

Fellow student and actress an inspiration for all

✓ Gwynne Warner struggled with Multiple Sclerosis, but didn't let it stop her dreams

by Helenmarie Nelson
Contributing Writer

The accomplishments and struggles of one of the new students at Clackamas may encourage others to continue their schooling even when the going gets tough.

Gwynne Warner is relatively well-known to drama enthusiasts in the Portland area, many of whom have seen her perform in local theaters in the last 14 years.

Warner has just finished her 26th performance as Mrs. Corney in a production of "Oliver" in Lake Oswego. Her performances are rated "superb" by Barbara Bragg of CCC's Drama Department. Bragg was enthusiastic as she recalled Warner's performance in "Quilters," shown at the Artists' Repertory Theater in Portland.

The new drama director at Clackamas, David Smith-English, was Warner's first vocal coach. "He was responsible for my being able to sing in musicals. Without his training and encouragement, I could never have done it," Warner said.

"I performed 176 times in the role of Sarah in 'Quilters,' and later in 'Nunsense II' in 1983," Warner recalled. "Nunsense II" played at Sylvia's Class Act Theater in downtown Portland. "Mother Superior was really fun to play," Warner added.

Warner has performed in 60 other full productions in the last 14 years, in addition to the two Gilbert and Sullivan productions Smith-English directed.

Although serious bouts with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) have made it more difficult for Warner to keep up with the demanding schedules of a performer, she has been persistent in accomplishing

all she has throughout her lifetime. MS made it necessary for her to quit teaching and become mostly bedridden for four years. The effects of MS left her with muscle weakness and loss of dexterity in many areas of her body. Nevertheless, when she was able, Warner reentered the college scene at Portland State and Clackamas, continuing with classes she had not had time for or been able to afford during her busy life.

"I wanted to take advantage of the free tuition offered to Gold Card students at CCC," Warner said. A Gold Card is issued to students 62 years old and up. The cards allow them to benefit from other discounts in addition to the free tuition at CCC. However, all colleges do not offer these benefits.

"When I became 62, I realized there were many classes at CCC I needed and could now afford. So I signed up for the Spring and Fall terms in 1994 into classes to fill in the gaps not yet fulfilled in my past education," Warner added.

Warner moved from San Francisco to Rogue River in Southern Oregon. In 1949, she moved to Portland in order to attend Lewis and Clark College, where she majored in drama for two years. She married in 1950 and later had three children. She entered Portland State College in 1962 and graduated from PSC in 1964.

Warner taught at Madison High School from 1964 to 1970. While at Madison, Warner was vice-president, then president, of the Oregon High School Speech Team League. She was also the director of speech in Portland for two years. During this period,

Warner also led the Readers' Theater group of the Multnomah County Library for five years, and was rector for their theatrical readings. She later reentered Portland State College, where she majored in speech and drama. Although Warner has been interested in drama since high school in California, she was not able to participate full-time until 1981, when her three children were grown.

All of Warner's performances in the 60 full productions she performed in will be long-remembered by the people who were fortunate enough to see them. In addition to "Quilters" and "Nunsense II," Warner has also performed in "You Can't Take It With You" and Arthur Miller's "All My Sons" at the Portland Repertory Theater.

Warner may be remembered for many of her performances in nine musicals at the Class Act Theater. She has also performed at the Musical Company, the Summer Theater Stage Company, in various productions at the Portland Civic Theater and several other Portland-area theaters.

"Perhaps my most fun show was 'Something's Afoot'," Warner said, reflecting on her past, and the production in which she played the part of Lady Grace at the Musical Company in Portland. "Playing Sarah is, by far, my favorite role," Warner added.

Although Warner has been singing all her life, she wanted to take advantage of the group voice class at Clackamas. LeAnne Denbeste, the instructor of group voice, was highly recommended to Warner as the person to help her improve.

"Gwynne has already improved her voice quality and



photo by Chad Patteson

Gwynne Warner, Clackamas student, has acted in 60 separate performances.

breath control," Denbeste said.

Warner is also taking the music theory class from Judy Hylton, head of Clackamas' Music Department. Hylton is pleased with Warner's progress in her class and feels that "Gwynne's perseverance and diligence will see her through."

In addition, Warner is taking Janet Martin's piano class, keyboard skills. "Gwynne is a remarkable person and is doing very well, progressing quickly with more difficult piano pieces than she has played before," Martin said.

"I am enjoying my return to college and exploring other classes in computer, et cetera, that I have not attended before," Warner said.

Personable, and a delight to talk to, Warner is a vital addition to Clackamas. She has much to offer as she shares her experiences.

Warner plans to continue with her studies at the college while she takes a little time off from the consuming and often exhausting performances of the past. Time will tell when she might again return to the stage.

Straight Ahead, Mainstream to perform

by Jocelyn Gauthier
Feature Editor

Several Clackamas students will be performing in a Vocal Jazz Concert at 7:30 p.m., Dec. 1, in the Gregory Forum.

The groups, Mainstream and Straight Ahead, are directed by Lonnie Cline, music instructor. Guest alumni soloist, Michelle Shelton of Portland, will also perform with the groups.

"This concert is always a great time," Cline said, "because former students show up to see the new groups. It's always fun to see them...that makes the concert unique."

Straight Ahead will sing "Splanky," "Witchcraft," "Olive Tree," "Bye Bye Love," "Unit 7," "How Do You Keep the Music Playing?," "One More Time," "Traveling Blues," "Groovin' Hard," "I Can Do It," "The Wind" and "Afro Blue."

Mainstream will sing "It's Only a Paper Moon," "Straighten Up and Fly Right," Bill Withers'

"Ain't No Sunshine When She's Gone," "Inside a Silent Tear," "Billy's Bounce," "Can't Buy Me Love," "Rhythm-A-Ning/St. Thomas Way," "Don't Get Scared," "Emmanuel," "You Are the Sunshine of My Life" and "Open Invitation."

Mainstream will be performing at the Convention Center in Anaheim, CA, in mid-January, as one of six college groups around the country. They have made a tape called "Workin' Overtime," which will be available at the concert for a \$10 donation that will help the students fund their trip.

"The finances (to make the tape) were made available through the Scott Marchant Scholarship," Cline said. Marchant was a CCC student who died and left money for the Vocal Department. The tape is dedicated in memory of Marchant and in tribute to Jason Womack, student. Leftover tapes will be on sale in the bookstore.

Mainstream singers are so-

pranos Michelle Spear, Whitney Wishart, Alison Christiansen, Karie House; altos Theresa Hahn Nelson, Molly Rice, Dawn Reins; tenors Chris Chan, Jarrod Lawson, Jordy Webb, Jim Knox; basses Jamie Keller, Maurice Wright, Amer Isse and Bill Reynolds. Musicians are Ed Wilson on acoustic bass, Sean Harle on piano and Micah Kassell on drums. Ostin Drais is the sound engineer.

Straight Ahead singers are sopranos Pat Harle, Nelson, Andria Smith, Lainie Perez, Sarah Kaser; altos Noelle Lopiparo, Michelle Daly, Cindy Collier, Becky Cameron; tenors Chad Murphy, Gary Marleham, Josh Nicholls; basses Keith Falkenberg, Matt Jones, David Krueger, Jason Womack and Johnny Schultz. Musicians are Henry Hohn on acoustic bass, Nelson on electric bass, Brian Patrick and Hohn on piano and Jeremy Hickerson on guitar. Dan Cowdin and Drais on sound.

Ravenscroft's experienced actors look forward to strutting their talent

✓ Students will open the show Dec. 1

by Jocelyn Gauthier
Feature Editor

The cast of "Ravenscroft" is: Bill Anderson, of Milwaukie, as Inspector Ruffing. "This is my second play," said Anderson. "I've written 3 plays, I'm better at writing than at acting. I like my acting, but no one else does," he said humorously.

Heather Rowley, of Mulino, who has been acting since age five, as Marcy. "I used to perform for church a lot," she said.

Merrilee Gilley, of Mulino, who has been acting since her junior year in high school, as Mrs. Ravenscroft. "I've been

doing things here and at Mt. Hood Community College since 1991," she said.

Tracy Andersen, of Milwaukie, whose first play was CCC's "Season's Greetings," as Gillian.

Jen Johnson, of Bend, who has been acting since high school, as Dolly. This is her first college production, and she wants to be a director.

Renee Reese, of Milwaukie, who has been acting since sixth grade, as Mrs. French.

"I used to perform for my stuffed animals," Reese concluded.