

# *Flutephones — A beautiful way to end the school week*

By MATTIE PAT SHAW  
Grayling, Alaska

The Flutophone is a small, plastic, musical instrument primarily used for teaching beginning music. To look at it, it looks innocent enough, but when twelve 6th, 7th, and 8th graders begin to experiment with it, emitting all kinds of happy sounds, ZING!, the flutophone has a personality all its own. Happiness invades the children, the school and the community.

I found fifteen flutophones stuffed away in a compartment in the school storage room

and we looked at each other for a long time. I love music, but I really can't sing or carry a tune and have been asked on several occasions, when singing in church, to cease and desist, as I was throwing everyone else off key.

I usually complied, muttering under my breath that the Bible read, "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord." I was informed that the sounds I was making, weren't joyful. Nevertheless.....night after night, I practiced and after each tune asked my husband, Johnnie, to guess what I had played. He never guessed the right tune. However, I felt competent enough to teach the children.

Friday was the big day, flutophones were ceremoniously handed to each student. The musical notations had already been written on the board and the great moment was at hand. Then something magical happened. The children's eyes lit up, they smiled, they followed the instructions, and they practiced. The room vibrated, the school came alive, the village rejoiced as the strains of, "Mary Had A Little Lamb," escaped through the classroom window, danced across the snow and darted through the trees.

What a beautiful way to end the school week.