



Engaging minds, memories, and movements

Here's what people are saying about our virtual music therapy...

Renee from Clark said "I think Melissa is doing a fabulous job! She is flexible with what she has planned to ensure the residents hear what they like. She is so kind and has a beautiful voice. Melissa has background information on singers and songs and the residents enjoy that as well and enjoy having a discussion about it. She gets to know the residents at a more personal level leading to a bond between them. She is an absolute joy and we love her!" -Renee, Clark Home Franklin

"I remember you! When you're here... lots of residents are tapping their feet.. you're doing us a huge favor! If you wonder how big it is... it's huge! Loneliness is our biggest failure.. "

"Oh you don't know how good it is to see you. I don't feel like I've just been dropped off - someone knows where I am and that's you!"



Melissa Gleason



Libby Norris

"Thank you for making our day a little brighter!" - a resident after a small group session

"It's so nice to have you! You just made my day. You're making me cry. I love you and you're my favorite!"...a resident after a one-on-one session

"Thank you so much for having us with you - it really makes a difference!" ...a resident after a small group session

Dear Friends

What a year this has been! The pandemic, stay-at-home orders, and sweeping shutdowns have hit us all hard...but our aging friends might be struggling the most.

On March 11, local senior living communities closed their doors to protect residents from the coronavirus. While necessary, it has been hard. For the last six months, thousands of seniors have experienced loneliness, anxiety, and depression like never before.

At no point in our lifetime have these seniors needed music—and us—more!

Knowing this, Senior Sing A-long's extraordinary Music Therapists, Libby Norris and Melissa Gleason, immediately began organizing virtual Music Therapy sessions and outdoor musical performances at facilities. As we continue serving in this new way, the grateful responses of seniors and their caregivers have been overwhelming.

It is clear our music—and your financial support—are making a meaningful difference!

Your support keeps the music playing. The unexpected shutdowns have dealt Senior Sing A-long some serious financial challenges, resulting in a significant shortfall this year. While times are hard, I know there are many people looking for ways to help. **If that is you, and you are able to give, your support today is critical.**

We can't wait to get back to serving seniors in person, as soon as it is safe. In the meantime, we will continue delivering the life-giving benefits of music in every way we can. Thank you for caring and supporting Senior Sing A-long.

Gratefully,

Jill Dover
Executive Director

Moments & Memories, The faces of Senior Sing A-Long

Caroline Boyce, 83

Caroline Brown lives in a partner community and she is lucky enough to have her daughter there with her as an activities director at the community. We sat down with her before the pandemic to reflect on some memories and share stories. Our friends from AARP Grand Rapids, John and Barb Zeiman helped make this possible with great storytelling and photography.

Here is a highlight from our conversation:

An old farmhouse, just a few hours from home, holds Carolyn's most treasured memories. Water came from a hand pump, an icebox kept food cool, and an outhouse was the only bathroom. It was where she and her husband Phil spent summer vacations, watching their six daughters explore, imagine, and play in the woods. She can still hear the giggles and screeches that filled the night air, as the girls would dart from tree to tree in lively games of hide and seek.

Through the power of music, Senior Sing A-long invites seniors like Carolyn to remember special moments and savor precious memories. Every melody shared is a memory recalled, a moment cherished, and a lifetime celebrated.

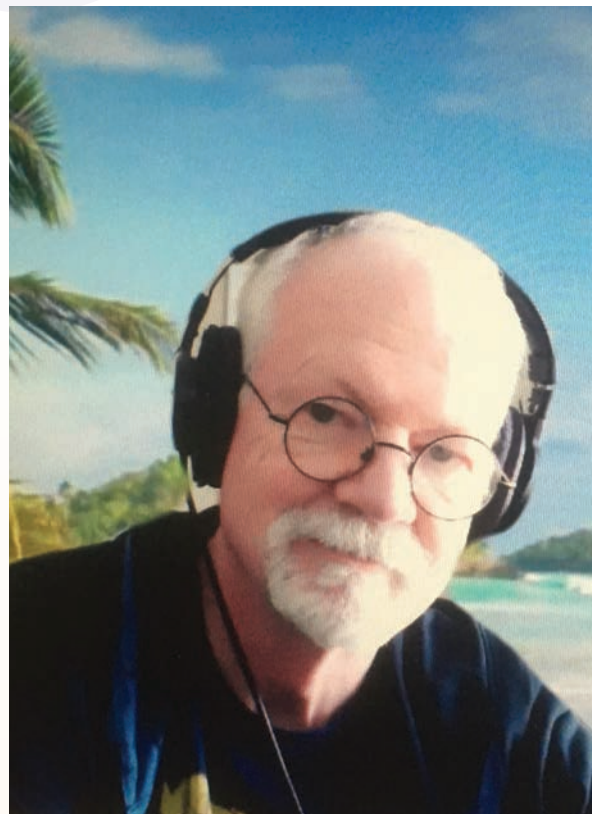


Performer Spotlight

Virtual Life of a musician told in the words of Martin Zyla...

Back in mid-March, it seems we all entered an episode of The Twilight Zone. All of a sudden my shows for seniors just stopped. I started having 'people interaction' withdrawal. Love performing, love the people...I was missing it all and couldn't do anything about it. I actually called some communities to send my apologies to the seniors for not being able to come and see them every month.

But then I started doing virtual shows. It's not the live performances we love, but I could at least do a performance and approach it like a radio DJ, who can't see the audience but does the shtick anyway. We're all in it for the long haul, and I'm glad to be able to offer seniors a version of what I was giving them before.



Pandemic performances in the words of Bob Lacy...

"I've been having a great time playing outside at various communities in August. I have more to look forward to this fall, if the weather cooperates. I'm getting a very positive response from all the folks. They are still not allowed family visits, so access to music lifts their mood. Quite often I extend my program length because they are having so much fun singing along and even dancing. It has been great for my spirits too. As I often tell people..."I've been a professional entertainer for 48 year's and this is the most fun I've ever had playing music". I'm not sure who is looking forward to things getting back to normal more... the folks or me!!"

Community Spotlight

Fountainview Lowell



Katie Elders, Activities Director, is always creative and ready to take on anything. With the pandemic closures she dove right in and was willing to try virtual music with the hope of spreading some joy to her residents. We are thrilled that virtual music therapy sessions with Libby and outdoor programming with some favorite Senior Sing A-Long musicians have been a great success.

According to Katie, "Senior Sing A-Long has been a great support to me during these difficult times. They have offered great alternatives for us such as Virtual Music Therapy and outdoor Socially Distanced Performances."

Justine Bishop, Resident Care Manager- Fountainview Lowell, "It is amazing to see the positive impact the music therapy has on our Memory Impaired residents. The music has been extremely important for the residents during the pandemic lockdown."



Support Senior Sing A-Long Virtual Fundraising Stems for Seniors!



Thank you to Metro Health for making our September Stems for Seniors virtual event possible. Thanks to their generous support we are delivering bouquets of flowers to partner communities over the upcoming weeks. The flowers deliver a message of hope in this lonely time. This small act tells a senior...you are loved, you are valued, you are not forgotten.

