

Evening supports Chaplaincy

Dori O'Neal, Herald staff writer

In a troubled world, you can always find solace and comfort at an Evening for the Angels concert.

The Tri-Cities Chaplaincy & Hospice's annual event is July 23 in the courtyard at the Red Lion Hotel in Richland. Showtime is 8 p.m.

Admission is \$50 and advance ticket purchase is encouraged by going online at www.tricityschaplaincy.org or call 783-7416.

Erich Parce and his wife Jenny Knapp-Parce, professional opera singers from Seattle, will once again lend their voices to the event. Tri-City pianist Libby Watrous will be their accompanist.

For Watrous, Evening for the Angels holds a special meaning.

"The first time I learned of the Tri-Cities Chaplaincy and their commitment to help people through crisis, transition and loss, often facing some of life's most difficult challenges, I was sold," she said. "None of us walks through life without experiencing the need for compassionate support.

"The Chaplaincy is committed to going where the needs are, meeting folks there and partnering with them as they look for healing, hope and meaning both through and after pivotal events in their lives.

"This event, to me, celebrates all of that. It has always been a joy to participate in the honoring of those who do that work."

Evening for the Angels began on a hot August night in 1996 as a celebration after the completion of the Chaplaincy's hospice and counseling center, which provides spiritual, emotional and physical support for patients.

And though the event is primarily a tribute to the people who keep the organization going, it's also a fundraiser, said Leslie Streeter, a volunteer for Evening for the Angels.

It also was originally a tribute to two Tri-City women (Francine Armstrong and Leah Buccholtz) who loved opera and were staunch supporters of the Chaplaincy.

The concert eventually turned into an evening that paid tribute to all the people who make the Chaplaincy and hospice a better place.

Music to be performed at this year's concert includes songs from the Broadway musicals *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Wicked* and *Sound of Music*.

The event draws about 500 people and usually sells out, Streeter said.

"But we have the flexibility to accommodate more," she added. "Early on, we've had different types of music, but we realized that the Parces' just bring a unique quality of style and elegance to the event."

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