

CALVARY MUSIC SCHOOL

FALL-WINTER 2009

Clef Notes



FEATURED STUDENT VICTORIA WHITE



I recently had the enjoyable experience of catching up with a former chorister from Calvary Church Youth Choir and spoke to her about her experience with Calvary Music School.

Victoria started taking lessons at Calvary Music School because her mother was brought up with music and realized the value of learning how to read music at an early age. She also sensed that Victoria would immediately bond to the experience and she was right! Victoria grew to love her music studies. When asked why, she said "Music brings you together with other people. It is something so beautiful to play and experience that I just have to share it. Being able to give that gift to others is a really great feeling."

Victoria is a violin student studying with Alison Holt. Victoria wanted to learn how to play the violin because she "loves the look and the tone of the instrument," noting that she chose her violin specifically for its lovely sound and, even though there are many more expensive violins, her violin is still the one she loves the best. Victoria notes that another reason to stick with her violin is because, as she says: "I've gotten quite attached to it and I'd have to readjust my playing style to a new one."

I asked her about what makes her studies with Alison so important and she replied, "Alison Holt is a really good teacher. She wants to ensure that I learn a variety of music and not get set on one style. It makes you more versatile and a better musician." Victoria meets with Alison once a week for an hour. Victoria tries to practice 45 minutes to an hour every day. This year she's been working harder and practicing longer and can appreciate the results.

Victoria's long term goal is to pass her ABRSM Grade 8 exam before her senior year in high school. It is the highest achievable level and also the hardest to attain. She is currently ready to take the Grade 5 test and while waiting for an examiner is "pushing on" to the Grade 6 music.

She described the exam pieces as follows: one piece from 200+ years ago, another piece from 200 to 100 years ago and one from 100 years ago. Examples from these eras include "Allemanda" by Vivaldi, "Romance" by Reynol'd Gliere, and "Cavatina" by Hans Gál. She has performed in Calvary Music School recitals and most recently played "Cotton Patch Rag" which she loved performing. Victoria really enjoys other genres besides classical.

Victoria is an eighth grader at the Williams School and feels that her long term goal with Calvary Music School is "within her sights and attainable even with her increased course load at school" For Victoria, it's the love of music that inspires her.

Interviewed by Dorothy Adams, CMS Board

ABRSM PROGRAM

ABRSM is a UK-based music examination organization. Students taking instrumental instruction now have the opportunity to take a music examination, having studied a group of pieces stipulated by the ABRSM, worked on technical exercises, learnt to sight read and worked on aural skills. During the examination, students are asked to play 3 pieces, and scales. They are then given a piece to sight read, followed by an ear training test. A perfect score is 150; with a score of 130 one passes with "distinction," and with "merit" at 120. To honor achievement nationwide, every year a "high scorer" concert is held, featuring those with the highest 3 marks in the nations. There are 8 grades or levels.

CMS Director Simon Holt is committed to developing CMS into a first-rate academic music institution, encouraging its students to embrace music in a serious way. Music instruction should be pursued as not only fun, or an after-school hobby, he believes, but as a thoughtful endeavor that can significantly enrich one across several dimensions, musically, culturally, intellectually, and spiritually. Similar to ranking systems used in many sports, the ABRSM language is being used to assess and communicate ability levels. Simon believes that shifting the emphasis toward something that is more purposeful and goal-focused, rather than simply meeting each week for a lesson, can be highly motivating to certain students. He believes that encouraging students in this way can make music instruction more meaningful, and encourages both students and parents to feel a greater commitment to succeeding musically.

Students can opt to participate in the program by simply speaking with their teacher, or Simon Holt, or by contacting the CMS office for more information.

Calvary Music School, 27 Church Street, Stonington, CT 06378 (860) 535-3631
Executive Director, Simon Holt

To submit info for the newsletter, contact CMS at 535-3631 or CalvMusicSchool@aol.com

STONINGTON CHORAL SOCIETY

On Saturday, December 19, the Stonington Choral Society will perform Mendelssohn's anthem *Hear my Prayer, O Lord*, and Part One and the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's *Messiah*. You are welcome to come and join in with the singing of the *Messiah*. All we ask is that you bring your own copy to sing from. For those of you without music, we will have a limited number of copies for your use. The soloists will be Sarah Callinan, Margaret Tyler, Brian Cheney and Ron Loyd accompanied by Fred Jodry at the organ. Simon Holt will be the Director. The performance will begin at 4:00pm. There is no admission to the concert, instead, a freewill offering is suggested to benefit the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center. A gala reception will follow the concert.

STUDENT RECITAL

On Sunday, December 20, Calvary Music School will be putting its students through their paces in a Student Recital beginning at 3:00pm. This 90-minute program will include performances by approximately 30 of our students of all ages and standards. There will be something for everyone, and you are welcome to join us!

2009-2010 FINANCIAL AID SCHOLARSHIPS

Calvary Music School is committed to providing opportunities for musical instruction to everyone and offers financial aid scholarships to support those with demonstrated interest and commitment in music instruction who are in need of some help with tuition.

Financial aid scholarships offer tuition assistance of up to 75% of lesson fees. Full-year and per-semester scholarships are available. When applying for financial aid scholarships, you will be asked to submit tax information and a written statement, both of which will be kept strictly confidential and returned within 30 days of the application. Applications are accepted anytime.

CIRQUE DE LA MER

This year's Summer Soiree "Cirque de la Mer" was another successful fundraiser for CMS, thanks to all of its 200 plus party-goers! The entertainment for the evening began with music by 28 Strings and mischief by the Mystic Paper Beasts' dancing sea creatures. The lovely backyard at Calvary Church provided a beautiful evening to be outdoors "under the big tops" listening to music, dining and dancing. The biggest hit was surely the Summer Camp's Rocking Out! Band, impressing us all with song after song. The silent and live auctions, ticket sales and donations raised \$17,000 to supplement the tuition and fees collected from lessons and to fulfill our merit and scholarship awards. *Thank you for your support!*



ANNUAL APPEAL 2009

It is not too late to give to our 2009 Annual Appeal! Every dollar shows support for the many educational and community outreach programs we continue to offer each year. Please consider making a year-end donation to Calvary Music School. Checks may be mailed to 27 Church Street, Stonington, CT 06378.

Or, for credit card or automatic monthly donations through your bank, call 860-535-3631.

Thank you!



MEET CMS TEACHER: NANCY URBONAS

I am pleased to introduce Calvary Music School's new Music Together teacher.... Nancy Urbonas!

As a young mom, Nancy attended Music Together classes with her two children, and now she is teaching them! When she heard that CMS needed a Music Together teacher, others told her countless times that this was right up her alley. Not only does she have the musical background and skills, she isn't afraid to get silly with the kids. She hopes each child will love to play music, feel it in their body and hearts and SING IT OUT LOUD!

Nancy says, "Music Together is another way of making memories together."

Nancy grew up in New Jersey and went to Syracuse University where she played in the marching band and met her husband Kevin. Her past careers have been writer and editor for *Working Woman Magazine* in NYC, and co-author of a book. In 1997 she and her husband opened a casual fish and chips restaurant called Two Little Fish in Westerly, RI. For three years, she also wrote a parenting column for the Westerly Sun. Nancy has two children; her son Quinn, age 9, and daughter Hope, age 6, who are both Calvary Nursery School alumnae. They have two terriers named Gulliver and Haley.

Music has always been a part of Nancy's life and she strongly believes that EVERYONE is musical. Music has brought her some amazing opportunities, from singing at Carnegie Hall to performing in half-time shows at Giant's Stadium for a Kickoff Classic football game. Her parents are both musical, and her husband plays the trumpet. And her children are starting to play their first instruments.

Welcome to Calvary Music School, Nancy!

Interviewed by Libby Hall, CMS student and CNS alum

THE MISSION OF CALVARY MUSIC SCHOOL IS TO NURTURE INDIVIDUALS AND THE COMMUNITY THROUGH PROFESSIONAL INSTRUCTION AND INSPIRING MUSICAL EXPERIENCES AS AN OUTREACH PROGRAM OF CALVARY CHURCH.