

State Indian seminar to bridge cultural gap

By KATIE KERWIN

The Michigan Board of Education will sponsor a seminar for parents of American Indian children Nov. 6 at the Troy Hilton Inn.

The timing is perfect as far as the newly founded Troy Parents Indian Advisory Committee is concerned.

The day-long seminar will train parents interested in planning compensatory, vocational and bilingual education programs for Indian students. The workshop is geared to help them become more active through local parent advisory committees.

"It's great," said Rene Sherman, president of the Troy parents committee. "Since we are a new program, there's not a lot we know," she said. "We need the help."

"We're anxious for it," Mrs. Sherman said of the upcoming seminar. "We're just lucky to have it close to us."

Committee members are planning to attend to help organize Troy's fledgling program, she said. "We want to get it off the ground."

The seminar in Troy is one of a series of four scheduled throughout the state. Parents of Indian children can attend a seminar at either Escanaba, Gaylord, Kalamazoo or Troy. Teachers and administrators are also invited.

THE WORKSHOP is organized under provisions of the federal Indian Education Act.

Mrs. Sherman said that as many as six representatives of the Troy group plan to attend the workshop. Betty Colden, supervisor of state and federal projects for Troy School District, said she will probably be among those present. Ms. Colden was instrumental in obtaining a federal entitlement grant this year to begin the parents advisory committee and other Indian education projects.

The school district qualified for \$7,100 in federal funds this year. Troy has identified 50 students who meet qualifications of at least one-quarter Indian blood. Parents began organizing

the advisory committee last April and May, Ms. Colden said. The committee elected its first board of officers on Sept. 26.

The grant is part of a federal compensatory program for native Americans, she said.

"It really doesn't have anything to do with income," she said. "So many American Indians have been denied opportunities that there is some obligation to provide special services. This is part of that program."

Troy hopes to offer "a full range of Indian culture, history, folklore, leg-

ends and other aspects provided by local resource consultants from the Indian community," Ms. Colden said.

MRS. SHERMAN, who is of Indian descent, doesn't doubt local Indian children need such a program.

"They've been missing out on learning more about their history and their background, as well as cultural activities: making things with their hands, learning dancing, drumming and beadwork," she said.

"But most of all, the history books don't tell us a lot of things about Indi-

ans," she said. "They make us all look like bad guys."

"Some children have only one idea about Indians and, usually, it's the wrong one," Mrs. Sherman said. Even Indian children may grow up without a proper understanding of their heritage, she said.

"We have to change that attitude, starting when they're young. Then they'll have a better feeling about themselves and a sense of pride."

The parents committee is planning to organize educational and cultural activities for the youngsters, she said.

"We'll definitely be taking the children on some field trips to see Indian sites — places they would probably never get an opportunity to go to." Participation in civic activities, such as parades, is also a possibility, she said.

LOCATING MORE students in the district who are eligible to participate is another of the group's goals. Current participants are those who responded to a districtwide survey Ms. Colden circulated last year.

"We found 50 children, but we have the feeling there are others in the dis-

trict," Ms. Colden said.

"Our main thrust this year will be hiring a home-school coordinator to work part time," she said. Identifying eligible youngsters and identifying needs to be addressed would be among that person's duties.

Parents who have joined the advisory committee are enthusiastic, Mrs. Sherman said. Gathering parental support was the first step in getting Troy into the state program, she said.

The program is five years old. But this is the first time Troy has been able to grab hold and do something with it."

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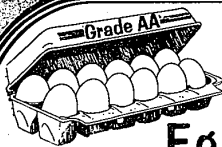
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Musician organizes new series

Flutist Cinka Gerova Ortega of Bloomfield Hills has been searching for years for the perfect location to showcase music and art.

The Bulgarian-born artist discovered the Galeria one day while walking with her children on the Orchard Lake St. Mary's college campus. She drew up some plans which were presented to the Rev. Stanley Milewski, St. Mary's College chancellor. His approval was quickly given.

And along with agreement to host the concerts, the college is providing some services such as publicity and financial sponsorship. With those important aspects out of the way, Ms. Ortega was free to coordinate the Sunday afternoon recitals.

"All (the recitalists) are hailed internationally as musicians' musicians," said Ms. Ortega.

Art is on permanent display at the Galeria so the programs will become, in effect, multi-media events. It is the metal sculpture of Marian Owezzski, artist-in-residence and Galeria director for the Orchard Lake Schools.

At each concert, there will be a different artist featured for patrons to enjoy, said Ms. Ortega.

The first concert, at 3 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 14, features Juan Serrano, known as the king of Spanish Flamenco, said the coordinator.

Born in Cordoba, Spain, son of a professional guitarist, Serrano acquired a technical facility that is often said to be unmatched today. In 1962, he visited the United States after having established himself in Europe and South America as a great guitarist.

With 22 records to his credit, Serrano has played for presidents and kings and is the recipient of the Gold Medalion from the Spanish Academy of Fine Arts. He is also founder of the Flamenco Society, a distinguished group whose members include Jose Greco and Nana Lorca. Serrano, who will be coming from his home in California, will teach a master class in guitar at 11 a.m. in the Galeria on Oct. 14.

Fr. Thomas O'Connell, musical director, can be reached for information on the concerts at 682-1885.

Tickets will be available for 200 seats at the door for \$5. Students and senior citizens' tickets are \$2.50. Season tickets are \$15.

St. Mary's Galeria is off either Indian Trail or Commerce Road in the city of Orchard Lake.

The 3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 18, concert features Roma Riddell, soprano, Lawrence LaGore, piano, and Ms. Ortega, flute.

On Feb. 24, Fedora Horowitz, piano, and Ms. Ortega combine talents to perform duets.

On March 23, the Rev. Carl H. Davidson, viola, and Sister Frances Blanchard, piano, from New Orleans, will perform music by romantic composers.

WSU offers seniors special

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For further information, call 577-3577.