

February 20, 2018

Laurie Berkner To Headline Children's Concert At 2018 NJ Festival of Ballooning



(READINGTON, NJ) -- Give the kids what they want. Best-selling children's recording artist and preschool television favorite Laurie Berkner --- recognized as the "queen of children's music" by People magazine --- will return with an encore performance to headline this year's children's concert at this summer's 36th annual [QuickChek New Jersey Festival of Ballooning](#) in Association with PNC Bank on Friday, July 27 at 1:30pm.

"For the second year in a row, Hackensack Meridian *Health* is absolutely proud to be a sponsor of the award-winning QuickChek New Jersey Festival of Ballooning and presenting sponsor of Laurie Berkner's opening day performance," said Robert C. Garrett, co-CEO of Hackensack Meridian *Health*. "Similar to how we approach our mission, Ms. Berkner is committed to providing an exceptional experience and we applaud her."

“Laurie was a huge hit last year, we’re thrilled to have her back with us,” said Festival Executive Producer Howard Freeman. “Having a dedicated concert for children ages 2-8 provided families with a new and very memorable experience last year. She’s a great talent who connects with the kids; it’s an enjoyable way for families to start their day at the Festival.”

The annual three day event, July 27-28-29, 2018 is the largest summertime hot air balloon and music festival in North America and has been named the premiere family attraction in New Jersey. The Festival features twice a day mass ascensions of 100 sport and special shaped hot air balloons from around the world, a live concert series, fireworks, a nighttime hot air balloon glow, children’s amusement rides, family entertainment, attractions and activities.

“Hackensack Meridian *Health* is thrilled to be part of this premiere event that earned its place as a Top 100 Festival in North America,” said John K. Lloyd, co-CEO of Hackensack Meridian *Health*. “This is a tremendous event and adding Laurie Berkner to the festivities elevates it even further. She is an amazing talent enjoyed by children and adults alike.”

“This is also a great opportunity for summer camps throughout the region to go outside the box and offer kids an entirely new and different experience,” added Freeman.

A longtime fixture on TV’s Nick Jr. and Sprout channels, Laurie was the first recording artist to ever appear in a music video on Nick Jr. and was a beloved presence on *Jack’s Big Music Show*. Her music videos now appear regularly on NBC Universal’s *Universal Kids* channel.

The Princeton, NJ native has released 12 best-selling albums. Berkner’s debut DVD went quadruple platinum and was the first-ever indie children’s music DVD to enter Billboard’s Top Music Video chart at #1.

What sets the Rutgers graduate apart? Her music speaks to kids without talking down to them, charming youngsters without boring grownups.

“When I’m writing a song, I’m thinking about whether the kids will like it and whether I’m going to connect to them through it,” said Berkner. “I’m also thinking about whether I want to sing it over and over again, so I guess that’s the part that connects with adults.”

Berkner has also authored numerous books based on her songs and Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers will publish her third picture book, *Monster Boogie*, in July.