



WON'T RAIN ON HER PARADE...Westfield resident Arielle Smelkinson recently performed with legendary singer and parade grand marshal Andy Williams in the 82nd Annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. Arielle, a 2007 graduate of Westfield High School, is currently a sophomore at New York University's CAP 21 theatre program at the Tisch School of the Arts.

Westfield Teen, Spencer Pascal, Rising to the Top

Spencer Pascal has defied the label of your typical teen. At the age of 13, he has met the challenges of dyslexia head on. After a year and a half of intense home schooling, Spencer has returned to the public sector. Here, he finds he is able to share the benefits of his home school knowledge with others who are in need of not only the educational knowledge but emotional support.



Spencer Pascal

This year, Spencer will be performing in New Jersey Ballet's *Nutcracker* 18 times! It will be a bittersweet ending to the lead role of Fritz as Spencer, standing five feet and seven inches tall, will have outgrown the role next season. This year, Spencer will not only play the role of Fritz in alternating casts, but a mouse, little boy and a nephew. No problem for this dancer

Cheryl Wheeler Performs in Westfield

WESTFIELD - The Coffee With Conscience Concert Series continues its ninth season by presenting Cheryl Wheeler at the First United Methodist Church of Westfield, located at 1 East Broad Street (corner of North Avenue) on Saturday, December 13. Doors will open at 7:15 p.m. and the concert will begin at 8 p.m. Admission is \$27. To purchase tickets in advance, visit cherylwheeler.eventbrite.com.

Carla Ulbrich will open. All net proceeds from this evening's concert will be donated to the Keith Knost Special Needs Trust. Ms. Wheeler is an accomplished poet and comic. She writes songs of love and loss, contrasting the prosaic landscapes of her native small-town America. In contrast, she also can display a sharp tongue, railing on American culture.

For more information, see cherylwheeler.eventbrite.com.

of 11 years. When not dancing 12 hours per week, Spencer works as a model managed by the Shirley Grant Agency. He is now part of the new face of Comcast, as well as several drug company ads that grace magazines, billboards, circulars and, well, even a bus or two. Spencer eagerly awaits growing that extra couple of inches that will move him into the fashion world.

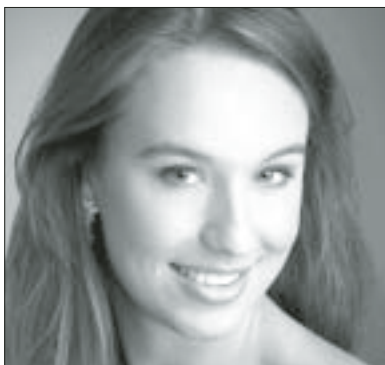
His parents, Sherryl Pascal, the reigning Mrs. New Jersey American Beauty 2009, and father, Roy Pascal, say Spencer is an extraordinary young man who believes in his dreams and works hard to achieve them. Plus, Spencer is just an all around nice guy; he is a leader, he is confident and brave.

The *Nutcracker* will perform at the Paper Mill Playhouse December 19 to 28. For tickets, call the box office at (973) 376-4343.

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Popular Local Soprano To Perform in Westfield

WESTFIELD - The First Congregational Church of Westfield, located at 125 Elmer Street, will present the third of its Mid-Day Musicales concerts for this season with a program by the mother-daughter duo Meredith Hoffmann-Thomson, soprano, and Barbara Thomson, piano, on December 17 at noon.



Meredith Hoffmann-Thomson

These free, half-hour concerts are presented in the church sanctuary on Wednesdays during the church seasons of Advent and Lent, and are followed by a soup-and-sandwich luncheon available in the church social hall for \$6.

The program will include works by Schubert, Gounod, Puccini and others. Ms. Hoffmann-Thomson is an accomplished musician, performing

in opera, oratorio and recital venues. She has sung the role of Musetta in *La Boheme* at the Sarasota Opera and both Miss Wordsworth in *Albert Herring* and Antonia in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at Opera North in Lebanon, N.H.

Ms. Thomson has performed across the United States and in Austria, Germany, Holland, France, Italy and Yugoslavia.

She has performed with the Westfield Symphony Orchestra, the Peabody Symphony Orchestra and the North Jersey Bach Festival.

She is currently organist and director of music at the Congregational Church of Westfield.

For further information, or to make luncheon reservations, contact the church office at (908) 233-2494.

A Gift of the Arts Endures Forever at the Workshop

WESTFIELD - The New Jersey Workshop for the Arts (NJWA) is assisting local holiday shoppers browsing for music-loving people. The workshop will issue a gift certificate in any financial amount, which can be used for any of its programs.

The Music Studio offers vocal and instrumental lessons for both children and adults. Youngsters may also select to enroll in group piano, guitar or vocal lessons. A 4- or 5-year-old may enjoy participating in Kids 'n' Arts, where children experience arts, music and theater crafts.

Aspiring thespians in grades 6 to 8 may sharpen their acting skills in an improvisation class called "Spontane-

ity Studio," while actors in grades 6 to 12 may learn the essentials of musical theater in Beyond Broadway.

Perhaps the recipient of this gift certificate will have an interest in taking hula lessons or in joining the Westfield Fencing Club, which offers lessons in saber, foil and epee.

The gift certificate can be used toward tuition for the Westfield Summer Workshop, a program of arts, crafts, communications, dance, drama, music and special interests for students in preschool to grade 8. The program also includes a musical theater production for those in grades 6 through 12.

For more information, call (908) 789-9696 or visit the NJWA studios at 150-152 East Broad Street in Westfield. Log on to njworkshopforthearts.com for information about all NJWA programs.



CANDLELIGHT PROGRAM...The Crescent Singers, above with organist/director Ronald Thayer, will present their 35th annual Yuletide by Candlelight program on Sunday, December 14, at 5:30 p.m.

Crescent Singers to Present Annual Yuletide Program

PLAINFIELD - Holly, ivy, the glow of candles, and carols - old and new - will be featured at the Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church in Plainfield when the Crescent Singers present their 35th annual Yuletide by Candlelight program on Sunday, December 14, at 5:30 p.m.

The program, the fourth in this year's Crescent Concerts series, is free to the public.

Directed by Ronald Thayer, director of music at Crescent Avenue, the Crescent Singers will present such favorites as "Silent Night," "We Wish You a Merry Christmas," "Angels We Have Heard on High" and "The Holly and the Ivy." Lesser-known carols will include "O Magnum Mysterium," by Francis Poulenc, "O Wondrous Star," "Listen Lordlings," and more. "A Christmas Folksong," composed by Crescent Singers baritone Robert Paoli, will be a special feature in the program.

Edwin Lopez and Jennifer Katherine Ludlow will perform instrumental music for two recorders by Handel, Bach and Loeillet during concert intervals.

Members of the audience will have the opportunity to sing along in six well-known carols accompanied by Mr. Thayer at the console of the large new G. F. Adams 96 rank French pipe

organ. There is no charge for this concert, which is presented as a holiday gift to nearby Union County towns and the Plainfield community.

Handicap access and large-print programs will be available. For information, call the church office at (908) 756-2468 daily from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Parking will be found in church lots and on nearby streets. The church can be easily found in the center of Plainfield at the intersection of Watchung Avenue and East Seventh Street.

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908-337-7323
dianna.depalmier@gmail.com *References Provided

Whose birthday is it, anyway?

We believe the important news at Christmas is not who comes down the chimney, but who came down from heaven. We invite you to join us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

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