

ARTS ENTERTAINMENT



Get Outta The House

By CAROL F. DAVIS
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

It's easy to drop \$5, but unusual to receive something of quality for the investment. We're talking a soup and sandwich luncheon at The First Congregational Church's Social Hall on Elmer Street in Westfield. By the way, you will also be able to attend the free, half-hour concert by the *Metropolitan Saxophone Quartet* before the meal. The concert will feature jazz and show tunes, including music by George Gershwin and Glenn Miller, performed by four men who have all had professional careers in music. Be there on Wednesday, February 20, at noon. If you are in the area, or it's your lunch hour, enjoy!

On Sunday, February 17, at 7:30 p.m., Temple Emanu-El in Westfield will host the *Mostly Music Chamber Series* with a performance of violins, viola, cello and piano. Music includes Setzer's *Elegy for Violin and Piano*, Faure's *Piano Quartet in G Minor*, and Mozart's *String Quartet in C*. Tickets, which are available at the door, are \$20 for the general public, \$18 for senior citizens, and \$10 for students. For more information, please call (973) 762-0108.

Kids and adults with talent are wanted! Try out for a part in *South Pacific* at CDC Theatre of the Cranford Dramatic Club (CDC). All roles are open for those who can dance, sing and act. Rodgers and Hammerstein wrote this musical, adapted from two love stories merged into one, set on an island during World War II. Sunday, February 24, is audition day. For kids, it will take place at 2 p.m. and for adults, be there by 7 p.m. Adults have a second opportunity on Tuesday, February 26, a 7 p.m. If you are selected, congratulations and be ready to rehearse. It's starting on the enchanted evening of Friday, May 3.

There are a few events coming to the Union County Arts Center, 1601 Irving Street in Rahway, this week. Catch the Valentine's performance of the film, *Moonstruck*, tonight at 8 p.m. It's a romantic comedy with a fabulous cast, including Cher and Nicholas Cage. Don't be shy - it's a Tuesday night - go alone if you want to get out. It will be dark in there. Tickets are \$8. On Saturday, February 16, take your favorite kid to a 1 p.m. matinee of Peter Pan. Tickets for this one are \$9. You know that story.

Pen & Ink

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Valentine's Day has been measured by flowers, popularity and vanity - rarely did the cupid's true aim of l-o-v-e make a dent in my tough exterior. While I'm not down on the whole concept of finding a special man to share my life with, I think Valentine's Day, as a whole, is too much of a 24-hour Hallmark holiday, with little or no emphasis on the l-o-v-e.

Still, you'd think I would have been tipped off as a toddler that any men named "Grimm" would not be reliable sources for advice on pursuing romance. Besides, I have tons of spiked heeled shoes in my closet that declare war on my ankles every time I try them on. What would make a glass slipper more comfortable? But, I'll still force them on my foot until the right one fits.



"Wanderlust," glicee print by Alexandra Eldridge. Courtesy of Alexandra Eldridge

Alexandra Eldridge: An Evolution

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25, 2001, when her father Harry Devlin succumbed to a long illness. "Confronting my father's death was very difficult for me," she said, "because he had been so incredibly important in my life."

"I got closer to the family as a result," confided Eldridge, who has made New York City her temporary home once again. Once eager to become familiar with the unfamiliar, the artist finds comfort in more recognizable and memorable environs, where her friends and family of many years have been found.

In a trendy nugget of the metropolis, Eldridge spends half of every day painting and often treats herself to meeting new people, visiting museums and galleries throughout the remainder of her day. Currently searching for representation in New York City, she will exhibit at The Turner Caroll Gallery in Sante Fe in June and at The Julie Baker Gallery in California in November. She has exhibited in galleries from Winooski, Vt. to Athens, Ohio, Montgomery, Ala. to Boulder, Colo., and Wabash, Ind. to Plainfield.

"My life is a continuous, evolving adventure," she said. "I've been for-

tunate. For the last five years, I've totally made a living through painting and raised two children on my own for 14 years."

An arduous, yet satisfying process, Eldridge has worked in a medium known as "Venetian plaster," which lends an antiquated look of layers upon layers to every piece she creates. While the semi-translucent, tinted plaster effect results in a gorgeous "Old World" European flavor, Eldridge acknowledges that hard labor is involved. With two growing children in toe, she was often painting until 2 a.m.

"It fed my soul and kept me alive," she said of the faux finish process. Eldridge believes the medium also achieves a sense of both physical and metaphorical layering. Over the years, Eldridge has served as illustrator for volumes like "Orlando" (Italcia Press, 1994), "The Sleepy Baker" (Northland Publishers, 1993), "A Medieval Book of Beasts" (Edwin Mellen Press, 1992), and "Visions of Heaven & Hell Before Dante" (Italcia Press, 1991).

At one point, when Eldridge resided in Spain, she developed paintings for a screenplay under the direction of Steve Buscemi's wife.

Gala Concert Will be Ideal Ending to Bach Weekend

WESTFIELD — The Westfield Bach Festival will conclude three days of music with its crowning jewel, the Westfield Bach Festival Gala Concert, on Sunday, February 24 at 7:30 p.m., when the Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity will ring with the sounds of festival chorus, soloists, and orchestra.

The program, conducted by the former director of the Westfield Oratorio Society, Philip Dieterich, will begin with piccolo trumpets and timpani, strings, and winds, presenting the *Orchestral Suite No. 3 in D*. This suite, which includes the famous *Air on the G String*, will be followed by *Cantata 56, Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen* ("I Will My Cross-Staff Gladly Carry"), for baritone soloist and orchestra.

This cantata, sung Sunday by baritone Elem Eley, is a fine example of Bach's use of tone painting to express in music the meaning of the text — a concept to be explored in detail at the Festival's Saturday symposium. The second half of the program will begin with the *Concerto for Two Harpsichords and String Orchestra in C minor*. Soloists for the concerto are noted harpsichordist Edward Brewer and Barbara Thomson, Music Director of the First Congregational Church in Westfield.

The program will conclude with *Cantata 19, Es erhub sich ein Streit* ("There Arose A Fierce Strife"). This cantata, written for the feast of St. Michael the Archangel, is again replete with tone painting.

Recitatives and arias include the famous "battle aria" for tenor, sung by noted Bach specialist Frederick Urrey. The whole cantata is concluded by a presentation of the final chorale with the full instrumental complement. Soloists include the acclaimed soprano, Laura Heimes, (who was such a success in last year's Festival with her performance of the solo soprano cantata *Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen*), Frederick Urrey, and baritone Eley.

The opening program of the festival will be on Friday, February 22, at 7:30 p.m. A semi-staged English production of Bach's humorous *Coffee Cantata and Peasant Cantata*, will be performed in the Parish Hall of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Westfield, and will feature table-side seating and cof-

fee and pastries.

Soprano Laura Heimes will be the vocal partner of baritone Eley in both cantatas. Tenor Timothy Fallon completes the cast of the Coffee Cantata, and the chamber ensemble will be conducted from the harpsichord by Edward Brewer.

At 11 a.m. on Saturday, February 23, there will be a symposium on the omnipresent symbolism in Bach's music, and at 2 p.m., the Organ Marathon will return for three hours of non-stop playing, beginning with a performance of the *Tocatta and Fugue in D minor*.

Organists for the marathon are Rives Cassel (2 p.m.), Director of Music/Organist of the Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity; Trent Johnson (2:45 p.m.), Director of Music and Arts at First United Methodist Church; Donald Sutherland (3:30 p.m.), Professor of Organ at the Peabody Conservatory, and Ms. Thomson (4:15 p.m.).

Both Saturday events will be held at First Congregational Church in Westfield.

Tickets for the Coffeehouse Cantatas and the organ marathon will be \$20 (general admission), \$15 (senior citizens), and \$10 (students) and for the Westfield Bach Festival Gala Concert will be \$30 (general admission), \$20 (senior), and \$15 (student).

Tickets for the entire series are \$55 (general admission), \$40 (senior citizens), and \$25 (students). The symposium on Saturday morning is free of charge and the pre-concert lecture before the gala concert (6:30 p.m. on Sunday) is free to those purchasing gala concert tickets.

Series and individual concert tickets will be available at the First Congregational Church, the First United Methodist Church, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, the Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity, and The Presbyterian Church of Westfield.

In addition, series tickets may be purchased at Betty Gallagher Antiques, The Classic Basket, Lancaster, Ltd., and Periwinkle's, all of Westfield.

The Westfield Bach Festival is made possible in part by a generous grant from the Westfield Foundation. For more information about the festival, please visit www.westfieldnj.com/bach.



Cheri Rogowsky for The Westfield Leader and The Times
GRAND OCCASION... The Little Opera Company of New Jersey presented its Vocal Excellence Awards Concert for professionals and young artists on Saturday at The Presbyterian Church in Westfield. The proceeds benefited the organization's scholarship fund. Pictured, above, are: Music Director and Conductor David Wroe of the Westfield Symphony Orchestra, pianist Susan Caldwell of Dunellen, Emily Golden of Westfield, Jane Bunnell of Chatham, and Director of the Little Opera Company of New Jersey Juan Pineda. The participants sang favorite operatic arias.

Book Nook

With Marylou Morano

Falling in Love With Literature Is Good for Young Readers

By MARYLOU MORANO
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Hearts, flowers, candy and kisses. It's time to celebrate St. Valentine's Day! Enhance your celebration by reading a book about the holiday. Several major children's book publishers have recently released books about the holiday, so there is a lot to choose from.

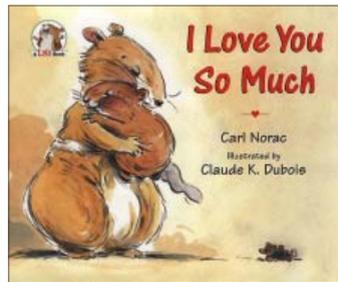
Picture Books
What exactly do we celebrate on Valentine's Day? Well, hugs and hearts for starters. "Hugs and Hearts" by Toni Trent Parker published by Scholastica in 2002 takes picture books one step beyond traditional — it uses photos of real children, making the book extremely true to life.

Valentine's Day is the time you tell people you love them, learns Little Bill in "Happy Valentine's Day" by Robert Scull and published by Simon Spotlight (Simon and Schuster). Little Bill, the star of a Nick Jr. series created by Bill Cosby, sure gives out a lot of love in the pages of this book.

In "I Love You So Much," written by Carl Norac and published by Dragonfly Books (1996), Nora can't keep her special words from bursting from her mouth. What are those special words and whom will she tell them to? No skipping to the end of the book to find out! We've heard of "The Night Before Christmas," but "The Night Before Valentine's Day?" Watch the children prepare for the school Valentine's Day party in "The Night Before Valentine's Day," written by Natasha Wing and published by Grosset and Dunlop in 2000. The text reads just like the favorite classic.

Middle Grades
Nate is on the trail of the culprit who left a red valentine on the dog-

house of his pet dog, Sludge. Check out this Valentine version of Nate, the popular children's sleuth in "Nate the Great and the Mushy Valentine" by



Marjorie Weinman Sharmot published by Bantam Doubleday in 1994.

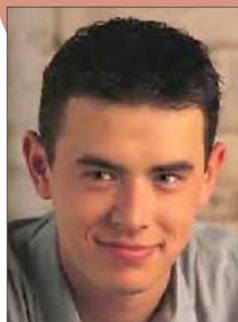
The story of the Civil Rights Movement is intertwined with the story of St. Valentine in a special book titled "The Legend of the Valentine." Written Christian writing award winner Katherine Grace Bond and published by Zonderkidz in 2001, elementary school age children who read this book will come away with new interpretations of what it means to celebrate love.

And now for the teens
Crushes...boyfriends...dating...How can you tell it's the real thing? Take the test with "The Love and Romance Teen Quiz Book" by Annalee Levine, Jana Johnson and Arlene Hamilton Stewart. It's hot off the presses of Andrews McNeil.

I hope you LOVE reading these books. Enjoy Valentine's Day and don't forget to tell your loved ones how much they mean to you every day, not just on February 14!

In the coming weeks, Book Nook will feature literature highlighting Black History Month.

Artist of the Week



Colin Hanks (1977-)

By MICHELLE H. Le POIDEVIN
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

I know what you're thinking. Son of the Hollywood can-do-no-wrong superstar Tom Hanks just happens to be the next up and coming in a 2002 Brat Pack. Colin just happened to get the lead role in a hit movie that's going like gangbusters at the box office, *Orange County*, and he's been adored on the WB network's "Roswell." All because he's the oldest son of Tom? Think again.

Resolved that he will not let his father's fame open doors for him in the entertainment industry, Colin adopted an assumed name when he auditioned for his father's movie, *That Thing You Do!* (1996).

Nearly the spitting image of his father, Colin grew up with his mother, Samantha Lewes, in Sacramento, Calif. before enrolling at Chapman University in Orange, Calif. and transferring to Loyola Marymount University in Westchester, Calif.

Studying acting at Loyola afforded Hanks the opportunity to hone his skills in productions like *Noises Off* and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Within two days, Hanks was cast in an update of the classic *Cyrano de Bergerac* entitled, *I'll Be You*, and "Roswell." He played a human being in the latter production, was quite a challenge since he was surrounded by a bunch of wacky aliens.

The 20-something actor now resides in Los Angeles, where he is contented building up his resume on his own merits and not the glitz which comes with his last name.

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{Spring Courses}

{1} New Jersey History Mondays 10-11:45am, 3/11-4/29 Note: no class 4/8 and 4/15

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{2} Comparative Religions Wednesdays 10-11:45am, 3/13-4/24 Note: no class 4/10

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Continuing and Professional Education - Kean University

The tuition for one course is \$60. Pay a discounted price of \$105, if you enroll in both courses.

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