



BILL BREKLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The Farmington Players production of 'Nunsense' features Elizabeth Bibik (left) as Sister Mary Annnesia, Cynthia Tupper as Sister Mary Regina, Angela Boufford as Sister Mary Hubert, Megan King as Sister Mary Leo, and Marcia Peterson as Sister Robert Anne.

'Nunsense' is habit forming for Farmington Players

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
STAFF WRITER

Marcia Peterson struts across the stage singing "I just wanna be a star." Dressed in street clothes the actress looks like she could be rehearsing any one of the Broadway-style musicals so popular with community theaters these days.

Then Peterson and the rest of the cast go backstage to put on their habits and veils. That's when the absurdity begins as the talented nuns from Hoboken, New Jersey reveal their plight in song. 62 of the women in the convent have died from botulism after eating Sister Julia Child of God's vichyssoise. The five remaining nuns were able to bury all but four who are temporarily at rest in the freezer. They decide to put on a talent show to raise money to pay for the arrangements.

"It opens with Mother Superior using her clicker to get people's attention," said Emily McSweeney, director of Nunsense, the Dan Goggin's musical opening Friday, April 25, at Farmington Players Barn Theater in Farmington Hills. "It sets the tone. A lot of people who went to Catholic school remem-

ber scenes like this with a stern Mother Superior. We wanted to maintain the decorum of a nun. For them to be modest at all times and never lose that dignity. My sister-in-law in Chicago is a Dominican nun. I know them as women and not just as nuns. Even today in their civilian clothing after the changes with Vatican II in 1968 there are things they won't do."

Focusing on the decorum of nuns while they speak nonsensical lines is what's made Nunsense popular for 20 years. That and Goggin's music. The Farmington Players live up their production with a three-piece band, and dancing choreographed by Lucy Kovine.

"There's not a song anyone will know but they'll walk away humming," said McSweeney. "Nunsense is habit forming. It's all upbeat. There's not one quiet moment in show."

Characters like Sister Mary Annnesia keep the musical rolling along.

"She fell on her head and can't remember her real name. She's a little ditz but very endearing," said Elizabeth Bibik, the Berkley resident playing Sister Mary Annnesia. "I like the role because she sings opera. I studied opera in

NUNSENSE

What: Farmington Players perform Dan Goggin's musical comedy about five surviving members of the Sisters of Hoboken convent

When: 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, April 25-26, May 2-3, and Thursday-Saturday, May 8-10 and 15-17, and 2 p.m. Sunday, May 4 and 11

Where: Farmington Players Barn Theater, 32332 W. 12 Mile Road, Farmington Hills

Tickets: \$15.
Call (248) 219-0800

Maine and it's kind of nice to blend the acting and opera together."

Goggin's Nunsense score is a favorite of Megan King's as well. The North Farmington High School student plays Sister Mary Leo, a "novice and

not exactly the most talented of the bunch." King recently sung in a musical at school.

"I like the convent humor in the cooking scene, the funny jokes," said King. "Each song is a different style—'50s, '60s, country, opera."

"And don't forget gospel," adds Angela Boufford who sings *Holler Than Thou*. Boufford plays Sister Mary Hubert, second in command after Mother Superior.

"It's always good when you can throw a little gospel into a Catholic show," said Boufford who works in Bloomfield Hills.

"But you don't have to be Catholic to enjoy Nunsense," adds Cynthia Tupper who assumes the task of playing Mother Superior. "It's going to be a lot of fun. I spent two years in parochial school but the audience doesn't have to be Catholic to laugh at some of the nonsensical things they do."

Playing a role in Nunsense is another story.

"The costumes are not that easy to move in," said Tupper. "They're hot. You put them on and you're 25 pounds heavier. It's given me a new respect for nuns."

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'BEAUTY'

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High School before earning a degree in theater from New York University. Since then, she's worked consistently in regional theaters like the Paper Mill Playhouse in New Jersey. She joined the cast of *Beauty and the Beast* at the beginning of March.

Dysarzcyk's grandmother died on the first day of rehearsal in Nashville. She left for the funeral, but returned immediately. In between working individually with the dance captain, she stood in the wings, watching and then "tracking" through costume changes the actress she was to replace.

"I also play one of the Silly Girls that follow Gaston, Belle's suitor around the village," said the 24-year-old Dysarzcyk. "They're pretty

funny. They provide comic relief. She's the tall one so she's constantly getting bumped into. I love comedy. My idol was Gilda Radner."

"It's the magic of Disney and appropriate for all ages," she added. "It's not only a children's show. It's theatrical and has everything Broadway has to offer. It's message is just so beautiful. You can't read a book by it's cover. You can't really judge a person. You never know what you can find behind the person."

Dysarzcyk knows her mother well and warns anyone wanting to see *Beauty and the Beast* to purchase tickets soon.

"I have the most supportive parents in the world," she said. "People better get their tickets fast because my mother is going to buy them all out."

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