

ECSU Lifestyles

Players to Present Picnic

submitted by
Shawn Smith

The Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Picnic* will be the next major production of the ECSU University Players. The romantic comedy by William Inge, the author of *Bus Stop*, will be performed on March 6, 7, and 9, in the Kermit White Graduate Center.

The setting for *Picnic* is the backyard of a house in a sleepy southern town, where a group of women are preparing for a Labor Day evening picnic to liven up the monotony of their lives. Into this quiet atmosphere there suddenly erupts a former college football star turned drifter who upsets the routine of the drowsy neighborhood with his blatant masculinity.

The play is being directed by senior theatre student Kenneth L. Lanier. Over the past several years, Lanier has acquired a long list of theatre credits, including stage managing,

directing, and acting. He appeared as Gabe Gabriel in last spring's *No Place To Be Somebody* and has worked professionally as actor and stage manager in the outdoor dramas *Strike At The Wind* and *The Liberty Cart*.

Irvin Brown, a senior English/Drama major from Portsmouth, Virginia will appear as Hal Carter, the young athlete who bums his way into town. Joycelyn Proctor will play Madge, the pretty girl who has the misfortune to fall in love with Hal. Both Brown and Proctor have acted in several University Players productions.

Madge's mother, Flo Owens, will be portrayed by Vera V. Patillo, a senior political science major from Gaston, N.C. She received acclaim for her portrayal of Nurse Ratched in last semester's *One Flew Over*

the *Cuckoo's Nest*.

Jacqueline M. Weddington, a Charlotte native who majors in chemistry, will be seen as the fading school teacher, Rosemary Sydney, who manages to snare Howard, a middle-aged merchant into marrying her. Vernel Barco, last seen as Dale Harding in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, will portray this reluctant bridegroom. Barco is a senior biology major from Elizabeth City.

Millie Owens, the tomboyish younger sister of Madge, will be played by Atleacia C. Stokes, a freshman from Portsmouth, Virginia.

Sheila Reid, a junior biology/drama major from Elizabeth City will appear in the role of Helen Potts, the next door neighbor, and Gary D. Shearod, a freshman from Goldsboro, N.C. will play Alan Seymour, Madge's

well-mannered, rich boy friend. Both Reid and Shearod have a good deal of acting experience. She was last seen as Nurse Flinn in *"Cuckoo's Nest"* and he has performed in several other productions including *Fly On, Sweet Angel*, in his hometown.

Rounding out the cast will be Edita Perkins, a junior business major from Danbury, Ct., as Irma; Shirley Ann James an ECSU senior from Elizabeth City as Christine, and James Kevin Runyon, a freshman education major from Herford in the role of Bomber.

Tracy Hoggard is the production stage manager, with Vincent Ruffin serving as stage manager.

John H. Gibbs is the assistant director, David Raper is technical director, and James Gibbs is the assistant technical director.



Irving Brown and Joycelyn P. Proctor will play Hal and the young lovers in *PICNIC*.

Here Comes The Spring

by Dreena Birdsall
Staff Writer

It's after the holidays, and the only things noticeably thinner are our wallets. However, a spartan-like regime of dieting and scholarly meditation (suggested to keep the mind off food and partying), should produce an emergence of lovely butterflies on campus everywhere this spring and just in time to don the upcoming season's lissom aristocratic-

looking fashion apparel.

This spring, the lure of pure white (Like a Virgin) will be conspicuous in everything from tailored pieces to simple frocks, constructed of gauzy cotton or clingy rayon, and designed to cover, not conceal.

A hint of the 50's look is seen in the bare-backed halter dress, cinched at the waist and tastefully sexy.

In evening party wear, the show-stopping femme fatale look is electric lame. (Not for the timid.)

The attraction in casual wear is an uncomplicated layered look, with long pleated skirts and loose cable sweaters or boxy collarless blazers over tank tops. To round out the "well bred

look," feet should be clad in flat or nearly flat shoes and slouchy socks.

For those who prefer a more jaunty look this spring but still want to be tres chic, the word is "short." Shorter lengths in floral abstracts and off-the-shoulder tops will be in the spring fashion line-up, alongside the lady-like attire of sophisticates.

Loose, lean shapes ranging from bright to white capture the fashion scene for the spring, and fabrics are primarily cool crisp linens, lightweight wools and cotton blends.

In the midst of winter doldrums, it's hard to believe spring is just around the corner. C'mon, girls; get that body ready to "show some skin."

HATS Stuns ECSU Audience

by Rick L. Jones
Executive Editor

Sandra Dunson Franks, in a one-woman show, gave a stunning performance on the life of Harriet Tubman. The show was full of rich, cultural history and a deep pathos - punctuated by periodic, humorous punchlines which brought immediate laughter from a very receptive audience.

Her polished acting technique of presenting a one-woman show carried the audience through many phases of her subject's life, especially the scene dealing with the "underground railroad." The scenery, Franks' costumes, and the heavily textured make-up gave the show an air of reality for an audience of all ages.

Franks is a native of Atlanta, Georgia and is a member of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from Spelman College. After a few years of traveling

and working, she returned to Spelman for further study. She has performed in the Lewis Company productions of *Ain't Suppose to Die a Natural Death* and *Ladies in Waiting*, and appeared in the Spelman Morehouse productions of *Macbeth*, *Three Penny Opera*, and *Not Enough Rope*.

Franks has coordinated a video-acting workshop for teens, and completed a certified program sponsored by CABLE ATLANTA. She has also trained in modern and African dance and ballet, and is a member of (SAG) Screen Actors Guild and Equity.

Regarding HATS: A TRIBUTE TO HARRIET TUBMAN, Franks sees this as more than simply a theatrical production. "Instead," she says, "it is a service to the people. It is a unique show that shares the life of a very special person who was the 'Moses' of a very special people."

The 90-minute one-woman production was written by Ms. Franks.

Dreena Reviews

Ironweed by William Kennedy

Francis Phelan, an ex-ballplayer, has descended to an abysmal state of despair following a series of unfortunate mishaps in his life. We meet Francis and his hobo girlfriend, Helen, both full-time bums, living a less than civilized existence, lingering on the outskirts of society.

William Kennedy's *Ironweed* is a graphic portrait of post-depression "street people." His tattered characters are of Steinbeck vintage and typify pathetic human remnants of our society - a derelict coterie unable to cope in a world adhering to "survival of the fittest" and bound by an unquenchable thirst for booze. A band of misfits, their day-to-day existence is focused on primal instincts for survival: shelter from the cold

and food and drink for sustenance. In their world, sexual favors are reduced to crude trade, wherever and whenever needed, and usually in exchange for temporary shelter in a hovel or a bottle of cheap wine.

In a story littered with depressing characters, we come to know intimately Francis Phelan's sepulchre of past and present ghosts and to gain compassion for a pitiful man seeking asylum from a reverie of ill-fated yesterdays.

Kennedy's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel is an intensely moving story and one not to be missed. It profiles one man's journey downward, as well as a glimpse of a touching return to the world of the living.

Cotton Club

The Cotton Club was "hot" in its heyday. It was big-city depravity for white America in the midst of prohibition, a "Cabin in the Cotton" for the white elite.

The Club, at 142nd Street and Lenox Avenue in Harlem, was operated by white gangsters from 1923-1935, and employed only black entertainment and black help - the Harlem royalty of the day.

The main attraction was the "Cotton Club Girls" - tall (5'5" minimum), nearly white mulattos, quatoroons, octoroons, scantily clad beauties that were custom-made for the racial voyeur.

Dixie Dwyer, played by Richard Gere, is a white jazz coronet player that works "gigs" in and around Harlem. He inadvertently saves the life of "Dutch" Schulz, a psychopathic killing gangster who befriends Dixie and hires him as a "yes" man. Dixie falls in love with Dutch's sassy young moll, Vera Cicero, but Vera wants a nightclub that Dutch has promised her and the romance is

thwarted.

Gregory Hines plays "Sandman" Williams, half of the Williams Brothers tap dancing duo. "Sandman" falls in love at first sight with Lonette McKee, one of the "Cotton Club Girls," who easily passes for white. McKee looks like a young Lena Horne clone, but despite her flashing smile and a face that literally embraces the camera, she lacks the stage presence and charisma of Horne.

"Cotton Club" goes more for razzle dazzle than an in-depth character study. It merely serves as a backdrop for a weak plot and script.

The period costumes are terrific, and the music captures the jumping jive flavor of Cab Calloway, Duke Ellington, and a retinue of high-brow Harlem entertainers. For the dance numbers, Coppola obviously hired some of the best "hoofers" in the business. However, even with the abundance of glitter and talent, it looks like Coppola will have to add "Cotton Club" to his ever-growing list of "Big Bucks" turkeys.

Important Dates

Did you know that the ECSU Teacher Education Program requires all prospective teachers to take and pass the National Teachers Examination (NTE) prior to becoming a Certified Teacher? A Bachelor of Science degree in Education does not in itself entitle you to a teaching position. One must make a satisfactory score on the NTE in order to become certified. If you are an Education major, be certain that you read the following information

Test Dates: A. Core Battery - March 30, 1985. The regular registration deadline is Feb. 25 and the late registration deadline is March 4.

B. Specialty Area - April 20, 1985. The regular registration deadline is March 18 and the late registration deadline is March 25. The fee waiver request deadline is Feb. 27. All tests will be given in Moore Hall Auditorium.

Promptness is always a virtue, but in the case of the NTE it is a necessity. Do not be late! No one will be admitted to the examinations after testing has begun.

A copy of the NTE Programs 1984-85 Bulletin of Information may be obtained from the Office of Student Services.

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