

A little humor, some song and banter

Benefit bash stars comic Steve Allen

By Victor Swanson
staff writer

Tomorrow an entertainer's entertainer will be appearing at the Royal Oak Theatre, Fourth and Washington.

He's a man who had his first network television show in 1950, on CBS, has written 30 books, composed about 4,000 songs, and appeared on countless television programs.

He's Steve Allen.

The 8 p.m. event is "Comedy Cares for Seniors," a benefit for the Catholic Social Services of Oakland County, a non-profit social service agency.

On Monday, Allen was in New York, where he was about to host an event at the Plaza Hotel for the Italian Clothing designers, who were showing off the new fall line. He took a few moments before rehearsal to talk about the show at the Royal Oak Theatre.

ALLEN INDICATED that "Comedy Cares for Seniors" would proba-

bly consist of passing cards around to the audience and have them ask questions. He'd read the card, and answer the questions with the famous Allen flare, which he used to do on his television talk shows.

And he's scheduled to perform some of his famous songs, such as "This Could Be the Start of Something Big."

Opening for Steve Allen will be magician comedian Jeff Hobson, a Detroit based performer.

The event also will give those who attend a chance to get Allen's autograph later in the evening, possibly on a copy of his latest book, "Murder on the Glitter Box."

ALLEN DESCRIBED the book as a "murder whodunit," which from conception has taken two years to be realized in print. The story opens on a television talk show, not unlike "The Tonight Show," on NBC, of which Allen was the creator and first host. There's a guest host and wonderful guests and everything is going well. Then there's a murder -

one of the guests keels over right on camera. The victim's been poisoned.

Of course, the remainder of the story is about finding out who the killer or killers are, all good fun for the amateur arm chair detective reading in a big chair on a dark night.

"Murder on the Glitter Box" is Allen's 29th book in print.

THE NEXT BOOK scheduled to come out is "The Passionate Non-Smokers Bill of Rights," which should be released in September.

Another book scheduled to be released soon is "Meeting of Minds," which will feature scripts from the interview show seen on PBS stations in the late 1970s and early 1980s, in which Allen interviewed great historical characters (that is, actors pretending to be such great historical characters), such as Ben Franklin.

In the 1980s, Allen has hosted and produced such shows as "Steve Allen's Music Room" and "Steve Allen's Comedy Room," both of which were series made up of six specials

Tickets are still available for Friday's show at the Royal Oak Theater.

shown on the Disney Channel.

This season, Allen hosted another television interview show for syndication, and this summer WXYZ-TV, channel 7, has carried it.

It's "Host-to-Host," a set of 13 half-hour shows, in which Allen interviews the interviewers, such as Dick Cavett, Hugh Downs, Larry King and Joan Rivers.

No other television shows are in the works for Allen at the moment.

HOWEVER, ALLEN'S wife, Jayne Meadows, has worked on two pilot television shows over the last two weeks, both of which are comedies.

Allen does have a second record album for Yamaha scheduled to be released soon, consisting of 12 of his own compositions.

Over the last few years, Allen has put together many albums or other

artists have recorded his material. Some of the albums are "Paul Smith Plays Steve Allen," "Ann Jillian sings Steve Allen," "Steven Allen's Hip Fables," and "Punny Font Calls," the latter two albums of which use material from an early 1960s television comedy-talk show of Allen's that featured such comedians as Mel Brooks, Carl Reiner, Louie Nye and Jack Lemmon.

Another of some 40 albums of Allen's is "Shakin' Loose with Mother Goose," with Jayne Meadows.

ALLEN MENTIONED that his wife was currently involved with giving lectures about powerful women in history and that his son, Bill, was doing well as an executive with MTM Productions, the television company that over the years has put



Steve Allen

together such shows as "St. Elsewhere" and "Newhart."

Steve Allen and Jayne Meadows are the 1989 spokesmen for the American Cancer Society.

Tickets for "Comedy Cares for Seniors" at the Royal Oak Theatre, cost \$25 and are still available.

upcoming things to do

IN THE PARK

The Birmingham Concert Band will be featured Thursday, July 20, at 7:30 p.m. in Shain Park as the Birmingham concert series continues. Director Grant Hoemke promises the program will be an old fashioned park concert in case of bad weather, call 644-1807 for recorded information.

The series continues Thursday, July 27 with the Santa Clara Vanguard Drum & Bugle Corps at 8:30 p.m. in Shain Park. The five time drum corps international world champion from Santa Clara, Calif. will perform music from Phantom of the Opera.

The Dick Murphy Big Band will perform at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 3. The band will play familiar big band tunes of the 30's and 40's. Park-goers can bring lawn chairs and blankets and light refreshments around the park are available.

SUNDAY CONCERTS

The City of Southfield and PPCAM have joined in sponsoring a series of Sunday concerts for music lovers. The South Oakland Band will perform on July 23 from 7:45 p.m. in the Prudential Sun Bowl.

The band will play everything from Broadway and pop selections to orchestral transcriptions. Debbie George of the Southfield Parks & Recreation Dept. will be master of ceremonies. Conductor is Walter Wilson. Call 354-4717 for more information.

TODD RUNDGREN

Todd Rundgren appears at the Royal Oak Music Theatre at 7:30 p.m. Monday, July 24. Tickets are \$18.50. Call 546-7610 for information.

12 DANCING PRINCESSES

Cranbrook Theatre School presents "The 12 Dancing Princesses"

on Wednesday and Thursday, July 26-27 at 8 p.m. in Cranbrook's Greek theatre. Featured are lovely princesses, a handsome prince, a king and village folk with dancing and merriment in a gorgeous theatre set amidst pine trees and gardens. For tickets call 644-9068, 645-1576 or 644-6093. They are available for purchase at the school between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. or they may be purchased on performance nights. Cranbrook Theatre School is in Bloomfield Hills on Lone Pine Rd.

PONTIAC JAZZ

Free top-notch jazz will abound at Pontiac Plaza Jazz '89. All performances will take place center stage at the ten acre park atop the Phoenix Center Plaza in downtown Pontiac Aug. 4-6. Among the headliners will be guitarist Kevin Eubanks, a graduate of Boston's Berklee College of Music, who has played with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, McCoy Tyner and Slide Hampton. Saturday will feature Brazilian songbird Flora Purim, named best jazz singer by Downbeat, Billboard, Record World and Rolling Stone. Sunday's principal performer is himself a legend - pianist Ramsey Lewis. For further information call the Cultural Council of Pontiac, 334-2390.

DON MCLEAN

Singer and songwriter Don McLean, who brought America "American Pie" and other goodies like "Starry, Starry Night" - a tribute to Dutch Impressionist painter Vincent Van Gogh - will appear at the Royal Oak Music Theatre on Aug. 4 at 8 p.m. \$16 tickets are available at all TicketMaster outlets.

IRISH SINGERS

From Dublin, Ireland, the 79-member St. James Choir will perform in concert at 7:30 p.m. Sunday,

July 23, in the Michigan State Fairgrounds Community Arts auditorium, Woodward at State Fair avenues. Tickets, \$10. Call 336-7615 or 255-5568.

JAZZIN' AT THE SNAKE

Sundance Natural Juice Sparkler and the Rattlesnake Club have teamed up to bring the great sounds of local jazz entertainment to the Detroit riverfront. Jazzin' begins at 7 p.m. on Wednesday and Thursday at the Rattlesnake Club, in Stroh River Place on Jos. Campau, on the patio overlooking the Detroit River - (weather permitting). Calvin Brooks Trio on July 20, Calvin Brooks Quartet July 21-22, Emanuel Higgins and Jan Spencer July 26-27, and Ralph Kozlarski with Expedition July 29-29. For more information, call 597-4498.

BUDWEISER MOTOR CITY MUSIC FEST

It's time for Hart Plaza to be the center of attention for another great weekend of music. July 21-23 with the 4th annual Budweiser Motor City Music Fest. Opening night the legendary Ray Charles will be the headline act, appearing with Charles will be Cajun music artist Wayne Toups. On Saturday, southern rockers the Georgia Satellites will take center stage. To close off the weekend Sunday, the Romantics and Thirty Eight Special will put the music fest to rest with a bang. Music begins at noon all three days. In addition to Budweiser, sponsors include Ford, WRIF, Pontiac Motors and the City of Detroit.

CONCERT ADDED

Carele King makes her Meadow Brook debut Sunday, July 23. Wayne Toups and Zydecojams will open. Tickets, \$22.50 and \$15. Evening concerts at 8 p.m. in the Baldwin Pavilion.

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Phantom of Shain Park

Birmingham's popular "In the Park" summer concert series continues with the Santa Clara Vanguard Drum & Bugle Corps performing at 8:30 p.m. Thursday, July 27, at Shain Park. The Vanguard Drum & Bugle

Corps, from Santa Clara, Calif., is five-time Drum Corps International world champion and will perform music from Phantom of the Opera. In case of rain, call 644-1807 for information.

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