

Spring 2016

MUSICmatters

Quarterly News from Music for Minors



Our Mission

To nurture in children a lifelong love of music by providing quality music education programs in schools.



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www.facebook.com/MusicforMinors



Thanksgiving in April

You may have heard of Christmas in July, so how about Thanksgiving in April? There's a lot to be grateful for at Music for Minors and I'm excited to share some highlights with you.

Many of you joined us in February for our wonderfully successful event, *Carnival in Vienna*. Thank you! Your enthusiastic support is helping us serve more children than ever before. Take a peek at some pictures from the event on the next page – it was a spectacular evening!

March was Music in Our Schools Month and many of our educators organized special classes that parents could attend, to get a glimpse of what their children are learning. We couldn't do what we do without our exceptional teachers, and we are tremendously grateful for their dedication to making our programs so strong.

And speaking of strong programs, did you know that this year we are reaching 23,000 children in transitional kindergarten through fifth grade, across three counties, in more than 800 classrooms? This impact is deeply felt, and it is only possible thanks to you, our generous donors.

Of course, we're still working diligently to meet our fundraising goals for this year, to ensure that these vital programs continue to thrive and so we can welcome even more schools into the Music for Minors community in the coming years. I'm delighted to announce an incredible gift from Nan and Chuck Geschke as part of the

upcoming Silicon Valley Community Foundation Day of Giving. Please mark **May 3rd** on your calendars, and join us by participating in this **24-hour online giving opportunity**, where every gift will be matched up to \$10,000. Your support that day will help us thank the Geschkes and honor their generosity. You can read more about this on page 2.

As we prepare to launch our 40th year, I am filled with appreciation for each of you, and I am so proud of what we have been able to accomplish



together. With your continued partnership, we will keep at it until every Bay Area child has music at school. I hope you are as excited for what's to come as I am!

With gratitude,



Sonja Palmer,
Executive Director

**To learn more or make a donation:
Contact us at 650.237.9130 or visit
www.mfm.org.**

Danke Schön!

Held in February at the Los Altos Golf & Country Club, *Carnival in Vienna* achieved an all-time high. “We are so moved by the spirit and generosity of our wonderful community who turned out for this very special annual event,” says Mike Rissi, Chair of the Board of Trustees. “Each year we are thrilled by the increase in support, and the winners are most definitely our children.”

This year’s event, complete with crystal candelabras and a string quartet playing Strauss, featured a virtuoso performance by celebrity sponsor and Broadway soprano Lisa Vroman. “It was an honor to take part,” Lisa notes. “I loved the evening and was truly inspired by all of you there...the most amazing group of people so committed to your goals, the impact of music education, and respect for each other.”

This successful event, now in its sixth year, celebrated record-breaking results, with more than \$200,000 raised toward subsidies for under-resourced schools that would otherwise not receive music education programs.



Silicon Valley Gives

On May 3rd, Silicon Valley Community Foundation will once again host SV Gives, a 24-hour, online day of giving. This simple donation platform connects donors with causes they care about, and this year it will help connect you with Music for Minors.

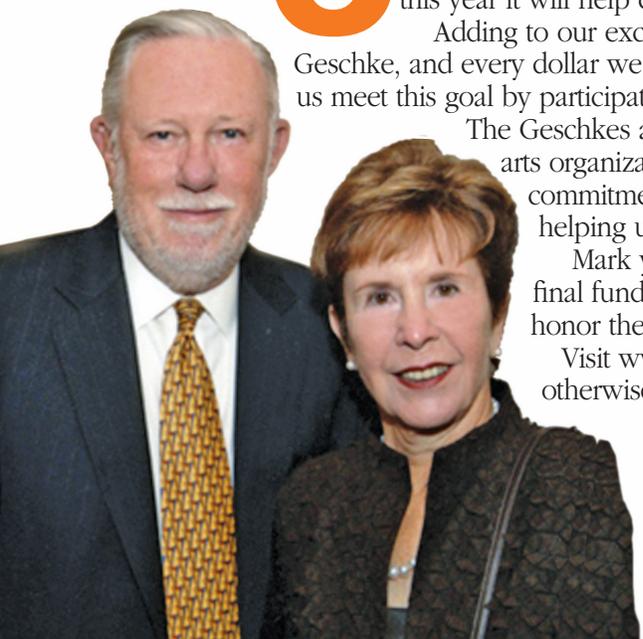
Adding to our excitement, we have already received a generous gift from Nan and Chuck Geschke, and every dollar we raise on May 3rd will be matched up to \$10,000. We hope you will help us meet this goal by participating and making a gift that day.

The Geschkes are philanthropic heroes, supporting education and arts organizations throughout the Bay Area and beyond. Their commitment to Music for Minors has been instrumental in helping us continue to grow and thrive.

Mark your calendars for May 3rd! This important day is our final fundraising call of the year, and **every dollar counts**. Please help us honor the Geschkes for their outstanding leadership gift by making a donation.

Visit www.svgives.org for more information and watch your mailbox (virtual and otherwise!) for more information in the coming weeks.

**silicon valley
gives**



Correction: Please note that a generous Sponsor level donation was inadvertently omitted from our 2015 Donor Recognition List. We gratefully acknowledge a \$500.00 gift from The Fred Terman and Nan Borreson Fund of the Community Foundation for Monterey County.

Educator Spotlight: Karl McHugh

If you would like to know what kind of educator Karl McHugh is, just ask his students:

- He is the Best Music Teacher. Ever.
- He is funny, but very serious at times.
- We have learned sooooo many songs. Good songs!
- He even lets us use instruments!

Now in his second year of teaching with Music for Minors, music has been a lifelong passion for Karl. He came into it naturally, growing up in Donegal, Ireland where music is an integral part of the culture. "I had massive exposure to music back home," he says. "Everybody plays music, everybody sings a song. It's an everyday kind of thing."

Karl takes this further than most. While he has focused on guitar, he also plays banjo, mandolin, piano, and has in the past played cello, violin, and saxophone.



This instrumental talent is put to use in Karl's life as a singer/songwriter, performing frequently as part of up-and-coming duo McHugh and Devine.

He loves that music is so accessible to children. "From the most academically challenged to the most gifted, every student can connect with and benefit from music equally," asserts Karl. "Music helps kids become more well rounded, and it's a great way to get them motivated to learn."

Karl's playful sense of humor keeps his classes flowing smoothly, with even the most hesitant students joining in. One student—Fabi, aged eight—sums it up neatly, "Mr. McHugh is the best music teacher I have ever had in the whole entire world. I just heart music!"

Funding Notes

MFM gratefully acknowledges generous support from:

- Bill Graham Memorial Foundation
- Carlsen Subaru
- Farrington Historial Foundation
- Los Altos Town Crier Holiday Fund



Calling all Alums!

With MFM's 40th anniversary approaching, we would love to re-connect with everyone who has been part of our story. Former volunteers, educators, and students, send us an email (alumni@mfm.org) to let us know what you're doing now. We hope to include you in event invitations! If you know of alumni we should be in touch with, please send them our way. We plan to make our 40th year a big one and want to see you all!

In Memoriam

It is with deep sadness that we honor the passing of long-time Trustee W. Earl Hall.

Earl was a stalwart friend and supporter, fully committed to preserving the arts and improving our community.

We will miss his wit and wisdom.

Student Spotlight: Emily Mannion

She sings, performs in musical theater, and plays piano, trumpet, and French horn. Meet Emily Mannion, a music-loving (and busy!) fifth grader from San Carlos. MFM classes throughout elementary school helped to lay a solid foundation, and Emily has spread her wings with each new opportunity that comes her way. At Tierra Linda Middle School, this includes participating in two bands, and singing in the choir.

"I am tremendously grateful to Music for Minors and the teachers who have taught and inspired my daughters," Emily's mother Heather says, reflecting upon the value of school music. She and Emily agree that the benefits begin with reinforcing math and language lessons, but reach far beyond academics.

"I appreciate that my kids come to see first-hand the pay-off of practice and hard work," Heather explains. "Important learning also happens when they develop their teamwork skills as part of a musical ensemble, and begin taking risks... whether it's trying a new instrument, or singing in front of a crowd."

Emily's not sure where music will take her long-term, but we expect her to continue embracing challenges with talent, discipline, and grace. Her recent performance with Lisa Vroman showcased those gifts for all in attendance. And Emily is currently appearing as Scout Finch in Hillbarn Theatre's Main-stage production of *To Kill a Mockingbird*.





1100 Industrial Road, Suite 10
San Carlos, CA 94070

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Check Us Out!

We hope you like the fresh new look and feel of the Music for Minors website:

www.mfm.org

Explore the site to learn more about our programs, our impact, and how you can support our work. Let us know what you think.

