

Arts and Entertainment

Joanne Carey Starts Second Season At Westfield School of Dance

WESTFIELD - Joanne Carey, a professional actress, dancer and singer, will begin her second season as owner and artistic director of Westfield School of Dance.

For the past six years, she has been a lead soloist with the Andrew Jannetti Dance Company performing in New York at the Bessie Schoenberg Theatre and The George Street Playhouse. She has taught dance and choreographed shows throughout the tri-state area.

Ms. Carey has also worked with the Paper Mill Playhouse in their artist-in-schools program and Paper Mill's Summer Musical Conservatory. Recently, she was on staff at The Children's Specialized Hospital in Fanwood where she ran a summer dance camp.

"Young performers need the opportunity to become well-rounded artists. They need a place where they can explore the endless possibilities of who



Joanne Carey

they are as artists and have fun doing that. Nothing pleases me more than to see a child grinning ear to ear because they're loving what they're doing and you just know it's coming from their heart," stated

Ms. Carey.

She was educated in dance at Mason Gross School of the Arts, the Sorbonne in Paris and the Masters Program in Dance Education at New York University and in drama at The American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York.

For more information on classes and to obtain a schedule, please call (908) 789-3011.

Kid's Corner

Learn How to Create Your Own Puppet at Trailside



MOUNTAINSIDE - Puppeteer Penny J. Rapicano will host "Fun On A String" on Wednesday, August 18, at 1:30 p.m. at Trailside Nature & Science Center in Mountainside for children interested in learning about puppetmaking.

Ms. Rapicano entertains children of all ages with her puppet and marionette shows. She will begin her performance at Trailside by demonstrating to the audience how simple it is to make puppets from everyday household objects.

Encouraging children to be creative and to experiment with various materials and shapes, Ms. Rapicano will explain the difference between puppets and marionettes. She will also demonstrate how to use hand puppets and hand-and-rod puppets. Marionettes will dance to different musical selections.

"Penny Rapicano has 15 years of experience organizing and orchestrating recreational activities for young and old alike," said Union County Free-

holder Chairman Nicholas P. Scutari. "She is the 1999 recipient of the E.L. Warfield Puppetry Scholarship and has performed throughout the New York Metropolitan area at fairs, schools and nursing homes, as well as 'First Night' in Montclair. We are pleased she will bring her expertise and entertaining presentation to our Trailside Nature & Science Center."

Ms. Rapicano is a Certified Activities Director and a member of the Puppeteers of America. Throughout the show, the audience is encouraged to participate and Ms. Rapicano takes the marionettes right into the audience for some exciting interactive play with the children.

"Fun On A String" is appropriate for children ages 4 and up and their families. Tickets will be sold at the door on the day of the performance for \$4 per person.

For more information on the program, please call (908) 789-3670. Trailside is a facility of the Union County Division of Parks and Recreation.



Cheri Rogawski for The Westfield Leader and The Times
THE KING OF COUNTRY... Tim Gillis of the Tim Gillis Band kept a packed audience swaying and singing country music at Echo Lake Park on August 4. The concert was sponsored by the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Division of Parks and Recreation.

Union County Gets Down To Brass Tacks With Band

MOUNTAINSIDE - The Brass Tacks Big Band Orchestra will make its debut performance in Union County on Wednesday, August 18, at 7:30 p.m. at the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders presents its eighth concert of the Summer Arts Festival Concert Series at Echo Lake Park in Mountainside.

"We are delighted to welcome the Brass Tacks Big Band Orchestra, one of New Jersey's finest bands, to our Summer Arts line-up," said Freeholder Chairman Nicholas P. Scutari. "The band has been entertaining audiences throughout the state for the past 10 years and we are proud to introduce the orchestra to Union County at this free concert under the stars."

This 17-piece band is comprised of four trombones, four trumpets, four rhythm instruments and five saxophones. The orchestra plays big band music of the 1930s and 1940s, including the original arrangements of Harry James, Tommy Dorsey, Glenn Miller and Artie Shaw.

The band also performs contemporary tunes from popular performers like Stevie Wonder, Melissa Manchester, Billy Joel and Brian Setzer. The group's first CD, "Getting Down to Brass Tacks," is due to be released later this year.

All Summer Arts concerts are held on Wednesday evenings at 7:30 p.m. at the Springfield Avenue end of Echo Lake Park in Mountainside. Lawn chairs, blankets and picnic baskets are encouraged. A refreshment stand will be available at approximately 6:30 p.m. In the event of rain, all concerts will

be moved to Cranford High School in Cranford. Rain information is available by calling (908) 527-4900 after 3 p.m. on the day of the concert.

The free summer concert series will continue on Wednesday, August 25, with an evening of Blues, featuring Rob Paparozzi and the Hudson River Rats. The final concert of the Summer Arts Festival will be on Wednesday, September 1, when The Party Dolls return to Echo Lake Park for another celebration of the girl groups of the 1960s.

For other concert information, please call the Union County Division of Parks and Recreation at (908) 527-4900.

Italian Music Under Stars Planned at Friberger Park

UNION - The Union Recreation Department in cooperation with the American Federation of Musicians Local No. 151 will present Italian Music Under the Stars this evening, Thursday, August 12, at 8 p.m. in Friberger Park on Morris Avenue in Union.

Music will be provided by the Ray Masters Orchestra, featuring song stylist Fran Masters. This orchestra has performed for a variety of affairs throughout the Metropolitan area.

The orchestra will perform its famous, "Musical Salute to America" and a medley of patriotic songs.

The concert is free and open to the public. For more information, please call the Union Recreation Department at (908) 686-4200.

POPCORN™ The Blair Witch Project Cheap Thrills



By Michael S. Goldberg

One Popcorn, Poor • Two Popcorns, Fair • Three Popcorns, Good • Four Popcorns, Excellent

1 & 1/2 popcorns

Embraced in some corners as the scariest movie since *Jaws*, maybe even since *The Exorcist*, there is no denying that *The Blair Witch Project* manages to cast a spell over about 50 percent of its audiences.

The other half, though, hardly impressed, puzzled, and declaiming such comparisons as outright sacrilege, wonders if they've even seen the same film as their obviously horrified peers.

The frightened-out-of-their-mind group reminds of a frustrated and dumbfounded Lou Costello, unable to talk and wild with gesture, trying to convince a nonchalant Abbott that the monster lurks right behind him; but each time Bud turns around, the terror is nowhere to be seen.

Maybe the phenomenon actually proves the divisive power of the Blair Witch, transported from her original haunting grounds in the woods near Blair, Maryland (now Burkittesville), where she began her sorcery around 1785, and is now successfully causing bitter enmity amongst filmmakers.

Certainly the battle lines are drawn. Each camp is entirely convinced of the other's lunacy and equally sure of its own rectitude. Where both contingents must agree, however, is that the scare quotient of *The Blair Witch* is based on a complete falsehood, implicit in a phony prologue that reads: "In October of 1994, three student filmmakers disappeared in the woods near Burkittesville, Maryland, while shooting a documentary. One year later, their footage was found."

Of course, this is all poppycock. Hence, while the controversial effort from independent filmmakers Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sanchez is hardly the most bloodcurdling film in two decades, its surprising success as a cinematic sham is actually a much more profound accomplishment.

Depending on its audience to actually believe that what they are witnessing is the recovered 16 mm film (and video tape) of a documentary project gone terrifyingly awry, *The Blair Witch Project* is the best horror hoax since Orson Welles' *War Of The Worlds*, the 1938 radio broadcast that created a virtual panic among Earthlings who believed they were under attack from Mars.

Coincided a mockumentary, this ersatz recounting reportedly cost its enterprising creators \$61,000, was purchased by Artisan Entertainment for \$1 million following its showing at the Sundance Festival, and harvested (or is it incultated?) a ready audience of anxious-to-cult viewers via a luring Web site and sneak previews across college campuses. Other media tie-ins abound.

Knowing all this but unwilling to suspend that much disbelief for the sake of a bone-rattling thrill, one becomes painfully aware of the amateurish yet cannily deceptive process that Messrs. Myrick and Sanchez employ to weave their counterfeit horror.

Keeping their own names as part and parcel of the cinema verité aura being emulated, the bogus film students in pursuit of their very own Yeti are played by Heather Donahue, the control freak diard, Joshua Leonard as the easygoing accomplice, and Michael Williams as the skeptic.

As they prepare for their trip into a spooky forest that will ultimately refuse to relinquish them, the three banter and chide with the realistic vernacular and concerns of 20-somethings. Before the intrepid troika descends into the woods, they interview fake locals about the legend, helping foster a patina of authenticity.

The trio does a bang-up ensemble job, both in the carefree early going as well as later, when things start going bump in the night and joking seamlessly transposes to bickering. Awaking each morning to see ominous symbols woven in tree branches and piled on the ground, their sangfroid turns to panic. Each of the filmmakers earns a shot at another film, especially the splendidly emotive Miss Donahue.

The mood grows dank and dreary as

the documentarians go deeper and deeper into the forest, maybe finding the witch (and maybe not), but getting hopelessly lost in the bargain.

Folks who still have unresolved issues emanating from Little Red Riding Hood's travail in the wilds may be forced to revisit old wounds. But while even the most unresponsive of reviewers will at this point acknowledge that a new set of dry socks might feel comfortable, the self-conscious, jarring motion of the hand-held cameras gets to be a bit too precious, and much more annoying than the threat of any heinous hag.

And if she does appear, not to worry. Just show the old bat a few minutes of this affectedly unsteady tripe and she's bound to come down with a case of seasickness. Twenty minutes into the proceedings, you feel like one of those head-bobbing baseball player dolls people display in the back windows of their cars.

Perpetrating this fraud, Myrick and Sanchez display only a smattering of artistry, except in the editing room where they fashion their knockoff. But they evince plenty ofchutzpah and a willing talent for deception; following the remarkable success of their charade, there are just the sort of qualities that doubtless will prove invaluable when the Hollywood big leagues beckon. And they will beckon.

The question is, do this week's poster boys for indie filmmaking have anything left up their delusory sleeve following this well-calculated sneak attack on unsuspecting audiences?

The Blair Witch Project has been hailed by jaded fright night aficionados more for its bargain basement novelty than for any real contribution to the genre. Yet there's no denying the marvel...regardless of how tactically the film has been marketed. Grown-ups and teens alike are making the conscious decision to forget that it's only a movie.

Exercising a reverse snobbery, supporters of the film exult in its bare-bones approach to horror, trading on the smug conceit that its low-budget purity requires viewers to use their imaginations. There is no music, eerie, thumping or otherwise (though a soundtrack somehow inspired by the movie is due out soon).

Naturally, you want this to work. The romantic notion of a \$61,000 movie succeeding in a motion picture business where it takes at least \$20 million just to hire the lead actor makes rooting for this creepy underdog irresistible.

However, there's a bottom line when it comes to horror films: Is it scary? And the only really frightening thing about *The Blair Witch Project* is the number of disciples it has indoctrinated.

The Blair Witch Project, rated R, is an Artisan Entertainment release directed by Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sanchez and stars Heather Donahue, Michael Williams and Joshua Leonard. Running time: 82 minutes.



Calling All Crafters: Deerfield School PTA To Hold Annual Show

MOUNTAINSIDE - Mountainside's Deerfield School Parent Teacher Association (PTA) will hold its annual Craft Show fundraiser on Saturday, November 20, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the school gymnasium. Crafters are needed as vendors for the show.

There is a \$30 fee for a 10-foot space for craft vendors. Tables and chairs must be provided. Spaces will be assigned on a first-come, first-serve basis.

For reservation information, please call Chris at (908) 233-6774.

The Dining Table

Tre Amici

1700 Elizabeth Avenue, Linden, (908) 862-0020

By DR. JOSEPH P. DEALESSANDRO
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

In the heart of Linden, in a comfortable nest of its own, sits a beautiful building complete with an abundance of parking, fine external landscaping and miniature lights that lure you into the surprise of an extraordinary, well-decorated restaurant with high-style decor that includes fine Tuscan design to Venetian and Roman appointments.

Tre Amici is vast and accented very stylishly with large mirror treatments to avoid anyone having to stare at a blank wall. The large, highly sophisticated bar is very spacious and very up market. There is a provision for entertainment which I will talk about later.

There are at least two dining rooms on the first floor and the banquet room downstairs seats approximately 320 people.

The waiters are all attired in formal tuxedos and the associate staff is in formal attire. The wait staff is especially courteous, extremely polite and efficient. Tables are spacious and comfortable.

After being seated by the Maitre D', Stefanos, a leisurely drink order followed along with the splendid menus. Giovanni Lavorato, who is in partnership with his brother, Mario the chef, told us that the restaurant is nine years old. The brothers hail from Calabria, Italy.

The menu is especially ambitious, running through the obvious pesce and meats, including veal and chicken and pasta.

The appetizers present a large array of selections, one of which is a signature appetizer, Spiedino Romano - a wonderfully prepared bread with the center removed and filled with mozzarella which is dipped in flour and egg and fried with an anchovy sauce. A very hearty and delicious tasty offering.

The Hot Antipasto is a medley of wonderfully stuffed mushrooms, stuffed clams, shrimp, peppers and fish and mussels. For those with hearty appetites, this is not to be missed.

The special appetizer of the day, a generous offering of large oysters with a warm champagne sauce, would delight anyone's palate.

The salads are Caesar, Endive, Tre Colori and Arugula. The Arugula, in particular, features a tangy dressing.

I could write a book on the soup starting with Pasta Fagioli. This is served in a large, very beautifully decorated bowl with the finest of red and white beans in a chicken broth. It is best described as an elixir, a hearty soup with ample portions and spiced to perfection. Escarole Fagioli, another premium Italian soup with sauteed escarole together with wonderfully flavored beans, is in a garlic and oil broth.

The Stracciatella Romana, which is the Italian version of egg drop soup, meets all the tests of this great Roman dish. Eggs are dropped slowly into a pot of bubbling chicken broth and Parmesan cheese is added to make it a delightful dish.

Pasta comes in at least 10 versions in this spectacular menu. The Linguine al Pesto fits the classical description of al dente as the linguine is topped with fine Parmesan cheese.

Ravioli Bolognese again offers a very generous portion of ravioli together with the classical meat sauce, aromatic and tangy. Other pasta dishes are Rigatoni Amatriciana, Spaghetti Genovese, plus Lasagna. The pasta dishes that passed our table were equally spectacular.

The fish menu offers a great variety of fish. The premier dish in this writer's opinion is the Zuppa de Pesce, an

enormous, beautifully presented variety of fish swimming in a piquant sauce over al dente pasta. The dish includes large, tender shrimp, clams, mussels and several varieties of fish served on a steaming hot, decorative platter fit for a king or queen.

Stuffed Shrimp includes a large portion of delectably stuffed shrimp with bread crumbs, cheese and crabmeat. A most tender presentation. This chef really knows how to cook fish and shellfish.

The Sole Française, which was cooked to perfection in a lemon butter sauce, was grand. Other items on the fish menu included Shrimp Scampi, Stuffed Sole, Snapper/Livornese and Calamari Marinara. I would like to eat my way through the fish menu.

The meat menu is slanted strongly toward veal dishes and chicken dishes. However, in the writer's mind, the Double Veal Chop reigns supreme. I ordered the veal chop grilled medium rare with no sauce. It was an absolute delight. The quality of the veal was such that it was fork tender. The subtle seasoning brings out the taste of veal to perfection. I highly recommend this dish.

The Filet Mignon Provolone presents an ample steak, beautifully seasoned in a provolone sauce. Again, the quality of the beef and the subtleness of seasoning make it a must.

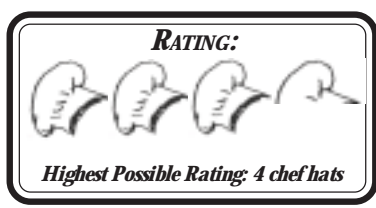
The broiled lamb chops are double-thick, broiled and seasoned to enhance the taste of the lamb. They are perfectly grilled and one must have them in order to assure that they are a most tasty delight.

The vegetables, Sautéed Broccoli, Sautéed Escarole, Sautéed Broccoli Rabe and Sautéed Spinach, make a great accompaniment for any of the entrees.

During the mid-part of the dinner, music fills the air. Very soft mood music is a fine accompaniment to a perfect dinner. Three extremely talented artists, including a vocalist, render melodic tunes that are appreciated by the entire restaurant. A lovely touch to fine dining.

Coffee of all types are available. Cappuccino, espresso and a most delightful dessert menu are available. The Cheesecake is a specialty. Chocolate Torte and Fruit Torte plus Ice Cream and Berries bring to a close a lovely evening of great dining.

As you leave the restaurant, sounds of music make you desirous of your next visit to Tre Amici.



Highest Possible Rating: 4 chef hats

STATE OF THE ART

Music

Brass Tacks Big Band Orchestra will perform on Wednesday, August 18, at 7:30 p.m. at Echo Lake Park; **Country singer, Lucy Amen** will take the stage on August 18 at 7:30 p.m. at Memorial Park in Berkeley Heights; **The Crescent City Maulers** will take the stage tonight, August 12, at 7:30 p.m. on the Village Green in Scotch Plains; **The VOODOUES** will perform Mardi Gras music next Thursday, August 19, at 7:30 p.m. in the Village Green; **Italian music with Ray Masters** will be spotlighted at Friberger Park in Union this evening, August 12, at 8 p.m.

THE CROSSROADS IN GARWOOD will welcome **Bad Attitude** this evening; **Funky Black Widows** on Friday, August 13; **Joe Taino & The Blue Flames** on Saturday, August 14 and **Fridays Child** on August 19. **Jazz Jam** will be held on Tuesday, August 17, at 8:30 p.m. and **Open Blues**

Jam will be held on Wednesday, August 18. **WATERLOO VILLAGE IN STANHOPE** will host "**History Through Song**" on August 13. For more information and the time of the event, please call (973) 347-0900.

Literature

BARNES & NOBLE IN CLARK will host **First Book Story Time** featuring "Will I Have A Friend?" by Miriam Cole on Wednesday, August 18, at 7 p.m. For more information, please call (732) 574-1818.

Art

A Day of Textile Arts will be featured on Sunday, August 15, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at **WATERLOO VILLAGE IN STANHOPE**. Workshops, demonstrations, spinning, weaving, quilting, rug-hooking, flax preparation and lace making will be featured. For more information, please call (973) 347-0900.

UNIQUE TRAVEL
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Saturday, August 21
3 to 5 p.m.

Come learn about "The Land Down Under"
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\$5.00(us) per Person

(to be applied to any Australia/New Zealand booking made with us within the next 2 years)

Please RSVP to 908-789-3303 by Wednesday, August 18

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Dittricks Wine & Liquors, 2 North Ave., Garwood

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