Out and About
A Community Newsletter

February 2022

Comedy Night Fundraiser for Williamstown Rotary

Stand-up comedy thrives in our area...and you can enjoy an evening of it in a good cause. The Williamstown Sunrise Rotary will be sponsoring a night of stand-up comedy on Friday, February 18th, to benefit its programs.

The evening’s line-up will include Chris Monty, from the Amazon Prime special “What’s The Worst That Could Happen?”, Ed McGonigal, a veteran Philly comic, Megan Goetz, who hosts the YouTube series “All Set”, and Vince Valentine, who has toured with the one-man show “Defending the Caveman”.

The show will be held at The Estates at Monroe. The doors open at 7 PM and the comedians take the stage at 8:30 PM. Tickets are $55 for individuals and $380 for a table of eight. The ticket price includes a buffet dinner, soft drinks, and door prizes.

Come and enjoy an evening of laughs while doing your part for some of our area’s best social programs!

Important Notice!
Though this newsletter covers events in our area, please be aware that with the recent surge in COVID numbers, events may be cancelled or rescheduled, and each venue has its own rules for masking and social distancing. Check before you go, have fun, and above all, stay safe and healthy!
Polar Plunge at Bells Lake

If you think you can stand the cold, take part in the Polar Plunge on February 26th at Greenwood Park-Bells Lake Swim Club to benefit the Washington Township PTO!

The Plunge will take place on Saturday, Feb. 26th. The first plunge takes place at 9 AM. If you sign up to take part (rather than just watch), your plunge time will be emailed to you a week before the event.

The registration fee is $25 for participants 18 and up, $20 for participants under 18, and $5 for spectators. (All participants under 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.)

The proceeds from the Polar Plunge will help Washington Township’s home schools to provide such services as playground equipment, sporting equipment, teachers’ grants, yearbooks, and much more!

You can register at the Washington Township Chamber of Commerce page at: wtchamber.org. For more information, contact Nicole at events@wtchamber.org.

Mullica Hill Chocolate Walk

Want to have a sweet time in honor of Valentine’s Day? Mullica Hill will be holding its annual Chocolate Walk on Saturday, Feb. 12th, from 5 PM to 9 PM.

For the price of a ticket ($10 in advance, $15 the day of) you can spend those hours strolling the wonderful shops of Mullica Hill. Each participating business will have sweet treats, hors d’oeuvres, and beverages for you to sample. You’ll check in at Madame Chili Pepper’s Children’s Boutique and get a passport that you can have stamped at each stop you make. Once it’s full, you can use it to enter a drawing for a gift basket from the Mullica Hill Business Association.

For more information or to order tickets, visit the Mullica Hill Business Association’s Facebook page.

Valentine Cookie Candy Box Craft at Creations By You

It’s the perfect sweet gift for the sweet ones in your life! Creations by You at 5471 Rt. 42 in Turnersville, along with Prima Cakes and Cookies, is holding a workshop on Friday, Feb. 11th at 6 PM to make your own cookie box.

Registration is $25 and must be made in advance. For this price, you’ll get a one and a half-hour workshop, with all supplies provided. Each participant will decorate 16 miniature cookies (which will be chocolate, because of course).

Space is limited to 12 seats.

To find out more or to order a spot (online registration is not available), call Creations by You at 856-777-5007.

Come and make a sweet Valentine for your Valentine...or anyone else you want to show your love and appreciation!
Coming Soon to Sicklerville—Urban Air Indoor Adventure Park!

What with Dave & Buster’s in Gloucester Township and Round One at Deptford Mall, there are plenty of indoor family fun venues available in our area. In a month or so, we’ll welcome another—Urban Air Indoor Adventure Park, opening at the Promenade on Berlin-Cross Keys Road (next to Hobby Lobby).

Urban Air is a chain of indoor adventure parks that’s been voted Best Kids’ Gym In America by Shape Magazine. The Sicklerville one will boast trampolines (hence, the “air” in Urban Air) as well as climbing walls, a drop zone with a huge airbag, a slam-dunk zone, climbing tubes, a virtual reality area, and more! (Anyone for trampoline dodgeball?)

The park is aiming for a February opening, though there’s always a chance that delays could arise (you never know in times like these). Still, the park should open soon.

For more information, visit urbanair.com/new-jersey-sicklerville. Get ready for a whole new place to enjoy family fun—and for kids to get fit as well!

February’s Special Events at Blue Cork Winery

Blue Cork Winery on Blue Bell Road is offering some very special events this February—whether you’re a trivia buff or simply a food and wine enthusiast.

On Feb. 3rd at 6:30 PM, there’s a Valentine’s Sangria Social. For the registration fee of $45, you can learn about the history of sangria and how to make your own.

Feb. 10th at 6:00 PM is Galentine’s Day Parks & Rec Trivia Night. If you love this hit sitcom and want to test your knowledge of it, there’s a $10 entrance fee, which will also include a glass of the house sangria.

On Saturday the 12th from 12 to 6 PM, the winery will hold Wine and Brownie Bite Guided Tastings for $30 per person, every hour on the hour. Each participant will get four 2-ounce pours of wine paired with four different homemade brownie bites.

All reservations MUST be made in advance, especially the brownie bite tasting, whose hourly slots fill up quickly. To reserve, visit Blue Cork’s website or Facebook page.

Galentine’s Market at Villari’s Lakeside

If you and your friends are interested in a cool indoor pop-up market, you can visit the Galentine’s Market at Villari’s Lakeside restaurant in Sicklerville on Thursday, Feb. 10th, from 6:30 PM to 9:00 PM.

The event is indoors (and therefore, weather-proof). It will feature local vendors like Nested Home Fragrances (homemade soy candles), Lori’s Little Lovelies (handcrafted gifts and jewelry), and more. There will also be drink and food giveaways (as well as the bar for cocktails, if that’s your thing).

Admission’s free—no tickets, no price. Stop by one of South Jersey’s most charming restaurants and pick up some great gifts for the occasion!
Meeting your son’s future in-laws is always stressful...even more so when they’re ultra-conservative, and you and your spouse both happen to be male! That’s the premise of the classic musical *La Cage Aux Folles*, playing at the Levoy Theatre in Millville from February 11th-20th.

Based on a French play and movie, the show introduces us to Georges, the owner of La Cage Aux Folles, a St. Tropez drag nightclub, and his longtime lover Albin, the club’s lead performer. Georges’ one and only liaison with a woman resulted in a son, Jean-Michel, whom the couple has raised together. Now, Jean-Michel is engaged and wants his fiancée Anne’s parents to meet his own...but he’s told Anne’s right-wing father (a politician who’s railed against homosexuals) that his parents are a heterosexual couple. Georges must hide his relationship to the man he’s loved for years...and Albin doesn’t take this well. When a plan to have Jean-Michel’s biological mother stand in falls through, Albin does what he does best...breaks out the drag. Can the couple keep the deception going, and will their relationship bear the strain?

With a score by Broadway legend Jerry Herman and a script by Harvey Fierstein, this is a witty, sparkling musical about being true to yourself. Tickets are $20-$25. To order tickets, visit levoy.net or call 856-327-6400. And remember: “Life’s not worth a damn/Till you can say, ‘Hey, world...I am what I am!!!’”

One of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s best Sherlock Holmes stories gets a comedic treatment in *The Adventure of the Speckled Band*, onstage at Philadelphia’s Walnut Street Theatre from Feb. 22nd-March 27th.

Young Helen Stonor, engaged to be married, visits Holmes and Watson in Baker Street with a strange predicament—she suspects her stepfather, the sinister Dr. Grimesby Roylott, may be trying to kill her, since he stands to lose her income from her late mother once she marries. Her sister had died some years ago under mysterious circumstances just before she herself was to be married, with her last words being, “It was the speckled band!” It’s up to Holmes to investigate how someone could have been murdered in a locked room, before the killer strikes again...and what exactly is this “speckled band”? But the usual serious goings-on in this classic mystery are given a comedic twist, as six actors play more than thirty characters in a madcap whirl of quick changes, and soon the laughs outweigh the thrills.

To find out more or to order tickets (which are between $25 and $57 for most seats), visit walnutstreettheatre.org or call 215-574-3550. The game’s afoot!

In all of our lives, there are moments when we must deal with immense changes and difficult choices—when our world is up-ended and we must face, or create, an entirely new one. That’s the main thrust of the staged song cycle *Songs For A New World*, onstage at Haddonfield Plays and Players from February 4th-19th.

Instead of a conventional musical with a single story, this is a song cycle in which a small cast of singers portrays different characters, a new one for each song. Each of these characters is facing, or has faced, a crossroads in their lives. From the fifteenth-century Spanish sea captain who is literally on the threshold of the New World, to the woman whose husband and son are fighting in the American Revolution, to the impoverished youth desperate to make a new life for himself through his basketball skills, to the young woman who’s just discovered she’s pregnant, they all have a “new world” to navigate...to chart a new course for themselves, or to turn their back on it all. Only they can say whether their choices are the right ones...but in the end, the new world, as frightening as it is, may be better than turning back.

For more information, visit haddonfieldplayers.com. Enjoy a unique show that, in this time of great upheaval, assures us, “Listen to the song that I sing/And trust me...We’ll be fine.”
What’s New Onscreen!

In 2017, Sir Kenneth Branagh scored a hit with his adaptation of Agatha Christie’s *Murder on the Orient Express*. Now he directs and stars in another classic Hercule Poirot mystery—*Death on the Nile*, premiering Feb. 11th.

After wrapping up a case, Poirot decides to take a holiday on the steamship *Karnak*, cruising the Nile River. But as always, there’s no such thing as a holiday for Hercule Poirot...he soon finds himself in the thick of a tense situation. Heiress Linnet Ridgeway (Gal Gadot) is on her honeymoon with handsome Englishman Simon Doyle (Armie Hammer)...who jilted her best friend Jacqueline de Bellefort (Emma Mackey) to marry Linnet. Jacqueline has been stalking the two, ending up on the *Karnak* with them. An angry scene between Jacqueline and her ex-fiancé ends up with her shooting him in the leg...and, the next morning, Linnet turns up murdered. But although Jacqueline is the most likely suspect, her alibi is iron-clad...she was under medical watch after collapsing in remorse. It turns out that many on board the ship had a grudge against Linnet for one reason or another. Nor is it the last murder to occur on the *Karnak*, as the killer tries to cover their tracks. So once again, it’s Poirot and his “little grey cells” to the rescue as he uncovers the killer’s plot...which is far more intricate than circumstances led him to believe.

Classic mystery fans have every reason to look forward to this new adaptation of one of Agatha Christie’s most compelling whodunits.

What happens when Earth’s moon is Earth’s biggest threat? That’s the premise of Roland Emmerich’s latest disaster flick *Moonfall*, premiering February 4th.

A mysterious force has knocked the moon from its orbit—and placed it on a collision course with Earth. Jo Fowler (Halle Berry), a former astronaut and NASA exec, has figured out a plan that may save the Earth and everyone on it—but the rest of NASA is skeptical and won’t back it. Only a fellow ex-astronaut (Patrick Wilson) and a conspiracy theorist (John Bradley) are willing to support her endeavor. So the three of them are off into space for a risky mission whose stakes could not possibly be higher. But when they arrive at the runaway moon, they find themselves in for more than they planned for...because it just may be that the moon we have looked to all our lives is not what we thought it was.

If you thought Roland Emmerich couldn’t possibly top himself after *Independence Day* and its sequel, this nailbiter turns the danger and suspense up to eleven...and should be a winner for disaster movie fans.

“I believe in America…” One of Hollywood’s greatest epics is fifty years old this year—and will be getting a limited re-release to celebrate. *The Godfather* will be re-released in select AMC theaters on Feb. 25th.

Based on Mario Puzo’s bestselling novel, this is the first entry in the three-film saga of the Corleone mob family. Don Vito Corleone (Marlon Brando) presides over the family in his old age, with his eldest son Sonny poised to step into his shoes, and not-too-bright middle son Fredo along for the ride. His youngest son, Michael (Al Pacino in the role that made him a star) is the odd one out—though he loves his family, he prefers to go his own path, distancing himself from the criminal activities Vito sees as “just business” and one of the only ways Italians can hope for success or justice in America. But when Sonny’s miscalculations lead to Vito’s near-fatal wounding, it forces Michael to take a stand for his beloved father once and for all...and touches off a chain of events that leads him to his father’s home country of Sicily, to a shocking personal tragedy, and back to the United States to take on the role of the new Don. And with every step...more and more of Michael Corleone’s soul is lost.

Re-discovering this classic on the big screen is an offer you can’t refuse. (Check amctheatres.com to find out which theaters are participating.)
Nicole Glover’s new Murder & Magic series features a pair of sleuths who were formerly conductors on the Underground Railroad—and now are involved in supernatural mysteries. *The Conductors*, published in 2021, is the first in this series (the second, *The Undertakers*, came out later the same year).

Before and during the Civil War, Hetty Rhodes and her husband Benjy aided escapees with their wits—and their talents in celestial magic. Now the war’s over and the couple is settled in Philadelphia. They continue to help their people by using their talents to solve mysteries brushed off by white authorities. When an old friend of theirs is murdered, they realize that the killer may be someone in Philadelphia’s Black community. It will take all of their magical talents and the resourcefulness that served them so well as Underground Railroad conductors to find out which one of their acquaintances is hiding behind a mask...and to keep themselves from becoming the next victims. Doing so will mean confronting truths about their community...and themselves as well.

This unique historical fantasy/mystery has already had the film rights optioned by Queen Latifah, and has earned Nicole Glover praise as “a writer to watch” (*Publishers Weekly*, starred review).

Colson Whitehead has wowed the literary world with *The Underground Railroad* (now an Amazon Prime series) and *The Nickel Boys*. His most recent novel, *Harlem Shuffle*, is a mixture of heist story and family saga that takes place in 1960s Harlem.

Ray Carney is a furniture salesman and family man (married, with one child and another on the way) who would like to live an honest life...not easy when he comes from a family of rather shady characters. Ray, however, is “only slightly bent when it came to being crooked,” as Whitehead describes him. But it’s not always easy to stay on the straight-and-narrow when you’ve got a growing family...so he sees no problem with fencing a few small pieces of jewelry that his cousin Freddie brings him. But when Freddie and his cronies set out to rob the Hotel Theresa—Harlem’s most luxurious hotel—and rope Ray into fencing for them, things go sideways. Suddenly, Ray’s store is patronized by a far shadier crowd—corrupt cops, local gangsters, and such. Can Ray keep himself and his cousin safe, while still maintaining some kind of honest life?

This novel from one of today’s best voices in Black fiction is, by turns, hilarious, heartwarming, and thrilling.

In the age of slavery, bi-racial people occupied a precarious spot—especially those who passed for white to assure their safety and freedom. *What Passes As Love* by Trisha R. Thomas tells us the story of one such woman.

Born to a slave woman that she never knew, Dahlia is taken to live on her father’s plantation when she is six, leaving behind her friend Bo and the life she knew. There, she works as a servant to her own father and half-sisters. As she grows, she feels more and more out of place—never acknowledged by whites as one of their own, but too light to be truly welcomed by Blacks as one of theirs. When she meets Timothy Ross, she sees her chance at a new life. Timothy is an ex-pat Englishman hoping for a political career—and a wife. So Dahlia passes herself off as “Lily Dove”, a white woman, and soon Timothy marries her and brings her to his own home. Life there isn’t what she’d expected, but even a loveless marriage is better than slavery...even if Dahlia’s forever terrified her secret will come out. Then Bo comes to the plantation as a slave...and it soon becomes clear his life is in danger. Dahlia must choose between the sterile but safe life she has carved out for herself, and her loyalty to her dear childhood friend.

Hailed as “well-researched and compelling” by Booklist, this novel from a prominent voice in Black fiction gives us a perspective on what it was like to be stranded between two worlds...especially when one of them lived in chains.