



FEELS SO RIGHT, IT CAN'T BE WRONG...Gennaro Raimo of ASAP Photo and Millburn Township Committeeperson Ellen Steinberg "practice" their dance number for the Happy Days Block Party and Sock Hop in Millburn on September 23.

## 'Happy Days' Are Here Again (in Millburn)

MILLBURN - On Sunday, September 23, from 5 to 7:30 p.m., residents can get out their varsity sweaters, poodle skirts and leather jackets for a back to the '50s evening on Main Street in Millburn.

There will be dancing in the streets to the live sounds of Reminiscence, as Millburn Township celebrates its 150th Anniversary and the opening of Paper Mill's production of *Happy Days*, the new musical by Garry Marshall.

Mr. Marshall, who created the television series "Happy Days" and also directed *Pretty Woman*, *Beaches* and the *Princess Diaries*, is coming to town for this block party and sock hop.

In addition, jitterbuggers will get to strut their stuff in a 50's costume contest. There will also be dance contests for all ages and a Fonzie Look-a-Like Contest. Millburn busi-

nesses Roxy Shoes, Leonard Bornstein Entertainments, Gotham City Clothing and Nita Ideas (Nita played Rizzo in the Broadway production of *Grease!*) will judge the contest.

The "Paper Mill Kids" will also give a dance demonstration. For those who are hungry, there will be hamburgers, hot dogs and ice cream floats at 1950's prices (40 cents a hamburger and a quarter for a hot dog) sponsored by Investors Savings and Martini's Bistro.

WMTR Radio, home of the Classic Oldies, will bring its promotional van. There will also be hula-hoop contests, vintage cars, motorcycles and more. ASAP Photo will photograph couples for free in a 1950's cut-out.

For more information, contact Ellen Steinberg at (908) 686-0500 or (908) 327-0922.

## Barbara Schwinn - 1947-2007 Former President of Westfield Art Association

### Broadbent Explores Role Of Fatigues in Park Exhibit

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

SUMMIT - The galleries at the Visual Art Center of New Jersey (VACNJ) in Summit are well-known for their juried art shows, eclectic exhibits and displays of both faculty and student work.

However, those seeking wonderful art can also satisfy their craving without even stepping through the door of VACNJ, as the park-like grounds surrounding the center have been transformed into an outdoor gallery where larger-than-life pieces of sculpture are displayed.



Each year, the works of several sculptors are displayed in this sculpture park.

Currently, the park has an exhibit entitled "Fashion Foliage Fatigues" by Thomas Broadbent on display.

Comprised of camouflage fabric, metal, lights, wire and plastic, the pieces in "Fashion Foliage Fatigues" invite viewers to discern for themselves the difference between fashion and conformity/uniformity.

The exhibit recalls a time when camouflage material was used to create uniforms, not fashion, as is the case now.

This dichotomy is further emphasized by the size of the pieces, which are approximately 15 feet high and 40 feet wide.

Yet, even when the fatigue is taken out of its context, as is the case when it becomes fashion, one can-

not help but see the garment in a political light, complete with all its related associations and representations.

To counter this, the artist has hung the fatigues upside down, "to reflect chaos in the current political climate."

In doing so, Mr. Broadbent asks the viewer to see "Fashion Foliage Fatigues" more as entertainment and less as political commentary.

The artist also invites the viewer to form a relationship with his oversized sculptures.

"The viewer's physical presence and action completes my art as an added component of the whole...I seek out a situation where the spectator combines...unique and personal interaction with the installation, thus completing a cycle of discovery," he said.

Mr. Broadbent has exhibited internationally in Belgium, Canada and Austria. Closer to home, his work has been displayed at the University of Maryland and in several New York galleries.

In addition to the materials used in "Fashion Foliage Fatigues," the artist uses inflatable materials, video, billboards and ice to create sculpture.

"Fashion Foliage Fatigues" will be on exhibit in VACNJ's sculpture garden until October 25.

VACNJ is located at 68 Elm Street in Summit. For more information, call (908) 273-9121.

## Visual Arts Ctr. to Feature Joint Exhibition on Sept. 7

SUMMIT - The Visual Arts Center of New Jersey (VACNJ) will hold a joint exhibition on Friday, September 7, from 6 to 8 p.m.

The domogallery will include a modern dance performance by Lydia Johnson Dance at the arts center. A free "Art Bus" will be provided to shuttle those attending back and forth between the arts center and domogallery throughout the evening. The entire event is free and open to the public.

The VACNJ has also announced a new contemporary view series exhibition of the work of African-American painter Peter Williams entitled, "Peter Williams: Artistic Repair." Mr. Williams explores a range of racial and social issues in his powerful and often humorous paintings.

The "Peter Williams: Artistic Repair" exhibition was selected by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts as part of the American Masterpieces Series in New Jersey.

The exhibition will be on display at the art center from Saturday, September 8, to Sunday, November 25. Gallery hours are Monday to Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Friday from

9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Saturday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, visit artcenter.nj.org.

The domogallery will present artwork and objects from the private collection of Patricia Bell, curated by Mari D'Alessandro, director of exhibition programs at the VACNJ. The exhibit, "An Artful Life," is a glimpse into the world of a private contemporary art collector.

Domogallery opened in December 2003 to promote the visual arts in New Jersey. The gallery focuses on abstract, figurative and conceptual contemporary art such as painting, sculpture, photography and prints.

The gallery offers the public the opportunity to review national and international emerging and established artists.

Visit the gallery online at domogallery.com.

Lydia Johnson Dance will perform a contemporary dance performance inspired by the art of Peter Williams. The performances will take place at 6:30, 7 and 7:30 p.m. upstairs in the art center's double arts studio.

## Community Players to Host Volunteers Open House

WESTFIELD - Westfield Community Players (WCP) will host an open house at the theater on Saturday, September 15, from 12 to 3 p.m. with light refreshments.

Located at 1000 North Avenue West in Westfield, the open house is for anyone interested in learning more about the operations of a community-based, non-profit theater and willing to give his or her time to support the new season of four shows.

President Letty Hudak said a similar event last year netted new people willing to work backstage and on the business side of things, such as set painting and selling ads for the season playbill. She added, "it is a great opportunity to come see what WCP is about and to help us get ready for our 75th season, which opens in October 2007."

The new season theme is Mystery, Comedy and Harmony, which features political comedy, a Pulitzer-prize-winning play, a murder mystery and the soaring harmonies of a 60's pop group.

October brings Garson Kanin's take on Washington shenanigans,

*Born Yesterday*, followed by Beth Henley's Pulitzer-prize-winning play *Crimes of the Heart* in January 2008.

In March 2008, Tim Kelley's mystery, *The Uninvited*, set in a bleak, English seacoast house, is onstage, followed in May by the high spirits and soaring harmonies of Stuart Ross's *Forever Plaid*, which traces the "almost singing career" of four young men cut short by the British invasion of American pop music.

Mrs. Hudak noted that all skills are needed, from stage crew, set construction, costumes, makeup and ushers to box office and facilities. Even with no theater experience, WCP has plenty of people willing to train a new generation of backstage and office workers.



GOOD GROUP...In Union Catholic High School's Performing Arts Company (UCPAC) August production of *Merryly We Roll Along*, friends and lovers, both past and present, gather. From left, Joe (Michael McKeown) Beth (Sammie Mellina), Franklin Shepherd (Angelo Cerimele), Charley Kringas (Greg Gedman) and Mary Flynn (Jillian Hernandez) watch the up-and-coming bigshot Franklin accept an imaginary award.

## TAKE THE STAGE Merrily, Sondheim Raises Questions About Friendship

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

SCOTCH PLAINS - Sondheim musicals are a little like eating sushi. They aren't for everyone, and sometimes it's tough to get people to try it even though you think they'll like it.

The summer theater group at Scotch Plains' Union Catholic Performing Arts Company (UCPAC) selected *Merrily We Roll Along* as its second Sondheim show in the last three summers.

Not a well-known show, *Merrily's* Broadway run lasted barely more than a fortnight.

So why would director Maryann Carolan of the teen summer program (open to current students and alumni of Union Catholic High School) tackle a long shot?

"We saw it as a challenge for everyone to stretch creatively and to learn something," said Ms. Carolan in the director's notes in the playbill. The director's gamble paid off handsomely.

Adding to the testimony of talent and dedication by cast and crew, the outstanding presentation was put together in little more than a dozen rehearsals.

*Merrily We Roll Along* uncharacteristically goes backwards by starting in 1976 at the end of the story of three young people that have struggled to make it big in the world of show-biz. It's a story about friendship, compromise and the price of success.

Specifically, *Merrily* follows jaded composer Franklin Shepherd (Angelo Cerimele) and his two estranged friends - lyricist Charley Kringas (Greg Gedman) and their gal pal Mary Flynn (Jillian Hernandez).

After the opening scene in '76, a series of interim steps take them back to 1956 when the trio first meets on the rooftop of a 110th Street apartment building in New York City.

That flashback technique may have been the show's ultimate downfall in 1981 when it opened. The audience doesn't know where the show is going. But, like sushi, it isn't going anywhere. It just is.

The professional-quality choral ensemble sensationally walks (and dances) the audience through "transition" songs that place us in the correct year. The projections on the movie-theater-size screen behind the teens provide visual reinforcement.

Another visual plus is the fact that the characters wear basically the same clothes throughout.

One unmistakable fact is the energy and talent that, although raw in places, offers a glimpse of pain in friendship gone awry.

And although Frank can't see that Mary is insanely true to him because of her undying love, we get it right away. Jillian Hernandez's portrayal of Mary, the gal brimming with unrequited love, makes us sympathize with her character.

Jillian, a 2007 UCHS graduate,

possesses a delightful, bright voice that brings life to the song "Old Friends," a reprise of "Not a Day Goes By" and "Our Time."

Angelo Cerimele, a rising junior at UCHS, has the good looks and charisma to fit the role of Frank, who gets lost in the world of success.

Rising sophomore Greg Gedman is perfectly cast as Charley Kringas, the other half of the creative lyricist/musical duo. Greg's song, "Franklin Shepherd, Inc.," is a tough number because of speedy tempo and the inordinate number of verses, but he pulls it off terrifically well.

Playing a sympathetic character, Beth, the wife who is left in the dust of philandering Frank's success, is Sammie Mellina, a rising sophomore. She packs an emotional, passionate punch in "Not a Day Goes By."

Michael McKeon, with merely a swagger and a cigar, is able to add years and credibility to his character Joe, a producer.



TYPECAST...In 1956, Mary Flynn (Jillian Hernandez) is content to pound a typewriter as a secretary in Stephen Sondheim's *Merrily We Roll Along*, Union Catholic High School's second summer show. According to Jillian, "The rehearsals were professionally run so that the students would get a feel for what it's like to be in a Broadway show."

Most impressive is the character Gussie Carnegie, a Broadway star that knows what she wants and zeros in on it like a seagull after an unsuspecting prey. Arielle Gonzalez, a rising sophomore who played Juliet in *The Romeo and Juliet Project* for UCPAC earlier this summer, projects the confidence and determination of a superstar. Her stellar acting, singing and dancing make her a triple threat.

Musical Director Tim Herman keeps the ensemble and solos together with his excellent piano accompaniment.

After a 10-year hiatus from UCHS, Emily Eger Donahue returns to choreograph the show with simple but effective staging/movement and dance.

At the end of this Sondheim musical, the three main characters, full of idealism and optimism, don't know what's in store for their troubled, complicated lives.

But as the philosopher Kierkegaard reflected, and as this Sondheim work depicts, "Life is best understood backwards but must be lived forwards."

## POPCORN™ Resurrecting the Champ: 'Coulda' Been a Contender

One Popcorn, Poor • Two Popcorns, Fair • Three Popcorns, Good • Four Popcorns, Excellent  
By MICHAEL S. GOLDBERGER  
2 and 1/2 popcorns

Director Rod Lurie's *Resurrecting the Champ*, a morality play about a street bum who claims to have been a heavyweight contender, is full of high ideals and grand intentions...about 20 minutes too much of them. But when the heartfelt tale at its core peeks out through the treacle and preachiness, it works.

Act one, scene one: The title character, portrayed by a la dreadlocks by Samuel L. Jackson, holds court in the back alleys of Denver, regaling anyone who'll listen with how the once great Bob Satterfield almost set the boxing world on its cauliflower ear. He is a favorite of the boozing bullyboys who, for a few dollars, feel they have the right to pummel him.

He laughs it off, perhaps seeing it as the paid beating a sparring partner must routinely endure. Then he's up, stoically laying down a repetitive patter of his exploits as he pushes his jingle-jangling shopping cart of empties and related treasures. And on it might have gone if sports writer Erik Kernan hadn't caught his act.

A moment of skepticism intercedes. Didn't Bob Satterfield, who once broke Marciano's nose (the little bone, not the big one) in a training session at Grossingers, die about twenty years ago?

"I thought you were dead," the fighter counters, wondering how this could be the famous sportscaster who once rang the death knell on his career.

"That was my father, cancer of the throat," he sheepishly responds. They ponder the irony.

For now, as the movies is wont to do, the parallels are drawn. Played by Josh Hartnett, Kernan is a little down and out himself. Covering the ring for the *Denver Times*, of late he's been living on the old man's laurels. Metz (Alan Alda), his acerbic editor, doesn't miss an opportunity to remind him that he's nowhere near as good as his dad.

Making it worse, there's trouble in the paradise that once existed for him and his wife. She's also a journalist...a very respected one, at the same paper, of course. Apparently, not only do they take their work home, but have allowed it to disrupt their marriage. Add to the mix a six-year-old, daddy-worshipping boy (Dakota Goyo).

Voila. Allison Burnett and Michael Bortman's script offers two redemptions for the price of one. Erik rushes headlong to get the Champ's story. The pug demurs. Erik jabs away, painting pictures of renewed glory. Still no bite. And with that, he unloads a barrage of self-pity. In the lingo, this is his shot.

Act two is the upshot, a piggyback story rife with soliloquies and fine notions about the ethical responsibilities of the reporter. Suffice it to note, things haven't gone quite as expected. The lesson in Journalistic Morality 101 ensues.

Unfortunately, for want of creativity, Mr. Lurie's film settles on a made-for-TV mode to deliver what consequently plays like the movie sermon

of the week. The shortcoming brings attention to other inadequacies. Hartnett's miscasting glares.

A good-looking fellow, he plays better in period piece and costume, and just doesn't offer enough complexity of character to wrestle with the dilemma of conscience Erik faces. He is little boy lost. While wife Joyce, played by Kathryn Morris, is more like authoritarian mom than partner.

OK, she's a little older and more established. But her holier than thou attitude makes things a tad unseemly. The combination of love and approval she'll withhold until he can solve some unspoken riddle smacks more of conceit than virtue. Boy, if only a young William Holden (*Sunset Boulevard*) could have played Erik.

Surprisingly effective, though it would seem much more fraught with peril, is the sentimentality between Erik and son Teddy. Dad has been piling it high. And now, as part and parcel of the moral cleansing, he must set the little lad straight.

In one of the film's more profound pronouncements, Erik explains how idolization by one's child is perhaps the most fulfilling ego trip of all. Some funny moments help temper the schmaltziness. Like Teddy's response when Erik asks if he'd still be his hero, even if he never did play golf with Muhammad Ali.

Pity, there's not enough of this one-two punch glibness to offset all the heavyweight deductions. Some better portrayals might have helped, too. The only truly stellar performance is Alan Alda's supporting stint as Erik's dyspeptic editor, a hardly p.c. fellow who insults not only the struggling scribe's copy, but his manliness as well.

But no further help emanates from the corner. And so, without a truly dramatic punch to score a knockout, the best *Resurrecting the Champ* can muster is a fairly respectable split decision based on its few good points and a lot of heart.

\*\*\*\*  
*Resurrecting the Champ*, rated PG-13, is a Yari Film Group release directed by Rod Lurie and stars Josh Hartnett, Samuel L. Jackson and Kathryn Morris. Running time: 111 minutes.

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