

SAN DIEGO COUNTY

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Novel Revue in Rancho Santa Fe

Show Goers Play Part in Hiring Teachers

By TED VOLLMER, Times Staff Writer

RANCHO SANTA FE — The situation is reminiscent of those old Mickey Rooney-Judy Garland movies in which the stars turn wide-eyed toward each other in times of financial need and shout in unison, "Let's put on a show!"

This time, however, it's real life and the unprecedented fund-raising goal of the original musical revue, "How to Cope With Life on the Ranch" is \$35,000 to hire two part-time teachers for the Rancho Santa Fe School District.

The production is not likely to be a big hit outside Rancho Santa Fe, but already all four evening shows and one matinee performance are sold out, and tickets for a second matinee are at a premium.

That success naturally pleases producer Jeff Brown — who also acts in and plays the piano in the production —

but not as much as the knowledge that the ticket sales will finance part-time music and art teachers for his children as well as the 440 other district students.

If the community does eventually raise

Project might be attractive for other districts.

the \$35,000, it may serve as a model for other financially strapped school districts.

Already, more than \$15,000 has been raised from ticket sales, and Brown is confident that the remaining \$20,000 will be raised through a letter-writing cam-

paign and solicitations after the productions.

Officials outside Rancho Santa Fe have expressed interest in the musical revue project and said they would be watching it carefully to see if similar efforts might be launched in their areas.

Education officials believe it is the first time a private fund-raising drive has been held to finance schoolteacher salaries, although such drives have in the past helped pay for band uniforms, field trips and school equipment.

In this fiscally tight year, however, the Rancho Santa Fe project might be an attractive method for some districts to rescue popular educational programs. If a small district like Rancho Santa Fe can hire two part-time teachers through a

musical revue, why couldn't, for example, larger districts raise much more money for full-time instructors in much the same way?

Although small, Rancho Santa Fe, of course, is inhabited by very wealthy people whose strong commitment to education of their children has been shown. Their teachers are the highest paid in the county, and past fund-raising efforts by parents and the community have financed a number of school-related projects.

This combination of wealth and commitment was cited by a number of officials in other districts as one advantage Rancho Santa Fe has over some of their districts. They added, however, that the concept was nevertheless worth a second look.

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