

Arts & Entertainment

Photographs by Leona M. Seufert of Roselle Park on Exhibit at Pearl Street Gallery

ELIZABETH – The Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders will present an exhibit of photography/montage by Leona M. Seufert of Roselle Park in the gallery space at the Union County Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, located at 633 Pearl Street in Elizabeth. A selection of her work entitled “Discovering New Jersey – Union County” is on display at the Pearl Street Gallery until Friday, March 28. Gallery hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays.

Ms. Seufert graduated from the prestigious High School of Art and Design in New York City and holds a B.A. in Theatre Arts from the State University College of Arts and Science in Potsdam, N.Y. She is a board member and webmaster of the Les Malamut Art Gallery in Union and the founder and curator of shows for the Casano Community Center Art Gallery in Roselle Park.

“As I travel through this diverse and fascinating state with my digital camera always tucked in my bag, I seek to capture the uniqueness of the cities and towns I visit,” Ms. Seufert said. “I have lived in Union County for 28 years and am



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enchanted by its architecture both old and new.”

Leona’s artwork has appeared in numerous group and solo shows in the metropolitan area and upstate New York. She has exhibited in galleries and museums such as the New Jersey State Museum in Trenton, the Hoboken Historical Museum,

The Visual Arts Center of NJ in Summit, The Les Malamut Art Gallery in Union, the Kenny Art Gallery at the High School of Art and Design, the Abracheff School of Art in New York City and the Market St. Gallery in Potsdam. She also lectures and demonstrates the use of Photoshop to manipulate images.

Haskell to Star in Pleasant Valley Productions’ Ragtime

WEST ORANGE – Garwood resident Tracey Lynne Haskell stars as Emma Goldman in an upcoming production of *Ragtime*. Pleasant Valley Productions will present the epic historical musical February 8-15 at The Theatre at Roosevelt Middle School in West Orange. Performances are Saturday, February 8, at 7 p.m., Sunday, February 9, at 2 p.m., Thursday, February 13, Friday, February 14, and Saturday, February 15, at 7 p.m.

As part of Black History Month and the NJ 350 celebration, a special educational talkback will follow the February 9 performance discussing the show’s themes and historic elements.

The production is directed by Camille Vecchio-DiLorenzo, with music direction by Ilene Greenbaum and choreog-

By SUSAN MYRILL DOUGHERTY

Specially Written for the Westfield Leader and the Times

NEWARK – Supporters of the arts, “friends,” oftentimes get benefits for their donations. Not only do they get to hear extraordinary concerts, but sometimes there are offerings of free lecture series with their subscription/donation and the best seats in the house.

Supporters of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra (NJSO) were treated last Friday to one of their “perks:” attendance of the final rehearsal of “Winter Festival: Strauss’ Alpine Symphony.”

The behind-the-scenes experience is one of the priceless benefits that this reporter got to experience along with the donors.

The sneak peek of the weekend’s concert, a part of the “Music that Moves” season, was given to the financial supporters and their friends. Preceding the rehearsal, refreshments of fresh fruit, croissants, mini bagels and beverages dotted a long table set up in the front lobby of Prudential Hall at New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC).

Westfield resident and NJSO subscriber Ilene Zelkin loves the atmosphere of these rehearsals. “I usually sit on the left hand side in the first balcony and love the fact that I can move the chairs, stretch out my legs and take up three seats if I want,” she said in a phone interview with *The Westfield Leader* and *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times*. Agreeing with her was Joyce



Susan M. Dougherty for The Westfield Leader and The Times

TASTY TIDBIT...Donors of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra enjoy a continental breakfast at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center just before the January 24 rehearsal of “Winter Festival: Strauss’ Alpine Symphony.” One of the benefits of being a monetary supporter of the arts is getting to see the behind-the-scenes creation process.

Fahrenheit, former high school teacher from the Clark schools, whose guest I was.

Before the 10 a.m. rehearsal began, James Roe, CEO and president of the symphony addressed the group. “There’s an instrument that you may not have ever seen or heard that is being played today, the heckelphone is an instrument that plays notes lower than a bass oboe.” Along with that unique instrument were sousaphone-looking instruments, “Wagner tubas” or “Wagner tuben,” a combination French horn and trombone. It made perfect sense that they were called into use for the Wagner piece the orchestra played, Venusberg music from “Tannhäuser.”

Maestro Jacques Lacombe, who sported a wireless mic system, said to the musicians at the top of the rehearsal, “I’m not going to push you too much because this is a big program.” The orchestra, dressed in work boots, jeans and other casual clothing were anything but casual in their approach to the music in this, their final rehearsal before the Friday night concert at NJPAC.

During a 20-minute break for the musicians, the patrons get to mingle with some of the musicians who join them for a quick bite to eat.

One violinist spoke to *The Leader* and *The Times* on the condition of anonymity. When asked if she minded having 100 or so audience members in the cavernous auditorium during the rehearsal process, she replied, “Oh of course not; I love the audience! That’s why I play music and have done so for decades.”

Concerning switching to two different locations in one weekend, the violinist said some venues are better than others. “NJPAC has wonderful acous-

tics, so we can hear each section beautifully; that’s not so for all venues.” The Friday rehearsal was the culmination of the week-long rehearsals of approximately five hours daily. Their Saturday concert was performed at the State Theatre in New Brunswick and then Sunday’s matinee was back at NJPAC.

The last portion of the rehearsal brought out pianist Pascal Rogé. Mr. Rogé’s passion could be felt in each arpeggio in D’Indy’s “Symphony on a French Mountain Air, Op. 25.”

The NJSO performs in six venues. That freedom of not being locked into one spot may be the draw for a number of people around the state who subscribe to the series. For Princeton Junction resident, Gail Baker, it definitely is a plus. “I love the fact that there are several venues. With their liberal exchange policy, I can switch tickets if need be because of weather issues.”

She added that the most significant benefit for her in being a donor is not a free continental breakfast, or even getting the best seats in the auditorium, but actually seeing and hearing art created. “It’s fascinating to see the development of the work from rehearsal process to the finished product,” she explained.

Indeed, that might be the best benefit of all.

Sugarloaf Crafts

Festival Set for March

SOMERSET – On Friday, March 21 through Sunday, March 23, more than 250 of the nation’s finest artisans will set up shop at the Garden State Exhibit Center for the Sugarloaf Crafts Festival. Visitors can shop a stunning array of hand-crafted sculptures, glass, jewelry, fashion, wood, metal, leather, furniture, home accessories, photography and fine art. Artists jury-selected for the show come from all over the country, including many featured New Jersey artists.

The festival is held at the Garden State Exhibit Center located at 50 Atrium Drive Somerset.

Show Hours are Friday, March 21, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday, March 22, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday, March 23, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is valid all three days and is as follows: Adults \$8 online, \$10 at the door; children under 12 are free. Parking is also free.

‘Love in the Stacks’ at FW Memorial Library

FANWOOD – Rosemary DiBattista will speak at “Love In the Stacks,” a romance conference to be held at the Fanwood Memorial Library on Saturday, February 8.

Ms. DiBattista is a Fanwood resident and a Westfield High School teacher who has written her first book “Murder and Marinara: An Italian Kitchen Mystery.”

Cynthia Weiss to Present Workshop at SPFAA

SCOTCH PLAINS — The Scotch Plains Fanwood Arts Association (SPFAA) will host artist Cynthia Weiss on Sunday, February 9. Ms. Weiss will present a workshop on working with matte acrylic gouache.

Ms. Weiss is a painter and book artist. She does work on paper and is a printmaker. Her work is mostly about landscape and the spirit within. Paintings and prints include both grand vistas and simple trees. Cynthia’s love of nature comes from being born and raised on a dairy farm in Southern New Hampshire. Landscape is part of her inner being.

“My work evolves from living, drawing, sketching, photographing and painting in the landscape. These works are both landscapes and abstractions of landscapes which represent my personal vision,” Ms. Weiss said.

At the workshop, the artist will also speak about her experience working as a book artist. Her art and books will be on display and she will

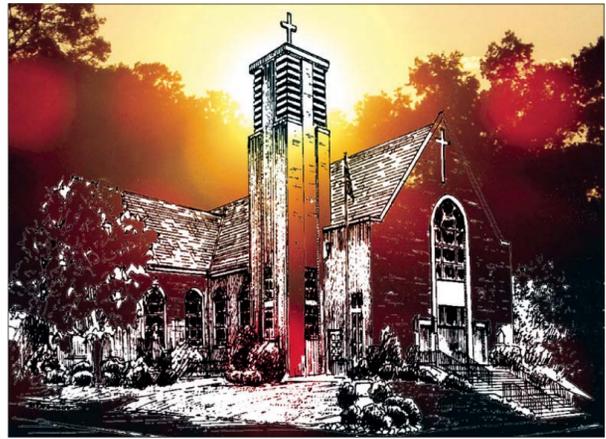
have a hands-on workshop segment where everyone can participate. The meeting will start at 1 p.m.

In January of 2014, the Scotch Plains Fanwood Arts Association moved to a new location and time. Meeting are held the second Sunday of each month from 1 – 3 p.m., at the Scotch Hills Country Club, 820 Jerusalem Road, Scotch Plains.

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, discussions and group trips. For more information, visit the SPFAA website at SPFAA.net or call President Sandra Cerchio at (908) 868-8909.



ARTIST WORKSHOP...Cynthia Weiss will present a workshop at the Scotch Plains Fanwood Arts Association meeting on Sunday, February 9.



UNION COUNTY ICONS...A selection of artist Leona M. Seufert’s work entitled “Discovering New Jersey – Union County,” including the Church of the Assumption in Roselle Park, above, is on display at the Pearl Street Gallery until Friday, March 28. Gallery hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays.

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