

Arts & Entertainment

Unusual Parade Themes Take Place in Tiny Irish Village

By MEGHAN GILL
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

COUNTY LEITRIM, IRELAND — The tiny Northwestern County Leitrim village of Keshcarrigan claimed the country's first and only "invisible" Saint Patrick's Day parade in 1999.

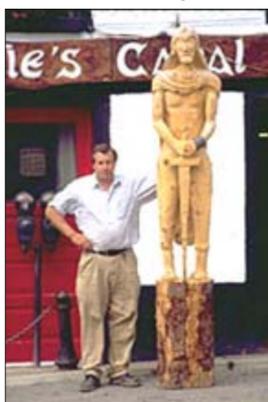
A crowd estimated by parade organizers at over 2,000 turned up to celebrate this historical event, along with national television and newspaper reporters.

Keshcarrigan locals welcomed many invisible visitors to their village, including Former Soviet Prime Minister Boris Yeltsin, *Baywatch* pin-up Pamela Anderson, who received a gift of an Irish bra, as well as a herd of "wild" African elephants.

Local parade organizer Desmond Foley claimed these special visitors were only visible to those who lived in Keshcarrigan. "Boris Yeltsin was too drunk to get off the plane, so he landed in Keshcarrigan instead. We met him with a bottle of vodka and two glasses," Des explained.

In 1997, this tiny village, which had a population of 18 and only two pubs, held a backwards parade where marchers, pipe bands, tractors, animals, lorries (trucks), and floats all traveled down through the village in reverse.

"We went up to Dublin a couple of days after Paddy's day, and overheard some people discussing the backwards parade in a café," Des



Des Foley pictured with a handcrafted wood carving of Brian Boru, one of Ireland's greatest leaders, in front of the beloved Gertie's Canal Stop pub.

said. "Meself and the boys, for a bit of craic (fun), walked out of the café backwards. The Dubs (Dubliners) exclaimed, 'sure, those culchies (country folk) are doin' it up here now!'"

This charming village also hosted a "standing still" parade one year, where participants stood in the road as parade-goers walked past along the footpath.

After the foot and mouth out-

break in 2001 (a highly communicable disease that plagues cloven-hoofed animals) Des planned the celebrated Saint Patrick's Day parade indoors.

His pub, Gertie's Canal Stop, was the venue for the parade. "Eight countries were represented that year at our indoor parade; there was even a woman from Mexico there that day," Des said.

"There were miniature tractors and lorries that were on parade on top of the pool table," Des explained.

In 2003, he decided to continue the indoor parade tradition. When the clock struck five o'clock, locals paid their respects to their patron Saint Patrick by walking in procession around the pub.

"We thought it was a good idea to have the parade indoors, because of the cold weather. A lot of people think it is much too cold to be walking outdoors at this time of year," Des said.

Des also explained that for the 2003 indoor parade, "We invited a matchmaker from (County) Clare to come along. We had single people of all ages, including a 93-year-old single



The crossroads in the village of Keshcarrigan, Ireland.

man with a good farm, who was looking for a wife."

This year, Des will be celebrating St. Patrick's Day in Alaina, Turkey. He is organizing Turkey's "first known St. Patrick's Day Parade."

Des has a pub in this Irish holiday destination called Pat Foley's Bar and Lounge, and the parade will consist of 30 marchers with pipes, drums, and dress-up.

The Turkish parade will take place on March 25, since "The people of Turkey might not know that St. Patrick's Day was on the 17 of March," Des said.

GL to Present Anything Goes In Late March

BERKELEY HEIGHTS — Come and enjoy the spring musical production, *Anything Goes*, presented by the Governor Livingston (GL) Hilltop Players.

Performances are Thursday March 23 at 7:30 p.m. and Friday and Saturday, March 24 and 25 at 8 p.m. in the GL Auditorium.

The show takes a star-studded, gangster-ridden transatlantic voyage and mixes in a tender-if tangled-love story and peppers it all with an abundance of comic situations.

Tickets are \$10 and \$6 for senior citizens or for groups of 10 or more. Advanced tickets are available by calling the box office at (908) 665-0783 or by emailing your request to boxoffice@bhpsnj.org. The Friday and Saturday performances will be interpreted for the hearing impaired.



AN EVENING IN WESTFIELD...In preparation for the upcoming Westfield Symphony Orchestra Gala are, from left to right, David Wroe, Keith Hertell and Mark Elsasser. The gala, entitled *An Evening in Venice*, will take place on April 1.

Celebrate The Patron Saint Patrick in the Local Area

By KEREN SCHULTZ
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

AREA — St. Patrick's Day is quickly approaching and if you don't pay attention, you'll miss the green, the corned beef and cabbage and, before you know it, Westfield will be blooming in spring fever.

Though originally a toned-down religious holiday in Ireland honoring St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland and one of Christianity's most widely known figures, St. Patrick's Day is celebrated in a different sort of festive spirit today.

In Ireland, families traditionally went to church and celebrated their patron in the afternoon. Since a push from the Irish government in 1995 to make St. Patrick's Day a celebrated holiday showcasing Ireland to the rest of the world, the green parade, beer, corned beef and cabbage emerged as a mainstay. Last year alone, close to one million people participated in Ireland's St. Patrick's Festival in Dublin, a multi-day celebration featuring parades, concerts, outdoor theater productions, and fireworks shows.

Below are a few things going on in the local area during St. Patrick's Day:

Westfield's Jolly Trolley is planning a weekend-long promotion beginning on Friday, March 17. With a possibility of a bagpiper for entertainment, along with a couple of choices of Irish beer (George Killians Irish Red and Harp), customers will have the option

of ordering from a special menu including corned beef and cabbage, of course. The Jolly Trolley is located at 411 North Avenue West. Call (908) 232-1207 for further information).

Meanwhile, the Westfield Corps will be marching in the New York City parade. After holding practice in Westfield at the Knights of Columbus Hall on North Avenue every Tuesday night, the corps will be headed for

New York attired with fifes, drums and Civil War-period uniforms. You may already be too late this year, but if you'd like the possibility of joining them next year for St. Patty's Day, contact Anthony Michael Sepe at (908) 232-2329.

If you're interested in going to a parade nearby, the Ringwood Saint Patrick's Day Parade 2006 will be taking place on Saturday, March 18 at 1 p.m. The parade will kick off from H.U.B. access road and continue down Skyline Drive to St. Catherine's Parish Center where there will be a post-parade celebration of music, dance, food and beverages. For more information, call (973) 728-3250.

On Sunday, March 19, Newark's 71st Anniversary Saint Patrick's Day Parade 2006 will start the march at 1 p.m. The parade will begin at Washington Street and Central Avenue and head East on Central Avenue. There will be two reviewing stands on the corner of Broad St. and New St. and a second at Newark City Hall. A post-parade party will follow at The Hamilton Pub.

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Get Outta' The House

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

Celebrate the diversity of film at the *New Jersey Film Festival* at Rutgers University in New Brunswick. Lasting through April, the line-up includes foreign language films, experimental shorts, documentaries, restored classics, and works in digital video. Admission is generally less than a seat at your local movie theater, and the selection is incomparable. The complete schedule is online at: <http://www.njfilmfest.com/>.

See what three decades of performing has down to the *Average White Band*. This R&B group has been around for a while, taking a long hiatus and then regrouping. They'll be at the Union County Arts Center on Sunday, March 26 at 7:30 p.m. **Tower of Power**, with their mixture of jazz, funk, rock, and soul will be the other half of this show. Seats are \$40 - \$45. For information, check out: <http://www.uacac.org> or call the box office at (732) 499-8226.

For a night of comedy without schlepping into the city, check out the JCC of Central New Jersey's *Comedy Nite* on Saturday, March 25. Gregg Rogell and Ben Bailey star, both faces you may recognize from late night TV or Comedy Central. Tickets are \$35, and include refreshments. The show will be held at Congregation Beth Israel, 18 Shalom Way in Scotch Plains. For more information email: slernerman@jccnj.org or call (908) 889-8800 x205.

Legendary *B.B. King* has turned 80, but age doesn't seem to slow him down a bit. He will perform tonight, Thursday, March 23, at 7:30 p.m. at Patriots Theater at the War Memorial in Trenton. If there are still tickets available, you can find out by calling (609) 984-8400 or log onto: <http://www.thewar memorial.com/>. It's got to be worth the ride to see the world's most renowned blues singer and songwriter.

An afternoon of family fun will take place at the *Family Arts Festival* on Saturday, March 25, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Courtyard in New Brunswick. The arts workshops are appropriate for kids from three to 12, and include storytelling, costume-making, improvisational dance, drumming and singing from around the world. There will also be parades, snacks, and other kid-friendly happenings. Adults get in for \$10, kids for \$5. Call (732) 220-1600 or visit the website at: <http://www.iahnj.org/faf2005.html>.

WESTFIELD — Residents and visitors in Westfield this March will once again find the downtown store windows decorated with an array of art created by local public school students. For the 11th consecutive year, the nationally proclaimed Youth Art Month is being celebrated by 45 downtown merchants who are displaying works of art produced by approximately 360 students from the Westfield Public Schools.

Student art includes paintings, drawings, sculpture and painted furniture designed by students of all ages from each of Westfield's nine public schools. Dr. Linda King, Fine Arts supervisor, commended the students, teachers and local merchants for making this annual event possible. "This exhibition is just a sampling of the wonderful art created by hundreds of Westfield students under the direction of our 21 art teachers."

County Holds Teen Arts Festival March 16
CRANFORD — The annual Union County Teen Arts Festival will take place Thursday and Friday, March 16 and 17, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on the Cranford campus of Union County College located at 1033 Springfield Avenue, Cranford, opposite Nomahegan Park.

The Teen Arts Festival showcases the artistic and creative abilities of Union County's youth. Students from more than 50 public and private schools participate at the festival each year. The public is invited to attend and enjoy the accomplishments of our talented teens.

At the festival, students participate in performances, master classes, inter-active workshops, and critiquing seminars led by professional artists in all disciplines — visual arts, music, theatre, dance and creative writing. All the performances are open to the public.

Assistive services are available on request. Anyone interested in attending the Union County Teen Arts Festival should contact the Union County Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs at 633 Pearl Street, Elizabeth 07202; telephone (908) 558-2550 for a program brochure or other information. Relay service users should call 711.



ROCKING THE BOAT...Cast members of *Guys and Dolls*, from left to right, are Malcolm Spurlock as "Society Max," Adam Ziering as "Angie the Ox," Tyler Varian (lying on floor) as "Big Jule," Michael Rosin as Sky Masterson, Dan Berman as Nathan Detroit and Julian Seltzer as "Nicely, Nicely" Johnson.



ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING...For their springtime musical production, the Governor Livingston (GL) Hilltop Players will present *Anything Goes* on Thursday March 23 at 7:30 p.m. and Friday and Saturday, March 24 and 25 at 8 p.m. in the GL Auditorium. Tickets are \$10 and \$6 for senior citizens or for groups of 10 or more.

REGISTER NOW FOR SPRING 2006 SESSION!

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Come and enjoy the Spring Musical Production

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