



Avon Players are now performing "Fiddler on the Roof." Shows will be held at 8:30 p.m. Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays and 7:30 p.m. Sunday.

The theater is at 1185 Washington Rd. in Avon Township.

Avon Players production

'Fiddler' pleases audience

By EDWARD TOWNLEY

Any day now, some daring and enterprising theater group is going to earn banner headlines by mounting a production of something — anything — that is not "Same Time Next Year" or "Fiddler on the Roof." Each of these audience favorites currently seems to be playing somewhere at all times, often in competition with itself.

The area's newest "Fiddler" opened the 33rd season of the Avon Players last Thursday, and a shiny, exuberant and polished production it is.

The star, Jac Cortes, is apparently staking out the role of Tevye as his own domain. He has played the impoverished dairyman twice before, including a run at Will-O-Way this summer.

Although Cortes is physically and vocally well suited to the role, his own accent sounds odd in Tzarist Russia and his sunnier Latin temperament

causes him to miss much of the darker undertones in Tevye's Jewish humor.

Indeed, the whole tone of the Avon Players production — staged in their sleek, natural wood A-frame theater — is decidedly more WASPish and ecclesiastical than Sholem Aleichem could ever have envisioned when he created these characters. But if some of its ethnic roots are missing, this "Fiddler" gives ample evidence of the universality of its central concern.

As with the original Broadway production, this "Fiddler's" secret weapon is its choreography credited to Kathy Bush. She and director Mattie Wolf

have made ingenious use of the sizeable stage and large cast to create dances and ensemble scenes that are lively, fluid and clear. The dream sequence, in particular, is imaginative and sharply executed.

Audiences have obviously come to expect a high performance level from the Avon Players, and they will not be disappointed; the cast is uniformly good. JoAnn Bourer is a shrewd and loving Golda, and Helen Morgan plays Yente as Fanny Brice might have.

Jonny Katz as Motel and Tom Barstavage as Perchik bring depth and humor to roles that have seemed one-dimensional in other productions.

Fort Wayne closes Nov. 28

Only a few weeks are left in historic Fort Wayne's season before it closes for the year on Friday, Nov. 28. Until then, hours remain 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesdays-Saturdays and from 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Sundays.

A visit to the fort is like a trip into the past, according to William Phenix curator of Military History. One reason for this authenticity is the fort itself. Built in the 1840s, it stands now restored to its Civil War appearance. The interpretive staff also adds to the total feeling.

"Our guides have been outfitted in the uniforms and costumes of the Civil War years and actually take on the identity of people who lived a century ago," said Phenix.

Fort Wayne is at West Jefferson at the foot of Livernois in southwest Detroit. For more information, call 848-0299.

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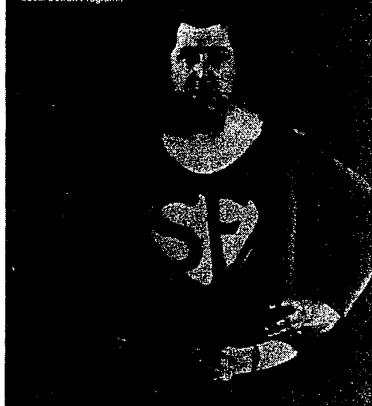
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