



MINDY SAUNDERS/staff photographer

Joan Reddy is Veta (left), Gene Ewald is Elwood P. Dowd and Amy Duchesneau is Myrtle Mae in the Birmingham Village Players production of "Harvey" opening Friday, Jan. 31. For ticket information, call 645-3094, 879-6080 or 474-5390 anytime.

upcoming things to do

FILM PREMIERE

CHAIM, Children of Holocaust-survivors Association in Michigan, will sponsor the Detroit-area premiere of a new film, "War and Love," at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 6, at the Northland Theatre in Southfield. The film is an adventure-love story that takes place during the Holocaust. Proceeds will go to the Holocaust Memorial Center. Tickets are available by calling Art Kirsh at 557-6089.

POGO BENEFIT

"A Tribute to Pogo" and a benefit for Pogo, who played cocktail lounge piano for six years at the Kingsley Inn, will be 4-9 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 9, at the Kingsley in Bloomfield Hills. Three bands will play at the event. Two bands that have been announced are the Sterling Band of Livonia and Dick Murphy's Band. Tickets at \$10 may be purchased in advance at the cocktail lounge or at the door. Hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar will be available.

NEW REVUE

"The Peanut Butter & Jelly Revue" will be Wednesdays and Fridays beginning Feb. 5 at Archibald's in Birmingham. Wednesday evenings will feature Archibald's Peanut Butter & Jelly performers, with arrangements created by Robert Leider of Bloom-

field Hills and Rebecca of West Bloomfield, the show's accompanist. Two shows nightly offers vocals by Elizabeth Porter of West Bloomfield and Nick Desanaki of East Detroit. "The Peanut Butter & Jelly Revue" will feature jazz and tap-style dances at 9 and 10:30 p.m. Fridays. Becky Frazer and Jan Winham, owners of Dance Collective of Orchard Lake, will appear in the Friday shows. For further information, call Archibald's at 642-9400 or TAP LTD. of Farmington Hills, which is producing the show, at 855-4293.

AREA PREMIERE

The Detroit-area premiere of "Wayside Motor Inn" will be presented by a cast of both students and professional actors from the area on Friday, Feb. 7, at the Oakland University Studio Theatre in Rochester Hills. Guest artists among the 10-member ensemble are Shirley Benyas, David Fox and Tom Emmott. Also in the cast is OU political science Professor James Ozinga of Rochester Hills. Performances will be at 8 p.m. Fridays-Saturdays through Feb. 22, at 2 p.m. Sundays through Feb. 23, and at 1 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 12. For ticket information, call the box office at 370-3013 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.

Timing is too slow in 'Table Manners'

By Barbara Michals
special writer

British playwright Alan Ayckbourn chronicles the foibles and absurdities of middle-class life with wit and style. The Farmington Players' current production of Ayckbourn's "Table Manners" captures the wit, but the style is disappointingly flat. While some of the individual characters are satisfying, director Sandra Sutherland does not always get her players to interact convincingly. Comic timing is ponderous at key moments, especially on curtain lines. Like a traditional comedy of manners, "Table Manners" takes place during a weekend in the country, the action set entirely around a family dining room table. Although the farce is incessantly bare (guests wear, after all, expected, albeit not this many), this family devours one another at each meal, then complains of emotional indigestion.

Annie (Sue Rogers) is the single sister, bogged down with an invalid mother and a dead-end relationship with the local veterinarian (Bobb Locks). Feeling used and manipulated, Annie longs to be free of her family's well-meaning but inept prodding. Rogers gives Annie a breezy naturalness that works exceedingly well.

BOB SMITHAM is well-cast as Reg, Annie's easy-going but self-centered brother. Reg's main concern is feeding his stomach, while he pretty much ignores his unhappy wife and the growing

review

family conflicts. Smitham has a casual, understated delivery that suits the role admirably.

As played by Paula Myers, Reg's wife Sarah is a British version of Lucy of the "Peanuts" comic strip. She is a fussbudget and busybody, domineering and shrill. Myers is generally convincing, but her early speeches are so shrill and her accent so nearly incomprehensible that she takes some getting used to.

While Sarah sees her motherhood as a glorious martyrdom, she clashes head-on with Ruth, Annie and Reg's sister. A no-nonsense female executive, Ruth has neither time nor inclination for motherhood or her husband Norman. Joyce Sponcia gives Ruth insufficient animation and drive; she is no match for Myers' steamroller. Also, some squinting would make Ruth's extreme myopia more credible.

The catalyst for the entire weekend is Norman, Ruth's puckish, husband. Phil Hadley is inconsistent in the part. At times, he strikes just the right note of jaunty insouciance, while at other times he is just too bland, despite his winning grin.

Locks is effective as Tom, the shy, rather dense veterinarian. Even the broadcast of hints about heating up his long-time relationship with Annie seem to bounce right off his shoulders.

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