



The Fuscos:

A family grown in music

On a warm and sunny afternoon in mid-May, I had the opportunity for a conversation via Zoom with East Wallingford resident, Jim Fusco. He and his wife, Becky, live in town near the vineyards, with their two young children, Jonathan (6) and Angelina (4). Jim is an accomplished musician and writer. Although he remains humble in his accomplishments, at age 38, he's released nine albums, produced a music video on YouTube, and authored a novel. An impressive zest for life, which as I learned from our conversation, stems from a curiosity to perpetually try and learn new things.

First inspired by a toy drum set gifted to his younger brother, Jim eventually asked for and received his own set. He took lessons while in fourth grade. After he mastered the drums, Jim's passion for music guided him to subsequently learn the keyboard and later the guitar. He soon taught himself how to use Musical Instrument Digital Interface (MIDI), which further allowed him to combine the individual sounds to record music. In 2001, at the age of seventeen, Jim released his first album, *With or Without*

You, which compiled fifteen songs he'd written over the course of his childhood that were inspired by impactful experiences.

Both Jim and Becky attended Sheehan High School. This past May marked 20 years since they first met while in the high school musical, *Annie Get Your Gun*. They continued to connect through their love of music, and have been together ever since. "We played in a band together," Jim shared with a proud smile. "That's her piano behind me." He said while pointing to an upright piano on the far side of the room. "I can read sheet music if my life depended on it," Jim confessed, "but Becky has a true talent for playing [piano], and reading music."

Jim plays and records all the instruments for his songs. "Everything is done manually," Jim stated, "no auto-tune or studio trickery needed." When asked to describe his musical genre, Jim preferred not to define a style. "I don't create music to fit a genre or sound," Jim stated. "I just write what sounds good to me." A review on www.jimfusco.com, written by Andrea Guy

from Mossip Music Blog, best describes Jim's distinct 60s sound as both "...an upbeat, get your feet moving song, or a slow, cuddle up with someone you love, ballad." Inspired by a mix of the Beach Boys, Beatles, Byrds and Moody Blues, Jim's music incorporates a vintage rock beat and complex vocal harmonies. "It takes a long time to do," Jim admitted, "but the effect is really powerful."

In addition to his musical accomplishments, Jim works as a supply chain director for a major health company and holds a Bachelor of Science in Communication with a master's degree in Business Administration. Certified in Planning & Inventory Management, Jim's occupation bestows the task of problem solving and keeping operations organized and efficient. A very different skillset from his talent for composing music; Presenting a rare balance of logic and creativity. "I'm comfortable in both roles." Jim acknowledged. "Although my music and song writing are most meaningful."

An avid writer, Jim recalls writing his first song at age 6, and started a novel in high school, which was later published in 2004. A fictional biography, *There's No Stepping Back*, is a story based loosely on "an increasingly complex childhood friendship between himself and his best friend," as Jim's website describes. Jim continues to write mostly music, with songs ready to go for his next album, which he hopes to pursue in the near future.

After living in the neighboring town of Meriden for ten years, Jim and Becky found a house on the east side of Wallingford in 2017 and have since made the copious town their home.



Jim and Becky's two children, Jonathan (6) and Angelina (4)



This past May marked 20 years since Jim and Becky first met while in the high school musical, Annie Get Your Gun

"Wallingford has every convenience you need, from Taco Bell to Home Depot." Jim boasted. "Yet we can still see green pasture and cows out my window." Becky enjoys the convenience of working close to home as a kindergarten teacher in Meriden, while Jonathon, attends Moses Y. Beach Elementary school, and Angelina is enrolled in a local Pre-K program.

For fun, Jim and Becky will still occasionally play together. Only these days it's mostly Christmas songs," Jim admitted, "We love Christmas music." Together as a family they enjoy hunting for old 45s to play in a jukebox formerly owned by Rockin' Rob's Seafood. The popular restaurant, which offered a 50s dining experience on East Center Street in Wallingford, closed in 2016 after a fire to an adjacent building disrupted business. "I went there all the time." Jim recalled. After the restaurant closed, he wondered what became of the old jukebox. "Until one day, I found it for sale." Jim retold with excitement. "So, I bought it." A treasured piece of the town's history, Jim finds delight to switch out the records periodically, and takes care to relabel each new selection.

Jim's fortitude to pursue his musical interest is impressive. Although he doesn't perform

publicly as often as he once did, he still actively creates music in his home studio, which is free to listen to on YouTube and other streaming platforms such as Pandora, Spotify, iTunes/Apple Music and Amazon, an through his website. "I've learned how to do a lot of things [on my own] out of necessity, or to be resourceful." Jim explained. "If something needs to get done, or needs fixing, many times it's quicker to do it myself, rather than to find someone who can do it." It's with that same determination that Jim continues to follow his curiosity and live life to its fullest.