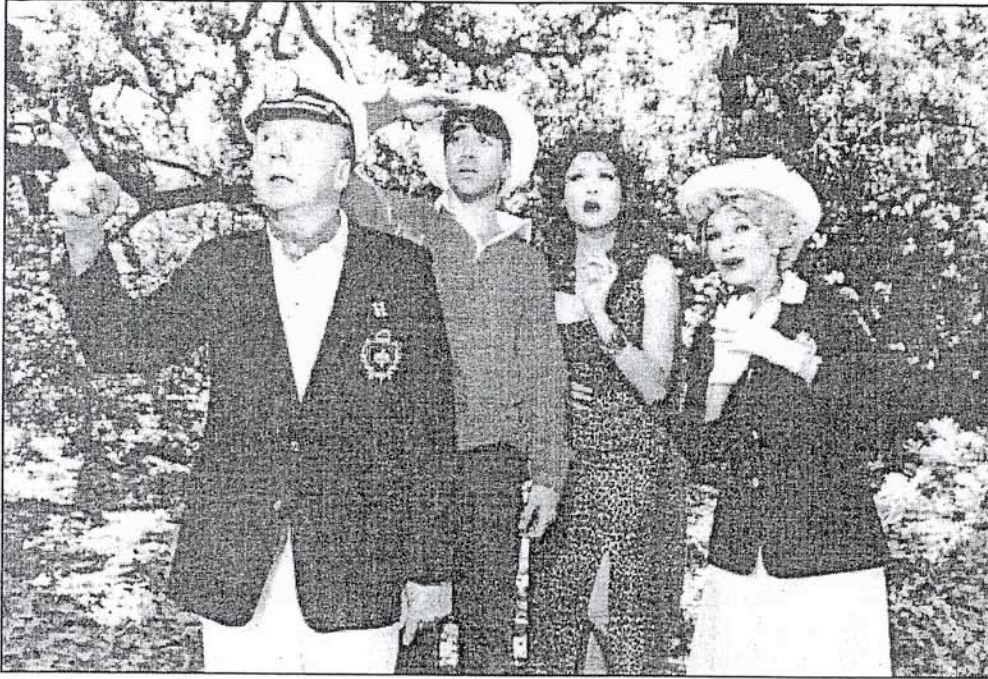


'Gilligan' makes a comeback



REMEMBERING WHEN—"Gilligan's Island: The Musical" cast includes, from left to right, Marshall Borden, Grant Rosen, Shea Alexander and Lee Meriwether. It's continuing at the T.O. Civic Arts Plaza.

By Elizabeth Angelini
Special to *The Acorn*

Stormy weather rocks the ocean, creating huge waves, tossing the small boat called *The Minnow*, in every direction.

Six passengers make up the crew of the destroyed ship and become stranded on an island, with food to eat, relationships to form, songs to sing, hieroglyphics to discern and hopes to fulfilled.

Even the people on the popular television show "Survivor" don't comprise such an interesting and humorous group of characters as the ones shipwrecked in "Gilligan's Island: The Musical," which continues through Sun., Aug. 26 at the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza.

First, there are Mrs. Lovey Howell and Thurston Howell III, played by Lee Meriwether and Marshall Borden—millionaires whose main concerns are wealth and unveiling their extravagant wardrobes.

After all, the amount of costume changes they have would suffice for a fashion show and their outrageous attire is as diverse as the characters on the island.

Second, there's timid, sensitive and kind Mary Ann, played by Melissa Fahn, who gets her first experience at love.

Then, of course, since there must be a mixture of personalities to keep the show entertaining, there's the movie star Ginger, played by Shea Alexander, whose attitude and mannerisms couldn't be more contradictory to Mary Ann's. She's a sensual, attractive lady who desires to be the center of attention, so she spontaneously launches into scenes from various plays.

The Skipper, played by Matthew Kimbrough, is the leader of the group. He gives orders to the others, trying to help them survive.

The Professor, played by Gordon Goodman, is the stereotypical intellectual whose vocabulary is far superior to the others.

He's a human textbook, has a degree from MIT, and most ironically, can't seem to get himself or the others off the island.

The sixth character is Gilligan, played Grant Rosen. Poor Gilligan always seems to mess things up. He accidentally breaks every device that can help lead the crew back home. On the other hand, beyond his clumsiness, there's a wonderful quality within him—he genuinely

likes the other castaways. His dedication to teamwork might be the only means of escaping the island.

Last, but not least, there's Na Niela, played by Perry L. Brown, an alien from another planet who seeks to destroy the Earth and its inhabitants until he observes how admirably the crew members cooperate. He then decides to give the planet a second chance.

Most noteworthy about the show is its comical approach to a serious situation.

Lines like "Rich people are just poor people, with money," which Gilligan says to Skipper as he talks about the millionaire couple, and "Can't we vote him off the island? After all, he is the weakest link," which is said of Gilligan, making reference to the TV programs "Survivor" and "The Weakest Link," inspire laughter and enable enjoyment of the onstage predicaments. And songs like "Worlds Apart" and "Goodbye Island" are catchy.

Another notable characteristic of "Gilligan's Island: The Musical" is the profound way it eliminates the boundary between fantasy and reality. Just as the fictional characters must team up to survive and

find their way home, the real life crew and actors must collaborate to ensure the production is a success.

And they accomplish it; everyone who worked on the show seemed to enjoy their work.