

A Market for Music

The Marshall Area Farmers Market will have a new feature this year starting on July 8 — live music and entertainment

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Submitted photo Pictured is Sunny Ruthchild of Merryweather Farm. She is a longtime vendor at the Marshall Area Farmers Market and organized Music at the Market, which kicks off July 8

As if buying fresh vegetables and other goods isn't enough incentive to shop at the Marshall Area Farmers Market, coming to see live entertainment might be.

The Marshall Area Farmers Market has been awarded \$3,250 by the Southwest Minnesota Arts Council to bring musicians to the Saturday morning Farmers Market in Marshall, which is located behind the YMCA building and starts July 8 from 7:30 a.m.-noon.

Performers will entertain from 9-11 a.m.

"The performers have 45-minute sets with 20-minute breaks in between," said Margaret Palan, the community resource coordinator for United Community Action Partnership.

Music at the Market organizer Sunny Ruthchild, who is a longtime Farmers Market vendor, is looking forward to the season.

“Having Music at the Market this year is really exciting for me,” she said. “It’s a great relaxed outdoor venue and the rhythm and the music and the color will add a whole new dimension to everybody’s Saturday morning.”

It was Ruthchild’s idea to bring entertainment to the farmers market. She said other markets across the nation offer music and wanted to bring that to Marshall so she applied for a SMAC arts project grant. Ruthchild added that the entertainment is *“a way for the Market to give back to the Marshall community for supporting us over the years.”*

Longtime Farmers Market vendor Linda Buller agrees.

“As the longest-selling vendor at the Marshall Area Farmers Market (38 years), customers and the general public seem excited about the Music at the Market concert series that is starting this summer and running into the fall,” she said. “It’s a free concert every Saturday morning that you can bring your family to and enjoy a variety of entertainers that will be performing while you shop for healthy food choices.”

The SMAC members were enthusiastic about the new addition to the arts community.

“What impresses me about Music at the Market is that the organizers focus on making the event accessible to all community members, regardless of income or ethnicity,” said Greta Murray, the former executive director for the SW MN Arts Council. “Their choice of musicians reflects the diversity of our community. As one Southwest Minnesota Arts Council grant review panelist commented, “This is a great way to get art to the people. It will reach a group who may not go to other art events.”

The performances are meant to help develop arts appreciation, promote diversity and meet the artistic needs of the community gathering place. The market starts on July 8 and goes through Oct. 28, with a total of 14 performance dates. Performances include a variety of singer-songwriters such as Jerry Ostensoe and Charlie Roth, and vocalists like Emily Hoffman, Nona Faye, and the Salem Men’s Quartet, a barbershop quartet. There will also be performances by jazz musicians Ross Anderson and Pete Lothringer, and Darwin Dyce on flute and trumpet. Other groups to perform are: PLACE (Preserve, Language, Adolescence, Culture and Education), a young Hmong group who perform traditional Hmong dance in original attire, and the Upper Sioux Youth Drummers and Dancers, a group of youth from the Upper Sioux who perform in traditional dress.

The Karen Dance group will kick off the Music at the Market season July 8. It will perform the bamboo dance which involves dances stepping between bamboo poles which are slapped together. It also will perform the Thiyan dance which represents water to the Karen and reflects their reliance on and respect for water.

The activity is made possible in part by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the SW Minnesota Arts Council, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund. Other supporters are the Marshall Area Farmers Market, Bremer Bank and the Marshall Community Fund.

For more information like the Marshall Area Farmers Market on Facebook.