

## 'Charity' audition scheduled

5/15/81

GILROY — A second audition for *Sweet Charity* has been scheduled Saturday at 3:30 p.m. in Room A of Brownell School, 7800 Carmel Ave. The musical will be presented this summer by Gilroy Community Theater. For information, call 842-7355.

All prospective performers are asked to prepare a song for their auditions. None of the leading roles have been cast. There are

several parts available and 12 openings for men in the chorus.

The Neil Simon comedy revolves around a dance hall employee, Charity, who is looking for true love.

Director and choreographer is Debbie Nelson, director also of last summer's musical, *Fiddler on the Roof*. Producers are MaryAnn Bruegmann and Kai Lai.



C2 Wednesday, June 24, 1981 **The Dispatch**

## Cast selected for new play

GILROY — Leading roles have been cast and the company is rehearsing for the Gilroy Community Theater's summer musical *Sweet Charity* slated to open July 10 at the Gavilan College Theater.

Best remembered for her portrayal of Sally Bowles in *Cabaret*, Sandra Rappazzini will star in the production as Charity Hope Valentine.

The play follows Charity's search for true love and her emergence wide-eyed and hopeful, despite humiliating disappointments en route. Roger Bennett will portray the Italian film star, Vittorio Vidal, in whose apartment Charity sings the show's most familiar song, *If My Friends Could See Me Now*.

Tom Pintello plays Oscar, a tax accountant with claustrophobia, with whom Charity finds herself trapped in an inoperative elevator.

Other major parts in the production, directed and choreographed by Debbie Nelson, will be played by Laura Youngwerth, Isa Campanile and Richard Nelson.

Starting July 10, the musical will run for three consecutive weekends, starting at 8 p.m. The company will also travel to Ft. Ord for performances July 31 and Aug. 1.

Oscar Lindquist, played by Hollister resident Thom Pintello, proposes to Charity Hope Valentine (Sandra Rappazzini) in a scene from the Gilroy Community Theatre production of "Sweet Charity." Performances are scheduled Friday and Saturday evenings at Gavilan College Theater. Curtain time is 8 p.m. Final performances are July 24 and 25. For ticket information, call 842-7355. (Kai S. Lai photo)

## 'Sweet Charity' lead to Pintello

Tom Pintello, a theater major at San Jose State, portrays the shy and slightly-nervous Oscar, Charity's boyfriend in the upcoming Gilroy Community Theatre production of "Sweet Charity."

Pintello has been actively involved in community theater for over ten years. He has also performed with the Western Stage Repertory Theatre. Some of his favorite roles include Rev. Blackwood from Gavilan's "Red Dawg," the Wazzi in GCT's "Kismet" and

murderer Phillip Mason in Gavilan's "13th Chair."

Pintello grew up in New England, moved to Gilroy in 1972 then Hollister in 1974. His ambition is to be accepted into the Lee Strasberg Actor's Studio.

"Sweet Charity," a Neil Simon musical comedy, runs at the Gavilan College Theater the weekends of July 10-11, 17-18, 24-25. Tickets are available at Dick Bruhn's, Town & Country Liquors, Creative Woods, Plaza Rexall or by calling 842-8677.



Photo special to The Dispatch

Sandra Rapazzini as Charity serenades Charlie, played by Marshall Sanchez.

## 'Sweet Charity' opening

GILROY — *Sweet Charity*, Gilroy Community Theater's summer production, will open for a three-weekend run on Friday, July 10, at Gavilan College Theater on Santa Teresa Boulevard.

Curtain time will be 8 p.m. opening night and for repeat performances July 11, 17, 18, 24 and 25.

A fast-paced, romantic musical with a script by Neil Simon, *Sweet Charity* includes the songs, *Hey, Big Spender* and *If My Friends Could See Me Now*.

Sandra Rapazzini stars as Charity, who emerges wide-eyed and hopeful from humiliating disappointments in her search for true love.

Roger Bennett, a vice principal at Live Oak High School in Morgan Hill and a Gilroy resident, portrays Vittorio Vidal, an Italian film star Charity encounters.

The future brightens for Charity after she is stuck

in an elevator with Oscar, a claustrophobic tax accountant played by Tom Pintello.

Other major roles are portrayed by Laura Youngwerth, Isa Campanile and Richard Nelson.

The musical comedy is directed and choreographed by Debbie Nelson, who has worked with numerous productions for Gilroy Community Theater and San Jose Civic Light Opera.

Tickets may be reserved by calling 842-7355. They are available in Gilroy at Dick Bruhn's, Town and Country Liquors, Creative Woods or Plaza Rexall.

A special champagne celebration following the opening night performance will be held by the Theater Angels Art League at the Cultural Center, 60 W. Fifth St. The event will benefit the historic Judge Willey home.



"Sweet Charity" leads Sandra Rapazzini and Tom Pintello, who will play Oscar, rehearse a

scene from upcoming Gilroy Community Theatre production.

# 'Sweet Charity'

7/3/81

## Opening night reception slated

GILROY — A champagne reception at the Theater Angels Art League Center on Fifth Street will conclude the opening night performance of *Sweet Charity* on July 10.

Champagne, wines and refreshments will be served following the 8 p.m. performance of the Gilroy Community Theater's summer

musical starring Sandy Rapazzini in the role of Charity.

Proceeds from the reception at 140 Fifth St. will go toward payment of the mortgage on the old Judge Willey home, which hosts a variety of art and cultural events during the year.

Neil Simon's musical comedy at the Gavilan College Theater will run July 10, 11, 17, 18, 24

and 25, starting at 8 p.m. each night.

Tickets for the performance and opening night reception are available at Dick Bruhn's, Town and Country Liquors, Plaza Rexall Drugs in Gilroy, or at Creative Woods in San Martin. They may also be obtained at the door, or by calling 842-7355 or 842-1170.

C4 Friday, July 17, 1981 **The Dispatch**

## Drive opened with reception

Members of the Theater Angels Art League (TAAL) opened their 1981-82 membership drive with a champagne reception for 200 theater goers following the Gilroy Community Theatre's opening of its summer musical, *Sweet Charity*.

Newly-elected TAAL president, Teri Freedman, said active members of the group are allowed one free use of the old Judge Willey home on Fifth Street after they have worked three events over a year's time.

Sponsoring members may pay a higher fee, but are not required to participate in the TAAL events, she added.

Officers serving with Freedman during the coming year will be: Pat Hoover, vice president; Nellanne Paterson, secretary; Joy Hall, treasurer; and Donna Pray, Sally Connell, Sharon Albert, Kay Campbell and Chuck Barrena, board members.

Freedman said that later in the summer the group hopes to raise funds through a salmon barbecue.

Proceeds from all TAAL endeavors go toward paying off the mortgage on the Judge Willey house, which was bought and restored several years ago to house cultural and social events of the community.

Further information on TAAL may be obtained by calling 842-1170.



Phillip Buchanan and Joy Hall pour champagne at the reception.

Photos special to The Dispatch

# Rapazzini excels in title role of Simon's weakest musical

By Joanne Rife  
Special to The Dispatch

7/15/81

Multi-talented Sandra Rapazzini sings, dances and acts up a storm in Gilroy Community Theater's production of *Sweet Charity*, giving a robust performance in a demanding role that is front and center for almost two and a half hours.

She is assisted by several supporting actors and a couple of production scenes that brought yelps of delight from the opening night audience, but ultimately *Sweet Charity* is too much of a burden for even the vigor of Rapazzini. The musical play flounders with a poor book by Neil Simon, generally forgettable music by Cy Coleman and unmemorable lyrics by Dorothy Fields.

All those big Broadway names came a cropper with this 1966 musical. GCT's production is fine, although agonizingly slow in the first act and occasionally uninspired. The real weakness is within the play itself. GCT can throw all the talent and energy it has and *Sweet Charity* would still sink.

But it floats for quite some time and bobs to the surface with wit and enthusiasm on occasion, and I would not want to discourage theater-lovers from taking in the effort.

Rapazzini is marvelous in the title role, taken on Broadway by Gwen Verdon and later Juliet Prowse. Verdon is credited with making it a hit with a two-year run. It is an odd play, based on Federico Fellini's Italian movie, *Nights of Cabiria*. It was staged and choreographed for Broadway by Bob Fosse of *All That Jazz* fame. It recounts the story of Charity Hope Valentine, a dance hall hostess pure of heart if not of body, who falls in love at the drop of a hat with a host of peculiar men. The play opens with Charity robbed and dumped in the lake by one lover, continues through a tender if disjointed interlude with a movie star, and culminates with an affair with a neurotic tax accountant. The weakness in the play is that Charity is never changed by any of these experiences and it closes exactly as it opened with nothing resolved and nothing changed.

Some of the musical numbers are that way too — they come from nowhere and then disappear into nowhere, not moving the story or even making a statement that reflects on the story.

One episodic number with little relationship to the story is, however, a show stopper. Because it is so well done, I don't care why it is there.

This is the marvelous *The Rhythm of Life*, starring Big Daddy Johann Sebastian Brubeck, played to a T by Chuck Myer. The staging, choreography, and most particularly, the costumes are exquisitely hilarious. Myer, who played Noah in GCT's *Two by Two*, shows another facet of the religious experience as the multi-colored robe wearer and leader of the Rhythm of Life Church. The costumes must have been purchased in San Francisco, the kook kapital of the world. If your imagination goes no farther than whips and chains,

you are in for a delight. It makes you wish there were instant replays.

The other show-stopping production number is *Rich Man's Frug*, done in black and white and full of tense energy, with a typical Fosse look with Cole Porter overtones. What should have been a third outstanding number, *Big Spender*, died with a ragged chorus. It has all the other elements — flashy costumes, lurid colors and a silhouette of the New York skyline in stark opposition. The song itself is one of two one hears occasionally: *The minute you walked in the joint/I could see you were a man of distinction/A real big spender*. Perhaps with a little more work, that number will also come around.

The other song with a bounce is *If My Friends Could See Me Now*. Out of 17 songs, Rapazzini sings 10, including *If My Friends . . .* She has an excellent musical comedy voice, dances well, and does the dizzy dame routine with aplomb. She is

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assisted along the way by Tom Pintello as Oscar Lindquist, the accountant. He seems to ooze figures and green eye shades and neurotic tendencies. A fine performance.

Two of the dance hall hostesses, Helene, played by Laura Youngwerth, and Nickie, played by Isa Campanile, are solidly done. Roger Bennett plays the movie star in Charity's life, Vittorio Vidal. He is properly debonair, but this section of the production moves so slowly the audience was experiencing St. Vitus' dance.

Bennett is up against it with his solo number, *Too Many Tomorrows*. Rapazzini steals the scene. It may be that *Too Many Tomorrows* could have been the hit of the show were it not for the fact all attention is on Charity, hidden in Vittorio's closet and watching a love scene through the keyhole.

Director and choreographer is Debbie Nelson, who did the same for GCT's *Fiddler on the Roof*. She has put together a complicated and detailed production, but the first act lags. Not until Oscar appears at the end of the first act does the story pick up momentum. The sets are sometimes spectacular. Designed by Jorge da Costa, they are enhanced by excellent lighting effects by Tom Trafton. The costumes, by Michael Pacciorini, are outstanding.

GCT's productions are always marked by enthusiasm, energy and effort. *Sweet Charity* is no exception.

*Sweet Charity* will continue at Gavilan College Theater July 17, 18, 24 and 25. Curtain is 8 p.m.