

## upcoming things to do

### ● 'CLOSE TIES'

The Michigan premiere opening of Elizabeth Digger's "Close Ties" will be presented by the Actors Alliance Theatre Company on Friday, Feb. 22, at the Lyceum International in Southfield. Performances will be at 8:30 p.m. Fridays-Saturdays and 8:30 p.m. Sundays through March 24. The cast includes Dorothy Hutton of Birmingham as the aging Grandmother Josephine and Henrietta Hermelin of West Bloomfield as Beas Frye, Josephine's daughter. Tickets are \$8 Fridays, \$9 Saturdays and \$7 Sundays. For ticket information, call the box office at 642-1326.

### ● BIRMINGHAM THEATER

"Isn't It Romantic," comedy by Wendy Wasserstein, opens at a preview performance Thursday, Feb. 14, at the Birmingham Theatre. The production stars Adrian Flood of ABC-TV's "The Edge of Night" and TV actor Michael Minor. The show runs through Sunday, March 17. For ticket information, call the box office at 644-3533.

### ● MUSICAL 'SHOOPY'

Performances of the Peanut Butter Players luncheon-theater production of the musical "Shoopy" continue Saturdays-Sundays through March 31 at the Genesis Theatre at Mercy High School in Farmington Hills. The professional company presents performances by children, for children. Luncheon is at 1:30 and the show at 2 p.m. For ticket information call 559-3893.

### ● 'BLACK ORPHEUS'

Cranbrook P.M.'s Encore Cinema will show the Brazilian film "Black Orpheus" at 8 p.m. Monday-Tuesday, Feb. 18-19, at the Cranbrook Institute of Science auditorium in Bloomfield Hills. The film retells the legend of Orpheus and Eurydice in a modern setting. Leading the discussion will be Cranbrook School faculty member Frederic Roth Jr. Included in admission is \$5 for adults and \$3 for students and senior citizens is the film, commentary and gourmet dessert. For more information, call 645-3835.

### ● ACTORS TRUNK

"Rumpelstiltskin" will be presented by the Actors Trunk Company, touring theater company for children, in free shows at 3 and 7 p.m. Friday-

Saturday, Feb. 15-16, and 1 and 3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 17, at Winchester Mall in Rochester. "Rumpelstiltskin" was written for the stage and directed by Henry K. Martin of Bloomfield Hills. The play is based on the tale from the Brothers Grimm collection.

### ● 'DANCE FEVER'

Glenn E. Clark of Birmingham and Susan K. Basala of Detroit will compete for \$1,000 on "Dance Fever" at 7 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 16, on WDIV-TV, Channel 4. Celebrity Judges Beverly Garland of TV's "Scarecrow and Mrs. King," pop-rock singer Jack Wagner and actor Alex Cord will judge the couple and other competitors from Pennsylvania, Jamaica and Minnesota. If Clark and Basala win, they will advance to the \$5,000 semifinal show Saturday, March 2.

### ● ABSURDIST COMEDY

Stephen Paul of Farmington, a veteran Adrian College actor, plays Daddy, the complaisant, long-suffering husband, in Edward Albee's absurdist comedy "The American Dream" continuing at 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, Feb. 14-16, at the Downs Studio Theater on campus in Adrian. Paul, a graduate of Farmington High School, is a senior majoring in speech. Admission is \$2.50 for adults, \$1.50 for children. For further information, call 255-5161, Ext. 240.

### ● 'THE CRUCIBLE'

Greedy, superstition and the misuse of power are dramatized in Arthur Miller's "The Crucible," to be performed by the University of Michigan Players at 8 p.m. Wednesday-Saturday, Feb. 20-23, and 2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 24, at the Power Center on the U-M campus in Ann Arbor. The cast includes Eden Cooper of West Bloomfield as Susanna Walcott. Tickets \$5 and \$3 are available at the PTP Ticket Office in the Michigan League. For further information, call 764-0450.

### ● AUDITIONS OPEN

Farmington Players will hold auditions for the musical "Appause" at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 27, and noon Saturday, March 2, with callbacks Sunday, March 3, at the players barn in Farmington Hills. There is a special need for singers and dancers who can act, in the 16-30 age range. For further information, call Cynthia Doehler at 353-3887 or Nancy Harrower at 355-0471.



Barbara Michals

## 'Damn Yankees' scores a homer

Performances of the Birmingham Village Players production of the musical "Damn Yankees" continue at 8:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday at the playhouse in Birmingham. For ticket information call 644-2075.

By Barbara Michals  
special writer

Sparked by a lively chorus and some outstanding players in supporting roles, the Birmingham Village Players "Damn Yankees" is a pleasant musical production.

This is the tale of a devoted baseball fan who is willing to sell his soul to see his favorite team, the Washington Senators, wrest the pennant from its traditional nemesis, New York. As Rocky, one of the bumbling Senators, Gary Temple is a scene-stealer whenever he appears. Temple's rubber face and great comic delivery suggest that Rocky has been beamed by quite a few wild pitches.

Temple puts real vigor into the "You've Gotta Have Heart" number, where he is ably assisted by Don Brown as Rocky, Steve Makowski as Sovchik and James Balmer as Coach Van Buren.

Young Randy Becker as the team's bat boy also makes his presence noticed whenever he is on stage. His dancing is impressive in a duet with co-choreographer Dee Dee Johns-Charlton. He puts terrific expression into all his chorus work, especially during "The Game" when Temple, Brown and Makowski lament their missed romantic opportunities.

In a very small role, Judy Gray gets

maximum laugh mileage as a hick country postmistress.

Kim Cooke is well cast as the young baseball wiz Joe Hardy who comes out of nowhere to rescue the Senators from the league cellar. Cooke projects plenty of youthful idealism and naivete and does a respectable job in the vocal department.

James Masters is convincing as Joe Boyd, the "old Joe" who is transformed into Hardy. Unfortunately, bad timing made his bit of stage magic a dud Saturday night.

Elizabeth Walters is fine as Meg Boyd, Joe's understanding, long-suffering wife. She nicely handles the vocal demands of the ballad "A Man Doesn't Know What He Has" and "Near You."

KATHRYN COOKE is a perky Gloria Thorpe, the sportswriter who hounds Hardy. She sang recently. Cooke choreographed the "Shoelace Joe from Hannibal, Mo." number and performs it with zest.

Ben Benson's Mr. Applegate looks every inch a dapper devil, but Benson is not smooth enough in the role. By the second act he has warmed enough to the part to do a pleasing rendition of "The Good Old Days," a lament for glorious past examples of war and mayhem.

As Lola, the temptress ordered to seduce Hardy, Johns-Charlton is personable as she romps through "A Little Brains - A Little Talent." Whatever Lola Wants, "Who's Got the Pain" and "Two Lost Souls."

Despite two directors and three choreographers, the production is plagued by several awkward entrances when cast members have to inch their way onto the stage.

repair bill. Add \$60 to the production budget. The car was an old gas guzzler. Add more to the budget.

Michael Foye, who plays Jason's father, the mayor, is in daily life head of the Fire Arts Department at Divine Child High School in Dearborn. Foye's acting debut was another plus to Zarembo's production of "Popcorn Man."

— Dan Greenberg

## 'Girl Crazy' has both good, bad

Performances of the Troy Players production of the musical "Girl Crazy" continue at 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday at the Troy Community Center. For ticket information call 878-1285.

By J. Timothy Penn  
special writer

Perhaps the way to describe the Troy Players production of "Girl Crazy" is to say that it is a study in sharp contrasts. The contrasts are distinctively good and bad.

Outstanding performances are turned in by Karen E. Elliott as Kate and Nick Dara as Zoli in this toe-tapping musical with a number of familiar tunes.

Even by community theater standards, however, much of the rest of the production is disappointing. Peter Antanalis, for example, as the romantic lead Johnny, is terribly miscast and asked by director Sharon Thomas to do much more than he can handle — especially in contrast to the performances by Elliott and Dara.

Community theater must be a team effort. Everyone has to contribute. On the surface, it appears as if Thomas may have asked herself to do too

much. She was listed in the program not only as the director but also as the musical director, and on top of that she played the keyboard for this performance.

ON THE BRIGHTER side of this production, Elliott just gets better as the night progresses. She opens the show strongly with "But Not for Me," finishes with her best in "Boy, What Love Has Done To Me" and in between sings "Sam & Delilah" and "I've Got Rhythm" as if the songs were written for her particular voice and dancing talents.

Another familiar face to area community-theater audiences, Dara is perfectly cast as Zoli. With his stage presence, he makes each of his three big numbers — "By Strauss," "Treat Me Rough" and

## review

"But Not for Me" — highlights of the show.

Whether he is singing with Elliott, the chorus, or Karyn Squires, as the romantic female lead, Dara makes the audiences listen and smile.

Squires, a newcomer to the Troy area, also does a good job as the squeaky-clean, cowgirl mailman. Her best is with Johnny and the male chorus in the song "Could You Use Me?"

Phil Martin, in a smaller role as Snake Eyes, also adds a number of good moments.

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Continued from Next Page

THAT SITUATION has some obvious comic values on film. It also had a goodly number of production problems. Zarembo obtained Northville City Council permission to shoot that footage early one Sunday morning, using an old car he had borrowed. But the car's owner needed \$80 to pay the