



News and Notes

September 2011

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From Our President

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

During the past few months I have been consumed with moving my household from Montana to Arizona. Settled in Arizona, I'm now so looking forward to making new friends and to new undertakings.



Marilyn Winter
Sun City, AZ

As I begin this new life in Arizona, I think of all of you and the new lives you are about to undertake as another school year begins. This is a GRAND time of year with new plans, new students, and in some cases a new school. I always loved this time of year with the smell of clean tablets and a new box of crayons in the air. I looked forward to sporting new shoes, duds and the like. I remember the excitement with my own children. My students and I loved beginning my teaching year with a freshly scrubbed room, fresh bulletin boards and new song games to play in class. I ADORED being with children in the song game setting. I felt so fortunate to have a job in which I could be with

children in this way.

As an organization, Music EdVentures is starting on new adventures with much to do in the next few months. We are in the process of establishing clearer guidelines for nominating teachers to the Fleurette Sweeney Foundation for Emerging Pioneers in Education. Guidelines for the Dianne Lukas Scholarship Fund are also being revised. It is necessary for us to explore new ways for funding these scholarships and grants in order to help as many educators as possible each year. Keep posted to the website and this newsletter for information as decisions are made.

Plan to register for the 2012 Conference as soon as the registration form appears in the newsletter. We want to see you there!

So, as new stages begin in our lives, the best of luck to you and remember to take care of YOU and keep healthy.

Marilyn

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.

Kelsey, Meghan and Danielle share 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."



Kelsey Jacobson
St. Paul, MN

Kelsey graduated from St. Catherine's University with a BA in Music Education in December 2010. Study with Paige Macklin, her undergraduate professor, and Anne Mendenhall, her student teaching cooperating teacher, ignited her enthusiasm for teaching music to children.

Since having graduated from college and returning to my hometown, I haven't had too many chances to be in the classroom. Anne Mendenhall has been gracious enough, however, to share her music classes with me many times before her retirement. I have absolutely implemented principles and practices of the SongWorks approach while I have been there. I have also had many opportunities to discuss these principles in my many interviews for music teaching positions. To me the most important part of the SongWorks approach is fully immersing the students in the music and giving them some control to use their creativity to create new music and movements. I truly believe that by the students' being enveloped in the musical process using the 'sound to symbol' approach they are able to have an enriching and joyful experience.

As a new employee at Schmitt Music in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota I will be able to teach early childhood classroom music. I am very excited to implement SongWorks and to be able to show my boss how successful children can be with this approach. I am also excited to be a substitute for their band program. I am always looking for ways to implement the SongWorks principles in a band setting in addition to classroom music settings. I look forward to my new career and cannot wait to implement SongWorks principles in every class that I teach in order to give my students a joyful and enriching musical experience. §

For this assignment I visited with my grandmother, who was a music teacher in a one-room schoolhouse for a couple of years before going to seminary. As I described some of the SongWorks practices to her over the phone, she interjected that the opportunities to be imaginative and creative during singing games intrigued her. When she taught music, she made a concerted effort to engage the students with whom she worked by leading them in singing or movement. (Many of the teachers that she observed during college did the exact opposite: they made the students sit in one place during the entire class.) So she was excited by the possibility that singing games could engage the students and also nurture an imaginative atmosphere in the classroom.

It was also neat to hear her "Aha!" moment when I described how singing games act as an experiential foundation for music learning in children. I explained that singing games get the kids movin' and singin', and the teacher can then connect abstract musical concepts to the songs and games that the children sing and play. I remember having a similar "Aha!" moment when I first learned about SongWorks, and hearing my grandmother's "Aha!" moment made me reflect on SongWorks during the conversation with a beginner's mind. §



Meghan Meloy
Oberlin, OH

A recent graduate of Oberlin College and Conservatory, Meghan aspires to teach vocal or general music.



Danielle Solan
Austin, TX

Danielle, a bassoonist and graduate of Oberlin Conservatory and University of Texas at Austin, has happily begun her fourth year as music specialist at Bluebonnet Trail Elementary School.

This Spring, our Fine Arts director was generous enough to arrange for all 5th grade students to see the Austin Symphony perform Carnival of Animals, and I saw this as an opportunity to share ideas for lesson plans that were inspired by the SongWorks approach.

One of the activities I most enjoyed at the 2011 Music EdVentures conference was dancing with long ribbons/scarves as we listened to classical music. In March I was delighted to find a stock of these beautiful ribbons and scarves in my classroom, stashed in the back of some cabinets, so I designed listening and movement experiences using them, and my students loved it! For years I have been choreographing expressive movement to classical masterworks, but previously I tended to play exciting, *forte*, *allegro* pieces that all students would find exciting, and I shied away from *piano*, *andante* pieces that some would complain were boring. I had never used scarves before in the classroom, and was surprised by how much they augmented the children's experience of aesthetic beauty when we moved to expressive pieces from Carnival of Animals such as Aquarium, and Swan, which I would likely have skipped in the past. Even most of the fifth graders were engaged and bought into the lovely sight, sound, and sensation of moving with scarves.

I was so excited by these successful "musical moments" in my classroom that I decided to share the joy. In early April, I met with my colleague and fellow MISD elementary music teacher, Elizabeth, to talk about the Music EdVentures conference. Elizabeth has always been most inspired by Orff methodology and trainings, but we share aspects of philosophy and practice, such as a love of song games, active listening activities, and interest in world music. Elizabeth loved the idea of moving with scarves and decided to try it out in her classroom. Elizabeth was also intrigued by

philosophical points that I made in our discussion about music teaching— especially my point of view that the two important objectives should be to nurture the arts of listening and musicality.

Though there is very little curricular alignment in the Manor Independent School District music department, I will have opportunities to meet with other music colleagues during our self-run professional development sessions in August, and I am eager to introduce activities inspired by the SongWorks approach with my other colleagues. §

*The cure for boredom
is curiosity.
There is no cure for
curiosity.*

Dorothy Parker (attributed)
(1893 - 1967)

*Only the curious will learn and
only the resolute overcome
the obstacles to learning.
The quest quotient has always
excited me more than the
intelligence quotient.*

Eugene S. Wilson
(1905 - 1981)

TIPS for September

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

NAME GAMES

How do you keep students engaged throughout the game?



Deb Eikenbary
Indiana

Switch it Up !

Vary the vocal quality or volume with which the name is repeated. Whispering the name occasionally seems to work its magic if the group is speaking a name before singing it in a game, such as Hickety Tickety Bumblebee.

Change the vocal register. Allow students to use their voices in different parts of their registers. This opens the door to many discussions or explorations of pitch and vocal production later.

Add an occasional greeting from the group to the person whose turn is next. "Good morning, Susie" or "Buenos dias, Sam" seems to refocus the group.



Jeanette Potvin
Minnesota

I find it incredibly important at the beginning of the school year to learn the students' names. I also take photos of the class to post or keep near my roster so I can review names before classes enter.

With the younger grades, I use Mary's Wearing a Red Dress, Bumpity Yellow Bus, or Willowby Walloby Woo. For 2nd-3rd grades, Sally Go Round the Sun works well. My hands down favorite for older kids is *The Darby Ram* (Darby Town.) All of these have great play party games that are great mixers for the class.

While learning names I work on my main goals for September:

- a) to establish healthy singing habits,
- a) to build community, and
- a) to set expectations.

I also review prior musical knowledge and plant seeds for the year's new learning. I've found that when I meet the first two goals, the rest of the year goes immensely better.



Kathi Smith
Oregon

Teach the name game in a large circle, then play it using several smaller circles to keep more students involved and to bring each game to conclusion more quickly. For repeated games, have students mix into a new place or into a new circle by the count of SEVEN.

Choose games where the turns accumulate groups, such as the sets of four in Skip to My Lou.

Add variety to the game. In Skip to My Lou, once the children have had their "skipping" turn, they sit on the floor in their circle, rather than continue standing. They sit in the correct name order by the cadence word, "darling." Each time it is their circle's turn, they must pop up and be ready to skip and sing again.

Pick name games that "zing" that particular age group: Skip to My Lou name game seems perfect for third grade; Rain Rain ball game is great for 5th and 4th; Here We Are Together is good for primary, especially if the children get to mix their positions while the rest of the circle closes their eyes.

Many times our students know each other's names well, but we need to review the names. With K and 1st grade classes, name game songs like Here We Are Together or We're Going Down Town become more intriguing when students focus on various mathematical concepts.

For example:

Number sense. How many names have we sung? How many shall we add this time? (let's choose a number less than 6) After playing a new turn ask, What's our total now? (allow thinking time, as some students will count each person in the line while others will just add the new people)

Patterns: I think I see a pattern in the students walking in the game. (students observe: boy, boy, girl, girl) Do you think the pattern will continue or change? Let's check.

Ask classroom teachers about the math concepts studied and terminology used in their classes. When you use a math term, the students will respond in the way they know. (Remember, you aren't "teaching math," you are giving students an opportunity to integrate their knowledge and thinking.) Many games have come alive with interest and enthusiasm with the addition of mathematical thinking.



Anna Langness
Colorado

Resources available from Peggy Bennett

Peggy Bennett's website (www.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.



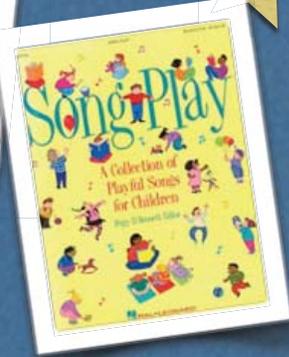
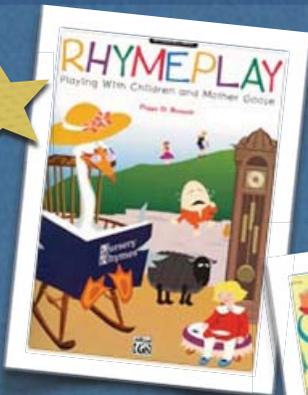
Announcing New Book

Peggy Bennett's newest book, *Playing with the Classics: Music Masterworks for Children*, Volume 1 will be published by Alfred Music Publishing (publisher of Peggy's *RhymePlay* book) in the next two months. Volume 2 will be published 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.

MEI MINNESOTA

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

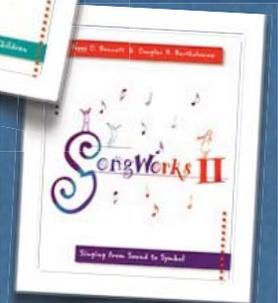
author of SongWorks 1, 2; RhymePlay, SongPlay, Playing with the Classics (new)



Saturday
Sept 17,
2011

SongWorks® For Children Sessions

- * Creating an Environment for Learning
- * Being Playful: Key Attitudes and Behaviors
- * The Amazing Mother Goose
- * Playing with the Classics



St. Catherine University, St. Paul, MN
Rauenhorst Hall, Coeur de Catherine
2004 Randolph Ave.

8:00 - 2:00 Saturday, September 17, 2011

For registration form email Paige at hatmack@frontiernet.net
or call 952.469.3384

In August 2011, a group of nine MEI members traveled to Deer Lodge, Montana to brainstorm possibilities for designing the structure and content of a master's degree. The two-day planning meetings focused on how to best help educators know, understand, and practice the activities and principles that are foundational to our work. Great food, great fun, great laughs, and great friendships abounded!



Betty Hoffmann hosted the meetings in the historic Deer Lodge Woman's Club building, established in 1890 by Betty's pioneering family. Her grandfather Bielenberg provided funding and her Aunt Alma founded the club. Betty founded and for many years conducted the Women's Chorus.



Betty stands in the entry way of the Woman's Club. On the wall behind her is a photograph of her mother, Anne Bielenberg Newlon, a charter member of the club.



Back row: Fleurette Sweeney, BC; Annette Coffin, BC; Gina Adoff, MT; Betty Hoffmann, MT; Daisy Cochran, AZ; Janice Crawley, MT;
Front row: Peggy Bennett MT/OH; Anna Langness, CO; Marilyn Winter, AZ



Music EdVentures, Inc. Celebrates 20th Year

2012 MEI Conference
March 1-3

Executive Airport Plaza
Hotel and Conference Centre
Richmond Vancouver, BC

Co-chairs Judy Fjell and Betty Phillips
are planning an extraordinary conference

SAVE THE DATE

Watch for the registration forms!
Register ASAP
US members -- passports ready? Check airfare rates often!

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.
1. Strategies that empower the learner within the context of music experience and study.
1. Networks that encourage collaboration between diverse disciplines, professionals, and interest groups.

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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

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. Will you contribute to the TIPS feature? Contact Anna.