

Nugget of suburbia lives in dingy downtown club

NEW YORK (AP) — To the land of magenta hair and mutilated T-shirts, to a club that offers transvestite mud wrestling and African tribal music, Vera Castellone brought a little nugget of suburbia: a Tupperware party.

A Tupperware party at a dingy club on seedy Avenue A in Manhattan's East Village. A Tupperware party where some participants seem to have come from another planet. A Tupperware party for the New Wave.

"I love the product, so I enjoy demonstrating it," said Mrs. Castellone.

On this night, Mrs. Castellone brought with her from Long Island scores of Tupperware products and an indomitable will to sell; she was greeted by men wearing Mohawks haircuts, others in unorthodox costume, and a female impersonator who made hors d'oeuvres with processed cheese.

Mostly, Tupperware is sold at parties at private homes. In 28 years with Tupperware — she and her husband are now distributors for the New York area — Mrs. Castellone says the only club dates she's had were at yacht clubs.

Mrs. Castellone may never have set foot within a five-mile radius of the Pyramid Cocktail Lounge but for Malcolm Kelso, a 32-year-old native of Montreal,

self-styled impresario of the bizarre, believer in Home Improvement Products and organizer of the Tupperware party.

"I always like to do something out of context. And I figure everybody needs Tupperware," said Kelso.

Mrs. Castellone, her blonde hair perfectly coiffed, wears a red suit with a button on the lapel displaying Tupperware's new theme: "You're in the company of friends."

"I did this because Malcolm and I are friends. I trust him," she said.

The man she trusts wore a lounge-lizard red blazer to the Tupperware party, along with a chain of tiny Tupperware containers draped over his bare chest. "You can put cocaine in them, diamonds, nickels, anything," he said.

"For me, Tupperware is America, and I love America," Kelso said in introducing Mrs. Castellone. The crowd applauded.

Mrs. Castellone climbed the stage to stand behind a table that appeared to support all of the Tupperware in the world.

"I hope you are comfortable here. I am. Ray is. The warmth of the friends that you make is more important than where you are. I certainly hope that by the end of the evening, we will be friends," she said, to applause.

She said she would not be able to demonstrate ALL Tupperware products ("Awww," moaned the crowd). She introduced her daughter, Claudia ("Hi, Claudia!" they exclaimed). She said she would help them figure the sales tax on their purchases ("How considerate," they said).

For the next hour and a half, Mrs. Castellone sang the praises of Tupperware and dispensed household hints.

She told them how to make cheeseburgers with the cheese on the inside; she explained that she cuts onions once a month and freezes them in miniature containers; she described how she seals each day's leftovers in separate containers, and then serves a "Saturday smorgasbord."

"Don't eat leftovers anymore," she said. "Eat planovers."

"Ohhhhhhh," said the crowd, numbering now about 50.

She explained the Modular Mates, the Chees-N-Butter Keeper, the Wonderlier Bowl Set, the Servelier Set, the Pick-A-Dei Set. The audience was agog when she discussed the Crisp-It container, guaranteed to keep lettuce fresh.

"Anybody out there like wilted lettuce?" she asked.

"I don't mind if it's left out of the refrigerator overnight. No longer than overnight, but overnight is fine," said one man, his earring dangling.

As Mrs. Castellone entered the home stretch — the Pop-A-Lot Toy, the Shake Mates — a tall man wearing a blond wig and a quilted gold mini-dress walked in, kissed Malcolm and sat down.

Mrs. Castellone didn't miss a beat; her pitch ended, she drew an ovation.

"I want the soup and sandwich set," said the blond, who is named David Wickstrom but performs as Peggi. "I work a five-day week and I take my lunch, and I think it would be very convenient."

"It was one of the best Tupperware parties I've ever been to," said Stuart Anthony, 21, of Brooklyn. Anthony, who wears small orange glasses and his hair in a semipompador, acknowledged he had attended only one other Tupperware party — when he was 6 years old.

"I think it was great, very funny," said a bare-chested, Mohawked man who identified himself only as Joey. "I'm not going to buy anything, though. I don't need any of it."

Indeed, Ray Castellone could not hide his disappointment at the business they did — about \$200 worth. But he would do it again, he added.

"It was an experience," he said.

New book points out some pitfalls of education reform

By LEE MITGANG
AP Education Writer

NEW YORK — She's pretty sure it was a joke, but Diane Ravitch this summer found her name in a column by political pundit George F. Will in which he nominated a hypothetical cabinet for the next Demo-

cratic president.

She was "named" Education Secretary.

Whether or not she ever lands that job, Mrs. Ravitch, an education historian on the faculty of Columbia Teachers College, has ably tackled a task almost as challenging as a

cabinet post: writing a post-war history of American education.

In "The Troubled Crusade: American Education, 1945-1980" to be published next month, Mrs. Ravitch casts a historian's eye on some of the political, social and academic forces

that have buffeted the classroom: the loyalty investigations of the early 1950s, the race question, campus radicalism.

But most meaningful — and ominous, in the context of the current debate on educational quality — are her chapters on past reform

efforts. In that respect, this history of modern American education makes for depressing reading.

Waves of reform, the book shows, come and go. Today's classroom dogma becomes tomorrow's heresy.

What saddened Mrs.

Ravitch most in writing her book, she said in a recent interview, is "a strain of anti-intellectualism" dominating U.S. educational theories.

So-called "progressive education," for instance, took hold in the 1940s through mid-50s, and sought to replace the rigid authority of the typical school with a curriculum that meshed more with

student needs and interests. Learning had to be "useful" to be relevant, so that doctrine went.

Lost somewhere along the way was the idea that schools existed primarily to teach "basics" like algebra and history.

Teachers either agreed with the progressive doctrine or they lost their jobs — ironic, observes Mrs. Ravitch, since pro-

gressivism was hailed by its backers as open and democratic.

The Soviet launching of Sputnik marked the next great wave of school reform based on boosting science, math and language skills, but hoped-for changes fell short because the questions of race and equal educational opportunity crowded out everything else through the mid-60s.

UTMB offers allied health summer program

GALVESTON — The School of Allied Health Sciences at Galveston recently conducted a summer program for high school students at The University of Texas Medical Branch campus. UTMB is the only school of allied health in the state which offers a summer program of this nature.

The program offered an overview of the allied health professions through a mixture of classroom and clinical experiences. Students received assistance in academic planning, study skills, motivation and goal setting. Campus tours, hospital tours and films were

also on the agenda.

This is the second year the school has sponsored a summer program. One week of the program was designed for students who attended last year. This year they received more intensive clinical exposure and also discussed clinical etiquette. In addition, seminars were offered dealing with the application and admissions process for allied health schools, and students practiced admissions interviewing.

This year more than 350 applications were received from students in the Houston, Galveston, Corpus

Christi, Laredo and Brownsville areas. Students were recruited through the mail and by school representatives who visited more than 40 high schools. Students applied to the program and were selected by an admissions committee of three health career counselors.

Area students attending included Stella Green of Hitchcock, Dennis Sparks of Hitchcock, Lurena V. Ray of Hitchcock, Mary Beth Levine of Galveston, and Courtney Coulter of Galveston.

While attending the summer program, the stu-

dents resided in the Phi Chi fraternity house on campus. They received funding out of a START-UP grant (a Health Careers Opportunity Program grant) to cover their room and board as well as a small stipend to assist with transportation costs.

The School of Allied Health Sciences includes instruction programs in occupational therapy, physical therapy, physician's assistant, medical records administration, medical technology, cytotechnology, health education and health administration. Personnel

from each of these programs made presentations, and student representatives from the Minorities Student-Faculty Council presented a panel discussion to relate their personal experiences.

The summer program is open to college-bound high school students who have expressed an interest in the health professions and have shown a motivation and commitment to post-secondary education. High School students interested in participating in next year's program may obtain an application and further information by calling the schools at 761-3030.

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