
Dvorak part of Living and Learning Series

Nationally known folk singer Mark Dvorak will make his first Kankakeeland appearance on Tuesday, January 11, 2005 when he performs at a coffeehouse held by the Kankakee Area YMCA's Living and Learning Series, beginning at 7 pm.

Based in the Chicago area, Dvorak has created a nationwide reputation for singing the folk songs of the American people, following in the footsteps of Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger and Carl Sandburg. Audiences delight in his nimble guitar and banjo playing, his broad repertoire, his obvious affection for this music and the charisma radiating from his somewhat offbeat, but warm personality. Longtime fans return to see him for all these, knowing as well they'll be treated to engaging stories, Dvorak's lively and somewhat irreverent sense of humor, and without fail, the chance to sing along.

Testament to his popularity are the continuing sales of his CDs (which will be available for sale), his appearances at festivals and concerts from coast to coast, reviews such as this from The Chicago Tribune: "[Dvorak is] a commanding vocalist and masterful clawhammer banjo player," and his receipt of the prestigious Peter Lisagor Award for Best Radio Feature for his radio documentary *Lead Belly's Legacy*.

In recent years Dvorak has begun writing songs of his own, revealing profound talent.

His composition, "Every Step of the Way," has been called "a wondrous work; instantly a standard. If you didn't know it was recently written, you'd be sure people had been singing it for decades."

Another of his activities is as one fourth of the spirited *Weavermania!*, an on-going tribute to the highly influential folk quartet of the 1950s.

The evening is underwritten in part by a generous grant from the Illinois Humanities Council. As at all Living and Learning events, the admission is free.

The Living and Learning Series is a once-a-month live presentation on a variety of topics usually with a local aspect. Now in its sixth season, the Series has offered Kankakeeland audiences everything from discussions on home schooling to an impersonation of Will Rogers, to local artists presenting their work, to symphonic musicians reflecting on their craft, to forums on local politics. More than 2,000 people have attended live Living and Learning presentations, and many more have seen them rebroadcast on cable television. Three times the Series has been awarded grants from the Illinois Humanities Council.

More information may be obtained by phoning the YMCA at 815-933-1741.