

Arts & Entertainment

Women For Winesense Makes Wine-Speak Easy

By LINDA B. CONDRILLO
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

SCOTCH PLAINS — Wikipedia defines *wine tasting* as the “sensory evaluation of wine.” Dictionary.com defines *wine tasting* as “the gathering of people to taste wines.” The ‘Grillin & Chillin Barbeque and Wine Tasting’ held in the backyard home of Ronnie Wood of Scotch Plains on June 2 satisfied both definitions.

Ms. Wood is the secretary for the New Jersey chapter of Women For Winesense (WFW), a non-profit organization that fosters wine education and networking for industry professionals and wine aficionados.

The barbeque was advertised on popular wine enthusiast websites such as localwineevents.com and blog.nj.com/wine_goddess/, luring members of the local chapter as well as non-members and guests to the event.

According to its website, womenforwinesense.org, two mothers from the Napa Valley working in the wine business founded the organization after their children came home from school and asked them about ‘making drugs.’

Billed as the “moderate voice of the wine industry,” WFW strives to offer a balanced view of the social and health effects of moderate wine consumption so that “people can form

and make their own decisions about wine and their lifestyle.”

WFW currently has 11 chapters nationwide; and despite its name, doesn’t discriminate against the opposite sex.

Zita Keeley of Hoboken, who started the New Jersey chapter in 2005 – which has since grown to more than 50 members – is in the wine business because she believes “there is no greater joy than good



friends, good food and great wine.”

The self-professed “winning woman” behind allidoidiswine.com studied at Le Cordon Bleu in London and originally planned to pursue a career as a sommelier. Mrs. Keeley quickly learned the hours weren’t the right fit for a new parent (a sommelier often works past midnight).

In 2001, Mrs. Keeley moved back to the States, where she continued her wine education. Her September 11

moving date into Battery Park City was temporarily delayed due to the World Trade Center attacks.

Despite the tragedy, it was her son – just six years old at the time – who convinced her to make the move into Manhattan six weeks later. Mrs. Keeley recalls the story on her website: “He helped me get through that sadness and realize how important it is to live. And with that in mind, wine is part of that living!”

Mrs. Keeley ultimately cultivated her love of wine into a business. She now works as a freelance consultant, wine educator, and has started a wine traveler’s school, partnering with french-wine-tours.com. Patrick Keeley, her equally charming British husband, is also a member of WFW and happens to be quite handy with a corkscrew.

Mrs. Keeley’s website will soon announce the imminent opening of her wine tasting school in Hoboken. She told *The Westfield Leader and The Scotch Plains - Fanwood Times*, it will be a “practical wine school.”

And rather than teaching about why or how climatic conditions affect wine, her school will have a more useful approach. She added, “It’s more about taking the intimidation out of wine. I want to teach people to trust their own palate, and to be able to select the right wine when they go out to a restaurant.”

As lovely as a lightly chilled Brouilly, Mrs. Keeley is also a font of knowledge about wine and is just as interested in what other people are thinking. An evaluation form was provided at the barbeque so that guests could pen their opinions about each of the six wines served at the picnic.

A discussion followed just as chocolate brownies were being washed down with a sampling of Domaine de Durban, Muscat Beaumes de Venises 2005 from the Rhone Valley of France.

At the conclusion of the event, guests were asked to “name that price” for each bottle. Winners walked away with signed copies of Deborah Brenner’s book, “Women of the Vine,” as well as campy corkscrews.

Event manager Lori Ratisher was at the picnic sipping on Avinyo Cava NV Brut from Spain while knocking on Ms. Wood’s homemade guacamole. Like many of the guests at the barbeque, Ms. Ratisher learned about WFW via the Internet.

The Weehawken resident told the newspaper that she was thrilled when she discovered WFW because she “always liked wine, but never had enough people to drink it with” and attending WFW events has enabled her to taste different wines – many of which are out of her normal price range.

She added, “Some wine groups can be little more than social groups with wine in the background. WFW’s primary focus is wine education in which I’ve learned how to pair wine with food.”

Mrs. Keeley told *The Leader/Times* that WFW venues are carefully selected so that events are spread

23 WOMEN FOR WINESENSE

Music Boosters Announce Golf and Tennis Outing

SCOTCH PLAINS –The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Music Booster Association will host a golf and tennis outing to kick off the fall season on Monday, August 27, at Shackamaxon Country Club, with a dinner dance to follow at the Scotch Plains Italian American Hall.

This event will serve as the Music Boosters premier fundraising event of the school year. The cost per person for golf is \$160 and includes a cart, use of the putting green, locker rooms, a light lunch and snacks on the course and dinner at the Scotch Plains Italian American Hall following the tournament.

Tennis is a round robin, mixed doubles tournament. The cost per



Minken Advises Residents On Principles of Feng Shui



By CHRISTIE STORMS
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

WESTFIELD — Home decorating can go beyond visual fulfillment, according to Feng Shui consultant Suzy Minken, and when the principles of Feng Shui are applied, the process can also be good for the soul. The Westfield resident recently presented her “Revisit Your Interior Space Using Feng Shui and Improve Your Life” workshop hosted by the Westfield Recreation Department.

Using a slideshow to enhance her lecture, Ms. Minken explained in great detail the principles and application of Feng Shui, a type of design that originated in China approximately 4,000 years ago.

According to Ms. Minken, who attended classes at the Omega Institute in Rhineback, N.Y. as well as through the New Jersey Feng Shui Alliance to become a certified consultant, “Feng Shui” translates to mean “wind water.” The term combines both the “unseen energies” of our environment such as wind or air, as well as the “seen” ones like water. She explained these energies flow

pects of your life. “When successful, you’re feeling safe, you’re feeling nourished and you’re feeling good,” Ms. Minken said.

Ms. Minken cited establishments in downtown Westfield that successfully apply the principles of Feng Shui. For example, a popular coffee-



Christie Storms for The Westfield Leader and The Times
INTERIOR SPACE, THE NEXT FRONTIER... Feng Shui consultant Suzy Minken recently presented a workshop to explain the basic principles and techniques used in Feng Shui design to local residents.

She described five ways to bring the elements into a space by using color, shape, fabric or pattern, object and design. For example, red and bright colors represent “fire” while deep jewel tones represent “water.” Pottery and clay objects bring “earth” into a space, circular patterns add “metal,” and cotton textures introduce “wood.”

“You achieve more balance when you combine the different elements,” Ms. Minken said.

She further explained that in addition to “activating” the chi with new design, preexisting features need to be considered as some could be disruptive or destructive to the chi.

For example, a large tree outside that hides your front door from view could be “blocking” the chi.

She emphasized that Feng Shui is learning to see things in a new way and also bring your thoughts into conscious awareness.

house balances the elements by combining “wood” through its tables and chairs, “metal” through its round logo, “water” with its wavy counter, “fire” through its red accent lighting, and “earth” with its tiles.

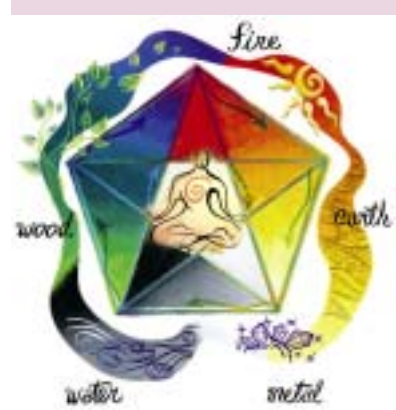
She also provided informative packets to help further understanding of what can be a complex subject to completely master. But she also emphasized that there is “no such thing as bad Feng Shui.”

“If you like it and it makes you happy, then it’s great Feng Shui,” she said.

Alice Plum of Cranford said she thought Ms. Minken gave a thoughtful presentation.

“She covered a lot of information in a pleasant manner and made it very understandable,” Ms. Plum said. “It’s very inspiring.”

Ms. Minken can be contacted at SLMinken@EveryDaysFengShui.com.



Feng Shui – Balancing the 5 Key Elements

throughout our living and workspaces in what is termed “chi.”

One of the main aspects of Feng Shui is to design rooms that provide harmonious chi by balancing the five key elements of fire, earth, metal, water and wood. When this is achieved, the belief is it will go beyond the décor to improve many as-

Celebration Singers Share Music Overseas

AREA – In celebration of its 70th anniversary, The Celebration Singers will embark on its first international trip to share its musical entertainment program during the summer of 2008.

With planned performances in the Czech Republic, Germany and Austria at this point, the group plans to create a fellowship of music between Cranford and these countries at a community choir level.

Formed originally as the ESSO Choristers in 1938, it became incorporated in 1980 as The Celebration Singers. In addition to boasting adult members ages 18 to 80, coming from throughout Union County and beyond, it started sponsoring a tuition-free children’s choir of 9 through 13 year olds in 1995.

In 2006, the ranks were expanded again with the addition of the Boy’s Ensemble, made up of young men 11 thru 15. Growing from an adult choir in 1938 of about 30 members, this past season, the adults numbered 47, while the children and Boy’s Ensemble combined were over 80 members. Over the years, the adults have performed at Liberty State Park, and were highlighted at the 1964 World’s Fair in New York.



CONDUCTING BUSINESS...Members of the Roosevelt Intermediate School in Westfield early morning chamber orchestra played at Ashbrook Nursing Home in Scotch Plains on Monday, June 18. From left to right are Brice Freeman, conductor; Matt Lee, Jack Santangelo, Pilar Martinez, Pete Mebane, Marilyn Kowalski, Allie Jason and Alex Davidson.

Comm. Band Celebrates Independence Day, July 5

WESTFIELD – The Westfield Community Band, under the direction of Thomas Connors, continues its 95th season of summer of concerts, performing on the gazebo in Mindowaskin Park on Thursday, July 5, at 7:30 p.m.

This concert serves as a town-wide Independence Day celebration. The Sons of the American Revolution and Daughters of the American Revolution, who will hold traditional ceremonies, will join the band.

A highlight for the evening includes music from one of the most recognized composers in America with “The Symphonic Marches,” opening with “The Raiders March” from Indiana Jones, followed by “The Imperial March” from the Star Wars saga and the stately Olympic fanfare and theme for the 1984 summer Olympics in Los Angeles.

In a focus on American music for the July 4 holiday, the band will perform “American Salute” by Morton Gould, which features variations on a theme with the popular American tune, “When Johnny Comes Marching Home.” Additional selections for the

evening include, “Amazing Grace,” arranged by Frank Ticheli, “The Fourth of July” by John Cacavas and “Sinatra in Concert” by Jerry Nowak. The intermission of the program on July 5 will highlight Town Crier Thomas Sherry regaling residents with local news stories and an Independence Day address by Ward 2 Councilwoman Jo Ann Neylan.

The band will continue its concert season on July 12 and 19, followed by the Westfield Community Swing Band on July 26.

Mindowaskin Park is located next to the Westfield Municipal Building at 425 East Broad Street in Westfield. The event is free to the public; audience members are encouraged to bring blankets or chairs. In the event of inclement weather, the concert will be held in the Presbyterian Church’s Assembly Hall on the corner of East Broad Street and Mountain Avenue.

The Westfield Community Band is sponsored by the Westfield Recreation Department. For further information, contact (908) 789-4080 or go to westfieldcommunityband.com.



OFF TO SEE THE WIZARD... Ken Reed will conduct a melody of songs from the Wizard of Oz with the Westfield Community Band this summer.

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Linda B. Condrillo for The Westfield Leader and The Times
OUI, WE WINE...Members and guests of Women For Winesense attended the Grillin & Chillin Wine Tasting and Barbeque on June 2 at the Scotch Plains home of camera-shy Ronnie Wood. Partygoers enjoyed discussing different attributes of six wines paired with picnic fare, much of which was prepared by Ms. Wood. Seated is Mike Vadon of Wyckoff; standing left to right are Mark Herbert of Jersey City, New Jersey chapter president Zita Keeley of Hoboken and event chairwoman Lori Ratisher of Weehawken.

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