



An Award-Winning Audiomagazine for Children
Storytelling and music for children ages 3 to 7

"A Moveable Feast for the Wee Literati"

Engaging Stories 🎵 Fun Poetry 🎵 Lively Music

Welcome to Shoofly: An Audiomagazine for Children (ages 3 to 7)

Shoofly is a unique audio publication dedicated to the celebration of contemporary children's poetry and literature. Described by one critic as "a moveable feast for the wee literati," Shoofly features original and traditional stories, poems, and songs for children ages 3 to 7. Each exciting issue boasts an eclectic mix of emerging authors, recording artists, and actors.

Shoofly is an independent "small press" publication and is completely free of advertising. Shoofly's contributing writers have come from across the U.S. Some are experienced, award-winning children's authors; others are published here for the first time. Shoofly welcomes the opportunity to introduce talented new writers and musicians, who are not yet well-known, to a wider audience. Shoofly also has collaborated with more established, nationally known children's entertainers, such as singer/songwriters Red Grammer, Anna Moo, and Lui Collins, as well as nationally acclaimed storyteller Jim Weiss. Many of the musicians and actors featured on Shoofly come from the very artistic Carrboro/Chapel Hill community—an area teeming with talented writers, musicians, and actors. Professional actors draw from their depths of talent and experience as they bring Shoofly's literature to life, whereas student actors from Duke and UNC give the sound a freshness and enthusiasm that especially appeals to kids.

Shoofly stands up to repeated listening. One reviewer writes that Shoofly "is a good investment for parent sanity." Parents' Choice gives Shoofly its Silver Honor, citing its "high entertainment, educational and production values." Other awards include an EdPress Distinguished Achievement Award, and a National Parenting Publications Award (NAPPA). Shoofly gets rave reviews in a variety of publications including School Library Journal, Publishers Weekly, New Age Magazine, Learning Magazine, The Joyful Child Journal, as well as parenting papers from Seattle to Boston.

Shoofly may be purchased by subscription (4 Shoofly issues + 1 music collection) by either mail (\$39.95 + s/h) or mp3 (\$29.95) download. A new issue will arrive approximately every 10 weeks (February, April, June, September, November). The 2008 subscription starts with vol. 1, no. 1 and will run consecutively thereafter. Shoofly may also be purchased as individual issues. Each of the 18 reissued Shoofly issues (read more Journey Back) offers approximately an hour's worth of stories, poems, and songs. Shoofly CDs are priced at \$12.95 each (or discounted at \$8.00 for a download version). The Shoofly website (www.shooflyaudio.com) and print catalog also include guest artist CDs and other children's entertainers that we feel represent the very best in children's recordings. These CDs are typically \$14.95.

Shoofly: An Audiomagazine for Children — Welcome to Shoofly



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Getting Back on Track: Editors of Children's Audio Series Keep Vision Alive

Whether wandering to far-off places or celebrating courageous deeds, the award-winning Shoofly series — an audio treasury of storytelling, poetry, and music for children ages 3 to 7 — has led young children to the wonder and magic of a well-told tale. Now after a 7 year hiatus, the Carrboro-based audio series is back in business — although Shoofly's return has been anything but typical.

In 1994 husband and wife team, Jack Nestor and Arlene Furman, published their first issue of Shoofly: An Audiomagazine for Children. "We wanted to create a publication to highlight and encourage new stories, music, and poetry for kids," said Furman. "And we thought the best way to do that was through audio — to present an eclectic mix, and make it really appealing to young children. They published 4 issues of the audiomagazine a year, offering subscriptions or single-issue sales. Issue after issue their subscription sales grew, with subscribers as far away as Australia.

In the spring of 1999, however, their personal lives were changed forever. Arlene, who was 9 months pregnant with their third child, suffered a devastating illness. After two months on a ventilator and in a coma, Arlene would awaken, frail and weakened, to discover that she had lost her baby and that she was permanently blind. With the loss of their baby and the long road from grief to recovery ahead of them, the couple redirected their focus onto Arlene's new situation and suspended the production and operation of Shoofly.

"It was an incredibly sad time for us," said Furman. "But I was determined to figure out my way in the dark, and I really wanted my two children, Harry and Hayley, to see their mother successfully meet the challenges of my vision loss." One of the things that would bring her back to Shoofly over the next several years were the remarkably kind letters she received from subscribers and friends of Shoofly. "At least once a month we would get a call or letter from someone asking about Shoofly," Nestor said.

"I really started to think about what our friend the storyteller Joel ben Izzy often claims: 'Curses can be blessings,' and being blind really renewed my attention to the spoken word, to music and to sound — and it just suddenly seemed like the right time to bring Shoofly back," said Furman.

In the winter of 2005, the couple began a serious effort to reinvigorate their labor of love. The complete Shoofly library, over 18 hours of recordings, which were originally published on cassette, have been re-mastered and reissued on CDs and MP3 downloads. Furman and Nestor also created a new print catalog, including the recording projects of

Shoofly: An Audiomagazine for Children — Getting Back on Track

guest artists, storytellers and musicians, who had appeared on Shoofly. Their website (shooflyaudio.com) features issues of their award-winning Shoofly series, as well as these outstanding children's storytelling and recording artists. But Furman and Nestor are especially excited about the recent release of volume 5, number 3 (read more Shoofly Serves Up "One Fishball").

And true to their mission to promote quality children's entertainment and independent artists, the couple hopes to release two more new issues by the latter part of 2008.

"It's important to us that Shoofly retains its vitality by continuing to publish new poems and stories for kids," said Nestor.

Arlene Furman agreed: "We always want Shoofly to be a place where kids and parents can hear something different, something surprising."

Although she has met the challenges of her eyesight loss remarkably well, Arlene was also diagnosed and treated for breast cancer in 2006, and is currently doing quite well.

"I just try to approach these challenges as I have everything else," Furman says. "You have to simply focus on all the positive elements of your life, enjoy each moment, and try to keep your sense of humor."

Arlene may have lost her sight, but together this couple, this family, has a vision for the future.



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What the Critics Say About Shoofly

Awards:

2008 iParenting Media Award

2008 Seal of Excellence Creative Child Magazine Award

Parents' Choice Silver Honor Award, 1998, 1996

EdPress Distinguished Achievement Award, 1996

National Parenting Publications Award (NAPPA), 1998

"Shoofly sets the standards to which all storytelling recordings should be held. A collection of classic as well as original songs, fables, tales, and poems written by some of the very best children's writers, poets, and performers."

Big Apple Parents' Paper

"The best feature of listening to Shoofly is what it does for children's poetry. The readings are so thrilling and vivid that kids, who never cared for it when mom or dad read, can feel the magic of the poetic form."

Boston Parents' Paper

"Each issue of Shoofly presents a new blending of poetry, music and storytelling. I've listened to every installment of this audiomagazine, and without fail the material, the performances, and the sound engineering have been first-rate... My daughters have worn out these tapes."

Philip van Vleck, The Spectator

"A good investment for parent sanity is a subscription to Shoofly."

San Diego Parent Press

"There's something for everyone here... and it's delivered with an enthusiasm that's infectious."

Publisher's Weekly

"A delightful feast for young ears."

Eastside Parent, Seattle

"From catchy songs to entertaining stories and age-appropriate poetry, this magazine keeps youngsters' interest."

Booklist

Shoofly: An Audiomagazine for Children — What the Critics Say About Shoofly

"Shoofly fulfills its objective of providing children with imagery, music, and fun..."

School Library Journal

"It's clear that these recordings can bear repeated listenings... Sure to sustain the interest of both driver and offspring over a long car ride."

New Age Journal

"I think this is a great idea."

Susie Wilde, WUNC Radio

"In the four years since the magazine started, Shoofly has developed an astute sense of its audience and what delights young listeners."

R.F.W., AudioFile

"Yet it's the voices and sounds that hold one's attention and help paint an image. Shoofly does a great job at that. There is a nice variety of strong voices full of emotions and varying pitches. And the sounds are great, giving clear images."

Sue Ontiveros, Chicago Sun-Times

"What fun Shoofly is! Stories, songs, poems: sad and lonesome, funny and gay. It's as much fun for the ear as Shoofly pie is for the taste buds."

Fred Chappell, Poet Laureate of North Carolina

"Part of the success of these recordings lies in their diversity. A silly story may be followed by a soothing poem or comforting music. Lively melodies give way to serene poetic lyrics. The constant shift in format keeps the interest level high and short attention spans engaged."

Myla Barhardt, Greensboro News & Record



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April 14, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SHOOFLY SERVES UP "ONE FISHBALL"

CARRBORO, NC: Sure, we're all familiar with the dubious classic ballad "One Meatball," but Shoofly, the award-winning audiomagazine for children ages 3 to 7, presents the only known recorded version of its musical antecedent, the infamous "One Fishball" (or simply, "Fishball," as we like to call it). Chris Frank (a member of the Red Clay Ramblers band since 1987, and Broadway and film veteran) uncovers this musical artifact, dusts it off, and serves up a strangely appetizing dish that will have all the kids dancing around the dinner table (more on Chris below).

Literary highlights of this issue include Rita Murphy's "The Boondocks," a mystical swamp yarn featuring Mango Shane, a boy adventurer renowned for his pluck, his ingenuity, and his "amazing red hair." Alethea Eason's "Turtle Soup" is the beautiful tale of a young girl's struggle to save a sea turtle from becoming the main course of her village's upcoming feast. Ruth Adams' "Crow Brings the Sun" is an illuminating retelling of a Native American legend; and Katherine Mellor's "Buster's Great Flight" introduces us to a calf with lofty aspirations. This issue is bursting with fun new poems as well, including Lisa Bast's "Chiggetty, Whoosh," a rollercoaster ride that will take your breath away.

And yes, Shoofly is very proud to welcome our featured musical guest and fellow Carrborean, Chris Frank. Chris performs four great songs on this recording, including a toe-tappin' "Polly Wolly Doodle" and the aforementioned, destined hit single, "Fishball." Chris is joined by long-time musical cohorts vocalist Lynn Davis and Jack Herrick on bass, trumpet and pennywhistle. Lynn is a former member of the Shady Grove Band; Jack is a composer and multi-instrumentalist with the Red Clay Ramblers. Chris, Lynn, and Jack have also teamed up to record an all-new Shoofly theme song.

Shoofly is a unique audio publication. This literary adventure for kids is available by subscription (CDs by traditional mail or via MP3 download). Shoofly is the only children's audiomagazine to weave together original and traditional stories, poems, and songs. Children love to get mail — and they're thrilled when Shoofly arrives five times a year with their names on it! Subscriptions are \$39.95 for CDs (plus \$5.00 s/h) or \$29.95 for downloads for 5 issues. Single issues are available for \$12.95 for CDs or \$8.00 for downloads.

Shoofly: An Audiomagazine for Children — Press Release April 2008

***Shoofly* Links with AudibleKids**

Shoofly is excited to announce its new affiliation with AudibleKids (audiblekids.com), a creation of Audible, Inc., the leading online provider of digital spoken word audio content on the internet. AudibleKids is the first-of-its-kind destination where families can find and purchase the highest-quality children's audiobooks, and Shoofly is proud to be one of the publishers invited to participate. Shoofly's relationship with AudibleKids now allows Shoofly recordings to be available through Apple's iTunes Store as well.

For more information or review copies, call Jack Nestor at (919) 968-7846; email: jack@shooflyaudio.com.

Creative Director: Jim Russell, Jim Russell Productions, Chapel Hill, NC

Shoofly: An Audiomagazine for Children, Vol. 5, No. 3

Length: 62 minutes

ISBN: 978-1-887066-56-3

CD, \$12.95; MP3 download, \$8.00

To View Our Online Press Kit Go to

www.shooflyaudio.com/shoofly_presskit/presshome.htm (Photos are available at "About Shoofly")

Visit our website at www.shooflyaudio.com



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Press Articles

Travels With Books By Mary Quattlebaum
Washington Parent August 2008
washingtonparent.com/articles/0808/books.php

See the world with these traveling companions.

babies/toddlers

If Animals Kissed Good Night
by Ann Whitford Paul
illustrated by David Walker
Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 2008, \$16.95

Travel the animal kingdom before bedtime with this whimsical poem. Being tucked in at night, a little girl imagines critter parents embracing their little ones, from the slow-kissing sloths to the lip-smacking monkeys to the “mud-happy” hippos. The cheery pictures of sweet-faced animals (even Mama Python looks cuddly) and soothing rhythm will ease the transition to Dreamland for even the liveliest young night owls.

ages 3 – 6

Come and Play: Children of Our World Having Fun
edited by Ayana Lowe
photographs by Magnum Photos Agency
Bloomsbury, 2008, \$16.95

During 2006-07, students at Hunter College Elementary School in New York City wrote poetic responses to photographs of kids from around the world. These 27 “riffs” delightfully capture the spirit of the photos, from the splash-silly exuberance of youngsters at a North Korean beach to the contemplative Alaskan grandfather and preschooler playing with string. The poems and photos (taken over the last 50 years by luminaries, such as the French Henri Cartier-Bresson, the Italian Ferdinando Scianna and the British Ian Berry) work off one another so well that reading a poem calls for a careful look at the photo, which then enhances a second reading. All this, in turn, may inspire young readers to create their own poems and photos. The book’s back matter includes such visual treasures as a location map for each image and group photos of young poets and adult photographers – all looking impish no matter their age.

Let's Go!
by Lizann Flatt
illustrated by Scot Ritchie
Maple Tree Press, 2007, \$16.95

Perfect for curious early readers, this history of North American transportation moves from an Ice Age trek to a Native American canoe ride to a long haul over new trails in a covered wagon. Then come trains, automobiles, airplanes, jets “chalk[ing] the sky with their shattering roars” and even rockets. Each double-page spread features brief text and bright illustrations. The text itself is informative, playful and far from plodding. Here's the description of that pioneer staple, the horse: “Horses pulled carts, pulled carriages, coaches, and wagons that waded for weeks through flat, grassy seas.” Back matter includes additional intriguing facts about “safety bicycles,” “horseless carriages” and “splashdown” space shuttles.

Shoofly, an Audio Magazine for Children
edited and produced by Arlene Furman and Jack Nestor
CD \$12; MP3 download \$8

These songs, stories and poems will enliven any road trip, be it cross country or just down the street. Established in 1993, this award-winning literary effort for kids comes out five times a year (<http://www.shooflyaudio.com> for subscription information). The summer issue (volume 5, number 3) brims with 62 minutes of fun, from the musical “Fishball” to the folkloric “Crow Brings the Sun” to the suspenseful “The Boondocks.” The different moods, sound effects, instruments and voices create an intriguing mix that stands up well to repeat listening. The audio's high quality and creative interpretations will also appeal to adults tired of the usual preschool sing-song stuff. If music soothes the savage beast, according to a 17th - century poem, then Shoofly will calm even the crankiest car-seated tot.

Ocean Wide, Ocean Deep
by Susan Lendroth
illustrated by Raul Allen
Tricycle Press, 2008, \$15.99

In a verse story part lullaby, part prayer, a 19th-century New England girl beseeches the ocean to be gentle with her seafaring father. The book chronicles the many seasons of the man's absence and the growth of the narrator's brother from cradle-bound babe to chattering toddler. Especially poignant are the girl's private reflections – her whispered message to a seashell, her imaginings of the Chinese shops where her father finds jade, teak, willow ware and silks. The delicate pencil-and-watercolor art reveals details of the life and landscape of old Cape Cod and beautifully captures the family's joy at the father's return. Though set in the past, this book will speak to contemporary children who suffer the absence of a parent due to work, divorce or war.

ages 7 – 11

Science on the Loose

by Helaine Becker

illustrated by Claudia Davila

Maple Tree Press, 2008, \$10.95 pbk.

Kids can explore the universe or their own noses through this compendium of science activities. Playful titles – “Naval Gazing,” “Into the Black Hole,” “Silly States of Matter” – introduce double-page spreads chock-full of colorful cartoons, fun facts and easy-to-do experiments. The book’s emphasis on readily available materials and step-by-step instructions empower youngsters to try these activities on their own. There’s no need for hovering parents, no concerns about dangerous substances. Just leave this book lying around and see what happens when your children pick it up. They may soon be releasing the neutron stars in their ordinary pencils or making ghosts appear through an optical illusion.

The Mix-It-Up Cookbook

by American Girl staff

illustrated by Tracy McGuinness

American Girl/Pleasant Company, 2003, \$14.95

Looking for culinary adventure? Cut your kids loose in the kitchen with this cookbook. Great for boys and girls, these easy-to-follow recipes feature kid-friendly fare, such as pizza, spaghetti marinara, pancakes, salads and cookies. An introduction to kitchen safety, cooking terms and utensils segues nicely into 10 sections on favorite simple-to-prepare foods, including eggs, quick breads and noodles. Young chefs eager to try something new will welcome the frequent mix-in tips and suggestions for varying a basic recipe. Space for notes and recipe ratings, bright stylized illustrations and full-color photos offer delectable eye candy.

ages 12 and up

Princess Ben

by Catherine Gilbert Murdock

Houghton Mifflin, 2008, \$16

When her royal parents go missing, Princess Benevolence casts a suspicious eye on a neighboring kingdom. Surely the king and his insufferable son, Florian, are behind the couple’s disappearance. The strong-willed princess, nicknamed “Ben,” sets out to punish them. But nothing is as it seems in this witty fairy tale. Ben’s magic mirror proves uncooperative, the enemy king adores gardening and Florian keeps interrupting her dreams in a most confusing way. After the requisite ball, the princess fumes over Florian’s rudeness until confronted with yet another fairy tale trope – a ferocious dragon. Only in vanquishing the beast does Ben discover the truth. Does this lead to “happily ever after”? As Ben herself puts it, “the girl ... dreaming her troubles will end ere she departs the altar is well advised to seek at once a rational woman to set her straight.” A truly

unexpected princess, forthright Ben fits this humorous, action-packed tale as the glass slipper once fit Cinderella's dainty foot.

Mary Quattlebaum is a mother and the author, most recently, of *Sparks Fly High* (colonial American folktale) and *Jackson Jones and the Curse of the Outlaw Rose* (middle-grade novel). You can contact her at www.maryquattlebaum.com, which has information on her 15 award-winning children's books and presentations at schools and conferences.

Reader Views **July 11, 2008**

Shoofly Volume 5, Number 3 (CD) (An Audio Magazine for Children)
"Shoofly" is an audiomagazine geared for young children age three to seven. This particular CD, "Volume 5, Number 3," has 19 different selections including poetry, songs, and stories. Among some of the selections are "Turtle Soup" which tells the story of a little girl's attempt to save a turtle from being eaten at a feast and "Buster's Great Flight" which is a story about a calf who can fly. The CD also includes songs, four of which are performed by musical guest Chris Frank who is a member of the Red Clay Ramblers including "Polly Wolly Doodle" and "The Fox."

Cayden: "I liked the rollercoaster one! 'Chiggetty, Whoosh'! We just went on a rollercoaster at the carnival!"

Max: "Whoosh! Whoosh!"

Cayden: "I like the story with the kid with red hair and the funny name in the swamp. The one where they say that the gator would get him!" (Mango Shane, "The Boondocks")

Cayden: "My favorite song is the 'Fishball' one because it is so funny!!" As he sings, "One fishball! One fishball!"

Max: "Fishball!"

Cayden: "I like the 'Polly Wolly Doodle' song too! That was fun to sing!"

Max: Sings "Polly Wolly"

Parent's comments:

"Shoofly" is a very unique offering for young children. Before this review I had never heard of this audiomagazine. According to the literature that I received with the CD, the first issue was published in 1994. Five years later however, Arlene suffered a severe health setback which put the publication on the backburner. Seven years later the magazine was started back up again.

Edited/produced by Arlene Furman & Jack Nestor

Shoofly, Inc. (2008)

ISBN 9781887066563

Reviewed by Cayden (age 4) and Max (age 2) Aures and Mom for Reader Views (6/08)

**Noirbaby's Best Gift Picks:
Useful and Fun Gifts for the Kids and You
noirbaby.com volume 2, issue 13 December 2007**

It's that time of year where shops are crowded and families are looking for useful gifts to please discriminating tastes. At Noirbaby, it's a tradition to provide ideas for useful Holiday gifts that won't break the bank. With 2007 being the year in which toys recalls were the norm instead of the exception, we made every effort to find products that are not only safe, but as close to natural as they come! Our list offers gifts you might not have thought of and that you might not even have known existed. For your convenience, we've arranged them in order from the least to the most expensive items. May our suggestions make your Holiday season more fun and just a little easier.

Over the river and through the woods to Grandma's house we go! Looking for a way to keep your kids engaged this holiday season and beyond? Look no further. Shoofly is a unique children's audio treasury, dedicated to the celebration of language, storytelling, and literature... for children ages 3 to 7. Described by one critic as a "moveable feast for the wee literati," Shoofly presents an eclectic mix of poetry, stories, and songs on each exciting CD issue. Parents' Choice Award Winner! Discover tomorrow's children's classics today. (CDs, \$12.95; MP3 downloads, \$8.00; Toll-free 1-888-929-9401, www.shooflyaudio.com).

**Onechicmama.com
October 23, 2007**

Shoofly...Don't Bother Me

We all know the rhyme that's a childhood favorite, but I have only just recently gotten to know the music, stories and poetry that comes from Shoofly Audio. The husband and wife team based in the lovely town of Carrboro ("Paris of the Piedmont"), North Carolina, who are the creators of Shoofly have come up with a wonderful collection of CD's that kids (and grown-ups) will enjoy for years to come.

Shoofly Audio came about back in the early 90's, when founders Jack and Arlene found themselves on a road trip with their son, Harry. While flipping about the radio dial they came across a poetry reading and all were captivated, being drawn into the poets' voice

Shoofly: An Audiomagazine for Children Press Kit — Press Articles

and images. Jack and Arlene knew this was the start of something big for them when they couldn't stop talking about sharing that experience with other children. Shoofly was born. But what began as a series of audiomagazines sent to subscribers all over the world has taken several turns and is now a labor of love released for all to hear.

Shoofly Audio CD's are chock full of songs, stories and poetry aimed at children, but that adults won't mind listening to. My kids have been listening to the CD's at home, and both love them. My son likes to listen to Shoofly CD's at lunchtime. He's only 1, so a pleasant distraction and something to get creative with to get food in his mouth is welcome. My daughter has listened to Shoofly during playdates and while doing artwork. It's been a nice backdrop, giving them something to pay attention to when they wanted, but without interrupting their play when they wanted to focus on something else.

**The News & Observer, The (Raleigh, NC)
February 13, 2007**

Dream revived

After a life-changing illness, a couple find their way back

Author: Kelly Starling Lyons, Correspondent

CARRBORO - Arlene Furman headed down Weaver Street with a sure stride. With her cane outstretched and the sun warming her face, she gracefully made her way down the sidewalk. Her husband, Jack Nestor, walked by her side. Blind for nearly eight years, she has found a rhythm to her walk and her life. But it has been a journey to get to this place. In 1999, the couple were in a groove. They ran a successful children's audiomagazine called Shoofly. They had a beautiful son and daughter and another baby boy on the way.

Then, two weeks before Furman's April due date, she started feeling sick. At first, they wrote off her cough as a cold. Days later, when her symptoms worsened, it was too late. Furman went from slurring her words at home to lying comatose in a hospital bed.

Just like that, life changed from the wonderfully routine to the unimaginable.

"The day just exploded," Nestor says.

It was a still-mysterious trial that tested their strength -- as individuals and as a couple. They lost Shoofly, and they lost the world they had known.

But today, Furman and Nestor have rebuilt their lives, reclaiming their business and with that, an important part of themselves.

"We knew we'd be back," she says.

Still, back in the midst of their ordeal, it was hard to think about the future. A doctor had told Furman she probably just had the flu. As her coughs became more violent and her breathing more labored, she knew it was much more.

"I felt like someone was standing on my chest," she says.

Furman had another doctor's appointment the next morning so she climbed into bed to rest. That's where Nestor found her when he came home from a Shoofly recording session. Things declined quickly. After a shower, Arlene started talking incoherently. Nestor called 911. The ER team arrived and took her blood pressure. Nestor saw shock in their eyes.

"That was the last time I saw her conscious," he says.

An ambulance rushed Furman to the hospital.

A team of doctors worked on Furman. Her kidneys failed. Her liver was worsening. She had dangerously low blood pressure. Her lungs stopped working and she had to be placed on a respirator. She was bleeding into herself.

"It was just incredibly horrible," Nestor says. "It's one of those moments when you're standing outside yourself watching things unfold."

Furman wasn't expected to live. The battery of health assaults she faced led to adult respiratory distress. Nestor spoke to grief counselors and asked what to tell their kids, 3-year-old Hayley and 6-year-old Harry.

He got a tough answer: The truth. Nestor would have to tell his children their baby brother had died and their mother might too.

When he broke the news, Hayley fell apart.

"She punched me in the face," he says. "Hayley was inconsolable."

In a medically induced coma, Furman seemed to hover between life and death. Ventilators did her breathing. She had one working organ -- her heart.

The damage done

After a big scare, Furman began to stabilize. It was time to bring her out of the coma.

Doctors had already told Nestor the risks: She could be paralyzed, have brain damage. But when they tested her nerves for signs of problems, things looked good.

"It seemed like we were going to get through this," Nestor says.

The morning Furman woke up, her pupils were dilated. She felt disoriented and hungry. Unable to talk or hardly move, Furman longed for pizza and her glasses. She had entered the hospital in March. It was May.

"I thought I had been in the hospital three days," she says.

After being awake awhile, the room was still dark. An ophthalmologist confirmed that she was blind.

"You think about things you won't be able to do," she says. "I thought about not being able to read or see a movie again." She had already lost her son. Now, her sight was gone too.

"It was hard when I woke up," Furman says. "I felt like a truck had run over me, then backed up and run over me again."

Her body atrophied from being in bed so long. She couldn't sit up or even raise an arm. She looked wan, weak. Harry cuddled with her. Hayley didn't want to come near.

At home, she had to go through physical therapy. They had the baby's funeral.

"It was just one kick after another," says Shanna Bryant, a family friend.

Tremors shook Furman's body. Tufts of her long, dark blond hair fell out. Harry told her, "You don't look like my mommy anymore."

Hayley clutched her tight.

From the beginning, people in their Orange County neighborhood rallied around them. They supplied months of meals. A teacher collected money and took Harry clothes shopping.

Finding a new way

But even with the help, it was hard to rebound. They were in a different place. From the day Furman entered the hospital, Nestor put Shoofly on the back burner so he could focus on being there for her and the children. With the challenges of her recovery, they ended the business they loved for good.

It was a painful decision. Years earlier, Furman and Nestor were inspired on a car trip to create Shoofly. As they listened to the radio, a poet came on who transported Harry and them to other worlds.

In 1994, they debuted their audiomagazine of innovative songs, stories and poems for children ages 3 to 7. Shoofly, which featured the work of authors nationwide and the voices of local actors and performers, won critical acclaim. They had a thousand subscribers and many who would buy individual issues. Now, it would be gone, just like so many things from their life.

Their marriage had always been filled with laughs and sharing. Suddenly, tension surrounded them.

"It got the point where we couldn't talk anymore. There was so much anger and frustration," Furman says.

She was mad at losing so much and envious of Nestor's freedom. Nestor felt underappreciated.

They knew they had to make a change. They loved their neighborhood but they needed to find a place more adapted to Furman's new needs.

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"We knew we could make a big or little change," he says. "We could move to Carrboro or Colorado. Everything was wide open. We had to figure out what was best."

They visited big cities like Philadelphia, but found what they needed close to home in Carrboro.

"We realized there would always be losses. But we could stop thinking of them as losses and think of them as changes," Furman says.

Shoofly returns

Once they settled into their new home, Furman found a fresh sense of freedom. She was close to the market, could walk around on her own. She started thinking more about Shoofly.

"It was always in the back of my mind," Furman says. "When we suspended operation, we got so many letters from people who were so supportive and loving."

She tucked them in a large envelope. "It just kind of sat there, a symbol. As if to say, 'Yes, one day,' " she says.

Over the years, they would get calls from people who wondered if they could still get issues. Or wanted to know when they were coming back.

In October 2005, they decided it was time. They started by creating a Web site, www.shooflyaudio.com. They learned how to transfer their cassettes to CDs. Instead of trying to re-create their subscription-base from scratch, they offered a new format where people could purchase individual issues.

"I'm thrilled that Arlene and Jack are back doing what they're meant to do," says Sarah Froeber, a children's book author who has directed and performed on many of their issues. "It was a loss for children, teachers and parents everywhere when they closed down. Now, a whole new group of children will experience the delights of this work."

Furman is completely blind in her left eye and has about 5 percent vision in her right eye. "It's dark like dusk," she says, "I see through something like snow on a TV. It's like bad reception with flecks of black and white flickering."

So now, some things like proofing the Web site takes longer. But Furman also has a new gift -- a keener appreciation for sounds.

"I feel even more connected to what we do," she says. "I hear traffic sounds and think about I like the way that sounds or hear someone's voice and say that would really work."

By next year, Nestor and Furman hope to be releasing new work. They're shooting for two issues a year.

On a recent day, they left their office and walked down the street toward home. Side by side, they matched each other's stride.

They were back in step, just right.

**Herald-Sun, The (Durham, NC)
February 4, 2007**

Getting back on track

Author: DAWN BAUMGARTNER VAUGHAN

Shoo fly, don't bother me. Shoo fly, don't bother me. Shoo fly, don't bother me. For I belong to somebody.

- *Children's song lyric*

Shoofly, the audio children's magazine of stories and songs, shooed away for seven years. Now it's back and buzzing around its new office in Carrboro. Shoofly is the editorial wife-and-husband team of Arlene Furman and Jack Nestor, who began producing audio recordings for children ages 3 through 7 in the mid-1990s.

The fun times of stories and songs were put on pause while the couple dealt with a devastating personal health crisis.

In March 1999, Furman was nine months pregnant with their third child. She contracted strep pneumonia, became septic, had disseminated intravascular coagulation and ended up in adult respiratory distress. Her blood pressure bottomed out and her organs began to shut down. She fell into a coma. Her daughter and son said their goodbyes. She was not expected to survive. But in May 1999, Furman awoke. She learned that they lost the baby and she was blind. But she awoke.

Shoofly takes flight

In the 1980s, Nestor was living in New Jersey off Exit 9 when he visited a friend in Rhode Island and met Furman. They started a long-distance relationship, married and moved to Jersey to work in New York City. They worked as editors in print publishing until 1989, when they decided the Triangle would be the best place to start a family. Nestor and Furman continued freelance publishing work from their Orange County home while they planned the launch of Shoofly.

The first issue was released in 1994. Shoofly began as an audio magazine, with three cassette tapes sent each year to subscribers. Poets and writers came through an open call. Voices on the tapes were frequently those of UNC or Duke drama students. Musicians were familiar and recommended, both local and national.

For the next five years, Furman and Nestor ran Shoofly from an outbuilding in the back yard of their house in the White Cross area of Orange County. It wasn't a straight shot to success, though. There was one disaster that resulted from the 10,000 Shoofly sampler tapes they sent out. It turned out the company loading the sound used not Shoofly songs and stories, but a recording about blue green algae on countless tapes. Nestor chalked it *Shoofly: An Audiomagazine for Children Press Kit* — Press Articles

up to living and learning. Soon after, they also began to produce a catalog of both Shoofly and other audio recordings for children.

The number of subscribers grew from 57 the first year to 1,000 four years later, when they closed down during Furman's illness. Nestor sent out a letter to subscribers explaining why family time outweighed the business. The couple received a lot of letters back from their listeners. Some of them -- blind children who listened to the tapes -- could empathize. When Furman's blood pressure dropped and her organs began to shut down, her optic nerve was damaged. During her long recovery, which included relearning how to walk, Furman regained a small amount of eyesight. She has 5 percent vision in one eye. She described it as viewing the world at dusk, through the flickering snow on an old television set. It's enough to make it possible for her to walk to their Carrboro office on West Main Street from their current home, just two blocks away.

The office space is also used for their other work -- Technica Editorial Services. They are managing editors for seven academic journals and a chemical society book series.

In late 2005, Furman and Nestor decided it was time to relaunch Shoofly after years of grief and depression over the loss of their child and Furman's long recovery.

"Your life is going on too at the same time. You realize you have to do something or it's just going to run you over," Nestor said.

"For me, I wanted Hayley and Harry [their children] to see me figure out how to take something awful and horrible and make it into something workable," Furman said. "I wanted them to see us work through it all."

The couple is candid about Furman's previous health crisis on Shoofly's Web site. She has also recently faced another health problem -- breast cancer. Treatment involved several surgeries and radiation, which she finished a few weeks ago. Furman said that experience felt like a splinter in comparison to her previous ordeal.

Back to work

For the past year, they have transferred all of Shoofly's audio recordings from tape to CD and compiled them into volumes available again by catalog. This year they will put out a new CD of recordings made for the unpublished spring 1999 audio magazine as well as a CD of just music for children. Next year, they'll produce new Shoofly material on CDs. They won't go the subscriber audio magazine route this time. Instead of adhering to a publication schedule, they'll release two or three Shoofly volumes throughout the year so they can have several pieces in progress at a time.

They'll hold more open calls for writers, poets and musicians. And as before, they'll choose the sounds to accompany the voices. Furman has a new take on that element of their work.

"I think I have a different outlook on sound. Just when I'm out and about outside," Furman said, she notices the distinct sounds of cars, horns and voices. They use all kinds of things for sound effects, even son Harry's old toys. Harry, now 13, was their initial sounding board for Shoofly. Now that he's moved on to teenage pursuits, Hayley, 11, wants her turn in the studio, too.

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