Music EdVentures
An International Network of Teachers

News and Notes

October 2011

IN THIS ISSUE

From Our President

MEI mentorship
Email from Angelie p. 2
Membership information p. 2

MEI 2012 Conference
Conference Flyer p. 3

Emerging Pioneers:
Danielle K-Loehr p. 4
Kari Wendroth p. 5

TIPS for October
Turns in games p. 6-7

Ideas for Singing in Rounds
By Marilyn Winter p. 8

MN Workshop Report
Feedback and photos p. 9-10

Announcing
TMEA address p. 11
Peggy's website p. 11
Playing with Classics p. 11

MEI Information
Purpose of MEI p. 12
MEI Officers p. 12
Board Members p. 12
Coordinators p. 12
Save the date p. 12
MEI Website p. 12
Submissions p. 12

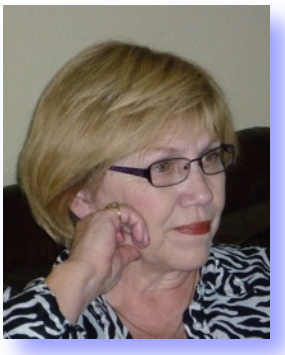
From Our President

Hello to all!

Ideas are stirring and plans have evolved for the 2012 Music EdVentures Conference. I'm so excited about the move of our conference to Vancouver, BC. How fortunate we will be to meet in such a stunning city with such gracious people to celebrate our 20th year of existence.

As folks begin thinking about upcoming conferences and filling out the registration forms, this question often comes to mind. *Why should I become a member of Music EdVentures? How does my membership in the Music EdVentures network benefit me as a teacher?* In this letter I hope to answer some of these questions.

MEI membership makes it possible to be linked to others who hold a like philosophy of how children learn and how to teach and treat them. As I reflect on my years of teaching, I am convinced this network of teachers was a lifeline for me. It helped encourage me as I struggled with teaching certain concepts and in some instances, even knowing *what* to teach.



Marilyn Winter
Sun City, AZ

I realize that I spent most of my years totally isolated from other music teachers in our district. I couldn't walk across the hall, as many educators could, and discuss strategies and challenges with someone who understood my philosophy of teaching. I had no one on the local level with whom to share my successes and struggles. *But*, I was on the phone very often with my dear friend and mentor, Betty Hoffmann (who I met through this network), exclaiming, "You know what happened today!!!" or wondering, "Now what do I do?" Thank you, Betty, for all the support throughout the years. *And* this mentoring is still happening. (See Angelie's note to Anna on the next page.)

Paying your membership dues will help assure that the SongWorks principles, strategies, and teaching techniques will be passed along to the next generation of teachers. This is of utmost importance, in my opinion, because so many promoters of higher test scores are moving in an opposite direction, tending more to testing than to the real needs of children.

I recently spoke with a parent who enrolled her children in a private school.

continued next page

President's letter, cont'd p.1

She noticed there were no playgrounds or places for children to play in the school. When she asked the principal about this, she was informed, "We are not about play here." Need I say more about how important it is that organizations such as Music EdVentures work diligently to keep the needs of children at the forefront of decisions?

There are more benefits of your membership:
Your membership entitles you to a discount in the MEI conference registration fee.

So, please think seriously about becoming a member of MEI, and act now to join this amazing network of teachers. It WILL be money well spent!

Take care my friends,
Marilyn

Editor's note: This September 15th email from Angelie Timm, former student teacher of Anna Langness, typifies the relationships of support that exist among MEI members. Used with permission.

Hey Anna,

I am doing all those songs you used to do with your 4th grade. I am also trying to find that happy balance of detail/ action. :)

I wanted to tell you that I've had some AHA moments this week. I realized I wasn't really teaching the SongWorks approach. There were a lot of holes in what I was doing and my lessons were falling short of what they should have been. I was jumping too early to the booklets/worksheets and the study was not what I wanted it to be. I went back and read through particular chapters of Peggy's book and was reminded of all the little things you do to prepare them for the booklets -- all the different ways to present a song, antiphon and make it a challenging experiment.

Today was fantastic! What I realized is that it takes real courage to teach the way you teach. My lesson plans became less relevant (repertoire driven, rather than step by step), and the experience and flow of the exchange came to the forefront. I realized that I had to have a great deal of trust in myself in order to believe that the kids could be so interested in chinning, antiphonning, etc. Now that I am fully committing to teaching this way, I am realizing I am not very skilled in making the handout materials. I would like to get better at this! I am going to do some more reading.

Just wanted to share!
Angelie

MEI Membership

$35 Regular $50 Sustaining $100 Patron $10 Student

Make checks payable to MEI (USD)
Include your name, address, phone and email.

Send to Anna Langness, Treas.
1179 Lilac St.
Broomfield, CO 80020

Now in our 20th year, Music EdVentures proudly presents

Celebrate LEARNING

A Conference for Music and Classroom Teachers

. . . it's what the excitement is all about!

MARCH 1-3, 2012 VANCOUVER, BC

THREE FULL DAYS YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS!

Thursday 10 AM - Saturday 3 PM

Save the dates! *Book your flights!*

Registration for Members: $170 (CAD$) Banquet: $40 (CAD$)
Forms will be available at www.musicedventures.org

Sample workshops in the conference program

SongWorks - What We Do, How We Do It & Why It Works
Song Games for Stimulating Learning
Modeling Vocal Health in the Classroom
Playing with the Classics & Children
Songs That Children Love to Learn
Dances to Inspire Voice & Movement
Bringing Children into Music Literacy

Presenters include Music EdVentures master teachers and emerging pioneer teachers from Canada, the United States, and Japan.
Dr. Peggy Bennett, Dr. Douglas Bartholomew, Dr. Fleurette Sweeney, Dr. Anna Langness, Tony Williamson, English EdVentures of Japan

LEARNING *. . . it's what the excitement is all about!*

SONGWORKS provides a foundation for general literacy, academic skills in language, and music literacy. SONGWORKS workshops demonstrate how to partner effectively with children, helping them release their singing voices AND their imaginations.
More information and registration forms available at www.musicedventures.org

Emerging Pioneers in Education

Eight young educators were recipients of the Fleurette Sweeney Fellowship for Emerging Pioneers in Education. In return for this recognition and financial assistance we requested feedback from our Emerging Pioneers about the 2011 Conference. In this issue and future issues, EPs will tell of the insights they gained from experiencing the principles and practices of the SongWorks approach at the conference and in their classrooms.

Danielle Koplinka-Loehr shares what transpired when pursuing grant assignment #3. “Write at least one paragraph about your observations and experiences as you have *implemented* select principles and practices of the SongWorks approach in your teaching.”

In my previous assignment, I spoke about the fact that I had decided to leave my wonderful position teaching music in the after-school program in Seattle, and seek full-time employment as a music teacher elsewhere in the area and in the country. I was fortunate enough to receive several interviews throughout May and June, and at each and every interview I was asked to sketch out a sample lesson plan, verbally, for the principal on the other end of the phone or on the opposite end of the video on the computer screen. As I was applying for mostly K-5 general music teaching jobs, each and every time I responded with answers that were full of SongWorks approaches and ideas--singing gathering songs, exemplifying song games, explaining how to sequence song dotting into musical reading, using song maps and tying it in to literacy...every example I gave came from ideas I had been given at the conference and from my methods classes as an undergraduate at Oberlin! Principals were engaged, and many asked follow-up questions about the methods and practices I planned to use, and seemed convinced that the students would enjoy the activities I sketched out. I was so thankful to have a larger "arsenal" of teaching ideas from which to source while under pressure, and because I had attended the conference so recently, the ideas were all very fresh in my mind.

Danielle Koplinka-Loehr
Burlington, VT

Danielle has left her position in Seattle, WA as the Education Director of Seattle Music Partners. She now lives in Vermont and teaches K-5 General Music at John F. Kennedy Elementary in the Winooski School District.

I am so pleased and privileged to have good news to share...that I was offered, and accepted, a position to teach K-5 General Music in Burlington, VT! I will be teaching at John F. Kennedy Elementary in the Winooski School District. I am leaving Seattle in the beginning of August, and will start the position by mid- to late August. I have a lot of family in the area, and am familiar with Vermont, having spent many summers there throughout my childhood, but leaving Seattle will be bittersweet to say the least. However, I am confident that my time in the classroom teaching general music (as well as band and choir, and helping out with the 4th-grade musical!) will be very informed by my practice and praxis with the SongWorks approach. I am already thinking of which songs I will teach the students, and what games will be the most engaging for this specific population of students--79% qualify for free and reduced lunch, 30% are English Language Learners, and many come from families who are recent refugees, from Somalia, Ethiopia, Nepal, Burma, and Iran, to name a few. I am excited and nervous, but I know that my preparation will give me a firm grounding from which to start...and I will learn a lot along the way!

I realize I have not had the full breadth of time and experience to fully implement the SongWorks practices and principles as I would have liked since the time of the conference, and so I very much look forward to keeping you updated as I continue to implement the ideas in my new classroom. Let the journey begin! §

A smile
is a curve
that can get a lot of things
straight.

Fortune cookie

Emerging Pioneer Kari Wendroth shares what transpired when pursuing grant assignment #2. “Within two months after returning from the MEI Conference, visit with at least one colleague about the SongWorks approach and its benefits for children.”

Kari Wendroth
Grove City, MN

Kari earned her Master’s of Music Education degree from the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN. During her twelve-year career she has taught in Litchfield, MN and Budapest, Hungary. She is married to Justin, has two sons, two-year-old William and one-month old, Parker, and has a golden-doodle dog named Clyde.

How does one explain our work to mainstream music educators who speak the language of Orff, Kodály, and Dalcroze as cornerstones of American music education? After my in-depth research of Mary Helen Richards and Education Through Music, I know fully the criticisms of her work and that connecting our work to hers can install road blocks with our colleagues. We continue to evolve our work over the years and incorporate facets from all of these methodologies into an all-encompassing approach focused on mutual respect in a safe learning environment.

In conversations about our work, I usually start by explaining that it is “a student-centered exploration of music fundamentals first introduced through song games, then teacher-questioning techniques bridge the students into a sound to symbol discovery of musical study.” Explanations of song dotting, mapping, ideographs, solfa study, and inner hearing usually make their way into the conversations as tools to help students unlock the mysteries within the song literature. Of course, the actual musical study is only a portion of the gains our work brings to student and teacher; I also share the linguistic, social, and psychological facets of our work in my explanations.

I have had many of these conversations over my twelve year teaching career and affiliation with this organization. I sometimes walk away from these conversations feeling like I’ve taken to the defensive since our work is less known and less mainstream than our counterparts. I know there have been ongoing discussions in our group for years about a certification program, which could help springboard our valuable work to larger audiences. During these conversations, I have found that it’s most helpful to focus on the social and linguistic contributions with regular education colleagues. The parallels to language and literacy are imperative to our work’s survival due to recent, albeit misguided, significance of test scores. There are some colleagues who still “get it” and know that we need to be educating the whole child, including the inner soul of a student, and the social facets of our work fits nicely into this basic essential for education. §

Many of the things you can count,
don't count.
Many of the things you can't count,
really count.

Albert Einstein

TIPS for October

Each month several MEI members will offer Tips for a selected topic.

TURNS IN GAMES

How do you handle situations with “turns” in song games?

Betty Phillips
Oregon

Here are some ideas from my turn taking toolbox. I use different strategies depending upon the number of times the class meets during the week and the frequency that turns occur during the game.

Sometimes I explain that we are not going to track turns, but I let them know why:
1) We will be playing the game over several days.
2) Turns happen quickly.
3) Some days are lucky and other days are not. This may be your lucky day or maybe it will be next time.
4) If you love this game, play it at recess or at home. That way you can gets lots of turns.

If it is a game where turns are REALLY important:
1) Invite the children to give their second turn away to a student that has not had a turn. This gives kids a chance to practice sportsmanship and manners: "Nina, would you like my turn?" "Thank you, James."
2)Amp up this idea a bit with "Surprise me!" Before the child invites another student to take their second turn, ask them to surprise us by inviting someone we won't expect.
3) When preparing for a game that involves closing eyes until the "chooser" finds the person to chase her or guess who she is, have the children that have not had a turn raise their hands after everyone's eyes are closed.
4) Write each child's name on an index card. Have the children decorate their cards during music time or perhaps the classroom teacher would like to make this an art project. Use these cards for turns. You can also use the cards to create a quick seating order. Before the class enters the music room, place the cards on the floor in rows. This gives you the flexibility to seat children where they will be most successful. When they enter the room, have them pass their cards down the row for you to collect.

If you need to record turns, make a copy of your class list.

Last hint: If you are chosen for a turn, take it! It delights children to see their teacher playing with them.

Esther Campbell
Washington

Overall, turns are usually game driven, with the cadences of songs themselves. With the younger children, I emphasize that when the song ends, our feet will stop and that person will be “it” next, i.e., in The Farmer in the Dell and I'm Looking For a Friend. I like to alternate song games that have different kinds of turns within a class period. Frog's In the Meadow has only a few turns, where One in the Middle and Clickety Clack end with everyone participating.

I turn the game and choosing who's "it" over to the students as soon as I can. I don't try to keep track of who has had a turn; it makes life too complicated. If someone complains about not getting a turn, I tell them, "Maybe next time. I sure hope so." That usually satisfies them and they eventually do get a turn. Also, it’s a good lesson about life. When I notice someone who needs a turn, I will let her/him choose the next song game to play or start the one I have planned to do. With children with special needs I have stepped in at times when needed, but usually my students have been good about giving them a turn.

TIPS continued

TURNS IN GAMES

How do you handle situations with “turns” in song games?

Vickey Suarez
Texas

I LOVE when the song chooses the next turn. :) That takes all the drama out of my hands! One of my favorite funny things is to play a game like We're Going Downtown with kindergartners and watch them try to scoot over so they'll be chosen. The younger children learn that sometimes the song chooses.

I think I just try to "read" the class and modify the game if I notice that girls are only choosing girls or boys are only choosing boys. I'll say that a boy or a girl needs the next turn. I like to have the students choose as often as possible. If we are playing instruments and it's time to give up your turn, I'll often say, "Choose a quiet person who would like a turn. Raise your hand if you want a turn."

With classes that are 45 minutes long, it's not difficult to play a game long enough for most kids to get a turn. Sometimes I will jot down names of kids who have not had a turn. Sometimes I'll say, "Remind me that we need to start with Habib next time we play this." Often I just say, "We'll have more turns next time you come."

And I do try to play the games many, many times so the children feel everyone has had lots of turns. I like to stay on the same game/song over weeks. Adjusting to 45 minute classes was a challenge for me last year; in Arlington (my former job years ago) my classes were only 25 minutes, but the kids came every day. Now I know that I need several shorter activities/games/songs in each class in order to use the time well and help the kids stay focused.

Heather Hicks
British Columbia

My students have favorite games that they will request over and over, once they have learned the songs, and in most cases, they are games where the song chooses the turn. Last year’s students would ask for The Penny Game; they would play over and over without tiring. Kids are the ones who influence the turn-taking because they will use disguised voices, direction changing around the circle, and giving the coin to another person to start when they've had lots of turns.

I don't worry about turn-taking very often in this situation. If I have students who raise the question, I then ask the ones who have had turns to stand so that everyone can see. Sometimes I will say, "See how many are still waiting for their turn?" or "Can you count and tell me how many there are who are waiting?"

Another method is to let the kids know that there are 4 more turns, three more turns, etc.

We play a game called Concentration that is challenging, especially when we're getting to know each other. It may be called different names in other places, but this is what I do:

"Con-cen-tra-tion
Ideeoddee - a- tion
When you hear your name, the game begins"

“Mrs. Hicks”	rest	rest
(Tap Tap	snap R	snap L)
“Daw-son”	snap R	snap L

Dawson:

“Daw - son”	snap R	snap L
“Em-i-ly”	snap R	snap L

and so on.
Throughout the game, maintain an ostinato for each line: Tap right knee Tap left knee Snap right Snap left

If someone stumbles and loses the rhythmic spoken pattern, you simply begin again.
Sometimes two students will pass the pattern back and forth between themselves, trying to trip the other person up.
The kids don’t seem to mind this repetition at all. Observing the non-verbal cues the kids give each other is amazing!

Editor's note: Ideas for building skills for part singing by singing rounds have been shared on the MEI Facebook group. To keep the ideas flowing, Marilyn shares what she used during her teaching career. Want to join the MEI Facebook group? Email your request to Kari Wendroth, kjtodnem@mac.com

Ideas for Singing in Rounds with Children

Compiled by Marilyn Winter

Kids will work on singing in rounds for hours. I LOVED this way of exploring with children. Here are a few of the procedures I have experienced with children:

The students must know the song well and must be able to sing it without teacher assistance. Betty Hoffmann encourages this important step. Have everyone in the singing group sing the song together once before they begin the round arrangement.

First exposure to round singing. Teacher: *Sing the song again. This time there will be something added. I wonder what it will be? See if you can discover what has been happened.* Children sing as a group, the teacher very quietly sings a second part of the round. It is important during initial exposures to round singing that the second part be barely present.

Teacher: *What did you notice?* Check out student ideas by repeating the activity. Think of all the practice that comes through checking.

Teacher*: Which word were you singing when I started my part?* Again check ideas by repeating the activity.

Teacher: *This time, I will begin my part at a different place in your song. Can you determine what word you are singing when I start my part?*

Teacher*: On what word should the second part begin this time?* Discuss the differences. Students choose another word on which to begin the second part. Discussion and checking follows.

Teacher invites one student to join her on her part then adds more students when appropriate.

Extensions:
Have the students make up and perform their own rounds in small groups. An important step is to have the listeners describe what they hear. Ex. The group all sang the song together then Ann and Sara started Part I of the round and then Joe, Adam and Lisa came in with Part II on the word "Round".

Have students close their eyes and then describe what they hear.

Have the students make their own arrangements. Ex. All sing the song. Joe, Mary and Stewart begin Part I. Anna, Sam and Amy will come in with Part II on the word "Old." Amy will sing the song alone. Amy and Sam will sing in round. The whole group sings the song together. Stewart sings alone, etc. etc. The listeners will take notes describing what they are hearing. A fun extension of this can be for the listeners to turn their back and describe what has been performed.

It is very important to remember that it takes time for students to learn to sing in rounds. Celebrate each new accomplishment no matter how small.

ENJOY! ENJOY! ENJOY! YOU ARE IN STORE FOR SO MUCH FUN WITH YOUR STUDENTS.

VIEWS FROM MEI MINNESOTA

Music in Early Childhood: SongWorks® For Children
Workshop with Peggy Bennett

Saturday Sept 17, 2011

On this beautiful fall Minnesota day, thirty teachers gathered at The College of St. Catherine's music building in St. Paul, MN. Marty Stover reports that the workshop was a HUGE success and a real "boost" for every participant. Every person was enthusiastic about the activities and the study. Especially meaningful and empowering was Peggy's urging that participants "try these activities and make them better."

All Join Hands

Fly Away Little Birdie

Facebook entries, with permission

Lisa Schoen (evening of Sept. 17)
I just had a most inspiring day playing and singing with MN MEI friends and Peggy Bennett! My five and two year old daughters (and even my husband!) and I spent the evening playing Little Miss Muffet! My heart is full. :)

Molly Feigal (Sept. 19)
Funny, I meant to comment last night. I did the exact same thing with my boy Saturday evening, same nursery rhyme even!! I have it on video tape. . . SO LOVELY to have such an inspirational seminar!! We are blessed!

Lisa Schoen (Sept. 19)
Peggy, thank YOU so much for a wonderful and inspiring day! I had a fabulous time and took away SO MUCH that I have already used - and it's only Monday! My fifth and fourth graders LOVED Also Sprach! I'm sure you can imagine their eyes lighting up and the giggling and excitement - oh so fun! Can't wait to try it with the younger groups! Thank you for taking the time to come to MN!!!!!

Peggy Bennett (Sept. 21)
Molly and Lisa, what you did with your children was exactly the vision I had for the RhymePlay book! THANK YOU for letting me know that the rhymes inspired you to play with your children . . . and Mother Goose!

Bumpity, Bumpity Yellow Bus

Viva Musica

Molly Feigal
Vivaldi's *Winter*

Terolle Turnham introducing Peggy

Photographs by Jeanette Potvin

Resources available from Peggy Bennett

Peggy Bennett's website (peggydbennett.com) is now the repository of 35 research and pedagogical articles that she has written over the past 22 years. The articles have a wide span of topics from the power of metaphor to taking turns and from Sarah Glover, a forgotten pioneer in music education, to children's perceptions of anacrusis patterns. Happy reading!

Peggy Bennett's keynote speech for the Texas Music Educators Association in February 2011 was professionally videotaped, and the DVD is available for those who wish to view it. The title of this speech, delivered to an audience of 2500 educators, administrators, and publishers, was Speak for Your Self!: Being Your Best in Difficult Situations. Three questions sequenced the content of the speech: When is Misbehavior Just Behavior?; How Can We Speak with Impeccable Words?; and What is Peaceful and Powerful Responsiveness. If you would like to borrow a copy for viewing, please contact Peggy at peggy.bennett@oberlin.edu.

Announcing New Book

Peggy Bennett's newest book, Playing with the Classics: Music Masterworks for Children, will be published as two books, Volume 1 and Volume 2. Alfred Music Publishing (publisher of Peggy's RhymePlay book) plans to release Volume 1 in late 2011 and Volume 2 in 2012. Each book will contain 12-15 “classics” with accompanying activities, composer backgrounds, music terminology, scores for reading, and a CD containing each work plus “study snippets” for focus and study. You will all be notified when the book is out, and Peggy will have purchase information at her website at www.peggydbennett.com.

The Purpose of Music EdVentures, Inc. is to search for and practice ways of making music and interacting with people that preserve and celebrate the dignity of both. As a guiding principle, this purpose will focus our work on:

1. Practices that foster interactive, facilitative learning environments.
2. Strategies that empower the learner within the context of music experience and study.
3. Networks that encourage collaboration between diverse disciplines, professionals, and interest groups.

SAVE THE DATE

2012 MEI CONFERENCE
March 1-3 (Th-Sat)
Vancouver, BC

Visit the MEI Website
www.musicedventures.org

Read articles, get ideas, and learn more about Music EdVentures, Inc. -- a great way to teach and a fun way to learn!

Support the Mission of MEI with your membership dues!

$35 Regular $50 Sustaining $100 Patron $10 Student

Make checks payable to MEI (USD)
Include your name, address, phone and email.

Send to Anna Langness, Treas.
1179 Lilac St.
Broomfield, CO 80020

MEI Officers

President
Marilyn Winter, MT
President Elect
Judy Fjell, MT
Past President
Deb Eikenbary, IN
Secretary
Pam Bridgehouse, OR
Treasurer
Anna Langness, CO

Board of Directors
Esther Campbell, WA
Yuriko Ishikawa, Japan
Gina Adoff, MT
Janice Crawley, MT
Annette Coffin, Canada

Membership Coordinator
Kari Wendroth, MN

Academic Coordinators
Tony Williamson, US
Fleurette Sweeney, Canada
Yuriko Ishikawa, Japan

News and Notes is the monthly communication of Music EdVentures, Inc. (MEI). Regular features will keep members and friends up to date on coming events and the latest teaching techniques, tips and strategies. Submissions are due on the 15th of the month prior to publication and may be submitted months in advance, indicating the month in which they are to be published. The committee reserves the right to select material to be published according to length and appropriateness. Articles should be 200-325 words. Visuals should be scanned and submitted as PDF or jpeg files. Submissions may be sent to alangness@comcast.net and may be edited to accommodate space limitations.