



1951 MERCURY...Eileen Maher of Westfield, see photo below.



FIFTY YEARS DOWN THE ROAD...Pictured above are Bill and Eileen Maher of Westfield standing next to their 1951 Mercury ZDR that they recently purchased and displayed at the car show last Tuesday on Quimby Street in downtown Westfield. The top picture of Mrs. Maher was taken next to a different Mercury ZDR in 1952 in Westfield after the two got married fifty years ago.

Fall Is Favorite Season For Scotch Plains Gardener

By JOAN MELLOAN

As autumn approaches, most gardeners start relaxing after their summer of labor. Not Ben Caruso. His Scotch Plains garden and kitchen become a beehive of activity. And he loves it. "Fall is my favorite time of the year," says the energetic owner of the Lemon Tree hair salon.

His closely planted beds and lawn yield plum tomatoes, eggplant, hot and sweet peppers, string beans, figs and peaches, along with all kinds of herbs. They must be picked and preserved soon. For the next few months, Ben's schedule is crowded. He has grapes to buy and wine to make. The olives must be packed in oil and spices. He must take a trip out to Pennsylvania Dutch country to buy meat for sausages and a 20-pound ham to cure as prosciutto. He goes to Newark to buy fresh sardines that will be packed in oil. He does all this in addition to spending five days a week at the salon.

As a child, Ben observed the traditional Italian ways of farming and gardening practiced by his father and neighbors on small farms at the southernmost tip of Italy, near the sea. "In spring, the neighbors helped each other cultivate and plant crops," he remembers. "In the fall, each family would preserve the food that would feed them all winter. At 4 a.m., fishermen would knock at your door offering sardines freshly caught in the Mediterranean," he said.

When Ben was 12, his family migrated to New Jersey. Today, his father, who is 83, keeps fit by maintaining a garden in Elizabeth that is "much bigger than mine".

One of the big September tasks, shared by Ben and his wife, Sharon, who is also of Italian descent, is canning all those plum tomatoes. They boil them, a bushel at a time. Then, they run them through a large Italian tomato press in the backyard to re-

move the skins. The pulp goes into mason jars with salt and basil. "It will be good for years," they say.

The savory eggplant appetizer is made from the slender Italian variety Ben grows. Slices are salted and placed under weights to draw off excess liquid. Boiling water and wine vinegar are added, plus a sprinkle of fennel, a dab of peppermint. Each jar is topped with olive oil. The fluffy mixture is delicious on a slice of warm semolina bread.

Sometime soon, Ben will buy a crate of grapes, perhaps two or three varieties, place them in the wine press in his garage, and wait. Eventually they yield about 50 gallons of red wine. The cost is about \$40 for the grapes. "But we don't drink much wine. We just like to have it available and give it to friends," he said.

During the winter, Ben and his teenage son will make the dry, salt-cured sausage, using a machine that grinds the meat and seasonings and fills dry casings, which they will hang to dry.

Right now, however, he must find time and space to plant one more crop of Italian arugula somewhere in his 60-by-100-foot property. His arugula, with a scattering of chopped onion and a vinaigrette dressing, makes a superlative salad.

You might call Ben Caruso a man for all seasons.

Westfield Recreation Events

Financial Planning Workshops: Includes Passport to Retirement (below), Dismantling Variable Annuities on October 10 and Long Term Care Planning on November 14.

Passport to Retirement Workshop: Learn how to manage money wisely. Instructor, Keith Toussaint, CFP, will teach the workshop on September 12 & 19 from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. The fee is \$20 or \$30 for two people. Participants will receive a 145-page retirement planning workbook. To reserve a seat call 789-4080 or email tkastner@westfieldnj.net.

Fall Tennis Program: September 9 to October 2. Classes for beginner level students, ages 7 to 10, will be from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. and intermediate ages 11 to 16 from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. Programs will be held Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday. Space is limited. The fee is \$40.

Movie Night at Memorial Park Pool: For pool members and

Westfield residents only. For children under 10 years and their parent or guardian. The fee is \$1 per person. Shows begin at 7 p.m. and will end approximately at 8:30 p.m.

Teen Night At Memorial Park Pool: Wednesday Nights from 8:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. for grades 6 to 12. Includes D.J. dancing, swimming and special events. The fee is \$3.

Discount Summer Tickets: Dorney Park \$25, Great Adventure \$30, Hershey Park \$26 for ages 9 to 54 and \$20 for ages 3 to 8, Mountain Creek \$18, Sesame Place \$30.

New Early Bird Lap Swim Program: Held at the Memorial Pool for residents and non-residents between 6 a.m. and 8 a.m., Monday through Friday.

Future Programs: Mad Science, Arts & Crafts, Bowling, Dancercise, Yoga, Family Skate Nights and much more.

For more information, call the Recreation Department at (908) 789-4080 or visit the rec. online at www.westfieldnj.net



Scotch Plains Recreation Events

Basketball Programs: Third through eighth grade basketball program begins on Thursday, August 27 through September 20 in the recreation department. The fee is \$30 for early registration, \$40 after September 20. Registration will be opened until October 11.

Overnight Vacation Trips: Sponsored by Scotch Plains, Mountaineer and New Providence Recreation Departments. The trip is to Pigeon Forge, Tenn. on September 28 to October 4.

Junior Golf Tournaments: Scotch Hills Country Club on September 8. Please register at the Recreation Office by the Wednesday prior to each tournament.

Teen Programs for the Fall: Programs include but are not limited to: Teen Club/Sports Night at the High School gyms, Shawnee Ski Program and Teen Talent Night/Karaoke. The Babysitting Program for ages 11 to 16 will be held on Saturday, October 5.

Adult Programs for the Fall: Programs include but are not limited to: Aerobics, Yoga, Line Dancing, Adult dance classes, Self Defense, Co-ed Volleyball, Coaches Basketball Clinic, Walking Club, Senior Spirits and more.

Special Events: Special events include but are not limited to: Scotch Plains Day on September 28, Spelling Bee (TBD), Halloween Celebration on October 31 and Santa's Arrival on December 8.

Mayors Gala: Tickets are on sale for the Mayors Gala, on December 6, at the Recreation Office. In addition, nomination forms for Volunteers of the Year can be obtained at the Recreation Office.

Theme Park Tickets: Great Adventure, Hershey Park, Sesame Place, Morey's Piers, Camelbeach, Dorney Park and Mountain Creek at discounted rates. Tickets can be purchased at the recreation office.

Summer Concert: The next concert is scheduled Thursday

The fall/winter brochure will be available at the end of August. For more information, contact the recreation office at (908) 322-6700.



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