

Harmonica lovers unite for annual foot-stompin' event

By CRAIG PIECHURA

When harmonica players convene at a convention, they are collectively known as "harmoniconists."

It's understandable. Call them "harmonica buffs" and it sounds like a secret society that plays the instrument in the nude.

"Harmoniconists" is what Gordon Mitchell, a Southfield resident and president of the Society for the Preservation and Advancement of the Harmonica (SPAH), calls the 1,500 harmonica playing members of the organization.

SPAH's membership roster is diverse, encompassing country star Charlie McCoy; Grammy award-winner Stevie Wonder, whose first hit, "Fingertips," featured harmonica histrionics; and Larry Adler, guest soloist with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

Mitchell, 53, has been playing the harmonica, or mouth organ, since the age of 9. He played professionally with groups like the Harmonica Rhythmaires, the Harmonica Dons and, most recently, the Hi-Lites and the New Group. In the early 1940s Mitchell also toured with the comedy group, the Borrah Minevitch Harmonica Rascals.

Many persons remember the latter group because of the slapstick antics of pugilist Johnny Puleo. In performances, Puleo usually was knocked around by fellow musicians with oversized harmonicas and would retaliate by biting them in the kneecap.

"PEOPLE invariably ask 'Where's the little guy?'" Mitchell says. "It doesn't matter what harmonica group is playing."

In response to that inevitable query, Mitchell says Puleo is in his 70s, re-

tired and living in Washington, D.C.

Puleo won't be at SPAH's upcoming 17th annual convention at Southfield's Ramada Inn, but nearly 1,000 harmonica players and enthusiasts will be there Sept. 4-6.

Featured performer at the convention is Peter "Madcap" Ruth of Ann Arbor, a blues and jazz player who has appeared on three albums with Dave Brubeck and one with folksinger Rosalie Sorels, among others.

Ruth will perform at 9 p.m. Friday, Sept. 5, at the Ramada Inn. The public is invited to the concert and tickets are \$5 at the door the night of the performance. He also will be playing a short set for free at 2:30 p.m. Sunday at Hart Plaza during the Montreux-Detroit International Jazz Festival.

Much of the convention, though, is not big names, just people who enjoy

playing the harmonica. Nearly half the scheduled hours are set aside for jam sessions or open playing by "harmoniconists."

SEMINARS are scheduled on such topics as ways of improving one's stage presence, proper mixing and amplification, harmonica repair, and a session on chord and bass harmonica technique.

There are certain songs, Mitchell says, that most harmonica players know and can join in on.

One of Mitchell's personal favorites is the song "Ruby," a romantic song done most recently by Ray Charles.

"For a group of young people, it's usually 'Proud Mary,'" he said. "That's a mover. They enjoy it and we old-timers enjoy playing it."

Mitchell says one of the best aspects of the convention is that you find older people playing modern songs and young people playing the classics like "Peg o' My Heart."

Along with Madcap Ruth, other groups slated to play at the convention are the Harmonica Express; the Harmonichords, Don Les' New Harmoniconists, the Sgro Bros. and Bernie Bray.

While many people think of the harmonica as only a backup instrument, Mitchell argues that harmonica groups handle it all. In fact, one group at the convention plays dance music.

A harmonica band usually features a bass player using a double row chromatic bass harp, a rhythm player blowing a two-foot-long chord rhythm harmonica and a lead player with a chromatic or diatonic harmonica with sharps and flats, Mitchell said.

Records, spare parts, bumper stickers, badges and assorted harmonica paraphernalia will also be available to conventioners.



Peter (Madcap) Ruth in concert with his harmonica.

Old styles are still cruising

(Continued from Page 1A)

gadget of the mid-60s, the push-button transmission.

These projects take time, as Bob Glover's four years' work on his fondly remembered '28 Model A hunk hot rod proves. That screaming yellow monster has a fiberglass body which graces the pages of national car magazines. Glover, obviously proud of his accomplishment, also notes that the car has appeared in the Autorama show at Cobo Hall in Detroit.

its own standards and problems, as the men will testify.

"I don't like having something like everybody else's got," Yount explained. "I want my car to be different from everyone else's."

His 1934 sedan boasts air conditioning, a tilt wheel, stereo and new rear and front suspension systems.

Next on the agenda is to paint the car a dark blue or wine color depending on which color other members have managed to miss when they painted their cars recently.

The parts for cars long removed from the showrooms are found,

bartered for, and the subject of some skillful wheeling and dealing. If all else fails, there are vintage car part swap meets and junk yards in remote rural towns.

On-the-road damage to the cars is protected by a variety of special insurance policies. Among them is the policy put out by the Michigan Street Rod Association. Owners evaluate their own cars and then set their policies on that basis.

For all their pains in the buying and caring of their cars, they've acquired their own brand of pride in ownership.

"Anybody can buy a vet. It takes a certain type of person to build their own car," said Glover.

2 from area join honors college

Two Farmington Hills residents are among 49 students admitted to the Honors College at Michigan State University.

Linda C. Lawson and Janice Somerville of Farmington Hills were admitted to the college which requires students submit a statement of values,

goals and interests before being selected for the school.

Ms. Lawson, daughter of David and Ann Lawson, is majoring in accounting. Ms. Somerville, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Somerville is majoring in journalism.

Both are 1979 graduates of North Farmington High School.



Westland Garden Center and Nursery, Inc.
32553 CHERRY HILL
WESTLAND • 721-6610 Mon-Sat 9-7
(Between Meridian & Van Dyke) Sun. 9-5

Large Selection of
SHADE TREES, EVERGREENS, BROADLEAF
EVERGREENS, & ORNAMENTAL TREES
COMPLETE LANDSCAPING & DESIGN SERVICE

Get-To-Know-You-Specials
through Sept. 15

The Gathering
FOOD
DRINK
SPIRITS
TUNE-UPS

MONDAY: "Wet Your Whiskers" 95¢
TUESDAY: Super Soup, Salad, & Bread 11.95
WEDNESDAY: "All You Can Eat" Spaghetti 13.95
THURSDAY: "All You Can Eat" Spaghetti 13.95
MON-SAT: Daily Dinner Specials 15.95

32305 Grand River
Livonia • 478-1516

Scott Woolf Roofing
"We Stop Any Leak"

- FREE ESTIMATES
- 25 YEARS EXPERIENCE
- COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL

24 Hour Emergency Service
HOME: 661-5267 OFFICE: 646-2452
18161 W. 13 Mile Southfield, MI.

OPEN HOUSE/REGISTRATION
September 2-6

"Miss Harriet's"
DANCE STUDIO
Six Mile at Inkster - Livonia

- ★ N.Y. STAGE JAZZ
- ★ MUSICAL COMEDY TAP
- ★ CLASSICAL BALLET
- ★ HAWAIIAN - TOE
- ★ BALLROOM
- ★ INTERPRETIVE

Classes For
Pre-Schoolers to Adults

CALL
261-5200

Harriet Fernandez
Artistic Director

Westland Carpet Cleaning
SPECIAL \$5.00 Off Reg. \$30
Now \$25.00

Any Living Room and Hall
plus any additional room \$15
Includes:
Shampoo and Steam Cleaning

UPHOLSTERY Steam or Dry Clean

CALL NOW FOR APPOINTMENT
ULTIMATE CARPET CLEANING
Professional Carpet and Upholstery Cleaning
33223 W. Seven Mile (at Farmington) 478-6380
Bonded and Insured Livonia 478-6381

bookpeople
the two and only

orchard mall 851-9150
prudential town center 358-4646

West Bloomfield's
MOST FASHIONABLE
Address ...
om THE ORCHARD MALL
Orchard Lake Road north of Maple
West Bloomfield

Learn
Dungeons & Dragons!
Saturday 12 pm-4 pm
Complete Line of D & D Supplies

all for learning
om THE ORCHARD MALL
Ph 851-6770

Woodstoves

- BLACK BART - TIMBERLINE
- OL HICKORY
- and others

- Fireplace Inserts
- Free-standing Models
- Furnace Add-ons
- Insulated Pipe

ENERGY STORE
16709 Middlebelt (Between 5 & 6 Mile)
Livonia 427-3300

Deep Steam CARPET CLEANING
ANY 2 ROOMS SAVE \$10.00
\$39.95

Additional Room \$15.00 NO SIZE LIMIT

Includes:
• Color Brighteners • Spotting
• Soil Guard • Deodorizer
• Furniture Pads • Traffic paper

SAME DAY SERVICE
Have your carpet cleaned today!
CALL NOW FOR APPOINTMENT

FOUR SEASONS CARPET SALES & SERVICE
33717 Plymouth Rd., Dearborn 937-3800

Appearing now
DEAN RUTLEDGE
Tue-Thurs 7-12
Fri & Sat 8-11

FOOD TO GO WITH YOUR
FUN & SPIRITS
6086 W. Maple Rd.
W. Bloomfield
Ha' Penny Lounge 851-8880

HAGGERTY LUMBER & SUPPLY CO
FOR ALL YOUR BUILDING NEEDS
2055 HAGGERTY, WALLED LAKE
624-4551 or 356-6166

HOUSE OF DENTURES
Licensed Dentist

28350 Grand River
Farmington Hills
24th Street West
of 8 Mile Rd.

FREE
Consultation
and Exam

Relinize & Repairs Same Day
Quality Personalized Service
Partials

For Appointment
Call 478-1406

Stride Rite
Portside
8 1/2-12 M
12 1/2-3 M
3 1/2-6 M
5-9 M

Greg SHOES

BEL-AIR CENTER 10 Mile at Orchard Lake Farmington 477-2343
ORCHARD MALL Orchard Lake N. of Maple W. Bloom. 851-5566 Sun. 12-5
"Prescription Fitting is Our Specialty"

TAP DISCO BALLET JAZZ

JACK BARNES 642-4292
DANCE CENTERS INC. W. Bloomfield 851-2400

Rite Carpet

SAVE
30%-60%
Famous Maker
REINFORCED &
ROLL ENDS

LIVONIA
BRIGHTON Brighton Mall 227-1314
7 Mile and Middlebelt Across from Livonia Mall 476-8360
Mon., Thurs., Fri. 9-9:30, Wed., Sat. 9-8

GARAGE DOOR OPENERS

Genie MODEL GS409D \$175.00 INSTALLED
MODEL GS459D \$195.00 INSTALLED 1 Year Warranty

ALADDIN GENIE Sales & Service
722-0610 335-9079
NORTHVILLE-NOVI WEST BLOOMFIELD
PLYMOUTH-CANTON TROY-PONTIAC
FARMINGTON-SOUTHFIELD ROCHESTER-BIRMINGHAM

YES-SECURITIES THAT EARN • TAX DEFERRED*
14.5% • SECURED & INSURED
INTEREST • \$10,000 MINIMUM NOT REQUIRED

BUT-RATES ARE DROPPING...

In Livonia area **CALL NOW**
(313) 425-9000

*May be tax deferred within the structure of your Keogh Pension Plan or individual Retirement Account, either new or existing. ATTENTION RECENT RETIREES with lump sum pension money; roll over into an Individual Retirement Account to further defer taxes.

GRAND RAPIDS: (616) 942-1980 FLINT: (313) 733-6780 MIDLAND: (517) 636-7020

REMVEST Remvest Building 33636 Five Mile Rd. Livonia, MI 48154
SECURITIES INC.
Yes, I'm interested in increasing my investment potential.

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
PHONE (AREA) _____