

Warmth and humor highlight comedy

Performances of "Some Things Are Forever" ran through Saturday, Nov. 11, at the Highland Lakes Campus of Oakland Community College in Union Lake.

By Mark S. Carley
special writer

Love, friendship and the endurance of both are themes of "Some Things Are Forever," a new comedy by James Warner that recently premiered at the Highland Lakes Campus of Oakland Community College.

Although it doesn't offer any original material on these themes, the play is well-paced, funny and often touching.

Warner is academic dean at the Highland Lakes Campus, in addition to being a local actor, director and playwright. He has given us a piece full of the warmth and nostalgia he clearly feels for his Detroit-based youth.

"SOME THINGS ARE FOREVER" chronicles the on-again-off-again friendship/romance of Joyce Keeler and Jim Walters from 1950 (age 10) through 1980.

As the protagonists go from baseball-playing children to middle-aged professionals, the author takes us a background, which takes us from the McCarthy hearings and the Korean War through the age of free love to the confu-

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sion and identity crises of the 1980s.

In his script, Warner shows a great sensitivity for human relationships and a keen sense of humor.

His sense of dramatic plotting, however, is still unrefined. Situations and conflicts in several scenes don't ring true.

The would-be lovers have to contrive reasons to remain apart, and certain episodes (especially one dealing with lesbianism) seem to have been included just for the sake of topicality.

EVERY NEW playwright should be blessed with a cast as good as the one that the author and his wife, director Sue Warner, have to work with in this production.

Beginning with young Laurie Breleski and Gary Prudian, who play Joyce and Jim at age 10, this ensemble is competent, energetic and very comfortable with the material.

Especially fine are the perfor-

review

manes of Eileen Kent as the adult Joyce and Linda Shepherd as Mrs. Walters, Jim's mother.

Kent plays Joyce as a tough but sensitive woman, determined to succeed on her own and very wary of being hurt.

As Mrs. Walters, Shepherd is bubbly, enthusiastic and optimistic — very much the 1960s sitcom mom.

Jim, played by Kevin Roehl, is a good-natured, braggart and a dreamer. Sadly, he never has the courage to pursue his dreams. He settles for a comfortable life instead.

Mr. Walters, portrayed by the author, is very funny, conservative and very laid-back. The cast is rounded out nicely by Andrea Willis in the small but potent part of Joyce's mother, Mrs. Keeler.

A VARIATION on themes presented in movies such as "When Harry Met Sally" and "Annie Hall," "Some Things Are Forever" is a tribute to the endurance of friendship, and perhaps a speculation as to whatever happened to all those adorable little children from the 1950s TV shows.

The production staff at the Highland Lakes Campus has done a fine job. Jim Warner should continue to write and further hone his craft.



The Ink Spots return to Somerset Mall in Troy for free shows at 1 and 3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 19.

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: Edith Simmons, Entertainment Editor, The Observer & Eccentric, 30251 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia 48150.

CAST MEMBERS

Performances of the Pontiac Theatre IV production of Meredith Willson's "The Music Man" continue at 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Nov. 17-18, at Pontiac Northern High School Auditorium. Marvin Brennan II, an 8-year-old second grader at St. Hugo School in Bloomfield Hills, plays

Winthrop Paroo; Stacey Brennan, a 14-year-old eighth grader at St. Hugo School in Bloomfield Hills, portrays Zanetta; and Karen Brody is Eulalie MacKechnie Shinn. Tickets at \$5 for adults and \$5 for senior citizens and students may be purchased from cast members, at the door or at the office of the Cultural Council of Pontiac, phone 334-2390.

'EDWIN DROOD'

Birmingham Village Players will present "The Mystery of Edwin Drood," the solve-it-yourself Broadway musical, Friday-Sunday, Nov. 24-26 and Dec. 1-3, 8-10, at the playhouse in Birmingham. The audience

votes on just who the musical murderer is — a different ending every night. Curtain time is 8:30 p.m., except for Nov. 26 at 2 p.m. and Dec. 20, which is a brunch-matinee at 12:30 p.m. Adults tickets are \$8, student tickets \$6. Brunch-matinee tickets are \$15. For reservations call 644-2075 anytime.

COMEDY CLASSIC

Woody Allen's zany comedy, "Don't Drink the Water," produced by the North Rosedale Park Players, continues at 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Nov. 17-18, at the North Rosedale Park Community House in Detroit.

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