

THEATER

Theatre Guild presents extravaganza of one-acts

BY KRISTA HOPSON
STAFF WRITER

Mark Ripper's one act play, "By the Horns" about love lost and regained between a husband and a wife, might just be what brings the Theatre Guild of Livonia-Redford the recognition it has been striving to achieve in the community.

Ripper's "By the Horns" will be one of four featured original plays by local playwrights performed at the Guild's "One Acts-Travaganza." The event will be at 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, June 16-17, June 23-24 and 2 p.m. Sunday, June 25 at the Guild's theater in Redford.

The inspiration for Ripper's play came from a real-life situation that he experienced. It was written as a short-story while

Ripper, a Westland resident, was in college. He then adapted the work as a play.

"It deals with real-life events, and people can really relate to it," Ripper said.

Other original plays will include "The Masquerade" by Pat Feldt, "Moral Congress" by Lance Abke and "Merely Neighborly" by Tim Jeffries.

For the last 45 years, the Redford Guild has struggled to maintain membership and increase visibility in the community, said Sean Kelley, the president of the Guild's board of directors.

"People (in the area) are always amazed when they find out a theater is there and has been there for so long," Kelley said. "We want to get more people out to support not only us

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but also local theaters as well."

Kelley, a member for four years, hopes the new and younger group of actors and playwrights currently involved will finally give the Guild the boost it has been looking for.

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new member of the Guild's board and Sean's wife.

"(The plays) are originals and showcase people's talents, and that's why we do it," Heidi Kelley said.

The Guild consists of local residents who Sean Kelley of Hazel Park describes as "just a group who love the theater."

Sean Kelley has loved the theater since he got a role as a 10

year old playing Tiny Tim in his school's "A Christmas Carol."

He continued to act and eventually received his bachelor's degree in theater from Western Michigan University.

But it wasn't until a friend asked him to audition for a one-act play he had written for the Guild that Sean became involved with the Guild.

"I just love performing, and theater is a live audience and that's just a fantastic thrill," Sean Kelley said.

His wife, Heidi, also has an early background in theater but now prefers to stay behind the scenes as stage management. She just recently got involved with the Guild.

"I have stage fright, believe it or not," Heidi Kelley said. "I tried

to act, but it just scared me too much."

Now, as newly appointed members to the board of directors, Sean and Heidi will be acting less but providing more leadership for the Guild.

The Guild's 11 new members to board of directors were elected on May 18. The board is planning to expand the number of plays the Guild puts on every year and possibly tour around the area to put on shows for children.

The Theatre Guild of Livonia-Redford is at 15138 Beech Daly in Redford across from the police station. Tickets for the One Acts-Travaganza are \$10 for adults and \$8 for students and seniors.

For more information, call (313) 531-0554.

Fisher's 2000-01 season features popular musicals

From September through April, the Detroit Fisher Theatre Playgoer Series will be loaded with musicals with a variety of Broadway stars.

The 2000-2001 season will begin in September with *Annie Get Your Gun* starring screen and television star Merilu Hanner. The 1946 musical follows the original female sharpshooter, Annie Oakley, on a trip through the West and during her days as a part of "Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show." With a score written

by Irving Berlin, *Annie Get Your Gun*, features song such as "There's No Business Like Show Business" and "You Can't Get a Man with a Gun."

This musical will be followed by *Blast!* in October. *Blast!* includes a cast of 68 world-class musicians performing classical, Broadway and popular pieces. The show is based on the synchronized drills and marches of the military marching bands as well as special effects.

■ 'Fiddler on the Roof,' starring Theodore Bikel, makes its way to the Fisher Theatre in October and runs through November. The musical includes such songs as 'Matchmaker, Matchmaker' and 'Sunrise, Sunset.'

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During November and December, *Nunchuckers* will be on stage. *Nunchuckers* stars Dodie

Goodman and Georgia Engel as sisters of Mount Saint Helen's convent. It is the fourth episode in the *Nunsense* series and is a holiday musical that pokes fun at holiday traditions from gift giving to secret Santas.

Kathleen Turner will star in the pre-Broadway tour of *Tallulah* in February and March. The play focuses on the life of screen legend Tallulah Bankhead as she prepares to host a fund-raiser for incumbent president Harry S. Truman.

The Playgoer Series concludes with *Ragtime*, the winner of four 1998 Tony Awards. *Ragtime* will be performed in March and April. It is a musical epic that follows the lives of three different families living in New York and they intertwine with one another as well as several historical figures.

Tickets for the Fisher Theatre Playgoer series went on sale on June 5. For more information call (313) 872-1000.

EMU wraps up with comedy

Eastern Michigan University ends its 1999-2000 season with "Das Barbecu," a country and western musical comedy by Jim Luiga with music by Scott Warrander. "Das Barbecu" is directed by Ken Stevens and will be performed in the Sponberg Theatre on EMU's Ypsilanti campus, 8 p.m. Thursday-Friday, June 8-10.

Tickets are \$13, call (734) 487-1221.

"Das Barbecu" is the campy retelling of Wagner's "Ring Cycle" that moves five actors through more than 30 characters at a delirious pace.

Characters included in this musical quest for a magic ring

are young maiden Brunhilde, her love Siegfried the singing cowboy, Alberich the evil dwarf, and Wotan the one-eyed man.

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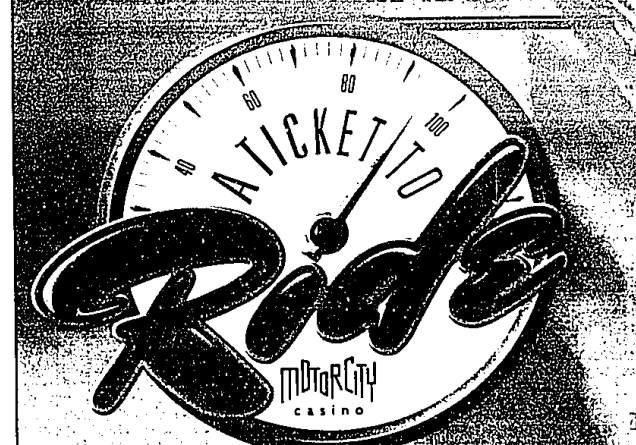
Send a postcard with your name, address and daytime phone number to LONESTAR, The Palace of Auburn Hills, 2 Championship Drive, Auburn Hills, MI 48326. Five winners, chosen at random, will win a pair of tickets to see LONESTAR at Meadow Brook Music Festival on Sept. 1, 2000. All entries must be received by June 22. Winners will be notified by June 23. Employees and immediate family members of Palace Sports & Entertainment and The Observer & Eccentric are ineligible.

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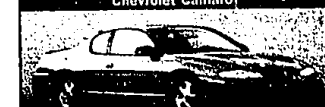

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