

LAS VEGAS

SHOWCASE

Bill Willard's
VEGASTARS

The childrens' epic at the Desert Inn, freely translated from an old, tired cartoon titled "Lil' Orphan Annie," earns about a five on scale of 10 in this corner. The kids in the show remind one of the dearly beloved remarks on such wee human animals by W.C. FIELDS. The star of the show, KRISTI COOMBS, has the strangest sound coming from her voice box ever heard. It's something like a squealing mouse scratching on a blackboard. Oh well, the kids in the audience and the grownup juveniles loved all the treacle. . . Crosstown at the Meadows, there's an old-fashioned farce going on as LON HUBER runs rampant with his characterization of "Charley's Aunt." One of the hysterical roles is puttered about engagingly by DAVID LEAN, who looks something like a compressed ORSON WELLES without wine before its time in the role of the old servant Brasnet. LEAN steps out from radio and video spots, plus some desk work in the electronic media to show his mettle at acting. And there's reliable ART ENGLER, best character actor in town, harrumphing Col. Sir Francis Chesney, all of the above and more exuberant cash members directed by brave JOAN SNYDER... Whatever happened to MITCH DE WOOD? He first arrived in Vegas 25 years ago singing on the bill with DANNY THOMAS at the Flamingo. Later on he booked acts and was ensconced at the Aladdin for years

until the sale to ED TORRES & WAYNE NEWTON last October. Now MITCH directs the Variety Showcase every Thursday night at the reopened Nevada Palace... At that same motel-casino on Boulder Highway, g.m. JOHN PARKER purloined a page from the Treasury's promo with card - counter KEN USTON and presents the other shark HOWIE GROSSMAN as consultant/casino host.. Mentioning the Aladdin a few lines ago reminds to praised the victuals in the posh new Contintale room, where JOHN FEDESCO presides. All of the fine food is the production of LEN PAVES, chief of food and beverage at the resort, who has the Hickory room next to the Continentale with PATRICIA WILSON in charge and the old Sabre Room downstairs ready to open soon as La Granada. Also to arrive, per LEN, is the Fishery.

★★★★★

All attention was focused on world championship of poker tourney at the Horseshoe won by a skinny kid who doesn't shave as the Tropicana's gin rummy classic just about went unnoticed. Poker champ Las Vegas STU UNGAR grabbed the chips second year running down at the Horseshoe pocketing \$375,000 outlasting 74 other players, while oil well owner NORM LEVINSON of Houston beat 235 gin players at the Trop for his \$25,000... It was a former Trop act that made newscasts as DAN GOODWIN climbed the Sears tower in Chicago. Last year DAN was Dorian, or Dorian Grey in a short-lived male stripper turn devised by puppeteer BARCLAY SHAW for the MICKEY MARTIN revue in the lounge... The town's entertainers turned out for restaurateur RUBEN BULLOCK'S benefit at his Westside Story Supper Club, where he greeted celebs although recovering from a stroke... Last day of jazz month provides news

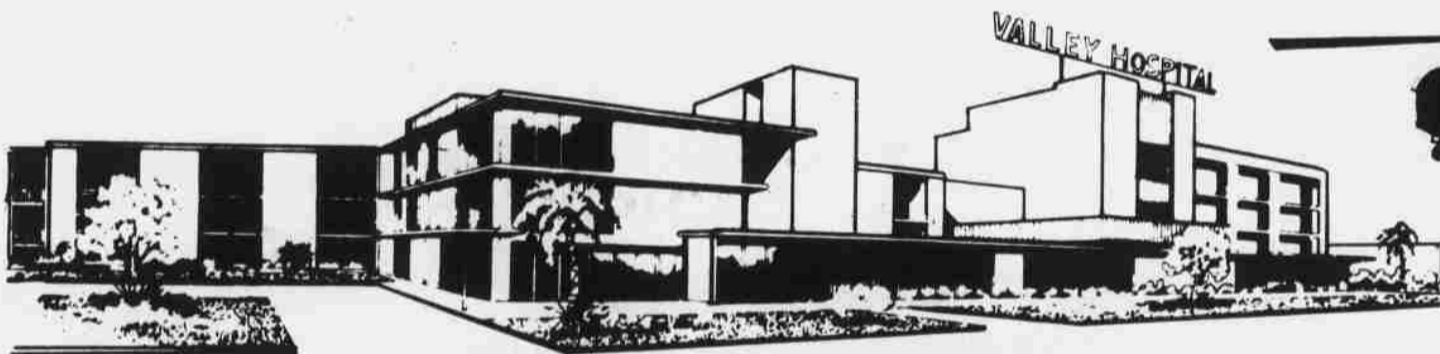
of L.V. Jazz Society's Hollywood Bowl junket June 20 & 21st for the GEORGE WEIN produced Playboy Jazz Festival. UNLV's Jazz Ensemble was named one of four college bands to compete for opening perf spot at the fest... FOREST DUKE leaves Channel 3 for 13 with his longrunning celeb show June 7 with producer JIM PARKER taping the half - hour for KWHY, Ellay.

★★★★★

LIBERACE, wrapping his month's European concertour at Berlin's Phil teed a three frame Hilton playback Tuesday... Meanwhile GEORGE LIBERACE will guest conduct L.V. Symphonic & Chamber Music Society benefit June 7 postponed from Mother's Day... Repeater JOAN RIVERS on "Tonight Show" June 29 & 30 swept up her entourage to applaud MARK TAN'S "The Lady & The Outlaws" at the Country Club... JUNE busts out all over as LA WILKINSON toplines "The 90 - Day Mistress" at Union Plaza June 16, retiring Neil Simon's "The Odd Couple"... And June manifests itself in similar explosive fashion at Caesars Palace with SAMMY DAVIS JR. Thursday for a week followed by FRANK SINATRA and then return of CHER to close out the month.

★★★★★

Meadows Playhouse continues its cabaret seating style during month's run of "Charley's Aunt." At UNLV's Bayley Theatre, TOM NEWTON and Debora Roventini are the cast in "Same Time Next Year," directed by PAUL HARRIS... DOTTIE WEST joins MEL TILLIS at the Frontier for his final week. Last Thursday space shuttlers JOHN YOUNG and ROBERT CRIPPEN were tossed a state dinner hosted by all the VIPs extant after they met with thousands



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Boyd Imai, Administrative Assistant Valley Hospital Medical Center

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