

## People

# Susan Myers takes on role of director for Music Mania

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Correspondent

After 13 years of portraying characters like Mayor Fran Sainsbury, Ernestine, and the bag lady, Susan Myers has traded her costume box for a director's chair.

Myers is the lady in the hot seat for 'Be Our Guest', the 34th annual production of Music Mania. And while the first year director has paid her dues, having sat on almost every Music Mania committee, she still recalls her first ever experience with the renowned Stouffville variety show.

"I'll never forget it," said the local hair salon operator. "I walked into a skit rehearsal and said 'I want to be in skits.' They just looked at me funny, they weren't expecting me."

However, as with all Music Mania newcomers, Myers was welcomed aboard and given a few small roles. The rest, as the line goes, is history as Myers went on to become a true Music Maniac.

"Each year I got more interested and I got more involved. I started making costumes, working on the stage crew, and I started to infiltrate a lot of the show."

Myers said the knowledge she has picked up from involving herself in such a broad range of activities has been crucial to her role as assistance director last year, and director this time around.

"You have no idea of how the whole show works until you've sat on most of the committees."

Despite all the work involved in putting the production together each year, Myers said Music Mania is essentially a social experience. "The number one part of the show is social. It's a way to meet people, and there have been a lot of great friendships made through Music Mania."

It also gives every day people a chance to discover things about themselves, she said.

"Music Mania has forced out my creativity. I had never done any acting before. As for my costume making, I had only done basic sewing, but I just looked at what was needed and said, 'I can do that.' And it's the same with other people. They end up doing things they never thought they could do."

Myers said she gets a kick out of seeing people going from being tentative and shy to outgoing and adventuresome after a few years with the show. "When you get out into something like this, otherwise straight people show another side of themselves. People will sometimes come out for the first time and say they'll help write skits, but they'll never get up on stage. But we always end up getting them on stage."

Myers said she has attempted to blend everything together in some segments of this year's show, with the chorus and skit people performing at the same time rather than individually. Things have gone smoothly so far, she said, but added there will probably be bugs to be ironed out once rehearsals begin in earnest at the Stouffville District Secondary School stage.

While Myers said she is enjoying the challenge of directing the show, she refuses to let the spot light shine on her alone. "I'm fumbling along in a way, being my first year as director. But I'm getting lots of support. Everything is done by committees so it's not one person's show, it's everybody's show. And we want everybody to be a star in our show."

She said 'Be Our Guest', which plays April 22, 23, 24, is an apt title. "I'm thrilled to death with it. I don't think they could have picked a better theme."

## Education

## York boards prepared for Gr. 9 destreaming

York Region school boards are prepared to launch destreaming of Grade 9 students this September.

The Ministry of Education mandated that all Ontario boards cluster first year high school students in a single rank and erase basic, general and advanced levels starting this September. Full-fledged destreaming is to be carried out by 1996.

But earlier this year, Education Minister Dave Cooke announced that boards that are ill-prepared to initiate a destreamed program can delay it until 1994.

"We're on track for September," said Don O'Shaughnessy, spokesman for the York Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board.

The York Region Board of

Education is "proceeding as planned," said Curriculum Superintendent Win Procyshen. She said the main concern has centred on the time needed to properly train teachers.

So far, 100 teachers volunteered for a destreaming forum in late February. Another 40 teachers took part in a teleconference linking them with ministry staff.

Procyshen said more workshops and seminars will be available to teachers this spring and summer.

Destreaming is aimed at acclimatizing young teens to the change from elementary to secondary school. Course selections will be put on hold for a year while students study a common curriculum for the equivalent of eight credits.



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