp (in the B \flat augmented chord) to the G, which is the fifth of the C chord. My ear liked it. One person I bounced the song off of, a stellar writer I've been friends with for years, didn't like that progression. It jarred his ear. I liked it, he didn't. I chose my way. Getting advice doesn't mean you have to take it if your muse disagrees. Just make sure you carefully consider the criticism in case you've been an idiot. You can hear my new song and see my dog Lulu and me on this YouTube video shot with my \$90 Flip camera in my studio last April, one week after Lulu's sixteenth birthday: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DSiQLgSnix0&feature=player_profilepage.


When I write lyrics, I usually keep them broad enough for multiple uses unless the first use demands that I not do this. (For example, if it's a Winnie the Pooh theme song, naturally I have to mention Pooh.) I did not use Lulu's name in the song "For the Love of My Pet" on the *Disney's 101 Dalmations and Friends* CD even though she had inspired it, and I'm glad I didn't. I had written and produced the song for another client (I retained ownership), then posted it on www.loosetoothmusic.com. I used an excellent Disney singer I'd used many times before, Randy Crenshaw, for the vocal. A few years later, when Disney wanted the song and sound recording, I licensed them both for a fair rate, and Randy and the background singers all got a union contract. Lulu and I got a lot of dog food and vet trips for that, and the money will come in for years to come. I wrote "My Dog Brings Out the Best In Me" in such a way that it's for both a male and a female dog. Notice I talk about "nose" and "tail" and "paws" and never have to say "she" or "he." That was no accident. I am always looking for the use beyond the first use. Why limit a song unnecessarily, especially if songwriting is your livelihood? My aim on a song like this is to have a standard. Like many standards that have a verse-verse-bridge-verse structure, I gave the last verse an extra line to put a little something special on the ending. I was concise in my expression and used language that leaned a bit to years gone by. I strenuously avoided any lines or words or even syllables that didn't serve my story, that didn't pull their weight. I kept the meter symmetrical between verses. The writers of

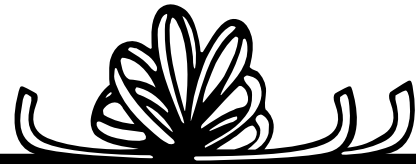
standards have a lot to teach us. (The Disney executive who licensed "For the Love of My Pet" started his own company and continues to hire me. He knows I don't turn in a song until it's the best it can be. That's why I showed it to Monty and several others and fixed the mistakes before recording my new dog song.)

Speaking of standards, how many of them do you know that have false rhymes? I can't think of any. I'll talk more about that and some other things in my next essay. For now, I wish for all of you a friend as precious as Lulu.



Dave Kinnoin has written hundreds of songs for the Muppets, Disney, Sesame Workshop and many other children's entertainment and educational companies. He's a Parents' Choice Gold Award-winning recording artist for kids on his independent label, Song Wizard Records. He's also a volunteer songwriter and talent recruiter for the Songs of Love Foundation, a nonprofit that provides personalized songs for sick children. He lives in South Pasadena, California, with his wife, two

kids, three dogs, and three cats. Dave can be reached at davekinnoin@songwizard.com. 



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Think of giving one to a friend or teacher for a birthday, a holiday, or in appreciation. To start off their year's experience of CMN, the recipient will be connected to the member e-mail group, the member section of the CMN website including access to *Pass It On!*, and will receive a welcome letter naming you as the giver.

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El Jilguerito (The Little Goldfinch)

Words and music by Francy Acosta
 Arranged by Francy Acosta
 Based on traditional Colombian *guabinas*
 © 2010 Francy Acosta

Francy Acosta is a music educator from Columbia who now lives in the Chicago area. Her work with children has been the source of inspiration of songs deeply grounded in her Columbian roots. Francy writes: "This song and the given arrangement allow many options for performance. The part that I created is in Voice 1. Voices 2 and 3 are ostinatos (continually repeated musical phrases or rhythms) based on the traditional rhythm of *guabina* from the Andean region of Colombia. Very similar ostinatos can be heard in arrangements of other *guabinas*; they are very popular and are often superimposed on any *guabina* due to the nature of the harmonic progression. This song can be performed with or without the ostinatos, but I highly recommend that the person teaching the song take a look at all the parts just to get a feel for the genre. I have done this song very successfully with choirs of boys and girls from second through fifth grades using the ostinatos as introduction and interlude."

Note: The \sim connecting words marks a *sinalefa* (elision), where in Spanish the final letter of a word forms one syllable with the first letter of the following word.

$\text{♩} = 120$

Voice 1

E A B7 E A B7

1. En el pa - tio de mi ca - sa me \sim en - con - tré un jil - gue - ri - to,
 2. Jil - gue - ri - to, jil - gue - ri - to, nun - ca de - jes de can - tar, _____

Voice 2

La la la la la la la la la la,

Voice 3

Pom pom pom pom po ro po pom pom pom pom,

y cuan - do me \sim o - yó to - can - do, me re - ga - - ló su can - ti - co: Li li
 mi - ra que to - das las flo - res se pu - sie - ron a bai - lar. _____

La la la la la la la la la la. La la la la

Pom pom pom pom po ro po pom pom pom pom. Pom pom pom

El Jilguerito (The Little Goldfinch)

continued from previous page

Three staves of music in G major (one sharp). The first staff has lyrics 'li li li li li li li.' with a first ending and a second ending marked '2. B7 E'. The second staff has lyrics 'la la la la la.' with a first ending and a second ending. The third staff has lyrics 'pom po ro po pom pom pom.' with a first ending and a second ending.

1. En el patio de mi casa
Me encontré un jilguerito,
Y cuando me oyó tocando,
Me regaló su cantico:
Li, li, li...

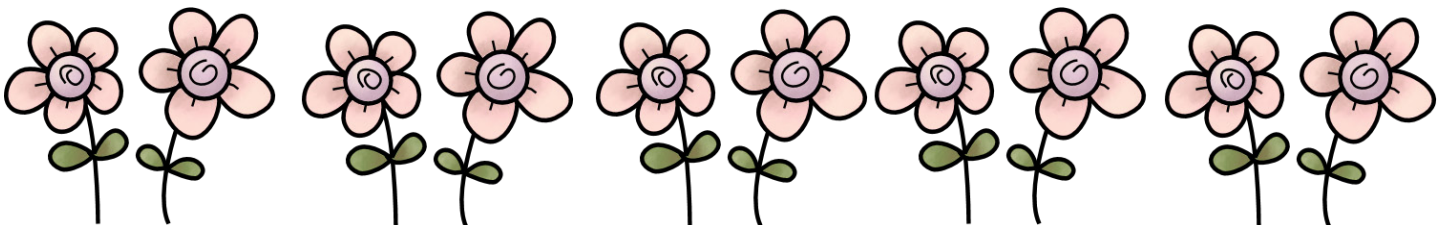
2. Jilguerito, jilguerito,
Nunca dejes de cantar.
Mira que todas las flores
Se pusieron a bailar.
Li, li li...



Loose translation:

I came across a little goldfinch in my backyard.
When he heard me playing he began to sing: Lee, lee, lee...

Little goldfinch, little goldfinch, please do not ever stop singing.
Just look around; all the flowers are dancing now. Lee, lee, lee...





If I Were A Bird

Words and music by Karen Banks-Lubicz and Amy Lowe
© 2003 Karen Banks-Lubicz and Amy Lowe

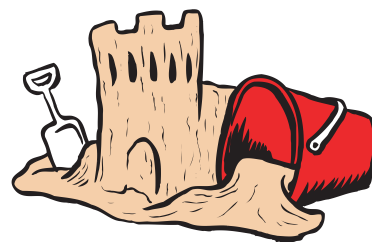
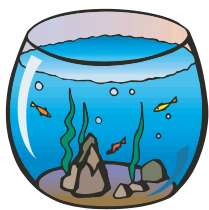
Amy Lowe and Karen Banks-Lubicz met on a gig in Chicago's Wicker Park neighborhood nearly twenty years ago. They've been friends ever since. Both singer-songwriters admired the other's work, and soon they were writing together. As their careers grew and changed, so did their audience. Eventually they found themselves working with children. That was the inspiration for their first children's song, "If I Were A Bird." Amy and Karen remember, "We wanted to write a children's song about the power of imagination and self-esteem. Brainstorming prompted 'What if I were...Ah! What if I could fly like a bird? Where would I go? What would I see?' The song began to write itself. The ending of each verse inspired the next verse; e.g., 'to see where all the fishes go' led to 'If I were a fish.' Imagination is where it all starts."

Sheet music for the song "If I Were A Bird" in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The music is written on a single staff with lyrics underneath. Chords are indicated above the staff: A, A sus4, E, and A.

If I were a bird, would I be sing-ing in a tree,
or would I spread my wings high a-bove the deep sea? How high would I fly,
would I try to touch the sky, or would I soar so low to see where all the fish-es____
go. If I were a fish, would I swim the o-cean blue, or would I be a lit-tle
an-gel in a bowl in front of you? Would I swim so slow, mak-ing waves as I
go, or would I flip my tail, catch-in' wind like a sail? If I were a sail,
would I float a-bove the reef, or would I cap-ture the wind, break a-way like a thief?

If I Were a Bird

continued from previous page



A A sus4 A A A sus4 A E
 Would I rest out at sea, or be pulled a-cross the land, or would I bake in the sun
 A A sus4 A A A sus4 A A A sus4
 as I lie in gold-en sand? If I were gold-en sand, would I be-come a cas-tle grand,
 A E A A sus4 A A A sus4
 or be pat-ted like a pie in a hap-py tod-dler's hand? Would I rest on a dune,
 A A A sus4 A E A A sus4
 a va-ca-tion spot in June, or would I stick to those when they sit on me in their wet clothes?
 A D A D D sus2 E
 But I like be-ing me _____ 'cause I can im - a-gine an-y-thing I want to be. _____
 D A D A D A D A D A
 A bird can fly, a fish can swim, a sail can on - ly sail when there's wind, and a grain of gol-
 D A D E E7 A A sus4 A
 den sand, wet or dry, can ne-ver im - ag-ine as much as I, no mat-ter how they try. _____

If I Were a Bird

➡continued from previous page

If I were a bird, would I be singing in a tree,
Or would I spread my wings high above the deep sea?
How high would I fly, would I try to touch the sky,
Or would I soar so low to see where all the fishes go?

If I were a fish, would I swim the ocean blue,
Or would I be a little angel in a bowl in front of you?
Would I swim so slow, making waves as I go,
Or would I flip my tail, catchin' wind like a sail?

If I were a sail, would I float above the reef,
Or would I capture the wind, break away like a thief?
Would I rest out at sea, or be pulled across the land,
Or would I bake in the sun as I lie in golden sand?

If I were golden sand, would I become a castle grand,
Or be patted like a pie in a happy toddler's hand?
Would I rest on a dune, a vacation spot in June,
Or would I stick to those when they sit on me in their wet clothes?

But I like being me 'cause I can imagine anything I want to be.
A bird can fly, a fish can swim, a sail can only sail when there's wind,
And a grain of golden sand, wet or dry, can never imagine as much as I,
No matter how they try.



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Do you mention CMN at your gigs, workshops, teacher trainings, or other events? We have materials to add to your testimonials.

To order a supply of membership brochures to distribute, contact Ellen Greist at vger42@aol.com

Recent changes to the membership fees and categories made the brochure membership form insert obsolete. If you already have a supply of brochures, please contact the CMN office about updated inserts: 339/707-0277 or office@cmnonline.org

For a Braille version of the brochure, contact the CMN central office

Check out the CMN website!



A screenshot of the CMN website homepage. The page is titled 'Check out the CMN website!' and features several sections: 'Sing' (CMN's Online Library), 'Read' (Pass It On!), 'Connect' (Participate in Events), 'Honor' (The CMN Magic Penny Award), and 'Join' (Join Us and open your door to children's music). There are also social media links and a 'Donate to CMN' button.

- Use the peace resources songs jukebox. <http://cmnonline.org/Peace.aspx>
- Print a form to submit a song for the environmental resources page. <http://cmnonline.org/docs/EnvResourceForm.pdf>
- Find link to other organizations that promote children's music. <http://cmnonline.org/Links.aspx?T=O>

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

New Sounds

Compiled by Mara Beckerman

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.



MONTY HARPER

Songs from the Science Frontier

Songs from the Science Frontier is a CD for learners age eight and up that brings musical meaning to current scientific research. Many of the songs were inspired by the work of actual scientists in Monty's hometown of Stillwater, Oklahoma. Topics include such amazing concepts as: phototactic bacteria, stress hormones, wheat genomics, bacterial biofilms, bat taxonomy, x-ray crystallography, and luminescence dating. Producer Chris Wiser of the Sugar Free Allstars helped put the groove to these esoteric subjects in a way that's fun, fresh, and funky. Monty's popular environmental song "Wind Energy" is included, as well as "Ain't It Beautiful," "Bat Man," "Acrocantosaur," "What Is the Shape of the Molecule?," "Super Scientist," and "It's Not Fair (When Your Mother Is a Scientist)." The funding to record this CD was raised through Kickstarter with help from many generous CMNers. Lyrics can be found on Monty's website.

CDs are \$15 (no s&h for CMN members) from Monty Harper at www.MontyHarper.com; by e-mail: monty@montyharper.com; or phone: 405/624-3805. It is also available at www.cdbaby.com.

KATHY REID-NAIMAN

I Love to Hear the Sounds

The songs on this recording have been selected for use with rhythm instruments: sticks, bells, shakers, sand blocks, drums and rhythm band. Songs range from traditional

to new adaptations of older songs and entirely new ones. Kathy's lovely sweet voice makes this recording a joy to listen to. With the very fine Ken Whiteley in the producer and arranger seat and a cast of incredible musicians playing trombones, trumpets, flutes, violins, guitars, piano and more, you are guaranteed a fine time. But that's not all. Kathy's version of "I Am a Fine Musician" will delight you when she introduces the next "fine musician" who turns out to be a professional cookie sheet player. From start to finish, from the simplest nursery rhymes to the grand marching band, these songs are great fun. Also included are instrumental versions at the end of the recording which will allow teachers, parents and children to use their own voices.

CDs are \$16.95 (plus s&h) from www.cdbaby.com, www.avcage.com, and www.midwesttape.com. You can also order from Kathy's website, www.merriweather.ca, where the price includes shipping costs from Canada.

MORGAN JORDAN

Caterpillar Music

To listen to *Caterpillar Music* is to take an adventure in music for all ages. Wanna ride a buckboard, or sing like a caterpillar? Have you ever gone muddlin'? And can you tell me What is this thing called gravity? These are just a few of the imaginative adventures you'll take along with Morgan Jordan. Morgan is joined by her good friend Connie Crockett, and together their voices blend melodiously. This exciting


recording was originally released in 1992 as a cassette tape titled *Kid Tested*. Now, a generation later, the children who loved it have their own little people and keep requesting that the recording be updated and re-released. So here it is: the same great music in a new twenty-first-century CD.

CDs are \$13.95 (plus s&h) and can be purchased at www.amazon.com, www.cdbaby.com, and www.iTunes.com.

MARLA LEWIS

Cocoa

Marla is "Jammin'" happy and dancing with her "Feet, Feet" now that her new website is up and includes her brand new digital EP release, *Cocoa*. The tunes are lovely, lively and all 'round fun. They include the African-flavored title song about how cocoa is made; a rock song about back to school anxiety; a stompin' fun tune about animals and their amazing feet (which can also be viewed as a video animation on Marla's website); a jazzy tune about synonyms, "Kalico Kat's Jug Band;" and how about a song for St. Patrick's Day that will get you feeling that even if you're not Irish, by golly, "Everybody's Irish on St. Patrick's Day."

Digital downloads are \$4.99 and can be purchased on Marla's website, www.marlalewis.com. You can purchase the whole recording or just individual tracks. Activities, lyrics, and the "Feet, Feet" video are also available on the site. 

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

The most recent ones are also posted in the Board Members Tool Kit on the CMN website.

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

CALL FOR ARTICLES!

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

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

All we ask is that articles...

- ✓ address topics of interest to CMN members...
- ✓ in some way relate to CMN's mission...
- ✓ be clear, concise, and reasonably well written...

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 2012 issue:

October 15, 2011

Deadline for Fall 2012 issue:

May 4, 2012

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

Hassaun Ali Jones-Bey
P.O. Box 1002
Alameda, CA 94501
music@boundlessgratitude.com

Submission via e-mail or disk is preferred.

CALL FOR SONGS!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Send songs to:

Brigid Finucane
Songs Editor
gardengoddess1@comcast.net

CALL FOR NEW RELEASES!

Send notification of items released in the last year to:

Barbara Rice
berice@bitstream.net

Please include date of release in description.

CALL FOR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR!

Letters to the Editor may be sent to:

Hassaun Ali Jones-Bey
P.O. Box 1002
Alameda, CA 94501
music@boundlessgratitude.com

Submission via e-mail is preferred.

Not a member?

Visit the CMN website, www.cmnonline.org, for details or contact the CMN office, office@cmnonline.org.





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