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Arts charity plans singing competition as latest fundraiser

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Posted: 12:00 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 16, 2014

BY MICHAEL READLING - SPECIAL TO THE PALM BEACH POST

STUART - You've seen them dance. You've seen them cook. You've even seen some of Martin County's most well-known people surf, act and fish for local charities.

But now, Artists for a Cause has plans to put even the most seasoned and charitable temperament to the test.



Founder and executive director of Artists for a Cause, Terry Barber, with one of the young artists from the A4AC network, ... [Read More](#)

Singing With the Stars is an evening of competitive singing, pitting local amateurs against each other, all with the goal of providing funding for Artists for a Cause, a local non-profit dedicated to using art as a solution to community problems through the use of the visual and performing

arts. A portion of the proceeds will also go to Keep Martin Beautiful.

Borrowing basics from "Dancing With the Stars," this singing competition will pair amateur singers with local professionals for six weeks of training. The newly formed team will perform a duet the night of the event, with the winner being determined through a combination

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of total fundraising and performance skills.

“The idea behind this inaugural event was to get some of the most gifted and experienced professionals in our network and partner them with people with exceptional voices,” said Terry Barber, founder of Artists for a Cause. “The professional will be the coach, similar to the ‘Dancing with the Stars’ model.”

Barber said the organization is in the process of accepting applications from prospective singers as he works to fill out the schedule for the March 15 event at the Lyric Theatre. The perfect applicant, Barber said, is one who is used to being on stage - be it a church stage or somewhere else singing in front of people - and has a vocal history.

Barber said the singers who are chosen will agree to a minimum of five meetings with their teaching professional during the six weeks leading up to the event. That means singers who have a pretty good idea of what they’re doing, he said.

One of the instructors Barber has lined up is Jonathan Cummings, a local vocalist who has toured with Barry Manilow and still performs as a professional jazz musician.

“The most important thing is we want them to be coachable, talented and comfortable to be on stage,” he said. “One of the questions on the application is ‘Have you ever had any professional training or private voice lessons’. We’re going to be screening them to make sure we get the best talent and they are going to be comfortable. We want someone who enjoys singing in front of other people who would like personal help from a pro. This is not about starting at the beginning.”

Of course, this is a fundraiser so the most important part is making sure they know people.

“The kinds of people we’ve been thinking about range anywhere from business owners to politicians to people involved in services like police and firemen,” Barber said. “I’m not that concerned with what their industry is, as just want them to have a network to be able to bring with them.”

A portion of the show will feature a duet with Stacy Ranieri, co-founder of Keep Martin Beautiful, and Barber, who is an internationally renowned vocalist.

Singing With the Stars

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vocalists and amateurs performing duets. Applications for singers are still being accepted.

When: March 15, 7 p.m.

Where: Lyric Theatre, downtown Stuart.

Cost: \$75

Information: Applications can be found at <http://www.a4ac.org/Singing-with-the-Stars-application-A4AC.html> or call Artists for a Cause at (772) 419-8778.

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