

Community Kicks Up Its Heels at First Night Westfield Celebration

First Night Westfield, which is sponsored by the Westfield Y, The Westfield Foundation and The Town of Westfield, is Westfield's community celebration of the arts held on New Year's Eve.



RINGING IN THE NEW YEAR IN WESTFIELD... Joshua and Amanda Simmoms show off their custom decorated masks they created at Westfield High School during First Night Westfield 2000 festivities held on New Year's Eve. Mask-making was just one of the many unique activities offered by the First Night Committee which worked diligently to make the evening the success that it was.

This program, which began in 1996, offers an alternative to the traditional revelry normally associated with celebrating New Year's Eve.

Each year since its inception, approximately 5,000 residents of all ages have rung in the New Year with dancing, singing, theatrical performances and a wide variety of entertainment ranging from magicians and hypnotists to the circus and Blue Grass, symphony and classical music.

Most of the entertainers are local, Union County, artists.

This affordable event emphasizes community participation for families of all ages. The planning committee recruits and hires age-specific entertainment that is family friendly.

Among last year's hits was the trolley which allowed participants to travel from site to site without their cars. Another highlight featured Karaoke at Fire Station No. 1.

Each year, new entertainment is included, some of the standards remain, and some of the acts that have been standards are rotated off to be included in future First Nights. This allows the participants to enjoy some of their old favorites and some new ones.

To attend First Night, participants purchase a \$10 First Night Westfield button and wear it as an admission ticket. Admission fees cover a small part of the evening's costs.

Sponsorships, including PNC Bank and The Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders, make it possible to keep the event reasonably priced.

In 1999, activities began at 7 p.m. and culminated into a large millennium celebration, coordinated by Elaine Slabe and Darryl Walker in the

Westfield Y gymnasium.

Attendees are encouraged to map out their evening with first and second preferences of over 50 performances. Held in 24 different venues, at 11 varied sites, indoor events continue until midnight. Most performances are scheduled for 45 minutes each and are repeated one time.

Participants may choose to attend three or four complete performances, or for greater variety, may attend partial performances.

All events are held inside so the weather is not a factor. Each site maintains parking so participants can walk, drive, or take a trolley to each site. Activities are held in three clusters of buildings surrounding the center of town. Participants may decide to stay in one venue or cluster or travel back and forth between clusters.

The sites used in 1999 included The Westfield Y, The First United Methodist Church, The Presbyterian Church in Westfield, The First Congregational Church, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, The Holy Trinity Roman Catholic School, Westfield High School, the Westfield National Guard Armory, and Firehouse Station No. 1.

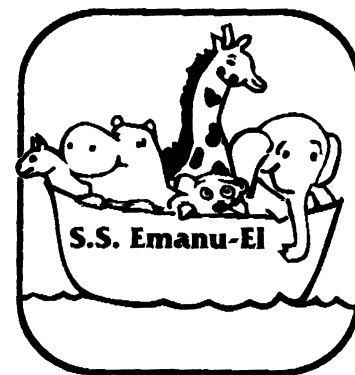
For more information regarding sponsoring or volunteering, please call Julia Black at The Westfield Y at (908) 233-2700. To participate as a performer, please leave a message at (908) 518-2983 for Barbara Karp or Arlene Bertrand.

What Do You Like About Westfield?

"Growing up in Brooklyn, this was quite a change for me. I like everything about Westfield; it's very quiet."

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Blue Devil Girls - Also True Champions



The Blue Devil girls swimming team won the Public B State title in 1999 and could have claimed the 2000 A Division crown on a judge ruling but opted not to, stating that they would have rather done it in the water.

Devil Gymnasts Become Dominant Force in State

Breaking all-time Westfield High School records has become a common occurrence for the Blue Devil gymnastics team in the past two years. These record-breaking occurrences have also catapulted the Blue Devils to major state power prominence.

The Blue Devil girls have completed two undefeated seasons in a row, 9-0 in 1998 and 13-0 in 1999, captured their sixth-straight Union County Crown, grabbed their second-straight North 2 title and finished second in the state tournament with a fabulous team total of 108.875. Additionally, in 1999, sophomore Lauren Caravello seized her second-straight New Jersey State title on the uneven



** Lauren Caravello **

bars and placed second in the state in the all-around.

In 1998, the Blue Devils, on several occasions, set all-time records in team totals and in individual totals. In 1999, the all-time team total was heightened to 109.02 during a victory over fourth-ranked Somerville. Lauren Caravello matched her all-time Westfield High School record on the uneven bars at 9.6. Also, sophomore Jessica Caravello tied 1999 graduate Julie Elmuccio's 1998 record of 9.5 on the balance beam.

Watch out for next year because the Blue Devils return all of their first-line gymnasts which include: Lauren and Jessica Caravello, Ashley Flood, Christina Massa and Rachel Skolnick.



Blue Devil Boys Capture State 'A' Swim Crown

The Westfield High School boys swim team completed an amazing comeback by capturing the NJSIAA A Division state championship with an 89.5-80.5 victory over Cherry Hill East at the College of New Jersey. Senior tri-captain Scott Kautzmann led the comeback, having been involved in three first-place finishes.

After sinking Scotch Plains-Fanwood 105-65 in the North Jersey sectional final, the Devils stunned Bridgewater 86-84 in the state semifinals. The Bridgewater meet was the high point of the season to date for WHS which swam 50 lifetime bests out of 60 swims.

However, the Blue Devils surpassed that just 70 hours later as most of the

Devils continued to have major time drops. Westfield managed six first places against Cherry Hill East, an 87-83 winner over three-time defending state champion Shawnee in the South Jersey sectional final.

Kautzmann captured the 50 (22.67) and 100 (49.97) freestyles, and anchored the meet-clinching 400 free relay (3:27.82, with freshman Zack Coppa, senior Turner Yevich and fellow captain Kyle McCloskey joining him). Junior Cliff Haldeman took first with a lifetime best 2:03.65 in the 200 IM, senior Paul Kolterjahn coasted to first with a 5:02.80 in the 500 and junior Matt Vidovich posted a first-place finish in 1:01.82 in the 100 breaststroke, good for fourth on the WHS Top 15.



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