

## Cause from page E1

Americans and Hispanics who have a smaller chance of finding matches.

Francke and Commissioned, an award-winning Gospel group from Detroit, are also scheduled to perform.

"It's a tremendous gift on the part of Marshall and 'Commissioned' to donate their time," said Francke, whose fifth CD, "Swimming in Mercury," includes some songs about his diagnosis and recovery.

Crenshaw has lived in New York for the better part of 20 years, including quite a long stint in Woodstock, the site of some legendary outdoor concerts.

He said he enjoys playing in theaters the size of Royal Oak's. More importantly, he enjoys its cleanliness.

"The dressing rooms are clean, there's no 'BS' on the walls," said Crenshaw, who co-wrote the Gin Blossoms recent hit song "Till I Hear It From You."

"I don't like to play in 'Rock toasters.' A lot of places I used to play prided themselves on being 'krungy.' Royal Oak Theatre is classy, cool. I used to go to

movies there when I was a kid. There's a lot of nice theaters in Detroit."

Ironically, it was a concert by Crenshaw back in 1981 at the Royal Oak Theatre that convinced Francke to quit his first job after college and go into music full time.

"Marshall's a terrific guy, one of the great rock 'n' rollers, a big favorite of mine," said Francke, who has two children with his wife Julia. "If I could have a wish list of people to play he'd be at the top of it."

Francke considers himself fortunate to have found a bone marrow match in his family. There is a one in four chance of a family member being a match.

A search outside an immediate family costs Leukemia patients \$10,000 and Francke's organization wants to defray the costs.

"I woke up one morning and absolutely knew I was going to match, had a ton of faith going in," his sister said. "We realized how lucky we were that I was a match, then heard horror stories about people who don't have a match, couldn't find matching

**What:** Benefit concert for The Stewart Francke Leukemia Foundation

**When:** Thursday, April 13, beginning at 6 p.m. with sample complimentary tastings from Royal Oak's D'Amato's Restaurant. A concert, featuring gospel group Commissioned, hometown favorite Stewart Francke and native Berkley rocker Marshall Crenshaw starts at 7 p.m.

**Where:** Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth between Washington and Lincoln.

**Why:** To raise money for research and awareness of the importance of blood marrow donors.

**Tickets:** \$75. Includes food and entertainment and silent auction. Call (248) 828-2865 or TicketMaster at (248) 645-6666 or log on to [www.sflf.com](http://www.sflf.com) for tickets. Cash bar.

donors."

Francke said the foundation has raised more than \$100,000 since its inception. General



Motors Vice Chairman Harry Pearce, the recipient of a successful stem cell transplant in 1998, has worked closely with Francke for the cause.

About 800 attended the inaugural event, according to Francke, and he anticipates 1,000 this year. He's hoping for a higher minority turnout.

"We're trying to change the face of the audience," Francke said. "Our mandate is to try to help people who need it the most. The chances of white people finding a match are twice as great as minorities."

"I'm lucky I had a match and lived. I depend on people. It's how I feel about the world, about life."

Crenshaw recently released a new CD, titled "Number 447," a name he said he picked for no particular reason.

"It's a watershed record for me," said Crenshaw, who has two small children with his wife Ione. "I couldn't think of a snappy name to give it."

**Fund-raiser:**

Stewart Francke founded The Stewart Francke Leukemia Foundation in hopes of helping others receive successful bone marrow transplants.

## Silence from page E1

ly we're in the midst of this," said Henry. "A year before they had a massacre and only two Jews are left. My lines set me up to be preachy. I'm dealing with the attitude that I'm supposed to be wiser than I am. This play is pertinent to what's going on in the world even today. You look around at what's happened in Sarajevo."

Art Collings, a member of the minstrel troupe, plays Avramel.

"He was a jester and is the professional actor of the band," said Collings, a Livonia resident. "He's seen it all so it's old to him. Being in the play has been a learning experience. It's made me think about things. How I would answer some of the questions — where is God when tragedy happens?"

Anessa Martin provides comic relief with her role as the barmaid who's somewhat of a gruff mother-figure. Her lines prevent the characters from sounding like they are in a debate.

### Learning process

"It's been a learning process,"

**■ 'It's been a learning process. The play is very wordy. Our challenge as a cast is to make it interesting.'**

Anessa Martin

Actress

said Martin of Redford. "The play is very wordy. Our challenge as a cast is to make it interesting."

Guy Snyder's character symbolically portrays the Catholic church. As the priest he asks, "what is the true nature of God?"

"Another massacre is on the horizon," said Snyder, a Livonia resident. "He wants Bereah to get out or to pretend to convert to Christianity. Every time we rehearse we discover something new about what Wiesel is trying to say. There's a lot of substance to the play."

## Wiggles from page E1

"We never ever thought of touring the world with what we do," said Page who dons a bright yellow shirt in all the Wiggles videos. "It is certainly very satisfying to think that what we do has been so well received by people in Australia, and is now starting to gain some recognition in other parts of the world."

Page said in 1991 the group took a leap of faith by giving up their regular jobs to become entertainers — nearly 10 years later they're the hottest children's group down under and have been gaining momentum in the U.S. since their first appearance in Sept. 1998.

"We first came to the U.S. to perform ... at Disneyland in California and then Sea World in Florida. It was a very brief stay, only about six days, but we still played to over 18,000 people while we were there," said Page.

### Stage show

The live stage show of "Barney's Musical Castle" will feature Barney and his friends Baby Bop™ and BJ. Barney's Musical Castle is a "whimsical

journey born of a child's imagination." Through Barney's guidance a day of fun building sandcastles turns into an adventure that ends up at a real castle. Barney, BJ and Baby Bop, along with several new friends, begin an excursion through an enchanted forest where sunflowers dance and a bunny, fox and bear are on hand to pave a path to a castle on the horizon.

Approximately 30 songs and dances will be played during the show.

### Popular format

Wiggles members Page says their success can be attributed to several things including their training as early childhood teachers.

"This gave us an incredible insight into the world of children, what they think about, how they think, what makes them act certain ways and of course, how to plan appropriate learning for them. Also, the songs seem to be quite popular with the children as well as the parents, so I think that if the parents can listen to the music it helps them tolerate, and then understand what it is the children are watching."

Coinciding with their April 2000 live performances will be



**The Wiggles**

& Friends: Captain Feather-sword (left to right), Dorothy the Dinosaur, Jeff Fatt, Henry the Octopus, Anthony Field, Murray Cook, Greg Page, and the Wags.

the Lyric® Studios release of both audio and video versions of "Wake Up Jeff!" Wiggles merchandise is available nationwide at Noodle Kidoodle stores, Blockbuster Video stores, Amazon.com, toys.com and FAO Schwarz stores.

"Small venues and those performances for us are always more rewarding," added Page. "It is a more personal way to see our audience and to ensure that we are connecting with the children."



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