

There are tears in beers, too

Bar hoppers savor slow drinks, quick pick-ups

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY
The lamps are kept low, the beer remains cold and the conversation is always light.

A bar's atmosphere is designed to keep away the outside world for a little while. But its decor is enough to give any self-respecting designer the shakes.

From the gilded mirrors and velvet-covered bar of Monk's Cellar, to the off-the-wall ornaments of the Stein Haus, bars shoot for the gaudy.

Low key is off-key when there's a bar stool involved.

Even the low key conversation of three women in the Stein Haus has a jolting effect.

Three chilled beer cans form three little pools on the bar as the women chat with the bored, slim bartender. Behind them the bar clock, set 20 minutes ahead, ticks away. It's a slow evening early in the week and the Farmington drinking spot is quiet.

"Did you hear about Jane?" the bartender asked. "She's in trouble. She's four months pregnant by John," he continues without waiting for an answer.

THE WOMEN CLUCK over the situation.

"Yeah," a slim woman in the middle of the small group pipes up knowingly. "Ginny talked to her a couple of

months ago and they were living on a cot in someone's garage."

The three solemnly shake their heads over the situation as the bartender serves up another round.

During the lull in the conversation, several pitchers are filled and bored barstool denizens watch the honey-colored drink luxuriatingly sliding into various containers.

Some bar customers are content in this curiously innocent pastime, while others are more concerned with making the liquid disappear as quickly as nature will allow.

There are those who like to drink and those who want to play. A bar attracts both.

A young man strolls past the three rowdier women at the end of the bar.

"Did you go to Clarenceville High?" he asks the woman nearest to him.

"Yes," she answered in surprise. "How did you know?"

"He didn't," laughed the slim bartender while drying out a pitcher. "He just picks a school out of the air."

The amateur LeChario confesses he is from Farmington High School's class of '74.

UNDAUNTED, he continues the conversation.

After a while spent comparing the merits of the two schools, he ventures to a more personal topic.



Jerry George serves the drinks at Be My Guest. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

"What do you want to do for a living?" he asks.

"I want to be a starlet," she answers, sweetly.

"Huh. I have no time for starlets," he retorts and returns to his friends in a huff.

He might have wanted to play but his friends are more interested in quaffing a few beers.

Their conversation centers around the various merits trampolines.

Down the road at Be My Guest, the scene's a little more crowded, a little louder. While the Haus attracts the 10-25 crowd, the Guest is the hangout of rising and stalled execs in their early 30s.

Pat's a little older than the usual crowd, but he takes his seat at the bar and teases the woman mixing the drinks.

"What's the score?" he asks in a tone that indicates he doesn't care about the televised baseball game.

"I don't know how many touchdowns they made yet," replies the bartender, being deliberately dumb. She smiles at him sassily and takes his order.

HE'S IN his fifties and has watched the shenanigans of his co-workers at General Motors' engineering department.

Tonight, he has plenty to puzzle him.

"There's a guy I work with, I screen all his letters. They're terrible. He wrote a 64-word sentence once. Since then, I read everything he writes."

"I told him, 'Who can read this sentence?' You can't write a sentence like that again."

"Sixty-four words," He shakes his head and takes a drink from his second beer of the evening.

He grimaces at the television set as the network shows an instant replay of a homerun.

"How can people watch that? They're like zombies. They just sit there. How can they know what else there is?"

"My daughter's 13. She comes to see me every other weekend. When she's there I put on the set. She sits in front of it, hypnotized."

He shakes his head again.

She's 13 and she talked me into taking her to a movie. She wanted to see "Grease" but I didn't want her to see it. Then, she wanted to see "Rocky."

"I didn't know what it was about. It was a movie about boxing."

"Why would a girl like that be interested in seeing boxing?" he asked.

"OF COURSE, I don't know. I went



Barry Westmore and Dana German ham it up over a couple of drinks while Michael Meeron chuckles over the scene. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

to a few matches myself and there were one or two women there who liked to watch. I guess some women go for that kind of thing," he said, stretching his blue-coated arm for the beer on the bar.

He tilts his head and furrows his greying brow as he listens to his companion complain about the state of the world.

"Yeah, nothing's done right. Everybody says that," he says, his grey Charlie Chaplin mustache twisting with the words.

"But you can't change it. I tried it once. It takes up too much of your time."

His slow, quiet mood couldn't have

been further away from the atmosphere at the Monk's Cellar.

The singer at the back of the room plays the piano and croons some popular tunes, seemingly unaware that no one is listening.

In one corner of the bar, three insurance salesmen play poker, using the serial number on dollar bills.

A blonde in a dark dinner suit drinks gin and vodka while watching the proceedings.

"MY NAME is Ann and I like my drinks with a twist," she calls belligerently to the bartender.

"I'll remember that," mumbles the

bar keep, a woman in her late thirties with a no-nonsense manner.

"Women bartenders don't like women at the bar," Ann charges, glaring at the woman's back. "It's always like that."

Then she pauses and sighs. "I wish Scott was back."

The poker players are losing \$50 a crack and laughing at the woman in the dinner suit.

"Hey, I've got to go," says one of the men who wears a plaid suit and white buck loafers.

"I've been told there's a party down at the Starboard Tack. I have to be there."

THE INSIDE * ANGLE

WE'VE CHANGED OUR mailing address. The new address is Farmington Observer, 22170 W. Nine Mile Road, Southfield 48034. Mail sent to our old address (P.O. Box 69, 57400) will be delayed for one year, but may experience some delay in reaching our offices.

MARYANNE KOWALESKI of Farmington has been awarded a Fulbright Scholarship and will spend a year in Exeter, England, doing research toward an advanced degree in economic history. A graduate of Our Lady of Mercy High School in Farmington Hills, Maryanne completed her undergraduate studies at the University of Michigan before earning her masters and licentiate degrees at the Pontifical Institute for Medieval Studies at the University of Toronto, where she will also receive her doctorate on completion of her dissertation.

FORMER SECRETARY of State Henry Kissinger is speaking in Southfield on Sept. 14 at a luncheon honoring U.S. Rep. William S. Broomfield at Banko's (formerly the Raleigh House). Kissinger will give his current assessment of world affairs, including the Middle East. His talk is sponsored by the Oakland County Republicans.

NOTHING IS FREE anymore, people say. Wrong. Oakland County Division of Health is sponsoring a free immunization clinic from 9 a.m. to noon on Thursday, Aug. 10, at the First Methodist Church, Warner and Grand River in Farmington. Free immunizations include: measles, German measles, mumps, polio, diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough. No appointment is necessary, but children must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. Bring any previous records of immunization. Additional information may be obtained by calling 424-7845.

"LET'S DANCE to the soothing sounds of the Farmington Community Jazz Band," say the fliers announcing a dance from 8-10:30 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 10, in room 306 of Building J of Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge campus. Refreshments will be available, and there will be no admission charge.

CONNIE KOURTAKIS of Farmington Hills was given the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church Youth Award recently. Connie is president of the Junior Greek Orthodox youth of America chapter of Holy Cross in Farmington Hills. She, along with other young people in the parish, operated several booths in the Greek Glendi (celebration) in July. A 1978 graduate of Farmington Harrison High, Connie plans to enter training in cosmetology this fall. Meanwhile, she is visiting friends and relatives in Greece this summer.

THE FARMINGTON Amateur Radio Club has scheduled a meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 8, in room 101-G of Farmington High School, 30000 Shawwassee. All meetings of the club are open to persons interested in amateur radio. The club was responsible for all of the on-the-street radio communications during the recent Founders' Festival parade.

THE GATHERING PLACE, a senior citizen drop-in center, invites all grandparents to gather up the grandchildren for an all-day picnic beginning at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 8, in City Park on Shawwassee near Power. Bring lunch for yourself and your charges. Extra goodies will be provided by The Gathering Place. The Gathering Place has no membership. Seniors come and go as they please from its base at Mercy Center, but they are planning their picnic for all comers.

IF YOU'VE NEVER BEEN to a comic book convention, you'll have your chance from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Aug. 20 at Sans Souci Hall on Nine Mile Road one block west of Middlebelt. More than 50 dealers are expected to show their wares. General admission is \$1. For information on dealers tables, please call 568-1500.

NATIONAL GUARD MASTER Sergeant Kenneth M. Burns of Farmington recently graduated from the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas. Selection for attendance at the academy is made by a Department of the Army board from among non-commissioned officers with less than 24 years of service who have demonstrated the highest standards of performance and job proficiency.

WE KNOW THAT fall is just around the corner when the back-to-school fashion news starts showing up in our mail. The first fashion show for the young set we've heard about this season is at Westland Center, in the East Court, at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 9. Shoppers will see a parade of the latest in jeans, slim skirts, wide-shouldered blazers and tapered pants. Westland Center is located at Wayne and Warren roads.

LEARNING TO SWIM or improving your swimming abilities is the best way to enjoy safe water sports this summer, advises the Red Cross. For information about swimming or lifesaving courses, call the Red Cross at 853-4440, Ext. 231.

DEADLINE Material submitted for the Inside Angle (22170 W. Nine Mile Road, Southfield 48034) should be typewritten and include the name and phone number of the sender. Items must be received at least one week before publication. Do not send photos. All materials received become the property of the Farmington Observer.



There's a jazzy stepping-out feeling in this stay-at-home tuxedo lounge, \$25.

It's part nostalgia, part party look for an all-around fashion pajama sensation. Comfortable short sleeves on a wrap tuxedo top and a long length of narrowed leg. Mink-colored nylon tunic in S.M.L. in Hudson's New Reflections at Eastland, Pontiac and Oakland.

hudson's