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Musical family lives on Bell St.

Theater...
...Arts

By MARY FORTNEY

Walk by the Winston Wheaton home on 475 Bell Street in East Palo Alto and you're bound to hear sounds of music.

The entire family is musical, so one of them is sure

to be performing at any given time.

Wheaton, who is in his thirties, works during the day as a coordinator in the reproduction department at Western Electric in Sunnyvale.

But music is in his major avocation. He plays the organ, piano, percussion, string and brass instruments, and likes to compose music.

His wife, Ida, PBX supervisor at Channing House in Palo Alto, and mother of three, sings. She is a soprano with what her husband describes as "quite a range . . . from low B flat to high C . . . and she does it with great richness."

Mrs. Wheaton sings with the choir at Saint Francis of Assisi Church in East Palo Alto, and also gives recitals of Negro spirituals.

The Wheaton youngsters are: James, 13, a student at St. Albert the Great in Palo Alto, and a drummer.

Winston, Jr., 10, also a student at St. Albert and a singer who performs frequently at area events.

Richard, 7, has found himself musically, but according to his father "vocalizes when not on the drums."

The Wheatons are Catholics and church music plays a big part in their lives.

Wheaton has composed a "Mass for the Congregation" which has been approved by the Archdiocese of San Francisco for performance in churches of the archdiocese.

Wheaton explained that when the use of English in Catholic services was increased in 1964, there resulted

a great need for music that would accompany masses sung in English.

His mass has been sung by the nuns at Sacred Heart Convent in Menlo Park and at the St. Francis of Assisi Church.

Wheaton's musical background goes back 20 years when he played percussion instruments in Paso Robles High School band. After graduating in 1951, he played piano in bands at Air Force bases in Memphis, Tenn. and Ardmore, Okla.

A year before his discharge in 1955 he married Ida. She encouraged him to major in music at the San Francisco Music and Art Institute after 2½ years at the College of San Mateo in the medical technologist curriculum.

In addition to composing, Wheaton directs the children's choir at St. Francis of Assisi for special religious occasions and leads the Christmas carolers at the Western Electric plant where he works.

He also sings at such events as weddings, and claims to have sung "Ave Maria" at 300 weddings.

Wheaton's current ambition is to compose a Mass in the tradition of the Negro spiritual.

He'd also like to write a Negro spiritual to be sung in Italian.



Musical family

Winston Wheaton plays as his family sings a Negro spiritual. Standing, from the left, are Richard, Winston Jr., Ida and James.