

## Music Newsletter December 2016

November was a noteworthy month for us. Congratulations to our talented 3rd graders on a great "A Time To Give Thanks" performance. They did an amazing job both at Hudson Guild/Fulton House where they sang for senior citizens, and at school. Now that the show is behind them, they started working on their Circle In The Square songs, "Another Openin' Another Show" and "Give My Regards to Broadway" both with adapted words. I gave a copy of the lyrics to all 3rd grade teachers to send home with each child. You can also find the lyrics on the PS 11 website. 3rd graders got recorders as a gift and started learning to play them. Parents, you can help them by reminding them to practice and to fill out their "recorder logs". Please be tolerant of any squeaking you hear! I will be telling them to "whisper" practice.

"V O T E Vote, V O T E Vote, get up off your easy chair and V O T E Vote!". We sang about Election Day and Veterans Day. This coincided with our Student Council elections at school.

We talked about National Saxophone Day and how Adolph Sax invented the instrument 202 years ago, in 1814. We studied John Phillip Sousa, the "March King" and talked about his invention, the Sousaphone. We learned some interesting facts about him...he always wore white gloves when he conducted his band and gave the pair away after every performance. We talked about Marches and listened to Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever". Several classes got to do the Music Memory Map of the song. Some classes read a great book about marching bands and we watched a few videos of marching bands. The children particularly enjoyed seeing the Ohio State Marching Band.

Several classes sang "Do A Deer" and "My Favorite Things" from the Sound of Music which opened on Broadway on November 16, 1959. I tried to impress on the children how many songs and shows stay popular for a very long time.

Several classes celebrated the birthday of Scott Joplin and we read a book about him and listened to "The Entertainer" and "Maple Leaf Rag". We looked at player pianos and talked about piano rolls.

We're learning several different birthday songs to sing when celebrating birthdays. We've learned the "original". Here are some interesting facts about it. According to the 1998 Guinness Book of World Records, "Happy Birthday to You" is the most recognized song in the English language, followed by "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow" and "Auld Lang Syne". The song's base lyrics have been translated into at least 18 languages. K's are starting to learn a birthday army chant, The Beatles "Birthday", Stevie

Wonder's "Happy Birthday", and Tom Chapin's "Happy Birthday". The other grades already know these songs.

We've been talking about how we can make music instruments at home..."tissue box" guitars, shakers, maracas, etc. Music is all around us, so please encourage your children to make some instruments at home. There are many web sites where you can learn about making instruments at home. Here are two of them... <http://nancymusic.com/PRINThomemade.htm>, and <http://www.craftymusicteachers.com/otherinstruments/>. What a fun activity for a rainy day!

K's played ABC and CDE Steps at the keyboard. They also played Notes and Rests. We learned about eighth notes and other types of rests. We're starting to "skip" fingers when we play. We read a delightful book by Jonah Winter and Barry Blitt called "The 39 Apartments of Ludwig van Beethoven". This is in preparation for his birthday in December when they will also be playing his "Ode To Joy". We also learned to play Music Tic-Tac-Toe. This game reinforces our music symbol and notation skills.

1st graders learned about ties and slurs and the difference between them. We're talking about Gioacchino Antonio Rossini's William Tell Overture and are playing it on keyboard. We also started crossing over hands to get to the A above G. Check it out, it looks good! K's, 1st, and 2nd graders love the "rock" and "jazzy" versions of all their piano songs in Book I. They are wonderful and the children get to hear different genres of the same song.

2nd graders are doing great work at the keyboards. We are getting ready for their 2<sup>nd</sup> grade Production which will be in the spring.

The 5th grade show, High School Musical Jr. has been cast and we will be continuing Wednesday 8 AM rehearsals. I'm very excited about this show.

We ended the month singing about Thanksgiving and talking about the many reasons to be thankful. If your child sang to the turkey at your Thanksgiving dinner, you can blame me. As we move into December, we'll be singing winter songs...brrrrrrrrr.

If you are a musician, sound engineer or involved in the arts in any other way, come see me about doing something in class with us. We love "guest" performers and speakers.

I wish you all a happy and healthy holiday season and a wonderful New Year.

Keep a song in your heart!

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