



Get Outta The House

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

Here is an opportunity for "Sopranos" fans to kill at least four hours on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon. For \$40 a pop, you can take the official **Sopranos Tour**. It begins at 2 p.m. on either day. Meet in front of Houlihan's in Harmon Meadow Plaza, off Route 3 in Secaucus, and look for the guy with the blue "On Location Tours" flag. You must purchase tickets in advance on Zerve: (212) 209-3370, or <http://www.zerve.com/OnLocation/Sopranos>. Watch your back.

Now through Thursday, July 28, Union County College is exhibiting the works of Gayle Ruskin-White, in a show entitled **Large Scale Works from 1990-1994**. The artist describes her works as abstractions, and they evoke a sense of depth and interconnectedness. The exhibit is in the Commons of the Cranford Campus at 1033 Springfield Avenue, and it's free from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m.

The **Summit Symphony** will present a concert featuring pastoral music on Saturday, May 14, at 8 p.m. at Summit High School on Kent Place Boulevard. There will be a pre-concert lecture by Maestro SadeWHITE at 7:15 p.m. Works by Delius, Handel, Vaughan Williams, and Beethoven will be performed. Admission is free.

An exhibition of **Russian and Soviet Propaganda Posters** is currently on display at the Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers University in New Brunswick. The museum is located at 71 Hamilton Street, and admission is \$3 for non-members, free for members. Check out the other exhibits while you are visiting. Call them at (732) 932-7237 or visit <http://www.zimmerli.museum.rutgers.edu/>. Parking is easier on the weekends.

The **Spitfire Grill**, a musical by James Valcq and Fred Alley, has been called "a soul-satisfying work of theatrical resourcefulness" by the *New York Times*. It is still running at the theater of the Westfield Community Players. The last performance is on Saturday, May 21. Single tickets are \$20. Call (908) 232-1221.

Arts & Entertainment



ANGELIC VOICES...The Madrigal Singers are pictured, above, with conductor Elaine Fiorino, left. Union County residents appearing in this program include Pam Newell of Westfield, Kirk Robbins of Fanwood, Sarah Riffel of New Providence, Mountside residents John Sichel, Lynn Sichel, and Margaret Thompson Mountside, Martha Desmond of Cranford, and George Stralkus of Elizabeth.

'Rogues! Rascals, Redemption' Concert Set by Madrigal Singers

WESTFIELD—The Madrigal Singers, directed by Elaine Fiorino, will return to the First United Methodist Church, 1 Broad Street in Westfield, on Sunday, May 22, at 4 p.m. to present a spring concert, "Rogues! Rascals! and Redemption!"

The title suggests the dual nature of the program, which includes both sacred motets and secular madrigals, sung a cappella.

The Madrigal Singers specialize in music of the European Renaissance, and this concert will offer a selection of the rich counterpoint melodies and harmonies of that early musical flowering, by both European and English composers.

Sacred works will include William Boyce's *Alluia*; Josquin des Pres' setting of Psalm 129, *De profundis*; and the final chorus from Heinrich Schütz's *Saint Matthew Passion, Easter sei dir, Christe*.

Madrigal offerings will include Thomas Weelkes' "Strike it up Tabor"; Thomas Vautour's five-part setting of "Mother, I will have a husband"; and Jacques Acadelt's "L'hiver sera et l'ete variable."

Other selections follow the choral tradition to the present day in sacred works such as Gerald Cohen's setting of the 23rd Psalm in Hebrew, "Adonai ro'el ehasar," and John Rutter's setting of the old English prayer "God be in my head and in my understanding" from the *Sarum Primer*.

Ernest Bullock will provide a modern setting for Ben Jonhson's love poem, "Have you seen but a bright lily grow?"

Performing in this concert will be Mary Arnold, Martha Desmond, Richard DeVany, Healf Goguen, David Lawrence, Roberta Lichtenberg, Jennifer Melick, Pamela Newell, Sarah Riffel, Kirk Robbins, John Sichel, Lynn Sichel, George Stralkus, and Ms. Thompson.

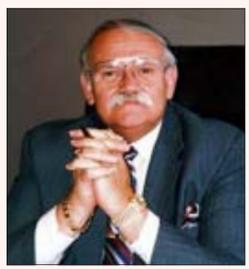
A \$10 suggested donation to cover expenses will be accepted at the door.

For further information, please call (908) 233-1570.

Endowment Gift Aids DeAlessandro Opera Concert

WESTFIELD—The Westfield Symphony Orchestra (WSO) will conclude its 2004-2005 season with the inaugural Joseph DeAlessandro Memorial Opera Concert, an opera-in-concert performance of Verdi's *Otello*, on Saturday, May 21, at 8 p.m. at The Presbyterian Church in Westfield.

The DeAlessandro Foundation recently made a \$100,000 gift to the WSO's endowment in support of an annual opera-in-concert as a memorial to Dr. Joseph DeAlessandro. This gift will support the concert and future WSO operas-in-concert in perpetuity in memory of Dr. DeAlessandro, a long-



time supporter of the WSO's opera performances, a longtime Westfield resident, a prominent businessman, philanthropist and patron of the arts.

This gift also qualifies the WSO for a matching endowment gift from the New Jersey Cultural Trust, which was created to help build endowments, create institutional stability and fund capital projects.

WSO Music Director David Wroe stated, "Joe's involvement with the WSO was deep and varied. His commitment to the annual opera-in-concert performances helped establish the concerts as the most popular jewel in the WSO's season. The annual Joseph DeAlessandro Memorial Opera Concerts will serve as a vessel to celebrate Joe's life, honor his commitment to the arts, and create a community event to share his memory."

Maestro Wroe continued, "Since Joe particularly loved Italian opera, I believe that our performance of *Otello* is the perfect one to inaugurate our Memorial concerts."

WSO President Norman Luka said, "We are very grateful to The DeAlessandro Foundation for making this generous gift. The Board of Trustees deeply appreciates the wonderful vote of confidence this is for the WSO. The endowment gift will allow us to continue our tradition of performing high-quality operas-in-concert in Joe's memory."

The WSO's performance of *Otello* will feature tenor Jeffrey Springer as Otello, soprano Yali-Marie Williams as Desdemona, baritone Todd Thomas as Iago and mezzo-soprano Kristina Martin as Emilia. Rounding out the cast will be Taylor Hargrave as Cassio, Vincent Chambers as Roderigo and Aaron Borst as Ludovico/Montano.

Executive Director Nicole DeNigro Carr stated, "The Symphony's annual opera-in-concert performance is always the climax of our season. People look forward to it all year. This season, Maestro Wroe has picked a truly spectacular work to honor Dr. DeAlessandro and he's found a wonderful cast of stellar opera veterans and talented, up-and-coming singers."

Music Alive Composer-in-Residence Robert Aldridge will offer a free pre-concert talk about Verdi and *Otello* at the Presbyterian Church at 7 p.m. on the night of the concert.

Tickets, which are \$25 to \$60 with discounts for students and senior citizens, may be purchased directly from the WSO, (908) 232-9400; or at Lancaster, Ltd. and The Town Book Store in Westfield, Martin Jewelers in Cranford, and Beautiful Things in Scotch Plains.



BASKETS OF GOODIES...Committee chairwomen of The Friends of Westfield Symphony Orchestra's (WSO) 21st Annual Home Tour to be held Saturday between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. are pictured with a sampling of the wide array of themed baskets and luxury objects included in a raffle being held in conjunction with the tour. Proceeds will support the WSO's programs of education and outreach. Area merchants donated the luxury items. Tickets for the tour are \$25 if purchased before Saturday and \$30 on Saturday. They are available in town at Baron's Drug Store, Burgdorf Realtors, Coldwell Banker Realtors, Weichert Realtors, Poppyside's, and The Town Bank of Westfield. In Cranford they are available at Martin Jewelers; at Irma's Hallmark in Fanwood, and Mary's Hallmark in Clark.

Diverse Art Classes Offered At WF Summer Workshop

WESTFIELD—The Westfield Summer Workshop (WSW), a division of the New Jersey Workshop for the Arts (NJWA), will offer 30 arts and crafts classes for students in grades one through eight at Roosevelt Intermediate School in Westfield, from Wednesday, June 29, to Friday, July 29, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

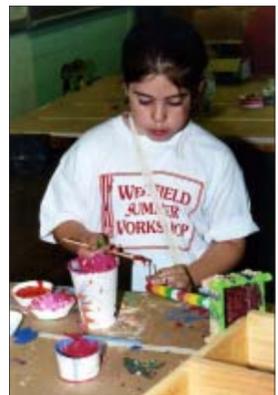
Art course offerings include airbrush, architecture, calligraphy, "Cartoon Country," cartooning, "Exploring Art," "Exploring Sculpture," graphic design, "Mythical Characters," sculpture, and studio art.

Craft classes include those in basketry, carving, international crafts, jewelry making, knitting/crocheting, mask-making, mixed crafts, mosaics, needlework, origami, outdoor designs, pottery, puppetry, scrapbooking, tie dye/batik, toy design, "Under the Sea," "Wild Kingdom" and "Wind, Wings and Wheels."

All WSW classes are taught by certified, and/or degreed teachers and professionals who have experience working with children. Many faculty members possess advanced degrees in their fields of expertise.

The WSW also includes separate pre-school and kindergarten programs which will be held at Redeemer Lutheran School in Westfield. An early morning drop-off at 7:30 a.m. is available and a full-day program is offered in conjunction with the Westfield Y.

Now in its 34th season, the WSW allows



GETTING CRAFTY...Students can choose from among 30 separate arts and crafts classes at the 2005 Westfield Summer Workshop.

students to enroll for one to five consecutive classes daily in this tuition-based program.

For more information about the WSW, please call (908) 518-1551, visit the NJWA office at 150-152 East Broad Street in Westfield, or log onto www.njworkshopforthearts.com.

POPCORN! The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy: The Odyssey: Tourist Class

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

By MICHAEL S. GOLDBERGER
2 & 1/2 POPCORN

You have to give credit to *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. Not too many movies declare right at the outset that discovering the secret of life is among its prime objectives. While you shan't be told right now whether or not director Garth Jennings, working from a screenplay by Douglas Adams and Karey Kirkpatrick, is successful in that ambition, suffice it to note that he gives it a good chase.

It's just this sort of outlandishness that gives the film, which, incidentally, is about the end of the world, its lunatic charm. For alas, while the sun has long set on the British Empire, happily the same cannot be said for that very special chutzpah at the core of British humor. It's evident throughout *Hitchhiker's*... practically makes a celebration of it.

There is a delightful, partly proud, partly self-effacing survival element that is the foundation of such wit and whimsy. While driving the laughs, like Hansel and Gretel's crumbs these notions also leaves clues... bits of sociological wisdom about the jester's character. And this in turn is then not only funny, but heartwarming as well.

Rarely has this unflappability been better illustrated than by Katherine Hepburn as missionary Rose Sayer in *The African Queen* (1951). While the movie is hardly riotous, it does have its comically relevant moments. Take one scene in particular. It's when the little steamboat seems completely compromised by the river's whitewater torrents. And there's Kate's character seated in the prow, looking straight ahead, as fit and brave a subject of king and country as there ever was. The travail and subsequent release of tension make for a sigh-filled laugh.

Well, he may not seem quite as gallant or brave at first blush, but our hero in *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* is just as disarmingly clueless about the dangers he'll be facing. He is Arthur Dent, played by Martin Freeman, though it might as well be Arthur Everyman. For that's who he is. A whole heritage of English literature says so. And so it comes to pass on one momentous day in Cornwall, England, that Arthur becomes the ordinary man tossed into extraordinary circumstances.

The circumstances are extraterrestrial as well. At first we think it's only the local authorities who want to knock down Arthur's house for the purpose of running a highway through the area. But it's a lot bigger than that.

Mind you, this is sci-fi as well as comedy. And as such, there is a greater metaphor for everything. Some work, some don't. Here it apparently does as the film successfully sets the tone by making fun of progress for progress' sake. For as it turns out, Earth is about to be destroyed by aliens. It seems our planet orbits right where they want to put a hyperspace bypass. So, we gotta go.

Luckily, Arthur has a friend, Ford Prefect (Mos Def), who has previous knowledge of this Armageddon, and the two are able to jump planet in just the nick of time. It's a classical case of a good deed paying off.

You see, when Ford first arrived in Cornwall, Arthur whisked the seemingly confused visitor out of the path of an oncoming car. At that point, there were two things Arthur didn't know about the fellow who would become his best friend. One, Ford is an alien. The other is that at the time of the lifesaving episode Prefect was trying to shake hands with the car, to introduce himself. He thought it was our dominant life form.

Of course the timing couldn't be worse for the Apocalypse to rear its ugly head. Sure, it's great that Arthur escapes his doomed planet. However, it was just the night before that a party when Dent had at long last met the love of his life. Pity, he hesitated.

Her name was Tricia McMillan (Zooey

LOCAL STARS



PRIZE POET...Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School junior Gabrielle Falco, one of 20 winners in the 16th Annual Rutgers-Newark New Jersey High School Poetry Contest, meets with Contest Director Barry Seiler.

SPFHS Pupil Gabrielle Falco Captures Rutgers Poetry Prize

SCOTCH PLAINS—Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School junior Gabrielle Falco has been selected as one of this year's 20 winners in the 16th Annual Rutgers-Newark New Jersey High School Poetry Contest, sponsored by the university's Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

As a contest winner, selected from among

Musical Club Scholarship Winners to Perform Wed.

WESTFIELD—The Musical Club of Westfield will present its final program of the season, with past and present scholarship recipients performing, on Wednesday, May 18, at 10 a.m. at the First Baptist Church, 170 Elm Street in Westfield.

Drude Sparre Roesser, mezzo-soprano, will perform *Four Sonnets* by Jean Berger with poetry by Luis De Camones, translated from the Portuguese by Loraine Noel Finley. The sonnets are entitled "Although the Ancient Poets, Where Can Mine Eyes Look, All My Life, and O Lovely Eyes." Marie-

Danielle Mercier will accompany on piano. David Bhasin, a violin performance major and graduate of New York University, will perform Cesar Franck's *Sonata for Violin and Piano in A Major*. Sheryl Lee will accompany on piano.

Elizabeth Anne Grausso, a flute performance major and graduate of Vanderbilt University, will perform the *Carmen Fantasy* by François Borne. Ms. Mercier will accompany her on the piano.

The program is free of charge and open to the public.

The Musical Club of Westfield provides scholarships to aid college students who are majoring in music and indicate financial need.

To become an active or associate member, please call the membership chairperson at (908) 232-2173.

Coming Soon in ASE:

- Dancer and actress Caroline Yost of Westfield;
- Review of latest Choral Art Society concert;
- Junior League Literary Luncheon attended;
- A new Book Nook column;
- District Art Show in Westfield Public Schools reviewed.
- More "Local Stars" - There are so many!

WF School Art Show To Open May 17-19

WESTFIELD—The 21st annual Westfield Public School District's Fine Arts Show, which will be held in the Westfield High School varsity gymnasium from Tuesday, May 17, to Thursday, May 19, will be open to the public.

A sampling of artwork by students representing all nine public schools and grades ranging from kindergarten through 12 will be on display at the annual show.

On May 17 and Wednesday, May 18, the artwork can be viewed from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and in the evening from 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Visitors are also welcomed on May 19, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Paintings, two-dimensional artwork, ceramic, crafts, computerized art and other work of Westfield Public School students will be displayed.

Dr. Linda King, Supervisor of Fine Arts, noted that the annual exhibit has become "an outstanding cultural event in this community. The art show is a wonderful opportunity to exhibit hundreds of various art media created by our talented students under the direction of dedicated art educators."

WestFilm

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24

can produce. Bravo Bill.

The first half of WestFilm also included a short, *Robots*, by WHS student George Buccu; another short, *Horror Movie*, by WHS student Ashton Golemb; a short, *The Blue Bouquet* directed by WHS pupil John Kerr; a movie, *Elevator*, by Seton Hall Prep student Andrew Clapham; a preview of Union resident Nick Pavano's *Jersey Ghost*, and the romantic comedy, *Lying Beside You* by Joe Valenti.

The second half of WestFilm featured a short by Jason and Steven Parker, execs at K-9 Resorts in Fanwood, and a puzzling animation short by WHS student Griff Kimmins which featured a painting squirrel who retrieves his masterpiece in outer space and who, just as he encounters a bug who had found joy in the painting and cried as the squirrel took it away, kills him. Some audience members laughed, while others were a bit disturbed by the outcome.

Westfielder Ken Waddell offered a somewhat predictable ending in *The Promise*. The acting was commendable, however, and the editing and filming were done very professionally.

For more information on the films and shorts that premiered at WestFilm, please visit www.westfilmfestival.com.

Summit Choral Plans 'Clap Your Hands!'

SUMMIT—The Summit Choral, under the direction of Richard Garrin, will present a concert of choral pops, "Clap Your Hands!" on Saturday, May 21, at 8 p.m. at the Dorothy Young Center for the Arts at Drew University in Madison.

Tickets are \$20 for general admission, \$18 for senior citizens and students over 16 (with a \$2 discount for advance purchase of either), \$8 for students 10 to 16, and free for Drew students and \$10 for Drew faculty.

To purchase tickets, which will also be available at the door, please call (973) 292-1186 or visit www.summitchorale.org.

County Art Exhibition Awards Reception Set

COUNTY—The Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders will recognize local artists and present awards at a reception on Wednesday, May 18, for the Fourth Annual Exhibit and Contest for County of Union employees and their relatives.

The reception and awards ceremony will commence at 5:30 p.m. at the Elizabethtown Gas Company, Liberty Hall Center, 1085 Morris Avenue in Union.

Presented in partnership with the National Arts Program, the exhibition will be open weekdays from Monday, May 16, to Monday, June 13, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Three prominent artists and art professionals, Dolores Stewart (a sculptor from Plainfield), Tim Jahn (a painter from Piscataway) and Donald Lokuta (a photographer from Union) are judging the show.

For more information, please contact the Union County Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, 633 Pearl Street, Elizabeth 07202, call (908) 558-2550 or e-mail culturalinfo@ucnj.org.