



**Chuck Gregory**  
Photo by  
Constance Gabriel



Queen Dorothy Soczek and committee members Barbara Parente and Yvette Mancini were quite regal at the film festival



*Ms Senior Sweethearts Take A Trip To  
"Their Movie" in Nantucket, 8*

## "You Ought To Be In Pictures!"

By **Chuck Gregory, Editor, Tribune**  
(VP, Marketing, Pageant)

Daffy Duck, 1940, movie  
by the same name



Len Kaplan stole the show (with what us city folk consider everyday activities) by playing his kazoo and being a verbal artist as an emcee. His character being what it is, came to the fore during interviews and committee functions. Las Vegas lost Mr. Kaplan as a icon because Fall River had first choice. If Kaplan was a mime he would still be considered noisy.

A personal note - Low Price (as he is known), you, the pageant staff itself and the 100's of other people involved in three decades of this project always were special. This documentary laid bare the fact that the Ms Senior Sweetheart Pageant was a big deal a long time ago. "Pretty Old" just let the rest of the world in on our secret.

Concerning any further successes, just have their people call our people, a volunteer will answer our phone. Maybe you'll have to leave a message. She'll get back to you as soon as she is done working out at the YMCA or teaching dance classes or organizing pageant meals or trying to come up with a new prayer for Monday morning's pageant agenda with eggs and coffee in the Westport Hampton Inn meeting room, #110. The lady, Yvette Mancini, will be 96 years old soon.

Since the pageant was formed in 1978 to benefit a fraternal fund raising effort, a group of people each possessing special talents and desires combined with a will to work for the good of all, have maintained the highest level of efficiency, proficiency and crowd pleasing, affordable fun to this day. This pageant is quite possibly the best of its kind in the world. Why? Each volunteer, no matter what age, has a professional, outstanding resume that has been built from toil in the work place and at home. The result of the volunteer's past, present and continued efforts has for 33 years always ended up with the greatest ladies in the world walking across a stage in Fall River.

We welcome the world to *our* stage. Us pageant folk know that this is a darn good group with a special mission. The Committee's and Board member's faces change over the years, people come and go, but their collective determination doesn't alter, ever.

We've heard it all before, most people around these parts know that the Ms Senior Sweetheart Pageant's unsinkable reputation for class and integrity is, well, quite simply, it's "Pretty Old."

The Ms Senior Sweetheart Pageant of America Inc./International's Planning Committee and Board Members took a trip to Nantucket at their own expense recently. The occasion was to watch a documentary based on them, yes, them and the Ms Senior Sweetheart Pageant.

Based in Fall River for its entire 34 years, Leonard Kaplan, founder of the concept and later the pageant itself has reached a goal. He has always wanted the pageant to be something "Special." What that 'is' is based on his own definition of "Special" because many people think it already is.

Well, Walter Mattesen and his New York production company (via Copenhagen) traveled with the pageant around this area for two years starting in 2008. They visited many current and previous contestants & Queens at their homes and work places.

The resulting documentary is a work of art. Many contestants traveled a few months ago to the Santa Barbara Film Festival in California, again, at their own expense. The first run was not only sold out at most venues, it drew national attention with a First Place win. The Executive Producer of the documentary is Sarah Jessica Parker and other film directors. The film, however, won on its own merits.

"Pretty Old" was acclaimed with a baptism in the bible of stardom, *The Hollywood Reporter*. News travels fast. So does Twitter and Facebook.

Before long inquiries were coming in from everywhere, and, much to everyone's surprise from the hallowed *Nantucket Film Festival*. Although about fifty miles east of the Southcoast (including 14 miles of ocean) the island is a million miles away from reality.

The documentary was shown twice, once on Saturday and again on Sunday. The site was the historic First Congregational Church. The church is in the film-festival-gig full steam with a theatre complex building-attached to the church building. Praise the Lord in HD and Cinemascope. If the building is a rectory it is like no other. It has a 20-foot projection screen, superb sound system, comfortable movie seats with arm rests, a 30% incline with popcorn and goodies like Mason Dots, Goobers and Sky Bars. We hear that God really likes to snack out at the movies.

The main entrée was the film. The audience was overwhelmed by the work, cheering as each pageant person who was in the audience showed up on the screen. Please understand, the pageant folks didn't know a sole in the audience before the film ran. They have a whole new world of family members now.

Besides contestants Charlotte Ambrose, Ida White, Tamara Thatcher Swihart, Phyllis Chickett and (the late) Frances Christian who were highlighted, the celluloid ego booster featured many other people. Jerry Gamache and Wayne Lima were noted for their attire and hard work, as was Mark Harrison. All of the planning committee got face time. The producers made sure everyone got recognized for their efforts fairly.



Top: On the porch of the home quarters on Nantucket Island are Sharon Maloney, Annette Gamache and Charlotte Ambrose. On stage after the showing are: Ms Maloney, Carol Tuohy, Len Kaplan & Josh Alexander at the microphone.

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**ACK**

Diane Keaton & Connie Gabriel



Walter Matteson went to Nantucket and caught an imaginary fish thi-i-i-is big.



**ACK**



Len Kaplan

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Left: With the champagne of bottled cheers and imitation chocolate Krackle are: Heather LeBeouf, Walter Mattesen, Yvette Mancini, Len Kaplan and Beverly Kaplan out on the porch on Darling Street in Nantucket.

Hanging out at the beach are: L-R: Marty Tuohy, Sharon Maloney, Carol Tuohy, Ida White (rear), Diane Keaton, Constance Gabriel, Charlotte Ambrose and Phyllis Chickett. The Senior Sweethearts had a great time with Ms Keaton, an internationally acclaimed actress.



*Above: On Nantucket even the trash barrels on Main Street have culture.*



Riding as Co-Pilot for the flight to Nantucket on Cape Air was pageant committee member Andrea Barron of Attleboro, MA.

Left: Len Kaplan on stage at a pageant final.  
Right: at a fish shop: Josh Alexander, Trish Govoni;  
Rear: Walter Matteson, Connie Gabriel, Charlotte Ambrose, Ida White, Carol Tuohy and Sharon Maloney.

Photos on these pages were taken by Chuck Gregory and Heather LeBeouf, with Andrea Barron and Constance Gabriel, as contributors.







Annette Gamache, Chuck Gregory and Heather LeBeouf goofing around.



Welcoming Commiiteeman Wayne Lima pauses on the porch after a very exciting day at the theatre.



Photo, right, Front: Barbara Parente; Rear: Charlotte Ambrose, Chuck Gregory, Annette Gamache, Walter Mattesson and 2012 Queen Dorothy Soczek.  
Right: Phyliss Chickett, Dorothy Soczek, Barbara Parente, Yvette Mancini, Len Kaplan, Charlotte Ambrose and Carol Tuohy; Rear: Sharon Maloney, 2011 Queen Constance Gabriel and Ida White.







Above: Taking flight are, front row, Andrea Barron, Barbara Parente, Dottie Soczek, Wayne Lima, Yvette Mancini and Beverly Kaplan; Rear: Susan and Alan Kaplan, the pilot and Len Kaplan.



Above: Marty Tuohy, the 2nd best looking person in a dress at the pageant's Men's Night Out. Who is first? Everybody else!



Queen Constance Gabriel and Len Kaplan, President and Founder of the pageant.



Ida White

[www.prettyoldtrailer.com](http://www.prettyoldtrailer.com)



Left: Many of the cast and production folks are on the stage at the intimate setting at the First Congregational Church in Nantucket.

Above: Len Kaplan in a solemn moment on stage.