

# Singing Voices



Winter/Spring 2009  
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## A NOTE FROM JULIE

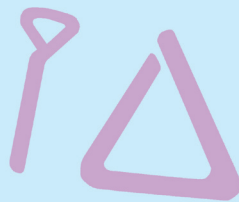
Dear Families,

I can hardly believe the winter 2009 semester is coming to a close. What a wonderful semester it has been!. Quite frankly, for me, being immersed in the classroom experience offers an opportunity to “get away” from some of the challenges we face in our world today. I hope you too find solace and joy in coming together with other adults once a week to sing, dance, laugh and focus on loving and nurturing your children’s artistic nature. Did you know that research has shown that singing releases oxytocin, the “feel good hormone” and after singing cortisol levels (stress hormones) are reduced and stay lowered for 25 minutes? That’s as good as any reason to sing and make music with your child!

I am excited that so many of you have already sent in your registrations for spring. I am sure you are all in need of new music to play with and the Triangle Collection will not fail to please! For those of you who are taking a break, be sure to sing, dance and make as much music as possible on a daily basis - we want to be sure we continue to keep those neuropathways of the brain open and developing . . . use it or lose it!

In harmony,  
Julie

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## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**COME MAKE MORE MUSIC, FRIENDS,  
AND MEMORIES WITH US THIS SPRING!!**

The 10 week spring semester starts  
the week of **April 6th**

Don't miss the **TRIANGLE** collection!!

**TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OUR  
“BRING A FRIEND” PROGRAM ON ONE OF  
THE FOLLOWING FREE TRIAL CLASS DATES:**

**The Creative Music Center - 701 Main Street, Monroe**

Tuesday, March 17th @ 10:30 am

Monday, March 23rd @ 1:00 pm

Wednesday, March 25th @ 10:00 am

Saturday, March 28th @ 10:00 am

**Trinity Episcopal - 1734 Huntington Tnpke, Trumbull**

Monday, March 16th @ 10:00 am

Tuesday, March 17th @ 4:30 pm

Thursday, March 26th @ 10:00 am

**Christ the King Lutheran - 85 Mt Pleasant Rd, Newtown**

Friday, March 27th @ 10:30 am

*\*please see p. 2 for “Bring a Friend” program details*



# REGISTRATION INCENTIVES



**BRING A FRIEND** - Bring a Friend to a Free Trial Class and you and your child(ren) can come too! If your friends signs up for the Spring semester, you will receive a \$10.00 certificate toward your next semester. (see p.1 for trial class dates)

**REFER A FRIEND** - Refer a friend to Music Together and if they sign up you will receive a \$10.00 certificate toward your next semester. Referral cards are available in your classroom and must be filled out in order for you to receive your certificate.

**GIFT CERTIFICATES** are available in Increments of \$10.00. Are family members not sure what to get members of your family for birthdays and other holidays? How about a gift certificate towards your next semester of Music Together Classes?



## MUSIC - A MUST

It is clear that we have fallen upon hard times lately. Every day brings news of lost jobs, lost savings, health care burdens, home foreclosures, and financial, social, and political unrest around the world. With so much worry and strife surrounding us it is more important than ever to remember the things that bring us together to get us through tough times. There is a speech that has been circulating the web recently that speaks to the importance of the arts (and most specifically music) in times of crisis. In an address given to incoming freshman at Boston Conservatory, Karl Paulnack, pianist and director of music at the conservatory, declared that "art is part of survival; art is part of the human spirit." In his speech he shared how personal and collective experiences have led him to believe that "music is a basic need of human survival." In particular he shared his experience of living and working in Manhattan at the time of the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers. "The first organized public expression of grief, our first communal response to that historic event, was a concert. That was the beginning of a sense that life might go on. The US Military secured the airspace, but recovery was led by the arts, and by music in particular, that very night." I couldn't agree more. Indeed, through good times and bad, music is my constant companion, but most especially in hard times I find that I cannot live without it. I truly believe the joy of music is essential to our very being! There is no doubt that you too value the role of music in your and your family's life. Please continue to experience, share, and pass on the love of music to your kids. Make it a part of your every day life, on good days and bad. To read Karl Paulnack's welcome address in it's entirety please go to <http://www.symphonymusicians.com/WelcomeAddressbyKarlPaulnack/tabid/87/Default.aspx>.

# March is “Sing With Your Child” Month

“The importance of parents actively making music with their children cannot be stressed enough. Music education is integral to children’s overall development. In fact, a number of studies suggest that parents who make music with their children will help them develop better linguistic and cognitive capabilities. Childhood music development is a natural process, just like language development, and the model of a music-making parent is essential to the child’s musical growth.

In addition to the bonding that occurs when parents sing and make music with their children, the children grow into confident music-makers who are able to participate with joy in the music of their culture. And, music learning supports all learning by promoting creativity, personal expression, and social interaction.

The beauty is that making music with children does not require special skills or “musical talent.” In fact, this may be the one time in your life when the audience (e.g. your children) will always be thrilled with your participation—and want more! These experiences will live in your children’s memories for the rest of their lives and help them develop all the necessary qualities to grow into loving and confident adults.”

And, as if that wasn’t reason enough, go to <http://www.musictogether.com/singmonth> for each week’s Family Music-Making Activity and for more information regarding the Photo- and Video-sharing Sweepstakes: an opportunity for you to share your family’s music-making fun with the rest of the Music Together community—and enter a drawing to win a free semester of Music Together classes!

Do you have questions, comments, concerns, or suggestions regarding our program, staff, newsletter, website, *anything*? Please never hesitate to share your thoughts with us. Please 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

Music-making is a uniquely integrative activity: it stimulates the eyes, ears, voice, breath, body, brain, and emotions.

# The More We Get Together . . .



Fresh off the fun of our Winter Family Jam last weekend, we finally bring you pictures from the Fall Family Jam! We had a blast singing, shaking, dancing, and drumming to Music Together songs and other well-loved family favorites. We were also lucky enough to be accompanied by local musician Andy -- who helped us sing and strum the night away. Be sure to join us for the Spring Family Jam during the upcoming semester!



**Top left:** Fun for the whole family! **Top right:** Elise has just as much fun dancing with the eggs as the kids do! **Left:** Andy strums along while Julie leads a song. **Right:** The gathering drums bring us together.



## GETTING TO KNOW YOU - THE INTERVIEW SERIES, PART 2

**MUSIC TOGETHER VETERANS Cher and Jesse Balkcom** have now completed one full round through the song collection cycle, plus two times each through the BONGOS and BELLS collections! Given their wealth of experience with the program, Elise approached Cher recently to solicit some feedback regarding her and Jesse's experience over the years.

**How long have you been participating in Music Together?** *We have been consistently enrolled since Jesse was about 4 ½ months.*

**How many semesters do you have "under your belt"?** *We've been through the entire cycle and this fall was our first repeat! It was so interesting to see how we worked with the BONGOS songs differently this time. Last time he liked "Itsy Bitsy Spider". This time he kept asking me to sing "Hey Diddle Diddle". He was just a baby the first time. The music was fun for me the first time and Julie really gave me ideas for how to "play" with Jesse using music. But this time, I could really see Jesse's development as a musical person. He would ask for specific songs, knew the words to many of the songs and of course, drummed along with every track.*

**What drew you to Music Together?** *I really liked that Music Together was presented as a program with a strong developmental foundation. As a school psychologist, the developmental research appealed to my sensibilities. I think too often developmental factors are overlooked in children's programming/education. Music Together certainly embraces a developmental approach. And when like most mom's, I get a little crazy (e.g, trying to decide how soon Jesse can start guitar lessons...), Julie and Elise keep me grounded!*

**What would you say is your child's favorite type of music?** *GIPSY KINGS! GIPSY KINGS! GIPSY KINGS!*

**What is your favorite part of class?** *I like what he likes. It thrills me to see him when he's really engaged in the music. Because he's THREE, it doesn't happen in every class, but when I see him "in the zone", that's my favorite part...so it kind of changes every week.*

**What have you learned from Music Together?** *I have learned so much about the development of our musical abilities. How children process music, first in their bodies (!) and how they incorporate their skills little by little. The whole idea of audiation had not occurred to me but it makes perfect sense. In my field I know a bit about language development and the information from Music Together is just about learning a different kind of language.*

**Is there anything else you'd like to add?** *I think I first noticed what a difference Music Together was making when Jesse was at a class at the Little Gym last year. I think he was two...The kids were doing a parachute activity and the teacher asked them to sing Twinkle Twinkle Little Star under the chute. I wasn't all that surprised that Jesse sang with her, or that he knew all the words...What DID surprise me was that he was the ONLY ONE singing and he was also "directing" the song AND he had the right beat! That showed me how much he had really learned compared to kids who didn't have Music Together.*

# The bells of Westminster

Whether it's the BELLS collection or not, no Music Together semester would be complete without the ringing of jingle and resonator bells. This semester's song collection featured a particularly sonorous adaptation of a traditional English tune, "The Bells of Westminster." Your songbook points out that "when bells ring, children notice it!" It's true, they're everywhere! In fact, there is a Handbell Choir in New Haven, featuring a 4-octave set of English Handbells, and this issue's interviewee Cher Balkcom. The choir plays for worship services at both United and Center Churches, and plays occasional concerts throughout the area. Membership is open to the greater New Haven community. Cher says, "It's fun. When I joined, I had previously sung in several church choirs. When I came to New Haven I wanted to try something different." For more information please contact Caesar Storlazzi through the Church Office at (203) 787-4195.

## OFF THE BEATEN PATH...

Looking for something fun to do with the whole family while you're NOT at a Music Together class this spring? Here are some upcoming events in the area:

**Saturday, 3/21**

### **Peter and the Wolf**

Young People's Concert Series

Featuring the Greater Bridgeport Youth Orchestra

and members of the Connecticut Dance School

Roger Ludlowe Middle School Auditorium in Fairfield, CT

<http://www.gbyo.org/>

**Saturday, 3/14 - 4/5**

### **The Three Little Pigs**

Downtown Cabaret Children's Company in Bridgeport, CT

"Inspired by the buffoonery and shenanigans of old time movies, this new musical pits the perils of three pigs against the villainous antics of the Big Bad Wolf!" A classic come to life!! All ages welcome!!

<http://www.downtowncabaret.org/>

**Saturday, 3/28 and Sunday, 3/29**

### **Alice in Wonderland** (Young Audiences series)

The Ridgefield Theater Barn in Ridgefield, CT

Live theater designed specifically for pre-school and elementary school children. Musical fun for the whole family! Infants and toddlers welcome!!

<http://ridgefieldtheaterbarn.org/>

**Tuesday, 4/14**

### **Zoo Tots** at Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo in Bridgeport, CT

A monthly program for children 18 months to three years includes stories, activities, crafts and live animals.

<http://www.beardsleyzoo.org/>