

For Immediate Release



**LOCAL MUSICIANS BAND TOGETHER
TO RAISE MONEY AND AWARENESS
FOR CHILDREN IN NEED**

*A benefit for Monroe County Children
and Youth Christmas Fund*

Pocono Mountains, PA) November 23, 2008 – The Wishmakers, a newly formed charity organization led by local business owners, artists and musicians Kristi Bronico, Jill Hughes, Bryan Schmidt, and Gary Wehrkamp, has recently produced and recorded an original Christmas song about the Pocono Mountain area in an effort to raise money for the Monroe County Children and Youth Services Christmas Fund. Many talented musicians and artists of

the Pocono Mountain area have collaborated on “CHRISTMASTIME IN THE POCONOS”, a song about the joy, togetherness and spirit of giving that Christmastime brings to the Pocono Mountains.

"It is with this spirit of giving that we hope to bring together as many local musicians, businesses, and members of the media to maximize our efforts and give as much as we can to the children this holiday season," says Kristi Bronico.

The project includes the production and CD duplication of the original song, which will be available the day after Thanksgiving, just in time for the holidays. The limited edition CD will be available throughout the northeast region of Pennsylvania at these and other fine retailers: Main Street Jukebox, Old Mill Pub, James Diamond Jewelry, Sarah Street Bar & Grille, KenBro Embroidery, Callie's Kitchen, Precision Music, The Music Store, New Horizon Music Studio, and Pocono Candle. You can download a digital version of the song, along with the CD artwork, for a donation of \$10 or more from the organization's website, www.thewishmakers.org.

The musicians involved in this charity project collectively have released hundreds of albums. Some of the most notable musicians involved in the project are Gary Wehrkamp, Mark Radice, Jim Roberti, Len Mooney, MJ Law, Bryan Schmidt and Trisha O'Keefe.

Gary Wehrkamp, producer and co-writer of “Christmastime in the Poconos” is a self-taught multi-instrumentalist, composer, producer, and teacher of music. He began performing as a drummer and vocalist at the age of ten, and moved on to guitar, piano and bass guitar throughout his teens. He took these skills with him when he joined the progressive rock band Shadow Gallery in 1992, which has released six albums. Gary has appeared on more than fifty other albums along the way, working with international artists James LaBrie (Dream Theater), Arjen Lucassen (Ayreon), and local songstress Terri Mallett. He has also been on numerous tribute albums for Rush, Yes, Pink Floyd, and Genesis. He has performed steadily throughout Pennsylvania, New York City and the east coast for the past ten years with cover bands The Maybabies and The Jim Roberti Trio. When he is not working in his new recording facility, New Horizon Music Studios, or teaching students he is spending time with his son Gabriel and wife Ginger.

Mark Radice is most known for his work with Sesame Street, composing songs for the character Elmo. He has also collaborated with artists Michael Bolton, Eddie Money, Dave Edmunds, Barbara Streisand, Barry Manilow, Johnny Mathis, Helix, Cheap Trick, Aldo Nova, Deodato, Phyllis Hyman, Jetboy, Box of Frogs, Gene Simmons, Shark Island, Jennifer Rush, The

Muppets, Disney's Jungle Book and many more. 112 songs written by Mark were "covered". In 1985, Cheap Trick released the album "Standing on the Edge", which features 8 songs co-written with Mark, including the Top 40 hit "Tonight it's You". He toured with Aerosmith and Cheap Trick as their keyboardist in the 70s.

Jim Roberti throughout the past fifteen years has evolved into a well-rounded, independent musician with a hectic gigging schedule averaging 250 shows per year and four self-financed and produced CDs. He is the singer for the Pocono-area cover bands The Maybabies and The Jim Roberti Trio.

Len Mooney is the main songwriter and keyboardist/organist for the group Roamin' Gabriels. He has shared the stage with such legends such as Rick Danko (of the Band), and Bernie Worrell (P.Funk, WOO Warriors), both Rock 'n Roll Hall of Famers. On the jazz front, he has performed with George Young (Saturday Night Live Band) and jazz pianist John Coates, Jr. In the world of pop, he has toured with RCA recording artists From Good Homes.

MJ Law is the drummer for the national touring act Solution AD. He also has won a Sports Emmy Award for Outstanding Live Event Audio/Sound for his work on "The Great Outdoor Games" for ESPN.

Bryan Schmidt, co-writer of "Christimastime in the Pcoonos", got a relatively late start on his musical career, but didn't waste much time once he started. Not long after picking up the guitar while attending law school in 1998 he began performing live with acoustic acts like Hippie and The Fatman (with Liquid Sunshine guitarist Ed Mason), and Schmidtwood Moe. A few years later he turned to his true musical passion, the piano. In 2003 Bryan moved from his spot at the soundboard with the Grateful Dead inspired, Pocono-based, Liquid Sunshine, to his current spot as the band's lead vocalist and keyboard player. These days Bryan can also be found playing around the area with Ryan's Revenge, a Pocnoo-based cover band.

Trisha O'Keefe independently released her first CD "All The Honest Liars" at the early age of 17. O'Keefe was soon writing source music for the ABC Daytime Drama "All My Children", a show that airs for an international audience of millions. She became a regionally-touring artist by 19, and was a guest vocalist on her first national commercial, the Coke Zero campaign "ChillTop" with artist G Love, at the age of 20. At 21, she made her national television debut, performing on the talk show Soap Talk, and fielding an interview from hosts Lisa Rinna and Ty Treadway. At 22, Trisha released her fourth CD, titled "Star Burns Brightest", on May 1st, 2007. She also was the guest vocalist on two prog rock albums, Amaran's Plight's "Voice in the Light" (also with **Gary Wehrkamp**), and Suspyre's "When Time Fades...".

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