

Senior-to-senior singer shines

By Jim Stevens
For The Crier

"It's when I see the toes start tapping that I know I've reached someone, and made their day a little better," said entertainer Jim Doherty, scheduled to bring his unique blend of songs and humor



Jim Doherty

to the residents of Plantation South on Barclay Road at 2 p.m. Thursday.

Doherty, a Chicago native, does what he calls "Senior-to-Senior" comedy from his unique viewpoint as a 77-year old man confined to a motorized wheel

chair.

"Many of the audience members have more mobility than I do," said Doherty, "but my voice still works, and I can still tell a nice 'clean' joke or two. I understand my audiences, and I love seeing them respond to my patter. Their faces light me up."

Doherty moved to Atlanta many years ago to escape the harsh Chicago winters, which caused health problems resulting from his childhood bout with polio. He was employed by the Social Security Administration for most of his business career, and also worked at WSB-TV as a news writer and film editor, but kept active in the entertainment world through community theater groups and associations, including the Dunwoody group that produced the musical "Cole," a Stone Mountain club, and the Reader's Theater. He also served as the director of the Funtastics at Toco Hills for more than four years.

"I got my start in Chicago singing opera at a small Italian restaurant where everyone performed," said Doherty. "I don't have the range for a true operatic voice, but I do well singing the

'standards' written by Cole Porter, or the Gershwins, or any of the composers from the forties era. I love doing Sinatra or Tony Bennett songs, my audiences' favorites. For years I was a wedding singer."

Doherty keeps active by scheduling his performances with postcard mailings to his list of more than 200 venues of nursing homes, assisted living facilities, senior centers, church associations, AARP chapters, and civic organizations. His promotional flyer offers "Golden oldie pop standards...Broadway classics...songs of faith...some country...but please, no rock or rap... a little or a lot of humor...clean but funny...story-telling...pick a category or mix and match...your choice."

"I enjoy singing the most, but the Irish in me loves telling stories in dialect," said Doherty. "I've done hundreds of gigs around Atlanta over the years, and I still get a thrill when people respond. I probably have more fun than they do. I'll keep performing as long as I can."

Doherty's email address is jefdoherly@comcast.net, and his phone number is 404-292-7127.