

Entertainment

Ethel Simmons editor/644-1100



(O/S)

Thursday, February 25, 1988 O&E



Patti Page and Jerry Vale will be the second attraction at Livonia's Omni Star Theatre, opening Thursday, March 3. They follow the sold-out engagement of Wayne Newton on Thursday-Sunday, Feb. 25-28.

upcoming things to do

Deadline for the Upcoming calendar is one week ahead of publication. Items must be received by Thursday, to be considered for publication the following Thursday. Send to: Ethel Simmons, Entertainment Editor, The Observer & Eccentric, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

● BRUCE ECONOMOU

Bruce Economou, son of Chuck and Lois Economou of Farmington Hills, will be featured on "Knotts Landing" at 10 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 25, on CBS, Channel 2, WJBK-TV. Economou worked in the Detroit and Chicago markets doing industrial films and commercials for seven years before moving to Los Angeles in 1986. He has appeared on "Hill Street Blues," "Superior Court" and "The Bold and the Beautiful." He also will appear on an upcoming episode of "Hunter."

● JAZZFEST

JazzFest '88 begins at 9 a.m. Friday, Feb. 26, in Warner Hall at Oakland University in Rochester Hills. The event starts with clinics, and continues into the night with a concert. The afternoon session wraps up with a 5 p.m. concert featuring the Motorcity Jazz Quintet and guest vocalist Michael Naylor. At 8 p.m., Donald Byrd will join the Vocal Jazz Ensemble, Jazz Guitar Ensemble, Afram Jazz Ensemble and Marvin "Doc" Holladay from OU in a public concert. JazzFest is sponsored by the Center for the Arts and the Department of Music, Theatre and Dance. Morning and afternoon programs are especially for individuals and school groups who wish to listen and learn in small groups. Tickets are \$10 general admission and \$8 for students and senior citizens. Call the Center for the Arts box office, 370-3013, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays for concert details.

● MOTHER, DAUGHTER

Fraydelle Oysher and her daughter, singer and improviser Marilyn Michaels, will make their first appearance together in the Detroit area at 8 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 27, at the Jewish Community Center in

West Bloomfield. For further information on this program, call 681-1000.

● ACTING CLASS

A film acting class will give area actors a chance to have a small part in an actual film. Classes begin 7-9 p.m. Tuesday, March 1, and continue for three weeks through Tuesday, March 22. Training positions for filmmakers also are available. Contact the Farmington Community Center for applications or call 477-9404.

● CANDLELIT CABARET

Art Thieme will entertain with his folk songs, ballads and stories at a candlelit cabaret at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, March 6, at the Birmingham Temple in Farmington Hills. Admission is \$4 for the general public and \$7 for seniors and students. For more information, call Joyce Chereah, 647-4632.

● CONCERT SERIES

Somerset Mall's Sunday concert series for March will begin 2-4 p.m. Sunday, March 6, with Blackthorn offering authentic Irish music, at the mall's Center Court. In Troy, other concerts 2-4 p.m. are March 13, Jim Perkins and Friends, with a touch of the barney; Sunday, March 20, Borkowski and Koschick, contemporary folk music and songs. Silas Walker, piano stylist, will perform 1:30-3:30 p.m. Sunday, March 27. All concerts, with seating available, are open to the public at no charge.

● FESTA ITALIANA

Tickets are available for the 14th annual Festa Italiana Dinner Dance on Sunday, May 1, at the San Marino Club in Troy. Doors will open at 4 p.m. There will be a cocktail hour and entertainment by Lillian DiMarra and Maria Luisa Ellero. Dinner is at 5 p.m. Dance music will be by Clavo of Windsor, Ont. The event is presented by the Italian Study Group of Troy. Ticket price is \$45 per person. Make check payable to: Italian Study Group of Troy, Mail to: Lisa Polinelli, 5123 Southlawn, Sterling Heights 48310. For more information, call Polinelli at 979-3870.

Purple 'wrinkles'

They age actress for her stage role

By Ethel Simmons
staff writer

ACTRESS RUTH VOOL, a veteran of New York's Yiddish theater, joked with the Observer & Eccentric's photographer, expressing concern about whether her wrinkles would show. But she's not at all bothered letting it all hang out onstage, where she's made up to play a 78-year-old.

"You follow the lines that you have," she said, describing her make-up routine. "And you know what color pencil you use? Purple."

In the green room, backstage at the Birmingham Theatre, she talked about her role in "Social Security," the comedy playing through Sunday, March 20. It's not the first time she's played the role of Sophie Greenglass, who breaks away from her daughters' care to have a romance with a 98-year-old, Chagall-like, world-famous artist.

Vool has been an actress since she was a teenager in Montreal, where she was born, but she didn't make her Broadway debut until 1986. She understudied Olympia Dukakis in "Social Security" and finally got her big break, playing Sophie for three weeks, when Dukakis went to Hollywood to film "Moonstruck."

ON BROADWAY, she appeared with gray hair. For the Birmingham production, she's just letting her darker hair color go lighter for the role.

Vool projects a warm personality, and she has a strong voice that complements her attractive appearance. Recalling how she got the part of understudy in the Broadway show, she said, "The show was cast. They were looking for understudies. I read for Peter Lawrence (the director) as a playwright (Andrew Bergman). They laughed."

Lawrence, who rehearsed the un-



STEPHEN CANTRELL/staff photographer

Ruth Vool, who understudied and played Sophie Greenglass on Broadway, stars in the same role in "Social Security" at the Birmingham Theatre. On stage she portrays a disheveled, aging woman who undergoes a transformation to chic when she finds romance with an elderly, world-famous artist.

derstudies on Broadway, is directing the Birmingham show. Vool couldn't say enough good things about him. She also spoke positively about the other cast members.

"I've rehearsed with this group for two weeks," she said. "They're seasoned performers. It's a good family. We owe a lot to Peter Lawrence. He never loses his temper. He put the show together in four weeks in New York."

In the New York production, Vool not only was thrilled about making her Broadway debut, but she had another dream come true. The understudies were present at all the cast rehearsals. "It was exciting being at rehearsals where Mike Nichols was directing. He gives the actors so much latitude. He just directed the movie version of 'Biloxi Blues.' For

me it was a fantasy that I should attend a rehearsal of Mike Nichols directing."

She added, "Mike Nichols has so much confidence in Peter Lawrence."

VOOL REPLACED Vivian Blaine in the Birmingham show when

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Oldster's problems have fun side

Performances of the Birmingham Theatre production of "Social Security" continue through Sunday, March 20. For ticket information call the box office at 644-3533.

"Social Security," the comedy playing at the Birmingham Theatre, will make you laugh. It's a light offering sparked by a good cast and one virtuoso performance, and it dishes up some worthy gaps.

Don't expect a modern Moliere, but "Social Security" comes off well as a decent New York comedy. If it aims to be sophisticated and relevant but slips a little off the mark into overblown clichés, at least it slips with good humor and panache.

Playwright Andrew Bergman went out of his way to deal with the timely problem of the aging in this



Cathie Breidenbach

upscale New York comedy about two big-time Manhattan art dealers, David and Barbara, who get her cantankerous mother, Sophie, dumped on them by her fed up sister and brother-in-law.

Barbara, played with admirable energy by Beth McDonald, may be a New York career woman with a sumptuous apartment and a handsome husband but that's just her successful veneer. On the inside, she re-

verts to trembling little girl when her aging mother thunders for tea.

SOPHIE, PLAYED delightfully by Ruth Vool, is too alive to slip into gently dottering senility. She runs Barbara ragged until her daughter and son-in-law introduce her to a charming munchkin of an artist, who's supposed to be nearing his 100th birthday.

Alvin Myerovitch plays the Chagall-like artist with Yiddish leprechaun charm. He charms Sophie

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