

Celebration Singers' Choirs 'Bring a Little Jingle'

CRANFORD - The Celebration Singers Adult and Youth Choirs will be presenting their winter concert "Bring a Little Jingle" at Saint Michael's Church, 40 Alden St., Cranford on Friday and Saturday, December 7 and 8, at 8:15 p.m. Boasting over 70 adults and over 50 children and teens, the Singers are celebrating their 74th season of providing musical entertainment.

"Performing at Saint Michael's Church is going to be such an awesome experience," stated Sean Berg, Artistic Director and Conductor of the Celebration Singers. "I remember when we first performed there in 2005, and I was agast with not only the beauty of the church sanctuary, but the sound quality. People are really going to be moved with this concert."

Although Jennifer Jenkins, director of the Youth Choir and Middle Cs was not a member of the Adult Choir when they last sang at St. Michael's, she is looking forward to bringing music to the beautiful sanctuary. "It will be wonderful to hear children's voices ringing in the rafters! Most of all, it's so gratifying to see the variety of ages performing together, from kids age 9 to 85! This is truly an intergenerational group," she said.

The performance will include many songs you will recognize by name, but in many cases, the Singers have

found a way to twist and turn a particular song, whether it is jazzy, classical, or gospel. Selections include: "We Three Kings," "Mary Did You Know," "Happy Holidays/White Christmas," "Al Ashlosa," "Hanukkah Flame" and the combined piece with all choirs - "Drummer Boy/Peace on Earth". On the lighter side, "Sleigh Ride," and "Santa Claus is Coming to Town," along with "Bring a Little Jingle" and "Rules of Christmas," will also be performed.

Not only will attendees be taken on a "Musicological Journey through the Twelve Days of Christmas" by the adults, but they will also enjoy the Hawaiian version of the famous carol as presented by the Youth Choir (i.e. palm trees replace pear trees). The Youth Choirs will also present "I Wish" which made its world premiere on November 13 at their Lord & Taylor performance.

Advance tickets can be purchased at celebration-singers.org for a discounted price of \$12 for adults and \$8 for seniors and children. At the door, tickets are \$15 for adults and \$10 for seniors and children.

Funding has been made possible in part by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Department of State, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, through a grant administered by the Union County Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs.



FAMILY FUN...The Westfield Community Players will present *The Emperor's New Clothes* on Saturday, December 1. Pictured from left to right, are: David Neal, Clare Dill, Lilli Markey, Brad Howell, Christian Ruppenthal, and Jennifer C. Turner.

WCP to Present *The Emperor's New Clothes*

WESTFIELD - The Westfield Community Players (WCP) will present *The Emperor's New Clothes*, a show designed to delight children from ages five and up, on Saturday, December 1, at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. An up-dated version of Hans Christian Anderson's tale brought into the 21st century of hip-hop and iPads is about a charming, but foolish, emperor who is led to believe that two conniving schemers will make him a suit of clothes that is not only beautiful, but magical. But is it?

Complete with singing and dancing and audience participation, this rollicking children's comedy will keep audiences laughing. The funnest continues after the curtain comes down. At the end of each performance, children will have the opportunity to talk with the actors who will still be in costume and have their pictures taken with them, if they wish.

Tickets for the show are \$10. Res-

ervations can be made by calling the box office at (908) 232-1221 or can be purchased at the door on the day of performance. The theater is located at 1000 North Avenue in Westfield.

The cast includes Christian Ruppenthal of Brick and Brad Howell of Toms River who are also the directors, David Neal of Westfield, Lilli Markey of East Hanover, Clare Dill of Jersey City, and Jennifer C. Turner of Rockaway. The producers are Lucille Bills from Scotch Plains, WCP Board member, and Michael Driscoll from Edison, Artistic Director of Alliance Repertory Theatre Company.

The Emperor's New Clothes is sponsored by Josephine Ward and Eileen Ward-Conway, broker of Elegant Homes Realty featuring the Savannah in downtown Westfield, the James Ward Mansion, and Ward and O'Donnell Property Management Company.

The Town Book Store Hosts WF Author John Luerssen

WESTFIELD - The Town Book Store is very excited to be hosting Westfield resident John Luerssen, author of Bruce Springsteen FAQ: All That is Left to Know About the Boss on Saturday, December 1, from 2 - 4 p.m. This indispensable read, packed with countless images of rare memorabilia, is a volume Springsteen fans will treasure.

Long before he sold 120 million albums globally in a career that has endured artistically and commercially like no other performers in the rock era, Bruce Springsteen was a working-class Jersey kid with a dream and a guitar. By the time he was 16, he was playing ShopRite openings and school dances around his hometown of Freehold.

For many, high school is where the garage-band dreams die, but time spent fronting a band called Steel Mill in the heyday of Asbury Park's Upstage scene gave him the courage to sidestep college and put his name out in front, soon enough making him "The Boss" to his band.

After five more years spent working diligently on that dream, Springsteen had landed the dueling *Time* and *Newsweek* covers that made him an instant household name on the strength of his album "Born to Run."

"Bruce Springsteen FAQ: All That's Left to Know About the Boss" investigates Springsteen's superstar "Born in the U.S.A." album and tour, the dissolution and reunion of the E Street Band, the legal wrangling that held up 1978's "Darkness on the Edge of Town," the group's post-millennium resurgence, the untimely passing of core band members Danny Federici and Clarence Clemons, and more.

John Luerssen is a Westfield native who wrote his first record review for Westfield High School's *Hi's Eye* in 1985. Luerssen has written for *Rolling Stone*, *Spinner* and *Billboard* and in addition to "Bruce Springsteen FAQ" he has written "U2 FAQ" and "Rivers' Edge: The Weezer Story."

John lives in town with his wife Heidi and their three children - Meredith, Hayley and Jack. He is currently at work on two upcoming books for Backbeat, "Nirvana FAQ" and "If You Like Coldplay."

Meet and chat about Bruce with John at The Town Book Store located at 270 East Broad Street in Westfield (corner of East Broad and Elmer Streets). If you are unable to attend this event, feel free to call The Town Book Store at (908) 233-3535 to reserve an autographed copy of his book.



The Celebration Singers Adult and Youth Choirs

Mid-Day Musicales Present Jersey Jazz Trio

WESTFIELD - The First Congregational Church of Westfield, 125 Elmer Street, will present the popular Jersey Jazz Trio as the opening concert of this season's Mid-Day Musicales on Wednesday, December 5 at noon. Admission is \$5.

The members of the Jersey Jazz Trio are Bill Shadel, clarinet; Ron Naspo, bass, and Bob DeBenedette, piano, all well-known musicians in the metropolitan region. Their program will feature music from the Golden Age of jazz, the 1930s, 40s, and 50s.

Mr. Shadel is one of the leading musicians in the New York City area, with performances, which range from classical to jazz, commercial to rock. He has been principal clarinetist with the New Jersey Symphony, Westfield Symphony, the Colonial Symphony, the New Jersey State Opera, Teatro Grattacielo, and Opera at Florham. He has performed and recorded with the New York Philharmonic and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra under the direction of Leonard Bernstein, Pierre Boulez, Karl Böhm, Eric Leinsdorf, Sir Colin Davis, Zubin Mehta, Kurt Masur and others, and has performed with Luciano Pavarotti, Placido Domingo, and Marilyn Horne. A sought-after chamber musician, he toured widely across the United States as clarinetist of the New Jersey Chamber Music Society, and was for many years the leader of the Festival Woodwinds. In reviewing his Town Hall recital in New York City, the New York Times music critic compared his performance to that of Kreisler and Caruso.

Mr. Naspo is an accomplished performer and teacher of the string bass. Active in both symphonic and jazz fields, he has been a member of the Florida Symphony, the New Jersey Symphony, and the American Symphony under Leopold Stokowsky, and has toured the United States and Canada with the Joffrey Ballet. He has worked with Stan Kenton, Sonny Rollins, Wild Bill Davidson Billy Maxted, and Bucky Pizzarelli, and toured with the Don Shirley Trio. Mr. Naspo has been a faculty member at Montclair State University and William Paterson University. His mentors have included Frederick Zimmermann, Gary Karr, Homer Mensch, and Alvin Brulm.

Mr. DeBenedette has performed with the Tommy Dorsey, Xavier Cugat, Richard Maltby, and Les Elgart bands as well as the New Jersey Pops Orchestra. He has accompanied singers Michelle Hendricks, Julius LaRosa, Marlene VerPlanck, Annette Sanders, Abbe Lane, Connie Francis, Lynne Roberts, and the Four Aces. He currently plays in several big bands and small jazz groups, accompanies both jazz and classical singers, and plays chamber music.

Funding for these concerts has been made possible in part by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Department of State, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, through a grant administered by the Union County Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs.



ALPHORN EVOLUTION...Come hear the world premiere of alphorn music performed with an adaptor with three valves, making the notes sound more like those of a French horn. These performances, by the International American Alphorn Society Ensemble, a program of the New Jersey Workshop for the Arts, will be directed by Dr. Ted Schlosberg, NJWA Founder and Executive Director. They will take place on Saturdays December 1, 8 and 15, on the corner of Central Avenue and Quimby Street, Westfield, from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. Call (908) 789-9696, extension 17, for more information.

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The Westfield Volunteer Rescue Squad is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that has provided medical assistance to Westfield and neighboring towns since 1951.

The Westfield Art Association is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 1922 for the promotion of art.

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