

Tiny Woman, Tall Talent

SUZANNE RICHARD is riding high. The Rockville native has been nominated for a Helen Hayes Award for best director for *Jesus Christ Superstar*. The show is also up for an award as best resident musical.

Richard is an actor and has just finished a run as the Witch of Capri in the Washington Shakespeare Company's production of *The Milk Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore*. Not bad for someone who barely hits four feet tall and uses crutches because of osteogenesis imperfecta (brittle-bone disease).

"Her bones may be weak, but her spirit is solid steel," says a friend from Walter Johnson High School.

At Walter Johnson, Richard spent more time acting than studying. She managed to talk her way into the theater department at the University of North Carolina even though she hadn't made the wait list.

"I begged, and they caved," Richard says. By the end of her first year, the school offered her a scholarship.

After graduation, Richard returned here and started audition-



Richard is up for a Helen Hayes Award for best director.

ing. She took jobs to keep body and soul together—she was a nanny, a member of the Kaiser Permanente Educational Theater Program, and an accessibility specialist at the National Endowment for the Arts.

She was cast in plays but felt that she had hit a glass ceiling professionally. "There should be a place where actors with disabilities are cast based only on their talent," she says.

That place is her Open Circle Theatre, a

company operating so far with big dreams and little money. Open Circle's next production, Bertolt Brecht's *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, opens July 4 weekend at Round House Silver Spring.

Meanwhile, she is getting ready for the Helen Hayes Awards on May 9. How did she react when she learned she'd been nominated?

"I was jumping up and down in shock," she says. If anyone can jump, it would be Susie Richard.

—LESLIE MILK

Barb and Jenna: Down and Out in Adams Morgan

THE TERM "cultural exchange" has taken on a whole new meaning. **John Cecchi, Tripp Donnelly, Lindsay**



Lona Alia and John Cecchi, a member of the Capitol Club.

Stroud, and James Maxwell, part of the Georgetown preppy crowd that hangs out with the Bush twins at Smith Point bar, threw a party that included a field trip to DC's Adams Morgan.

The four men are part of a social group called the Capitol Club, mostly made up of Republican bachelors.

"The kids here don't normally hang out in Adams Morgan," said Cecchi at the invitation-only party at the newly opened restaurant/lounge Chloe on 18th Street. "It's too international, too crazy, so we wanted to get everyone together and show them that it

can be a good time."

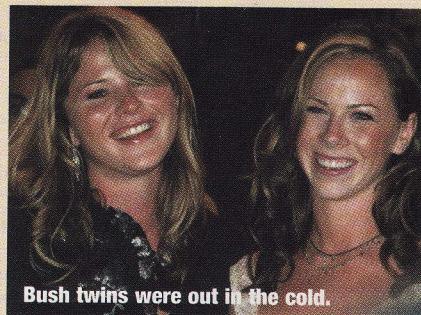
The word "them" includes all manner of privileged and promising young men and women about town. Nearly 1,300 people accepted, and judging from the line of young women freezing in strappy sandals outside, the party hit its 500-person capacity without a problem.

Even VIPs such as **Barbara and Jenna Bush** were stuck outside for nearly 30 minutes before opting for some bars across the street. "I think a couple of guys who were with them actually waited in line while they were in the car," says Donnelly. "I had some good friends who were

with them, and we were disappointed they didn't get inside."

The Bush twins are part of the clique that meets regularly at Smith Point. According to Cecchi, the twins' Secret Service agents don't even bother coming in when "Twinkle" and "Turquoise" hang with this very J.Crew crew.

"The Secret Service knows us," he said. "I mean, how threatening are a bunch of guys in blazers?"



Bush twins were out in the cold.