



News and Notes

February 2010

The purpose of Music Ed Ventures 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.

Are you interested in hosting a workshop or class in your area? Send requests to the email address shown above, to be routed to the appropriate presenters/coordinators.

From Our President *Deb Eikenbary, Indiana*

The year is off to a brisk start here in Indiana both in the weather and with activities. You know them, those activities that leave you feeling pulled in multiple directions. Spring programs will be here before we know it, trips to the symphony, working around testing in the classrooms, and how to schedule that talent show and not conflict with the science fair. You know the drill. There is much to do and never an over abundance of time in which to do it. . Then there is the budget.—Don't get me started... I am finding it difficult to slow down in the midst of this and give students the time it takes to practice and play and manipulate the new concepts. However, I have been making time to go to the back of the class and leave a student in the leadership role with our rhythm compositions. Each student gets to be the conductor of his or her own rhythm compositions. For some, just putting it on the board takes all the courage they can muster, but the natural leadership ability for others has surfaced in an amazing way. Getting to "count us off" to get the whole class going seems to bring them pleasure and has given me greater insight into my students potential. They also have the option to choose others to do the conducting if that is just too far out of their comfort zone. Once again, the lesson for me seems to have been to step back and watch in a new way and let them grow and develop. We never cease to learn do we?

* For your convenience you may print page 2 of this newsletter fill it out and mail it in to register for the conference. Hotel reservation information is shown below. The Update Schedule is on page 3.

Officers:

President: Deb Eikenbary, Indiana
President Elect: Marilyn Winter, MT
Past President: Mary Springer, WA
Secretary: Pam Bridgehouse, OR
Treasurer: Paige Macklin, MN
Board of Directors:
Bekka Butter Grathwol, MN
Yoshie Kaneko, Japan
Gina Adoff, MT
Judy Fjell, MT
Membership Coordinator:
Paige Macklin, MN

Conference 2010 Hotel Reservations

Red Lion Hotel Convention Center

1021 NE Grand Ave. (off Interstate 5 at exit 302A)
Portland, OR 97232

Room Reservations: 1-800-343-1822

Ask for Music Ed Ventures rate: \$92 + tax (about 12.5%)
(Accommodations for up to four people per room)

News and Notes is the monthly communication of Music Ed Ventures, 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 PamBridgehouse@hughes.net and may be edited to accommodate space limitations.

Plan now to attend Conference 2010

*March 5 & 6 in Portland, Oregon
(Update for returning members on March 4)*

Connections Between Educational Philosophies with Dr. Peggy Bennett
Healthy Voices with Dr. Anna Langness
Potpourri of Puzzles for Reading
Four Faces of a Song
Dancing, Song Games, and Singing in the Education of Children
plus
Teaching English with Music by our friends from Japan

Conference and Membership Fees (in US dollars)

Two-Day Conference Fee		One-Day Conference Fee (check one) ___Fri ___ Sat	
Members	\$130 _____	Members	\$80 _____
Non-members	\$165 _____	Non-members	\$105 _____
Retirees	\$ 80 _____	Retirees	\$60 _____
Students	no charge	Students	no charge
Friday night banquet	\$35 _____	Friday night banquet	\$35 _____

Lunches are included in registration (includes gratuity and tax)

Membership: Regular \$35 ___ Sustaining \$50 ___ Patron \$100 ___ Student \$10 ___

(Deduct \$5.00 if posted before February 7, 2010)

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

NAME _____ email _____

Address _____ phone _____

Please mail the completed form to:

Paige Macklin
23021 Woodland Rd.
Lakeville, MN 55044

Music EdVentures, Inc.

UPDATE 2010

Thursday, March 4, 2010 • Red Lion Inn • Portland, OR

Update is an informal pre-conference gathering in which MEI members share classroom ideas with other members. The only requirement for attendance at Update sessions is MEI membership, so be sure to join.

10:00-10:10 **Opening**

10:10-10:30 **The Pretty Princess Story** - Heather Hicks (BC)

10:30-10:50 **Penmanship and Singing: Making learning and practice joyful** - Daisy Cochran (AZ)

10:50-11:10 **Fun with Boomwhackers** - Esther Campbell (WA)

11:10-11:20 **BREAK**

11:20-12:00 Thesis Summary: **The Life and Work of Mary Helen Richards** - Kari Wendroth (MN)

12:00-1:15 **LUNCH**

1:20-1:40 **Bele Kawa: African Dance** - LeAnne McClellan (WA)

1:40-2:20 **Song Games and Learner Traits: Making the Connection Visible** - Kate McCabe (BC)

2:20-3:00 **Singing English in Education** - Bonnie Davison (BC)

3:00-3:10 **BREAK**

3:10-4:20 **Making the Connection with Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders: Song Experience Games for Families, Teachers and Caregivers** - Bev Kenik (CA) & Judy Fjell (MT)

Music EdVentures Conference 2010

Friday, March 5

8:45 - 9:00 **Welcome**

9:00 – 10:30 **Four Faces of A Song**

- Introducing a Song – Sandy Murray (BC), Tony Williamson (OR)
- Notation – Deb Eikenbary (IN)
- Instruments – Anne Mendenhall/Paige Macklin (MN)

10:30 – 10:40 **Break**

10:40 – 11:00 **Interlude** – Judy Fjell (MT)

11:00 - 12:30 **Big Thinkers and Big Thoughts: Educational Connections** – Peggy Bennett (MT, OH)

12:30 – 1:45 **Lunch**

1:45 – 2:30 **Simple Song Games** – Kathi Smith (OR), Mary Springer (WA)

2:30 – 2:40 **Break**

2:40 – 3:00 **Interlude** – Pam Vellutini (OR)

3:00 – 4:00 **How Not To Teach Music Unmusically: Observations From a Theory Nerd** – Douglas Bartholomew (MT)

4:00 – 4:30 **1-2-3 Dancing with Gina Adoff** (MT)

4:30 – 4:45 **Fifteen with Fleurette** (BC)

6:15 – Social time and Banquet

Saturday, March 6

8:15 – 8:45 **Registration**

8:45 – 9:00 **Good Morning**

9:00 – 10:30 **Potpourri of Puzzles for Reading** – Tony Williamson (OR), Sandy Murray (BC),
Kate Smith (BC) Anna Langness (CO)

10:30 – 10:40 **Break**

10:40 – 11:00 **Interlude** – Mary Springer (WA)

11:00 – 12:30 **Voice Education for Children**
Anna Langness (CO)

12:30 – 1:45 **Lunch**

1:45 – 3:00 **English EdVentures from Japan**

3:00 – 3:45 **Singing by Heart** – Annette Coffin (BC)

3:45 – 4:00 **Fifteen with Fleurette** (BC)

4:15 – 5:15 **Business Meeting**

Playfulness!: Full of Play In and Out of the Classroom

Peggy D. Bennett, PhD
Professor of Music Education
Oberlin College Conservatory of Music
Recipient, 2009 Mary Helen Richards Lectureship

Each year since 1989, members of our Music EdVentures group, have gathered in the spring to re-connect ourselves, to be rejuvenated by our friends, to get re-inspired to be better teachers, and to rejoice in the wildly hilarious, spontaneous laughter that seems to be a staple of our organization and our lives. I do think we are “full of it”. . . full of play, that is!

What comes to mind immediately when I think of hilarity is the banquet of 2008; I still don't quite know what was in the air that night, but something spurred those of us who would not normally get up and do something entertaining, to join in the “show” and do our bit to participate in the “entertainment.” It was such good, clean, innocent, hilarious fun. I laughed so hard, so constantly that night that I didn't want the evening to end. As we were walking out of the room, Judy Fjell and I looked at each other and burst out laughing (those low, full-bodied, belly laughs!). Then, she took a breath and asked with wonder on her face, “What just happened in there?”

My Introduction to Playful Teaching and Living

When I first “got connected” to this playful way of living and teaching, it was 1971 and I took a course in Fort Wayne, Indiana called Education Through Music. Mary Helen Richards and Fleurette Sweeney were the main teachers of the course, and I had so much fun that I knew THIS would be my teaching self, although I hadn't even taught yet. I had never experienced such playfulness and easy humor with children and with peers. At the time, the playfulness was most often situated in a “song-experience-game,” labeled that to emphasize the wealth of experiences (social, musical, movement, and linguistic) present in the play, experiences beyond the singing of the song and the process of the game.

I was so smitten by the philosophy, practices, and people of Education Through Music (ETM) that I could not imagine myself NOT attending every course, workshop, or gathering that I could. And, I hardly missed anything (first as an apprentice, then on the faculty). . . .for the next 20 years (except the Minnesota summer course of 1978 when I was in Texas beginning my doctorate). As I mentioned earlier, we had wildly hilarious times as we drove, ate, planned, taught, talked, traveled, and told stories. As I write this, I see Mary Helen with mouth wide open, shoulders hunched, eyes a-sparkle, and full-out serendipitous laughter.

Some of us have played the singing games with such abandon that we got injured in the process. My first year of teaching in Indiana, I was outdoors with a Grade Four class playing Frog's in the Meadow, and as I raced around the circle, I stepped in a hole, fell down, and seriously sprained my ankle . . . this left me on crutches for a few days. Also in the midst of a chase game, Betty Hoffmann was racing around her Grade Three class in Montana, took a slide on the tile floor, fell flat on her back, tore some cartilage, and seriously bruised her sternum; she was out of commission for quite a while. In a Kindergarten class in Ontario, I was teaching When I Was One as a leapfrog game. I was tucked up on the floor, but when one little guy jumped over me, he pushed his hands down on my head in order to jump over me, knocking my nose into the tile floor. The class had to be suspended while we tried to get my nose to stop bleeding!

The Outliers

Not everyone who took our courses or encountered us singing and playing in airports, restaurants, and public places were equally enamored with our sense of play. I remember that a few teachers over the years would

groan, “All we do is play games, I need to learn how to teach music!” Some diners looked at us with annoyance when our restaurant noise-level and singing audibly trumped their conversations and images of a nice quiet meal with their loved ones. Some airport travelers (in the old days, we could wait for and greet people at the gate) seemed to think we were a particularly avid religious group, as we would “sing in” an arriving friend when she exited the plane. So, these outliers, especially *those in our courses*, got my attention, and I began trying to figure out the distinctions between play-infused teaching (playfulness) and playing games.

During our talks over the years, Anna Langness would often confess that a relatively small proportion of her elementary music classes were devoted to “playing games.” Instead, Anna was intent upon developing skills and understandings that gave students a springboard to a lifetime of musical satisfaction and skillfulness. So her study activities were designed to be fun, engaging, stimulating, and game-like, but they did not necessarily warrant playing singing games for most of the class period.

Likewise, my university students (undergraduate and graduate) needed the intellectual stimulation that comes from being challenged with cognitive, analytical discourse about our music making and methods-learning. Too much game playing without enough “learning about learning” led some of these adults to be skeptical about the academic rigor component of my college classes.

Thinking about these and similar contexts caused me several years ago to adopt the term “playfulness” to describe the style and intent for interacting with learners. When we present study activities and information, playfulness can be, but is not *necessarily* a game.

Playfulness Without a Game

Some of us have struggled with the notion that “Okay, the game (fun) is over, now it’s time to be serious and study.” Twenty years ago, I tried to address the concern “What do we do besides play games?” in an article in the ETM Newsletter called “We’ve Had a Good Time Playing the Game: Now What?”

Ideas about the content and implementation of the “Now What?” question, led Doug Bartholomew and me to write two books that have playfulness threaded throughout the pages and activities: *SongWorks 1: Singing in the Education of Children* (1997, Wadsworth) and *SongWorks 2: Singing from Sound to Symbol* (1999, Wadsworth).

Introducing children to sound study, musical terms, historical contexts, skill practice, compositional techniques, and notation of sound is part of a comprehensive music program, but these facets of the program are likely not taught while playing a singing game. These “now what?” activities, however, can be taught with the charm, playfulness, and imaginative interaction that are so characteristic of our folksong games.

Even when we teach in “lecture mode” or “presentation mode,” we can infuse our teaching presence with a playfulness that connects us to our learners, no matter how many there are, no matter what age they are. Here are five ideas for doing that:

1. Look at learners as if you know and like them, with soft eyes and lingering eye contact
2. Plan brief acknowledgments of the presence of your learners by using their names (#1 behavior is important here), even if you do not ask them anything: Ex: “Now, in Stacy’s class she may never encounter this, but in Tammy’s class, she may have the opposite experience.” “Jess, you look a little unsure of this idea. Let me give an example.”
3. Use light humor to show your own light, humorous side (see #1): “Stan, I wonder if, at any time in your long, wonderful life, you got to be the Cheese!” “Just in case, I went into babble-mode when I explained that, could you explain to me what I just tried to explain to you?”

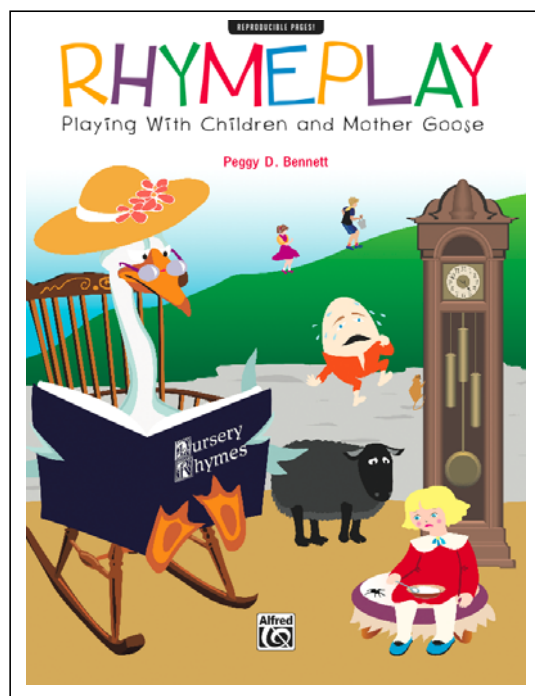
4. Teach as if you are having a conversation with your learners (see #1): “My gosh, Molly, your image is sure vivid for me!” “Josh, how does that explanation compare with your music study?” Rhetorical questions, those not needing a verbal response, can be good ways to accomplish #2, #3, and #4. Again, being conversational can lead us to pose our ideas as if we are asking, “I wonder if this has ever happened to you?” “When you do this, what happens?” In these ways, our teaching is playful by being highly interactive with our learners, no matter their age or number.
5. Be aware of the balance between *your* talking and *their* doing. Teaching never needs to be one or the other (I teach in universities, remember? We have *all* learned from good lectures!), and ideally, it is a balance between the two. Sprinkle your talking with #1, 2, 3, and 4 and sprinkle your interactions with light-hearted, yet meaningful playfulness.

Playfulness with Mother Goose

My most recent project with playfulness involved developing ways to play with young children and nursery rhymes. Developed over the past 10 years at Oberlin, the nursery rhyme play grew from my desire to introduce the three-, four-, and five-year-old children and their parents in the MusicPlay program (I teach two sections of 12 children once a week for 12 weeks) to the charming, lilting language and stories of Mother Goose rhymes.

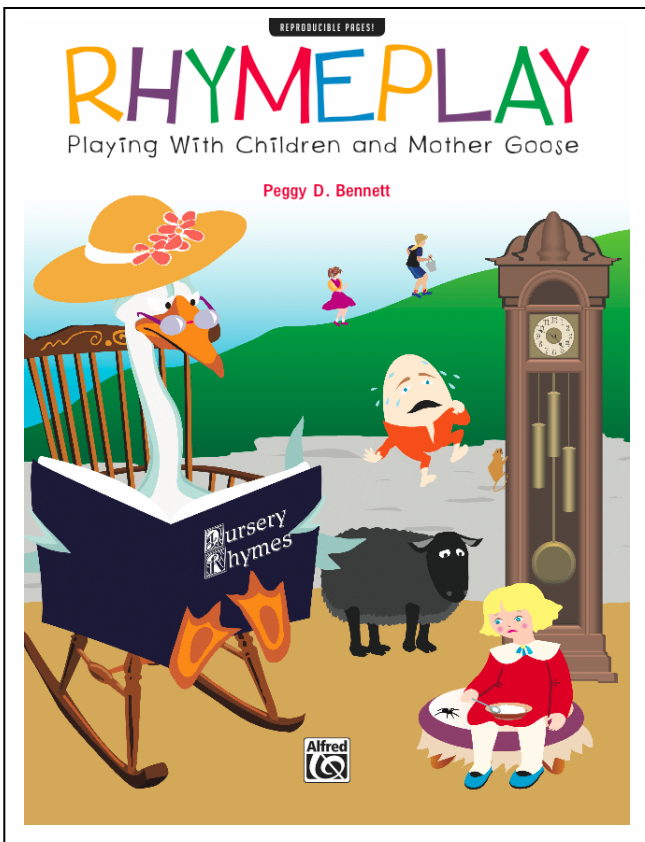
Published in February 2010 by Alfred Publishing, *RhymePlay: Playing with Children and Mother Goose* is the result of my attempts at playfulness and rhyming. Each of the 16 rhymes included in the book has four components to lead the teachers, parents, and early childhood caregivers in playing with their children: FingerPlays, Playlets, Story-Making, and ReadingPlay. The book also features a Glossary of Terms, 10 Ways to Make RhymePlay Playful, FAQs for the Author, and reproducible picture cards for reading ideographs. So, if you are interested in exploring some of this playfulness with children, see the promotion information on the next page for ordering details.

None of the activities in RhymePlay is a “game” in the conventional sense, but I hope they are all playful. My ideal image for using rhymeplays is parents, teachers, and caregivers exchanging giggles and surprises and playlets and story-making with children as the rhymes “come alive” for both tall ones and small ones. Let me know if that happens for you, okay?



Announcing a New Book by Peggy D. Bennett

Charming the senses of young children is key to the spirit of *RhymePlay*. The simplicity and musical lilt of Mother Goose rhymes engage and enchant children as they play with language, dexterity and imagination. Accompanying the delightful rhymes are wonderfully photographed fingerplay movements, ready for immediate use.



Reproducible Picture Cards enhance the lessons, making it easy to prepare and have students actively engaged in the lesson.

Designed for the early childhood classroom, *RhymePlay* includes a wealth of energizing and imaginative activities, focusing on building children's organizational, expressive, and memory skills.

"Storymaking" and "Playlets" allow children to develop expressiveness and understanding as they actively explore the imaginary world of the rhymes. "ReadingPlay" exercises lead children toward literacy. Each of the charming finger plays and activities in *RhymePlay* will captivate and enchant children while developing their senses, minds, and social skills. [back cover]

RhymePlay is written for parents, teachers, and early childhood caregivers.

Bennett, Peggy D. (2010). *RhymePlay: Playing with Children and Mother Goose*. Van Nuys, CA: Alfred Publishing. ISBN 10: 0-7390-6146-1 ISBN-13: 978-0-7390-6146-6

Cost: \$24.95

Order: Available February 1, from your favorite music store, Alfred.com, Amazon.com

QuickTime™ and a decompressor are needed to see this picture.

News from Minnesota

The Minnesota Music EdVentures group, after a long hiatus, got finally got together on October 24 for an official sharing time.

Present were Karalyn Koskela Jeanette Potvin, Leah Steffen, Marty Stover, Lisa Schoen, Molly Feigal, Rebekah Butter – Grathwol and Norma May.

It has been quite a journey for the MN MEI group. Of the eight of us present, 5 of us are new parents in the past two years. Kari Wendroth, who was with her sick baby, would make it 6 out of 9! All of us have gone through life changing transformations of some sort in the past two years.

Once we finished the hugs, laughter, tears, and passing pictures of children and grandchildren, we got down to business. We viewed clips from what we call, “Peggy’s DVD” (created in 2006 with SUNY) which affirmed our teaching, sparked discussion and inspired us to try new things. Our focus for the meeting was officially pre-K, Kindergarten, and 1st grade musical activities. However, we had such wonderful discussions about all sorts of topics. Here are some examples:

- Personalities when working in groups – if you have a lot of “leaders” who can’t agree, what do you do?
 - Leah’s rule is if two people are unable to come to an agreement within 30 seconds, they have to sit down and the third person (the quiet one) gets to make the decision.
- Sandgate – “Norma, what was that awesome activity you did with your children?” Norma walked us through it. We forgot to ask Norma where she got the activity, so it may be familiar to you already. Beka, Karalyn and I remember seeing Norma do this with her 6th graders. It can be an amazing gentle, cooperative, musical, and physical experience for the children.
- “What was the partner song for Sandgate?” Darby town!
 - We remembered the ostinato patterns that went with it. D’TLSS D’TLSD’ M F M R M F MRD S-----F S-----FM. Karalyn remembered the words Tony presented that linked the last two patterns above so nicely to the story telling aspect of Darby town – “I don’t believe you I don’t believe you.” And “soooooo what soooo ooh what.”
- How to address pitch matching?
 - Antiphon around the circle. Instead of one person starting and giving it to the entire class to continue the song, they pass it to the person sitting next to them. There must already be a safe exploratory environment fostered regarding vocal exploration. Figuring out how to foster that depends on your own personality and the students you are working with.
 - Passing pitch – expanded from Terolle’s past presentations to us of passing the pitch of the recorder (written up in Maryin Winter’s recorder book – assuming Terolle got it from there, but most of us had never read the book. ☺) Leah passes pitch vocally. Once you think you match the pitch of the person singing to you, you cut them off with a conductor’s move, then turn, holding that pitch, to the person on the other side of you. Leah knows her students so well and has built such an environment of mutual encouragement! We asked her what they do when someone can’t match the pitch. Leah leads the entire class in matching the lower pitch, the gliding up together, encouraging with facial expression their friends’ attempts to slide up with them. If that doesn’t work, she tells that student to keep focusing their brain on hearing the higher pitch. “Your brain is

not connecting with that pitch.” “Keep training your brain.” Her students are well versed that singing on pitch is something your brain has to figure out how to do.

- Jeanette shared a song map for Charlie Over the Ocean focused on the melodic line. She uses it with her kindergarteners as their first experience with a song map.
- Beka has been teaching with McPhail and she shared a lesson she has done with her pre-k children focusing on fast and slow music.
 - The part I remember best leads to an art project linked to the story the Tortoise and the Hare. What I remember – They read the Tortoise and the Hare. They listen to Carnival of the Animals “Fleet footed animals” and “Tortoises” doing age appropriate movement activities. They dramatize it, using the music. Then the children receive a piece of paper with a start line and a finish line of a race drawn on it. They get a Q-tip and some green paint and, while listening to the music Tortoise, draw a slow green line from start to finish. Then, listening to Fleet footed animals, with another color and a new q-tip they make fast dots from the start to the finish line.

There were many other things shared – but it is impossible to put them all down on paper. Throughout all of this whenever conversation slowed we would stop and watch sections of Peggy’s DVD.

It was an inspiring two hours.