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WORRALL COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS

THURSDAY, MAY 7, 1998 • SECTION B

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Force rebukes McDermott for GOP's decline

By Phillip Sean Curran
Staff Writer

Trying to maintain his hold as chairman of the Union County Republican Party, Frank X. McDermott received stinging criticism from a former Republican county freholder, who charged that McDermott is primarily to blame for the party's eroding support base.

Edwin H. Force, whose defeat last year helped give Democrats unanimous control of the freholder board, said the demands of McDermott's law practice, combined with his work as chairman—of the N.J.—Tumpike Authority and myriad other responsibilities have caused him to ignore the party's growing problems. Republicans have failed to capture a freholder seat since 1993, and some party members foresee a similar outcome this year.

"I think he has been neglectful of the Republican party in Union County," Force said.

The first notable figure to publicly criticize McDermott, Force added, "It's almost a sin that he has not spent the time to build up the Republican party in Union County."

The former freholder chairman related an anecdote that he believes shows McDermott's lack of interest in the GOP in Union County. At last year's election night rally in Garwood for county Republicans, Force said McDermott circulated for a scant 20 minutes before leaving for Princeton, where Gov. Whitman was holding her own rally.

McDermott, county chairman for nine years, is currently engaged in building a strong challenge from Anthony DiGiovanni, the Union Township municipal Republican chairman.

Earlier this week, DiGiovanni announced the names of his five-member committee team.

His members include three Republican municipal chairmen: Nancy Lawrence of Cranford, Peter Kobylarz of Elizabeth and Bill Ruocco of Springfield; Summit Committee Chairman Bill Franklin and Frank Meeks III. Interestingly, Meeks served as McDermott's committee secretary for nine years. He said he considers McDermott a friend. Downplaying his switch of allegiance, Meeks said he thinks DiGiovanni has what it



Frank X. McDermott takes to restore Republican pride and reverse the five-year losing streak on the county level.

"It is a matter of trying to turn this around in Union County because we've been wiped out," Meeks said. "McDermott has been good, but I think he has too much on his agenda."

McDermott and his allies struck back at critics who blame him for



Edwin H. Force election defeat.

"Tony fails to recognize that he will have run the three last campaigns," McDermott said, referring to Linda DiGiovanni's Republican freholder campaign management. "I didn't lose it by myself, I had help from Linda."

Linda DiGiovanni, a former freholder who now works for Rep. Bob

Franks, R-Union, declined to comment on McDermott's remarks.

In defense of McDermott, Republican committee secretary John DeSimone said, "to zero in on one person is totally unfair. There are many factors that make and break a candidate."

McDermott, who has raised over \$1.3 million for the Republicans during his tenure, added: "(DiGiovanni's) arguments, well I lost the county, are pretty arguable and he probably thinks they are too, especially when you consider the fact that... the loss of his town hurt us county-wide."

In 1997, Democrats won control of the Union Township Committee and Whitman lost in the township during her re-election campaign.

The vote for chairman, which is to take place June 9, is widely viewed as setting the stage for the next Republican gubernatorial primary. State Sen. Donald T. DiFrancesco and Franks are the top candidates for the party nomination.

McDermott said he believes the chairman's race is an early test of strength for both men.

"If (Franks) were to take the county chair, he would certainly show the

people in the other counties that he had the support over Dony in his own county," McDermott said. "The only problem is they miscalculated me. I guess they thought I'd dry up and blow away."

DiGiovanni, however, brushed aside rumors that he is attempting to support Franks. "It basically has nothing to do with Bob Franks and Don DiFrancesco," DiGiovanni said. "It's just that, for two years."

DiGiovanni challenged McDermott two years ago but relented after DiFrancesco promised that McDermott would serve only one more term. "He is trying to pick a fight between Bob Franks and Don DiFrancesco," DiGiovanni observed.

DiFrancesco refused to comment about the matter, said Rayve Hutton, a spokeswoman in the senator's Trenton office.

According to a source familiar with the two, Franks and DiFrancesco attended a meeting five weeks ago where both men expressed the desire to become governor. The source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the pair left the meeting without reaching a consensus.

Training county's bravest

Academy mix of sweat, high tech

By Walter Elliott
Staff Writer

"Some people think we're one of Union County's best-kept secrets," said Anthony Parenti, chief of the John H. Starnier Police Academy in Scotch Plains. "I think we're one of the county's best returns on its investment."

Parenti has been at the helm of the academy since January. His office window overlooks the parking lot for police trainees and their instructors share with students and faculty at the neighboring Union County Vocational-Technical High School. Parenti recently led a tour of the academy's facilities.

"I've been giving tours about once a month," he said. "We're getting law enforcement people from across the county in here on tour."

This particular tour includes Union County Prosecutor Thomas Manahan, Assistant Prosecutor Robert O'Leary and retired Scotch Plains Police Chief Robert Luce, who now serves as special assistant to the prosecutor.

"The academy has been around since the 1920s but never had a place of its own," said O'Leary. "It was sharing space with Union County College in Cranford and here at the County Ve-Tee when a need for a separate facility arose."

Manahan picked up the narrative at this point.

"John Starnier, who was prosecutor at the time, promoted the idea of a purposely built academy building. It was his vision which the municipal chiefs and the freholders agreed to. He lived long enough to see the construction start," the prosecutor added.

"The tour passed by Starnier's por-



Recruits go through a workout on the overhead bars at the John H. Starnier Police Academy in Scotch Plains recently. From left: Wayne Dawes of the NJ Transit Police, Gary J. Roman Jr. of the Rahway Police Department and Royce Stafford of the NJ Transit Police.

trait at the building's entrance. The lobby's centerpiece is an array of 22 county and municipal police emblems displayed on the wall. They represent the departments which send members to the academy for training.

"When a department hires an officer, that person is sent here for a semester's training," said Parenti. "The recruit is put through the physical and technical training needed on the street."

At this point in the tour, two recruits sprint up, salute Parenti and ask permission to go to their cars. Parenti returns the salute and tells them to go ahead.

Following the recruits out the front door, the group finds six more trainees working out on a set of overhead bars. They represent Hillside, Rahway and NJ Transit.

"Our day begins at 5 a.m. with a flag raising and exercises," said David Swider, a recruit from Hillside. "We exercise and go through basic training

until 8:30 a.m. After a breakfast, we go to our classes until 4:30 p.m."

Luce explained that most of the money for operating the academy is confiscated from drug dealers and other criminals. NJ Transit and Somerset County pay tuition for their recruits. Union County police departments pay no tuition to send recruits to the academy.

The tour next passed through a gym where a group of about 40 recruits were practicing judo. This group is a little less than half the size of the average graduating class. Parenti said, "Recruit training one of three training branches," said Parenti. "There's the corrections training which we began in February and the continuous in-service training."

In-service training keeps officers informed about new laws and advances in technology. Among the topics covered in in-service are bicycle parking, computer crime and colloquial Spanish. A revamped class

on ethics is to be offered to all 18,000 officers in the county over the next year, Parenti said.

In a glance at the course catalog shows a comprehensive array of classes taught by either supervisory officers or specialists in the field.

A peek inside the firearms range reveals an interactive "shoot-don't shoot" video display, where participants in a cyber-shootout must make split-second decisions during sudden on-screen confrontations with gun-wielding criminals and innocent civilians. The academy has an in-house audiovisual production facility and satellite links to an instructional television network.

"Law enforcement is ever-changing and is becoming more specialized," he said. "What makes our academy special, however, is that our graduates can come back to us with whatever problem they have. That open door policy allows us to apply what's on the street into our training."

Community Affairs okays UCUA lease

By Sean Dally
Staff Writer

Financing the lease of the Rahway garbage incinerator between Ogden Martin and the Union County Utilities Authority may have gotten a lot easier.

The state Department of Community Affairs approved the lease between the UCUA, owner of the incinerator, and the facility's operator last week.

According to UCUA Chairman James Kennedy, the DCA's approval of the lease was not required, but it was useful; it could lead to lower interest rates when the UCUA issues bonds in the future.

This could be important to Union County taxpayers. The Rahway incinerator's 25-year lease to Ogden Martin includes the refinancing of about \$175 million of the UCUA's \$293 million in bonded debt. With the DCA's approval in hand, the refinancing could result in the UCUA making smaller interest payments on the bonds.

The lease still needs to be approved by the state Department of Environmental Protection and by Union County's 21 municipalities.

The Summit Municipal Utilities Authority was expected to authorize its officials to sign contracts with the UCUA Tuesday.

When asked why the authority was expected to okay the agreement, Michael R. Townley, executive director of the Summit MUA said, "I think the staff recommendation was to sign the agreement because the agreement gives the city stability in trash disposal rates."

The 25-year contract would give Summit a per-ton garbage disposal fee of \$50 the first year of the agreement. Annual increases in the per-ton fee would be based on the consumer price index.

Not every municipality is in favor of the lease, however.

Westfield's Town Council passed a resolution on April 7 refusing to sign a contract with the UCUA. The town is one of seven in Union County where homeowners pay for garbage to be picked up by one of several small contractors instead of by municipal employees or a single large contractor. Council members decided they could not impose a contract on the private garbage haulers.

The UCUA will also levy an environmental investment charge, or EIC, of \$18.00 on every ton of garbage collected in Union County. The EIC will be built into the tipping fee for towns that sign contracts with the UCUA, but it will also be imposed on towns that send their trash elsewhere. Westfield officials questioned whether the EIC could hold up under a court challenge.

Westfield council members also said they had serious concerns about the length of the contract — 25 years. During that time, Westfield would have to send the same amount of garbage to the incinerator each year. Any shortfall would have to be made up in cash.

Summit sends 6,500 tons of garbage to the UCUA every year. Townley said the city could continue to send that amount each year over the 25-year term of the lease based on Summit's high rate of recycling.

The Clark Township Council is also expected to pass a resolution similar to Westfield's later this month.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

CDC's 'Baby' gets a chance to grow

The health of a newborn is very often determined by the prenatal care afforded by the expectant mother. Though cute and bouncy, "Baby" delivered this past weekend by the Cranford Dramatic Club, seems to have been somewhat undernourished during pregnancy resulting in a slightly premature birth.

"Baby" — with an intelligent script by Sybille Pearson and a score by Richard Malby Jr. and David Shire — was first presented on Broadway in 1984 and is among the more charming musicals in recent decades. The show tells the story of three couples in a college community: Danny and Lizzie, students in their 20s; Pam and Nick, thirty-something coaches, and Alan and Arlene, a 48-year-old administrator and his wife.

Spanning a period of nine months, "Baby" offers a glimpse of the effect the same event has on different people. While each couple's story follows a slightly different path, all three find their lives turned upside down at the prospect of parenthood. The unmarried student finds themselves expecting and must rethink their dreams and goals; infertile Pam and Nick's marriage to the test, and Alan and Arlene, awaiting an unexpected change-of-life baby, must question the strength of their relationship when not defined by the roles of "mother" and "father."

"Baby" is an untraditional musical comedy in that the chorus makes only a handful of appearances and rarely in full. The power of this show rests in the hands of the six principals, a fact which proves to be a double-edged sword.

The flaws here are relatively minor. However, they are to be found in the performances, and their regular appearances fray the dramatic thread of the story. Alan and Arlene lament that their marriage has no fire. Rather than showing us a couple full of passion, they somehow can't express. Maurice J. Moran Jr. and Janice Lynn Shuhan show us a couple with no fire.

Lynn's second-act solo, "Patterns," is the closest we get to seeing the desperation plaguing this marriage. The song was cut from the Broadway production because it tends to slow down the plot. Lynn, however, rose to the occasion, turning in a performance which justified the number's inclusion here.



The 'Baby' makers — from left, standing, Anjanette Valiente, Bob Pells, Peggy Seymour, Janice Lynn Shuhan, Carl Barber-Siegle. Seated, Rich Sibello, JoAnne Gschickter, Melissa Loderstedt and Maurice Moran.

Theater View

By Bill Van Sant
Staff Writer

The authors, while dividing the story into thirds, have been a little generous with Danny and, particularly, Lizzie. Unfortunately, Rich Sibello and JoAnne Gschickter are the show's weakest links. Neither looks at all like a college junior, nor do they fully mine the depth of the material provided. Perhaps because neither is in their early 20s, the actors' points of view conveyed a maturity and perspective which betrayed the characters' innocence and naivete, two key elements in the successful portrayal of the roles.

Audiences, however, should expect stand-out performances from Kim Webb and Melissa Loderstedt as Nick and Pam. Both display a comfortable ease with the material, with each other and, most importantly, with being on stage. The poignancy of their story is

effectively juxtaposed by the humor each brings to their role, making the resolution of their share of the story all the more meaningful.

Although Malby and Shire have provided Pam with the least interesting material, Loderstedt — the most impressive vocalist in the show — invests each of her numbers with a catalog of emotions sure to prove amusing, tender and heartbreaking at the same time.

Webb's Nick is an artful combination of machismo, tenderness, bad jokes and deep love. His skillful construction of the character lays the foundation for the ultimate choice this couple must make in "With You," a moment which leaves the audience smiling through their tears. He and Loderstedt provide Nick and Pam with an intensity and quiet urgency one would want from all the principals.

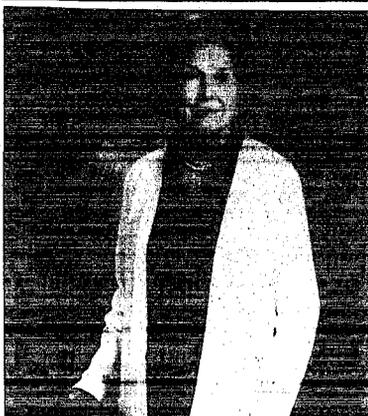
The chorus, shaved down to four from its usually larger number, effectively ties the action together in transitions and interpreted scenes. Carl Barber-Siegle brings so much sparkle to the stage, one wishes he had more to do. Also of note is Bob Pells' turn as a fertility specialist, making an

otherwise tense moment a laugh riot. He, Webb and Loderstedt play this scene like a symphony.

The production values here are excellent, with Janet Murphy's sets, Peggy E. Seymour's lights and Liz Howard's costumes all effectively adding to the intention of the script, and director Mary Brunton-Webb keeps the show moving at a nice pace. Musical direction by Anjanette Valiente and Brunton-Webb's choreography also do their respective jobs to keep the show on its course. If the same attention, however, had been paid to the depth and layering of the characterizations and relationships, this would be the brightest baby in the nursery.

However, despite its flaws, the "Baby" of this show — in both the material and the handling — are worth a look. Perhaps with another weekend under its belt, "Baby" will start to walk and talk rather than just be cute.

"Baby" continues its run at the Cranford Dramatic Club, 78 Winans Ave. in Cranford, Friday and Saturday and May 15 and 16. For information and reservations, call (908) 276-1011.



Belva Plain

Renowned author visits the Springfield Library

By Walter Elliott
Staff Writer

The Springfield Free Public Library may have set an attendance record when author Belva Plain visited Sunday afternoon. An estimated 115 people filled the library's Donald Palmer Museum and spilled into the outdoor center court to hear Plain talk and sign books.

"This book signing exceeded my expectations," said Library Director Susan Pemasz. "We know when Belva Plain is about to publish a new book because we get reserve requests weeks and months in advance."

Pemasz said the Plain book signing is one of several special or continuing events the library holds as a local cultural center. The activities include children's readings, book discussion groups, foreign film screenings and concerts. But to have an author of Plain's caliber present, however, she credits the assistance of Mayor Sy Mullman.

"At one of the library board meetings, the idea of getting a noted local author here came up," said Mullman. "I've been a friend of Belva for years and I asked her if she can visit our library. It was one friend asking a favor of another, and she waived her usual appearance fee."

"I have never been to the Springfield Library before," said Plain. "I've come from an author's book tour in Maryland and Virginia. This library has a great children's section."

Plain is largely known for her historical novels. Her first book, "Evergreen," was published 20 years ago and has since become an NBC mini-series. Her latest work, "Legacy of Silence," was published by Dolacore Press April 10. "I was extremely fortunate to have 'Evergreen' published within months of submission," said Plain. "Sometimes it takes years for an author to get a first book published."

Describing herself as "a person who did the normal things like getting married and raising children," Plain began writing short stories for magazines like "Cosmopolitan" and "Redbook." When her children had grown up, she attempted writing a novel.

"I always wrote in journals and have been interested in history," said Plain. "I do some research, like the time I found a journal in a New Orleans synagogue about the congregation's early life before the Civil War. The important thing is to have a plot and characters that are interesting enough to hold your attention." After she read a passage from "Legacy of Silence" and fielded questions about writing for most of an hour, Plain began to sign books. Among those in line were Eric Kijas and Jeanne and Ben Graulich.

"This is the first time I've seen Plain and been to a book signing," said Kijas. "My family has and reads most of her 15 titles." "I've been reading to Ben, who is six months old," said Jeanne Graulich. "Plain knows how to draw readers into historical times."

Find out what's cooking at Miller-Cory House

If you enjoy cooking, becoming a member of the Miller-Cory Museum's cooking committee is a wonderful way to experience the joy of cooking in an early American kitchen. As a cook, you will become a member of the Cooking Committee, meet warm and friendly people, experience baking and cooking many varieties of food over the open hearth and have fun.

No experience is necessary, just a love of cooking. As a new cook, you will be fully trained. Cooking schedules are planned in accordance with your availability and depth of interest. In addition to introducing new and flavorful recipes into your own home you will also learn about life in early New Jersey.

If you are interested in joining the Cooking Committee, call the Museum office at (908) 232-1776.

Events, functions for children at Trailside

Trailside Nature & Science Center offers birthday party programs for children 5 years and older. Group size is limited to 12 children for preschool programs and 18 for 1st grade and up. Naturalist-led programs are 45 minutes and may be booked for weekdays or Saturdays. Planetarium shows are also available, are limited to 25 children and may be scheduled weekdays or the first Saturday of the month.

Upon request, some group programs can also be adapted for birthday parties. Please advise in advance if your group has special needs. To schedule a birthday party call Trailside at (908) 789-3670, weekdays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

- Pre-First Grade and Up.
- Snakes & Turtles: Fun facts about these popular animals; meet a turtle and touch a snake from Trailside's collection.
- Dinosaurs: Become a paleontologist and put together a dinosaur skeleton, then create your own prehistoric creature on paper.
- Seasonal Sensory Walk: Explore the woods and fields using your senses.
- Mini-Beasts: Uncover smaller animal neighbors such as earthworms, millipedes and slugs. April-October only.
- Animal Detectives: Investigate the diversity of animal calls, coverings, taxidermed members of the bird and mammal groups. Tour Trailside's Museum to get a closeup look at some sizes and shapes.

- Busy Bees: Explore the world of honey bees using games and stories. Observe a live hive in action.
- Snowflakes: Discover fun facts about snow! Go on a snowflake hunt and draw your own snow scene. December-February.
- Rock 'N' Roll Rocket: Planetarium Show: Join Rodney the Rocket on a musical tour of the planets! Explore the moon, Venus and Mars. Learn planetarium basics, counting and the planet song.
- The Sky Inside: Planetarium Show: Learn what causes the daily changes from daylight to darkness, what causes the phases of the moon, and all about the composition of stars.
- First Grade and Up.
- Seasonal Field Walk: Explore forests and fields to find out how plants and animals adapt to the changing seasons.
- Animal Neighbors: Find out about the mammals, birds and insects that share our suburban neighborhoods. We'll look for clues that tell us about animals living in the Reservation and play "Who Am I?"
- Birds: A Flock of Facts: A slide presentation and activities about birds adapted to the season: spring nests and eggs; fall migrants; winter feeder birds.
- Family of the Sun: Planetarium Show: Learn about the planets of the solar system and see close-up photos taken by spacecraft. Includes a song about the planets, dazzling special effects and lasers.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Catch 'The Seagull' before it flies away

Any theater critic worth the light in his monitor has trouble with the works of Anton Chekhov. Not because they are not well-written — quite the contrary, because they are, and because they are from a place and time so far away it might as well be on the moon — or Moscow, 1895: The playwright's meaning, however timeless, is too often lost in translation. But when Chekhov's works are done well, layers of meaning unfold like the bloom of a rose, or the feathers of a gentle bird, as is the case with "The Seagull," on stage through May 31 at The Elizabeth Playhouse.

Deny any human being their basic freedoms — to achieve, to love and to be loved — remove the opportunity to leave or avoid the situation, relate a group of them to each other and then place them all in close proximity in the heat of the summer, and you've got the following:

Aspiring writer Constantine is tortured by his honesty and inexperience, both of which put him in conflict with his famous actress mother, Irina, who traded honesty-for-image-early-in-her now-fading career. Constantine is loved by the well-meaning Masha, who is pursued by pitifully annoying Symyon. But Constantine only has eyes for income goddess Nina, also tortured by her honesty and inexperience. Irina is pursued by Masha's father Ilya, to the great chagrin of Masha's mother, Paulina. Irina clings as tightly to her renown as to her lover, Boris, who — well, now, that would give it away.

Got all that? Ah, but it's so much more than a soap opera. It's real life, any place or year you choose, and the actors do a fine job. Pauline Walsh is wonderful as usual as the fragile Paulina. Jack Drucker



Lorraine Hernandez as Nina, far right, addresses a rapt audience, from left, Howard Krebs as Symyon, Bebeka Martenson as Irina, Gilberto Ron as Boris and Jack Drucker as Ilya in 'The Seagull' at The Elizabeth Playhouse.

Theater View

By Jacquie McCarthy
Associate Editor

comes on strong as the effusive and ingratiating Ilya. James Broderick, terrific in an intense performance in "All My Sons" this season at Carnival Productions, earns more kudos as Irina's brother Peter Sorin. Eika Bendit is truly effective as

quietly desperate Masha. Bernie Weinstein gives an enjoyable performance as Dr. Yevgeny Dorn. Not to be overlooked are Howard Krebs as Symyon, Lyn Adams as Anna, and a cameo appearance by Rich Aront as servant Yakov.

Gil Moreno is the Playhouse's new find, as subtle and effective as Constantine as he was funny in the recent "The Real Inspector Hound." Rebekka Martenson gives a strong performance as Irina.

Gilberto Ron's Boris Trigorin is understated yet impressive, and a great delivery of the Act 1 Scene 2 monologue is to his credit. Last but

not least, Lorraine Hernandez is as moving and sincere as an ingenue should be, but sit tight during Act 3, when Hernandez proves she has left the ingenue behind.

Speaking of Act 3, the multi-talented Marlow Ferguson has once again constructed an efficacious set, not to mention presenting a thought-provoking production.

"The Seagull" will continue Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$8, \$6 for students and seniors. The Elizabeth Playhouse is located at 1100 East Jersey St., Elizabeth. For information, call (908) 355-0077.

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WORRALL COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS
The Union Leader, The Leader, Summit Observer, The Echo Leader, The Gazette Leader, The Spectator Leader, Rahway Progress, Clark Eagle
DINING REVIEW
May 7, 1998
by Renee Illan
When someone wants great Steaks - Fish - Burgers what else comes to mind but Alexus Steakhouse & Tavern located on Route 22 West in Mountainside. A pleasant dining experience for lunch, dinner, special occasion or a getaway from the office.
The upbeat music greets diners as they enter this comfortable restaurant. Novelty mirrors and neon signs suggest the free spirit of the restaurant. A 57-foot bar is the perfect place to catch the game or stock market on one of the televisions.
My dining companion and I had a very enjoyable lunch. An ample supply of pickles, cherry peppers and cole slaw dressed each diner's table. We started out with the calamari appetizer lightly battered and fried, served with a tangy or mild dipping sauce. We decided to order the famous Alexus 24oz. Demonic Steak, thick juicy and cooked to perfection, tender as could be, served with choice of potato or rice with a sweet apple ring. My companion was very pleased. I ordered my all time Favorite Swordfish and I made a special request for the Alexus dill sauce which came atop this large piece, a side of herbed rice was just the touch.
My dining companion and I are dessert connoisseurs. A nice assortment was available and it was hard to choose. I selected the strawberry shortcake and my friend chose the cheesecake. The cheesecake was absolutely sinful but the strawberry shortcake was divine. Mounds and mounds of homemade whipped cream over a light shortcake and the quantity of fresh strawberries was more than plentiful. Both of us agreed the desserts complemented the meal very nicely. We both had coffee steaming hot and fresh.
Seeing is believing! Alexus Steakhouse & Tavern is the place to tempt your taste buds and soothe your spirit. Reservations are gladly accepted. Alexus Steakhouse & Tavern is located at 1230 Route 22 West in Mountainside. Lunch and dinner hours: Monday through Thursdays 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays to midnight, Sundays 3 p.m. to 10 p.m. For reservations special occasions call (908) 233-5300.
This column is intended to inform our readers about dining opportunities in the area

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NJ Ballet springs into its final performance of the season

By Bea Smith
Staff Writer

An especially enchanting evening was offered to a large audience on Saturday by Kean University and the New Jersey Ballet Co. with the presentation of "An Evening of Pas de Deux" at the Wilkins Theater. This was the final in the spring productions of the New Jersey Ballet Saturday Evening Series and it was interspersed with bravos and bravas throughout the performances.

In a group of 11 excerpts from full-length productions with the fascinating, versatile dancer-choreographer, Elie Lazar, flying across the stage without touching the ground as only he can do in the opening, the middle and the final ballet offering, the enthusiastic audience sat transfixed by all the drama, music, dancing and elegance on that stage.

One of the more outstanding classical ballet numbers was "Don Quixote." In a grand pas de deux performed by Lori Christman and Andrei Jouravlev. The Spanish style rod costumes and Christman's red fan were very effective, as were Jouravlev's strong, one-handed lifts. It was choreographed by Marius Petipa with music by Ludwig Minkus and costumes by Bolshoi Costume Shop.

"Frantelli," opened the ballet with Lazar and Morgan Goddard, dancing with timorous blending the Italian carnival with classical ballet. It was one of Lazar's outstanding ballet performances, and he ended it by kissing his partner's hand. It was choreographed by George Balanchine, with music by Louis Moreau Gottschalk and was staged by Edward Villella with costumes by Vasia Beusi.

"Dobra Sayles and You Qing Guo danced beautifully to "Sleeping Beauty," choreographed after Marius Petipa, staged by Eleanor D'Annunzio with music by Peter Tchaikovsky and costumes by Paul McRae and Lori Christman.

"Russian Princess Dance," which is from the third act of "Swan Lake," danced by Era Korotava, combined the Russian folk dance with ballet. It was very pleasant to watch with music by Tchaikovsky, choreography after Petipa-Ivanov and costume by McRae.

"Pas D'Esclave" from "Le Corsaire," about a sailor who owns many slaves, was fantastic with two new dancers in the company, Julia Vorobyeva and Konstantin Dournev. Vorobyeva has a beautiful extension, a very supple back and in Arabian costumes, both blend Arabian movements with classical ballet. It has choreography by Marius Petipa, with music by Ricardo Drigo and costumes by Christman.

"Grand Pas Classique," also choreographed by Petipa with music by Ludwig Minkus and costumes by Bolshoi Costume Shop, was powerfully danced by Christman and Jouravlev. The latter has powerful legs, and his turns and jumps are exciting. It blends elegance with strength and skill.

"Stars and Stripes," a ballet to all march music, is an unusual piece, choreographed by Balanchine, who dedicated it to the memory of New York City Mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia. With music by John Philip Sousa, it was performed by Christina Thuring and You Qing Guo, both of whom are wonderful to watch, particularly Guo, who is effusive and very expressive in his interpretation.

"Giselle," a pas de deux from Act II when the spirit of Giselle defies the Queen of the Willis, takes place in a cemetery. Sayles portrays the very delicate Giselle, who causes her lover's death because he betrayed her. In this romantic ballet, the choreography is by Coralli and Perrot, staged by Eleanor D'Annunzio, with music by Adolphe Adam and costumes by Gianini.

"Le Corsaire," which was inspired by a poem of Lordi Byron about a princess and a pirate who are shipwrecked on a desert island. Lazar dances with Rosemary Sabovick-Bleich with their customary skill, strength and personality. They are beautiful together. And Lazar, even though he becomes her slave, kisses her hand. The choreography is by Petipa with music by Ricardo Drigo and costumes by Vasia Beusi.

An excerpt from "Nucracker," with the Sugar Plum and her Cavalier performing a grand pas de deux, was well done by Julia Vorobyeva and Konstantin Dournev. George Tomal staged the ballet with music by Tchaikovsky and costumes by McRae and Christman.

In the playful and light "Satinella," which had a little comedy and a carnival



Rosemary Sabovick-Bleich and Elie Lazar dance gracefully in a Pas de Deux ballet excerpt Saturday evening at the Wilkins Theater in Kean University and the New Jersey Ballet Co. presentation of "An Evening of Pas de Deux."

atmosphere, Lazar and Sabovick-Bleich dazzled the audience. As in most of his performances, Lazar, looking directly and softly into his partner's eyes, ends his dance with a kiss on the hand. It was choreographed by Petipa, staged by Leonid Kozlov with music by Cesare Pugni and costumes by Toodie Witmer.

The NJ Ballet is one of the finest companies in the metropolitan area, with the very talented Carolyn Clark as its director. This production, as with many others staged by this company, can compete with any major ballet company in New York. And it is right around the corner in Union County.

Jacquie McCarthy, Editor
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Organizations submitting releases to the entertainment section can mail copy to 1291 Stuyvesant Ave., P.O. Box 3109, Union, New Jersey, 07083.

REUNIONS

Kean University Music Department will hold its 6th Alumni Reunion on June 7 at Cryan's in Neuchem. For information, call (908) 257-2654 or (732) 205-9658.

Linden High School Class of 1963 will hold a reunion on July 11. For information, call Reunions International at (732) 845-5200.

Union High School Class of 1973 will hold a reunion on July 17. For information, call Reunions International at (732) 845-5200.

Governor Livingston Regional High School Class of 1968 will hold a reunion on July 25. For information, call Reunions International at (732) 845-5200.

Arthur L. Johnson High School Class of 1973 will hold a reunion on Aug. 1. For information, call Reunions International at (732) 845-5200.

Linden High School Classes 1950-1959 will hold a reunion picnic on Aug. 29 from 1 p.m. to dusk in Memorial Park, South Wood Avenue in Linden. For information, call Gail Hudak at (908) 862-4272.

Linden High School Class of 1958 will hold a 40th reunion on Sept. 12 at Galloping Hill Inn. For information, call Gail Hudak at (908) 862-4272.

Rahway High School Class of 1978 is planning a 20th reunion on Oct. 16 at The Westwood in Garwood. For information, call (732) 382-6956.

David Breatley Regional High School Class of 1973 will hold a reunion on Nov. 27. Interested alumni are requested to write to: Breatley Class of 1973, c/o P.O. Box 254, Kenilworth, NJ 07033.

Roselle Park High School Class of 1954 is planning a reunion for February 1999. For information, contact Jean Castello Mangini, 2120 Villa Way, New Smyrna Beach, Florida 32169.

Roselle Park Summer Camp

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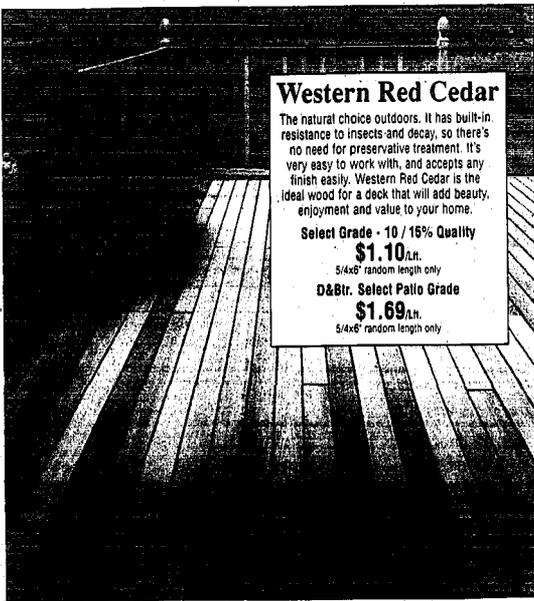
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Stepping Out is a weekly calendar designed to guide our readers to the many arts and entertainment events in the Union County area. The calendar is open to all groups and organizations in the Union County area. To place your free listing, send information to Associate Editor Jacqui McCarthy, Worral Community Newspapers, P.O. Box 3109, Union, New Jersey, 07083.

Stepping Out

Saturday from 1-5 p.m.
The gallery is located at 32-34 Essex St., Springfield. For information, call (973) 912-9292.

ART IN SUMMIT outdoor show will take place on May 16 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the Green in Summit.
For information, contact New Jersey Center for Visual Arts at (908) 273-9121.

The camp is located at 1245 Orange Ave., Cranford. For information, call Cindy Smith at (908) 276-5053 or Michael at (973) 912-9051.

AMERICAN PERFORMANCE STUDIOS Rome Festival Church Institute will offer a Choral Theater course in May and June.
The studios are located in Westfield. For information, call (908) 233-7214.

Thelonius Monk on Saturday at 12:30 p.m. at NJPAC.
Admission is free. NJPAC is located at One Center St., Newark. For information, call (888) GO-NJPAC.

SUMMIT SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA will present a concert at Summit High School on Saturday at 8 p.m.
Admission is free. The high school is located on Kent Place Boulevard in Summit.

GARDENING
PLANT SALE will take place tomorrow from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Cleveland School in Rahway.

JUNIOR GREENTHUMBS program at Roselle Park Library will offer a program on Saturday from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. On May 16, Planting Day at 10:30 a.m.
Registration is required in person at the library. The library is located at 404 Chesapeake St., Roselle Park. For information, call (908) 245-2456.

Children 3-6 years old can sign up for Musical Explorers: Going Places! Usually held every weekday and Saturday.
Kindergartners and first graders can take Group Piano on Thursday afternoon. Also, Fiddlin' Fun, an introduction to violin for four to seven year olds, is taught on Tuesdays.
Fundamentals of Singing for children in grades K-8 will be held on Tuesdays.
Musicianship Training is a Thursday afternoon class for grades K-1.
Preschoolers with Disabilities in Hand on Saturdays, and Guitar for the Young Child is for ages 5-7.
Classes may be observed on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. The center is located at 570 Center Ave., Murray Hill. For information, call (908) 790-0700.

ANTIQUES
LINCOLN GALLERIES in Orange will hold an antique auction on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday beginning at 9:30 a.m.
The galleries are located at 225 Scotland Road in Orange. For information, call (973) 376-2255.

AUDITIONS
BLOOMFIELD ORCHESTRA is looking for musicians for the string and woodwind sections.
There are no auditions. Rehearsals are every Wednesday evening at the Bloomfield Civic Center. For information, call (908) 686-1224 or (201) 233-9420.

CLUBS
CLUB BENE Dinner Theater shows classic, popular entertainers on weekends.
Shows are 7 p.m., with all show-only tickets are available. Club Bene is located on Route 35 in South Amboy. For information, call (908) 727-3000.

AFTERNOON MUSIC will feature the American Virtuosi Baroque Orchestra on Sunday at 3 p.m. at the Unitarian Church in Summit.
Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$12 for seniors and \$2 for students. The church is located at the corner of Springfield and Waldron avenues, Summit. For information, call (908) 273-9245.

MUSICAL PRODUCTIONS art exhibits and dance, music and drama performances will be held at Union High School for students pre-K through grade 12.
Classes run from June 29 through July 31 from 9 a.m. through 12:15 p.m. daily at Kew-Forest Middle School in Union Township. Parents must contact the teacher providing instruction: The Technician/Dreamcast, grades 3-7. Grades 8-12 are to be determined.
Musical productions, art exhibits and dance, music and drama performances will be held at Union High School for students pre-K through grade 12. Classes run from June 29 through July 31 from 9 a.m. through 12:15 p.m. daily at Kew-Forest Middle School in Union Township. Parents must contact the teacher providing instruction: The Technician/Dreamcast, grades 3-7. Grades 8-12 are to be determined.

ART SHOWS
BACK TO BACK, two Keam University Fine Arts department graduate exhibitions will be on display through today at 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
The exhibit will hang in the James Howe Gallery, Vaughn-Estess Building. Keam is located on Morris Avenue in Union. For information, call (908) 527-2347 or (908) 527-2307.

GENIINI GROUP looking for an adult person who is slight of build and able to play a man of considerable years. The part is integral to the play, part of an evening of one-acts to be presented in early June. There are no lines. Interested parties should call Scott Coffey at (908) 654-1054.

COVE LOUNGE presents live music by alternative bands every weekend.
The tavern is located at 114 Chestnut St., Roselle. For information, call (908) 241-1226.

NEW JERSEY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER will showcase a performance by 160 youths from the Newark area on Wednesday at 7 p.m.
NJPAC is located at One Center St., Newark. For information, call (888) GO-NJPAC.

SUMMIT JCC Nursery School will hold a plant sale on Sunday from 9 a.m. to noon.
The JCC is located at 67 Kent Place Boulevard, Summit. For information, call (908) 273-9130.

UNION MUSIC SCHOOL is holding mail-in registration for courses in music performance, dance, theater and art for students pre-K through grade 12.
Classes run from June 29 through July 31 from 9 a.m. through 12:15 p.m. daily at Kew-Forest Middle School in Union Township. Parents must contact the teacher providing instruction: The Technician/Dreamcast, grades 3-7. Grades 8-12 are to be determined.
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SPRING FEVER by Dolores Fayah Whitehead of Union will be on display through today at Les Malmut Art Gallery.
The gallery is located in Union Public Library, Friburger Park, Morris Avenue, Union. For information, call (908) 686-9857.

THE PHILHARMONIANS OF FANWOOD needs technical help for ongoing season. For information, call Bob Peiser at (908) 688-0312.

CROSSROADS in Garwood features a weekly lineup of musical rotation: Tuesdays — Acoustic Open-Mic Nights; blues guitar slinger and vocalist Rhett Tyler opens the show, and then opens the stage to any aspiring player who enters. The show opens at 9:30 p.m. Wednesdays — B.B. of B.B. and the

BOBBY BYRNE SHOW will take place on May 16 at 8 p.m. at St. Elizabeth School in Union.
Admission is \$15. The school is located on Hussa Street in Linden. For information, call (732) 388-3645.

TRAILSIDE Nature and Science Center in Mountaineer will present a workshop on edible weeds and how to prepare them on May 14 from 7:30 to 9 p.m.
Fee is \$15. Registration is required. Trailside is located at 452 New Providence Road, Mountaineer. For information, call (908) 783-5670.

PLAYRIGHTS THEATRE will hold Creative Dramatics in three two-week day sessions beginning July 6, July 27 and Aug. 3 for grades 4-8.
Playwrights Theatre is located at 33 Green Village Road in Madison. For information, call (973) 514-1787, ext. 32.

EUGENIE GALLERY in Scotch Plains will display the art of Debra Livingston of Scotch Plains and Marguerite Brennan of Summit through May 23.
Gallery hours are Monday-Friday from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The gallery is located at the corner of Park Avenue and Second Street in Scotch Plains. For information, call (908) 322-8333.

GENIINI GROUP seeking cameramen and technicians for filming original works for broadcast on local cable stations.
For information, call Scott Coffey at (908) 654-1054 or write to: Geniini Group, 569 Tennyn Place, Westfield, 07090.

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LECTURES
JUST ABOUT ART will present a Curator's Talk on "The Pattern and Decoloration" tomorrow from 7:30 to 9 p.m. at New Jersey Center for Visual Arts. The event is free. NJCVA is located at 58 Elm St., Summit. For information, call (908) 273-9121.

SWAIN Galleries in Plainfield will present "Venice Autumn," a solo oil painting exhibit by Robert Leber through May 30.
Gallery hours are weekdays from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Swain Galleries, 703 Watchung Ave., Plainfield. For information, call (908) 756-1707.

SANGHERCHOIR men's chorus rehearses Friday evenings at 8:30 p.m. Schwabacher Sangerbund mixed chorus rehearses Thursday evenings at 8:30 p.m. at the Deutscher Club in Clark. New members are welcome.
For information, call Manfred Schneider at (908) 382-4900.

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CHILDREN'S SPECIALIZED HOSPITAL in Mountaineer will display artwork by Roselle Park residents Richard Schiebue and Michael Sileo, and Pam Gosner of Chatham through May 30.
Gallery hours are 9:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. CSH is located on New Providence Road in Mountaineer. Visitors are requested to use the Ambulance Entry.

UNION HARMONICA BAND holds practice sessions at the Senior Citizen Building, Caldwell and Morris avenues, Union, every Friday from 7 to 9:30 p.m.
WESTFIELD GLEE CLUB invites male singers to come and sing at rehearsals on Mondays at 8 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church Parish Building Assembly Hall, 140 Mountain Ave., Westfield.

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HEALTH & NATIONAL NURSING WEEK

Carrots, spinach linked to eye disease prevention

What you don't know can hurt you, according to a recent consumer survey that examined the link between diet and prevention of eye disease.

Among consumers who report eating specific foods for eye health, 72 percent chose carrots. Only seven percent named spinach, the source of an important nutrient that helps prevent the most common and devastating form of blindness among older Americans.

"We're not saying carrots are bad for you," said Steven G. Pratt, MD, a senior staff ophthalmologist at Scripps Memorial Hospital, La Jolla, Calif. "Vitamin A found in carrots helps protect color and night vision. But consumers seem completely unaware of new evidence that indicates lutein, a powerful carotenoid, is the primary antioxidant found in the retina and may be the key to preventing age-related macular degeneration. This is a case where ignorance can literally cause blindness."

Blood drive locations scheduled

The Blood Center of New Jersey is announcing blood drive locations and asking healthy adults to call and sign up to donate. "Blood is needed every day for victims of accidents and trauma, and for the ongoing needs of cancer patients and those with blood disorders," said Judy Daniels, spokesperson for the blood center.

There is no substitute for voluntarily donated human blood. Each pint donated is tested and broken down into components which have different uses. For example, red cells, with a shelf life of 42 days, are used in surgical situations and trauma cases; platelets, with a shelf life of 5 days, are used for transplant and cancer patients, and plasma, the liquid portion of blood, is used in patients with severe burns.

Donors must be 18 years of age. Seventeen-year-olds may donate with parental permission. There is no upper age limit for donors provided they have donated within the last 2 years, or have a doctor's note. Donors should know their Social Security number and bring a signed form of identification. People with cold or flu symptoms should wait until they are feeling better before donating, and there is a 72-hour deferral for dental work, including routine teeth cleaning. For those who have travelled outside of the United States recently, call the blood center for eligibility criteria. For more information or to sign up for a blood drive, call the blood center at (800) BLOOD-NJ.

Your business can grow with more customers. Reach the potential customers in your newspaper with an ad by calling 1-800-564-8911.

Although those surveyed linked diet and health, fewer than one in five eat specific foods to protect their eye health. "It's encouraging to see consumers make the connection between nutrition and their eye health," said Pratt. "It's discouraging, however, to see how ill-prepared they are to act on this information."

Understanding diet and eye health is clearly complicated by a lack of knowledge regarding eye conditions. When asked to identify eye problems associated with old age, only nine percent mentioned macular degeneration, although AMD is the leading cause of irreversible blindness in older Americans.

"It's difficult to change eating behavior," said Pratt, "when the individual doesn't understand the disease

you're working to prevent. People need to understand the serious nature of AMD before they're likely to change their diet."

Sunray respondents indicated a strong interest in changing their eating behavior after hearing about the relationship between lutein and eye health. Sixty-nine percent reported being somewhat or likely to eat more foods containing lutein, and 41 percent indicated interest in taking a daily supplement containing lutein.

For people who don't like spinach, eye formula supplements containing lutein are available in health food stores, pharmacies and other chain stores.

CHIROPRACTIC FOR BETTER HEALTH

DR. DONALD ANTONELLI CHIROPRACTOR

WHEN SPORTS DON'T WORK

Are you concerned about keeping your body in good condition? You should be, especially if your job does not include a lot of physical activity. You may have favors upon that helps you fill this need. But if you can't play often enough, or if you don't get the exercise you need to maintain good muscle tone, it should be supplemented with exercise. Take golf, for example. In days of yore, golfers used to walk the full 18 holes. Now, many golfers "ride and play," using electric golf carts to carry them to the ball. There are many simple exercises that can help you maintain good muscle tone.

Sit-ups, push-ups, side twists, and neck rotations can be helpful. But don't try to overachieve. Perform with moderation and gradually build up your stamina. It's also a good idea to have regular checkups to find out if your spine and nervous system are in good condition. If there are any defects, they can usually be corrected with proper treatment.

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'Daughter of the Regiment' holds its ground at NJPAC

Well, I guess it must be true. Newark is really having a renaissance. There was a time when everyone who was anybody came to Newark to perform, from the big bands, to opera and ballet. I remember a time when the Metropolitan Opera Company came to Newark each year as a part of its tour.

On Monday, April 27, the New York City Opera National Company came to Newark, to the New Jersey Performing Arts Center. They may not be the Met, but in my view, they can sometimes give the Met a run for their money.

Overall, their production of "The Daughter of the Regiment" was entertaining. Sung in French with English super-titles, "The Daughter of the Regiment" was composed by Gaetano Cappiello. It is filled with beautiful music, melodic and harmonious. Most people are familiar with his "Lucia di Lammermoor" and "L'elisir d'amore," which are performed more frequently. This is an opera meant to showcase two outstanding bel canto specialists in the leading roles. Alas, on Monday night, this was not the case.

Of the two leads, the soprano, Robin Blitch Wiper, sang Maria, the daughter of the regiment. She has a sweet-sounding voice. However, with any other conductor or in some other house, you'd be hard-pressed to hear her. In the beginning of the first act, she could hardly be heard over the orchestra. Conductor Joseph Colaneri is to be commended. He kept the orchestra under control and the music beautiful. Blitch Wiper could be heard much better as the night wore on due

Opera Buff

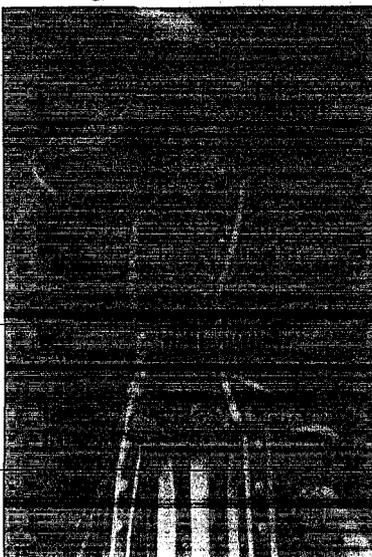
By Theodora Russo
Staff Writer

to Maestro Colaneri's efforts. In the role of Tonio, Thomas Trotter displayed a big sound but not a very pleasant one. He hit all those high "Cs" this opera is known for, but they sounded forced and harsh. William Fleck as Sulpius was a standout, wonderful both vocally and in his acting. Matching him, the chorus was exceptional. They were sweet-sounding and natural.

The less said about the staging and production, the better. A word about the operating function of the NJPAC theater itself — a bad choice was made at the outset during the opening of the opera, when numerous false corners were allowed in to be seated. Not only were they visually distracting, but due to the poor design of the orchestra's wooden floor, very noisy as well. Why there is no carpeting I cannot fathom!

Whatever its shortcomings are, NJPAC promises better times to come. I sincerely hope this is only the beginning of many more melodious happenings waiting to delight we inveterate opera lovers.

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Robin Blitch Wiper in the title role of 'The Daughter of the Regiment,' performed by the New York City Opera National Company on April 27 at New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark.

Inexplicably fascinating, 'Twister' will reel you in

There are films that are so strange they tend to drive the audience away. Then there are films that are so strange they tend to reel the audience in. "Twister" is a strange film that falls into the latter category. I've seen the picture three times and I still don't know what it's about. But "Twister" doesn't need a story; it has an ensemble cast of crazy characters including Suzy Amis, Crispin Glover and Harry Dean Stanton.

Glover spends the movie in mad, wacky outfits playing his electric guitar — his song over the end credits is an alternative rock anthem — and Harry Dean Stanton spends the movie trying to make a sense out of his insane surroundings. The titles come from a twister that is supposed to hit the ranch they all live on. But what it could also mean is the movie itself — something that's made up of many elements, is out of control and is very powerful.

The Video Detective

By Jim Riffel

As I mentioned, I saw the film three times and I still don't know what the story is. But for some odd reason, I want to see it again.

New on video: "Use's a Cold," drama; "Brassed Off," comedy; "Graveyard," action/drama.

Video Detective Trivia: Who was the last woman nominated for Best Director, Best Screenplay and Best Picture?

Answer: Jane Campion for "The Piano," 1993.

A resident of Mountainside, Jim Riffel is the author of "The Video Detective's Guide to the Top 100 Films of All Time."

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There's a million stories in the Garden State

I would say that Philip Roth's most creative and impressive writing is rooted in his New Jersey origins. That is not only apparent in his recent Pulitzer-Prize winning novel, "American Pastoral," but in his earlier works.

"American Pastoral" is about a Newark-born, liberal, Jewish businessman who moved to the Jersey suburbs with his Christian wife as they gained success in life, to bring up their precocious and troubled daughter. She is rebellious as a teenager in the Vietnam era to the point that she becomes a part of a violent sect that brings tragedy to them all.

It is the details of time and place that give "American Pastoral" its generational wallop and relevance. In this, his 22nd book, Roth ups the locale to portray the conflicts of an era in a very personal story with brilliantly creative writing for which he has become well known.

Interestingly, Roth has accomplished this narrative immediacy and focus on our mores and values a number of times in his writing career, by rooting his story in New Jersey Jewish life, and this reflecting the life of the larger majority. In his first important work, "Goody" — "Goody" — he looked at our societal flight to the suburbs and materialism through satirical description of a brief affair between a young man from Newark and a more affluent girl from Short Hills. Roth has always been a satirist, and his satire of Jewish life in "Goody Columbus" was a prelude to the raucous

On The Arts

By Jon Plaut

and funny examination of an upwardly-bound Jewish family in Newark in "Porcyny's Complaint." He showed, too, that he could be serious and highly inventive in writing about this same milieu, examining the creative act and the writer's responsibility in "Ghost Writer."

In "Patronomy," Philip Roth portrayed his own father in relationship to himself, in a unique non-fiction work. The struggle that exists between the generations is expressed in that work, almost unequalled in literature and located as it is in a New Jersey neighborhood of changing character. The walk to the corner store by aged father and adult son takes on a special connection to the reader, which the highly-talented and canny Roth exploits.

In "American Pastoral," Roth brings this focus on New Jersey and the development and conflicts of American and Jewish culture in transition to an exquisite pinnacle of art. Everything comes together for Roth, and it is a great, great moment in American literature. Roth, however, is not the only contemporary writer successfully mining the lode of New Jersey locale and society. Without turning the focus too minutely on

others, Richard Ford and Joyce Carol Oates should be mentioned.

The principal character in both Ford's "The Sportsman" and "Independence Day" not only identifies with and operates out of the New Jersey shore, but actually feels and acts displaced when he leaves for an unhappy assignment in Chicago or an unsuccessful attempt at bonding with his troubled teen-age son in Cooperstown, New York. Ford actually uses the New Jersey locale to express the angst and longing for permanence of his only nominally Gentile protagonist.

Some of Oates' most relevant and best books, for me, take place in the Princeton area, including "Solstice," "Marty," "A Life" and "American Appetites." In each, the plight of a modern-day female at risk is shrewdly portrayed and dissected by Oates. Contemporary life on the east coast of our America today, especially for women, with all its contradictions and dangers, is presented by this very special writer with roots in New York state, who lives and teaches, and is working now in New Jersey.

Of course, there have always been well-known authors in New Jersey. Stephen Crane and William Carlos Williams are representatives of the past. And there are new, exciting writers emerging, but perhaps we have never before had such a trio as Roth, Ford and Oates using New Jersey to root stories which examine and express contemporary American culture.

HOROSCOPE

For the week of May 10 to 16

Aries March 21-April 20
Keep your comments to yourself and watch what you say this week. Someone may misinterpret things, which could mean problems for you at work. This weekend, take time to do something special for a family member getting through a rough time.

Taurus April 21-May 21
It's important that you set aside time to relax this week. Things have been so hectic at work and home, you haven't taken enough time for yourself. Do it now. Consider joining a health club or exercise facility as a way to relax and get in shape, too.

Gemini May 22-June 21
A project you have been working on may be stalled. Don't worry about it because things should get underway again soon, which will be a credit to you. Look to a close friend for some help in the romance department. Listen closely to the advice.

Cancer June 22-July 22
Love may be closer than you think. Maybe it's an acquaintance at work or someone you see at the health club every day. Be open. Take the time to learn something new. A local community college is a great source for continuing your education.

Leo July 23-Aug. 23
If a friend approaches you this week concerning a problem, be a good listener. But don't try to give advice — just listen and offer consolation. It's a good time to get friends together — old and new. Think of something fun and different and start drawing up plans.

Virgo Aug. 24-Sept. 22
You have always had a bright outlook on life. It can have a powerful influence on people around you. Use it to make things better for everyone. Consider working to help iron out a difficult family situation. Your help could mean mending a long-standing family rift.

Libra Sept. 23-Oct. 23
This is a good week to enjoy time with friends. Have fun doing some of the things you haven't had time for lately. A great bargain will come your way this week. Be sure to take advantage of it, but no matter how good it is, don't overspend your budget.

Scorpio Oct. 24-Nov. 22
Change is on the horizon this week. Look for an unexpected ally at work. That help you've been needing on the home front could come from a relative or friend you haven't seen in a while. Take advantage of the help; it will be a great relief — one that you deserve.

Sagittarius Nov. 23-Dec. 21
This week, it's important to your career to choose your words wisely. Think about what you're going to say before you say it. If you're not careful, someone could get the wrong impression. To help clear your mind and soul, go for a long walk alone.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 20
One of your closest friends needs some help but doesn't want to impose. Keep your eyes and ears open for signs, and be ready to volunteer your services. Plan an outing for you and your coworkers. Even consider inviting everyone's families.

Aquarius Jan. 21-Feb. 18
This is the week to start on the commitment to improve your life. Discuss career options with a personnel representative, but be careful how you begin your new enterprise with some fun this weekend. Grab a friend or take off on your own.

Pisces Feb. 19-March 20
If your partner seems to be having trouble understanding money problems, consider consulting a financial specialist. It's time to rethink your priorities and plan for the future. Let a special friend know how much you care with time set aside for him/her.

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Writers are invited to join the collective

A new creative home for playwrights is being formed under the joint auspices of the Union County Arts Center and the newly created Rahway Arts Guild. The purpose of the Writers Collective at Union County Arts Center is to offer an environment where playwrights can meet regularly, where they can experiment, hone their craft and explore their art in a safe harbor of like-minded peers. The Collective is not envisioned as a classroom where the basics of the craft would be taught, but rather a workshop where one-act, full-length, children's shows and musicals are created and re-created.

At each session, portions of new work under development will be read and discussed in supportive terms. The writers will be encouraged to create a list of questions that will channel discussion into desired areas. Although reading will be done primarily by members of the Collective, guest talent may be brought in from time-to-time for specific projects.

The Writers Collective will be facilitated by playwright and journalist Lou J. Stalsworth. Stalsworth holds an M.F.A. in playwright from Rutgers University and is currently artistic director of PinWorth Productions, a company dedicated to fostering new playwrights and introducing audiences to the experience of plays-in-process. A former theater critic for the *Home News*, Stalsworth is a member of the Dramatists Guild and is a frequent teacher and guest lecturer at Mercer County and Brookdale Community Colleges.

Applications are now being accepted by the Writers Collective at Union County Arts Center for its Spring 1998 Playwrights Workshop. Beginning March 9, the Collective will meet for 10 consecutive Mondays. The fee for this workshop is \$120. Interested parties should send a 20-page writing sample, and a biography/resume to Lou J. Stalsworth, Union County Arts Center, 1601 Irving St., Rahway, NJ 07065.

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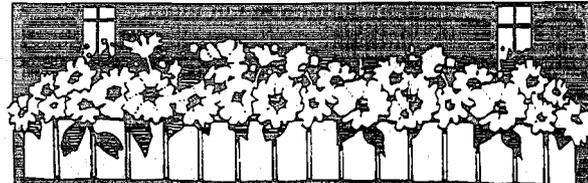
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Hilarity is the height of fashion in Summit

"When the cat's away, the mice will play." Isn't that the way the old saw goes? Well, what happens when the cat unexpectedly decides to stay home, throwing a wrench in the teeth of the mice's plans?

Playwright Marc Camoletti answers that question in his stylish French boulevard comedy, "Don't Dress for Dinner," which runs through May 16 at the Playhouse Association in Summit. Under the original title "Pyjamas pour Six," "Don't Dress for Dinner" was a smash hit in Paris, where it ran for more than two years. It's easy to see why it was so successful. With its slamming doors, mistaken identities and laced-up dialogue, this hilarious farce about double adultery and gourmet cooking will split your sides and leave you gasping for air.

In a stylishly converted farmhouse in the countryside outside Paris, Robert is hoping to entertain his chic mistress, a model named Suzanne — Suzy — for a weekend tryst while his wife, Jacqueline, is off visiting her mother. To provide a suitable alibi, he has invited his best friend Roberto to come down from Paris. He has also engaged a Cordon Bleu cook to furnish gourmet delights. When Jacqueline discovers Robert is coming, however, she cancels her plans immediately. For it turns out she and Robert have been conducting a secret affair for some time.

With Suzy on her way and to throw Jacqueline off the track, Bernard and Roberto are forced to improvise at the breakfast speed as their weekend plans disintegrate before their eyes. Desperate to cover his tracks, Bernard persuades an unwilling Roberto to pretend Suzy is his mistress. But when the cook — appropriately named Suzette — also called Suzy — arrives, Robert mistakenly assumes she is the mistress and when the real mistress, blonde bombshell Suzanne, shows up, she finds, to her horror, that she must play cook for the evening, a role for which she is terribly unsuited. Confused? You will be as the plot becomes more and more convoluted with multiple mistaken identities and preposterous role-playing. Through it all, each character's reasoning is completely logical, and humor results when their logics collide.

The outstanding cast keeps the



Robert is having a very rough weekend, being stuck with his mistress, the cook who is pretending to be his girlfriend, and his mistress' husband's mistress, in "Don't Dress for Dinner" by the Playhouse Association of Summit. From left to right, Jean Brooker of Short Hills, David Hoffman of Summit, Marguerite Wurtz of New Providence and Dossie Clausen of Summit.

Theater View

By Ruth Ross
Theater Correspondent

action moving along at near-breakneck speed as the two men, John Walz as Bernard dancing around the living room, we know something's up. He's too happy his wife is leaving for the weekend. He splutters and spitters as he attempts to improvise to throw his astute wife off the track. Jean Brooker's Jacqueline is all archness and conniving in her efforts to rendez-vous with her lover right under her husband's nose. David Hoffman is hilarious as the friend/lover Robert, who is unwittingly and unwillingly drawn into this marital treachery. As Suzanne, the real mistress, Dossie Clausen is appropriately confused when she learns that she

must play the cook for the evening and outraged when she discovers that Bernard has another mistress, Suzette, who is really the cook.

And it's Marguerite Wurtz as Suzette who almost steals the show. We know immediately that she is not the correct Suzy for Robert to claim as his mistress; she's too old, too unpolished — clearly not a woman to engage in extramarital hubby-panty. Her attempt to play the sophisticated Parisienne mistress are really hilarious, especially when she has imbibed too much Cointreau.

Director Kate Schlesinger has done a very good job keeping these insane antics perking along. Physically, the comedy is hilarious. The play's dialogue, however, is even more important, and it's here that the actors could use a little more practice. The first act's exchanges were snappy and crisp, but in the second act, where there's a lot of complicated dialogue to memorize, the timing flagged, resulting in some dead spots and vocal

mix-ups. Given more time to perform, the cast can only improve.

The set, designed by Rhoda Roper, presents a stylish retreat converted from a barn, complete with exposed rafters and beams and stucco walls. Bill Roomer's lighting, however, is not really atmospheric enough; the lighting level remains the same throughout the entire play and are too bright for the after-dinner goings-on.

As the 26th production of the Playhouse Association, "Don't Dress for Dinner" continues the group's record of presenting outstanding shows. The pace is fast, and you have to keep your wits about you, but its mindless silliness, seasoned with that incomparable French wit, will give you a few laughs and keep you entertained for a couple of hours.

"Don't Dress for Dinner" runs May 7, 8, 14, 15 and 16 at 8 p.m., and May 17 at 2 p.m. The Playhouse Association theater is located at 10 New England Ave., Summit. For information, call (908) 273-2192.

Correction policy

It is the policy of this newspaper to correct all significant errors that are brought to the editor's attention. If you believe that we have made such an error, please write Tom Canavan, editor in chief, 1291 Suyvesant Ave., Union, 07083, or call him at 686-7700, ext. 329 on weekdays before 5 p.m.

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NJPAC hosts dance companies from around the world

This spring, the New Jersey Performing Arts Center presents several international dance companies from Portugal, Brazil, Mozambique, Italy and Israel. Among the performing companies are two troupes from Portugal — Paulo Ribeiro Dance Company and Olga Roriz Dance Company — that represent their American debut engagements at NJPAC. Additional companies include the National Song and Dance Company of Mozambique, Bale Folclorico da Bahia, and the internationally acclaimed Ballet Gulbenkian. Each of these four companies is a part of NJPAC's World Festival I: Portuguese Words and Ways.

Rounding out this series of dance events is Italy's Balletto di Toscana, appearing for the first time in the US, and the internationally acclaimed Baahava Dance Company, from Israel to present its latest dance work at the NJPAC. Olga Roriz Dance Company: May 15 at 8 p.m. and May 16 at 8 p.m. Tickets: \$20.

One of Portugal's leading contemporary choreographers, Olga Roriz has created over 20 original dance pieces which have delighted both critics and audiences. After dancing with the Ballet Gulbenkian from 1976 through 1992, Olga Roriz branched out to found her own company the same year. From lyric beauty to primal, new-wave wonder, her choreographic works have been garnering attention throughout Europe. At NJPAC, Roriz will present one of her latest works, "Our Lady," created in 1996. Her powerful company of dancers performs her creations with elegance and precision. As a choreographer, Roriz has also worked with The National Ballet, England; The Danca Grupo Contemporaneo Dance Company, Portugal; Theatre Ballet Guaira, Brazil; Monie Caro, Baillos, Monaco, and National Lyric Ballet, Spain. Roriz has also choreographed for a wide variety of opera and theater productions.

World Festival I: Portuguese Words and Ways/Rumos e Sons Portugueses is made possible through the generous support of the Government of Portugal, Caixa de Depositos, CIMPOR, The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, First Union National Bank and the Bernardino Coutinho Foundation.

Conceived for both traditional and popular cultural events, the New Jersey Performing Arts Center serves as home to the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and host to nationally and internationally celebrated performing artists as well as the New Jersey arts community. NJPAC is located on the Newark Riverfront near Gateway Center, Newark's Penn Station, and the Ironbound district in downtown Newark.

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