



An Interview with
JANELLE HOUSE
By Karen Marcotte

Many of our Naples Music Club members are local music teachers. If one wonders if all the extra work is worth the effort of getting your students to perform in events such as Naples' *Festival of Lights on Third Street South*, this story will be heartwarming. One has to get parental permission, find parking, carry the instruments, arrange a sound system, and fight the crowds. Once one finds one's prearranged street corner, all is set for you to join with many other performing groups – tuba ensembles, country music and jazz singers, church groups, school choirs, steel bands and others – getting the holiday season off to a grand, musical start.

In 1988, harp teacher Laura Lou Roth brought her students to Third Street for the annual event. Six-year-old Janelle House saw and heard the young harpists and fell in love with the instrument. After asking in her prayers every night for a year for the chance to take harp lessons, her grandmother finally relented, and Janelle began her studies with Ms. Roth for three years, then subsequently with Dickie Fleisher.

Janelle competed in the Naples Music Club Student Scholarship Competition each year from 6th grade through her senior year of high school. As a home school student, Janelle says she really enjoyed meeting other young musicians and being rewarded with attention and prize money for her hard work.

Miss House has received other scholarships and awards and was principal harpist at Clearwater Christian College. She has performed frequently with the University of Florida Orchestra and Wind Symphony, Disney's Epcot Center, the Southwest Florida Symphony, the Naples Orchestra and Chorus, the Strauss Symphony, the Brevard Symphony Orchestra, and throughout the state as a freelance harpist.

Sitting across from this attractive and confident young woman today, I am again struck by the direction music can provide in a young person's life. Janelle feels that she has been given this talent as a gift from God and has been extremely motivated to share her gift with others. Recognizing the soothing sounds of the harp and its ability to remove tension and stress from others, she has taken her harp to hospice settings, worship services, the Moffitt Cancer Center and even to the housing projects in the Bronx. She created her own music ministry, which she named Journey to Rest, where she uses the harp as a call to relaxation and contemplation, and simply to rest in the presence of God. In addition to a full time job at a golf pro shop (a musician has to eat,) and running a youth music ministry at her church, Parkway Life Church on Golden Gate Parkway,

Janelle performs for weddings, banquets and many other special events. One can contact her at <http://www.peaceofmyharp.com>.

Janelle House, harpist and 2001 Naples Music Club Turiel Scholarship Award winner, will join Dickie Fleisher and Flute Cocktail for the opening concert of the club's 2009-10 Concert Series. What a privilege to enjoy this performance and witness the full circle of student winner to young, professional musician.

When I asked Janelle what would have happened if her family hadn't gone to the *Festival of Lights* that evening in her childhood, she responded that she "would not be nearly as happy with life." Keep up the good work, teachers! The power of music is worth the effort.