

Part II of the MFMII Story: 1998-2008

This decade marked continued expansion of the MFMII program from serving 2,500 students in 1998 to reaching 4,000 children in 2001 in three school districts: Fremont, Newark, and Castro Valley Unified along with the addition of the Extended Day Care Centers (EDCC) in Pleasanton and Dublin. MFMII began training the EDCC teachers who then shared the music with children during their before and after school program.



Volunteer recruitment has been ongoing but what is essential is caring, dedicated, unselfish parents and community members who stepped up and took our training classes to make the musical difference in children's lives and their own because that's what music does! Our Docents are the core and heart of MFMII because they directly impact the children!

In 2005, MFMII began recognizing volunteers in a very special way by instituting the In Harmony Service Award to a docent, liaison or board member who exemplified excellence in volunteer service to the program in more than one area of volunteerism. Mamata Deshpande was the first recipient of the award which has continued to the present with a plaque engraved with the names of many outstanding people who have contributed greatly to our success.

Annual children's showcases and concerts by children's recording artists such as Charlotte Diamond and Red Grammer played a major role in our recruitment and expansion efforts as their music really touches the hearts of people and motivates them to join our mission.



Charlotte

and



Red have

become good friends of MFMII, and our docents have passed on their meaningful and fun-filled songs to generations of children who never forget them. Families returned again and again to be a part of a Diamond or Grammer audience because it was always fun to make music together with hundreds of people and it was always a treat to be able to join the artists on stage and perform with them. There's nothing like singing, clapping, signing and moving to the beat with 1,000 people at a Diamond Concert! Parents and School Board Presidents let their hair down as well holding puppets/props and moving to the beat onstage!

School Boards of Education, superintendents, teachers, businesses, and service organizations, to name a few, came to believe in our program and began to support our mission from our MFMII presentations. Past donors include the Fremont Bank Foundation, Allegro Music, Niles Rotary, Alameda County Arts Commission, and Morris Stulsaft Foundation to name a few. Since its inception, MFMII has depended on community support and that continues today.

2008 marked our 20th anniversary so MFMII celebrated in style with Red and Charlotte performing at a wonderful event held at the Veterans Hall across from Niles School in Fremont where the program began. Local dignitaries included Fremont Mayor Gus Morrison, Alameda County Art Commissioner Gail Steele, former Police Chief Bob Wasserman, and Lily Mei as when her children were at Gomes School in Fremont, they received the MFMII program so she knows about it firsthand. Today Mayor Mei serves on the MFMII Advisory Council and is a strong supporter and donor of MFMII.

Look for Part III of the MFMII story or the third decade, in our 2018 fall newsletter. Until then, may your summer be filled with the beauty of nature and song!

Carol Zilli

