

# Tenor prepares to launch singing career

By GRETCHEN MCHUGH

Tenor Ken Young sprang from the middle of his comfortable armchair and indicated a spot in the middle of his back.

"The long muscles pulling down here send the tone up the back of the head and then it comes over and out the eyes."

He chuckled. "Well, the tone doesn't really go up the back of your neck. But it sure feels that way."

Young was describing one of the ways that the body is tricked into allowing the involuntary muscles to take over in singing. Producing a "clear, open, free, easily-produced tone that sounds beautiful" is his goal.

"A talented local singer, Young feels he's learned enough about producing beautiful tone from his teacher, Richard Conrad, to make an important career decision. Granted a leave of absence from his employer, Oak Park Schools, he plans to spend a year in New York City to see if he can make singing a full-time profession.

It's a one-year experiment. If he

can't earn a living equivalent to his income from teaching, he'll return to his elementary school post of 13 years. Young said, "He plans to live on the money from the sale of his Birmingham condominium while auditioning for jobs."

"I'VE THOUGHT AND DONE nothing but singing all my life," Young said. "But I haven't thought of myself as a singer until just recently, after the immense difference Richard Conrad's teaching has made."

The advanced, intensive work with Conrad has allowed him to realize his potential, he feels. And now, feeling vocally, emotionally and intellectually ready, Young said, "I have the courage to find out."

"And if nobody jumps up and down and says, 'Wow, where have you been all our lives?' I can still come back and say, 'I've had a nice time. I've found out something about myself. I've found out how the business works. It was fascinating. And now I'm ready to fit back in here again. I'll have tried it and I'll be satisfied.'"

Of course, he just might make it. He grinned.

YOUNG PLANS TO LAUNCH himself professionally through musical friends in New York, making contacts and setting up auditions. He plans to live in Manhattan, where, "I can see a lot, hear a lot, do a lot and get acquainted with people."

Auditions are the key. But unless one has plenty of time and money, auditions are, practically speaking, almost impossible. Young ticks off the expenses of flying to Milwaukee, for example, for a day to try for a part with the Florentine Opera Company there.

"Forty-three dollars for the plane, \$12 cab fare, \$5 food. The audition lasts ten minutes, they say. 'Thank you very much,' you leave and that's it. That's the way auditions go."

Obviously, it isn't practical to spend the kind of time and money needed for auditions, and be a full-time teacher simultaneously.

"You can't ride two horses at the same time," he said. Singing and teaching don't both fit into one life. Young maintained. He cited his recent experience with a Grand Rapids opera company, where his audition for a part in "Rigoletto" was successful only after he informed them he would not be teaching for a year.

"Then they were glad to have me."

RECENTLY, YOUNG HAS BEEN TAKING three voice lessons a week. The refinements of his craft demand not only time and money, but patience and determination as well.

"There's always that little bit more that you're after. You say to yourself, 'Maybe if I take one more lesson, I'll get it.' Nobody but myself and a few birds can hear the difference. But you want a little more speed, clarity, precision. You get hooked on that sort of thing. You're beyond good."

He described some recent work as a coloratura tenor.



KEN YOUNG

## Carrier of the Month Farmington



David Fouts, 15, has been chosen the Carrier of the Month for the Farmington Observer.

He is the son of John and Ardis Scott. He lives in Farmington Hills with his brothers, Doug and Eric Fouts, and his sister, Kathy Fouts.

A student and O. E. Duncel Junior High School, Dave is in the ninth grade and enjoys mechanical drawing, shop and science. He wants to be a photographer. His hobbies are model rocketry and photography.

If you want to be a Farmington Carrier, Call

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## Harrison band marches at camp

Farmington's Harrison High School marching band will be stomping and playing up a storm this weekend, as 70 members of the band begin summer camp.

For about seven hours a day, the students will be practicing their music and learning the formations they will employ at HHS's football opener against Farmington Sept. 9.

Baton twirlers, flag bearers and drum majorettes are also expected to be attending the five-day camp near Traverse City.

"Of course, mixed in with the music and marching will be plenty of leisure time fun—like swimming, tennis, boating and volleyball," says Paul Barber, HHS director of music. Special activities such as movies, square dancing and trips to nearby attractions such as Sleeping Bear Dunes round out the

camp experience for the HHS students.

The entire operation is funded and supervised by the Harrison Band and Orchestra Boosters, an organization of parents of the music students. Each student attending pays a small tuition fee covering all expenses.

Band camp directors will be Eleanor Proski and Lee Markovitz. Parent chaperones are Norm Leukke, Ann Kasura, Betty Babcock, Barb Cantor and Fern Barber.

HHS ALUMNI Bill and Rene Teth, Bill Kaufman, and Debbie Wise will be instructing the students, and Mark Schulman is the water safety instructor.

The entire group will perform for an expected audience of 50-60 parents on the last day of camp.

## Nancy Hebert earns BA from Oberlin

Nancy Hebert, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Earl R. Hebert, of 25538 Arden Park, Farmington Hills, received a BA from Oberlin College in Ohio during

commencement ceremonies recently.

Ms. Hebert majored in sociology and anthropology.

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