

Bellaire Examiner

ROCO's newest outreach taps lapsed musicians

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Don't just lament your rusty music skills — pick up that dusty instrument and join River Oaks Chamber Orchestra's new Pro-Am Chamber Music Program.

To participate, just sign up; there's no audition, said ROCO founder Alecia Lawyer, oboist.

A little practice, a little professional coaching by ROCO's musicians and you'll be up and playing once more as part of smaller groups determined by skill level.

Other pursuits have amateur leagues, why not orchestra music, Lawyer asked, rhetorically.

Many who attend ROCO's concerts and programs have mentioned they enjoy the music because they used to play, she said.

This new group is for them and is just the latest experiment in music fellowship from ROCO, she said.

"It's a natural extension" of what ROCO has been doing since its founding in 2005, which is spreading the joy of hearing music.

She expects that born-again musicians who participate will discover how recalling the way a piece of music should sound will help them remaster the music skills to play it.

Part of what participants might relearn is the wonder of discovery, she said, adding that children already have this, but adults sometimes squelch it in themselves.

ROCO's sixth season begins this month. From its start as a family-friendly



concert, complete with companion child care with a mini music component, ROCO has expanded into an entrepreneurial assortment of formats, venues and programs.

The idea behind the outreach to lapsed musicians is to "re-ignite lost flames" in individuals who for various reasons might have let the music in them subside, she said.

Come spring, there might even be a recital showcasing the renewed talent.

ROCO's season opener

ROCO kicks off its 2010-2011 season with Beer & Brass, featuring a trombone trio led by ROCO principal trombonist Brian Logan.

The event, which includes a formal pitch for the Pro-Am Chamber Music Program, is 6-8 p.m. Sept. 21 at St. Arnold Brewery, 2000 Lyons Ave.

Tuition for the Pro-Am Chamber group is \$125.

ROCO is a professional chamber orchestra of 40 all-star musicians, distinguished guest conductors and composers who come together from all over the world to present engaging performances of classical and original compositions.

For information, visit www.rocohouston.org.

By CYNTHIA LESCALLEET

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Brian Logan, principal trombonist with River Oaks Chamber Orchestra, is among the musicians ready to welcome lapsed instrumentalists to the organization's new Pro-Am Chamber Music Program.