



March 25, 2007

# Crowd enjoys 'Monkey'-ing with performer

## Children invited to join the show

By **Christine Pizzuti**  
Poughkeepsie Journal

Any 4-year-old who's been around the Lego blocks knows his "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes." But you could also see it on his eyes, ears, mouth and on his nose.

Little Jack Dorney had a great time dancing to the song when Meredith LeVande performed in the James and Betty Hall Theater at Dutchess Community College Saturday.

"We went on stage this time," Dorney said, a smile stretching from ear to ear.

His hands were wiggling at his sides and his mom, Kathy, had tied the string from his new balloon to the zipper on the front of his jacket.

"They were doing Monkey Monkey Music," the St. Francis Preschool student said.

Monkey Monkey Music, LeVande's live children's music program, teaches children their colors, body parts and more. Her natural skills of children's communication and her catchy tunes made it a great morning for the children and their parents.

"One of the reasons why my music works and the personality works, is because I try to stay real," LeVande said. "It's more about keeping it fun and really organic."

Unlike many children's performers, LeVande wears no costume, and has a separate singer/songwriting career. She performed a more adult set for college students the day before.

Saturday's performance was part of the college's Family Festival series, which hosts a variety of programs designed for

### On the Web

Listen to samples and buy Monkey Monkey Music online at [www.monkeymonkeymusic.com](http://www.monkeymonkeymusic.com)

'It's educational. The programs get them to think about things they don't always think about.'

**Matt Hanlon**

assistant director  
of student activities,  
Dutchess Community College

children ages 2-10. One Saturday a month, a different performer comes, hopefully one who fits in with the month's theme. In this case, it's Women's History Month, which can be a little difficult to convey to this particular age group. However, LeVande said she is "active" in women's studies.

"It's educational," said Matt Hanlon, assistant director of student activities. "The programs get them to think about things they don't always think about."

Kathy Dorney said she and Jack have been to the Family Festivals a number of times.

"I work at the college, so we come here pretty frequently," she said. "They teach at a level that preschool age can understand."

She mentioned the other cultural activities offered, like Black History Month's African dancers and Hispanic Heritage Month's puppet show, "The Day it Snowed Tortillas."

Reach **Christine Pizzuti** at  
[cpizzuti@poughkeepsiejournal.com](mailto:cpizzuti@poughkeepsiejournal.com) or  
845-437-4800.