

ENTERTAINMENT



The "Teen Angel" (Mark Llewellyn) lectures "Frenchy" (Shannon Marshall), in this scene from Globe's upcoming production of "Grease". The show will run at the John Elliott Theatre from August 5-8 with a matinee on the 8th. Tickets are \$12.00 and can be purchased at Royal LePage.

It's Bobby Sox & Ducktails time in Georgetown

Poodle skirts, rolled-up jeans, and saddle shoes will be all the rage in Georgetown this summer when Georgetown Globe Productions presents "Grease" at John Elliott Theatre August 5-8, 1992.

Grease is an energetic musical set in the fun-loving 50's. The show centres around the kids of Rydell High and features a great assortment of colourful characters including the Burger Palace Boys - Danny, Kenicki, Doody, Roger, and Sonny; and the Pink Ladies - Rizzo, Frenchy, Marty, and Jan.

The action begins when Sandy, a sweet, innocent, and naive new girl in town, has a summer romance with Danny. Their relationship ends when school starts and they go their separate ways, however, Sandy's plans suddenly

change and she finds herself at Rydell High. During the musical number, "Summer Nights", Sandy and Danny give their own versions of their romance and it becomes quite clear that Sandy has no idea who Danny really is. The Pink Ladies, namely Rizzo, take great delight in pointing out that her "dreamboat" is none other than the "too cool" leader of the Burger Palace Boys. When he sees Sandy at school, Danny must maintain his cool and distant at-

titude to impress the guys, especially when they start doubting his story about their "hot" summer romance.

Other favourites that will have the audience tapping their feet include "Those Magic Changes", "Greased Lightning", "Hand Jive", and "We Go Together".

Tickets for *Grease* are only \$12.00 and can be purchased at Royal LePage on Guelph Street in Georgetown. Show times are 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 5 to Friday, August 7, and 2:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 8. For further information please call 873-6016.

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School - not what it used to be

By JO PHENIX

Did you ever talk to one of those people who, when they were young, had to walk eight miles to school, in the snow - and probably barefoot? Things were tougher in the old days, weren't they? These folk often think that because they didn't have all our modern conveniences their time in school was more profitable, their learning somehow of more value. I'm inclined to think that, under those circumstances, I would have been half asleep all day.

I recently appeared on a TV phone-in show in Thunder Bay. A lady called in to talk about the school train. Apparently, when she was a girl, the school train, with the teacher, came around for five days every month. In between, the children were left with plenty of pencil-

and-paper work and repetitive drills. Because this lady had grown up to be a keen reader, she thought the way she had been taught must be the right way. Everyone is an expert on school because they went to one.

The other day, I overheard a couple of mothers talking about the school vacation. One commented that it must be really difficult for teachers because schools were so "loosey-goosey" these days. It seems to be a common belief that learning is less structured now, that kids do what they like most of the time, that skills are not taught any more.

It's not surprising really that classrooms are mystifying places for parents today. I was startled recently to realize that I am now in my sixth decade of personal experience with schools, from the forties to the nineties. Plenty has changed in that time. In fact, I have taken as my motto for life, a sign I saw on the wall of a teacher's centre: There seems to be an increasing number of things I know nothing about.

It isn't that schools no longer teach skills, but that the skills themselves have changed. There was a time when schools taught mostly for the past: classics of literature, history, dead languages. The ability to quote from these was the mark of an educated person. Then we tried to bring things up to date, to teach skills that would be useful in the modern world and in the modern workplace.

The problem now is that we do not know what our six-year-olds will need to know when they are ready to start work. Most people,

who now work with computers, started school before the machines they use were invented. It is the norm now for a person to have two or three different careers during a working lifetime. Even retirement today is usually seen as the start of a new career.

We cannot view education as a list of things a person ought to know. Memorizing and parroting back facts is no longer a useful skill - it probably never was. We can no longer even teach for today; we have to prepare our children for a future which is changing all the time.

So our classrooms today are different. Children no longer just listen to the teacher; they participate in their own learning. They don't just memorize facts and take tests; they create, solve problems, develop ways of working together, experiment. Quite often, they make a mess of things, but don't we all when we are learning something new? I always worried about the students who got A's all the time - where was the challenge, the struggle, the failure that learning involves?

We must be careful about falling into the "back to the basics" trap. What would we want to go back to? What our kids need more than anything is self-motivation, the skills to find out for themselves what they need to know, and an ability to solve problems. These are the basics we must go forward to.

In this column, I will be talking about some of the issues and problems in our schools today. If you have any particular questions or beefs you would like aired, please write and tell me about them. Next month's topic: Whatever happened to spelling?

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