

INSIDE THIS EDITION OF A&E: MONSTERS, INC. REVIEW, SCRAPBOOKING SEQUEL, AND HOME FIRES KEEP BURNING

Artist of the Week



Paul Sorvino (1939-)

By MICHELLE H. LePOIDEVIN
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Opposite his TV wife Ellen Burstyn, Brooklynite Paul Sorvino has been busy playing a former New Jersey Turnpike toll collector-turned-restaurantier in CBS' Friday night series, "That's Life." In an episode last season, he was searching for restaurant space with Burstyn, who plays Dolly DeLuca. What sold him on the particular venue was a stage area where she told him he could live out his dream of singing to patrons and audience members. Few people know how personal that passion for music is in Sorvino's real life, or that he dreamt of being an opera singer at a young age. But, a childhood bout with asthma temporarily stood in the way, averting Sorvino's musical dreams to a career in acting. Later, Sorvino helped ease his breathing problem with yogic breathing exercises.

The tenor, who never gave up his operatic aspirations, took center stage when he performed "Die Fledermaus" with the Seattle Opera Company and sang during a benefit at the Metropolitan Opera House. In his theatrical endeavors, Sorvino's bulldog exterior has often caused casting directors to pigeonhole him into role of "hitman" extraordinaire - the man you just wouldn't want to mess with or find with his fists clenched at the end of a dark alley. But, Sorvino, who let emotions flow as generously as tears on the evening his daughter, Mira, captured the Academy Award for her role in *Mighty Aphrodite*, is just a teddy bear. Broad shoulders and a stern grimace may come with the package, but Sorvino has worn his heart on the sleeve of every pinstriped suit.

Still, Sorvino's portrayal of Frank DeLuca, a man who's pride bursts the buttons of his blue collared shirt on "That's Life," has been most recognizable for his roles in *GoodFellas*, *Dick Tracy*, *The Firm*, *Nixon* (playing Henry Kissinger), *Bulworth*, and the modern-day Capulet in *Romeo + Juliet*. He's starred in over 50 films, and stuck in the movie memories of all of us. On television, Sorvino has also made his mark, both theatrically and musically ("Paul Sorvino: An Evening of Song"). In "Joe Torre: Curveballs Along the Way," he portrayed the legendary New York Yankees coach. He also hit a homerun when he played Bruce Willis' father in ABC's banter-laden series "Moonlighting."

Sorvino's ability to command the souls of his audience through demonstrating raw, human emotion has never been more prevalent than in "The Surviving." He played the father of Molly Ringwald, who dies in a double-suicide with her teenage love. His marriage falls apart, he has no family save the parents and children of his daughter's beau. Never have I seen, and it is rare to find, so many genuine tears coming from a stoic, strong Italian man. It was truly an under-appreciated performance by critics, which deserved high praise.

Sorvino has also been known to put pen to paper to express the struggle of individuals with asthma in "How to Become a Former Asthmatic." In 1992, he also established the Sorvino Children's Asthma Foundation to aid the littlest sufferers of the malady, following up with the educational "Breath of Life: Asthma Prevention Program" for low-income public schools.

The man who made his film debut in the 1970 comedy *Where's Poppa?* hasn't achieved the accolades of his counterparts. Instead, the likes of DeNiro and Pacino have been applauded by critics for what seems like centuries. But, what Sorvino possesses as an actor and in his soul far outweighs the glitter in any statuette.

Sure, he's a toughie. But, his heart is pure gold. If you know someone suffering from asthma and want to learn more, call the Sorvino Children's Asthma Foundation at (212) 941-8686.

Bambos Breathes New Life Into Historic Buildings

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

WESTFIELD — Westfield resident Kathy Gorga Bambos has been awarded a HEART (History Education Arts Reaching Thousands) Grant by the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders for her watercolor renditions of several significant buildings in Union County.

in Rahway.

Legend has it that George Washington stayed overnight at the Merchants and Drover's Tavern, located on St. Georges Avenue and Westfield Avenue, on the way to his inauguration. It was recently made into a museum.

Of the four buildings, only the old Rahway post office, built in the 1930's has not been designated an official



Ingrid McKinley for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Kathy Bambos and her puppy appreciate the value of creativity.

Awarded to Mrs. Bambos, the HEART Grant is an initiative of the Freeholder Board that supports theatre, art exhibits, music, historical and educational presentations throughout Union County in an effort to build a vibrant community.

The multimedia artist wanted to make the public aware of four architecturally significant buildings that are still being used by the town in which they exist.

The buildings include the old post office in Fanwood, built in the 1700's, the old Rahway library, built in the late 1800's, the old Rahway post office and the four-story 18th century Merchants and Drover's Tavern historic site.

Mezzo-Soprano, Pianist To Open New Season Of Mid-Day Musicales

WESTFIELD — The First Congregational Church of Westfield, located at 125 Elmer Street, will begin its popular Mid-Day Musicales series of concerts for Advent on Wednesday, November 28.

Mezzo-soprano Susan McAdoo and pianist Brenda Day will kick-off the series of free, half-hour classical programs. These concerts are presented in the church sanctuary at noon on Wednesdays, followed by a soup and sandwich luncheon available in the church social hall for \$5.

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

"All of these buildings are extremely well built and architecturally sound, considering their ages," said Mrs. Bambos, "and all are still being used."

Although she has no formal artistic training, Mrs. Bambos has always painted.

"Making hand-painted cards is my love," she explained. At first she gave the cards to friends as gifts, then began selling them at CBL Fine Art on Elm Street in Westfield.

"I can't paint them fast enough," she said.

In addition to the historical building cards, Mrs. Bambos has 30 other designs of hand-painted cards, most with floral designs.

To fulfill the requirements of the HEART Grant, Mrs. Bambos constructed historical timelines, took photos, enlarged them on double thick boards and replicated the photos on cardstock with watercolors.

Each building received 25 cards, which are accompanied by an abbreviated history of the building.

"There is no age limit to the appeal of this project," the artist said, adding that people from 10-90 years of age would enjoy seeing her interpretation of the buildings and learning about their histories. Over the next several months, she will be bringing her Historical Building study to middle school history classes.

An exhibit of the four Union County buildings studied by Mrs. Bambos will be displayed around

Continued on Page 19



Pen & Ink

With Michelle H. LePoidevin

Potter's Magic Hexes Miraculous Messages of Coming Holiday Season

By MICHELLE H. LePOIDEVIN
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

About an hour ago, Katie Couric beamed her Cheshire cat grin, while accompanied by wizards in another Pepto-Bismol inspired *Harry Potter and The Sorcerer's Stone* TV special. Such predictable hype, as seen on the movie's website, encourages kids to practice their magic spells and conjure up a witchcraft. Funny, I remember a town circa 1692 called Salem in Massachusetts where women named Abigail and Sarah were burned at the stake for doing such things.

In the movie, we see Harry and his extraterrestrial gang in a classroom, raising objects off of their desks into thin air. I haven't attended a lot of board of education meetings recently, but I tend to believe that our elected officials would prefer the kids stick to Everyday

Math instead of making pencils fly. We've got some major test scores to worry about here in the real world, after all - and I don't think Warts and Toads 101 or Intro to Potions will be included in any of the multiple choice questions.

So, you tell me to have a sense of humor, enjoy the "levity" (pardon the pun) of the situation. I should not challenge the idea that kids are better off believing what

The Diners

Mr. D's

899 Mountain Avenue, Mountainside (908) 317-0073

By CAROL F. DAVIS
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Editor's Note: Carol F. Davis critiques area restaurants from a vegetarian perspective.

Vegetarians, beware! Steer clear of this restaurant, even if your carnivorous friends are going out. In fact, had I taken a moment to glance at the menu before entering Mr. D's, I would have phoned my A&E Editor Michelle Le Poidevin right then and there, begging her not to waste my time reviewing a place like this.

"Assign it to someone else!" I should have called. It would have been an easy job for someone with mediocre taste in food.

We were led to our table by a very polite man, who, as it turned out, owned the place. He took my coat, which my husband hasn't done for me since I don't know when. That was nice. The menus came immedi-

NO STARS
HIGHEST POSSIBLE RATING:
4 STARS

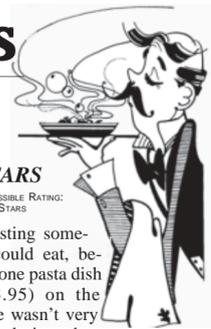
by suggesting something I could eat, besides the one pasta dish (for \$13.95) on the menu. He wasn't very accommodating, but offered to have the chef prepare rice and vegetables. I agreed.

How could I go wrong with that, plus a salad I ordered as an appetizer? Don't ask.

First came the bread. The hot rolls soon became hard, crusty round things, which were obviously microwaved and at least a day old.

The olive oil/balsamic vinegar combination for dipping was bland at best. It could have used some fresh rosemary or other herbs. The salad was the equivalent of one I might expect in a diner (where there would have been more choices, by the way). It had obviously been pre-made, and chilled.

When will people learn that tomatoes are delicious when they are ripe



Curses! Harry Potter-mania should squelch the reason for the season.

is tangible and important in life instead of what is irrational or imaginary. Curses, for you are mistaken!

It strikes me wickedly frustrating when I realize that just in time for our religious holidays of Hanukkah and Christmas, we are stuffed with fluffy movies praising the occult and scheming impish children. Suddenly, Hanukkah Harry and Santa Claus are sitting in conference with the Baby Jesus, trying to find a way to bring children's minds back to the real meaning of the season. "Harry Potter" mastermind J.K. Rowling would just as soon fill the nativity scene with hogwarts and have them light the menorah through telekinesis.

Frankly, I know there is a child still giggling and goofy inside of me. She played with Strawberry Shortcake dolls and collected Smurfs. She played practical jokes on her relatives and still plays them on her co-workers. But, I find nothing nourishing to the soul and mind of a child when it comes to Potter's world.

I don't think kids should be concerned with shopping for magic wands. They shouldn't worry about attaining acceptance to the illustrious Hogwarts School of Witchcraft & Wizardry. Maybe an arts and crafts or intramural sport instead might be worth joining. Maybe worrying about getting good grades in order to be accepted into a reputable college is more praiseworthy.

On Halloween, I dressed as a Fairy Godmother, because I am...well, a godmother. After the tiara and wand, with their ribbons and roses, were passed onto my godchild, she asked me why she needed the wand.

"If someone wishes something, you can grant them a wish," I said. Taking the wand from her, I tried to demonstrate what I meant. "For example, what do you wish for?" "A fish!" she responded.

Tapping her head lightly with the glittery star, I said, "Then you shall have a fish. Your wish has come true."

"But where is it?" she asked, her big blue eyes searching around the kitchen.

"It's pretend, like magic," I erred, remembering my initial role as a godparent is to stress God, not the supernatural.

Maybe the lesson I learned won't make the headlines of *Harry Potter's* "Daily Prophet" newspaper, but here is something worth taking to heart that I read in a classic book called "Deuteronomy" under the heading of "Prophets": "Let there not be found among you anyone who immolates his son or daughter in the fire, nor a fortuneteller, soothsayer, charmer, diviner, or caster of spells, nor one who consults ghosts and spirits or seeks oracles from the dead. Anyone who does



Carol F. Davis for The Westfield Leader and The Times

A VEGETARIAN'S NIGHTMARE...Mr. D's in Mountainside grated more than potatoes for freelancer Carol F. Davis -- the lack of vegetarian selections grated on her nerves.

ately, and I knew right then and there I was in deep you-know-what.

Michael said, bluntly, "You are not going to be happy." He's still right once in awhile.

We were told that there were no specials that night, and that the soup was a cream of mushroom. That gave me a glimmer of hope, until I found out that it was made with a chicken broth.

There was absolutely nada on the menu for vegans, and the selection for ovo-lacto veggies was extremely limited. So limited, in fact, I asked the wait person if he could help me

and served at room temperature, like most fresh fruits and vegetables?

The raspberry vinaigrette reminded me of a cheap bottled version.

I looked around more carefully while waiting a long time for my entree. It was a nice-sized room, and a few other tables were occupied by parties of 2 or 4. One couple brought their kids. I guess 7:30 is a little bit earlier than I am used to going out.

I was still waiting, which, to me, could mean either of two things: my meal is being freshly prepared or these guys don't have their act together. I won't tell you which I think it was.

Finally, out of the kitchen emerged two meals, and the aroma of fresh herbs. I noticed that the rice on my plate was the exact same thing as the rice on Michael's plate. Funny, so were the vegetables, with the addition of some fresh eggplant and a sauce that I could have skipped.

The eggplant was tasty. The owner later told me it came from his garden. I told him to thank his wife for picking it this morning. Everything else was, you guessed it, disappointing.

Let's not even discuss what Michael ordered. We're not going there, at least not in public. He did surprise me, though, as he left the fleshy part of his meal, and had it wrapped for the cats. I took back all the mean things I said to him when he ordered. The cats were very happy.

The thing I liked best about Mr. D's had nothing to do with food. Big surprise. There were these cute little chili peppers hanging on the ceiling fan pull chains. The new owner explained that the place had formerly been southwest cuisine, and he was trying to get away from that image. Too bad. The pulls were probably

J. Winthrop & Company's
Holiday Sale Event
Sat. Nov. 17 - Sat. Dec. 1
Great savings - just in time for the holidays!

 Fine Jewelry and Gifts
Tues. - Sat. 10-5:30pm
Thurs. 'til 8pm
233 North Ave. East
(908) 232-8199

Continued on Page 19

Continued on Page 19