

5 QUESTIONS WITH ...: She sings her way through current events

Grosse Pointe Park mom is part of parody band

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September 24, 2006

Sara Fischer Hodges' days with a rock band called the Fun Club were beginning to wind down in the early '90s as she settled into a career as a case manager in U.S. District Court.

The Grosse Pointe Park resident figured her singing days -- at least in front of an audience -- might soon be silenced by the demands of life.

But the opportunity to work her pipes in public surfaced unexpectedly when a singing group, all of them lawyers by day, invited her to join them for a performance at a dinner honoring federal judges.

"They knew I was a singer, and they asked me to sing. ... Later when they got back to me, they handed me a script. ... I almost said, 'I don't want to do it,' but I ended up loving it," Fischer Hodges, now 46, recalled about her introduction to the singing and acting group that she's been with for 14 years.



Sara Fischer Hodges

The group called itself A (Habeas) Chorus Line, and it was invited to perform at the judges' dinner the following year. That led to other private bookings and eventually a public show.

This year's public show, called "State of Panic," will be at 7:30 p.m. Saturday at Berkley High School.

Musical selections include parodies of the Commodores' "Brick House," performed as "Please Buy My Brick House," a lament on the sluggish housing market, and a bit called "Pumping That Gas" that borrows from the Rolling Stones' "Jumpin' Jack Flash" and lets the audience share in the pain -- in a funny way -- of high gas prices.

Of the group's nine members, only Fischer Hodges is not an attorney. After taking early retirement in 2004, she primarily raises her 5-year-old son, Jack, with husband Jeff.

QUESTION: What is it about singing and performing?

ANSWER: Anybody who has it inside of them to sing knows. Anybody who loves to perform understands it. So once you have the opportunity to perform, you take it.

Q: At the risk of offending other mothers, are you the exception when it comes to being on top of

news and current events?

A: Honestly, that's Justin Klimko (another group member). I'm happy I'm in this group because it keeps me up on things. But at times he's written a song, and I'm like, I don't know what this is about. My husband is a big CNN freak, thank God.

Q: You do all sorts of performances, but do you prefer shows that illuminate politics and current events?

A: I love it all. But it's fun to do the current events because people love it. They're astounded by it. It's fun to perform songs that are in the public consciousness. Sometimes it's fun to laugh at what's going on in the world, to laugh at the things we're all talking about and frustrated about.

Q: Where do you perform?

A: We've done everything. You name it, from an 80th birthday party to synagogues. We've gone to Texas, Kentucky, Ohio.

Q: You mentioned that you don't like to audition, and if not for this group you probably would not perform, but do you have a dream role?

A: In a perfect world, it be would be to do something like "Chicago," but I'd have to do a lot of exercising and take a lot of dance lessons.

*For tickets to the show, to learn more about the group, to book it or to buy a CD, go to www.habeaschorus.com or call 313-438-2425. **KIM NORTH SHINE** can be reached at 313-223-4557 or at kshine@freepress.com.*

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