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WORRALL COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1999 - SECTION B

http://www.localcolor.com

Merries and unmerries

It's time to send some merry holiday greetings and not those whose greetings are specifically withheld.

Merry holiday to Darrell Hatchett. As the director of the Union County Juvenile Detention Center, Hatchett has the responsibility for the kids under 18 who commit terrible crimes. There are no ribbon cuttings or media events at that site. The harsh reality is that the kids we would prefer to just forget must be housed. Hatchett runs the place with a mix of professionalism and compassion.

Left Out

By Frank Capece

Merry holiday to Mary Kretsch from Roselle Park. At holidays, I tend to duck Mary Kretsch. I don't know anyone who is so dedicated to providing toys and clothing for underprivileged kids. But if you see Mary, get ready. She's not shy about hitting you up for a contribution for the kids.

Merry holiday to Steve Canuso from Cranford. He may have lost a local election, but along with his wife he leads the war to find a cure for diabetes. This guy was definitely a winner in 1999 in my eyes.

Merry holiday to Elizabeth Municipal Court Judge Roman Montes. For most people, many of whom are foreign born, a local court can be intimidating or resemble a cattle call. Montes runs his courtroom with humility and professionalism. His efforts mean a much better result than the T.V. judges which are so prevalent.

Merry holiday to Carmine Giordano from Clark. This unfairly maligned part-time Public Works director is totally dedicated to his town. Last fall, late on a Friday, he jumped on the tractor himself to make certain the soccer kids had fresh fields the next morning.

Merry holiday to Hillside Municipal Clerk Janet S. Vlasavljevic. With the ball out of former Mayor Barbara Rowen, Janet's "V" is starting to resemble the French after the Liberation. Her skills and service to the town have stood the test of time. Plus, you know what it must be like to sign her name all day?

Merry holiday to my cousins in Cranford, Frank Diano and Gerald Capece. One day when I wasn't looking, these two "Generation X" kids grew into wonderful parents, successful businessmen and participants in community activities. They make me feel so much better about whose going to pay for my Social Security.

There is another side of the coin. An unmerry greeting to the members and staff of the Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority. Even See COAL, Page B2

Sending their own messages to future

Website documents Class of 2000

By Mark Hrywna
Regional Editor

How will people remember what life was like for the Class of 2000? Cranford resident Stephen Van Hecke hopes to make the answer to that question a little clearer for future generations.

"Messages to the Future," America's Class of 2000 Internet Yearbook Project, will give high schools the opportunity to participate in the first-ever national Internet yearbook. Students can submit video, photos and text, such as poems or essays, about their lives, all of which will be uploaded to a permanent website and link high schools from around the country.

Originally planned as a time capsule, the project recently changed to reflect a yearbook concept. Van Hecke said, because it's something high school relates to. The website, which went on-line in July, now includes guidelines for how high schools can participate.

Schools began logging onto the

website and now 12 Union County high schools have expressed interest along with more than 50 from 14 states in the U.S. in addition to a high school at a U.S. air base in Germany.

"The Internet and computers are things many students are most comfortable with," said Van Hecke, author of "Messages to the Future."

Van Hecke quit his job as director of research at the Union County Economic Development Corporation in January 1998 to begin the yearbook project and coordinate it full-time.

Through April, schools can participate and be linked to the national yearbook. Once information goes into the website, it will never be changed after graduation in the spring. Van Hecke describes it as "a window on this year."

Students from several area high schools have been helping Van Hecke to design technical aspects of the website, such as a package, which will allow schools to input all their materials to one central site.

See WEBSITE, Page B2



Photo By Jeff Grant
'Messages to the Future' author and director Stephen Van Hecke of Cranford, standing, observes students Eric Strom, left, and Sean Powell as they work on the website project.

More waivers granted

By Mark Hrywna
Regional Editor

A lawsuit against the county will continue following the Board of Freeholders' approval of four more waivers to the county's residency requirement last week. The waivers bring the total of requests recommended and approved to 14 out of the 49 submitted to County Manager Michael Lapolla within the past several weeks.

The board approved waivers by a 5-1 vote for corrections officers George Lord, William Hugelmeyer and Christopher Smidt, and Amette LaBree, an employee within the division of welfare. Donald Goncalves, in his final meeting as freeholder, cast the dissenting vote. Chairman Nicholas Scutari and Freeholders Linda Stender and Mary Ruotolo were absent due to illness.

Goncalves was the only freeholder present who voted against the waivers both times. Scutari voted on the first group of waivers on Dec. 9 but See LAWSUIT, Page B2



The Memorial Wall, honoring detectives from the office who died during their service to the county, is now on display on the third floor of the Prosecutor's Office on Rahway Avenue.

Prosecutor unveils memorial wall

Past and present members of the Union County Prosecutor's Office joined law enforcement representatives and surviving family members at a touching ceremony this week to dedicate a special Memorial Wall honoring detectives from the office who died during their service to the county.

One by one, current and retired members of the office along with Sheriff Ralph Froehlich joined Prosecutor Thomas Manahan in a special tribute to the officers, whose pictures were placed on a high stand for viewing inside the courtroom of Superior Court Judge Edward Begin Jr. on the first floor of the courthouse and then later hung on a special display wall on the third floor of the Prosecutor's Office across the street on Rahway Avenue.

The detectives that are being permanently memorialized

are Daniel J. Kelleher, Vincent Canavan, James L. Tupper Jr., William J. Cleri, Joseph M. Brady, James S. Arbos, Alfonso L. Pisano III, Edwin H. Glassman and Paula Lerman.

"Every single one was a highly regarded detective, special in their talents and contributions to the office and law enforcement, and loved and missed by all of us," said Manahan, who directed that Deputy First Assistant Prosecutor Richard Rodbart work to create the special wall and dedication ceremony.

After the packed courtroom ceremony, guests of the office were able to see the preserved memorials that are part of the display inside the new office headquarters at 32 Rahway Ave. in Elizabeth.

Rate increase likely at Runnells Hospital

By Mark Hrywna
Regional Editor

Long-term residents at the county's Runnells Specialized Hospital in Berkeley Heights can expect to see an 8-percent increase in the per diem rate sometime after the New Year, up \$20 per day from \$225 to \$245.

The rate has not changed in several years, said Hospital Administrator Joseph Sharp, and an increase is long overdue. "It still represents an exceptional value compared to private pay nursing homes at the proposed new rate."

The last rate increase occurred in 1994 when the cost was raised more than 12 percent, from \$200 a day to \$225.

Runnells continues to represent an exceptional value in the nursing home business, Sharp said. There is some feeling that the new rate should only apply to new patients.

Vice Chairman Dan Sullivan, who will become chairman after the Jan. 2 reorganization meeting, said the rate increase will be the first issue the Policy Committee addresses in the new year. He said the increase will not take effect until the board hears from the Policy Committee.

"The justification is there," Sullivan said for a rate hike, it's a matter of how it is applied.

The rate hike, Freeholder Lewis Mingo said, "doesn't change the fact that it's an outstanding facility."

"It's our absolute obligation to provide adequate notice" of any rate increase, Sharp said. "We're nothing if not even-handed in the application."

The 300 long-term beds at Runnells Hospital are usually 98 percent full, said marketing director Peggy Salisbury, with anywhere from three to eight beds unoccupied at any given time.

The average length of stay is a couple of days and a half but the stays vary widely, anywhere from a few months to a year or years to even decades for some residents. Patients, she said, have differing medical needs.

While some nursing homes charge patients for other items, Salisbury said the rate at Runnells is all-inclusive with the exception of hairdressing services.

Entertainment books sold as fund-raiser

The Union County School Counselors are selling Entertainment 2000 books as a fund-raiser for the We Care awards. These awards are given to deserving Union County high school students at the end of each school year in recognition of their good deeds, volunteerism, and assistance to others.

The entertainment book contains coupons discounts for fine dining, family dining, sports events/activities, special attractions and hotels. The 2000 book also has instant movie discount tickets, cruise discounts, as well as Continental and Northwest Airline tickets.

The books are \$30. For more information or to purchase a book, call Carmine at (732) 396-1077 during the day or at (908) 233-1086 in the evening.

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Photo by Jeff Grant

Cranford High School student Dan Rowen accesses 'Messages to the Future,' a year-book website he is helping to create that will document the lives of the Class of 2000 from across the United States.

Website on-line for high schools

(Continued from Page B1)
Eric Strom, a junior at Cranford High School, is helping with the technical aspects of getting the website working and implementing the system which will make the site interactive. "It's a great experience. I've been doing web work for awhile but this is the first time it'll reach a real wide audience."
Van Hecke, who has absorbed the costs of the project out of his own pocket so far, is determined to see it through. "There's no reason why we can't have everything in place." The project has earned support from

numerous school and public officials including Newark Mayor Sharpe James, Gov. Christine Whitman and Vice President Al Gore.
However, he said, the project is at a point where it needs funding.
Van Hecke said there has been opportunities to obtain grants for the project but he believes if it is a good idea, the public should be able to support it without using tax dollars. He estimated the project at this point to cost anywhere between \$15,000 and \$20,000, having received about \$4,000 or \$5,000 in contributions.
His mission now is to spread the

word that high schools can be a part of this project at no cost while seeking corporate funding.
The more high schools that become involved, Van Hecke said, the better for the project not only because the yearbook would have more materials, but it would be more attractive to potential corporate sponsors.
"Messages to the Future" can be found at www.messagesothefuture.org.
For more information, contact Van Hecke at "Messages to the Future," P.O. Box 5, Cranford, 07016, or (908) 931-0850.

League must change with the times

The League of Women Voters will have to change if it is to survive, members of the Union County LWV Council were told recently.
That caution came from Susan Lederman, former president of the LWV of the United States, who was the guest speaker at the council's annual holiday party at The Westwood in Garwood.
The executive director of the Gateway Institute for Regional Development located at Keon University in Union, Lederman also is a former president of the New Jersey League and a member of the Berkeley Heights unit.
"Recalling the long struggle for women's suffrage, she said that when it was won in 1920, the founding members of the league knew that work remained to be done. They established the organization to help women become "full partners in democracy."
Since then, local League units have worked on issues of "enormous importance," she said. "We register voters, sponsor debates; we study issues and advocate on them," Lederman said, listing the environment, child care and tax policy as among these issues.
"What will the league be like when it is 100 or 150?" she

asked. "What are the barriers to growth? Where will we find local league leaders?"
In the years ahead, "we will have to invent new ways to structure this organization," she said. It will have to change the way policy is set and money is raised.
Noting that she also serves on the board of Common Cause, Lederman said that with that organization, "you just send your money and you're a member."
In contrast, "in the league you have to join at the local level. You're suspect if you only send money" and don't participate.
"We must reshape our organization or the League of Women Voters will not be around 25 years from now," she continued. "We have to hire professional staff for the work we can no longer staff with volunteers."
She urged local league units to "break out of what would you have for meetings" to attract members who are diverse in age, race and gender, suggesting such things as breakfast meetings and e-mail as alternatives.
Lederman was introduced by Barbara Littero, a member of the Berkeley Heights League. Barbara Patrick, council president and a member of the Summit League, presided at the meeting.

Lawsuit continues over residency requirement

(Continued from Page B1)
was absent last week. Freeholder Chester Holmes voted in favor last week after voting against the 10 waivers Dec. 9. Vice Chairman Dan Sullivan said he does not expect any more waiver recommendations coming from the county manager.
The latest move leaves 30 corrections officers and six county police officers involved in a lawsuit against the county.
"This issue has been raised in negotiations with the corrections officers' union, said David Fox, a Livingston attorney representing the officers,
"but we're still continuing with the lawsuit."
The county, he said, has been cooperative and has offered to extend the Feb. 1 deadline for employees to move back into the county so both sides can pursue discovery in the lawsuit, including depositions. He expects the discovery phase to last several more months.
"Waivers not granted by the freeholders, Fox said, had the same kind of arguments as those that were granted. "There isn't much difference between those that got them and those that didn't."

Employees living out of the county have children in schools with commitments to the area and would have to uproot their families. Others are caring for ill relatives.
The freeholders have granted waivers in the past for the same reasons, the attorney said.
Employees vary in years of service to the county from four to as many as 13. They have worked "long enough to expect that the county tolerates where they live."
Additionally, out-of-county employees vary in terms of residences with some living in communities bordering Union County and other living as far away as Brick and Toms River.
A county audit earlier this year revealed a higher number of employees living outside of Union County than expected. A 1983 ordinance requires employees of the county to live within its borders.

Hotline urgently needs volunteers

Contact We Care, the 24-hour telephone hotline and crisis intervention service based in Union County "urgently needs volunteers to staff its phone lines." The next volunteer training class begins Feb. 22 at Willow Grove Church in Scotch Plains.
Offer the gift of listening to callers who want to relieve their pain and stress, and get help. Contact callers are lonely, depressed or in crisis. They are dealing with traumas such as unemployment, suicide, alcoholism, or a loved one's death. They need to know someone cares.
After attending 50 hours of training, contact volunteers are able to actively listen and deal with a broad range of human needs. Volunteers must approach their work in an open and non-judgmental way.
For more information or to register for the upcoming training, call Contact We Care at (908) 889-4140.

Sheriff teams up for veterans

Union County Sheriff Ralph Froelich spearheaded a fact-finding mission with officials from veterans associations and local corporations recently to combat problems faced by homeless veterans. Commenting on the increase in Hepatitis C cases diagnosed among homeless veterans, Froelich said he is always ready to support projects to help veterans.
"In addition to a large percentage of homeless veterans, five million Americans are infected with Hepatitis C, many of whom don't even know they are infected. We must find a way to educate the public to get tested and make sure the homeless veterans are diagnosed and treated," the sheriff said.
Scott Campbell, director of public relations for the Vietnam Veterans of America, said the group would like to enlist the help of Miss America, Heather Renee French, whose platform is homeless veterans assistance.
"In addition, The Home Care Program and National Liver Association are anxious to work with us. They are launching a program in 110 cities across the country in February, to provide home testing kits for Hepatitis C," Campbell said.

'In addition to a large percentage of homeless veterans, five million Americans are infected with Hepatitis C, many of whom don't even know they are infected.'
— Sheriff Ralph Froelich

Joseph Starkey, manager of community affairs for Schering-Plough Corporation, whose company developed Interferon, a medicine used to treat Hepatitis C, said once the group comes up with a solid plan it will send a proposal to Schering-Plough seeking corporate support.
The group included Paul Sutton, chief of Homeless Veterans Services and Deputy Director Division of Veterans Programs and Margaret Wojcikiewicz from the state council. They agreed to work on a proposal that outlines the group's mission.
Robert Plaro, chairman of the National Task Force on Homeless Veterans, who traveled from Wisconsin to attend the meeting provided some background on Hepatitis C. He said there are more people infected with Hepatitis C than AIDS and destroys the liver. To treat one infected veteran for the required 12-month program costs \$15,000.
The disease can remain in the open air for up to seven days and still infect someone. It can be dormant for up to 35 years before symptoms appear, but once the symptoms appear it spreads rapidly. Hepatitis C can be controlled, but not cured.
Before concluding the meeting, Herb Worthington, president of the Vietnam Veterans Chapter 779, said the group would consider hosting an event at the Veterans Education Center in Holmdel with a goal to educate the public about the problems facing homeless veterans including Hepatitis C and to tie it into the launch of The Home Care and National Liver Association's launch of the home testing kits scheduled for February.

Competition scores with students

For the fourth consecutive year, Novartis Corporation is the sponsor of Junior Achievement of Union County's high school programs. Earlier this month, Novartis Pharmaceuticals sponsored a tri county competition with all of Junior Achievement's participating high schools at The Grand Summit Hotel in Summit. There were approximately 60 students competing on business strategy and public speaking.
Judges for the competition were Ivan Rubin of Union County College, Stephanie Parrar of Service Corps of Retired Executives and Elaine Frasier, assistant dean for MBA Career Services at Rutgers University.
Students used a computer simulation exercise, created to test their

Students used a computer simulation exercise, created to test their knowledge of marketing, finance and production.

knowledge of marketing, finance and production. During the competition, each team made tactical decisions that were scored by computer.
The three top teams to win this part of the competition will attend a Student Leadership Conference with students from four different states in the area. The remaining teams will proceed to complete in an oral strategy presentation before judges, the top three winners will also attend the Leadership Conference.
Meanwhile students competed individually in the public speaking competition, their topic related to business and Junior Achievement. The top three public speakers also will attend the leadership conference. All of the participating students developed their business strategies based on economic principles learned through the Junior Achievement Economics program.
Junior Achievement is the world's oldest, largest and fastest-growing nonprofit economic educator of children. By bringing volunteers from the business community into the classroom to share their experience with young people, Junior Achievement programs teach students how to understand and appreciate free enterprise.
Locally, Junior Achievement reached almost 6,000 students with their programs during the last school year. For more information about Junior Achievement call (908) 289-6380.

Clerk named to committee

County Clerk JoAnne Rajoppi recently was named a member of the National Association of Counties' Taxation and Finance Steering Committee by NACO President C. Vernon Gray.
NACO, a national organization representing county government in the United States, is composed of 10 steering committees which form the policy-making arm of the association. Each committee is comprised of about 50 county officials who meet several times a year to examine issues critical to local government.
"I am honored to serve on this important NACO committee," Rajoppi said, "since I am always looking at new ways we can address the tax and financing issues in our county as it is related to land recording." Rajoppi is the author of a statewide clerk's trust fund to permit for modernization and technological advancements without taxpayer expense.
The Taxation and Finance Steering Committee focuses on financial resources of counties, fiscal management, federal assistance, municipal borrowing, county revenues, federal budget and federal tax reform. The steering committee's recommendations become part of the American County Platform, which is the basis of NACO's efforts in representing counties before Congress and the White House.
Rajoppi, who previously served for several years on NACO's Intergovernmental Committee, is a former state president of the Association of Counties in New Jersey, a state branch of the national association.

Coal for RVSA's stocking

(Continued from Page B1)
though this group deals in a less-than-glamorous area, the impact on municipal budgets by these appointees with their five-year terms is significant.
The whole episode of costly surcharges that Clark was forced to accept or otherwise live with a building ban still makes my blood boil. The new year should bring a greater scrutiny of RVSA activities, a ban on costly litigation between the RVSA and their members requiring instead mandatory arbitration, and maybe even a look at privatization of the facility to cut costs.
If you get a chance, read their new glossy self-promotion brochure called, "The Railway Valley Sewerage Authority, A History of Concern for Your Community." Yes, right.
Also a very unmythical greening to all members of the Cranford Township Committee with special note to Mayor-Elect Phil Morin, as they consider raising the overtime parking fines. As the town fights to keep the downtown viable, this fine increase may help short-term with the municipal budget, but long-term it is deadly to commerce.
And they wonder why I look more and more to Garwood and downtown Kentonworth to shop. Though I am sure Cranford's peppy meter maid will wholeheartedly endorse the fine increase.
For all others, however, a very joyous holiday season.
A resident of Cranford, Frank Capece is an attorney.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

St. Peter by the Sea is a rare gem

The wonderful sounds of the Orchestra of St. Peter by the Sea and chorus floated into the beautiful St. Theresa's Church in Kenilworth last Wednesday night.

The program part of the Jensen Concert Series proved to be a memorable and moving experience, bringing the joy of the holidays through music to the more than 700 members of the audience. The most engaging part of the program was the introductions to the music by the sprightly conductor, Father Alphonse Stephenson, a former musical director of Broadway's "A Chorus Line." His humorous anecdotes and laid-back manner put the audience at ease in the large hall brimming with the holiday spirit.

The concert opened with Handel's Overture to the "Messiah" reminding the concertgoers of the awesome potential of music to lift one's spirit. The dramatic opening to the program set the tone for a most engaging concert set in the St. Theresa Church with its soaring ceilings and fabulous wreaths that adorned the altar. Tenor soloist Anthony Buonaro sang a heartfelt "Comfort Ye" followed by a musical bridge of swelling strings and the Sea Chorus in a holiday melody of "Hark the Herald Angels Sing," "Silent Night," and a briskly tempoed "Joy to the World," punctuated by the tenor and chorus.

This dramatic opening was brought to a halt with short quips by conductor Father Alphonse who humorously asked the audience, "Anybody forced to attend tonight's concert?" This kind of opening and references made to his summer concert series on the beach at

Concert Scene

By Lorraine Marks
Music Correspondent

Jenkinson Pier in Point Pleasant brought the audience closer to him. Father Alphonse used "The Twelve Days of Christmas" as the theme that permeated the program. The chorus and orchestra mimicked various composers' styles to deliver a comical rendition of this traditional holiday tune. Composers such as Palestrina, Vivaldi and Wagner were aptly performed by the 45-piece professional orchestra while the chorus gleefully proclaimed each day in song.

"Sleigh Ride" by Leroy Anderson carried the audience through the snow with great percussive effects such as a sleppstick and jingle bells. The trombone section had a solo and stood up to receive recognition for their marvelous sounds. The horse whinny by a solo trumpet brought the ride to an end.

Chorus master William R. Shoppel Jr. read a dramatic rendition of "Twas the Night Before Christmas" with orchestral accompaniment. The opening was so sound like "ET Meets Santa Claus." The orchestra achieved that and even more with wind chimes, great tympany rolls and special effects by the drums.

A booming Father Alphonse introduced us all to his young assistant conductor from nearby Springfield.

Carmine Aufiero bounced onto the podium with vim and vigor to conduct the lively Treppek from the "Nutcracker Suite" by Tchaikovsky.

One of the highlights of the evening was young and handsome tenor Anthony Buonaro, who made his professional debut in the New York Grand Opera's 1989 production of Puccini's "Il Trittico." Buonaro sang "O Holy Night" with such grandeur that he brought the audience to its feet. A standing ovation brought him out for a second bow. Father Alphonse, looking proud, commented that "his voice is maturing and more beautiful each year." Later in the program, Buonaro was joined by his equally talented wife, Donna, in "The Prayer." They were given a much-deserved and enthusiastic standing ovation.

The finale to this wonderful musical evening of Christmas holiday celebration was a motley of "O Christmas Tree," "Here We Come A-Wassailing," "Carol of the Bells," "Jingle Bells" and a most spirited "Joy to the World" performed by the orchestra and chorus.

A comment by orchestra member and French horn player Jim Robinson of West Orange summed up the evening: "This program was fun for the audience and fun for the orchestra." We can only hope that the Orchestra of St. Peter by the Sea and chorus under the direction of Father Alphonse Stephenson comes ashore here again next year.

Lorraine Marks is a music teacher in the Cranford school system, and the founder and director of the New Jersey Intergenerational Orchestra.



The Nutcracker and the Mouse King do battle for the affections of Clara in the New Jersey Ballet presentation of "The Nutcracker," currently on stage at the Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn.

"Nutcracker" is a 'absolutely delightful' New Jersey Ballet presents 27th staging

By Dea Smith
Staff Writer

There are few theatrical partnerships in the country that can offer so spectacular a production as Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker" as the Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn and the New Jersey Ballet Company.

Together with NIB's hard-working, marvelous artistic/executive director Carolyn Clark, this absolutely delightful holiday tradition, now in its 27th year at the Paper Mill, with its stunning ballet performers, its exquisite costumes, colorful scenery, has audiences of all ages thoroughly entranced.

The most astounding thing about "Nutcracker" at the Paper Mill Playhouse is that the beautifully dressed children, from ages 2 and up, sit so quietly alongside parents and friends, and enjoy everything that is offered to them on the stage. Even at intermission, which for this reviewer was Saturday afternoon with a theater full of youngsters, there was no running up and down the aisles. It seemed that they identified with what was going on onstage and were thrilled beyond words.

"Nutcracker," which will run through Dec. 27, in breathtakingly beautiful music and dance tells the familiar story of a Christmas Eve party at the home of the Mayor, his wife and their children, Clara and Fritz, and what happens when Herr Drosselmeyer arrives with his handsome nephew. All the children receive dolls and toy soldiers, but Clara has a special gift — a colorful nutcracker dressed like a stately soldier — which her brother jealously breaks. The doll comes to life as a handsome prince in Clara's dream, as do the mice whose master, the Mouse King, finishes the Nutcracker to the finish. The prince takes Clara away on a silver swan boat through the forest, and they meet the King and Queen of Snowflakes as their subjects dance a waltz.

In Act II, they journey through the Kingdom of Sweets, and the Sugar Plum Fairy escorts them to a pair of partners, and as they sit and watch, the whole kingdom entertains them.

With musical direction by Gary S. Fagin; scenic design by the Paper Mill's Michael Arsenia; lighting design by Jack Mehler, costumes by A. Christina Giannini, Nancy Reed, Paul Hilliard McRae and Lori Christman; and choreography by Joseph Carow in Act I, Scenes 1 and 2, and George Tomal in Act I, Scene 3 and Act II, the production this Saturday matinee was overwhelming.

In Act I, Scene 1, Clara was played by Shannon Plum-

stead, a lovely girl, who danced skillfully with grace, and her acting ability was evident. This reviewer would like to see more of her in ballet productions. The porcelain doll, Drosselmeyer's nephew, was wonderfully performed by Andres Neira, who matches dancing talent with Clara. A veteran performer of the New Jersey Ballet, Paul McCrea was much at ease as the Father. It was really great to see him on stage again.

The entire audience was entranced by The Magic Spell in Act I, Scene 2, when a cascade of mice and soldiers fought each other, and the ultimate conclusion of the fight between the Mouse King and the Nutcracker Prince.

And in Act I, Scene 3, "In the Forest" was performed with such beauty and grace and skill by principal dancer Julia Vorobyeva, as the Snow Queen, and Andrei Jouravlev, as the Snow King, who had extremely powerful leaps and jumps.

In Act II, in the "Waltz of the Flowers," Alexandre Antchoutine, who performed some exciting Russian steps, brought the house down. The audience absolutely loved this outstanding performer. Another outstanding performer, Debra Sayles, as Dew Drop, a beautiful and versatile baller principal, did many difficult turns, all with ease and always with a smile on her face.

And in the Grand Pas de Deux, an equally marvelous dancer, Rosamary Sabovick-Bleich, as the Sugar Plum Fairy, danced with Konstantin Doumev, as the Cavalier. They interact beautifully. They were truly outstanding and offered a combination of classical skill and very strong dancing turns. Sabovick-Bleich always has a very expressive face. There is no question — she is truly a star!

Actually, all of the dancers were outstanding in their parts. With such fine dancers, other "Nutcracker" productions can try but never will compare to the "Nutcracker" up there on the Paper Mill stage.

Unquestionably, this production will stand out in the history of "Nutcrackers" — and will continue to be the highlight of the holiday season right here in Millburn.

The "Nutcracker" continues its run on the Paper Mill stage through Monday, with performances today, Thursday, Friday, Sunday and Monday at various times. For information, call the Paper Mill, located on Brookside Drive in Millburn, at (973) 376-4343. For groups of 20 or more, call (973) 379-3636, ext. 2644. Tickets range in price from \$18 to \$36, with a limited number of box seats available for \$38. Visa, MasterCard and Discover are accepted.

Porter, Bard make good stage mates

Cole Porter's intention in his musical comedy "Kiss Me Kate" was, as he simply stated it, to write a Broadway musical which would entertain audiences for all time. To that end, he marshaled all his efforts in a body that was failing him and almost miraculously composed 18 songs — music and lyrics — brilliantly adapted to and co-opting William Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew."

Fifty years after its original Broadway run, "Kiss Me Kate" is again being toured — with its first Broadway revival — as the most sublime yet intricate of Cole Porter's immense output. The additional incentive is that the book is a collaboration with Mr. Shakespeare, who Porter tells us to "brush up on," as the actors of the musical prepare "The Taming of the Shrew" while they enact that Shakespearean play in their personal lives.

In fact, as we all know, Shakespeare has become top draw in the contemporary theater in and on movie screens, with all the stage productions, musical adaptations, and films,

On the Arts

By John Picaut

including teen versions, these days. It's not only the tremendous popularity of the Bard's tragedies and comedies, and the characters who populate them, but incredible books of public attention like "Academy Award-winning 'Shakespeare in Love,'" written as it was by Tom Stoppard around "Romero and Juliet," gave to creative use of Shakespeare's work.

That is precisely what Cole Porter conceived to do and did 50 years ago in "Kiss Me Kate." He cleverly used a great Shakespeare play to create a musical comedy with songs honoring and incorporating the Bard, as well as his verse and story, which would vaulterly entertain, by making us laugh and enchanting us with humanity's best as Saul Bellow recently has put it, much

in the manner of "The Taming of the Shrew."

"Kiss Me Kate" is witty, and often very funny in its characterizations and portrayal of the battle of the sexes. It borrows greatly from "The Taming of the Shrew," while remaining thoroughly original. Musically, the show is overwhelming, particularly in the lyrics in which Mr. Porter invested his vaunted creativity. Songs like "Brush Up Your Shakespeare," "Why Can't You Be More Like 'Always True to You (In My Fashion)'" "Wunderbar," or the beautiful "So in Love" are unique and expressive, yet perfectly tied to Porter's and Shakespeare's intent.

In this, my last column written before the millennium, the thought occurs to me that in "Kiss Me Kate" we have the perfect vehicle to take us from the 16th century to the 21st. Public television should record the current Broadway version for all those in the next millennium who will have no access to the Broadway theater, or can't afford the exorbitant prices.

Student artwork tours Springfield schools

Have residents been wondering where their children's artwork in the Springfield School District is heading? An art show of student work. The compiled work is a sample of the best painting, printing, drawing, computer graphics, and multimedia within a variety of classes per each grade level. The show includes work from Pre-K to high school and will be touring all of the schools and the board offices. The schedule is as follows:

- Sandrier Elementary School, Jan. 18 to Feb. 4.
- Walton Elementary School, Feb. 14 to 29.
- Springfield Public Library, March 1 to 31.
- F.M. Gaudiner Middle School, April 3 to 20.
- Jonathan Dayton High School, May 1 to 19.
- Springfield Board of Education Offices, May 22 to June 2.

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NJN series to highlight century

The NJN Public Television will air a series of "video snapshots" throughout the last week of 1999 that provide a reflective overview of images and issues that affected New Jerseyans during the last century.

The presentations include the NJN News series, "New Jersey at the Millennium," video retrospectives of 30 years of New Jersey news, "NJN Millennium Minutes," a video series of NJN's "Millennium Postcard," a salute to 20th-century inventors and leaders from New Jersey that features children from around New Jersey. These three-minute spots will air beginning Dec. 26 and continue through January 2000.

"For close to three decades, NJN has captured on video the people and places that distinguish the Garden State, and has created a video history book for our citizens," said Elizabeth Christopherson, NJN executive director. "As we embark on the new millennium, we wanted to share these images with our viewers as to where our state has been and where we are going."

The NJN News' special millennium series, "New Jersey at the Millennium," will feature retrospectives on New Jersey news, politics, business and sports, each segment of the series is being produced by a senior member of the NJN News team, which includes Keni Manahan, Michael Aron, Dicky Pomey and Jerry Henry, respectively. The series will air on NJN News beginning Monday, and continue through Dec. 30. The NJN News airs at 6 p.m., 7:30 p.m. and 11 p.m., and 6:30 a.m. the following day.

The NJN Millennium Minutes offers memorable highlights in New Jersey history, as seen on NJN's news and public affairs programs. The programs highlighted include:

- "NJN's 'Another View,' NJN's weekly public affairs program that focuses on New Jersey's diverse ethnic communities;
- "Due Process," NJN's weekly program focusing on contemporary legal issues as discussed by attorneys and experts;
- "Images/Imágenes," NJN's weekly cultural events and public affairs program focusing on the Hispanic community;
- "State of the Arts" NJN's cultural program that features interviews and performances with the artists who live, create and/or perform in New Jersey, and;
- "NJ 'Outdoors'" as well as NJN-produced documentaries and specials that showcase numerous environmental,

historic and cultural treasures of the Garden State.

In addition, NJN has been selected by PBS to participate in its spectacular, day-long broadcast, "PBS Millennium 2000," which will include a series of "Millennium Postcards" from various PBS affiliates selected from around the country. The NJN will offer viewers nationwide a "Millennium Postcard" that features an overview of the great 20th-century inventors and leaders who were from New Jersey. The children involved will convey the message that they are New Jersey's future, and a great inventor or leader could be among them. The NJN's "Millennium Postcard" highlights Thomas Edison, Albert Einstein, Alice Paul and Paul Robeson.

Eighteen children from Mercer, Somerset, Middlesex and Hunterdon counties participated in NJN's "Millennium Postcard" that was taped at NJN's Trenton studios in November. Ben Schindler of Lawrenceville, Jamin Powell of Somerset, Samantha Hoseln of Warren, Kelly Nigh of Princeton and Mickey Leong of Plainsboro were selected for speaking parts. The children were selected from a series of auditions held in early November.

The national PBS Millennium 2000 is a unique broadcast that will allow viewers to experience the stroke of midnight 24 times from more than 50 countries by featuring celebrations from around the globe as each participating country marks the dawning of the new millennium. Broadcasting from a virtually every region of the planet, "PBS Millennium 2000" is one of the most massive and ambitious live television events in history.

The NJN will air "PBS Millennium 2000" which includes NJN's "Millennium Postcard" beginning Dec. 31 at 8 a.m., continuing through Jan. 1 at 6 a.m. "NJN Millennium Minutes" will continue to air throughout the month of January on NJN.

The NJN is New Jersey's public television network and a PBS member. The NJN is broadcast over channels 23, Camden; 50, Montclair; 52, Trenton; 58, New Brunswick, and all New Jersey cable systems. The NJN is also broadcast in parts of New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Connecticut. The NJN Public Radio, an NPR member station and PRI affiliate, is broadcast on 89.7 FM/Antiatic City; 88.1 FM/Berlin; 89.3 FM/Bridgeton; 90.3 FM/Cape May Court House; 89.9 FM/Manahawick; 88.5 FM/Sussex; and 88.1 FM/Trenton. All NJN-produced series are aired on NJN Public Radio and webcast on NJN's Website at www.njn.net.

Visions of Sugar Plums



The Sugar Plum Fairies take to the stage in the New Jersey Ballet production of "The Nutcracker," on stage at the Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn through Dec. 27. For details, call (973) 376-3636.

Circus joins Westfield's First Night lineup

First Night Westfield 2000 has received a grant from the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders to sponsor Vignobel's Olde Tyme circus at the Westfield Armory Dec. 31. Funding has been made possible in part by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Department of State, through a grant administered by the Union County Divisions of Cultural and Heritage Affairs.

First Night Westfield is a celebra-

tion of the arts for people of all ages. By contributing to First Night Westfield, organizations and individuals help provide an alcohol-free, drug-free New Year's Eve alternative, while supporting the arts and providing access to events people might not otherwise have the opportunity to attend.

Buttons, which serve as admission to all of the venues, can now be purchased at the following locations: the

Westfield "Y," the Westfield Leader, Baron's Drug Store, the Leader Store, Little Treasures, Lancaster Ltd., the Westfield Recreation Department, the South Plains/Farwood YMCA, and Kings of Garwood.

The cost is \$10 per button through Dec. 30, and \$12 per button on Dec. 31. For more information, call the First Night Hotline at (908) 518-2983.

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County sponsors workshop for visual artists

Are you an artist en route to success? "In Pursuit of Professional Recognition," a workshop for visual artists, will supply a detailed road map, with five panel members presenting five fresh perspectives on the journey.

Hamilton Park Conference Center at 175 Park Ave., Florham Park, will host the event from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Jan. 15.

The Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders, the Union County Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, Department of Economic Development, and the Arts Council of

the Morris area are co-sponsoring this half-day workshop.

"We are delighted to be able to extend a morning of nuts-and-bolts information and networking to our thriving art community," said Freeholder Mary P. Ruzolo, liaison to the Cultural and Heritage Advisory Board.

Artists will gain insight into the competitive world of promoting their art and presenting themselves. They will learn what galleries are looking for, from the people who run them. Panelists will advance tips on everything from preparing for gallery sub-

missions to putting invitation lists together.

Phoebe M. Pollinger, artists' representative, will moderate. Panel members will include Arthur H. Bold, director of Art in the Arlun Inc., a non-profit arts organization in Morris County, and Charles Chamor, artist and owner of Chamor Gallery, a commercial venture in Jersey City. Speaking for cooperative galleries will be Annette Adrian Hanna, an artist and teacher at the Blackwell Street Center for the Arts in Dover. Martha Suhr Rolland, representational expressionist painter from New Vernon, will

present what she discovered on the road to a New York exhibition.

Registration, including a \$15 fee, is required by Jan. 7. To request a brochure or more information, contact the Union County Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs at 633 Pearl St., Elizabeth, NJ 07202. The telephone number is (908) 558-2550. Relay users can call (800) 852-7899. Assistive services are available on request.

'Y' offers bellydancing

The Westfield "Y" has announced the addition of bellydancing to its winter programming schedule beginning in January 2000. Classes will be held on Sunday evenings for one hour at 6:30 p.m. beginning Jan. 9. Instructing this class will be "Tania" from Clark, who will bring the beauty and grace of bellydancing to the public. According to "Tania," "Belly dancing, or oriental dancing, allows for artistic expression in movement, wonderful muscle toning and most importantly, a feeling of empowerment. With the wide choices of costuming and dancing attire, anyone can feel comfortable participating in this class."

Registration began for current "Y" members Dec. 11, and for new members Dec. 15. The "Y" is located at 220 Clark St., Westfield. For more information, contact Karen Simon at (908) 233-2700.

Grant money available for cultural programming

The Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders invites community arts organizations, schools and other non-profit organizations that wish to present cultural programming to apply for funding from the Union County Arts Grant Program.

Funds for this program are made available through the Local Arts Program of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Department of State.

"The purpose of the grant program is to enrich the quality of life in Union County by stimulating and supporting the production, presentation and creation of the arts," said Nicholas P. Soutari, chairman of the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders. "Arts activities taking place between Jan. 1, 2001 and Dec. 31, 2001 are eligible for consideration. The deadline for proposals is March 6, 2000."

"We are pleased to continue the Arts Education Special

Project initiative this year," said Freeholder Mary P. Ruzolo, liaison to the Cultural and Heritage Affairs Advisory Board. "The program enables schools as well as other organizations to apply for funding to enhance arts education and teacher professional development."

Union County Arts Grant Program is administered by the Union County Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, Department of Economic Development. The division was designated a Major Arts Service Organization by the New Jersey State Council for the Arts for the third consecutive year.

For an application and guidelines, contact the Union County Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, 633 Pearl St., Elizabeth, NJ 07202. Telephone inquiries may be directed to (908) 558-2550. Relay users dial (800) 852-7899.

Family programming is announced

After a fall season that included Scholastic's "Magic School Bus" and a sold-out performance of "Winnie the Pooh," the Union County Arts Center has announced three performances for families this spring.

"The Hundred and One Dalmatians," an all-new one-hour musical bonanza onto the stage Jan. 9 for two big shows at 1 and 4 p.m. Presented by SAFL productions, this show tells the story of Cruella de Vil, her attempts to make herself a fabulous dalmatian coat, and the efforts of a family of dalmatians to thwart her plans. Featuring an all-new score, and audience participation, "The Hundred and One Dalmatians" is sure to please.

"Jack and the Fire Dragon" is the

Arts Center's "Family Week at the Theater" show. A collection of exciting folk tales presented by the Shooting Players, "Jack and the Fire Dragon" is engaging, entertaining, and educational. As a special gift to encourage families to share live theater together, one student ticket is free with every full-price adult ticket purchased. "Jack and the Fire Dragon" will be presented at 1 p.m. March 11.

The traditional favorite of girls throughout the world, "Black Beauty" trots onto stage at 3 p.m. April 2. An all-new musical featuring Black Beauty, Ginger, Merrylegs and all of their friends, "Black Beauty" is presented by Harmony Artists, and is sure to bring back memories of the

book in every member of the audience.

Tickets for all three of these events are \$9, and can be purchased by calling the box office at (732) 499-8226, or online at www.ucaec.org. Other upcoming events at the Union County Arts Center include comic thrills magicians Penn & Teller, Feb. 13; "70s superstars Three Dog Night, April 15; and Broadway's original Evita, Patti LaBelle, May 12, as well as a production of the hit Broadway musical "Man of La Mancha" March 10 to 25, film and classical events.

For more information, or tickets availability, call the box office at (732) 499-8226, or after 5 p.m. at 1-888-ETM-TIX.

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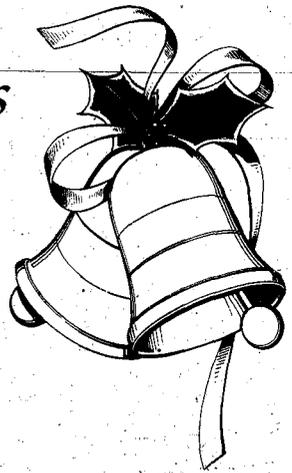
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On Christmas Eve all offices will close at 3 pm. THE WALK-UP/DRIVE-IN WINDOW WILL ALSO CLOSE AT 3 PM.

For your convenience, both Elizabeth offices will be open Thursday evening, December 23 from 6:30 - 8 pm.

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It's the season to celebrate all the good things in life.

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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 Arts and Entertainment Editor Bill Van Sant, Worrall Community Newspapers, P.O. Box 3109, Union, NJ 07083.

Stepping Out

Today — Delayed Green Friday Evening
 Saturday — Swampadelica and Robert Malarazzo
 Sunday — Hardcore Night
 Tuesday — Jazz Jam, every Tuesday
 Wednesday — Juggling Suns, every Wednesday
 Dec. 23 — Shady Grove
 Dec. 24 — Joe Talno & the Blue Flames
 Dec. 25 — Funky Black Widows Cup
 Dec. 26 — Cup of Joe
 Dec. 31 — Blunt Force
 Jan. 1 — BBQ Bob & the Spareribs
 Crossroads is located at 78 North Ave. in Garwood. For information, call (908) 232-9666.
VAN GOGH'S EAR CAFE in Union will present a series of jazz concerts every Sunday at 8 p.m. throughout the fall. Cover charge is \$3 for all concerts.
 Sunday — Ginny Johnston
 Dec. 26 — Pam Purvis and Bob Ackerman
 Van Gogh's Ear is located at 1017 Stuyvesant Ave. in Union Center. For information, call 810-1844.

ART SHOWS

ART AT OVERLOOK will be an exhibit at Overlook Hospital, featuring the artwork of New Jersey photographer Dwight Hiscano through January 2000. The hospital is located at 99 Beauvoir Ave. For information, call (908) 525-6004.

SUMMIT FRAME & ART will exhibit paintings by American artists dating from the mid 19th to early 20th centuries. The gallery is located at 465 Springfield Ave. in Summit. For information, call (908) 273-8665.

TEEN ANGST, LOVE, HATE & OTHER THINGS, the work of Neal Korn, will be on exhibit at Tommaso Art Gallery at Union County College through today.

Gallery hours are Mondays through Thursdays and Saturdays from 1 to 4 p.m., and Tuesdays through Thursdays from 6 to 9 p.m. Union County College is located at 1033 Springfield Ave. in Cranford. For information, call (908) 709-7155.

CHRISTMAS MINIATURES, an exhibit of mixed media, will be on display at the Swain Galleries through Dec. 31.

Gallery hours are Tuesdays through Fridays from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sundays through Dec. 19 from noon to 4 p.m. Swain Galleries is located at 703 Watchung Ave. in Plainfield. For information, call (908) 756-1707.

THE BRIDGES OF NEW JERSEY, works by photographer Jay Gehring Smith, will be on exhibit through Jan. 8, 2000 at the Donald B. Palmer Museum at the Springfield Public Library.

Gallery hours are Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., and by appointment. Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The library is located at 68 Mountain Ave. in Springfield. For information, call (973) 376-4930.

3 ARTISTS, 3 STORIES will be on exhibit through Jan. 16, 2000 at the New Jersey Center for Visual Arts in Summit. On exhibit will be the works of Nancy Cohart, Kay Walkingslick and Bea Wahagan.

NJCVCA is located at 68 Elm St. in Summit. Hours are Monday to Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For information, call (908) 273-9121.

THE HUMAN PRESENCE, an exhibit by The New Art Group, will be on display at The Gallery at the Arts Guild of Rahway through Dec. 30.

Gallery hours are Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 1 to 4 p.m., Thursdays from 1 to 3 and 5 to 7 p.m., and by appointment. The Arts Guild is located at 1670 Irving St. in Rahway. For information, call (732) 381-7511.

PHOTOGRAPHER ART CARLSON will exhibit his black-and-white works at the Donald B. Palmer Museum in the Springfield Free Public Library from Jan. 7 to Feb. 10.

Gallery hours are Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.; and Tuesday, Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The library is located at 66 Mountain Ave. in Springfield. For information, call (973) 376-4930.

INDUSTRIAL IMAGES, paintings by Michael McGinley and Tim Baydovs, will be on exhibit at the Arts Guild of Rahway from Jan. 12 to Feb. 9.

Gallery hours are Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 1 to 4 p.m., Thursdays from 1 to 3 and 5 to 7 p.m., and by appointment. The Arts Guild is located at 1670 Irving St. in Rahway. For information, call (732) 381-7511.

AUDITIONS

CARNIVAL PRODUCTIONS will continue auditions for "Bus Stop" by William Inge 7:30 p.m. Monday at the offices of the Rahway Center Partner-

ship, 1417 Main St. in Rahway. Being sought are two men, one in his 20s and one in his 40s to 50s; and two women, both in their late teens to early 20s. For information, call (732) 388-0647 or send e-mail to carnivalp@aol.com.

CRANFORD DRAMATIC CLUB will conduct auditions for "Lend Me a Tonic" by Ken Ludwig today from 7 to 10 p.m. at the playhouse, 78 Winans Ave. in Cranford. Being sought are four men, late 20s to 80s, and four women, mid-20s to 60s. For information, call (973) 376-1216.

FUNCTION TEN INC. will conduct auditions for its fifth Valentine Spectacular Monday and Tuesday from 7 to 9 p.m. at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Park Avenue and Galloping Hill Road, Elizabeth. Being sought are versatile performers between the ages of 6 and 96. Auditions should bring music and be prepared to dance and sing. For information, call (908) 317-9295.

CARNIVAL PRODUCTIONS is still seeking personnel — actors and support staff — for "Bus Stop." For information on available positions, call (732) 388-0647 or send e-mail to carnivalp@aol.com.

CRANFORD REPERTORY THEATRE will conduct auditions for "Fiddler on the Roof" Jan. 5 and 8.

BOOKS

AUTHOR DON FRIEDMAN will appear at the Town Book Store in Westfield Saturday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. to sign copies of his book, "The Hand Before the Eye." The Town Book Store is located at 255 E. Broad St. in Westfield. For information, call (908) 233-3535.

AUTHOR FRANK FINALE and artist Theresa Troise Heidel will appear at the Town Book Store in Westfield Saturday from 1 to 3 p.m. to sign copies of their book, "To the Shore Once More: A Portrait of the Jersey Shore's Prose, Poetry and Works of Art." The Town Book Store is located at 255 E. Broad St. in Westfield. For information, call (908) 233-3535.

CLASSES

WESTFIELD YOUNG ARTISTS' COOPERATIVE will offer professional classes in the performing arts. Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced Acting classes will concentrate on improvisation, character development and scene study. Also offered are four levels of tap and three levels of musical theater, which focuses on song selection and interpretation, ensemble work, voice, and musical theater movement and dance. Private lessons in voice and/or acting are available.

The Westfield High School is located at 728 Westfield Ave., Westfield. For information, call (908) 233-3200.

THE WESTFIELD "Y" will conduct classes in cardio box and kick, art appreciation, and bellydancing beginning in January. The "Y" is located at 220 Clark St. in Westfield. For information, call (908) 233-2700.

COMEDY

CASUAL TIMES restaurant features comedians on Saturdays, at 8:30 p.m. and 11 p.m.

The restaurant is located at 1055 Central Ave., Clark. For information, call (908) 388-6511.

DANCE

THE NUTCRACKER, performed by the New Jersey Ballet, will be presented at the Paper Mill Playhouse, Milburn, through Monday. Evening performances are 8 p.m. Friday, Saturday and Monday today and Thursday at 7 p.m., and Sunday at 8 p.m. Matinee performances are Friday, Sunday and Monday at 1 p.m., and Thursday at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$18 to \$36.

The Paper Mill Playhouse is located on Brookside Drive in Milburn. For information, call (973) 376-4343. For information on rates for groups of more than 20, call (973) 379-3636; ext. 2438.

SUMMIT FOLK DANCERS will meet Friday at The Connection, formerly the Summit YWCA, to learn dances of other countries. No partners are needed. For information, call (973) 467-8278.

FILM

UNION COUNTY ARTS CENTER in Rahway continues its Film Series Jan. 12 with "Driving Miss Daisy" starring Jessica Tandy in an Oscar-winning performance. Screenings are at 1 and 8 p.m. Tickets are \$3 for the 1 p.m. show, and \$5 for the 8 p.m. show. UCAC is located at 1601 Irving St. in Rahway. For information and reservations, call (732) 499-8226 or visit the UCAC website at www.ucac.org.

UNION COUNTY ARTS CENTER in Rahway continues its Film Series Jan. 19 with "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner," starring Katharine Hepburn in an Oscar-winning performance and Spencer Tracy in his last screen appearance. Screenings are at 1 and 8 p.m. Tickets are \$3 for the 1 p.m. show, and \$5 for the 8 p.m. show. UCAC is located at 1601 Irving St. in Rahway. For information and reservations, call (732) 499-8226 or visit the UCAC website at www.ucac.org.

GOLF

GOLF CLINIC for children ages 10 to 13 will take place at the Baltusoll Golf Club in Springfield from 10 to 11 a.m. The clinic will raise funds for programs run by The Children's Aid Society. For information, call Freeman Miller at (212) 614-4216.

KIDS

UNION COUNTY ARTS CENTER in Rahway continues its family series with "The Hundred and One Dalmatians" Jan. 9 at 1 and 4 p.m. Tickets are \$9. UCAC is located at 1601 Irving St. in Rahway. For information and reservations, call (732) 499-8226 or visit the UCAC website at www.ucac.org.

TRAILSIDE NATURE AND SCIENCE CENTER, 452 New Providence Road in Mountainside, will sponsor workshops for families this fall.

• Two of Us: ages 3 and 4 years old with an adult; hikes and outdoor activities; Tuesdays in December from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.; \$4 per class.

For information and a complete brochure, call (908) 799-3670. Trailside Nature and Science Center is located at 425 New Providence Road in Mountainside. For information, call (908) 789-3670.

UNION RECREATION Department will sponsor weekly ceramics classes for children between the ages of 7 and 12 at the Recreation building, 1120 Commerce Ave., Union, from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. For information, call 964-4828.

SINGLES

INTERFAITH SINGLES will meet every Sunday from 9 to 10:30 a.m. — for discussion and continental breakfast at the First Baptist Church, 170 Elm St. in Westfield. Donation is \$2. For information, call (908) 869-5269 or (908) 869-4751.

KISMET SINGLES will sponsor several events in the coming weeks. For information, call (908) 232-8872 or visit the website at www.thatskismet.com.

TELEVISION

STATE OF THE ARTS will present "Jazz Jazz" featuring two New Jersey-based jazz performers Saturday at 11:30 p.m. and Sunday at 8 p.m.

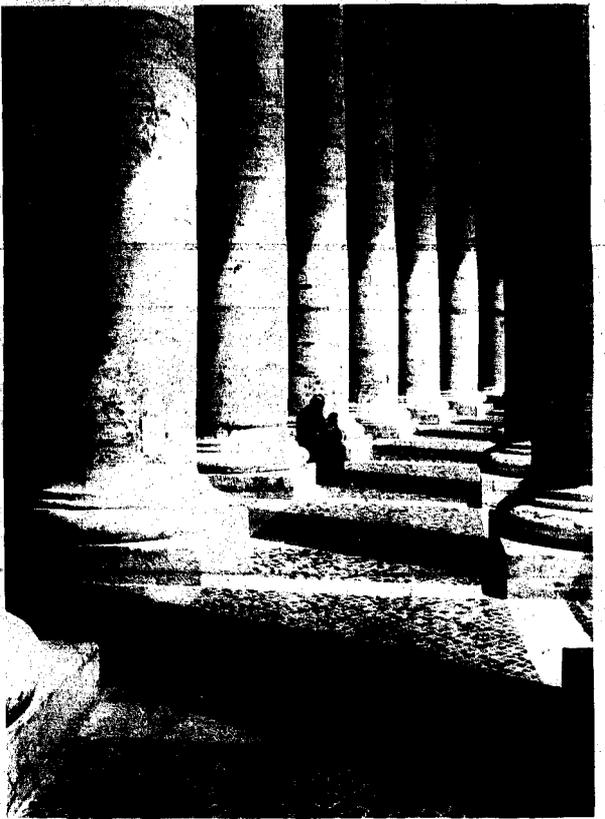
THEATER

PAPER MILL PLAYHOUSE will continue its 1999-2000 season with the farce "Noises Off" Jan. 5 to Feb. 3. Michael Frayn's play-within-a-play focuses on the backstage — on stage and off — of a lit-rare acting troupe and stars Brian Murray reprising his original Broadway role.

Evening performances are Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m., and Sundays at 7:30 p.m. Matinees are Thursdays and Sundays at 2 p.m., and Saturdays at 2:30 p.m. Singles Night is Feb. 10, and audio-described performances are Feb. 3 at 2 p.m., Feb. 5 at 2:30 p.m., and Feb. 6 at 7:30 p.m.; sensory seminars take place 90 minutes prior to curtain. The Paper Mill Playhouse is located on Brookside Drive in Milburn. For information and reservations, call (973) 378-4243; for groups of 20 or more, call (973) 379-3636, ext. 2438.

VARIETY

CROSSROADS in Garwood will present a series of jazz, blues and comedy concerts.



ST. PETER'S COLONNADE in Rome is but one of the black and white works by photographer Art Carlson on exhibit at the Donald B. Palmer Museum in the Springfield Free Public Library from Jan. 7 to Feb. 10. For information, call (973) 376-4930.

New plays with Jewish themes are now sought

New Jersey and New York playwrights are invited to submit plays with Jewish content to the New York/New Jersey Playwriting Contest.

Supported by the Sophie and Joseph Ables Foundation, the winning playwright will receive a \$500 honorarium in addition to having the play produced and performed in four venues in the New York/New Jersey metropolitan area, including the Maurice Lewis Theater at the JCC of Metropolitan New Jersey in West Orange.

All plays must be new works based on a Jewish theme, have one set that is easily transportable, and have a maximum of seven characters. Musicals will not be accepted and production costs are limited to \$5,000. Playwrights must be previously published.

Submissions should include the following: a \$10 readers fee, letter of recommendation, cover letter and self-addressed stamped envelope. Deadline for submissions is April 5, 2000. The winning play will be chosen in September 2000 and mounted between November 2000 and February 2001.

Entries should be submitted to the Herbert Mark Newman Theater, 600 Bear Ridge Road, Pleasantville, N.Y. 10757. Further information is available by calling John Arco at (914) 741-0333, ext. 626.

Dance/New Jersey currently offers its new initiative

This past year, Dance/New Jersey launched its Associate Members Program, a new initiative which offers an additional tier of services and support to a larger sector of the dance community in the state.

The Associate Member Program is open to all dance organizations that have been funded at the county level. Associate members will be able to take advantage of the collective marketing expertise of the organization; they will have access to all of the resources of the organization such as funding guidelines and deadlines and audience databases. They will also be included in the organization's Calendar of Events, which is expected to be distributed to 4,000 individuals and organizations in the coming season. The program is also intended to act as a mentoring program, to develop excellence in the state's dance artists and companies of tomorrow.

For more information about the new Associate Membership Program or Dance/New Jersey, contact Portland Green at Dance/New Jersey at (973) 222-8844.

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Union County Freeholder Chairman Nicholas Scutari, left, presents a resolution to Union County photographer and HEART Grant recipient Nancy Ori of Berkeley Heights.

County Freeholders honor photographer Nancy Ori

Freeholder Chairman Nicholas P. Scutari presented a resolution from the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders to Nancy J. Ori, an internationally respected industrial photographer and video producer from Berkeley Heights as well as a photographer of architecture and landscapes.

"Nancy Ori's exhibit, made possible in part by a HEART Grant — History, Education, Arts, Reaching Thousands — from the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders, is exceptional," stated Scutari. "Four exhibits, which recently hung in the county Administration Building in Elizabeth were selected from a larger body of photographs taken in the county's park system. Through her fine art photography, Nancy highlighted the natural resources, preservation and beauty that exist in Union County."

Additional pieces were added to the exhibit at the end of October, and it went on to the Liberty Science Center in Jersey City. It is currently part of an exhibit called "Earth, Wind, Fire and Water: Images of the New Jersey Landscape." The exhibit, which is expected to be seen by 400,000 people, will remain at the Liberty Science Center until March 31, 2000.

Sell it with a classified ad. 1-800-564-8911.

State of the Arts plans to 'jazz up' viewers this Christmas

The NJN's Public Television and Radio plans to get viewers "jazzed" up this holiday season when NJN's State of the Arts presents "Jersey Jazz," featuring two New Jersey-based jazz performers and a behind-the-scenes look at one of the nation's top jazz radio stations.

This edition of State of the Arts will be broadcast Christmas night — Saturday at 11:30 p.m. — with a rebroadcast Sunday at 4 p.m.

For the first stop on "Jersey Jazz," State of the Arts sits down with jazz saxophonist and Trenton-born Richie Cole on his home turf — taking the viewer inside his home and dropping by some of Trenton's old-time jazz spots. Known to play in the Charles Parker bebop tradition, Cole has an international reputation that includes followings in Europe and Japan and has performed on more than 25 records.

Follow New Jersey jazz artist Teri Thornton, who, after a 30-year career hiatus, surprised many with a win at the 1998 Theloniou Monk Jazz competition in Washington. The 60-something jazz vocalist had a taste of stardom in the early '60s and now is back on track, poised for a comeback. A resident of the Actor's Fund Home in Englewood, Thornton speaks candidly with State of the Arts about the ups and downs of her jazz career.

To conclude "Jersey Jazz," State of the Arts takes the viewer inside one of the nation's foremost jazz radio stations, WBGO-FM in Newark, in recognition of its 30th year of service to New Jersey. The segment introduces viewers to the faces behind the voices and to jazz percussionist T.S. Monk, the son of Theloniou.

The WBGO broadcast on all seven NJN Public Radio stations from midnight to 6 a.m., State of the Arts airs

on NJN Public Radio on Thursdays at 10 p.m. The "Jersey Jazz" program of State of the Arts is closed-captioned for the hearing-impaired.

State of the Arts is a half-hour, studio-based program focusing on the arts and artists, with interviews and performances. The program is hosted by Emmy Award-winner Amber Edwards and is a thoughtful, in-depth treatment of the arts with engaging conversations with the artists who live, create and/or perform in New Jersey. Field pieces take viewers behind the scenes into artists' studios as well as backstage to discover the art of set and costume design.

The NJN Public Television and Radio is New Jersey's public telecommunications network. The NJN Public Television, a PBS member, is broadcast over Channel 23 in Camden, Channel 50 in Montclair, Channel 52 in Trenton, Channel 58 in New

Brunswick, and all New Jersey cable systems. The NJN Public Television also is broadcast in parts of New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Connecticut. The NJN Public Radio, a NPR member station and PRI affiliate, is broadcast on 89.7 FM/Atlantic City; 88.1 FM/Bridgeton; 89.3 FM/Bridgeton; 90.3 FM/Cape May Court House; 89.9 FM/Mantoloking; 88.5 FM/Sussex; and 88.1 FM/Trenton. The NJN's website is located at www.njn.net.

To place a classified ad call 1-800-564-8911 by 3 p.m. Tuesday.

Westfield's Choral Art Society welcomes new singers

The Choral Art Society of New Jersey Inc. welcomes new members to its fall rehearsals at the Presbyterian Church in Westfield at the corner of Mountain Avenue and East Broad Street. The group meets each Tuesday at 8 p.m. under the direction of James S. Little and accompanist Mary Beth McFall. The society is currently preparing the "Mass in B minor" by J.S. Bach.

Little is the organist and choirmaster at Calvary Episcopal Church in Summit, where he directs three choirs and the Calvary Concert Series. He is a graduate of Trenton State College and Westminster Choir College. He is also director of MadJazz, a Union County capella group, and the Prep Choir of the Somerset Hills Children's Chorus.

The Choral Art Society of New Jersey Inc., now in its 37th year, is a non-profit community chorus dedicated to the study and performance of great choral works. It sponsors a "Messiah" Sing in early December and performances of major works are scheduled in January and May.

For more information, call (908) 232-2455.

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TOY STORY 2 (149) G Fri 11:15, 1:15, 3:15, 5:15, 7:15, 9:15 Sat, Sun • Thur 11:15, 1:15, 3:15, 5:15, 7:15, 9:15
STUART LITTLE (124) PG Fri 11:00, 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00 Sat, Sun • Thur 11:00, 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00
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Please call theater for more movie times & titles 908-241-2525

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MIDAS TOUCH RESTAURANT Diner

By Jacquie McCarthy

When deciding where to eat out, every now and again the traditional New Jersey diner wins out as the best choice for variety and value. If you drive down Westfield Avenue in Roselle Park, you will find a diner with value, variety and more — The Midas Touch. Midas Touch Diner is a comfortable place to take a lead off, get a hot cup of Joe or a cold egg cream — both of which are good — and enjoy one of those well-rounded meals like Mama used to make.

My diner companion and I chose from the specials highlighted in the center of a menu filled with diner classics, from burgers and sandwiches to surf and turf. I ordered the broiled stuffed flounder Florentine; my companion, the chicken scamper. First, of course, we took a trip to the diner's fine salad bar, which includes the standard assortment of veggies and salads, plus the added bonus of tasty seafood pasta salad, devilled eggs, pasta and meatballs.

When we got back to our table, warm bread was floured, and a cup of delicious lobster bisque soon followed. The flounder Florentine was flavorful, with generous feta cheese in the stuffing. Mashed potatoes — always a diner diner fav — and peas and carrots accompanied the meal. The chicken scamper was rich and juicy with succulent chicken, and I could not resist taking a taste myself. For dessert, no diner special would be complete without creamy rice pudding.

Many Niotis, owner of the Midas Touch diner, takes great pride in his establishment. He and his staff were welcoming and eager to please. Midas Touch is located at 61 Westfield Ave., Roselle Park. For information, call (908) 241-1335.

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Church welcomes millennium with Dixieland liturgy service

On Jan. 2 at 10 a.m., Faith Lutheran Church in New Providence invites the public to start the new millennium in a unique way — with a Dixieland Jazz liturgy.

The Dixie Kings band — featuring Simon Wetten Hall on trumpet, Ken Salvo on banjo, Michael Christianson on tuba, Jack Suckey on clarinet, and Randy Rinehart on trombone — will offer a traditional New Orleans-style funeral resurrection service, featuring such favorite hymns as "Precious Lord," "Amazing Grace," "Swing

Low, Sweet Chariot," and "When the Saints Go Marching In."

This service of Holy Communion begins with slow, somber music, progresses to a joyous celebration, and climaxes with a rousing march. Child care will be available during the approximately one-hour liturgy.

Faith Lutheran Church is located at 524 South St. in New Providence. For more information, contact the church at (908) 464-5177 or send e-mail to fanfath@bellatlantic.net.

Children take center stage for Christmas Eve service

The First Baptist Church of Westfield, 170 Elm St., offers a Christmas Eve Children's Service at 4 p.m. and a Candlelight Service at 7:30 p.m. Friday, with Music for Meditation at 7 p.m.

All services are in the church sanctuary, which is decorated with a free-standing creche surrounded by angels.

The 7:30 p.m. Candlelight Service uses traditional carols and readings to tell the story of the birth of Jesus and allow quiet reflection on its meaning. The 4 p.m. Children's Service is a rehearsed Christmas pageant with choir numbers by the children and carols sung by the whole congregation. It is followed by refreshments served in the lounge. The 7 p.m. music features Minister of Music Bill Mathews at the organ. Child care is provided from 7 to 9 p.m. Visitors are welcome at all services. For information, call (908) 233-2278.

Westfield 'Y' to offer osteoporosis workshop

The Westfield "Y," 220 Clark St. in Westfield, will be offering an eight-week workshop on fall prevention and exercise for people with osteoporosis, beginning Jan. 4. This 45-minute class will be conducted twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 to 10:15 a.m.

strength, joint mobility and coordination.

Appropriate for both men and women, the workshop is designed to reduce the risk of falling and improve functional mobility. Participants will learn exercise to improve balance,

Comfortable clothing and sturdy shoes are a must. A doctor's release form, provided by the "Y," is required before starting this class. The fee for this program is \$40 for Gold and Silver members, and \$80 for Basic members. The Westfield "Y" is handicapped-accessible. For more information, call Karen Simon at (908) 233-2700.

'Y' classes will answer artistic questions

The Westfield "Y" has added an art appreciation course to the January 2000 schedule.

"Why Is This Art?" will take a look at how art in the media has influenced our culture. If one has ever wondered what one was looking at when one walked into the Museum of Modern Art or the Guggenheim, or wondered what makes a postage stamp or can of soup "art," then this is an appropriate course.

Taught by Sharon Schindler — formerly associated with the Cambridge Museum of England, professor of art at the

University of Wuppertal and professor of English at the New Jersey City University and Raritan Valley Community College — the class will include slide presentations. The course also may offer an optional tour of the Newark Museum.

Classes will be conducted Tuesday evenings from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. and will run for eight weeks beginning Jan. 4. Registration began for current "Y" members Dec. 11 and for new members Dec. 15. The Westfield "Y" is located at 220 Clark St., Westfield. For more information, contact Karen Simon at (908) 232-2700.

The century's last 'first'



Preparing for First Night Summit 2000 is Over the Moon of Millburn, who will be among the many performers when Summit says 'goodbye' to 1999. For information, call (908) 522-1722.

Nutritional information available at workshop

The Westfield "Y," 220 Clark St. in Westfield, will be offering a lecture on nutrition titled "It's Your Body" Jan. 17 at 7 p.m.

Participants will have the opportunity to discuss the health and nutrition issues of concern to women. They will learn the facts and fiction about fats, cholesterol, calcium, sugar, carbohydrates, popular diets and why Americans eating "right" are gaining weight and experiencing an epidemic of chronic ailments.

This lecture is free and open to the public. For information and registration, which is required, call (908) 233-2700.

Bill Van Sant, Editor

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Westfield 'Y' adds kickboxing course

Beginning in January, the Westfield "Y" will expand its popular Cardio Box & Kick program to include an advanced Cardio Kick Circuit class Monday evenings at 6 p.m.

This circuit class is limited to seven participants, and will offer personalized attention to punching and kicking skills using targets.

Cardio Box & Kick classes provide the participant with a safe, fun, dynamic workout that will improve strength, flexibility, endurance, balance and agility. "Safety is our number one concern," says Karen Simon, director of Adult and Senior Programs. "With the proliferation of kickboxing-type classes, the customer must make sure that the instructor is not only qualified to teach, but is able to properly demonstrate technique and modify the class for all fitness and ability levels. At the 'Y,' we focus on form and the proper execution of all moves, paying particular attention to beginning, ensuring that they learn to execute the moves safely and effectively."

Classes at the Westfield "Y" are taught by certified instructors. When circumstances allow, instructors often team-teach, offering the opportunity for an even more personalized and diverse workout for each participant. Formats include circuit-style classes, that utilize traditional boxing and kickboxing equipment, "The Body" classes requiring no equipment, and combination classes that may include the use of target mitts, kick pads, jump ropes, weights and tubing. Registration began for current "Y" members Dec. 11, and for new members Dec. 15. The Westfield "Y" is located at 220 Clark St. in Westfield. For more information, contact Simon at (908) 233-2700.

Deadline approaches for national poetry contest

The International Library of Poetry has announced that \$58,000 in prizes will be awarded this year in the International Open Poetry Contest.

Poets from the United States area, particularly beginners, are welcome to try to win their share of more than 250 prizes. The deadline for the contest is Jan. 15, 2000. The contest is open to everyone and entry is free.

"Any poet, whether previously published or not, can be a winner," stated Howard Ely, contest director. "When people learn about our free poetry contest, they suddenly realize their own poetic works of art can win cash prizes, as well as gain national recognition."

To enter, send one original poem, any subject and any style to: The International Library of Poetry, Suite 19907, 1 Poetry Plaza, Owning Mills, MD 21117. The poem should be 20 lines or less, and the poet's name and address should appear on the top of the page.

Entries must be postmarked or sent via the Internet by Jan. 15, 2000. Online entries may be directed to www.poetry.com.

The International Library of Poetry, founded in 1982, is the largest poetry organization in the world.

Kean seeks theaters for 2nd 'incubation'

The Arts Incubator Project at Kean University in Union is seeking "homeless" New Jersey theater groups and playwrights.

The project provides rent-free rehearsal and performance space at the university and, when possible, assists with technical needs for productions. For playwrights, the incubator provides rent-free studio space for play readings.

The Kean Project is the first Arts Incubator in New Jersey and the first in the country to be housed at a university.

Summer of 1999 was the first Arts Incubator season at Kean, and five theater groups were selected to rehearse and perform plays using a variety of the university's theater spaces.

According to Project Director Susan Appibbaum of Kean's Communication and Theatre Department, "This year we are expanding the use of facilities and increasing their availability to accommodate more groups. Also, we feel that offering space to playwrights will help us meet our goal of supporting the entire theater process."

Theater groups and playwrights wishing to apply for the Arts Incubator Project or needing more information may contact Appibbaum at (908) 527-2350.

Volunteers sought for Teen Arts

Do you like working with artists, teachers and students? The Union County Teen Arts Festival provides an opportunity for volunteers to get involved.

The Union County Teen Arts Festival, sponsored by the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, Department of Economic Development, is a two-day celebration of the arts sponsored annually at Union County College in Cranford. The event, scheduled for March 15

and 16, is open to all students from public, private and parochial middle and high schools in the county.

"At the Festival, 3,000 students participate in performances, critiquing seminars, master classes and workshops with a staff of 50 professional artists in every discipline — visual art, music, creative writing, theater and dance," said Freeholder Mary P. Ruotolo, liaison to the Cultural and Heritage Programs Advisory Board.

"Volunteers are needed to assist

artists with workshops, manager performance sites and staff information stations," Ruotolo added. "We appreciate the invaluable assistance of our county residents with this exciting program."

If you are interested in any of these activities, contact the Union County Division of Cultural and Heritage Affairs at 633 Pearl St., Elizabeth, NJ 07202, or call (908) 558-2550. Relay Users should call (800) 852-8789. E-mail inquiries should be addressed to SCoen@UnionCountyNJ.org.

Essay contest deadline draws near

"Growing Better Everyday Through Bio-Technology" is the theme of the annual Essay Contest sponsored by the New Jersey Agricultural Society in celebration of National Agriculture Week, March 19 to 25, 2000.

The contest is open to all students in grades six through 11. Each grade level will have three prize winners with the first-place winner receiving a \$150 savings bond and a plaque.

The deadline for entries is Jan. 14, 2000. Each winning essay will be published in the *New Jersey Farmer* news-

paper. Awards will be presented to the winners at a ceremony in Trenton during National Agriculture Week. Essays should be between 250 and 500 words and may be neatly handwritten or typed. Essays will be judged on creativity, originality, neatness, and the correct use of grammar, spelling and punctuation.

Founded in 1781, the New Jersey Agricultural Society is the oldest farm organization in the United States. The society is a non-profit, charitable organization dedicated to promoting agriculture in the Garden State. For more information, contact Maryann Huson at (609) 292-8897.

REUNIONS

Westfield High School Class of 1980 reunion is scheduled for March 25, 2000. For information, call Reunions Unlimited Inc. at (732) 617-1000.

Westfield High School Class of 1970 reunion is scheduled for April 7, 2000. For information, call (732) 617-1000.

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

Union High School Class of 1990 reunion is scheduled for June 10, 2000. For information, contact Reunions Unlimited Inc. at (732) 617-1000.

reunion is scheduled for July 13, 2000. For information, contact Evelyn Steudle Borshay at (402) 647-8119.

Union High School Class of 1980 reunion is scheduled for Aug. 19, 2000. For information, contact Reunions Unlimited Inc. at (732) 617-1000.

Cranford High School Class of 1980 reunion is scheduled for Nov. 25, 2000. For information, contact

Reunions Unlimited Inc. at (732) 617-1000.

Batin High School Class of June 1934 is looking for classmates for a 65th reunion. Contact Dorothy M. Bittel at (561) 364-8671.

Union High School Class of 1955 has scheduled its 45th reunion for Nov. 25, 2000 at L'Affaire Restaurant in Mountainside. For information, address e-mail to UHS1955@aol.com.

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Bill Van Sant, Editor
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ACROSS

- Capacitance unit
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- 1978 Nobelist
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- History book chapter
- Magazine title
- Loudness measures
- Man of "Oz"
- Winter melodies
- Without help
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- Council
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- Fuss
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- Woodworking tool
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- Suffix for cloth or cash
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- Raccoon kin
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- Ladies of La Scala
- Teleton bigwig
- Turkish topper
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- 67
- Seaman

DOWN

- "Cabaret" director
- Ster clear of
- Nancy's man
- Snake —, hurry
- Not true-blue
- Ousted a queen
- Melody
- Marriage proclamation
- Break with
- Domestic
- 11 Ken or Bartle
- Charles Correll role
- Cobb and Harlin compounds
- Bambi's mom
- 46 Bellefit
- 47 Catches her eye
- 49 Grit
- 51 Logo
- enclosers
- 53 Inuc
- 54 — Give You Anything But Love, Baby"
- 55 Buttes
- 56 Heavy reading
- 57 Track event
- 58 Out of the wind
- 59 Radames' love
- 60 Animator's sheet

See ANSWERS on Page B12

HOROSCOPE

For Dec. 27 to Jan. 2

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Expansion is your key word for this current cycle. Make a commitment to your worldly talents and excel in the professional arena. **TAURUS** (April 20-May 20): Start the new year with a clean slate. Find time to look over old photos, review financial papers and generally clean out your files.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21): Close friends can be your link to the completion of an important project. Take advantage of a holiday gathering to network your ideas.

CANCER (June 22-July 22): The desire to get going on a personal project is very strong. Let moderation be your key word as you move forward to tackle the opposition.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Prepare for the professional duties and responsibilities that are facing you at this time. Assistance from an elder or mentor is helpful and on time. **VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Joint ventures appear to be very promising. Play it safe and do your share of research before cutting loose with a large sum of money. **LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 23): Dream of great romantic adventures with a new partner or mate. Open up, and share your emotional secrets, goals and desires whenever you're ready. **SCORPIO** (Oct. 24-Nov. 21): Throw your support behind a special cause, philosophy or political party. Share your thoughts, but don't expect everyone to agree with your views. **SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You may suffer from over-enthusiasm and change, especially on the home

front. Plan activities that are relaxing and fun. **CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): This could be a passionate and emotionally turbulent week for you. Batten down the hatches, and find a way to express your feelings positively. **AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): News you'll hear this week is exciting but at the same time unsettling. This is your chance to break out of the routine and dream big! Take it! **PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20): Monetary breakthrough or discoveries are liberating. Start now, and build a financial portfolio you can be proud of.

If your birthday is this week, take advantage of opportunities to expand emotionally, financially and professionally during the coming year. The size of your family or your physical home is likely to increase.

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REAL ESTATE

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Ruff joins Burgdorff

Burgdorff ERA recently announced that Denise Ruff has joined the company as a sales associate in the Summit office, located at 785 Springfield Ave.

In addition to providing premier home buying and selling services through the exclusive Burgdorff ERA Signature Program, Ruff can offer information about local schools, neighborhoods, shopping, dining, recreation and more. Before she became a Realtor, Ruff was trained and licensed as a beautician — a position where she acquired many customer-oriented skills. She knows how to listen carefully and provides high quality service. These same skills are indispensable in her career as a sales associate with Burgdorff ERA.

Ruff was born in New York and lives in Cairo, Egypt; Peking, China; Dublin, Ireland; Haines, Zimbabwe and London, England. Her father worked for the United Nations and later became a consul general in the Austrian Embassy. Her childhood experiences of moving frequently make her especially sympathetic to the feelings of relocating families. She has been exposed to many different cultures and is fluent in German. Founded in 1958, Burgdorff ERA has more than 825 sales associates and 28 offices across New Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania.

lozzi celebrates 10th

lozzi-Williams Inc., Realtors of Clark, one of the largest independent brokers in Union County, is celebrat-

ing its 10th anniversary. Locally owned and operated serving Union, Somerset, Middlesex and Ocean counties, lozzi-Williams Inc. has grown to more than 30 agents since it opened in 1989.

Owner/Broker Mary Ann Ruffini-Williams is a lifelong resident of Union County and has been a Realtor for the past 20 years. All the sales associates in her company are also actively involved in the communities her agency serves.

"Our clients deserve individual attention for their own unique needs, and our agents specialize in this," said Ruffini-Williams. "Integrity, professionalism and customer service are first and foremost to our agents."

The company's transactions include sales of residential and commercial properties, townhomes, new construction of single family homes, and rentals.

With a strong conscious desire to give back to the community, lozzi-Williams Realtors actively participate in many community projects, including the Children's Halloween Parade, Christmas tree-lighting ceremony, Career Day at local high schools, and Lions Club scholarship presentations.

The Clark Lions Peace Poster Contest for grade-school children, in which the agency participates, saw its first prize go to a student from Carl H. Kumpf School this year. lozzi-Williams Realtors also assist in the distribution of Tot-Finder Deals for Fire Safety and 9-1-1 Emergency Awareness booklets.

lozzi-Williams Realtors was one of the first agencies in the industry to establish its own site on the World-

wide Web, where people from anywhere in the country could access the company's listings.

"We're known for our cutting-edge technology," said Ruffini-Williams. "We invite everyone to see our listings at www.iwrealtors.com."

Matallana to Mangels

Matallana, a veteran real estate professional from Elizabeth, is bringing his expertise to Mangels Realtors at 367 Chestnut Street in Union. Javier came to the Elizabeth area about 14 years ago from Peru and began his real estate career in 1994, earning the NJAR Million Dollar Sales Club award five times, 1994-99, three times at the Silver Level, '95-97.

"We are delighted to have Javier on our team," said mangels president for residential sales, Jim Schoening. "We have a strong multi-lingual office to effectively serve the needs of the Union County market. Javier has demonstrated a keen ability to put people at ease with his outstanding professional service."

"Mangels is an ideal company for me," said Matallana. "They're known for their caring and their integrity, two qualities that are very important to me. They have strong roots in the community; they're a family-oriented business, and they give me the flexibility and support I need to do my best. I also think their affiliation with the R.E.L.O. network gives us an advantage in the marketplace. I've been selling their listings as a cooperating agent for years. Now I'm a full-fledged member of the team."

Matallana can be reached at Mangels Realtors, (908) 688-3000.

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Who's buying? Who's selling?
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Improve your homes for the winter season

The days are getting shorter. The wind is kicking. Like it or not, winter is almost here. Is your home ready for the big chill? There are some things you can do right now that will help lower your heating bills and make winter a whole lot warmer at your house, according to the real estate professionals at Burgdorff ERA.

"Windows and doors are the big gas culprits when it comes to heat loss," said Doug Radford, vice president of the Burgdorff ERA Summit and New Providence offices. "Fortunately, it's easy to caulk leaky windows with a good silicone product which will keep the cool air out. Exterior doors can also be sealed with scrubber 'sweep' attached to the bottom of the door."

When your home heating bills start to skyrocket, Radford advises going directly to the source. "You should have your furnace serviced and cleaned at least once a year to make sure the whole system is energy-efficient. Baseboard heating should be vacuumed often to remove dust that may be blocking the heat. And notice where your furniture is placed in a room. You may want to rearrange your rooms so that nothing is blocking a heating element."

Beverly Hannold, the vice president and manager of the Burgdorff ERA Princeton office, explained that her favorite energy-saving tip comes from a source not often thought of: the chilly winter — ceiling fans. "Many families in our area install ceiling fans to push warm air back down into the room. This is a smart idea because these same fans will also cool your room in the summer," said Hannold. "Another inexpensive way to make a room feel warmer is to add some

humidity. Moisten dry air with potted plants or a humidifier."

"In Sussex County, we know that insulation is one of the secrets to keeping your home comfortable and making the long, cold winter a lot easier to survive," said Dave Haanz, vice president and manager of the Burgdorff ERA Sparta office. "Good insulation between the walls, under floors, in attics and in ceilings keeps your home warmer in the winter and cooler in the summers. Many homes more than 15 years old may not be insulated properly. Installing insul-

tion is a relatively easy weekend project that will pay for itself in lower energy bills."

Founded in 1958, Burgdorff ERA has more than 825 sales associates and 28 offices across New Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania. The worldwide ERA real estate network includes more than 2,700 independently owned and operated brokerage offices with more than 27,000 brokers and sales associates in all 50 of the United States and 19 other countries. The Burgdorff ERA web site is located at www.burgdorff.com.

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30 YEAR FIXED	7.75	0.00	7.78	APP 30 YR FIXED	8.13	0.00	8.13
15 YR FIXED	7.50	0.00	7.54	FEF 15 YR FIXED	7.38	0.00	7.38
1YR ADJ.	5.00	0.00	5.68	1YR ADJ.	5.80	0.00	5.81

Rates subject to change without notice

Bank	Rate	PTS	APR	Bank	Rate	PTS	APR
Barco Popular M.A.	8.00	451-2263	114.0	Loan Search	6.58	2279	1133
30 YEAR FIXED	7.75	0.00	7.78	APP 30 YR FIXED	NIP	0.00	NIP
15 YR FIXED	7.38	0.00	7.41	FEF 15 YR FIXED	NIP	0.00	NIP
1YR ADJ.	6.25	0.00	7.85	100 10YR JUMBO	7.88	0.38	7.92

Call for Jumbo mortgage rates. Apply on line. Free approval. Rates updated daily.

Bank	Rate	PTS	APR	Bank	Rate	PTS	APR
Columbia Savings, BK	8.00	952-9189		NY Dominion Financial	6.58	0000	8113
30 YR FIXED	8.00	0.00	8.03	APP 30 YR FIXED	7.25	1.88	7.51
15 YR FIXED	7.50	0.00	7.54	FEF 15 YR FIXED	6.88	1.88	7.29
1YR ARM	5.63	1.00	8.26	NIP 7/23 BALLOON	6.88	1.88	7.13

Call for Jumbo mortgage rates. Apply on line. Free approval. Rates updated daily.

Bank	Rate	PTS	APR	Bank	Rate	PTS	APR
Empire State Bank	NIP	1.50	NIP	APP 30 YR FIXED	7.13	1.00	7.47
15 YR FIXED	NIP	1.50	NIP	FEF 15 YR FIXED	NIP	NIP	NIP
BIWKLY CONF	NIP	1.50	NIP	150 30 YR FIXED	7.88	0.00	7.92

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Bank	Rate	PTS	APR	Bank	Rate	PTS	APR
First Savings Bank	7.38	0.00	7.69	APP 30 YR FIXED	8.25	0.00	8.32
15 YR FIXED	7.38	0.00	7.38	FEF 15 YR FIXED	7.75	0.00	7.76
1YR ADJ.	7.00	0.00	7.87	350 10Y-30 YR	7.63	0.00	7.92

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Bank	Rate	PTS	APR	Bank	Rate	PTS	APR
Hammill Mortgage Co.	8.00	885-8300		The Albany Savings Bank	6.58	0000	8113
30 YR FIXED	NIP	0.00	NIP	APP 30 YR FIXED	8.13	0.00	8.16
15 YR FIXED	6.75	3.00	7.24	FEF 15 YR FIXED	7.80	0.00	7.85
30 YR JUMBO	5.99	1.00	8.25	10-2-30	7.50	0.00	7.78

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Bank	Rate	PTS	APR	Bank	Rate	PTS	APR
Wilmington Financial Svcs	7.88	1.00	8.00	APP 30 YR FIXED	NIP	0.00	NIP
15 YR FIXED	7.50	0.00	7.85	FEF 15 YR FIXED	7.75	0.00	7.75
15 YR JUMBO	7.75	0.00	7.88	15-30 YR	6.88	0.00	7.68

FTM program! Jumbo rates have float down option! Free float down option! Lowdown program available.

Rates compiled on December 17, 1999
NIP - Not provided by institution

Rates compiled on December 17, 1999
NIP - Not provided by institution

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Babie Raposo
Fátima Portuguese

AUTOMOTIVE

Ford's new Excursion stands tough

Sticks and stones can break his windows, but names will never hurt the Ford Excursion.

Ford's newest utility vehicle—the biggest passenger-vehicle on sale today—has been scrutinized by consumers and media since production plans were announced last February. The Sierra Club called it a “40-ton suburban super-tanker,” and its competitors have nicknamed it “Extortion” or “Exponential.”

It is easy to criticize such a big target, but after a week behind the wheel of a two-wheel-drive XLT with V-10 engine, I can say to Henry Plant: “The sky is not falling.”

The Excursion is big, and it's heavy, though not quite four tons. Curb weights range between 6,650 pounds for a base two-wheel-drive V-8 to 7,688 pounds for the top-line four-wheel-drive with diesel engine. It measures 226.7 inches long, 80 inches wide and 77.4 inches tall with the roof rack or 80.4 inches in four-wheel-drive form.

Parked next to a Chevy Suburban, it is 7.2 inches longer, 3.3 inches wider and as much as 6 inches taller depending on the trim and 4WD.

Excursion is also 20 inches longer than its Expedition stable-mate built off the F-150 platform. Compared with Ford's 15-passenger Econoline van, Excursion is 5 inches shorter, half an inch wider and not quite as tall.

Still, don't expect to park an Excursion in your condominium one-car garage, unless it is at least 20 feet and the door is at least 7 feet high. You'll have to look twice at the opening to an underground parking lot, and many times you'll have to park outside and walk.

It comes in XLT and top-line Limited. Base prices start at \$31,145 for the XLT and go to \$40,880 including destination for the top-line Limited, which adds Arizona-beige body cladding with wheel-tip moldings, chrome front bumper, with Arizona-beige valance, and aluminum-Beige step pad on rear bumper, illuminated running boards in Arizona beige.

Also added are aluminum wheels, rear-seat audio controls, wood-grain trim, trip computer, power rear quarter windows, captain's chairs with leather and 6-way power driver's seat.

Ford knows Excursion sales will be limited by its size, so it mentions its 44-gallon gas tank. Multiply that by 11.60, and the masses who would love to pile into this behemoth are drastically whittled down to the hardcore truckers who a) want the biggest rig available or b) have something really big to tow.

The government doesn't require a fuel-economy rating on trucks with a gross vehicle weight in excess of 8,500 pounds, but Ford estimates that the 5.4-liter V-8 will deliver 10 to 11 miles per gallon city/highway, the 6.8-liter 15 to 16 mpg, the 7.3-liter turbo diesel 17 to 18 mpg. The diesel will make the most of the fuel, but it is a \$4,600 premium on 2WD trucks and \$4,005 on the 4WD.

The V-10 test truck gave brisk acceleration at all speed ranges, but I'd question how handy the V-8 would horse around the curb weight. The average mpg readout from the test truck's trip computer held fairly constant at 12.2 to 12.6 mpg. I also remember noticing the readout for “Distance to Empty” when it was at 635 miles, and the tank was not full.

Ford says it can build 50,000 Excursions a year, which is a shadow of the 30,000 Explorers it sells every month.

Technically, it is a new model, but it is a borrowed rib from the Super Duty pickup trucks—a Crew Cab with a steel shell over the cargo area. Like General Motors' pair of Suburbans, it makes a workhorse of a family vehicle, but it is almost too big to fill the role of family station wagon. The turning radius is expansive, and it can be a handful to maneuver in small parking lots.

Excursion is a use-specific truck. It makes sense for anyone who loads up a couple of kids and regularly heads to the mountains or to Baja California with a gravel trailer or boat. And, unlike the pickup, your belongings can be locked inside and protected from the elements.

Smaller “utes” just don't cut it for this kind of travel. When you try to pack two adults, two kids, the dog, luggage, cooler and sporting gear into an Explorer, something gets left on the curb or strapped to the roof.

Moving up to the larger Expedition gets you more elbow room, but your trailing is constrained by horsepower, from either the 215-horsepower 4.6-liter V-8 or 260-horsepower 5.4-liter V-8.

This is where Excursion excels. Its three engines cover the need for power, and all are rated a slow-

emission—or better—in all 50 states, producing as much as 43 percent less smog-forming exhaust emissions than permitted by law. Both of the gasoline engines run on regular unleaded.

- The 5.4-liter V-8 is rated 255 horsepower and 350 foot-pounds of torque;

- The 6.8-liter V-10 is rated at 310 horsepower and 425 foot-pounds of torque;

- And the 7.3-liter V-8 diesel is rated at 235 horsepower and 500 foot-pounds of torque.

The only transmission is Ford's 4100 heavy-duty four-speed over-drive automatic unit, and the four-wheel-drive system is a part-time, two-speed transfer case with electronic shift-on-the-fly engagement.

GM and Dodge will argue that they have smaller engines and smaller trucks with comparable power ratings, but is more than power that separates the Excursion. It has frame rails with the heft of steel girders that lay a solid foundation to endure decades of towing and hauling abuse.

Moving down the highway, Excursion has a high-torque smoothness to its engine, four-speed automatic transmission and suspension, which is softened from the setup used on the pickups.

At speeds as much as 80 mph, the interior is remarkably quiet with plenty of isolation from road harshness and noise from the 16-inch tires, the roof rack and the larger trailing rear-view mirrors with split lenses.

The lower convex mirror is definitely a good idea to allow visibility along the lower sides of the vehicle. Without that feature, the driver's head swivels like a highhouse beam in search of small cars following close behind or in adjacent lanes.

For those accustomed to driving big sport-utes, the Excursion has an enduring finesse, but it is still the offspring of a working-class truck. If you want more conveniences and poshness, the Expedition is more refined. In ride quality, however, the Excursion might be better because it feels more planted on the road and less subject to body lean.

There's also more cargo space behind the third seat, and the rear Dutch doors to the cargo hold with a glass hatch window that lifts up or pops open—simply loading and unloading groceries or concrete block.

Interior Dimensions
If you need room to spread out your family, there are 41 inches of head room in the first two rows and 38.6 in the third row, which has 39 inches of leg room. This is the only three-row bench in the industry that will support two adults or three children and had decent room for legs and shoulders.

Climbing into the back seats is fairly simple, thanks in large part to the wide and usable running boards. The second row seats tip and fold forward with little effort, but most kids—and adults—just climb over.

The driver's position is an efficient command post with clear visibility of controls. There are as many as 10 cup holders, depending on how you configure the second-row seat, which in the test truck had a broad pull-down armrest with insets for two cups.

Safety features

Besides a lot of steel, Excursion has several passenger-car-type safety features:

- Crumple zones in the front and rear body styling that absorb the energy of a crash instead of passing the force to passengers;
- Steel side-impact beams;
- Four-wheel anti-lock brakes;
- Child-seat tether anchors.

Also unique to Excursion are a pair of anti-submarine devices. To help prevent the mighty Excursion from being branded a reckless brute, Ford invented the Blocker-Beam, which is sort of a modern-day cowcatcher and a secondary bumper. The 3.5-inch wide, 2-inch tall and 4-foot longer steel cross member is bolted just below and behind the bumper and is meant to prevent Excursion from plowing over cars in a front-end collision.

At the rear end is a large, 3-foot-wide trailer hitch—a standard equipment that acts as a blocker to reduce the potential for cars to slide underneath in a rear collision.

Demographics
Before the Sierra Club and others admonished Ford, they might have considered the buyer profile for Excursion and other such utility vehicles.

The owner demographics are probably very close to someone who reads outdoors and environmental magazines. These big “utes” are often the second, third or fourth vehicle in a family fleet. The driver is not the typical

2000 Ford Excursion XLT, 2WD

- Body style: Full-size, eight-passenger utility vehicle
- Engine: Triton 6.8-liter SOHC V-10
- Power ratings: 300-horsepower at 4,250 rpm and 430 foot-pounds of torque at 3,250 rpm
- Transmission: Electronic four-speed automatic
- Fuel tank: 44 gallons, regular unleaded recommended
- Estimated mileage: 15 to 16 mpg combined city/highway, Ford-estimated
- Towing capacity: 10,000 pounds
- Curb weight: 6,694 pounds—4WD with V-10, 7,150 pounds
- Brakes: Four-wheel disc with four-wheel ABS
- Tires and wheels: L7265/75R 16-inch on stylized steel wheels; full-size spare
- Length: 226.7 inches
- Width: 80 inches
- Height at curb with roof rack: 77.4 inches, 80.4, 4WD
- Wheel base: 137.1 inches
- Front head/shoulder/leg room: 41/68.3/42.3 inches
- Middle head/shoulder/leg room: 41.1/61.4/39.5 inches
- Rear head/shoulder/leg room: 38.6/64.9/39 inches
- Cargo capacity: 48.6 cubic feet behind rear seat; 165 cubic feet with all seats folded

• Base price: \$34,135, including \$675 destination, price as tested, \$36,200

- Options on test truck: 6.8-liter V-10 engine, \$595; 4.30 limited slip differential, \$250; power heated trailer-tow mirrors, \$60; convenience package, \$1,160, includes trip computer, lighted running boards, power driver's seat, leather-trimmed captain's chairs with center console and rear seat controls, power rear quarter window

- Standard features: Remote keyless entry and keyless entry keypad on the driver's door; electrochromic inside rearview mirror; single intermittent rear wiper/washer; non-illuminated running boards; front intermittent wipers and rear wiper/washer; non-illuminated running boards; front intermittent wipers and rear wiper with washer/defroster; air conditioning front and rear; cargo net with tie downs in cargo area; power mirrors/locks/windows; 40/20/40-split front bench; leather-wrapped steering wheel with tilt and cruise controls; sun visors with secondary visor and illuminated mirrors

- Safety features: Front air bags, steel side-impact beams, Blocker-Beam, anti-lock brakes, child-seat locomotive, quiet and smooth. Room to spread out for every occupant and comfortable seats back to the third. Minuses: It's like parking the Queen Mary. Instrument-panel ergonomics and storage are better on the Expedition, but this ain't bad for a truck.

Prices:
Trim levels in XLT and top-line Limited:
XLT 2WD: \$34,135, including \$675 destination charge
XLT 4WD: 437,450
Limited 2WD: \$37, 785
Limited 4WD: 440, 880

Sales Mix
XLT 2WD: 22 percent
XLT 4WD: 33 percent
Limited 2WD: 18 percent
Limited 4WD: 27 percent

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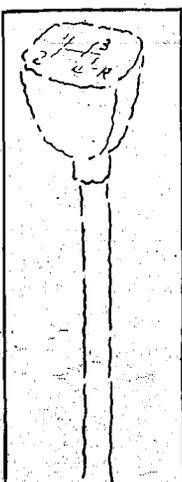
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rockless spendthrift, but part of a household that most likely has a combined yearly income of \$100,000-plus. The truck is used through the week to cart around a couple kids and their friends, pets and soccer gear, and on the weekends it is used to pull a boat, horse or travel trailer.

It's also likely that the owners maintain the vehicle according to the manufacturer's specifications.

That's a fairly reasonable segment of society.

And when examined by reasonable people, Excursion emerges as a well-oiled truck, even though it isn't for everybody.



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\$287.32 PER MO PAY PER MO \$20,216

LEASE FOR \$287.32 DUE AT INCEPTION

NO DOWN PAYMENT NO SECURITY DEPOSIT NO BANK FEE

6 cyl. auto, power/locks/abs/air/tilt, air, sunroof, cruise, 85,000 miles, MSRP \$22,876. VIN #97030648. \$27,954. Based on 36 mo closed end lease includes first mo payment of \$343.08 due at inception. Mile cost of lease \$11,909.08. Purchase option at lease end \$16,120. Lease price includes \$1100 Customer Cash Rebate. Buy price includes \$500 Factory Rebate.

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