

Arts & Entertainment



ARTISTIC ENSEMBLE...Visual artists from Westfield gathered for the "Verdict" concert last week at Echo Lake Park in Mountainside/Westfield. The concert was sponsored by the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders.



My Take on It

With Kerriane Spellman Cort

Wedded Bliss and Celebrity: Rarely Long-Lasting Union

By KERRIANNE SPELLMAN CORT
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

FANWOOD — It's official. J. Lo (Jennifer Lopez) has filed for divorce from husband Cris Judd after 10 months of marriage. Ten months! It's refreshing to see that they hung in there that long. Hollywood, un-

"Please, getting married to most of them is like going to a prom. Let's dress up, I'll wear a gown, you wear a tux and we'll have a big party. But as soon as we get sick of each other, it's on to the next thing. No offense."

But, in defense of celebrities, being in the entertainment field is very difficult. I know this firsthand. It's a brutal, cutthroat business. Few can survive the constant rejection



fortunately, has a terrible reputation when it comes to celebrity wedded bliss.

The list of recent Tinseltown breakups is yards longer than my arm. Tom and Nicole. Drew and Tom. Angelina and Billy Bob. Solid unions such as Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward or Tom Hanks and Rita Wilson are sadly in the minority.

So the question is ... is Hollywood the culprit for all the failed duos today? Or is it something more insidious, such as the fact that perhaps many celebrities are simply too impressed with themselves to ever be able to find true happiness with another?

Whether you are rich and famous or not, it is true that a marriage simply cannot work if one or both parties is not content with who they are. More than half of the couples marrying in their early 20s part ways within five years. Emotional immaturity and marriage is clearly not a good combination.

As we get older, one would hope, we gain a better understanding of who we truly are, and only then can we possibly be able to share our lives with another. Michelle Pfeiffer once said that marriage should be outlawed before age 30.

I assume if I was adored, waited on and kowtowed to on a daily basis like most celebrities are, I might also lose my perspective on what really matters most in life. How can one possibly focus on a marriage when your career is just so unbelievably important? Phooey. I don't buy it.

A friend of mine recently said,



LOVE'S LEADING ROLE...Couples like Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward, pictured top left, and Rita Wilson and Tom Hanks, pictured above, seem to love play a leading role in their lives without letting celebrity distractions get in the way.

and criticism. It takes a very special kind of bravery to be able to withstand the inevitable backbiting that is so prevalent in this industry. With your ego constantly on the line, it does rather make sense that it might be a bit difficult to put someone else first.

I think a course should be taught to all couples who plan on getting married whether they are famous or not. I think the course should be taught by God. I think we should be put through test after test until we are ready. When we have passed all of the hurdles and can truly say that we are satisfied with who we are as individuals, then, and only then will we be given the green light to share our lives with another.

I'm not bashing Hollywood or celebrities in any way. It's just disheartening to see things end. True, some unions are not meant to be and many marriages are incredible learning processes that ultimately make us better people. Failure is an ugly word. Growth and change sound much better to me. Food for thought.

Savory Summer Farmer's Market Fare

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\$1 per pound were found among \$2.50 bountiful pots of basil, every marketer knew that the true benefit would be reaped upon cooking the farm-fresh produce.

Not prone to missing the chance to shop, cook or eat, *The Westfield Leader* and *The Times of Scotch Plains-Fanwood* opted to stir the pot with some of Maxwell's tangy leeks and earthy golden potatoes for a Leek & Potato Soup. Also purchased was

a pint of Sunhaven's sweet sugar plums for a California-based Plum Coffee Cake and another pint of blueberries to be nestled within warm crêpes, perfect for Sunday morning.

The Leader/Times hopes that the Farmer's Market will be widely attended and that our readers might try to use some farm-raised produce as ingredients in their favorite dishes. Try the recipes enclosed with this article.

Leek and Potato Soup

- 3 or 4 leeks
- 4 medium potatoes
- salt and pepper
- 1/2 pint heavy cream
- 2 tbsp. butter



- Peel and wash the leeks very carefully and cut into small pieces. Peel and cut the potatoes into small squares.
- Place in a pan and cover with water, adding salt and pepper to taste.
- Bring to a boil and simmer for at least 30 minutes.
- Mash part of the potatoes and return to the pan to thicken the soup.
- Remove from the heat, add the cream and butter and serve right away.

Published in "Volume One: The American Country Inn and Bed & Breakfast Cookbook," by Kitty and Lucian Maynard from Broad Bay Inn and Gallery in Waldoboro, Me.

Sugar Plum Coffee Cake

- 1 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup canola oil
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 3 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. salt
- 6-8 fresh sugar plums, pitted, sliced
- 1 cup brown sugar, packed
- 6 tsp. all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 6 tsp. butter
- 1 cup chopped walnuts



- In mixing bowl, cream sugar, oil and eggs until fluffy. Stir in milk.
- Sift together flour, salt and baking powder. Beat into other mixture.
- Spread batter into greased and floured 9x14 glass pan.
- Top with rows of plum slices.
- Combine remaining ingredients and mix until crumbly.
- Sprinkle crumbs over plums.
- Bake at 350 degrees for approximately 1 hour. Serve warm.

Adapted from the Old Thyme Inn Bed & Breakfast in Half Moon Bay, Calif.

Arts Funding: The Show Will Go On

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\$20,000 from the state and will be given \$19,376 for 2003.

NJCVA's Director of Development Betsy Smith commented, "It is not very different from what we received last year," adding that the small cut from the state will not impact the group too much.

"We were grateful for what we received," she said.

The NJCVA, which allows residents from over 200 communities to learn from professionals in almost every artistic genre, hosts various exhibitions during the year, and works with ARC (Association of Retarded Citizens) to provide citizens from Union and Essex counties with special artistic instruction through its "Artists with Disabilities" program.

Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn, which annually boasts the talent of residents from Westfield, Scotch Plains, Fanwood and Mountainside, will have to plan its programs without \$31,536 in 2003. Last year, the premier theater was given \$1,011,465, but will have to make do with \$979,929 next year.

Paper Mill Playhouse Director of Development Lynne Brum related, "The cut in funding is unfortunate for Paper Mill and for all performing arts organizations in New Jersey, although the decrease is not surprising due to the state's fiscal challenges."

She continued, "Paper Mill will continue to reduce its expenses across the organization, and will look for additional charitable gifts from foun-

dations, corporations and individuals."

"No major programs will be cut as a result of the decrease from the state," Ms. Brum concluded. "We will continue to try to do more with less across the board, not unlike what most organizations, whether non-profit or for-profit, are trying to do."

While the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) in Newark will receive one of the largest cuts in this coverage area — \$45,051 — Public Relations Spokesperson Jeffrey Norman looks at the glass as half full.

"Truthfully, we are very grateful to the state," Norman told *The Leader* and *The Times*. "We were expecting even deeper cuts."

Grappling with what Norman acknowledged was an "extremely difficult budget year," he feels that the state "held in line as much as they possibly could."

"This makes us have to work harder to ensure additional private funding," he related.

"We are very gratified by the Governor's remarks to restore funding next year and to make up for what was lost this year. We believe that he will develop a sustainable, predictable plan," Norman said.

For a full list and summary of the Fiscal 2003 Budget developed by the State Arts Council, please visit www.njartsCouncil.org



POPCORN™

K-19: The Widowmaker: Sub Pic Ship-Shape, But Not Very Deep

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

By MICHAEL S. GOLDBERGER
2 & 1/2 popcorns

Care to venture beneath the ice-covered sea and unto straits so very dire and dim? If so, your ship has come in. But be aware that a trip aboard director Kathryn Bigelow's *K-19: The Widowmaker* means two hours and 18 minutes in a submarine on a very dangerous mission.

A mission that may be beyond the abilities of Russia's first nuclear ballistic sub. But it's 1961, the Cold War is on, and the Russians have something to prove, even if it kills them...or us. The deadly errand is ordered.

Granted, next to getting stuck in a well or a mine shaft, there are few better places for exploring the dramatic possibilities of compression, claustrophobia and sheer panic.

Pity is, there currently are no movies playing at the cineplex about getting stuck in a well or mine shaft. Not even one about being marooned in an elevator. Not even one about someone getting his or her head caught in a fence. Truth be told, there are folks who thrive on the emotional wringing-out that attends such wrenching fare. Hence, at the very least, *K-19: The Widowmaker* is like Chilean fruit: available.

Was it Freud or Red Skelton who said it? That for some there is a thrill in traveling to the edge of despair, followed by the exultation of being able to safely leave the theatre, no matter how things finally play out on the silver screen. Well, for folks in need of such a fix, there is little choice but to stow away aboard *K-19: The Widowmaker*.

While about the only submarine I'd care to populate is *The Yellow Submarine* (1968), in all fairness filmmaker Bigelow's manic-depressive rush does have other assets to recommend it. Two to be specific: Harrison Ford and Liam Neeson.

Once you get past the obvious absurdity of actors feigning to be Russians by speaking English with a Russian accent, Messrs. Ford and Neeson recall the great action movie heroes of yesteryear in middle-age. The testosterone is advised. Adversaries by circumstance, they are naval captains Alexi Vostrikov and Mikhail Polenin, respectively.

Their interaction is a high intensity comparison in management styles. Moscow considers Neeson's Polenin, the K-19 crew's original captain and much beloved father figure, too soft. They don't think he's up to the job at hand. Part military venture, part propaganda ploy, the future of Mother Russia may hang in the balance.

You see, the Soviets are determined to prove they can launch a nuclear weapon from a submarine, even from a location as remote as the Arctic Ocean. Of course it wouldn't make for much dramatic controversy if Hollywood's version of the Krem-

lin merely replaced Polenin with hard-liner Vostrikov, a no-excuses, spit 'n polish leader whose dad was a hero of the Revolution.

So naturally the fickle Communist leaders toss them together. And you know what they say about too many cooks in the kitchen. Thus the question is asked, can too many captains spoil the borscht?

The results are somewhat surprising. There's even a bit of an inspiring message here. Why, some corporate bosses may even wish to treat their managers to a free screening of Bigelow's movie, as sort of an exciting primer of different executive techniques...question and answer session to follow.

They can take the ticket money out of the widows and orphans fund. Hey, it's another write-off.

Back to the movie's messages. To get to *K-19*'s lessons, first you'll have to survive all the sturm und drang indigenous to submarine movies. You know the drill: "Up periscope, down periscope; man the torpedoes; captain, there's a leak in the forward hold," and, let's not forget those all-time favorites, "Dive! Dive! Dive!" and "There's a fire in the galley."

Plus, remember that this is a nuclear submarine. So there's always the potential for an extra-added bonus should the reactor go on the fritz. If it does, we can take bets on who goes in to fix the radiation-spewing devil.

Although they rarely venture past one-dimensionality, Ford and Neeson do complement each other well in this reportedly true story, supplying credible nuances to their leadership roles. While competent, the rest of the cast is your stereotypical bunch of submariners, like sardines stuck in a tin can, to belabor a euphemism.

One night, in their bunks swapping tales of back home in the USSR while a balalaika dolefully strums in the background, a sailor informs of his discomfort in such tight quarters. Then his shipmate explains why it doesn't bother him: "When I'm finished here, I go home to work in the coal mines with my father and brothers. So what's the difference?"

With that, someone in the back of the theatre lets out a moan that could shiver your timbers, and then adds: "Oh...I can't breathe." He may not be a film critic. But you can trust him on this one.

K-19: The Widowmaker, rated PG-13, is a Paramount Pictures release directed by Kathryn Bigelow and stars Harrison Ford, Liam Neeson and Lubomir Myslytiuk. Running time: 138 minutes.



Pen & Ink

With Michelle H. Le Poidevin

MTV Makes Sorority Struggles Look Like a Kindergarten Cakewalk

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

Any student preparing to go off to college this fall should stay alert and realistic. While it might not always be easy to "fit in," joining a sorority or fraternity will seem like the best alternative to watching reruns on a Saturday night while everyone else goes out to a kegger. If you think of making that ultimate sacrifice of study time, sleep, and over all consciousness to become Greek, don't believe an ounce of what MTV's "Sorority Life" is spoon-feeding you.

For, I should know. I was spoon-fed condensed pea soup until I gagged because I didn't know the name of a sister's boyfriend's favorite Led Zeppelin song. Our entire pledge class went into tears on "Hell Night" when sisters, faces smeared in war-paint, screamed questions in our faces and pounded their paddles in fury.

So, I'm a bit bewildered when I tuned into about four to five episodes of "Sorority Life" to find personality-less pledges filing their nails, putting on their make-up and shooting pool in another "Real World"-esque house, glammed up with goodies. Where was this Pledge House when I was dragging myself through those crazy weeks?

The sisters of Phi Mu Epsilon, a local sorority of Moravian College, which is now defunct and taken over by a national sorority, lived in a cushy house, forced us to do their dirty dishes for points and only invited us up to scream at us. Our pledgemaister was nothing like the sugary "Becca" on "Sorority Life," who seems to tend to the pledges like a tender shepherd. Ours was a tyrant who told us to trust her, only to rat us out during the sisters' yell-a-thons. We had no time to spend with our boyfriends like MTV's beauty queen, Jordan. Instead, I had to tell the guy I was dating, "See you in a couple weeks when all of the hell is over."

Would I pass up the chance to pledge a sorority all over again? Even though I sound quite bitter, I wouldn't rip up my pledge bid. I would still go for it. I had one good year of being a Phi Mu sister, before I dropped out to become a true full-time student. After all, that is why I originally enrolled before I became sidetracked by the sisterhood. However, I would discourage any young men and women watching "Sorority Life" from thinking that they are witnessing an honest depiction.

I've compared my experience with those of other fraternities and sororities. What they had to go through, like having their fat measured in front of each other and their "trouble spots" marked and criticized, I couldn't write it all here and you certainly wouldn't be allowed to film it for all to see on primetime television.

For once in your many decades of reaching impressionable minds, get really real, MTV — before people actually start to believe what you're dishing out.



OH, OH, IT'S MAGIC...YOU KNOW...Westfield Summer Workshop Office Manager Susan Appar, center, gets a life when students in Beverly Suzan's "Magic Class" levitate her.

Jen's Trends: Accessorizing

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and Michael Michaud.

Due Sorelle is a company formed by two sisters who are originally from Maples, Italy. The gallery customers often order original designs from *Due Sorelle* for weddings and other special occasions. The wonderful and rich chunky pieces of *Due Sorelle* instantly made me a fan.

The duo-team uses heirlooms and antique like designs and transform them into modern pieces. They combine silver, silk, beads and semipre-

cie was Michael Michaud's exquisite nature inspired pieces. Michael uses the lost wax casting method and creates models from natural elements, he then manipulates these models into jewelry. Michael uses bronze, sterling silver, gold and natural stones and pearls. His classic designs are a magnificent sight and encompass nothing less than pure elegance.

Whether your looking to spend two dollars for a pair of earrings at H

GALLERY GRANDUER (Pictured on A&E front)... This fine costume jewelry can be found at Juxtapose Gallery in Westfield. Pictured, above, are fine-crafted bronze earrings and a matching bracelet embellished with genuine dyed pearls by Michael Michaud. Pictured, below, are two necklaces by *Due Sorelle*. The necklace on the right is made with green turquoise and blue quartz and the necklace on the left is made with coral and green turquoise.

ious stones with distinct metals. What caught my attention were the glass beads and the beautiful stones used in many of their pieces.

Due Sorelle's fine art jewelry pieces have appeared on such shows as "Friends" and "ER" and also most recently in the film *Daredevil*, starring Ben Affleck.

The other designer that caught my

& M or hundreds of dollars on fine costume jewelry, just remember what the word costume means... it's about having fun with fashion and your individual style.

However, if you manage to run into a couple bucks and want a unique piece, check out the jewelry at Juxtapose Gallery. It's simply fabulous.



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