

Players' Jupiter in July quite amusing, done well

Why is it that obeying one's conscience and following one's heart often lead to two very different outcomes?

It's a sad but true fact of life that doing what we want isn't always the right thing, and doing the right thing isn't always fun.

So learns Donald Springer, the lead character in the Milton Players' Theatre Group's latest production, Jupiter in July by Norm Foster.

Friday night, the Milton Seniors' Activity Centre on Childs Drive was filled with laughter as the audience put themselves in Donald's place for a few hours. It's always nice

to take a break and watch someone else have to make a difficult decision for a change.

Directed by Geoff Ford, the play follows 50-something Donald as he "falls in love"

— or infatuation, depending on your definition of love —



with STEPHANIE THIESSEN

Back stage

with a woman half his age while his wife ails at home in bed.

As he meets Heddy Athens daily at their allotment garden, Donald comes to realize everything he doesn't have with his wife Joanne. And as Joanne realizes she's losing out to a garden, she comes to realize it represents all the dreams the middle-aged couple has thrown by the wayside.

Can a comfortable, time-worn love compete with the headiness of something new and emotional? And should Donald follow his head or his heart?

These are questions he grapples with, and a few surprises are thrown in to keep the audience on its toes. Each viewer will have his or her own opinion on what Donald should do and whether he makes the right decision in the end.

Veteran actor Susan Cranford is quite believable as the pitiful Joanne Springer who seems bored with life.

And Pat McManus is skilled as the charmingly old-fashioned Donald with a new spring to his step — despite a few fumbled lines. Sharon Stevens' perky portrayal of the "other woman" fits into the mix nicely, creating a good chemistry between her and the stodgier Donald.

The only problem I had with the play has nothing to do with the Players and everything to do with the flippant way Norm Foster treats marriage. If there's no passion left, throw the relationship away — that seems to be Foster's attitude.

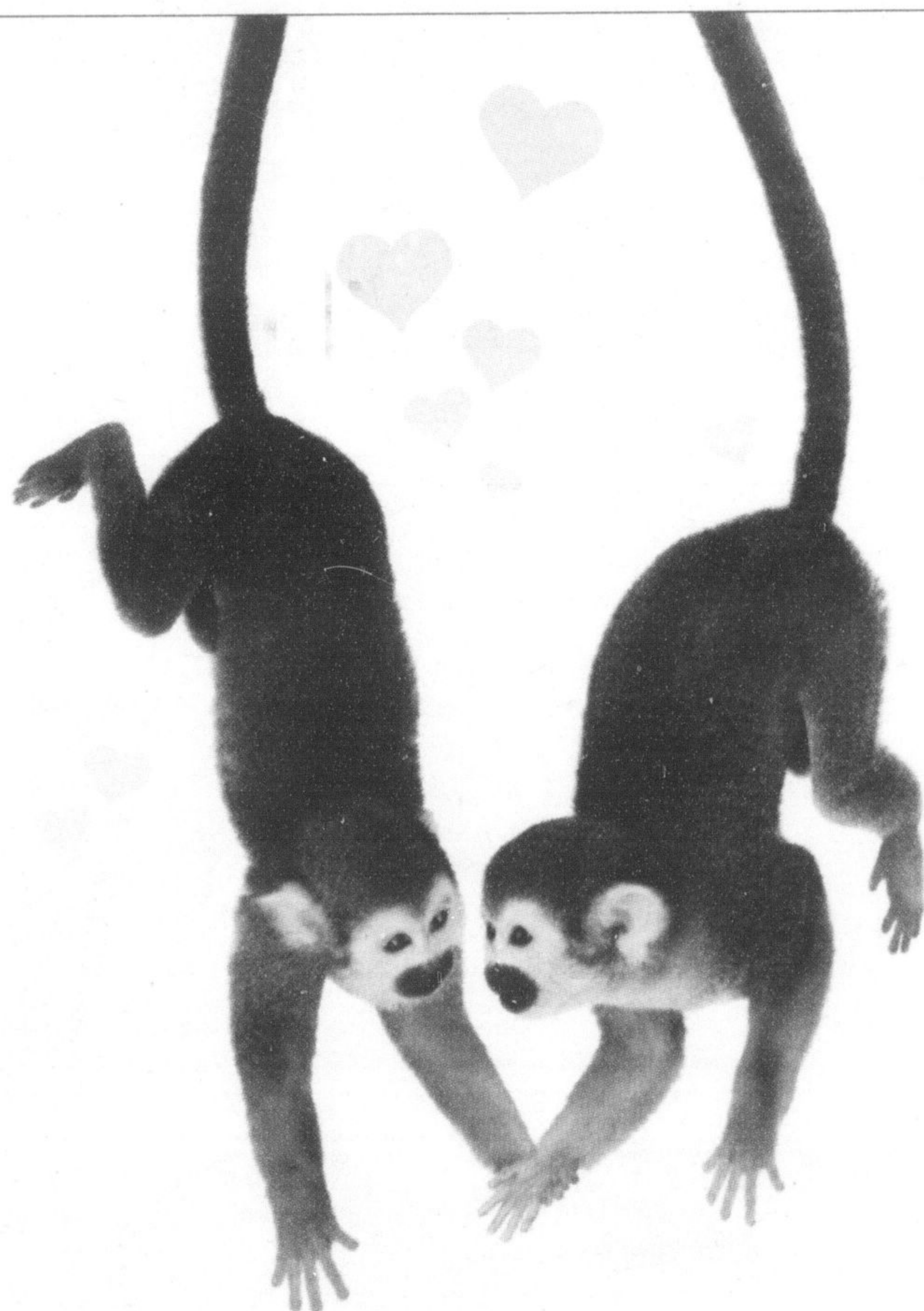
Jupiter in July wasn't a love story for me, it was an infatuation story — because love isn't something born out of a two-week attraction, but out of time, commitment and a decision to make it work. If everyone "followed their heart" all the time, there'd be very few marriages left indeed.

Regardless, this is an amusing play performed well by Milton's own theatre group.

There's still time to catch Jupiter in July. Remaining show-only performances are Thursday and Friday. Doors open at 7:30 p.m., with curtain call at 8 p.m. Tickets cost \$25 each.

There's also a dinner theatre performance Saturday. The bar opens at 6:30 p.m., dinner's at 7 p.m. and the show starts 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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