

HUNG UP!!

Mother Worries Son's Friend Will Spoil Planned Party

By Milt Faith, Executive Director
Youth and Family Counseling Service



A Puzzled Mother Writes: My eight-year-old son will be having a party, and I will be inviting his classmates and other friends. I have a problem with "Jim" (disguised name.) He is very destructive, and I am afraid if I invite him, he will act up and make a mess of things. My son has mixed feelings and would like to invite him, but doesn't want Jim to spoil this special occasion. Jim's parents are of no help since they overprotect and defend him no matter what. I am torn about what to do.

Answer: Since your son has mixed feelings, reassure him that if Jim is invited you will be very proactive. If Jim starts becoming a problem, you will speak to him privately about the behavior you expect from him and the others, and if he doesn't behave in an appropriate manner, he will be sent home. This may be refreshing to a youngster who encounters an adult who cares enough to set limits and boundaries, unlike his defensive and ineffectual parents. Good luck.

A Confused Daughter Writes: My mother passed away two years ago after a difficult bout with cancer. She was 70. The family mourned her appropriately. My dad, age 75, retired from his job, spent a lot of time at home and then began to meet for lunch with old friends. Gradually, he began to go to sports events, theater, etc. At one of these events, he met "Eve" (disguised name.) For the past half year, he has seen Eve regularly. They eat out constantly, and go to Florida hotels and other resorts. She is a widow who comes from a poverty background, and we (my siblings and I) believe she is interested in dad's money (he has plenty.) She discourages family dinners and feels he should buy her jewelry for any and all occasions. We've talked to dad, but he refuses to listen to us. "She makes me happy!" he discloses. We want him to speak to a psychiatrist or our priest; he refuses. How can we persuade him to get help?

Answer: I don't feel it is your role to get him "help." I really don't know Eve, only through your description. You may be correct about her motivation (or are you jealous, competitive??) However, your dad says he is happy with her. You could encourage more family contact, but he will probably oppose it if he feels you oppose his relationship with Eve.

I would not pursue his seeing someone professionally since he sees no reason for this. He is an adult and has a right to make decisions re his happiness. If you are wrong in your evalu-

ation, he will continue to be happy with Eve. If you are right, he will have to discover this for himself. Let us hope his judgment is appropriate.

A "Blessed" Mother Writes: "Jayden" (disguised name) never went to college and doesn't communicate easily. I was concerned about Jayden's vocational future. He has also had long-standing problems with his dad, which didn't help. But let me share with you how he has made a wonderful adjustment in his career and his communication skills. He contributes to sayings that are put on cups, sweatshirts and other accessories, and he is doing very well. After a confrontation between Jayden and his father, in which my husband always yells, "You have to listen to me, I am your father," Jayden wrote: "Any man can be a Father, but it takes someone special to be a Dad." Another time, when my husband ridiculed Jayden's youth involvement at our church, Jayden wrote: "Prayer, the world's greatest wireless connection." My husband hasn't changed, but he appreciates Jayden's sense of humor and his expressions of sincere emotion.

Answer: A wonderful story (I might be able to use Jayden as my PR person.)

Openings Are Available For Senior Recreation

FANWOOD - The Fanwood Recreation Department has announced that individuals may still sign up for the borough's winter recreation programs for senior citizens.

Programs run weekly and will continue through the week of March 28. They include Aerobics (Tuesdays, 9:15 to 10 a.m.), Tai Chi (Tuesdays, 10:15 to 11:15 a.m.), Line Dancing (Thursdays, 1 to 2 p.m.) and Water Exercise (Fridays, 11 to 11:45 a.m.).

For Fanwood and Scotch Plains residents, the registration fee for each program is \$10. All others will be charged \$25 per program. All programs are held in the recreation building at Forest Road Park in Fanwood, except for Water Exercise, which is held at the indoor pool at the Jewish Community Center (JCC) of Central New Jersey's Wilf Jewish Community Campus, located at 1391 Martine Avenue in Scotch Plains. Space is limited.

Program schedules and registration forms may be picked up at Fanwood Borough Hall, located at 75 North Martine Avenue, or downloaded from fanwoodrecreation.org. For more information, call Fanwood Recreation at (908) 370-7092.



Westfielder Has Breathtaking Hike to Top of Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania

TANZANIA - On Sep. 30, 2010, Westfield resident Douglas MacNeil succeeded in reaching the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, Africa. At 19,334 feet, Mt. Kilimanjaro is the highest mountain in Africa and the tallest freestanding mountain in the world.

Climbing Kilimanjaro required hiking 6 days over 70 miles and ascending over 12,000 feet. The hike began in the hot tropical rain forest and ended up near frigid glaciers at the summit. With summit temperatures of only -10 F to -15 F, strong winds, and less than half as much oxygen as at sea level, only 40 percent of climbers successfully reach the peak.

Although not a technical climb, the route is challenging and dangerous. The week before Doug's climb, two climbers died in separate falls and accidents. During the descent, Doug saw an unconscious woman being evacuated down the mountain on a stretcher. Doug had trained for six months by bike riding and hiking. By August, he was riding 125 miles per week and on the weekends hiking over 20 miles along the Appalachian Trail.

Of the last 150 climbers to register for an attempt to climb, only two were, like Doug, older than 55. Doug did

suffer modest altitude sickness, including headaches, and near total loss of appetite on the day of the climb. From base camp at 15,000 feet, it took seven hours to reach the summit.

The ascent started at midnight so climbers would be off the mountain before late morning weather developments, which can include fierce winds and snow. The lack of oxygen was very noticeable, not only was any rapid movement exhausting, Doug noticed strange visual effects, including blurred vision, strange colors, and 45 degree tilt of the horizon.

The climb was dedicated to Doug's dad, James MacNeil, who died relatively young, in part due to his life long battle with asthma. Over the years, lung diseases have especially hard hit Doug's family. His grandmother, father, uncle and sister all suffered with asthma. Two of his grandparents died from emphysema and his mom is battling interstitial lung disease.

Doug's fundraising efforts for the American Lung Association were in his Dad's memory. With the support of family, friends and colleagues at Merck, Doug raised \$5,000. The blog of his African adventure is at mtkilimanjaroandme.blogspot.com. He posted pictures from his Blackberry while on the mountain.

Westfield Foundation Announces 4th Quarter Recipients

WESTFIELD - The Westfield Foundation, originally founded to be a turnkey solution for individuals who want to leave a legacy in the community, announces their grant recipients for the fourth quarter of 2010. The Foundation granted over \$31,000 to five local programs and projects. These grants will be used to purchase new stretchers, an aquatic access life chair, and fund a crisis intervention program for teens at risk.

The Westfield Foundation favors grants for programs or projects, which focus primarily on the Westfield community or groups serving the Westfield community. These areas include education; the arts and other cultural activities; civic, health and human services; community development; and the conservation and preservation of historical resources. This quarter's recipients include: Youth and Family Counseling Services, The Westfield Y, Good Grief, Continuo Arts Foundation and the Westfield Volunteer Rescue Squad.

The Foundation is currently conducting its annual fundraising campaign. Tax-deductible donations allow the Foundation to grow their en-

dowment, while utilizing the income for grants. In this way, donations give back to the community for many years to come. The Foundation is also a resource for community members to leave a permanent legacy for a favored philanthropic interest in the community. Funds can be established in the family name, allowing contributions to have a long-term impact that will continue to meet community needs indefinitely.

The Westfield Foundation started with an initial donation of \$2,000 over 34 years ago. The Foundation's funds are professionally invested and the income generated is granted to carefully screened applicants throughout the year. The Foundation has distributed over \$4 million since its inception.

If you need more information about the Westfield Foundation, please see www.thewestfieldfoundation.com. If you are interested in contributing to this worthwhile community foundation, please contact Betsy Chance, the Executive Director, at foundation@westfieldnj.com or by telephone at (908) 233-9787 with any questions.

Yoga Series to Commence At Trailside January 18

MOUNTAINSIDE - The popular gentle yoga series at Trailside Nature and Science Center will resume on Tuesday nights throughout the winter months. Intended for adults, ages 18 and older, this series will begin on January 18 and continue for nine additional weeks through March 22.

"The yoga series for adults, held in the beautiful and tranquil setting of the Trailside Visitor Center, is a great way to relax and learn methods to reduce the stresses of daily life," said Freeholder Vice Chairwoman Deborah Scanlon, liaison to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

This 10-week series will be an opportunity to learn and experience Raja yoga techniques for integrating body and mind. Yoga instructor Claire Bay, certified by the Chopra Center in New York City, will return to Trailside to teach and guide participants. Soothing

music will enhance the overall experience.

Each yoga session will run from 7:15 to 8:30 p.m. The fee is \$15 per class for Union County residents and \$20 for out-of-county participants. Pre-registration is preferred, as space is limited. However, participants can register for individual sessions. Doors will open 15 minutes prior to each class. Participants are asked to bring a yoga mat or pillow.

Yoga classes will be offered on January 18 and 25; February 1, 8, 15 and 22, and March 1, 8, 15 and 22. For more information about this series or upcoming programs at Trailside, call (908) 789-3670 or visit ucnj.org/trailside.

Trailside Nature and Science Center is located at 452 New Providence Road in Mountainside and is a service of the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders.

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