

The Diners

JOLLY TROLLEY STEAKHOUSE: A NEW TWIST ON AN OLD FAVORITE

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HIGHEST POSSIBLE RATING: 4 STARS



By MICHELLE H. Le POIDEVIN and MELISSA BETKOWSKI
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD — One of Westfield's great dining mainstays has always been The Jolly Trolley on Central Avenue, adjacent to the Westfield Fire Department.

The buffalo chicken wrap, served as a Thursday special, is hot enough to need the firefighters' assistance, so its proximity works wonders. Pails of water might be appropriate.

Like the opening credits of NBC's long-adored hit comedy, "Cheers," almost every patron's name is known by the owners and staff. It's no wonder why "The Trolley," as it is affectionately called, has been a second home to many, a meeting place for old friends on college break, or the perfect before/after concert spot in Westfield.

ment wanted to do something to accommodate those patrons for whom the steps would pose a problem.

We were told by Mr. Covey that patrons in wheelchairs had always been able to dine at The Trolley, however, they had to enter the restaurant through the kitchen.

My first recommendation to the management was regarding the handicapped parking space. The space was signed as a handicapped space, but it did not seem to be any larger than any of the other spaces in the lot. Also, there was no "loading zone" between the handicapped space and the one next to it. My concern was that if someone, like myself, driving a van with a handicapped lift or



Michelle Le Poidevin for The Westfield Leader and The Times

In a recent decision by Jolly Trolley Manager Rich Covey to expand the restaurant's patronage by providing handicapped accessibility, several changes have been made to the restaurant's façade.

Melissa: Growing up in Westfield, I was always familiar with the Jolly Trolley. However, being in a wheelchair, I always felt limited in my ability to dine at The Trolley, since the restaurant's front entrance has steps leading up to it.

A few weeks ago, as I sat in my car waiting for the traffic light at Elm Street and North Avenue to turn green, I peered out the window and was pleasantly surprised to see the addition of a ramp leading up to the entrance of The Trolley.

The management at The Trolley contacted *The Westfield Leader* and *The Times of Scotch Plains and Fanwood* to see if someone in a wheelchair could come over and give them an honest critique of their efforts. *Leader/Times* Publisher Horace R. Corbin felt that I was the perfect person for the job.

When we ventured to The Trolley, my first reaction was to commend the management for their efforts to make the Westfield landmark handicapped-accessible.

It was wonderful to see that after all these years The Trolley manage-

ramp were to park there, there would be nowhere for the ramp to descend, except for into the next parking space.

Mr. Covey responded to my concern by saying that the space would be moved to the opposite side of the parking lot on the end where there is empty space, allowing a ramp or lift to be utilized.

Another recommendation I made was regarding the handicapped entrance. Since the ramp does not go up to the main entrance, it is hard for one to tell which door to use. The management has since placed a handicapped emblem on the door to signify the entrance.

Before departing, I inspected the bathroom facilities. I was pleased to note that the bathroom was fully handicap-accessible. The stall was wide, with more than enough room for a wheelchair. I was happy to note that even the paper towel dispenser was at a perfect height: there is nothing I dislike more than being able to

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National Arts and Humanities Month

October



Pen & Ink

By Michelle H. Le Poidevin

\$10 Million from Saudi Prince Is Exception to Gift-Returning Etiquette

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

"How did you know? This is the perfect color and it should fit just right" — my mom's mantra every Christmas, without fail. It's the one thing in life you can count on, that mom is sure to ask for the mound of receipts two weeks later so she can return the sweaters I painstakingly picked out.

After all of the huffing and puffing through Menlo Park Mall, the endless lines, and the earfuls of holiday musak, it kinda drives me batty when she returns my stuff.

It's an unspoken rule that it is polite and proper etiquette to ooh and ah over a present, even when you are repulsed by what you've unwrapped. You simply don't say, "My God, Aunt Sara! When they passed out bad shopping taste, you sure got the mother load!" Instead, we put that unsightly antique vase in a box to bury deep in the attic, only to unearth when Aunt Sara comes by for the next fete.

Is it so wrong to return a gift you will never use, that doesn't fit, that clashes with your skin tone, that makes dogs howl in pain, causes grown men to cry, or simply offends? Why, no. Just ask Rudy Giuliani.

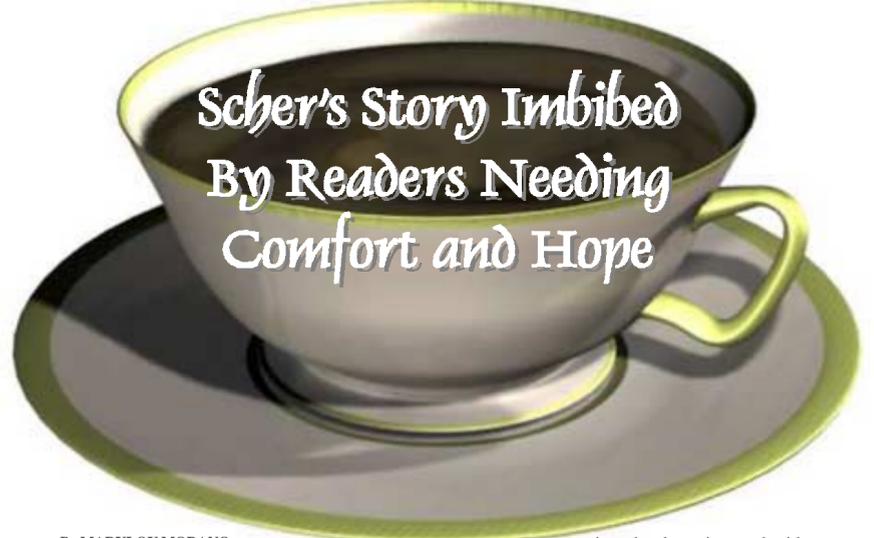
The Mayor of New York City kicked Saudi Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal to the curb after Prince Uncharming visited Ground Zero. Once Giuliani discovered that the prince said U.S. policy in the Middle East contributed to the dark day of September 11, he bounced back the prince's check for \$10 million, which would have aided the struggling metropolis.

Poor etiquette on Giuliani's part? Not when the gift comes from a Judas like Prince Bin Talal. The American Jewish Congress agreed in a press release issued to *The Westfield Leader* and *The Times*, dated October 11.

The New York City agency stated, "The gift was accompanied by a price tag which exceeded the substantial dollar sum the prince proposed to donate. Prince Talal did not make his gift expressly contingent upon change in American policy. But, the inescapable inference arising from the statement accompanying his gift is that at the very least he hoped that his act would induce the U.S. to 'reexamine its positions in the Middle East' — another way of saying that it reduce its support for the State of Israel."

Few things in this world come without strings attached. The prince clearly did not come to New York to give this otherwise generous gift without expecting something for himself. There's a line in *Godfather III* that goes something like this, "Keep your friends close, but your enemies closer." That doesn't mean we have to betray our country by taking blood money from Saudi Arabia, which

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

SCOTCH PLAINS — To Scotch Plains writer Edie Scher, inspiration is everywhere.

The former high school English teacher has written for the *New York Times*, *Runners World* and *Country Living* magazines, just to mention a few publications.

Recently Mrs. Scher's short story, "The Lady in the Blue Dress" was

selected to be the lead story in a collection entitled "A Cup of Comfort."

On the order of a "Chicken Soup" book, "A Cup of Comfort" contains stories to warm your heart, lift your spirit and enrich your life. All the stories in the anthology are true.

The events told in "The Lady in the Blue Dress" actually happened about 10 years ago to a friend of Mrs. Scher's.

The story tells how a woman is cured of breast cancer after she is visited by her dead mother in the hospital.

"There's a story everywhere you look," the author claimed in an interview with *The Westfield Leader* and *The Times of Scotch Plains-Fanwood*.

"Everything I feel, everyone else has felt, too. Experiences aren't unique. Other people can identify with them, also," she said.

Much of Mrs. Scher's writing celebrates the human experience. Two years ago, her story "See Robbie Run" was published in *Runner's World*. The article tells the story of how a father teaches his disabled son to run. An educational publisher later incorporated the story into a collection of children's literature for middle school students.

Recently, the author put the finishing touches on a nonfiction book titled "It Happened in the ER Waiting Room." The book relates the vulnerabilities of the relatives of people brought into the ER of Union Hospital.

Mrs. Scher's husband, Joseph is also a writer. The couple met while working as writers for an advertising agency. Mr. Scher is now semi-retired from a career as a television and video writer. He has written scripts for the Miss America pageant and the Macy's Day Parade.

After retiring as a high school English teacher, Mrs. Scher tried writing full time. Eventually, she found her way to becoming a full-time substitute teacher at the Union County Magnet High School in Scotch Plains.

"Writing is a lonely life and I missed the kids," she explained. When not writing or substitute teach-

ing, she also enjoys embroidery, running and reading.

Mr. and Mrs. Scher have two grown children, Jordan and Ellen, and a four-month-old granddaughter named Jennie Rebecca.

"A Cup of Comfort" is the first in a series of comfort books to be published by Adams Media Corporation of Avon, Mass. "A Cup of Comfort" can be found at all local bookstores as well as www.adamsmedia.com.



Keep the Home Fires Burning

French President's Letter Responds To A&E Editor

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

Shortly after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and the airplane that crashed in Shanksville, Pa., I sent a letter to French President Jacques Chirac, hoping to glean some sense of France's support for the United States in its military campaign.

You see, there's a lot of nudging and winking that goes on when people talk about France's support in past military operations. I wanted to be sure that my head could be held high as a woman of French descent during my country's war against terrorism.

I received this response on October 8 from Le Chef de Cabinet (The Head of the Cabinet) Annie Lheritier. I translate the French to English in the following paragraphs:

Chère Mademoiselle,
Dear Miss,

Le Président de la République française a bien reçu l'aimable message que vous avez tenu à lui adresser à la suite des terribles attentats qui ont frappé votre pays.

The President of the French Republic received the pleasant message which you have been anxious to address to him following the terrible attacks which have struck your country.

Sensible aux sentiments qui ont dicté votre démarche et aux marques de confiance que vous lui témoignez, Monsieur Jacques Chirac m'a confié le soin de vous en remercier chaleureusement.

Sensitive to the feelings which you have dictated and with the marks of confidence that you testify to him, Mr. Jacques Chirac entrusts to me the responsibility of cordially thanking you.

Le Chef de l'Etat a tenu, au nom de la France, à exprimer au peuple américain toute son amitié et sa solidarité dans cette tragique épreuve. C'est un des moments de l'histoire où les démocraties doivent s'unir pour relever ensemble le défi qui leur est lancé par le terrorisme international et préserver ainsi la dignité humaine.

The Head of State, in the name of France, has to express to the American people all of his friendship and his solidarity in this tragic test. It is one of those moments of history when the democracies must be linked to take up together the challenge which is launched to them by international terrorism and, thus, to preserve human dignity.

Bien cordialement,
Cordialement,
Le Chef de Cabinet
Annie Lheritier

Artist of the Week



Louis Prima (1910-1978)

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

Rocker David Lee Roth took no exception to accepting the Romeo reputation in his beach babe video, "Just a Gigolo/I Ain't Got Nobody." It's originator, Italian New Orleans native Louis Prima, gave it class and character when it was first released around 1956.

A primo performer, who is credited with making Las Vegas the entertainment lounge singer attraction that it is, Prima played violin before moving onto the trumpet in his pre-teen years. But, it was Louis Armstrong's music that inspired Prima, and with that motivation, he formed a septet called, "New Orleans Gang."

In the mid- to early-30s, Prima took some bit parts in films like *Rose of Washington Square* and the movie musical *Rhythm On the Range*. However, no where was Prima's acting ability more evident than on the stage with his fourth wife-singer Keely Smith.

In 1948, when Keely was 16,

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Cheryl Rogovsky for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD WONDER... Mary Paynter works wonders in her portraits. During the annual Art in Westfield event, which was sponsored by the Westfield Art Association, Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Westfield Corporation, talented artists lined the streets with their most prized works on October 6.

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