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POETRY IN MOTION: St. Petersburg Russian Ballet performs Thursday night as part of LVAC's 2003-04 Presenter Series.

PHOTOS: St. Petersburg Russian Ballet

Artistic Leap

LVAC presents the St. Petersburg Russian Ballet

By Dean Poling
dean.poling@gafnews.com

Lowndes/Valdosta Arts Commission's Presenter Series is known for bringing professional touring companies of Broadway musicals, plays and singing groups to Valdosta. But this week, LVAC's Presenter Series leaps into a different arena of the arts.

The 2003-04 Presenter Series hosts a one-night stop Thursday for the St. Petersburg Classic Russian Ballet's American tour (see "Showtime" box on this page for details on time, etc.). Ballet has long been a hallmark of Russian culture, especially in St. Petersburg. Even in the communist days of the Soviet Union, when St. Petersburg had been named Leningrad, Russia frequently lifted the Iron Curtain to showcase its ballet dancers to the rest of the world.

With the fall of the Soviet Union, Russian ballet continues to thrive and set a benchmark for ballet performances around the globe. After all, Russia has also been the home to composers such as Ptiar Ilyich Tchaikovsky, who created music for some of the most famed ballets in the world, and to some of the age's most renowned dancers such as Nureyev and Baryshnikov. So, neither the rise nor fall of the Soviet Union could destroy Russian ballet. It continues to endure and inspire.

The St. Petersburg Classic Russian Ballet features choreography by Marina Medvetskaya, who is also the organization's artistic director. She founded the troupe in 1996. She has been the lead soloist with the Tbilisi State and Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre. She is described as a disciple of renowned ballet artist Vakhtang Chaboukiani and has danced the lead roles of the entire repertoire of classical ballet.

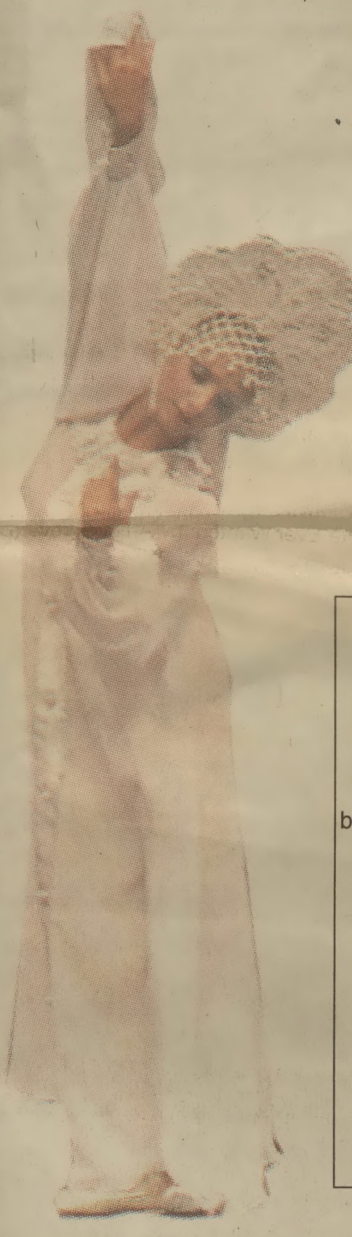
In creating St. Petersburg Classic Russian Ballet, Medvetskaya has selected dancers from ballet companies such as the Kirov and the Maly. Her company's repertoire includes works from the best of the Russian classical ballet tradition as well as more modern works from her native nation as well as from other parts of the world. In 1998, the troupe won the gold medal in the Kaliningrad International Ballet Competition.

Local audiences should expect to see a performance featuring selections from "Swan Lake," "Nutcracker," "Sleeping Beauty," and many more.

VALDOSTA

BALLET WORKSHOP

St. Petersburg Classic Russian Ballet and the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts host a Ballet Master Class, 3:30-5 p.m. Thursday, prior to the Presenter Series performance. The class will be held at Linda Chase's local Dance Arts Inc., 1760 W. Gordon St., Remerton. Members of the St. Petersburg Classic Russian Ballet will work with intermediate to advanced local ballet students. Cost: \$20 per student. More information, registration: Call the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, 247-2787.



SHOWTIME

LVAC's Presenter Series sponsoring of the St. Petersburg Classic Russian Ballet is scheduled for 8 p.m. Thursday, Mathis City Auditorium, 2300 N. Ashley St. Ticket: \$35. PLUS: An optional, pre-show dinner is available in Mathis' multi-purpose room, starting at 6:30 p.m.; advanced reservations are a must for the dinner-show experience. Dinner and show ticket: \$55. More information, reservations, call the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, 247-2787.

RECENT EXHIBIT



Valdosta artist Colleen Harris recently exhibited her work in the Mary Brogan Museum of Art and Sciences, Tallahassee, Fla. The museum presented the exhibit in association with the Thomasville Cultural Center Guild and the Smithsonian Institution. Harris has also recently exhibited work at the Albany Museum of Art.

PICTURED: 'Demetrius,' oil, artist Colleen Harris.

The hero a few desks over

You can know someone for so long that you lose track of why you've enjoyed knowing them for so long. Then, they do something and you know again. It all comes rushing back.

It happened recently when a man was hit by a car near a local office building. I don't know the particulars of how the man was hit, but he rode a bicycle, rain fell in buckets, there was a truck and ... The man had injured a foot or an ankle. He balanced himself on the other foot, standing in the rain, standing one-footed on the curb.

Other folks in the office made a call to 9-11, and they gathered by the office windows to watch. But my friend, he took an umbrella to the injured man. Then, he returned to the office and grabbed a chair from a desk. He rolled the chair across the street so the injured man could sit down. He stayed with the man until emergency vehicles arrived. My friend was soaked through to the skin and he had a full day of work ahead of him.

There were no heroics involved. He did not risk his life. Yet, by the simple acts of

taking an injured stranger an umbrella and a chair, he is a hero to me because he made the effort to get involved. He took the time to show a human concern and share a human kindness.

And it reminded me of other times that he dealt with situations in a quick and human way.

Once, his work took him to a house where the lawn was overgrown. To do his job properly, the lawn needed mowing. He could have re-scheduled the work. He could have said he'd come back once the lawn had been trimmed. But co-workers were waiting for the results of his work and the woman said she didn't know when she could get the lawn mowed. So, he mowed her lawn and then did his job. None of his colleagues had to wait or scramble to find another location. He went a step beyond what was expected of him and succeeded. He performed a kindness for the woman, did his job for his company, and did not let his colleagues down.

One Christmas Eve, when several workers hustled to finish work and get home for the holidays, an argument erupted in the business' lobby. Voices rose and the workers sighed, hoping that the argument would soon end, hoping that they would not have to take the steps of getting involved in the dispute. Not my friend. With a "that's just about enough" attitude, he walked to the lobby, informed the arguing

individuals that they were too loud, they were in a place of business, and people wanted to finish their work and get home for Christmas. He said it in a way that cut to the facts and humbled the argument. The argument ended. The workers finished their chores and went home for Christmas.

These are just a few examples of this individual's efforts. Perhaps, you have a friend like him, too. On a daily basis, his colleagues come to him because he listens to their concerns, personal and work-related, with a well-worn patience. He meets dilemmas with humor and honesty and performs his tasks with talent and dedication.

I'm tempted to call him out by name, but I won't do that because I don't want to embarrass him. Besides, reading this, there is likely an old friend of yours who fits many of these descriptions if not the details of the incidents. He'll know who he is, and those folks who know him will know this column is about him.

So, take a few moments to appreciate these fine folks. You don't have to say anything, but take a minute to realize how lucky you are to know such a person. As for myself, I am proud to know this individual. He is one of the finest people I've ever met. And I'm proud to call him a friend.

Dean Poling is The Valdosta Daily Times features editor.

The Valdosta Daily Times'

VALDOSTA

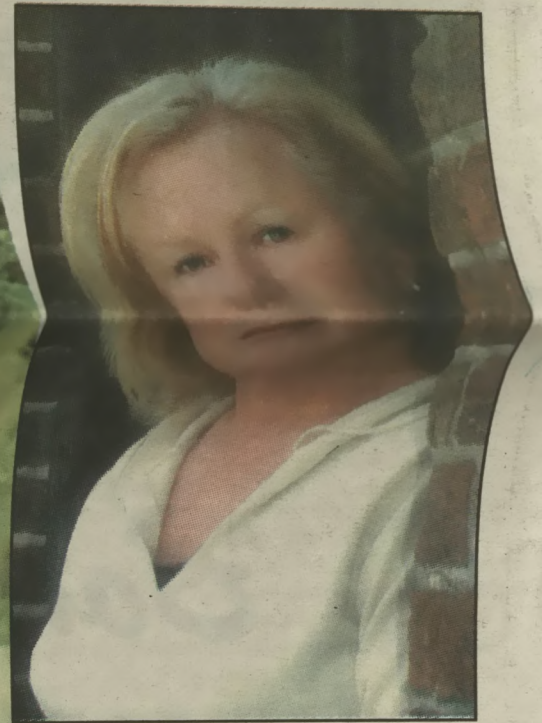
preView

Issue No. 78

Thursday, April 29, 2004

JUST DOLL

BOOK ONE OF THE STATEN BAY TRILOGY



JANICE DAUGHARTY

Just Janice

After years of no new published novels, author Janice Daugharty returns with 'Just Doll' and the makings of an Echols County epic

CHART TOPPERS**BILLBOARD TOP 20 SINGLES**

1. "Yeah!" Usher (feat. Ludacris & Lil Jon). Arista.
2. "I Don't Wanna Know," Mario Winans.
3. "Burn," Usher. Arista.
4. "Topsy," J-Kwon. So So Def.
5. "Naughty Girl," Beyonce. Columbia.
6. "This Love," Maroon5. Octone.
7. "If I Ain't Got You," Alicia Keys. J.
8. "My Band," D12. Shady.
9. "All Falls Down," Kanye West. Roc-A-Fella.
10. "Dirt Off Your Shoulder," Jay-Z. Roc-A-Fella.
11. "Freak-A-Leek," Petey Pablo. Jive.
12. "Overnight Celebrity," Twista. Atlantic.
13. "One Call Away," Chingy.
14. "The Reason," Hoobastank. Island.
15. "My Immortal," Evanescence. Wind-up.
16. "Game Over (Flip)," Lil' Flip. Sucka Free.
17. "Toxic," Britney Spears. Jive.
18. "I'm Still In Love With You," Sean Paul. VP.
19. "Hotel," Cassidy (feat. R. Kelly). Nick.
20. "The Way You Move," OutKast

BILLBOARD TOP 20 ALBUMS

1. "Confessions," Usher. LaFace.
2. "Now 15," Various Artists.
3. "The Reason," Hoobastank. Island.
4. "Damito Jo," Janet Jackson. Virgin.
5. "Greatest Hits," Guns N' Roses. Geffen.
6. "Feels Like Home," Norah Jones. Blue Note.
7. "In This Skin," Jessica Simpson. Columbia.
8. "Fallen," Evanescence. Wind-up.
9. "U Gotta Feel Me," Lil' Flip. Sucka Free.
10. "The College Dropout," Kanye West.
11. "Speakerboxxx/The Love Below," OutKast.
12. When The Sun Goes Down, Kenny Chesney.
13. "Hood Hop," J-Kwon. So So Def.
14. "Me And Mr Johnson," Eric Clapton. Duck.
15. "Songs About Jane," Maroon5. Octone.
16. "The Diary Of Alicia Keys," Alicia Keys. J.
17. "Kamikaze," Twista. Atlantic.
18. "Honkin' On Bobo," Aerosmith. Columbia.
19. "Closer," Josh Groban. 143. (Platinum)
20. "Good News For People Who Love Bad News," Modest Mouse. Epic.



Dining Directory

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Drawings will be held every Tuesday. Winners to be announced the following Thursday. Mail official entry forms to: P.O. Box 968, Valdosta, Ga, 31601, ATTN: Dining. NO PHOTOCOPIES.

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THIS WEEK'S WINNER: Martha Chason FEATURED RESTAURANT: Mellow Mushroom



67194bmv

Ben Kweller changes things up with 'On My Way'

On Ben Kweller's second full-length studio album, "On My Way," the 23-year-old artist returns with more finely tuned, but slightly toned-down rock. 2002's "Sha Sha" was a brilliant mixture of slick indie rock songs and country-tinged ballads, all driven by thick harmonies and catchy choruses. "On My Way," however, leaves some of the thick harmonies behind for a closer feeling, more intimate atmosphere, creating a sound more akin to mid-'60s rock than the indie-rock stylings of his previous work. The distinct sound results from Kweller and his band recording the album



Matt Walker
Columnist

live, with all the instruments together in the studio, rather than each musician recording their parts individually. The outcome is a totally different feeling album than "Sha Sha," and while "On My Way," is not as strong all the way through, it definitely has its moments.

Kweller's preferred instrument switches back and forth from guitar to piano

throughout the album, and both play a crucial part on many tracks, such as the bouncy and classic sounding "Hospital Bed." But where the gentle ballads would have taken a country-inspired turn on his last album, Kweller's softer songs here lack the rich, twangy textures that helped make that album great. The thick harmonies aren't missed on the title track though; a raw sounding acoustic number where Kweller sings, "Aw mom, I never thought that I could love no one / but tonight I'm on my way." On some of the more rocking songs, such as "The Rules" and "Ann Disaster," Kweller makes up for what is missing in big production values with a tough sound, built on simple techniques. He uses repetitive guitar riffs that accumulate into jangly, but effective choruses of overworked guitars running through maxed-out amplifiers.

Melody and natural songwriting ability is what drives Kweller's music, and both are abundant on this album. And although "On My Way" doesn't have as many memorable tracks as "Sha Sha," it's still a great release that shows Kweller moving in a different direction.

Matt Walker is a contributing writer to Valdosta Preview. He may be reached by e-mail (matthiasw2@hotmail.com). □



BEN KWELLER
On My Way



Earth, Wind and Fire gets elemental at Wild Adventures

By Dean Poling
dean.poling@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA — Earth, Wind and Fire breathed a great deal of R&B soul into the '70s. Yeah, the band dipped into the disco craze of the era but was still able to maintain its credibility. The songlist to Earth, Wind & Fire is impressive with hits such as "Shining Star," "Boogie Wonderland," "Mighty, Mighty," "Evil," etc.

This weekend, Earth, Wind & Fire brings that '70s Funkenstein groove to Wild Adventures Super Park for a concert.

Earth, Wind and Fire has been around for 35 years, forming in 1969, originally as the Salty Peppers before discovering its more elemental name. Maurice White, a session drummer from Chicago, founded the group, investing it with jazz-funk life. In 1972, following a dramatic change in line-up, Earth, Wind and Fire became more pop and more soul with the addition of Philip Bailey's voice. From there, for the next several years, Earth, Wind and Fire became a mainstay on R&B charts as well as enjoyed crossover success on the pop charts. Yet, by the early '80s, Earth, Wind and Fire slipped in the charts, broke up and reformed later in the decade.

Earth, Wind & Fire, with opening act the Billy Rigsby Band, are scheduled to play 6:30 p.m. Saturday, Wild Adventures Super Park, Old Clyattville Road. Concert is included in the park's regular admission: \$36.95 (plus tax), adult; \$28.95, seniors (ages 55-up), juniors (ages 3-9); free, children under 3. More information: Call 219-7080. □

VIDEO HITS

TOP VHS RENTALS

1. "Cheaper By The Dozen (2003)," FoxVideo.
2. "Matrix Revolutions," Warner Home Video.
3. "Something's Gotta Give," Columbia TriStar.
4. "Gothika," Warner Home Video.
5. "The Rundown (Widescreen)," Universal.
6. "Texas Chainsaw Massacre," New Line.
7. "Brother Bear," Walt Disney.
8. "Mona Lisa Smile," Columbia TriStar.
9. "Honey," Universal Studios Home Video.
10. "School Of Rock," Paramount.

TOP VHS SALES

1. "Brother Bear," Walt Disney.
2. "Cheaper By The Dozen (2003)," FoxVideo.
3. "Dr. Seuss' Cat In The Hat," Universal.
4. "Dora's Egg Hunt," Paramount.
5. "Here Comes Peter Cottontail," Sony Wonder.
6. "The Lion King 1 1/2," Walt Disney.

7. "Winnie The Pooh: Springtime With Roo," Walt Disney Home Entertainment.
8. "Dora The Explorer — Dora's Pirate Adventure," Paramount Home Entertainment.
9. "Elmo's World: Springtime Fun," Sony Wonder.
10. "What's New Scooby Doo? Safari So Good," Warner Home Video.

TOP DVD SALES

1. "Cheaper By The Dozen (2003)," FoxVideo.
2. "Matrix Revolutions," Warner Home Video.
3. "Matrix Revolutions (2 Disc Pan)," Warner.
4. "Brother Bear (2 Disc Special Edition)," Disney.
5. "Something's Gotta Give," Columbia TriStar.
6. "Friends: Complete Seventh Season," Warner.
7. "Texas Chainsaw Massacre (Widescreen)," New Line Home Entertainment.
8. "The Matrix," Warner Home Video.
9. "In Living Color: Season One," FoxVideo.
10. "The Matrix Reloaded (Widescreen)," Warner Home Video.

JUST DOLL

BOOK ONE OF THE STATEN BAY TRILOGY



JANICE DAUGHARTY

'Just Doll'

Janice Daugharty returns with a historic novel based in her native Echols County

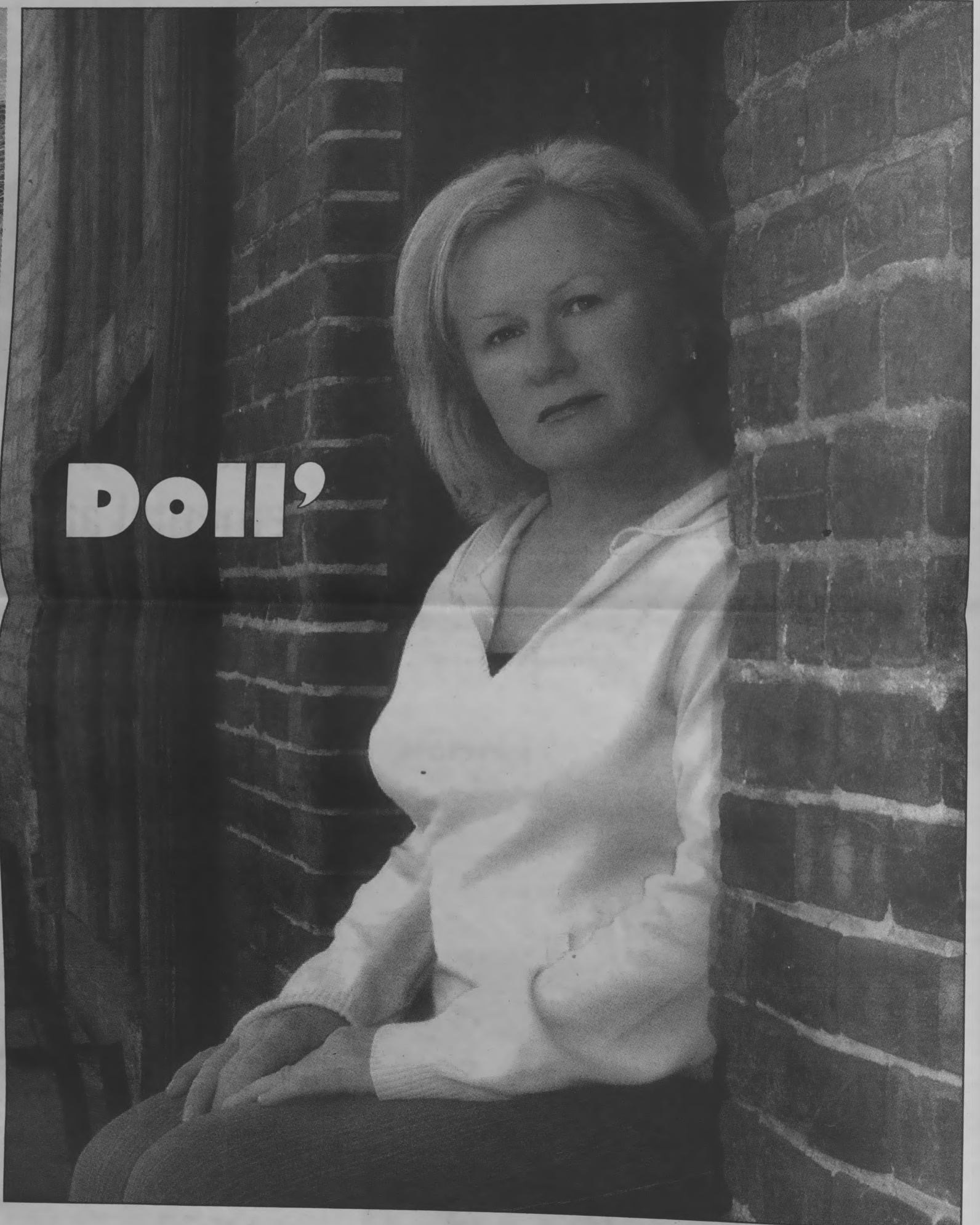
By Dean Poling
dean.poling@gafnews.com

STATENVILLE

Five years have passed since the publication of author Janice Daugharty's last novel, "Like a Sister." Five long years with no new books in publication which, compared to the majority of the 1990s, was a dramatic change for the life-long Echols County resident.

With this week's release of "Just Doll," the first installment in her planned "Staten Bay" trilogy of novels, Janice Daugharty is back with a bevy of local events to celebrate her return to publication (see "Janice Daugharty Festival" sidebar for more details), and a new book that is possibly her best novel to date and promises to be the beginning of an epic (see our accompanying review of "Just Doll").

Daugharty's story as a writer is well known. Several years ago, she began writing stories, mostly for herself. She wrote nearly a dozen novels, learning the crafts of writing, plot and character development. She learned them the old-



JANICE DAUGHARTY, author of such novels as 'Earl in the Yellow Shirt,' 'Paw Paw Patch,' 'Whistle' and 'Like a Sister,' returns with the release this week of 'Just Doll,' the first volume in a planned trilogy focusing on the life of an Echols County family in the years following the Civil War.

PHOTO: Wes Sewell/Mirage Studio

fashioned way. By sitting down and writing, writing, writing. Through the task of doing, her writing took form and shape. She began sending her manuscripts to publishers for consideration.

In 1994, Daugharty's novel, "Dark of the Moon," was published. During the following years, additional novels were published: "Earl in the Yellow Shirt," "Paw Paw Patch," "Whistle," "Necessary Lies," "Like a Sister," and a collection of short stories entitled "Going Through the Change." Throughout the late '90s, she averaged the publication of one book a year — two, really, if you consider that as one new novel arrived in hardcover, the previous year's novel was being published and distributed in paperback.

But with the hardcover publication of "Like a Sister" in 1999 and its subsequent paperback follow-up in 2000, there have been no new published novels from Daugharty's pen. No new tales from her fictionalized version of a very real South Georgia.

Without a book to promote and deadlines to meet, Daugharty took time to enjoy her life again, spending time with family and friends, doing things she enjoys doing. She was named Valdosta State University's writer-in-residence. VSU has archived reams of materials from Daugharty's files as part of a literary collection at the university. But the lack of a new novel in book stores didn't mean that she stopped writing.

No, Daugharty has continued and continues writing every day. She has published several short stories as well as a brief run of essays for The Valdosta Daily Times a few years ago. She continued writing novels. She is shopping for a publisher for two finished manuscripts that are similar in setting, she says, to her past Southern contemporary works. And she wrote something completely different from her other novels. She called it "Staten Bay," a historic novel that opens on a tale of an Echols County family in the years following the Civil War.

A few years ago, shortly after the release of "Like a Sister" in paperback, when Daugharty sat down for an interview with The Valdosta Daily Times, she discussed "Staten Bay," which she had then only recently completed. At the time, she described "Staten Bay" as one epic novel,

"I've never been a novelist or writer, though, to just take five years to do one novel. I'm always writing, every day."

— Janice Daugharty,
on her work during her five years between publication

divided into three parts, over more than 800 pages in length. She said the book, which is loosely based upon stories of her family and Echols County, was completely different for her. A work of historic fiction. She said it was the best thing she had ever written. Daugharty said, however, she couldn't seem to find a soul who wanted to publish it. Publishers told her the book was too long. Some said they loved the first part; others said they loved the second part; but no one ever commented on the third part, leading Daugharty to believe that no one had bothered reading the book's conclusion. More troubling, Daugharty was told that the book didn't fit her established image; it was suggested that she stick to writing contemporary Southern tales that more closely resembled her previous novels.

Despite publishers' reluctance, Daugharty persevered and continued shopping "Staten Bay" around. She divided the original book's three parts into three separate books, with the first being "Just Doll," a 260-page-plus volume which is subtitled "Book One of the Staten Bay Trilogy." Baskerville Publishers, a Texas-based publishing company, picked up the book.

And Daugharty is back, with her dream project, possibly her masterpiece so far, in publication and in book stores as of this week.

"Just Doll" is a book that can be enjoyed on its own merits and terms, without needing to be told that there are two more books planned in the series.

Though it is a read unto itself, "Just Doll" does include a few loose ends which Daugharty promises are addressed in future volumes. Still, the knowledge that there are two more books planned in the series — two volumes which one knows from previous interviews are already written — will urge many readers to anticipate and read the further adventures of these characters as well as this tale.

But will the readers of "Just Doll" have to wait five years between each volume?

Not if Daugharty can help it. She hopes to release the second installment in 2005 and the third installment in 2006. She has no immediate plans for another five-year hiatus. Daugharty believes, though, that the five-year break from publication has been and will be good for her career and personally.

"I had become too accessible," she says. "I had a new book out every year, with a paperback from the previous year coming out every year. I wrote quotes for almost any book that was sent to me because I have such a soft spot for new writers." One agent told her that if a person walked into a book store that the name Janice Daugharty was everywhere, especially in back-cover and book-flap endorsements on many books which she should not have agreed to support. So, she took the break from publication, partly because she needed it, partly because she wanted to see "Staten Bay" in print. "I've never been a novelist or writer, though, to just take five years to do one novel," she says. "I'm always writing, every day." >

Storyteller Daugharty serves up a winner with 'Just Doll'

REVIEW

Let's say you decided to write a work of historical fiction set in post-Civil War Georgia. This book, which features a strong-willed and beautiful female protagonist, is full of romance but isn't necessarily a traditional romance novel.

Comparisons between your book and what is considered the definitive Southern epic, "Gone With the Wind," are inevitable.

The Baskerville Publishers letter that accompanied galleys of Janice Daugharty's newest publication, "Just Doll," even cited similarities:

"Some of the story elements of 'Gone With the Wind' are present

here, particularly in the delineation of character: a woman as mistress of a large agricultural demesne, and her love interest is a man with many endearing qualities beneath a raffish exterior. But this novel has nothing in common with stylized,

romantic conceptions of Southern life among the aristocracy."

It's been right at 20 years since I read "Gone With the Wind," but what I remember distinctly about Margaret Mitchell's classic is that it didn't present a romantic concept of Southern life. Mitchell, who was first and foremost a storyteller, described how the Civil War changed our little corner of the United States by showing us how those changes affected an interesting mix of characters.

Daugharty reminds me of Mitchell. She is, first and foremost, a storyteller. "Just Doll," opening in 1880s Echols County, introduces us to Doll Baxter, the youngest and prettiest of two daughters. With her father dead, Doll's No. 1 priority in life is to keep tax collectors' hands off the family land — "five hundred acres more-or-less of row crop and timber land."

Enter wealthy landowner Daniel Staten. Though loved by Doll's sister, Sheba, Daniel is just a nuisance to Doll — although, she secretly admits to herself, a handsome nuisance. Doll shields herself with a coat of pragmatism as she enters into a business arrangement to save her homestead. She will accept Daniel's marriage proposal if he will use his own

family's considerable fortune to secure the Baxter property. But it's not pragmatism that drives Doll to learn what hides behind her new husband's aloof masculinity. Daniel fascinates Doll — more than she would ever admit.

"Just Doll," in a natural, engaging way, takes us on Doll's journey as she establishes herself in Daniel's world and learns what makes the man tick.

"You're so curious to know, let me tell you that Daniel Staten's a man with little use for people putting on airs," a character named Prude Purdue tells Doll at one point. "He likes his women hot and feisty and real. Women he can play with. And I'm not talking about checkers."

(Note: Daugharty, a South Georgia native, understands how we talk. She also uses dialogue so effectively you'd swear you were listening to real conversations on someone's porch.)

As a fellow South Georgia native, I'm critical of how this region is depicted in literature because of how much I love it. Growing up, I fished the ponds near my rural home in Cairo, earned money in the summertime by sweating away in the okra patch. I appreciate the bluntness of those reared in the Bible Belt — none of us are

shy about telling you what we think or where we stand.

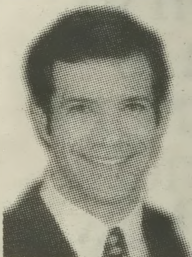
Daugharty strikes me as a kindred spirit. You don't have to hail from the South to like "Just Doll," the first novel of the "Staten Bay" trilogy. But if you're from this part of the state, you know she gets all of her little details right. Heck, the author even knows what exposure to okra plants will do to a person's skin. You can't have more of an eye for regional details than that.

While some similarities exist between "Just Doll" and "Gone With the Wind," Daugharty wisely avoids shooting for the epic scale of the latter. Her work and the events she depicts are more low-key. (Atlanta doesn't burn here, but there is one costly forest fire.) The result is that characters such as Doll Baxter seem more approachable, their motivations easier to figure.

"Just Doll," released Wednesday by Baskerville Publishers, is the first novel of the upcoming "Staten Bay" trilogy.

The bottom line? I'd be proud to set "Just Doll" on a shelf next to "Gone With the Wind."

To contact City Editor Heath Griner, call 244-3400, ext. 274.



Heath Griner

Columnist

But with no pressing publication deadlines, she had time to realize that life was passing her by. "I needed to focus on the now," she says. "I needed to focus on life in general. The people in my life and realize how blessed I am to have them."

She mentions her husband, Seward Daugharty, whom she says is a tremendous blessing for the support he shows her and her writing. She notes how he takes care of numerous things around the household while she is struggling with and creating her works of fiction. "I am so blessed with this man," she says of her husband, whom she says has never read one of her books, but he knows her stories inside and out as she works on them day after day. He provides almost constant insight into her ideas and characters, she says.

When asked about a previous statement she made that she is always writing, even if only in her head as she travels to a function or if she is doing something else, of how she once said that she often passed on social functions if she was in the middle of developing a book, Daugharty laughs, saying, "I'm getting better about all of those things. The past five years have given me a new perspective."

In developing the "Staten Bay" trilogy, Daugharty leaned on experiences from her life as well as family stories. The books center on a family named Staten living in the turpentine timberlands of Echols County in the post-Civil War years. Daugharty's maiden name is Staten, and she says that she based her fiction and characters on family stories she heard during her childhood and young adulthood and her ancestors in those stories.

Make no mistake, though, "Staten Bay" is no family history nor is it factual history. Daugharty used the basis for many stories to create a novel; she creates her characters partly from family tales but fleshes them out using her own observations and imagination.

As gifted as she is a novelist, Daugharty has a knack for explaining how a writer creates fiction. A novel may base some of its plot points and people on real experiences and people from an author's life but, in fiction, the novelist expounds, deletes, adds dialogue, scenes, new facets of character traits to create a new world and vision. In other words, a reader may think a fictional character is based on a real person but in truth a fictional character may only vaguely resemble some of the qualities of a real person. The character is the character and the person is the person.

In this way, Daugharty built upon her family stories to create an entirely fictional and new series of tales.

While she has created a fictional tale, Daugharty's attention to detail brings the story's sense of immediacy and realism to life. She describes in vivid detail the gritty work necessary to keep a small family farm running during a South Georgia summer. Though she grew up in a region

JANICE DAUGHARTY FESTIVAL

During today, the next few days, and in the weeks to come, several events are scheduled to celebrate local author Janice Daugharty and the release of her new book, "Just Doll." The festival is part of the council's grant project, "Regional Identity: A Reading, Writing and Regional Issues Project Using the Works of Janice Daugharty," says Diane Howard, VSU English department. A look at the events categorized by sponsors.

VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY

Sponsored by VSU & Georgia Humanities Council. Daugharty is VSU's writer in residence. Events are to be held in VSU's Powell Hall auditorium and the Biology/Chemistry Building. The public is invited. Copies of "Just Doll" will be available throughout.

TODAY

- 8:15-9:15 a.m.: Lowndes High School presents papers, performances, etc., from Daugharty's works. Powell Hall
- 9:30-10:30 a.m.: VSU presents papers, performances, etc., from Daugharty's works.
- 10:45-11:45 a.m.: Echols High School presents papers, performances, etc., from Daugharty's works. Powell Hall
- 12:45-1:45 p.m.: Valdosta High School presents papers, performances, etc., from Daugharty's works. Powell Hall
- 2-3 p.m.: VSU Theatre students perform readings of Daugharty's "Amazing Grace." Powell Hall
- 8 a.m.-9 p.m.: Regional Identity Exhibit, with papers, posters, performances, etc. Biology/Chemistry Building atrium
- 9 a.m.-2 p.m.: VSU Student Poetry Readings during paper presentation breaks. Powell Hall
- 5-6 p.m.: Reception for Daugharty, with book signing of "Just Doll," which will be available. Biology/Chemistry Building atrium
- 6:30-8:30 p.m.: Georgia Southwestern State University Theatre students present a play adaptation of Daugharty's "Earl in the Yellow Shirt." Powell Hall

ANNETTE HOWELL TURNER CENTER FOR THE ARTS

FRIDAY

- 7 p.m.: The arts center, 527 N. Patterson St., in cooperation with sponsor Snake Nation Press hosts a free, public, wine-and-cheese reception for Daugharty, along with a book signing and reading by the author from "Just Doll."
- More information: Call 247-2787; or Snake Nation, 244-0752.*

SOUTH GEORGIA REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEM

Area libraries host several events featuring Daugharty with readings, book signings, presentations, etc.

- 10:30 a.m.-noon, May 5: Statenville Library.
 - 5:30-7 p.m., May 17: Hahira Library.
 - 5:30-7 p.m., May 18: Lake Park Library.
 - 5:30-7 p.m., May 27: Southside Library.
 - 5:30-7 p.m., June 1: Lakeland Library.
 - 5:30-7 p.m., June 3: Valdosta-Lowndes County Library.
- More information: Call 333-0086.*

known for its timber and turpentine history, she didn't solely rely upon her memory for recounting the details of these processes; she interviewed several knowledgeable sources and researched how numerous processes worked during the era. She smartly inserts this information into the framework of the story. This attention to detail enriches the tale rather than distracts from it.

Daugharty mentions that her love of food, and the

importance of meals to people and families, is readily apparent in this book. True. A reader can almost taste the meals prepared in Maureen's kitchen while recoiling at the ashy smoke belching from Fate's oven.

"Just Doll" is a magnificent work, a bright return for one of South Georgia's best-known authors, and a great start to what has the makings of an epic trilogy of local Southern lore and gripping human drama. □

While she has created a fictional tale, Daugharty's attention to detail brings the story's sense of immediacy and realism to life. She describes in vivid detail the gritty work necessary to keep a small family farm running during a South Georgia summer ... she interviewed several knowledgeable sources and researched how numerous processes worked during the era. She smartly inserts this information into the framework of the story. This attention to detail enriches the tale rather than distracts from it.

Disenchanted with 'Ella Enchanted'

Movie Reviews

"Ella Enchanted" (Musical Comedy/Fantasy: 1 hour, 35 minutes); **Starring:** Anne Hathaway, Hugh Dancy, Cary Elwes, Vivica A. Fox, and Minnie Driver; **Director:** Tommy O'Haver; **Rated:** PG (Violence and non-social language)



Adann-Kennn Alexandar

Movie Review: Ella of Frell (Hathaway of "The Princess Diaries") is given the most unique gift by Fairy Lucinda (Fox), the gift of obedience. Lucinda is known for giving awful gifts. She wishes upon Ella that every command asked of her, Ella will obey. But the

spell is a tough one because Ella does everything she is told, good and bad. Ella sets off to find Fairy Lucinda to ask the fairy to take back the cursed spell. On her way to find Lucinda, Ella meets Prince Charmont (Dancy), and the two fall in love. However, Ella's obedience spell may jeopardize their relationship.

Gail Carson Levine wrote the novel on which "Ella Enchanted," a movie with some technical difficulties, is based. This tale takes place in the Middle Ages but is modernized. Malls, escalators, and skyscraper castles exist in this fairy-tale world. It is those modernized moments that obliterate the validity of the period setting for this movie. The editing of this photoplay is lacking. One moment a character has a cut arm and a bloody sleeve; the next moment, the sleeve is patched-up with little or no blood stains.

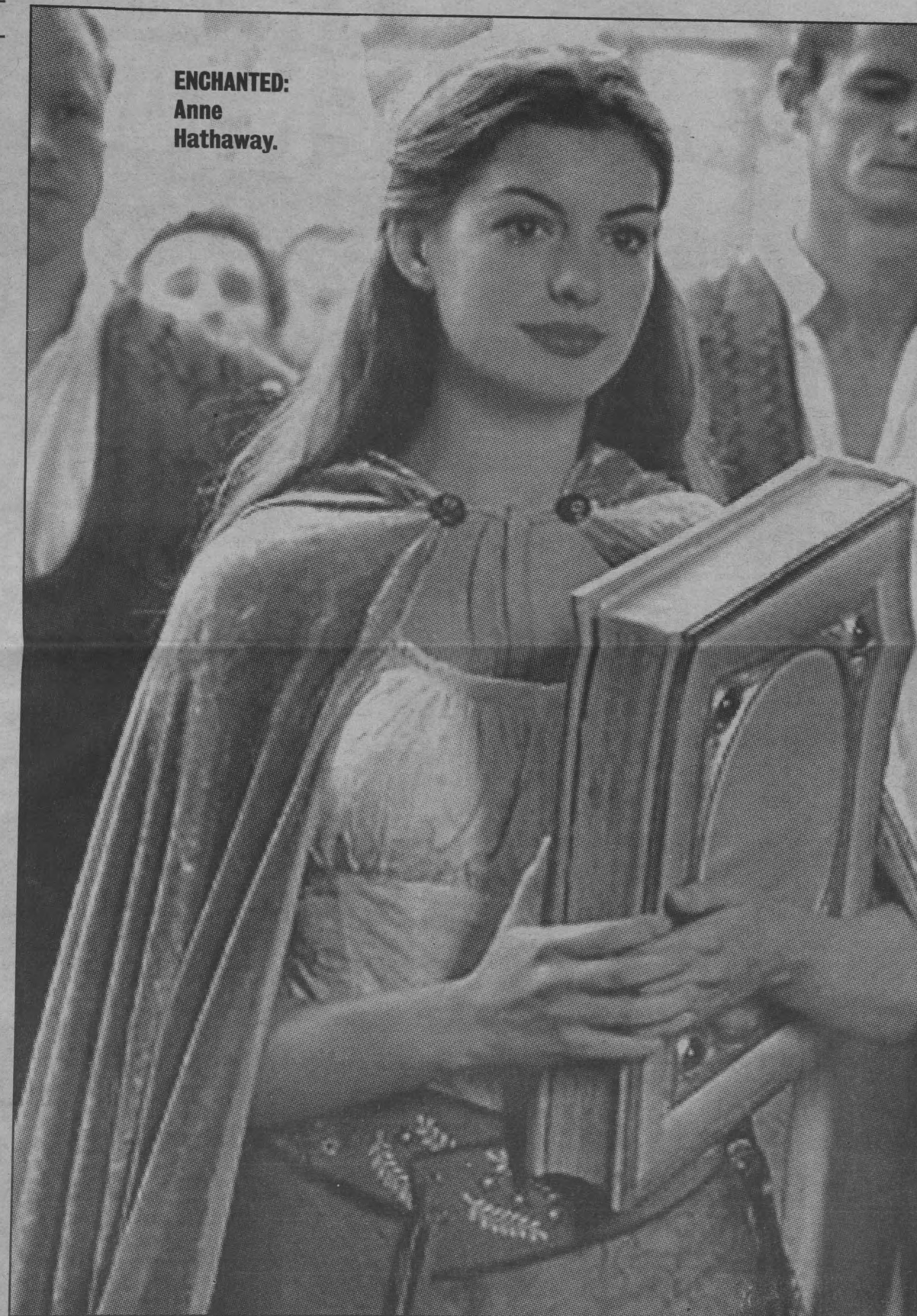
Anne Hathaway tries her best to bring comedy to her role but is never up to par. Hugh Dancy is a talented British actor and a rising star. He makes the most of his role, appearing as a dashing, sword-wielding swashbuckler. Who knows why Minnie Driver hovers in the background. Cary Elwes seems to be having the most fun as the film's villain. Maybe, Elwes works well in this production because this film is very similar to "The Princess Bride" (Rob Reiner, 1987), in which he starred. "Ella Enchanted" is an adventure and musical. The adventure is mild, and the musical moments are mediocre at best.

Grade: C- (Disenchanted!)

"The Whole Ten Yards"

(Comedy/Action: 1 hour, 39 minutes); **Starring:** Bruce Willis, Matthew Perry, Amanda Peet, Kevin Pollak, and Natasha Henstridge; **Director:** Howard Deutch; **Rated:** PG-13 (Violence, sexual innuendo, profanity, mature themes, and nudity)

Movie Review: Jimmy the Tulip (Willis) has a new quiet life with his lover, Jill (Peet). Jimmy's new living arrangement is destroyed when his old pal, Oz (Perry), shows up at his door. Jimmy and Jill spring



ENCHANTED:
Anne Hathaway.

into action once more to help Oz retrieve his wife, Cythia (Henstridge), who has been kidnaped by Lazlo (Pollak), a Hungarian mob boss.

"The Whole Ten Yards" is a sequel to "The Whole Nine Yards" (Director Jonathan Lynn, 2000), which was much funnier. "The

Whole Ten Yards" is just recycled material from its prequel. All the actors have monologue-like lines, where they scream out loud as if they are on stage, rehearsing before an empty room. Kevin Pollak, as crime lord Lazlo, is great and the one bright spot of the film. The movie's tagline is:

"They missed each other. This time, their aim is better." Well, they missed. **Grade:** D+ (Definitely not a first down.)

"The Alamo" (Drama: 2 hours, 16 minutes); **Starring:** Dennis Quaid, Billy Bob Thornton, Jason Patric, Patrick Wilson, and Emilio Echevarria; **Director:** John Lee Hancock; **Rated:** PG-13 (Strong war violence)

Movie Review: Based on the 1836 standoff between a group of Texans, led by Davy Crockett (Crockett) and James Bowie (Patric), and the armies of Mexican dictator Antonio Lopez de Santa Ana (Echevarria) at the Alamo in San Antonio, Texas. Of course, we know how the story of the Alamo ends. So the rest, as it is said, is history.

There have been multiple films made about the Alamo, but taking "The Alamo" seriously is difficult when lead players mouth off joking quips in middle of battle. While these comical moments are interesting and aid in carrying the film at low points, the scenes of laughs dull the seriousness of the historical importance of this event. The movie also has unneeded scenes of non-essential characters making political and racial statements that add nothing to the screenplay. Thornton is funny, but the best in way of acting is Emilio Echevarria as General Santa Ana and Dennis Quaid as Sam Houston. Even at over two hours long, "The Alamo" moves fast, missing the opportunity to develop characters and make them more personal and identifiable. When battle scenes finally emerge — and Director Hancock makes you wait for the climactic moment — there is no emotional

attachment to any involved personalities.

Grade: C+ (Remember the Alamo. Remember better movies.)

Adann-Kennn Alexandar is curator of galleries with the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts. □

SOUTH GEORGIA'S ASIAN TRADITION

Cultural Reflection program returns with dances and more

By Dean Poling
dean.poling@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA
For the past few years, Serena Huang has taught cultural-enrichment programs, focusing on Chinese and Taiwanese dance styles and traditions. Huang initially wanted to teach the dances and culture she learned from her native Taiwan to her American daughter and son. She wanted her children to understand the cultural heritage of their ancestors while growing up in America. Yet, with her children enrolled in Lowndes County schools, Huang began volunteering to teach customs from her native Asian heritage to hundreds of area students.

Along with the series of complex and elegant dances, Huang shared other Asian traditions with the students. She and her family have spent thousands of dollars of their own money on detailed costumes and props that are part of the dances. She has devoted countless hours to the Cultural Reflections program. And each year, following months of rehearsal and training, Huang and the students present a dance program for the community.

She doesn't mind the hard work, the long hours, the spending of the family's hard-earned money. Serena Huang sees sharing her heritage as part of her family's new American heritage. She views introducing a different culture to South Georgia as a way of giving back to the community and to the nation. A way for Huang to add to the mix of the great American melting pot.

This week, Serena Huang, her family, and the many students she voluntarily teaches at Lowndes County schools present the Valdosta Asian Cultural Association's Fifth Annual Cultural Reflection program, "Celebrate 2004 Chinese New Year in Valdosta." This year's event includes the traditional Chinese and Taiwanese dances, but it also offers more about Chinese culture. The event, which is presented twice Friday (see "Cultural Reflection" box with this story), includes a Chinese New Year exhibit and presentation; a historical and cultural China exhibit; a traditional Chinese wedding ceremony; acrobatics; significant Chinese performing and fine arts; and numerous interactive Chinese games and activities for youngsters and adults.

"We wanted a bigger program for this year," Huang says. "We wanted to do a program that included the dances but also explored the history and cultural contributions of China and Taiwan. ... We wanted a program that looks at China's distinct past but shows how it has become more modern."

China has a long history as a nation, able to trace its roots back to the Chou Dynasty starting in 1122 B.C. Looking at a list of China's many dynasties, the depth of Chinese heritage becomes apparent. The nation was ruled mostly by emperors for approximately 3,000 years until an early republic was formed in 1911 before communist rule from 1949 to the present. The Chou Dynasty lasted 352 years; Spring-Autumn-Warring Period lasted 549 years; Han Dynasty, 426 years; Tang Dynasty, 289 years; Song Dynasty, 319 years; Ming Dynasty, 276 years; Qing Dynasty, 267 years, with a few century-long periods occasionally interspersed between some of these dynasties. Comparatively, the United States of America has been a nation nearly 228 years.

To underscore China's epic history and traditions, the Cultural Reflection program is scheduled to include exhibits on some of China's great contributions to the world, such as the compass, gunpowder, paper, printing. It will also explore China's contributions to painting, calligraphy, ceramics, music, architecture, the zodiac, silk production, the umbrella, the abacus, religion, and numerous other things.

A demonstration of a Chinese wedding ceremony features local people wearing traditional dress and participating in the wedding rituals. "Marriage, in Chinese society, is thought to be 'the beginning of human relationship, the basis of all social relationships,'" Huang notes in a booklet explaining many of the ceremonies and customs.

While there is expected to be many events to watch and exhibits to view, the program will also highlight numerous hands-on displays. Visitors are expected to have an opportunity to try their hand at dozens of traditional Chinese games such as the chopstick gun, bamboo dragonflies, twirling handkerchiefs, wooden puzzles, tops and more. At these interactive sites, youngsters and adults can get an idea of the weight of the mask from a Lion Dance. Eight hands-on activity stations are planned for the event.

As for the dances, past Cultural Reflection audiences should not be disappointed. The program features several dances choreographed by Serena Huang and performed by Lowndes County students. This year, Huang added Lowndes Middle School to her teaching program, which already included Dewar Elementary, Hahira Middle, and Lowndes High schools; Huang says she hopes to add more schools to the program next year, including Valdosta city schools. The performance also features martial-arts demonstrations and routines.

Huang views the Cultural Reflection program as keeping both with Chinese and Taiwanese traditions as well as a very American tradition.

"American ideas are spreading throughout the world, modernization, business, democracy, technology, even China has become more modernized and accepting of American ideas," Huang says. "Still, many American traditions were once part of other countries. I hope to bring part of my heritage to this great country. ... It is an opportunity for people to open their hearts to diverse cultures."

CULTURAL REFLECTION

Valdosta Asian Cultural Association's Fifth Annual Cultural Reflection: "Celebrate 2004 Chinese New Year in Valdosta" event is scheduled for two programs: 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Friday (exclusively for area school students on field trips) and 4-9 p.m. Friday (general public), Mathis City Auditorium, 2300 N. Ashley St. Admission: \$5, school field trip (money available for students who cannot afford the admission price); \$6, for the general public event. Funds raised to be used for purchasing more costumes for more children to participate in the dance program.

EVENING SCHEDULE

- 4-7 p.m.: Exhibitions and Children's Games
- 4:30-5 p.m.: Picture with Lion Dance, Qin-Shi-Huang-Di & Confucius
- 5-5:30 p.m.: Acrobatics Demo
- 5:30-6 p.m.: Martial Arts Demo
- 6-6:30 p.m.: Traditional Chinese Music Demo
- 5:30-6:30 p.m.: Free Chinese food sampling
- 7-8:30 p.m.: Chinese Cultural Show and Professional martial arts and acrobatics performers invited from Orlando



TAIWANESE MENDING BROKEN NETS DANCE: Lowndes Middle School dancers Tess Baker, Kayla Prine, Garrett Scarborough, Jamie Shiver, Kayrine Cope, Brittany Young, Dirsten Olehafen, Tiffany Cutlip, Mindy Watkins dance the tale of a poor woman trying to mend her husband's damaged fishing net. The wife is trying to mend the net as well as her hopes and dreams, Serena Huang explains.

Contributed photos



HAPPY CELEBRATION: Hahira Middle School students Kristen Tucker, Summer Swindle, Lynn Pulido, Robyn Smith, Becky Shell, Kimberly Genseal, Katie Jennings, Kelly Sumner spin one of Chinese folk dance's most lively props: handkerchiefs.



TAIWANESE FARMERS DANCE: Dewar Elementary School students Kelsey Rasmussen, Kaitlyn Emmons, Katelyn Walden, Leah Sigmon, Lauren Nichols, Ashton Loyd, Durham Harris, Heath Bayman, Benjamin Hafer, Matthew Luke perform this dance celebrating the toil of farmers digging, planting, weeding and harvesting their crops.

TAIWANESE PICKING TEA DANCE: Lowndes Middle School students Kimberly Harmon, Sabrina Cornelius, Morgan Harris, Katie Shipman, Kati Keefee, Taylor Smith, Emily Backes, Kerrie Beth Davis perform the traditional tea picking dance which celebrates the Asian tradition of drinking tea.



MOVIE NIGHT



"THE TRIPLETS OF BELLEVILLE" is the featured presentation of tonight's monthly Movie Night at the Annette Howell Turner Center of the Arts. Each month, the arts center shows a movie, many of which never appeared at local theaters, or appeared only a brief period of time. "The Triplets of Belleville" is an animated foreign film of 2003 that earned an Oscar nomination. The Valdosta Daily Times movie critic Adam Kennn Alexandar gave this film rave reviews late last year. Alexandar is also the arts center's curator of galleries. Following the movie, he leads a discussion of the film. Movie Night is 7 p.m. today, Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, 527 N. Patterson St. Refreshments available. Admission: Free. More information: Call 247-2787.

Award-winning poet visits arts center tonight

By Dean Poling
dean.poling@gaffnews.com

VALDOSTA — Robert Dana writes poetry that seems to locate the perfect connection of thought, word by word, while locating a reader's heart and mind with the same precision.

Tonight, local poetry lovers can hear Dana's free-form expressions in the poet's voice when he is featured in a reading sponsored by the Georgia Poetry Circuit, says Roberta George and Jean Arambula,

event organizers and editors of the local Snake Nation Press.

The author of 10 books of poetry, Dana's poems are sparse but not bleak. The words are deftly chosen and evoke great visions with a smart palette of vocabulary. As several critics



POET ROBERT Dana visits Valdosta.

have noted, Dana's poems make immediate connections word by word rather than line by line.

Consider this example from his poem, "The Morning of the Red Admirals," "We saw them first / last evening — two / spiraling up / a column of late / sunlight, then / tilting away / from each other / in a floating stagger / through the early / summer leaves — / a jittery dipping / dropping, rising — / one coming / to rest a moment / on the still warm / roof of

our fat / pagoda lantern, / the other on weathered / deck rail; / the tips of its / long antennae / beaded and bright; / wings black, / white dot / and blue dot, / and barred aslant / with orange red / laid flat, / then clicking shut / to dull grey sail, / then opening again. ..."

Dana is the author 10 books, which include "Hello, Stranger: Beach Poems," "What I Think I Know: New & Selected Poems," "Yes, Everything," "Starting Out for the Difficult World," "Summer" and most recently

"The Morning of the Red Admirals."

Born in 1929 in Boston, Dana served in the military at the end of World War II in the South Pacific. Following the war, he made his way to Iowa, which became his home. He recently retired as the poet-in-residence of Cornell College, and he has served as distinguished visiting poet to several colleges and universities. In 1985 and 1993, Dana was awarded National Endowment of the Arts fellowships for poetry.

In 1989, he won the Delmore Schwartz Memorial Award for poetry.

Dana's visit is a rare opportunity for poetry lovers to hear a master of his craft read his works, discuss poetry and sign his books, George says.

■
Poet Robert Dana is scheduled for a poetry reading, 8 p.m. today, Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, 527 N. Patterson St. Admission: Free. More information: Call 247-2787.

FIRST ANNIVERSARY EVENT

THE TURNER CENTER FOR THE ARTS FIRST ANNIVERSARY

Spring Into Art

MONDAY, APRIL 12TH, 2004

REGIONAL ARTISTS EXHIBIT & SALE

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from 6:00-9:00pm. For tickets call 247-ARTS!
All proceeds go toward the Turner Center For The Arts



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In her words: Director describes exciting time for arts

The arts community has had a reinvigorated focus with the opening last year of a new center for the Lowndes/Valdosta Arts Commission at 527 N. Patterson St. The Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts is providing a more spacious and comfortable place for the exhibition of art and for an increasing number of other activities. Valdosta Daily Times Editor Ron Wayne recently asked Paula Brown, the relatively new executive director of the Turner Center, some questions about this cultural asset in our community.

The Lowndes/Valdosta Arts Commission has been in its new building, the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, for a little more than a year. What has this new location meant to the Arts Commission and to the arts community in general?

As we reach our first anniversary in the new Turner Center for the arts, we look at all of the things that are now possible here that were not possible in the other center, such as four concurrent exhibits and our permanent African Art collection on display for visitors at all times.

Our new expanded space allows for multiple simultaneous classes and meetings and larger tours. Many artists are interested in exhibiting in this region and have not had the opportunity before. The Center not only adds to the arts community, but our community as a whole.

Our new meeting spaces are used by a variety of nonprofit and community organizations. We are interested in working with other area organizations to increase tourism, business, industry and new residents.

And, of course, our new catering and teaching kitchen has allowed our extremely popular gourmet cooking classes and a successful rental business for us for wedding receptions and private parties.



PAULA BROWN: Executive director of the Turner Center for the Arts

This year's Spring Into Art Exhibition and Sale includes 379 works of art from artists drawn from a large geographic area. Your curator, Adann-Kenn Alexander, says some of the artists from places such as Gainesville, Fla., indicate they sell more work here and more quickly than in the larger cities. What do you think that means?

Many of our patrons look forward to Spring Into Art each year to purchase art. It is a great opportunity to find art from their favorite artists and also to discover the talent of budding artists, while supporting the endeavors of the Center. This event draws people from all over the region. We do also sell pieces from most exhibits throughout the year.

Visual art can be perceived as a high-brow or hard to understand. What is the Center doing to improve the appreciation of the arts and to reach out to all aspects of the community?

The staff and board are committed to bringing a diverse selection of art and artists to exhibit at the Turner Center. We strive to provide art of interest to a wide variety of people, including those of differing races, nationalities and cultures. In May, we will feature the work of Annie Greene, a recognized African-American artist from LaGrange, Ga.

The public is invited to the opening of each exhibit where they can meet the artists and learn more about their work. Artists are also invited to hold lunch-and-learn seminars to explain their art in more detail and the meaning behind it. We have several exhibits that feature works of local residents and encourage family attendance, such as Youth Art Month, the Regional Invitational High School Exhibit, and various schools displayed in the Children's Gallery.

In addition to visual arts opportunities, we bring live theatrical performances for children and adults. This year, area schools viewed "Lewis and Clark," "A Thousand Cranes," "Journey to the Center of the Earth," "Julius Caesar," "The Magical Nightingale," and "Trail of Tears."

Our Presenter Series included Titanic, the St. Petersburg Classic Ballet from Russia, the

funding to many organizations over a five county area to share the arts with underserved populations.

Are you getting the number of visitors you would like to see at the Center?

We have been delighted with the number of people who have visited the Center and our attendance continues to increase. During March, we had nearly 2,300 visitors.

It is encouraging to hear the positive comments about the quality of the Center and the exhibits. We encourage groups to visit and take tours of the Center and civic groups to hold meetings here. The Center is open to the public seven days a week, with no charge for admission.

Area organizations have helped by putting our Center on the agenda for tours for their groups. The recent Rotary District Conference and the Georgia Cities Foundation tours were great examples.

The university nurtures artistic talent. What more could be done to build collaborative efforts between VSU and the Turner Center?

We are so fortunate to have VSU in our community and the support of its leadership, as well as its great talent. VSU regularly brings classes for tours and to learn more about the inner workings of the Center.

We currently have gallery space reserved for an exhibit of VSU students next fall. The students must submit their resumes and portfolios as any other artist would to continue

through the selection process. It is good practice for the students who plan to exhibit in other galleries.

We have several exhibits planned with VSU professors, including Al Park and Hollis Barnett in June; Karin Murray, Julie Bowland and Dr. Ronald Zaccari are slated to have exhibits in 2005. Several students and professors submitted work for the Spring Into Art Exhibition.

In addition to Visual Arts, we are working with other departments at VSU on our permanent East African Art Collection. We have been fortunate to have talented interns from VSU and plan to continue to find other avenues to work together.

What is your vision and your board's vision for the Turner Center 10 or 20 years from now?

The sky is the limit! Anyone who knows our board members knows their collective determination and vision to ever expand the arts opportunities in Valdosta and Lowndes County. There is talk of a new separate Children's Building in seven to 10 years! We plan to be the premiere arts destination in our region.

I look forward to expanding our offerings to encompass more programs and disciplines — more offerings for the growing senior population, children, and families. We would also like to start Friday night affairs for young professionals. Community support has been incredible to date, and we look forward to continuing to grow the arts together.

Paul Leavy/The Valdosta Daily Times

Hollywood Hills Orchestra and "Singing in the Rain."

We are making strides to reach all areas of the community by working with area schools and civic groups to help create awareness of our Center. Tours of the Center are available for groups.

Also, we are a Grass Roots Arts Agency, through the Georgia Council for the Arts, through which we provide



SUMMER CAMP 2004

Youth Empowerment Services
Summer fun for students grades K-9
June 1 - July 2, 2004.

OPEN ENROLLMENT

APRIL 26-MAY 14, 2004 FROM 8AM - 5PM
SIGN UP ONLY AT THE YES CENTER
(Berrien County Residents Only)
909 N. DAVIS STREET

Enrollment for this year's Summer Camps has begun! Because Berrien County schools and the community are working together to improve educational and recreation opportunities for families, we have received numerous grants to provide summer activities at a minimal charge! Weekly cost is \$10 per student (maximum \$20 per family). Transportation and meals will also be provided. Although we will maintain a focus on reading activities, every child will also have the opportunity to swim at Camp Tygart, attend field trips and participate in recreation! Stop by the YES Center and sign your child up today!

The Berrien County Collaborative is a non-profit organization created to enrich the lives of children, youth, and families in the community. This program has allowed us to start after school programs, mentoring, family literacy programs, and summer programs for youth at a minimum charge. For more information, please contact the YES Center at (229) 686-6576.

About Paul Brown

Paula Brown began her position as the executive director of the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts in October 2003.

Brown's past experience includes Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce, where she served as the Membership Development Coordinator and as the Community Affairs Coordinator. Prior to moving to Valdosta, she planned the Festival of Flight in Fayetteville, N.C., a \$3 million centennial celebration of the Wright Brothers first powered flight. Brown's career began in the hospitality industry, where she worked in hotel and restaurant management, conference and catering sales, and event planning.

Brown grew up in Oxford, Miss., and continued her education at the University of Mississippi, earning a bachelor of science in home economics with an emphasis in institutional management. Brown is married to Marty Brown, executive director of the Valdosta-Lowndes County Conference Center & Tourism Authority.

May is National Better Hearing Month

Here are the Facts...

- 1 in 7 Americans have hearing loss
- Hearing loss is the fifth leading medical disorder in our country.
- Many times hearing loss can be corrected medically if identified early...sadly most people wait too long.
- Audiologists are trained to determine the type and degree of hearing loss, whether medical treatment may be necessary or if hearing aids will help.
- New advancements in hearing aids allow many people to be helped now...even if they have nerve deafness, when properly prescribed.

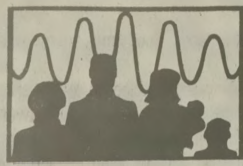
If You...

- Hear but don't understand;
- Ask people to repeat often;
- Turn the T.V. up too loud;
- Have ringing in one or both ears;
- Have been told a hearing aid won't help;
- Avoid communicating with others;
- Feel tired and nervous from straining to understand;

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Notice to our Patients

Effective May 1, 2004 our office will

no longer participate in the

United Healthcare HMO which includes the

State Health Benefit Plan/HMO Option

Our physicians will continue their participation in the

State Health Benefit PPO Plan through 1st Medical Network.

Our patients who have selected the PPO plan option

will continue access to our practice through 1st Medical Network.

Please remember your benefit selection

must be made prior to May 14, 2004 for next year's participation.

We are sorry for any inconvenience this may cause.