

# SNAPSHOTS



Marlowe Beckman and Lizzie Swan will entertain at the New Canaan Nature Center on Sunday, May 20.

## Swingset Mamas *Croon Songs for Kiddies*

BY CHANDRA NILES FOLSOM

When Lizzie Swan carried her six-string to a Montauk beach bonfire in 1995, little did she know her future was being stoked in the smoldering embers.

"Marlowe was there and we connected because we were the only ones singing at the end of the night," says Lizzie of her musical partner, Marlowe Beckman. "We developed a friendship and began to jam and play around on keyboard and guitar. We realized pretty quickly that we were a good team and began to write songs together."

Today they are known as Swingset Mamas, an award-winning duo who perform original folk songs for kids and families. Their CD *Dance around the House* recently garnered the iParenting Media Award — one of twenty across the nation chosen as outstanding by an expert parenting panel.

"We both instinctively began to make up songs to soothe our newborn babies," says Lizzie, who gave birth to her first child in 1999, the same year as Marlowe. "Just for fun we recorded six of them and gave out a tape to our friends. The feedback that we got was amazing. People told us that our songs were the only

thing that helped to quiet their kids."

Requests for a CD followed, and soon they collaborated on a full-length album. Most of the songs were recorded at KJV studios in New Canaan. "It's owned by our good friend Ken Volpe, who teaches guitar to a lot of kids in the Darien–New Canaan area," says Lizzie.

Their paths laced by kismet, Lizzie and Marlowe gave birth to their second children three years later. All that separates them is 2,000 miles. Lizzie and hubby Jim live locally, while Marlowe and Chuck make their home in the Lone Star State. They collaborate over the phone and Internet between gigs.

Lizzie also performs with her rock band, Swivel Chair, and works as a creative arts therapist at area schools and elderly facilities. Marlowe, whose eldest child was diagnosed with autism, supports autism organizations as a teacher, therapist and fundraiser.

"We take family experiences and put them to music," says Lizzie, whose kids sing on the albums and help write songs. "We are continuing to write and perform music that brings our families, schools and communities together." >