

Thursday, May 14, 1981

Charlene Slabey

Composer takes 1981 Artist-in-Residence award

Composer Charlene Slabey has won the 1981 Artist-in-Residence Award sponsored by the Farmington Area Arts Commission (FAAC). The award will be presented June 7 at a Farmington Community Center reception.

The Artist-in-Residence Award is one of four awards chosen by the FAAC Awards Committee this year. Service-to-the-Arts Awards will be presented to Hope Nahstoll of the Farmington Players and to Paul Barber, conductor of the Farmington Community Band.

The Farmington Players will receive the new Organizational Service Award, given for the first time this year. This award will be accepted by Farmington Players Director Winton McCall. The 1981 winners were chosen from 20 nominations in the fields of drama, painting and music.

The Artist-in-Residence Tribute Committee is chaired by Betty Paine, director of the Farmington Community Center and is composed of Jan Dolan, Farmington Hills City Council; David McCabe, president, McCabe Funeral Homes; William Mitchell, Farmington City Council; Lawrence Freedman, assistant superintendent of Farmington Public Schools; and Iris Sanderson Jones, freelance writer.

"We were very pleased with the response this year," Mrs. Paine said. "It

is the largest number of nominations we have ever had for these awards."

CHARLENE SLABEY will receive the Artist-in-Residence Award and a cash prize of \$500 for her work as a pianist, composer and teacher. She majored in music at Cass Tech in Detroit and has studied at the University of Detroit, Eastern Michigan University and the Detroit Institute of Music.

"I was only 3 years old when I first sat at the piano making sounds," she said. "By age 7, I wanted lessons so badly that I stopped a piano teacher in the street and brought her home."

"She gave piano lessons in exchange for dinner."

Mrs. Slabey was playing with much more famous musicians by the time her first compositions were played at Eastern Michigan University.

Her "Clarinet Suite" was performed then by Marius Fossenk, who was clarinetist for the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. That same "Clarinet Suite" will be played at the Arts Awards Reception by Mrs. Slabey's daughter, Mindy.

Teaching music to children is one of the most important facets of her life.

"Amazing things happen when you teach composition to a child," she said.

"I ask my students to think of their favorite occupation, and they write music about baseball and popcorn." Her students have won several awards for their work.

THIS COMBINATION of artistic creativity and service to the community is common to all of the award-winners this year. Paul Barber, coordinator of music for the Farmington Public Schools, is known throughout the community for his work with the Farmington Community Band.

Barber played in both band and orchestra as a student at Redford High School, where he won auditions to play with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and at University of Michigan, where he earned his bachelor of music degree in 1966.

He began change the Farmington music scene immediately after he moved into the public schools here that year with his wife, clarinetist Fern Barber.

Together they founded the Farmington Civic Band, which is now the Farmington Community Band, an umbrella organization for seven musical groups. The Dixieland, Jazz, Concert, Clarinet Choir, Chamber, Wind, Brass Ensemble and Euphonium Quartet all play

regularly throughout the area.

Barber still plays the trombone regularly, but he moved into teaching because he said it allows him to share the excitement of music with youth on a daily basis instead of pleasing a conductor and an audience once in a while through performance.

"The most exciting thing is to know that most of the music students still play instruments through college and into adulthood, even when they don't major in music," Barber said.

"It means that something happened here to make music part of their life."

HOPE NAHSTOLL, who played the cello before being distracted by a life in the theater, also works regularly with young people.

She had switched her major from music to history and was teaching in elementary schools when she first played in a presentation called "The Torch Bearer."

According to her, it "was a turkey" but a perfect vehicle for a new community theater group. She introduced it in Dearborn as a founding member of the Ford Motor Co. Player's Group, part of the Ford Employee Recreation Association, and as a founding member of the Farmington Players.

"It's a satire on the little theater movement, starring a woman who thinks she knows everything about the theater," Mrs. Nahstoll said. "I learned from this play that comedy is very difficult for a performer."

She has worked closely over the years with Winton McCall, who has been involved with theater all of his life and is now director of the Farmington Players.

The Artist-in-Residence and Service-to-the-Arts Awards will be given to the winners at a reception at 4 p.m. Sunday, June 7, in Farmington Community Center, Farmington Road between 10 Mile and 11 Mile Roads. The public is invited to attend.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Conductor and composer award winners share a common love of teaching children. The conductor is Paul Barber, who took a Service-to-the-Arts award. The composer is Charlene Slabey, named Farmington's Artist in Residence for 1981.

Poets tell of 'Women's Work'

Eight poets will recite and talk about their work under the theme "Women's Work, Women's Work," in an all-day program which begins at 10 a.m. Thursday, May 21 Orchard Ridge Campus, Oakland Community College.

Admission is free in Room J-409, Tirrell Hall.

The event begins with a coffee reception for the poets. The programs continue until 3 p.m. with a noon break for lunch. Guests may lunch in the Rathskeller Cafeteria on campus, or bring their own.

Patricia Hooper, who has had her work published in "Poetry," "Ohio Review," "The American Scholar" and "New Directions" leads off the roster of speakers.

She is followed by Melba Boyd, author of "At Eyes and Deadwood." Next on the program is Linda Nemec Foster, a finalist for the Anne Sexton Award, who appears with Arlene Biggs. Ms. Biggs won the Maragat Bridgman Award in 1978.

Stella Crews appears after the lunch break, at 1 p.m. with Christine Lahey-Dolega, holder of the Hopwood Award.

Mary Louise Angeli and Lorene Erickson team up for the 2 p.m. session of the day.

Ms. Angeli is holder of the OCC Creative Writing Award. Ms. Erickson is author of "Seasons of Small Purpose." The event will close with a period of open reading for local poets who wish to participate with poems concerning the women's work theme. Interested poets are invited to call WomenCenter, 476-9400, ext. 500 or 501.

Registration is not necessary for guests who wish to attend "Women's Work, Women's Work."

Youth update parable in musical production

The Biblical parable of the Prodigal Son, found in Luke 15: 11-32, has been turned into a modern-day story that will be staged by Nardin Park United Methodist Church's Carol Choir Sunday.

"Barbeque for Ben," written and composed by Donald F. Marsh, will be presented to the congregation and community during the regular Sunday services at 9:15 and 11 a.m. in the church sanctuary, on 11 Mile Road, west of Middlebelt Road.

The fourth-through sixth-grade youngsters tell the story in song of a lethargic Sunday school class which decides to act out the tale of the Prodigal Son, with each class member playing a part.

Tom Warburton, a sixth-grader, plays Ben, and Jim Hildebrand plays Ben's father, Mr. Jackson. The Sunday school teacher, Mr. Burns, is played by Dr. Allen Brown.

The production is directed by Nardin Park's minister of music, Melvin C. Rookus, who recognized in "Barbeque for Ben" an excellent vehicle for displaying the skills of upper elementary school children.

Rookus described the production as "somewhat of a folk musical done in an upbeat style with music that is universally appealing."

The youth will perform with the accompaniment of a tape of a full orchestra.

"One of the great charms of the work is the contrast between the sophisticated sound of the orchestra against the simplicity of children's voices. The combination is at once unique and satisfying," said Betty Love, who has seen the youth in rehearsal.

The youth have been rehearsing the musical for the past four months.



Kelly Vroman (left) and Barbara Van Buren team up in song for their roles in "Barbeque for Ben." The youths stage their musical production at the 9:15 and 11 a.m. services Sunday in Nardin Park United Methodist Church.

A recital for those who enjoy good vocal music

Voice teacher Marilyn Truitt has invited Mary Sue Ewing to be a guest soloist when she presents six of her students in a vocal recital at 7:30 p.m. May 16 in First Methodist Church of Farmington, on Grand River and Warner Avenue.

Mrs. Truitt's students in the recital are Ann Ruel, Maureen Latimer and Jennifer Buss, all from Farmington; Debra Palmer of South Lyon; Earl Sexton of Garden City, and Elizabeth Ramsey of Dearborn Heights.

Beverly Notestine and Verna Rob-

erts, both of Farmington Hills and both piano teachers, will be accompanying the students. Mrs. Truitt, Mrs. Ewing and the accompanists are all members of Farmington Musicales.

Mrs. Ewing is a graduate of Mercy College and has studied with the late Anthony Marlowe. Her current teacher is Barbara Windham and her accompanist is Eleanor Peels, who also accompanies Oakway Symphony.

Mrs. Ewing has performed for Tuesday Musical of Detroit, Four Octave Club of Marygrove College and the

Farmington Musicales. She will close the program with Bellini's "Almen se non Poss'io," Puccini's "Doretta's Song" and a medley from "Guys and Dolls."

Mrs. Truitt's vocal recitals "are for anyone who likes good vocal music," she said. Admission to the recital is free.

She has been teaching voice in the area for 20 years, belongs to the National Association of Teachers of Singing and does much solo work throughout the metropolitan area.



MARY SUE EWING guest artist

ter and get into shape for summer and the coming swim suit season.

It is important that enrollment be made before May 22 for the discount rate of \$35, which also includes yearly YWCA membership.

Shape-up program begins in Y

Teen and adult women are invited to join the Spring Shape-Up Program, which will be held in Northwest Branch YWCA, 2540 Grand River, during the first three weeks in June.

Registration will open May 4 with a special package price for new mem-

bers who enroll during the YWCA membership drive between April 27-May 23.

The program is designed for women who want to take off the pounds and inches that have piled up over the win-



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Hope Nahstoll and Winton McCall congratulate one another on the grounds of Farmington Community Center where they will be guests of honor when

Farmington Area Arts Commission makes its awards presentation June 7.



Randy Borst/staff photographer

Tree dedicated

A new rubus maple tree in Farmington Memorial Park has been dedicated to the memory of Dave Jones, the late director of Farmington's Department of Public Services. Jones' son, Rick (at left) wields the shovel with his mother and Mabel Jones, sister-in-law of the deceased. The tree was purchased and dedicated by members of Farmington Beautification Committee.