

Q A rock group gets 30 percent of the money from sales of its newest compact disc. That 30 percent is split equally among the five group members. If the disc generates \$1,000,000 in sales, how much does one group member receive?

Answer at page bottom

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IN OUR SCHOOLS

LIVE AND SILENT AUCTION

Proceeds benefit Sandwich school

SANDWICH – The Oak Ridge PTA is hosting a live and silent auction 7 to 10 p.m. Friday at the Dan'l Webster Inn on Main Street. Proceeds benefit Oak Ridge School student curriculum enrichment programs, family events, guided reading and equipment purchases. Admission, \$35, includes hors d'oeuvres and a dessert reception. For information, call 508-420-2868.

WINTER FESTIVAL AND OPEN HOUSE

Family event includes arts & crafts

BOURNE – The Children's Workshop, 536 MacArthur Blvd., will hold a Winter Festival and open house 10 a.m. to noon Saturday. Enjoy a magician, moonbounce, arts & crafts, refreshments and a visit from Clifford the Big Red Dog. For information, call 508-563-3400.

FALMOUTH KINDERGARTEN

Registration open Monday-Friday

FALMOUTH – Kindergarten registration at all Falmouth elementary schools will be 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Evening registration is also available Monday, 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Mullen-Hall School, and 6:30 to 8 p.m. at East Falmouth School; and Tuesday, 4:30 to 7 p.m. at Teaticket School and 5 to 7 p.m. at North Falmouth School. For information on entrance requirements, parents should call the school where they expect to register their child or visit www.falmouth.k12.ma.us.

SUPER SILLY AND SERIOUS PLAYS

Theater program arrives in Wellfleet

WELLFLEET – Super Silly and Serious Plays comes to Wellfleet Elementary School 2:15 to 4:45 p.m. Mondays through April 2. The program introduces students in grades K-12 to playwriting, acting and ensemble skills through writing and producing an original play that will be aired on WOMR at a later date. For information and sign-up, call 508-349-3101.

SANDWICH HIGH SCHOOL

College planning night Wednesday

EAST SANDWICH – The Sandwich High School Guidance Department will hold a college planning night for current 11th-graders and their parents at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday at the high school, 365 Quaker Meetinghouse Road. Guest speakers will address topics related to private and women's colleges, the Massachusetts state college system, and vocational/technical post-graduate opportunities. For information, call 508-888-4900.

ACCREDITATION

Laurel School certified by AISNE

BREWSTER – The Laurel School, 1436 Long Pond Road, has received full accreditation by the Association of Independent Schools in New England (AISNE). The private school serves students Capewide from nursery school through Grade 5. For information, call 508-896-4934 or visit www.laurel-school.com.

JUNIOR YOUTH POSTER CONTEST

Local kids awarded gift certificates

HYANNIS – The Garden Club of Hyannis recently sponsored a Junior Youth Poster Contest for children 3, 4, and 5 years of age. The theme, "My Garden of Many Colors," was interpreted by children from the Barnstable Early Learning Center Program at Barnstable High School. Winners received \$10 gift certificates from Borders Books Music Movies & Cafe.

ACT SIGN-UP DEADLINE

Students must register by Friday

College-bound students should register by Friday for the next national ACT test date, Saturday, April 14. The late registration date is March 23, which includes an additional fee. Students can obtain registration materials from high school guidance counselors or register online at www.actstudent.org. For further information, call 319-337-1028.

The Cape Cod Times wants your school news. Contact Linda Corcoran at 508-862-1178 or lcorcoran@capecodonline.com, or e-mail Barbara Clark at bclark@capecodonline.com.

DID YOU KNOW? In 2005, nearly 100 percent of public schools in the United States had access to the Internet, compared with 35 percent in 1994.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics

ANSWER
 \$60,000

Source: www.actstudent.org



Cape programs

- Families United Network: www.cccdp.org/families_united.html; 508-775-6240
- Osterville Free Library: www.ostervillefreelibrary.org; 508-428-5757
- Meryl's Music and Arts Centers: www.merylsmusicandarts.com; 508-432-5240

Anne Kennedy, 2, of Marstons Mills, makes rhythm with a pair of sticks during the Families United Network (FUN) program Music and Movement class held at the Osterville Public Library. Holly Kane from West Barnstable, below, helps her daughter Annabelle, 2, during the program.

KEVIN MINGORA
 photos/Cape Cod Times

Keeping the beat



Music education helps step up children's development

By ANN ARCHAMBAULT
 CONTRIBUTING WRITER

It's quiet in most of the Osterville Free Library rooms before noon. The library isn't even open yet, but in one room at the side of the building, parents and their infants and young children are playing, singing, waving brightly colored scarves and chasing tiny bubbles.

On Thursdays, the library hosts a music program for children from newborns to age 5 and their parents or guardians. Mary Wilson, of the Barnstable-based Families United Network (F.U.N.) coordinates the free program along with one assistant.

In a crowd of mostly 1- to 3-year-olds, there is amazing harmony. Children weave around the room, shaking plastic egg rattles or ringing bells, and when Wilson sing-songs, "Bum, bum," they start to put away the toys or instruments and get ready for the next set.

The tiny hands gather up balls and bells and return them to a plastic bin. The "bum, bum" signal – sounding like a gentle chime – allows the most recent tune to stay with the children as they move on to the next, Wilson said.

This music program includes children with disabilities, offering an even playing field for everyone, according to Wilson. "Music is universal – anyone can participate whatever way they want to," Wilson said.

Balls and bubbles are universal, too, she said, and she uses them – along with toys and other props – in the music programs.

By the time the music classes are done, Wilson said, the children "have grasped some kind of musical competency" and parents have learned new ways to be role models for their children.

How important is exposure to such programs for very young children? Eileen J. Keating, a licensed mental health counselor and certified psychoanalyst with an office in East Sandwich, said these types of programs are valuable

for children on many levels.

"It hits so many things," she said. Exposure to music and play helps the development of the brain, and they become aware of color and rhythm, as well as the social aspects of the group.

The most rapid growth of the brain occurs from birth to age 5, based on scientific research on brain scans. Music works the part of the brain that makes connections of logic, math, language, and reading, and working that part of the brain strengthens those connections. Research has shown that children who suffer neglect will show a reduction in brain matter, while children who experience a rich environment will make more connections.

Eric Bright of West Barnstable is the father of triplets – 2-year-olds Faith, Sydney and Reece. He keeps a sharp eye out for the three, who all seem at ease as they check out what other children are doing.

"It's great because it gets them around other kids," Bright said. Even with three siblings, they can get bored with each other, he said, and this is a chance for them to socialize, noting that they're fascinated with the babies in the room.

Dawn Atsalis of Centerville holds her smiling

8-month-old Sofia while keeping an eye on the more mobile 2½-year-old George.

In addition to providing music enrichment and a social support group for parents and children, having the program in the library serves the community, said Osterville Free Library Director Patricia Rogers.

"It makes me and the library as a whole feel good that we're offering something everyone can use," Rogers said.

Wilson said the demand is great for these early childhood music programs; there are long waiting lists. But funds are limited. Because the Osterville library came up with the money and space for one of the two sessions each Thursday, Wilson said, F.U.N. was able to cover other programs for single mothers, as well as parenting classes.

Meryl Vujs of Meryl's Music and Arts Centers also brings music to young children in six Cape locations. Her classes focus on participation, not performance. Parents and their children learn the "joy of family singing," she said, without worrying about what it sounds like.

Vujs' mission is to give young children (from birth to age 5) basic music competence – the ability to sing on key and keep a beat. This makes it easier for children later on to pick up an instrument or sing, she said, so that "they ease right into it."

Like the F.U.N. program, her classes are not formal music lessons, but participatory experiences. Vujs uses streamers, rhythm sticks, and age-appropriate instruments in her classes. Every session involves new music, from American standards to "world music."

Although her classes are not free, Vujs said there are some scholarships available. With so many music programs tightening up school budgets, she said many parents are looking for something like this for their children.

"I don't think a child is complete without music education in their lives," Vujs said.



The Families United Network offers a free music and movement class for young children at the Osterville Free Library, aimed at helping them learn musical competency.