

## Contagious Drama Presents S.O.S. (Stories of Sandy)

WESTFIELD — For the fourth year in a row, the Contagious Drama Workshop's (CDW) teen class will perform *S.O.S. (Stories of Sandy)*, an original production created just for them. In past years, the group worked with New Jersey playwright Ben Clawson. This year, the series of short plays has been written by five playwrights from New Jersey to California. The plays will be performed on Friday, January 17, and Saturday, January 18, at The Presbyterian Church in Westfield in Westminster Hall.

"Working with different playwrights has been an amazing experience," says Beth Painter, director and founder of CDW. "They all have different styles, which will make for an intriguing evening of theatre."

The process of meeting with student actors and having material created specifically for them is quite unique and very exciting.

According to Ms. Painter, the material is challenging, humorous and realistic. That is not easy to find when the goal is producing an ensemble piece for 14 students.

*S.O.S.* is a collection of fairly light, short plays inspired by Hurricane Sandy. Through power outages, gas lines, friendships, love, loss and connection, we see the profound effects Sandy had on all of us. You will laugh. You will cry. You will be glad you came.

Performances are at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, January 17, and Saturday, January 18, with a 2 p.m. matinee on January 18. The matinee performance will be free for all students with an ID.

As always, there will be a talk back with many of the playwrights and the cast immediately following the Friday night performance.

Tickets are \$5 for students and \$8 for adults, still cheaper than a movie and always in 3D.

Featured in the cast are Catherine Barry, Colin Barry, Anna Bloomfield, Elijah Fields, Jarred Graber, Matthew McGowan, Julian Mone, Ally Morganthal, Casey Murphy, Lexi Nelson, Calvin Nemeckay, Matthew Schuman, Joseph Stokes and Connor Wynn.

Playwrights include LA actor/playwright, Chip Bolcik, the one

and only Ben Clawson, WHS senior, Alexa Durman, Drew graduate/actress/playwright, Lee Ann Hoover, and recording artist/playwright, Betsy True.

CDW continues its community outreach with teen and middle school students, bringing their improvisation talents on the road as they conduct workshops with youth and adults who are less privileged.

"It's a great way to give back and tons of fun" said Ms. Painter.

Ms. Painter's adult improv troupe, Contagious Laughter, returns to the stage on Friday, February 2, at 7:30 p.m. at the Edison Valley Playhouse to benefit the Arthritis Foundation. Email hcrilley@arthritis.org for tickets.

On Sunday, April 27, they will perform at Westminster Hall as part of the fundraising efforts of the Westfield Women's Club. Visit [www.westfieldnj.com/wcw](http://www.westfieldnj.com/wcw) for details.

The Contagious Drama Workshop offers acting classes for students ages 6 through adult and is currently accepting registration for the 13 week winter session which begins on Wednesday, January 29. Classes include improvisation, scene study and performance. Adult improvisation has ongoing registration with classes on Thursdays at 8 p.m.

Visit [www.contagiousdrama.com](http://www.contagiousdrama.com) for all forms and information or call (917) 836-3740.

### Stony Hill Players Present

#### Marriage of Figaro

SUMMIT - Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* will be presented by Stony Hill Players at the Oakes Center, 120 Morris Ave, Summit. It will be fully staged and sung in English with a Chamber Orchestra.

Performances are Friday and Saturday, January 24 and 25, Friday, January 31 and Saturday, February 1, at 8 p.m.; Sundays, January 26, and February 2, at 3 p.m.

For more information call (908) 665-1376.

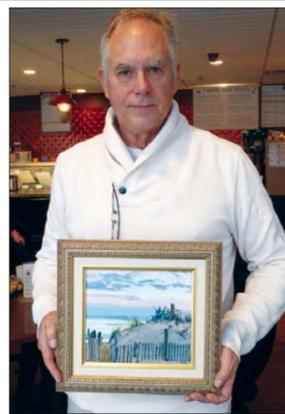
[www.goleader.com](http://www.goleader.com)

## SPFAA Announces New Meeting Location

SCOTCH PLAINS — The Scotch Plains Fanwood Arts Association (SPFAA) will start the new year meeting at a new location - the Scotch Hills Country Club. The meeting will take place Sunday, January 12, from 1 - 3 p.m. The Scotch Hills Country Club is located at 820 Jerusalem Road, Scotch Plains.

At the first meeting of 2014, there will be a demonstration by William A. Griffith, who works in acrylic medium. William has an M.A. in Fine Art/Education from Kean University in Union. He has been an art teacher for 25 years, having taught at Somerset Hills School in Warren Township. William has had a number of one-person exhibitions and has exhibited in many group shows.

The Scotch Plains Fanwood Arts Association is a group of fine artists, crafters, photographers and sculptors forming a social group to express and enjoy their talents. All are welcome who want to use their creative skills to share, appreciate and grow with others. A main goal of the Scotch Plains Fanwood Arts Association is the integration of the arts into daily life. We strive to achieve this through informative demonstrations, discus-



**NEW LOCATION...** The Scotch Plains Fanwood Arts Association will start the new year with a demonstration by William A. Griffith, above. The meeting will take place on Sunday, January 12, from 1 - 3 p.m. at the Scotch Hills Country Club located at 820 Jerusalem Road, Scotch Plains.

sions and group trips. For more information, visit the SPFAA website at [SPFAA.net](http://SPFAA.net) or call President Sandra Cerchio at (908) 868-8909.

SPFAA meets the second Sunday of each month from 1 - 3 p.m. at the Scotch Hills Country Club, 820 Jerusalem Road, Scotch Plains.

### Bouras Galleries Announces Exhibit

SUMMIT - Norma Griffith will exhibit at Bouras Galleries in Summit from now through February.

Ms. Griffith was born in Philadelphia Pa. and currently resides Blackwood and Stonington, Me. She is a graduate of Philadelphia College of Art, where she holds a B.A. in Art Education. She attended Moore College of Art, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Tyler School of Art and Temple University.

Ms. Griffith studied privately with Animal Artist George Sklar and Chinese Painter Zhe Zhou Jiang.

She is the winner of many Best in Show awards, Honor and Merit Awards from various arts organizations and is a member of several watercolor societies including Garden State Watercolor Society, New Jersey Watercolor Society and Philadelphia Watercolor Society.

Bouras Properties is located at 25 DeForest Avenue Summit. For more information call (908) 277-6054.

## NJ Festival Orchestra

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Did for Love" from *A Chorus Line*, was another highlight of the night. Lush orchestration especially on the last choruses found Ms. Stravelli and Mr. Quinlan in a pianissimo of breathy, vibrato-less unison that showed masterful control.

The four soloists were blessed with a conductor who so thoroughly enjoys working with them that he lovingly watches their every breath. It is a pleasure to watch the joy on Maestro Wroe's face when he turns around to watch them and match the downbeat of his baton with their interpretation of the music.

This is the 31st season and the 206th concert of the newly-named NJ Festival Orchestra. As David Wroe said in his program notes, their name is their calling card. Their "programming stays the same, the wonderful musicians stay the same yet our broadened horizons now allow us to collaborate with new partners throughout the state." Quality music ushering in the New Year is a treasured tradition.

## NJWA Flute Ensemble Begins New Session

WESTFIELD — A new session of The New Jersey Workshop for the Arts (NJWA) Flute Ensemble will begin on Saturday, January 11, from 2 to 3 p.m., at the NJWA studios, located at 150-152 East Broad Street in Westfield.

Intended for those playing at middle school or high school level, the ensemble will be playing music from the chamber music repertoire, appropriate to their age and ability levels. Players must be able to play Bb, Eb and F major scales. During the course, they will learn to improve their tone, articulation and technique as well as to implement ensemble elements like cohesiveness, balance, phrasing, style and dynamics.

The class will consist of 20 sessions, culminating with a final performance. They will also perform several times throughout the semester, including playing at downtown Westfield's Spring Fling on Sunday, May 4.

The NJWA Flute Ensemble will be directed by Danielle Parteno Plagge, a graduate of The College of New Jersey with a B.M. in Music Education and of New York University with an M.M. in Flute Performance.

Mrs. Plagge, who is currently a staff member in the Bernards Township Public Schools, where she teaches elementary and high school instrumental and general music, holds a New Jersey State Music Teacher



Danielle Parteno Plagge

certification and a certificate in the Kodaly Method.

Mrs. Plagge has worked with beginning, intermediate and advanced flute and instrumental music students, including coaching chamber music ensembles. In addition to being a private flute and piccolo instructor, she has also performed with a variety of different ensembles.

Regarding the recent fall session of the ensemble, she commented, "The level of playing throughout the ensemble is very high. I'm looking forward to playing more complex pieces that utilize other members of the flute family such as the piccolo and alto flute."

For more information on the Flute Ensemble, or any program of the NJWA, visit the NJWA studios, phone (908) 789-9696 or visit their web site at [www.njworkshopforthearts.com](http://www.njworkshopforthearts.com).

## Mah Jongg Tournament For Children With Special Needs

SCOTCH PLAINS — The community is invited to play the ancient game of Mah Jongg at a special tournament fundraiser to benefit Newmark K-8 and Newmark High School on Sunday, January 26, at Newmark, located at 1000 Cellar Avenue, Scotch Plains.

The Mah Jongg tournament begins at 12:30 p.m. sharp and includes three rounds. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. for lunch. The tournament fee is \$40 per person and includes lunch, snacks and prizes. Proceeds will go towards skill building programs at the Newmark, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization serving children living with special needs in New Jersey.

If you do not know how to play, the "Learn To Play Mah Jongg" package is \$25 per person and includes lunch (tournament is not included). Both events are for adults only.

To register for the Mah Jongg tournament or lesson, visit [www.newmarkeducation.com](http://www.newmarkeducation.com). The Mah Jongg Tournament and lesson will be held at Newmark, 1000 Cellar Avenue, Scotch Plains.

Newmark K-8 School and Newmark High School are state-approved, private schools serving children living with autism spectrum disorders, mood disorders, anxiety disorders, attention issue and other developmental disabilities since 2001. The innovative Newmark Teacher Training Institute also provides educators with the opportunity to learn the extremely successful teaching methods used at Newmark.

For more information about Newmark's academic programs, school tours, training and community events, visit [www.newmarkeducation.com](http://www.newmarkeducation.com).

### Mother Seton to Host Open House

CLARK — Mother Seton Regional High School located at One Valley Road, Clark, is hosting an Open House on Monday, January 27, at 7:30 p.m. for girls in grades 5-8.

For more information on the event call (732) 382-1952.

### WHS Class of 1966 to Host Reunion

WESTFIELD — The Westfield High School (WHS), Class of 1966, is planning a 50th Reunion on October 22, 2016. The committee is looking for addresses and emails of classmates from the Class of 1966.

A Facebook group page has been created and has 37 members at this time. The weekend will start with a "getting to know you" gathering at a local pub featuring drinks and appetizers.

The Saturday night reunion will be held at Echo Lake Country Club in Westfield. A parting brunch will be held on Sunday.

Contact Stephanie Stapp Mannino about joining the Facebook Group WHS, Class of 1966, by emailing [ssmile4@aol.com](mailto:ssmile4@aol.com).

### WHS Christmas Tree Disposal Now Saturday

WESTFIELD - The Westfield High School Concert Choir and Wind Ensemble have postponed their Christmas tree disposal fundraiser due to the snow storm. Pick up is now scheduled for Saturday, January 11. High school music students will remove the tree from curb side and transport to the conservation center. This service is available to Westfield residents at \$15 per tree.

Reservation can be until today, Thursday, January 9, by emailing [whschristmastrees@gmail.com](mailto:whschristmastrees@gmail.com) including last name, address, and a phone number.

Proceeds will go towards scholarships and future music department trips.

## Rahway Arts District to Host Chartball Exhibit

RAHWAY — The non-profit Rahway Arts District Inc. is mounting an unusual exhibit in its gallery that will capture the attention of sports fans and the imagination of graphic designers and art lovers.

The exhibit consists of large-scale data visualization posters by Chartball, a company operated by Rahway artist Andrew Garcia Phillips that blends sports history and design in a series of remarkable graphics. This is the first time a collection of these posters has appeared in any gallery.

The Chartball exhibit runs from Friday, January 17, through Thursday, February 27, at the Rahway Arts District Gallery, 1591 Irving Street Rahway. The exhibit is free and open to the public.

A free public reception is set for Friday, January 17, from 7 to 9 p.m. (In the event of inclement weather date the event will be held on Friday, January 31). Artist Andrew Garcia Phillips will be present.

Each poster focuses on one professional or college sports team, drawing their statistics into a colorful and playful visual history. Some posters feature lyrical in the use of line as player stats are traced, while others chart out data in brilliant fans of color and organized information.

The posters include histories of baseball, football, basketball and hockey. Some posters focus on a particular

season while others may map out the entire history of a franchise as far back as 1876, depending on the data available.

"There aren't many topics where you can readily find a well-maintained data set that goes back more than 100 years, as you can with baseball," said Mr. Garcia Phillips. "That makes sports a really rich field for new data visualization ideas."

The exhibit is timed to coincide with the Super Bowl — this year taking place just a few train stops away — as well as the Winter Olympics. These events transcend sports into popular culture, just as Chartball data visualizations play on the border of sports and art.

Andrew has spent the last fifteen years working as a journalist, currently as a Senior Editor for Information Graphics at *The Wall Street Journal*. His design work has also appeared in *The New York Times*, the *Star-Ledger*, *National Geographic* magazine, *ESPN The Magazine* and elsewhere. His data visualizations have been recognized both nationally and internationally as among the best in the field.

"The response from fellow sports fans has been really overwhelming," Mr. Garcia Phillips stated. "There's a world of data nerds who are also sports fans. Honestly, I can't keep up with the requests for additional teams and championship seasons."

Chartball posters may be purchased online at [Chartball.com](http://Chartball.com).

## POPCORN

### "The Wolf of Wall Street"

Grandma, What a Big Stock Portfolio you Have  
3 popcorns

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

By MICHAEL S. GOLDBERGER  
Film Critic

I approached Martin Scorsese's "The Wolf of Wall Street" with trepidation - 'gosh, three hours long...that's a sentence, not a movie' - but emerged from the thoroughly entertaining, fastest moving 179 minutes on film with exaltation. Based on stockbroker Jordan Belfort's autobiography of the same title, the primer on how to make a killing in the market at any cost is an enrapturing rollercoaster ride through all manner of excess.

I should have trusted that Mr. Scorsese could pull this off...keeping us mesmerized and tantalized via contemporary America's most potent of intoxications: the euphoria of unimaginable wealth. It is Dreiser's "An American Tragedy" updated, and just as telling of its time.

Just out of college and recently wed, the title character, superbly portrayed by Leonardo DiCaprio, starts off as a seemingly nice enough, unassuming kid from the Bronx looking to make a good living. If there was a proclivity for scheming and fraud, it isn't mentioned. Simply suffice it to note that, once ensconced within the marble and granite halls of unlimited moneymaking, Jordan catches the fever. He has quite the knack.

In fact, he makes it look rather easy, and doubtless a few young, impressionable viewers who gain entrance to this R-rated odyssey into the land where anything goes will adopt the icon of white collar crime as their ideal. Belfort, swigging full tilt at the font of drug abuse, debauchery and whatever else the traffic will bear has skipped well past the bulls and bears of his chosen field and piggyishly settled on total golden calf worship.

Hurling his character through the steps leading to this vainglorious pursuit in much the same way Ray Liotta hustled Henry Hill into the mores and folkways of the Mafia in "Goodfellas" (1990), DiCaprio's devil-may-care mountebank renders us mouth-agape. The party is always in full swing at Stratton Oakmont, the fancy Wall Street firm that passed itself off as an old line, prestigious firm. Of course, once they won your trust, you were literally sold a bill of goods. Namely, junk penny stocks.

At Stratton, obscene abuse of trader-client trust was not only applauded and rewarded, but revered. For here, under Jordan Belfort's tutelage, the rules of justice, fair play and decorum have been thrown under the bus in preference for the canons of the monetary jungle. Anyone who

doesn't agree is a sucker, and hence fair game. Here, like religious zealots in some arcane culture, they bow to that sin declared the root of all evil: the love of money.

No one here wants to be a great statesman, write the Great American Novel or work endless hours in a lab to cure cancer. Nope, money can facilitate all that, or so they contend. It is a grand conceit. But then, even we altruists, do-gooders all, don't mind being waited along for a little while. Ah, the deep, luxuriant sigh of relief knowing there is no bill we cannot pay, no Ferrari we cannot buy, no opportunity for our children that can't be realized.

Supporting Mr. DiCaprio in this feature length orgy, pretty Margot Robbie is effective as Naomi, the trophy wife extraordinaire who, at least in the beginning of their relationship, is blind to hubby's extracurricular dalliances. And Jonah Hill is aces as Donnie Azoff, the Pancho to Belfort's Cisco and every bit as smitten by what initially seems like easy pickings. The thing is, can they avoid the canny circumspection eventually brought to bear by Kyle Chandler's splendidly sly F.B.I. Agent Patrick Denham?

An astute recreation of the 1980s landscape, from corded phones to the high-powered sartorial facade of the era, populates a screen jam-packed from start to finish with all the indigent trappings and appurtenances. Editor Thelma Schoonmaker beautifully parcels out the elaborate panoply of materialism gone wild, and powerfully showcases the abashing behavior it spawns.

Naturally, just before film's end, when the chickens come home to roost, we fair-weather friends will suddenly recall the ethics Miss Popper taught us in grammar school and sober up, leaving the comeuppance to our high wire financier personified. We will disdainfully tsk, tsk. But oh, for a while, indulgently, like lottery players with a grand dream, we'll bask in this guilty thrill...as close to immortality as worldly pursuits can take us.

There's no quiet desperation for this ilk and certainly no concern for the commonweal unless there's a tax break in it. Such is the cynically amusing commentary on man's financial inhumanity to man so bilingly illustrated by "The Wolf of Wall Street."

"The Wolf of Wall Street," rated R, is a Paramount Pictures release directed by Martin Scorsese and stars Leonardo DiCaprio, Jonah Hill and Margot Robbie. Running time: 179 minutes

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