



SANTA ROSA AREA MUSIC TOGETHER NEWS

A newsletter for Music Together families in Santa Rosa, Windsor, and Healdsburg.

Volume III, Issue I ♦ Winter 2007



Registration Changes Coming Up - Don't be left out!!

Our little program has gotten too popular for me (Ginger) to manage alone! Because we must streamline our registration process from the administrative end, I won't be handling the main bulk of registrations anymore; my wonderful administrative assistant will be taking over. So, there will be a few changes for the spring session. **When registration materials come out next week, please look the information over carefully!!**

The priority registration period, three weeks long, is for all current families to either keep their classes, or switch to a different class time for the next session. In the past, your current class would always be considered your fall-back time if you requested a switch that could not be granted. **THAT IS CHANGING. Now, If you wish to switch to a different class time, but want to keep your current class time in case the switch cannot be granted, you must give your current class time as one of your 2 or 3 choices. If you don't list your current time as one of your choices, we'll assume you're dropping it.**

The priority registration period for spring session classes will be from February 19 to March 9. On March 10, registration will be open to the public (March 12 in Windsor). Spring session begins the week of April 2. First priority goes to families who wish to keep their current class time, and second to families who wish to switch. Switch requests are honored on a first-come, first-served basis, so get your registration in *right away* if you hope to move.

If you have been on a wait list this session to move into a different class, you'll be contacted soon so we can find out if you want to keep your spot on that list. Wait lists always carry over to the next session if you didn't get the chance to move.

At the end of the priority period, we'll let anyone who requested a switch know if there was room in your preferred class. Registration can be done in class, by mail, or online, and detailed how-to information will come out the week of Feb. 19.

Please look at the calendar on the next page for important session dates.

Spring Schedule of classes

Look at the schedule you'll be given in class next week for the details, but basically there will be classes 4 mornings a week at Ellington Hall, Thursdays in Healdsburg, Monday mornings and Wednesday evenings in Windsor, and most probably a new Santa Rosa morning option in Railroad Square!! Stay tuned...



Got Email?

I occasionally send out emails; a link to the make-up scheduler, mid-session evaluations, etc. In a given session, I maybe send three. If I don't have your email address and you'd like to be able to be connected this way, please tell me, so I can get you on the list. You can email me at

gingerparish@netzero.net

or give your teacher your email address in class.

Keep the Music Alive!

As this session with the DRUM collection closes, remember to **keep** doing music with your child every day! It's really YOUR model of music-making that means the most to your child educationally. You're taking your child on a wonderful journey toward music competence; don't stop when class ends!! Keep up the good work!

See inside/back for:

- Calendar
- "Homeplay" ideas
- Music Development
- ...and more!



“Music Together Family Favorites”

This article is from Princeton, NJ. Over the past two decades, hundreds of thousands of families have experienced the joy, learning, and community provided by Music Together classes. Now, for the first time in our history, we are making a special compilation CD of our music available to the general public, to reach families who might not otherwise hear about Music Together.

"Music Together Family Favorites" contains nineteen songs and rhythmic rhymes drawn from all nine Music Together song collections, with an accompanying booklet outlining basic activities for each. The booklet introduces the Music Together philosophy to families and educators and includes information about family classes and the Music Together Pre-school program.

If you have friends or family you would like to share Music Together with, this would make a great gift and introduction to the program. It sells for \$14.95, and is currently being offered on Music Together's website at www.musictogether.com. Click on 'store' and you'll find it along with a list of the songs included.



MAKE-UPS: Get 'em While They're Hot!!

It's a good idea to schedule your make-up classes as soon as you can. So many people put it off until later, that often there are no spaces the last few weeks. Here's a reminder how to use the online make-up scheduler. Go to: <http://makeups.musictogether.com>

Then type in this access key: **wiggle**

You can also find a link at www.santarosamusictogether.com

on the home page, under "For Currently Enrolled Families"

The scheduler is the best way to get a make-up class, but if you can't do it online for some reason, you can call me (Ginger) at 544-5747 to set one up by phone. Please don't email me for a make-up time, phone works much better. Thanks!!

Cool brain development info... If your child is between 2½ to 4 years of age, you may notice him pull back in participation in class, even if he used to participate more in the past. Most likely your child is becoming aware of the difference in her own singing and movement compared with the way the class sings or moves. He may want to observe without participating in order to take in more information and study "how things work". She's developing her receptive system and processing information. While it may look on the surface as though he isn't interested because he isn't participating *physically*, it may very well be an important developmental step on the way to completing the receptive-expressive loop necessary for group music-making. Her receptive system lets her know what the group is doing, and the loop or link to her expressive system will eventually allow for participation with the group. While a child is developing this receptive skill, watch for the intensity of his absorption in class - and listen for his music play at home, where you'll see the expression of what he's learned. It's fascinating to witness your child "teach herself" through imitation and play, correcting and fine-tuning. Sometimes you might want to join in, but other times definitely be a "fly on the wall" and watch the miracle take place as your child works to make his voice match the sounds in his head, and his movements match the rhythm. It is between 2½ and 4 that children work the hardest at this. Enjoy!!

“Older” Kids... We've been having tremendous fun in the "Older Kids' Classes"! These classes meet on Mondays at 2:00 PM and Thursdays at 3:30 PM. I developed them for experienced Music Together children who are ready to move on musically and socially. Children must be between 4 and 6, and have had 2 prior sessions of MT to join us. Of course, children to age five do perfectly well in a regular mixed-age class, too. Choose what's right for your family, and keep those "older kids" exercising their music skills!!

Song Collections

The Center for Music and Young Children has recorded nine separate song collections for use with our curriculum, and they're rotated over fall, winter, and spring sessions - collections are repeated every three years.

Coming up in Spring, we'll be using the TAMBOURINE song collection. This is a great one, with fun songs like "Tingalayo" and "See the Pony Galloping", and the gorgeous lullaby "Raisins and Almonds". - I'm looking forward to doing it again already!!





Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
FEB.	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	Priority		Registration			
MARCH				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Open Enrollment begins
11	12 Open Enrollment - Windsor	13 Last week of winter classes	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	Break between sessions			30	31
APRIL 1	2	3 First week of spring classes	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14

Spring session ends in early June.

‘They Come Back’ was written by Music Together’s founder, Ken Guilmartin, and is a song about separation anxiety. If a children’s song can be controversial, this one may fit the bill. Some families would sooner avoid discussing separation anxiety at all costs and some would choose to face the issue head on. For some, the reality that “they” may not always come back makes this song too uncomfortable to sing. Please listen carefully to this song, or read the words in the songbook, and let me know how you feel about the topic. Take a look at the parent notes at the end of the page in your songbook for some other thoughts on the subject.

Personally, I’ve always been uncomfortable with this song, having lost my father as a child. Over the years, though, I’ve had several families tell me it’s one of their favorites. Watch for any reaction in your child. If it seems to make your child uncomfortable, just skip over it. If it delights you and your child, then sing away!

Why continue in music classes anyway? The average stay in Music Together is about 2 years per child! Why do so many people consistently re-enroll? Most families choose to keep their children in classes for several sessions, because the development of music skills, like language development, is ongoing, continuing to build in a deep way with focused experiences.

Brain research shows us that music aptitude can actually increase or decrease depending on environment. In other words "use it or lose it"! The brain is making important neural connections in early childhood that must continue to be exercised so they're not "pruned". In classes, you can be sure your child will have exposure to a meaningful and powerful group music-making experience each week!

And besides all that - it's a fun thing to do with your children as they become older and more confident of their skills! We look forward to you and your child continuing this journey toward musical confidence and expression with us!





“Homeplay” suggestions ...

We used to have “Homeplay” sheets available after each class. They were kind of like homework, except without the work! They weren’t utilized by enough people to justify my continuing them weekly, but so many did say they enjoyed them, that I thought I’d use part of the newsletter three times a year to give a few suggestions. Here are some ideas just for fun:

I) Time out for play:

- This week, do “Rig-a-Jig-jig” at home at least one time without the CD. Try making up some new verses for it, using things you do in your lives around home. Remember to just do it yourself, even if your child isn’t participating with you. It helps your child just to see your example of spontaneous music making!
- Play “Play Along” with instruments (if you don’t have many, use some “kitchen” ones), and watch your child’s reaction. Let yourself really listen to it and get into it, regardless of what your child is doing.

Important: When you do a musical activity at home, whether scarf-dancing, playing instruments, whatever, **see the song through to the end even if your child is not participating with you!!** If you stop, perhaps feeling frustrated that your child isn’t engaging in that moment, your child will notice!! This will teach two things: 1) making music isn’t something worth sticking with for your own enjoyment, and 2) your child will think his/her participation is the only reason you make music (it may actually be, but it’s better to send the message that it’s something **you** do for fun!!). **You’re the role model!**

- Have a parade! Sing something with a marching beat (“This Old Man”, “Drum and Sing (from this collection)”, and “The Ants Go Marching One by One” come to mind...) and play instruments and march around. It’s fun to do with more people, so see what family members you can get to do it with you! Set up a row of stuffed animals on the couch to watch the parade go by!

II) Fun with daily routines:

- As you’re coming in the house from a car ride, sing “Hello Everybody” to things in your house. Another time, play “peek-a-boo” with a scarf or your songbook while singing the Hello song to your child.
- At bath time, chant “The Snail and the Mouse” while crawling your fingers slowly on your child like the snail or fast and tickly like the mouse (or use a toy). Make up new words - think of other animals that move in contrasting ways to each other. Have fun with it!
- The next time you are picking up toys or doing some other repetitive motion, sing a rhythmic song such as “John the Rabbit” or “She Sells Sea Shells” and turn the job into a music time, popping toys away on the beat! Maybe your child will even join in with you...
- The songs “Sneak and Peek” and “Roll Over” can be very engaging for little ones. Try using one of them this week while you’re doing a diaper change-it may stop a wiggly baby or toddler long enough to do the job quickly! If your child is no longer in diapers, sing them while dressing or putting on shoes.

III.) Songbook Activity:

- Read the parent introduction pages (particularly pgs. 5-8) in your songbook (especially if you haven’t already!) and see if you can relate any of it to what we did in class this week.
- Point out pictures in the book that relate to this week’s class (instruments, animals, etc.) Talk about seeing/doing those things in class as you look in the songbook. Sing or chant a song or two while you’re at it!
- Sit with your child and your songbook, and find the “Pussycat” picture (pg. 22). Point out the different parts of the picture. Make up new words to the song from the picture. (“Little girl, little girl where I have you been?”, etc.) It’s fun to tap the beat onto the picture while you sing. Notice what’s on the wall in that picture; maybe you can recite “Hey Diddle Diddle” while you’re at it! Or, find any one of your favorite songs or rhymes in the book and sing it to your child while tapping the rhythm of the song or rhyme on the page. Point out the pictures that go with it too. You can do this while the song is playing on the stereo or not.

This newsletter was created by Ginger Parish, Director of Santa Rosa Area Music Together. Please direct comments and questions to me at 544-5747 or through www.santarosamusictogether.com . Thanks.