

Arts & Entertainment

SPFA Arts Association Sponsors Trip to The Barnes Foundation

SCOTCH PLAINS – On Friday, March 27 the Scotch Plains Fanwood Arts Association (SPFAA) will sponsor a trip to the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia. SPFAA members and guests will leave by bus from Brookside Park in Scotch Plains, at 9 a.m. returning by 5 p.m.

The Barnes collection is the greatest private collection of post-impressionist and early-modern art. Explore more than 3,000 masterpieces, including 180 Renoirs, 68 Cézannes, 59 Matisse's, 46 Picassos, 16 Modiglianis, and 7 Van Goghs, plus textiles, metalwork, decorative objects, African sculpture, Native American ceramics and jewelry, and Pennsylvania German furniture.

The fee for the bus is \$35 and

admission to The Barnes is \$20. The reservation for entrance to the Barnes is for 11:30 AM. Anyone interested in visiting other museums and would like to pay for the bus only may do so. The bus will leave from the Barnes Foundation at 3 p.m.

Payment is due by Monday, March 2. Please make checks payable to Scotch Plains Fanwood Arts Association and mail to P.O. Box 151, Fanwood, NJ 07023.

SPFAA generally meets the first Sunday of the month from September thru June, at 1 p.m. The following schedule is in place for March through May 2015: Sunday, March 22 - Primavera Luncheon at Scotch Hills; April's date is to be deter-

mined and will be a water color demonstration by W. Carl Burger; Sunday, May 3 – a demonstration of plein air by Dannille Mick; Sunday, June 7 – Botanical Drawing. Meetings are held at the Scotch Hills Country Club, 820 Jerusalem Road, Scotch Plains, NJ 07076.

The SPFAA 49th Annual Members' Show and Sale will be Saturday, April 11 to Friday, May 1. It will be held in the gallery at the Scotch Plains Public Library.

For membership information, and any additional details, please visit the SPFAA website at SPFAA.net or call Sandra Cerchio, President, at (908) 868-8909.

The SPFAA is a group of fine artists, crafters, photographers and sculptors forming a social group to express and enjoy their talents. SPFAA's mission is to promote and foster an appreciation of the arts and related cultural activities, and to provide an organization for local artists to meet and share their talents while providing an atmosphere of collaboration and empowerment. All are welcome who want to use their creative skills to share, appreciate and grow with others. A main goal of the SPFAA is the integration of the arts into daily life. We strive to achieve this through informative demonstrations, discussions and group trips.



BRINGING HISTORY TO LIFE... Westfield High School students in United States History classes recently had a visit by Barb Baltrinic, author of *A Founder for All*, a book about Abraham Clark, signer of the Declaration of Independence. Ms. Baltrinic (left), who was welcomed by Social Studies Supervisor Andrea Brennan, discussed the prominent role of New Jersey and its dedicated citizens in the Revolutionary War and in the birth of a new government. She shared the story of Abraham Clark, who was born in Elizabethtown (Elizabeth, NJ), and became an outspoken champion for the rights of the common man. Ms. Baltrinic detailed the social and political forces at play during the Revolutionary period and shed light on how siding with the patriot cause made many signers of the Declaration of Independence wanted men. Students had the opportunity to ask Ms. Baltrinic questions about her research process, how she overcame obstacles to becoming a published author and what were the most interesting surprises she learned during the research for her book.

Visual Arts Center of N.J. Offers Summer Art Camp

SUMMIT — The Visual Arts Center of New Jersey, located at 68 Elm Street, Summit, has announced that registration is now open for Summer Art Camp for all ages. Interested persons are invited to sign up for Kids Art Camp for ages 5 to 12; Teen Art Camp for ages 13 to 15, and the Adult Sip & Sample.

Summer Art Camp begins on Wednesday, July 8, and continues through August. For those wishing to participate in art camp programs

Speed-The-Plow Paves the Way for Laughs and Surprises

By DEVON YANVARY
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

CRANFORD – Everybody likes to criticize Hollywood, usually saying something along the lines of: "The media only cares about money!" Well, if your sentiments are along similar lines, you might want to check out The Cranford Dramatic Club's (CDC) production of *Speed-The-Plow* in the upcoming week it's playing, and see just what goes into the movie-making process.

From the profit-gearred mindset, to the exploration of self and morality, *Speed-The-Plow* is not your typical comedy about two money sharks and a mild-mannered secretary. Playwright David Mamet provides realistic, blunt and relatable dialogue, and gives us an interesting display on the dynamics of human nature. *Speed-The-Plow*, originally written in 1988 is still just as relevant—perhaps even more so—as it was when it was written. Though there are just three characters in this play, it will have you laughing, reflecting and sympathizing.

Humor is the key component to this piece, whether characters are poking fun at something in their lives or themselves. The humor is relatable, and at times, tastefully offensive.

The premise of the play is that mildly successful Hollywood movie executive Bobbie Gould has finally found the manuscript that will make him rich. What's more is that he even has a famous actor who is interested in playing the lead. It's a

sure-fire hit. And he has his right-hand-man Charlie Fox to thank for it. The two naturally decide to celebrate with lunch and a bet: Fox bets Gould that he cannot get his (temporary) secretary to go on a date with him. Gould accepts the bet. What follows next is nothing short of an unexpected—but highly satisfying—shock.

Mike Burdick gives an amazing performance as Bobbie Gould, the successful, sarcastic movie executive. Though the dialogue is written to intentionally sound conversational, Mr. Burdick sells it seamlessly and genuinely, regardless of whether he's cracking a dirty joke or exploring his own mortal purpose. Gould's character seems to be the audience's representative—he is critical and aware of other characters, life and even himself, and is the least static of the three. Mr. Burdick does a fine job of personifying the essence of this character and really bringing Bobbie Gould to life.

The very talented actor and play director Jonathan Fishman plays Charlie Fox, Gould's most "loyal" friend and co-worker. Mr. Fishman does a fantastic job as Fox, and plays the part so honestly that during the climactic final scene, one forgets that it's all scripted. Mr. Fishman's character surely is to show how fickle humans can be, and Fishman portrays it perfectly. Audible gasps were heard as Fishman truly shocked the audience with his dynamic performance.

Finally is actress Kate Bade, who plays temp worker Karen. The character of Karen is depicted as naive, and probably the biggest cork screw in the play. Ms. Bade does a brilliant job of sounding like she has no idea what's happening, which is really quite an accomplishment, considering she knows something the audience doesn't! Cunning, clever and convincing, Ms. Bade is able to fool both her fellow characters and the audience with a performance that truly brings the whole story together.

Despite the quick, cohesive performance, director Mr. Fishman says the cast only rehearsed for a month. "The play is written to be conversational, very precise," he told *The Westfield Leader* and *The*

Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times, "we may phrase some things differently from show to show, but we try to be as precise as possible."

Though practice time was limited, he praises his co-stars' talent and dedication. While some may wonder why do a play that is 27 years old, Mr. Fishman expresses a sincere happiness at being able to perform, and stated that, "people are more tech savvy and knowledgeable than they were back in the eighties," and this makes the play is just as relevant as ever, maybe even more so, "especially now that people know more about the movie industry."

Performances run weekends until Saturday, February 21. Tickets are available at www.cdtheatre.org.

Masterwork Chorus Presents Come Away

SUMMIT – Join The Masterwork Chorus as they present *Come Away* at 8 p.m. on Saturday, March 7 at Calvary Episcopal Church, 31 Woodland Avenue, Summit under the baton of guest conductor Sun Min Lee. Exploring the joys, sorrows and hopes shared by mankind across the centuries, the program includes works by Renaissance composers Thomas Greaves and Orlando di Lasso, romanticist Johannes Brahms, and contemporary composers Stephen Paulus, Steven Sametz and Moses Hogan.

Ms. Lee, the first of the two finalists to perform as part of Masterwork's music director search, is Robert Cutler Professor of Practice in Choral Arts at Lehigh University, and until December 2014 was associate conductor of the Masterwork Chorus. Christopher Jennings, recently appointed organist and choir master at Calvary Episcopal Church, and pianist Carol Walker, an award winning conductor in her own right, are the accompanists for the concert. Tickets are \$25 and are available through the Masterwork website www.masterwork.org or by calling Brown Paper Tickets at (800) 838-3006.

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For more information contact BrawlHouse:
(908) 317-2727 winner@brawlhouse.com
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