

Assignment TV

By TERRENCE O'FLAHERTY

NEW YORK CITY — There is an elfin quality to Robert Morse that is not easy to dispel — largely because he looks like one of those mischievous little trolls sitting on a toadstool in a garden ornament shop. His nose is upturned, he is gap-toothed and his bright eyes peer into yours with a curious delight.

But the circumstances under which we met recently were hardly delightful. Morse's ABC series, "That's Life" has been canceled (although a series of re-runs started this week to continue until summer). It was one of the brightest shows of the season and the only new idea in TV musicals in a decade.

In a hall off Times Square he and his youthful cast were rehearsing the last show of the series, which ran on the 1st of this month. In one corner a pianist pounded out the tune on an upright. Just like the old Warner Brothers musicals. I sneaked into the room and sat down on a folding chair that squeaked. (Don't they always?) Morse stopped the rehearsal and walked over, grabbing at his chest, dramatically.

"NOW THEY bring in the press!" he cried. "My heart's hanging out — LOOK! I don't want you to tell me how good the show was or how sorry you are. I just want you to tell me WHY? Why is it ending?"

"This is a FAMILY show . . . It's about things everyone can relate to — marriage, birth, death, taxes, baby's first birthday party. It's apple pie and ice cream — right down the middle of the plate. It's a gentle, nice, funny, GOOD show."

"It's live and it's spontaneous and it's decent. Everyone in this room is talented. The man at the piano staged the dances for 'Mame' . . . the composers have two hits on

Broadway . . . the dancers are the best . . . Do you know something? ALL TV should be like this — talented people doing new things, lively things. It shouldn't be a frantic switching from one gimmick to another just because some automobile company says that's what the Nielsen Rating families want . . ."

SUDDENLY his lips spread into a big toothy grin and he put his face close to mine. "Come on, ask me what I want to do next," he said. "Just ask me and I'll tell you that I want to be a Nielsen family and do crossword puzzles while the TV set's on! You can put that down." And then he laughed as if he was delighted to have regained his sense of humor.

"Just look at her," he said, referring to E.J. Peaker the happy, dumb, dizzy blonde who plays his wife. She was rehearsing. "She's the whole King Family rolled into one! Look, do me a favor. Don't tell her we've been cancelled. She doesn't know it yet. I don't think she reads the papers. She's as happy as a chorus girl."

Suddenly Miss Peaker laughed at something or other on stage and Morse looked at me, his eyes crossing ever so slightly. "Oh, that laugh! I hear it in my sleep. Maybe it's just as well we're going off the air . . ."

"NEXT WEEK I'm going down to the Greenbriar Hotel and play golf for four days. Then I'm going home and enter magazine contests. I love puzzles . . ."

Then his blue eyes clouded and he said, "The trouble with television is that not enough good things are being done by the important people in our business. TV should be uplifting our spirits."

So now it's back to Hollywood or Broadway. "Which do you like best?" I asked.

"As the old vaudevillians used to say, I like it where I'm good," said Morse.

He was very good on "That's Life."



PRESENT TROPHIES . . . Mrs. James Leech, historian of Torrance Elementary School PTA, presents trophies to Larry Basile (center) and Jan Karr, eighth grade students. The pair won the trophies during a patriotic speech contest coordinated by Mrs. Harriet Allingham, eighth grade teacher. Judges were: Miss Pam Dubigh, English teacher at Meadow Park School; Mel Grumm, eighth grade teacher at Hillside School, and the kisses Jan Kostach and Paula Boyd, speech club members at Torrance High School

South Side

By Lynne Alessio

South's eighth annual Art Show is in its beginning stages. Applications have been available since last Wednesday and will be out until April 28. The planned opening for the show is May 7.

This week also brought application deadlines for the orders of Athena and Apollo the girls' and boys' service organizations. Membership is open to a sophomore or junior who has an above average academic standing and is reasonably active in school affairs.

Thursday, April 24, "The Planet of the Apes" is coming to the Spartan auditorium. Sponsored by the Order of Athens, the proceeds will go for new uniforms for the organization. Tickets are 50 cents for adults and students at the 4:30 showing and 1 cent for grade school students at this showing. All tickets for the 7:30 showing will be 50 cents.

"Science Scene '69," this year's theme for the annual TUSD science fair is being held tonight in the South High

gymnasium. The fair began yesterday, and all students from any school in the Torrance District was eligible to enter.

Photography Club is sponsoring a photo contest, open to any South student. The contest has three divisions: scenic still life portrait; open, special effects, abstract; and sports, news. The winner from each division will win a prize and the over-all winner will be presented with a cash award of \$5. The deadline for entering prints is April 30. An entry fee of 25 cents is charged for the first print and 10 cents for each additional entry. A student can enter as many prints as he wants.

Yesterday John Goddard came to South for the second time this year. The assembly was held at 2 for any student who wished to attend. The last assembly that this noted speaker and adventurer spoke at was so successful that Student Council invited him to return.

Luncheon To Honor Educators

A luncheon honoring Harbor area educators is scheduled for Tuesday, at Dana Junior High School.

Members of Harbor area Masonic Lodges and service clubs will be present for this 25th annual event. Host club will be the San Pedro Day Lions. Fred Lebsac, president of the San Pedro Day Lions, will preside. Jan Plum, principal of Dana, will welcome the 250 educators, Masons, and service club members on behalf of the school and faculty.

Dr. J. Graham Sullivan, deputy superintendent of schools, will speak on the subject "Inner City: There Are No Easy Victories."

The Dana junior high music department will provide luncheon music and entertainment and the Dana cafeteria will prepare the meal.

The luncheon is an annual event in the Harbor area and it always scheduled during Public Schools Week, April 21 to 25.

Secretary Day Theme Slated

"Better Secretaries Mean Better Business" will be the theme of the 18th consecutive annual Secretaries Week, April 20 through 26, sponsored by The National Secretaries Association (International). Wednesday is set aside as Secretaries Day.

NSA's continuing purpose is to elevate the standards of secretarial performance.

Press-Herald

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Shutters To Click On Campus

Sunday is camera day at the El Camino College campus as the ECC Camera Club holds its second annual Photo Day from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

A 75-cent registration fee is all that is required to participate, according to George Jaeger, camera day chairman.

More than 500 photographers are expected to turn out to take pictures of approximately 150 models who will be on hand to pose during the day.

Among the planned events are a model contest and a print exhibition. Door prizes will also be awarded during the day's activities.

A trade show will also be held in conjunction with the other photo day activities, with most photo equipment manufacturers represented including Nikon, Omega, Bessler, Calumet, Hasselblad, Bronica and Mamiya.

"All interested photography fans are welcome to attend," Jaeger said.

Rancho San Antonio Dedication Planned

Two new building will be officially dedicated and blessed at Rancho San Antonio, the Boys Town of the West, 21000 Plummer St., Chatsworth, Sunday at 2 p.m.

Presiding will be His Eminence James Francis Cardinal McIntyre, who has fostered the boys' home for more than 20 years.

Completed recently were a 9,000 square foot dining room-kitchen facility and 5,700 square foot staff residence, both of brick construction in contemporary Spanish design and effectively using colorful ceramic mosaic tile.

The public will be invited to inspect the new buildings on a tour of Rancho during the annual Barbecue-Fiesta sponsored by the Knights of Columbus at the home on Sunday, April 27.

As the KC's major fund raising event, the Barbecue-Fiesta will help finance construction cost of the new buildings, and Rancho San Antonio Guild, a women's auxiliary, will assist in providing furnishings.

Sponsored by the Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles, Rancho is a home away from home for boys, 12 through 16 years, unrestricted as to race, religion or nationality.

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Anniversary Sale Slated For Sunday

Chuck Nader, president of Nader's Furniture and Appliance Stores, today extended an invitation to area residents to join him and his staff for a one-day anniversary celebration Sunday.

The celebration will take place at Naders' at 166 E. Carson St., Carson, from noon to 8 p.m.

Everything in the store will be "drastically reduced," Nader said, for the anniversary sale.

Mr. Charles A. Nader President

Nader's Furniture Stores Inc.

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