

VILLAGER BACKSTORY

You may know Marty Taylor from the Opera Club of The Villages, but did you know she's a member of the Metropolitan Opera National Council and helped with the audition process in the Midwest Region and Michigan.



Michael Johnson | Daily Sun

GETTING TO KNOW MARTY TAYLOR

Village: Lake Deaton
Spouse: Barry
Moved Here In: 2015
Moved Here From: Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
Favorite Villages Activities: yoga, bone builders and other physical fitness activities. The Opera Club of The Villages, where she sits on the board of directors as the scholarship chair



Kristen Fiore

THE VILLAGES DAILY SUN

Do you know someone with an interesting backstory to tell? Email kristen.fiore@thevillagesmedia.com, or call 352-753-1119, ext. 5270

Marty Taylor grew up in Pittsburgh in a household full of music, where she listened to famous opera arias and aptly followed Saturday afternoon radio broadcasts about the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. Taylor played the flute and piccolo and thought about a career as a professional flutist, but dreaded auditioning herself. Later, Taylor would help run auditions for the Metropolitan Opera as a National Council board member and audition chair for the National Council Auditions in the Michigan District and Midwest Region. As for her career, Taylor chose her other interest: math and computers. Taylor studied information technology at Grove City College and then at Case Western Reserve University, where she got her

master's degree. She worked in a variety of places, first as a programmer, then a manager and then went on into the executive ranks. "It was interesting as computer technology and how companies used it changed," said Taylor, of the Village of Lake Deaton. But her passion for music didn't go away. She heard about Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions taking place in Michigan and went to check them out. "The National Council Auditions are like the 'American Idol' of the opera world," Taylor said, explaining that they start out with a big pool of auditioners who get eliminated until the final round. "It was fascinating to hear those young singers," Taylor added. "They put so much effort into their study."

So, Taylor got involved as a volunteer and member of the Metropolitan Opera National Council. As a board member and audition chair for the Midwest Region and Michigan District, she helped identify singers, attended sessions in New York City about audition policies and procedures, processed applications, kept things running on audition day and sat with the judges while they deliberated. "I had no say, but had to make sure that they stayed on track," she said. Her position often took her to New York, where she enjoyed attending Broadway and opera shows. "I preferred to go to the opera shows when I was in New York, because you can't see those anywhere else," she said. In March 2019, she went

with the Michigan District National Council Board to the Metropolitan Opera House in New York to see one of the past Michigan District winners, Jennifer Rowley, perform the title role in "Tosca." "We saw her backstage after the performance to congratulate her as her guest," Taylor said. "It was so exciting and we were so proud of her. She is now singing on major stages around the world." After moving to The Villages in 2015, Taylor was quick to join the Opera Club of The Villages, where she shared her experience with members. The Opera Club board got together and channeled that experience into improving the club's own audition process for its Harold S. Schwartz Music Scholarship. The Met had contacts

at area universities, so members of the Opera Club developed relationships with teachers at schools in the tri-county area. Taylor said that opera club members worked hard to make sure the club's audition process is a professional operation for all of the schools, students and judges involved. During the pandemic, the Metropolitan Opera took auditions online, so the Opera Club did, too. Like the other members of the Opera Club, Taylor sees the importance of helping the younger generation continue their education in music so that they can have the opportunity to one day work in the music world. "We hope these students continue their love of music and spread it through their lives," she said.

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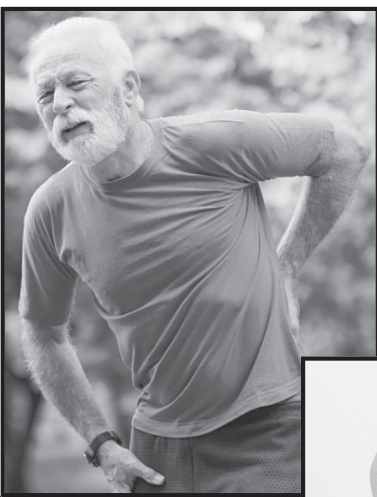
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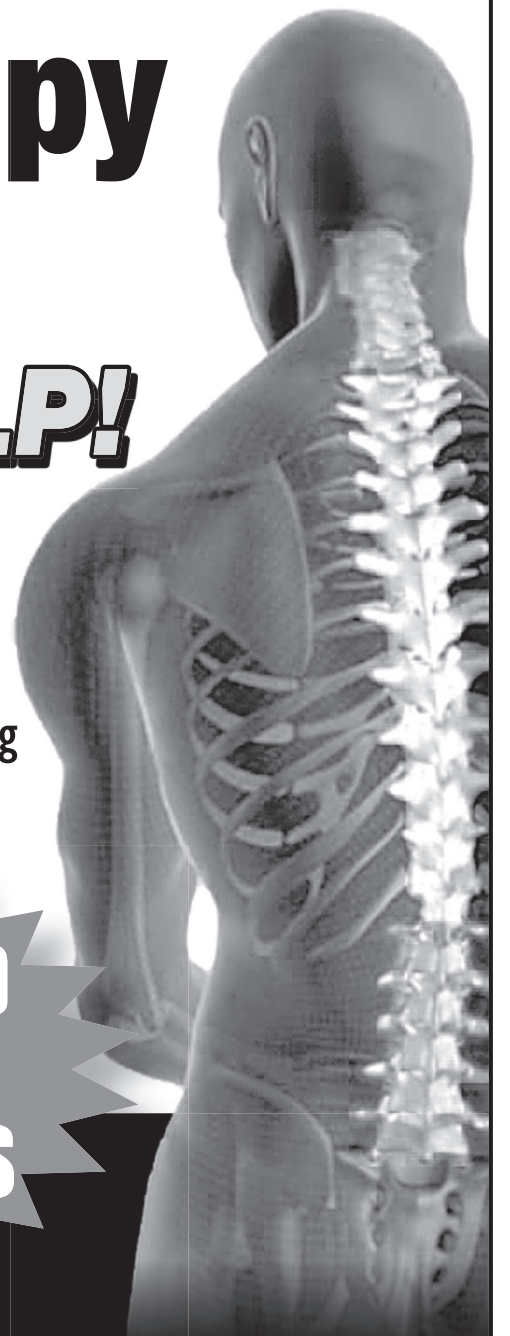
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