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Sunday March 6, 2011

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Local arts groups support gifted kids

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Peggie Miller Performing arts columnist

Posted: Sunday, March 6, 2011 4:00 am

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The number of young students here who possess astounding talents never ceases to amaze.

Fortunately, local arts groups have encouraged youths by supplying diverse training and experience for many years.

THE CONROE SYMPHONY offers lessons and music opportunities through its youth symphony; both THE CRIGHTON PLAYERS and STAGE RIGHT furnish on stage training and performance experience; the PERFORMING ARTS SOCIETY presents MISSOULA (MONT.) CHILDREN'S THEATRE every fall; and the list goes on.

THE CONROE ART LEAGUE continues its outreach to youth with its annual SENIOR STUDENT FINE ARTS AWARD COMPETITION on Saturday, April 16. It's in the fellowship hall of Christ Church, 10087 League Line Road, exit off I-45. Only high school seniors may enter.

One very appealing facet of this exhibition / competition, in addition to the prestige of winning, is that cash prizes are handed out. First place gets \$500, and two runners up receive \$250 each.

Not a bad swag for kids needing to upgrade their I-phones or buy towels for college. Especially when there's no entry fee, and entrants may submit up to three paintings, sculptures, drawings or other media (upon approval). Believe that about covers it all.

Okay, here's the plan: Students are to bring artwork to the church from 10-10:45 a.m. April 16. At 11 a.m., students will be introduced and may discuss their work, inspiration or future plans. After a light lunch (it's free, too!), Art League members will vote and present the awards. One caveat: Students must be present to receive an award.

For additional information, go to sibrub@aol.com, or raderizms@hughes.net.

With STAGE RIGHT'S "Always ... Patsy Cline" closing after today's matinee in the Crighton Theatre, those who want to see MAREDITH ZARITSKI perform the title role again will get a second chance.

Community theatre, PLAYHOUSE 1960, is facing hard times because of fire code modifications and attendant expenses, as well as the need for a new air conditioning system. With only two weeks notice, Playhouse 1960 had to cancel its next production. Because that troupe staunchly supports Stage Right, the SR board of directors decided to offer "Always ... Patsy Cline" at Playhouse 1960 for three weekends beginning at 8 p.m. Friday, March 11. Ms. Zaritski stars in all performances there.

Tickets will go for \$15 or less. For more info or to reserve, go to www.ph1960.com.

Put this in the sounds-like-fun division: Introduce your pet to a Subaru, take a photo of the animal — in or out of the vehicle, submit it before March 31, and maybe win a prize for your trouble. Either way, it's fun. West Houston Subaru on Katy Freeway will even furnish the car, if you need one for a pose.

You could appear in a full page ad, get a \$1,000 pet portrait, Red Robin Gourmet Burger gift basket, and a lot of gift certificates.

To learn more go to www.WestHoustonVWSubaru.com.

Here's another fun event: You also may nominate all the women of distinction that you know for a recognition luncheon taking place April 8 in The Woodlands Waterway Marriott Hotel & Convention Center.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY WOMEN'S COUNCIL OF ORGANIZATIONS has put on this luncheon for 20 years.

Purpose is to honor distinguished volunteers for the county's local nonprofits, or "20 Years of Extraordinary Women Doing Extraordinary Things." This year's program is dubbed "Petticoats to Parasols — a Walk through Time in

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Fashion." For information about nominating a distinctive lady or two or about just being there, contact PENNY BRADSHAW at plpibradshaw@comcast.net or www.mcwco.org.

There went another of those I-wish-I-could-be-everywhere-events. JOHN COOPER SCHOOL had its 23rd annual fundraiser gala last eve at The Woodlands Marriott, and the possibilities for fun were endless.

In addition to a social period in the foyer, fabled prizes on a big board auction were — get this — a chance to take home a hand rolled cigar. A tuition raffle brought lots of interest and some large dollars, adding to the \$500 each couple paid for admission.

Inside the ballroom, guests wearing formal soiree chic or black ties found a "Sandbar Soiree, an exotic Escape close to Home."

The evening continued with student performances, dinner, a live auction, and optional dancing to rhythm and blues music from THE GREEN ONIONS. It's a Houston group here for an encore at JCS.

Communications Director DEB SPIESS said The Green Onions band has been around since the early 80s and owns a diverse play list, including hits from JAMES BROWN, ZZ TOP, ELTON JOHN, THE COMMODORES, THE O'JAYS, CRENDENCE CLEARWATER REVIVAL and on and on like that.

It happens every year, so now's a good time to plan ahead.

Send people and performing arts news to the e-mail address pegmillr@juno.com or call her at 936-448-6455.

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