



LEFT: Actor Karl Malden gets wired for sound. ABOVE: Co-producer Alex Karras (left), director Mel Damski (with beard), assistant director Jack Cash (cowboy hat) and other members of the film crew ready for the next scene.



ABOVE: Equipment vans contained everything from cameras and props to rest rooms and food. LEFT: A bit actor talks with local residents who ventured out to watch the filming. (Photos by Tom Trueter)

Lights, action!

Hollywood takes over lakes area for TV movie filming

By JUDITH BERNE

"Quiet, please, roll it."
The words of assistant director Jack Cash, wearing a cowboy hat, shot out as a scene from "Word of Honor" was filmed over the weekend in an out-of-the-way corner of West Bloomfield.

The crew of 50 — from co-producers Alex Karras, his wife Susan Clark and John Dutton, to the grips, make-up artist and set nurse — transformed the 40-year-old home and surrounding acreage of Erwin and Bernadine Bruner into a believable set for the television movie.

In the film, due to be aired as a CBS movie of the week early next year, a small-town newspaper reporter, played by Karl Malden, goes to jail for refusing to reveal a source. The source identifies a prominent citizen as the killer of a teen-age girl.

More than 20 scenes for the movie were shot at the Bruner home, which overlooks Pleasant Lake. The body of the movie victim is discovered at a specially prepared grave site on their property and the would-be killer is believed to own the house.

Bruner said the film people weren't the first to decide his isolated property lends itself as a likely burial ground.

"I often wonder where they put Jimmy Hoffa," he said in between takes Saturday. "We're due west of that tin," the Machus Red Fox in Bloomfield Township, from which Hoffa was apparently abducted. "This would be the perfect place. I looked."

BRUNER IS PROUD that he built the frame house graced by a long front porch and stone chimney, which will be immortalized in a movie.

But the retired cabinet maker admits surprise when, several weeks ago, he answered the knock of a West Bloomfield policeman with two women in tow.

One of the women was Evelyn Orbach, hired by Karras, the former Detroit Lions football player-turned filmmaker, to find suitable locations for filming his Georgian Bay Productions' "Word of Honor."

The women stopped the policeman as he made his rounds, telling him what they were after — a lived-in looking, lakes-cren cottage. He directed them to the Bruner home, on a bluff overlooking Pleasant Lake.

"They needed this house — our house," Mrs. Bruner said. "I said 'you've got to be kidding.' They said, 'this is the perfect spot.'"

The Bruners would not reveal what they were paid for the two days' filming.

But while they were readying a scene on the front porch, Mrs. Bruner was directed to enter her home from the backdoor. "In my own house, I have to ask whether I can go in," she laughed good naturedly.

Six huge vans straight out of Hollywood parked on a cleared site below the Bruner home, carrying cameras, props and other equipment, and providing dressing and restrooms and power generators — a nearly self-contained operation.

Food was brought in by van during the two noon-to-midnight filming days, where the approximately \$40,000 per day production costs were a constant reminder of the pressures of the film industry.

IT WAS STRICTLY business on Saturday's set, where a spokesman said earlier heavy that rains were welcome and contributed to the aura of mystery.

Malden, dressed in khaki fatigue hat and pants, dark green cardigan sweater and running shoes, was one of only a few actors taking part in the West Bloomfield scenes. The majority of the movie will be set in the public buildings and park in Plymouth, after being turned down by the Birmingham City Council for fear of stirring up memories of the Oakland County child killings.

West Bloomfield police came into play when Walnut Lake Road had to be blocked off for a scene in which Malden drives up to the house.

Otherwise, production assistant Judith Alms monitored traffic, restricting passage during scenes where the noise of a car might be picked up on the soundtrack.

Both reported few problems in keeping people away from the site.

Neighbors were apparently welcome to walk over to the Bruners as long as they stayed away from the scene.

Kathy Karner, 22, a bus driver for the Bloomfield Hills School District, walked down from her parent's lakeside home with her small niece. "Me and that little girl came up on a horse yesterday," she said. "It's nice knowing it (the movie) is in the neighborhood."

Although she was interested in watching the movie making, where even the shortest scene was rehearsed and filmed several times, she acknowledged she hoped to be included as an extra.

"They said they might need people to be around them (the actors). I'm hoping to get into a scene."

Straight from the shoulder, Bill Blass quilts a new silhouette

A puff of quilt, shaped by a curve of royal purple carved in pewter. Sweeping channel quilting on nylon/polyester, warmed from within by white European down insulation. Misses' sizes, \$190. Contemporary Coats in The Woodward Shops at Northland, Oakland and Twelve Oaks.

hudson's



The Bruner home in West Bloomfield stands on a bluff overlooking Pleasant Lake. Erwin Bruner built the home 40 years ago.