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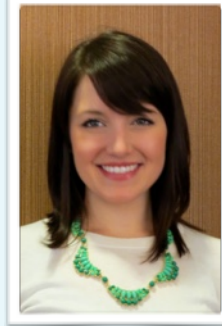
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*From the President*

Greetings all,

Happy New Year! I hope you all found some time to sit back, relax, and recharge over the holidays. Sometimes this two-week refuge gives us just the boost we need to go back to work refreshed and excited in the wake of our busiest concert season.



Samantha Smith  
Rocky River, OH

With the New Year comes new beginnings. What about that class that tested your patience before break? This is your chance to “start over” and reframe your thinking. Maybe they need more group-work, instrument-playing time, or quiet study. What about the class who really excels? Here’s your chance to try that tricky song study that you’ve been hesitant to introduce. After you’ve taught it, let us know how it went by sharing on the MEI Facebook Page. Or, you can even write an article for the Newsletter! This will help give others the little jolt they may need to start the New Year right!

The advent of 2016 also means that the conference is quickly approaching! Have you booked your flight or reserved your hotel room yet? For those of you who have attended an MEI conference, you know that it is truly an invaluable experience. Presenters give immediately applicable lesson plans and activity ideas, and you’ll surely learn new songs and games to take back to your classrooms. Perhaps my favorite part of the conference, though, is connecting with other MEI members. The MEI conference gives me an opportunity be with friends who I rarely see, to connect with other like-minded music educators, and to get a glimpse into others’ classroom settings. So, if you haven’t made a New Year’s Resolution yet, why not resolve to come to the MEI conference, and to meet, connect with, and keep in contact with at least two members you did not know before. These shared connections get me through the school year, and I’m sure that others feel the same as well.

Happy New Year to you all, and I cannot wait to see you in just a few short months!

*Sammi*



**2016 MEI Conference**  
**SongWorks: Basics and Beyond!**  
**April 7, 8, 9**  
**Denver, Colorado**

**IT'S TIME TO MAKE PLANS!**

**REGISTER** for the Conference online or by mail. Link and Form on [page 3](#)

**RESERVE** your Hotel room! **Wednesday, April 6 ~ Sunday, April 10**

The block of rooms and prices for MEI are guaranteed until March 23.

PLEASE RESERVE NOW! Use the Link on [page 4](#)

Meet us and new friends in the Hospitality Room!

**CONFERENCE SCHEDULE**

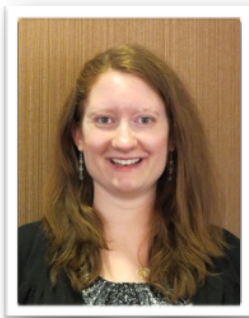
Registration: **8:00 a.m.** Thursday, April 7

Conference Banquet: **6:30 p.m.** Friday, April 8

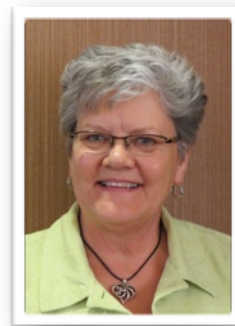
Conference sessions end: **3:30 p.m.** Saturday, April 9

Membership Business Meeting ends: **4:45 p.m.**

Saturday evening: Informal gathering for dinner, hospitality



Conference Chair  
Ruthanne Fisher Parker (PA)  
MEI President-Elect  
[ruthanne.fisher@gmail.com](mailto:ruthanne.fisher@gmail.com)



Onsite Coordinator  
Anna Langness (CO)  
MEI Treasurer  
[alangness@gmail.com](mailto:alangness@gmail.com)



**2016 Music EdVentures Conference  
April 7-9  
Denver, Colorado  
REGISTRATION FORM**

Registration: **8:00 a.m.** Thursday, April 7  
Conference Banquet: 6:30 p.m Friday, April 8  
Conference sessions end: 3:30 p.m. Saturday, April 9  
Membership Business Meeting ends: 4:45 p.m.

**CONFERENCE LOCATION  
HOLIDAY INN AT DIA**

6900 TOWER ROAD  
Free Shuttle to/from Denver International Airport

**REGISTER EARLY**

**HANDOUTS ONLINE 1 WEEK PRIOR TO CONFERENCE**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State/Prov \_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**CONFERENCE FEES:** *(Luncheons included in this fee) (All fees payable in US Dollars)*

- \_\_\_ \$175 **2016** Members (choose 2016 membership below)
- \_\_\_ \$225 Nonmembers
- \_\_\_ \$100 Retirees (choose 2016 membership below)
- \_\_\_ \$ 75 Students (choose 2016 membership below)
- \_\_\_ \$110 One Day Only *(Includes sessions, luncheon, 1 year complimentary membership)*

**2016 MEMBERSHIP DUES:** \_\_\_ \$45 Regular \_\_\_ \$20 Student

**FRIDAY NIGHT BANQUET:** *Great opportunity to dine, enjoy conversation and music-making with friends.*

\_\_\_ \$40 *(includes gratuity and tax)*

**My diet requires:** \_\_\_ No restrictions \_\_\_ Vegetarian \_\_\_ Vegan \_\_\_ Dairy Free \_\_\_ Gluten Free

**To register ONLINE go to [www.musicedventures.com](http://www.musicedventures.com) with payment via PayPal  
or COMPLETE THIS FORM, MAIL it with a check in USD by March 10 to:  
Anna Langness, 1179 Lilac St., Broomfield, CO 80020 Questions? Contact [alangness@gmail.com](mailto:alangness@gmail.com)**

**MAKING A TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION?** Online: after registering return to the DONATE button.

If registering by mail add: I am including \$ \_\_\_\_\_ *(for the MEI Scholarship/Travel Grant program)*

**TOTAL PAID: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ CHECK NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_** *(Checks payable to Music EdVentures, Inc)*

**SCHOLARSHIP AND TRAVEL GRANTS:** Inquiries regarding a scholarship or travel grant to the 2016 Conference: contact Samantha Smith, MEI President, at [samantha.smith@gmail.com](mailto:samantha.smith@gmail.com) for information and application process.



Holiday Inn at DIA  
6900 Tower Road, Denver, CO

**MEI Hospitality Rooms:**  
6th floor Presidential Suites

Plan to **Meet, Greet, and Celebrate** with your “new” and longtime MEI friends!



Guest rooms: Double (2 Queen beds) \$104 plus tax

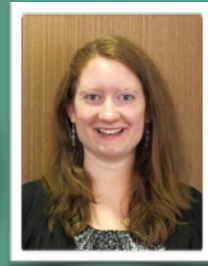
**RESERVE ROOMS** using this Direct Booking Link to receive MEI rates. Enter the dates and check availability. [http://www.holidayinn.com/redirect?path=hd&brandCode=hi&localeCode=en&regionCode=1&hotelCode=DENMF&\\_PMID=99801505&GPC=MED](http://www.holidayinn.com/redirect?path=hd&brandCode=hi&localeCode=en&regionCode=1&hotelCode=DENMF&_PMID=99801505&GPC=MED)

**RESERVE EARLY**  
**Deadline: March 23**  
MEI rates are available until March 23



**2016 MEI Conference**  
**April 7 - 8 - 9**  
**Denver, CO**

*Conference Chair*  
*Ruthanne Parker*  
*MEI President-Elect*



**SongWorks: Basics and Beyond**  
**2016 Conference Sessions and Presenters!**



“I Don’t Care...” A Folk Song Mixer to Break the Ice  
Bronwen Fox, OH

Pick It Up: The Importance of Anacrusis in English Folk Songs,  
and Its Absence in Hungarian Folk Songs  
Max Mellman, NJ

Sounds & Symbols: Language Patterns and the Duets  
Douglas Bartholomew, MT

Beyond Movement Basics  
Jeanette Potvin, MN

Sing, Dance, Learn, and Smile through SongWorks  
Yuka Inoue, Japan

SongWorks for Instrumentalists  
Deb Graf, MN

Mussorgsky and Me  
Vicky Suarez, TX

Oh, the Places You’ll Go: Where a Sturdy Song Can Take You  
Betty Phillips, OR

*cont’d next page*



Get the Children Moving  
Bethany Beaudry, MB



SongWorks and Executive Function:  
Why What We Do is So Important for All Children  
Aimee Newman, CO

How to Deconstruct a Story: A SongWorks Approach to Literacy  
Beth Cain, TX

Mapping Again: The Beat in the Flow  
Susan Kenney, UT

Playfulness as Practice  
Peggy Bennett, MT



Songs about Sally  
Fleurette Sweeney, BC and Kate Smith, BC

Opening the Doors to Literacy  
Sandy Murray, BC and Ruth Hodgins, BC

Play Song Chunks on Your Ukulele  
Judy Fjell, MT

Talking about SongWorks  
Alice Nordquist, MD

Music EdVentures Communities: Planting Seeds  
Jeanette Potvin, MN and Samantha Smith, OH

MAKE PLANS NOW TO ATTEND!  
REGISTER ONLINE at  
[www.musicedventures.com](http://www.musicedventures.com)



*hmta*

Helena Music Teachers Association  
and Music EdVentures in Montana present

a **FREE** day of professional development in

# SongWorks

PLAYFUL TEACHING  
VIBRANT LEARNING

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 23, 2016 10AM - 3PM**

*Registration begins at 9:45. BYO lunch or order takeout with the group.*

**HELENA - ST. PAUL'S UMC Choir Room** *(Cruse & Lawrence)*

## Our Presenters

**Peggy D. Bennett, PhD** Professor Emerita, Oberlin Conservatory  
**Douglas Bartholomew, PhD** Professor Emeritus, MSU-Bozeman  
**Judy Fjell, Singer-Songwriter-Teacher, Helena**

*Playfulness and vibrancy you will experience  
at the workshop . . .*

- **Activities** that engage and establish an environment for learning
- **Games** that embody the importance of social interaction among learners
- **Songs, classics** and **study** that directly apply to your classrooms, PK-5
- **Music** that is simple and sturdy
- **Nursery rhymes** that elevate expressive speech and flow of sound
- **Sound skills** (ear skills) that evolve from singing
- **Literacy** that moves from song to movement to symbol-making and symbol-reading
- **Movement** that maintains musicality and prepares literacy
- **Notation** that engages auralacy, preserves musicality, and facilitates music-reading
- **Classics** that flow from folksongs to masterworks
- **Instruments** (\*ukuleles) that transition **sound study** into accompaniment and improvisation
- **Reflections** that consider the ways we think, behave, and speak to learners

**\*IF YOU HAVE AN UKULELE, PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN. EXTRAS WILL BE AVAILABLE SO THAT ALL CAN PLAY**

*Bring your friends. Although reservations are not necessary, please let us know you are coming.*

Email: [peggydbennett@gmail.com](mailto:peggydbennett@gmail.com)

4 OPI credits available for participants.

For more information about Music EdVentures and SongWorks, visit [www.musicedventures.org](http://www.musicedventures.org)

For more information about Helena Music Teachers Association, visit [helenamta.org](http://helenamta.org)

*Please forward information on this FREE workshop to anyone who may be interested.*



# SongWorks in 2016

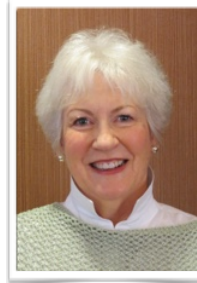
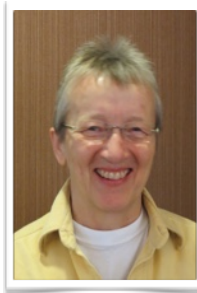
## Workshops, Inservices and State Music Conferences



Helena, Montana  
January 23, 2016

### **SongWorks: Playful Teaching, Vibrant Learning**

Judy Fjell, Peggy Bennett, and Doug Bartholomew



Taylor Falls, Minnesota  
January 25, 2016  
Staff Development

### **Teachers Teaching Teachers: Sharing Our Strengths**

Peggy Bennett

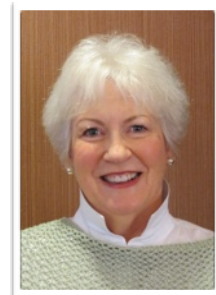


### **Ohio MEA Conference, Cincinnati**

January 28, 2016

#### **Feedback that Feeds: Connecting What We Think and Say**

Peggy Bennett



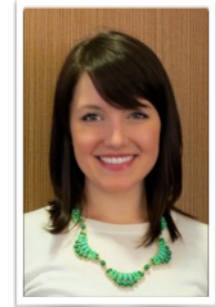
January 29, 2016

#### **Feedback that Feeds: Connecting What We Think and Say**

Peggy Bennett with Samantha Smith

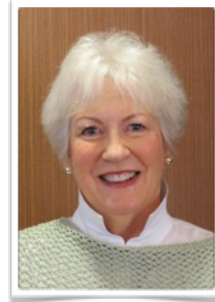
#### **I Can Sing! I Can Read!: Early Literacy in Early Childhood**

Peggy Bennett with Samantha Smith

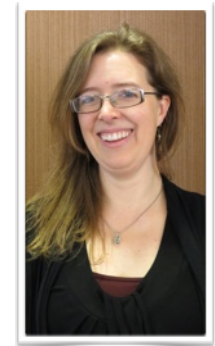




**Texas MEA Conference, San Antonio**  
February 11, 2016  
**Vitality: Reviving the Life in Your Teaching**  
Peggy Bennett with Vicky Suarez



**Minnesota MEA MidWinter Clinic, Minneapolis**  
February 12, 2016  
**Take a Look in My Classroom: Surprises from  
Closely Observing Students with Special Needs**  
Molly Feigal



**COME**  
Hear our  
**SongWorks**  
presenters



# Congratulations! Twenty-eight Achieve SongWorks Certification



Celebration! That's how we feel about our first class of SongWorks Certified Educators! As you see the faces of these dedicated educators and read anonymous quotes from their writings, we hope you will gain a sense of the magnitude of their work, their commitment to learning, and their eagerness about the transformative effects of SongWorks teaching. Their instructors Peggy Bennett and Anna Langness have been on "a high since July" from the exceedingly satisfying experiences with this group.

Beginning with an intensive 10-day Foundations Course at St. Catherine University (St. Paul, MN) in July, certification candidates studied principles of teaching and learning, sound skills and literacy, observation of children, and song game repertoire while completing academic papers as well as skills proficiencies and assessments. In the fall Practicum Course, students (in their home settings) designed and implemented a Practicum Project that fit their needs and interests and that implemented SongWorks principles and practices. Throughout the 4-month course, mentorship, teaching, teacher feedback, and idea-sharing occurred online (with faculty and classmates) and through regular journals, song analysis submissions, and group and individual conference calls.

So, we tip our hats and our glasses to our 28 SongWorks Certified Educators! We are proud of you!



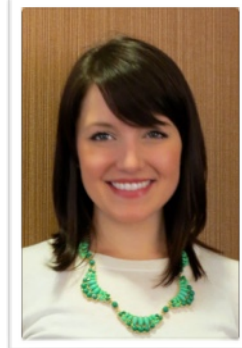
Vicky Suarez  
Richardson, TX



Taryn Raschdorf  
Virginia Beach, VA



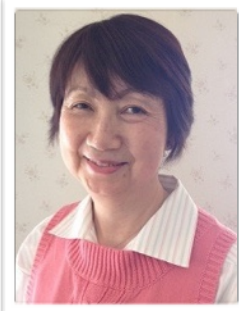
Susan Kenney  
Alpine, UT



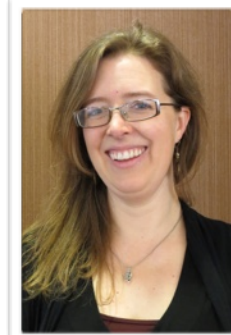
Samantha Smith  
Rocky River, OH



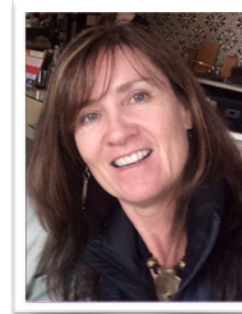
Pam Vellutini  
Ashland, OR



Namie Yokoo  
Kiryu, Japan



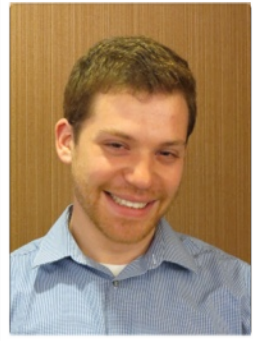
Molly Feigal  
Minneapolis, MN



Melody Epperson  
Arvada, CO



## SongWorks Certified Educators



Max Mellman  
Montclair, NJ



Mary Stockum  
Kremmling, CO



Lisa Schoen  
Farmington, MN



Leah Steffen  
Shafer, MN



Kimie Honda  
Nagasaki, Japan



Kathy Cartwright  
Apple Valley, MN



Kate Smith  
Port Coquitlum, BC



Karalyn Koskela  
Rosemount, MN



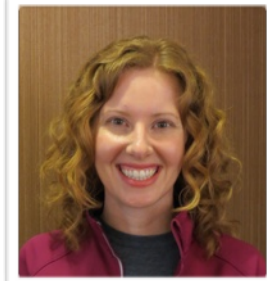
Judy Fjell  
Helena, MT



Jeanette Potvin  
Woodbury, MN



Jake Harkins  
Arlington, VA



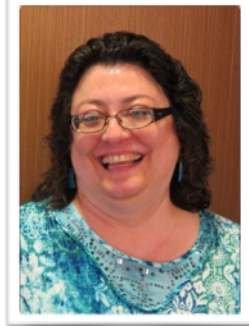
Jacquie Udem  
Chisago City, MN



## SongWorks Certified Educators



Ethan Updike  
St. Petersburg, FL



Esther Campbell  
Olympia, WA



Emma Shukle  
Mound, MN



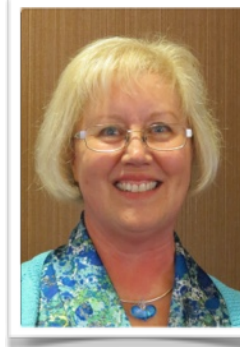
Emilee Knell  
Provo, UT



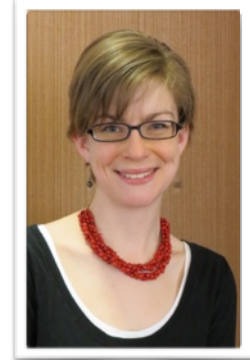
Deb Graf  
Lake Elmo, MN



Danielle Solan  
Hong Kong



Betty Phillips  
Corvallis, OR



Alice Nordquist  
Baltimore, MD

### Quote from a SongWorks Certified Educator

Maya Angelou's thought-provoking words ("Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.") have inspired my introspections throughout and since my class time in the SongWorks Certification Course 2015. It is encouraging advice to "Do the best you can." This idea holds one to a standard of personal excellence, while simultaneously providing release from perceived external pressures of achievement. The second phrase, "Then when you know better, do better" is a gentle indication of expected accountability along a personal growth continuum. I can think of no better quote to fit the instruction, support, and mentorship I have received throughout my transformative experience in this Certification Course. §



## Quotes from our SongWorks Certified Educators



I am so thankful I was able to be a part of the first ever SongWorks Certification Course. In the weeks and months leading up to the class, I anticipated that it would be a life-changing experience, and after only the first five minutes, I knew that was going to be true. My classmates and I had the privilege of being immersed in SongWorks language, thought processes, and attitudes for ten days. We benefited from being with like-minded people and watching master teachers work with children. Most importantly for me, I can now say that I have a better understanding of the Big Picture – the history and process of how SongWorks came to be, and the why and the how behind the teaching techniques. The puzzle pieces are coming together for me! The experiences I had, the things I have discovered, and the connections I was able to make during this SongWorks Certification Course were incredible, invaluable, and yes, life-changing. §

I have learned to plan like I have never planned before! There are several reasons why: I can relax and be my authentic self because I know exactly what I am going to say and do; I can think before answering questions because my mind is not muddled with trying to remember what I am going to do next; I can infuse humor without distracting myself or the participants; and I can begin building positive relationships with the participants. §

It was intensely stimulating, not to mention absolutely delightful, to attend the 2015 SongWorks certification course. SongWorks explores and espouses values that are instinctively important to me - musicality, vocal health, the enfranchisement of all people to make music, the intention and integrity of teachers, and the complexity involved in assigning ownership to music. §



For the first time in a long time, I am feeling more relaxed with my students and teaching! I am back to enjoying teaching! §

My change in teaching [has caused several results.] Students laugh and smile more easily. They are absorbing more and getting deeper into study of the music. I do more teaching and less managing behavior. Up until this past year, I rarely played games with my students because it could be hard to manage their behavior. Now we play many games, study song maps, antiphon to help learn songs, and use our solfa hand signs to study melody. Classroom teachers are seeing happier children exit the music room, and they are asking to learn our games and activities. This fall alone I have had 800 students and teachers dancing together in gatherings, and introduced games into their classrooms for movement breaks. My music colleague is using several of my teaching ideas and song maps and asking questions. I have been able to see the gift of giving a new song or game to students that they can play outside of class. §

As Executive Director of SongWorks Certification, I field many questions from SongWorks teachers and others interested in SongWorks. PLEASE continue to ask questions and suggest possibilities for us to consider! To begin 2016, I share with you two of the most frequently asked questions and my answers to them. I am thrilled to facilitate course offerings to meet the needs of passionate, dedicated teachers!



Terolle Turnham  
Eagan, MN

*I'm SongWorks Certified. Now What?*

## Music Literacy for Children

**2016**

**Music Literacy for Children**  
*Pre-requisite: SongWorks Certification*  
July 18 - 22, 2016  
St. Catherine University St. Paul, MN  
Credits: Seattle Pacific University

Peggy Bennett and Anna Langness have designed this five day course intending to challenge many of the notions about teaching children to “read music.” Literacy skills evolve through a playground of folksong games and recorded instrumental music activities. This evolution expands from conversational responsiveness, demonstrations of sound through movement, movement that graphs into non-conventional notation, and non-conventional notation that systematically transforms into conventional music notation.

All experiences and assignments in **Music Literacy for Children** are based on a solid understanding of the principles and practices that form the foundation of SongWorks teaching and learning.

*I want to be SongWorks Certified. When can I do that?*

**2017**

**SongWorks Certification**  
Foundations Course Summer of 2017 (10 days)  
Practicum Online Course Fall of 2017 (Sept-Dec)



Emerging Pioneers complete four assignments to fulfill their Fleurette Sweeney Fellowship award. Deb Graf, 2015 Emerging Pioneer, shares her #4 assignment.



**Deb Graf** teaches K-6 band, strings, and classroom music in Woodbury, MN. She holds a masters degrees in music education. Deb spent six years launching and leading a band and strings programs for a K-12 International School in Vienna, Austria. Taking full advantage of technology, she creates websites and uses tablet-based teaching to enhance music. Deb especially loves the opera and international travel with her husband.

### A Visit With Longtime Friends

A few years ago my college friends and I met to celebrate twenty-five years as music teachers. Eight of us shared our lives during those formative college years and six of us were still teaching. All these years later after much reminiscing we got onto the subject of what was new in our own classrooms.

As we began conversing, my friends immediately noticed my renewed excitement towards teaching and children. They wanted to know all about SongWorks, and I was thrilled to share. Initially the conversation sounded something like this:

ME: I found a great new way to teach that is actually an old way in some ways, but it works for me!

FRIENDS: hmmm...what?

ME: Well, it is teaching that includes many songs and games and allows me to move about the room with freedom while observing or playing with the children.

FRIENDS: Is it a book series?

ME: Not in the traditional sense.

FRIENDS: Are the lesson plans laid out sequentially?

ME: Not really.

FRIENDS: Does it include an accompaniment track?

ME: No.

FRIENDS: It sounds like a lot of work.

ME: Smile.

I decided practice was needed before I told anyone else what I was finding so difficult to put into words. I went home and worked out a script to be sure I included everything that was important. In my next phone call to a friend I covered the principles for teaching and learning music, a recommendation to visit the MEI website, the many benefits to teaching this way, and links to Dr. Peggy Bennett's videos on the Oberlin Library SongWorks for Children website. I could hear her losing interest as I shared and realized I had not left room for questions from her.

In my excitement for SongWorks I need a succinct way to explain my new approach to teaching and why I am willing to spend much of my free time rewriting lesson plans, rethinking my perception of children's behaviors and in many ways starting over with what I thought I knew about being a good teacher.

As I try to find my own voice I am coming to a better understanding of what I might include. Lately I've said, "It's an approach that uses songs and games to bring students from sound to symbol in a way that preserves the integrity of the song and the dignity of the child. There's a great website if you are interested." Then I choose to sit back and listen. If they are still curious I would love to tell them some day about all the things I love about SongWorks. It has solid principles and wonderful lesson plans, games and songs. I can use all instruments including xylophones, classroom instruments, ukuleles, and the latest technologies to enhance my teaching through SongWorks.

My explanation of SongWorks continues to develop and change as I am immersed in this extraordinary approach to teaching based on solid research in the music classroom. Regardless of the words I use to explain SongWorks, I know I've found the best solution to match my philosophical goals of teaching and to keep the students engaged in a lifetime of "playful teaching, vibrant learning" the tag line to SongWorks. I know that each time I get to tell someone about SongWorks my explanation is more polished. §



Emerging Pioneers complete four assignments to fulfill their Fleurette Sweeney Fellowship award. Max Mellman, 2015 Emerging Pioneer, shares his #3 assignment.



### From Song Dotting to SongWorks: An Elevator Pitch

There's an entrepreneurial adage that a strong 30-second "elevator pitch" will earn you three minutes with an investor; and that a convincing three-minute pitch can earn you a full 30-minute meeting with that investor and her associates. As SongWorks teachers, it can be hard for us to distill our teaching principles and practices down into a 30-second elevator pitch for other music teachers. Can we talk about educating the "whole child" with the "whole song" without overwhelming our listeners? Can we make a case for the importance of preserving musicality and playfulness throughout the entire music study? Can our words do justice to the joys of participating in song games?

I've recently spoken with two other music teachers about SongWorks—"the way that I teach music"—and each time, things seem to click when I demonstrate song-dotting. Song-dotting is a simple and intuitive technique for moving from sound to symbol.

**Max Mellman**, Montclair, NJ, is in his second year teaching elementary general and instrumental music at a public Montessori School (the same district where he attended school as a child.) He holds a Bachelors and Masters degree in Music Teaching from Oberlin College and Conservatory. Max loves technology and design, and enjoys being a multi-instrumentalist.

*Let's try dotting the chunk "pretty little Suzie" from Paw-Paw Patch (You know that song, right?) Here we go—take your (imaginary) marker and tap it out from left to right: "pret-ty-lit-tle-Su--zie--". Now, read your dots with your finger to check your work, then add a stem and two flags to each of the fastest notes, and a stem and one flag to each of the slower ones. And there it is—you just figured out how to write a rhythm with sixteenth notes and eighth notes!*

Assuming the music teacher you are speaking with knows "Paw-Paw Patch," you can successfully take her through this process in 30 seconds. Of course, we know that song-dotting is a set of learned skills for our students that takes years to refine and perfect: writing and reading the dots are two different processes, and fluency in one does not necessarily imply fluency in the other. Students feel the second syllables in "pretty" and "little" when they've had time to put that rhythm in different parts of their bodies. Adding stems and flags can be confusing if introduced simultaneously with song-dotting.

And yet, to a music teacher, the process is intuitive, and the benefits are immediately apparent: students are writing their own notation; not just reading it. Song-dotting addresses curriculum standards for teaching conventional notation.

A few weeks ago, I met with my own elementary music teacher, Henry Boote, after loaning him my SongWorks books at the beginning of the school year. We played a song game for *Paw-Paw Patch*. We chinned "pretty little Suzie" on *la* and *do*, we stepped it in our feet and blinked it in our eyelids, and then we finally wrote it down on paper (note: this would be the equivalent of the three-minute entrepreneur's pitch). "Is this in the books?" "Yep, and even with that song." Henry regretted not having read more, and asked me how he could buy his own copies of the books.

I had a similar experience when I drove back from New York City with my bandmate Howie Freund, who used to be a band director and is now a high school principal. I gave him a brief overview of what SongWorks was about. When I talked him through a dotting exercise for *Tideo*, he responded that we need some new ideas like this in music education. I laughed as I told him that this is not, in fact, anything new. In an email follow-up, he wrote:

*I checked out the program on the Oberlin website and I really like the philosophy and approach. I am going to share the page with my department - maybe we can find a prof dev day to bring you in.*

Okay, disclaimer: I have never introduced song-dotting in just 30 seconds without some pretext, and you probably won't find yourself in that exact situation either. But it's hard to describe SongWorks—there is so much depth to our teaching! I think that song-dotting is one of the most effective ways to introduce our teaching principles and practices to SongWorks perspectives, and the elevator pitch is a good way to conceptualize framing that introduction. §

Emerging Pioneers complete four assignments to fulfill their Fleurette Sweeney Fellowship award. Alice Nordquist, 2015 Emerging Pioneer, shares her #3 assignment.



**Alice Nordquist**, is in her sixth year of teaching elementary general music and chorus in Howard County, Maryland. Before moving to the East Coast, she taught band and strings in California for three years. A flutist with undergraduate degrees from Oberlin College in Music Education and Latin and a graduate degree in Music Education from the Peabody Conservatory. Alice has a particular interest in exploring the interactions between music and language in her teaching.

## In Good Company

In my current position as a teacher of general music at two elementary schools, I enjoy the benefit of sharing a music classroom with a full-time, general music teacher colleague at each school. In this situation, in addition to sharing space, materials, songs, and ideas, we become ever-present, casual observers of each other's teaching and interaction with students. Helen, the colleague with whom I spend the first two days of each week, has been teaching music for fifteen years and has explored a variety of teaching practices and approaches. She and I frequently discuss developments and challenges we experience in our teaching, and I have a deep appreciation for the support, perspective, and insight I have gained from her during the four-and-a-half years we have worked together.

Although Helen has not studied the principles and practices of SongWorks in a formal setting, she has enjoyed visiting the Music EdVentures website, exploring the Resources section, and trying some of the lesson activities she has found there. Recently we set aside some time to have a discussion focused on SongWorks. I was eager to hear about any developments she had observed in my teaching over the past year, when I have been increasingly purposeful in my implementation of SongWorks principles and practices. I wondered how closely the events and interactions she had happened to witness during my classes would align with SongWorks principles and my teaching intentions. As it turned out, each observation that Helen shared provided an opportunity to make connections to specific SongWorks principles found in *SongWorks 1* & *SongWorks 2*.

One theme that arose in our conversation was that of classroom environment. Helen shared that the way I have been starting classes creates an inviting atmosphere that extends beyond my initial greeting to the students. Specifically, she noted my efforts to start most classes with singing games. She pointed out that this approach elicits immediate class-wide participation and engagement while supporting music-making from the beginning of class. She also mentioned that using this approach during the first week of school gave me the opportunity to explain and affirm examples of our school and classroom expectations for respect. In the process of learning and playing singing games, the students were naturally engaged in respecting each other and themselves while singing musically, following the rules of a game, and listening to each other. Instead of leading an isolated, specific discussion about school-wide expectations, I could

make connections between those expectations and student behaviors within the context of the singing games. After Helen described her perceptions of my purpose in using singing games, I shared with her the first and second Principles of Teaching and Learning from *SongWorks 1*, and noted the similarities between her observations and the principles' emphasis on treating students with respect and providing an engaging learning environment.

The next topic that Helen brought up connected closely with the sixth Principle for Teaching and Learning Music from *SongWorks 2*, "Song provides direct involvement for making music and studying sound relationships." She saw me using songs that are relatively simple and easy for children to learn quickly, such as "Black Cat" or "I'm Going Downtown," as a framework for study of specific musical elements and skills, such as phrasing, rhythmic or melodic chunks, score reading, and notation. I was particularly glad to hear that this aspect of my lesson planning was apparent to her, as I am currently working on organizing music concepts and content standards into a curriculum that aligns with SongWorks principles and practices.

A third theme of our conversation was that of student involvement. Helen noticed that I had been making an effort to give students more opportunities to talk to each other when formulating their ideas during lessons, rather than only leaving time to hear individual students share answers publicly, with the whole class.

*cont'd next page*

She also pointed out the benefits of encouraging students to figure out the procedures for a new song game, such as the “Penny Song.” We discussed how this approach immediately generated high levels of student curiosity and engagement in the activity while letting the students know that their ideas were valuable and making important contributions to our study. Helen was particularly interested in the practice of reintroducing familiar songs as “Secret Songs.” She had frequently noted the intense, silent focus my classes had when watching me tap or sign a secret song, and the subsequent interest with which they tested their ideas using their inner hearing. I excitedly told her that this was one of the SongWorks practices with which I had experienced the most immediate success this year. We discussed the benefits of this approach in not only eliciting student engagement, but also in providing a safe environment in which students could demonstrate their knowledge and test their ideas. These examples of student involvement demonstrate further connections with the first two Principles of Teaching and Learning mentioned above, as well as the third, “Student learning is the responsibility of both teachers and students.”

Helen’s curiosity about SongWorks and her excitement over the positive developments she has noticed in my teaching are both validating and inspiring to me. I was encouraged to hear how all of the observations that Helen shared reflected aspects of SongWorks that I am currently striving to implement in my teaching. While I know that I have many steps to take before I meet my personal goals for fully, purposefully, and consistently implementing SongWorks principles and practices, this conversation has done much to strengthen my confidence in my progress. As the Music EdVentures membership knows well, connecting with like-minded colleagues is a precious experience that sustains and revitalizes us in ways that nourish both our professional and personal lives. How fortunate I am to share space, songs, and thoughts with such a person in my current teaching life! §

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The screenshot shows the Music EdVentures website's donation page. At the top is the logo for Music EdVentures, an Association of SongWorks Teachers. Below the logo is a navigation menu with links for Home, About Us, Get Involved (with a dropdown arrow), Resources (with a dropdown arrow), Members Access, and Contact Us. The main heading is "Donate to Music EdVentures". The page is divided into two columns. The left column contains text explaining why to donate to MEI and a security notice. The right column contains instructions on how to donate, the name and address of the MEI Treasurer, and a "Donate" button with logos for Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover.

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*From the Website*



Marilyn Winter  
Sun City, AZ

Happy New Year SongWorks teachers,

As the new year begins, I urge you to peruse the Music EdVentures website. Many people tell me how surprised they were to find the wealth of resources there -- many years of Newsletters with Song Study and teaching tips, and inspiring essays of our Emerging Pioneers, and Articles listed by topic. These are all on the general site. For Members, you can access videos from the 2013 conference with study guides, handouts from several Conference years, the 2015 Membership List (soon to be updated) and the ever-growing and developing Sturdy Song Collection. I thank the many people who are contributors in various ways to the Sturdy Song studies. Thank you for sharing tried and true teaching ideas from your classroom experience!

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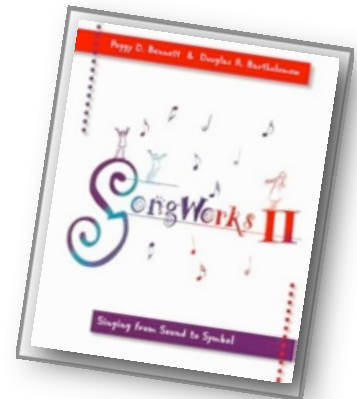
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In 2015, the leadership of MEI voted to initiate a Visiting Scholars program. Each year select scholars will be invited to our conference for the purpose of exposing them to the principles and practices of SongWorks and the activities of our organization. Visiting Scholars are chosen based on their leadership in and contributions to education, as well as their commitments to excellence in learning and teaching. Throughout the conference, Visiting Scholars will observe our presentations and interact with attendees. We are very, very excited to introduce you to our very first Visiting Scholars.

## THE 2016 VISITING SCHOLARS

Dr. Lynn M. Brinckmeyer is Professor of Music and Director of Choral Music Education at Texas State University. During 2006-2008 she served as President for The National Association for Music Education (formerly MENC). Past offices include: President for the Northwest Division of MENC, Music Educators Journal Editorial Board, Washington Music Educators Association General Music Curriculum Chair and Conn-Selmer University Advisory Board. She also served as a Music Expert on the Disney, "Let's Play Music" Site. In addition to chairing the Eastern Washington University Music Department for six years and conducting the EWU Concert Choir, Dr. Brinckmeyer received both the PTI Excellence in Teaching Award and the CenturyTel Award for outstanding faculty. Other awards include the MENC Lowell Mason Fellow, Washington Music Educators Association Hall of Fame, the MENC Northwest Division Distinguished Service Award and Eastern New Mexico University's Outstanding Alumni Award.

Dr. Brinckmeyer recently published *Wander the World with Warm-ups* with Hal Leonard Publishing; her book *Advocate for Music* with Oxford University Press is available January, 2016. Dr. Brinckmeyer is also a contributing author for *Interactive Music – Powered by Silver Burdett, The Music Director's Cookbook: Creative Recipes for a Successful Program* and *The Choral Director's Cookbook: Insights and Inspired Recipes for Beginners and Experts*. She founded the Eastern Washington University Girls' Chorus while teaching at EWU. She also served as Artistic Director for the Idaho State Children's Chorus in Pocatello, Idaho and the South Hill Children's Chorus in Spokane, Washington. Dr. Brinckmeyer is a co-founder and Artistic Director for the Hill Country Youth Chorus in San Marcos, Texas.



Dr. Brinckmeyer's degrees include a Bachelor of Science in Education and Master of Music Education from Eastern New Mexico University, and a Ph.D. in Music Education from The University of Kansas. In New Mexico she taught elementary music and middle school choir, then moved to higher education in the Pacific Northwest. At Texas State University Dr. Brinckmeyer teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in choral music education. She serves as Associate Director for the School of Music, Coordinator for Music Education, and directs the Texas State Women's Choir. Each summer Dr. Brinckmeyer teaches classes for Will Schmid's World Music Drumming workshops. She has conducted all state choirs and honor choirs, lectured, presented master classes and performed in forty-nine states in the United States and sixteen different countries, including China, Brazil, South Africa and Cuba. §



**Dr. Sheila Woodward** is Chair of Music and Associate Professor of Music at Eastern Washington University, USA. She is President of the International Society for Music Education and serves on the Editorial Board of the *International Journal of Music Education*. She is a native of South Africa and earned her Ph.D. from the University of Cape Town and a Performer's Licentiate in Organ from the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. She previously taught at the University of Southern California, the University of South Florida, and the University of the Western Cape.

Dr. Woodward has previously served on numerous professional boards; among them being two terms on the ISME Board of Directors (2004-2008), three terms on the ISME Early Childhood Music Education Commission (1992-1998, two as Chair), two terms on the NAFME Council for IN-ovations (2012-2014, one as Chair), and two terms on the NAFME Executive Board of the Society for General Music (2002-2006).

Dr. Woodward's research focus is *Music and Wellbeing*. She explores this from before birth to adulthood, with studies on the fetus, neonate, premature infant, young child, at-risk youth, juvenile offender and adult musician. She has published numerous articles, in addition to chapters in *Elliott's Praxial Music Education: Reflections and Dialogues* (Oxford, 2005) and in *Malloch and Trevarthen's Communicative musicality: Narratives of expressive gesture and being human* (Oxford, 2009).

Dr. Woodward has been awarded generous grants to promote international exchange programs, bringing South African musicians to perform in the USA alongside students and professors, and she has directed numerous outreach programs in both countries. §

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### **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.

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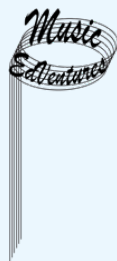
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Any member of Music EdVentures, Inc. can receive a copy of the **MEI Policies and Procedures Manual** by contacting MEI Past President Leah Steffen at [lehrsteffen@gmail.com](mailto:lehrsteffen@gmail.com).

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**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 jpg files. Submissions may be sent to [alangness@gmail.com](mailto:alangness@gmail.com) and may be edited to accommodate space limitations.