

Youth

# Mooney students suited to merry-go-round play

By Rob Cullivan

HILTON — Every actor dreams of the chance to play a role written expressly for him or her. On Saturday night, Feb. 4, six fortunate students from Cardinal Mooney High School got just such a chance in the play *Carousel*.

Written and directed by Bob Smyth, director of Mooney's campus ministry, *Carousel* was one of six pieces performed last weekend at Hilton High School in the First Annual Monroe County High School One-Act Play Festival. Mooney finished second to Aquinas Institute's *The Sand Castle*, written by Lanford Wilson and directed by Brian Buff, an economics, drama and global studies teacher. *The Sand Castle* examined a day in the life of a looney group of people living in a beach house on the California coast near San Diego.

Fairport, Irondequoit and Hilton High School also participated in the competition.

The Mooney play's plot revolved around a merry-go-round that came to a halt because of the self-centeredness of each of the animals on it. As the play unfolded, the audience learned how each character's insecurities had "stopped the music." After revealing themselves to each other, the characters were reunited by Songbird, played by junior Lucy Gallucci, as she sang "Circle of Love." The competition's panel of judges remarked that each student was well-suited to his or her role, a comment that brought a last smile to Smyth's face. Smyth wrote the play last summer with the cast he wanted already in mind. Each character, ranging from the macho Bull to the diminutive Doe, "had a quality that each (student) could carry off," he said.

Senior Jason Mancuso wasn't sure he wanted to carry off the qualities of Bull. "At first, I didn't want to do it because the Bull seemed to

be stuck up and conceited," he said. "But at the end, he was saying he was sorry to the Songbird." The senior took Smyth's advice to play his booze-guzzling, womanizing character along the lines of similar characters in film and theater. "I envisioned (Bull) as a mix between Sylvester Stallone and Tony Danza," Mancuso said.

Smyth's daughter, freshman Dani Smyth, found several of her own qualities reflected in Doe, who lamented the loss of several childhood pets in her opening monologue. "I've never going to love anything that's not forever," Doe said.

"Definitely a little like me," Smyth commented. "Sometimes, I'm shy in front of people. It takes me awhile to get used to people and to get comfortable."

Doe's insecurity and Bull's machismo are among the negative qualities Songbird believes are stopping the carousel. "You each get so much into yourselves that you stop connecting," Songbird exclaims.

"Yet even Songbird reveals that she is not immune to self-doubt. Her body is made by Cher, her nose by a plastic surgeon, and her hair by a Park Avenue stylist. Junior Lucy Gallucci empathized with her character's two-sidedness.

"The character really cared a lot, but another side was brassy," Gallucci said. "Everybody needs to build a character from the inside and not get a lot from other people. She got a lot from other people."

On the other hand, deriving certain qualities from other people can be beneficial as long as those qualities lead one to take risks. Senior Erin Hodges, who played the bubbly, mischievous Pony, identified with her character's exuberance, but not her prankishness, which was exemplified when she told the audience how she set off a bomb in a school restroom.

Pony's character nevertheless taught Hodges to be more impulsive. "I liked the character... because she was willing to do a lot of things I normally wouldn't do," Hodges said.



Cast members of the Cardinal Mooney Drama Team perform the one-act play "Carousel" during the Monroe County High School One-Act Play Festival.

Linda Dow Hayes/Courier-Journal

## Facing facts about breaking away from a violent love

### Coming of Age

By Christopher Carstens  
NC News Service

Every year tens of thousands of girls are terrified, brutally beaten and sometimes even murdered by the men they love — their boyfriends.

These young men often regret what they do, but they are emotionally programmed to repeat the acts again and again.

If you recognize even one of the following signs in your boyfriend, you are in an abusive relationship.

- Most guys don't hurt girls on purpose, especially girls they care about. It is not normal for your boyfriend to hit you intentionally, twist your arm, kick you or pull your hair in a way that hurts you even once.

If he ever does it a second time, he is almost certain to do it again and again and again.

- If your boyfriend loses his temper and does dangerous things, like racing down the freeway to catch a driver who cut him off, or challenging security guards to fights, he is likely to abuse you when he loses his temper.

- Some boyfriends specialize in emotional abuse, like saying nobody else would want you because you're too fat or too ugly, or making

you constantly worry about upsetting him with slight mistakes. Such boyfriends erode your confidence and make you feel worthless.

- Oddly, the same abusive boyfriend will break down and cry when you try to end the relationship. He says his life will be ruined, and may even threaten to kill himself if you break up.

In 12 years of work with teens, I have never heard of a single boy who kept the threat. It is a tool abusive boyfriends use to make girls emotional prisoners.

- Abusive relationships follow a cycle. It begins when the boyfriend hurts intentionally. He may hit the girl, humiliate her in front of her friends, or even destroy something she cares about.

Soon afterward he becomes sweet and often very affectionate. He does little things to show he cares, for a while.

But the cycle repeats over the next time he's angry and does something mean. Remembering the sweet times, his girlfriend tries not to upset him. But the cycle repeats itself, again and again.

If you recognize even one of these features in your boyfriend, you must act quickly to protect yourself.

1. Urge your boyfriend to go for counseling. Only psychotherapy can break the cycle of abuse. He is trapped and needs help getting out.
2. Next, break off the relationship, right away, no matter what he pledges or threatens.

By Gina Giancursio

Are you planning to get a job after high school? Or do you think you'll go on to college? Either way, you should give some serious thought to making the most of your high school years.

Even if your grades aren't the best, or you're having a hard time with some courses, it's not too late. You can turn things around. But you have to make the effort.

The first step is choosing the right courses — tough courses that will challenge your mind and develop the knowledge and skills you'll need to survive on the job or in college.

The second step is having the willpower to stick with difficult courses, no matter how demanding they may.

Third, develop the right attitude. Believe in yourself. Be confident that you can succeed if you do your best.

Looking for an easy way out of high school may very well lead to a dead end in life. The plain fact is all students, whether they pursue college or a career after high school, need basic

## Speaking Out

academic skills in reading, writing, mathematics, reasoning, speaking, listening, observing and studying.

But these skills can't be learned overnight. You'll only develop them by sampling academic courses. By taking tough courses, you'll strengthen your academic and reasoning skills.

Without these basic academic skills, you will have a hard time becoming an expert in any field, and you will probably have an equally hard time finding a good and satisfying job. Without basic skills, people can't even get on the employment ladder, to say nothing of climbing it.

Simply put, you need the learning skills you get from academic courses. Make an extra effort now, and you'll keep your options open for college, for jobs and for your future.

Do a favor for your abusive boyfriend, especially if you really care about him. Tell him to get help. Tell him why you are unwilling to continue the relationship.

And then stop seeing him for good.  
Dr. Carstens is a clinical psychologist in San Diego, Calif.

### Notre Dame

## What sacrifice would be hardest for you during the season of Lent?

Laura Llinas, senior:

For me, it would be giving up laziness and procrastination, since they have always been a part of my daily routine. Trying to break these habits would be hard because I'd need a lot of willpower and determination.

Bill Birdsall, senior:

The hardest thing for me would be refraining from going out with my friends. I'd be lonely, and my friends might not understand. However, if I could accept this and make them understand, I would demonstrate the true meaning of Lent.

## As Teens See It

LARRY O'BRYAN, sophomore:

Junk food would be the most difficult for me to go without. Whenever I go for a snack, junk food is the first thing I reach for.

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We received 12 correct entries identifying Charlie Watts as the drummer for The Rolling Stones. The winner was Jenny Hamilton of Aurora.

## MUSIC TRIVIA

This week's question:  
Who recorded the following #1 song, "What a Fool Believes?"

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
School \_\_\_\_\_

**Rules:**  
Each week, the Courier-Journal, in conjunction with the House of Guitars will feature a Music Trivia contest. All you have to do to enter is answer the question, fill in your name and address and the school you attend (if applicable), cut out the coupon, and send it in to the Courier-Journal. If more than one correct entry is received, a drawing will be held and one winning entry will be drawn. If yours is the winning entry, you will be mailed a coupon for a free album or tape of your choice redeemable at the House of Guitars, 645 Titus Ave.  
All entries must be received within seven days of this paper's issue date. Winning names and answers will be printed the week following each drawing.

**The Courier-Journal Music Trivia**  
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