

table talk

Gourmet Gala

Bite-sized samples from more than 30 area restaurants and specialty shops will be offered at Crittenton Hospital's 11th annual Gourmet Gala on Sunday, Nov. 1. For ticket information call Crittenton's Community Resources department at 452-5269.

Contest time

D. Dennison's in Farmington Hills is conducting a contest to choose a new name for its birthday dinner discount offerings. The restaurant offers a free birthday dinner when another meal of equal or greater value is purchased. The discount is applicable only on the participant's birthday and when proof of same is presented. Entry forms may be picked up and deposited at D. Dennison's by midnight Oct. 31.

Good taste

Cranbrook P.M. is inviting gourmets to celebrate "Adventures in Taste" on Thursday, Oct. 8, at the Palate Pleaser in Bloomfield Hills and Friday, Oct. 23, at Sebastian's in Troy.

For reservations call Cranbrook P.M. at 645-3635. Palate Pleaser owners Suzanne and Pete Goatley will demonstrate and serve appetizers, entrees and desserts beginning at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 8. Featured will be pate, mussels, dilled shrimp, wild mushroom-filled ravioli and rotisserie loin of veal done on La Broche, their new French rotisserie. Fee is \$25.

Recipes of Jeremiah Tower will be used by Sebastian co-chefs Linda Proastelink and Christopher Rydning — as well as pastry chef Andrew McGrath — to create a Napa Valley Feast at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 23 at Sebastian's.

Included in the six-course dinner will be grilled sweetbreads, chilled sorrel and herb soup, grilled salmon with cucumbers and black bean sauce, Cross Creek tangerine, leek, grilled breast of duck, avocado papaya rocket salad, and chocolate paradise with champagne Sabayon. Fee of \$38.50 includes wine served with the first course.

Appropriate wines may be purchased for additional courses. A cash bar will be available beginning at 7 p.m.

Vocalists entrance audience

Performances of "Fascinatin' Rhythms," presented by TAP (Theatre Arts Productions) Ltd. at the Novi Hilton, are offered at 9 p.m. Saturdays through Oct. 24. Christmas shows will be given at 7:30 and 9:30 p.m. Saturdays, Dec. 5 and 12. Tickets are priced for show only, or for show and dinner. A Bed and Broadway package also is available. For more information, call the Novi Hilton at 349-4000.

By Rob McCabe  
Special writer

"Fascinatin' Rhythms," a compilation of songs from the world of theater and film, provides a fun-filled evening guaranteed to please. The Novi Hilton and TAP Ltd.'s second production of Chicago-style cabaret theater is directed by TAP's founder, Michael J. Klier. "Rhythms" features a quartet of excellent performers who from the very start grab you and won't let go until the finale.

Vocal performers Rick Ingram,

review

Nick Beasanski and Nancy Koltin, along with singer/accompanist "Rebecca," show the audience how to have fun by involving them in sing-alongs and "Name That Tune" types of games. The audience participation adds to the intimacy already established by the small theater (it seats 100).

The 12-by-30-foot stage at first glance seems too small to hold a piano and three singers, but these performers are quite comfortable being up there. They also enjoy walking out into the audience, making the showgoers feel at home.

SINGER NANCY Koltin has a particular style that is not easily forgotten. She doesn't simply sing a song, she belts it out, making every note ring loud and clear. She is also quite a performer as she flirts and bats her eyes while strolling up and

down the aisles, playing coquette with various male audience members. It is that kind of involvement that raises a simple singer to the status of musical performer.

Rick Ingram has a certain verve and flair that brings to mind such notable performers as Ben Vereen and Gregory Hines. His tenor voice rings "I," from the off-Broadway musical hit "The Fantasticks" and manages to work around the difficult machinations of "Money," from "Cabaret."

Nick Beasanski, while enthusiastic enough, seems to lack the vocal strength that is evident in both Koltin's and Ingram's performances. When singing a ballad, Beasanski's

voice doesn't quite project the sound needed in the upper tenor range; his voice is barely audible. But when he sings "The Mickey Mouse Song," from the old TV series, and other upbeat songs, his strength shines through.

It is pianist Rebecca who deserves a special hand because of the extreme difficulty of accompanying these talented performers — which she does to perfection. Not one note is lost or blurred throughout the evening. Every one is succinct. Not only does she accompany on the piano, but she also sings.

The show is broken up into 10 different sections, with songs devoted to that many themes. What is particularly amazing about this production is all the tremendous energy the performers exude. They perform non-stop for 75 minutes.

"Fascinatin' Rhythms" continues to run for a six-week engagement until Saturday, Dec. 12.

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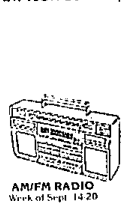
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