

# ARTS

## Moral dilemmas aplenty in next Players' offering

*Norm Foster's Jupiter in July hits the stage next Friday*

By Stephanie Thiessen  
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

When a middle-aged man meets an attractive woman half his age at a community garden, the sparks start to fly and it isn't long before he's faced with an age-old moral dilemma.

You see, he has a wife waiting for him at home.

It's a plausible situation that'll work itself out on-stage in the Milton Players Theatre Group's upcoming performance of Norm Foster's comedy *Jupiter in July*.

The show will run next Friday as well as February 3, 8, 9 and 10 at the Milton Seniors' Activity Centre, 500 Childs Dr.

The story follows Donald Springer whose wife, Joanne, has heart trouble and spends most of her time in bed. His refuge is an allotment garden he visits each evening.

During one visit, he meets a young woman tending to the garden beside his. He begins helping her, an attraction forms, and before long he has some major decisions to make.

"It's really an enjoyable play," said director Geoff Ford. "It's not a farce, but it's a nice comedy. There are funny situations all throughout."

### Shifting loyalties expected

He explained the audience will find themselves on a roller coaster ride as their loyalties switch between Donald and Joanne.

The Milton Players have performed several of Foster's plays, and continue to do so in response to the positive reactions elicited from the audiences, Ford said.

*Jupiter in July* is another of Foster's plays where his trademark ordinary people find themselves in extraordinary situations.

"He (Foster) talks everyday language with everyday situations so people recognize themselves," Ford said.

Pat McManus, who plays Donald Springer, agreed.

"The theme is plausible and realistic. His (Foster's) characters are real and not a stretch of the imagination," he said.

He added there's something for almost everyone — except for children because of sexual innuendos — in the play.

"He (Foster) writes good contemporary stories."

McManus said his role is challenging because it's wordy, but as far as the character goes, it's not a big stretch. Donald is about his age, and he can relate to some of what he says, McManus said.

The show features a veteran cast. Joanne is played by Susan Cranford, while Sharon Stevens plays the role of the young temptress.

Andrew Finnigan plays the boyfriend of the young woman, who soon finds himself dumped. Peter Hawley plays



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**EASY, HONEY:** Portraying Heddy Athens, Sharon Stevens wields a garden shovel at Andrew Finnigan — playing boyfriend Allan — during a rehearsal of *Jupiter in July*.

an apartment landlord, while Brian Cranford — Susan's son — plays her son on-stage as well.

Having an experienced cast makes it easier on the director, Ford said, because "they give you what you want."

Though Ford has played various parts throughout the years on stage, he's equally comfortable directing and said it suits his personality.

"I have a God complex," he said, half-kidding.

Ford wants residents new and old to know they don't need to travel to Toronto or out of town to experience a quality performance.

"It's the best value in entertainment you're going to find,"

he said, adding, "It bothers me when people say, 'Oh, you're just a community theatre.'"

Show only dates are next Friday, plus February 8 and 9. Doors open at 7:30 p.m., with curtain call at 8 p.m. Tickets cost \$25 each.

Dinner theatre performances are held February 3 and 10, with the bar opening at 6:30 p.m., dinner at 7 p.m. and curtain call at 8:15 p.m. Tickets cost \$40 each.

Tickets can be purchased in person at Boutique 188, 188 Main St., or by phoning (905) 875-0629.

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