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March 18, 1982

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BLOOMINGTON, ILL.--When the director and cast of a one-act play at Timothy Christian High School in Elmhurst found they needed some outside help with their production of "The Ugly Duckling" for the school's Fine Arts Festival, Mar. 30, they recalled having seen and worked with Dr. Carole Brandt, Director of the School of Drama at Illinois Wesleyan University.

Ms. Brandt had conducted a workshop in January at the Illinois Theatre Association convention at Illinois State University. Some of these student had been there.

John Harkema, the director, is a Latin teacher at Timothy Christian and only rarely gets involved in drama productions, but for the festival, he would do this one.

He called Ms. Brandt to arrange an appointment for an afternoon workshop at Wesleyan. Ms. Brandt, who enjoyed great success teaching and directing high school drama prior to coming to Wesleyan, couldn't say no. She loves working with young people and she loves theatre, but the visit would have to be delayed until her own play, "Much Ado About Nothing," closed last Saturday.

The appointment was made and Harkema and seven students spent most of Tuesday afternoon in McPherson Theatre. Utilizing only a small portion of the main stage and using the simplest of props, a chair or a box or a board for a bench, the students put on their play for Ms. Brandt, who took copious notes, and Harkema.

Then the real work of the visit, the purpose of the trip, started as Ms. Brandt sat with her buests in her office and on the stage reviewing what she had just seen. She commented generally about a line here or a movement there, and questioned the students individually about character motives and understanding. After an hour or so, the suggestion was made they might benefit more by running through more scenes, but the

seven students, as one, disagreed. They wanted to hear more and to talk more. Soon a two-hour session stretched to nearly three hours before Ms. Brandt scurried off late to a previous appointment.

But Steve Wiersum, Rob Ramey, Ruth Luchtenberg, Debbie Slager, Jane Voortman, Jim Cook and Terry Jackson...and John Karkema...affirmed the day had been well spent. They all seemed to think that, because of having made the trip, the "Ugly Duckling" just might become a pretty darn good show.