

## CONVERSATIONS



FRANK PROVENZANO

### Local author finds answers from passages

Rich Rahn is infatuated with life. At 40 years old, he's taking stock of a lifetime of habits. Some good, many bad.

Rahn has gone through enough passages to make the roads of his life read like a busy airport monitor with a list of departures and arrivals.

And by all appearances, the one-time surfer, construction worker, deck hand, car salesman and waiter is settling in.

But that's not to be mistaken for slowing down.

Rahn of Bloomfield Hills still searches restlessly for what he calls the "flow" of life. He has a simple response for anyone looking for deeper meaning, yet still clings to routine.

The word, of course, is also the name of his new publishing company — "Dahl" Succinct and understated.

If there was ever a contemporary expression packed with layers of philosophical enlightenment, "Dahl" is it. And Rahn is the disciple.

With a youthful earnestness and an entrepreneur's zeal, Rahn has assembled the most thought-provoking "Dahl" in his new book, "Evolue yourself."

Don't expect heavy psychological theory. The introduction in Rahn's book opens with a quote by Dante and Jefferson Airplane.

The simple message: "Feed your head."

#### Road back home

Rahn readily concedes that his credentials for writing a book about life don't come from a career of academic study. Life, for Rahn, is more like a pair of worn shoes than a framed certificate hung on the wall.



Rich Rahn

"I don't want to argue theology or what's true. It's just my way of saying here's a way of looking at life and being more human."

Unlike these Life's Little Instruction Books on the counters at book stores, Rahn's book has a refreshing intimacy.

Obviously, the author speaks about the need to change and evolve from experience.

Rahn moved back to the area after he attended his 20-year reunion of Seaholm High School in 1976. Rahn was expelled. He loaded up his Ford truck and headed to the California surf.

He changed addresses more frequently than most people rotate their tires.

Evolution times two

The night of his class reunion, however, serendipity was in the air, he said. He smiles to think that there's a mystical force at play.

This is, after all, a guy who lives by the ancient Indian proverb: "Wherever you are, there you are."

On that night of his class reunion, Rahn recalled talking with a former classmate, Mary O'Neill. They talked about their deep interest in the writings of Joseph Campbell.

Serendipity, there you are. Rahn and O'Neill have been sharing books

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WHAT: Book signing — Rich Rahn, author of "Evolue Yourself"

WHEN: 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 21

WHERE: Borders Books, 34300 Woodward Ave., Birmingham, (248) 203-0005

# PHOTOGRAPHY

## TRANSCENDS BARRIERS BETWEEN STUDENTS

By LINDA ANN CARMON

STAFF WRITER

David Calder and Amanda Aaron never really noticed the racial or religious backgrounds of the students in their Focus: HOPE photography project. They were too busy trying to get a better look at the lives of people who are personally diverse.

While the two students, who are now project planners, were in high school, they met at the Detroit High School for the Arts and Jim and Linda's daughter, the result was the same: to bring together

metropolitan Detroit high school students from all backgrounds, ethnicities and religions, to people of diverse racial, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds. The project was in keeping with the premises on which Rev. William T. Cunningham and Eleanor Joseph founded the civil and human rights organization back in 1968.

Talia, a junior at Marian High School in Bloomfield Hills and Aaron, a senior at Highland Park Community High School, exhibit their images along with 60 other students through Feb. 1 at Summit on the Park Community Center in Canton. The show is co-sponsored by Canton Project

Arts and Focus: HOPE's community arts department. The students were more than just going to be city kids but they were from all over. I learned there's more people out there than just me. I'm thinking they have a different life but they don't, they're just like me."

During the introductory session, students read the Focus: HOPE mission statement that encourages everyone to work to "overcome racism, poverty and injustice" and to recognize "the dignity and beauty of every person." Students were then

divided into groups of varying cultural, geographic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. After a tour of Focus: HOPE, students were given 35 mm cameras and rolls of film and taken out into the neighborhood surrounding the facility for their first shoot. Afterwards, students were sent home with the assignment to photograph their own communities, families and friends then mail back the film so they could share their images during the second session.

"It's really amazing to watch them come in the first day, shy and barely speaking to one another," said Bathish, community arts department manager and a Clarkston resident. "When the students share their images, it helps other students find out where they're from and opens a dialogue. By the last session, they're exchanging phone numbers."

Photographers and mentors volunteer to work with each group of eight students. Gina Granger, an assistant educator at the Detroit Institute of Arts, was a mentor to students in projects in 1995 and 1997 and plans to volunteer her time for the third time beginning in spring 1999. She also serves on Focus: HOPE's arts advisory board.

"It's a great project because it involves young people with the camera," said Granger. "They use the camera to look at their environment, social group, neighborhood and the greater community. Each group

Please see PHOTOGRAPHY, C2

WHAT: Canton Project Arts hosts the Photography Project of Focus: HOPE, which reflects students' perceptions through the eyes of the camera.

WHERE: Through Monday, Feb. 1. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Sunday.

WHERE: In the pre-function area of Summit on the Park Community Center, 46000 Summit Parkway, Canton. For more information, call (734) 397-6450.

Also at water Center: Project Arts hosts a Family Storytelling festival featuring the talents of Debra Christian, Ron Lowe, Judy Sims and Marc LeJare.

On Saturday, Jan. 23 at Summit on the Park. An all day event with workshops taking place 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., a children's show at 11:30 a.m., and family storytelling show at 7 p.m. Tickets for all events are \$8 family, \$3 individuals; family or children's show only, \$5 family, \$2 individual.

Advanced tickets available at the Summit. For information, call (734) 397-6450.

WHAT: Three Tenors in concert, featuring José Carreras, Plácido Domingo and Luciano Pavarotti. The concert is sponsored by Ford Motor Company.

WHERE: Saturday, July 17

WHERE: Location to be announced. For information, (313) 961-3500

WHAT: The image of Detroit and the American automotive industry is inseparable, said Nasser.

"This event will put Detroit on the (cultural) map and further polish (the city's) image."

The Three Tenors — José Carreras, Plácido Domingo and Luciano Pavarotti — have been credited with broadening audiences through their PBS televised concerts, international concerts and two best-selling CDs.

Arguably, José, Plácido and Luciano are to the opera world in the late 1990s what John, Paul, George and Ringo were to pop music in the late 1960s.

Midway through the press conference, a taped interview with the three tenors was played.

In heavily broken English, Domingo noted that a "surprise"

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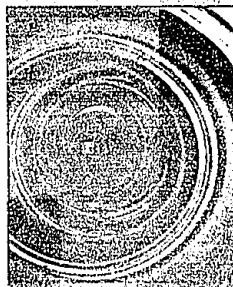
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Goin' in circles: David Calder took this photograph as part of Focus: HOPE's photography project for students of diverse backgrounds.

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## THREE TENORS CONCERT:

### Announcement delivered with operatic flair

By FRANK PROVENZANO  
STAFF WRITER  
fprovenzano@ec.homecomm.net

It's almost inconceivable that any corporate event could come close to the spectacle of even a mid-emotional range opera.

But last week's opening-night extravaganza of the Detroit auto show certainly had the appropriate blend of ostentation and melodrama.

As word of a major announcement by Ford Motor Co. swept through the ritzy, black-tie opening, legions of corporate employees filed steadily into the makeshift Trust Mark Auditorium inside Cobo Center.

Inside the 400-seat auditorium was Jacques Nasser, chief executive officer at Ford, standing alongside Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer. Most in the crowd thought breaking news of a mega corporate merger was at hand.

Of course, there was an imminent announcement, but not the kind of merger news auto industry watchers had in mind.

In the tradition of grand operatic gestures, Nasser announced Ford's unprecedented sponsorship of Michigan Opera Theatre's Three Tenors concert, to be held at a to-be-determined site on July 17 in Detroit. Mentioned sites include Joe Louis Arena, The Fox and Cobo Center.

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