

Press Release

Harp Concert May 1 Celebrates Beginning of Summer

Morgantown, WV, April 6, 2009 Local harpists will offer a May Day concert at 7:30 PM on Friday, May 1, 2009, at Trinity Episcopal Church in Morgantown. Featured guest harpist is **Leah Marie Trent**, from Ronceverte, WV. Local performers are **Eric Harshbarger**, **John Lozier**, and the **Almost Heaven Harp Circle** directed by **Cindy Lewellen**.

This year's concert will benefit a harp school in Barinas, Venezuela, and other programs of **Harping for Harmony Foundation (HHF)**. **Tickets are \$10 for adults, two for \$15, and free for children under 12.**

Leah Marie Trent plays the large concert pedal harp, as well as the smaller Irish, Celtic, and lap harps. She taught at Alderson Broadus in Philippi several years ago, then moved to Oklahoma City. There she built the harp program at the Classen School for Advanced Studies and created St. Patrick's Irish Harp Orchestra, before returning to West Virginia in 2006. More recently, she has taught harp for Irish Week at the Augusta Heritage Center in Elkins.

Eric Harshbarger started harping 12 years ago at the age of 4, when John Lozier played at his preschool. From his first harp, made by Lozier, he moved up to a Lyon and Healy Troubadour harp, and then the pedal harp, studying with Cindy Lewellen and with Christine Mazza. He performed with orchestras at Suncrest Middle School and Morgantown High School, and is a member of Mazza's Morgantown Harp Ensemble.

John Lozier performs music from many lands, with special attention to harp music of Latin America in general. His preferred instrument is a Venezuelan *arpa llanera*. He and like-minded others founded Harping for Harmony Foundation in 1995.

The Almost Heaven Harp Circle, under the direction of **Cindy Lewellen**, meets on the third Thursday of each month at the Church of the Brethren, 464 Virginia Avenue. The group consists of musicians of all ages and skill levels, and newcomers are always welcome. Look for information online.

Venezuela has a long history of strong support for folk and classical music and arts. In 2008, in Barinas, Venezuela, Lozier found not one, but two, harp schools! One teaches only the harp to relatively advanced students. The other serves a wider range of folk-cultural interests, with dancing, singing, and puppetry as well as harp and other instruments. Lozier's annual visits to Venezuela since 2005 have come to be known as ARPATUR (harp tour), engaging local people as well as a few intrepid internationals. The ARPATUR collaboration involves Venezuelan singer-songwriter and professor of agriculture Adolfo Cardozo and Caracas lawyer and pedal harpist Fernando Guerrero. ARPATUR-IV will take place in June, 2009, an expression of HHF's mission statement: **to promote harmony and community, locally and globally, through harp music.**

Another HHF project, started in 2000, is the Millennium Harper Awards. This award recognizes harpists around the world for their completion of a "worthy quest" involving live performance, local public service, and personal growth. Through this program, HHF has given away more than 40 small harps.

Other projects of HHF since its formation in 1995 involve support for harp teacher Lis Joostens in Honduras; training and support for harpmaker Rigoberto Hernandez in Guatemala; and travel support for Patrice Fisher to Guatemala and for John Kovac to Cyprus. In earlier years, John Lozier has traveled with his harp to El Salvador, Russia, Haiti, Northern Ireland, Guatemala, and Mexico.

Tickets are available in advance or at the door. Send order to HHF, 345 Virginia Avenue, Morgantown, WV 26505. You also may call 304-599-8233 or 304-276-5141 or email jl@harpingforharmony.org

More information:

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