

Players do well by old favorite

Performances of the Troy Players' production of the musical "The Sound of Music" continue at 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, 2:30 p.m. Sunday, and 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Nov. 22-23, at the Troy Community Center. For ticket information, call 879-1285.

By Helen Zucker
special writer

The Troy Players has mounted a crystal-clear, ambitious production of "The Sound of Music."

This perennial favorite has been making the rounds for 29 years. Sitting in the dark, admiring the marvelous costumes, sets, lighting, musicians and, most of all, the superb and diction of the cast, I couldn't help wondering why "Sound of Music" still draws crowds. This production gives the audience a chance to really listen to the script, and at the end I wished all this marvelous good will and energy had been lavished on a wortlier vehicle.

Peggy Jamieson manages through the sheer force of her womanliness to overcome all the unanswered questions about Maria, the singing postulant who marries Captain Von Trapp and presumably sings nine people across the heavily guarded Austrian border in 1938. Jamieson has a wonderful voice, lots of pluck, and she carries much of the show.

Franc Laux looks marvelous as Von Trapp in navy regalia (especially in the wedding scene), but, like Maria,

he has no past. We know nothing about his dead wife other than that she has left seven children.

THERE IS no motivation for the captain's conversion from a man who blows whistles to call his children and staff, believes in marching toddlers and everyone else — to the only man in Austria who will not fly the Nazi flag. Laux does his best to inject solemnity and delicacy into a role that lacks believability.

I have nothing but admiration for the seven kids who fill the most substantial roles. All of them display polish and a joy in performing far beyond their years. They're all scene stealers.

Patricia Sullivan is an amusing Sister Berthe, Patricia Pierobon as Mother Abbess makes the walls shake when she belts out "Climb Every Mountain."

Stephen Kiersey deserves special mention as Max, the compromiser, who helps the Von Trapps. Kiersey could have done a terrific job if his part had the shadings, the double-edged smile of "Cabaret." A wholesome Max is unrealistic.

Wilma Nichols rightly treats her role as Frau Schmidt, the frazzled housekeeper, as gruffly as possible. She stands around complaining like a British tea-cart-brolley pusher. She's refreshing.

Throaty Rita Joy as Elsa, the strong nun's chorus and everyone else in "The Sound of Music" deserves a better musical.

Fonte d'Amore is a happy place

Your traveling taster visits area eateries and rates them on a 100-point scale. Up to 30 points are awarded for ambience, which includes general atmosphere and service; 55 points for food, and 15 points for price/value rating. A total count of 55 points or less indicates a restaurant is not recommended; 58-74 points signify food passing to good; 75-89 points designate very good with some extraordinary features, and 90-100 points show that a very special dining experience awaits you.

FONTE D'AMORE, 32030 Plymouth Road, Livonia (422-0770), is a happy, homey taverna-type spot, featuring Italian dishes. The restaurant attracts mainly middle-aged regulars, and patrons treat accordingly — from jeans to suits. The tables have paper placemats on top of tablecloths. A peppy piano player performs on Friday and Saturday nights (and on some Thursdays), Wednesday is opera night. In keeping with its at-home atmosphere, the restaurant is sometimes rather noisy, and during our meal a busboy during clean silverware at his service station interrupted all conversation for a few minutes. Reservations are recommended, especially on weekends. General Atmosphere — 15 points maximum. Points awarded — 11.

We visited Fonte d'Amore on a Friday night. Our reservations were honored immediately. Service was good, and the waitress was helpful in making meal suggestions. Water was refilled. But there was some confusion by the busboy who cleared our table of everything, including silverware, after the appetizers. Later a different busboy forgot to clear our vegetables before dessert. Dinner took about an hour and a half. Service — 15 points maximum. Points awarded — 11.

Drinks were weak, but at \$2 for most brands, not overpriced. Our waitress suggested Mozarella Al Forno (baked, breaded mozzarella cheese, in a tomato sauce) as an appetizer. It was adequate, but not special. More to our taste was the baked Italian bread with parmesan cheese, tomato and spices. The regular bread was also fresh and tasty. Drinks, Appetizers and Bread — 10 points maximum. Points awarded — 6.

A choice of soup or salad is included with most meals. The minestrone soup was thick and delicious, although it could have been a little hotter. The salad was fresh and the Italian dressing, pleasing but bland. Salad — 5 points maximum. Points awarded — 3.

The waitress recommended Linguine with White Cream Sauce, Italian style, at \$8.50 as a pasta dish.

a counting for taste

by D. Gustibus

If you enjoy this dish with a strong garlic flavor as it's intended to have, then this is for you. Not quite as successful as the Veal d'Amore (\$10.95), a concoction of tastes that didn't quite work. For some reason, the veal, artichokes, mushrooms and brown sauce did not blend together. The vegetables served with the veal had little taste. Entrée, Vegetables and Garnishes — 30 points maximum. Points awarded — 23.

Fonte d'Amore bakes its own desserts, according to the waitress, and we enjoyed both our fruit flan and our flan with chocolate mousse and Bailey's Cream. At \$2.75 each, they were quite reasonably priced. Coffee was a bit weak and a little cool. Dessert and Coffee — 10 points maximum. Points awarded — 8.

Total cost of our meal was under \$40 per couple.

including tip. We enjoyed the overall feeling of the restaurant and with the amount of food served, tip will not leave hungry. Price/Value — 15 points maximum. Points awarded — 13.

A COUNTING FOR TASTE — 100 points maximum. Total points awarded: 75. Fonte d'Amore offers good food, good fun and good feelings. If you're in the neighborhood, enjoy!

D. Gustibus welcomes your reactions, comments and suggestions of favorite restaurants in the Observer & Eccentric communities. Write to D. Gustibus, in care of Observer & Eccentric, Entertainment Department, P.O. Box 503, Birmingham 48012.

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The stringband Footloose will perform at 7:30 and 9:45 p.m. Friday and Saturday at the Raven in the Northville Community Center building.

Walking Jim Stolt is the attraction Saturday, Nov. 30. Doors open at 6 for

the 8 p.m. show. Reserved seating is \$6 per person for each performance. Doors open at 6 p.m. for dining. For reservations and information, call the Giddler Music Store in Northville at 349-9420.

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