

# Entertainment

Keely Wygonik editor/953-2105

Thursday, October 10, 1991 O&E

(O7B)



## Classic drama 'Inherit the Wind' provokes thought

Performances of the Meadow Brook Theatre production of "Inherit the Wind" continue through Oct. 27 on the Oakland University campus in Rochester. For ticket information call the box office at 377-3300.



Cathie Breidenbach

The classic courtroom drama "Inherit the Wind" grapples with academic and intellectual freedom questions raised when a high school science teacher in Tennessee was tried for teaching evolution.

Did humans evolve from creatures that crawled out of the earth's primordial swamp? Does the Bible speak metaphorically or literally?

SUCH QUESTIONS polarized the nation in 1925 during the Scopes Monkey Trial. "Inherit the Wind" is not history. Inherit the Wind is not history. Inherit the Wind is not history.

Meadow Brook Theatre's robust production of this genuine American masterpiece holds up a mirror to our cultural values — past and present.

The line cast of 37, and an imaginative, mobile set of the town/courtroom, recreate the era and offer dynamic, thought provoking theater.

Booth Coleman's brilliant portrayal of defense attorney Henry Drummond provides a stable nucleus of in-

tegrity in the hullabaloo of media hype that blew up around the trial.

DRUMMOND'S DEDICATION to freedom, his belief in "truth as a direction," and his faith in the miracle of the human mind make him the unquestioned champion of the play. His salty, non-elitist language and willingness to stand alone against public opinion make him a quintessential American hero.

Coleman's boney physique and slightly arthritic gait show him as an ordinary, aging man, pacing the courtroom in shirt sleeves and suspenders. Drummond's heroism comes from within, and Coleman projects a quiet charisma and bedrock strength that qualify him as a brilliant advocate for the right to think. He defends schoolteacher Bert Cates, played with convincing humility by John Seibert.

Arthur Beer portrays Matthew Harrison Brady, the populist preacher/politician and prosecuting attorney. After three runs for the presidency, Brady has sold out his former



Booth Coleman and Arthur Beer debate the Theory of Evolution in Meadow Brook Theatre's production of "Inherit the Wind."

grass roots integrity to political ambition. He still draws crowds, but his charisma has begun to fade.

THE TRICK to playing Brady is to retain a core of the integrity which once made him great; to depict a man with enough residual heroism to be a match for Drummond. Beer's Brady is all charming bluster and inflated rhetoric; he never really challenges Drummond.

Director Charles Nolte depicts the

media circus surrounding the trial with burlesque-like humor. The small town Southerners from the Bible Belt look like stereotypical local yokels who hook their thumbs in their farmer overalls and chew with their mouths open. In Nolte's hand, the small-town folk come off as righteous bigots or ludicrous bumpkins.

Nolte puts media mayhem center stage in the play and makes a power-

ful statement about how media confuses, complicates and oversimplifies events. In 1925, brass bands welcomed Brady; journalists headlined their biased interpretation of events, and a radio station broadcast live from the courtroom. The brass band at the train station partly drowns out dialogue in Act I and Nolte puts the radio mike center front at the trial.

The broadcaster's loud comments into the microphone nearly oversha-

dow the jury foreman's verdict. Does media "reporting" muddy history? Alter it? Charles Nolte's "Inherit the Wind" revives a lively, funny, powerful event from our past, and raises probing questions for the present.

Cathie Breidenbach of West Bloomfield teaches college writing classes and works as a freelance writer.

## Storytellers lend an ear at conference

By Keely Wygonik  
staff writer

When Celia Goodman of Southfield wants to teach her grandchildren something, she tells them a story.

"All good stories have something to say about life. It's a wonderful way of teaching, the person learning isn't aware they're learning," said Goodman, a member of the Detroit Story League, and volunteer at the Holocaust Memorial Center and the Janice Charach Epstein museum/gallery in West Bloomfield.

LINDA DAY of Livonia, president of the Detroit Story League, loves when the story becomes a friend in common between the storyteller and the audience.

"I've often find myself in the community, in the grocery store and someone will tug on me, and say 'I know you, you're the storyteller.' I just love that feeling."

"A story is a wonderful thing that's able to bridge generations," said Day, a former teacher and Garden City librarian. She works

full time as a storyteller, and storytelling consultant for the Livonia Public Schools.

"STORYTELLING FOSTERS literacy by focusing on the spoken and written word in our technological times. It is a powerful means of passing on values and morals," said Goodman, who joined the Detroit Story League 10 years ago. Goodman earned a bachelor's degree in library science before retiring from Wayne State University where she worked as a library assistant.

"One of the last courses I took was storytelling. It's made retirement really fun."

Some of the best storytellers in the area will meet Oct. 12 at Henry Ford Community College, 5101 Evergreen, Dearborn, for a conference featuring Johnny Moses, Rafe Martin and Marcia Lane. The workshops are open to the public.

Registration is 9:30 a.m., workshops start 10 a.m. The price is \$25 for the whole day, or \$20 for the morning and afternoon sessions. Metropolitan Detroit storytellers will meet for a story swap at 6 p.m.

Call 761-5118 or 845-9834 for registration information.

MOSES, A Nootka Shaman from a remote village off the Northwest coast of Vancouver Island, is a storyteller, musician, dancer and teacher. He will share his gems of native American wisdom in a children's concert 2-3 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 12, in the Mackenzie Fine Arts Center on the campus of Henry Ford Community College.

"Moses strictly adheres to Indian traditions in his stories," said Day. The audience participates. I think the children will enjoy it, this is not something they've seen before."

Members of the Detroit Story League will also perform at the concert. The price is \$3 adults, \$1 children.

In the evening, Moses will perform with Martin and Lane. Martin is an award-winning storyteller and author from Rochester, N.Y. His stories explore the mythic dimension and workings of creative imagination.

The 7:30 p.m. concert in the Mackenzie Fine Arts Center on the campus of Henry Ford Community

College, is open to the public. Tickets are \$8.50 adults, \$5 senior citizens.

Lane is from New York City and has performed in over 40 cities throughout the United States. Her repertoire includes a fusion of folk tales from many cultures, music and American sign language.

"STORIES THAT lend themselves best for oral delivery are folk tales," said Goodman. "One definition is — a folk tale is a letter from the past. It passes from hand to hand, and each one adds a post-script. When you tell a story, you send a letter to the future."

For over 80 years, the Detroit Storytelling League has been bringing together people who like to tell stories. Numbering 85, the league meets at noon on the third Saturday of each month. The league provides storytellers to schools, churches, libraries and other institutions as a community service.

The children's concert will be signed for the hearing-impaired. For more information on the league, call the story bureau, 535-0318 or Day at 478-6339.



Johnny Moses shares the teachings of his ancestors, the songs, dances, stories and cultural traditions from many Northwest tribes, in a children's concert Saturday, Oct. 12, at Henry Ford Community College in Dearborn.

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