

The Toe Jam Puppet Band Story

Once upon a time in the year 2002, magic happened. Two big kids named Tom and Vinny decided to form a musical group called **The Toe Jam Puppet Band**. With diverse backgrounds spanning the areas of music, songwriting, scenic artistry and puppetry, it seemed like a natural fit for the two friends.

Tom Poitras is the plaid-suited songwriter and singer of the Toe Jam Puppet Band. He plays banjo, acoustic guitar and washboard tie. Tom says the inspiration for his songs comes from his family of 2 young boys, Hank & Jack, and his wife Donna. From throwing laundry around the house to squeakin' like a mouse, Hank & Jack feed Tom new song ideas daily. Tom also draws from a wide variety of musical tastes in the writing of Toe Jam songs, including Jump Blues, Punk Rock, Reggae and Traditional Folk Music. Tom says, "Music is exploration and there's a whole world of music out there to be turned on to and explored."

Tom has been performing musically for over 25 years. Toe Jam is his first children's music venture, which coincided with the birth of his first son. Tom has written hundreds of songs for Toe Jam and has just begun writing children's picture book stories.

Every live show needs a live wire and for the Toe Jam Puppet Band it's Mr. **Vinny Lovegrove**. Acting as emcee and resident silly man he can always be found right in the thick of it with the Kiddos. At each Toe Jam performance he directs the fun and activities with a big bag of puppet shows, storytelling, amateur acrobatics, improvisation, and well-timed shtick. Inspired by Tom's homemade songs, Vinny, keeps the audience involved.

Vinny has 18 years of experience with children's entertainment and education. He has been a co-founder and contributor to a number of continuing programs including: the Open Space Arts organization of Reisterstown, MD. , the New Bedford Art Museum's " Purple Bus " Art Mobile program, and his own Miracle Fish Puppet Theater. Vinny has made puppets for, and performed with, The Caravan Stage Theater of St. Petersburg, FL., the University of Massachusetts in Dartmouth, MA. , the Zeiterion Theater of New Bedford, MA. and for the past eleven years - The King Richard's Faire of Carver, MA. to name a few.

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