

Life Experiences Seen Many Ways Through the Eye of the Beholder

By NANCY PLUM TUTHILL

When my eldest child, her little daughter and I visited Lancaster, Pa. last fall, my daughter, Dawna, decided it would be a great spot in the summer for a family get-together.

She convinced her five siblings to bring their families to the same location for a weekend of fun for the little people, my grandchildren. We looked forward to this all through the months, from winter to spring, but by vacation time, Dawna was off with other plans and I was left to figure out where, what and how.

With Dawna's two children out of the picture, there remained six cousins — two 10-year olds, two fives, a four and a three. What could we do that would be fun for all ages — including us?

I've discovered that when planning anything, it helps to pray — starting with the understanding that God invites the guests. I've learned to think of God as the one true, perfect Mind, the Mind that is Love Itself, providing all the good ideas one needs in any given situation.

A familiar hymn reminded me, "God is every need supplying, All, all is well." — Christian Science hymnal no. 350. Acknowledging and accepting God, Love, to be the Father and Mother of us all, made this planning a lot easier.

Keeping my thought on the spiritual facts of our true identity (man made in God's image and likeness), rather than yielding to the temptation to base my thinking on how the physical senses were defining us (mortals with 17 individual opinions), certainly kept me spiritually alert.

We had reserved the entire Country Log House Farm, a working farm with lots of animals, lots of fun things to do and hearty farm breakfasts, as our resting place. There were five bedrooms and an attic loft for seven sets of people — hmmm. Well, I guess I could just fit in someplace.

I thought of the Bible story where the guests are invited to the wedding party and one is reminded to take the lowest room, hopefully to be invited to a better place, rather than go for the best and have to move (Luke 14:7-11). I just kept quiet and waited for each family to find its niche for the two nights.

One sibling, arriving early, secured one of the larger, prettier rooms for his family with one child. By the time his brother's family, including two little ones, arrived, there was no room that was adequate for that larger family.

Seeing what the need was, I patiently waited for the first brother to suggest that his younger brother take the best room in the house. He did speak up — and had no qualms about taking the smallest room in the log house.

Also, because the seventh group didn't arrive that night, I had a perfect room with all the space I needed, to do what I wanted, while the rest

partied — stay upstairs to help all the little ones fall asleep peacefully and read a good biography I was just getting into.

The second night was sufficiently cool so that the attic loft, which had only fans, could be used; this was an ideal spot for the late arrivers.

Coordinating these seven units the next morning, assigning them to four vehicles and maneuvering these in line formation through Saturday Lancaster traffic, was a feat in itself. We hadn't planned any activities — it was follow the leader all the way.

Always a great choice for kids of all ages is a train ride. Being a Westfield commuter of the 50s and 60s, trains would be my first choice for mode of transportation, were it not for time and the "advantage miles" of air travel. Seeing this great country from the open windows of the train, feeling the rhythm of the tracks, was good fun. Some little ones had never been on a train before.

After the train ride, we stuffed ourselves while on a tour of The Pretzel Factory and did some shopping to benefit the economy. Then the big choice came — where to have dinner with 17 people at high tourist time. Finally, the decision was made for those with little ones to go where they would be nourished to their liking (fast food) and those with older or without children to head to a steak house, which had a billiard table.

Wise decision to split up! The billiard place was just barely okay for us, and would have been awful for the little ones. We left the farm the next morning after another delicious breakfast and more animal feeding. A good time was had by all.

Looking back at this experience, thinking how the Gospels were told from four different perspectives, I can't help but think...had any of the other 16 people present written this story, it would not have been the same as mine.

The others might have seen other points of interest. Maybe something else would have seemed more important than the incidents I recorded — possibly emphasizing a disagreement or accentuating the negative — illustrating a different point of view. But this was the gospel of this family event...according to me.

I like to think of the Four Gospels of the New Testament with the understanding that each writer believed what he believed and wrote about it, for a specific reason. Certainly, each Gospel gives vital information for following the teachings of the Master we know as Christ Jesus.

I wonder what the world would be like had they never been written or never been made part of that textbook for life, The Bible.

Nancy Plum Tuthill is First Reader at the First Church of Christ, Scientist, located at 422 East Broad Street in Westfield.



HEADING FOR HAPPINESS...More than 50 children with cancer and blood disorders recently attended a fun-filled week at Sister Pat's Camp. This special camp, located in Esopus, N.Y., is sponsored by St. Helen's Roman Catholic Church in Westfield. Volunteers, primarily from the parish, work to ensure that campers enjoy a carefree week. Pictured, above, are some of the campers and their counselors as they get ready to go on a field trip.

Concepts & Thought

Jeanette Munoz Named New Jefferson School Principal

WESTFIELD — On July 30, the Westfield Board of Education unanimously appointed Jeanette Munoz as the new principal of Jefferson Elementary School, a Kindergarten through fifth grade school with approximately 500 students.



Jeanette Munoz

Mrs. Munoz has 27 years of experience in education, most recently as Instructional Supervisor and Assistant Principal in Mount Olive Township.

Prior to that, she served as a Basic Skills Coordinator, reading teacher and classroom teacher. Mrs. Munoz was a Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation Grant Recipient in 2001-2002 and 2002-2003, served as a consultant for Everyday Mathematics and is a member of several educational organizations, including Kappa Delta Pi, International Education Honor Society.

Mrs. Munoz holds Masters of Arts Degrees in Professional Education and Administration and Supervision. Her Bachelor of Science Degree is

in Secondary Education and she is certified in both elementary and secondary education. Her appointment was effective August 12.

In accepting her position, Mrs. Munoz commented, "As a resident of Westfield, I have always admired our school district. I have sensed teamwork and collaboration among the entire school community to provide the best education possible for students. I am proud to be part of the team."

In a letter to parents of Jefferson Elementary School students, Superintendent of Schools Dr. William J. Foley acknowledged the help of parents and teachers who assisted him in selecting Mrs. Munoz.

Dr. Foley added, "I am confident that Mrs. Munoz will continue the tradition of excellence at Jefferson School."

The new appointment was made following the resignation of Dr. Jorden Schiff, who accepted a position as Assistant Superintendent in Howell Township.

Application Deadline for Vacant Westfield BOE Seat Is August 23

WESTFIELD — Westfield Board of Education President Arlene Gardner recently outlined the procedure that will take place to fill the seat to be left vacant by Lisa Alter in September.

"Consistent with the approach the board has taken in the past, I believe that we should invite interested citizens to apply for the appointment, interview each candidate and appoint the individual deemed to be best qualified," stated Ms. Gardner.

Charged under state law with appointing a replacement when a member resigns, the Westfield Board of Education plans to appoint a successor for Ms. Alter.

The successor will serve until the April school election in 2003, when Westfield voters will elect four citizens to the school board.

Ms. Alter was elected in 2001 and announced her intention to leave her board position following the first year of her three-year term. She plans to enter a graduate program that will conflict with board obligations.

Her successor will be appointed by the school board to fill the second year of her term. The individual chosen to serve the board during the third and final year of the term will be determined by voters in the April

2003 election. Citizens interested in being considered for the September 2002 - April 2003 appointment are invited to submit a letter of interest and résumés.

Résumés should be submitted by Friday, August 23, to Robert Berman, Board Secretary at 302 Elm Street, Westfield or e-mailed to rberman@westfieldnj.com.

Board interviews will be scheduled with interested citizens. The interviews will be open to the public. The board will discuss the appointment at a private session. Following a public discussion, the board will vote on the appointment of a new board member at a regular public meeting.

Citizens interested in serving on the Westfield Board of Education must be United States citizens, at least 18 years of age, able to read and write, a Westfield resident for at least one year preceding the date of the appointment, and a citizen who does not have an interest in any contract with or claim against the school board.

For further information about the school board position, please call Mr. Berman at (908) 789-4402 or e-mail rberman@westfieldnj.com.

National Award Presented To Local Church Member

CRANFORD — Patrice Patterson, a member of the Calvary Lutheran Church in Cranford, has received the 2002 Lamb Award in national recognition of her distinguished service to local youth.

The Lamb Award is given jointly by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Lutheran Church-Missouri (LCMS) to Lutheran adults whose outstanding volunteer efforts have fostered the spiritual growth of youth and who have served as role models and leaders for young people.

Mrs. Patterson was chosen from a nationwide group of laypersons, pastors and professional church workers nominated to receive this highest of Lutheran service awards.

At Calvary Lutheran, she has served as Chairwoman of Christian Education and Superintendent of the Sunday-School program since 1988. She directed the church's Vacation Bible School for 13 years and has been a Sunday School, first communion and catechetical teacher.

Mrs. Patterson chaired the task

force that researched and developed Calvary's Nursery School and Childcare Program. She additionally served as a teacher in that program for seven years.

As a youngster, she earned the Girl Scout program's highest award of First Class Scout. For the past 30 years, she has served as a leader in all levels of Girl Scouting, including Daisy, Brownie, Junior, Cadette and Senior Advisor.

She also served as camp counselor in the Nomahegan Day Camp, sponsored by the local council. In 1994, she was named "Leader of the Year" by the Cranford Girl Scouts.

In all of her work with her church and Girl Scouting, Mrs. Patterson has been recognized for developing leadership in the young people with whom she has worked, for mentoring and developing new teachers and for working to serve others.

Currently a teacher in Elizabeth, she lives with her husband, Ed, and their daughters, Laurel and Heather, in Cranford.



Baseball Strike: Angry Fans Will Leave Game Behind

By JEREMY LIPSTEIN
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

It doesn't take much to realize the ridiculousness of the arguments that surround the labor talks between Major League Baseball and the players association.

To the millionaire players, the billionaire owners are being greedy; to the billionaire owners, the millionaire players are being greedy; and for the fans, the entire argument over revenue sharing, luxury tax, contraction, and a salary cap sounds like a bunch of spoiled brats arguing over who has the most expensive toys.

Talks of a strike have further pushed fans to the edge, already angered by an All-Star Game that ended in a tie, high ticket prices, and supposed steroid abuse. A strike would surely repel fans from the seats. Even an avid Yankee fan like myself would lose interest in and respect for the game, something the league would have trouble gaining back.

With some of this season's amazing feats such as Barry Bonds' 600th career homerun, the underdog Minnesota Twins leading their division, John Smoltz aiming for the single season save record, and the Curt

Schilling/Randy Johnson duo paving the road to Cooperstown with a combined 38-8 record, it would be a shame to see it come to an abrupt halt.

Baseball's last strike, which occurred in 1994, dragged on for 232 days and left the fans without the playoffs or World Series. This so-called necessary job action left a scar on the game, with attendance dropping 20 percent the next season. The game hasn't fully recovered since.

According to a recent poll by Sports Illustrated, 75 percent of fans have not forgiven baseball for the 1994 strike, and 66 percent of fans say that if the post-season is cancelled they will no longer be interested in the game.

To say that the possible strike this season would have less harmful effects would be an outright canard. Frustrated fans would turn off baseball and turn on the ever so timely sport of football.

Football, which typically has a drought of attendance and viewers early season because of overlap with the baseball post-season, would see a myriad of viewers tuning into week one, beginning on Thursday, September 5, with the San Francisco 49ers taking on the New York Giants.

Ending the horrible dry spell of attendance after this possible strike would take something of the magnitude of the McGwire-Sosa home run race of 1998, which had fans glued to the television to see who would break the 37-year-old single season home run record, set by Roger Maris in 1961. This event finally drew fans back to the ballpark after the strike of 1994. Nobody wants to have to wait four years again for baseball to return to normalcy.

While players claim they are just trying to what's best for the game, a strike would cripple the sport. The game has played such an important role in American life as the national pastime, and it would be a shame to see the game fall apart because of greedy players and even greedier owners.

Take a step back... To banking the way it used to be.

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Westfield Public School Slate Sept. 4 Opening; Post Holidays

WESTFIELD — The Westfield Public Schools will open on Wednesday, September 4. Homerooms will begin at the following times:

- Westfield High School — 8:30 a.m.
- Edison Intermediate School and Roosevelt Intermediate School — 8:15 a.m.
- Elementary Schools (Grades 1-5) — 8:45 a.m.
- Kindergarten (a.m.) — 8:50 a.m.
- Kindergarten (p.m.) — 12:30 p.m.

Parents are invited to "Welcome Coffees" at many of the schools. Specific times are listed in correspondence sent to parents by the individual schools.

The Westfield Board of Education has approved the following list of pupil holidays that will be in effect for the 2002-2003 school year:

- School Calendar — 181 Student Contact Days plus two Snow Days
- Pupil Holidays — Monday, September 16, Yom Kippur;
- Monday, October 14, Columbus Day/Staff In-Service;
- Wednesday, October 23 (Four-Hour Session - Grades K through 5 only) Parent Conferences;
- Tuesday, November 5 (Four-Hour Session - Grades K through 5 only) Curriculum Planning;
- Thursday and Friday, November 7 and 8, Teacher Professional Days;
- Tuesday, November 19 (Four-Hour Session - Grades K through 5 only) Parent Conferences;
- Wednesday, November 27 (Four-Hour Session - All Schools);
- Thursday and Friday, November 28 and 29, Thanksgiving Recess;
- Monday, December 23 through Wednesday, January 1, Holiday Break (Christmas on Wednesday, December 25, Kwanzaa from Thursday, December 26 through Wednesday, January 1);
- Wednesday, January 1, New Year's Day;
- Monday, January 20, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day;

See it all on the Web!
www.goleader.com



SCHOLARSHIP WINNER...Scotch Plains resident Robert Mattar was recently awarded a \$500 Commerce Bank scholarship for his academic and extracurricular achievements at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School. He plans to attend the University of Pennsylvania and major in business. Robert was a member of his high school's DECA chapter and co-founder of SMAC (Student Movement Against Cancer), now established in 30 high schools.



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