

COMMUNITY: Annual Stouffville variety show first took to the stage in 1960



TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO

Yve Seraphine was one of the dancers in the Spice Up Your Life number at the 1999 Music Mania show. The production is celebrating its 40th season and planning for the spring 2000 show starts this week.

Music Mania celebrates 40 years of entertainment

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
Staff Writer

"Break a leg" has been the battle cry in Whitchurch-Stouffville for 40 years.

Music Mania, the annual stage production that highlights local talent, is preparing to bring its legacy of skit, song and dance into the next millennium.

"Our show gets better every year," said veteran chorus member Doris Harvey. "We're going into 2000 with lots of optimism."

Harvey joined Music Mania 22 years ago, a move that turned out to be one of the best things the supply teacher said she has ever done.

"Music Mania has been a success. We put on the finest amateur entertainment in the region. It's the best show for 10 bucks you'll ever see," Harvey said.

As well as entertaining the audience, Music Mania offers a wonderful opportunity for people to form friendships. Performing in the show creates a bond, Harvey said.

"It has a lot to do with fun and fellowship. Of course, we wouldn't do it if nobody came. But, it goes beyond the audience."

Under the direction of producer Linda Williams and director Carolyn Duggan, plans are well under way for Music Mania's 40th anniversary show, slated for the spring.

Tomorrow night, at 7:30 p.m., at Stouffville United Church on Church Street, music maniacs will meet for a very important planning meeting, Harvey said.

Music Mania's 150 current members are expected to attend, while group officials hope past and future cast members will also come out.

Because the anniversary is so important, it's hoped that former Music Mania members will make a special appearance for old times sake, Harvey said.

At Wednesday's meeting, a theme for the 40th anniversary show will be decided on.

Also, people can sign up for parts, including singing, dancing and acting. Musicians are being sought for the band, while behind the scene workers are always needed, Harvey explained.

"I'll sign up for the chorus again and maybe a skit," she said.

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Beginning in January, Music Mania rehearses once a week, while during April, practice is beefed up to twice a week.

Some people linked to Music Mania have been cast members since the beginning.

For Lorne and Marion Boadway, Sharon and Jim Brazier, Marguerite and Bill Murphy, Gale and Ivan Harris, and Helen and Don Huxtable, April's show is very special. The 10 amateur entertainers took to the Stouffville stage in 1960 and they've never stepped down.

Founded as a musical show by the United Church, Music Mania is now an independent production and donates its proceeds to local charity.

Music Mania will be held at the Stouffville District Secondary School from April 26 to 29, 2000.



Joan Ransberry

Child's video rental cause for concern

Oral sex is OK, especially if you're a kid. A few days ago, an upset Stouffville mother called the newsroom. Wanting to touch base with other parents, she asked if I'd help get a message out.

The mother had given her 11-year-old daughter permission to go to a Stouffville video store and rent a movie. It was the first time the youngster had been granted such a privilege. "My husband said I have to let her spread her wings and start assuming responsibility, so I let her go," the mother told me.

The child came home, popped the movie into the VCR, snuggled on the couch with her six-year-old sister and pressed the play button. From the beginning, the kids never uttered a word. "It must be a good movie," their mother thought, as she prepared a meal.

A few minutes later, the mother heard moaning and groaning sounds coming from the livingroom. Something was wrong. She entered the room and looked at the TV scene — her children were watching oral sex. "There was nothing left to the imagination," she said.

The mother wasn't sure how to handle this. But, one thing was certain — the movie was over.

The mother went to the video store to find out why a movie, showing explicit sex acts and drugs and alcohol abuse, was rented to an 11-year-old.

Apparently, the store owner said this particular movie should not have been rented to the child unless she was 14 years old.

"He said it was a mistake," she said. "The store owner said kids try to rent restricted movies all the time."

The store owner needs to be reminded that by law, a person has to be 18 years old before he or she can rent a restricted movie. Being 14 won't cut it. Incidentally, one must be 18 to rent an adult movie. The government calls these movies X-rated. I call them pornography.

Why do we, as parents, pussy foot around this issue? Parents should walk into the video store and let the operators know the law must be obeyed or police action will be taken.


The fact kids try to buy or rent restricted movies doesn't make it OK. A video store owner, citing demand from the kids as a reason to make the sale, deserves to be boycotted. Can't video store owners say "no"?

I called this video store. A parttime worker said she knew nothing about the laws linked to video rentals. She thought the owner might know. He was expected back in the afternoon.


So, who's minding the store? If video store owners knew they were being watched, would fewer restricted videos fall into the hands of kids? Also, kids trying to score such movies need to be told by their parents they'll risk paying far more than the rental fee.

Parenting is twice as hard today as it was 20 years ago and 10 times harder than it was 40 years ago. Moms and dads face more obstacles now. Today, parents feel powerless. Throwing in the towel is often tempting.


Still, people should remember that if parents assume responsibility, they hold the power, deserve the credit and are, indeed, a force to be reckoned with. Here's my message to parents: Take back your kids.



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