

Quality of SPFAA Members' Show Continues to Climb



"Father and Son" by Terry Michalisin. She won first place in the Oil/Acrylic category at the SPFAA annual members' show.

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

SCOTCH PLAINS - The Scotch Plains and Fanwood Art Association (SPFAA) recently held its 43rd Annual Members Show at the Scotch Plains Public Library.

Each of SPFAA's 42 participating members was invited to submit up to three pieces of artwork to the exhibit.

Sixteen members submitted a total of 34 pieces.

Honors were awarded in the categories of photography, oil/acrylic painting, watercolor painting, graphite/pen and ink drawing, mixed media, pastels and best in show.

Connie Pinkman was awarded first place in photography for "Old and New NYC 3."

"I've been working on a series of photographs in New York City where I create images showing both old and new buildings positioned together. 'The Old and New NYC 3' was taken on 42nd street across from Penn Station," she said.

Terry Michalisin received first place in oil/acrylic for "Father and Son."

SPFAA President Paula Pearl received first place in the pastel category for "Batso," a painting of a jug placed near a window at the Grist Mill at Batsto Village.

Other members receiving first place awards include Betsy Ruff for her watercolor, "Where's the Corned Beef?"; Bill Connolly for his drawing, "Oh My!"; and Joseph Hulsen for his mixed media, "The Pond."

Marion Derrett won Best in Show for

"Relaxing," a pastel portrait of her son, Tom, created from a photo taken last year in Greece.

"Relaxing" has also been accepted into the "prestigious" Salmagundi Club's 32nd Annual Juried Painting and Sculpture Exhibition for Non-Members, explained Ms. Derrett.

Julie Friedman, a signature member of the Pastel Society of America and the owner of Artspace Studio and Gallery in Morristown, served as judge.

"The SPFAA is a small but growing group of artists and art lovers from Scotch Plains, Fanwood and surrounding areas," said Ms. Pearl.

"We received many compliments about the quality of our Members' Show this year and are considering adding a second show sometime in the fall."

"We have many talented artists in our group, and it is so nice to see their new work every year," she continued.

Ms. Pearl also recognized the SPFAA board members whose commitment to the Association helps make the Members' Show possible.

The SPFAA meets five times a year in the Patricia Kuran Cultural Arts Center in Fanwood, which is located on the grounds of Fanwood's Borough Hall.

Meetings, which often include an artist demonstration, are held on the third Thursday of every other month, September through May.

SPFAA meetings are open to the general public, and new members are welcome.

SPFAA meeting information can be found on spfaa.org.

WF Family Dedicates Refurbished Pediatric Room at Overlook Hospital

By CHRISTIE STORMS
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

SUMMIT - Two years ago, Lisa and Peter McNamara of Westfield vowed to make something positive come from the loss of their 16-month-old son, Liam. They wanted to help other families with children suffering from a terminal or life-limiting illness by making pediatric palliative care resources more accessible and creating an inviting, family-friendly environment for hospitalizations.

"The McNamaras were incredible to work with because building something new and different presents a lot of challenges...But their vision was very clear, and their motivation quite strong. We recognized this would be something of great value to pediatrics, and we intend to maximize its use."

- Dr. Walter Rosenfeld, chairman of Pediatrics at Overlook

Through their hard work and determination, along with the generous donations of many, their vision became a reality this month with the opening of Liam's Room in the Goryeb Children's Center at Overlook Hospital in Summit.

At the recent dedication ceremony, Dr. Walter Rosenfeld, chairman of Pediatrics at Overlook, spoke to a large gathering of Liam's Room supporters, which included New Jersey

entire suite's wall coverings, mosaic tiles and upholstered fabrics.

A painting that slides across the wall behind the bed hides medical equipment from view.

Even the ceiling received careful attention with a stary galaxy lit above the bed along with hand-painted stars and sea life overhead throughout.

Mrs. McNamara told *The Westfield Leader* and *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times* the room exceeded



A "BITTERSWEET" MOMENT...Liam's Room is christened in the Goryeb Children's Center at Overlook Hospital in Summit. The McNamara family of Westfield - who two years ago lost their 16-month-old son, Liam, to a brain disorder - wanted to create a warmer family-friendly environment for hospitalizations. In the front row are: Peter and Lisa McNamara and their two sons Nathaniel (Liam's twin), 3, and Trevor, 9. On the far right is Dr. Walter Rosenfeld, chairman of Pediatrics at Overlook.

State Senator Tom Kean, Jr. and Westfield councilman Mark Ciarrocca. Dr. Rosenfeld christened Liam's Room the "crown jewel" of the pediatric palliative care program and thanked the McNamaras for their efforts.

"I don't think anyone can really understand what they've been through," he said. "But they've taken that tragedy and turned it into something to help children and families for decades to come."

Mr. and Mrs. McNamara thanked family, friends and donors, including the Junior Women's Club of Westfield, the Westfield Service League and the Westfield Foundation.

Liam's 9-year-old brother, Trevor, also spoke about his involvement in the process, how much he'd learned from having Liam in his life and how he missed him.

After the formal ribbon-cutting, guests were invited to tour the completely renovated Room 680.

Liam's diagnosis of Lissencephaly, a terminal brain disorder, had necessitated frequent hospitalizations, so the McNamara family, including Liam's twin, Nathaniel, had spent much time with him in that same room two years ago.

Mrs. McNamara described the room back then as the cold, stark and uncomfortable place in which Liam took his last breaths in her arms.

Today, the room houses comfortable home furnishings such as an upholstered rocking chair and couch for additional sleeping accommodations,

her expectations.

She described the journey as "a long process" and that seeing it finally come into fruition was "bittersweet."

"I can close my eyes and still see his crib and that rickety chair right here," she said.

Mrs. McNamara would ultimately like to create rooms like this at other hospitals in New Jersey and eventually, across the country.

"First, we're going to wait for feedback from families about what they like and don't like," she said.

She also plans to remain on the Pediatric Palliative Care Steering Committee at Overlook and Morristown Memorial Hospital, where they're working toward assigning a designated pediatric palliative care coordinator. They will continue to seek further education for staff to support families from the onset of diagnosis.

"It goes so far beyond just admitting someone to this room," Dr. Rosenfeld told *The Leader* and *The Times*. "It also provides emotional support and home-nursing care."

"The McNamaras were incredible to work with because building something new and different presents a lot of challenges," he said. "But their vision was very clear, and their motivation quite strong."

"We recognized this would be something of great value to pediatrics, and we intend to maximize its use."

Those interested in more information or in making a donation can go to liamsroom.org.

FML Recognizes 'Friends' Founder, Other Volunteers

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

FANWOOD - Fanwood Memorial Library (FML) recently held a Volunteer Recognition Night in honor of the many volunteers whose dedication and hard work preserve the library for the use and enjoyment of the entire community.

FML Director Dan Weiss hosted the event, which was sponsored by the library's Board of Trustees.

Thena Rosahl and FML board member Nancy Eisenbarth, who were this year's Friends of the Library (FOL) book sale co-chairs, planned the event. Ann and Les Minski entertained attendees with their impersonations of George Burns and Gracie Allen.

Mr. Weiss acknowledged the many volunteer groups associated with FML, including the theater group, the quilting group, the hook and needle group and the Fanwood Women's Club, who fold and sort the FOL newsletter.

He also recognized the FOL members and library staff who assist with setting up library events.

"We have many people who give of their time in many ways," said Mr. Weiss.

Special recognition was given to Carol Campell, the founder of FML's "Friends," a group of individuals that furthers the library's mission by raising funds and sponsoring programs that are open to the public.

"As a librarian, Carol brings a professional perspective to the volunteer task she continues to embrace," Mr. Weiss said, "but her real love is for the town she lives in. The residents of Fanwood are the real beneficiaries of her efforts, and especially her belief that a strong and vibrant library is at the heart of a strong and successful community."

Ms. Campell was feted with proclamations. Mayor Colleen Mahr proclaimed April 20 "Carol Campell Day," Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders' Chairman and former FML Board Member Al Mirabella read a proclamation issued by the freeholders, and FML Board Member Pat Plante presented a proclamation written by Assemblywoman Linda Stender.

Caught completely off guard by the recognition, Ms. Campell expressed sincere surprise.

"Any award for a volunteer belongs to the many behind that honoree, as well as some leaders guiding those people along," she said.

"[Fanwood is made of] talented people who share, support and connect with each other," continued Ms. Campell.

"Fanwood is small, but we are a

mighty group. People have become friends through the Friends."

Ms. Campell began her librarianship at University of Southern California's World Affairs Library and worked in various capacities, including as head of technical services at the Plainfield library from 1974 to 1981.

She began the FOL, a group that now numbers 103, in 1986, when she noticed the children's librarian needed help shelving books.

She credits her dedication to the FOL to the many mentors she has had along the way.

"[There are many] wonderful people who have done so much for libraries and their patrons, and influenced me in ways I could never repay," she said.

"Libraries are an essential part of learning, not just for the individual but for society, reinforcing the principles of free access to information," she continued, adding that one of her favorite things is seeing people happy with a book they love or the information they need.

In addition to Ms. Plante and Ms. Eisenbarth, other members of the FML Board of Trustees who attended the recognition event included Sheldon Ross, the recently elected president, Ann Minski and Jane Frost-Guzzo.

In appreciation of her contributions to FML, Ms. Campell was presented with replicas of "Patience" and "Fortitude" - the two lion sculptures that grace the entrance to the New York City Public Library.

Musical Comedy Concludes WCP Season

WESTFIELD - The Westfield Community Players (WCP) conclude the 2008-2009 season with Rick Besoyan's musical comedy *Little Mary Sunshine*. The show concludes Friday and Saturday evening, May 29 and 30. The 24-hour ticket tape at (908) 232-1221 is now on, and all reserved seating is \$20. The theater is located at 1000 North Avenue, West, in Westfield.

Directed by Drude Roesler of Westfield, a veteran of multiple productions at WCP, she is assisted by musical director Larry Rothweiler, choreographer Maury Herman and producer Kay Macrae. John Schweska of Westfield stars as the dashing captain of the Colorado Rangers.

This send-up of Hollywood musicals of the 1920s and '30s presents dashing Forest Rangers, damsels in distress, devious politicians, Indian warriors, soaring tenors and beautiful altos - all with tongue planted firmly in cheek. To learn more, visit westfieldcommunityplayers.org.

UK's Choral Union Joins The Westfield Symphony

WESTFIELD - On Saturday, May 30, at 8 p.m., at the Presbyterian Church in Westfield, a combined chorus of more than 100 voices from the UK's Liverpool Welsh Choral Union and Bergen County's Pro Arte Chorale will join the Westfield Symphony Orchestra (WSO) in an inspiring performance of Giuseppe Verdi's *Requiem*.

The Choral Union, one of Britain's leading choral societies, broadcasts regularly for the BBC and enjoys a strong partnership with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic as well as the Northrop Silver Band, winning critical acclaim for its performances of the great choral classics as well as both grand opera and popular music.

Pro Arte Chorale, now celebrating its 45th anniversary season, has appeared in major concert venues across the region, including the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, Avery Fisher Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Carnegie Hall and the South Orange Performing Arts Center. In addition to its own subscription series in Bergen County, the Chorale

has appears regularly with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic and American Symphony Orchestra, as well as Westfield Symphony Orchestra.

International soloists Eun He Kim, soprano; Elise Quagliata, mezzo; Yoon Soo Shin, tenor; and Patrick Blackwell, baritone, are also set to feature in this production, which challenges singers and musicians alike with Verdi's vigorous rhythms, sublime melodies, powerful contrasts and use of brass and percussion.

This concert marks the WSO's 2008-2009 Season Finale to its SOUNDPartnerships initiative, which has presented concert programs that are only possible through the cross-fertilization of artistic mediums.

Student tickets cost \$10. Tickets may be purchased at the WSO office at 224 East Broad Street or by calling the box office at (908) 232-9400. Tickets (with cash or check) are also available at the Town Book Store of Westfield or Martin Jewelers in Cranford. To learn more, see westfieldsymphony.org.



Clockwise from top left: International soloists Eun He Kim, soprano; Patrick Blackwell, bass-baritone; Yoon Soo Shin, tenor; Elise Quagliata, mezzo.

Award-winning Broadway Stars Come to Mountainside

MOUNTAINSIDE - The Actor's Camp at Mountainside has just announced the addition of two Broadway stars to its teaching staff for this summer's classes.

Tony Award-winning actress Michele Pawk and Michele Ragusa (star of Broadway's *Young Frankenstein*) have just been signed to lead classes in musical theater and acting at Mountainside's premier camp for young aspiring actors.

Ms. Pawk won a Tony for her performance in Carol Burnett's *Hollywood Arms* and has worked with such Broadway legends as Harold Prince and Susan Stroman. She also has starred in such Broadway classics as *Cabaret*, *Seussical*, *Chicago*, *Hairspray* and *Mamma Mia*, as well as having made various guest appearances on TV, including "Law and Order."

Ms. Ragusa has just finished working with the comic legend Mel Brooks in the Broadway production of *Young Frankenstein* and will reprise her role in the national tour of that production

shortly at the conclusion of the camp's summer session. She also has starred in the Tony-winning Broadway productions of *Ragtime*, *Titanic* and *Urinetown*, as well as appearing in the upcoming Paper Mill Playhouse production of *The Full Monty* while teaching at the camp.

Paul O'Connor, artistic director of the camp, said, "I am thrilled to have landed such incredibly talented and accomplished Broadway veterans to join our faculty. With the addition of both Michele, we are elevating the level of instruction for our students and giving them exposure to a professional caliber of instruction that can't be found anywhere in the area."

The Actor's Camp at Mountainside conducts workshops at Our Lady of Lourdes from July 6 through July 30. Class size is limited to approximately 20 students. For more information about the camp, please call (908) 400-2321.

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