

The Arts



by BILL SEYMOUR

If the thought of turning a \$2 ticket into a gourmet banquet for 10 appeals to you then Marlene Lawrence has a deal for you.

Lawrence, the president of the Bel Canto Children's choir, has a handful of raffle tickets offering a first prize of dinner for 10, at home, on the date of your choice. City chef Francois Valois suggested the idea to help the choir raise funds for a trip to Montreal.

"The idea was presented to us by Francois because he has done it before," Lawrence said recently. "We thought it was a wonderful idea."

The raffle is just part of the fundraising efforts the choir has mobilized for a trip next year to a Montreal music festival. And for those who might want to hear the singers as they warm up for Montreal there's a few opportunities to listen to their music.

About 44 members of the Bel Canto choir are preparing for the L'alliance Regional des Chorales de L'ile de Montreal, March 26-27. The raffle is part of an effort to raise at least \$30,000 to help cover costs.

"You have to have a focus for a

group of children," she added. "It is a lot of work and a heavy time commitment."

Singing in Montreal is the choir's goal, for this, their 12th season. The venue has a couple of attractions for the singers.

"A lot of children are bilingual," she said. "It will give them a opportunity to use their French in a very French situation," Lawrence said.

You can hear the Bel Canto singers Dec. 2 at Pine Centre Mall between 6 and 7 p.m. Also in December, the full choir will give a concert at St. Michael's Anglican church at 7:30 p.m. on Dec. 4 and 5.

The teen choir of Bel Canto will sing with the Cantata singers at Our Saviour's Lutheran church at 8 p.m. Dec. 12 and at 2:30 Dec. 13.

The whole choir tops off their Christmas season during the Prince George Symphony Orchestra's presentation of the Nutcracker Suite, Dec. 18-20.

Raffle tickets are available from any Bel Canto singer and will be available at Pine Centre, Dec. 1-3 between 6 and 9 p.m.

The first prize banquet is valued at \$1,000. Second prize is a mountain bike and third prize is \$300 in cash.

Sweet music, fine dining



color photo by Chuck Nisbett; black and white photo by Brent Braaten