

Connecticut Songsmith

Newsletter of the Connecticut Songwriters Association



CSA is an educational, non-profit organization dedicated to improving the art and craft of original musical and lyrical composition. Serving music's artisans and craftsmen since 1979.



Sept 2009
Volume XXX
Number 9
Issue #353

Combining Arts,
Education, and
Community Outreach

1979 - 2009 : 30 Years of Combining Arts, Education, and Community Outreach

A LOOK AT THE CURRENT STATE OF MAINSTREAM AND INDIE MUSIC IN NASHVILLE

Sept 15, Glastonbury YMCA, Welles St.

Through the Eyes of Nashville

Tuesday, Sept 15, 7:15pm at the Glastonbury YMCA (directions page 2). Bill and Kay Pere just returned from four days of representing CSA at the Indiegrl Conference in Nashville, presenting workshops, participating in panels, and networking with lots of significant industry folks. The Conference brought together folks from all across the US and Europe, in all aspects of the music business including publishing, A&R, radio, record labels, singer-songwriters, ASCAP/BMI, NSAI, Artist support organizations, film/TV, and much more.

This CSA meeting will give you a full report on what's going on in all these areas, how to tap in, and what it means to you and your goals. What did a Vice-President of ASCAP say is a major new trend in songs? Why did a Nashville country artist switch totally to the Folk scene and become an international star? What new laws governing performance royalties will affect you, and how? How can you get national/international airplay? Where do you stand as an artist against a cross-section of other Indie artists?

Come get all these answers, and more! Learn what major speakers we may be getting to come to CSA! See you there, and bring a friend!

PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITY!
AUGUST 30 Glastonbury
The Annual CSA Outdoor
Showcase/Picnic

CRITIQUE SESSIONS

Following the program, as time permits, there will be a critique session. To participate in the critique session, members may bring a song on CD (or do it live), with 20 copies of typed lyric sheets, and receive constructive feedback. Critique sessions are a good forum for works in progress or rough demos. For best feedback, note on your lyric sheets the intended genre and audience for your song, and what your goals are (i.e. picked up by a commercial artist, self-produce, etc.). The programs at most CSA monthly meetings, except for pro workshops, are free to members, \$5 to non-members, applicable toward membership if you join within 30 days. Members are encouraged to bring a friend who might be interested in what CSA offers.

CSA EVENT CALENDAR

(for complete listing see www.ctsongs.com)

Sign Up Now to perform on August 30!

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| Aug 30 | CSA Summer Showcase/Picnic - JB Williams Park |
| Sep 15 | CSA Meeting - Glastonbury YMCA |
| Oct | CSA Meeting- Workshop |
| Nov 09 | CSA Meeting - Wesleyan Univ. |
| Nov 19-23 | IMC, Northampton, MA |
| Dec 5 | 13th Annual LUNCH Holiday Show - Stonington |
| Dec | TBA |

NOV 19-23: The 7th Independent Music Conference, Northampton, MA
Special CSA performance opportunity

Mar 19-21, 2010: CSA Weekend Songwriting Retreat, North Stonington, CT

Guiding Songs Along the Path from Creation to Realization to Proliferation

COMBINING ARTS, EDUCATION, AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH FOR 30 YEARS

**How to
Get There!**

Directions to Glastonbury YMCA : From I-91 going north or south: Take Exit 25 over the CT River onto Route 3 to Glastonbury. Bear right onto Route 2 towards Norwich. Take Exit 8 (Hebron Av.) off Route 2 and go right at the late onto Hebron Av. Go right at the next light which is New London Turnpike. Take first left (Welles St.) and a quick right into the Fox Run Mall. Go straight, park anywhere and look for CSA signs near People's Bank.

From I-84 east or west: Take Exit 55 onto Route 2 towards Glastonbury to Exit 8. See above. **From Norwich / New London area:** Take Route 2 to Exit 8 in Glastonbury and go right and a quick left onto Hebron Av. Go 2 lights to New London Tpke. See above

HAPPENINGS

AIRPLAY OPPORTUNITY: I produce a weekly show on which I play (exclusively) bluegrass music of New England. This is an audio show that is used by my local public access TV station as a music bed when they roll the community calendar. If any of the CSA members are writing bluegrass these days and want their material aired on Charter TV, they can send it to me. MP3 is ok Myrna Riquier myrna123@charter.net

GET A TAX DEDUCTION FOR YOUR OLD STUFF !

If you have any old music or office equipment lying around or just old "stuff" that you don't need, consider donating it to CSA and you'll get a generous tax deduction !

CSA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and all items donated to us can be deducted at their maximum fair market value. We have helped many folks get nice deductions for their old items, which certainly can be useful to us either in our regular CSA programs or our community outreach programs through LUNCH.

We can use any office equipment and supplies, old computers, any type of music and studio equipment, and any type of item that could be used for auction or raffle. We'll provide a tax receipt that will give you the best possible tax-deduction. If you have anything that you might like to donate, contact Bill Pere at bill@billpere.com

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HELP PLAN AND EXECUTE CSA SPECIAL PROJECTS

If you are willing to give some of your time and energy to helping organize and execute some special events, please let us know.

We are always in need of volunteers.

Success comes from opportunity, and
opportunity comes from involvement.

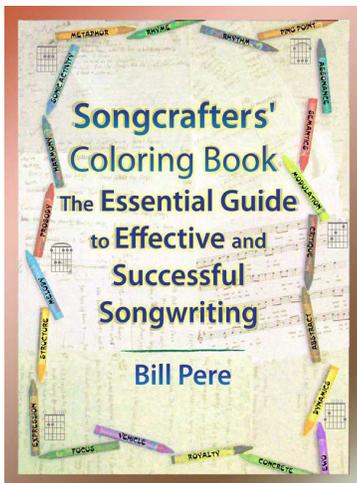
GET INVOLVED !

Contact Bill Pere, President, CSA
info@ctsongwriting.com

CSA SONGWRITING RETREAT

Take control of your creative process!
You'll see songwriting in a whole new way and experience a level of creative control you never thought possible.

In recognition of CSA's 30th Anniversary, we are presenting our first (and hopefully not last) weekend songwriting retreat. A time away from the distractions of everyday life, where all you have to think about is your music. A beautiful setting in the woods, with meals and lodging provided, and a group size limited to 12. You'll get personalized attention guaranteed to give you new ways to improve the effectiveness of your writing, and bring it to a new level.



**March 19-21, 2010, at Camp Wightman,
North Stonington, CT**

The program of Master Classes, performance and critique, will be based on the concepts of Bill Pere's internationally acclaimed songwriting book, "Songcrafters' Coloring Book", and led by Bill and Kay. This content, presented nationally at major conference events, is not available anywhere else at this affordable cost. All the details about the program, the facilities, schedule and registration are online at: <http://www.ctsongs.com/Retreat/SongwritingRetreat.htm>

The program is limited to 12 participants. The earlier you register, the lower the cost, and it guarantees your spot. The cost includes lodging for 2 nights, 4 meals, all workshops.

(Note: If you have to arrive late or leave early, we cannot make cost adjustments).

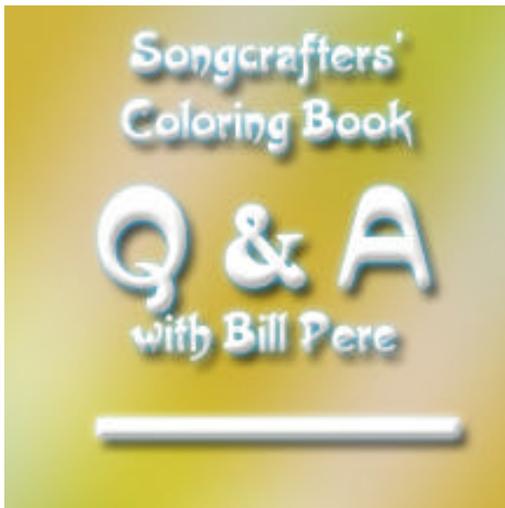
Register by:	Member rate is for active members of CSA, Songalive, Indiegrrl
(Sept 1 – Nov 31)	Member Rate = \$129 Non-member = \$142
(Dec 1 – Feb 28)	Member Rate = \$135 Non-member = \$149
(Mar 1 – Mar 15)	Member Rate = \$142 Non Member = \$155

Three ways to Register, for your maximum convenience and security:

1. PAYPAL SECURE REGISTRATION ONLINE
2. VISA/MASTERCARD SECURE REGISTRATION ONLINE
3. BY MAIL: Send check or Money Order payable to CSA, PO Box 511, Mystic CT 06355

You must include your e-mail address, phone number, street address, and member ID # (if you are a member of CSA, Indiegrrl, or Songalive).

QUESTIONS ? Check the Website for FAQ Info. If you don't find what you need, e-mail us at retreat@ctsongwriting.com



Real Questions that I Receive from Across the U.S. and Abroad.

QUESTION: I hope you can help me because this "counting" stuff is driving me crazy! I'm taking a "Basic Musicianship" course at my local college. We're already two weeks into the course and I'm falling behind because I can't get this counting business down.... With that said, how on earth does he come up with the first half note getting a (1 + 2 +) counting pattern? I understand (1,2) are for the beats but where did these + signs come from? And not only that, but what about these "e" and "a" counting patterns that he uses for sixteenth notes or as he refers to it as "divisions" and "subdivisions" In a word, HELP! -- from Ed.

ANSWER: First, don't feel bad about not quite "getting" the counting stuff -- of all the things in music, rhythm counting is the thing that the most people have the greatest difficulty with. Not to mention that it is not easily taught in groups, as different people may need to learn by different methods.

Being able to master counting first assumes that you can accurately "hear" a rhythm and understand what you are hearing. This means that you should always be able to find the downbeats (the "1" of every measure). If you start hearing any song randomly, you should be able to pick up the downbeats within a couple of measures. Make sure you can do that.

Then, as far as counting goes, you need to understand the following:: A song has a basic "pulse" that drives it -- it may be the 1-2-3-4 (a quarter-note pulse), but more likely, you'll hear the high-hat of the drums keeping an eighth-note pulse (eight pulses per measure, thus each quarter note gets two pulses) This is counted as 1 + 2+ 3+ 4+ (one and two and three and four and).

The numbers are the strong beats, the "ands" are the off-beats. Thus a pattern of half, quarter and 2 eighth-notes in a measure would be (1+2+) for the half = 4 eighth notes; (3+) for the quarter = 2 eighth notes, and then 4 (the first of the two eighth notes, and the final "and", the second of the two eighth notes).

If you have a dotted quarter note, it takes up three pulses (3 eighth notes). If a measure is a half note, dotted quarter, and eighth, the count is (1+2+) (3+4) (+).

You always have to count at the rate of the fastest pulse. If a piece of music has 16th notes, then you need 16 pulses per measure, so each quarter note is now divided into 4, and is counted as 1 e + a (You say one-ee-and-uh)

Now you have sixteen pulses in a measure -- so if your measure was a quarter, eighth, two sixteenths, and a half, you get: (1 e + a) (2 e) (+) (a) (3 e + a 4 e + a) = 16 pulses.

So it's really not so hard. You just need to look at the fastest notes in the measure, and count at that pulse rate. Just practice with some simple rhythms and then get gradually more complex as you go along. Listen to some songs you like and focus on the percussion or the fastest moving part to get the pulse rate, then count along at that rate, making sure your downbeats always match up. It helps to use your hands beating against your legs or on a table, alternating left-right-left-right, and matching them with the pulse rate.

Rhythm is the most difficult thing in music for people to master, but with practice, it can be done. It is a very important skill. If you go to my website, <http://www.billpere.com> and click the link for "Songwriter Tools" you'll have access to all my PDF articles on songwriting and music. There is an article there called "Rhythm and the Theory of Relativity" which might also help you.

I hope this helps you understand it a little better.

THE UN-COMFORT ZONE with Robert Wilson

The Main Ingredient

In 1907, during a major league baseball game, second base was stolen 13 times by the winning team. The catcher for the losing team, Branch Rickey, was unable to pick off even a single runner. That record stands to this day. It also spelled the end of Rickey's career as a baseball player after just two short seasons. With nothing else to do, he went to college and law school.

Six years later, he returned to major league baseball. This time as a manager – and what a manager he turned out to be! He created the modern baseball farm system which enables major league teams to nurture and develop future stars through their minor league teams. He was the first to establish a permanent spring training facility in Florida. He changed the way statistical analysis is used in baseball by proving that *on-base percentage* is more important than *batting average*. Branch Rickey is best known, however, for breaking the color barrier by bringing African-American Jackie Robinson into the major leagues. It earned him a spot in the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Rickey offers this as his recipe for success, "Success is where preparation meets opportunity." A simple formula that reminds me of the old joke: "How do you get to Carnegie Hall?" The answer: "Practice. Practice. Practice." Obviously, you can't take advantage of an opportunity if you don't have the skills. It's a good recipe for success, but it doesn't reveal the secret main ingredient.

A well-known old song gets us little closer to the answer. Do you remember these lyrics from *High Hopes* ?

*Just what makes that little old ant
Think he'll move that rubber tree plant
Anyone knows an ant, can't
Move a rubber tree plant!*

I love that song because a stanza later we learn the ant CAN: "*Oops there goes another rubber tree plant.*" Is having "high hopes" the secret ingredient? No, but it gets us closer to it. You see, the ant succeeds because he doesn't know that he can fail. Think about some of the people you know who are successful. What is it that makes them big achievers? What traits do you associate with them?

When I ask this question of my audiences I frequently hear the following ingredients: Courage, Perseverance, Enthusiasm, Discipline, Confidence, Decisiveness, Self-reliance, Responsibility, Focus, Ambition, and Optimism. All of these are certainly traits of successful people, but which one is the overriding characteristic? Which one is the main ingredient? None of the above!

That's right – none! Yes, they are all important, but there is one ingredient that makes the cake, and that is simply your *belief* that you will succeed. It's called *Self-Efficacy*. Your belief in your ability to achieve what you seek is the biggest part of actually getting there. The best part is that self-efficacy is a trait that can be acquired at any age.

We acquire a sense self-efficacy in four ways. The first way is cumulative. With each success we achieve we add a new layer of confidence in ourselves. The second way is through observation. When we see someone similar to ourselves succeed, we realize that we can too. The third way is controlled by our attitude. A positive attitude enhances our belief in our abilities whereas a negative one destroys it. The fourth way is from the encouragement of others who believe in our ability to succeed. This is where you as an effective manager can help your people succeed. Tell them that you believe they can meet their goals and you will help them believe it too.

Robert Evans Wilson, Jr. is a motivational speaker and humorist. He works with companies that want to be more competitive and with people who want to think like innovators. For more information on Robert's programs please visit www.jumpstartyourmeeting.com.

ANNOUNCING THE CSA 2009 COMPILATIONS

CALLING ALL WRITERS

Get your songs in by October 31, 2009 to insure eligibility! (after 10/31, contact us for status)

CSA Compilation CDs have received radio airplay and are displayed at national conferences, and the digital downloads pay artist royalties.

- 1: SONGS of SOCIAL RELEVANCE** - We're continuing to collect songs that address an issue of social importance -- hunger, homelessness, the environment, substance abuse, global warming..... This is your chance to speak out and be heard. TIP: Don't just write a song that preaches -- Make your point by showing it, not telling it.
- 2: SPIRITUAL/INSPIRATIONAL SONGS** - Our 3rd collection in this very popular series. See our previous Spiritual/Inspirational collections "Share the Journey" and "Along the Road" for examples of songs that fit this category.
- 3: HOLIDAY SONGS** - One of the favorite categories -- CSA has released four great holiday collections. The holidays keep coming, and so do the songs!
- 4: GOOD OL' COUNTRY SONGS!** - Always popular, and there is no lack of good quality country songs in CSA. NOTE: Because of the many great CSA country songs, submission is not a guarantee of inclusion.

GUIDELINES

- At least one writer must be a current CSA member
- All songs must be professionally produced, up to 'radio-ready' standards.
- Social Relevance songs must address a specific topic and social issue, such as hunger, homelessness, substance abuse, the environment, global warming, etc...
- Spiritual Inspirational songs must be appropriate to the category. See examples on the previous CSA Compilations "Share the Journey" and "Along the Road".
- Songs for the Humorous/Novelty compilation must be appropriate for the theme of the collection. Songs should feature unusual topics, tongue-in-cheek lyrics designed to bring a smile to the listener, or to just present a totally whimsical idea or story.

Please specify for which CD Collection you are submitting.

- Any musical style is okay
- Submission is NOT a guarantee of acceptance. Songs will be selected based on :
 - Appropriateness to the theme
 - Song Crafting
 - Production Quality (must be professionally recorded and radio-ready)
 - Available space on the CD (if there are more acceptable submissions than can fit on the CD, those submitted earlier and those of shorter length will be given greater consideration.)
- Songs must not violate the terms of any third-party agreement (e.g. with a publisher). Unsigned songs are preferred. If a song is under contract to a publisher, a signed release from the publisher must be provided.
- Songs may not have been included on any previous CSA CD Compilation
- Submissions will not be returned.
- At CSA discretion, songs from the compilations may be made available for digital downloads, with royalties paid to the writers.

TO SUBMIT, PLEASE SEND THE FOLLOWING:

- A recording of the song on CD, suitable for duplication (put your name and contact info on the CD)
- Clearly indicate the TIME of the track, in minutes: seconds
- A lyric sheet (put your name and contact info on the lyric sheet)
- A signed release form, printed out from the CSA web site (www.ctsongs.com)
- A non-refundable one-time \$10 per song processing fee payable to CSA.
If you want your complementary copy to be mailed to you, please include \$2 for postage.
(there are no additional costs, whether a song is accepted for inclusion or not)

Send your recording, lyric sheet, release form, and \$10 (+ \$2 postage) to CSA, PO Box 511, Mystic CT 06355.

IF YOU HAVE A SONG which is not yet fully produced and you want to know if it acceptable for consideration before doing the production, you may bring it to a CSA critique session

SONG CRITIQUES Members may bring a song or lyric on cassette to the monthly meeting for critiquing by fellow members. Please bring 30-40 copies of typed lyric sheet. Out-of-State members may have their songs or lyrics critiqued by sending one submission with 40 typed copies of lyrics to: CSA, 51 Hillcrest Ave, Watertown, CT 06795. Include a double stamped return envelope. Members are encouraged to write their comments on the sheets which can provide valuable feedback to the writer(s). Comments by the group will be recorded at the end of your song (do not remove the record-protect tabs from the cassette). Please note that since critiquing is designed to give constructive feedback and suggestions for improvement, songs which are meant only to be shared for self expression (as opposed to critiqued for improvement) should not be submitted. These can be presented in song-sharing opportunities.

FREE ACCESS to CT SONGS CAFE -- The CSA online area for posting notices, getting your electronic newsletter, and other features.

Questions about CSA Programs? Need To check your Membership status? Have a news item to submit? Want to volunteer for a project? Seeking a collaborator? Change of Address? It's easy to contact CSA.

General Info: www.ctsongs.com E-mail: info@ctsongs.com

Change of Address, Newsletter, Membership, Special Projects:
 CSA membership PO Box 511 Mystic CT 06355

Phone: 860-572-9285 **Fax:** 860-572-6091

E-Mail: info@ctsongwriters.com

CSA on the Web: www.ctsongs.com

• **COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES AND NETWORKING**
 CSA provides opportunities to meet collaborators and providers of various music services. Make sure you're listed on our web site.

• **SONG SCREENING** : CSA helps its members get well-crafted songs targeted to their best potential market. Songs are screened at meetings 2-3 times a year, or by mail. Selected songs are eligible for inclusion on CSA cassette albums which are often given to industry pros. Songs submitted for screening must have been presented at a prior critique session. (exceptions on a case-by-case basis) For details, contact Wayne Gamache, 203-265-6518 in Wallingford

• **PARTICIPATION IN CSA MARKETING OUTLETS AND DISTRIBUTION** : Recordings by CSA members may be made available to retail outlets, radio stations, or Internet Distribution channels.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES: The LUNCH Program offers opportunities to be involved in the production and performance of benefit shows to address hunger and poverty in Connecticut. Contact Bill Pere, 860-572-9285 for details.

CSA REGISTRATION FORM FOR NEW MEMBERS (This form not valid for membership renewals)

NAME _____

ADDRESS: _____

E_MAIL (required for newsletter) _____

TODAY'S DATE: _____ BIRTH DATE _____

PHONE: (____) _____ OCCUPATION: _____

CHECK WHERE APPROPRIATE Songwriter Lyricist Vocalist
 Composer Musician Patron Other: _____

Members receive a free 1 year subscription to the monthly newsletter *Connecticut Songsmith*, free or discounted admission to monthly meetings and critique sessions, participation in the Song Share Sessions, Song Screening Services, eligibility for inclusion on Compilation CDs, free classified ads, and discounts on goods and services.

Membership Categories

(outside the U.S., please add \$10 to all categories)

(All memberships include free electronic Newsletter Subscription. For a paper copy by mail, add \$10 per year)

- 1 year New Membership \$40
- 2 year New Membership \$70 (save \$10)
- 3 year New Membership \$99 (save \$21)
- Full Time Student \$35/yr
- Senior Citizen \$35/yr
- Lifetime \$400 one time total
- e-Newsletter Subscription only (\$25/yr. 12 issues)

Enclosed is my check or money order to CSA for \$ _____.



Mail to:
 CSA Membership
 PO Box 511
 Mystic CT 06355

E-Mail: info@ctsongs.com

Name on Credit Card: _____

Credit Card Number : Visa Mastercard Expiration _____



Connecticut Songwriters Association
 PO Box 511., Mystic, CT 06355
 Serving Music's Artisans
 and Craftsmen Since 1979