

Entertainment

Observer & Eccentric

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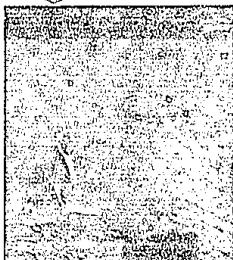
THE WEEKEND

FRIDAY



West End Productions presents "Saucy, Bossy and Burlesque," a comedy that captures the spirit and jokes of a vanished era, 9 p.m. at the Underground Theatre, 110 S. Main St. (1 block south of 11 Mile Road), downtown Royal Oak. Tickets \$12, call (248) 541-1763.

SATURDAY

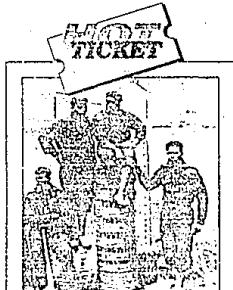


Visit the Japanese Snow Monkeys at the Detroit Zoo, and follow the bunny trail that winds through the length of the park. Several treat stations offer candy, food, books, and toys for children (while supplies last), 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., \$450 W. 10 Mile Road, Royal Oak. Guests who bring in a non-perishable food item from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. admitted free; food goes to Mother Waddles' Perpetual Mission. Zoo admission is \$7.50, \$5.50 seniors/students, \$4.50 children ages 2-12, \$3 parking. (800) 732-3477 or (248) 398-0903

SUNDAY



Henry (Steve Martin) and Nancy (Goldie Hawn) star in the comedy "The Out-Of-Towners," now playing at metro Detroit movie theaters.



Discover Greatness: An Illustrated History of Negro Leagues Baseball, a new touring exhibit at the Detroit II. Wright Museum of African American History, 315 E. Warren Ave. in Detroit's Cultural Center, opening Saturday, April 3 and continuing through Sunday, May 16. Admission \$5 adults, \$3 children (17 and under). The museum is open 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call (313) 494-5809 for information.

A BEGINNING TO AN END



Off to see the wizard: Casey Colgan as the Scarecrow, and Jessica Grove (Dorothy) in a scene from "The Wizard of Oz."

There's no place like the road for Dorothy

BY KEELY WYGONIK
STAFF WRITER
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Remember the scene in "The Wizard of Oz" where Dorothy repeats "there's no place like home," clicks her heels and off she goes, back to Kansas.

Born at Benumot Hospital in Royal Oak, Grove lived in Birmingham as a child, and later moved to Ohio where she is an honoree in the Birmingham Hall of Fame High School. Home is Hilliard, Ohio near Columbus, where she lives with her parents, Willie and Katie, and her brother, Thomas.

"I still like going home, but also, there's no place like the road. It's like a second home," said Jessica Grove who plays Dorothy in "The Wizard of Oz," now playing at the Fox Theatre in Detroit.

Grove has been touring with the show since 1997. She was 15 years old then, and celebrated her 17th birthday in February.

She followed the Yellow Brick Road all across the country, but her journey is coming to an end.

The search is on for a new Dorothy to replace her. "My last show will be late this year," she said. "I've decided to finish my senior year in my own backyard."

There have been a few breaks

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Jessica Grove

in between shows. This tour of "The Wizard of Oz" began Dec. 26, and Grove's been on the road ever since.

It hasn't always been fun or easy. "Honestly, during the first tour I started doubting myself," she said in a telephone interview from Chicago where the show is now playing. "I was missing home, my friends, my cat."

But now, she feels differently about things. "It's definitely opened a lot of doors. I got to go to the Grammys this year. It was like one big huge concert."

Grove also liked seeing all the different stars, "and what they were wearing."

Traveling has allowed her the opportunity to check out some colleges. She's leaning toward Boston Conservatory because they're supportive of actresses like her, and allow time off to be in shows.

But Grove's not star struck, and recognizes that Dorothy is an opportunity to

make children smile. "I visit hospitals and take the kids Beanie Babies. It's really rewarding," she said.

Grove loves what she does, and wants to pursue a career in film and TV and do more musical theater.

She has some advice for the girls who will be auditioning to be the new Dorothy in this production, or for other shows.

"Just have a good time," she said. "It's an opportunity to show your stuff. It's good experience to audition whether you get to finals or not. You win some, you lose some. You don't get everything you try out for. You have to fit the role, and you don't always. They won't cast you to play the mean girl if you look too sweet. I've been at auditions where people said I was too nice."

Working with Mickey Rooney who plays the Wizard has been fun. "He's a character," said Grove laughing. "But he takes good care of me, and makes sure I eat my dinner."

Being on the road is also a challenge academically. Grove still has to do her school work, often while other cast members are out for a leisurely dinner, or working out at the gym.

"We do 10-12 shows a week," she said. "It's a pretty tough schedule. Sometimes I feel left out, but it's one of the sacrifices I have to make."

This production of "The Wizard of Oz," has changed a little from the one presented last year. "They improved it a bit," said Grove. "It's pretty much the same, except for the scenery improvements, and choreography."

Her favorite moment of the show is when she gets to sing "Somewhere Over The Rainbow." "The stage is mine," she said.

Please see DOROTHY, E2



Jeffrey Jacob Tauber Hyke

Young actor says good-bye to cast, hello to school

BY KEELY WYGONIK
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After 13 months on the road together, Jeffrey Jacob Tauber Hyke of Rochester Hills felt like part of the "Les Miserables" family.

"The hardest part of leaving the tour was saying good-bye," said Hyke, 12, who played the part of Gavroche, a street urchin. "It was like saying good-bye to family. I like choked for five minutes."

"It was great," said Hyke. "But I've been there long enough." he said about the tour. Happy to be home, Hyke had to quickly learn a new part - middle school student.

"It's good, I'm getting used to it, except for getting up at 6 a.m." said Hyke about starting at West Middle School in the middle of his sixth grade year. On the road, bedtime was 1 a.m. with a 10 a.m. wake-up from mom.

Acting since second grade when he appeared in a Channel 62 TV commercial, Hyke has already had a pretty impressive career.

He played Tiny Tim in "A Christmas Carol" at Meadow Brook Theatre for the past three years and appeared in shows at Paper Bag Productions in Detroit and Avon Theatre in Rochester Hills. He played the demon child in "Nerd," a role his father Stuart tensely "he was born to play," and is rehearsing for the Avon Players' upcoming production of "Children of Eden," in which he plays young Abel.

Please see GOOD-BYE, E2

THE WIZARD OF OZ"

WHEN: Continues through Sunday, April 11 at the Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit.

PERFORMANCES:

- 12:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 1
- 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 2
- Noon, 3:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, April 3
- 1 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. Sunday, April 4
- 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 6
- 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Wednesday-Friday, April 7-9
- Noon, 3:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, April 10
- 1 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. Sunday, April 11

TICKETS: \$45.50, \$32.50, and \$17.50, call (248) 433-1515 or (313) 983-6611.

Please see DOROTHY, E2

Please see GOOD-BYE, E2

POPULAR MUSIC

StunGun defies threats, releases EP

By CHRISTINA FUOCO
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Hanging out with members of the all-female pop quintet StunGun is kind of like joining a girls' club. They laugh and giggle, whisper across the table about guys in the coffee shop and talk about nail polish.

Laughing and giggling isn't something that StunGun could do the latter part of 1998 thanks to a female stalker that was harassing the band. With that almost behind it, the band members are concentrating on their new EP "StunGun" and partying with their friends.

"StunGun" contains five songs with "some really cool remixes" on there,

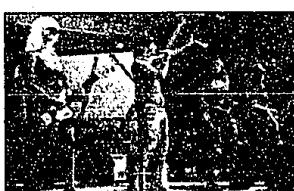
according to platinum-blonde guitarist Joell of Redford.

"I kind of wanted more on the CD, but we really didn't have enough time and money," she said.

"StunGun" was recorded with Warren Dafever, a Livonia resident and multi-instrumentalist best known for his band His Name is Alive. When the women were introduced to him, they were unaware of his international reputation as a top-notch musician. All they knew was that he was a great guy.

"He's a very good guy to work with. The atmosphere is very comfortable. He works with you, he doesn't try to change you. That's what we want," Joell

Please see STUNGN, E2



STAFF PHOTO BY PAUL HURCHAKIAN

Celebrating release: StunGun - guitarist Joell of Redford, keyboardist Danielle of Plymouth, bassist Tania of Auburn Hills, and drummer Kelly of Garden City.

Please see STUNGN, E2