

## STARS IN THE ARTS WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Naples, Florida (December 12, 2007) ~ The United Arts Council has announced the winners of the annual Collier County *Stars in the Arts* awards. This will be the fourth year for *Stars in the Arts*, a program initiated by the Council to spotlight contributions made by the local arts and cultural community.

Each year, the public is encouraged to submit nominations, and winners are selected by a committee that consists of past *Stars* winners and local arts leaders. From 38 nominations, three individuals and one organization have been selected for recognition, and they will be saluted at a luncheon on February 27, 2008. Winners are:

### **Dr. Ron Doiron**

*Musician and Educator*

Artistic Director and Conductor for The Bach Ensemble, Dr. Ron Doiron also serves as director of music for a local church. He has held positions in vocal and sacred music throughout the U.S., and served on the faculty of Duquesne University. He is a published author and served on a national board for the Directors of Music Ministries. An organist, choirmaster and musical conductor, Ron is an active member of The Bach Ensemble and the Naples Opera Society. He teaches and coaches many of Naples finest young vocalists.

### **Ted Tobye**

*Visionary in the Arts*

A life member of The Naples Players, Ted Tobye served as president of the organization for seven years. During his tenure, he managed the planning, financing and construction of the Sugden Theatre as a permanent home for The Naples Players. He has worked behind the scenes and served on numerous committees for the Players over the past 20 years. The Tobye Studio at the Sugden Theatre is named in Ted's honor.

### **Elaine Vreenegoor**

*Artist - Painter*

An early pioneer in the development of The von Liebig Art Center, Elaine Vreenegoor served several terms as president of the Naples Art Association (NAA). She one of several people credited with helping to raise the money needed to open the Center. Still an active artist, Elaine is still involved in the NAA. She is also currently serving as president of the Art Council of Southwest Florida.

### **Paradise Coastmen Barbershop Chorus**

*Non-profit organization*

A part of our cultural community for 30 years, the Paradise Coastmen Barbershop Chorus is dedicated to preserving the barbershop harmony style of a cappella singing. Nearly 100 members strong, the chorus, smaller ensembles, and quartets provide wholesome entertainment throughout the community, including performances for shut-ins, hospital patients, retirement communities, their annual show and hospice patients. They provide scholarships for students to further their vocal music education and are involved in numerous charitable endeavors.

Past recipients of *Stars in the Arts* awards are: Olga Hirshhorn, Dolph von Arx, Delores & John Sorey, Bill Meek, Clyde Butcher, Joel Banow, Dr. Ron Bowman, Andrea Clark Brown, Paul Arsenault, Jonathan Green, Kathy Spalding, Jim Rideoutte, Betsy & Al Harris, Charlie Horn, Mary Margaret Gruszka, the Philharmonic Center for the Arts, Naples Art Association, Art League of Marco Island, Naples Players, Classic Chamber Concerts, and student star, Kylen Moran.

The arts play a significant role in the local economy. An independent research survey conducted in Collier County indicated that the arts contribute over \$200 million to the local economy each year. Audiences at cultural events in the county number in excess of one million annually.

The *Stars in the Arts* luncheon on February 27 will be at the Naples Grande Resort. Former news anchor, Jim McLaughlin, will serve as master of ceremonies. In addition to recognizing the winners, the ticketed event includes student musician performances. Proceeds from a silent auction will benefit the United Arts Council's arts education programs. For more information, contact the United Arts Council office at 263-8242.

The United Arts Council is designated by the state of Florida as the official local arts agency for Collier County. The non-profit agency is responsible for promoting arts and culture in the county. For information about area cultural events, visit the Council's web site at [www.collierarts.com](http://www.collierarts.com).

# # # #