

# Ronald Reagan: the movie star

Former California Gov. Ronald Reagan, who bills himself as the "Let's make America great again" candidate, was a leading man in movies of the 1930s and 1940s.

Reagan wants to be even more of a superstar in the 1980s, and he claims the election of a president in this decade may well be the most important decision America will make in the remainder of the 20th century.

By now, most citizens know much about Reagan the politician and more will be gleaned during the Republican National Convention in Detroit this week. A former sports reporter, Reagan was elected governor of California in 1966 and 10 years later narrowly missed the GOP presidential nomination.

But what do we remember about Reagan the movie star? Probably his best motion picture was "King's Row" in 1941. In that year, the actor's legs were amputated and when he awoke from the anesthesia he asked with alarm, "Where's the rest of me?"

Reagan in 1943 wrote an autobiography appropriately titled, "Where's the Rest of Me?" He may be asking himself that same question after the November election.

"Love is on the Air," made in 1937, was Reagan's first movie according to "The Warner Brothers Story" by Clive Hirschhorn — Crown Publishers Inc. Love was barely featured at all in the picture but Reagan was.

IRONICALLY, HE played the part of a radio announcer who gets fired after bringing crooked local politics into one of his broadcasts. But, according to "The Warner Brothers Story," Reagan gets his job back in the end by being on the spot when the villains are finally apprehended and he broadcasts the news live.

Reagan was initially in "Submarine D-1," but his part finished up on the cutting room floor, the book said. What a place for an aspiring politico.

"Sergeant Murphy," the true story of a cavalry hero that was smuggled into England and became a winner, was offered to James Cagney, Hirschhorn wrote. Cagney turned down the role and so the producers turned to Reagan.

In 1938, Reagan starred in "Accidents Will Happen." He played an incorruptible young insurance claims adjuster who gives up his honest life for a life of crime. The law catches up with him.

Reagan got top billing in "Girls on Probation," but the flick was reviewed as a ponderous melodrama, reports Hirschhorn. Enthusiasm was the keynote of "Brother Rat," a comedy about three cadets in military school and Reagan was one of them.

In 1939, writes Hirschhorn, Reagan starred in the melodrama "Hell's Kitchen" with the Dead End Kids. Reagan who played an ex-racketeer turned philanthropic to facilitate his parole. It was reviewed as entertaining enough but negligible as a social comment, Hirschhorn says.



**Jackie Klein**

ALSO IN 1939, "Angels Wash Their Faces," again features the Dead End Kids. In this one, Reagan plays a district attorney's son who falls for "pomp girl" Ann Sheridan.

Reagan in 1940 appeared in "Brother Rat and a Baby." Hirschhorn says the flick was dubbed a mindless screenplay. That same year, Hirschhorn says, Reagan played in "An Angel From Texas," a breezy farce with a plot about the adventures of a pair of Texas yokels who get the better of a couple of Broadway theatrical sharps.

Reagan soon played the part of an FBI agent in "Murder in the Air," a melodramatic spy-thriller, the book says. Shortly after, he was in the cast of "Knute Rockne—All American."

A quarter of a century before being elected governor of California, Reagan wooed Laraine Day in "The Bad Man." In "Tugboat Annie Sails Again," Reagan romanced Jane Wyman.

Reagan was among stars in "The Santa Fe Trail" long before he hit the campaign trail. The versatile actor was



A young Ronald Reagan smiles cheek-to-cheek with Doris Day in a scene from "The Winning Team." The movie, released 30 years ago, is one of a

a concert pianist in "Million Dollar Baby." He starred as a newspaper reporter in "Nine Lives Are Not Enough," a second-rate thriller.

"INTERNATIONAL SQUADRON" starred Reagan as an irresponsible flier, Hirschhorn says, who ultimately pays for his cocky behavior by going on a suicide mission. In "Bedtime for Bozo," he was a young college professor trying to raise a 5-year-old chimp like a child.

Hirschhorn reports that "King's Row," a 1942 film, took a look at life in small town America, portraying a community touched by murder, madness and sadism. In that picture, Reagan lost his legs but won accolades for his performance.

That same year, Reagan played an American shot down in Nazi Germany. The film was "Desperate Journey" and the critics called it "wild, improbable, entertaining nonsense," Hirschhorn says.

In 1947, Reagan played the part of a veterinary surgeon in "Stallion Road." He starred with Shirley Temple in "That Hagen Girl." The book says Reagan tried his best to get out of doing the film as a lawyer and war-hero old enough to be Shirley's father.

In 1964, Reagan was blasted down in his last screen appearance in "The Killers." Reagan played a heavy in that one.

There were other films in which Reagan wore many faces. One hopes he's playing a different role as a presidential candidate. By the way, he never won an Oscar. He wasn't even nominated for an academy award.

series that failed to propel Reagan to superstardom. (Photo courtesy of Monthly Detroit Magazine)



**Shirley Temple**

## ERA divorce: will it work?

Just when the Grand Old Party and Ronald Reagan seem to have gotten it all together, they may have blown it.

Throwing caution to the wind, the GOP Platform Committee, just days before Senator Nancy Kassebaum gavelled the convention open, has divorced itself from the Equal Rights Amendment.

The "divorce" breaks up a 40-year marriage that began when Democrats weren't buying the ERA concept, not a bit.

Now some say: "So what?" With inflation, unemployment and America's status in the world causing consternation, why worry about equality for women?

You don't have to go back 40 years to recall the number of "causes" people espouse and get near-violent about. We lived through the era of McCarthyism and chasing the anti-Vietnam War movement, the Dumb Johnson flap (which succeeded), John Birchism and even zero population growth, to name a few.

If a social movement has put its stamp on our time, it has been the feminist movement and the battle to make the Equal Rights Amendment the law of the land.

NO TIME yet for comprehensive polls to see who cares and how much about ERA. Yet, there are already indications that the GOP stand on ERA may be a grave error.

Time may prove that the prudent thing would have been to quietly approve a plank similar to the one adopted four years ago and keep the lid on controversy.

Now the party, seemingly unified as it hasn't been in years, is up to its elephant ears in controversy.

Candidate Reagan is saying he's all for equal rights, but leave it to the states. It's exactly because of unequal treatment from state to state that women get the short end of things in many real life situations.

Vehement pre-anti-ERA Phyllis Schlafly called the platform turnabout a compromise, others call it a disaster.

Mary Dent Crisp of Arizona, in a farewell speech which ended her nearly four years as the Republican National Committee's co-chairman said: "Now we are about to bury the rights of American women under a heap of platitudes."

YOU CAN'T help but wonder how Betty Ford, Ely Peterson and Helen Milliken feel about this flap. Where do you draw the line between your party affiliation and your feminist philosophy?

Sandra Carpenter, feminist, National Organization for Women (NOW) of Oakland County activist and Republican said it this way:

"There's no way I can support the Republican Party if they deny my right to equality."

Another Oakland county NOW activist, Muriel Versagi said she's "very much distressed."

"As a Republican and a member of the Republican Women's Task Force, I think the party has destroyed itself as far as women are concerned."

She added she's considering resigning from the party.

Karen Haydu, an independent politician, but an active feminist and member of the Women's Liberation Coalition predicts: "If you negate or subjugate women on issues that will hurt them, we'll hurt you at the ballot box."

As the convention gets under way today, feminists plan a protest demonstration. They will assemble at 11 a.m. in the Kern block and march to Jefferson Avenue down to Washington Boulevard and rally at Kennedy Square.

NOW, League of Women Voters, AAUW, UAW, YMCA and the Women's Liberation Coalition will march as planned before the Platform Committee voted.

It may be that protest will now be greatly escalated. It may be that there is no line to draw between party politics and basic human rights.

After nearly two decades of walking for women's liberation, we'll find out if feminism flies.

## What it's like being meanest mom in town

According to my two young sons (ages 4 and 5), I seem to be the only mother in Canton who refuses to let her children go swimming when they have colds. I also hear from them that no other mother in the "whole world" prohibits snacking just before dinner, or forbids her youngsters to ride their bikes in the street.

I'm certainly not winning any popularity contests around here.

A simple request on my part that they wear shoes on a cool day is met with such groans and moans of protest you would think I had put them in shackles with a ball and chain trailing behind.

It's no fun being the "bad guy." Of course, they don't appreciate that it's even less fun sitting up with them all night nursing them through coughs and colds or serving complete dinners that go untouched after an afternoon of Twinkies, bananas and Popsicles. To them, I just enjoy being a mean.

My 5-year-old, in all his wisdom, is developing a definite knack for making me feel like a real creep.



**Nancy Walls Smith**

"You hurt my feelings when you yell at me," he whimpers tearfully.

"But you don't pay attention to me when I talk in my normal voice," I logically reply.

"You're making me feel awfully sad about all of this," he adds. "Don't you love me anymore?"

It's hard to say "I love you" when he has just flushed his baseball cap down the toilet.

Today, we had a three-hour argument because I insisted he wear a shirt while playing outside.

"Daddy didn't wear a shirt outside yesterday," he kept insisting.

"But it was 85 degrees yesterday. It's only 70 today," I repeated several times.

"But daddy's the boss of the house."

With that line, he lost his argument and I lost my temper. I'm sure I could win my case in any court, but at home I feel like a warden in a "B" movie who's abusing her prisoners.

It's not that I don't understand how they feel. It hasn't been that long ago that I was a kid myself. My tyrannical mother used to force me to do unreasonable things like brush my teeth before bedtime or pick up my dirty clothes from under the bed.

"When I grow up, I'll get to do what I want to do," was the main thought that got me through childhood and adolescence.

Well, I've grown up only find that things look a little different from the other side.

I'm surprised my own dear mother has thus far restrained herself from saying, "I told you so." Personally, I can hardly wait.

## at your leisure

### SHOWTIME

Side by Side by Sondheim new version of musical hit with songs of Stephen Sondheim, starring Peggy Lee, in pre-Broadway engagement through Sunday at Birmingham Theatre. Cast includes Teri Ralston, George Lee Andrews, Marti Medaris and Eric Gillette. Ticket information at box office, 644-3333.

King Arthur's Legends puppet theater production at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and July 22-23, 29-30 and Aug. 5-6, 12-13 at Studio Theatre of Varner Hall on Oakland University campus near Rochester. Joint venture of the School of Performing Arts and the Theatre Arts and Summer Arts programs. Tickets available in advance or at the door; further information at 377-2000 or 377-3016.

The Music Man "Family Theatre 1980" production of Meredith Willson's musical, sponsored by Lathrup Recreation Department, at 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday at Southfield-Lathrup High School Auditorium. St. Bede Players and Lathrup Youththeatre participate. Tickets at the door; adults, children and one-price family ticket available.

Cabaret Broadway musical hit with

music by John Kander and lyrics by Fred Ebb presented by Will-O-Way Repertory Theatre at 8:30 p.m. Friday through Aug. 23 at Will-O-Way Repertory Theatre in Bloomfield Township. Reservations at 644-4418.

### DINNER THEATRE

Under the Yum Yum Tree satire presented by Jimmy Launce Productions on Fridays-Saturdays through Aug. 23 at Somerset Dinner Theatre, Somerset Mall, Troy. Cast includes Mark Halpin, Liz Denison, Jo Ann Tyler and Fred Buchalter. Buffet dinner prepared and served by Alfred's Restaurant at 7:30 p.m.; show at 8:45 p.m. Reservations at 643-8865.

### CONCERTS

Pine Knob Music Theatre continues ninth season at outdoor concert theater in Clarkston. Barry Manilow at 8:30 p.m. Monday-Tuesday; Engelbert at 8:30 p.m. Wednesday-Thursday; Rockets at 7:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday; J. Geils at 7:30 p.m. Sunday through July 23. Further information at 647-7799.

Concerts a la Carte presents Misha Rachelevsky, violin; Linda Svedden, Smith, violin; I-Pu Wang Violin; David Saltzman, cello, at 8:30 p.m. at

Twoen's Cafe in Birmingham. Dinner reservations for 5:30-7 p.m. More information at 644-0050.

Summer Outdoor Concert Series at Jaycee Park sponsored by City of Troy. Good Old Boy presents country western music at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Free. For comfort, blanket or chair is recommended. In case of inclement weather, Athens High School Auditorium will be used; call Hotline 689-9756 after 4 p.m. Mondays for rainout information.

Oakland Youth Symphony challenges Detroit Symphony Orchestra Softball Team, in a premiere work with two orchestras playing under balloons rather than batons, at 8:30 p.m. Wednesday on Oakland University Softball Field, on campus near Rochester. Oakland Youth Symphony also plays Final Friday Concert at 8 p.m. Friday at Varner Recital Hall on campus. Both concerts free.

In the Park free concert series in Shain Park sponsored by City of Birmingham. Alex Cuisinier, Jr., Dancers Hungaria, with community folk dancing, sponsored in part by AAUW-Birmingham Branch at 8 p.m. Thursday. In case of inclement weather Shain Park performance will be moved to indoor location. Listen to WMJC-FM (95) or call 645-0730 for recorded information.

Meadow Brook Music Festival continues 17th season of outdoor concerts at Baldwin Pavilion on Oakland University campus near Rochester. Blood, Sweat & Tears at 8:30 p.m. Tuesday; Detroit Symphony Orchestra with James Galway, flutist, and conductor British-born Raymond Leppard at 8:30 p.m. Thursday; "cool" mixer's daughter, Loretta Lynn, with Johnny Russell opening the show, at 8:30 p.m. Friday; Leppard conducts DSO, with soloists mezzo-soprano Claudine Carlson and tenor Frank Little, at 8:30 p.m. Saturday; pianist-conductor John Coevell with DSO Pops at 7:30 p.m. Sunday. Ticket information at box office 377-2010.

Nightgaw with Mozart presents Misha Rachelevsky, violin; Linda Snodden-Smith, violin; I-Pu Wang, violin; David Saltzman, cello, at 11 p.m. Friday at Birmingham Unitarian Church in Bloomfield Hills. Complimentary wine and beverages served at 11 p.m.; stay for afterglow and meet the artists. Information at 851-8344 anytime.

Carillon Recital with Dr. Ivan J. Maddere, associate carillonneur at Kirk in the Hills, who is executive vice-president and medical director of William Beaumont Hospital, in two 20-minute concerts at 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Sunday, in Bloomfield Hills.

Carillon and Organ Program with Christ Church Grosse Pointe music director and carillonneur William DeTurk at 4 p.m. Sunday at Christ Church Cranbrook in Bloomfield Hills, organist Todd Wilson at 5 p.m. inside church. Bot' programs free.

Outdoor Concerts in "Sun Bowl" at Prudential Town Center sponsored by City of Southfield, in cooperation with Music Performance Trust Fund. John Shaffer Concert Jazz Band at 7 p.m. Sunday. Free. Bring blankets and folding chairs. In event of rain, concert will be held in Southfield Civic Center Pavilion, across from Prudential Town Center.

### NIGHTLIFE

Angie's big band sound of the Dick Murphy band 9 p.m. to midnight Sundays in Farmington Hills. Cover charge.

The Blue Parrot bar and grill in Franklin Shopping Plaza presents The Progressive Blues Band on Monday-Tuesdays. "Solace," a musical celebration 9 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. Wednesdays-Saturdays in Southfield.

Cafe Flor presents "Jam" with Gary Shunk, piano; Danny Jordan, bass; Larry Bell, drums; and George

"Sax" Benson, saxophone, at 7:30 p.m. Sundays at Franklin Plaza in Southfield.

Comedy Castle presents comedians Tuesdays-Saturdays at Friday's in Pine Lake Mall, West Bloomfield. Joe "no-no" Nipote from L.A.'s Comedy Store on Wednesday-Saturday, One show 9-11 p.m. Wednesday-Thursday; two shows at 8:30 and 11 p.m. Friday-Saturday. Open mike amateur night Tuesdays from 9 p.m. until last minute finishes. For information and reservations call 851-3322.

Dewey's presents Saxony, six-piece group featuring female vocalist Alice Morgan, performing Top 40 dance tunes, through July 19. Showtime 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. Mondays-Saturdays, at Michigan Inn in Southfield.

Eden Glen Joe Grande Trio plays for listening and dancing 7:30-11:30 p.m. Wednesdays-Thursdays and 8:30 p.m. to 1 a.m. Fridays-Saturdays at restaurant in Troy. Doug Jacobs and the Red Garter Band plays for Dixieland brunch from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Sundays.

Midtown Cafe presents Wolf through Wednesday; Trees, from Ann Arbor, Thursday-Saturday; comedy and music by Jim Schrock, Sunday through July 23, in Birmingham. More information at 642-1133.