

She takes to her wheels — leaves driving to others

By SHIRLEE IDEN

At age 4, Elena Emanuel won her first race on roller skates, beating much-older competitors. Born to a roller-skating family, her three brothers had also won championships in racing.

She later married Maurice Glasier but not before going from racing to figure skating and traveling with the Skating Vanities, akin to the skating shows which still tour the country.

"I could tap dance on skates before I could dance in tap shoes," she recalled. A Southfield resident for seven years, Mrs. Glasier is a native of Cleveland, Ohio. Her late husband was from Detroit, and they eventually moved here. She has a son, Albert.

"Once I was considered the fastest skater in Ohio, but now I have to admit Albert can beat me," she said.

Sandwiched into a busy schedule which includes teaching Hebrew, frequent traveling, tennis and bicycling, she manages to get on skates at least "a couple times a week."

"I go down Nine Mile or even to the grocery store," she said. "It's not a bad way to beat the energy crunch. I hate to take my car out all the time."

Mrs. Glasier said rollerskating has been in eclipse for a number of years, but it once again is a craze in California.

"I'm glad it's back," she said. "I hope it happens here as well. Roller-skating exercises every part of your body, just like swimming."

THE PROFESSIONAL part of her career ended many years ago when she quit the Vanities right after making the movie, "Pin-Up Girl," with Betty Grable and Martha Raye.

"I met them both and found Martha charming, a real kibbitzer. Betty was very warm and nice," she said.

Despite the rigors of life on the road, Mrs. Glasier said she loved show business, especially the chance to travel and meet new people.

"In every city we took in everything of interest," she said. "It was educational. And I enjoyed rooming with Gloria Nord, one of the stars of the show."

"My picture was in magazines and newspapers all over the country, even in Newsweek. I was also in a number of movie shorts and on television."

Since her career paralleled the years of World War II, Mrs. Glasier played many USO shows, sold war bonds and performed in veterans' hospitals.

"I did one three-in-one number where I wore three costumes in one and changed as I did the routine," she said.

She said the rollerskating started for the Emanuel family because her uncle was a professional skater and her father owned skating rinks in Cleveland.

A NEWSPAPER CLIPPING in one of her many scrapbooks says that Eleanor Emanuel went 2,500 miles to Hollywood on wooden wheels.

Her mother, Frances Emanuel, now 92, always was encouraging. "My mom

always wanted to be a dancer herself and she was very supportive. My father was more leery about my being on the road," she said.

"Being on the road wasn't the wild life that many people imagine. It was the way people earn a living."

A highlight of her career was performing for President Franklin Roosevelt, a thrill she said she would never forget.

When her career ended with marriage and the birth of Albert, now 30, she gave up skating as a profession but never gave up on skating.

For eight years she taught roller-skating at the Jewish Community Center in northwest Detroit, putting on elaborate shows.

"We did everything the big ice shows did," she said. "Some of the kids became great skaters."



Lacing up the boots of her rollerskates is something Elena Glasier does at least twice a week when she skates for exercise or to save energy by picking up groceries and leaving the driving to others. (Staff photo by Gary Friedman)

Headaches serious?

A headache could be something more serious than just a reaction to stress and strain.

Although most headaches are not serious, the National Pharmaceutical Council (NPC) cautions that some headaches may be warning signs of diabetes, high blood pressure or an infection.

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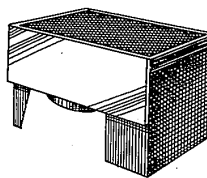
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