

Long
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Meredith LeVande of 'Monkey Monkey Music' comes to Long Island

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 Monkey Monkey Music will be performing at the

Monkey Monkey Music will be performing at the Family Festival By the Sea on Saturday, Sept. 26, 2015. Photo Credit: Monkey Monkey Music

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Many would say she is the face
of Kids 13, New York's 24-hour
PBS Kids channel. Most well



known for her music videos, Meredith LeVande can be seen in "Monkey Monkey Music," broadcast multiple times a day, leading classic shows such as "Sesame Street" and "Curious George," on more than 100 public television stations.

Monkey Monkey Music will be performing at the Family Festival By the Sea in Lido Beach on Saturday, Sept. 26. Here, LeVande talks

about her music, television fame and summers spent on Long Island. Take a look:

Q. Tell me a bit about your music: What songs do kids love?

A. What I love about writing children's music is: the simpler, the better; the happier, the better. I started performing music for children in the late '90s and I instantly fell in love with how joyful the experience was. I get many requests for newer songs that I haven't released yet, such as "Macaroni," but children really love the "Hello" song, "Air Guitar," "Jump High," "In the Garden" and many more. Many of my newer songs have been performed live or aired on television but haven't been released yet on CD or DVD.

Q. What's it like being the face of PBS?

A. It's been completely surreal seeing my videos air on Kids 13 and NJTV. I'm still in complete shock each time I see them. I've put every ounce of my being into creating them. In fact, all I do is work on music videos. What many people don't fully realize about PBS is that part of its mission is to serve underserved children, and its early initiatives were to create content that helped equal the playing field for children who didn't have access to early childhood education. I feel blessed and honored that my work is now part of that tradition and I identify and understand what it's like to not have opportunities and stability that other children had. I've had many parents with special-needs children write me and personally come to my shows to tell me how much of an impact my music and videos have had on their children. One mother recently sought me out to tell me she was told by specialists that her son would never talk. Then, one day, her son started belting out "Air Guitar." It's so meaningful to hear these types of stories and know that my work is impacting a child's development.

Q. You grew up in New Jersey but spent summers in Baldwin.

What are some of your favorite L.I. memories?

A. I have many wonderful memories of Long Island. My mother was ill so I was raised solely by my maternal grandmother in New Jersey. Things were difficult for my grandmother and I spent a lot of time with my aunt, uncle and cousins in Baldwin. We would go to Nunley's Carousel, the Freeport Rec Center, and we'd enjoy breakfasts in Long Beach.

Q. What's up next for you?

A. I recently worked on an exciting television project that I will be able to share soon. I also filmed many videos as well as a curriculum, which focuses on really critical aspects of childhood development.

You can find Monkey Monkey Music on monkeymonkeymusic.com and Amazon.com.

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Coming soon: Newsday's Family newsletter, for things to do with kids, events, more.

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