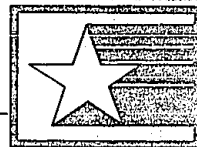


# Entertainment

Ethel Simmons editor/644-1100



(OJSC)

Thursday, August 31, 1989 O&E



Nana Mouskouri sings in the small theatre set up at the Palace of Auburn Hills at 8 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 31.

## upcoming things to do

Deadline for the Upcoming calendar is one week ahead of publication. Items must be received by Thursday to be considered for publication the following Thursday. Send to: Ethel Simmons, Entertainment Editor, the Observer & Eccentric, 36251 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia 48150.

### MISS DAISY

"Driving Miss Daisy" the 1988 Pulitzer Prize comedy opens the Birmingham Theatre's 1989-90 season Tuesday, Sept. 19, through Sunday, Oct. 22. It stars Rosemary Prinz and Ted Lange and is directed by Charles Nelson Reilly. Alfred Uhry's play is about the friendship that blossoms between a sharp-tongued, elderly Southern widow and her spirited black chauffeur.

Prinz, who plays Miss Daisy, created the role of M'lynn in "Steel Magnolias." She played Penny in the long-running TV soap "As the World Turns." Ted Lange is known as the bartender, Isaac Washington, in "The Love Boat" for its nine TV seasons. Reilly has performed in more than 30 New York productions and directed on Broadway.

At the conclusion of the Birmingham engagement, "Driving Miss Daisy" will begin a national tour. Tickets are available beginning Tuesday, Sept. 5, at the Birmingham Theatre box office, or by calling the theater at 644-8833, and at all Ticketmaster outlets including Hudson's and Harmony House stores.

### MUSIC, COMEDY

The Ron Coden Show brings music and comedy to the Fox an-

Hounds Lounge within the restaurant complex in Bloomfield Hills. Coden will appear at the Fox and Hounds starting Friday, Sept. 8, for four weeks. Shows will be at 8:30 p.m. Fridays-Saturdays. For information, call 644-4800.

### CENTER STAGE

Season tickets are on sale for Center Stage Series events at the Oakland University Center for the Arts on campus in Rochester Hills. Programs start in September and continue through May at Varner Recital Hall or Varner Studio Theatre. If subscriptions are ordered by Friday, Sept. 15, an additional 10 percent will be taken off already discounted rates. Programs include both professional entertainers and student performers.

The 1989-90 season includes Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," Sept. 15-17 and 22-24; the Detroit Concert Band in "A Musical Kaleidoscope," Oct. 15; Mike Naylor and the Motor City Samba, Oct. 27; Stephen Sonshelm's musical, "Company," Nov. 3-5, 10-12 and 17-19; the Lafayette String Quartet, Nov. 12; love songs by sopranos Jan Albright and Edith Diggory, bass John Paul White and pianists Joyce Adelson and Jane Brandt in "To You, With Love," Nov. 19.

Meadow Brook Estate Holiday Extravaganza, Dec. 1-3 and 8-10; Lafayette String Quartet, Jan. 21; Herbert Blau's play, "The Dancers Party," Feb. 2-4 and 9-11; pianist Jorg Demus with "Masterworks of Vienna," Feb. 16; singer Sheri Nichols in "Celebrated Chanteuse," Feb. 24, and Lafayette String Quar-

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## 'Stardust' in his voice, doing the old standards

By Victor E. Swanson  
special writer

SOMETIMES WHEN you hear a good old standard song, such as "That Old Black Magic," you hear a bit of "stardust" in it — that is, the heart of the singer. That's especially true if the singer is George "Stardust" Green, the professional supper-club entertainer, who is now a resident of West Bloomfield.

Although barely settled into a new house, Green is already working on his career here. "I would like to see if I can formulate the type of group that would fit in supper clubs," Green said expressively, using his whole body to talk, continually moving and gesturing. In his seat in his kitchen, I've been in some nice rooms — eating houses (here). They have no music."

According to Green, one reason for the lack of supper clubs in the Detroit area is, "The type of music you play in a supper club is different than the type of music that you would play for a concert. I don't think that the musicians here know the type of music that the supper club people appreciate. The first thing is, they would like music if it would go along with the conversation."

Green said the supper club entertainer "must play contemporary jazz. He must know the show tunes. He must be smart enough to know the music never gets into the area to make it offensive." And he must know "the standards," for patrons like to hear familiar songs.

GREEN is a musician and singer. He calls himself a lyric baritone. "My speaking voice doesn't sound like my singing voice at all," he said.

He wants to put together a duo in which he will sing and play drums. "I'm looking for a piano player who needs a piano player who thinks like I think, and who loves music like I love music, who likes to rehearse."

"I would prefer a woman. Also, 'I'm not tied down to race. That has nothing to do with it.'"

Green came to the status I attained as a performer has come from people — who didn't look at color — who were looking at my ability," he said.

Green came to the Detroit area from Reno, where he was working at the Hilton with a white woman, in his '50s, whom he had found in a mission. Although she has a master's degree in music, she was, as Green described her, not "rich more than a bag lady" when he found her. Today she is teaching music classes at the local university.

Green was in Reno with his family wife Shirley and their son, Bill, and daughter, Veronica — for about seven years. Mostly, they were there because of his wife's career in hospital administration.

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— George 'Stardust' Green

Before going to Reno, Green spent many years in Chicago, where he was born and raised, working the many supper clubs around in the 1960 and 1970s. In the early '60s, he was a member of the Ramsey Lewis Trio, with Lewis and L.L. Young. They worked the south side of Chicago.

HE SOON BRANCHED off and formed his own group, Stardust, with pianist Bob Knowles and bassist Delphus Dean. Green described Dean as "a man that could use a bow as fast as most guys could pick."

Together for much of the '60s and '70s, they worked in Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Indiana. For about nine months they even worked in California.

In 1967, Green performed in South Africa on a 21-day tour with singers Laverne Baker and Billy Williams, bassist Billy Yancy and Bob Knowles.

"We were received admirably. We quartered at an Indian hotel . . . and it was very nice. All the concerts that were scheduled were integrated," he said.

Green explained why they had gone and performed in South Africa: "Anything that smacks of racism is always hard to digest, but we also figured that there's a certain culture that these people are reaching out (and) trying to identify with. So who are we hurting? Who's getting injured the most? Is it the white populace, who — the dominate force — who are keeping that part . . . of this world in what you call dire straits of apartheid, which is hard-core segregation, or are we hurting the people who don't get a chance to see what the offsprings of 400 years have been able to attain?"

He commented on the recent conflict the musical group the Commodores was having, in which one performer of the group didn't want to



STEPHEN CANTRELL/Staff photographer

George "Stardust" Green of West Bloomfield had made a show-business career singing in supper clubs, performing the kinds of music that customers want to hear.

perform in South Africa. "I can understand how the guy feels who doesn't want to go. He looking at it from strictly a racial standpoint. But on the other hand, he's doing the same thing that he's fighting . . . He's taking to punishing 25 million people . . . for what five million people are doing and not allowing them to enjoy his culture. So he's playing right into the same hands that he's trying to stop."

GREEN DID HAVE time for lighter topics. He talked about how his wife, whom he has been married to for about 23 years, is in nursing administration at Harper Hospital. Bill, 17, a keyboardist, is interested in science fiction and football, and it looks as if he will be a member of the West Bloomfield High School football team this year.

Of Veronica (who often is called Ronnie), 13, Green said with sparkle in his voice — or was it stardust? — "She's quite a dancer. She's into ballet and tap and modern and jazz, and very good, and very, very good, and she plays keyboard."

It was Green's mother, who died about eight years ago, who really guided Green to a musical career. Otherwise, he might have become a baseball player. "The scouts were looking at me. I mean, around third base I was a vacuum. They used to call me, 'The Vacuum.' They (the scouts) did come around the house to talk to Mom, and she said, 'No, I'm going to have him do something that's going to make him happy all his life.'"

So instead of being known "The Vacuum," George Green is known as "Stardust."

**In 1967, Green performed in South Africa on a 21-day tour with singers Laverne Baker and Billy Williams, bassist Billy Yancy and Bob Knowles.**

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