

# Singing Voices



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## A NOTE FROM JULIE

Dear Families,

I hope you are all enjoying the Triangle collection this semester! I can't believe we are more than half way through the semester!

Are you watching and listening to your child(ren) at home? Do you hear them cooing, singing the resting tone or whole songs? Are they moving to the music with the beat or in their own tempo? Be sure to talk with your teacher so you can understand some of the musical milestones your child is processing. Maybe your child likes to sit and watch in class (the wise observer) or is the kinesthetic type that is constantly on the move and needs to touch and try every instrument someone else has! No matter what learning style you or your child has our goal is to provide a rich, loving, nurturing environment free from performance and full of opportunities to explore. As parents in this environment we set the tone for the community by modeling both live music making experiences and positive social interactions between families and towards one another. I am a true believer that music can move us in many ways and is an integral part of our humanness!

See you in class,  
Julie

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## SUMMER SCHEDULE

Summer is just around the corner and we are currently working on the upcoming schedule. We will NOT be holding classes in our Newtown location as it is not air-conditioned. In the past, we have switched Newtown classes to our Monroe location, however, we can only run Saturday classes at the Creative Studio this summer due to the scheduling of their summer camps. We are actively searching for a location for two mornings a week - please bear with us while we try to put it all together. Trumbull and Shelton classes will remain the same.

Tentatively, the summer session will start the last week in June and will run either 6 or 7 weeks.

We appreciate your patience as we realize that everyone is anxious to schedule their summer activities!

# Two Little Blackbirds

## 10 Different Ways

*"Two little blackbirds sittin' ...*

- 1) *"on a hill, one named Jack and one named Jill. Fly away Jack, fly away Jill. Come back Jack, come back Jill."*
- 2) *"down below, onenamedfast (super fast!) - and - one - named s-l-o-w- (dramatically slow!) ..." etc.*
- 3) *"on a cloud, one named soft (sh) and one named LOUD!! ..." etc.*
- 4) *"on a gate, one named early and one named (wait)..... late" etc.*
- 5) *"on my Dad, one named happy and one named sad ..." etc.*
- 6) *"on a wall/ball, one named big and one named small ..." etc.*
- 7) *"on my/your knee, one named woooo!! (drawn out and super silly) and one named weeee!! (even sillier!) ..." etc.*
- 8) *"on my/your nose, one named high and one named low ..." etc.*
- 9) *"on my/your belly, one named peanut and one named jelly ..."*
- 10) *Come up with your own variations for a free, fun family activity. Be extra dramatic. Sing and laugh yourselves silly! This is a great dinner party game, with or without the kids!*

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!

Do you have questions, comments, concerns, or suggestions regarding our program, staff, newsletter, website, *anything?* Please share your thoughts with us. Contact Julie Capuano at (203) 381-0335 or online at [mtreg@optonline.net](mailto:mtreg@optonline.net). We'd love to hear from you!

**RESONATE:**  
the parent ed  
corner

Children learn by noticing differences --- they are especially alert to contrast. Immersion in a musically rich environment provides several opportunities for you and your child to experience and explore tonal, rhythmic, and stylistic differences.

# MAKING MUSIC TOGETHER WITH PETE SEEGER

Folk legend Pete Seeger turned 90 earlier this month. On Sunday, May 3rd, he celebrated his 90th birthday at Madison Square Garden in New York, NY. The concert, a benefit for the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, a non-profit organization founded by Pete to clean up the Hudson River, was not only a celebration of his music but a tribute to his still tireless activism. From Pete's early days archiving and recording music of the American south, to being blacklisted for his political beliefs in the McCarthy era, to performing at the inaugural festivities for President Barack Obama earlier this year, he continues to be an inspiration and a pioneer. To this day, Pete Seeger uses music to not only bring people together but to educate, to advocate, to take a stand, and to force change. I was lucky enough to be in attendance at the five hour long, star-studded tribute and I was so thoroughly moved by the experience that I am sure it will continue to leave an impression on me for many years to come.

The lineup included such artists as Bruce Springsteen, Dave Matthews, Arlo Guthrie, Bela Fleck, Emmylou Harris, Joan Baez, and local favorite and friend Scarlett Lee Moore, to name only a few. The concert, like so many Pete Seeger concerts before, was a true community experience -- a chance to sing along to well-known favorites (*This Land is Your Land, Turn! Turn! Turn!, If I Had a Hammer, We Shall Overcome, Goodnight, Irene, and The Water is Wide*), and a chance to learn a few I did not know before (*Bring Them Home, Well May the World Go, and Garbage!*). The entire audience was encouraged, in fact asked, to sing along with each and every song. Now, leading an audience in song is what Pete does best, a tradition that has helped pave the way for Music Together teachers everywhere. Indeed, the most moving experience of the night was when Pete led the audience in a slowed down rendition of *Amazing Grace*. He began by outlining the tonic chord (aka the "resting tone" and its related pitches), suggesting pitches for low and high voices, and then asking the audience to experiment with harmonies saying "There's no such thing as a wrong note as long as you're singing." It was beautiful indeed. There couldn't have been a dry eye in the house.

A Pete Seeger concert is not a performance really, it is a moving, participatory experience. This is one of the cornerstones of the Music Together philosophy as you well know. Our classes just wouldn't be the same, not for you, your kid(s), or your teacher, without *your* participation. Music should not be enjoyed passively, it simply brings us too much joy to merely leave it to the "professionals". In looking back on this experience, I have tried to imagine having to sit quietly and not sing along to all of these songs. It would have been impossible. For me, as a Music Together parent, I would liken it to coming to class and not participating in my or Lily's favorite songs. I don't think I could do it. So, sing it loud, sing it proud, and remember, "There's no such thing as a wrong note as long as you're singing!"

~Elise Miller

# **THE POWER OF MUSIC** Following Up with Karl Paulnack

In our last newsletter we highlighted a speech given by Boston Conservatory music director Karl Paulnack. This speech was given as a welcome address to the incoming freshmen class at the conservatory in September 2004 and speaks to the inherent value of the arts (most specifically music) and the important role it plays in all of our lives. Nearly five years later, this address continues to circulate widely throughout the music education community and beyond. In fact, this speech resonates so strongly to those of us with a commitment to community music-making that we are quite simply compelled to pass it on. Music Together of Fairfield County teacher Bizzy Bender emailed Mr. Paulnack recently to request his permission to print copies of his welcome address to give to the families in her classes. Dr. Paulnack responded:

*Dear Bizzy,*

*Thank you for your kind words regarding the welcome speech of mine you've seen circulating. I continue to be amazed at the number of people this has reached (I gave it as a talk to the parents of incoming freshmen in 2004) but I'm glad that so many have found it useful.*

*Music Together is a wonderful organization; I have heard from a number of chapters across the country.*

*Another piece which you and your students and parents might find useful as we explain (and sometimes defend) the importance of music is a "sermon" I recently gave at Arlington Street Church called "How Music Works." It's up on their website as a free podcast, an audio version in my own voice, and it's about 15 minutes long. You can find it here: <http://www.ascboston.org/downloads/podcast/080824.mp3> It talks more about the use of music in establishing peace and wellness, both within and between individuals. It contains some of the same material as the talk you got hold of, but it is more specifically aimed at how we use music to keep the world well. Feel free to refer people to it; it's very good for non-musicians to help them get a sense of what we do and why.*

*If I can ever be of service to you or groups in your area by speaking to them, please know this is something that I do heartily and often. I consider it a form of service to others, and a way to give back to the communities from which we all come. Please don't hesitate to call on me or suggest me to other organizations if I can be of service.*

*Thanks again for taking the time to let me know that my words had meaning to you. Please feel free to pass them on as you have requested. I am including a clear text copy below for you.*

*Warm regards,*

*Karl*

Our thanks to Dr. Paulnack for continuing to advocate for MUSIC FOR ALL PEOPLE!  
If you have not yet had a chance to read Dr. Paulnack's speech you can do so by going to <http://www.symphonymusicians.com/WelcomeAddressbyKarlPaulnack/tabid/87/Default.aspx>.