

Pumpkins Make Festive Fruit For Autumn Season

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

When the children were young, we'd set aside one Sunday each Autumn to head westward on Route 78 into Hunterdon County to go Halloween pumpkin picking. The fun always included a bouncy hayride and a mystifying corn maze, but the highlight of the trip was undoubtedly the walk through the pumpkin patch. There we would carefully scrutinize at least 100 pumpkins before selecting a few future Jack-O-Lanterns given the honor of returning with us to our home.

Halloween is to Jack-O-Lanterns as Thanksgiving is to pumpkin pie. Now that the children are older, my interests lean less towards decorating pumpkins and more towards cooking them. Nothing announces the arrival of autumn like the cornucopia of ginger, nutmeg and cinnamon aromas emanating from pumpkin baking in the oven. Pumpkin bread, pumpkin muffins, pumpkin cookies and, of course, pumpkin pie; loaded with Vitamins A and C, fiber and potassium, and low in calories and sodium, any way you cook them, pumpkins are healthy for you.

While all varieties of pumpkin are edible, there is a wide range of flavor among them. A cooking pumpkin will make a nice Jack-O-Lantern, but a carving pumpkin won't taste as good in a pie as a cooking pumpkin does. The difference is in the sweetness; cooking pumpkins, also known as sugar pumpkins, do have a sweeter taste. Carving pumpkins also lack the smooth consistency found in baking pumpkins. Their coarseness makes them more difficult to mix into batters for breads, muffins and cookies.

Large pumpkins have courser (or stringier) "meat." A pumpkin that is going to be used for baking should be no larger than 10" in diameter. Rounder pumpkins are more suited for baking, as again they aren't as "stringy," while taller pumpkins are better for carving.

While the traditional orange color of the pumpkin makes it a festive fruit for the autumn season, pumpkins don't have to be orange to taste good. The Lumina pumpkin is a smooth-skinned white pumpkin with bright yellow

flesh. It is a favorite for cooking.

The recipe below calls for cooked pumpkin. An easy equation will help you know how much fresh pumpkin you need. One cup of cut-up fresh pumpkin yields three quarters of a cup of cooked. And don't discard the pumpkin seeds. They are a vitamin, protein and fiber-rich food. Spread them on a cookie sheet, sprinkle lightly with packaged taco mix, garlic or onion powder or pumpkin pie spice and bake at 350 degrees for about 30 minutes. Eaten with a mug of hot apple cider, this healthy snack will give you the extra energy you need for a second round of raking leaves.

Pumpkin Date Cookies (adapted from Betty Crocker's New Cookbook):

- 1 d. sugar
- 1 stick butter
- 1 c. cooked or canned pumpkin
- 2 large eggs
- 2 c. all-purpose flour
- 1 c. chopped dates
- 1/2 c. chopped walnuts
- 2 tsp. Baking powder
- 2 tsp. Cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. Ground nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp. Ground ginger
- 1/4 tsp. ground cloves

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Cream sugar and butter with electric mixer set on medium speed until light and fluffy. Beat in pumpkin and eggs. Stir in remaining ingredients. Drop batter by rounded teaspoon about two inches apart onto ungreased cookie sheet. Bake eight to 10 minutes. Remove immediately onto wire rack.

Concert Band to Benefit Red Cross

WESTFIELD - In a benefit concert for the American Red Cross Hurricane Relief Fund, the New Jersey Workshop For The Arts (NJWA) Concert Band will perform a two-hour concert on Sunday, November 20, at 2 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church of Westfield, 140 Mountain Avenue, Westfield. Donations will be accepted to help in the rescue work of the American Red Cross.

As of this date, the NJWA Concert Band has ready a repertoire of over 100 selections. For further information call (908) 964-1793 or email the band at njwaband@att.net.



Susan M. Dougherty for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WIGGING OUT...Old vaudeville actors Al Lewis (Chuck Azen) and Willie Clarke (Stan Nathanson), of the Lewis and Clarke comedy team, recreate their doctor sketch for a TV special on the history of comedy. See continuation above.

Sunshine Boys

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break all of the doctor's orders. We've all heard the famous, "It takes a village to raise a child" slogan, but it's really a truism for this theater production that has elicited the help of 40 some volunteers to come up with the finished product.

Producer Debbie Linder has called on assistant director Shelly Abersorn-Narotzky and widely-respected director Ken Rosenblum to pull it all together with style and professionalism.

My only suggestion is for the weekend run to be doubled next time.

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Arts & Entertainment

Westfielder Mitchell Fennik To Appear on Cheerios Box

WESTFIELD - The store manager of the Parsippany ShopRite approached employee Mitchell Fennik of Westfield back in the spring and asked him to spearhead the Cheerios Box competition.

He, along with one other associate, hosted in-store events such as hot dog sales, coloring contests and spaghetti-and-meatball events to raise money and awareness for the hunger problem in the local community. When he found out he had won the contest and would be appearing on the cereal box, "I was excited, but my kids were more excited than I was. It's all over the school," he said.

Mr. Fennik has four children—Sara, Emily, Eric and Allison. Sara and Emily attend Mother Seaton in Clark, and



Mitchell Fennik

Eric and Allison are students at Holy Trinity School in Westfield. The children have been bragging to all of their friends and teachers that their dad is going to be on the Cheerios box. Some of Mr. Fennik's family out of state has also been asking for boxes.

"It's costing me a fortune to buy all the boxes and ship them all over the place," Mr. Fennik said. "It's happy money to spend though."

He said even his dentist asked for a box once he found out he would be on it. Mr. Fennik said the store could not have won the contest without the support of all the employees. "Everybody helps. Everybody puts their hands in it (the contest)," he said.

WSO to Perform Saturday, Plans Diverse Concert Season

By VICTORIA MCCABE
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD -According to legend, famed classical composer Ludwig van Beethoven wrote his third symphony, a massive work that he subtitled *Eroica* (heroic), with his then-hero Napoleon Bonaparte in mind. When Beethoven found out that this hero had declared himself emperor, he supposedly ran to his manuscript and, in a fit of rage, tore the dedication page in half, leaving the piece with a more ambiguous, universal hero at its center.

On Saturday, the Westfield Symphony Orchestra (WSO) will perform Beethoven's Third, along with 20th-century American composer Aaron Copland's clarinet concerto and the overture to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*, in a concert entitled "Symphony Meets the Blues." And though their performance will not literally reference the page-ripping incident, one who speaks with WSO conductor David Wroe certainly gets the sense that he and his orchestra will tackle the work with the same fervent passion that its creator poured into it.

As for the title of the program, the symphonic elements are self-explanatory; the Mozart overture ("a fun-loving piece with laughter and explosive hilarity packed into a short amount of time," said Mr. Wroe) and the Beethoven symphony ("the calling card of a musical force") are purely symphonic works.

Copland provides the popular-culture component with a fusion of classical and jazz music in his concerto. "Many countries have searched to find their own culture in classical music, and the American national color is best represented by Copland.

He incorporated American elements into classical music by mixing high art with American 20th-century music - namely, jazz," Mr. Wroe said.

Alan Kay, an old schoolmate of Mr. Wroe's who the conductor described as "one of the leading professional clarinetists in America," will be the featured soloist for the concerto, which was commissioned by "King of Swing" Benny Goodman in 1947.

"This concert is particularly good for families," Mr. Wroe said. "The Mozart is fun, and since many students taking up wind instruments play the clarinet, it will give them an extraordinary opportunity to see the instrument in a professional environment and to see what it can really do."

This concert season, the WSO has already performed Georges Bizet's *Carmen* at the Garden State Arts Center and has provided a live orchestral soundtrack for Kean University's showing of the 1931 film *Dracula*.

On New Year's Eve, the WSO, along with "top-flight Broadway stars," will present "The Guys and Dolls of Broadway," a Broadway revue, at Westfield High School. "The event has developed into such a huge performance that this year we had to move it to a bigger venue," said Mr. Wroe. "Last year we had to turn people away at the door."

The WSO will perform "Symphony Meets the Blues" at 8 p.m. on Saturday at the Presbyterian Church in Westfield. Tickets are \$25 to \$60 and can be purchased at the Town Book Store (255 East Broad Street, Westfield), Martin Jewelers (12 North Avenue West, Cranford) or Beautiful Things (1878 East Second Street, Scotch Plains) or by calling (908) 232-9400.

POPCORN™

Jarhead: Semper Fair



One Popcorn, Poor • Two Popcorns, Fair • Three Popcorns, Good • Four Popcorns, Excellent
By MICHAEL S. GOLDBERGER
2 popcorns

Warmongers, be warned. *Jarhead* may not necessarily be your cup of armed conflict. Based on the book by Anthony Swofford and adapted for the screen by William Broyles, the body count is slight, the pageantry nil.

You'll say boo to this, too. The best one can hope for is that director Sam Mendes's military misfire will one day be viewed as an odd relic that helped humankind escape from its barbaric past. The thinking being, if movies recording our wars are going to be so lackluster, why bother in the first place?

Since this account of Mr. Swofford's experiences as a U.S. Marine during Desert Shield isn't that exciting, the charitable inclination is to assume it holds a clue or two toward achieving that future armistice. Narrated here and there in voiceovers by Jake Gyllenhaal, who stars as Swofford, the young Marine notes late in the proceedings that, "All wars are the same: all wars are different."

That's about as profound as the film gets. Still, it does give one pause. Is there something here about the DNA of war that might prove useful? Otherwise, why are we watching? For fun? Because we like depictions of mortal combat? Because we're hardwired to this survival of the fittest thing? Say it isn't so, Mr. Darwin. It's pretty nutty, when you really think about it.

But in any case, if such is your pastime—nothing like a nice, calming march from Bataan or a relaxing siege through the Argonne Forest after a hard day at the counseling center—keep marching, soldier. The macho tricks and gawgaws meant to stimulate whatever hormone or psychology it is that perpetuates an interest in this stuff just doesn't cut the mustard.

Even the recruits complain about the lack of action. And they bemoan what they see as a dearth of identity for their particular conflict. In one scene, obviously an attempt by director Mendes to emulate the atmospheric surrealism of war in *Apocalypse Now* (1979), the platoon of scout/snipers led by Jamie Foxx's Staff Sergeant Sykes is treated to some '60s background rock. Rails one disgruntled grunt, "Man, we don't even have our own music! That's Vietnam!"

Indeed, there is a *Catch 22* at work, pun fully intended. The tactics of war have rapidly changed. Likewise, the desert venue is a drastic departure from the motion picture wars that doubtless formed these soldiers' im-

pression of what to expect. The defense of Kuwait brings its very own sort of disappointment.

But there are different types of terror besides combat...other horrors that assure us war is hell in all its permutations. A traipse through areas that have been bombed and thus conflagrated renders a most unholy petrified forest of charred victims. Not much glory here.

In this respect, we are libidinally reminded that these are young men. They aren't philosophers, let alone very educated folk. Save for the usual upper echelon academy types, who never seem to change, these are primarily boys of rather slight expectations. Mendes gets this sociology right, giving us our first dramatic look at an all-volunteer army.

We note the differences. Despite their youth, the dreams are more realistic, more vocational in nature. Sure, there's a certain amount of that patriotic zeal that threads through almost every film in this genre. But unlike the esteemed array of rather literary surveys that have emanated from the numerous wars fought by America's conscripted armies, Broyles's fighters lack that perennial optimism.

But in starkly telling it like it is, and despite Mr. Mendes's so-so direction, it seems that the author might have just backed into a fairly effective antiwar statement. *Jarhead* gives testament. Sometimes war can just bore you to death.

Jarhead, rated R, is a Universal Pictures release directed by Sam Mendes and stars Jake Gyllenhaal, Peter Sarsgaard and Jamie Foxx. Running time: 123 minutes.

Book Store Kicks Off Holiday Season

WESTFIELD - To kick off the holiday season, The Town Book Store of Westfield is hosting Meet & Greet book signings for two Westfield authors this weekend. On Saturday, November 26, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Westfield native Edward Einhorn will be in the store to promote his new novel, "The Living House of Oz" and his new book of plays, "Golem, Shylock & Methuselah."

Then, from 2 to 4 p.m., Westfield resident Ed Leibowitz will be in the store to sign copies of his book, "It Takes More Than A Whistle To Coach Basketball: A Simple And Complete Guide To Becoming A 'real' Basketball Coach."

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