

# Long Island

NL

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## It's musical teen-work

By WILLIAM MEINBERGER

**D**ON'T MIGHT HARDLY THINK of a remnant of berry-fry card-board, wooden planks, old clothes, grease paint, and other theatrical artifacts could be used to install such lofty qualities as self-discipline and a spirit of cooperation among teenagers, but in Port Washington it becomes virtually a community project this time of year.

The main endeavor in this generally affluent North Shore village of 40,000, with its private clubs, tree-shaded roads, and utilitarian main street, visibly comes to bear next month is a production of Frank Loofers's Broadway hit musical, "How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying," the sixth annual offering of the Port Washington Teen Theater Training program.

For the 100 youngsters — who are 15 to 18 years old and over — involved and the legions of local residents, merchants, businessmen, and civic and religious groups helped to sponsor it, the singing effort serves as a sort of support perhaps more revealing of human interchange than the play itself.

"There's a warm feeling among the participating youngsters that seems to come to full bloom as the opening years," says Pamela (Pam) Meadows, the 40-year-old director who, with her husband, Ronald, 46, have guided the fortunes of the vibrant young troupe

since it staged its initial production of the Cole Porter musical, "Anything Goes," in 1972.

The Meadows, whose only child, Christopher, 15, will be moving the lights in this year's show, have strong roots in the community and are local members of the Play Troupe of Port Washington, a vintage theatrical group that co-sponsors the teen summer theater.

"There's a special dynamic among these youngsters, way beyond just excitement, that seems to be leaking into the local folklore, and the way they push it has got to put them in good stead for later life," Pam said.

Her husband Ron, who produces the shows, said the teens' dedication is an offshoot of their own resolve to stage musicals as a restorative summer pastime.

"Some of the children, like the sixth graders, are old enough to shoulder some responsibility but still too young to get outside jobs, so they get involved in the teen summer theater as a way of venting their energies, and whether they be onstage, in the orchestra or behind the scenes, they develop a spirit of cooperation and mutual regard that is truly refreshing in our days," Ron said.

The Meadows said casting calls went out last May through correspondence, flyers, word-of-mouth and notices in the local newspaper, and that rehearsals for the musical which will be presented Aug.

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**On Saturday here**  
Stage Director Pam Meadows gives actors suggestions from her notebook during rehearsal.

## Two help keep act together

**R**ON MEADOWS SLIGHTS slightly under an August moon, a cool summer breeze caressing his face while the answering chimes of microcycles along the town's main drag intrude upon his slumber. No, he knows they weren't the "1961's Angles" variety, but the local high school and college-age kids sniped and said hold parties in the vicinity, creating what cops and homeowners charge was an intolerable noise level.

But Meadows had other thoughts on his mind as he lay in his hammock beneath the stars dappled by the town dock.

It was a well-orchestrated warning, keeping a nocturnal guard on the wood and seaward side at the John Philip Sousa headliner that would soon reverberate in the walled home of the Cole Porter musical, "Anything Goes." It was 1972, and the infant Port Washington Teen Summer Theater program was about to launch its initial production systems.

But Meadows was not about to let anyone monkey with the act.

"Yes," he recalled yesterday, "it wasn't the best of situations and I wouldn't preferred being in bed at home, but it was a beginning. As it happened, the actors had to learn to project their voices above the roar of the microcycles."

### Troupe moves indoors

That was eight years ago, and the thriving troupe of licensed teenagers and college-age youths have moved today to the auditorium of Schermer High School

on Campus Drive, 447 Port Washington Blvd., where they will stage the musical "How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying" for four performances next month.

Ron, director of systems and programming at Publishers Clearing House in Port Washington, and his wife, Pam, a playwright and certified teacher in speech and diction, are living legends in local theatrical circles. For the past eight winters, they have produced a yearly show for and by grade-school children at the Main St. School in their community. They also have been active over the years in the Play Troupe of Port Washington, founded in 1927, which blends adults with younger children in productions geared for family audiences.

### Do hit musical every summer

"The Teen Summer Theater was launched in response to children involved in the winter productions who wanted something to do in the summer," Pam explained. "To date, more than 1,000 youngsters 13 through 18, and even school children of college age, have participated in the shows. We do a hit Broadway musical each summer, and each production has had the support of parents and the entire community."

She said the summer operation is self-sustaining in that the youngsters raise the cost of sets, royalties and

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Ron and Pam Meadows look over stage model for the production of "How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying."

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