

REBECCA LITTLE
PHOTOGRAPHY



Thirteen families are participating in South Valley Civic Theatre's summer production of "The King and I."

Local thespians to stage royal play

By **KATHY M. NICHOLS**

Special to Let's Go!

"The King and I" is the classic summer musical — a romantic adventure set in an exotic location, filled with glitter, pomp and lots of cute kids.

It is also a huge undertaking, as anyone connected with South Valley Civic Theatre's latest production can tell you.

SVCT will bring Rodgers and Hammerstein's classic to life at its playhouse starting Friday and continuing through most of August.

The production has stretched the community theater group's resources and ingenuity to the limit.

For instance, said Cindy Hoffmann, president of SVCT and the show's co-producer, one of the big problems was outfitting the 55 cast members, many of whom had to look properly regal as denizens of the Siamese court.

"It wasn't like some of the other shows we've done. We couldn't go to Goodwill for the costumes," she said. "It

The King and I

Where: South Valley Civic Theatre playhouse, 235 Tennant Ave., Morgan Hill.

When: July 21-Aug. 19, Fridays and Saturdays, 8 p.m.; 2 p.m. matinees, Aug. 6 and 13.

Cost: \$10 general admission, \$8 students and seniors.

Details: 842-SHOW

was very challenging."

Some costumes were made and others borrowed, with a number of them coming from West Valley Light Opera, which produced the musical several years ago.

Not only did the West Valley company provide the look, it also helped SVCT find its king. Don Masuda took the role in the West Valley production and is reprising it for SVCT.

"He's been coming all the way down from San Mateo for this," said Hoffmann admiringly. "He has this incredible stage presence and great charisma."

Dedication can be found on all fronts of this show, however. About 80 local people have been busy in one of its aspects for the past eight weeks.

"It's a real tribute to the community that so many are coming together to make this happen," Hoffmann said.

The music will be provided by a group of local musicians who are donating their time. And since "The King and I" is a musical, there is choreography and singing to consider — in addition to the usual concerns of lighting, set design and costuming.

Directed by Greg Camacho-Light, the show stars local favorite Ruth E. Mullins as Anna, the teacher who befriends the King of Siam when she goes to his country to be governess for his many children.

Based on a true story, the play also weaves in several subplots and many instantly recognizable songs, including "Whistle a Happy Tune," "Getting to Know You," "Shall We Dance," and "We Kiss in a Shadow."