

Teeple parlays laughs into a thriving business, act

By Susan Steinmueller
staff writer

Kirkland Teeple is getting more laughs from life than ever these days, even though he is performing less.

His ownership of the successful MainStreet Comedy Showcase in Ann Arbor is a main reason. The dual role of comedian and entrepreneur, he explains, allows him the freedom to perform when he wants, and when he does, to perform with less pressure.

"One of the reasons I enjoy performing now so much is it's not my livelihood, it's my hobby," said Teeple, 32, who founded the club in 1984, and will be performing there during Thanksgiving weekend.

But he also enjoys his role as businessman, perhaps even more than that of comedian.

"I think I enjoy being a businessman more in the sense that it is a day to day gratification."

However, the road to getting where he is today was not smooth.

A native of Dearborn, Teeple got his start in comedy in 1982 by taking to the stage on open mike nights at clubs around Detroit.

By 1983, he dropped out of college, quit his odd jobs, packed up his navy blue Escort and hit the comedy club road.

"I WAS unemployed," he said, "and his reason for taking up comedy. Success came at high speed. But he swiftly encountered some of the

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perils of life when you have a traveling job — including drugs and alcohol.

"I don't think it's so much the entertainment business. I think it is just any work with lots of travel," he said. "When I was in treatment, there were a lot of doctors and traveling salesman."

His "treatment," which led to his recovery, came from the Betty Ford Center, which he praises highly.

While on the fast track, his Ann Arbor club, located above the Heidelberg Restaurant, faltered. In 1986, however, he moved the club to a hall below the Seva Restaurant, and channeled his drive and commitment to comedy into turning the club into a success — which he has done.

In fact, "Rolling Stone" magazine, in its 1990 guide to comedy clubs, hailed MainStreet as "one of the best clubs between the coasts."

The ironic thing is since opening the room and working on getting clean, everything has taken off for him, Teeple said.

Teeple has been coming into his own as well, comedy wise. A gifted storyteller, his material is a foray

into his own life experiences. He also enjoys chatting with the audience, and says he just "enjoys himself" during his shows.

A GROWING list of club credits include New York's "Catch A Rising Star," in addition to "Dangerfield's" and "Stand Up, New York."

Teeple notes that MainStreet has an advantage, in that while on the road, he often spots and books new talent, which MainStreet will then introduce into the area.

As for Teeple's show over Thanksgiving, he said he believes the audience will be thankful.

"I just stare at the audience and I say, 'You think of something funny, and people say, 'oh my gosh, I can't believe I paid to get in here.' And then I say, 'you have to pay to get out of here, too.' Boy are they thankful that it's over."

Teeple, of course, is joking — but that's his hobby.

As for his profession, Teeple intends to stay with it and expand. He most recently opened The MainStreet Comedy Showcase Roadshow, which takes place Thursday nights at Hamada Heritage Center in Southgate.

"I think people are always going to want to laugh and have an economical alternative to staying at home. The challenge for me is consistently to find a fresh approach."

Kirkland Teeple will perform at MainStreet Comedy Showcase, 314 E. Liberty, beneath Seva Res-



Comedy for Kirkland Teeple means ownership of the successful MainStreet Comedy Showcase in Ann Arbor and a successful career as a comedian.

aurant, at 8:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 21, and 8:30 and 11 p.m. Friday, Nov. 23, and 7, 9 and 11 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 24. Tickets are

\$10; reserved seating is \$12. For more information, call 996-9080.

COMEDY CLUBS

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

● MAINSTREET

Kirkland Teeple will perform Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, Nov. 21, 23-24, at MainStreet Comedy Showcase, 314 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. Show times are 8:30 and 11 p.m. Friday and 7, 9 and 11 p.m. Saturday. For information, call 996-9080.

● BEA'S COMEDY KITCHEN

● COMEDY CASTLE

At April will perform today, and Spike Manton and Eric Champella will perform Tuesday-Saturday, Nov. 20-24, at the Comedy Castle, 269 E. Fourth, Royal Oak. Show times are 7 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday and 8:30 and 11 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For reservations, call 542-9900.

● JOEY'S LIVONIA

Jet Brennan will perform along with Mark Hill and Dowling Toy Brown Monday-Tuesday, Nov. 23-24, at Beas Comedy Kitchen, 541 Larned, Detroit. Show times are 8:30 and 11 p.m. For information, call 961-2581.

● JOEY'S ALLEN PARK

Kirk Nolan will perform Wednesday-Saturday, Nov. 21-24, at Joey's Comedy Club and Sports Emporium, 15246 Southfield Road, Allen Park. Show times are 8:30 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday and 8 and 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For information, call 382-7041.

● JOEY'S AT THE ROXY

Tommy Chan will perform Wednesday-Saturday, Nov. 21-24, at Joey's Comedy Club at the Roxy, 11175 Haggerty Road, Belleville. For information, call 699-1829.

● HOLLY HOTEL

Tommy Chan and Brent Chashman will perform with Ray Effler and Steve Billa Friday-Saturday, Nov. 23-24, at the Holly Hotel, 110 Battle Alley, Holly. Show times are 8:30 (no smoking show Friday only) and 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For information, call 634-1891.

● MISS KITTY'S

Lowell Sanders will perform along

with Danny Morris Friday-Saturday, Nov. 23-24, at Miss Kitty's Comedy Club, Long Branch Restaurant, 595 N. Lapeer Road, Oxford. Show times are 8 and 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. For information, call 628-6500.

● LOONEY BIN

Danny Gray will perform with Wendy Fox and John Thalia Friday-Saturday, Nov. 23-24, at the Wolverine and Looney Bin Restaurant and Comedy Club, 1655 Glengary, Walled Lake. Show times are 9 p.m. Friday and 8 and 10:30 p.m. Saturday. For information, call 669-9374.

● DUFFY'S

Bob Posch Comedy Show will perform at 9 p.m. and 11 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays at Duffy's, 8635 Cooley Lake Road, Union Lake. Admission is \$7. For information, call 363-9469.

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