

# Arts & Entertainment

## Westfield Not Far From the Heart Of Now-Texan Zehnder-Hahn

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

WESTFIELD – When artist Veronique Zehnder-Hahn relocated from Westfield to San Marcos, Tex. two years ago, the town lost a pillar of the artistic community.

Although she no longer calls Westfield home, her creative influence continues in the downtown gallery of Galeria West, where an exhibit of 12 pieces of her work is currently on display.

on display in New York City, and in San Marcos.

She is also the recipient of numerous recognitions throughout the world, and while a member of WAA, in 2004, Mrs. Zehnder-Hahn received the association's Catherine Barnett and Fred Sitzler Award.

Mrs. Zehnder-Hahn fondly recalls her artistic colleagues in Westfield as "amazing artists."

In addition to art, volunteerism is also important to Mrs. Zehnder-Hahn.

"I love to volunteer because it gives me the opportunity to give back to the community, to learn new things and to meet new people," Mrs. Zehnder-Hahn said.

Mrs. Zehnder-Hahn has easily integrated herself into the artistic community of San Marcos, where she is president of the San Marcos Art League, and also serves on the board of the San Marcos Area Arts Council.

In addition, the artist uses her talent for fundraisers by holding art



Mémoires d'une enfance-within my soul. ( Memories of a childhood-within my soul), charcoal, 2006.

In Texas, the former member of the Westfield Art Association (WAA) divides her time between art and volunteer work, just as she once did in Westfield.

The daughter of a Swiss scientist, Mrs. Zehnder-Hahn was born in Morocco, and lived in several countries as a child because her father's profession took him to various loca-

While living in Westfield, she assisted with publicity at Redeemer Lutheran School, and volunteered at the Westfield YMCA as a preschool teacher assistant. She was an after-school program, as well as a French teacher classroom volunteer at Holy Trinity Roman Catholic School.

"I like working with kids," she said. In addition, she was a public relations officer for the Westfield Lions Club.

classes for adults and children. The money raised by her classes goes to Blue Santa and other local charities.

The current display of Mrs. Zehnder-Hahn's work will be at Galeria West into February.

Galeria West is located at 121 Central Avenue in Westfield. For hours, call (908) 301-9217.

For more information about Mrs. Zehnder-Hahn and her work, log onto zeha-art.com



Morocco- Inner Landscape series

tions around the world.

She graduated from high school in Holland and college, with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, from the College of Higher Education for the Arts Arnhem, in the Netherlands.

A mixed-media artist, Mrs. Zehnder-Hahn's multicultural and intercultural experiences are widely expressed in her art, which is full of symbols, animals and bright colors, along with geometrical, oriental and natural forms.

"I call my work 'Inner Landscapes,' because it reflects my search for the best of every culture in the world," Mrs. Zehnder-Hahn explained via phone from her home in San Marcos. "I internalize different ways of thinking, and I translate them into a visual language; it is the language of the arts," she continued.

Mrs. Zehnder-Hahn is known worldwide, as she has exhibited in France, Switzerland, Austria and Germany. In addition to her exhibit at Galeria West, she currently has work

### TAKE THE STAGE Bulldog Inspector Pounces In WCP's Angel Street

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

WESTFIELD – Some people are so passionate about what they do that they are consumed by the job.

Thank goodness for just such a man in the character of Sergeant Rough—the inspector in the Westfield Community Players' (WCP) latest show, *Angel Street* by Patrick Hamilton.

In 1938, English novelist and playwright Hamilton wrote the play, which ran in New York for three years in the mid-forties and was made into the movie classic, *Gaslight* starring Ingrid Bergman and Charles Boyer.

Set in Victorian London in 1880, the play's exposition quickly spins to psychological intrigue.

Lead character Bella Manningham, like her mother before her, is timid and frail in temperament.

Her supposedly well-meaning husband Jack reminds her repeatedly of the genetic predisposition to her family's insanity.

Through the first act of this three-act drama, the audience is uncertain if Bella is indeed losing her rationality, or if her husband is a cruel, unfeeling manipulator who is trying to make her feel that she is crazy.

When the philandering Jack Manningham leaves the Angel Street residence for the night, enter Inspector Rough who, like a stubborn dog that won't let go of a tasty bone, has

tracked down Jack, whom he suspects of murdering a woman 15 years earlier.

The question arises— whom will unstable Bella believe— her husband of five years or a stranger, who makes her wonder if she truly knows her enigmatic husband?

Real life husband and wife duo Mark and Syndi Szabo play the leading roles of tormentor and victim with ease and credibility. Mr. Szabo's stare can bore a hole through a concrete slab, his shout sends chills and Mrs. Szabo's wilting body language is convincingly appropriate.

Mrs. Szabo deftly plays the wide range of emotions needed to pull off the sensitive Mrs. Manningham.

The retired Inspector Rough, Lee Wittenberg, is a big hit. He can elicit dread with the cold hard facts he presents; yet, he tosses out a laugh line equally well.

Nicely playing the role of Elizabeth, the head maid, Jackie Weiner is deferential to her male and female employers.

The younger maid, Nancy, played by a vivacious Valerie Vaan Hoosier, is referred to as "saucy" and that she is. Her constant smirk shows she is indeed playing with Mrs. M's head.

As usual, the Westfield playhouse boasts an interesting stage with everything necessary for an English drawing room: a winding staircase, sliding door and a half-dozen working "gas" lights thanks to lighting designer Bob Murray and Jessica Foerster. The white moonlight through the lace curtains lends an eerie touch.

A tip of the hat to Gordon Wiener, director and set designer, for creating a fantastic set with the help of Bill McMeekan, Sue Klinker and Home Design/Decorator Kim Macrae Otto.

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## Home-Based Business Moms Love Being Their Own Boss Too

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

MOUNTAINSIDE – Step inside the well-kept homes of Sherri Bolksam, Marianne Jennings, Carolyn Williams, Debbie Steinberg and Madeline Gerris and, to your surprise, you might not be able to see the surface of their dining room tables.

The suburban moms, who are all pursuing careers in the multi-level marketing industry, confess that the conventional use of their dining room tables is now strictly reserved only for the holidays.

Any other time of the year, boxes and bagfuls of products — ranging from cookware, baskets, scrapbook paraphernalia to velvet backdrops for displaying jewelry — get first dibs on what used to be a place where, at the very least, their children could once do their homework.

In an interview with the ladies turned self-employed sales reps, *The Westfield Leader* and *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times* asked about the pros and cons of doing business from home.

As if working full-time and raising three teenage daughters weren't enough, Debbie Steinberg of Mountainside is now also a representative for Spilada Fine Silver Jewelry.

Noting the threefold motivation for starting her own home-based business, Mrs. Steinberg told the newspaper, "It was an opportunity to share the self-employed experience with my teenage daughters; to wear quality, impressive jewelry; and to make an aggressive profit with minimal effort."

Like most home-based businesses, products like Spilada Jewelry are showcased at house parties. And the bigger the party, the bigger the benefits, as hostesses usually earn points towards free merchandise or deep discounts on the product.

Mrs. Steinberg added, "What woman doesn't love jewelry? What woman doesn't like to party and try on jewelry? What woman doesn't like to earn free jewelry while partying with her friends? It was a no-brainer all around."

Depending on sales, prizes for sales representatives can also be impressive. For Madeline Gerris of Westfield, who sells high-end baskets for the Longaberger company, the lure of a Caribbean Cruise was too irresistible to pass up.

Mrs. Gerris told *The Leader* and *The Times*, "Since Longaberger has no sales quotas for consultants, my initial motivation to become a consultant was to get a discount on a product that I loved. I then began to see the potential in it as a business, and later found out you can earn a trip at the branch leader level. I wanted that trip, and earned my first one (a cruise) last year. That will be a definite goal from now on."

And it seems some people just can't get enough of a good thing. Take scrap booking for example. Now a multi-billion dollar industry, it is one of the fastest growing hobbies in the United States.

Marianne Jennings of Mountainside, an avid scrapbooker herself and now a consultant for Creative Memories, one of the major suppliers in the industry, noted, "I also wanted to be my own customer, and that was the real reason I started."

A former customer of Carolyn Williams, also a Creative Memories consultant, Mrs. Jennings noted, "I was spending so much money that I could just supply myself every month. The only problem was that I should have started three years before I did."

Mrs. Jennings was a regular attendee at Mrs. Williams' monthly scrap booking workshops that were held at the borough hall in Mountainside for several years.

Mrs. Williams, who recently had a change in venue to a more convenient location (her newly renovated basement) remarked, "Working from my own home means I no longer have to pack up my expansive inventory of supplies. People can come to my



HOME COOKING...Sherri Bolksam dishes up a fine serving of Pampered Chef cookware and kitchen gadgets at a recent gathering of home-based business consultants.

house, where everything is set up, laid out and all ready to go."

But there are times when it just makes sense to leave home to conduct other home-based business. Sherri Bolksam, also of Mountainside, is a consultant for Pampered Chef, the maker of an array of kitchen tools and cookware.

Mrs. Bolksam noted, "At the time I started my Pampered Chef business, I had just had my second child and going a little stir crazy being a stay-at-home mom. So this gave me an opportunity to have something that was just mine, and I got a night out once or twice a week."

Because most home-based businesses have web-based interfaces, invitations and tracking orders can be done online at any time day or night, and support is just a click of a mouse away. Mrs. Steinberg remarked, "Spilada's support infrastructure is so remarkable; I never feel I'm doing this business without a team behind me. I'm very self-reliant, but it's good to know there are folks to help you succeed."

And start-up costs? Nominal, for Pampered Chef, at least. Mrs. Bolksam told the newspaper, "Starting a Pampered Chef business is pretty inexpensive. You can buy the starter kit for less than \$100 — a bargain, considering it contains about \$350 worth of products that are yours to keep."

"You can also get the kit for as little as \$50 by hosting a cooking show and using some of your show credit toward the kit." Because the selection of kitchen gadgets and cookware is so voluminous, Mrs. Bolksam doesn't maintain too large a stock of items, and operates more like a mail order business, which helps to keep costs low.

## Deadline Approaches for Playwrights Competition

CRANFORD – The Theater Project, Union County College's Professional Theater Company, reminds all New Jersey high school playwrights that the deadline for submission is approaching.

The contest was made possible by a donation from Linden screenwriter and

novelist Bill Mesce, Jr. ("The Advocate," Bantam Books). The Theater Project has been called "the best company in the state for finding off Broadway work and premiering it for New Jersey audiences" by Peter Filichia of *The Star Ledger*.

"Theater gives young people a chance to think about what kind of people they want to be," Mr. Mesce said at the packed house at the 2006 awards ceremony, "and we don't give kids in the arts nearly enough recognition or chances to be heard."

"Arts and letters are where the next generation of critical thinkers is being developed," said Theater Project artistic director Mark Spina. "Theater is a language-driven intellectual activity that stimulates us in ways movies and TV do not."

This is the fifth year of the competition.

The Theater Project is also the home of The Student Playwrights Association, a support and peer feedback group for high school writers. Entrants to the competition need not be members of the association.

The contest is open to New Jersey students in grades 9 to 12. Scripts at any stage of completion are eligible. The deadline for submission is January 31 and there is a \$5 entry fee.

Original work only, no adaptations, will only be accepted. All submissions must be at least 10, but no more than 30 pages (excerpts of longer work are acceptable).

Scripts must be typed in play format. Only one entry per author is permitted and all entrants must be New Jersey residents in secondary school. Entries must be post marked by January 31. Mailed entries will be accepted at THEATERPROJECT@aol.com. (Entry fee mailed separately.)

All entries must include a self-addressed, stamped envelope, a 50-word biography of the author including contact information and the \$5 entrance fee (check or money order, payable to The Theater Project) and mailed to: The Theater Project, Union County College, 1033 Springfield Avenue, Cranford NJ, 07016.

Winning scripts will receive script-in-hand performances where authors will receive their prizes and certificates in March. For more information, call (908) 659-5189

First, second and third prizewinners will receive \$600, \$400 and \$200 U.S. Savings Bonds. The winning scripts will be honored with script in hand performances during Family Week at the Theater (in March), when professional theaters in New Jersey offer free programming for young people. The prizes will be presented at that time. Honorable mentions also receive a certificate.

For further information about the contest, call Mr. Spina at The Theater Project at (908) 659-5189, or visit TheTheaterProject.com.

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