

Tuesday February 2, 2010

## Concert benefits choir dedicated to world unity

by Eileen M. Carlton | Special to the Times

David K. North, with the House of Jam Band, will take the stage with "The Many Moods of Love" at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax this Saturday, and when he does, he will bring to that stage a global -- and noble -- essence with him.

This performance will represent merely the tip of the iceberg for North, the band and the choir they are supporting, Mosaic Harmony, which is a 60-member nondenominational choir that has had atheists, agnostics and members from up to 17 different faiths since its beginning at Oakton's Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax in 1993. Mosaic Harmony follows a guiding principle, "Unifying the World One Song at a Time."

Eddie Adkins, a past president of Mosaic Harmony's Board of Directors, met North seven years ago when he first became a member of the choir.

"The first word that comes to mind when I think of David is 'amazing,'" Adkins wrote in an e-mail. "What is so amazing about him? His beautiful voice ... the love he displays for people ... the respect he shows to everyone ... his humble spirit ... his charisma ... his sincerity."

The House of Jam Band, which was formed in 2008, also includes Dave Hanbury on acoustic guitar, David Ylvisaker on keyboards, Steve Sachse on bass guitar and Andy Hamburger on percussion.

Laura Schanes Romstedt, assistant director of Mosaic Harmony, met North 16 years ago. She was one of those who selected him to be the director.

"I think the point of the February concert is really a testimony to David and Mosaic Harmony. All the funds will go back to Mosaic Harmony," Romstedt said.

Romstedt said there will be a dance floor and plenty of opportunities for the audience to sing along with the tunes.

"This allows us to get together for a fun evening with fellowship, songs and laughter," Romstedt said.

Mosaic Harmony has held its own fundraisers for causes, such as Uganda and its Central Buganda University and the Northern Virginia AIDS Ministry. But that was inspirational music, and North made it clear this concert will be different.

"We will be playing all popular music: top 40, blues, jazz, R&B. We've even got a country-and-western song. There are just so many songs out there," North said. "This concert will have a little bit of something for everybody. ... We want people to feel free to get up and boogie and dance, and clap and sing along."

North emphasized that the band will not disappoint.

"House of Jam has serious rocking musicians. Each of these guys has years of personal, professional performance and musicianship, and we're all buddies," North said.

North describes himself as "an Illinois country boy" and a "science nerd." He graduated with degrees in physics and environmental science and then proceeded to become a Baptist minister. He has also worked for the Prince George's County Department of Social Services in the adult protection division for 17 years and is on its board of directors of the community crisis center, which staffs homeless and suicide hot lines.

North has also performed in theater, such as "The Gospel at Colonis," a gospel version of Sophocles' tragedy, "Oedipus at Colonus," and recently was on stage in "Black Nativity" for the H Street Playhouse in Washington, D.C.

"Music has always been a constant presence throughout whatever career I may be in for bread and butter. ...There's a breadth of music, even though my roots are gospel, [that] I love being able to sing in a variety of venues," North said.

Kim Moss, who sings alto and serves on Mosaic Harmony's board as its promotions director, said North is just a natural musician.

"He's one of those people who can sing all four voice parts and do it without the piano. He just sings the part and it's always amazing to me how he always remembers how many parts go with each song," Moss said. "He doesn't have perfect pitch, but he's pretty close. Having him as the director is a luxury."

'The Many Moods of Love'

Who: David K. North, with the House of Jam Band

When: 7 p.m. Feb. 6

Where: Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton

Program: Pop, Top 40, R&B, jazz, rock 'n' roll

Cost: Single \$25 (\$30 at the door), Double \$45 (\$50 at the door), Sweetheart Table (includes two admissions) \$62. The number of Sweetheart Table tickets is limited and those tickets will not be available at the door. All other tickets ordered online will have an additional \$2 processing fee.

Proceeds: Benefit Mosaic Harmony

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