

# Ansonia native brings campfire music home

By Peggy Schenk  
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Margie Warner doesn't need wood to fuel fun around a campfire when she's singing her around-the-campfire songs.

On a recent afternoon, it was the joyful songs of youngsters that sparked the notes that warmed the hearts of everyone in the community room of the Henry Carter Hull Library in Clinton.

The event was the launch of Warner's first CD, "Singin' Round the Campfire with Margie," a mix of original and

traditional campfire songs.

It was engineered and mastered by fellow musician Phil Rosenthal of American Melody Studio in Guilford.

Her appearance was the first of a series of free concerts she will be giving statewide in the next several weeks.

Warner, of Chester, will sign copies of her CD at the United Church of Chester's Christmas Fair from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday. She will donate a portion of the proceeds to the church.

And she will perform at the Derby Neck Library at 11 a.m. Dec. 29.

Her mission is to keep blazing the family fun fostered by American campfire songs.

Her songs are interactive; "I never sing alone," she said.

The perky melodies and story-telling lyrics invite participation, and it's not long before lots of "Itsy-Bitsy Spider" hands are crawling up the imaginary water spout, and "Ear-Wiggie" fingers are pinch-pinch-pinch.

A group of campfire kids, youngsters from her Chester-Essex neighborhood who also perform on the recording, led the group in hand gestures and singing. Everybody sang "Oh,

Susannah" and "Polly Wolly Doodle." They held their noses during a song about stinky old "Sock Monsters."

"We could do this for hours," she said to her enthusiastic young audience, but like all good things, her songs came to an end as she sang the "Boom-de-Adda Song" and her own "Hi Diddle Bye-Bye."

New Haven-born and Ansonia-reared, Warner has been singing and playing her guitar since she was 16.

"I was totally into the folk music scene. I was weaned on it."

"Peter, Paul and Mary, The Kingston Trio, all that stuff was excit-

ing to me," she said.

She recalled Sundays at her grandmother's house, when the family gathered and the cousins brought guitars.

"Grandma would call for requests from the kitchen," she said. Although she sings campfire songs, Warner never went to summer camp.

However, she recently discovered that an ancestor, abolitionist Frederick Gunn, is credited as the first to organize American camping in 1861.

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