

# Expressions from page C1

one concert a season." Rehearsals for the Plymouth Oratorio Society began in January. The choir meets the first four months of the year for an annual May performance. Lottie Reaser likes the flexibility of that schedule. She'd always loved choral music but was too busy raising a family to sing with a group until she joined the Plymouth Oratorio Society 14 years ago. "It's always been something I wanted to do since I was a young girl," said Reaser, a Canton resident. "I love choral music."

**Join the group**  
Ricciato encourages anyone interested in singing with the Plymouth Oratorio Society to join the group next January. For information, call Pratt at (734) 455-8953.

"It's open without audition," said Ricciato. "Some members are former music teachers but they come from all walks. People should not be afraid to join us if they like good choral music. If there's anything they need to know, I can teach them."

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its annual spring concert 4 p.m. Sunday, May 14, at Hill Auditorium, 826 North University, Ann Arbor. Tickets are \$12, \$9 students, call (734) 458-9336. "When I first moved to Plymouth I was looking for places to sing," said Fuller. "The Oratorio Society sings different music. The Rutter is a major work, a totally different experience. And I enjoy working with Dr. Ricciato. He's able to demand and still make you comfortable. He can make you laugh and be serious as well."

Have an interesting idea for a story? Call arts reporter Linda Ann Chomin at (734) 963-2146 or send e-mail to lchomin@oe. homecom.net

# Get ready to be 'Touched by a Song'

"It's A Grand Night for Singing," and you're sure to be "Touched by a Song," at one of these three "Choral Offerings" being presented this week by local vocal groups.

## Farmington Chorus

The Farmington Community Chorus celebrates its 20th anniversary with *It's A Grand Night for Singing*, to be presented 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, May 5-6, at Farmington High School on Shilwassee Road west of Orchard Lake Road. Tickets are \$10. Call (248) 788-5322 or visit the Web site, www.farmingtonchorus.com.

Under the direction of Steven SoGraves, the chorus will perform some of its best numbers from the past 20 years. Susan Garr will provide piano and key-

board accompaniment for the chorus of over 90 members. The Perfect Blend, a select group of 12 people, will also perform. Solos, duets and small ensembles will complete the evening's program, but watch for some very special surprises.

## Plymouth Community Chorus

The 126-voice Plymouth Community Chorus will present its annual spring concert, *Touched by a Song*, 8 p.m. Friday, May 5, and 7 p.m. Saturday, May 6, at First Church of The Nazarenes, Haggerty at Eight Mile Road in Novich. Tickets are \$8 and can be purchased at Sideways, 505 Forest, Plymouth; Evola Music Center, 7170 N. Haggerty Road, Canton, or by calling (734) 455-

4080. A variety of songs are on the program, including *You'll Never Walk Alone*, *Impossible Dream*, *Wade in the Water*, *Love Will Find A Way*, and *The Time of Your Life*. The chorus was founded in 1973 and its members come from 25 communities in southeastern Michigan.

## Schoolcraft College Community Choir

Fifty voices strong, the Schoolcraft College Community Choir will present *A Choral Offering* with small orchestral accompaniment, 7 p.m. Sunday, May 7, at St. Matthew's United Methodist Church of Livonia, 30900 Six Mile Road, between Merriman and Middlebelt roads. Donations

will be accepted during intermission. For more information call (734) 462-4435. The choir, ending its first year under new director Mark Perrine, will perform Gabriel Faure's *Requiem*, Ralph Manuel's *Alléluia*, several spirituals and a variety of choral compositions.

Celebrating its 35th season, the choir is a skilled ensemble dedicated to performing music of the masters. Offered through the Liberal Arts Department at Schoolcraft College in Livonia, the choir presents at least two major concerts each semester. Membership includes both college students and experienced singers of all ages throughout the metro area. Auditions for the group are held at the beginning of each semester.

# Chorus from page C1

Canton, Farmington Hills, Troy, and West Bloomfield.

"It's a performance group but also a class with educational components," said Sheets. "With a group that also we can perform every choral genre."

Sheets would like to pattern the chorus after the 150-member University Musical Society Choral Union, which he's conducted the last 7 years. An un-auditioned group, the Oakland Community College Masterworks Chorus would develop musical skills that would allow it to perform as a small chamber ensemble or as a chorus capable of large works with orchestra. Sheets, who's been involved

with church music nearly 30 years, earned his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in choral music at the University of Southern California. He came to Michigan in 1993 to direct the University Musical Society Choral Union at the request of Society president Kenneth Fischer.

"I hope to develop a group that's large enough and skilled enough to perform choral music of every genre," said Sheets, who also teaches graduate choral studies at Wayne State University. "This semester we've already done a wide range of literature from Palestrini to Brahms, to Gilbert and Sullivan and gospel music. I like good music of every

type. Our musical theater program features a lot of variety."

Chorus members have a variety of reasons for belonging to the group. This is Jodi Allhands' first semester with the chorus. A Canton resident, Allhands is studying elementary education at the college. She's never sung in a choir before but thought it would help her overcome the fear of speaking before a crowd.

"I'm scared to death to sing in front of people," said Allhands. "I'm excited because this is my first performance, but it'll be fun. The chorus is great for honing presentation skills and we meet lots of different people from different countries. It's neat to

talk to them."

By day, Dianne Larimer is an admissions counselor at William Tyndale College in Farmington Hills. At night, she loves to sing. Larimer had sung in choirs while a student at a high school in Jackson. Ever since, she moved to Farmington Hills, she's wanted to sing in a choir again. Her favorite selection on the program is *Neighbors' Chorus* from a French opera by Jacques Offenbach.

"It's something I want to continue with," said Larimer. "Dr. Sheets challenges us to become better musicians not just a fun, sing-a-long group."

## ART BEAT

*Art Beat* features various happenings in the suburban art world. Send Wayne County arts news leads to *Art Beat*, *Observer Newspapers*, 36261 Schoolcraft, Livonia MI 48150, or fax them to (313) 591-7278.

**FINAL CALL**  
Celebrate Indian culture at the Arts of India Festival featuring dance, poetry readings, roundtable discussions, yoga lectures and demonstrations, and a dinner Friday-Saturday, May 12-13 at Schoolcraft College, 15600 Haggerty, between Six and Seven Mile roads, Livonia. Admission is \$70 for all events, or \$25 conference, \$10 concert/dance recital (Friday), \$40 Indian buffet dinner/dance recital (Saturday). For more information or to register, call Robekah Weber at (734) 462-4400, Ext. 5941. Deadline to register is Monday, May 1.

**ARTS MEETING**  
Three Cities Art Club meets 7 p.m. Monday, May 1 at the Plymouth Township Clerk's Office at Ann Arbor Road and Lilley. For information, call Annalee Davis at (734) 427-8524.

By a sample of your work. A ribbon will be awarded to the most popular painting as determined by a vote. You need not be a member to win. May's program features Canton artist Kay Rowe who owns Village Artists Studio in Plymouth. Rowe demonstrates watercolor techniques including overlapping images and layering with transparent glazes.

**IRISH MUSIC**  
The Detroit/Ann Arbor Grupal Ceol, which won first place in the Midwest Irish Band Competition and second in the All Ireland Competition last year, will give a concert 8 p.m. Saturday, May 6 at the Gaelic League, 2085 Michigan Avenue, Detroit. Tickets are \$7 at the door. Proceeds will help fund the group's return to the All Ireland Competition. For more information, call Sean Gavin at (313) 537-3489.

**FESTIVAL FUN**  
Don't miss out on all the fun at the Farmington Festival of the Arts continuing through Sunday, May 7 at the Wm. Costick Center, 28600 Eleven Mile (gate four), Farmington Hills. Farmington community arts organizations present exhibits, concerts, theater, dance, poetry readings, and hands-on activities. Events are free except for gala, Farmington Community Chorus concert and Farmington Players production of *Kiss Me Kate*. Hours are 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Sunday-Friday, April 30-May 6, until 5 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, May 6-7. For more information, call (248) 473-1818.

**IMPRESSIONIST LECTURES**  
The Plymouth Community Arts Council hosts a lecture on the French Impressionists noon Tuesday, May 9 at the Joanne Winkelman Hulce Center for the Arts, 774 N. Sheldon at Junction, Plymouth. The brown bag lecture will be presented by a docent from the Detroit Institute of Arts. Admission is \$3. Call (734) 416-4ART for more information.

If you miss this lecture, later in the day Hope Palmer will talk about Post-Impressionism at 7:30 p.m. in the Wm. Costick Activities Center, 28800 Eleven Mile, Farmington Hills. Tickets are \$10. Call (248) 473-1818. Palmer, an associate professor of humanities at Lawrence Institute of Technology and Oakland Community College, and art department chairman at North Farmington High School will lead the audience on a journey through Paris when it sizzled in the 1890s.

**MARKET OPENS**  
The Ann Arbor Artisan Market opens Sunday, May 7 at the Ann Arbor Farmers Market site, 315 Detroit Street at Fourth, one block east of Main, next to Kerrytown. The Artisan Market remains open 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sundays until Christmas.

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