



SUMMER 2024

VOL 23 | ISN 1

# MUSIC NOTES

SONGCATCHERS, INC. NEWSLETTER



PHOTO CREDIT:  
LIZ FARRELL  
PHOTOGRAPHY

THE SONGCATCHERS  
ORCHESTRA: A NEW  
PROGRAM



PHOTO CREDIT: NICK CARTER

DANCING THROUGH THE  
DECADES: A CELEBRATION  
WITH COMMUNITY

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NRHS - PAVE CONCERT  
FERNANDA MAYA, JAYDEN FLORES &  
LINDA SANCHEZ

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## A NEW BEGINNING CONCERT

We threw a fabulous concert and delightful  
Afternoon Tea bash to toast to fresh starts at our  
shiny new digs at Holy Name School!



**Moved to a New Location**

HOLY NAME SCHOOL Ground BUILDING Floor

Classes Enter through the Sherman Street Entrance

Offices at 70 Peterville Rd.

with Greater Space and Location

Contact information remains the same  
Phone: 914.654.1192  
Email: info@songcatchers.org  
Website: www.Songcatchers.org  
Classes available!

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PARTNERSHIP WITH SHARE  
YOUR MUSIC / ISAAC AHN

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The Youth Choir took on the role of Cupid, fundraising by selling Musicgrams for Valentine's Day. Additionally, they created a unique rendition of "Happy Birthday" available for purchase, making it an ideal gift for those who are distant. As a result, we have established a group of loyal birthdaygram customers.



# Composers of the Future

This yearly program headed by **Jon Deak** and **JL Marlor** was a wonderful success. Six students created original pieces that were performed by our Songcatchers Youth Choir at the **New Rochelle Public Library**. We thank our sponsors **ArtsWestchester** and The **New Rochelle Public Library** for their partnership.



The **Cap Cares** crew, the volunteer org of **The Capitol Theatre**, swooped into our new digs to give our **Early Childhood Program** cubbies a makeover. With smiles as bright as their paintbrushes, they tackled the job and even performed a magic trick by making a massive bookcase disappear from the Piano Room. Huge thanks to **Renee Pfeffer** for coordinating it and them for sprinkling some paint and magic in our space!



Congratulations to our newest Composers: **Annette Raqui**, **Kimberly Maya**, **Andre Raqui**, **Angel Gonzalez**, **Samantha Raqui**, and **Melany Soto**

Through New York State's continued investment in arts and culture, NYSCA has awarded over \$80 million since Spring 2023 to over 1,500 artists and organizations across the state. We are grateful recipients of 2023 & 2024 grants totaling \$65,000. Thank you to Gov. Kathy Hochul; our State Senator Shelley Mayer; and State Assemblyman Steve Otis.



This year, through the inspiration of Sr. Beth Dowd and under the direction of Youth Choir Director, **Kathleen McEntee-Lawlor**, the Youth Choir sang like angels at the annual Concert for Peace. **Holy Name Parish** was a beautiful backdrop for the harmonious sounds of the singers as they ushered in the holiday season. The Concert was well attended and praised by many members of the community, including **State Senator Shelly Mayer!**

# Community Music Pop-Up

During the **New Rochelle Council on the Arts ArtsFest** from 10/17 to 11/1, we will be bringing music to our community! Our delightful young musicians, and our skilled volunteer teachers, will perform at various locations throughout New Rochelle to

help raise awareness for our After-School Music Program. They will be paired with a partner or accompanied by their parents. The Music Pop-Up will serve as the highlight of a month-long social media fundraiser that our families will be promoting. Please contribute if you see them around town.



# CONCERT FOR PEACE



After 27 years of searching, we've struck gold with a new spot! Kids and parents are over the moon with our fresh digs. Say hello to our swanky ground floor entrance (no stair-climbing necessary!), a cheery waiting area for parents, loads of street parking, a play area, and two devoted classrooms for the CIRCLE ROOM and the PIANO ROOM. We've also got 4 shared classrooms for lessons; instrument storage; and an Early Childhood Classroom adorned with whimsical nursery rhyme paintings. Let the fun begin!



## Concert at the NRPL

Our piano mentor, **Janice Nimetz**, held a free concert at the New Rochelle Public Library. It was a wonderful way for the children and volunteer teachers to see this truly talented concert pianist in action. Janice holds a Ph.D. in Piano Instruction and is responsible for guiding all our piano teachers as they work with the students.



We owe you a big one! Huge thanks to everyone who pitched in - from volunteer teachers to parents, mentors, office heroes, Ursuline School students, and Salesian High School students who flexed their muscles moving us lock, stock,



# NEW DIGS!

and barrel. Special shoutout to **New Rochelle Auto Body** for the loan of their van. Can you believe it only cost \$2500 to shift our whole shebang? You all rock! Thanks also to our Board of Directors, **Catherine White** & the **NR Chamber of Commerce** for our Grand Opening!

New Rochelle HS salutatorian

## ANNIE GOMBINER

Not only is she a violin guru for volunteers, but she also snagged the Margaret Manley Scholarship from Junior League of Westchester on the Sound and a grant from the New Rochelle Rotary Club, among a pile of other national accolades.

On top of that, her hobby list is as long as a giraffe's neck, being the big boss as the Editor-in-Chief of the High School newspaper. She and **Veronica Yu**, another violin rockstar, showcased "Humans of New Rochelle" in City Hall, where they shared the life tales of New Rochelle residents through a NRCA program.

At the NRHS PAVE Concert in June, **Yarely Alvarado & Yeray Lopez-Ibarra** performed a duet together. We are very proud of them; both are graduates of Songcatchers and currently volunteer as teachers in the After-School Music Program. Yeray is also an Area All-State clarinetist!



## We are looking for a few good Muralists!



When we moved from our previous location at St. Gabriel's, we had to leave behind two stunning murals. We truly miss the uplifting messages they brought to our everyday. If you or someone you know is talented in creating new murals, please contact the office!



## Golden Shoestring

The **Junior League of Westchester on the Sound** sprinkled us with stardust once more! This time, they showered us with a grant in recognition of the fabulous volunteer work by our After-School Music Program high school students. In April, they also put the spotlight on us during their monthly shindig at their 2024 Best of Westchester thrift store, The Golden Shoestring. Our **Executive Director, Jennifer Lanser**, joined forces with **Rosemarie Castellano**, VP of the **Songcatchers Board** to spread the word about Songcatchers to their clients, **Caroline Vance**, **JLWOS Board Pres** and **shop manager, Deborah**, all while indulging in a bit of retail therapy!





# WE LOVE OUR VOLUNTEERS!

Our volunteers are the real MVPs! From September to June, these legends keep our music lessons affordable for our students. But hey, it's not all one-sided - our volunteers get a kick out of it too! They make friends, join a cool community, and even polish up their music skills while they're at it.

To show our appreciation, we showered them with daily snacks and decked out our volunteer teachers in snazzy "Spread Peace with Songcatchers" sweatshirts. And let's not forget the epic pancake breakfast - shoutout to parent Denise Stella, who hooked us up with blueberry, plain, and banana flavors! We also uncovered some hidden vocal talents during our unforgettable Karaoke night. Who knew our musicians could belt out a tune like that? Cheers to our awesome volunteers!



Looking for new Musicians!  
**Join Our**  
SONGCATCHERS ORCHESTRA

**APPLY NOW!**  
Email Director Ariana Barrios  
arianasbarrios@songcatchers.org

Our maestro **Ariana Barrios** and the Songcatchers Orchestra made their debut at the New Rochelle Street Fair and have been on the go since with performances at the Annual Rotary Club dinner, two fabulous Fundraisers, and the unforgettable Volunteer Concert this year!

To spotlight Volunteer Appreciation Month, we cranked up the volume at our annual Volunteer Appreciation Concert, featuring 24 mind-blowing acts by our talented youth instructors. Thank you to Patrick Smith, Branch Manager & **Orange Bank & Trust** in Mt. Vernon for sponsoring this event!

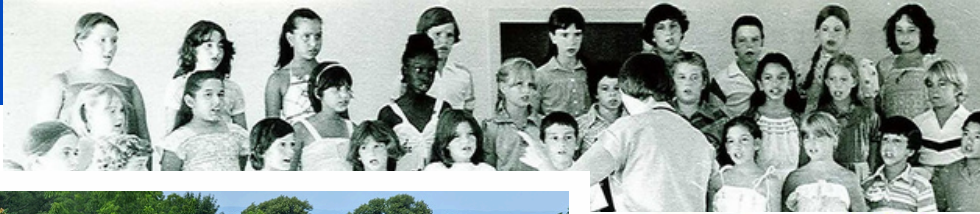
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# CHOIR CAMP – 45 YEARS

This year marked the 45th anniversary of choir camp. Returning to the camp, you would still find the familiar warmth and traditions cherished by dedicated counselors who invest weeks of planning each year to create a memorable experience for today's campers. Nestled in a serene location with picturesque hills at Warwick Conference Center, children wake up to stunning views and enjoy beautiful sunsets each night. Spending five hours a day singing, along with pool dips and delicious meals, they forge lasting memories and friendships. With 42 campers this year, we extend our gratitude to Campership Fund of New Rochelle and generous donors who sponsored some of our campers.



Ulysses Torres - Board Member - Choir Camp Choral Director



## Board of Directors

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 Ulysses Torres, MM

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Sr. Beth Dowd, OSU, MM

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 Jim Weingast Percussion  
 Ulysses Torres, MM Brass  
 Enid Blount Press, MM Clarinet  
 Janice Nimetz, MM, PhD Piano  
 Gabriella Kann Strings  
 Amy Hersh, MM Flute  
 Dianne Flagello, MM, PhD Xylophone  
 Jerryl Bell Guitar

## Early Childhood Violin

Ariana Barrios Coordinator

## Choir Camp

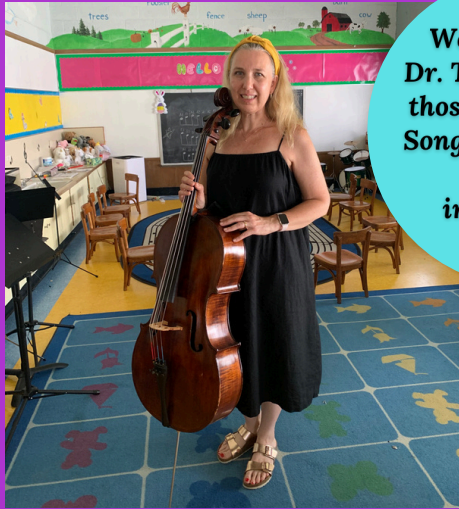
John Dennehy Director  
 Ulysses Torres Choral Director





# GIFTS OF LOVE

Our Newest Board Member, **Coralie Gallet**, (pictured below) encouraged **Michael Terman, Ph.D.** to donate to Songcatchers this beautiful and valuable cello belonging to his late wife, **Juan Su Terman, Ph.D.** Our children and orchestra will be performing publicly at the New Rochelle Street Fair on this lovely instrument.



**We appreciate Dr. Terman and all those who think of Songcatchers when donating instruments.**



The renowned artist **Charles Fazzino** decorated and signed these two **AMAZING** violins that were in disrepair to help us raise money. If you know a Fazzino Fan, call the office and make an offer. You'll be helping our programming! What a unique gift for a musician!

During the Holidays, **City Councilwoman Martha Lopez-Hanratty** used her City Council allowance and brought 55 of our Songcatchers community to see Cirque de Soleil in New York City. For many of them, it was their first time seeing a show in New York! Thank you Ms. Lopez!

## Dancing Through the Decades

Our "Dancing Through the Decades" fundraiser was an absolute blast! We had a mouthwatering dinner donated from Best of Westchester regular, **Maria's Restaurant**, and the community favorite, **Fratelli's Pasta and Pizza**. We had groovy tunes from the high-energy "**Beautiful Buzz**," with keyboardist and volunteer piano teacher, **Mark Lipitz** and non-stop dance floor action by **Frank & Carmelina DeMarco**. It was a night to

remember! Shoutout to **Board Member, Ullysses Torres** on brass & **Nick Carter** for snapping epic photos that truly caught the vibe!

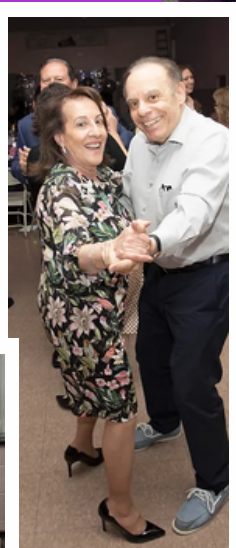
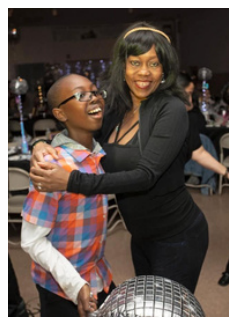


Photo Credit: Nick Carter

## SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

We have many events this year in which we will be selling sponsorships. If you have a business this is a great way to connect with the community! Call (914) 654-1178 for info!

### Fun Fact

Kermit was Sr. Beth's (our founder) favorite Muppet! We brought her two Kermit's to our new location: one in the Circle Room and one in the office. This year at Choir Camp, the drama performance was "Muppet Treasure Island" Kudos to anyone who knows how many times this show has been done at Camp!



## Double Your Donation

**ARTSW** Challenge grant  
ARTSWESTCHESTER

Thanks to the generosity of **Arts Westchester and the WC Board of Legislators**, we qualify for an additional \$8,500 grant alongside our Basic Grant and Arts Alive grants. To receive this matching grant from AW, we need to secure \$8,500 in either new or increased donations. If you're interested in doubling your contribution, please check the box on the attached envelope when you return your donation.



# A NEW PARTNERSHIP

For the first time ever, Songcatchers is offering individual and group vocal lessons besides our choir to students age 7-13 by partnering with the not-for-profit music organization, Share Your Music (SYM),

Founded by Isaac Ahn, a sophomore at The Hackley School in Tarrytown, and a baritone in Juilliard's Pre-College Program, SYM aims to empower underserved children through the universal language of music. The organization consists of dedicated individuals who believe in music's transformative power. It spearheads fundraising concerts, music education programs, and community outreach. Due to the similar missions of Songcatchers and

Share Your Music, collaborating was a natural fit. This partnership opens many doors for Songcatchers to provide individual voice lessons for the first time. also Share York Music also helped with 2 fundraisers and assisted in raising \$30,000+. One of the Funraisers included Isaac gathering his



Photo Credit: Nick Carter

peers along with some of our talented Songcatchers to put on a stellar concert called "Future Stars Under the Stars" at The New Dawn Foundation in June.

He also represented Songcatchers at the recent city-wide celebration for Lafayette singing two musical selections along with Songcatchers volunteer piano teacher S Topogna.



Photo Credit: Nick Carter



## SONGCATCHERS IS BROUGHT TO OUR COMMUNITY BY YOU AND THESE ORGS:

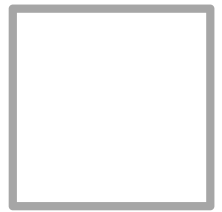
Whether you play guitar, piano, or drums or any instrument your musical talent can significantly impact others. Our program fosters a fun, supportive environment for you and kids to grow. You'll collaborate with experienced musicians, enhance your teaching skills, and build friendships in a community that values creativity and joy in music. Join us to inspire the next generation of musicians and make a harmonious impact!

This school year, Songcatchers is teaming up with Salesian High School for some musical magic! For the first time ever, we're cranking up the volume with group lessons for high schoolers aged 14-18! Join us on Wednesdays from 2:40 to 3:40 at our Sherman Street entrance. Got questions or ready to sign up your budding rock star? Give us a ring at (914) 654-1178!





**Songcatchers, Inc.**  
2005 Palmer Ave. #252  
Larchmont, NY 10538



REACHING  
FOR PEACE  
THROUGH  
MUSIC...  
WITH YOUR  
HELP -  
Thank you!

To double your donation, specify "Arts Westchester Challenge Grant" in the memo on Venmo or the reply envelope.

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**Donate Today!**