



**ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENT...** Congressman Mike Ferguson (L.D-7) commends Scotch Plains resident Kathleen Yan on Thursday, April 12, during a special reception held at Schering-Plough Corporation in Kenilworth for her Conte crayon self-portrait. Kathleen was one of 23 students to be honored by the congressman during "An Artistic Discovery," the Congressional Arts Competition Mr. Ferguson sponsored for high-school students in New Jersey's Seventh Congressional District. Kathleen studies at the Union County Magnet High School in Scotch Plains.

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**POTTERS' GUILD OF NEW JERSEY**

Zarrabi were dramatic and luscious. The potter achieved such gorgeous red tones and contrasted them with some beige, browns and teal in different decorative pieces adorned with dragonflies or Chinese symbols.

Guild registrant and administrative contact Kathleen Nolan of Vienna has been a member for two years. A web designer by trade, Ms. Nolan admitted that she is trying to find her own signature style. She doesn't have to look far. Ms. Nolan hit her stride with mystical outdoor paper clay fairy and toad houses. These colorful and intricately painted pieces would be a superb addition to any summer garden.

For shoppers seeking a more traditional or contemporary piece, it was easy to appreciate those offered by seven-year guild member Bryan Weitz of Highland Park and Mert and Holly Kilpatrick of Stonecrop Studio in East Bangor, Pa.

Mr. Weitz told *The Leader/Times* that he draws his inspiration from Japanese and Korean styles. He even took time to describe one of his favorite techniques - raku firing - that helps him achieve some very dynamic cracked textures in his simple, stately vessels.

The Kilpatricks, who are also members of the Pennsylvania Guild of Craftsmen, use uncomplicated glazes to produce rather traditional and basic functional pottery that would fit into any décor.

Kathy Peck and Jennifer Stein, also known as "Mudspinnners," are partners

in pottery that really balance each other out. Kathy uses 22-karat gold with an overglaze and some copper to create very rustic and warm tones in her pots and plates.

Some of the plates even have a fish fossil embedded along the rim. Jennifer, however, chooses to decorate her pieces with some playful floral stems on glazes of mostly deep evergreen and tan.

Last, but certainly not least, a deep bow of appreciation goes to Barbara Donatacci of Columbia for her "B's Bloomin' Bowls." These modestly priced bowls with elegantly fluted edges nest inside one another to resemble pottery in bloom. The six-year guild member has been a self-taught potter for 11 years.

It was easy to give into temptation and buy some of her clever pottery buttons, which are perfect for wind chimes, pins or jewelry.

Other fabulous displays included the funky animal heads and terra cotta-colored "Earthwomen" created by Jersey City resident Elizabeth DiCara, the simple and serene wheel-thrown pieces by 20-year pottery veteran and guild Vice President Illene Olanoff and the whimsical figurines by Carol Cennamo, which dance to life and stir a little intrigue. She's the potter who created a fish bursting from the bottom of a pie plate and breaking through its crust.

To learn more about upcoming Pottery Guild exhibitions and membership, visit [pottersguildnj.com](http://pottersguildnj.com).



**Clay art piece**  
By Carol Cennamo

## Small in Size, Seltzer's Prints Stand Out at AGR

By MARYLOU MORANO  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD - For Westfield artist Shari Seltzer, art is about being open to new solutions, embracing the unpredictable and finding beauty in the ordinary.

All of these perspectives are evident in the works Ms. Seltzer has contributed to "Mini Mania 2," an upcoming nine-artist exhibit at the Arts Guild of Rahway (AGR) that is putting the spotlight on small-scale artwork.

An artist who works in many media, Ms. Seltzer has selected a series of Japanese-style prints called gocco prints for inclusion in "Mini Mania 2."

"The word 'gocco' means 'playful,'" explained Ms. Seltzer, who learned Japanese printmaking at the Visual Art Center of New Jersey. She has been working in this medium for about six years.

"The most exciting part about creating goccos is that each print is unique," she continued. "As I progress through the printing process, the colors change and blend, and each print comes out a little different."

Because she doesn't know what the end result will be, Ms. Seltzer describes the color application of gocco printmaking as being similar to taking "a leap of faith."

by 6.5 inches, her "Early Bird" is a multicolored gocco with printed images of 1960's girls with curlers, birds and coffee cups.

"Rooster" is a gocco-printed image of a rooster with glass beads, silk threads and red cotton ric rac embellishments.

The small size of the gocco prints earns the respect of the artist.

"Because they are so small, they must be carefully created," she said.

Ms. Seltzer has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Rutgers University's Mason Gross School of the Arts.

She has also studied surface design at the Fashion Institute of Technology, textile design at Parson's

School of Design and photography at Boston Museum School of Fine Arts.

"I am a surface designer by nature. I see patterns and layers in the world and convey [them] in my artwork," she stated.

Presently a full-time artist who works from a studio in her home, Ms. Seltzer has in the past served as associate director for the A.J. Lederman Fine Art Gallery in Hoboken and worked as an art teacher in several communities.

She has also exhibited locally both in solo and group shows.

Selected most recent exhibits include the Book Arts Roundtable Ex-



Lovebirds  
Shari Seltzer



Shari Seltzer - "Early Bird"

According to Ms. Seltzer, most Japanese households have a gocco machine to create handmade prints, which she calls "open prints," and which she often embellishes with beads and threads.

"My gocco prints are a little bit of everything," she said. "They contain a little bit of painting, a little bit of collage."

The artist shows 10 gocco prints in "Mini Mania 2." Measuring just 4.5

inhibition at the Pierro Gallery in South Orange, Children's Specialized Hospital in Mountainside and a show with the Contemporary Art Group at the Les Malamut Gallery in Union. "Mini Mania 2" will be at AGR from April 29 to May 25. An opening reception will be held on Sunday, April 29, from 1 to 4 p.m. Admission is free. AGR is located at 1670 Irving Street in Rahway. For additional information, call (732) 381-7511.



3 1/2 GOING ON (A PERFECT) 10... Lily McGuire was named "Little Miss Westfield" last Friday at the Esprit store on East Broad Street. The tot will get her pick of an entire ensemble, which she will wear in the Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce Spring Fling parade on April 29.



FOUR WEDDINGS... Miss New Jersey 2006, Georgine DiMaria, models a traditional wedding gown at the College Club of Fanwood-Scotch Plains' fashion show and luncheon at the Shackamaxon Country Club in Scotch Plains. The April 22 fundraiser, "A Festival of Weddings," offered four glimpses of wedding fashions - beach, glamorous, country and traditional - all supplied by Lord & Taylor, The Bridal Suite at Saks Fifth Avenue, Cozy Formalwear and Mademoiselle, with flowers from the Apple Blossom Flower Shop and live music of the MS Ensemble of the Woodland Quartet. Antique bridal gowns on display were courtesy of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Historical Society.

### TAKE THE STAGE

## Seven Brothers Find Love In Paper Mill's Latest Show



By SUSAN MYRILL DOUGHERTY  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

MILLBURN - We've all heard of "love at first sight," but in Paper Mill Playhouse's production of *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, it's more like love at first need.

Adam Pontipee, a 19th-century frontiersman in Oregon, needs someone to cook, clean, mend and care for himself and his six brothers in their pigsty log cabin that would curl Martha Stewart's blonde locks.

Townswoman Milly Bradon needs to get out of the restaurant business because of long hours of cooking and overly familiar male customers.

It's into that proverbial frying pan for the naïve, pretty little miss when she and Adam say "I do" after knowing each other for about three minutes of stage time. Each one dreams idealistically that this will be the perfect fulfillment of his/her needs.

The audience sees what's about to happen when Milly, who knows nothing of the six brothers, gets to the mountain man's homestead and meets the gang of ruffians - it ain't a pretty sight.

Director Scott Schwartz's production is cram packed with swagger and energy. This remake from a 1954 movie with additional music hosts characters and storyline from a bygone era.

Milly - ever the optimist - teaches the brothers etiquette and how to talk and dance with girls, so they are game to give the Saturday night social a try. Unfortunately, fighting is on the agenda when the townsmen, called the suitors, and the brothers get together despite all of Milly's peacemaking efforts.

Memorable songs like "Bless Your Beautiful Hide" and "Love Never Goes Away" and "Wonderful, Wonderful Day" might be ones that ring bells of recognition.

Ann Louizos' scenic design at the top of the show offers a foreboding series of trees, which need to be pared down. Her barn set, log cabin interior and the town piece, on the other hand, are sparse yet deliciously perfect.

Most outstanding in the production is the well-executed choreography by the suitors and brothers, all acrobatic and gymnastic geniuses that flip and fly all over the place. Utilization of the tables and every inch of the stage in "The Challenge Dance" yielded the closest thing I've ever seen to a show-stopping dance number. The full company had a hand in making Patti Colombo's creative choreography come to life.

Adam Pontipee, played by the charismatic Edward Watts, has a voice that soars as big and open as the turn of the century's Oregon frontier. Under his woolly beard, he is the quintessential dashing hero for whom young girls faint.

The role of Milly is handled well by sassy Michelle Dawson, who could control her vocal consistency a bit more. She has a tendency to belt the low notes and gingerly sing the higher notes. That approach doesn't read as strength in her character.

Ms. Dawson's tender lullaby "Glad You Were Born," however, warms the heart.

Happy endings were always the norm for musicals in the 1950s, so get ready to smile at the final wedding scene where costume designer Jess Goldstein pulls out all the visual stops and everyone gets ready to live happily ever after.

Let's hope that there's as happy an ending for the Paper Mill Playhouse, which has experienced financial woes of late. It would like to be able to celebrate its 70th anniversary at the end of next season and re-up for another 70 years.



SIGNS OF SPRING... Friends of Music at St. Paul's will present the Parish Choir of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in concert on Sunday, May 6, at 7 p.m. The choir will perform Francis Poulenc's *Gloria*. Also to be performed will be Alexandre Guilmant's Organ Concerto, featuring St. Paul's recently installed organ. Nationally renowned soloists and members of the Grammy Award-winning New Jersey Symphony Orchestra will join the choir. The choir will perform under the direction of Charles Banks. St. Paul's is located at 414 East Broad Street in Westfield. There is a suggested donation of \$10 at the door. For further information, contact Mr. Banks at [cbanks@stpaulswestfield.org](mailto:cbanks@stpaulswestfield.org).

### POPCORN™



## Pathfinder Can't Save us From The Wrath of Bad Filmmaking

By MICHAEL S. GOLDBERGER  
1 and 1/2 popcorns

Even the perennial optimist viewing *Pathfinder*, director Marcus Nispel's take on the Vikings' storied visits to our shores, will be hard put to ascribe any redeeming worth to the reprehensible mishmash. Whereas, in this instance, the pessimist who routinely bemoans the pitiable state of modern cinema will be right.

Too bad, too. The subject is ripe for fascinating conjecture, and all we get here is a lot of that green screen, CGI, video-game rigmarole, with history again just an excuse to celebrate yesteryear's weapons of mass destruction. In this case it's the broadsword, the likes of which the indigenous folk have never seen.

Only the blood 'n' guts crowd won't mind the flagrant misuse of civilization's chronicle, monster-like Vikings wreaking merciful havoc and all that. Though, they'll be justified in assailing the relentless, tiresome use of that gauzy blue filter.

The whirling miasma of imagery, supplemented by the pounding, faux-momentous score, obscures the fine detail of the non-stop slaughtering that's being depicted. And the mercenary never like their mayhem obfuscated that way.

The only saving grace for thinking moviegoers somehow hornsogged into seeing this besmirched little epic is the scholarly interest it might renew. Going home and Googling "Viking Age: Voyages to North America" is somehow cleansing, if not compensatory.

You'll recall that, back in grammar school, kindly old Mrs. Popper broached the subject about how maybe the Norsemen hoppedscotched over to Vinland some six centuries before Columbus sailed. Then, without further ado, she was aboard the Nina, the Pinta and the Santa Maria.

Here, albeit introduced as legend, the tale of how our local inhabitants fought off the Viking incursion is ostensibly told as fact. Screenwriter Laeta Kalogridis, adapting the script from Nils Gaup's much-heralded *Veiviseren* (1987), merely switches the persecuted from 11th-century Lapps to Native Americans. The recycled myth goes way back.

According to this saga, the "Dragon People," so named because of their longships' sculpted prows, leave a young boy for dead after one of their plundering forays. He wouldn't kill a native kid. "He's no Viking of mine."

Fast forward and the waif has grown to manhood. Ghost, portrayed by Karl Urban, is a handsome lad in a Tarzan sort of way. Problem is, while his foster tribe has provided him with health and home, he's still not blood. It'll take

something extraordinary to change that opinion.

And as it just so happens, here it is. They're back, the Norsemen. And this time they mean to settle the place... not just killing everyone for fun, though that's certainly on the agenda.

Whether Lamarckian or Darwinian, it's the plot's contention that it takes a Viking to defeat a Viking. Suddenly, fighting instincts long dormant in Ghost are aroused. He's all take charge. And once he wrests one of the interloper's aforementioned swords, he's the ninth century's answer to Rambo.

The battle rages on, the European invaders traversing all manner of snowy landscape as they drive inland. But when deterred by our hero, their usual bad mood is turned to anger. And oh boy, what cursing when Ghost manages to pluck out the leader's eye.

Shades of the syndrome delineated in *Dances with Wolves* (1990), what so incenses the bad guys is that this injury was imparted by one of their own. Even though they abandoned him, he's seen as a traitor. You just can't talk sense to these brutes.

Of course, no important turning point in history is complete without a problematic love affair. Thus, we are introduced to Starfire (Moon Bloodgood), daughter of Pathfinder (Russell Means), the wise, brave captain of the home team.

Starfire and Ghost have been doing the sexual-tension tango for quite some time now, admiring each other from afar at baby showers, weddings, feasts and Tupperware parties. It could go no further, she a princess and he not even a real Native American. Nonetheless, the forbidden fruit factor is working its wiles. War changes things.

These clichéd plot pieces noted, most of the film is devoted to bad behavior of the murderous kind, masqueraded as a moral crusade against imperialism. Not that anyone who really relishes this film is going to care how it's a metaphor for current world events.

Sadder yet, the picture isn't even true to its nihilistic intent. Scenes are as randomly lopped as the limbs and heads of its miserable combatants. All smoke and mirrors, computer style, there is hardly a full motion to anything.

No real scenery. No real feelings. Just the aberrational entertainment product predicted in *A Clockwork Orange* (1971). All of which suggests that we conveniently lose *Pathfinder* among the murky morass of movies worth missing.

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### HOME & GARDEN TRENDS



## Water, Mow, Repeat

By CHRISTIE STORMS  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Watching a shampoo commercial the other day, it dawned on me that many issues we have with our hair are similar to those we have with our lawn. We're always striving to make it stronger, thicker and fuller. We want to maintain vibrant color, lock in moisture and do whatever it takes to prevent bald spots.

Like a great head of hair, a lush lawn starts at the roots. And now is an excellent time to plant, fertilize and nurture.

"Seeding works well at this time in the spring," Bob Amberg of Amberg Perennial Farm and Garden Center in Scotch Plains said. "If you do it too early, it will just sit there until it's warm enough to germinate."

Mr. Amberg said he likes to use a mix of Kentucky blue, turf-type rye and fescue grasses that can handle the sunlight as well as the shade. He recommends Terre and Jonathan Green brands for such mixes.

Leslie Bartell of Bartell Farm and Garden Supply in Clark also likes hard fescues mixed together with some rye. He says this "stress mix" is drought resistant, hardy and can take a lot of traffic.

Keep in mind that healthy grass begins with good soil. Mr. Amberg reported that in our area it's common to have a clay-type soil, which sometimes results in poor drainage. He recommended a gypsum product to combat the problem.

"It's a long-term soil amendment that takes the clay particles and joins them together to make bigger particles," he said. "It makes the soil more porous. It may take a season or two, but it works really well."

Mr. Amberg reported that gypsum can also counteract damage that occurs from winter's deicing salts that may have made their way onto the lawn from nearby sidewalks and walkways.

Whether or not seeding is necessary, lawns can benefit from some fertilizer at this time of year.

"The biggest thing right now is to use organic fertilizers," Mr. Bartell said, citing the Espoma line of such products.

Mr. Amberg said the best overall fertilizer is about 60-percent organic. "You want some of it to go to work

right away and some of it to be slow released," he said. "That's the best of both worlds."

It's also important that all seeds and fertilizers are spread evenly. Mr. Bartell recommended covering sloped areas with hay to keep the seed in place and prevent washing out when it rains.

Another issue to address right now is the application of crabgrass preventatives.

"You want to get it down about when the forsythia blooms," Mr. Amberg said.

Both Mr. Amberg and Mr. Bartell stressed the importance of waiting until after a few mowings before applying products to newly seeded areas.

"Tupersan is one you can use with seed," Mr. Amberg said. "It's expensive because it can differentiate between crab grass and good grass. Dimension is cheaper, but it will stop all grassing."

Mr. Bartell recommended a liquid such as "Ortho Weed-B-Gon" to spot kill any dandelions that start to come up.

Mr. Amberg cited Trimec as very effective on a number of weeds.

"But you've got to be careful, especially with new seed," he cautioned. "If it gets too hot, like 90 degrees, do not put any on. The chemical is very volatile and can form a vapor and do damage to things it's not even near."

While grass can "brown out" and dry up without enough water, excessive watering can also do harm.

"Too wet is not good," Mr. Amberg said. "Too much water spoils the root system, so then when it gets really hot in the summer, it's not as hardy."

He also said keeping the grass taller helps maintain a thick, healthy lawn by both shading the roots and keeping weeds away.

So try to resist the temptation to cut the lawn very low so that it can go longer between mowings. Small frequent trims are preferred to maintain optimum vitality.

I can't help but recall my hairstylist saying the same thing.

Do you have a home or garden question or topic you'd like to see covered in this column? Send your inquiries to [cstorms@goleader.com](mailto:cstorms@goleader.com).