

NEWS RELEASE

NEW COLLEGE

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SARASOTA--With the closing of the ninth season of the Turnau Opera Players at the Asolo Theater Friday, some 16 New College students packed away some exciting memories of participation with a professional opera company.

Mostly working backstage in a variety of volunteer capacities, a number also played minor stage roles, all but one in non-singing capacity.

It all began with an inquiry for help from the Turnau group to the Humanities Division of the college. The names of Stephen Posey, a first-year student from Greenwich, Conn., and Dale Benziger, a third-year student from Bensenville, Ill. were suggested, according to John Bryan Turnau assistant to the producer. Their names led to others.

Dale started out doing costume work and Posey as a production assistant. "They were both so good we even offered them jobs with the company in the summer," said Bryan.

Besides Dale and Steve, in the opening production of "Madame Butterfly" other students doing backstage work were Pat Lawson,

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Ft. Meade, Md.; Sally Woodmansee, Falls Church, Va.; and Mary Blakely, Eau Claire, Wisc.

Miguel Tapia, a Mexican student here on a Rotary Club exchange scholarship, had a small singing part in this first production.

When "Die Fledermaus" opened, those backstage workers suddenly blossomed out with stage roles which Bryan described as having "no lines but requiring movements and poses which the students did remarkably well."

New names cropped up in the second production as Dave Burck of Minneapolis, William Gooderham of Bradenton, Bob Goza of Chattanooga, Jeff Jordan of Goffstown, N.H., Larry Reed of Nampa, Idaho, Harold Shallman, of Wayzata, Minn. and Alfred Scheinberg of Baltimore, went on stage with small parts.

When the final production, "Rake's Progress" was staged, there were seven students in the cast including Tapia, Benziger, Posey, Gooderham, plus Rye Weber of Colorado Springs, Colo., Mimi Donnay of Miami, and Claudia Blair of Skokie, Ill.

"They all did an excellent job," said Bryan, "better than many professionals we've seen."

To cement the close cooperation between opera company and college, the Turnau group also played host to from 20 to 50 students and some faculty and staff at each of the three productions.