



David Jacobson as Eugene and Pat Nesbit as when he and his buddies are on leave from Rowena share his first sexual encounter, his Army base, in "Biloxi Blues."



Cathie Breidenbach

Good casting, careful detail are strengths of 'Close Ties'

Performances of "Close Ties" by Elizabeth Diggs continue through mid-January at Somerset Dinner Theatre of Somerset Mall in Troy. For ticket information call 648-6626.

Somerset Dinner Theatre's production of "Close Ties," a play about a family facing the encroaching senility of an aging grandmother, explores the topic with humor and intelligence.

At 84, Josephine Whitaker, played by Blanche Graham, is a long way from a pathetic senior. She's a sharp and feisty old lady of high energy who turns querulous one moment and vague the next, as she intermittently loses her hold on present reality but never parts with her sense of dignity.

The strength of the production lies in expert casting by director Rebecca Smith and in attention to the vibrant details that give characters the roundness of real people rather than stereotypes. Diggs plays never less ideas take over from the interesting members of the Whitaker-Frye clan when they get together at the old family cottage and deal with the arduous business of sorting out their complex lives.

Vicki Cravens as Evelyn and Frances Martone as her sister, Anna, parry especially well as they revive dormant rivalries and jealousies. Rob Polle plays little brother Thayer complete with blaring jam box, hyperactive dance gyrations and a three-inch-tall brushcut. He plays for laughs and gets them.

KATHY ABLESON as the third sister, Connie, creates a character who seems on a more even life track than her explosive sisters, yet distinctly part of the family.

Patricia Thompson as Bess, their mother and Josephine's well-meaning daughter, catches flack from her difficult grown daughters and from her aging, opinionated mother. The middle generation characters of Bess and her lawyer husband, Watson, played by Louis Emmert, come off as conscientious but a bit boring compared to the barefoot, popcorn-throwing grandchildren with their troubled love lives and the straight-talking grandmother who sprinkles her conversation with the rich color of memory.

Ira Bienenstock, Evelyn's lover, in-

vades this tangle of personalities with easygoing kindness. He's winningly portrayed by Fred Buchalter.

Somerset theatergoers may choose a play-only package or a dinner theater package. Dinner before the theater is served at Sebastian's elegant restaurant in Somerset Mall. The gourmet meal features salad and exceptional assorted breads with flavored butters. Entree choices on a recent evening included chicken breast with artichoke (delicate and moist), beef Wellington (deliciously tender and rare but with crust not as flaky as the Duke would have liked), broiled fish and seafood.

Beverage and a selection from the sumptuous pastry cart completes the meal. The chef serves all entrees with a superb awareness that people savour a meal with more pleasure when food is presented as a feast for the eyes as well as the palate.

Cathie Breidenbach of West Bloomfield has always loved theater. A former high-school-English teacher, she works in public relations.

Arnold was his favorite role

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What he has was the role of a male student in "The Beat" opposite John Savage. Due to the release of "The Beat" in 1985, he played a role in a movie.

He plays a role in a movie with a role in a movie. He was in a role in a movie.

IT WAS A WILD experience, and Jacobson about seeing the film for the first time. I don't

know what to expect. I don't find it hard to watch myself. When you're acting you see it from your point of view. It becomes a blur.

Extensive shots of the streets surrounding the high school and background music added a different dimension to the film. "It was amazing to see it in final form taking shape." Although he returned to school the semester after he was finished with the film, Jacobson kept on audition-

ing. That led to his selection as understudy for the part of Eugene in the national touring company of "Biloxi Blues."

"I want to finish school but at this point I'd so much rather work," he said.

Not any work will do, though. "I'm not interested in doing commercials. They don't appeal to me. I hope I don't have to put myself in that position."

TV 'Feast' features Botsford

WIBX-TV Channel 7's Jack McCarthy will turn the spotlight on Farmington's Botsford Inn at 6 p.m. Friday Oct. 30.

The camera of Friday Feast, a recurring Detroit feature, will focus on the Botsford's Marie Miller, food services supervisor, as she demonstrates the art of making tart.

TV fans and regular guests of the inn will see techniques of creating the Raspberry Gum Tart traditionally served throughout the holiday season in the hotel's Christmas restaurant.

Muller and her pastries have been featured in several nationwide publications: "Woman's Day," "Christmas 1983," "Smucker's Best American Country Inn," "Cooking," "1984," and "America's Country Inn Yearbook" by the R.T. French Co. 1984.

The inn is a nationally registered historic site owned by the Ann Arbor and operated by John W. Ann Arbor, president. The 151-year-old property hosted numerous celebration activities throughout 1985 — its 100th anniversary.

Recipes used on "Friday Feast" are available to viewers by contacting the TV station. "Over one-quarter million inquiries have been received by the station since we started," McCarthy said. "The most popular one had over 6,000."

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