



The cast dances of "Once Upon a Mattress" performs a dance number in the comedy musical.

mouse consumes a hawk." The royal couple's rather spineless though handsome and princely son is Prince Dauntless the Drab, played by Ron Thompson. The prince and his knightly sidekick, Sir Harry, played by Billy Phillips, search for suitable royal marriage material for the prince.

And that, folks, is no easy task.

The queen has decreed that

none of her subjects

may marry until

her son has taken

a bride. If you run

into anybody with

longings to marry

a prince, heed this

piece of advice: Get

to know his mother

first. Each princess-

bride-wanna-be

must pass a series

of the queen's tests,

which are trumped-up teasers such

as, "What was the middle name

of the daughter-in-law of the best

friend of the blacksmith who forged

the sword that killed the beast?"

These challenges aren't looking

good for any girl's chances — or

for Dauntless.

The prince's pal, Harry, has his

own fast-track agenda to find the

prince a mate. One of the royal

ladies, Lady Larkin, played by

Kristen Gadzik, is Harry's sweet-

heart, and she has found herself in

a royal-lady nine-month way. But no wedding is permitted until the prince is wed.

Enter Winnifred the Woebegone, played by Brooke Brown, a swamp princess and royal bride interviewee No. 13. After swimming across the castle's moat twice, a feat never before accomplished, she swims herself into the heart of Dauntless.

Now it's game on. To wed,

"Fred" must rise

to the nasty Queen

Aggravain's

seemingly undoable

challenges.

Ladies in wait-

ing, jesters, knights

and minstrels sing,

and thread their way through-

out the kingdom.

The suspense

builds, all of it set

to catchy music and lyrics.

Making it all come to life, Glenn

Ripley runs the lights and sounds

while Becca Bageant operates a

simple-looking-but-complex music

computer system, which matches

the fully orchestrated music to the

actors' live voices. Grants and gifts

by donors have provided a superb

sound system. Costume designers, set

designers, stage managers and more

— it is evident that the PAPA troupe

love what they do each summer.

The play's original musical



Princess Winnifred, performed by Brooke Brown, center, sings with others in "Once Upon a Mattress."

score is by Mary Rodgers — the daughter of Richard Rodgers of Rodgers and Hammerstein fame. The lyrics, which cleverly run the gamut from side-splitting comedy to romantic swooners, are by Marshall Barer.

The play first appeared off Broadway 1959, moving to Broadway the same year. Theater buffs and trivia gatherers may remember it as the debut of a long and illustrious career for Carol Burnett. To use stage terminology, "This play has legs." With several revivals and television adaptations, it remains a popular choice for playhouse and school productions.

PAPA's production of "Once Upon a Mattress" adds to the summer's offerings for theater lovers of all ages — there's magic in the air.



Actors dance during rehearsal for "Once Upon a Mattress" at Fort Columbia Theater.



Brooke Brown, left, performs as Princess Winnifred the Woebegone, a princess who can hold her own against the scheming Queen Aggravain.



Cast members, including Cindy Flood, right, who plays Queen Aggravain, take a break during rehearsal at Fort Columbia Theater in Chinook, Washington.