



Hilary Ann Feldman



Caryn Caffarelli



Marianne Murphy Orland

Music among friends for charity

BY MYRNA PETLICKI

Contributor

At a time when charitable organizations are struggling to survive, Acts of Kindness Cabaret has raised over \$200,000 for a variety of nonprofits. The organization was founded by Highland Park native and popular cabaret professional Hilary Ann Feldman.

Feldman and her fellow cabaret artists use their talents to help others by performing benefit cabarets.

"When people are seeing something they enjoy and they realize that it's a bunch of people in a nonprofit helping a bunch of people in a nonprofit to help a bunch of people, it creates a really great energy," Feldman said. Donations seem to increase because of this dynamic.

Cabaret showcase

Feldman will be joined by singers Caryn Caffarelli of Wilmette and Marianne Murphy Orland, and pianist Paul Hamilton, for an Acts of Kindness Cabaret showcase at the Skokie Gorilla Tango Theatre on

'A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS'

Acts of Kindness Cabaret, Gorilla Tango Theatre, 7924 N. Lincoln Ave., Skokie

8 p.m. Saturday, April 14

\$22, \$10 for nonprofit representatives

(847) 419-7664 or visit www.aokcabaret.org

Saturday evening, April 14.

"It's a chance for us to invite people from the nonprofit world to come in and see exactly what we do — to experience a performance so they understand exactly what cabaret is and exactly what it isn't," Feldman said. The general public is welcome, too, for an exciting evening of music by three outstanding performers.

The theme of the show is "A Little Help from my Friends."

"It explores friendship in its many facets," Feldman said, "so not necessarily even people friendships,

but pet friendships, food friendships."

Person-to-person friendships will be covered, though, as will love relationships. "It's a lot of really happy, uplifting music and thoughtful stuff, too," Feldman said. "The music will come from many different genres and eras."

Selections will include theater songs such as "Three Friends" from "Closer than Ever"; some Beatles selections; a classic Johnny Mercer tune, "The Whatchamacallits"; plus music by Sondheim, Stephen Schwartz and others. There will be solos, duets and trios.

Marianne Murphy Orland joined Acts of Kindness Cabaret six months ago when a scheduled performer had to drop out from another showcase because of a death in the family. "I had nine days to learn a two-hour show of all new material," Orland said. That included a few songs that she had never heard before.

"It was a really, really good test of my mental agility," Orland jokingly related.

Giving back

Orland was willing to take on that challenge because of her friendship with Feldman but even more because she believes that Acts of Kindness Cabaret is "a wonderful organization," she said. "It's a nice way to give back and use the gift and talent that I've been given in a generous way."

A singer since childhood, Orland became a professional at the age of 17. She started out in musical theater and has sung extensively with big bands, performing selections from the 1940s to current hits. Like Feldman, Orland is now a member of the Chicago Cabaret Professionals. Her cabaret credits include "If I Were a Carpenter," a tribute to the music of Karen Carpenter.

For "A Little Help from my Friends," Orland's selections will include "Come in from the Rain" and a couple of duets, "Make Your Own Party" and "I Get by with a Little Help from my Friends," plus a variety of other numbers.

"It will be touching on lots of different kinds of friendships," Orland said.