

# HAPPENINGS



The Benny Bell Dancers concert will be at Northwest Dance Center's Grand Ballroom, 918 S.W. Yamhill, January 14, 15, 21, and 22, 1983, at 8:15 p.m. Tickets will be \$5 general and \$4 students. For more information call Benny Bell, 227-3180 or Debbie Kantor 248-9388.

## Spotlight On Dancers

The Benny Bell Dancers are back! Not since 1981 has Portland seen as energetic and innovative a dance company as this one. With 20 dancers now, the company returns in full force in a concert this month, performing five dynamic works, including three premieres, from ethnic jazz to modern jazz to ballet.



The Singing Lady, Tramaine Hawkins, will be at Portland State University's Black Cultural Affairs Board Saturday January 29th, 1983. Hosted by Ken Berry, she will be in the Smith Center, 3rd floor. This will be the Black Cultural 2nd Annual Gospel Festival.

## Gospel Singing Lady

Tramaine Hawkins, wife of one of America's foremost gospel singers and composers, Walter Hawkins, really doesn't remember a time when she wasn't singing.

She started singing when she was four years old in her Grandfather's church in Berkeley, California. By the time she was seven, she joined her first singing group, "The Heavenly Tones" and sang with the group until she was 15 in 1966.

She also recorded her first album with the group, "I Love The Lord," on the Savoy label.

The group traveled extensively and as they improved they received an offer from Sly Stone to turn to popular music. "I knew this wasn't for me," she said, as the rest of the group went on to become Sly Stone's "Little Sisters."

She met and joined Walter Hawkins' first group "Praises of God" when she was 16 in 1967 and at the same time organized a group called the "Progressive Three" with Walter's sister, Lynette, and Gail Smith, appearing before numerous churches.

Tramaine then joined the Northern California State Choir, the forerunner of the Edwin Hawkins Singers. The big 68-member choir was also known as the "Oh Happy Day Choir" and was featured on Edwin Hawkins' now famous record. She was also featured in the trio on the album for "I Heard The Voice."

She then joined Andrae Crouch and the Disciples when she was 18 and for the next ten months sang with the group and recorded the Crouch album "Keep On Singing" on Light Records.

She rejoined the Edwin Hawkins Singers for a tour of Europe in 1971 and appeared on their return with the group at Caesars Palace, Las Vegas, where she became engaged to Walter Hawkins. They were married in March, 1971.

She continued her work with the Edwin Hawkins Singers until Walter Hawkins organized his Love Center Church in Oakland in 1975 and began performances with the "Love Center Choir." With the "Choir" she recorded three albums, including "Love Alive," "Jesus Christ Is the Way," and "Love Alive II," on Light Records.

Tramaine's first solo album for Light Records, "Tramaine," which was released in 1980, was nominated for a Grammy and sold over 100,000 copies in its first 70 days on the market. Tramaine and her husband, Walter, both won Grammys in 1981 for their participation in "The Lord's Prayer," an album featuring some of the nation's top gospel artists. She is currently featured on "The Hawkins Family."

After hundreds of performances and concerts as a member of the choir or featured vocalist for Walter or Edwin Hawkins as well as Andrae Crouch, Tramaine is now making concert appearances on her own, while continuing her appearances with Walter Hawkins and the Family.

"I've always been singing," she says. "It's a ministry. The Lord has become the spotlight of my life. The main reason I sing the gospel is not just to keep it in the four walls of the church, but to take it to the people."

## Cowboys Are Girls

When the World's Toughest Rodeo appears at Memorial Coliseum, January 21 thru January 23, most of the rodeo spectators will be expecting only to witness the competitive competition of pro rodeo athletes in seven world championship events.

The rodeo producer, Steve Gander, has arranged a special treat for the Portland fans. The featured attraction is a talented group known as the Riata Ranch Cowboys.

There is no group like the Riata Ranch Cowboys anywhere in the world. In the past six years they have performed in eleven countries, twenty-eight American states, and four television specials. Their amazing show includes acrobatic horse riding, trick roping, and musical performances. One thing that makes them really unique is that these cowboys are actually beautiful young ladies.

The girls, who range from 18 to 23, appeared with the World's Toughest Rodeo in Toronto, Washington D.C., Atlanta, and New York's Madison Square Garden in 1981.



The World's Toughest Rodeo, with all its snortin', buckin', Wild West action and color, combines show-biz extravaganza and big-money athletic competition at Memorial Coliseum, January 21-23.

"We always spend a great deal of time scouting the country for fresh and different specialty entertainers so we can bring our audiences something bright and new every year," said Mr. Gander. "The Riata Ranch Cowboys were such a success in New York and other cities we've asked them back for their second tour." This marks the first time Mr. Gander has renewed an act for the second year.

The two-and-a-half hours is more than pageantry and production. In addition to the special attractions, rodeo fans will witness a major sporting event that is chock full of the PRCA's best rodeo athletes and most recognized cowboys in the sport today.

The animals spectators will see making misery for the cowboys will represent three of the sport's top rated herds from California, Washington, and Oregon. The animals themselves are athletes and many of them, like 1982 Bareback Horse of the Year, Smith & Velvet, are better known within the sport than some of the cowboys.

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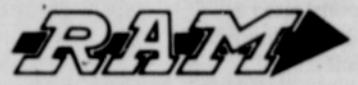
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