

## Metropolitan Museum of Art Trip Set by WF Library Friends

WESTFIELD - The Friends of the Westfield Memorial Library will sponsor a trip to The Metropolitan Museum of Art (MMA) on Tuesday, December 4, for a guided tour of the El Greco exhibition.

The tour is scheduled for 10:30 a.m., however, tourists will have ample time to explore on their own. Other special MMA exhibitions include "Crossing the Channel: British and French Masterpieces of the Age of Romanticism," "Italian Manuscript Painting," "French Daquerotypes," "Celebrating St. Petersburg" or "Bravehearts: Men in Skirts" at MMA's Costume Institute. The Annual Christmas Tree and Neapolitan Baroque Crèche will be

on display during the tour in MMA's Medieval Art section on the first floor. Last minute holiday shopping may also be completed at the museum's gift shops.

Following the museum visit, tourists will proceed to The Mark Hotel for an afternoon tea, which will be served with finger sandwiches, scones and various pastries. The bus will depart the Westfield Memorial Library, 550 East Broad Street in Westfield, at 8:45 a.m. and will return to the library at approximately 5:30 p.m.

The cost of the trip is \$63 per person. Reservations are limited. To reserve space or to obtain more information, please call Marilyn Musell at (908) 233-2902.



"The Virgin Mary - Mater Dolorosa" by El Greco, 1590s.

### POPCORN™

## Radio: Plays A Mixed Message

One Popcorn, Poor • Two Popcorns, Fair • Three Popcorns, Good • Four Popcorns, Excellent

By MICHAEL S. GOLDBERGER  
2 popcorns

If you are lucky, sometime in your life you will meet someone like Radio — loving, caring, bereft of artifice, full of childlike enthusiasm and, alas, mentally challenged.

Hopefully, you will know how to graciously accept his or her gift of unconditional friendship, unlike a few members of the Hanna High School football team who, at the outset of director Michael Tollin's *Radio*, a true tale named after the character in question, tie-up the poor young man and cache him away in an equipment shed.

That was back in 1976. And, was coach Harold Jones (Ed Harris) angry. For those boys, practice the next day was, to put it mildly, bracing. Too bad the storied coach couldn't administer a similar lesson to several other citizens of the football-crazed South Carolina town. It may have saved time.

Skip to the chase and it's all about the fear of the unknown, mostly, along with fear of association. To the prejudiced and ignorant, maybe whatever Radio (Cuba Gooding, Jr.) has is catching. This is what the goodhearted coach soon finds himself up against as he befriends and then assigns the misunderstood lad a helper position on the football team.

Living with his widowed mom in a modest home on the outskirts of town, Radio loves football even more than he does the music-emitting namesake forever pressed to his ear. Then, he begins to flourish. Previously unconnected, aimlessly piloting a shopping cart around town to fill his day, Gooding's character is soon also given duties within the high school itself. He is made an honorary, perennial 11th grader.

This is a legitimately sweet-souled film, although several dollops of saccharine keep it from providing truly original entertainment. A facility for surprise is not one of its assets. Therefore, expecting neither twist nor turn, you can surmise what happens when those powers that be get wind of the highly unorthodox experiment.

Gosh. You'd think folks like this would just be content to burn the library's copy of "Catcher in the Rye," or maybe every so often ban something that might even save their kids' lives, like sex education. But, not so. Though there isn't a burgher who wouldn't agree that Hanna H.S. couldn't find a better football coach than Jones, you can guess where the plot's heading here as well. When it comes down to it, isn't it all in the writing? The problem is how to compellingly embellish a true story without compromising the facts. Unfortunately, screenwriter Mike Rich doesn't quite answer the challenge. While commendably opting for the integrity route, he fails to pepper the material with the sort of Hollywood voodoo it takes to give the truth that added zing.

Likewise, filmmaker Tollin doesn't exhibit any compensatory flourishes. His direction is clean, but with nary a nuance or an inventive stroke to spirit the saga along. Of course, super acting can always be counted upon to enliven matters. In some rare instances, it can even save the day. Problem is, you'll see no exceptional thespic contributions here.

Harris, who consistently etches good performances, is solid enough as the hassled humanitarian, but no great shakes. Likewise for Gooding, who should nonetheless be applauded for successfully veering from potentially maudlin excesses in his execution of Radio.

While it's certainly nice to see Debra Winger, her return to the big screen as Linda, the coach's wife, is sadly inopportune. Like the role of Willy Loman's wife in *Death of a Salesman*, incidentally also a Linda, the subordinate part brings no notice...that is, unless it isn't done right. She brings no notice.

This all said, it behooves to note that despite its generally unsensational attributes, *Radio* remains a rather watchable if not unique commodity. This is largely a function of its subject matter. It's interesting. But when it comes down to it, *Radio* is much more important than it is good.

So, the trials and tribulations of James Robert "Radio" Kennedy might have been better served had they been mounted by some good documentarian. When a movie straddles the fence this way, it becomes rather academic...trying to decide if it is filmic fowl or fish. You could go back and forth ad infinitum, citing facets of *Radio* that may have played out better in documentary form, as well naming scenes that certainly benefit from the docudrama treatment.

A prime example of the latter are the engaging barbershop sessions, held every Friday evening after the game, win

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or lose. At these meetings, supposedly informal yet anything but, coach Jones stops in to hold court and tells a dozen or so of his zealous neighbors how he did or didn't do it that night. If he is victorious, which is more often than not, accolades are then afforded.

But if such is not the case, what follows is a question and answer forum, with no inquiry taboo, the repartee group ostensibly resembling a small town answer to a Greek chorus.

The dramatic mechanism speaks volumes, about the townsfolk, their love of football, and how they ultimately deal with it when their esteemed coach seeks a greater victory beyond the gridiron. It's a wonderfully homey touch. If a similar spirit permeated other aspects of the work, *Radio* wouldn't be on the receiving end of quite so much static from this critic.

### Fast Eddie

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magician who won the praise of Hope. Wow. Is there anything that Fast Eddie can't do?

Kutlik admits that balancing family, work and his art can at times be difficult. However, he would not stop painting for the world. When he is under stress, he just puts some classical music on the stereo and begins to paint.

He loves to travel and recently vis-



"Russian Ballerina," Edward Kutlik

ited the Hermitage in St. Petersburg and attended the Ballet Gizele at the Mariinsky Theater. As a young man, he went to The Louvre in France and The Metropolitan Museum of Art in Manhattan. An art enthusiast, he never thought that he would actually become an established artist himself.

His advice to aspiring artists is to persevere. Stick with it. Learn to put up with the criticism and overcome it. Then, you will be able to discover the joy of painting.

### Pen & Ink

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good sport so she decides to play along. Most viewers don't think she can keep up the act.

Yet, we know she promised herself that she was looking for a guy with a good heart and personality that would light up a room, not an airbrushed, perfectly-aligned million-dollar smile like she's probably used to. Plus, she has been pouring out her feelings on paper since she was a little girl, so we know there's more depth to her than the layers of Maybelline on her lashes. At least we hope so for the sake of the fragile egos she holds in her perfectly manicured hands.

Call me naive, but for some bizarre reason, I'm inclined to believe that Melana has sincere intentions. Maybe it's the romantic in me. The dreamer. Perhaps she realizes that love doesn't necessarily come in a pretty package with a GQ bow on top. So, while these might be the types of guys she mocked behind their backs in high school or treated like slimy, warty toads, this might be one of those times when nice guys won't finish last. At least for the camera's sake.

## WSO Concert

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the soul.

The printed program listed only one *Gavotte*, when there were actually two. As Joseph Orchard's thorough program notes explained, *Gavotte I* repeated after the completion of *Gavotte II*, so the two worked together as a unit. The orchestra performed both expertly, even if the audience may have lost track of what it was listening to.

The *Bouree* was bright and quite brisk. The following *Gigue*, also a quick movement, seemed almost slow by contrast, but it was appropriate for a dance tempo. At one point, the cellos seemed a bit behind rhythmically. This timing issue, which occurred somewhat similarly in the *Overture*, may have been due to the live acoustics of the church, which perhaps made it difficult for sections to hear each other precisely.

Those who heard Sandra Wolf-Meei Cameron on Saturday night will probably boast in years to come that they personally witnessed her phenomenal talent early in her career.

The young violinist, who treated a transfixed audience to an impassioned and dynamic performance, gyrated on the podium, even jumping up with both feet at times in moments of extreme intensity. I had to close my eyes at more than once so that I could concentrate on how the performance actually sounded. It was superb, if a bit over projected for a live hall of relatively small size.

Cameron played with such ferocious energy that, despite the Maestro's highly adaptive accompaniment, she pushed the tempo and briefly left the orchestra lagging behind at least twice. Part of the problem was that the small stage made it impossible for Cameron to be on the same platform as the orchestra.

Instead, Wroe surrendered the podium to the soloist and moved stage left to face the orchestra diagonally. Cameron was out in front of the orchestra and the conductor, and she only occasionally looked back to Wroe for cues.

Despite these minor issues, the concentration and accuracy of Cameron's playing throughout the piece was remarkable, especially considering the abandon with which she threw herself physically and musically into the performance.

At the conclusion of the piece, the spell-bound audience, with seemingly pent up energy, leaped to its feet in thunderous applause. Many immediately shouted "Bravo!" The listeners had heard this war horse played by an artist young enough to still be excited about the piece, and who has the prodigious talent to play it brilliantly.

The final work on the program, *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, can be problematic to perform without specific references to the play of the same name by Moliere. Wroe solved this problem with some introductory remarks prior to the piece, and recitation of lines from the play before some of the movements, such as *The Fencing Master* and *Entrance and Dance of the Tailors*.

The multi-talented Maestro demonstrated a knack for comedic timing and mimicry, eliciting numerous hearty laughs from the audience. More importantly, his rendering of the play excerpts provided a context for the ensuing musical selections, and audience members unfamiliar with the play enjoyed a much richer experience. His enthusiasm for the material was delightfully infectious.

Wroe's playful sense of humor was conveyed through his *rubato* renderings of the aforementioned movements, plus the *Menuett* and parts of *Diner*.

Wroe schmaltzed up the *Menuett*, conjuring up Monsieur Jourdain tripping over himself while trying to learn to dance. In *The Fencing Master*, the trombone's lower register and a prominent piano part both emphasized the buffoonish quality of the clumsy bourgeois' attempting to execute the fencing master's instructions. Wroe made the most of this movement, creating a feeling of the student's utter incompetence.

The final movement, *Diner*, had enough tempo and atmospheric shifts to be a tone poem unto itself. It required some difficult string passage work, and at times played up the comic element with sour notes in muted brass and bird-like sounds in the woodwinds. Wroe highlighted the contrasts and mood swings in his interpretation, demonstrating a complete understanding of the play's context.

Throughout the piece, various first and second chair players performed in solos and small ensembles. Nearly all the woodwinds and brass were also featured, as well as the piano.

The concertmaster, who had a full evening as a soloist, was the busiest of all. The passages were expertly played, with the Maestro delegating the interpretation to the musicians whenever possible.

At the conclusion of the piece, Wroe spent considerable time inviting the various soloists to stand one by one to receive recognition for their excellent work. He seemed almost reluctant to take a bow himself. But it was evident that bringing all the elements of this piece and the entire concert together successfully was due largely to the Maestro's efforts.

His contagious enthusiasm and boundless energy as music director, conductor, talent scout, teacher, and sometime actor combined to make this event memorable and absorbing for a rapt audience. When he finally took his bow, the audience responded in hearty appreciation of his efforts.

# Arts & Entertainment

## Allegra of SP Will Judge CASE Awards This Year

SCOTCH PLAINS - Michael Allegra of Scotch Plains, Editor and Art Director of *Crimson* magazine at Morristown-Beard School in Morristown, will judge this year's Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) awards.



Michael Allegra

Under Allegra's supervision, the alumni magazine has been awarded for Excellence in Independent School Periodicals, noted especially for creativity, innovation, resourcefulness, adherence to professional standards and success in meeting school objectives.

Allegra is responsible for assembling a committee of jurors who will discuss and rank each submis-

sion. He will also contact the winning schools and compose a series of reports on each entry for the CASE officials.

An award-winning playwright, Allegra served as juror for the 2002-2003 Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation's Individual Artist Fellowships in Playwriting for both New Jersey and Delaware. He was responsible for reading, reviewing and rating over 70 full-length scripts.

For the past two years, he has also served as a judge for the Playwrights Theatre of New Jersey's Young Playwright's Competition in Madison.

A former journalist and graphic designer, he is currently writing and illustrating a children's book.

## Guillotine

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coated rubber band.

My misery stopped at the Guillotine's front door and my trust was placed in Fitzpatrick's 27 years of expertise. During her career at the salon, she briefly relocated to Florida, when the owner at the time insisted on flying her back to Guillotine every month so she could tend to clients' haircolor needs. She's just that good and I couldn't have been in better hands.

Fitzpatrick added volume to my hair by cutting off a few inches, bringing my hair a little below chin length, and adding dimension with strategically placed layers and angles to frame my face. When coordinated with Fitzpatrick's styling techniques, Kiwi Color Reflector Root Elevator gave my tresses the boost they longed for.

Upon my final styling on Tuesday, Fitzpatrick shared some tips with Velcro rollers that would not only add volume to my roots, but force my bangs to swing over to the right-hand side and cooperate with my new modern hairstyle. Before returning to the salon, retraining my bangs was as difficult as disciplining a bratty child. Eventually, with Fitzpatrick's tips, some time and new hair growth, we would win the battle...and the war!

Next, Brading took all of my previous beliefs about makeup and tossed them out the window by introducing a fresher, softer approach. I couldn't have been more grateful. Trained around 17 years old at the Estée Lauder counter of my local mall, I had been given some bad advice.

Bearing in mind that oily skin is hard to manage, Brading taught me the tricks of the trade, using many of the oil control products manufactured by Nelly De Vuyst.

She unlearned me from quite a few ruts I had been dying to escape. While I was in the habit of applying blush around my face to chase away my ashen complexion, Brading applied the color to the apples of my cheeks and blended accordingly. She encouraged me to stick with warm brown tones, and to introduce some cooler shades into my eyeshadow collection, such as a wine hue and a white/cream shade ideal for highlighting and blending.

Normally armed with harsh black liquid eyeliner, Brading said to replace it with a warmer brown liner. My eyes became more dramatic as she used an accompanying shade of mascara and added the gentle press of an eyelash curler.

Soon to be cured of my most common conundrum - the matte brown lipstick - Brading advised that the color was too dark for my lips, eventually forcing them to look smaller instead of fuller. She recommended and applied a wine/berry shade by Fudge called Energy Lip Colour in Sheer. She accentuated the lips with a Pro Lip Pencil by Trucco, which made the whole look come together.

If you remember the end of *The Wizard of Oz*, when Dorothy is about to board the hot air balloon and return to Kansas, you will understand how I felt leaving Guillotine on Tuesday afternoon. Though I knew I would become a regular client and return to maintain my new look, I was overcome with appreciation and didn't know how to say my temporary goodbye.

For, over the past few weeks, Guillotine made me feel like a queen for every day of my life, reeducating me about cosmetics, beauty, and life in general. We swapped stories, joked about relationships, watched toddlers romp about the salon in their Halloween costumes, and smiled as Senator Tom Kean, Jr. got a haircut on Election Day.

The Guillotine family has told me that, while they can do marvels with a person's appearance, they know that it is only half of the full picture. Clients must also keep "the inside" just as beautiful to balance miracles done on the outside.

For me, the staff at this Westfield salon has accomplished both with sincerity, generosity and professionalism beyond compare.



## Get Outta The House

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

Union Catholic High School's *Craft Fair and Holiday Gift Market* will be held on Saturday, November 8, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the campus on 1600 Martine Avenue in Scotch Plains. Both artisans and gift vendors will occupy more than 100 tables, displaying a variety of merchandise. You'll certainly walk away with a little something. It will cost you a mere dollar to get in the door. Breakfast, lunch, desserts and beverages will be sold.

Harding Township Historical Society's *20th Annual Antiques Show & Sale* will be held on Saturday and Sunday, November 8 and 9, at Tunis-Ellicks Historic House - the beautifully restored 18th century cottage located in the center of New Vernon at the intersection of Village and Millbrook Road. You'll find items such as period furniture, antique botanicals, vintage clocks, porcelain, glass, jewelry, antique charms, baskets, and oriental rugs. The Country Store will offer frozen homemade soups, jams, jellies, condiments and holiday decorations in addition to handmade crafts by local artisans. Enjoy a complimentary cup of tea and light snack by the roaring hearth throughout the weekend. Admission is \$3.50 per person or \$3 if you have a show card or newspaper coupon. Call (973) 292-0161 for additional information.

The Trailside Visitor's Center will be home to the *10th Annual Holiday Sale of the Potter's Guild of New Jersey* on November 8 and 9, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free to view the functional and sculptural ceramics, with items such as vases, pitchers, decorative objects, platters, teapots, ceramic jewelry, and other one-of-a-kind pieces. The center is in the Watchung Reservation, at New Providence Road and Coles Avenue in Mountainside. Call (908) 789-3670.

On November 8, there will be a performance at the First United Methodist Church, 1 East Broad Street at the corner of North Avenue in Westfield. Presented by the *Coffee With Conscience Concert Series*, this double-bill will feature Freebo and Brian Joseph. Freebo, who you may recall performing with Bonnie Raitt, Ringo Starr, or Crosby, Stills, & Nash, primarily plays acoustic guitar, but he also manages to work his tuba, ukulele, and bass into the show. Brian Joseph (<http://brianjosephmusic.com>) recently abandoned all the glamorous trappings of life as a Los Angeles actor for the glory and prestige of being a full-time folksinger. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. for the 8 p.m. concert, and tickets cost \$12 each.

## Ferguson Brown

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ing "Coal Country Christmas" upon her retirement in 1992, it was only recently released by Boyds Mill Press this past October. The book has been selected by the American Coal Foundation in Washington, D.C., as recommended reading for coal education.

"Holding my first picture book in my hands has been a dream come true," said Brown. "It has been just as exciting to return with it to School One."

Although Brown's book is not suited for early primary grades, she adapted her story so that she could interact with all grades while visiting School One. She also presented her program, "Walking In an Author's Footsteps," to the upper grades, taking students on an author's journey from idea to writing to publishing.

In her evening program for parents, Brown talked about "Raising a Reader," and the importance of reading aloud to children. She gave practical advice for encouraging children to become life-long readers and provided research about the importance of reading aloud with youngsters right into their teens."

Brown currently lives in Rhode Island with her husband, Robert, a former Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School music teacher.

"Together we watched generations of Scotch Plains-Fanwood pass through our classrooms," Brown commented.

Brown currently has several additional picture book manuscripts under consideration for publication. "Coal Country Christmas" is available from all local and online bookstores.

**Come sing with us!**

Oratorio Singers of Westfield  
Trent Johnson, Director

# REQUIEM

Giuseppe Verdi

Join us for a workshop rehearsal  
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Regular Monday Rehearsals begin January 5, 7:30-9:30 p.m.  
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