

local spotlight

Mr. David's Drawings, Songs & Silliness

By Marichelle Rocha

Are you a parent planning your child's approaching birthday party, or a planner arranging an event for your community or school? If you are in search of an engaging performer, then consider David C. Perry, a local entertainer from Montgomery County, Pa. His performances, familiarly known as Mr. David's Drawings, Songs & Silliness, combine music, artwork, props, puppets and plenty of laughs.

David has entertained multi-generational audiences as a full-time artist, musician and comedian for more than a dozen years. He has performed for audiences at the Please Touch Museum and the Folk Festival in Philadelphia, as well as at the Hershey Museum in Hershey. Although most of his engagements are local, David's entertainment has reached the Jersey shore, Scranton and Washington, D.C.

David's achievements include founding Kids Express Productions, an organization devoted to staging intergenerational special events that celebrate children's music and art. These include sellout events at the Keswick Theatre in suburban Philadelphia. He has also been the official artist for the Summer Reading Club program of the Pennsylvania Library Association. Other successes include starring in Story Web broadcasts on Berks County TV, as well as having his songs played on various shows, such as WXPB's "Kids Corner" and "The Doctor Demento Show."

David's impressive accomplishments are a culmination of his childhood experience, his artistic and musical talent, and his lifelong appreciation of the arts. As the oldest of four children, David quickly learned that providing humorous entertainment was the best way to avoid sibling discord. During his babysitting duties, he created imaginative games, drew pictures and sang silly children's songs in order to amuse his siblings.

David's introduction to music began as a teenager when his parents gave him a guitar. He later played the guitar in his early 20s to provide musical accompaniment for his own poetry. During his shows at coffeehouses and clubs, he transformed from a writer



into a singer-songwriter. Similar to his heroes, Tom Paxton, Tom Chapin, Woody Guthrie, and Shel Silverstein, David's works appeal to people of all generations.

With the exception of a few guitar lessons, David is virtually a self-taught musician. His other musical abilities include playing the keyboard, harmonica, recorder and flute.

Design in Toronto, Canada, it was during his position as an art director for South Florida magazine that he participated in a charity event to provide caricature services. After a few such gigs, David began moonlighting as a caricaturist at community events and private functions. He later expanded his entertainment to include songs, artwork, and eventually, puppets and props.

The more he performed for children, the more he learned which entertainment style best suited different age groups. For example, younger kids are more interested in music and movement, while older kids enjoy art and verbal comedy. His star-studded guitar, rainbow colored propeller hat, and jumbo markers are signature elements of his shows. The fundamental factor in all of his performances – regardless of whether he is performing for children or adults – is his theatrically wacky sense of humor.

A wonderful characteristic of being a kids' entertainer is the "friendly competition," where the performers are mutually supportive and often refer clients to each other. David's decision to enter the entertainment field was influenced by several fellow entertainers, including Craig Taubman, Peter Moses, and David and Jenny Heitler-Klevans (the musical duo "Two of a Kind"). By working with successful individuals, he gained experience by providing enjoyment to people of all ages.

During his journey, he was fortunate to be blessed with a child himself, his daughter, Allison. She already loves to

draw, sing and act silly. When asked, "What is your most exciting achievement?" David's response is, "My amazing daughter, Allison."

What David enjoys most about his career as a kid entertainer can be summed up in one of his songs:

*Searching high and low, I have found
There's no more wonderful sound around.
There's no more wonderful sound in the world
Than the sound of happy, laughing boys
and girls.*

For anyone contemplating entering the kids' entertainment field, David recommends to always be true to yourself.

"Follow your bliss! If you do, it will constantly renew you. You'll never be more self-expressed and happy to bounce out of bed every morning. Be yourself, whoever that may be; kids can smell a phony in a heartbeat," he says.

For song samples, video clips, pictures and an up-to-date performance schedule, visit www.DavidCPerry.com.

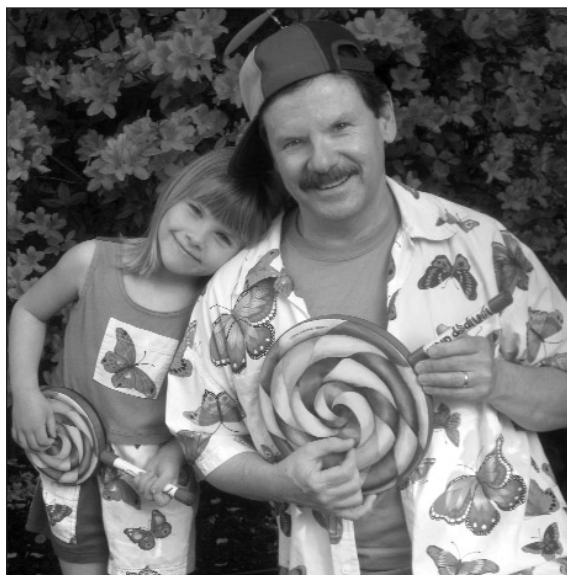
Marichelle Rocha is a freelance writer from Harleysville, Pa. For more, visit www.MarichelleRocha.com.

David Perry's Upcoming Events

- **Fri. June 5**, 6:30-8 p.m. Caricatures at the "Summer Bash" festival. St. John of the Cross, 2741 Woodland Road, Roslyn, Pa.
- **Fri. June 19**, 10-10:30 a.m. "Story Web" show live TV broadcast, BCTV (Berks County Television), Reading, Pa. and vicinity
- **Mon. June 22**, 1-2 p.m. "Be Creative @ Your Library" Summer Reading Program Concert at Lawncrest Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia, 6098 Rising Sun Ave., Philadelphia, Pa.
- **Thurs. June 25**, 7:15-8:15 p.m. "Be Creative @ Your Library" Summer Reading Program Concert at Elkins Park Free Library, 563 East Church Rd., Elkins Park, Pa.
- **Wed. July 1**, 1-2 p.m. "Be Creative @ Your Library" Summer Reading Program Concert at Aston Public Library, 3270 Concord Rd., Aston, Pa.
- **Wed. July 1**, 7-8 p.m. "Be Creative @ Your Library" Summer Reading Program Concert at Conshohocken Free Library, 301 Fayette St., Conshohocken, Pa.
- **Fri. July 10**, 10-11 a.m. "Be Creative @ Your Library" Summer Reading Program Concert at Ridley Township Public Library, 100 E. MacDade Blvd., Folsom, Pa.
- **Wed. July 15**, 7-7:45 p.m. "Be Creative @ Your Library" Summer Reading Program Concert at Abington Free Library, 1030 Old York Rd, Abington, Pa.

Mr. David and daughter, Allison (right).

Mr. David wows the crowd with rainbow bells held high (below).



However, David's first love was definitely art. He recalls the numerous occasions when, as a schoolboy, his artistic abilities were requested by fellow students and teachers.

A graduate from the Ontario College of Art &