

Auction

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Wings games, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Michigan Opera Theatre, Detroit Institute of Arts and Purple Rose Theatre. A two-hour tour of the Detroit Zoo with director Ron Kagan is another one-of-a-kind item. A helicopter ride for four, 18 holes of golf at St. John's Golf and Conference Center in Plymouth, a signed Ken Burns jazz video collection and a certificate for classes at Bkman's Yoga College of India should pique bidders' interest as well.

Those who love to dine out will want to take note of certificates for dinner at Ernesto's, Station 885 and Cafe Bon Homme. For the stay-at-homes, there's a chance to bid on nine loaves of bread from the Canton Bread Company. Their garlic-cheddar bread is a savory treat if there ever was one.

Meal fit for royalty

In addition to the opportunity to bid on auction items, guests will be treated to the sounds of the madrigal singers from Plymouth-Canton Community Schools, then, after a meal fit for a king or queen, dance the night away to the swing music of The Gousters.

Feel like playing a little golf? Guests can take their chances on a putting green. Anyone who gets a hole in one will be entered in a drawing for a Callaway putter.

"We're using a bent stick like they did in Scotland when golf originated," said Harrison. "We want it to be an elegant evening with something for everyone. This is our only fund-raiser and we wanted to concentrate all our efforts on this one event. The

arts council operates on a shoestring budget. All of the money will go to sending all the fifth graders in Plymouth and Canton schools to the DIA and to promote the arts."

Last year's dinner auction raised \$30,000 of the annual \$170,000 budget that provides concerts in the park in summer, a fall theater series, year-round art classes and special events like ArtTrain. The arts council is bringing the "Artistry of Space" exhibit on board the Ann Arbor-based train to Plymouth's Old Village Oct. 27-30. School children and adults will be able to enjoy the works of Norman Rockwell, Peter Max and other artists created after visiting NASA and viewing first-hand the inner workings of the space program.

Exciting new activities such as an art camp this summer and a play workshop for ages 7 to 10 with members of the Village Pottery Guild April 17-19 broaden the scope of the arts council's offerings. A cultural diversity program in April on Armenia will bring the art, sounds and dance of the country to life.

"With the success of the dinner auction we're able to get back to things like bringing back Josh White Jr. to the high school to do a residency in April," said development director Stella Greene. "And that's due in large part to the money we raise from the dinner auction."

A free preview, 7-9 p.m. Friday, March 23, at the arts council will feature all of the auction items with some duplicates up for bid that night.

Devotion

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she is a general music teacher. Last year, she began an elementary string program for middle school students. She offers two classes a week for beginners and an intermediate class once a week.

"They're like little sponges," said Zurbuchen, a bassist who performs regularly with the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra and a swing band called Five Guys Named Mo. "The earlier they start, the easier it is for them to see music as a language. When they start later, they're not as

receptive to ear training. Teaching by ear is important for strings because they're not pushing buttons. They have to hear the right pitch."

Research

"And research shows early music training develops their brains, especially their abilities in math," added DePentu.

Jeff, Kristin and Derek Thieleman are less concerned with what research studies have shown and more with keeping up

with their 15-year-old brother. Ron plays bass in the high school orchestra.

"We went to one of the middle school orchestra concerts in which Ron was playing, and we decided to join," said Jeff, 15. "It's good to hear when we all play together instead of individually, and we like to play music."

"I think it's fun and a great experience," added Kristin, 10.

Derek, 11 plays bass, just like his 15-year-old brother Ron.

"I do it because I try to outplay

Ron," said 11-year-old Derek.

Instilling a love of music

The students have as many reasons for playing in the orchestra as there are bad horror movies. Zurbuchen and DePentu hope that early exposure to music will lead students to develop a life-long love of the classics, whether they go on to play professionally or in a community orchestra, or simply enjoy the beauty of the music from the other side of the stage.

Expressions

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life." So why are "The Prince of Tides" by Pat Conroy, "Searching for Caleb" by Ann Tyler, and Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings" trilogy among her favorites.

"I've always liked people and finding out about people," Pearl said. "As far as liking good writing, my mother was a stickler for grammar. I like to be pleasantly stunned by an authors' use of language."

"I read every moment I'm not doing anything else and I try to do little else as possible. I write in the garden and I don't cook but I do enjoy baking. I start eight books for every one I finish. I'm a big believer in not finishing book you don't like. I try out many books."

Award-winners

Pearl does finish the books she reviews for the Seattle Times, Library Journal Magazine, and radio stations in Seattle and Tulsa. But if you don't have access to these publications or programs, "Now Read This" lists hundreds of award-winning novels. Pearl's second book will focus on 500 titles from the

1980s that weren't included in the first book due to space. It should be available at the end of the year.

"In the last 20 years fiction has gotten franker in its portrayal of the downside of life. There are subjects not explored in the 1950s. There's more sex and grunginess. There's a much wider choice of books to read and they're not to everybody's taste."

"I wrote 'Now Read This' because I think people want direction. The world of books is large."

That's one of the reasons Nancy Swanborg is bringing Pearl to Schoolcraft College in Livonia for the March 30 lecture, and a symposium for faculty, students and anyone who wants to participate Saturday, March 31 at the college's Radcliff Center in Garden City.

"We wanted to engage people across disciplines," said Swanborg, director of the Women's Resource Center. "There are many reading groups we know exist in the community. 'Now Read This' helps them find good mainstream fiction."

Before listening to Pearl talk

about books, you might want to take part in a Wednesday, March 28, buffet luncheon and lecture to celebrate women. You learn about women who received Nobel prizes for their discoveries, the first woman appointed to the U. S. Supreme Court, and those instrumental in the Civil Rights Movement.

Luncheon

"The luncheon is dedicated to famous women who made a difference in different spectrums, women in every area of life who had made significant contributions," said Swanborg. "When we think about early explorers we think of men like Louis and Clark but the reality is there were women in every one of those wagons. Willa Cather wrote stories about Nebraska. When we talk about World War II, the men went off to fight the war but it was the women who took over this country and made it run. Everyone knows about Rosa Parks not giving up her seat on the bus but there were lots of women in the Civil Rights Movement. The book 'Michigan Women: Founders and Firsts'

reveals many of these women and they're invisible. It's important to say they made a difference."

Every woman makes a difference to the staff of the Women's Resource Center which provides resources for single mothers and homemakers. Their "From Chocolate Chips to Micro Chips" program assists women in transition especially homemakers trying to enter the work force after a divorce or death of a spouse. The program helps them develop assertiveness skills and prepares them for job interviews as well as provides basic computer skills.

That's why the center's annual spaghetti fund raiser 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 28 is so important. Tickets are \$25 or 2 for \$60. If you'd like to help keep the center helping others, call (734) 482-4443.

Have an interesting idea for a story? Call arts reporter Linda Ann Chomin at (734) 953-2146 or send e-mail to lchomin@oe. homecomm.net

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