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THE ENQUIRER

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# Young actors blend theater with community service

## Good things happening

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As Lauren Martinez and Steffen Whorton danced and sang with other cast members of Acting Up at the Mason Health Care Center, Thelma Bowling tapped the arms of her chair in rhythm.

The group, made up of 60 students ages 6 to 18, was rehearsing for its production of "Once On This Island," a musical fable that tells the story of forbidden love between people from two different worlds.

"I love kids, and I love to see them performing," said Bowling, 89. "I have never seen this play performed before, but I sure enjoyed it tonight."

Bowling was among about 50 seniors at the center who gathered in the recreation room last Wednesday evening to hear the performance.

Acting Up performs community service at different places while rehearsing for their big performance, May 11-13 at the Mason High School theater, said Laura Peebles, producer.

"Performing here is part of our community service we do, including such places as the Ronald McDonald House," Peebles said.

Lauren and Steffen, both 16 and sophomores at Loveland High School, said they have been singing as long as they can remember.

"Probably since my vocal cords were developed enough to sing a tune," Steffen said.

Through such songs as "Once On This Island," "We Dance," "One Small Girl," "Waiting for Life," "And the Gods Heard Her Prayer" and "Rain," the award-winning Broadway play tells the story of Ti Moune, a peasant girl who falls in love with someone above her class .

It is told to a young child on a dark and stormy night by a group of Caribbean peasants as they wait out a terrible storm.

Becky Corstanje, costume director, said the costumes are selected to reflect what Caribbean peasants wear.

"Some of it is chosen to reflect the character in the play. For instance, Pappa Ge, played by Jeremy Braley, wears a black hat, representing the God of Death," Corstanje said.

Corstanje said Acting Up strives to give youngsters an educational experience in the theater through performing and backstage knowledge in designing, costumes and lighting, choreography and assisting in stage managing and other stage crew positions.

She said performances will be held at 7 p.m. Friday, May 11; 1 and 7 p.m. Saturday, May 12; and at 1 p.m. Sunday, May 13.

A sign language interpreter will be provided.

Tickets are \$8 each and are available online at [www.ActingUp.com](http://www.ActingUp.com) or at the box office. For more information, call 513-588-0988.

## **RACE BENEFITS GIRLS ON THE RUN**

A noncompetitive 5K run/walk, called It's Fun to Run, set for May 12, will benefit Girls on the Run of Cincinnati, a nonprofit program that encourages preteen girls to develop self-respect and healthy lifestyles through running.

Girls on the Run will present the 5K run/walk at 4 p.m., with registration starting at 3 p.m.

The event will be held at Winton Centre in Winton Woods.

Registration until May 11 is \$20 and \$25 on race day which also include a T-shirt, free food and beverages and a race goodie bag with samples and coupons.

For more information, call 513-755-6407 or visit [GOTRCincinnati@fuse.net](mailto:GOTRCincinnati@fuse.net).

## **SPRING MINIFEST HELPS GOODWILL**

The annual Spring Minifest, held by the Service Guild of Ohio Valley Goodwill Industries, is set for 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday and Saturday at the Woodlawn Retail Store, 10600 Springfield Pike, Woodlawn.

The Service Guild operates the Treasure Island Gift Shop inside the Woodlawn retail store.

The mission of the guild is to help make the public aware of Goodwill's vocational training and job placement efforts and to support the organization's mission.

All proceeds from the festival will help to support Goodwill's programs and services for men and women with disabilities.