



GETTING THE GANG BACK TOGETHER...The First United Methodist Church (FUMC) of Westfield's Wesley Singers, pictured above, a prominent choir of the last four decades, will reunite this coming weekend.

Wesley Reunion Choir To Sing at FUMC Service

WESTFIELD - During the 1970s, 80s and 90s, the First United Methodist Church (FUMC) of Westfield was blessed with a special choir, The Wesley Singers, directed by Rev. Philip Dietterich, then the church's minister of music.

Rev. Dietterich and his wife, Jane, graced the church with their talents for more than 30 years before Rev. Dietterich's retirement in 1994. The Wesley Singers and Wesley Waits Children's Choir consisted of FUMC choir members and many non-FUMC adults and youngsters.

The choirs toured Europe on numerous occasions, bringing the gifts of harmony and song to many communities in Great Britain, Western Europe, and behind the Iron Curtain, including Leipzig, Germany, where J. S. Bach spent most of his life.

Rev. Dietterich recently recalled an experience when the Wesley Singers were to travel into East Germany.

"We went through much apprehension as we crossed the border into Eastern Europe and East Germany," he said. "We were to sing for congregations that were suppressed in the police states who were cut off from

Christians in the West. In Zwickau, East Germany, in 1979, we sang in a large Methodist Church, which was packed with 1,000 people. They listened with an intensity that I'll never forget and expressed their gratitude not only with rhythmic applause, but with heartfelt, teary-eyed handshakes."

In a unique situation, The Wesley Singers had a sister-choir liaison with a choral organization in West Germany, The Singkreis Laudate, conducted by Max Köhler, returned the Wesley Singers visits with concerts at the Westfield church and at other locations in the United States.

From October 17 through 19, about 65 of the Wesley Singers and their families, joined by Rev. Dietterich, will gather at the Westfield Methodist Church for a special reunion.

After a weekend of rehearsals and musical recollections, the Wesley Singers Reunion Choir, directed by Rev. Dietterich, will join Trent Johnson, current FUMC director of music and organist, in the 10:45 a.m. Sunday service on October 19. Any and all are invited to attend this service of worship, choral and organ music.

Brentano's Series Promotes 'Naturalization' of State

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

WESTFIELD - Westfield resident Pat Brentano is not only an artist; she's an environmental activist who uses her art to make a statement.

Ms. Brentano recently installed eight of 10 pieces in her "Missing Trees" series in an empty lot in Highland Park as a way of calling attention to the Edison Wetlands Association's (EWA) Raritan River Project (RRP), which is creating an international community garden on a former Highland Park landfill.

"The international community garden is a public-private 'Brownfields' project and a national model for the ongoing return of an industrialized waterway to an ecological treasure for the public to enjoy," Ms. Brentano said.

The EWA began in 1995, with its mission to clean up and protect the lower reaches of the Raritan River by identifying and reducing sources of contamination.

Ms. Brentano's "Missing Trees" sculptures were inspired by the destruction of 21 trees in her neighborhood, which were felled to clear land for the construction of a new home.

"The trees were hundreds of years old. They can never be replaced," Ms. Brentano said.

The "Missing Trees" series consists of 10, four-by-five-foot wooden, three-dimensional representations of trees, all of which Ms. Brentano has personally seen destroyed.

Even though the trees are gone, they seem to be present. Depicted as cutouts, there is an ethereal quality to the work.

The wispy nature and ghostly images of the trees in Ms. Brentano's collection will not be lost on anyone

who mourns the destruction of the environment.

"By the way they are installed, you could easily see them as tombstones," said Ms. Brentano.

Collectively, the sculpture series has been exhibited throughout the state to call attention to environmental issues.

Locally, "Missing Trees" has been exhibited in Westfield's Mindwaskin Park and the Trailside Nature and Science Center in Mountainside.

"I want to keep the exhibit traveling to places and organizations that keep New Jersey natural," said Ms. Brentano.

The EWA, which is currently working on 60 hazardous-waste sites throughout central New Jersey, provided \$10,000 in funding for the international community garden through a legal settlement with Edgeboro Disposal, Inc. over the cleanup and riverfront restoration of Edgeboro Landfill in East Brunswick.

"This funding will enable the Borough of Highland Park to design a scenic hiking trail connecting its residents with the newly restored Raritan Riverfront," explained Ms. Brentano.

The EWA, Rutgers School of Landscape Design and the Borough of Highland Park jointly designed the garden.

Residents of a housing project adjacent to the park will plant the garden.

"Missing Trees" will be in Highland Park until the end of October.

To see the exhibit, take Route 1 South to the Woodbridge Avenue Exit towards Highland Park. The exit will be on your right. Stay on Woodbridge Avenue until Crowell's Road. Make a left on Crowell's. Continue until the road ends and bear right onto Donaldson Avenue. The sculpture will be on the left-hand side.



Missing Tree # 3
Location: Great Swamp



COMICAL SPIN ON A CLASSIC...Roosevelt students promise that the comedic *Somewhat True Tale of Robin Hood* will be a rollicking good time.

School Presents *Somewhat True Tale of Robin Hood*

WESTFIELD - Roosevelt Intermediate School is presenting *The Somewhat True Tale of Robin Hood* on Friday, October 24, and Saturday, October 25, with both performances beginning at 7:30 p.m.

The *Somewhat True Tale of Robin Hood* is a comical spin on the timeless classic. The story, set in Sherwood Forest, sprinkled with Monty Python-esque humor, is narrated by the Town's Guy (Geoffrey Ko).

The charming-yet-egocentric swash-buckling Robin Hood, played by Connor Swingle, is once again stealing from the rich and giving to the poor. He is accompanied by Friar Tuck (Ed Caralan), Will Scarlett (Asher Horowitz), Alan Adale (Joel Seltzer), Little John (Zachary Jaffee) and his band of merry men (Lucas Bizarro, Alex Breakstone and Dan Maran).

Robin Hood's efforts are met with resistance by the diabolical plans of the evil Prince John (Asher Stabler) and the conniving Sheriff of Nottingham (Aus-

tin Fishman). The tale would not be complete without the lovely damsels, Lady Marian (Samantha Doles) and her Lady in Waiting (Kate Capodano).

Annie Howe directs the play, while Tracy Pushko serves as technical director. A crew of 20 has worked tirelessly under the direction of stage managers Theresa DePalma and Lily Horowitz.

The shenanigans of Sherwood Forest include wishes of skin afflictions, fawning ladies, a bowling tournament, a Girl Scout, an orphan, flashy battle scenes and, of course, a guy in green.

Written by New Jersey playwright Mary Lynn Dobson, *The Somewhat True Tale of Robin Hood* will debut at Roosevelt Intermediate School on October 24 and 25, at 7:30 p.m. and promises to be a treat for the whole family.

A special performance on Thursday, October 23, at 4 p.m. is limited to students, teachers and senior citizens. Tickets may be purchased 45 minutes prior to each performance at a cost of \$7 per ticket.

Publisher/Poet R.G. Rader To Read at Carriage House

FANWOOD - The Carriage House Poetry Series invites the public to attend a free poetry event on Tuesday, October 21, at 8 p.m. in the Patricia Kuran Arts Center on Watson Road, off North Martine Avenue, adjacent to Fanwood Borough Hall.

The featured reader will be R.G. Rader, who will speak about small press publishing and then read from his own works.

Poet, playwright, actor and professor of English, Mr. Rader is also a coordinator of the Theater Program at Passaic County Community College and the publisher of *Muse-Pie Press*, which he founded in 1980.

Mr. Rader's poems have been widely published in the United States and abroad, and his book "Neon Shapes" received a Merit Book Award.

A playwright-in-residence and actor with the Arrowhead Theater Company in New York City, he is a member of The Dramatists Guild of America and has appeared in numerous Off Broadway and regional plays, as well as in films.

The Carriage House Poetry Series, celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, has featured some of the finest poets writing today, including Renée Ashley, Robert Carnevale, Catherine Doty, Pulitzer Prize recipient Stephen Dunn, Alicia Ostriker and Chancellor of the Academy of America Poets Gerald Stern.

Readings are held in the Kuran Arts Center, an historic Gothic Revival structure that was once a 19th-Century carriage house, hence the name of the series.

An open mic will follow the featured performance. For information, call (908) 889-7223 or (908) 889-5298.

For directions and information, visit carriagehousepoetryseries.blogspot.com.

Urinetown Promises No 'Shortage' of Laughs

CRANFORD - Cranford Dramatic Club Theatre opens its 90th season with three-time Tony winner *Urinetown*. The musical tells a hilarious tale of greed, corruption, love and betrayal set in a future town crippled with a severe water shortage.

A 20-year drought has led to a government-enforced ban on private toilets, forcing citizens to use public bathrooms that are regulated by a private monopolizing company.

Those who cannot scrounge up enough money to use the "amenity" get dragged off to the dreaded Urinetown as punishment.


From the ruins there rises an unlikely hero who decides he has held it long enough and launches a revolution to lead them all to urinary freedom.

With a lively score and libretto by Mark Hollman and Greg Kotis, *Urinetown* won the 2002 Tony Award for Best Original Score and Best Book of a Musical.

Urinetown is being performed at the CDC Theatre at 78 Winans Avenue in Cranford on Fridays, October 17 and 24, and Saturdays, October 18 and 25, at 8 p.m., as well as Sunday, October 19, at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$20 and are available by calling (908) 276-7611.



DEAD POETS SOCIETY...R.G. Rader portrays Lord Byron at the "Festival of Famous Poets," which was held at the Kuran Arts Center in Fanwood in 2006.



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IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES...Children ages 3 to 5 will learn music as part of the curriculum of Kids 'n' Arts, a drop-off program in art, music and drama sponsored by the New Jersey Workshop for the Arts.

Kids 'n' Arts Celebrates 15 Years of Arts Education

WESTFIELD - For those seeking an initial introduction to the arts, the New Jersey Workshop for the Arts' Kids 'n' Arts (KNA) program, a weekly two-hour drop-off class that returned earlier this week, offers an age-appropriate course in art, music and drama.

During the past one and a half decades, hundreds of children from ages 3 to 5 have benefited from this carefully designed curriculum and the experience and talent of the arts educators involved.

The art segment allows children to create arts and crafts using a variety of mediums, while they listen to the music of Mozart. During the music segment, the group learns about rhythm and pitch, using their voices and percussion and tonal instruments.

In the fall semester, they will be introduced to playing the recorder, while the spring semester will include introductory violin lessons. The drama segment of KNA encourages children to express themselves through acting, theater games, creative movement, dance, puppetry and pantomime.

The KNA staff includes Diane Burkam, who possesses a Bachelor of Art Education degree from College Misericordia.

"As a practicing artist, I know that living out our imagination through creative expression adds a fullness to all aspects of life," she said.

Maureen Monroe, who holds a Bach-

elor of Arts degree from Vassar College and a Master of Music degree from the New England Conservatory of Music, is also on the staff.

Mrs. Monroe is a vocal music teacher at the NJWA Music Studio and has performed in area musical theater venues. She said, "Music and theater help children to access their imaginations and allow them to have a great deal of fun while building their self-confidence."

Parents may choose a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday class at either 9:30 a.m. or 12:30 p.m.

For additional information, call (908) 789-9696, visit 150-152 East Broad Street or log on to njworkshopforthearts.com.

Intl. Alphorn Society Releases Holiday Music

WESTFIELD - The International Alphorn Society (IAS), a division of New Jersey Workshop for the Arts, located in Westfield, has produced its first-of-a-kind collection of Christmas and Chanukah songs.

The collection consists of 20 traditional Christmas carols and two Chanukah songs, all arranged for four alphorns.

The arrangers are Ted Schlosberg, Dana Sylvander and Martina Struck, all performers of the IAS Alphorn Quintet.

To learn more, call (908) 789-9696.

WCP's Midsummer Offers Special Student Matinee

WESTFIELD - Westfield Community Players opens the 2008-2009 season with William Shakespeare's romantic comedy, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The show continues Friday and Saturday evenings through October 25, with a 3 p.m. matinee on Sunday, October 19.

The 24-hour ticket tape at (908) 232-1221 is now on and all reserved seating is \$15. The October 19 matinee at 3 p.m. has special student pricing at \$7 per ticket. The theater is located at 1000 North Avenue, West in Westfield.

Ms. Naomi Yablonsky directs this tale of nature and star-crossed lovers set in the woodlands ruled by a fairy king and queen. She is assisted by associate director is Jerry Yablonsky and stage manager Barbara Ruban.

The cast is a blend of WCP veterans and newcomers who inhabit this wondrous glen. Steve Lemenille (Clark) is Theseus, Debbie Badal is Queen Hippolyta and Allen Gershenson is Egeus.

Other cast members include Candy Predham, Ryan Correll (Winfield), Peter Curley, Erica Flory, Anne Marie

Viola, Joe Penczak (Westfield), Jackie Weiner (Westfield), Rick Roberts, Claudio Venancio, Bill Van Sant, Garry Tamburro, Ted Satur (Westfield), Joe Belden (Fanwood), Danielle Levitt (Westfield), Elizabeth Minski (Fanwood), Karina Otero and Desiree Ewankov (Fanwood).

For more information, see westfieldcommunityplayers.org.

Hedgehog, Feather Hold One-Day Workshops

WESTFIELD - Westfield's Hedgehog and Feather Theatre Company, is holding one-day workshops, including "The Spooky World of Theatre," on Monday, October 20, from 5 to 6:30 p.m.

The workshops are designed for kids in grades 3 to 5.

All classes are held in the parish hall of St. Paul's Church, located at 414 East Broad Street of Westfield.

For more information, contact hedgehogandfeather@yahoo.com or (908) 578-0756, or consult hedgehogandfeather.org

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