

Day-camp program set for Camp Stella Maris

LIVONIA — Camp Stella Maris, 3052 E. Lake Road, is accepting registrations for its 1994 day-camp program.

The eight-week program, designed for boys and girls ages 5-10, opens July 4. Swimming, arts and crafts, spiritual programming, ball games and a field trip are among the camp's activities. This summer's theme will focus on music.

Camper transportation is available from Guardian Angels Church, 2061 E. Henrietta Road, Henrietta.

For details, call 716/346-2243.

Exchange program seeks host families

Host families are needed to sponsor teenagers through the International Student Exchange.

Exchange students, ranging in age from 15 to 18, come from France, Germany, the former Yugoslavia, Hungary, Luxembourg, Spain, Norway, Turkey, Colombia, Mexico, Brazil, Japan, Thailand and China. Other nationalities are occasionally available upon request.

Families in the Rochester diocese who are interested in helping this not-for-profit organization should contact Bob Walker at 315/331-7508 or Harryl Jones at 716/334-2941.

Elmira students raise \$997 with fundraiser

ELMIRA — Students at Holy Family Intermediate School, 301 Demarest Parkway, recently raised \$997 for St. Jude Children's Hospital.

Students in grades 4-6 collected funds through a "Math-a-Thon," for which they obtained sponsorship pledges to solve several math problems. This fundraiser served as a Lenten service project for the Holy Family pupils.

Volunteers sought to assist as tutors, aides

ROCHESTER — The learning center at the Threshold Center for Alternative Youth Services, Inc., is searching for volunteers to serve as classroom tutors and aides.

Threshold, located at 80 St. Paul St., provides instruction to high-school dropouts who are working toward their equivalency diploma.

Those interested in volunteering should call Jackie Efejuku at 716/454-7530.

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Aquinas band director James Ferris (far left) leads his talented unit during a May 12 rehearsal. S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

He's got lots to blow his horn about

AQ musician to tour in Europe

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Ever since its debut in the early 1980s, MTV has been the subject of heavy debate regarding its potentially negative influence on youths.

Steve Kushner, on the other hand, might be wondering what all the fuss is about.

Kushner, a 16-year-old Aquinas Institute sophomore, gives the music-video network partial credit for sparking his urge to play the saxophone.

"I always used to listen to the radio when I was young, and sax solos were big in rock music," recalled Kushner, who cited examples such as Foreigner's "Urgent" as well as riffs by former E Street Band member Clarence Clemons.

"Then when music videos started, Clarence Clemons would be on the stage. So it was visual as well as listening," Kushner remarked.

This interest led to saxophone lessons at a time when Kushner could barely lift the instrument — in second grade. "By fourth grade I was playing pretty hard music," he said.

Eight years later, Kushner's early dedication is showing some substantial dividends.

A member of the Aquinas marching, concert and jazz bands, Kushner is already quite active as a local performer. And, by the end of this summer, his talent will be known on the international level as well.

Kushner was recently accepted to play with the 1994 Spirit of America National Honor Band. This select unit, featuring musicians from across the United States,



Steve Kushner was recently accepted to play with the 1994 Spirit of America National Honor Band. The select group will perform a 16-day performing tour in Europe beginning in late June.

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Kushner is among the youngest of this 120-member group, which includes a number of college students. He was noticed by band organizers after performing with Aquinas in a music festival at Virginia Beach last year.

"It's a tremendous opportunity for a student like Steve because all the people going have the same dedication to music and performing," commented James Ferris, who serves as Aquinas' band director.

Ferris credits Kushner — an All-Monroe County saxophonist in both 1992 and 1993 — for helping the AQ music program make big strides in recent years.

"He kind of brought other people up to the level we were shooting for," said Ferris. "Unlike the public schools, we have to go out and recruit — and the best recruiting tool I can think of is having the best program."

To prepare for the European tour, Kushner just purchased his own \$2,500 alto saxophone last week. He also plays the tenor and baritone sax.

In addition to his saxophone exploits,

Kushner finds time to work in other activities not related to music. He is a youth-group member at St. John of Rochester Church in Fairport, and recently attained the rank of Eagle Scout with Boy Scout Troop 207.

Kushner admits to being "sort of nervous" about his upcoming European trip, which will include concert performances in Luxembourg, Austria, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands.

"I don't know anybody, but judging from when I came to school here, nobody comes from Fairport but everybody in the band was friendly. I think this (tour) should be a similar experience," he said.

Asked about future plans, Kushner said he plans to maintain a strong commitment to his craft — but is skeptical about building an entire career along those lines.

"There is only one Kenny G out there. I'm not sure I want to shape my life around music," remarked Kushner, who plans to major in architecture in college. "But even if I'm not doing it professionally, I'll always be playing."

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