

Flute World hits high note



retirement memos

Margaret Miller

Retirees have energy, expertise to spare

After we bought our Florida home but before we were in there, Joe and I were avid readers of the minutes of meetings for both condominium and neighborhood associations.

We read because we were eager to learn more about our some-day home. But what we noticed was the great amount of interest in these proceedings and the expertise and sense of urgency on the part of those in positions of responsibility.

That wasn't surprising, we agreed, in groups that involve a lot of retirees. These are people who have had much responsibility in their careers and know how to handle it. They have both know-how and energy to put into helping run things at their retirement base, and they have the time to use it.

NOW THAT we're on the scene at such a base, what we see both confirms our earlier judgment and adds a new dimension to it.

Soon after arriving here, we attended several meetings of the homeowners association on the island to give its directors a hand with publicity.

And in those meetings we realized we had seen but the tip of the iceberg when it came to meticulous and conscientious attention to association projects on the part of these retirees. Their reports were detailed almost beyond belief, and when we talked to them we were amazed at the time and dedication they gave their association.

We go to those meetings less now, partly because they're so darned long and partly because the association seems to be doing all right with regard

to publicity. But we know our interests as homeowners here are in extremely good hands.

AND JOE has added to his schedule another kind of meeting. He's on the board of directors for the condominium association.

These meetings are long, too, he tells me. Retiree-directors take their assigned responsibilities seriously and report on them in detail. Decisions are not made without thorough discussion. Also, his part is to keep track of rentals to be sure association rules are followed, and he finds he gets plenty of "help." Several retiree residents have the time to take note if violations occur, and they make sure they let him know about them.

Retirees leaving the business world tend to have energy and interest that needs focusing somewhere. It makes for organizations that are well-run, maybe at times a bit over-run, when they are involved.

Margaret Miller was Suburban Life editor for Observer Newspapers for 16 years. She and her husband Joe have retired to Florida, where she writes Retirement Memoirs.

"Flute World" — established a year ago by Shaul Ben-Meir on 13 Mile and Orchard Lake Road — is a special store. Before opening his current store, Ben-Meir had a store on Twelve Mile and Southfield in partnership with Ervin Monroe (principle flutist in the DSO).

This store is unique in the nation and there are very few others like it. We receive here calls from all parts of the United States, asking questions about flutes and flute music — was one of his first comments.

Ben-Meir, a student of Jean Pierre Rampal and a member of the DSO, is obviously a professional in his field. His store is meant to be a place of a music center than just a place to sell merchandise. He maintains a library of the available flute music and will order anything necessary to replenish his stock. A musical catalog is presented to

inform the buyer of the available music for flute today. There are also recordings and tapes of flute music.

He talks about the most outstanding musicians in the history of the modern flute, one of them being Marcel Moyse, and he mentions with pride that he is currently teaching Monique Moyse, Marcel Moyse's granddaughter.

DURING the interview, a flute teacher comes in with a Louis Lot flute that one of his students sold him. Ben-Meir and the teacher look the flute over together. It is about 80 years old. It has been changed over and rebuilt a couple of times. The finger holes on the keys have been filled and will have to be opened up again to enable a more professional technique of playing.

The month place has been changed and enlarged by a millimeter in comparison to the original make. One part of the flute is loose and will have to be soldered into place again. Ben-Meir offers to do some of the repairs in the coming days, although some of the pieces will have to be specially ordered.

The knowledge of the mechanical build of the flute has come to him through the many years of exposure to the instrument and interaction with the best masters. The creator of the modern flute, Theobald Boehm (1794-1881) developed the measurements of the modern flute, as it is today.

Through his developments, the flute has become a much easier instrument to play. Before him, "one had to be a Paganini on the flute to play flute sonatas by Bach but today these are considered only moderately difficult."

Over the last year, the store has been dealing with music departments in the

area schools — Orchard Lake, Farmington, Novi, Wixom, and others. Ben-Meir handles all problems with professionalism. He stakes his name and reputation on his products.

The store serves as a music school as well. During this last year, there were about 60 students involved, learning flute and other wind instruments. Ben-Meir screens for the best teachers. One can learn clarinet playing from Doug Cornelius, of the DSO. Laura Larsen and Ben-Meir's wife Liz, are among those who teach flute — both professional players and good teachers. For the coming year, Ben-Meir predicts a much higher number of students.

As one steps into the store, one senses the high degree of knowledge that permeates the environment. This store adds a quality of significance to our area.

Bingo pays off tennis house mortgage

Northwest Branch YWCA, 24940 Grand River, has just completed its tennis project, started in 1976, by buying the mortgage at a special ceremony early this month declaring the facility paid in full.

The mortgage burning ceremony, chaired by Irene Matheson of West Bloomfield, and Elizabeth Cadwallader of Livonia, was given in honor of the 150 YWCA members who have spent a collective 31,800 hours of volunteer time raising the money to pay off a loan amounting to \$440,484. The final payment on the loan was made in April of this year.

The celebration was postponed until September marking the 11th year of bingo which was started in September, 1973 at Northwest Branch YWCA.

The Saturday night bingo game was the chief source of funds which made the tennis house a reality for YWCA members and residents in the north-west area of Metro Detroit. According to Winifred Sawyer, Rosedale Park, the first bingo chairman at the YWCA, more than 122,000 persons have played bingo on Saturday night at the Y.

Over the 11 years the game has been in operation, the players have taken home about \$751,000 in prizes while proceeds were paying off the tennis house mortgage.

"Our YWCA members who have volunteered to work the bingo game every Saturday have made it all possible," stated Shirley Tolan of Birmingham, chairman of the Northwest YWCA board of management. "Their volunteer efforts show tangible results as witnessed in the four-court, air-conditioned tennis house. Our mortgage burning ceremony was in honor of our bingo workers," she added.

ALTHOUGH planning for the tennis house was started by the board and committees as early as 1973 following the swimming pool addition at Northwest YWCA, the tennis house was not completed until July 1976. Enrollment in tennis classes reached 1,400 by the middle of the summer 1984.

During this time court fees and tennis club memberships were kept at low rates so that tennis

could be accessible to those who could not afford an expensive racket club. No additional building fees or assessments have been charged to members or tennis players to offset the building costs.

"We are very proud of our volunteer participation at the YWCA and delighted with the results of their efforts," stated Ruth Ducey, branch executive.



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Christmas toy drive is on

The annual collection of Christmas toys is under way in Children's Leukemia Foundation of Michigan, based in Southfield. The new toys are collected for distribution at area hospitals and treatment centers for children with leukemia and related blood disorders.

"The tests the youngsters are given monitor their disease course and determine appropriate medications," said Lynn Schweigert, speaking for the foundation. "One such test, a spinal tap, involves injecting a needle into the spine and withdrawing fluid for study. Although necessary, these tests are painful. Often the only way to replace those tears with smiles is through the gift of a toy."

For nearly three decades, the foundation has been sending toys to hospitals throughout the state. It is at this

time each year the foundation asks help in making the enormous task possible.

For sanitary reason, only new toys can be accepted. Toys are needed in all price ranges, for all ages of children. They should not be gift wrapped.

Donations may be sent to Children's Leukemia Foundation, 19022 10 Mile Road, Southfield 48075. Or they may be dropped off in the office, between Southfield Road and Evergreen, between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. weekdays.

The foundation is a Torch Drive-United Way agency supporting research and providing patient services to victims of life-threatening blood disorders, adults as well as children. Inquiries are taken by calling 353-8222.

Graduation announced

Micell Lobay, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lobay of Farmington Hills, has graduated from Kelsey Institute in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. with a 4.0 point average. With a degree in computer engineering, she hopes to work in the space industry.

Lobay is a former student of Harrison High School and Oakland Community College.

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