

# Sounds around town

## Georgette Labrèche ~ Encouraging Creative Expression

O wishes do come true! Since I was a little kid I've always wanted to sing. I grew up watching movie musicals on wintry Sunday afternoons and in the shower I could belt out a pretty respectable cockney-accented "Wouldn't It Be Lovely" a la Eliza Doolittle and a rousing "Put On Your Sunday Clothes" from *Hello Dolly!* Except for a one-stanza solo from *Mary Poppins* "I Love to Laugh", happily sung at my third grade chorus night, I rarely lifted my unsteady singing voice above a whisper in public.

Of course, in the last eight years since my daughter was born, I've had loads of practice singing "Twinkle Twinkle" and "Baa Baa Black Sheep" (I even made up new lyrics!), evolved with the Disney Princesses, and now sing along to songs Chloe teaches me. But it's hard keeping up with her: she has an inspired, pitch-perfect voice that leaves me warbling when I try to accompany her.

Yet each year as Christmas approaches and I hear carolers sing, I get a lump in my throat wishing I could confidently join in, adding cheerful song to the season. And every year I keep telling myself and a few friends that I want voice lessons just so I can sing carols! So here's the wish come true part: voice lessons with Georgette ~ I can't wait to start!

Classically trained in voice and piano, Georgette Labrèche has been a singer-pianist-composer and teacher for more than twenty years. She plays every Friday night at the lovely restaurant Spain of Narragansett, is music minister at St. Joseph's in Hope Valley, RI, and she teaches voice, piano and voice improvisation out of her home in Westerly.

In 2005, she formed Georgette & Company for gifted young vocalists. Together they travel throughout Rhode Island and Connecticut to perform at benefits and community events.

Helping to brighten the annual Westerly Stroll on Wednesday, December 2nd, Georgette & Company is performing in the Atrium at 12 Broad Street from 6 to 7 pm; this is their second year performing at the Atrium. Georgette was first invited by Tina Pagliusi and Lori Olsen co-owners of the In Due Time Boutique. Tina's 5 year old daughter was taking voice lessons with Georgette and Tina wanted to offer family friendly entertainment for the Stroll.

"The most exciting thing about Georgette and her group of children singing is that they brought innocence to the whole event. People are moved by music and it is even more impressive when you hear heartfelt songs interpreted by young singers. We really wanted to cater to families and saw music as being a universal draw," explained Millie Donovan resident artist at the Riverside Artists Studio and Gallery. "Plus, we'll have refreshments, a wine tasting, special art and shopping discounts. We promise an evening of music, art and fun!"

Georgette has close to 40 students, ages 5 to 80. She teaches everything from classics to theater, from movie themes to soft rock and jazz. "I try to bring kids out of their domain of academia and help them find relaxation and escape in music," Georgette said. "In addition to reading music, they first learn how a song is sung and written, but then I encourage them to change it and develop their own style, to freely



See Georgette Labrèche and her youthful singers Dec. 2 at the Atrium, 12 Broad Street, 6 to 7 pm during the Westerly Holiday Stroll.

express themselves. And after a while they do!" She's a stickler for articulation too. Students develop crisp diction so people understand them when they sing.

Georgette's youngest students often love to write lyrics about their pets, a friend, flowers, or a rhyme. Georgette sets the lyrics to music and parents bring a tape so the children can record their songs, track their progress and build their portfolio. "Some kids are so gifted and creative! I want to encourage that. We all need to share our personalities and talents and what better way than through the arts." Many of Georgette's students move on to study music performance and theater management in college. And they call when they're home on vacation. "I keep pictures of them on my refrigerator; my students are part of my family.

I learn from the people I work with and teach. I learn to be as creative as I teach them to be. It's my whole life and I just love it!"

Contact Georgette at 401-596-4808 or visit [www.georgiesings.com](http://www.georgiesings.com). Contact the Riverside Artists for more information and event details at [theriversideartists.blogspot.com](http://theriversideartists.blogspot.com).

