

## OPUS / DECEMBER 2017



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### News at CCM

#### **CCM strives to raise student achievement via Student Progress Reports!**

To aid in our young musicians' achievements and provide high-quality music education, CCM instructors will now provide written progress reports to our private lesson students. During the 14th week of each semester, CCM instructors will use part of the private lesson to meet with parents and students to discuss their progress for the semester. Topics addressed include musicianship/performance, preparedness for lessons, technique, note reading, theory, and achieving their semester and long-term goals.

**Spring Semester Registration—[Register today](#)** for private and group instruction and secure your time slot. Spring semester private lessons and group classes start on

Tuesday, January 16<sup>th</sup>—please refer to our calendar for start dates per day of the week. **There's a class for everyone at CCM!**



**Save the date for the CCM American Roots Winter Party** to be held on Saturday, March 3, 2018, at The Scout House in the center of Concord!

**CCM Second Saturday Bluegrass Jam with BBU: December 9<sup>th</sup>!**



Boston Bluegrass Union is now partnering with CCM to co-sponsor the **Second Saturday Bluegrass Jam** in West Concord from 7:00 – 9:30 pm. This monthly jam is open to all ages and bluegrass instruments for advanced beginner musicians and above. The fee is \$5 payable at the door. **Through June 2018, the jams will take place at CCM.** The jams will feature a rotating cast of hosts, and there are at least five separate rooms to jam in at CCM. **See below why attending a jam session is both fun and beneficial!**



**Are you a CCM [friend](#) yet?** Join us on [Facebook](#) to hear the **Tune of the Week** and be the first to hear CCM news and more! See what music videos we like, photos we post, practice tips and articles we suggest, and discover what's new in the music world. [Join us on Facebook](#).

## Spotlight - Rocking Out



Open mic night on the eve of Thanksgiving at West Concord's ice cream joint, Reasons To Be Cheerful, may not go down in our cultural lore with exactly the same wallop as the Beatles-on-*The-Ed-Sullivan-Show* moment of 1964. Or maybe it's still too soon to say? On that crisp evening, while everyone else was home assembling pies or brining the turkey, a group of fans gathered in the back room to hear the first performance of a band called Anarchy in a Jar. The bandmates play together weekly at CCM's Rock Lab; they are all 11 years old. On November 22, in front of a crowd that was graciously seeded with friendly aunts and uncles, beaming grandparents and cousins, they turned it straight up to 11. Rock Lab introduces children to group dynamics and gets them working on solos, song choices, and performing as a band, all under the direction of CCM's Chaim Burstein. Anarchy in a Jar features Max Johnson on keyboard, Noah Zall on guitar and vocals,

James Goar on drums, and JJ Gee on bass. They've been jamming together since September.



As the band settled into the space and tuned up, the crowd filed in around them, hanging on the banisters and piling into the perimeter of the room. There were definitely some nervous jitters among the performers, but all of that melted away once the band started belting out the covers: “Believer” and “Radioactive,” by Imagine Dragons; “Viva la Vida,” by Coldplay;

“Renegade,” by X Ambassadors. By the time they played their finale, “Revolution,” by the Beatles, you got the clear sense these guys were hooked, that we’ll all be seeing more Anarchy in a Jar. Stay tuned.

**Banding Together: Families That Play Together, Stay Together**



Back in the 1990s, when Suzanne and Joe Jachinowski were living in San Francisco, long before they had children, they would get together with friends in their garage to jam: Suzanne on vocals, Joe on guitar, Suzanne's brother Jay on piano, and others on drums, bass, and rhythm and lead guitar. The Zen Lunatics, as they called themselves, played an odd lot of covers (Fleetwood Mac, Tom Petty, and Joan Osborne tunes, for example), wrote some original songs, and played a few gigs over the years. The band still gets together these days—often on the East Coast now, since the Jachinowskis moved to Concord in 2010—and they have a couple of new band members, namely Suzanne and Joe's children, JJ and Ben. The band still plays all the old covers, but the younger generation has introduced some fresh beats to the set list, with songs by Arctic Monkeys and The Revivalists, for example.

Suzanne's mother was a music teacher, so music has long been in the family's DNA. The Jachinowski children started playing early: JJ on piano initially, Ben on drums. "Among the many reasons moving to Concord turned out so beautifully was finding CCM," Suzanne says. There the boys have been able to explore a variety of music, from piano and drums to composition and alto sax, for example. And now that the boys are 17 and 15 years old, music is something the family can enjoy together.



“You never know what the magic thing—that the whole family is going to enjoy doing together—is going to be,” Suzanne says. Joe loves to fish, for example. Suzanne is a reader. The boys love fantasy football. “We all have different tastes,” she says. “As the children grow up, they’re each going to become their own people, with their own interests, which is great. But I feel blessed that music is something cross-generational that we can all do together.”

Playing with the band has afforded the children other lessons, too. “Just as it’s great for kids to learn how to interact with the coaches and teachers in their lives, here they’re learning how to talk with people from another generation. It helps the kids learn how to hang as grownups, how to be a part of a more mature, wider group,” Suzanne says.

The family’s Concord basement is outfitted with all the mics and speakers from the old California garage band days, so the band has a place to practice and make the occasional recording. Playing with the Zen Lunatics gives the children a chance to challenge themselves in all the ways attendant with ensemble playing: learning patience, knowing your part, letting others shine, and figuring out where you can add something of value, for example. “It’s been fun for me to see them grow as musicians,” Suzanne says. “And there’s a great deal of satisfaction when you all get through a song, and you think, ‘That sounded pretty good!’”

### **You create Opportunities!**

Who is helping inspire and train the next generation of musicians? Who is providing them with excellent opportunities for their future?

### **When you give...you are!**

Eighteen-year-old baritone sax player Josh Allen headed to Berklee College of Music this fall. “If not for CCM, Josh couldn’t have chosen this path,” says Josh’s dad, Steve.



**Please consider supporting CCM today and read more about Josh and his exciting story>>**

**Did you know...Why attend a jam session and making the most out of it!  
A few words by our CCM American Roots Faculty:**

**Rich Stillman, CCM Banjo Faculty Member**

In many ways, a jam session is a conversation, and many of the rules of conversation apply. Understand what's being discussed. Contribute your perspective. Participate, but don't dominate. Listen to and make room for the contributions of others, and encourage everyone to be heard.

Like most conversations, jam sessions have rules that regular participants understand implicitly. If you're an outsider, it's best to hang back and figure out the rules and avoid interrupting. Most sessions are open to newcomers who want to make a positive contribution. Likewise, make your contribution fit your ability. Even a beginner can play quiet rhythm as long as he or she knows three things:

1. how to form chords
2. how to do a simple vamp or chop

### 3. how to recognize a few chord changes

For a beginner especially, rhythm is the entree into any jam session. It gives you a chance to observe, to understand the rules, and to be ready when an opportunity arises to offer more. You can also play rhythm quietly, testing your abilities without intruding on a session that challenges your skill level.

As you gain confidence, you can start doing more. Play louder. Offer a lead break. Sing a song. Move closer to the center. After a while, you may find yourself in the thick of it. You've both strengthened your own musical skills and created relationships with people you can play with in the future. Now you're a full participant in the conversation.

**Ian Goldstein,**

***Be prepared; be open; be brave.***

**Be prepared**, as best you can, based on your current level of experience and knowledge. At a basic level, this could mean gaining familiarity with chords. Since many roots/folk/jamming songs utilize only a few chords, a great place to start is by learning the most commonly utilized chords in a few popular jamming keys, e.g., the key of G or C. In the key of G, for example, many songs use the chords G, C, and D (often referred to as the I, IV, and V chords in G, respectively). Knowing how to play a simple strumming pattern using these chords, including being able to transition from one chord to the next smoothly, will go a long way toward enabling you to join in on a song. On a more advanced level, being prepared could mean knowing how to play an instrumental tune, or sing and play a song all the way through, or being able to solo over chord changes in several keys.

One of my teachers gave me some great advice years ago: best to learn fewer things, and learn them well. A far better strategy than "kind of" knowing fifty songs is to know three but to play them effortlessly and with a sense of confident mastery. I have found this applies every level of playing!

**Be open** to meeting new people, hearing and learning new songs and even new genres. Be open to calling yourself a musician, even if you are not a professional. Be open to putting yourself out there. Be open to making mistakes. Be open to improving your skills and gaining confidence through the act of playing with others, live, without a net! This all goes hand in hand with my last point:



**Be brave.** Volunteer to sing a song (one you know well--see above!) or take a solo on an unfamiliar tune. You have nothing to lose except the fear of making mistakes or not playing as well as (insert your inspirational musical icon here). You have everything to gain--namely all the joy and pleasure of making music with others. Know that everyone is very busy keeping track of their playing, which is another way of saying that no one is listening as closely to you as YOU are! Moreover, in most jams, everyone is there to have a good time and encourage one another. This is the case at CCM. Cultivating a supportive, social music-making environment is a big part of our intention with the American Roots program. Since you will surely be your worst critic, it is up to you to leave that critic hat at home, and instead choose that care-free, go-for-it hat that you have wanted to wear out to the jams. Look! There it is, right next to your instrument case. You will soon find that the hat fits, and best of all, it matches every time.

Oh yeah, and whatever you do, please, please, please: Have fun!

### **Tony Watt**

In bluegrass music and many related styles of music, jamming is by far the best way to improve as a musician. Jamming is actually the easiest, fastest, most enjoyable, most rewarding, most motivational, and the most downright fun you can have with bluegrass music. Nothing beats the experience of making music socially with your peers, who may soon become your life-long friends.

While it can be challenging for beginners to attempt jams without a ton of experience on their instrument first, it can still be a very worthwhile experience. Even coming to just a few jams early on, hopefully enough to get an idea of what they need to be working on, can save beginners lots of time and energy working on less critical skills. Ideally, everybody can find the best jam for their level of experience, such as my CCM bluegrass jams on Thursday evenings which are geared towards folks who have never participated in bluegrass jams before.

### **And, Bobby Britt adds...**

The only thing I would add (fairly obvious), is that the skills acquired in **a group jam are very different than detailed focused practice** (at home with a metronome... transcribing solos... working on time feel...repetition of small chunks of melodies to get them just right and second nature, etc.). Both jamming and solo practice are extremely important, and

compliment each other. Take your favorite tune that you learned in a jam, and bring it home.

**Learn it. Slow it down, play it with a backing track or metronome, and make it your own.**

Play it until you don't have to think about playing it. Take one section at a time, and don't move on until you have mastered that section.

### **CCM December Dates to Know**

- Saturday, Dec. 9th, **CCM Second Saturday Bluegrass Jam with BBU**
- Thursday, Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>, **Student Recital** at 7 pm
- Saturday, Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>, **Student Recitals** at 1:00, 2:30, 4:00 pm
- Monday – Saturday, Dec. 4 – 9, **CCM Student Progress Report Week**
- Tuesday and Wednesday, Dec. 19 & 20, Last day of Tuesday & Wednesday Group Classes
- Saturday, Dec. 23 – Jan 1, CCM closed for the holidays

**To view important dates for the New Year, [visit our calendar>>](#)**

### **Upcoming Area Performances**

**Boston Pops 2017 Holiday Pops Tour**, Friday, December 8 at 8:00 pm at The Hanover Theatre for the Performing Arts

Join the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra and Conductor Keith Lockhart for their sparkling and beloved Holiday Pops concert. Capturing the magic of the Christmas season and the winter charms of New England, the Boston Pops will perform their signature Sleigh Ride, as well as other Holiday classics, and new arrangements of seasonal favorites. They are joined by the Metropolitan Chorale, known as one of Metro Boston's premier choral ensembles. Santa Claus himself will make a guest appearance.

For tickets visit [The Hanover Theatre for the Performing Arts site](#). The Hanover Theatre is located at 2 Southbridge Street in Worcester>>

**Judy Collins at Cary Hall**, 1605 Massachusetts Avenue, Lexington, MA

Saturday, December 15 at 8 pm (opener Ari Hest)

**Judy Collins**, now 77, is as creatively vigorous as ever, writing, touring worldwide, and nurturing fresh talent. She is a modern-day Renaissance woman who is also an accomplished painter, filmmaker, record label head, musical mentor, and an in-demand keynote speaker for mental health and suicide prevention. She continues to create music of hope and healing that lights up the world and speaks to the heart.



Tickets - \$49 – 79

[To purchase tickets>>](#)