

Cardiologist Has Music In His Heart

By RICK SULLIVAN
It's only natural that Dr. Louis Krasno is a Bohemian.

As a descendant of Transylvanian Gypsies, it is hardly fortuitous that the physician should wander among members of the prestigious San Francisco-based fraternal organization, which has adopted a name so often associated with the colorful Balkan nomads.

It even seems it was destined that the doctor should join the Bohemian Club. It was there some 18 years ago that he met two classical musicians who shared his enthusiasm for Romany folklore and, especially, gypsy music.

Up until he joined the club, the eminent cardiologist had had to content himself with fiddling gypsy tunes to the accompaniment of records in his Redwood City home.

Now, after cutting two little-known albums with the trio and performing before President Gerald R. Ford at Bohemian Grove, Krasno wants to offer his music to the greatest possible audience.

He plans to open a gypsy cultural center and theater in San Mateo County.

The non-profit center would be dedicated to exposing the general public to ancient folk tunes and to encouraging young people to pursue musical careers. The physician also wants to establish a scholarship fund for aspiring musicians.

"My primary intent is to preserve gypsy music in its most authentic form," says Krasno. "I'd like to help inspire some young musicians who can take over for me when I'm no longer able to fiddle around any more."

Krasno envisions his center as resembling an intimate cafe, with checkered tablecloths, candles and lots of wine.

"The music always sounds better with a little wine under your belt, he says.

Krasno hopes to have the center operating by the time he retires as United Airlines' cardiology consultant. For the past 23 years, he has worked at United's maintenance base in San Bruno developing highly acclaimed preventative heart attack programs for airline employees.

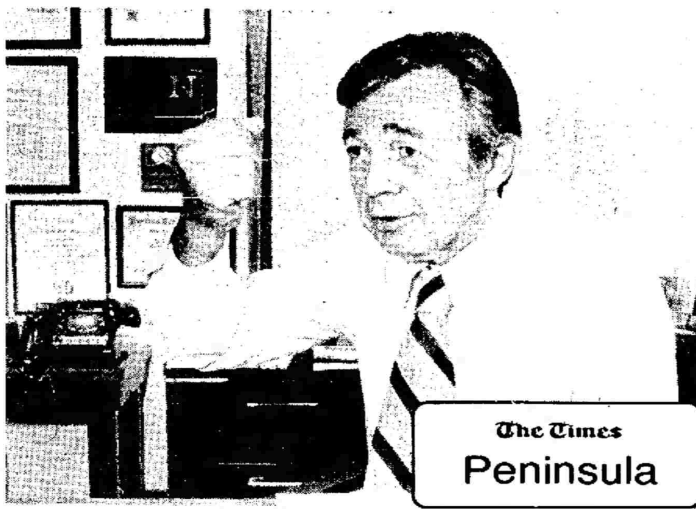
The success of his programs has been documented in medical journals. Citations and plaques cover the white walls of his office.

Krasno is credited with reducing by 40 percent potential cardiovascular problems among airline pilots and other employees.

But if the doctor has distinguished himself in the medical field, he has won equal plaudits for his contributions to a greater understanding of gypsy tradition.

Several references are made of him in Bart McDowell's book, "Gypsies, Wanderers of the World," published by the National Geographical Society.

The doctor is quoted as saying of gypsy music,



The Times Peninsula

(Times Photo)

THE DEVIL MAKES GYPSY MUSICIANS PLAY OVER THEIR HEADS

Dr. Louis Krasno plans to open a Gypsy cultural center.

"When a performer and audience are united as one, the 'beng,' (the devil) visits the musicians and makes them play above their heads."

Krasno speaks with considerable authority. Since he was a 5-year-old, he has been playing centuries-old Gypsy folk tunes on the violin.

The cardiologist is the son of a Hungarian mother and Romanian father. His grandfather played the violin in a Romanian Gypsy ensemble.

Although Krasno has never taken a music lesson in his life and can neither read nor write music with any degree of competency, he is a consummate technician, whose music he says comes to him intuitively.

Gypsy music, like the Balkan nomadic culture, has never been written down. It has passed through the centuries only through word of mouth.

Parental schooling in music at an early age has left an indelible mark on the 62-year-old physician. The basic patterns of the Balkan compositions remain intact in his mind — and there only.

"The music just evolves from my head," he says.

Few others can compose a gypsy melody with such precision as does Krasno. And since 1959 he has imparted his musical know-how to the two other members of his trio.

For the past 18 years they have practiced at least five hours a week in such an unlikely place

as the men's restroom at the Bohemian Club.

"We've always liked the way our music sounded there. Krasno laughs, adding that one of the group's albums was recorded in the restroom.

The trio is somewhat discriminating in where they perform. Demanding full attention while playing, they regularly turn down offers to play background music at parties.

Most of their concerts are benefits.

Their next scheduled concert is Sept. 10 at a community potluck dinner in Menlo Park. Many local officials, including members of the Board of Supervisors and state legislators, are expected to attend.

Although there is a small clan of gypsies in this county — most of whom engage in fortune telling — none of them has heard Krasno perform.

"I think if I lived like a gypsy and I played gypsy music, then I might attract a fair number of my type, he says, "but because I'm a physician, I think the local gypsies are a little wary."

"The true Romanyes have never allowed intermarriage and have never strayed from the gypsy tradition. They're skeptical of the gypsies who have broken away from the clan.

"I broke off when I left high school in Chicago to go to college to become a doctor. I established a different lifestyle, but what I never lost was the music."

380 Link No Longer Left Dangling

The Interstate 380 interchange left dangling in San Bruno two years ago may be completed by 1984, the state Department of Transportation has announced.

CalTrans has presented an updated six-year highway program, covering the period from 1978 to 1984, to the state Highway Commission for special statewide hearings.

The total plan is estimated to cost \$6.4 billion, largely derived from fuel taxes and federal aid.

The interchange project is estimated at \$17.6 million. CalTrans spokesman Bob Halligan said funding sources "have loosened up" in the last year, making funding of that project possible.

The completion of the interchange, Halligan said, will connect the short freeway, which now begins in mid-San Bruno north ends at Bayshore Freeway, in the airport shops area.

The freeway is considered in Interstate route, Halligan said, because it is intended to connect a state highway with a major traffic generator, the San Francisco International Airport.

The project also calls for widening the airport service road parallel to Bayshore.

CalTrans also plans to set aside funding for landscaping Interstate 380 from Seventh Avenue in San Bruno to South Airport Boulevard in South San Francisco.

May Be Place In Space for 5

Five Bay Area scientists have been selected for shuttle missions in Houston, Tex., as possible space shuttle astronauts.

NASA officials announced that the local people are among a third group of 20 candidates selected for further interview from among 8,079 applicants.

Tentative selection will be made in November, NASA said, and candidates will be notified in December.

The local candidates: Danielle J. Goldwater, M.D., 28, from the Stanford Hospital staff.

Lionel Greene, PhD, 29, NASA Ames Research Center, Moffett Field.

Dale A. Harris, PhD, 31, Letterman Army Hospital, San Francisco.

Millie Wiley, PhD, 31, Veterans Administration Hospital, San Francisco.

Lt. Mark S. Davis, M.D., 31, Naval Regional Medical Center, Oakland.

Officials of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration said 20 successful candidates will be chosen in each of two categories — shuttle pilot and mission specialist.

Mission specialists, said NASA, are scientists who will conduct or oversee scientific experiments aloft during space shuttle flights.

Final selection will be made after a two-year evaluation period following the current screening.

Federal Study Backs New SSF Police Facility

By JANET PARKER

South San Francisco could meet the needs of its presently overcrowded Police Department best by building a new facility on city-owned land at Grand and Chestnut avenues, a federally funded report suggests.

City Manager Walter Birkele this week released the report, prepared by the National Clearinghouse for Criminal Justice, Planning and Architecture, concerning a longtime controversial issue in that city.

In its conclusions, the study states that building a new facility is the second least expensive of four options, but most desirable in long-range service capabilities.

The report also recommends that the city build a smaller building than originally was anticipated, reducing the size from 59,168 to 30,590 square feet.

The City Council earlier this year, on the recommendation of Police Chief James Datzman, asked for the report to evaluate its police facility needs through the year 2000.

South San Francisco has been considering for more than five years ways to solve its police department housing problem.

In 1974, the council embarked on plans to move both its police and fire departments to the Grand and Chestnut avenue property it purchased explicitly for that purpose for \$1.1 million.

However, one resident challenged the method of financing the project and after months of litigation, the council rescinded the plans and went back to the drawing board.

The council also dropped the fire department from its plans entirely.

The pros and cons of building any kind of facility have frequently sparked debate in the city.

The council is expected to briefly review the study Wednesday night and to schedule a study session for more intense review later.

The three other options studied by the clearinghouse committees were for renovation and expansion of the existing facility, purchase and renovation of the vacant former Value Giant building on El Camino Real, and a fourth alternative never considered before — expansion and renovation of the Oranoff Avenue Library building.

However, building an entirely new facility would "serve the community well for both the present and many years into the future," the report states.

The six acres of land, it states, are centrally located in the community. There is more than enough land to meet police needs beyond the year 2000, it adds.

At the same time, the report suggests renovating the existing 7,000-square-foot police facility and developing an additional 11,000-square-foot facility at the Chestnut and Grand site, both for use by other departments.

The study points out that the city needs an estimated 17,800 square feet of space and discovered the same for its parks and recreation department, fire administration, police and finance records storage, senior citizens and City Council chambers.

In addition, it states, the Orange Avenue library is "overcrowded and that an additional unknown quantity of space is needed."

The total cost for the new facility, renovating the old building and making

room for other city services would be about \$2.9 million, the report estimates.

The report also points out the advantages and disadvantages of the other three alternatives.

Renovating the existing police building — which was built in 1949, when the department had 15 employees — would be inappropriate, even though it probably is the least expensive alternative, the report notes.

"Today, 86 employees work there.

"This is because of the existing shortage of space inside the building, and the type of construction... and the lack of available land for expansion purposes," it continues.

It is possible to add a second floor to the building, but the required square footage still might not be available and it would be difficult and costly to meet specific police needs.

"In addition, this alternative, no matter how carefully the planning, would result in a certain number of functional inefficiencies and compromises, several

of which (security, to name one problem) would be serious," it adds.

Using the vacant Value Giant building, at a cost of about \$3 million, would require extensive renovation, according to the report. The city would sustain a local property and

sales tax loss if the building is not used for commercial purposes as it was intended, it is pointed out.

Renovation of the Orange Avenue Library would not be as extensive as other options and there is sufficient land to the west of the building for both parking

and construction, the report states.

Although this option is most expensive, about \$4.4 million, it is the second most desirable because it would provide a solution for overcrowding of all city agencies, according to the report.

Four residences to the north of the existing El Rancho will be leveled for the new units. Additional parking will be provided on the eight-acre site. The El Rancho's lobby will be expanded and retrofitted. One of the new buildings will feature an outside glass elevator. Some of the older units will be refurbished at the same time, Wilms said.

The new units will continue the structure's Spanish theme, with tile roofs and arches.

A tennis court will be added.

"This expansion will bring us in line as a major competitor with hotels like the Hilton and Hyatt," Wilms said. "And we feel we will have more to offer guests in view of the fact that we are in a shopping area and public transportation is available to San Francisco and throughout the Peninsula."

The El Rancho began as the El Rancho de Mill Motor Hotel 26 years ago. It was expanded in 1956 from its original 36 rooms to 126. The second expansion occurred in 1962.

The motel has had its share of famous guests, including the Marx Brothers, Lou Costello and Joan Crawford. Then vice president Richard Nixon stayed at the El Rancho in 1964.

Wilms son, John, is in charge of general operations for the Best Western-affiliated El Rancho. Wilms father, Marlin, began the inn.

Millbrae Inn Plans Major Expansion

A \$2 million expansion and refurbishing project designed to bring Millbrae's El Rancho Inn up to par with San Mateo County's largest hotel, a convention center was announced today by Earl Wilms, company president.

Wilms will take his proposal before the Millbrae Planning Commission tonight.

The project will increase the size of the El Rancho, 1100 El Camino Real, from 170 rooms to 242. It also will increase to 18 the number of "executive apartments" (two-bedroom, complete kitchen facilities for long-term residents) and increase to six the number of meeting rooms (accommodating groups as large as 175).

Wilms, a former Millbrae mayor, said he hopes to have the project completed within 90 days, pending approval at the various

city agency levels. Architecture for the project is Robert Onorato and Associates, San Bruno.

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Woman Drowned

A 67-year-old woman apparently drowned Monday in a swimming pool at 1521 Lago St., San Mateo.

Her body, submerged in the deep end of the pool, was discovered by her grandson at 6:30 p.m.

The woman was reported dead on arrival at Mills Hospital, where she was taken by ambulance.

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Mrs. Berry was a bookkeeper for United Products of South San Francisco. Mrs. Sweetzer was a divisional clerk for the city of San Mateo.

Kenneth Bucho has been hired as a firefighter. The Santa Ana firefighter was employed previously in Brisbane.

Pacificia still is looking for a planning administrator, an assistant planner, 10 police officers, a fireman, an information and referral director, a half-time staff aide for the Parks, Beaches

and Recreation Department, a sewage waste inspector, two sewage treatment plant operators and a police dispatcher.

Applications have been closed for the police officer, firefighter, treatment plant operator and police dispatcher positions.

City Manager Donald Weisler is writing job descriptions for a budget and research officer who will try to attract grant money to the city and for an economic development officer, who will attempt to lure more businesses to Pacificia.

Avery was in critical condition following a car accident on Aug. 30 in which he suffered severe head injuries.

Victim Critical

David Avery, 21, of 248 Catalina Ave. in Pacifica, was reported in stable condition this morning at Kaiser Hospital in South San Francisco.

Avery was in critical condition following a car accident on Aug. 30 in which he suffered severe head injuries.

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(Dave Dornias Photo)

LOOKING OVER ARCHITECT'S PLANS

El Rancho president Earl Wilms reviews work to be completed.

Dentures

CREDIT TERMS — on approved credit for Dental Plates, Partial Plates and Removable Bridges.

NEW DENTAL PLATES IN ONE DAY in many cases. Please be at office before 10:00 a.m.

Dr. J.C. Campbell DENTIST

(COME IN OR PHONE FOR DETAILED INFORMATION) San Mateo 181 East 4th Ave. Phone 347-9672 No appointment needed in city Dr. Campbell's office. Open Mon. - Sat. 9:00 - 5:00