

# Entertainment Outlook



## Call me Captain

Falling in love is part of the fun in the musical H.M.S. Pinafore. See what Stewarttown Middle School students (left to right) Trevor Lewis, 12, (Sir Joseph Porter), Julie Johnston, 13, Sarah Howitt, 13, (his

cousins), and Cheryl Rice, 11 (his sister), do with this popular show. They'll be staging in April 7, 8, and 9 and tickets are available at the school by calling 873-1637. (Herald photo)

## Library review

### Motherless child an enduring theme

Sarah, Plain and Tall by Patricia MacLachlan (Harper and Row, 1985)

The plight of the motherless child is an enduring and pervasive theme in children's books. Robert Burch uses it in *Ida Early Comes Over the Mountain*, set in rural Georgia during the Depression. Hector Malot's endearing nineteenth century French classic *Nobody's Boy*, recently resurrected as *The Foundling*, tells of an orphan raised by a kindly woman, and sold to the manager of a troupe of performing animals. The six Bastable children in Edith Nesbit's *The Story of the Treasure Seekers* are also motherless. "And if you think we don't care because I don't tell you much about her, you only show that you do not understand people at all." Foster child Galadrial Hopkins, alias *The Great Gilly Hopkins*, is determined to find her mother who deserted her as a baby.

Fatherless children are granted equal time in today's novels of "social realism" but stories in which a father is missing from the family scene seldom pack emotional punch delivered by the circumstances of the motherless child.

This, I suppose, stems from society's perception of the traditional role of the mother as nurturer and principal influence in the affective life of the child. The father's role of supporter and provider of the family's physical needs, although perhaps equally as important, is often eclipsed.

ed in children's books by the influence of the mother figure. Sarah, Plain and Tall, the 1985 Newbery Medal winner for outstanding children's books, is a tender story about the fragile beginnings of a family relationship on its way to permanence. Mama died at Caleb's birth, leaving two children, and Papa has not sung since. When a request for a mail-order bride brings a response from a woman half a continent away, both Anna (who tells the story) and Caleb want to know if she sings. Sarah, plain and tall, arrives for a trial period, and the family quickly become attached to her - and wonder if she will stay.

Refreshingly, this novel portrays children as receptive to the love and attention that a step-parent can offer, and brings to life their willingness to return that affection. A short but moving book that is anything but plain - for those who prefer quality to quantity.

Jane McQuarrie  
Halton Hills Public Libraries.

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## Amy Irving likes her fairy-tale world

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (NEA) — Amy Irving doesn't feign modesty when told of a magazine article that hails her and husband Steven Spielberg as Hollywood's royalty. "It doesn't surprise me," Irving says, looking less than royal in a faded

denim jacket and jeans. "I feel like Hollywood royalty. Steven is such a power in this town. But I didn't get here on my own. I married into it."

In the Santa Fe-Indian style screening room of her large but not palatial

hilltop home in Beverly Hills, Irving wrestles with Hollywood's "crown prince." At 20 months old, Max Samuel Spielberg is a blond cherub so pretty he could have stepped out of one of his father's films.

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