

Entertainment

Ethel Simmons editor/644-1100



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(OJOC)

They're duo offstage, on

Twosome: partners in music and marriage

By Victor E. Swanson
special writer

THERE'S NOTHING more irritating at a restaurant than an over-loud entertainer. You know, that type of performer whose voice makes you wish you were sitting in the kitchen with the clanging pots and pans.

That's why it's such a joy to be at a supper club, such as Bobby's Country House at Idyl Wyld Golf Club in Livonia, where Mike Quatro and Connie Cocquyt-Quatro appear periodically on Thursday nights. He's a 37-year-old business veteran who composes, and she's a talented young singer who won the talent award at the 1987 Miss Michigan Pageant. They've been working as a team since June 1987.

"What you'll hear . . . is a good blend of subtle, soft and uptempo things," Mike said, sitting close to his new wife, in a recent interview at Bobby's. "The main thing is, I never do anything straight. Every single time we do a tune, we do an arrangement, a specific arrangement, specifically tailored for her voice, my voice and my sense of rhythm."

They perform his songs and classic rock tunes by other artists, such as "Unchained Melody," which the Righteous Brothers did; "Please

Believe Me," which the Beatles did; and "Bridge Over Troubled Water." Quatro is the musician of the group, and he often plays instrumental works from his past albums. Their musical equipment is like that found in the better recording studios, so there's rich, not tinny or muffled, sound.

THEY'RE FUN to watch because they give a real show. He's handsome; she's beautiful, which is why she was one of the top-10 finalists in the 1987 Miss Michigan Pageant. And both — Mike and Connie — sing well.

By the age of 15, Connie was doing dinner theater. "I've done plays at the Masonic Temple . . . the Michigan Opera Theatre," Connie, now 19, said.

Mike said of his gorgeous wife, who's mostly French, "She's got an incredible range . . . I haven't heard a better voice. This one's got talent that I've always wanted to be associated with." He started to smile. "I've never had the chance to work that closely with a female singer and be in love at the same time." Then he really smiled. "How can you beat that?"

Mike's been a professional entertainer since the age of 7. He was already making professional network television appearances by the age of 9. In the 1950s, for instance, he made appearances on "Law-



RICK SMITH

Musician Mike Quatro and his wife, vocalist Connie Cocquyt-Quatro, currently entertain at several spots in the Detroit area. Here they perform at Bobby's Country House in Livonia.

rence Welk's Top Tunes and New Talent" (also known as "The Plymouth Show").

Mike said, "Welk used to come on stage and say, 'And now, ah, let me Mike, ah, Quatro from Grosse Pointe will play the piano for you.' Mike added, "And the Lemmon Sisters — I called them the Lemmon Sisters — would sit on the piano and sing a tune occasionally." (Of course, they were the Lemmon Sisters.)

SINCE THE 1950S, Quatro has had a busy career. For most of the 1960s, he was involved with booking musical groups, starting out

with his father's agency.

"I developed my own agency and booked exclusively in the premiere years — the final four years — from '66 to '70, the MCs, Iggy and the Stooges . . . Alice Cooper, Ted Nugent and the Amboy Dukes, Bob Seger." He also did promotion work for a few years. "The final cap to my promotion career was the Rolling Stones' concert at Olympia Stadium in '69."

In 1970, he went back to performing. He said, "The first date, the first major date I played, was the Summer Peace Festival with John Lennon in Toronto. They sandwiched

me (his group) between Sly Stone and Jethro Tull."

Since 1970, "I've produced and made myself or produced approximately 18 albums." In 1987, he signed a new record deal with Jet Records of England. It's a five-year package (a two-record deal, with three one-year options).

Mike and Connie hope to be in England in May or June so that he can start work on the first of the two albums. First he must finish his "syndication."

Mike explained, "Syndication is this. I've developed a corporation, which I am signed to. All of my income goes into that corporation.

Investors buy shares of stock in the corporation and get a piece of the net profits. And that's for the next 10 years, plus a 10-year option. We're just now at the point of putting the stock certificates for sale to investors. We'll have about eight or 10 investors . . . They'll own pieces of me . . . Quatro Project, Ltd."

CONNIE WILL SING duet with Mike on one of the songs. Rock star Susie Quatro, Mike's younger sister, who lives in a castle in England, is also expected to do a duet with Mike.

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table talk

Dinner, wine

First in a series of three Winemaker dinners will be held at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday at Sebastian's in Troy. A six-course meal will feature wines from Pine Ridge Vineyards for each course. Included is a 1983 Andrus Special Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon. For reservations at \$28.95 per person, call 649-6625.

Feed homeless

A collection of canned food will be held all day Thursday, March 17, at Diamond Jim Brady's at 3000 Town Center in Southfield. Food will be donated to St. Patrick's Center, which feeds the homeless. Diamond Jim Brady's is celebrating its ninth birthday at the Presidential Center with free birthday cake. The menu for St.

Pat's Day includes corned beef and cabbage, lamb stew, Irish soda bread and green beer. Festivities begin at 11 a.m. and entertainment starts at 7 p.m.

Irish fare

Chef Gary Graywacz will be Irish for the day, as he prepares traditional corned beef and cabbage, Irish

lamb stew and beef stew on St. Patrick's Day at the Clarkson Cafe. A six-member group of Irish musicians, Mixed-Up O'Company and Friends, will entertain from 5 p.m. to midnight.

Charley Horse

Charley's Restaurants throughout metropolitan Detroit has renamed

its lounge areas, calling them the Charley Horse Saloon. "Suitecase" Night on Fridays continues through the Grande Finale on March 18. To be eligible to win the Grand-Prize Weekend Rendezvous, you must bring a suitcase with you, to Bloomfield Charley's, Southfield Charley's, Livonia Charley's or Northville Charley's, among others, on the night of the drawing, for a trip that weekend.

Culinary salon

The Midwest's largest culinary competition, the 15th annual Hospitality Industry Culinary Art Salon, will be held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, March 27, at Oakland Community College in Building J&H on the Orchard Ridge Campus in Farmington Hills. More than 400 works of

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D.O.A. (R)

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HAIR SPRAY (R)

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SHOOT TO KILL (R)

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