



Rod Pintello, Bruce Williams, Bill Corneth and Bill Dougherty star in SVCT's "Heaven Can Wait." REBECCA LITTLE

# SVCT stages a heavenly comedy

By SUE GORDON and  
MELISSA SNYDER

May brings us an old favorite — Harry Segall's joyous romp, "Heaven Can Wait." Directed by Betsy Andrade, who is enthusiastic about the production and the cast, this show includes many familiar faces from recent productions of South Valley Civic Theater, as well as some new ones.

"Bruce Williams, who plays the lead is a newcomer from Morgan Hill, and he's never been on our stage. He and Bill Corneth, who plays the angel who leads Joe around, have a great rapport with each other. It kind of just clicks when they're working together, and the play flows because of it," Andrade said.

"Heaven Can Wait" is the story of Joe Pendleton (Bruce Williams), who suddenly finds himself in heaven 60 years ahead of his appointed time. The chief dispatcher for "Heavenly Airlines" (Bill Corneth) must find a different body for Joe to inhabit, so he may complete his scheduled term on earth. The decidedly blue-collar Pendleton ends up inhabiting the body of a stuffy millionaire, whose wife

and lover have conspired, successfully, to murder him. From there on, it becomes hectic and fun.

The play has enjoyed at least two film versions. Fans of the 1970s Warren Beatty film of the same title will notice some differences in the stage production. Most obviously, Pendleton is a

based on Segall's script.

"(The play) is so light. It's kind of a fantasy you end up in. There's a lot of spoofing," Andrade said. For instance, Joe speaks to his "guardian" angel, who is present on stage, but no one else can see him.

As is often the case with SVCT, "Heaven Can Wait" is partly a family affair, with Bob and Shirley McGee and Rod and Marion Pintello taking part in the ambitious production. Rounding out this great cast are: Pete Mandel, Leigh Garay, Dan Walters, Taniesa Dedrick, Jason Jessel, Janet Espinosa, Cheryl Jessel, Tony Andrade, Scott Navlyt, Courtney Ottoboni, Liz Gifford and Chiisai Leneave. Bill Dougherty, president of SVCT, plays "Heavenly Messenger 7013," who makes the blunder of removing Joe from Earth in the first place.

Andrade said "Heaven Can Wait" should prove a wonderful evening or afternoon of entertainment for the entire family. "It's a good group of people. They're having fun, and that really does come through."

## HEAVEN CAN WAIT

**Who:** South Valley Civic Theater

**Where:** Gavilan College Theater

5055 Santa Teresa St., Gilroy

**When:** Thursday-Sunday, May 2-12

Thursday-Saturday, 8 p.m.

Sunday, 2 p.m.

**Admission:** \$10 general; \$8 Seniors/Students

Senior Citizen Sunday matinee May 5 (over age 65 admitted free)

Mother's Day, May 12 matinee (all moms admitted free)

**Details:** 842-SHOW

pugilist, rather than a professional football player, in the play. The earlier film "Here Comes Mr. Jordan," an earlier film that is close to the original, was the first movie