

# Shows, venues are varied at Wayne suburban theaters

By Bob Weibel  
special writer

COMMUNITY THEATERS in Western Wayne County will treat audiences to interesting and varied venues during the 1988-89 season. Curtain time for all shows is 8 p.m.

The Theatre Guild of Livonia-Redford generally offers well-produced pieces of theatrical merit rather than the latest commercial hit. Theatergoers will have more of the same as the group begins its 35th season. President Maggie Lamb advises that there is a new number for ticket reservations and group information. It's 427-1905. Ticket prices are \$6 regular shows, \$8 for the musical.

TGLR begins with David Story's "Home," a touching drama of elderly people and how they cope with their situations. The show opens a week later than originally scheduled. New performance dates are Fridays-Saturdays, Oct. 14-15, 21-22 and 28-29.

Next up is the delightful musical spoof, "Olympus on Mars," in which we learn what happens when Jupiter comes to Earth in human form to seduce the beautiful Alceme, wife of Amphitryon. Auditions are 2 p.m. Sunday and 7:30 p.m. Monday at the guild playhouse, 15138 Beech Daily one block south of Five Mile in Redford. Director Jim Posante asks that you come prepared with a song and bring the

TGLR closes its season with Hy Gardner's rambunctious little comedy "I'm Not Rappaport" on April 14-15, 21-22 and 28-29.

sheet music. Show dates are Friday-Saturday, Nov. 25-26, and Friday-Sunday, Dec. 2-4, 9-11.

TGLR WILL PRESENT "My Sister in This House," by Wendy Kesselman on Feb. 10-11, 17-18 and 24-25. This extraordinary drama, winner of the Playbill Award, is about a celebrated 1920s French murder case that examines the strange and complex relationship of four lonely women.

TGLR closes its season with Hy Gardner's rambunctious little comedy, "I'm Not Rappaport," on April 14-15, 21-22 and 28-29.

Trinity House Theatre works out of its own theater at 3840 W. Six Mile, Livonia. Tickets are \$5, and the phone number is 464-6302. Most of its productions stress moral or ethical values.

Thomas Peterman reports that Trinity will open the season with "Sentence to Life," by British playwrights Malcolm Muggeridge and Alan Thornhill. Auditions are at 7:30 p.m. Monday-Tuesday at the theater. Show dates are Friday-Saturday, Nov. 11-12, 18-19, 25-26 and Dec. 2-3. An evening of readings and workshop productions of original works is

scheduled for the winter.

Trinity will present something very different from the usual community theater fare, T.S. Eliot's verse play, "The Cocktail Party," on April 28-29, and May 5-6, 12-13 and 19-20. On the surface it's a comedy of manners, the silly party, trivial chatter of life. At another level, however, Eliot examines the conflict of Christian values with the negatives of our culture.

THE PLYMOUTH Theatre Guild has a new home. It will stage the 1988-89 season at the Plymouth Hilton Inn, 14707 Northville Road. Ticket price for all shows is \$5. For information, call 420-2161.

Al LaCroix directs the first offering, "The Night of January 16th," about a murder trial, in which the jury is selected from the audience — and actually determines the outcome of the play. Production dates are Friday-Saturday, Nov. 4-5, 11-12 and 18-19.

Fred Butten will direct A. J. Gurney's hit of a few seasons ago, "The Dining Room." Over the course of many years, the audience meets a wacky and diverse cast of characters in many dining rooms. Play dates are April 7-8 and 14-15.

Spotlight Players has tentatively scheduled "Sound of Murder" for November and Jean Kerr's domestic comedy about publishing people, "Mary, Mary," in February. The musical "Charlie Brown" is a possibility for May. The theater group is short a director or two. If you're interested, call Tobin Hissong at 459-7672.

## Audience enjoys familiarity of family in 'Alone Together'

Performances of "Alone Together," presented by the Ridgedale Players, continue through Sunday at the playhouse in Troy. For ticket information, call 644-8328.

The Ridgedale Players production of Lawrence Roman's timely comedy, "Alone Together" is provocative and hilarious.

Roman's play about parents who have made life so pleasant for their children that they would rather return to the nest hit a nerve in the packed theater Saturday night. I suspect this play speaks for parents in their 50s all over the United States.

Under Susan Skibicki's direction, the cast manages to find humor in lack of privacy, too many telephone lines, exploding hot tubs, invading strangers, misplaced talent, unused talent, affairs, the sort of problems playwrights used to write serious dramas about. The good humor and feel for American middle class life that underlies "Alone Together" is contagious. Roman has stood frustration on its head and created a very funny comedy.

Maureen Cook's energy in the role of wife/mother Helene Butler lights the stage. Cook has a voice filled with wonderful inflections, and she uses them in the right places. When Helene's youngest son, Keith, leaves for college, she tells us she doesn't want to find herself. "I haven't been lost, I've just been under siege," she says, and everyone in the theater, not only mothers, identifies. Cook carries us through Helene's bafflement at the return of the gen-



Helen Zucker

ius from M.I.T. ("he's 30, he's halfway to retirement") through her chagrin at the return of her womanizing second son whose wife has thrown him out. She takes us through all the stages of compassion and, "What have we done wrong?" and patience worn thin until her explosion, when she screams, "The mother machine has run down!" Instead of her kids leaving, she does.

IT'S A WONDERFUL turn of events, and Cook makes us cheer for this feisty woman who wants to pick up her paintbrushes after a 30-year pause.

Michael Elbert looks like the dad everyone wants. Elbert plays George Butler as a hard-working, successful accountant who has done his best to give his wife and kids a good life. Yet we believe George's regrets when he recalls sports events he missed because of his son's school play. Elbert shows us a father who is strong on love but shies away from discipline. Elbert gives us a husband who grows up and tells his adult sons to "pack up and grow up somewhere else."

Julianne West is wonderful as Janie Johnson, the underdressed friend who arrives uninvited for room and

board. Janie, who has been told she's a dunce by her mother, is into doomsday, cellabacy and cheerful survival. She's the new breed of college student; she travels light, takes heavy courses and has no idea how to set a table. West is ebullient and canny as a girl who understands

Jim Rink slouches around in battle fatigues, T-shirts and wire-rimmed glasses as Michael, the genius who can't face his job at M.I.T. Rink is very funny, adding and subtracting the many reasons why his parents should be grateful for his presence. The panic that has driven him home is perhaps given short shrift, but we believe in Michael's final departure. Rink is a pleasure to watch.

Dan Fuller as Elliott, the woman chaser, is loose, limber and easy to watch. Fuller has the only Western accent in this Los Angeles family, but this is a play about the mysteries of raising kids. Who knows how Elliott picked up his accent so fast? Of course, his wife divorces him, and Elliott, after taking four days to pack, lopes off into the sunset.

Kent Martini as Keith, the youngest son, who drives home from college because he has a toothache, is a chip off the old block. Martini is lively as he carries chicken sandwiches out the door. . . . Though Helene and George embrace at the finale, we are left with a vision of Keith returning to the nest.

Helen Zucker has many years' experience reviewing for newspapers and magazines in Michigan, New York and Massachusetts.

This weekend, getaway to the most fun in Michigan!



- Available Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights
- Luxurious accommodations, outstanding restaurants, lively lounge
- Indoor swimming pool and sauna
- \*20 "Hilton Money" to spend for refreshments and/or dinner at Hurley's, Charley's Crab and/or The Wicker Works Restaurant

24-hour advance reservations required!  
**NORTHFIELD HILTON**  
5500 Crooks Road, Troy, MI 48069  
(313) 879-2100

Cherish advance booking request. Offer valid Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights. \$60 rate does not include state or local taxes. Limited time offer subject to availability.

The New Palace of Auburn Hills presents



G.R.I.L.L.E

**LUNCH**  
Monday-Friday  
11 a.m.-3 p.m.  
\*DINNER will be served to the public on non-event nights ONLY.

**DINNER\***  
Monday-Thursday  
5 p.m.-8:30 p.m.  
Friday-Saturday  
5 p.m.-10:30 p.m.

L.O.U.N.G.E

The Palace Lounge invites you  
**"AFTER HOURS"**  
Monday-Friday 4:30-7:30 (non-event nights)  
Featuring: A Selection of HOT HORS D'OEUVRES  
and DAILY DRINK SPECIALS

B.R.U.N.C.H

**Sunday Brunch 11 a.m.-2 p.m.**  
In addition to our regular menu,  
available from 11 a.m.-7 p.m.

Located in The Palace of Auburn Hills  
Exit Lapeer Road (M-24) off I-75

Reservations Recommended 377-8454

DINING & ENTERTAINMENT

## On the Town



For the ultimate in Northern Italian cuisine, dine at La Guardia Restaurant, downtown on Pitt Street.

The beautiful bridge that goes to a beautiful place. All for only \$1.25.

To look good, see Freeds. It's Windsor/Detroit's largest Men's Store, with exclusive Canadian and European fashions.

For dance, theater, or music, it's Cleary Auditorium downtown—showplace of Canadian culture.

They say the best view of Detroit is from the Art Gallery of Windsor Restaurant. Enjoy its fine Belgian cuisine.

# Windsor.

## The more you look, the more you like.

Windsor is the kind of place that improves with familiarity. For one thing, you'll never run out of great restaurants. A few? Elliott's on the Avenue. Wong's Eatery. Louie Linguini's. Traiteur's. Casa Bianca. La Notte. The Royal Bengal Indian Curry House. Stoney Point Tavern. Sunnyside Tavern. Duffy's Tavern. Dan Flannagan's. The list goes on.

And, no matter what you're shopping for, you can find it in Windsor. Hockey equipment? You've come to the right place: Johnson Sports, on Wyandotte east of Ouellette. With selection—and prices—you'll find hard to match anywhere.

Up for a little sightseeing? Take Route 18 to Colasanti's Tropical Gardens in Ruthven. You'll see quaint farmhouses, boats on the river and waves on the lake.

If you plan to stay the weekend, remember that Detroit's most affordable mini-vacation is in Windsor, at Relax Plaza Hotel. It's on the waterfront, right in the heart of Windsor's bustling downtown. It's so easy to get to, just say...

*Let's go to Windsor*  
The gateway to Incredible Ontario

For over \$200 worth of Windsor Savers' Certificates and a Valtora® Kit, mail this coupon or call toll-free. Offer ends 12/30/88.

**1-800-265-3633**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to Valtora® Bureau, 80 Chatham Street E., Windsor, Ont. N9A 2W1, Canada. **OE**

Windsor means Essex County, including Amherstburg, Belle River, Colchester, Essex, Harrow, Kingsville, La Salle, Leamington, Lighthouse Cove, Pelee Island, Rutherford, St. Joachim, St. Clair Beach, Stoney Point, Tecumseh, Tilbury, and the town of Windsor.