

Phantom from page B1

catacombs of the Paris Opera House. He falls in love with Christine, an innocent soprano, and nurtures her talent as an "Angel of Music." Christine falls in love with Raoul, and the Phantom is outraged.

"The Phantom is a misunderstood character," said Keegan. "He has his own concept of right and wrong, and is never accepted by society."

So many things to love

Romance, pyrotechnics, dancing, humanity, magic, spectacle, beauty, gorgeous costumes, music, there are so many things to love about "The Phantom of the Opera."

"There is humanity in the show that touches people," said Keegan. "It's very clearly written and easy to understand."

Winner of seven Tony Awards, including Best Musical, "The Phantom of the Opera" has mesmerized U.S. audiences since it opened in New York on Jan. 26, 1988.

"I think it's the mystery of the story," said Pitcher. "It's full of love, growth, it's just magical, it's a spectacle, people see it, and want to be a part of it."

That's certainly the case for Keegan and Pitcher, who both saw the play while they were in college and decided then that the Phantom and Christine were roles they wanted to play.

"It was a dream," said Pitcher. "I remember saying, 'Man this

'I think it's the mystery of the story. It's full of love, growth, it's just magical, it's a spectacle, people see it, and want to be a part of it.'

Rebecca Pitcher
Actress

is a show I would love to do and six years later I was doing it," recalled Keegan.

"The story itself is amazing; you'll fall in love with the characters," said Pitcher. "The Phantom is trying to capture and hold Christine. It's kind of like when your parents don't want to let go of you. Christine is really confused."

Ted Keegan Sings

In addition to his work as the Phantom, Keegan recently recorded a CD "Ted Keegan Sings" featuring some of his favorite songs, including "Music of the Night."

To find out more about it, visit www.tedkeegan.com

"Phantom of the Opera" is directed by Harold Prince, and presented by The Cameron Mackintosh/Really Useful Theatre Company.

Vaudeville from page B1

scene. My character is completely broken down. The dog was his only companion in life."

The audience won't be in tears for long if David Thompson is anything like his character, Tim O'Reilly. The 30-something Irish tenor will have them in stitches.

"I like the role because it's not a stereotype," said Thompson of Fairhaven. "It's a brand new

character. And it's a simpler but harder time but they didn't know it because they didn't have cell phones back then."

Keeping the nonsense rolling

Brian Johnson keeps the nonsense rolling as Jackson Washington, the African American song and dance man. Johnson's

character is certain he'll make it, he'll be able to go legit if he only gets a break. Johnson knows how he feels. The Redford resident just finished playing with Wild Swan Theatre in "Along the Tracks." He has also acted with Detroit Repertory Theatre.

"He's one of the better acts," said Johnson. "I like that he's the underdog. It's a pivotal part. He doesn't go on until the final

act so he's one of the better acts. He says things like what went wrong with your wedding? The marriage."

Bloom expects a lot of the lines to bring out groans in the audience.

"Zingers go back and forth. It's what I call a groaner show. You don't really laugh you just sort of groan."

Enjoy a night out to help Gilda's Club

BY SHARON DARGAY
STAFF WRITER

Gilda's Club, the cancer support group named after the late comedian, Gilda Radner, will trade stand-up for Motown sounds at its annual fund-raiser on May 3.

The club, based in Royal Oak, will keep the mood upbeat with food, dancing, and music by KGB with Karen Harris, from 6:30 p.m. to 10 p.m., at Andiamo Banquet Center, in Warren.

"We looked at what we had done for the last two years and felt we wanted to take a different approach. The organization is young and doesn't want to feel locked into any one format," said Lisa Barrie, development director.

"We talked about wanting to hold a big party where people could come to enjoy good food and music."

Gilda's Big Night Out evolved from a comedy fund-raiser started in 1994 by the late Alyce Faye, a comedian and Farmington resident.

"It began with Alyce and a bunch of volunteers, built around comedy. It morphed into the first Gilda's night out in 1999," Barrie said.

"When Gilda's Big Night Out



Music for dancing: KGB will keep the mood upbeat during Gilda's Big Night Out

Gilda's Big Night Out evolved from a comedy fund-raiser started in 1994 by the late Alyce Faye, a comedian and Farmington resident.

was created, it was clear it would be a special party. It was unclear what the format would be. It was comedy the first two years but we left our selves open to discover other kinds of parties."

Tickets

Tickets to the event are \$150 and will include food with a Motown flavor — Coney Island

hot dogs, sliders, Greektown favorites — as well as canapes and Andiamo specialties.

"It's an eclectic mix — fun junk food and Italian restaurant foods. There's an open bar."

General Motors Corporation is sponsoring the event and its chief Environmental Officer Denny Minano and his wife, Marty, will serve as honorary chairs.

The club will raffle a 2002 Buick Rendezvous, donated by General Motors, during the party. Raffle tickets are \$100 each. Six hundred will be sold.

Gilda's Big Night Out is one of two major fund-raisers that generate revenue for the club's program.

"This is responsible for almost a quarter of our budget. Our program is free, so all fund-raising is geared toward paying the bills."

Cancer patients, their friends and family members, may attend weekly wellness group sessions, monthly networking groups, lectures and workshops, as well as social events, such as monthly potluck parties, for free at Gilda's Club.

"Today we've got pencil draw-

ing, a guided imagery workshop and journal workshops," Barrie described a programming at the club. "It's also our monthly potluck party today. We did a Sound of Music party once and we all dressed up as nuns."

"It's all rather kooky and funny and that is the essence of Gilda's House. The idea is to laugh through it all. Cancer is unfunny."

Members also come together for lectures and classes in more serious topics, such as developments in breast cancer treatment.

Making people feel at home

"We offer a lot, but it's within the context of social and emotional support. Gilda's Club is like being in a comfy home. Everything here is non-medical. People feel at home and they can come here and take part in as much or as little as they want."

"Building community is what happens here."

Admission tickets to Gilda's Big Night Out and car raffle tickets are available by calling Gilda's Club Metro Detroit at (248) 677-0800.

The City of Southfield Parks and Recreation Department presents

Ice Company 2001

April 25 - 29

Please plan to join us for our 30th (and final) ice skating spectacular, Ice Company 2001!

For the past 29 years, some of the most skilled figure skaters in the Midwest and Canada have taken part in this one-of-a-kind show, many of them are returning for this special performance featuring former World Professional and U.S. Open winner Scott Williams!

Wed., April 25, Thur., April 26 & Fri., April 27
7:30 p.m.

Sat., April 28
1:30 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

Sun., April 29
2 p.m.

Tickets: \$9.50 - \$8.50

Southfield Sports Arena, 28000 Evergreen Road

For tickets or information call (248) 354-9357

NOW IN DETROIT!

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

CALL (248) 645-6666

HOUSEHOLD HINTS • HOUSEHOLD HINTS • HOUSEHOLD HINTS

HOUSEHOLD PROBLEMS?

Tune-In Bob Allison's

Ask Your Neighbor

(WNZK 690 AM • Mon.-Fri. 9 am-11 am)

- How to Cook It
- How to Do It
- Where to Find It

www.askyourneighbor.com

HOUSEHOLD HINTS • HOUSEHOLD HINTS • HOUSEHOLD HINTS

MONDAY, APRIL 30TH!

LARRY NOZERO QUINTET

MITCH HOUSEY'S

28500 Schoolcraft
Livonia
(734) 425-5520

EVERY MONDAY NIGHT
NO COVER CHARGE!
Offering the
Finest Jazz Music in Town!!

AMPLE LIGHTED PARKING • BANQUET FACILITIES AVAILABLE

MITCH HOUSEY'S

NOW EVERY TUESDAY & THURSDAY DAVE THE DJ

Formerly at Vickie's Steakhouse

No Cover Charge!
The Fundamentals
FRI.-SAT.
28500 Schoolcraft
Livonia
(734) 425-5520

OPEN DAILY MON-SAT AT 11:00 AM

COCKTAILS • DINNER • DANCE • DISCO • KARAOKE • NIGHTCLUB • RESTAURANT • TRAVEL

DINNERS from 4 p.m.

BUSINESSMEN'S LUNCHES from \$6.95

DINNERS from \$6.95

AMPLE LIGHTED PARKING • BANQUET FACILITIES AVAILABLE

COMMUTER EXPRESS Brings you Reliable Motorcoach Service to

CASINO WINDSOR

DEPARTURES FROM:
Bloomfield • Farmington • Novi
Hamtramck • Madison Heights • Southfield

MONDAY - WEDNESDAY - FRIDAY

Call 1-800-290-2957

Service provided by Canadian Express and is not affiliated with Casino Windsor. Licensed by the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation and under license.

April is

Disney Bonus Month

at AAA Travel

Come Visit Our Dream Vacation Show & Sale
Saturday, April 28, 10 am - 6 pm
Twelve Oaks Mall
Upper Level Sears Court

Spring is here! And so are exclusive savings and benefits on select Disney Vacations from AAA Travel! All month long, book a Disney resort package and receive great savings, special deals and more... including:

- Special Grandparents Package
- Magic Moments savings up to 20%
- Preferred parking
- Diamond Card savings...plus more!

For reservations or details on Walt Disney World, Disneyland and Disney Cruise packages, contact AAA Travel

AAA Travel
www.aaa-travel.com

AAA Travel/Farmington Hills
38751 W. 12 Mile Rd.
248-553-3337

Weekdays
8:30 am - 5:30 pm

Saturdays
8:30 am - 12:30 pm

City Sprints

When Your Mind & Body Need a Break!

Key

TORONTO
Only 4 hours away
The world is at your doorstep with shopping, dining, and entertainment.

Days Inn **LONGLEIGH** from \$129
Royal York from \$154
Sheraton Centre from \$159

NIAGARA FALLS **LONGLEIGH**
Best Western Fallsview from \$129
Sheraton Fallsview from \$139
Park Plaza from \$139

CHICAGO **LONGLEIGH**
Hilton Chicago from \$154
Royal Lakeside from \$189
Doubletree Grand Hotel from \$199

EXPLORE CANADA

OTTAWA **MONTREAL** **QUEBEC CITY**
Canada's Capital of Government and Architecture
French Flavour
European Ambiance, Old World Charm

LAMARCA **LAMARCA** **LAMARCA**
Travelodge from \$295
Days Inn from \$249
Holiday Inn from \$299

Call your Travel Agent or (800) 265-5488