

LaSalle Drinkery deejay Troy Players handles 'Fantasticks' with finesse

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prize was dinner for two at Wellington's, the restaurant at the Embassy Suites.

Some prizes in the past have been overnight stays at the hotel and trips to San Diego or Chicago.

If there is a special sporting event on ESPN, for instance, it's very likely it will be on the TV screens.

"We've got four TV screens and two large screens. We've got a VCR. We have music videos we're trying to get away from using them."

From time to time, impressionists and comedians will give free shows.

"You cannot have a bad time while you're here (at LaSalle). If you are having a bad time, we make sure we rectify that situation. We go out and we talk to them and bring over some popcorn." She thought a

moment and then said, "We have a lot of people that come in — lonely sometimes. Usually we get a smile, if nothing else, before they leave. That makes everything worthwhile."

Kalapski has a bachelor's degree in radio-TV-film from Wayne State University, and she is a former member of the student radio station on campus, WAYN-AM.

She has been associated with LaSalle Drinkery since May. During a media conference, she met Linda Wasche, vice-president/account supervisor of a Farmington Hills public relations firm, who gave her a lead on the job and even recommended her. Wasche's firm, Hermanoff and Associates, represents the Embassy Suites.

Kalapski said about her job, "I love it. It's great. I meet so many people. I've met practically every

person that's been on 'Kelly and Company,' because they were going to be there. I meet a lot of celebrities."

SHE USED THESE words to describe herself: "Tenacious, energetic, hardworking, honest, sincere, and genuine."

"I'm a realist. I'm not thinking that someday I'm going to get married to some rich millionaire and be living in Camelot."

And she said, "I'm one of those people that's everyone's friend. It's not a fair-weather friend. I enjoy people. I have an ability, I have talent, to open myself up and let people feel comfortable around me, and that makes people feel good."

In the future, she'd like to be the corporate entertainment and promotional director and, maybe, move to Chicago.

Performances of the Troy Players production of "The Fantasticks" will be presented at 8 p.m. Fridays-Saturdays, Aug. 12-13 and 19-20, at the Troy Community Center. For ticket information call 878-1285.

By Manon Melgaard special writer

With its simple picture-frame set and scarcity of props and costumes, America's longest-running musical play "The Fantasticks" is not only amusing hyperbole but a tricky piece to perform. There's also a serious purpose behind the froth.

The inverted Romeo and Juliet theme, with book and lyrics by Tom Jones and musical score by Harvey Schmidt, has a subtle underlying philosophy, as well as a series of demanding solos, duets and vocal combinations. Happily, the Troy Players tackle this powerful menu of ideals with ease.

The young love, wacky comedy, literary allusions, seasonal rebirth, disillusion, menace, mayhem and growth, with verve, sensibility and freshness.

Among the characters are a boy, Matt; a girl, Luisa; two fathers, a narrator who doubles as a bandit, El Gallo, and a wall invisible to the audience, personified by a mute actor (Robert Szakowski) who mimics with the puckish dexterity of a young Marcel Marceau.

Matt and Luisa are kept apart by the wall built by their fathers, but in direct opposition to Shakespeare's tragedy, these kids are friends who believe that pretended parental disapproval is the surest way to have

review

theirs offspring fall in love.

IN HILARIOUS DUETS like "Never Say No" and "Plant a Radish," the two, played by Stephen Kiersey and Hal D'Arpini, strut their stuff in a nifty combination of vaudeville patter, singing and hoofing. They further their "scheme" by paying El Gallo to stage a make-believe rape of Luisa, which is to be successfully thwarted by Matt. All goes well.

The wall is pulled down and Act I ends with the fathers and children blissfully united in a familial tableau within the picture frame.

Alas, the tableau falls apart when Act II opens with the lovers finding fault with each other. Even the fathers quarrel, and the wall goes up again. Matt leaves on a harrowing journey through the trials and tribulations of the outside world, and Luisa is about to run off with the rascal El Gallo who steals her precious necklace instead.

When Matt returns disillusioned and battered, the young couple rediscover their love. They have been hurt, but they have grown. As the narrator sings in the haunting "Try to Remember," the first and last song in this tragicomedy, "without a hurt, the heart is hollow."

Sister and brother team Colleen and Pat O'Shaughnessy are endear-

ing as the moonstruck lovers, more in love with love than with each other — at least in the beginning. They both have a wide and versatile tonal range, which is particularly effective in sentimental ballads like "It's Gonna Rain" and "They Were You."

TOM TIGHE AND Robert Dadich, as down-and-out actors who aid in the rape plot, are as bumbling and clownish as the amateur village players in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and Jim Talpos as the philosophical narrator links the whole piece together. He is equally good as the bandit. In lieu of the usual casting of El Gallo as a vaguely Spanish, leering, black-caped Machiavellian character, Talpos wears an understated Mexican mariachi sombrero, and plays him as an almost likable con man and petty thief. His singing voice is warm and mellow.

This is a well done rendition of "Fantasticks." The acting is generally fine and the songs are memorable. Kudos to Stephen Kiersey, who is also the director and set designer, and to producer Judy Feakes. Pianist Greg Nichols, who plays a lively and spirited instrument, remains hidden onstage throughout. Stage manager Colleen Kane-Mohan and choreographer Jill Pyzoha.

Actress Beverly Garland is offering 'travelers' aid'

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have three children.

IN ADDITION to her busy acting career, Garland has become a spokeswoman for the travel industry. She recently accompanied Los Angeles Mayor Thomas Bradley to Australia to promote L.A. as a travel destination. She also visited the Polynesian island of Bora Bora. Upcoming is a trip to Thailand.

Potential tour travelers want value, education and security, Garland said.

"When you take an escorted tour, you have tremendous value for your money," she said.

THE NATIONAL TOUR Association this year introduced a Consumer Protection Plan, which safeguards travelers' deposits of up to \$10,000 per company in the event that a member tour operator declares bankruptcy.

"We want to instill confidence in tours," Garland said. "That's why we put it into effect."

The protection plan is designed

to buffer travelers from problems stemming from deregulation of the airline industry and the growth of sophisticated telephone marketing scams.

Garland cited a survey by Opinion Research Corp. The survey indicated that, contrary to stereotypes, group tours aren't confined to senior citizens.

For information about group travel, the Consumer Protection Plan and National Tour Association, call 1-800-242-1520.

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