

THE WEEKEND



Lloyd's Blues Music Festival features B.B. King (above) 6 p.m. at DTE Energy Music Theatre, Independence Township. Tickets \$18.50-\$39.50, call (248) 645-6666.



Detroit's Cass Corridor presents the 2001 *Daily In the Alley*, a free outdoor street fair, art fair and music festival 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Judah Johnson (above) is just one of more than 40 performers. See <http://dailyinthealley.net>



The Ann Arbor Blues and Jazz Festival continues with Madcat Ruth and Shari Kane (above). Tickets \$20 advance, \$25 at the gate, \$15 students at the gate only with ID, children age 12 and under free. Call (734) 763-TKTS.



The 51st annual Old Car Festival kicks off with a Grand Parade 10:30 a.m. Saturday-Sunday, Sept. 8-9 at Greenfield Village, 20900 Oakwood Boulevard, Dearborn. The festivities continue to 5 p.m. both days. Free with admission to village \$8.50 to \$14, children under age 5 free. Call (313) 271-1620.

Farmington Players brew up an evening of spooky theatre

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER
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Kathleen Ternes rushes across the stage with script in hand. Filling in for lead actress Kathleen Warner is just part of her job as director of *Bell, Book and Candle*.
To an outsider attending the rehearsal, it might seem as if she's directed many times before. But the Farmington Players production is Ternes' first attempt, and she's determined to make it a success.
Written by John Van Druten, the romantic comedy opens Friday, Sept. 14, in the West Bloomfield Civic Center inside Barnes & Noble Booksellers.
"It's kind of an easy show for a director to cut her teeth on. I was an art director in my last job and felt I was well suited to gathering up a lot of information and tying it all together," said Ternes, a Farmington Hills resident now in her eighth season with the Players.

Ternes mainly worked behind the scenes in make-up, lighting and costumes until last season when she assistant directed *The Uninvited*. She first read *Bell, Book and Candle* while serving on the theater group's play-reading committee this spring.

"We wanted to do shows to help sell tickets. When I first read it, I thought it was funny," said Ternes, who works part time for SFO Productions as an assistant to the producer. "It was the basis for the sitcom *Beautified*, and I just loved it. I wanted it to be campy. Each character has the potential to steal the show."

Kevin Branshaw plays the love interest smitten by witch Gillian Holroyd. Set in the 1950s, the play weaves a charming story about the two who form a bond in spite of Gillian's eccentric aunt, brother and mystical cat.

"In my opinion Shepherd Henderson is kind of dull, leading his life just going along," said Branshaw, who previously had roles in *Lion in Winter* and *The Uninvited*. "He has a girlfriend and is sup-



Eccentric characters: Aunt Queenie (Marge Wetzel) and Nicky Holroyd (Andrew Young) stir up trouble in the Farmington Players opening production.



Smitten: Director Kathleen Ternes cues Kevin Branshaw at a rehearsal for *Bell, Book and Candle*. Branshaw plays the love interest of witch Gillian Holroyd.

posed to be announcing their engagement when Gillian (played by Warner of Troy) casts a spell on him and totally changes his life. Witches can't fall in love because if they do, they lose their powers."

Eventually Gillian admits to casting a spell on Branshaw. Aunt Queenie (played by Marge Wetzel of Farmington Hills) seizes the opportunity to have a little fun.

"She's an eccentric, flamboyant witch," said Wetzel. "She's the most fun character of the show. She tends to have fun with her magic. My favorite scene is with Shep. I'm taunting him. He's borderline horrified to find out Gillian cast a spell on him. It's fun and fantasy and stuff. You don't have to think about what lessons you should be learning. We laugh a lot."

Like Aunt Queenie, Andrew Young's character, Nicky Holroyd, enjoys stirring up trouble. Nicky is Gillian's brother. He's working on a book about witchcraft with author Sidney Redlitch.

"Nicky's mischievous. His idea of fun is to make a little trouble," said Young, who became interested in theater in the early 1980s while a student at Farmington High School. "He's a little shallow, but he has fun. He learns a little something as the play goes on."

Fun is the main reason David Gilkes joined the Farmington Players 11 years ago. Gilkes plays the hard-drinking Redlitch. He's also serves on the theater group's board.

"I came along with my wife Maggie to an audition and read for a part and was hooked," said Gilkes, a Farmington Hills resident. "It's a close-knit organization. We have golf outings and picnics and a Christmas party where you can bring your grandchildren to see Santa."



It's magic: Kathleen Warner sprinkles magic dust on Kevin Branshaw to make him fall in love with her.

It seems Gilkes can't say enough good things about being a member of the Farmington Players, even though he admits each production "takes about three months out of your life."

"It's a big commitment," said Gilkes. "My daughter

Kathleen is assistant stage manager. She started at age 10 coming to rehearsals and hung out with us. It has been a family affair."

The Farmington Players planned its 2001-2002 season with families in mind. It continues with *Habeus Corpus*, a comedy, Nov. 16 to Dec. 8; *The Rainmaker*, a heartwarming drama, Feb. 8 to March 2, and the musical *Once Upon a Mattress* May 3 to June 1.

Farmington Players
What: Present *Bell, Book and Candle*, John Van Druten's romantic comedy
When: 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Sept. 14-15, 21-22, 28-29 and Oct. 5-6, Thursday, Sept. 27 and Oct. 4, and 2 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 16, 23 and 30
Where: West Bloomfield Civic Theater inside Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 6800 Orchard Lake Road, between 14 and 15 Mile.
Tickets: \$13. Call (248) 219-0800

Film

Verve Pipe's 'Rock Star' takes to silver screen

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO
SPECIAL WRITER

One of Brian Vander Ark's least favorite musical genres is '80s metal. But when the Verve Pipe singer was approached to play a musician from that era in the upcoming Mark Wahlberg and Jennifer Aniston movie *Rock Star*, he jumped at the chance.

"Oh my God, it was amazing," Vander Ark said about his experiences in the R-rated film, which opens Sept. 7.

"I hated those bands in the '80s. I hated hair bands. It was totally against anything that I wanted to do musically and lyrically. So when the opportunity arose to actually be able to transport myself to 1985 and have a mallet for three months, I loved it."

Rock Star (Warner Bros. Pictures) tells the story of Chris Cole (Wahlberg) who performs as part of Blood Pollution, a Steel Dragon tribute band. When Cole is kicked out of his band, he is recruited by Steel Dragon to replace its frontman.

Vander Ark, who plays Blood Pollution's bassist "Ricki," is one of several musicians who has roles in *Rock Star*. Third Eye Blind's Stephan Jenkins, Dokken's Jeff Pilson and Ozzy Osbourne's guitarist Zakk Wylde are among the real-life rockers who appear

in the film.

Rock Star is Vander Ark's first major studio production, as his previous efforts were indie flicks such as *Road Kill* and *Mergers and Acquisitions*. This time, the gig had a snowball effect. It

led to a two-month run as gun slinger Charlie Bowdre in the La Jolla Playhouse's production of *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid*, written by The English Patient author Michael Ondaatje. *Rock Star* and the playhouse,

located near San Diego, shared the same casting director.

"It taught me to relax. The only way you can become the character is to relax or the entire production will fail."

Also, if it wasn't for *Rock Star*, the poignant ballad "Colorful" wouldn't exist.

"They sent me the script and said, 'We need this Seattle-based grunge ballad for this character' and they picked me on the strength of 'The Freshmen,'" Vander Ark said about the Verve Pipe's biggest hit.

He explained that writing a song for a film was much easier than personal tunes penned for a Verve Pipe record "because you already have the idea for the story laid out for you."

"You've got the characterization. You don't have to flush anything out really. You don't have to be incredibly personal either. So I think it's easier to take this person and say, 'OK, I'm going to write a song about him.'"

Busy month

Besides promoting *Rock Star*, Vander Ark will be busy this month pushing the Sept. 25 release of *Underneath*, the Verve Pipe's new album for RCA. (The song "Colorful" appears on the *Rock*



Rock band to 'Rock Star': Verve Pipe vocalist Brian Vander Ark, (far right) is featured in the film, *Rock Star* with Mark Wahlberg and Jennifer Aniston. The movie opens tomorrow.