

Musicals March Down The Years



CABARET REHEARSAL—Director Pat Anderson, right, goes over lines in the Theater Guild's 1970 production with leads Judy Nester and Ted Melton.

Now...

By MARGARET MILLER
Women's Editor

"Nautical But Nice" and "All Systems are Go."

Those PTA mothers who balanced baskets of fruit on their heads and danced in a chorus line back in 1954 didn't know they were starting a tradition.

But their revue for the PTA fair at the Shear School in Redford Township was forerunner of an event that has become an annual one—the musical production of the Redford Suburban League Theater Guild.

The newest of these strictly-local-talent extravaganzas comes up next weekend when "Cabaret Capers" is presented April 24, 25 and 26 on Redford Union High School's stage.

IT WILL be added to a list of productions that began in 1957 with "Around the World in 80 Days," and has included such enticing titles as "Snow White in Las Vegas," "My Aunt Wore Old Army Boots,"

"That was the year we worked so hard but by the time we got to dress rehearsal night we all felt it was just incredibly bad," Jean Sansone recalled.

"We fully expected to be pegged with a few tomatoes and eggs, and we just couldn't believe the applause we got."

The Theater Guild as a separate entity was born out of the need for more men in the organization.

"WE NEEDED the men both for male parts on stage and for all kinds of help back stage," Mrs. Sansone said.

"And we certainly didn't want to have them in an auxiliary."

"So the Theater Guild began, for both men and women who wanted to take part."

The pattern of male participation has been an interesting one, Jean said.

"The first year the husband comes because his wife drags him," she said. "Then

he starts getting interested in the sets. About the third year someone else gets sick and he agrees to do a very small part just this once. The fourth year he can be talked into taking a speaking role, and the fifth year he's demanding the lead."

IN RECENT productions a regular system for putting on the show has evolved.

The script is written in the summer, and the directors and producer are chosen. Casting comes in the fall, and rehearsals go on through the winter, pointing to the April production dates.

There's plenty of work, especially in the dance routines that include this year "Walking Happy," "Can't Take My Eyes Off You," "Aquarius," and "Cabaret."

Other League members stitch up the costumes, and everyone takes a hand in selling tickets. That's the big part, because proceeds always go to

some part of the Suburban League work with retarded children—usually the summer camp program.

The profits in the last few years have totaled at least \$1,000.

THE PRODUCTIONS have been so full of funny moments it's hard to pick the best.

Carol Metevier, a regular in the revue in recent years, thought of the time in "All Systems Are Go" when her slip fell off in the middle of a dance.

And Jean Sansone couldn't help remembering the production when the leading man got laryngitis just before show time.

"He couldn't get a word out loud," she said. "We did the only thing we could. He did the acting, and one of the other men followed him around the stage, reading the lines from a book."

"It really made the show."

A NEW MEMBER of the Theater Guild, Judy Nester, has one of the leads in "Cabaret Capers," and Ted Melton has the others. Pat Anderson is director. Curtain time is 8 p.m. April 24 to 26, and tickets are \$1 for students and \$2 for general admission.

Tickets may be reserved by calling Mrs. Kenneth Downen, 523-5223, or Mrs. Victor Slapik, 531-7140.



For D.C. Residents LWV Crusades

The old revolutionary cry of "taxation without representation" comes to the fore in a present-day situation for a League of Women Voters project underway this week.



Members of three local LWV chapters—Plymouth-Northville, Livonia and Farmington-West Bloomfield—will join their counterparts across the country in conducting a petition drive on behalf of Washington, D.C. residents.

The idea is to collect signatures calling for a constitutional amendment to get representation in Congress for residents of the nation's capital.

And League members are careful to point out that the petitions will be available to sign beginning Thursday, April 16, the day after the deadline for Washington residents, like others in the country, to pay their 1969 income taxes.

Different means to the petition-signing end are being planned by the three area leagues.

The Farmington-West Bloomfield members will conduct the petition drive through area schools. Because the petition is a call for a constitutional amendment and a show of feeling, anyone 16 years of age or older may sign.

So LWV members will visit political science classes at Farmington High School, North Farmington, Our Lady of Sorrows and Our Lady of Mercy, and with the help of political science teachers will distribute petitions to be circulated by interested students.

Mrs. Olga Weir is in charge of the project in Farmington schools.

Members of the Livonia League of Women voters will have a booth in the Livonia Mall from Thursday, April 16, to Wednesday, April 22. Those interested may sign at that time.

In Plymouth, the League will have tables set up in the Mini-Mall, Main and Ann Arbor Trail, on Friday, April 17.

Signatures collected in this area, together with those from all over the country, will be formally presented to the U.S. Congress during the League of Women Voters national convention in Washington May 4 to 8.

The petition drive is part of the observance of the LWV 50th anniversary this year.

Mrs. Ferl Thomas, Livonia president, said of the project:

"The fact that the 800,000 people who live in our nation's capital have no one to represent them in the Congress of the United States is a basic injustice which must and can be righted."



FIRST CHORUS LINE—These Carmen Miranda type beauties, photographed at the Shear school fair in 1954, are (from left) Betty Nelson, June Watson, Helen Haight, Jean Sansone, Clara Monarch and Phyllis Sheridan.

And Then...

m. m. memos

Sometimes I think I'd like to get my hands on the guy who eons ago invented the chair.

I wonder if his house had the trials over downsittings and uprisings that ours does.

Isn't just in the house. We head for the family car and someone shouts "Front" and two more announce "Window." That leaves the one who was slow to speak to the horrible fate of sitting in the middle of the rear seat for the five-minute ride we're about to take.

We've made the decisions about where everybody sits at the family table. But any variation from the norm—like a guest for a meal—means the whole matter has to go back to committee for reworking.

The real problems develop in the living room.

"I'm sitting there," will announce an erstwhile occupant of a comfortable chair while quite obviously leaving the room.

That works unless someone else feels pretty strongly about that chair or someone else didn't hear or a parent pulls rank or the cat discovers a warm seat vacant.

We've had a few discussions about the reservation system versus squatters' rights. The upshot usually seems to be that it depends who's sitting or leaving or waiting to pounce.

I guess we'll just have to be more up-standing citizens.

—Margaret Miller

Working Women To Explore Blocks And Opportunities

An underlying theme of equality, pressure, and women's rights will surface at an Oakland University conference focusing on "working women" Saturday, April 18.

Entitled a "Conference on the Current Status of Gainfully Employed Women," an all star cast of Horatio Alger type women will explore today's and tomorrow's opportunities, the need for pressure and effective methods of pressure in erasing discrimination.

PRISCILLA JACKSON, assistant dean for developmental programs in Oakland University's Division of Continuing Education, will moderate a morning session on "The Route We Took," featuring District Judge Alice L. Gilbert and newspaper economist and editorial writer Patricia Shontz.

Also featured are Mary Ellen Riordan, president of the Detroit Federation of Teachers, and Dorothy Pearson, director of social services for the Wayne County Child Development Center. Another session focusing on the "range of jobs in the modern institution, preparation and obstacles" will be led by Dorothy Hope, Oakland University's Placement Director. Well-versed speakers setting the tone for opportunities in-

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