

STREET CRACKS

Shriner: Show biz' bright star

By Shirlee Rose Iden
staff writer

Attention folks who are planning to enjoy comedian Wil Shriner when he comes to Chaplin's East shortly. The comic, who already has the Lamaze breathing technique down pat, says he "will be outta here in a flash if my wife goes into labor."

"It's written into my contract and believe me, I'll leave for California, if Catherine's water breaks or labor starts."

And that's no joke. Shriner's wife, a model and actress, is expecting the baby during the first week of October. But though they don't know exactly when, they do know they will have a daughter to bring home to their 3-year-old son.

Meanwhile, Shriner just bought a beeper so Catherine can stay in touch.

Among the brightest of comedians on the show business scene today, Shriner also has acting, filmmaking, producing, and film editing to his credit.

His national talk show "The Wil Shriner Show," syndicated on 108 stations by Group W in 1987-88, won Emmy nominations for "best show," "best host" and "best writing."

One of the twin sons of the late "Hoosier Humorist," Herb Shriner, Wil draws on his experience of growing up in a small town as well as dealing on the Hollywood scene, a contrasting environment.

WHEN HIS FATHER gave his twin sons a movie camera, its use became a learning experience for both, leading them to acting. Kin played "Scotty" in the television series "General Hospital." Wil, spotted and cast for a co-starring role in Francis Ford Coppola's "Peggy Sue Got Married," is presently looking at a script with a role in it for a young pilot.

"I do like what I'm doing, all of

it," he said. "When I'm not working comedy, I keep busy with filmmaking and other things."

Flying a Piper Cherokee Arrow is one of Shriner's happiest involvements, which he started 15 years ago when he moved to California.

"I've been going through my tapes, but it's too nice a day to be sitting inside, and I'm getting ready to go flying," he said.

Shriner belongs to some flying clubs, dodging actual ownership of a plane which he said can be demanding.

IN SHRINER'S VIEW, it wasn't difficult for him to get started as a comic.

"I went into it in 1978 and I'd go to the Comedy Store and watch all the great guys," he said. "Now, comedy is more of a business and not as free of an expression as before."

Shriner writes his own material, only occasionally trading jokes with other comedians. Critics, such as John Stanley, have praised him, writing: "What a surprise from left field. With his impish gleam and breezy manner, he blows in as refreshing as a trade wind."

Another, Bob Hill of the Louisville Courier-Journal, called Shriner a "funny man. There's not an ounce of pretense, ego or self-serving dramatics in his show."

The comic has appeared on the Johnny Carson and David Letterman shows and keeps busy performing in concerts, night clubs and comedy clubs. He also has acted in Steven Spielberg's "Amazing Stories" television show.

Born in New York City, he moved to Fort Lauderdale at age 7, because his father sought a small city environment for his children. Herb Shriner and his wife, Pixie, were killed in an automobile accident and the twins and their sister finished high school in a suburb of Dallas



Comedian Wil Shriner can make people laugh, but his arsenal includes work in acting, filmmaking, producing, and film editing.

where they lived with their grandparents.

WHEN SHRINER became a full-time performer, he found it necessary to move to the show business hub, Los Angeles.

It was during a guest appearance on the David Letterman Show that Shriner was spotted and asked to audition for "Peggy Sue Got Married." Shriner said he likes acting, but the "hours are boring."

"With Francis Ford Coppola, when

I wasn't acting, I watched him. I'm a sponge that way."

Shriner said he wouldn't want to be breaking into comedy right now, because the business has changed.

"My future is really up in the air. I'd like to do another talk show, acting, or working steady in television."

Meanwhile, outside of his work, Shriner plays a waiting game, watching the clock, listening for the beeper, and waiting to meet his new daughter.

COMEDY CLUBS

Here are some listings of comedy clubs in our area. To let us know who is appearing at your club, send the information to: Comedy Listings, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

● BEA'S COMEDY KITCHEN

Downtown Tony Brown will perform with Tim Butterfield and Fred Williams Friday-Saturday, Sept. 29-30, at Bea's Comedy Kitchen, 541 Larned, Detroit. Show times are 8 and 11:15 p.m. For information, call 981-2581.

● CHAPLIN'S EAST

Wil Shriner will perform Wednesday-Saturday, Sept. 27-30, at Chaplin's East, 34244 Groesbeck, Fraser. Show times are 8:30 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday and 8:30 and 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For information, call 792-1902.

● CHAPLIN'S PLYMOUTH

Paul Kelly will perform Thursday-Saturday, Sept. 27-30, at Chaplin's Plymouth in the Plymouth Radisson, 14707 Northville Road, Plymouth. For information, call 454-4680.

● CHAPLIN'S WEST

Jerry Grossman will perform Tuesday-Saturday, Sept. 26-30, at Chaplin's West, 16990 Telegraph, south of Six Mile, Detroit. For information, call 533-8866.

● HOLLY HOTEL

"The Women of the '90s, Part II," will take place Thursday through Saturday, Sept. 28-30, featuring Mary Miller, Gilda Hauser, Jenny McNulty, Jill Washburn and Sheila Kaye, at Holly Hotel, 110 Battle Alley, Holly. Show times are 8:30 p.m. with additional 10:30 p.m. shows on Friday and Saturday. For information, call 634-1891.

● JOEY'S LIVONIA

Bill Thomas will perform Thursday-Saturday, Sept. 28-30, at Joey's Comedy Club, 36071 Plymouth Road, Livonia. Show times are 9 p.m. Thursday and Friday and 8:30 and



Michael Blackman will perform Thursday-Saturday at the Wolverine Lounge and Looney Bin Comedy Club in Walled Lake.

10:30 p.m. Saturday. For reservations, call 261-0555.

● LOONEY BIN

Michael Blackman will perform along with Ken Brown and Don Borza Thursday-Saturday, Sept. 28-30, at the Wolverine Lounge and Looney Bin Comedy Club, 1655 Gengary, Walled Lake. Show times are 9 p.m. Friday and 8 and 10:15 p.m. Saturday. For information, call 669-9374.

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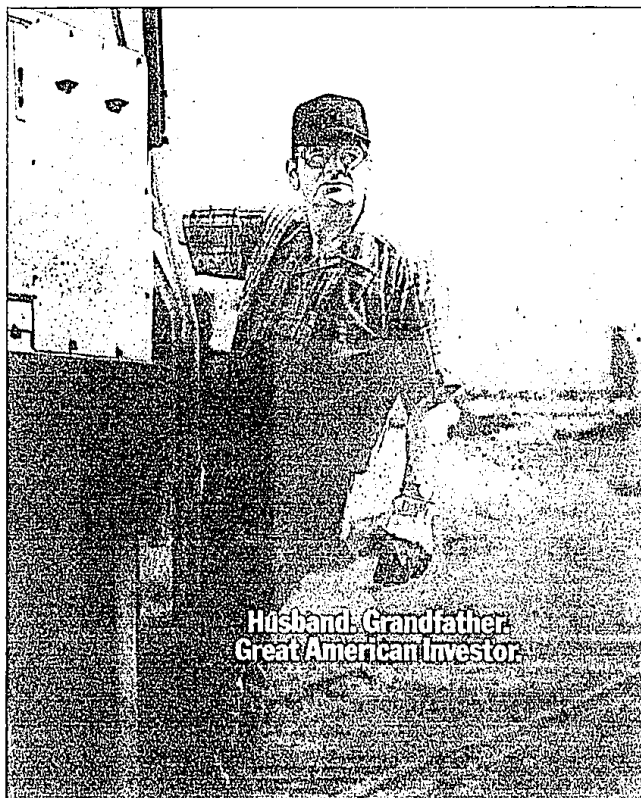
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