



Linda Condillo for *The Westfield Leader and The Times* DIZZY UP THE GIRL...Daughter of Dizzy Gillespie, Jeanie Bryson, and Chuck Mangione guitarist Coleman Mellett 'kick it up a notch' every Wednesday night in the lounge at Northside Trattoria.

Northside Trattoria's Great Food, Talent Are Recipe For Success

By LINDA B. CONDILLO
Specially Written for *The Westfield Leader and The Times*

WESTFIELD — The recent addition of a bar and newly renovated lounge at the Northside Trattoria has all the right ingredients for mixing eclectic cuisine with great music thrice weekly. Wednesday night's featured act boasts a famous musical lineage and some amazing credentials.

In a recent interview with the *Westfield Leader and The Times of Scotch Plains-Fanwood, Times*, jazz vocalist Jeanie Bryson and guitarist Coleman Mellett spoke about themselves and their regular gig at their new "home."

Ms. Bryson is the daughter of the late Dizzy Gillespie, a fact she had kept hidden until after his death in 1993. Early in her career, Ms. Bryson sang for her father at one of his engagements. Fondly recalling the moment, she told the newspaper, "He was playing near Atlantic City and invited me to come up on stage with him. My son was just about two at the time and waiting backstage for me. There I was, standing at the mic, when he runs out to find me and clings on to my leg, as I'm singing (Billie Holiday's) 'God Bless the Child' for my father."

Ms. Bryson admits that having Dizzy Gillespie for a dad may have helped her career, but only partially. "I think maybe cosmically, and surely genetically, it definitely helped, but politically, no. What most people don't know is that I had a very good relationship with my father. I remember him coming to see me in the late '80s, to see me play at a midtown jazz club in Manhattan. And he was just so proud."

Ms. Bryson's mother is songwriter Connie Bryson. "My mom was a very

big influence on my music career. There was always music in the house, all kinds of music, and a lot of jazz of course. Her birthday was just the other day, and I had been cleaning out the basement and came across about 25 years of sheet music, demo tapes and recordings on cassette. One of them was a tape she made for me singing one of the songs she wrote when I was about five or six. I played it for her on her birthday and the words came right back to me as if they were sung yesterday."

Her mom also wrote the lyrics for Ms. Bryson's recording "Deja Blue." Her album *Some Cats Know* for Telarc, a label that has released several of her recordings, is a tribute to Peggy Lee. A selection of her CDs is available at the Trattoria, and Ms. Bryson is happy to autograph them.

She married her husband of two years, whom she warmly refers to as "Coley," at Dizzy Gillespie Park in Cheraw, S.C. In attendance were Mr. Gillespie's first cousins, Renee Wilson and Hanson MacIntosh. Mrs. Wilson and husband, Jack, hosted the couple's wedding party.

No stranger to big names himself, Mr. Mellett is Chuck Mangione's guitarist. He started playing music early on, first on the piano. "My father played a little guitar, so I started getting interested in that. Then I took guitar lessons from a nun. She was very strict," he said.

Obviously, the discipline paid off. Hired by Mangione in 2000 to perform as a member of the "Feels So Good" band, Mr. Mellett also tours globally. Several months following the nuptials, Mr. Mellett was scheduled to play an engagement in South Africa. As a wedding present, Mangione and his wife, Rosie, sprung for airline tickets for the bride so the

two could have a belated honeymoon in Cape Town. Mr. Mellett also teaches guitar at the Jazz Institute of New Jersey, and his new guitar actually played a small role in landing the gig in town.

So how did the couple end up at the Northside Trattoria? The two revealed that it was a series of interesting coincidences. Mr. Mellett told *The Leader and The Times*, "John Reynolds of Golden Age Fretted Instruments recently moved his vintage guitar store to Westfield. He kept telling me about the Trattoria and that I should come in to check it out because they were starting to feature live music and it might be the perfect place for us."

Ms. Bryson was getting the same signals, but from a different source. Her good friend, Toni Lissman, the manager of Town and Country Wine — the Trattoria's cheese supplier — mentioned the same thing.

One night, the two stopped in for dinner and, according to Ms. Bryson, "From the moment we walked in the door, we knew we found our home." When the couple talked to the owners, they discovered they had something else in common.

Although they had never met, both Ms. Bryson and Trattoria co-owner Chris Boyle worked together — in different ends of the restaurant — 15 years ago in Madison at the Cook Plaza Café. The musicians and the restaurateur took it as a sign, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Ms. Bryson has performed in internationally acclaimed jazz clubs all over the world. Out of the 20 something countries she has toured, she counts Brazil as the most memorable of all. "The music is imbued in the Brazilian culture. The people there are very knowledgeable about indigenous music — all kinds of music, really, and they love jazz. I can remember once when I was playing on

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Junior Musical Club To Perform Ensemble

WESTFIELD — The members of the Junior Musical Club will perform in their annual ensemble concert on Sunday, March 5, at 1:30 p.m. The concert will take place at the First Baptist Church, located at 170 Elm Street in Westfield.

This free concert will be open to the public and everyone is welcome to attend. The concert will feature the talents of musicians from Westfield and the surrounding area.

The Junior Musical Club has welcomed Ben Baron to its ranks following his induction at the February 1 auditions. Current club officers are as follows: President, Jean Namkung; Vice President of Programs, Kirsten Mandala; Vice-President of Auditions, Ellen Scariati; Treasurer, Andrew Gibson; Secretary, Wendy Lin; Hospitality, Elena Tinfow, and Publicity, Bryan Krichilsky.

Arts & Entertainment

Mother Nature Rolls Out White Carpet For Symphony's Valentine

By SUSAN M. DOUGHERTY
Specially Written for *The Westfield Leader and The Times*

WESTFIELD — "World Premiere" connotes an occasion replete with celebrities and a red carpet. While the Westfield Symphony Orchestra (WSO) may have provided the guest composer celebrities for their February 11 concert, Mother Nature switched the red carpet to a snowy white one on the night touted by the media as the "Blizzard of '06."

Despite the inclement weather, the show went on, consisting of three distinct parts: Leonard Bernstein's "Overture to Candide," the world premiere of "The New Colossus" and excerpts from Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet."

Musical Conductor David Wroe opened the musical valentine at a fantastic pace—almost like a child ripping open a chocolate-filled crimson heart. Precision and magnificence entwined to fill the Westfield Presbyterian Church's sanctuary with the familiar Bernstein piece. The effervescent "Glitter and Be Gay" segment of the overture fairly skipped along at breakneck speed.

A pale-pink program insert gave background as to how the next section of the night's program originated.

"The concept (of "The New Colossus") came out of a creative partnership between WSO's Music Director David Wroe and the Geraldine Dodge Foundation, whose vision coincided in the desire to create a work representing a manifestation of the 'American Dream,' as expressed by New Jersey artists," it said.

Each artist represented a different sphere of the world—Africa, South America, Asia or Europe.

Local composer and choral arts director for the Westfield Methodist Church Trent Johnson was one of the four men commissioned to write a section of the larger work. He said he had no foreknowledge of what the other composers were planning. "We did not meet as a group," Mr. Johnson told *The Westfield Leader and The Times of Scotch Plains-Fanwood*, during intermission, "but we were given a portion of the Emma Lazarus poem to interpret through music." The famous poem is engraved at the base of the Statue of Liberty.

Representing an African voice, Mr. Johnson opened his composition with bird-like flutes, which suggested dawn, and a luxurious harp to create waves lapping on the American shore. Three sections of his piece gave the listener a snippet of a European jig, an African song and a Korean tune.

One's imagination could soar envisioning the diversity of people standing before Lady Liberty as the magnificent strains filled the air.

Metro Chorus Enjoys Seventh Anniversary

CRANFORD — This is a milestone year for the members of Metro Rhythm Chorus, as they celebrate seven years as a Sweet Adelines International barbershop-singing chorus. Since the chapter was issued its charter in early 1999, ladies from across Northern and Central New Jersey and Staten Island have sung, danced, competed in costume and learned the skills of this four-part harmony style of music.

The chorus has welcomed new director Daniel Chernosky, who has taken up the task of polishing the performance level, while improving the chorus's technical skills.

Anyone who enjoys singing and fellowship is encouraged to join the chorus any Wednesday evening at 7:30 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, located at the corner of Springfield and Union Avenues in Cranford. For more information, call Janice Uhlig at (732) 391-2535. All ladies are welcome.

Palmer to Sign Copies Of 'Patriot James'

WESTFIELD — Westfield native Rob Palmer will meet readers and sign copies of his novel, "Patriot James," from 2 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, February 25 at The Town Book Store, 255 East Broad Street in Westfield. Mr. Palmer, a 1970 graduate of Westfield High School, lived in Westfield for 33 years. His father, Marshall, still resides in Westfield.

Mr. Palmer's thriller explores contemporary issues: the ethics of uncontrolled surveillance, the morality of killing terrorists and the line between patriotism and revenge. "Patriot James" is the story of Cynthia James, a woman who asks herself: "how far will I go to avenge a brother killed by terrorists?"

Having previously reviewed the work, *The Westfield Leader and The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times* called "Patriot James" "an excellent novel for those who wish to escape into finely written fiction.... the reader is challenged to rethink previous ideas about patriotism, especially in a post-9/11 world."

"Patriot James" is available at The Town Book Store, as well as online through ropalmer.com, amazon.com, and barnesandnoble.com.

Representing South America was composer Carlos Frangetti, who said in the program notes, "This short work encompasses my reflections, my thoughts, and the merging of indigenous Latin-American music with American music." He used the actual poet's words during a portion of his piece, narrated by Kristin Rothfuss, mezzo-soprano.

A flamboyant brass section and syncopation featuring xylophone and maracas enhanced the flavor of his music.

The third section of the quartet of short compositions reflected Ge Gan-Ru's interest in combining Eastern and Western music. He explained in the program notes, "While in West-

seeing Maestro Wroe up close. He is a focused whirlwind of activity that echoes the sentiment of the music. Just watch his fingers, hands and wrists and you'll see a master craftsman molding the composition like a potter with a piece of malleable clay. So thoroughly entranced by the sounds the orchestra produced, he barely glanced at the Prokofiev score even once. It was impressive indeed.

Many people in the Union County area will remember the crippling snowstorm of February 11, yet others will recall the night for the musical valentine presented by this master conductor and equally talented New Jersey composers and the musicians who made the old and new music sing.



Susan M. Dougherty for *The Westfield Leader and The Times* TUNING UP...Moments before the Westfield Symphony Orchestra present their musical valentine to the community on February 11, orchestra members do last minute tuning in the Westfield Presbyterian Church sanctuary. The blizzard of '06 didn't deter too many of the diehard fans.

ern music composers are concerned with the relationships between pitches, in Chinese music what is important is the particular pitch and microtonal and timbral character."

Soprano Carole Farley translated Ge Gan-Ru's portion in untraditional vocal sounds. Unfortunately, the orchestra overpowered her bird-like staccato vocal notes. A lovely cello and viola section echoed a memorable refrain.

Segment four of "The New Colossus" was written by Mark McGurty, who said in print, "This work is a very simple three-part structure with an extended obligato for mezzo-soprano soaring over a lush orchestra statement."

Mr. McGurty's music spotlighted a gorgeous duet of Ms. Rothfuss' talent and a marvelously mellow flute.

After the brief intermission, the Prokofiev "Romeo and Juliet" proved to be well worth the wait.

Maestro Wroe worked his magic with the responsive orchestra members, who struck a good balance between the percussion and strings.

In the "Montagues and Capulets," especially, the two distinct clans were easily imagined. With a crisp snare drum and impressive tympani, the fortissimo/pianissimo contrasts were stunning.

The "Young Juliet" segment sparkled with energy and delightful flutes. Likewise, "Friar Lawrence" fit the character with plodding, lumbering sounds of a deep-throated tuba, mellifluous cello, oboe, clarinet and bass.

One of the advantages of sitting near the front of the auditorium is

Cynthia Graham

To Give Author Talk

SCOTCH PLAINS — On Saturday, February 25, Scotch Plains author Cynthia Graham will join the Scotch Plains Public Library to discuss her recent book "And When They Call" at 2 p.m.

All book lovers are invited to attend this free program. For more information, contact (908) 322-5007, ext. 204 for further information. Light refreshments will be served.

The Scotch Plains Public Library is located on 1927 Bartle Avenue, a block away from the center of the town on Park Avenue.

First Congressional

To Present Musicales

WESTFIELD — The First Congregational Church of Westfield, located at 125 Elmer Street, resumes its acclaimed series of concerts, the Mid-Day Musicales, on Wednesday, March 1. These free, half-hour noon programs are held in the church sanctuary, and followed by a soup and sandwich luncheon available in the church social hall for \$5.

The March 1 concert will feature the chamber music group *Maya* - Sato Moughalian, flute; Jacqueline Kerrod, harp, and John Hadfield, percussion. Their program on March 1 will include works by Bach, Romaneiro, and Ravi Shankar. *Maya*, a trio formed in the summer of 2005, performs classical music, ethnic music and incorporates improvisations into its performances.

For further information, contact the church office at (908) 233-2494.



Get Outta' The House

By CAROL F. DAVIS

Specially Written for *The Westfield Leader and The Times*

On Saturday and Sunday, March 4 and 5, Puccini's *La Boheme*, featuring Kam Chang who starred in the Broadway production, will be at the Roy Smith Theater at Union County College in Cranford. Tickets are \$25 to \$35, and show times are 7:30 and 3 p.m. respectively. This is a Little Opera Company of New Jersey performance. For information call (908) 789-9696, or log onto: <http://www.njworkshopforthearts.com/>.

Café Vivace, on the Fanwood/Plainfield border, has a Thursday evening *Mix and Mingle Networking* get-together for singles every week, between 5 and 7 p.m. There is a card exchange, finger foods, live entertainment, and, of course a bar. The restaurant is located on 1370 South Avenue. Who knows, you may wind up meeting someone special and staying for dinner. Reach them at (908) 753-4500.

The Nearly New Shop, located in the lower level of Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church, 716 Watchung Avenue, Plainfield, is having a *Fill A Grocery Bag* event. For a flat fee of \$5 you get to fill an entire grocery bag with clothes. It is taking place from now through March 3. The shop is open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. For more information, call (908) 226-8352.

The Work O' The Weavers: A Heartfelt Celebration of America's Pioneering Folk Group, is a tribute to one of the original folk groups. They will perform on Saturday, February 25, at 8 p.m. in Chatham. Led by Pete Seeger, some of their hits included "If I Had A Hammer," "This Land Is Your Land," "House Of The Rising Sun," and "Michael Row The Boat Ashore." Using songs and tales, you will the group will enlighten you about the Weavers' fight against censorship and repression 50 years ago. Sound familiar? Tickets are \$20, and the doors open at 7:30 p.m. in the Presbyterian Church. For information log onto: <http://www.sanctuaryconcerts.org/> or call (973) 376-4946.

Debra Galant, author of the fiction book "Rattled," will be at Barnes & Noble Booksellers on Route 22 West in Springfield on Wednesday, March 8, at 7:30 p.m. This book has all the elements of a good soap, from a New Jersey housewife to animal activists, slimy developers and McMansions. Call (973) 376-8544.

The Little Opera Company

Conducted by Robert W. Butts
Directed by Fausto Pineda

7:30 PM Sat. March 4
3:00 PM Sun. March 5

Roy Smith Theater
at Union County College
1300 Springfield Ave
Cranford, NJ

Adults \$30
Seniors \$25
Students \$15

For tickets call:
908-789-9696

The Little Opera Company is a division of the New Jersey Workshop for the Arts

Westfield Community Players

Deathtrap A mystery by Ira Levin

March 4, 10*, 11, 17, 18

All Single Tickets \$15

1000 North Ave
Westfield NJ

Box Office: 908-232-1221
opens 1 week before show
All Tickets must be prepaid
All Curtain times 8 PM

* Additional cost for the March 10 benefit performance
WCP Membership cards are not honored on benefit nights

Call 908-232-9568 For membership & Group Sales

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