



Frank and Pat Gengo, of the Village of Amelia, are founders of the ROMEOs and JULIETs social clubs.

Marian Richardson, Daily Sun

Romeos And Juliets Celebrate 5th Anniversary

Frank and Pat Gengo each started clubs so they could get to know their neighbors.

By MARIAN RICHARDSON
Daily Sun Staff Writer

Frank and Pat Gengo moved to The Villages in 2002, but they did not want to spend their retirement sitting at home. They wanted to meet their neighbors and go out on the town.

To make it happen, Frank founded the Retired Outstanding Men Eating Out on Feb. 4, 2013. A few months later, in April, Pat decided to start a similar club: Just Us Ladies Intelligently Enjoying Talk. Both clubs were open to residents of the Village of Amelia.

The couple recently celebrated the fifth anniversary of the ROMEOs and JULIETs. "Our clubs are all about promoting friendship and camaraderie in our village," Frank said. "We wanted to get to know the members better in the Village of Amelia."

Frank and other men in Amelia spend time together every month as the ROMEOs at Perkins in Lady Lake. He said having dinner helps them bond.

"We get to know everyone, their problems and their desires," he said. "And if one of us needs help, we assist each other. We have handymen and contractors who help all of us out."

The JULIETs have a similar mission. Pat said they even eat at the same restaurant as the men, but on a different day.

"They meet the first Monday of each month and we meet the second Wednesday," she said. "The ladies enjoy catching up and each other's company."

Pat started the JULIETs as an extension of the ROMEOs' driveway socials.

"Since it's strictly a men's club, we started having driveway parties to get together with our wives," Frank said. "Then the men can get to know each other's wives."

They said they value the intimate feel of smaller clubs because they want to know every member.

"The ROMEOs have 21 members and the JULIETs have 30," Frank said. "Sometimes too big is not good. Some

of the clubs here have started out as 30 people and then become 800. You lose that personal touch and you don't know anyone."

"It's a good, warm feeling to be in a small club," Pat added. "When you're around a table (having dinner), you can really get to know who's beside you."

The ROMEOs and JULIETs often go on golf outings, play card games, take cruises and, of course, have dinner.

"We just like to have a good time," Frank said. "We're active seniors. All the boys go together and all the girls go together."

"We're a generation of grannies and grandpas, but we don't sit in the rocking chair," Pat added.

The couple said they look forward to celebrating another year with their clubs.

"We are like a family," Pat said. "When you come down to The Villages, you find a new family in your neighbors."

Explore the Crevices of An Artist's Mind With 'Red'

Tickets are still available for The Studio Theatre at Tierra Del Sol's last production of season two, "Red."

By KRISTEN FIORE
Daily Sun Staff Writer

The Studio Theatre at Tierra Del Sol is wrapping up its commitment-themed second season.

But this time the play is not about commitment to another person, it is about commitment to art.

Set in 1950s Manhattan, the play explores the work of abstract expressionist Mark Rothko as he works on one of his biggest commissions — a series of murals for the famous Four Seasons Restaurant in New York.

"But that's just the jumping off point," said John Lombardi, who plays the role of Rothko in the play. "The play is really a conversation, often heated, about what art really is at its core."

Though largely biographical, the play introduces the fictional character of Ken, Rothko's young assistant, and imagines the kind of conversations Rothko would have had with Ken.

"It follows their relationship of friend, mentor and critic over the course of two years," said Colton Butcher, who plays Ken in the production. "Rothko, the paintings and the studio the story takes place in is all real and happened. Rothko could've had an apprentice, but he was a very secretive artist, so all we can do is imagine what could be."

Butcher said Rothko is fiercely committed to what he believes art is and isn't, and Ken challenges him on that commitment and shakes up Rothko's ideas.

"Coming after a beautiful musical where commitment is more about a relationship ("Company"), it's fun to see a more abstract idea of commitment to art as a medium of storytelling," Butcher said. "It's an excellent way to

bookend a wonderful season."

"Red" director Trevin Cooper said the season selection process is very detailed. The selection committee goes through more than a hundred plays in a year's time.

"As we narrowed down titles, this one kept speaking to everyone on the committee, and I think because it's about the artistic process," Cooper said. "It's sort of a window to what it means to be an artist."

Cooper said all artists, no matter what type of art they create, face a lot of the same challenges.

"We felt it was something we could bring to our subscriber base," he said. "It's an insider's perspective for the audience."

"Red" was written by John Logan and first performed in 2009. Since then, it has won six

Tony Awards.

"The play has been one of the most popular plays in the last half-decade," Cooper said. "It's a really remarkable play, and it's something we're really proud to bring to this area. If you enjoy art in any perspective, whether it's fine art, performing art or both, it will let you see what it means to be an artist."

"Red" will run at the Studio from March 20 to April 22, and many tickets still are available for the April performances. Tickets can be purchased for \$35 at thesharonstudio.com or at any Villages Box Office location.

Kristen Fiore is a staff writer with The Villages Daily Sun. She can be reached at 352-753-1119, ext. 5270, or kristen.fiore@thevillagesmedia.com.

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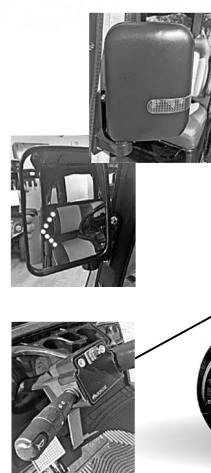
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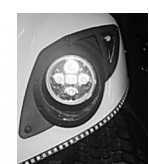
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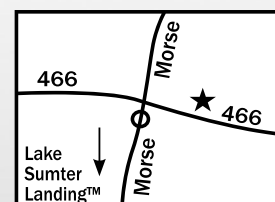
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