

Entertainment

Ethel Simmons editor/644-1100



Thursday, October 25, 1990 O&E

(O)7C

It's a challenge

A big musical requires lots of effort behind scenes



Jerry McCray and Becky MacIntyre rehearse a scene from the Bloomfield Players production of the musical "Hello, Dolly!"

By Cathie Breidenbach
special writer

DOES ANYBODY have artificial roast chicken to spare for two weekends, or a plastic salad guaranteed not to wilt under lights?

Margie Montross, director and choreographer, is scavenging for plastic food to ride atop trays carried by eight dancing waiters in "Hello, Dolly!" musical production staged by the new Bloomfield Players Community Theatre. Performances will be Thursday-Sunday, Oct. 26-28, and Friday-Sunday, Nov. 2-4, at the Lahser High School auditorium in Bloomfield Hills.

Montross' biggest challenge in casting the show was finding eight male dancers to play the waiters. "I begged for men," she says. Then she had to juggle rehearsal schedules so all eight could work on the split-second timing of routines.

Last week, as the cast prepared for opening night Friday, the waiters were perfecting their duel with shish-kebab skewers and practicing how to dance carrying trays rigged with elastic on the bottom.

THEATER THRIVES on illusion. The chickens may be plastic, plates of food may be glued so they can't slide and the waiters may have elastic handles so they can't drop the trays, but as long as they carry the trays horizontally, the illusion prevails of waiters deftly balancing heavy trays of piping-hot food while they execute fancy footwork. "You're gonna love my waiters," says director Montross.

Finding fake-food chickens is one of the myriad details of launching a big musical production like "Dolly!" The show boasts a 19-piece orchestra led by Valerie Palmieri, who teaches orchestra at Lahser High School. The set crew built an elaborate, lighted runway designed by Bob Pullar, a

retired architect in Mature Minglers, and Montross will fill the Lahser High School stage with 54th on stage and behind the scenes is the aim of the Bloomfield Players. June Hamilton, director of the Recreation and Community Services Division of the Bloomfield Hills School District, says, "We want children, teens, adults and seniors. Our objective is for people to have fun."

The community theater group is sponsored by the Bloomfield Hills School District. Hamilton hopes to get the word out that everybody is welcome, even those whose only

stage experience was walk-on parts long ago but ever since have yearned to make their stage comeback.

"You don't have to come in with a resume of 40 productions to try out," Hamilton says. Bloomfield Players is so serious about involving many people in the fun and the family feeling of putting on a production that it has been known to invent street scenes to give more players a chance to bask in the warmth of stage lights and to take their bows at the final curtain.

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Ron Strote (left), Seth Strote and Kathleen Born are in the cast.

table talk

Winning chef

Charles D. Rachwitz was declared the winner in "The Best of Michigan... Nothing's As Good as a Michigan Meal" competition Wednesday.

Oct. 17, at Morels, a Michigan Bistro in Bingham Farms.

"Hockey" Rachwitz is corporate executive chef for the C.A. Muir Corp. based in Detroit. He entered the contest representing Charley's Crab of Troy and was assisted by

Carmen Vilcan, a chef at Charley's Crab.

Rachwitz prepared a menu of Parsnip Pancakes with Northern Spy Apples, Sour Cream and Whitefish Caviar, Great Lakes Pickerel Baked with Walnuts and Charrilled Roma

Tomato-Basil Sauce with Grilled Sweet Corn Salsa, Cornucopia of Late Summer Peppered Fruits and Peas Strawberry Sparkling Water.

Five other Michigan chefs competed including Tim Kiera of Morels. The contest was sponsored by the

Michigan Department of Agriculture, with assistance from the Michigan Grape and Wine Industry Council.

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