

Producer eyes new concepts for television

By LOUISE ORRUTSKY

the studio instead of the camera equipment being brought to the play.

WHILE THEATER hasn't always done well in the ratings, Pace says that's because "they've tried to place the theater in a television environment."

While cultural programming may seem to be the realm of public television, Pace insists there are differences in presentation.

"Public television does it in their own way, but it's still TV. It's has limitations which are not the same as commercial television."

The on-location filming which he wants to apply to local theater is the coming trend in covering community issues, according to Pace.

"I believe the '80s will be a turning point for TV."

That change will involve more on location filming because that method allows more of the feeling of the event to come across on the screen, according to Pace.

Another change in television isn't due to technical advances. Instead, the economic setback of auto company layoffs have brought a new daytime audience for television.

Last place can have its advantages. And William Pace, executive producer of programming for WDIV Channel 4, wants to use whatever advantage the station has to bring it out of its seemingly firm last-place position in the ratings.

"We're number three. We can afford to take chances. We're looking for things which catch people's eyes," he said.

The Farmington Hills resident wants to bring theater, neighborhood events and community issues to a more important spot in local television.

The task of convincing viewers to become enthused about local programming and eventually Channel 4 goes to a man who admits, "There's not that much on television I'm excited about."

His own television tastes lean toward news programs such as "60 Minutes" and "PM Magazine," which he produced for WJBK-TV before moving to his present post in March.

"I don't watch 'Three's Company.'" "I don't watch stuff like that," he said.

Situation comedies, a prime time staple, come under special criticism.

THE COMEDIES deal with situations which can be far removed from the concerns and experiences of their real life counterparts.

"Situation comedies are done by people who work and live in L.A. and a few who live and work in New York," he said.

"You've got white Jewish guys writing black situation comedies," he said.

Comedy, like any other entertainment form should relate to the lives of its audience. Situation comedies suffer from writers removed from the scene of the action second guessing their audience.

Removal from the audience's experience is something Pace wants to eliminate from his station's programming.

He visualizes camera crews going into theaters to film plays for television audiences. He wants to bring local talent and culture into the screen.

"I want to change the face of what people are used to seeing," he said.

Part of this plan relies on changing the method of presenting some programs. In the case of theater productions, the play is usually brought into



Bill Pace, Farmington Hills resident, becomes animated when he talks about the challenges of being a producer at a local television struggling to boost its ratings. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

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St. Louis joined Alexander Hamilton in 1973, first holding positions as an administrative assistant in sales promotion before holding successive posts as

director of agencies and sales promotion, director of field marketing administration and director of agency administration.

He came to Hamilton after spending nine years in the design engineering field and serving in the campaign of U.S. Sen. Robert Griffin in 1972.

He lives in Auburn Heights. Beth joined Alexander Hamilton in 1966 as an underwriter. He has served as supervisor of new business, supervisor of premium accounting, manager of life claims and manager of client service.

He lives in Highland.



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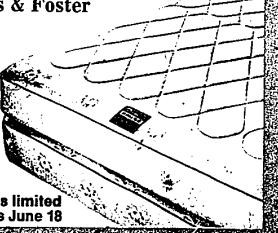
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