

Dancer from Troy appears in 'Can-Can' at the Fisher

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adagio team with Kevin Oviatt, whom she met when they both were in a Las Vegas show.

"We traveled for three years together, as lead dancers in several revue shows in Las Vegas, Reno and the Caribbean," she said.

Their partnership was strictly business, not romance. In fact, her fiancé traveled with them for the last two years. She and her dance partner appeared on "Star Search" together, for four performances in all. They didn't win, but she was a big winner but, "we made good money."

SHE AND JIMMY met in New Jersey when she was working with Kevin. After the dance team split, "I decided to go to New York. For three months, before I joined the Rockettes, I trained myself vocally and in dance and acting."

McMacken gets along great with the other Rockettes. "They're my buddies," she said.

She finds doing precision dancing with the Rockettes a real change of pace from her adagio teamwork. That kind of dancing was athletic and aerobic.

"I loved it," she said. "I'm really flexible. It (adagio) demands a higher concentration than I used in any other form of dance."

With the Rockettes, "coming from

lead work, I had to learn how to calm down and be myself." She had to learn to use the same gestures, to kick at the same time.

"When you do solo work, everyone wants your job. When you do work like this, in the line, there's no competition. We're all friends. The Rockettes are all earthy Jersey girls."

AFTER THE TOUR closes, the show will go to Atlantic City without Chita Rivera. Nor does McMacken plan to continue with the show. "There are other things I want to do. I would like to take a European tour," she said.

Working with Rivera is a real joy. "She's a pro. She's a star. She's like one of us. She is in the chorus. She still has that dancer's mentality. She's very down to earth," McMacken said. "I get to step out of line a couple of times and dance with Chita."

McMacken is 28, and she said some people think that is old for a dancer, but she considers herself to be in top form. A star like Rivera, who just turned 56 Wednesday, is an exception to the rule, she noted.

Dancing the can-can is nothing new to McMacken. "I danced many can-cans when I did adagio," she said. "I always played the lead and was the one who got flipped." She did the Moulin Rouge Can-Can at the Las Vegas Hilton's show. "We did about 30 jump splits in the course of one dance."

PARTS OF THE Cole Porter musical "Can-Can" she likes best are "the improvisational scenes in the courtroom, dancing with Chita, and doing the Rockettes' famous kick lines."

During the show's run, there have been a lot of unexpected incidents, such as the night "I forgot to put on my corset and couldn't go on stage." Everyone in the cast tries to keep the show from getting stale. "We play a lot to keep it new. Chita loves the play. She cracks us up during the Beaux Arts Ball."

McMacken said she was going to visit her old high school this week to tell the show last week, with McMacken's family.

After graduating from high school, McMacken attended Point Park College in Pittsburgh, where she took an intense program in dance. She returned to her high school one summer to train the Athens High school football team in ballet (she had taught a similar session to the Pittsburgh Steelers). At the request of the Athens theater department, she choreographed "Anything Goes" in 1981-82, before she graduated from college in 1983.

After college, she worked on cruise ships and was line captain and dancer at the Desert Inn Hotel in Las Vegas. She appeared in the show "One of a Kind" for a year. "It was more of a family show for Vegas," she said. She said she never went topless.

upcoming things to do

Deadline for the Upcoming calendar to 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, 3625 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia 48150.

P2039

● PRIZE COMEDY

Lost hopes and dreams of a radical generation are revealed in the Pulitzer Prize-winning comedy "Fools of July," opening Friday, Jan. 27, at the Oakland University Center for the Arts in Rochester Hills. Performances, directed by Blair Vaughn Anderson, will be at 8 p.m. Fridays-Saturdays, Jan. 27-28, and Feb. 3-4, and 2 p.m. Sundays, Jan. 29 and Feb. 5, in the Varner Studio Theatre. Tickets are \$8 for adults, \$4 for senior citizens, students and children, and \$3 for OU students. Call the Center for the Arts box office at 370-3013 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.

● COMEDY/THRILLER

"The Butler Did It," a comedy/thriller by Marks and Marks, opens Friday, Jan. 27, at the Farmington Players Barn in Farmington Hills. Action for "The Butler Did It," the players' second show of the season, takes place in a present-day New York theater. The plot revolves around the production of a play and, therefore, there is a play within the

play. The show runs Friday-Sunday, Jan. 27-29; Thursday-Sunday, Feb. 2-4 and 9-12. Curtain time for all performances is 8 p.m., except on Sundays, when it is 7 p.m. Tickets are \$8 and can be obtained by calling 538-1670.

● DINNER THEATER

Actress-singer Nancy Gurwin will present the music of Judy Garland at "Over the Rainbow Dinner Theater" in the intimate setting of the Community Center Farmington-Farmington Hills. Opening Saturday, Jan. 28, the evening will begin at 7:30 p.m. and feature a full-course, catered dinner along with the show. For more information, call the Community Center at 477-8404. Cost of \$24 per person includes the performance and dinner. Complimentary wine will be served. Other performance dates are Saturday-Sunday, Feb. 4-5. Gurwin also will teach a new course for the Community Center's winter 1989 session. "Creative Drama, with Nancy Gurwin" will introduce youth age 10-17 years to theater techniques and performance. Beginning Feb. 23, these workshops will be held Thursdays 7-8:30 p.m. Fee is \$60 for five sessions.

● MUSICAL EVENT

Walled Lake Western Band and Orchestra Booster will sponsor an

all-day musical event featuring area performing groups and the high school's orchestra, symphonic band, combined bands, jazz ensemble, pep band, flag corps and concert choir. Performances will be from noon to 10 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 28, in the school auditorium. Admission is free. In conjunction with the "day of music" a silent auction will be conducted for musical instruments and other musical paraphernalia. Show times include 1:35 p.m., the Clarencville High School Concert Band, and 5 p.m., the Oakland Community College Jazz Ensemble.

● BLUES BASH

Bates Street Night Out and Blues Factory Records has scheduled a Birmingham Winter Blues Bash for 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. Friday, Feb. 3, at the Community House in Birmingham. Bates Street Night Out is an evening held once a month for singles and couples to enjoy live entertainment, dancing and socializing with adults from the tri-county area. Appearances by Robert Penn, selected by Metro Times Music Poll in 1988 as the Best Blues Vocalist, and Zoom and the Paybacks, noted as "Detroit's hottest lady blues singer," are planned for the evening. Tickets are available at the door or by calling the Community House at 644-5532. Cover charge is \$5.

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