

THE WEEKEND

FRIDAY



Season's Greeting, starring Christy Marsico (left), Josh Eikenberry and Shelly Gaza, opens at 8 p.m. at the Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Tickets \$12-\$20, call (313) 577-2972.

SATURDAY



Rock's best-kept secret The Strokes appear 8 p.m. at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. Tickets \$10, call (313) 961-MELT.

SUNDAY



Suicide Machines perform 5 p.m. at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. Tickets \$10, call (248) 645-6666.



The angelic entrance to Tunnel of Lights welcomes visitors to the annual St. Nicholas Light Display, opening Friday, Nov. 16, at Domino's Farms, in Ann Arbor. Admission \$7-\$9 per car. Call (734) 930-4430 for details.

RADIO CITY'S ROCKETTES CELEBRATE

75 YEARS OF KICK

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO
SPECIAL WRITER

As a Rockette, Marlene Boll has performed on some of the most well-known stages in New York City. But none was more important than the one created by her grandchild.

"One of my grandchildren asked me to come to school as a Rockette for show and tell," Boll said with a laugh.

The effervescent Boll, a Rockette in the early 1950s, has been celebrating the holidays with her family and her former dance troupe since the Rockettes began its Christmas Spectacular in Detroit five years ago. This season's run - Friday-Saturday, Nov. 23 to Dec. 29, at Detroit's Fox Theatre - celebrates not only the holidays, but the Rockettes' five years in Detroit and the group's 75th year overall.

Like years past, the 90-minute Christmas Spectacular will feature snowmen, reindeer, elves, Santa's Gonna Rock 'n' Roll, as well as the yearly *The Parade of the Wooden Soldiers* and *The Living Nativity*.

"What's nice about the Christmas Spectacular is you have the *Wooden Soldiers* and *The Living Nativity*, which are long-standing traditions and themes that audiences have enjoyed since 1932. Then, of course, there are a lot of contemporary routines that the Rockettes are featured in. It's nice to have the traditional and some of

Radio City Christmas Spectacular

When: Performance times vary, Friday-Saturday, Nov. 23-Dec. 29
Where: Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit
Tickets: \$12-\$57.50 with a limited number of gold circle seats. To charge tickets by phone, call (248) 432-5545. Groups of 20 or more call (313) 474-3099. For more information, call (313) 471-6611.



JOAN MARCUS

Famous feat: The Rockettes will celebrate five years in Detroit when the 2001 Radio City Christmas Spectacular opens Nov. 23 at the Fox Theatre.

the new stuff," explained Cheryl Hebert, a current Rockette.

"There's a special treat within the show commemorating the 75th anniversary. That's a surprise," she added.

Santa's Gonna Rock 'n' Roll, one of the new numbers, is described by Hebert as "fun and hip."

"The Rockettes have always been an up-to-date precision dance company so the changes have just stayed with the trends of the times basically."

The Rockettes rehearse for the more than 65 Christmas performances for 2 1/2 weeks in October, but they dance and work out throughout the year. Off-season, the group has been featured on *The Late Show With David Letterman*, *Super Bowl* halftime performances, the *World Series* and *America's Thanksgiving Day Parade*.

Things were much different for Boll when she was a Rockette. The Grosse Pointe Shores resident worked year-round, four weeks on, one week off, at Radio City Music Hall. The troupe was led by choreographer Russell Market, who founded the Rockettes.

In her time, the Rockettes were restricted to performing routines choreographed by Market. As she watches the current Rockettes, she sees more jazz numbers mixed in with traditional moves.

"Jazz wasn't as popular then as it is now. The routines might be choreographed a little differently. But you still have the wonderful kicks, and the wonderful precision and the great costumes," she said.

"It's nice for me to see it happening and see these wonderful young girls dancing and the Rockettes becoming so popular. When I first came out to Michigan, people in the Midwest and onward, they knew where they were but they weren't as popular as they are now."

Boll, who met her husband while touring with the Rockettes, now makes the Fox Theatre series a yearly family event.

"I think it even has been nice for my children because they can see it first hand here. I have taken them to New York when they were younger. Knowing that they're in Detroit here and having seen them here, it's a little more meaningful for them."

MUSIC BENEFIT

GoGirls Fest: Women rock for music education

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER
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When it comes to women in music, the Detroit area has featured plenty of talent. Names like Patti Smith, Madonna and Aretha Franklin come readily to mind.

Last fall, Blush's Amy Anselm found a way to celebrate such talent. She connected with GoGirls, a national organization dedicated to promoting and supporting female artists, and organized a local benefit with a meaningful cause.

Last year's GoGirls Music Fest brought in a constant crowd, filling Ferndale's Magic Bag, and helping raise thousands of dollars for Visions Unlimited.

The Farmington Hills-based school for mentally and physically impaired young adults is in need of a music education program and will again be the beneficiary for this local show. Anselm, lead singer and keyboardist for Blush, organized the event.

"Last year's show raised \$4,000," she said. "That was enough to get Visions started. They were able to purchase instruments, have guest musicians come in to teach and go on music-related field trips. They had weekly music

classes and at the end of the year put on their own singing and acting version of *Home Alone* with backdrops and all, which was a complete success. The students involved were excited to rehearse and perform."

"Music has touched these students. I've seen it first hand. It makes them sing, laugh and cry... We are so fortunate, we need to give back."

This year Blush continues the tradition. GoGirls Music Fest boasts a new line-up. "We wanted it to be a little bit more of a variety," said Carey Gustafson, bassist for Blush. "Last year had a common thread. This year we wanted to mix it up."

And so they did. GoGirls will bring the best new female-fronted bands together with some outrageous favorites. From the pop rock candy of newcomers The Nice Device, to the mellow sounds of Slumber Party, from Blush's spacey electro-pop to the outrageous punk antics of the Demolition Doll Rods, this year's show is bound to draw a diverse crowd.

"We wanted to have all Detroit bands, fortunately there are quite a few female-fronted bands on the scene," said Anselm. "It was just a matter of getting the right mix and not having a



GoGirls Fest: Blush is (left to right) Amy Anselm, Phil Skarich, Carey Gustafson and (not pictured) Carey Weaver. Margaret, Christine and Danny Doll Rod (Below, left to right) are the Demolition Doll Rods.

repeat of last year's show. There will be a few guest MCs for the evening, including Detroit's legend Karen Neal of Queen Bee."

The first 75 people through the doors on Saturday will receive a free copy of a GoGirls compilation CD, featuring Blush. But don't expect quite as many prizes as last year, the spotlight now is on the stage.

Please See GOGIRLS, E3



JOHN ROBERTS