

# Union County

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WORRALL COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS

THURSDAY, MAY 25, 2000 - SECTION B

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## Annual cameo

Republicans made their annual cameo appearance at a freeholder meeting earlier this month for the public hearing on the county budget. Wally Shackell, who will be running for freeholder this year with Al Dill and Esther Guzman-Malcolm, was the only member of his ticket in attendance. Albeit Republicans would not miss much if they attended freeholder meetings, at the very least they would have some kind of presence, which currently seems almost nonexistent in Union County.

Completely shut out on the freeholder board, R.O. the GOP is now trying to gain a seat via legislation in Assembly bill 2536, sponsored by Joel Weingarten, R-Union. The measure would create distinct freeholder seats versus the current at-large process.

## My Two Cents

By Mark Hryniak  
Regional Editor

It makes sense and seems fairer to have at least a portion of the freeholder board elected by district. Regardless whether Republicans win big in the small western towns, the least Democratic cities in the east district election outcome.

Neighboring Essex County has a combination of at-large and district seats. A Republican candidate can carry nearly all of the towns in a countywide Essex election yet still lose if a Democrat manages the urban core of Newark and the Oranges.

Similarly in Union, Democrats need to carry Elizabeth, Linden and Plainfield and they're in good shape. It's more than offsets any GOP wins in hamlets such as Garwood, Mountainside and New Providence.

The legislation, however, would be a little easier to swallow if Republicans managed to win a seat or two. As it stands, they've lost five consecutive county elections and it looks like they are simply trying to grab a seat in any way they can.

It would be nice if the GOP could at least give the Democrats a run for their money in freeholder races. In this, a presidential year, one would think they would pull out all the stops and run an active campaign and even a stronger ticket.

There are three things that would help the GOP win a freeholder seat this year:

• Congressman Bob Franks wins the nomination for U.S. Senate, which would bring out the Republican voters in his home county of Union.

• Former Gov. Jim Florio wins the Democratic nomination, setting up a battle against Franks. Republicans would love nothing more than to hammer at the easy target of Florio's tax hikes of 10 years ago to bring out the anti-Florio voters.

• A long shot, but if Gov. Christine Whitman ever got the nod as George W.'s vice presidential running mate, it would complete the trifecta to get out the GOP voters.

•••

The mud is getting deep in the 7th Congressional District race. The campaign press releases coming through the fax machine are fast and furious these days, with only weeks before the election. Whether Republican or Democrat, candidates are heaving the accusations as fast as they can find something. Funny how each signed clean campaign pledges months ago. Why, boomer with them? We all know they're worthless.

Every candidate, in some form or another, has gone the tired, expected negative route while some have even made it seem as if it's their platform. I'll give credit to Republican candidate Patrick Morrissey. Relative to other candidates, he's been the least negative while actually stating his positions and saying what he would like to see. **THE, Page B2**

## County continues focus on seniors

By Mark Hryniak  
Regional Editor

All 21 towns in Union County will share in the Board of Freeholders' latest grant program. Senior Focus, designed to aid in the construction or renovation of senior citizen centers. The county announced the Senior Focus grants Tuesday afternoon in the shadow of the nearly-completed senior center being built near Union Center.

Senior Focus is one of the board's senior initiatives announced at the beginning of the year. Seniors in Motion will provide municipalities with vehicles for senior transportation; Seniors Scholars offers free classes at Union County College on a non-matriculated basis.

The grant was dependent on the number of residents above age 60, according to the 1990 Census. There are three levels of funding: up to \$250,000 for those with 3,000 to 8,999 seniors, and up to \$100,000 for those with fewer than 3,000 seniors.

One out of every five Union County residents is over the age of 60, and it is expected the number will increase to one in four, according to county officials.

Population data show that seniors tend to stay in Union County, rather than to move to senior centers or retirement communities elsewhere in New Jersey or out of state, according to the county's Division of Aging.

Receiving grants of \$250,000 each were Linden, Elizabeth and Union. Elizabeth will construct a new senior center on Anna Street while Linden will make improvements at five community centers: the 7th Ward and 8th Ward recreation centers, Sunnyside Recreation Center, Wilson Park Recreation Center and the John T. Gregorio Recreation Center.

Union's 11,000-square-foot senior center will cost about \$900,000 and is expected to be completed later this summer. The grant will purchase furniture, appliances, computers and recreation equipment.

A community center under construction on Walnut Avenue in Cranford will receive building upgrades, furniture and recreation equipment with \$150,000 from the county grant.

Garwood will use its \$100,000 grant to relocate a donated building from North Avenue to land acquired at 32 Willow Ave. In Fanwood, the funds will identify and renovate a downtown location for a new senior center as well as furniture and fixtures. In Clark, officials plan to acquire and renovate the American



Listening to County Manager Michael Lapolla announce Senior Focus grants on Tuesday in Union are, from left, Lou and Ann Roman, vice president and president of the Garwood Seniors, respectively, and Bill Davis of Roselle Park.

Hungarian Club on Raritan Road for senior activities.

Improvements and renovations are planned at senior centers in Kenilworth, which received \$99,850; three sites in Rahway, \$150,000; Roselle, \$150,000; and Springfield's 100-year-old Sarah Bailey Civic Center, \$150,000.

The \$150,000 grant for Westfield

will cover architectural and engineering fees, plans and testing for a new facility for the Westfield Community Center on the corner of Palsted Avenue and West Broad Street.

With nearly half of the weekday users at Scotch Hills Country Club on Jerusalem Road senior citizens, the \$150,000 for Scotch Plains will be used to upgrade the clubhouse, making it ADA accessible, and build a new pro shop/cart shed.

Several towns will utilize the grants to provide seniors with computers and Internet access. In Roselle Park, an Internet-ready computer room will be built at the Casano Center on Chesnut Street. In addition to indoor and outdoor facilities built. Ten computers

See ALL, Page B2

## Union rejects opinion of fact finder

By Mark Hryniak  
Regional Editor

Members of a union representing employees within the Department of Parks and Recreation last month overwhelmingly rejected a fact finder's recommendation in its ongoing negotiations with the county.

United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers Local 494, which represents 109 employees, including laborers, carpenters and electricians, has been without a contract since the last one expired at the end of 1997.

Director of Administrative Services Joseph Saleme said he has reported the fact finder's recommendation as well as the union's position to the freeholder board which will now weigh its options.

The fact-finder's recommendation, issued last month, was similar to the county's last offer which the union rejected in December. Union members voted down the recommendation by a 55-5 vote, according to union president Joseph Petrosky.

The recommendation included a \$500 bonus for employees at the maximum on the salary grade rather than the union's pleasure of a \$250 bonus for all employees.

## Geek this plant smells terrific



Photo By Barbara Kukulski

Dan Obermeier carries a large plant he purchased at the Spring Garden Fair and Plant Sale Sunday at Trailside Nature and Science Center in Mountainside. The annual event was hosted by the Union County Master Gardeners.

## Dredging project continues

By Mark Hryniak  
Regional Editor

Lake Surprise in the Watchung Reservation could be ready for public use as early as this summer. With the lake dredging phase of project complete, the second phase involves erosion control measures on the slopes that feed to the lake and the drying out of two sedimentation basins.

The county will clean debris and silt accumulation from the shoreline of the lake this summer and new picnic areas will be constructed at various points along the shore. Also in the works is an area for unloading and launching canoes or rowboats, with the appropriate county decal, for fishing and boating. County officials hope the state Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife will restock the lake with fish by next spring.

Had the lake dredging not been completed by April 1, it would have had to stop until July 31 because of aquatic life.

The two basins constructed uphill from the lake along Glenside Avenue contain the dredged sediment. After several months, the sediment will be dried out and wildflowers will be planted.

F.X. Browne Inc. of Landsdale, Penn., was awarded the \$1.33-million contract to dredge the lake. The firm will complete the development of plans and specifications for the second phase of the project.

The same firm has been hired to begin engineering and consulting services for the county at Upper Echo Lake, Moxon Pond, and along a stream which connects the two, in Mountainside. The county will fund \$12,000 for the engineering and consulting while about \$55,000 will come from the state Department of Environmental Protection.

Approximately 53,000 cubic yards of sediment was expected to be removed from the bottom of the lake but county officials anticipate less. After drying out, approximately 6,000 yards will be placed in the clay pits at the Deseried Village to refill an area "ecologically barren."

Dredging of Lake Surprise began in November. The lake has not been dredged since the construction of Route 78 was started almost 25 years ago.

Freeloaders approved funding for the project in 1998 but ran into some road blocks, such as, state restrictions on when dredging can take place and initial bids coming in too high.

Lake Surprise runs parallel to Glenside Avenue and borders Ne Providence, Summit and Mountainside in the northeastern part of the 2,000-acre reservation.

## County prosecutors offer scholarships

The County Prosecutors Association of New Jersey Foundation, a non-profit corporation created by the prosecutors association to award scholarships, is accepting applications for the Rittenhouse Scholarship, the Ruotolo Scholarship and the Coston Scholarship.

The Oscar W. Rittenhouse Memorial Scholarship is a one-year, \$2,500 grant that is paid directly to the recipient. It is open to any New Jersey resident who has been accepted for admission to an accredited law school

and who has a special interest in law enforcement.

Those who have been awarded the scholarship in the past may reapply for the award. It is awarded annually in memory of Oscar "Bill" Rittenhouse, Hunterdon County's first full-time prosecutor.

The Andrew K. Ruotolo Jr. Memorial Scholarship is also a \$2,500 annual grant paid directly to the recipient. It is open to former award recipients and to state residents who have been accepted by an accredited law

school or graduate school.

Applicants must show an interest in enhancing the rights and well-being of children through advocacy programs. The scholarship is awarded in memory of former Union County Prosecutor Andrew "Drew" Ruotolo Jr., who established the Union County Child Advocacy Center.

The Harris Y. Cotton Memorial Scholarship is also a one-year \$2,500 award paid directly to the recipient. Those who receive the scholarship may reapply in succeeding years.

Those interested in any of the scholarships must demonstrate a financial need for the scholarship. Applicants for any of the scholarships available for the 2000-2001 school year must be received no later than June 15. Applicants will be notified of the trustees' decision in August and the scholarships will be awarded at the Conference of the County Prosecutors Association on Sept. 7.

Applications may be obtained by calling (609) 984-0051 or by writing to: Oscar W. Rittenhouse Memorial Scholarship, Andrew K. Ruotolo Memorial Scholarship or Harris Y. Cotton Memorial Scholarship; c/o New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice; Prosecutors and Police Bureau; Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex; P.O. Box 085; Trenton; 08625.

## Let it ride



Volunteer Charles Klagman of Berkeley Heights, left, acts as roulette croupier at the annual Monte Carlo Casino Day for residents and patients at Runnels Specialized Hospital of Union County in Berkeley Heights. Looking over the action are, from left, resident Hildegard Gehr, Freeholder Angel Estrada, and residents Carol Bovine and Bernard Bonavita.

## Sheriff's Office mourns passing of K-9

Union County Sheriff Ralph Froehlich announced May 16 the passing of K-9 Jodi. Jodi, a 12-year-old bloodhound was a highly-decorated member of the Sheriff's Search & Rescue Unit. She had a very even disposition and was fond of children. Jodi had multiple handlers because of her pleasant disposition. Sheriff's officers would bring Jodi to schools and street fairs for demonstrations.

Jodi's last two jobs were representative of her career. On May 12, she was taken to Berkeley Heights to help track a suicidal teen-ager. On May 17, she went to the Cranford Police Department where she performed a tracking demonstration. A short time later Jodi died.

Froehlich, an animal lover and activist, can recall one of Jodi's most impressive jobs. Sgt. Mark Bank and Jodi were called to Westfield to help search for a kidnapped baby.

The baby was removed from the home by the non-custodial parent. Jodi tracked a scent trail left by the non custodial parent for one mile to the house of an acquaintance. The baby and parent were found hiding in the basement.

"Jodi will be sadly missed," said Froehlich. "She was pleasant and playful. The handlers got an emotional attachment to their K-9 partners. It's like we lost a member of our family."

## All towns share in senior grant funds

(Continued from Page B1) and printers for senior citizen computer classes will be purchased in Mountainside.

The Senior Focus grant will provide a third of the funding for \$485,000 in improvements at the Summit Recreation Center on Morris Avenue.

Plainfield's \$2.9-million project that will more than double the space at the East Front Street senior center will

receive \$250,000 from the county. Attendance has increased 82 percent, from 74 to 135, at the center during the past 11 years. In New Providence, the \$99,720 grant will create a multi-purpose room in addition to other improvements at the senior center.

The freetholders will bond for the Senior Focus funds, similar to what has been done in previous years with grant programs. Last year, the \$5-million Downtown Union County

and \$1-million Project Pocket Parks grants were funded through bonding.

The county will cover a 5 percent downpayment on the \$3 million Senior Focus grants this year. About \$105,000 is included in this year's capital budget in addition to existing, unused capital funds, with the remaining \$2 million as debt to be authorized.

County Manager Michael Lapolla said the county's debt ratio is very

low, approximately 40 percent of debt capacity. "We're as close to pay as you go as government can have." The county, he said, plays almost all of its debt off in 10 years.

Applications for the county's Seniors in Motion initiative are anticipated in the next month. The county will purchase 10 senior citizen vans which will be leased for \$1 to municipalities to replace, expand or create their fleets.

## COUNTY NEWS

### Gun forum tonight in Scotch Plains

A program entitled "Who is calling the shots? A Society Armed: A Forum against gun violence," moderated by former Gov. Tom Kean will take place tonight at 7:30 p.m. at the Will Jewish Community Campus, 1391 Marane Ave., Scotch Plains. Admission is free.

This event aims at generating a forum for public debate where all the views could be heard so that people could have an opportunity to learn and also to express their views. Public officials and decision makers are welcome to attend.

The program will feature Bryan Miller, executive director of Ceasefire New Jersey and Nancy Ross, spokeswoman for the Association of New Jersey Rifle & Pistol Clubs.

Ceasefire NJ advocates for strict gun control laws at the state and federal levels. Most recently Ceasefire has been instrumental in bringing a new initiative in the Legislature which would ensure that childproof handguns are sold within a short period of time.

The Association of New Jersey Rifle and Pistol Clubs has been outspoken in advocating for the right to

bear arms and has claimed that gun violence is rather a social problem that needs to be solved by means other than by tough gun control measures. The problem of gun violence and gun control has become an increasing subject of local and national debate. Several states recently approved gun control laws, particularly affecting children.

The program is sponsored by the Jewish Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of Central New Jersey and the B'nai B'rith Center for Public Policy. Among the co-sponsors of the program are the New Jersey Council of Churches, the Archdiocese of Newark, the Community Relations Committee of Metrowest, Ceasefire New Jersey, American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, Anti-Defamation League, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the Hispanic Executive Directors Association. Other co-sponsors are welcome to join.

For more information call Luis Fleishman at (908) 889-5335 or Wendy Van Wym at (973) 765-9779.

### 'Who's afraid of a tobacco-free' state?

The National Council on Alcohol-

ism and Drug Dependence of Union County Inc and Trinity Hospital will sponsor a statewide conference on coalition building and tobacco treatment on Wednesday at The Westwood in Garwood. The conference planned for "World No Tobacco Day" is funded by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services and is entitled "Huff and Puff — Who's Afraid of a Tobacco-Free New Jersey?"

"Huff and Puff" was developed to offer participants a chance to learn, collaborate and build their connections. Among those supporters of the "Huff and Puff" conference is Assemblyman Richard Bagger, R-22, who will welcome conference attendees.

The event will focus on two main themes: "The Challenge of Treating Tobacco Users" and "How to Build and Strengthen Coalitions." Tobacco treatment forums will help participants gain both knowledge and skills in treating tobacco using adults and children. In addition, coalition forums will help participants learn the building blocks necessary to create and strengthen coalitions to effectively implement community-based prevention efforts. Registration fee is \$5.

which includes breakfast, lunch and materials.

Interested in creating a tobacco-free New Jersey? Call the NCADD at (908) 233-8810 — TTY at (908) 233-8893 — to register for this event.

### Linen sale at Rumlens

The Volunteer Guild of Rumlens Specialized Hospital of Union County will sponsor a linen sale today from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the multi-purpose room of the facility, 40 Warching Way, Berkeley Heights.

N&N Linens, the vendor, will offer brand name domestic table linens, including tablecloths, napkins, napkin rings, runners, place mats, and place mat sets, at wholesale prices.

"The public is always welcome to attend our monthly vendor sales, free of charge, thanks to the efforts of our Volunteer Guild," said Freeholder Deborah Scanlon, liaison to the hospital's Advisory Board of Managers.

All the income the Volunteer Guild receives from vendor sales is used to purchase items for our residents and patients, such as televisions, VCR's, and prizes for the bingo games. The Guild also sponsors an annual summer picnic and a Christmas party/gift distribution, in cooperation with the Berkeley Heights Lions Club.

On June 15, the Volunteer Guild will have its annual Flea Market and Bake Sale. A limited number of tables are available to the public. Call the Office of Volunteer Services at (908) 771-5858 for information.

The Volunteer Guild and the Office of Volunteer Services are always interested in recruiting volunteers. Flexible hours and a variety of opportunities exist when resident contact, as well as performing other tasks.

For more information, call the Office of Volunteer Services at (908) 771-5847.

### Monroe places second

Oiana Montpe of Westfield, vice president of the Union County Vocational-Technical Schools Chapter of Health Occupations Students of America, represented the schools at Expo 2000. This was a series of events recently at Union County College in Cranford which highlighted students' technical and business-related skills.

Monroe was awarded second place in the public-speaking competition. Her topic was "Planning Your Career." She is a student in the Allied Health program at UCVCs where Donna Powers serves as instructor and as advisor to the HOSA Chapter.

For more information about Allied Health and all other programs at the Vo-Tech Schools call the Admissions Office at (908) 889-2999 or 2911. The schools are located at 1776 Raritan Road.



Brendan Mulvihill, 3, sits for Pat Pagnetti as she documents his appearance at the Atlas Pythagoras children's identification program at the Masonic Lodge in Westfield.

## Volunteers team up with Sheriff's Office to ID kids

Eighty-seven youngsters and several senior citizens went home with free laminated photo identification cards and videotapes from the Atlas Pythagoras Masonic Lodge in Westfield May 6. Members and their wives volunteered for various administrative tasks.

Participants were photographed and fingerprinted by Sgt. George Valladas and Officer Robert McLaughlin of the Union County Sheriff's Office, and videotaped by volunteers at the lodge. The three-minute videotapes documented each child's physical characteristics in face, profile, ear details, teeth and voice. The fingerprint cards, identification cards and tapes were presented to each parent for safekeeping.

Westfield Police Detective Matthew Cassidy assisted. Refreshments and safety-oriented coloring books were distributed.

The concept of the program is to record identifiable features of the children to ensure swift action by law enforcement agencies in the case of a missing child. It is hoped that these records will never be needed for this purpose.

Members of Atlas Pythagoras have invested in the security of the community's children with their Children's ID Program, which has grown considerably since its inception in 1991. The program is offered free in the area by the Masonic Lodge.

## The mudslinging 7th District

(Continued from Page B1) accomplish. Whether you agree with him or not, he has made his stance on certain issues clear.

The Democrats seem to be narrowing the field to County Manager Michael Lapolla and former Farwood mayor Maryanne Connelly. It's the organization versus the organization. It seems too close to call at this point, which really could be viewed as a victory for the Connelly campaign considering they're now classified as insurgents.

As for the Republicans, word has been that Michael Ferguson of Warren and Assemblyman Joel Weingarten of Millburn lead the pack. I still can't understand why Ferguson is considered a front-runner as he moved to the district

simply to run and spent tons of money in 1998 to get pummeled in the 6th district by incumbent Frank Pallone.

Thomas Kean Jr.'s campaign must be considered a disappointment at this point after getting endorsements from big-time county leaders and getting shut out of the organization files. Nice guy, people say, but just too green for Congress. Some have him running for Assembly in the 22nd district next year.

As an unaffiliated voter and amateur prognosticator, on the Republican side I'm going with Weingarten to win, after that it seems there are too many variables: Ferguson has the money, Kean has the name and Morrissey is the wild card.

## Local police officers learn the basics



Five police officers recently completed the Crash Investigation course sponsored by the AAA New Jersey Automobile Club Foundation for Safety and Education and the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety. The 40-hour course consisted of classroom instruction and practical field exercises designed to provide officers with the basic skills needed to investigate traffic crashes. From left, seated are, Sean McGuire of the Plainfield Police Department and Jennifer Schneider, manager of Public Relations & Safety for the AAA New Jersey Automobile Club in Florham Park; standing, Kevin O'Keefe of the Westfield Police Department; Jeffrey Searies of the Linden Police Department; Michael Wielgus of the Roselle Park Police Department, and Mac Gottick of the Fanwood Police Department.

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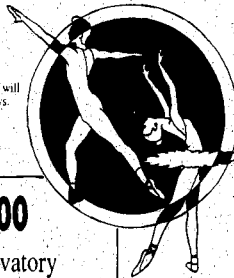
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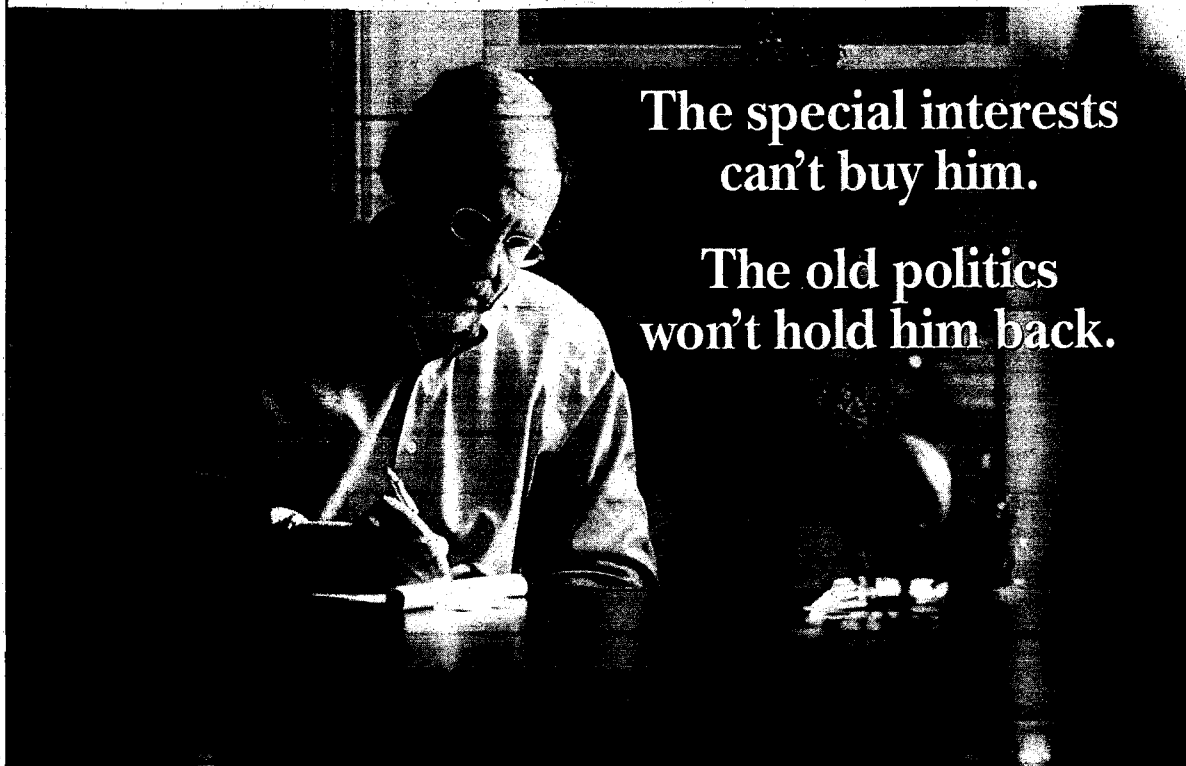
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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## Composer's life is celebrated

By Bea Smith  
Staff Writer

A new moon shone brightly over the Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn on the evening of May 16, while inside featured cast members of "The Student Prince," in glorious operatic voices, sang "The New Moon," from one of Sigmund Romberg's well-known operettas.

Albert Evans — who wrote additional lyrics to the Paper Mill Playhouse's current version of "The Student Prince," and with Tom Helm, wrote musical arrangements — accompanied himself at the piano, while Artistic Director Robert Johanson narrated and sang a portion of the life of Sigmund Romberg. They all were celebrating the life of Romberg in a Humanities Series symposium, "The Music of Sigmund Romberg."

Assisting in the celebration of the songs and career of Romberg were the exceptional Vicky Carter, resident associate conductor, and her incredibly gifted newly formed Paper Mill Community Chorus.

The additional celebrants who opened the program — Sharon Sandbach, president of the Paper Mill Guild, and Susan Spindel, director of education, who also appears in a stellar role in "The Student Prince" — lifted their own personal curtain on what was going on in the early life of Sigmund Romberg.

Evans explained that Romberg had written more than 60 musicals in a 40-year period, and only a handful was successful. In song and narration, both Evans and Johanson unveiled the life of a Hungarian-born composer, whose parents wanted him to be an engineer, and sent him to the city of musical fever, Vienna. He immediately went to work at the *Theater-Opern-Und-Studien* with Richard Heuberger. His first success, according to Evans and Johanson, was "Auf Wiedersehen," and he had a major success with his own interpretations of Schubert melodies for "Blossom Time" in 1921. One of them was "Song of Love."

When Johanson directed "Student Prince" years ago at the Paper Mill with Allan Jones starring, he said he had learned "a lot about Romberg, who had been a friend of Jones." "The Student Prince" was originally staged in 1924, "The Desert Song" in 1926, "My

*Sigmund Romberg had written more than 60 musicals in a 40-year period, and only a handful was successful.*

Maryland," 1927 and "The New Moon," 1928.

Some of Romberg's best known songs were offered by the fantastic cast, including Brandon Jovanovich, Christine Noll, Glory Crampton, Bill Bowers, Robert Longo, Glenn Seven Allen, Todd Almond, Scott Tucker, James Patterson, Benjamin Brocher, Kristin Hoffman, Cara Johnson, Tara Lynne Khater and Colleen Maccello.

The audience thrilled to the operatic voices as they sang "Lower, Come Back to Me," "One Kiss," "Softly, As in a Morning Sunrise," and "Southearted Men."

Evans and Johanson offered amusing anecdotes that they experienced during performances of the works of Romberg. They talked about their former operetta stars, Richard White and Judith MacCauley, and their mishaps on stage. They mentioned how Romberg's inspiration seemed to come and go. And they also reflected on other classical works, on "Romberg gems, and how some of Romberg's music and tone resembled the works of other classical composers."

Johanson explained that he has always been "in love with operettas. They are beautiful — truly so beautiful," he said. And he proceeded to sing a few of the classics in his fine voice.

The whole company filled the theater with thrilling voices, thrilling music, thrilling performers at the finale. They sang Romberg's famous "Drinking Songs," and the audience seemed to wave invisible glasses in tribute to the Paper Mill Humanities Series, made possible by a grant from Mercedes-Benz Tri State Dealers.

And as the filled theater filed out, humming "New Moon," a new moon smiled down at the patrons and lit the way to the parking lot.

## Comstock's 'Hart' is in his work

By Bea Smith  
Staff Writer

Neither lightning, nor thunder, nor slushing rain could keep the Manor patrons from flocking to the Cabaret Soree May 18 to dine on elegant cuisine and to further enhance the appetite by climbing up the winding steps to Le Dome for an evening of entertainment provided by a versatile and talented young man, Eric Comstock.

One was able to temporarily dismiss the dampness at the cordial, polite touch of the maître d', Carlos Gomes, as he welcomed this critic and her companion and led us to a table near the piano. And one nearly forgot the numbing weather outside when the waiter, Alex Soufanati, brought the chef's petite speciality to sample, lobster mousse over smoked salmon with gamisted dill, as the captain Alexandrie looked on with approval.

While one swooned over the indescribably delicious cream of wild mushroom soup, and one's companion, over the equally delicious Manor smoked salmon carpaccio, caviar crepe franchise, Bobby Richards, pianist extraordinaire, amusingly brought the merriment of the rain back to the patrons by pounding out "Stormy Weather." Laughing good-naturedly, the diners encouraged him, and while munching on a tangy salad of mixed baby greens with Porcini vinaigrette, one tapped one's damp foot to "Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head."

Then this reviewer savored the delicate sautéed Maryland crabcakes, melted Roma tomatoes, lime-scented herbs, and my companion, the superb petit fil Mignon with root vegetables, Macaire potato and Cabernet-Thyme reduction, as Richards continued to entertain and amuse with "Singin' in the Rain." That was soon



Eric Comstock

followed by "There's That Rainy Day," "Tomorrow" — "The sun'll come out tomorrow" — and "Misty." "The Entertainer" accompanied a decidedly rich and impossible-to-resist heavenly Manor chocolate with strawberries and chocolate sauce and a wonderful cup of coffee along with petit fours.

Eric Comstock's explosive array, accompanying himself on the piano, offered the music of Rodgers and Hart, Cole Porter, the Garbowskis and Frank Loesser, Harold Arlen and Victor Young and the popular tunes made famous by Frank Sinatra; and the sparks of lightning in the glass dome above our heads turned the evening into a fascinating experience.

Accompanied by blasts of thunder, Comstock enveloped his audience with gems from "my personal heritage," from Jolson to Sinatra. He brought a young Lauren Bacall to life in a song called "How Little We Know," from an early Bogart-Bacall movie, "To Have and Have Not." "I don't try to be Sinatra, the likeable

young man admitted, but he put over the Oscar-winning "All the Way" and "New York, New York" as memorably as did Sinatra. It was a delight to hear Comstock's version of "Everything Happens to Me," and he brought back the golden voice of Jane Froman and the radiance of Susan Hayward when he thrilled the audience with "With a Song in My Heart."

The program turned romantic despite the pounding rain on the dome when Comstock sang "Isn't It Romantic?" His own version of "My Heart Stood Still" — highlighted by his own words — was a delight, and Comstock went on to sing some Allen Jay Lerner Broadway tunes, such as "I've Grown Accustomed to Her Face" from "My Fair Lady," and old stories about a young song-and-dance man on Broadway named Clifton Webb. He again used his own humorous lyrics with "Let's Fall in Love," "You're the Top," "In a Small Hotel," "I Got a Kick Out of You" and "I've Got You Under My Skin." With additional music from Irving Berlin and a piece from Lucille Ball's Broadway musical, "Wildcat," this cabaret star worked wonders as he ran his fingers over the magical musical keys of a piano.

Comstock introduced his new album, "Young Man of Manhattan," to an interested audience, and this young man, who took a night off from his regular night club performance in New York City, can now regard himself as a young man of the Manor in West Orange. He captured the heart of every member of the audience with his "All Han — the Songs of Rodgers and Hart" program, and because he laughed at the rain that sometimes dimmed the lights during his numbers, the audience beamed too.

## Freeholders treat county students to a day with the symphony

The Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders made it possible for students in the fourth and fifth grades to attend a concert of classical music by the Westfield Symphony Orchestra.

"The Union County Freeholders were happy to sponsor this special performance for children," stated Freeholder Chairman Daniel Sullivan. "This concert was in keeping with the county's commitment to supporting the arts through programs like the HEART grants, which help the county's non-profit groups, artists and scholars to provide creative projects and the Summer Arts Festival concerts in the park."

Funding for this and other free con-

certs is part of the grant that was given to the Westfield Symphony Orchestra from the Union County Freeholder Board when the orchestra was designated the resident orchestra of Union County. It places quality classical music in the proverbial backyard of "all" county residents.

"It was more than a concert for young children," stated Freeholder Lewis Mingo Jr. "By combining the orchestra with musical clowns and mime Bob Berkly, the children were enjoying themselves so much, they completely avoided the stereotype that says that 'children won't like classical music.' They loved the classical music! The adults and children of Union County have their own orchestra. I hope that they support it. Who knows... if they start applying themselves now, perhaps some of them may be in an orchestra some day."

The children were treated to an afternoon filled with the music of Manuel de Falla, considered to be the most important Spanish composers of the 20th century and Ludwig van Beethoven, the greatest classical composer of the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

"The program, which was aimed at young children who are starting musical study in school, was identical to the program for adults that was held at

the Arts Center that weekend," noted Freeholder Chester Holmes. "Every adult and every child in the theater enjoyed the beauty of the Falla's ballet 'El Amor Brujo' — 'Love, The Magician' — and the four movements of Beethoven's Symphony No. 7, Opus 92. If I can admit something on behalf of every adult there, we were roaring with laughter at the antics of the musical clown and mime as much as the kids. His performance truly spans the generations."

A spokesperson for the orchestra said that the Freeholder grant enables the outreach efforts of the orchestra to succeed as they reach out to all members of the Union County community. This is evidenced through examples such as the concert for the children at the Union County Arts Center or last summer's Tango in the Park for adults and children.

"The Freeholders believe that Union County can be a center for innovation and excellence in arts and cultural activities," said Mary P. Ruffolo, Freeholder liaison for the Cultural and Heritage Programs Advisory Board. "This concert for children allows them to see that classical music can be fun and not stuffy. If the concert at the Union County Arts Center is an example... that is one lesson the kids enjoyed learning."



Officials and concert-goers alike join Music Director and Conductor David Wroe after what everyone agreed was an exceptional afternoon of music and fun — a concert of classical music by the Westfield Symphony Orchestra combined with the antics of Bob Berkly, musical clown and mime at the Union County Arts Center in Rahway. From left, in the back row, are Wroe, Union County Freeholder Lewis Mingo Jr. and Frances Lobman, Union County Superintendent of Schools. In the front row are Dominique Gallichio, Diane Matos, Johnny Torres and Domineco Rosata, fifth grade students of Robert Woods at the Charles J. Hudson School in Elizabeth.

Bill Van Sant,  
Editor

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# Union teen's versatility has its roots in a musical family

By Ben Smith  
Staff Writer

She stood in the balcony corner of the stage at Union High School — blonde, seductive, in tightly knit clothes, remarkably resembling Marilyn Monroe.

And in a near childlike, yet adult voice, began to sing "The Star Spangled Banner," a la Monroe's famous rendition of "Happy Birthday, Mr. President" at Madison Square Garden. While the audience stood for the national anthem silently staring, transfixed by the 16-year-old high school student (prior to an April matinee performance of "Damm Yankees," Lauren Slotnick became Marilyn Monroe).

When it was over, the audience roared and applauded wildly. This was something Union High-School had never experienced before — and probably never would again.

That same evening, that same teenager was seen — sans makeup, blonde hair simply combed, in loose, choir clothes — singing again; this time, in the Temple Israel Choir, where her father, Mark Slotnick, conducted the group during a solemn Holocaust program. Her soprano voice sweetly filled the temple and merged harmoniously with the other voices.

Is it possible that this could be the same girl? One and the same?

"Just love to sing," explained young Slotnick soon after that extraordinary event. "Our whole family sings."

She was dressed in typical teenager clothes, and her clear expressions took on those of a bright and intelligent young lady. "I had no idea I would be making such an impression," she laughed. "It was Yvonne Rago who wanted me in the show, but I couldn't take the time to rehearse — I had too much homework. But she wanted me in the show, somehow, and this is how I appeared."

Slotnick mentioned that "my grandfather had a lot to do with music and plays. Lou Raffie. He had lived in London and had a one-man band in Florida. My father is now director of the choir at Temple Israel. He also is vice president of the temple. He asked me to be in the choir. My mother,

Cindy, is in the choir, and she is president of the Sisterhood. My brother, Stephen, also is in the choir. In fact," she explained, "I have been in the choir for about three years."

Last year, the teenager "was in the high school play, 'Grease.' I was in the chorus. That really got me to the idea that I loved singing, loved music and being in front of people and making everyone smile."

Slotnick smiled her little girl's smile. "That was my first time on a big stage, and I felt so comfortable. I felt so cool. Three years ago, the choir sang with Sol Zimm, the famous Jewish singer. And I had my first small solo. I'm not nervous on stage, which is great."

"This year," she said, "I could not join the high school musical play because I had so much homework. I really had no time for it. But I think Mrs. Rago likes me. And she said, 'Lauren, I have to have you in my show somehow. I want you to sing "The Star Spangled Banner" on April 9.' Since I am a blonde, and the show's story is from back in the 1950s, she wanted people to believe that I was Marilyn Monroe singing the national anthem. I never saw her sing the president's birthday song, but I've seen her in pictures. It was pretty cool."

Slotnick said that "I've started my singing lessons six months ago, at the American Performance Center in Mountainside. I know I want to be a teacher — a kindergarten or first grade teacher. I'm in love with children."

"But right now, my hobby is to sing and to be in front of people and try to be funny. There's a lot of acting going on. Who knows?" she shrugged. "Eventually, I will attend Kean University to become a teacher. I will minor in music and the arts. I don't know what kind of teacher I was born with — but I'll find out soon enough."

The teenager explained that "I'm also involved in temple functions. It's important to feel like I'm making my religion grow. I'm helping by standing in front of people — and singing. It's a great inspiration," she said proudly. "It makes me very happy — to be able to sing for an audience — especially at the temple."



Lauren Slotnick of Union displays her talent and versatility by portraying Marilyn Monroe singing "The Star Spangled Banner," left, then in the evening, becoming a solemn member of a choir at Temple Israel of Union during a Holocaust program, above.



## Kids can spend their summer on stage

The Union County Arts Center in Rehway has announced the Missoula Children's Theater will be visiting Union County for the fifth year straight starting July 10.

Missoula Children's Theater, the nation's largest touring children's theater, has been touring extensively for 28 years. Based in Missoula, Montana, MCT will visit more than 800 communities, as far away as Japan, with 24 teams of four actor-directors.

A four team arrives in a given town with a set, lights, costumes, props and makeup — everything it takes to put on a play except the cast. The team conducts an audition workshop to cast 50 to 60 local students to perform in the production. The show is rehearsed throughout the week and two public performances are presented on Friday and Saturday. All MCT shows are original adaptations of classic children's stories and fairy tales that audiences and actors know and love.

Also, there are three enrichment workshops included in the residency and presented by the four actor-directors. Creativity, social skills, goal achievement, communication skills and self-esteem are all characteristics that are attained through the participation in this unique, educational project. MCT's mission is the development of lifestyles in children through participation in the performing arts.

This year, the program has been expanded to include more opportunities for more children. This is the fifth year that the Union County Arts Center has welcomed MCT to Rehway and is thrilled to announce that we have increased their stay to two weeks. Each week works independently from the other and offers different productions at the end of their respective weeks.

The first week runs July 10 to 15, and has scheduled performances of

"Cinderella" for July 14 at 1 p.m. and July 15 at 3 p.m.

The second week runs July 17 to 22, and has scheduled performances of "Sleeping Beauty" July 21 at 1 p.m. and July 22 at 3 p.m.

Both productions require a placement workshop to cast pre-registered students in the play and are conducted the Monday morning of each respective week. The placement workshop gives MCT participants an opportunity to put their "best foot forward" and is more about spirit, attitude and participation than talent. Nothing is to be prepared for this workshop.

As a further addition to the cast, MCT will ask two students per week to serve as assistant directors, technical assistants to the four actor-directors. All registration rules apply to the assistant director positions, including involvement in the placement workshop. Since there is limited availability for this position, all registrants interested in being an assistant director should be willing to perform as well.

The cost of the program is \$110 per child per week, but discounts are offered for early registrants and families registering more than one child. If you register by June 15, you may receive \$10 off the registration fee. Also, if a parent is registering more than one child, they may receive a discount of 10 percent. There will be \$120 registration fee for participants registering the day of the placement workshop. This program is appropriate for students in kindergarten through 12th grade. Pre-registration is requested and advisable.

For more information or for registration materials, call the Union County Arts Center at (732) 499-8226.

## Odds & ends provide glimpse of fancies

Some short but very big takes on creativity and its rewards this month.

The April 2000 National Geographic has a beautifully photographed article of one of my favorite Na'vu projects, the conservation effort in the San Pedro, Arizona river basin, including an even more lyrical text by novelist Barbara Kingsolver. This is a month, too, when Ken Burns' mighty television special about Elizabeth Kady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, "Not For Ourselves Alone," won the highly coveted Newbery Award and "The Sopranos" outhit itself for drama and old-fashioned character insight in the penultimate program, where Tony's sister shoos her boyfriend in a moment of self-defense — rage only the Mafia could justify — revealing that our popular expressions of art and culture do have something quite entrancing to say to us.

The superb performance by movie actor Christopher Walken, in the Broadway musical of James Joyce's "The Dead" was so surprising in its breadth and delicacy. Always cast as the villain, Walken was given the range in the musical book to move

## On the Arts

By Jon Plaut

between the straggler and the Dubliner who absorbs his wife's story of youthful romance with another man. The knowledge that James Joyce was told this story of probable sexual liaison by his wife, Nora, added to the rich fabric of this unfolding Irish classic. The recent closing of this musical is frankly too bad for a Broadway often lacking in musical subtlety.

The New Zealand director Jane Campion reached, for me, a nadir and a zenith in her creativity this month with the loser of a film "Holy Smoke!" — how could a film with Cate Blanchett turn out so bad? — and a real winner which I saw on video, "Angel at My Table" about the reclusive author Jane Frame and her battle against a society which mistakenly

judges her mentally ill. The brilliant new French film, "East-Wea" delivers the truth-telling wallop, too, of the cruelty of societal mores, in the case the vicious Stalin regime on European expatriates who start out as well meaning but duped sympathizers.

South African writer J.D. Coetzee makes a great case for the narrative in the art of the novel in "Disgrace," about current-day South Africa. Saul Bellow took the novel to new heights by embracing a rough and tumble treatment of America's intellectuals. John Updike in the "Rabbit" quartet of novels framed the larger acquisitive American society, as did Richard Ford at the century's end in "The Sportsman" and "Independence Day." Phillip Roth in "American Pastoral," and Joyce Carol Oates in "We Were the Mulvaneys" took a close look at our affluent but very flawed culture, flawed particularly by the violence we live with. Within this understanding, Booker Award-winner Coetzee has flawlessly found the post-Mandela South Africa to be in serious trouble, but not without hope.

Jon Plaut is a resident of Summit.

## Alumni are sought for directory

The Scotch Plains High School Alumni Directory is near completion — but organizers are still waiting to hear from several alumni.

The new directory will be the most up-to-date and complete reference source compiled on the Scotch Plains High School alumni and will feature detailed personal and professional information on graduates from all class years — making it easier than ever to find old friends as well as to network professionally.

To ensure proper and accurate directory listing, contact the directory editor, Bernard C. Harris Publishing Company, to provide details such as current name, address, phone number and professional information.

All Scotch Plains High School graduates are welcome to call in their information at (800) 654-4548. They may also fax information to (800) 860-9085 or send an e-mail to gcupdate@bcharrispub.com. For regular mail, forward information to the Scotch Plains High School Alumni Directory Project, c/o Bernard C. Harris Publishing Company Inc., Graduate Connection, 6300 Center Drive, Norfolk, VA 23502.

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# FUN

# Summer

## Strawberries can add zing when 'whipped up' for summertime fun

*Cikék* in Turkey... *fraise* in France... *khibrik* in Russia.

Regardless of the language in which you say it, the "strawberry" is a universally popular fruit enjoyed by people around the world.

The first fruit to ripen domestically in spring, this readily available berry is grown in every state throughout the country. In fact, 23.8 baskets of strawberries are sold every second in America.

Pair up this naturally sweet berry with one of America's other favorite tastes — Reddi-wip real whipped cream — to create a delicious fruit treat.

**Strawberries 'n' Cream Pizza**  
1 1/2 cups flour

1/2 cup butter or margarine, cold and sliced  
1 cup chopped pecans or walnuts  
3 1/4-oz. packets chocolate-covered toffee bits  
1 8-oz. package cream cheese, softened  
1 cup powdered sugar  
1 qt. fresh strawberries, hulled and halved lengthwise  
Reddi-wip real whipped cream

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In large bowl, combine flour, butter and nuts; mix until blended. Press mixture on bottom of 12-inch pizza plate or pan. Bake 10 minutes. Immediately sprinkle hot crust with 2 packets of toffee bits, distributing evenly over crust. Set aside to cool.

Combine cream cheese and powdered sugar, beat until blended and smooth. Spread evenly over cooled crust to within a 1/2-inch of crust edge.

Arrange strawberries, cut side down, in circular rows over cheese mixture. Decorate top of pizza with Reddi-wip real whipped cream in a spiral design, starting at center and ending at crust edges. Sprinkle remaining toffee bits over top. Serves 8 to 12.

**Fresh Strawberry Pie**  
Filling:  
2 cups fresh, very ripe strawberries, washed  
2 tablespoons cornstarch

1 cup granulated sugar  
2 cups whole ripe strawberries  
Reddi-wip real whipped cream

**Crust:**  
15-oz. refrigerated sugar cookie dough

Freeze sugar cookie dough until very firm but not frozen, approximately 2 hours. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Slice dough thin, and cover bottom and 1 inch up sides of a 10-inch springform pan. Bake 12 to 15 minutes; until brown. Cool and place on serving plate.

In a heavy pan, mix sugar and cornstarch; add washed strawberries and cook slowly, for about 10 minutes, until thick. Cool slightly and

add whole berries. Pour into cookie crust. Chill. Decorate with Reddi-wip real whipped cream when ready to serve. Serves 6.

Receive an assortment of year-round recipes, fun dessert trivia and a 35-cent coupon toward the purchase of a can of Reddi-wip real whipped cream in the new "Shake Up Your Recipes" booklet from Reddi-wip. For a free copy, send a self-addressed, #10 business-sized envelope with a 35-cent stamp to "Shake Up Your Recipes" Cookbook Offer, P.O. Box 5524, Dept. M, Riverton, NJ 08077. Allow six to eight weeks for processing. For more fun recipe and entertaining ideas, visit the website at [www.reddi-wip.com](http://www.reddi-wip.com)

## Marinades add splash of excitement to grilling favorite meats

The backyard grill can be a great friend when it comes to creating fast and fabulous summertime meals. Mouth-watering grilled meats are super-easy if your pantry is well-stocked with tasty mesqueros.

One essential shortcut helper is ready-made bottled marinades. It's easy to add fantastic flavor with marinades that use real fruit juices such as those from Lawry's Foods. In addition, a recent study revealed marinating chicken or meat prior to grilling reduces the risk of carcinogens by as much as 95 percent.

For no-clean-up meals, marinate in a Ziploc bag in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes. Place the food to allow for more flavor absorption.

Here are a few easy recipe ideas to help make your grilling season sensational.

• **Margarita Chicken** is a trendy restaurant dish you can easily create at home with Lawry's new Tequila Lime Marinade with Lime Juice. Mar-

inate chicken for 30 minutes, then grill until chicken is thoroughly cooked and no longer pink. Top with fresh cilantro and serve with black beans, rice and warm tortillas.

• **Sensational Shrimp** prepared with Caribbean Jerk Marinade can form the basis of a wrap party. Skewer shrimp, red onion, green bell pepper and pineapple chunks, then grill until shrimp are cooked and vegetables are crisp, yet tender. Let guests make their own wraps by placing each skewer on a flour tortilla, then pull out the skewer. Wrap tortilla around grilled food and enjoy!

• **To save time**, buy prepared deli salads or prepackaged coleslaw, then add a splash of marinades such as Herb and Garlic or Lemon Pepper for extra flavor.

• **Dijon Sausage** — Smoked kiel-

basa or Italian sausage tastes fantastic when basted with Dijon and Honey Marinade with Lemon Juice during grilling and broiling.

• **Spice up** grilled chicken with this simple fruit salsa, combine two tablespoons Teriyaki Marinade with pineapple, onion, cilantro, red bell pepper and jalapenos. Let stand. Serve on top of or on the side of entree.

• **Cowboy Skewers** — Alternate

marinated cubed steak, bell peppers, onions and small corn cobs on skewers. Brush with additional Mesquite Marinade with Lime Juice before grilling.

If you have a tasty tip or quick recipe for sensational summer meals, it could pay off in Lawry's "Save the Summer" Tasty Tips contest and sweepstakes.

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# Freeholders sponsor Memorial Day concert at Echo Lake

The Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Westfield Symphony Orchestra will honor the men and women who served in the military during the attack on Pearl Harbor at a free Memorial Day weekend concert Sunday in Echo Lake Park.

The Westfield Symphony Orchestra, the resident orchestra of Union County, will perform a free concert of American patriotic music beginning at 7 p.m. in the park. Prior to the concert, the Freeholders will dedicate a permanent memorial in Echo Lake Park to the memory of those who lost their lives during the

surprise attack at Pearl Harbor Dec. 7, 1941.

Members of the Pearl Harbor Survivors, North Jersey Chapter 2, will be on hand for the dedication along with a color guard contingent of the Central Jersey Leathernecks from Westfield.

In conjunction with the installation of the Pearl Harbor memorial, Park Drive in the park will be designated "Pearl Harbor Memorial Drive" from May 27 through June 3.

"As representatives of Union County's half-million residents, the Freeholders are proud to honor those who defended our country during the

fighting at Pearl Harbor," said Freeholder Chairman Daniel P. Sullivan. "We respect the brave men and women of our armed forces and we hope that this memorial will help keep alive the memory of those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom."

The Westfield Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Maestro David Wroe, will perform a program of favorite patriotic songs and marches including Maroon Gould's "American Salute," based on the familiar song "When Johnny Comes Marching Home;" Kenneth J. Alford's familiar "Colonel Bogey

March," also known as the theme from the movie "The Bridge on the River Kwai," and John Philip Sousa's marches "Semper Fidelis" and "Stars and Stripes Forever." A special highlight of the concert will be local pianist Elena Bakshi performing George Gershwin's beloved "Rhapsody in Blue."

"Union County is fortunate to have such a forward-looking and artistic Board of Chosen Freeholders," said Jane Kelly, former president of the Westfield Symphony Orchestra. "Under David Wroe's leadership, the WSO has developed into a world-class orchestra. This is a great oppor-

tunity to introduce young people to 'classical music.'"

"Bring a beach chair or a blanket and come early to get a good seat on the lawn," added Helene Gersten, vice president of the WSO. "Last year, the 'Tango in the Park' concert drew a very large audience. We do not want people to be disappointed."

Echo Lake Park is on the Westfield/Mountainside border on Springfield Avenue, just off Route 22 East. In case of rain, the concert will take place at Cranford High School, 201 West End Place, Cranford. For information, call the Westfield Symphony Orchestra at (908) 232-9400.

## Coffee can perk up summertime coolers

Cafe au lait. Coffee — Oie! Sensational coffee-flavored drinks are central to this season's celebrations.

From flavored iced-coffee coolers to delightful Kahlua cocktails, many warm weather drinks are rich in wonderful coffee flavor.

One sensational surprise is the Kahlua Rum-Cola, which offers a new twist on the traditional rum and cola. This delicious drink is easy to make, but for the beach or big summer parties, Kahlua also offers convenient Drinks-To-Go four-packs.

Another favorite is the Kahlua Coconut Mudslide, which combines the smooth taste of a Kahlua Mudslide and cream of coconut. Or for a satisfying refreshing treat, combine Kahlua, vodka and orange juice for a savory Kahlua Slaw.

**Kahlua Rum-Cola**  
1 part Kahlua 1 part rum 4 parts cola  
Pour over ice. Add a wedge of lime.

**Kahlua Coconut Mudslide**  
Equal parts:  
Kahlua Carolans Irish Cream  
Vodka Cream of coconut Favorite ice cream, milk or cream

Toss into a blender with a few ice cubes. Blend and garnish with marshmallows, cherries.

**Kahlua Slaw**  
1 part Kahlua 1 part vodka 4 parts orange juice  
Pour over ice and enjoy.

For more drink recipes, visit [www.kahlua.com](http://www.kahlua.com).

## Colors can add pizzazz to entertaining

Looking for the perfect way to add color and pizzazz to any spring/summer get-together? The answer: colorful and casual plants, tumblers, margarita glasses, pitchers and serving trays.

"Bright colors and bold prints transform any summer get-together into a day at the beach," said Chns Daniel of Mervyn's California. "For a fun, inexpensive way to add a splash to your patio, poolside or picnic, invest in one or two sets of colorful outdoor tableware."

According to Daniel, the hottest looks in entertaining this season include:

**Tropical Colors**  
Color is everywhere this season and the brighter the better! Hot colors include fuchsia, azure, daffodil yellow, lime, tangerine, and turquoise. Look for tableware that incorporates these fun colors and mix them up when setting the table or picnic! Ideas include two-toned tumblers in contrasting blues, margarita and wineglasses with brightly colored stems, and clear acrylic drinkware in the latest shades.

**Fun Florals**  
Florals are everywhere this season and the bolder, the better! Tropical flowers, such as hibiscus, gerber daisies, poppies, and tropical palms are popping up on plates, trays and drinkware. For alternate dining looks, mix florals with stripes or solids.

**Neat Nauticals**  
For a more classic outdoor look, set sail with nautical-inspired tableware. Look for classic hues such as crisp

white, navy or electric blue, fire engine red, sunny yellow and fun sailboat-shaped dinnerware for a nautical dining experience.

**Summertime Shapes**  
Shape takes a starring role at mealtime this season. Curved tumblers add just the right amount of pizzazz to lemonade and iced tea. Serve up burgers and hot dogs on whimsical sailboat shaped trays.

**Putting It All Together**  
Be creative! Remember that summertime dining is all about having fun. Don't be afraid to mix and match florals and stripes. Or, set the table with multi-colored two-toned tumblers. Almost anything goes when dining outside.

**Durability**  
Look for non-breakable materials when choosing outdoor tableware. Dishwasher-safe, acrylic, melamine, sturdy plastics and rubberized materials are all great choices. Keep glass away from pools and picnics to ensure safety for everyone in the family!

"Have fun when dining this summer," said Daniel. "Summertime entertaining goes beyond backyard barbecues ... add a splash of color with colorful tableware when lounging by the pool, enjoying picnics at the beach or park, even when vacationing via boat, camper or SUV."

The exclusive Done Down Under home collection can currently be found at all 267 Mervyn's California stores across the country. For more information, call (800) 637-8967 or visit the website at [www.mervyns.com](http://www.mervyns.com).

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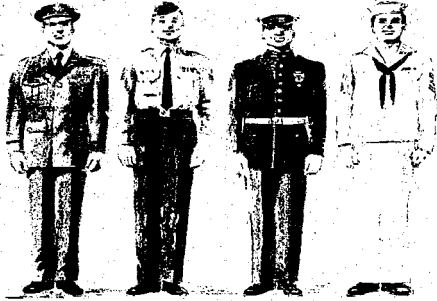
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# Remembering with Pride



## Remembering The Reason For Memorial Day

Memorial Day is the day we remember and honor those who lost their lives fighting for our nation. The men and women we remember on Memorial Day demonstrated the highest form of faith in the triumph of good over evil. Just as they had a mission, we, too, have a mission: To teach the young people of today to respect America's values.

History teaches us that our faith in freedom -- readily backed up by our resolve to defend freedom -- has made America -- and the world -- a better place. Today, 179 of the world's 193 sovereign states elect their lawmakers. That means the earth is covered by democracy in greater proportion than water; it's covered by 93 percent democracy. Clearly, those who made the Supreme Sacrifice for freedom did so for a victorious cause.

## American War Deaths

More Americans lost their lives in the Civil War than in any other American wars. The Civil War claimed the lives of 2 percent of the nation's population. Unlike other wars, all the casualties of the Civil War were Americans. Of total Union forces, more than 40 percent were casualties and nearly 23 percent died. About 33 percent of the Confederate forces were casualties, and almost 24 percent died.

Year of War	War	Americans Dead	Estimated Cost of War
1773-1783	American Revolution	4,435	\$101,100,000
1812-1815	War of 1912	2,260	\$90,000,000
1846-1848	Mexican War	13,283	\$71,400,000
1861-1865	Civil War	558,052	\$5,183,000,000
1898	Spanish American War	2,446	\$283,200,000
1914-1918	World War I	116,708	\$18,676,000,000
1939-1945	World War II	407,316	\$262,259,000,000
1950-1953	Korean Conflict	33,651	\$67,386,000,000
1957-1975	Vietnam Conflict	58,168	\$150,000,000,000
1991	Gulf War	293	\$61,100,000,000

"Soldier, rest! Thy warfare o'er,  
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,  
Dream of battled fields no more,  
Days of danger, nights of waking."

Sir Walter Scott

## Eulogy for a Veteran

Do not stand at my grave and weep,  
I am not there, I do not sleep.

I am a thousand winds that blow,  
I am the diamond glints on snow.

I am the sunlight on ripened grain,  
I am the Gentle autumn rain.

When you awaken in the mornings hush,  
I am the swift uplifting rush  
of quiet birds in circled flight,  
I am the soft stars that shine at night.

Do not stand at my grave and cry,  
I am not there, I did not die.

Author Unknown

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# What's Going On?

## FLEA MARKET

**FRIDAY**  
June 2nd, 2000  
EVENT: Garage Sale/Flea Market  
PLACE: St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, 568 South Broad St., Elizabeth, NJ  
TIME: 9am-3pm, rain or shine.  
PRICE: Used Clothes, Shoes, Books, Housewares, Jewelry, etc. Food and beverage available.  
ORGANIZATION: St. Nicholas Orthodox Church.

**SUNDAY**  
June 4, 2000  
EVENT: Outdoors/Indoor only if it rains!  
PLACE: Belleville High School, 100 Passaic Avenue (Off Jerusalem Street), Belleville.  
TIME: 9:00am-5:00pm  
PRICE: Over 100 quality dealers selling a variety of unique merchandise! For information call 201-937-8933.  
ORGANIZATION: Student Government Organization

**FRIDAY**  
June 2nd, 2000  
EVENT: Flea Market  
PLACE: Redeemer Lutheran Church, 134 Prospect Avenue, Irvington, NJ  
TIME: 9:30am-12:30pm  
PRICE: New and used clothes, shoes, records, housewares, books, etc. For further information please call 973-277-0377.  
ORGANIZATION: Redeemer Lutheran Church

**RUMMAGE SALE**  
**FRIDAY**  
June 3rd & 4th, 2000  
EVENT: RUMMAGE SALE  
PLACE: Italian American Civic Association, 106 Hillside Avenue, Hillside  
TIME: 9:00am-4:00pm  
PRICE: Free Admission.  
ORGANIZATION: Italian American Civic Association

## THEATRE-PLAY

**FRIDAY-SUNDAY**  
May 26th to June 4th, 2000  
EVENT: "They Got What They Wanted," an Irish comedy by Louis D'Alton  
PLACE: Salem Hall University Theatre-in-the-Round, 400 South Orange Avenue, South Orange  
TIME: Fridays and Saturdays at 8pm, Sunday matinees at 2pm  
PRICE: Tickets \$13 regular, \$10 student/seniors. Reservations: 973-761-9790  
ORGANIZATION: Celtic Theatre Company

## WORKSHOPS EDUCATIONAL

**WEDNESDAY**  
June 7th, 2000  
EVENT: Free Open House/Clinical Presentation. TOPIC: Impossible Pleas—How We Live with Them and How We Work with Them.  
PLACE: The Psychoanalytic Center of Northern New Jersey (PCNJ), 769 Northfield Avenue, Suite 112, West Orange, New Jersey 07082  
TIME: 7:30 to 8:30pm  
PRICE: Free. For reservations or further information call 973-736-7600.  
ORGANIZATION: The Psychoanalytic Center of Northern New Jersey (PCNJ)

Want to stay on a paid directory of events for non-profit organizations? It's a great idea! For just \$100 for 6 months for Eastern County or Union County and just \$250 for 12 months for the rest of the state. For more information call 973-277-0377. For information call 973-277-0377. For information call 973-277-0377.

## OTHER

**FRIDAY-SUNDAY**  
June 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 2000  
EVENT: Grecian Holiday Festival  
PLACE: St. Constantine & Helen Church, 510 Linden Place, Orange  
TIME: Friday, 4:00pm-midnight; Saturday, 3:00pm-midnight; Sunday, noon-6:00pm.  
PRICE: Donations \$1. Live, authentic Greek dancing, full dinner menu and outdoor games for children. Indoor air conditioned, outside under tents. Free shuttle service available. For more information call 973-674-6600.  
ORGANIZATION: St. Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Church.

**FRIDAY**  
June 2nd, 2000  
EVENT: International Masons Job Grand Lodge, Princess Matilda Grand Place Convention  
PLACE: Newark International Airport Hotel, 973-623-7618  
TIME: Friday meeting, 9:00am-3:00pm. Opening: Awards Program 7:00pm  
PRICE: Grand King Solomon, William Henderson, Layton Swanson, Grand Duke Bathsheba, Or. Richardson, Supreme Queen Bathsheba, Dorothy Riley, Supreme King Solomon, James Alexander  
ORGANIZATION: International Queen of the South Department

**SATURDAY**  
June 3, 2000  
EVENT: 70th Anniversary of Bavarian  
PLACE: Deutscher Club in Clark, 787 Featherbed Lane, Clark  
TIME: Doors open at 5:00pm  
PRICE: \$5 Admission, Children under 12 free. Music by "Bernie's Orchestra" and performances dance clubs representing N.J., NY, and PA. For information call Rick Ebel at 908-851-9466. For tickets and table reservations call Ralph Mehne at 908-276-7745.  
ORGANIZATION: Bayern Verein Newark, Inc.

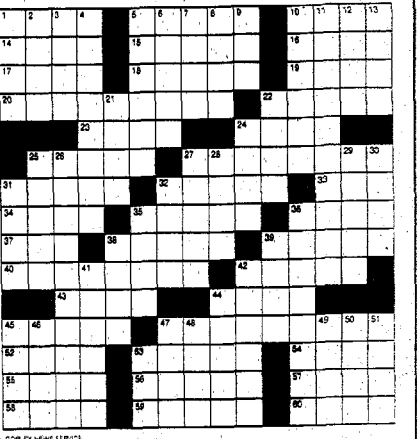
**THURSDAY-SUNDAY**  
June 1st-4th, 2000  
EVENT: International Masons & O.E.S. Job Grand Lodge Convention  
PLACE: Newark International Marriott Airport Hotel, 973-623-7618  
TIME: Thursday 7:00pm Presentation; Friday Night Singing & Awards 7:00pm; Saturday meeting 9:00am-4:00pm; Banquet 7:00pm. Sunday closing.  
PRICE: \$5 Admission, Children under 12 free. Music by "Bernie's Orchestra" and performances dance clubs representing N.J., NY, and PA. For information call Rick Ebel at 908-851-9466. For tickets and table reservations call Ralph Mehne at 908-276-7745.  
ORGANIZATION: International Masons & O.E.S.

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## ACROSS

- Catchall abbreviation
- Sacred Islamic text
- Cliché cleric
- Lombardy town
- Blue shade
- Shipboard quaff
- Tentamentum in Tours
- Copland ballet
- Kind of hand or wolf
- Footwear for little girls
- Artificial conduit
- Choice foods d'oeuvre
- Mongoloid tribe in Burma
- "— Suspicion"
- Year-end time
- 31 Estate of the White oak family
- Electromagnetic unit
- Wallach
- Character in "Antony and Cleopatra"
- Russian novelist
- Cap of Manche
- many cooks
- Gilbert and Sullivan producer
- Before four or point
- Living-room item
- Cafeteria equipment
- Long ago
- TV offering
- French novelist
- Sweetened teacake
- Not care —
- 35 Secret plotters
- Kind of chop
- 6 Ethereal element
- 7 Without refinement
- 8 Greek god
- 9 Avanti-garde member
- 10 Shaming
- 11 Baked pudding
- 59 1950 Nobel in chemistry
- 60 Australian peninsula

## GIRLS' CLUB



- 13 River to the Elbe  
21 All right but  
22 Wood or water  
23 follower  
24 Conform to rules  
25 of meter  
26 N. L. luminary  
28 Mixed drink  
27 Italian poet  
28 New Indian  
29 Fielder Duror  
30 Noisy disorder  
31 Tow — hydrogen  
32 Slow & pence  
33 Toyland denizen  
35 Flier with foats  
38 Side followers  
39 Let us —  
41 Cover-up for Kroat  
42 German dialect  
Ernst  
44 Nat. Turner, e.g.  
45 Container in a  
Poe tale  
46 "In bel' di" e.g.  
47 Crossback or lug  
48 Not up  
49 Pioneer in heavy  
hydrogen  
50 musc  
51 Ending for cog or oo  
55 181 initials

See ANSWERS on Page B15

## REUNIONS

• St. Joseph's School in Roselle Class of 1950 reunion is planned for May 2000. Contact Jane Geoghegan Burke at (732) 388-7363, Al Hease at (203) 744-7896 or George Schindler at (920) 432-0210.

• Union High School Class of 1990 reunion is scheduled for June 10. For information, contact Reunions Unlimited Inc. at (732) 617-1000.

• Jefferson High School Class of 1940 reunion is scheduled for June 24 at the Jefferson Performing Arts House in Elizabeth High School. For information, call Patrick Gargano at (908) 272-5485, or write to him at 322 North Ave., East, Cranford, NJ 07016-2435.

• Union High School Class of 1940 reunion is scheduled for July 13.

Luncheon will be served at noon at the Gallinger Hill Inn, Five Points in Union. For information, contact Evelyn Steudle Birstay at (407) 647-8119 or send e-mail to epearthorshay@worldnet.att.net.

• Summit High School Class of 1990 will conduct its 10th reunion July 29. For information, contact Reunions Unlimited Inc. at (732) 617-1000.

• Union High School Class of 1980 reunion is scheduled for Aug. 19. For information, contact Reunions Unlimited Inc. at (732) 617-1000.

• Summit High School Class of 1980 will conduct its 20th reunion Oct. 7. For information, contact Reunions Unlimited Inc. at (732) 617-1000.

## HOROSCOPE

**For May 29 to June 4**  
**ARIES** (March 21-April 19): Open a line of communication with family members and friends. Avoid playing tug of war with words to gain control.  
**TAURUS** (April 20-May 21): Make financial matters your number one priority. Settle your differences over a joint account. Creativity is your strong suit this week.  
**GEMINI** (May 21-June 21): The new moon in your sign this week serves as a green light signaling you to move forward with pending plans. Initiate a new personal project.  
**CANCER** (June 22-July 22): Charitable issues come to the foreground. Share your ideas for fund-raising or show your support by actively participating in the daily operations.  
**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22): You can reach your goals with the help of others. Get involved in a group endeavor in which there are plenty of opportunities to make new friends.  
**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Take a close look at your professional status, and chart a course of action or change

for your career. A mentor or superior offers some helpful guidance.  
**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 23): Your intense exploration of the unknown. Expand your world most effectively through sport or travel.  
**SCORPIO** (Oct. 24-Nov. 21): Prepare for a timely change on the domestic front. Be careful not to go too far over your budget when planning a home improvement project.  
**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): An emotional breakthrough or reaching a special understanding vastly improves your relationship with a loved one. Open your heart.  
**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): This is a great time to make those long-desired adjustments in your diet or daily routine. Bite the bullet, and get on track.  
**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Enjoy a creative or social endeavor, perhaps including children. Set your sights now on a desired goal for the distant future.  
**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20): Fickle emotions will help facilitate a major turning point in your life. Take a momentary timeout to decide what you feel and what you want.

If your birthday is this week, power plays and manipulation will dot your path during the coming year. On many levels, you'll experience a deep personal transformation. Self-control is the key to staying grounded and in the moment. Relationships are strong and intense and take on a fated quality. Work to keep a balance in your life and avoid an emotional upsurge or crisis. An unexpected trip involving siblings or old schoolmates proves to be a real eye opener.

Also born this week: John F. Kennedy, Peter the Great, Walt Whitman, Marilyn Monroe, Thomas Hardy, Josephine Baker and Judith Malina.

## Freeholders Invite residents to 'connect'

The Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders has announced the Union County Calendar of Events, "Cultural Connections," is available on the county's website.

"The Cultural Connections calendar is an instant link to the county's broad range of arts, musical, educational and historical programs," said Freeholder Mary P. Ruotolo, liaison to the Cultural and Heritage Advisory Board. "It not only highlights our talented county organizations and individuals, but also makes it easy to plan ahead so you don't miss any special events."

Union County is rich in culture, history and arts activities. The calendar reflects this representation with a wide variety of events from concerts to lectures, from children's programs to theatrical performances and dance. The Union County Museum and Historical Sites schedule contains regular operating hours and special program information. Also available on the web page is the Cultural Connections Information Form, which can be printed out, completed and mailed in by any individual or group that wishes to include events in the calendar.

To access the Union County website, simply type in [www.unioncountynj.org](http://www.unioncountynj.org). When the homepage is downloaded, notice the department listing on the left side of the page. Click on "County Man-

ger," then "Economic Development," and finally "Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs," where options will be found to access the Museum listings, Current Calendar or the Information Form.

For more information on the Calendar of Events or other services of the Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, call (908) 585-2550; send e-mail to [scen@unioncountynj.org](mailto:scen@unioncountynj.org); or write to the Union County Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, 633 Pearl St., Elizabeth, NJ 07202.

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What's Going On is a paid directory of events for non-profit organizations. It is FREE-PAID and costs just \$100.00 (for 2 weeks) in Essex County or Union County and just \$300.00 for both Counties. Your notice must be in one of our Offices by 4:30 P.M. on Monday for publication the following Thursday. Offices are located at 463 Valley St., Maplewood, 170 Southland Rd., Orange, 268 Liberty St., Bloomfield or 1291 Stuyvesant Ave., Union.

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# Healthy Living

## Cardiac transport team meets a variety of patient needs

Heart patients from all over New Jersey are benefiting from a unique transport service that safely delivers them to Saint Barnabas Health Care System facilities for the highest level of cardiac care.

The Cardiac Transfer Center arranges and provides for the safe transport of cardiac patients who are in other hospitals and need the higher level of care that is provided at The Heart Hospital of New Jersey at Newark. Both Israel Medical Center and Saint Barnabas Medical Center, both affiliates of the Saint Barnabas Health Care System. In the past two years, the center has coordinated the transfers of more than 2,182 patients with-

out a single negative outcome during a trip.

The Cardiac Transfer Center was introduced at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center in December 1997 to help improve access to the specialized cardiac services provided there. Last spring, when Saint Barnabas Medical Center began a new cardiac surgery program, the center began transporting patients to that facility as well.

The demand to bring patients to both hospitals has grown so much that today the team is on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The Cardiac Transfer Center team includes Brenda Robatino R.N.,

coordinator; Mary Verrinder R.N.; Jose Citty R.N.; Bud Lavin R.N.; Ben Monerato R.N.; Tony Lucania MTC; John Oliveira EMT; and Dace Stangorciak EMT. Since the Transfer Center's inception, the team has received high marks from patients, family members and physicians.

"This team is one of the highlights of the Saint Barnabas Health Care System. It has become a model for other institutions to follow," said Fred Aueron M.D., director of Invasive Cardiovascular Laboratories for the Saint Barnabas Health Care System. "With tertiary cardiac services now available at The Beth on a 24-hour

basis, the Cardiac Transfer Center's ability to bring patients here around the clock has greatly enhanced the care we provide."

The team is specially trained to detect and treat cardiac emergencies and ensure rapid and efficient transfer. To initiate a transfer, the referring physician calls (888) 8-HEART-1 and the team coordinates the arrangements for each patient to be transported and admitted to an appropriate patient care unit, saving time for the physician and the nursing staff on the unit. Patients are transported in cardiac ambulances, accompanied by an ACLS-certified registered nurse, a

paramedic and an emergency medical technician. If needed, emergency transport by trained professionals using a specially equipped helicopter is also available. The team members frequently maintain contact with patients throughout their hospital stay.

The team's medical expertise is matched by a compassionate and caring nature that is evident to the patients and families they come into contact with every day. The Cardiac Transfer Center has maintained a consistently high level of patient satisfaction through education and simply "talking to the patient as a person" during each transport, according to Robatino. They have also performed many extra duties that are beyond the expected level of service.

"Last June, the team transported a heart transplant candidate from Newark Beth Israel to her son's high school graduation ceremony at the PNC Arts Center in Holmdel, and stayed with her throughout the day in

case she needed emergency care," Robatino said. "A few months ago, our ambulance was flagged down on the Garden State Parkway where a motor vehicle accident had just occurred. They found the driver in cardiac arrest, successfully resuscitated him and transferred him to a nearby hospital."

The greatest compliments to the Cardiac Transfer Center come from the patients, families and physicians the team has encountered during the last two years. The center's patient satisfaction surveys are returned with consistently high scores and positive comments.

"This has to be the best transport team there is. They made my trip very pleasant and safe," one patient wrote on his survey. Another commented, "The team that transported me was very concerned about my condition. They took their time, made sure everything was right, made me comfortable and explained my procedure. They did a very excellent job."

## Overlook's Emergency Room takes national honors

Overlook Hospital's Emergency Department ranked in the 100th percentile for patient satisfaction in a survey conducted by Press, Ganey Associates, which compared hundreds of hospitals across the country during the last quarter of 1999.

Despite a steady increase in patient volume, Overlook's Emergency Department ranked highest for patient satisfaction based on factors such as courteous and attentive nurses, consistent and prompt treatment, information from attending physicians, and accessibility to family and friends during treatment. Survey results revealed a high percentage of patients would return to Overlook for treatment and would recommend the hospital to a friend or relative.

"We are proud of this important achievement," said David Freed, president of Overlook Hospital. "Our Emergency Department is dedicated to meeting the personal needs of our patients. We provide patients with as much timely information as possible regarding all aspects of their treatment."

James Espinosa M.D., medical director of the Emergency Department, and Linda Dielensch R.N., the nurse manager of the ED, both credit the cooperative

efforts of all areas of the ED and hospital for the high patient-satisfaction ranking.

"We are constantly working on improving ED services," said Linda Kosnik R.N., chief nursing officer at Overlook Hospital, and former nurse manager of the Overlook ED. "This month, we have been the groundbreaking on a new Pediatric Emergency Department." The "Peds ED" will be open to children in the fall of 2000.

Winner of the 1999 New Jersey Governor's Award for Performance Excellence — the highest state honor an organization can receive for quality and performance — Overlook Hospital is an Atlantic Health System, 490-bed major teaching hospital in Summit. Home of New Jersey's first stereotactic radio-surgery program for the treatment of cancer, Overlook's specialty services include the Neuroscience Institute and Brain Tumor Center of New Jersey; the Valerie Center, a pediatric oncology cancer program; The Children's Medical Center of Atlantic Health System; a Chest Pain Center; the Same Day Surgery Center and Hermita Center. Overlook also provides maternity services and critical care services to high-risk newborns at the new Frank and Mimi Walsh Maternity Center.

## Contact We Care offers callers 24-hour assistance

For those who are anxious about the upcoming summer season, there is a place to turn for help and support.

Contact We Care — the 24-hour listening and crisis intervention service serving Union, Middlesex, Somerset and Essex counties — has been offering the gift of listening to callers in need for 25 years.

As the leaves bud on the trees and the winter holidays are a fading memory, the phone at the non-profit agency is ringing more and more with callers who are anxious about life and their relationships and feeling a sense of disappointment.

Contact We Care handles more than 12,000 calls a year from indi-

viduals who are lonely, depressed, stressed or in crisis. Contact's highly trained volunteers, who have undergone 50 hours of training on active listening and a wide range of human problems, help callers sort through their problems and find their own answers. The agency's trained telephone volunteers give callers the

opportunity to talk and truly be heard.

The agency does not charge for its services, which are anonymous and confidential. Contact is funded by The United Way, individual donations, and private foundations, churches, and through the agency's fund-raising events such as "Contact's S-K Road Race."

The hotline number is (908) 232-2880.

## Proper prenatal care begins before conception

Everyone knows how important prenatal care is for pregnant women. But taking care of yourself shouldn't begin only when you are pregnant.

If you are a woman who would like to have children in the future, there are steps you can take now to help reduce risks of future birth defects, low birthweight, and other pregnancy problems. These steps are called "Pre-conception Care." Call your healthcare practitioner for more information.

- Get help now if you drink too much or use drugs. Drugs and alcohol have been linked to a variety of complications including low birthweight, developmental disabilities and birth defects.
- Stop smoking now. Smoking can cause low birthweight in babies.
- Get annual gynecological exams


and get tested for STDs and HIV.

• Improve your eating habits and, if necessary, take a vitamin supplement that contains folic acid. This mineral can reduce the risk of spina bifida, which may cause paralysis and disability in a baby.


• If you are sexually active, protect yourself from STDs and other unplanned pregnancies by using contraception. Remember, abstinence is the only


100-percent effective way to avoid both pregnancy and STDs.

Planned Parenthood of Greater Northern New Jersey can help women throughout their reproductive years. The Elizabeth Center, 208 Commerce Place, offers high quality, comprehensive reproductive health services for women. The center is affordable and confidential. Call for more information at (908) 351-5384.



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The average age for girls to begin menstruation in the United States is 12.5 years with a range from 10 to 15 years. If girls experience their first period (menarche) at age 9, they are still considered as normal. However, the younger they are to have their first period, the greater is the psychological impact on them. They may find the development overwhelming. Parents can prepare their daughters by providing concrete details without confusing them with excess information. The best approach is to have several small, matter-of-fact conversations that include practical information such as what happens, how a fetus, if others will

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# Healthy Living

## Specialists lend expertise to Network

The New Jersey Organ and Tissue Sharing Network — The Sharing Network — announced recently that Thomas Cannon has joined the organization as Community Development Specialist. Since joining the organization, Cannon has initiated a number of successful community relations initiatives involving civic groups, churches and corporations.

In this position, Cannon is working with local political officials, the clergy and residents of various communities in establishing partnerships that will lead to increased awareness about the importance of organ and tissue donation. Specifically, Cannon is using his background and expertise in reaching out to New Jersey's African-American communities to increase the organ donation rates. This is a particularly important outreach because of the disproportionate of African-Americans on waiting lists due to hypertension, diabetes and other illness that lead to the need for organ transplantation.

Cannon received a bachelor of science degree from Lehman College, Bronx, N.Y. in 1984. Prior to joining The Sharing Network, Cannon was assistant manager of the Lifestyle Fitness Center and was responsible for sales and facility operation.

Cannon and his wife, Beverly, and their daughter, Joy, are residents of Old Bridge.

Also joining The Sharing Network, it was announced, is Ximena A. Laleski, who will serve as a community development specialist. Since joining the organization, Laleski has initiated a number of successful community relations initiatives involving civic groups, churches and corporations.

Like Cannon, Laleski is working with local political officials, the clergy and residents of various communities in establishing partnerships that will lead to increased awareness about the importance of organ and tissue donation. Specifically, Laleski, who is proficient in English, Spanish and Portuguese, will use her skills and expertise in reaching out to New Jersey's Latin-American communities to increase the organ donation rate.

Laleski attended Saint Joseph's University, Philadelphia, and received a bachelor of arts degree in 1989 and a masters of science in international marketing degree in 1993.

Prior to joining The Sharing Network, Laleski was an international sales manager with Magic Supplies Inc. of Southampton, Pa. Laleski and her husband,

Lawrence, and their daughter, Isabella, are residents of Mount Holly.

Also new to The Sharing Network is Michael R. Mirabella, who has joined the organization as community development specialist. Since joining the organization last year, Mirabella has initiated a number of successful community relations initiatives involving civic groups, high schools, churches and corporations.

Mirabella, too, is working with local political officials, the clergy and residents of various communities in establishing partnerships that will lead to increased awareness about the importance of organ and tissue donation.

Mirabella attended Bernard Branch College, C.U.N.Y., and graduated with a B.B.A. degree in management in 1984. Mirabella brings 20 years of business development experience to the network.

Mirabella and his wife, Mary Ann, and their three children, Dana, Michael and Andrew, are residents of Berkeley Heights.

The Sharing Network is a nonprofit, federally-certified, state-approved procurement organization responsible for the recovery of organs and tissue

## Options exist for senior care

"Understanding the issues associated with aging and knowing what health-care options are available are critical in today's families," says Peggy Degnan, administrator of Ashbrook Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, a 120-bed long-term care facility located in Scotch Plains.

The Saint Barnabas Nursing and Rehabilitation Centers, affiliates of the Saint Barnabas Health Care System, have compiled a set of six brochures to help people make important decisions about health care as loved ones grow older. The set explores a wide range of pertinent topics and includes the following titles:

- "Assessing Living: Today's Option for Independent Seniors"
- "Caregiver Burnout: Reducing the Stress of Caregiving"
- "Choosing a Nursing Home: Questions to Ask"
- "Do I Need a Living Will? Questions and Answers"
- "Respite Care: The Gift of Time"
- "Understanding Medicare and Medicaid: How They Work"

To request a free brochure or brochures, write to "Educational Brochures," Public Relations, 695 Chestnut St., Union, NJ 07083, or call (800) 222-0147.

## Lecture series covers caregivers' needs

Senior Health will sponsor a five-week lecture series for caregivers, led by Janice Monaghan M.S.W., L.C.S.W., designed to provide support and information for individuals caring for elderly relatives.

This program will take place Thursdays from June 1 to June 29, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Union Hospital Senior Health office, 973-A Stuyvesant Ave., Union.

The group will focus on topics such as "Taking Care of Yourself," "Preventing and Solving Problems," and

"Accessing Resources."

The fee is \$10, which covers the cost of the manual used by participants. Checks should be made payable to Saint Barnabas Medical Center and mailed to Saint Barnabas Senior Health Services, 101 Old Short Hills Road, Suite 101, West Orange, NJ 07052. For further information, call (973) 322-6281.

The Saint Barnabas Senior Health Network, a systems-wide free membership program for people 50 years

old and older, is a service of the Saint Barnabas Health Care System. The program currently has more than 110,000 members who enjoy a variety of programs, lectures, discounts and services throughout the year at 10 affiliate hospitals in New Jersey.

For more information about the Senior Health Network, call either Union Hospital Senior Health at (908) 944-0444 or Saint Barnabas Senior Health at (973) 322-4205.

## Union Hospital's Vascular Laboratory earns accreditation

The Union Hospital Vascular Laboratory was recently among the first 1,000 vascular laboratories in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico to be granted accreditation by the Intersocietal Commission for the Accreditation of Vascular Laboratories, IC AVL.

The following areas have been accredited: Extracranial Cerebrovascular, Peripheral Arterial and Peripheral Venous.

The IC AVL, a non-profit organization established with the support of 10 medical societies, provides a mechanism for accrediting facilities which perform comprehensive testing for

vascular disease with noninvasive testing modalities. Ten sponsoring societies represent the medical specialties of radiology, ultrasonography, vascular surgery, neurology, cardiology, neurosurgery and internal medicine.

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. Stroke, often resulting from a disorder of the blood vessels to the brain, is the third leading cause of death and disability in this country. Each year, 2 million people in the United States alone develop deep vein thrombosis, or blood clots in the veins. This affliction becomes life-threatening for 500,000 of these peo-

ple when the blood clot breaks loose and travels to their lungs.

Although life-threatening if undetected, early diagnosis of these and other vascular diseases is possible through the use of noninvasive testing techniques performed within the vascular laboratory.

Union Hospital's Vascular Laboratory operates under the leadership of Medical Director Clifford M. Sales, M.D., R.V.T., and Technical Director Joanne Gerard Mont B.A., R.V.T. Accreditation status signifies that the facility has been reviewed by an independent agency, which recognizes the laboratory's commitment to quality

testing for diagnosis of vascular disease. Participation in the accreditation process demonstrates the laboratory's concern for high quality patient care and attention to quality assurance.

Union Hospital is an affiliate of the Saint Barnabas Health Care System.

**Bill Van Sant, Editor**  
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# Scotch Plains acting school earns praise from students, parents

The Performing Arts Studio is completing its spring semester to an overwhelmingly enthusiastic reception from its students and their parents.

"I think we have clearly identified a need and desire for theatrical arts education in our community. I am thrilled to be able to share my love of acting and music with my students," said Robin Gersoff Wong, director of The Performing Arts Studio.

"I have been so pleased with the acting class run by Robin. My son has found an additional avenue for creative expression. He is enthusiastic about performing and says, 'It's fun.' The class has helped to enhance his self-esteem and made him more goal directed," one parent said.

"My daughter absolutely loves the musical theater class and can't wait to continue the program this summer," another parent commented.

"The Performing Arts Studio has filled a creative void for my 6th-grader and he is enjoying it immensely," added a third parent.

Yet another parent enthused, "My daughter loves the musical theater workshop. As well as making new friends, it has also helped her self-esteem ... it has helped her to be comfortable in front of others."

"The Performing Arts Studio offers my daughter an outlet for her imagination and creative spirit, while at the same time teaches her basic acting and performance techniques. My child is having a wonderful time in class," added another parent.

"I am gratified with the responses to the Studio," says Gersoff Wong. "In addition to teaching the craft of acting, I feel it is equally important that the students have a good sense of self.

"In class, we strive for a supportive and nurturing environment where children can feel secure in expressing themselves and taking creative chances. In my youth, I was fortunate to have two high school teachers, Mr. Messenger and Mr. Zaccaro, who were genuinely passionate about acting. They instilled in me their love of theater. In fact, several of my classmates and I went on to successful professional careers as actors and directors. After many years, I am still in contact with these teachers who had such an impact on my life. In turn, I hope to pass on my love of theater to my students."

Gerson Wong went on to get her degree in theater from The Boston Conservatory of Music, where she studied with Dave Connor, currently the musical director of "Sesame Street." She performed on Broadway in the musical "Good News" and appeared on daytime television and in regional theater. She starred in Atlantic City musical revues at the Sands Hotel and Harrah's Casino. Gerson Wong performed throughout the New York metropolitan area as a singer and sang for New Jersey's Governor and Mrs. Florio at their Sweetheart Ball. She worked with Gary Marshall, creator of "Happy Days" and director of "Pretty Woman," Abe Burrows, director and writer of the original "Guys & Dolls," and Donald Sadler, Tony Award-winning choreographer of "No, No, Nanette."

Gerson Wong will continue her program this summer at Park Middle School in Scotch Plains. She will offer classes in musical theater, acting and stagecraft. The program is designed for students entering second grade through high school. For more information and brochure, call The Performing Arts Studio at (908) 412-6565.



The Performing Arts Studio's musical theater students rehearse the show-stopper, 'Another Op'nin', Another Show' for the end of the year performance June 4 at Terrill Middle School in Scotch Plains.

# Senior citizen artists are being sought for county-sponsored exhibit

All Union County senior citizen artists, professional and non-professional, are invited to enter the 2000 Union County Senior Citizen Art Contest and Exhibition.

Sponsored by the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, Department of Economic Development, the exhibition will be conducted at the NJ/Elizabethtown Gas Company, Liberty Hall Center, 1085 Morris Ave. in Union, a barrier-free site. The show opens with a reception June 21, and it will be on display until July 31.

"The whole community is enriched by the contributions of our senior citizen artists," said Freeholder Mary P. Ruotolo, liaison to the Cultural and Heritage Programs Advisory Board. "I hope many county residents will take advantage of this opportunity to share their talent at this annual event."

Artists must be a minimum of 60

years old and may submit an entry that was completed within the last three years. All work must be the original creation of the artist. Hanging craft or framed work, including photography, must be no wider than 38 inches and no narrower than 14 inches, including matting and frame. Sculptures or 3-D craft may not exceed 18 inches in height, width or depth.

Artists wishing to participate should return their application forms as soon as possible. Participation may be limited to the first 100 applicants due to space requirements.

Professional artists will judge the exhibit. The following are categories of eligible work: oil, acrylic, watercolor, pastel, print, drawing, mixed media, photography, sculpture, craft — no kits — and computer graphics. Computer graphics is defined as any artwork generated or manipulated

electronically, using one or more software programs. Work must be entirely original, including the source, material, if submitting a digitally-manipulated photograph, drawing or painting.

There will be awards of recognition for professional and non-professional artists. Participants claiming non-

professional status must not have sold the type of art entered in the exhibition through commercial channels; exhibited in a professional gallery; held professional membership in a guild or association. Artists claiming professional status are those who have met any of the above criteria. Both professional and non-professional first-place winners in

each category will represent the county in the statewide art contest that takes place in September.

Full information is on the application form, which is available from the Union County Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, 633 Pearl St., Elizabeth, NJ 07202. For information, call (908) 558-2550. Relay service users should call (800) 852-7899.

The annual Union County Senior Citizen Art Contest and Exhibition is made possible by the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders, the NJ/Elizabethtown Gas Company and a grant from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State. Additional support is provided by the Union County Department of Human Services, Division on Aging.

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## SUMMIT ANTIQUES CENTER

A taste of Europe is what I felt when I first entered The Summit Antiques Center in Summit. But the more I walked through it the more I realized I was observing the history of the world, from the early American period to the 20th century and the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries in Europe and the Orient. It's made of fifty small shops most individually owned, all with a different personality. That's what is so different from the antique shop that is large but only has one owner. Instead of getting one viewpoint of expertise you get fifty. Because the shops are small, each dealer shows you the best he's got, from his unique viewpoint. I learned a few things at The Summit Antiques Center about the countries of the world, European in particular. One dealer stressed the idea of tradition and I realized that we don't regard our history as highly as Europe regards its history. He said, "America has become a country of transitional people, values have decreased, we are a throw away society. For example, in America we grow up in a house and sell it. In Europe it remains in the family for three and four generations. They just won't sell it, at any price, everything means something to them."

What caught my eye was this tricycle with the crooked and worn out wheels. It evoked a picture of a little child long ago riding it. I knew that if the child was there that owned it, it would have brought back sacred memories. That's the power of antiques, bringing back a long forgotten period to your mind. As hindsight is always best because of the ability to compare, how much more to compare current trends to long ago, it teaches a lot.

Meredith Limmer who prefers early American says "The patriotic period of American History can't help rubbing off on an individual." Ed Coles A shopper adds, "The idea of a new nation being formed blows my mind. The chances of creating a new nation that would achieve what we have achieved is infinitesimally small, and that which is around us should show that experience, if Chinese furniture was here, how and what would have been the effect, I think quite different." I asked another shopper Cindy Edgar, why do people come here? She answered, "Why do people go to a museum, because of the art. In this place because of so many dealers, the prices are reasonable, and the inventory keeps changing."

The only way a man kept his job was because he was a true craftsman. There were no return policies. They had to do great work. I've already stressed this many times, antique shopping is the best psychological journey one can take. Just ask yourself why do you like it? You probably don't know why, and when you do things that you can't answer why, it must be profound. My conclusion is antique shoppers are very serious people with strong values, the values that made this country, these people cannot easily be swayed. Stop in and see for yourself. Summit Antiques Center is located at 511 Morris Ave., Summit Phone 908-273-9373. Hours 11:00 am - 5:00 pm 7 days a week.

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Please send or fax your resume to: Human Resources, Union Hospital, 1000 Delaware Hill Road, Union, NJ 07083. Fax: 908-851-7535. E-mail: [unhosp@schco.com](mailto:unhosp@schco.com) EOE

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# AUTOMOTIVE

## Buick's Rendezvous combines features to be 'a new breed' of SUV

Rendezvous, Buick's exciting new entry in the booming truck market, combines many of the best features of sport utility vehicles, premium sedans and minivans.

"We're proud to introduce Rendezvous as the Buick SUV — a new breed of sport utility that goes beyond the usual vehicle categories," said Buick General Manager Roger W. Adams. "It's really the best of all worlds — in terms of versatility, security and comfort."

"With our reconfigurable interior, we believe this is the most versatile vehicle in the utility market. It's a great product for today's active families — and a great example of General Motors' strategy to reach beyond traditional constraints and become the industry's product innovation leader."

Unlike traditional SUVs of about the same size, Rendezvous offers seven-passenger seating with its optional — and comfortable — third row of seats. Need fewer seats? Rendezvous can be easily reconfigured to create a huge cargo space of 108.9 cubic feet — about 5½ times the capacity of a Buick Park Avenue trunk. Rendezvous can be ordered with Versatrak, GM's innovative all-wheel-drive system that provides sure-footedness on all roads. And it can be equipped to tow as much as 3,500 pounds.

Ready for 2002? The first truck-based Buick is nearly 80 years. Rendezvous will be introduced as a 2002 model, with production beginning in the spring of 2001. It was unveiled at press conferences in early February of 2000 at the Chicago Auto Show and in San Diego, in conjunction with the Buick Invitational Golf Tournament.

Why create a truck-based Buick after all these years? There are several reasons. One, of course, is that today's U.S. vehicle market is about half trucks. Another is that specific opportunity was seen for Buick to reach out to new customers.

Marketing opportunity "Our research shows that the Baby Boomer and Generation X groups, who tend to buy SUVs and other trucks, acknowledge there's plenty of quality behind the Buick marque,"

Adams said. "So the opportunity is there to transfer what a variety of customers like about a Buick to a premium vehicle built according to a completely new formula — highly functional, enjoyable to drive and very luxurious."

Team members responsible for creating and marketing Rendezvous are particularly enthusiastic about the new vehicle.

Rendezvous Brand Manager Jack Bowen said that "by combining the best features and design elements of today's SUVs, premium sedans and minivans, we've been able to create a vehicle with real comfort, all-road and all-weather driving security and flexible cargo versatility. Buick Rendezvous is ready to handle the pace and diversified tasks of today's hectic life."

And Mark L. Reuss, its vehicle line executive, noted that Rendezvous is the first SUV with a combination of three-row seating, a low flat load floor, all-wheel drive and independent rear suspension.

"Our primary objective was to design a more innovative vehicle than those available today," Reuss said. "The marketplace is congested with 'three of these and a dozen of those.' To stand out and be recognized as something special, you need to be dramatically distinctive. This one goal I am sure we have achieved."

**"Refined ruggedness"** Of Rendezvous' design, Liz Wetzel, its design chief, said her team used Buick's "heritage of distinctive styling, power, comfort and security as a foundation, but took Rendezvous even further to add simplicity, practicality and durability — characteristics that are gaining in importance."

Rendezvous has a look of "refined ruggedness," Wetzel said. The new Buick's overall appearance is suggestive of an SUV, yet it sets its own course with such elements as a striking grille that is a stronger, more substantial version of the Buick vertical-bar design. The oval-shaped grille is "unmistakably Buick," she said, but the grille bars are stronger than the fine-pitched type in Buick automobiles. Instead of chrome, she noted, the grille is finished in an attractive



Buick's first truck since 1923, the Rendezvous, due in 2002, combines the best features of sport utility vehicles, premium sedans and minivans.

paint treatment that's more appropriate to the SUV mission.

"Our mission was to create a design that visually supports the vehicle's versatility, reinforces Buick brand equity and heritage, and portrays a youthful image," Wetzel said.

**Interior elegance** The design team also provided a feeling of interior elegance with a two-tone theme for all three trim levels — leather, flat-woven cloth with leather bolsters, and all cloth with pile fabric. Instrument-cluster detailing provides a look of precious stones set in polished metal, like jewelry. Needles and numbers are set in a silver face to resemble an expensive watch or designer bracelet. A new metallic accent trim lends a sophisticated and technical air to the interior.

Said Bowen, "The idea is to provide one vehicle that avoids the compromises inherent in traditional vehicles. With Rendezvous, consumers can have both style and functionality, performance and comfort, handling and roominess. Plus we're providing an impressive array of safety features,

outstanding fuel economy and great overall value."

**Key features** Among Rendezvous' many features:

- Low door sills, compared with traditional SUVs, providing low step-in height for easy entry and exit.
- A newly designed independent rear suspension to provide superior road-holding — and ride characteristics more like a Park Avenue Ultra than an SUV.

- Various seating combinations — handling as many as seven passengers — that are the key to Rendezvous' superior versatility. The two front seats are buckets. Two second-row choices are offered — a three-across split bench or two captain's chairs. Second-row footrests are optional. The optional third row has comfortable seating for two adult passengers and can be folded flush, with the release of a lever, to provide even more space in Rendezvous' large cargo area.

- A new-design center console large and versatile enough to handle a full-size laptop computer — and with

a special area for a purse. The console may be easily accessed by either front passenger. The lockable console also offers secure storage and charging space for the ubiquitous cell phone.

- A full range of instruments, a number of them visible on a new-generation head-up display as well as on the instrument panel. There are four audio entertainment systems, including one with optional rear-seat controls and headphones for rear-seat occupants.
- A 48-inch-wide rear opening, providing the ability to carry 4-by-8-foot panels and other building materials.

**Versatrak** Rendezvous will be one of the first vehicles to offer Versatrak, General Motors' innovative "on-demand" all-wheel-drive system. Versatrak uses front drive under normal road conditions and adds torque to the rear wheels on slippery roads. Versatrak is standard on Rendezvous's upscale CXL model and optional on the CX.

With Versatrak, there are no buttons to press or levers to throw, according to Reuss. "No special driv-

ing action is needed beyond stepping on the accelerator. Versatrak is always poised to make the best use of the traction available."

The CX model without Versatrak, which is a front-drive vehicle, may be ordered with an all-speed traction control that employs both powertrain and brake system intervention to avoid wheel spin on slippery surfaces.

**Powerful, economical V-6**

Rendezvous' powerful 3.4-liter V-6 engine, attached to an electronically controlled four-speed automatic transmission, generates 185 horsepower at 5200 rpm and 210 lb-ft of torque at 4000 rpm. It provides exceptionally good fuel economy — estimated EPA fuel economy numbers are 19 miles per gallon city and 24 mpg highway for the front-drive version and 17/22 with all-wheel drive.

**Safety features** The new Buick has numerous safety features, such as frontal and side air bags with advanced inflation features for front-seat passengers, safety-cage construction and four-wheel disc and anti-lock brakes.

**Personal choice**

Like Buick automobiles, Rendezvous has many features that can be personalized, such as exterior lamp exit delay, interior lighting functions, automatic door lock and unlock operations, delayed locking, remote door unlock with remote keyless entry and feedback with remote keyless entry. On the upscale or CXL, a driver information center on the instrument panel provides an outside temperature reading, compass and readings for trip average fuel economy, range and fuel used. It also includes a tire inflation monitoring system that lights a warning lamp if low tire pressure is detected.

**Intrusion alert,**

**rear-objection detection**

Another advanced Rendezvous option is an ultrasonic intrusion alert system that can be armed to sound an alarm if movement is detected inside the vehicle when it is locked. In addition, an optional rear parking assist system uses four ultrasonic sensors to warn the driver of obstacles in the blind spot immediately behind the rear bumper.

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# Franchini, Lynn partner with NJ Stallions

Robert Franchini of Franchini Chevrolet of Garfield and Lynn Chevrolet of Kearny have partnered to co-sponsor the New Jersey Stallions Men's Professional Soccer Team, and the Lady Stallions Women's Elite Amateur Soccer. The sponsorship will include 3,000 youth season passes — in all regular season games — to be distributed free of charge to all Lipson Soccer League players. Also included will be 100 soccer balls to be given away at both the men's and women's home games July 5.

The Stallions and Lady Stallions will be playing their 2000 season games at Kean University in Union, with games from now through July. According to team officials, the Stallions look forward to a great turnout at the men's and women's games there, and are proud of bringing professional soccer to this area.

Fans can catch the Stallions often at "7-11" and "7-11" tickets and game information.



Franchini Chevrolet of Garfield and Lynn Chevrolet of Kearny have partnered to co-sponsor the New Jersey Stallions Men's Professional Soccer Team, and the Lady Stallions Women's Elite Amateur Soccer. Marking the agreement are, from left, Robert Franchini of Franchini Chevrolet, Luis Mendoza, star midfielder for the Stallions, and Rich Gentile, general manager of the New Jersey Stallions.

## Mercedes S-Class combines luxury with entertaining touch

By Mark Maynard  
Clyck New Service

Talk about radical changes in car design. The Mercedes-Benz 2000 S-Class sedan has gone California — and never has flagship luxury been so entertaining.

The S-Class is the largest Mercedes sedan — has been since the line began in 1957 — and the preceding five generations of S-Class have all been stonings of prestige. They were a collective body of formal luxury with a brooding, squared-shouldered air of capability and immediacy.

The sixth-generation S is the breakaway car — first S-Class that will cut across-driving personalities that replaces that old, Teutonic seriousness.

Despite the predecessors' purist purity, the new S-Class is a futuristic, customer-wild, low-profile tires, dark windows and sleek, black treatments.

Personalization of your car is a signature of many S-Class owners, and Mercedes-Benz has given them a fine canvas for their creativity.

To begin with the new millennium, there are two models of 2000 S-Class, both on a long wheelbase, steel unibody for maximum rear-seat leg room.

- The 275-hp, 4.3-liter V-8 S430 has a starting price of \$70,295.
- The 303-hp, 5.0-liter S500 is \$78,445. A 12-cylinder model isn't expected for at least a year.

Both models are quite complete as equipped, but it is the S500 that carries the most personalities, performance and standard features.

It is 2 inches shorter than its predecessor, 1.5 inches narrower and lower, and 500 pounds lighter. Inside, there is 1.5 inches more leg room and more head room.

The profile is rounder, lower and sleeker with a remarkable 0.27 coefficient of drag — down from 0.32 and even slicker than the Corvette's 0.29. The shape disguises the size, but the car feels smaller and less bulky than before. There also is a 2- to 3-inch less shoulder room and back, which will be better for some and disappointing to others.

What it gives up in width, it gives back in the driving experience.

The 2000 S has steered from the private lounge or office-on-wheels to a driver's car. The responsive touch to the accelerator, brakes and 5-speed Sportshift transmission are all turned to feed driver interaction.

The extra horsepower of the S500 is easily appreciated and, somehow, this more expensive model felt more substantial on the road than the S430.

With its versatile stick-shift capability, you can gear down on the approach of a curve and feel the suspension respond with athletic finesse. The old car carried more ballast and wasn't as lively in the corners.

The shift points are accurate and lithe in the transitions.

Acceleration is formidable for a car that weighs more than two tons. The S430 will do 0-60 mph in 6.9 seconds, the S500 in 6.1.

Fuel economy is 17/24 city/highway for the S430 and 16/23 for the S500 and both pass low-emission qualifications.

The mass of this car, which is nearly 17 feet long, is also well disguised in the way it handles potholes and steep entryways without a scrape or rebound. The turning circle — 38.4 feet — also was tightened by 2.6 feet, which adds nimbleness in crowded parking lots.

Mark Maynard is automotive editor at the San Diego Union-Tribune. Contact him at mark.maynard@uniontrib.com.

### AUTOMOTIVE

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