

RM Youth Symphony Is Formed

A new group, the Rocky Mount Young Peoples Symphony provided a short musical for the teacher's first orientation meeting of the 1967-68 school year in the Senior High Auditorium, and from reports "There hasn't been anything like it in thirty years."

The orchestra, under the direction of Mr. Peter Laurini and his assistant Mr. J. C. Sykes performed "Suite" from "Eine Kliene Natchmusic" by Mozart, "Song of the Reapers" from The Seasons" by Tchaikovsky, and "America the Beautiful". The audience was asked to join with the orchestra in singing the last stanza of "America the Beautiful".

Mr. W. O. Fields, superintendent of Rocky Mount City Schools expressed an "extremely favorable" reaction and said, "We hope to broaden the program eventually and include the high schools."

The Symphony presented their first concert July 1st at which time Mrs. J. M. Brown,

assistant director of the Rocky Mount Supplementary Education Center formally introduced Mr. Laurini, Mr. Sykes, and guests of the orchestra from East Carolina University. In her introduction, Mrs. Brown explained the purpose of the orchestra and its conception as part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. The Act, passed by Congress, established the Supplementary Education Centers and provided inovated programs and services that are needed.

In forming an orchestra one of the biggest problems facing the center was where to find just the right person totake charge and direct the group. It would have to be someone qualified who would have the time to teach the students.

Through the Southern Teachers Agency of Memphis, Tennessee Mr. Laurini was contacted in Santa Monica, California, where he recently retired from his position as mu-

sical Director for Rogers and Hammerstein.

Because of his desire to work with young people and to share his talents with them; he was very interested in the information sent to him. After sometime, Mr. Laurini accepted the position and came to Rocky Mount to live.

Mr. Laurini is originally from Rochester, New York. He began playing the violin at an early age and distinguished himself in the Broadway orchestras. This helped to pay for his first venture from home. He rose rapidly in the musical world, and after graduating from college he toured Europe, conducting in Venice, Rome, Milan, and Berlin for the State Department." I have been blessed with inspiration from many people. And now I feel the time has come when I must in turn give what I know to the people who want it". Teaching is a new experience for Mr. Laurini but much of his zest and enthusiasm for



MR. PETER LAURINI DEMONSTRATES . . .

stringed music and what it has done for him can be seen already in his students. These young people now range from the sixth to the ninth grades. His schedule includes Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Wesleyan College and the three

junior high schools plus orchestra practice every Saturday morning at R. M. Wilson. The ultimate aim of this course is to revive the orchestra at Senior High and to instigate one at Booket T. Washington High School.

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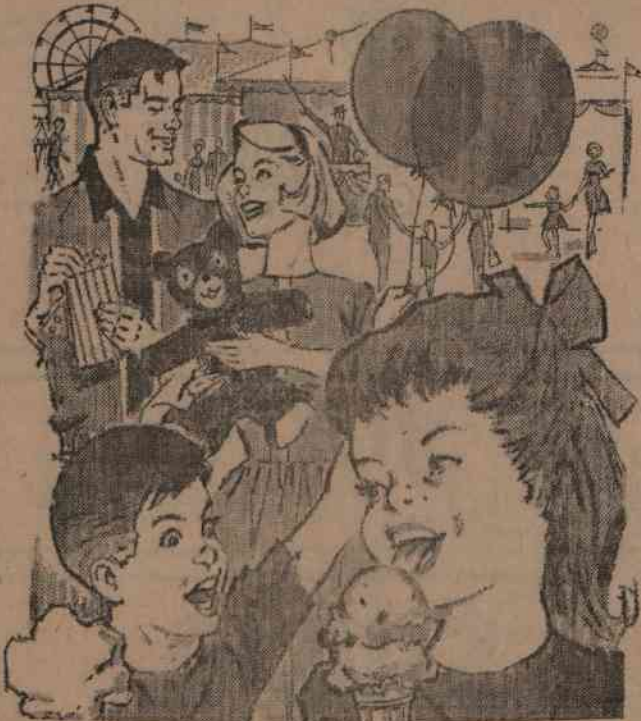
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