

# International music series readies for 10th anniversary

Musica Viva, Michigan's premier international entertainment series, is readying for its 10th anniversary season. Since its creation in 1987, the series, in collaboration with Oakland Community College, has presented over 10,000 Michigan artists and 250 international guest artists in programs of music, dance and world premieres—ranging from the classics, jazz, world music, folklore and musical dramas to contemporary genres.

With programs like the Michigan Flamenco Festival, the Prague Festival of Film and Dance, and the Festival of World Music, Musica Viva has focused on fulfilling its mission to expose new audiences to cultural diversity, while encouraging tolerance and pride in ethnic heritage. According to series founder Ginka Ortega, the primary objective of Musica Viva is educational outreach.

"By partnering with OCC, we are able to provide an experience for students, as well as present a cultural gift to the community right in its own backyard," Ortega said. All shows are at OCC's Orchard Ridge Campus in Farmington Hills.

In addition to OCC, the series works closely with numerous local educational, cultural, state and ethnic organizations. Supporters include: the

Michigan Opera Theatre, Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit Symphony Orchestra and the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs. Master classes, workshops and collaborative projects are also offered through OCC, Wayne State University, Center for Creative Studies, the University of Michigan School of Music and various middle and high schools.

The 10th Anniversary Season of Musica Viva opens Dec. 14 with a Flamenco festival featuring Juan Sezzano, "King of Flamenco Guitar." The show will also feature acclaimed Hispanic singers and dancers from South America, Spain and the United States including La Conja and Pepe de Molina.

Other series events include a joint appearance by piano virtuoso Scott Holden of Michigan and Tomoko Uchino of Japan on Jan. 24. On Feb. 22, the U.S. premier of the Brazilian musical "Magdalena" will be presented by Wayne State University Opera and Musica Viva artists.

For more information on the above shows, or Musica Viva's upcoming season call Ortega at (810) 626-9705. For ticket information only, call Ticketmaster at (810) 645-6666.

## STATE NEWS

**Catching up on Michigan's world of natural resources:**

### Deer crashes rise

Deer-related auto accidents in Michigan were up 10.4 percent in 1995, says the Michigan Association of Insurance Agents—more than 62,500.

And since 1986, vehicle-deer crashes have leaped 182 percent. Eight people were killed and 2,168 injured last year. Average collision claim cost: \$1,700. Highest county totals: Kent (Grand Rapids), 1,976; Jackson, 1,689; Calhoun (Battle Creek), 1,615.

Advice from the insurance people:

- Be cautious and slower when deer are on the move, such as October through December.
- Brake hard but stay in your traffic lane. It's safer to hit the deer rather than swerve off the road or risk hitting another vehicle.

- Worst times: dawn and sunset. Dim your instrument panel lights to make it easier to spot deer.

Michigan has 1.8 million deer.

### Wood cutting cut

Permits to gather firewood from state forests are discontinued from Oct. 1 through next March 31, DNR announced.

When they're available, they're valid for 90 days, cost \$20 and entitle you to five standard cords of wood. Wood may be collected only for personal use (no resale) from downed or designated trees.

### Think summer

Campgrounds in Michigan State Parks are so popular that it's a good idea to reserve a spot by telephone and credit card. It's

for cheaper than searching in frustration through crowded campground the first evening of your vacation. You may reserve 11 months in advance.

"By planning now, campers can be sure they get their first choice of parks, especially for holiday weekends," said O.J. Scherschligt, DNR chief of parks and recreation.

Know what park you want to use, and have alternative dates and places in mind if your first choice isn't available.

Be ready to provide your name, address, camping equipment size and type, Visa or Mastercard number, and telephone number of a contact person. Or you may ask for a mail-in reservation form from any state park or the toll-free number.

The toll-free number is 1-800-5432-YES between 8 a.m. and 11 p.m., weekdays and 8 to 5 on weekends.

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## The voice of public education

# Public schools— a choice for all children

Bernard Robinson would never turn his back on a needy child. As a Michigan public school employee, he can't. As a caring human being, he wouldn't.

But Robinson, a social worker in Pontiac public schools, worries that presidential candidate Bob Dole is turning his back on the majority of the nation's children and their parents by touting private school vouchers as a solution to public school problems.

"Most parents don't necessarily think the grass is greener at private schools," said Robinson, a veteran educator. "Many just want the grass to be a little greener at their own neighborhood schools."

He's right.

In recent polls, most American parents—Republican and Democrat—say they oppose diverting public school funds to send a handful of children to private schools. They want their tax dollars to support a public school system that is responsive, responsible and reflective of their community's values.

But, instead of emulating the countless success stories in our public schools, the Dole voucher scheme would rob our nation's public schools of \$2.5 billion. That money is now being used to pay for successful programs that support high academic standards, boost basic skills and promote safe and drug-free schools.

Under Dole's vouchers, those called "opportunity scholarships," those resources would be given to some middle and lower income families in the form of partial-tuition coupons that they could use at any private school that would accept them.

The problem is that private schools, not parents, will be making the choices. Private school officials decide whom to accept—the best basketball players, children of a certain faith, well-behaved children. No voucher system guarantees that private schools will accept every child who applies.

That means parents with a disabled or difficult child could shop forever and not find a private school willing to work with their child.

Parents who cannot find transportation to get their child to and from the private school of their choice would be left out in the cold.

And parents who don't speak English

might never find their way into the loop.

Our public schools embrace every child who arrives at their doors, no matter what their race, religion, ability or disability. Our public schools reflect the diversity of our community. They are microcosms of the "real world." That is precisely why public schools are the backbone of our democracy.

That is also why public schools reflect, and are often called upon to resolve, the challenges of our communities. Indeed, our public schools are helping chart the course our nation will follow into the next century.

For most public school employees, working with children is a labor of love. They don't need the kind of competition a voucher system would create to do their jobs well.

What they do need is parental involvement, time and community support. Just ask Robinson. He works with some of the most troubled children—those who are hungry or abused, those who are hearing impaired or learning disabled. He knows that the only way he can succeed is in partnership with the home and the community.

A commitment from our politicians to build on what is best in our public schools, he believes, would do more to improve public education than giving private school vouchers to only a few.

Vouchers will not magically create high expectations, increase parental involvement or ensure discipline. School-community partnerships will.

Such collaboration takes hard work, mutual respect and communication. Bernard Robinson and other Michigan public school employees from Marquette to Monroe are building such bonds between the school and the community.

We all should be doing our part to make those relationships work. Only then will it become crystal clear that a competent, committed school community—not vouchers—makes education work.



Julius A. Maddox  
MEA president

# OCTOBER HOME FREE

# HOUSE party

# WIN \$150,000 & you could be home free!

Whether it's your dream home, a cabin in the woods, or just paying down your mortgage, you could be "home free" in Casino Windsor's Home Free House Party contest. Casino Windsor and Northern Belle Casino will draw for 5 cash prizes totaling \$5,000 U.S. every weekday in October. At the end of the month, we'll draw for a grand prize of \$150,000 U.S. CASH which you can use to help make your dream home a reality. Entering the contest is easy: receive one entry ticket when signing up for a Club Windsor card

in October; or every hour on the hour, when playing a slot machine or table game, or by attending the Club Windsor booth at Casino Windsor or Mardi Gras Deck at the Northern Belle Casino. Drop your ticket stub in the specially marked drum and look for your ticket number on the prize board! Tickets for cash prizes will be drawn each weekday at 8:00pm. Even if you don't win one of our daily prizes, you can still win by holding on to your ticket stub for the \$150,000 U.S. Grand Prize at the end of the month!



Complete rules and regulations are available at Casino Windsor, and Northern Belle Casino. Winners must first correctly answer a math, spelling or trivia question to be declared a winner.