

Silent Movie Night at Westfield Methodist Church

WESTFIELD – Organist Trent Johnson returns to the console of the Aeolian-Skinner organ at Westfield's First United Methodist Church, One East Broad Street, at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, September 25, to provide the "Old Tyme" sound track music for the 1925 silent film *The Freshman* starring Harold Lloyd, Jobyna Ralston, Brooks Benedict and James Anderson. This comedy remains one of Lloyd's most successful and enduring films suited for the entire family.

Prior to the film, a 6:30 p.m. dinner will be served in the church social hall. Cost for the film and dinner will be \$15 for adults and \$10 for children 12 and under.

The Freshman is a film loaded with humor and sight gags. The plot is quite simple and Harold Lloyd makes the most of it when he enrolls at Tate University where he decides the emulate his movie idol, a move which makes him the butt of ongoing jokes as he becomes the laughing stock of the whole school. His only real friend is Peggy, who turns out to be his landlady's daughter. In time, Harold joins the football team, an association which sets the stage for high jinks, amusing romps and rollicking errors.

In another scene, Harold is persuaded to host the annual "Fall Frolic Dance." After his clothes begin to fall apart, the viewer can't help but laugh as Harold is seen trying to put everything back together. In the end, it seems that Harold just might find that Peggy, the hat-check girl, finds him to be irresistible.

Trent Johnson, along with being an

accomplished organist and composer, is also the music director of The Oratorio Singers of Westfield who will present a concert of music for brass, organ and chorus by composers including Copland, Handel, Wagner, Rutter and Johnson on Sunday, March 13 at 3 p.m. in the sanctuary of the Westfield First United Methodist Church. Mr. Johnson is also Director of Music at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Bernardsville. An active organist, Mr. Johnson frequently performs in the major churches of New York City, Washington DC, Boston, New Jersey and in Europe and Asia. Also on the staff of Radio City Music Hall in NYC, Johnson plays the "mighty Wurlitzer" for the Christmas Spectacular Shows.

Mr. Johnson is a fan of films from the silent era and has accompanied many silent films in live improvised concerts including *The Phantom of the Opera*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, the *Son of the Sheik* and comedies of Charlie Chaplin and Harold Lloyd.

Mr. Johnson has composed many works for chorus, orchestra, along with chamber music, works for vocal and instrumental soloists, piano and organ. A number of his works have been given their world premiers during Oratorio Singers concerts of past years.

Dinner reservations for this event are encouraged and can be made by calling (908) 656-7418. Church parking is accessible from Ferris Place which is located behind the church and off Prospect Street.

Chansonettes Begin Rehearsal for Holiday Tour

WESTFIELD – The Chansonettes of Westfield are getting back to rehearsal to prepare for their winter holiday concert tour starting on Tuesday, December 8. Their Sounds of the Season program will make stops this year at Westfield Senior Housing, Chelsea Warren, Atria of Cranford, Winchester Gardens in Maplewood and Springfield Presbyterian Church. The all female chorus will present the sounds of the holidays including "A Jingle Bell Christmas," "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree," "Hanukkah Nagilah," "African Noel"

and "Ode to Peace".

The Chansonettes, in existence for over 60 years, performs a holiday concert series in December and a spring concert series in May of each year. The women rehearse once a week on Wednesday nights at the Presbyterian Church on Mountain Avenue in Westfield, under the direction of Jean Schork and accompanied by Mel Freda.

For more information regarding joining the group or booking a future concert may call co-president Amy Herrington at (908) 317-5910.

Intergenerational Orchestra Plans Musical Season

NEW PROVIDENCE – New Jersey Intergenerational Orchestra (NJIO) is excited to welcome newcomers to its 22nd season.

At the beginning of the 2015-16 season, NJIO will hold two open house rehearsals on Thursdays, September 17 and 24. Musicians of all ages and abilities are welcome to join one or all of the orchestras during these rehearsals. Light refreshments will be provided. Prelude, an ensemble intended for beginning strings, rehearses from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Intermezzo, an intermediate-level group that recently expanded to a full symphony orchestra

(strings, winds, brass, and percussion), rehearses from 5:45 p.m. to 7 p.m. and Symphony, the more advanced symphony orchestra, rehearses from 7:15 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

NJIO's first concert of the season is Sunday, November 15 at 3 p.m. Symphony will play works by Beethoven, Kallinikov, and Lalo. The orchestra will accompany cellist Heechan Ku, the second-place winner of NJIO's annual Young Artist Concerto Competition.

For more information or to join the orchestra, contact Administrator Mary Beth Sweet at (908) 603-7691 or info@njio.org. Or visit njio.org.

NJYT Announces Class Registration

ROSELLE PARK – New Jersey Youth Theatre (NJYT) provides various levels of performing arts classes in drama, musical theatre, ballet, jazz, and private voice at the NJYT studios at 172 West Westfield Avenue in Roselle Park. The first semester runs from Monday, October 5 through Wednesday, January 20, 2016; the second semester runs from Monday, Janu-

ary 25 through Wednesday, May 4, 2016, culminating in a performance on Saturday, May 7.

Class registration will take place at the NJYT studios on Friday, September 18 from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. and on Saturday, September 19 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. For information call (908) 233-3200, or go to www.njyouththeatre.org.



READY FOR ANOTHER YEAR...Allen Artz creates music with the Crescent Choral Society in the beautiful Crescent Ave. Church a new list of concerts has been announced for the 2015-16 season.

Crescent Concerts Announces 2015-16 Season

PLAINFIELD – "A Sonic Spectacular" opens Crescent Concerts' 34th, 2015-16 season of seven exciting and varied music programs all performed in the gothic, cathedral-like splendor of the Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church in Plainfield.

The Solid Brass ensemble provides "A Sonic Spectacular" when it begins the season with music both old and new on Sunday, October 11 at 3 p.m.

Then, on Saturday, November 14 at 7 p.m. the Crescent Choral Society returns with "Divine Dvorak," an all Dvorak concert featuring the beautiful Mass in D and his Te Deum, a large work he composed and conducted for the first time in 1892 in New York City. F. Allen Artz, III, the Artistic Director of Crescent Concerts, will lead this performance of the Choral Society singers, accompanied by organist Brenda Day.

For the third concert, the Crescent Singers highlight the holiday season with their festive annual "Yuletide by Candlelight" on Sunday, December 13 at 5 p.m. "There is No Rose of Such Virtue" is the title of this year's musical gift, free to the community and surrounding areas towns. The Crescent Singers perform familiar and not so familiar Christmas anthems, carols and songs in the candle-lit sanctuary of the church. This beloved concert tradition always delights audiences with musical surprises and helps bring on the spirit of the Christmas season. Allen Artz conducts his very experienced and professional choristers. He also is organist for this performance.

The eagerly anticipated "Exceptional Young Artists Showcase" is featured on Sunday, February 21 at 3 p.m. Five young artists, 18 and under, will perform in this recital after having been chosen in an earlier competition. In the past the young performers have amazed and excited audiences with their virtuosity and talents.

Westfield Foundation Grant Brings Music to Seniors

AREA – Music for All Seasons, Inc., of Scotch Plains announced they received a grant award from The Westfield Foundation to present four interactive programs (at each facility) to the residents of the Westfield Senior Citizen Housing Center and Sunrise Senior Living facility in Westfield from September to May, 2015-2016.

Music for All Seasons, (MFAS) was created 24-years ago with the belief in the power of music to heal, to bring solace and to change people's lives. Since its inception, MFAS has been in the forefront of the arts in the healing and wellness movement and is nationally recognized as leaders in this field by the National Endowment

for the Arts, and was cited in their "Best Practices" publication.

Providing live, interactive musical programs to those members of society who have no regular access to the arts in hospitals, shelters, prisons and jails, juvenile detention centers, halfway houses for foster children, and geriatric centers is at the heart of our mission.

MFAS is currently completing the fourth very successful year of their latest initiative, "Voices of Valor", which addresses issues of trauma and stress in veterans, both recently returned from Iraq and Afghanistan and from many other conflicts, through the creative application of songwriting.

For additional information, please visit www.musicforallseasons.org or call (908) 322-6300.

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A Walk in the Woods
Seeing the Forest for the Trees
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By MICHAEL S. GOLDBERGER
film critic

Because director Ken Kwapis keeps it real, *A Walk in the Woods* may not be as exciting as it is heartfelt and visually enthralling. Based on renowned travel writer Bill Bryson's true-to-life attempt to hike the Appalachian Trail with his long lost pal Stephen Katz (reportedly a pseudonym for Matthew Angerer), it offers an engaging wrinkle on the buddy film. And, since we in turn are reunited with our movie chums Robert Redford and Nick Nolte as the hikers in question, it's like getting double coupons.

Act #1, scene #1, Redford's travel scribe extraordinaire is being interviewed on TV by a pretentious idiot who apparently knows nothing about belles-lettres, travel, or anything else for that matter. We see the polite exasperation on Mr. Bryson's face. On the precipice of diving into retirement, when thinking folk are prone to sum up and evaluate their life experience, it is hardly time to suffer fools.

Shortly thereafter, the funeral of a family friend further intensifies the need to establish *raison d'être*. That's it. He has to do something...something daring, defining and outrageous before going gentle into that good night of the voluntarily unemployed. So he'll hike the Appalachian Trail, all 2,200 miles of it, from Springer Mountain in Georgia to Mount Katahdin, Maine.

Never mind that only one in four backpackers makes it all the way and that his wife, played by Emma Thompson, isn't charmed by this mid-life crisis that has kicked in some twenty years late. He is a man of resolve. He's going. Problem is, no one wants to go with him, the return messages on his phone delineating a litany of old age maladies. Each also warns that only a fool would sign on for such an undertaking. Then comes the call from Katz, boyhood compatriot from Des Moines and sidekick to Bryson's European gallivants in their wild oat-sowing days.

After noting he's a bitiffed that he had to learn about the expedition from mutual friends, the self-admitted reprobate, a perfectly dramatic antithesis to the accomplished author, says he'd be willing to reunite, after 40 years, for this last great hurrah. Issuing that Redford scowl of tolerance, Bryson accedes. The adventure is afoot. We rub our hands in anticipation. This should be fun. I'd sure like to go, at least for a piece of the way, if I can find the right shoes.

Of course before embarking, solidly middle class, respectable, accomplished and doubtlessly well-heeled Bill Bryson, now of Hanover New Hampshire, must second guess his choice of companions for what looks to be a daring project. Nick Nolte's superbly etched Katz is the rag-tag antihero personified. He is overweight, boasting metal replacement parts here and there and, we suspect, running from something back in Des Moines. The travel writer's wife, apprehensive to begin with, goes into hyper-warp worry upon Stephen's arrival.

Katz stokes the trepidation by immediately regaling the gathered Bryson clan with heretofore untold tales from when their noted patriarch wasn't yet a complete model citizen: i.e. — the blonde in Amsterdam, the redhead in France. Additionally, just in case his character is still in question, Katz admits (the verbiage cleaned up a bit here) that he spent half his life chasing women and drinking, while the other half he wasted. Then, without further ado, off they slip into the wild rainbow of nature's expanse.

At least one fine truth is amusingly dramatized. Namely, those wonderful memories you have of adventures with

your best buds didn't always seem so great while they were happening. In this case, Bryson and Katz quickly learn why such a small percentage of initially ambitious hikers complete the trek. While it's comical to us from the comfort of our stadium seats, our latter day Lewis and Clark aren't as quick to see the humor in menacing bears, discomfiting weather, daunting terrain and nutty fellow trekkers.

Winning our interest via the unfolding nuances of their characters' resumed friendship, Messrs. Redford and Nolte conjure a swell duo of opposites. Making it thrilling without exaggerating matters, the thespic treasures provide a vicarious experience that satisfies both on the wanderlust and philosophical levels. However, while Nolte's scallawag is exacted to nomination-worthy perfection, Redford's more thoughtful, soul-searching explorer isn't able to mine that deeper, subtextual message about the human condition it seems he's trying to impart.

Then again, Mr. Redford suffers no shortcoming in exclaiming his conservationist zeal, allowing the luscious location cinematography to say those proverbial thousand words. Granted, the ramble you're perhaps resultantly stirred to undertake may not be as ambitious as Bryson and Katz's. All the same, heeding *A Walk in the Woods'* prevailing message will help assure there are still woods to walk in when you're ready.

A Walk in the Woods, rated R, is a Broad Green Pictures release directed by Ken Kwapis and stars Robert Redford, Nick Nolte and Emma Thompson. Running time: 104 minutes

WCP Announces

Upcoming Auditions

WESTFIELD – The Westfield Community Players has announced auditions for its upcoming production of Lanford Wilson's *The Hotel Baltimore*. The play will be directed by Beatriz Esteban-Messina and produced by Lucille Bills.

Auditions will be held on Tuesday, October 20 and Thursday, October 22 from 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Westfield Community Players, 1000 North Avenue West, Westfield.

The show's production dates will be in 2016 at 8 p.m. on January 9, 16, 22 and 23 and a 2 p.m. performance on Sunday, January 17.

The cast of five men and seven women, in an age range of 19 to 70 is required. For cast requisites and synopsis, please visit: <http://www.westfieldcommunityplayers.org/WCPauditions.html>.

Paper Mill Announces

Auditions for Show Choir

MILLBURN – Paper Mill Playhouse announced open auditions for the award-winning Paper Mill Playhouse Broadway Show Choir. The choir is a tuition-free, audition based, performance show choir that stems from Paper Mill Playhouse's award-winning Arts Education and Outreach programs. The choir consists of 40 to 50 singer/dancers between the ages of 16 and 22.

Auditions for this special ensemble will take place at Paper Mill Playhouse, 22 Brookside Drive in Millburn on the evenings of Sunday, October 4; Monday, October 5 and Tuesday, October 6 by appointment only. To make an audition appointment please call (973) 315-1640 or email Jzeitoun@papermill.org. For more information please visit www.papermill.org/showchoir.

The Westfield Memorial Library presents
The Blue Jersey Band
Saturday, September 26
At 2:00 pm



A mix of music genres from an accomplished band means an afternoon of lively entertainment! Blue Jersey Band brings an eclectic mix of swing, gypsy jazz and bluegrass to

their performances. With Frank Ruck on mandolin, guitar and vocals, Ellen Ruck on guitar and vocals, and Mike Sutton on bass guitar, they provide a lively and swinging time of music. Sign up!

It's your Library ... make the most of it



Sign up online at www.wmlnj.org and click on the Calendar link, or call 908.789.4090 option 0.

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