

President's Letter March 2024

Pam Hetrick

One spectacular spring day, Jim Panzee woke feeling silly. He leapt off his branch and ran through the jungle laughing and shouting. "Why do I feel so silly?" Jim wondered. "Maybe you have spring fever," suggested Norman from next door.

- Suzanne Lang and Max Lang, illustrator. 2024. *Grumpy Monkey Spring Fever*. New York: Random House. (Includes fun stickers.)

Spring forward! On this spectacular sunny Spring Equinox Day (March 19, 2024) in Vancouver, there is a lot to laugh and shout about. At 11:06 pm EDT today, the earliest vernal equinox in North America in a century began. This must be why I'm feeling a lot like Jim Panzee, a little silly, combined with a surge of energy, optimism, hope, and definitely some spring fever sprinkled in, with longer days to enjoy it. The Lunar New Year Spring Festival, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, Passover, Ramadan, Nowruz, Holi, Songkran, Japanese Cherry Blossom Festival, May Day, Poisson d'avril - around the world people celebrate this time of hope and renewal.

In Vancouver the Hobiyeer spring celebration of the Nisga'a New Year marks the last crescent moon at the end of the winter. "During Hobiyeer, the thundering of enormous box drums echo our Earth Mother's heartbeat, and hundreds of dancers and singers move in unison. It's a magnificent celebration to witness, often taking place in large centres such as Vancouver, and it draws thousands of people from all Nations and ethnicities."

www.alive.com/lifestyle/indigenous-springtime-traditions/

More information about the Hobiyeer celebration in Vancouver this year can be found at:

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/indigenous-vancouver-hoobiyeer-1.7131266>

From the alive.com website Karen Lee White (Dak'laweidí, Tuscarora, Salish, Chippewa, and Scots) gives her perspective on how we can learn from Indigenous ways of being. She suggests surrounding ourselves with uplifting music at this time of year, and "joining like-minded musical, faith, or creative communities for collective upliftment."

When we create joy together, we create true reciprocity—and the energy of joy reverberates everywhere.

- Karen Lee White

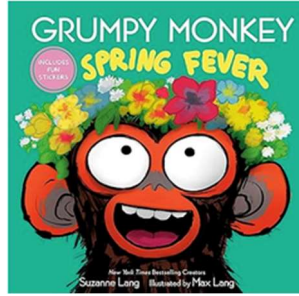
As music teachers we have the privilege of creating joy every day. As members of Carl Orff Canada, surrounded by like-minded musical friends sharing together, we create true reciprocity. We have always been a creative community where collective upliftment is our norm. How many other professions get together regularly to sing, dance, play, and feel the joy of creating and improvising together?!

In this, my last “President’s Message” I want to give a big shout-out. To the National Board - 14 dedicated teachers who have supported the COC mission over the past 2 years that I have been President. You are fabulous. We began as a brand-new board, learning together, helping each other with grace and humour. Thank you for your untiring support. The many COC committees – there are at least 14 and counting, made up of volunteers from all chapters - have contributed immensely to a long list of new initiatives. Thank you, *Ostinato* Team, for your beautiful work helping to transform our journal to a successful online journal. My gratitude for the COC Chapter Boards across Canada, our life force, doing the work of inspiring new and old members through workshops, hands-on opportunities and local support.

To the Constellation 24 Committee – wow! You have been planning for the past 4 years, navigating the unknown waters of a constantly changing world impacted by a pandemic to bring us our first in-person conference since 2018. Kudos to you for your flexibility, determination, and creativity - not to mention hard work.

The amount of time, freely offered in so many capacities by so many people – beyond their daily work of bringing the joy of music to children – is gargantuan. Bravo/a and thank you! What a pleasure it has been to collaborate with you and to be part of the collective energy of Carl Orff Canada, with our goal of bringing the joy of music and movement to children and adults. Especially now, in our 50th Anniversary year, we can enjoy this moment, celebrating being part of the COC community.

Spring fever is alive and well! We’ll laugh and shout, sing and dance, play and be silly together at Constellation 2024, and whenever and wherever we gather in our pursuit of being the best teachers we can be. May our work together as members of COC continue to result in “the energy of joy.”



I write to you from the unceded and ancestral territory of the hə́ŋqəmiḥə́m and Sḵw̓xw̓ú7mesh speaking peoples, the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵw̓xw̓ú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tseil-Waututh) Nations, land that has been stewarded by them since time immemorial.