

Orchestra to hold own Oktoberfest

By Stephanie Koons
skoons@centredaily.com

For most of us, the closest we can get to participating in the German festival Oktoberfest is drinking the namesake beer at Otto's Pub & Brewery. Tonight, the Pennsylvania Centre Orchestra will offer a chance to partake in some of the other traditions, including polka dancing and wearing lederhosen, at its first Oktoberfest PCO.

"It's going to be very much in the Bavarian style of Oktoberfest," Oktoberfest chairman PCOs board of directors member Eric Hurvitz said.

PCO has struggled in its fundraising due to the economic downturn, director of development Karen Gregg said, and has been forced to scale back its programming. Normally, the orchestra performs four or five concerts in a season.

"The arts have been hit terribly just because people don't have the extra spending money to do the little niceties in life," she said.

Because there is no other Oktoberfest celebration in State College, Hurvitz said, the board of directors thought it would be a great way to draw interest to the organization.

"We thought that it would raise awareness for PCO outside of the classical music scene," he said.

In homage to the first Oktoberfest in 1810 in Munich, Germany, in which a horse race was

where to see it

6 p.m. today,
Celebration Hall,
2280 Commercial Blvd.,
State College,
234-8313, www.centreorchestra.org,

Season schedule

- ◆ "Peter and the Wolf" with Hudson Vagabond Puppets, 3 p.m. Nov. 8, Rowland Theatre, Philipsburg
- ◆ "Le Matin" with pianist Enrico Elisi, 7:30 p.m. Jan. 17, Esber Recital Hall, University Park
- ◆ 10th Vienna Serenade, 1 p.m. Feb. 28, Tavern Restaurant, State College
- ◆ "Le Midi" with harpist Anne Sullivan, 3 p.m. April 18, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Centre County, State College
- ◆ "Le Soir" with mezzo soprano Jan Wilson, 7:30 p.m. May 8, Esber Recital Hall, University Park

held, Oktoberfest PCO will feature "Night at the Races." A DVD recording of 10 horse races with 10 horses each will be shown. Attendees can "purchase" a horse, Hurvitz said, and owners of winning horses can win prizes.

Oktoberfest PCO also will feature a buffet with pig roast, sausage, brat-

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Orchestra counts on its Oktoberfest

Orchestra, from C6

wurst and other German specialties, as well as German beers from Otto's and W.R. Hickey Beer Distributor and wines from Mount Nittany Vineyard and Winery. Koch Funeral Home will donate "Death by Chocolate" desserts. There also will be a Herlocher's pretzel station.

The Little German Band, which was founded in State College more than 40 years ago and is structured in the style of typical brass bands from Munich, will provide entertainment. The band's repertoire features German polkas, waltzes, marches and authentic German folk tunes, plus a mix of American dance and novelty tunes.

In addition, guests can see "fleas" perform impressive feats during Phydeaux's Flying Circus of

Fate, a traveling show conducted by George Esparza that uses optical illusions rather than real fleas.

Gregg said she hopes guests of Oktoberfest PCO will have fun as well as learn more about the orchestra, and that the proceeds of the event will pay for the season.

"We hope that it's the first of many," she said.

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