

'George M.' taps into Port Washington

By Margaret Lorenz
Staff Writer

Mark off August 11-14 on your social calendar; the Port Summer Show will be offering a nostalgic look into yesteryear with a colorful production of "George M.," a musical based on the life of George M. Cohan at 8 p.m. on these dates.

The cast of over 55 kids ranging in ages from 12 to 17 will perform such true red-white-and-blue favorites as "Over There," "Yankee Doodle Dandy," and "Grand Old Flag." The totally teen production promises to bring old-time theater back to Port Washington. The \$3 admission tickets will be sold at the door.

Because the show required a tap-dancing cast, rehearsals started as early as June 29 to allow the performers time to master the dance numbers before the curtain went up.

Choreographer Cam Gelb is very proud of the result. "They have been just great. They're real hard workers." Because many of the cast members had never donned tap shoes before, "hard work" was a necessity. Gina Farasciano said that although she has been in approximately 16 shows, this is her first tap experience. "Well, let's say I'm attempting to tap," she said. Like Farasciano, Craig Glantz, who plays George M., had never tried tapping.

"I never even thought about it before the show, but I'm having a fun time learning," he said. Gelb seems to feel he has done more than just learn; "he's taken to it



Cast members and supporters of the Port Summer Show scrubbed cars in an effort to raise money for the production. This year's offering, "George M.," will run August 11-14 — don't be fooled by the error on the banner. The car washers are: (l. to r.) Nicole Farasciano, Gina Farasciano, Dani Super, Dan Chehebar, Amanda North and Susan Blumlein.

like a duck takes to water," she said.

Lee Healy, the adult publicity chairperson, explains "George M." will be "the most elaborate [show] in terms of costumes and dancing," in the history of the summer program. All cast members make at least five costume changes and over 400 costumes will be utilized in all. Many audience members may recognize the green sequined material used on many of the costumes from the "Emerald City" Schreiber

Senior Gambol.

"We like to recycle," said Bess Mulvihill, the president of the summer show.

The costumes may prove to be a bit of a cross for the performers to bear, for like the theaters the real George M. played in the Schreiber auditorium has no air conditioning. Pity the poor performers, it may be a little warm sitting in the audience but "it's a lot worse under the lights," according to Danny Chehebar, who plays

George M.'s father.

This is Chehebar's first experience with a show of this type. "I played the dentist in 'Little Shop of Horrors.'"

Healy and Mulvihill feel it is the casts' inexperience which may make the performances shine.

"This year the kids don't have that much stage experience so they're working a lot harder," said Mulvihill.

'Ninja' burglar is still at large

A.J. Benza
Staff Writer

Newly appointed Sixth Precinct Inspector Mel Kenny has appealed to the public for assistance in apprehending the unpredictable and notorious "Ninja" burglar who has been robbing occupied homes in the Flower Hill, Searingtown and Manhasset Hills areas.

"We are dealing with a very good burglar; a very agile burglar," Kenny said. "And he has not been easy to follow." He is believed to be African-American, with light-brown skin and freckles, between 20-30 years old and 5'8" to 6' tall.

He has been tabbed the "Ninja" burglar because he dresses entirely in black, wears gloves and partially covers his face with a ski mask. He does not carry the typical sword of an authentic Ninja warrior, but he has been known to use a silver handgun. Police have been hunting the burglar ever since he made his first impression on the community in May of 1987. Since then he has victimized home owners approximately 20 times.

Kenny said that a majority of the incidents have been confrontational with the burglar normally striking between 7 and 11 p.m. He usually seeks entry through a

skylight or a second-story window and has chosen those times, Kenny believes, because he seems to enjoy confronting his victims.

"It seems he does it this way because this way he orders his victims to shut off their burglar alarms," he said. "Sometimes he even wakes them up to tell them so."

No one has been injured in the incidents, but the burglar has threatened to shoot the children of anyone who refuses his requests and demands. His last hit is believed to have been on July 2 in the North New Hyde Park area, where he took cash and jewelry valued at \$15,000. Prior

to that he entered a home in Flower Hill on June 24 and walked away with jewelry after threatening the home owner's son, who had awakened from sleep to find the burglar ransacking his home.

Police have added foot patrols and additional squad car details in the affluent areas that the burglar is apt to strike, and Kenny is urging all home owners to keep burglar alarms activated and to be certain all second-story windows are kept locked. "By all means," Kenny said, "Do what he asks. Don't put up a struggle." He said all non-emergency calls should be placed to Sixth Squad detectives at (516) 365-8000.

Grape boycott gets mixed results in New York

By Bradley Finkelstein
Staff Writer

The petition drive and boycott sponsored by the United Farm Workers to stop the use of pesticides on California table grapes has had mixed results in its first month in the New York Metropolitan area. The union has already collected 20 percent of the signatures it established as a goal for the drive to halt the use of what they call health-debilitating additives, although one supermarket chain participating in the boycott said its shoppers did not notice when the grapes were taken off the shelves for a week.

According to Jocelyn Sherman, spokeswoman for the United Farm Workers, the union has collected between 7,000 and 8,000 signatures since June 30 when Cesar Chavez, president of the UFW, appeared at the Waldbaum's in Garden City Park for a rally to kick off the drive. The

"We got 12 letters supporting the action [of taking grapes off the shelves] and three letters opposing [it]."

Jules Rose, chairman of Sloans Supermarkets

union has a goal of 40,000 signatures by December 30, 1989.

Sloans is one of several Manhattan-based supermarket chains participating in the boycott by not publishing advertisements for grapes during the summer. Jules Rose, chairman of Sloans said his stores took the grapes off their shelves for the first week of July but their customers have paid little attention to the matter.

"We got 12 letters supporting the action [of taking grapes off the shelves] and three letters opposing [it]," said Rose.

Waldbaum's was selected by the union to be the site of the rally because its par-

ent company, A & P, is the largest purchaser of grapes in the metropolitan area. Chavez said the union wants to stop the use of pesticides in grapes because exposure to chemicals has caused adverse health effects such as cancer, lung ailments and birth defects in over 300,000 farm workers and their families. Residue of the chemicals remains on the grapes when purchased by consumers, exposing them to the same health risks, according to the UFW.

The union recently turned its attention toward another A & P subsidiary, Food Emporium. It claims that Food Emporium distorts the truth about the use of chem-

icals in grapes in recent advertisements. In a flier published by the UFW, the store's ads say to ready grapes for eating, they must be rinsed and patted dry, but the UFW flier says the pesticides are oil based and cannot be washed off.

"All government agencies assure us there is no problems with pesticide residue," said Mike Rourke, spokesman for A & P. "We do our own testing and we find no problems. No responsible authority condones anything [the UFW] is saying about grapes." Rourke said that A & P has no plans to remove the grapes from its shelves at this time.

Rose said that the company's buyers on the West Coast have been lobbying growers to stop the use of chemicals and the growers are beginning to listen. "In the next 10 years, you will have more organic produce from growers using much less chemicals," he said.