PALISADES NEWSLETTER

APRIL 1997 NUMBER 156

Getting Started in the Garden

S elf-seeding plants – whether annuals, biennials or perennials – can be an enormous boon to any gardener. They save planting time, stretch a limited budget, and tend to create a more "natural," less manicured garden. If you like that, these plants are for you.

Truly prolific self-seeders like cleome, malva, and forget-me-nots need to be watched, deadheaded, thinned or transplanted the next spring, but this is not a difficult or unpleasant task. When forget-menots re-seed, for example, they form a spectacular blue groundcover. They are easily transplanted in spring and look great along the edges of a lawn or drifting among tulips.

I am especially fond of plants that do well in my garden without a lot of coaxing. The following are easy favorites. Masterwort (Astrantia) is a shade-tolerant summer bloomer with delicate button-shaped flowers in shades of white or rose. Lady's mantle (Alchemilla) has beautiful rough-edged foliage that catches and holds the dew and chartreuse-colored flowers that appear in summer. It tolerates everything – sun or shade and damp or dry soil.

The three-foot larkspurs bloom in rich blue, clear pink, or white and should be planted in early spring.

They may be fussy to start and are not easy to transplant but, once you have them, you have them for good. Bachelor's buttons and cosmos have also been known to reappear on their own in the spring. The downward-facing blue, white or pink blooms of nigella (love-in-a-mist) are complex, delicate and a welcome sight as their lacy foliage emerges each year.

Although prairie mallow (Sidalcea malviflora) may be better suited to the less formal ends of the garden, it is a lovely three-footer with hollyhock-like shell pink flowers. Rose campion, also prolific, has gray/green furry foliage and brilliant magenta blooms.

Thriving nearly everywhere, the grand pink spires of foxglove that appear in spring are stunning when planted in groups toward the back of the garden. Lobelia syphilitica will enhance a dull, shady spot when its blue or white spikes emerge in late summer. This plant spreads like crazy and thrives in the damp, heavy Palisades soil. The many types of primulas are also a perfect choice for Palisades gardens.

There are lots of other wonderful plants that do well without needing much encouragement. They thrive so well in most gardens that they can be divided, transplanted, and given away. The following

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PROFILE: Joan Konner

I n 1965, under an ambitious executive formerly from CBS, public television's Channel 13 was nearly bankrupt. Joan Konner was laid off from her job as producer-host of the channel's weekly New Jersey program.

While at home in Sneden's Landing, looking for a new job, she went to a neigh-

borhood cocktail party. One woman told her, "Good, I'm glad you're fired. You're better off home with your children."

At the same party, another housewife gushed about Konner's balancing a family with a journalistic career. Konner said, "I'm just trying to learn to stay home like you. I'm just very bad at it." The woman burst into tears and said, "I'm bad at it too."

This was a low point in a career during which she broke ground consistently for other women journalists, starting as a writer at *The Record* of Bergen County and rising to dean of the premier American journalism school, at Columbia University.

Joblessness ended some

weeks later when Konner started a 12-year stint writing, reporting and producing documentaries for NBC news. At NBC and later as producer and executive at Channel 13 she won most of the top awards for broadcast journalism including 12 Emmies.

In 1968 Konner got the job as producer of NBC's local documentary show, "New York Illustrated." In five years she created more than 50 programs including groundbreaking reports on homosexuality, the women's movement, and abortion.

It was hard, satisfying work, but Konner said she got "documentary poisoning."

Also she realized at this point in 1973 that she could do as well as the men who filled every key network executive job. She told herself, "These guys are (mild expletive deleted.) I can make the decisions that they're making for me."

She asked the bosses at NBC news for a chance to work as assistant to any executive in order to learn the job and get on the executive track.

The number two man at NBC news, his feet resting on the desktop, told her, "There's nothing to do-

ing the job. It's getting the job

that's hard." This was an in-

dication of the mess at the top

of the network pyramid,

Konner said. "Everybody was

busy getting the job instead

relatively minor executive job

as director of programs for

the NBC radio division. It

made her the first woman ex-

radio. "I guess I really had be-

come a television person. I felt

But she'd hit the glass ceil-

like I went blind," she said.

ing trying to get a job as a net-

work television producer. Her

many award-winning docu-

mentary films sat for six

months on the floor of the

NBC television executive in

But she was not happy in

ecutive in network news.

In 1973, Konner did get a

of doing the job."

charge.

It was time for a "power dinner" at Snedens. She invited her neighbor, Morley Safer, well-known CBS "60 Minutes" reporter. And she invited the NBC executive and his new lady friend.

The executive saw that she knew Safer, "lived like a human being," and he lost to Konner at ping pong. "I swear to God I got a job the next day from him because I beat him at ping pong," she said.

She spent four years as a network producer.

In 1977 she did a controversial program: "Danger! Radioactive Waste." The TV networks had never questioned nuclear power and the show was seen as anti-nuclear because there was no solution to the radioactive waste problem.

The nuclear power industry was up in arms.



Konner said she had an experience that was "truly threatening." Her phone was tapped, her briefcase stolen. She was followed.

"It was a horrendous struggle getting the show on the air," Konner said. Although NBC went through with the broadcast, she was disillusioned with her new boss and accepted an offer from Channel 13.

She spent the next 11 years at Channel 13, includ-

ing three years as vice-president and director of programming. She produced the "Bill Moyers Journal." Later she and Alvin Perlmutter co-produced the celebrated "Joseph Campbell on the Power of Myth" with Moyers as host.

Konner was named a trustee of Columbia University in 1987. The School of Journalism, where she graduated in 1961, was looking for a new leader. "Nobody wanted the job because the school was known to be in trouble," Konner said. She took over as dean in 1988.

In eight years she raised \$20 million and put the school on a solid financial footing. She beefed up the faculty with prominent working journalists, including Terry Anderson, the Associated Press correspondent held hostage for six years by Arab terrorists. She also presided over renovation of the school buildings and established the New Media Center to integrate modern information technology and electronic journalism.

Konner feels satisfied leaving the deanship after eight years. "I think the school is in very good shape now. I think it's the only good journalism school in the country," she said.

Konner left to high praise from media leaders.

"She brought the institution into the late 20th century without ever sacrificing the underlying training that is the backbone of good journalism." said A.O. Sulzberger, chairman of the *New York Times*.

Konner will stay on at Columbia as publisher of the *Columbia Journalism Review*, an influential jour-

nal of press criticism, and as a teaching professor of journalism.

Konner was born in Paterson, NJ in 1931. She married at 18 and graduated from Sarah Lawrence College. When her two children were in school she went back to study journalism at Columbia. The family moved to Sneden's Landing 1961 when she started work at the *Bergen Record*. The Konners bought the house of CBS news star Mike Wallace. The Konners divorced in 1970.

Joan and Alvin Perlmutter recently moved to another Snedens Landing house formerly owned by Jean Twitchell.

Konner is a fan of **10964**. "It's the real voice of the real community talking about the real people who are our neighbors," she said. "There are veins of reporting that you don't even see in the professional press that you can explore in a community press."

She singled out local history, spiritual concerns and alerting readers to issues of shared interest such as the Hudson River bridge threat.

Nick Ludington

Getting Started in the Garden: Cont. from page 1

spread by their roots but are much too charming to be called invasive. Japanese Anemones are great plants; they're tall, bloom in the fall, and have pink or white flowers that resemble dogwood. Boltonia, monarda (bee balm), tall and creeping phlox, coreopsis, black-eyed Susans and daisies, monkshood, echinacea (cone flower), and perennial argeratum are all showy, happy additions to any garden and they get bigger and better with time.

I keep some of all of these in my perennial garden and transplant the excess to the sunny edges of my yard. The rest I share with friends and bring to the library plant sale in May.

Cellen Wolk



"I swear to God I got a job the next day from him because I beat him at ping pong,"she said.

Open Letter to the Palisades Community

Dear Neighbors:

I wish to alert you to the proposed development of the Graney Sandpit area in Sparkill. This former quarry has been rezoned recently from industrial/ laboratory use to RG housing (which allows for 1/4 acre units). The developer, represented by Orangetown lawyer, Donald Brenner, wants to build 47 homes on the 18.9 acre site. The site plan has been submitted to the Orangetown Planning Board for their approval. Many of us who live in the area are concerned with this proposed site plan for the following reasons:

1. The land itself was extensively excavated in the past and left damaged. How much damage and what effect the prior excavation will have on the building of homes needs to be addressed.

2. Fourteen of the proposed homes are situated on the southeast side of the former Conrail track on land abutting the Sparkill Creek. The site plan calls for grading and clearing of the entire area near the creek, including the banks of the creek itself. This land was significantly affected by the prior excavation and is now a hollowed-out area bordered by the higher banks along the creek. All development near the creek must be carefully considered. We are concerned that the proposed clearing and grading will severely and negatively affect the Sparkill in terms of flooding, erosion, sedimentation, and fertilizer and pesticide runoff. The creek has degraded considerably because of careless and poorly planned building in Orangetown and New Jersey. We must not add to it.

3. The proposed site plan calls for two new roads: one would serve the majority of homes and feed onto the intersection of Washington Street and Dederer – which is already a busy and dangerous intersection. The other entrance is a proposed extension of William Street. This road would lead almost directly to a pond near the creek and would be the only access to the southeast, creekside section of the project.

4. The former Conrail track runs through the entire development. The site plan calls for an emergency road across the track to connect one side of the development with the other. How will this crossing and the development as a whole affect the proposed Railsto-Trails?

5. At the pre-preliminary meeting on 2/11/97 where this site plan was presented, many residents of Sparkill voiced their concerns. The representatives of the developers critiqued or discounted all of our worries, including comments from geologists, engineers, and people who have lived their whole lives in the area and watched the creek change as more and more building occurred along its banks.

In light of this, we have asked the Planning Board to request a full Environmental Impact Statement of this property. We want this report to be reviewed by an engineer without ties to the developer or to Orangetown so that the impact of the project can be assessed objectively. A large development like this in such a sensitive area deserves no less.

If you wish to add your voice to this petition, please write to the Planning Board, Town of Orangetown, 21 Greenbush Road, Orangeburg, NY 10960. You can also let Thom Kleiner know about our concerns by writing to him at 26 Orangeburg Road, Orangeburg, NY 10962.

If you wish to be informed about meetings related to the project, please call me and I will place you on our meeting phone chain.

Sincerely,

Elaine Silver, 540Washington Street, PO Box 246, Sparkill, 398-1419

From the Editor:

This letter from our neighbor in Sparkill vividly illustrates the need for all of us to remain vigilant about the possibility (some might say likelihood) of attempted development in Palisades and surrounding communities. During the last several months, for example, surveyors were observed on Route 303 near Oak Tree Road, and the builder of the Lauren Road houses was examining the undeveloped wetlands on this road as a first step to ultimately building additional houses. Since the Civic Association is loosely organized, we all must take the responsibility to notice such development, particularly when it raises environmental concerns, and to alert our neighbors in Palisades and neighboring areas in an effort to prevent what could have long-lasting and undesirable consequences. The editors thank Ms. Silver for writing to 10964.

Connie

onnie Price, Minama to us, sat at the head of a large maple table. Its surface diffused with a mellow golden light from the reflected late afternoon sun. She calmly and purposely sat there chain smoking, occasionally picking little bits of tobacco off her tongue. She was wearing one of her many house dresses, its particular pattern faded, blurred from endless laundering. Her hair was a military iron gray, cut decidedly short. Not a crimp or a curl for her to have to waste her time fretting over. Her hands, holding the cigarette were square and gnarled, just beginning to be twisted by arthritis. You could see the veins in knots. Solid. Her fingernails were cut short and square too. The dry tanned skin of her hands showed up beautifully her narrow yellow gold wedding band. It was the only jewelry she wore.

A sabatier paring knife lay on the table, its seriously sharp edge warning not to be touched. The long



cutting board, maple as well, had decades of slices and nicks and was treasured because it had belonged to her grandmother. Forest green broccoli, peeled and trimmed to perfection, was piled in an aluminum colander on the table, waiting to be rinsed under clear cold well water at the kitchen sink.

She just sat there and enjoyed her smoke, savoring the quiet moment stolen out of her day, yet still looking forward to preparing dinner, creating a gastronomic feast for the ten small charges she and Dinny cared for.

Connie was the mother of Dinny Price, the woman who took care of us Drechsler children after school while both of our parents worked – my father in N.Y.C. at his own ad agency, and my mother, who worked closer to home at a nearby textile firm designing fabrics.

Connie was originally from somewhere in France. She came here in 19-whatever. She was very learned, quite knowledgeable about many diverse subjects and, aside from Andy Norman, the only person you could trust entirely on the subject of mushrooms. She was expert on locating edible mushrooms, from the easily seen plebeian white snowballs and the softer off-white puffs – (sliced in rounds and quickly seared in melted butter with a touch of fresh tarragon sprinkled on top) – to the rare and elegant morels, leaf covered, hidden in the earth like treasure – (these slowly sautéed in butter until they could literally melt in your mouth, with fresh black pepper ground from the little wooden mill that came to this country with her – coarse salt pinched frugally on top at the last minute).

My grandmother, Nana, who was visiting Connie this afternoon was originally from Germany. She came safely to this country, a charming innocent teenager, several years before the Holo-

caust. A soft spoken, well educated, cultured German Jew.

Nana and Minama sat together at the kitchen table with a European coziness, chatting of country things and cooking, trading unwritten recipes and snippets of familiar family history. So, Minama chain smoked and Nana would sneak a few of her own exotic smelling Turkish cigarettes. Hand rolled of cinnamon and cloves and tangy, spicy tangerine - they transported me to another land altogether. Nana kept these cigarettes in a special little polished silver case that GrandPaul had given to her, en-



graved with the pet name that only he used for her – Deg – for Hildegard.

At dusk they would stir themselves and stand, their knees creaking wearily. Then they would head for the garden arm in arm, Connie having searched for and found just the right basket from the top of her enormous kitchen cabinet, letting it swing as she walked. And Nana, so elegantly dressed in her N.Y.C. clothes would hold the large garden shears carefully in both hands, afraid of their implied danger.

Connie was a gardener of the first rank and had row upon row of tomatoes and what seemed like acres of rustling corn, and bright upstanding asparagus in her garden. The basket was gradually, tenderly filled by Connie, her hands calloused, roughened. Rich

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Connie: Continued from page 5

loamy dirt deposited in the whorls and crevices, the patterns on her palms and fingers etched with it, emphatically defining who she was. This basket was filled completely with perfectly ripe ruby red tomatoes, and corn just picked from the stalk, the husks a gleaming green turning silver, like sea foam silk velvet. And asparagus, only a few mouth-watering dozen left over from the end of June harvest. Just dug from the warm mold-scented ground, bits of luscious black earth clinging to the pale yellow slanted ends, tied together in neat bunches with lengths of the prettiest ribbons from Minama's collection.

Nana would be brought back home to gather the rest of her belongings, then driven to the top of the hill, to wait in the deepening dusk for the 9A back to the City.

The mild air was alive with a cacophony of night noises. The cicadas, 17 year curiosities, sang their songs loudly, drowning out the others, listening to each other with their circular eardrums. Grasshoppers trilled, rubbing the notches in their tired legs with a vein in their wings, natural Isaac Sterns. Discerning the direction of their kinds' call by waving their silly legs awkwardly upside down in the air. Peepers peeped with staccato punctuality. Male butterflies with their large compound eyes searched the fading light for a fertile mate. A trail of female pheromone wafted in the night, detectable only to the feathery antennae of males lured here from miles away.



And my grandmother's basket was a bounty overflowing with scented flowers, columbine and sweetpea, and miniature roses – that Minama had tucked in here and there at the last minute. In amongst the vegetables. An intoxicating riot of color and smell. It was easy for Nana to leave, knowing that she would return next week, her summer marketing pleasantly complete. She held the basket on her left arm. And in her right hand, a huge bouquet of glowing spotted tiger lilies, picked by us girls from the side of the road earlier in the day. Held together with soggy newspaper, saran wrap, rubber bands and tin foil. As she disappeared in the cavernous gloom of the 9A, the last we saw of her were the tiger lilies, held upside down, trailing her like a glorious blaze of fire.

Jocelyn DeCrescenzo

SOUTH ORANGETOWN SCHOOL NEWS

Since there has only been one snow day so far, the school calendar will include an Early Spring Recess (March 26-April 1), a superintendent's conference day on April 10, and a Late Spring Recess from April 21-25. School will also be closed for an extended Memorial Day weekend May 23-27. The last day of school will be June 25. Board of Education meetings are held, as always, on Mondays at 7:30 p.m. at the South Orangetown Middle School on Van Wyck Road in Blauvelt. Public discussion of the proposed bond and budget will be from March 3 through April 14, followed by a budget vote on May 7. **Don't forget to vote!** Call the District at 365-4204 for more details.

Among many interesting ongoing projects sponsored by the South Orangetown Central School District (SOCSD) is the People Who Made A Difference writing project. A volunteer editorial board has been assembled, and they are asking all parents and students in the school district as well as the entire South Orangetown community to consider submitting a story, poem, or drawing for inclusion in this publication. It should tell about a special person who has shown courage, spirit, and extra effort in a difficult situation that made a difference in the writer's life. The deadline for submission is Friday April 18th, and pieces can be dropped off at any of the district schools, or sent directly to the office of the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Morton Sherman.

Palisades Free Library News



Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Palisades Free Library, now in its 106th year, was held on Sunday, February 23, at the Library. Attendees were treated to an interesting and entertaining talk about women explorers by our guest speaker and Palisadian, Milbry Polk. The resolution to amend the by-laws was passed, reducing the number of nominees to fill a vacant seat from two to one. In addition, two new board members were elected: Carol Heinemann and Greta Nettleton.

Fundraisers Planned

Actress and Comedienne Didi Conn to Give Benefit Performances at the Community Center

Palisadian Didi Conn will delight both children and adults on Sunday, April 13th with readings of children's stories and songs from her critically acclaimed album, **Mommy, Gimme A Drink of Water**. There will be two performances, at 2:30 and 4:00 p.m. at the Community Center on Oak Tree Road. All proceeds will benefit the Palisades Free Library.

Ms. Conn is perhaps best known for her portrayal of Frenchy, the beauty school drop-out in the films **Grease** and **Grease II**. Pre-schoolers, however, know her as Stacey Jones from the PBS series, **Shining Time Station**.

Tickets, at \$10 each, will go on sale at the Library beginning March 31st. Children under 10 must be accompanied by an adult. **Don't miss it!**

Plant Sale on May 10th

The Palisades Free Library will hold its annual Spring Plant Sale on Saturday, May 10, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Cellen Wolk and Margaret Anderson are organizing the sale again this year. They urge everyone to bring plants from their gardens to sell at this fundraiser. Not only will this benefit the library, but will help make many of our gardens truly "gardens of the community." Please call Larry Bucciarelli at 365-0520, Margaret at 365-0520, or the Library at 359-0136 if you have some plants to donate. We also need volunteers to provide baked goods, help sell or make donations to books by the pound, or lend a hand in any other way. Please call Mary Viviano at 359-1664 for the bake table, Greta Nettleton at 359-0513 for books by the pound, or the Library at 359-0136 if you can help.

Tappan Zee Thrift Shop Donations

Did you know that when you donate clothing or other household items to the Tappan Zee Thrift Shop in Piermont, these donations can benefit the Palisades Free Library? Simply designate these donations for the Library when bringing them into the Thrift Shop. All donations are tax-deductible.

New Acquisitions

Fiction

Berg	Joy School
Clark	Pretend You Don't See Her
Erdman	The Set Up
Freemantle	Bomb Grade
Grisham	The Partner
Michaels	Fugitive Pieces
Price	The Waiting Time
Pynchon	Mason or Dixon
Rosenberg	Abuse of Power
Roth	American Pastoral
Spark	Reality and Dreams
White	Remote Control
Non-fiction	
Dyer	Manifest Your Destiny
Forward	Emotional Blackmail
Heilbrun	The Last Gift of Time

Emotional Blackmail The Last Gift of Time Memories of Summer Irons in the Fire Eight Weeks to Optimum Health Power

Library News: Continued next page

Kahn

Weil

McPhee

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New reference titles

Copyright Handbook, 3rd edition
Everything You Need to Know About
Medical Tests
Materials Handbook, 14th edition
Encyclopedia of Plague and
Pestilence
Illustrated Book of Signs and Symbols
Encyclopedia of Occultism and
Parapsychology

Tax Forms

The library has available both reproducible tax forms and income tax reference books. Please feel free to use both.

Library Hours

Mon Wed.	3 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Thurs.	10 a.m. to noon,
	3 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Fri.	3 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Sat.	11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sun.	1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Marianne Armistead: Continued from p. 13

Marianne mused about her future at Oak Tree, "I guess I will have to retire when the children of Oak Tree children start to arrive."

For those of you who need day care for your children, aged 2 years 9 months to 5 years old, Oak Tree Playgroup offers a unique experience. You may bring the child in for any three hours between 9 and 3 Monday through Friday, during the school year. In the summer, the program runs from 9 to 12. Parents provide one healthy snack a month. Charges are \$4.00 per hour with a monthly minimum of 20 hours.

The Playgroup is always receptive to donations of toys in good shape with all the pieces. They were given an old Apple 11GS, and need donations of children's programs to work on this older format. Even better, if someone is thinking about upgrading and wants to donate an older computer, Oak Tree is a good place to consider. And of course, old clothes in good shape, the glitzier the better, are most welcome.

Call 914-359-6472 for information about the winter and summer programs at Oak Tree Playgroup.

Milbry Polk

CLEANUP DAY IS COMING ON SATURDAY, APRIL 19 — A CHANCE FOR PALISADIANS TO REDEEM THEMSELVES

by Andrew E. Norman, for the Palisades Civic Association

At last, residents of Palisades who disgraced themselves in 1992 will be able to recover their selfrespect by participating in Cleanup Day on Saturday, April 19. Post-1992 settlers will be able to prove themselves a better breed of community citizen than 95 percent of their predecessors.

All who are not blind to the hideous trash that disfigures our landscape and brands our community with shame will gather at the Community Center at 10:30 a.m. to collect trash bags and receive or choose their assigned territories. With a halfway respectable turnout, the task should be completed well before noon.

Palisades Cleanup Day will be part of a countywide blitz coordinated by the Rockland County Beautification Committee and by Orangetown Deputy Supervisor Eliot Tozer. The bags will be furnished by Miele Sanitation Co., and will be collected by the Orangetown Highway Department.

Items too large or heavy for bagging will be listed by location and collected by the Highway Department within a few days.

The Civic Association urges all Palisadians to

observe the roadside between Lamont Doherty and the Rockland Country Club along Route 9W, between Oak Tree Road and the R.C.C. along Route 340, and along Oak Tree Road on both sides of the Parkway. Is this a home we are proud of?

As I wrote here five years ago, "I would not like to spend half my life picking up trash from roadsides, but doing it for an hour or two a year with one's neighbors is a very pleasant experience, and noticing the result afterward is most rewarding.

"And maybe the best part is that you don't have to spend the rest of the year groveling in guilt and shame and low self-esteem — looking at a landscape disfigured simply because you decided to leave it that way and knowing that the people who did act like self respecting citizens know who you are."

Be there!

(Certificates of illness or incapacity signed by a licensed physician and documentary proof of compelling business or previously planned foreign travel will be collected and examined at a date to be announced later.)



Bulletin Board



If you are a parent of a four-year old child who will be entering Kindergarten in the Tappan Zee Elementary School in September, 1998, **Geraldine Miras**, Trustee of the South Orangetown Board of Education, invites you and your child to tour the building with the principal, Mrs. Lynn Gorey. Gall Gerry at 359-1720 for details.

Jacquelyn Drechsler, flutist, along with Lisa Tannenbaum, harpist, will be performing Mozart's Concerto in C major for Flute, Harp and Orchestra on May 18, 1997. The Gala Classical Pops Concert will be conducted by Edward Simons, Director and Conductor of the Rockland Symphony Orchestra; Marvin Von Deck, Associate Conductor; and Joseph Halfon, making his world debut. The program consists of the Mozart concerto, and selections from Puccini, including the entire third act from La Boheme. The concert will be held at the Cultural Arts Center at Rockland Community College, 7:30 p.m. For ticket information please call 356-1522.

Palisades Resident Honored

Congratulations to Palisadian **Geraldine Miras**, South Orangetown School District trustee, who was honored by the Rockland Art Educators Association on March 7 for her support of the arts in the South Orangetown School District. Mrs. Miras was nominated by the art teachers in the School District and the honoring ceremony took place at the opening of the Art Educator Association's Second Annual county-wide art exhibit at the Helen Hayes Hospital.

Mrs. Miras, who started her own career in education as an art teacher, says the arts have always been an important part of her life. The love for music came from her mother, art from her father. "Exposure to the arts when young is vital for the intellectual growth of children," she says. "To be honored by the art teachers for supporting the arts, something I believe in so strongly, was especially gratifying. And those young, enthusiastic teachers remind me of myself when I was young and just starting out."

Changes Welcome at the Post Office

Thanks to **Palisades Postmaster Denise Madura** there are now two outside post boxes for mailing, one for mail going out of town and one for mail going to Palisades only. The addition of an outside box for Palisades is greatly appreciated. It saves mail delivery time since mail going to Palisades no longer must travel to another location to be processed and then returned; instead, it can now be handled directly by the Palisades Post Office.

Collection times for both outside boxes are the same: **Monday-Friday**, 6 and 7:30 a.m.; 1:30 and 4:15 p.m.; and the last collection at 4:30 p.m. **Saturday**, 7:30 a.m. and 12:50 p.m., the last collection at 1 p.m. The same rules apply to both outside boxes: Domestic mail weighing 16 ounces or over (that bear stamps) and International mail and military APO/FPO mail weighing 16 ounces or over should not be put in the boxes, but instead mailed in person at the Post Office.

Around Rockland County

Rockland Center for the Arts will celebrate its 50th anniversary of serving Rockland County with a Golden Gala dinner on April 12 from 6:30 to 11:30 p.m. The occasion, which includes dancing and entertainment, will also serve to announce the Center's theme for the coming year, "The Art of Film." At the dinner, the following performers and actors will be honored for their contribution to the art of film: Mikhail Baryshnikov, Barry Bostwick, Lorraine Bracco, Ellen Burstyn, Arlene Dahl, and Edward James Olmos. For further information and reservations, call the Center at 358-0877.

Wait Until Dark opens May 23 at the **Elmwood Theater.** This bone-chilling mystery/thriller about a blind woman who is terrorized by three desperate men will keep you at the edge of your seat. For tickets, call Elmwood Box Office at 914-353-1313.

> June is graduation time, and the **Editors** of **10964** would like to know of any high school, college, or graduate school graduates who live in Palisades. Please call us or drop a note to Box 201 with the student's name, school and degree, and plans for the future, if known. Deadline for copy for the June issue is the first week in May.

In the Classroom With Lincoln Center Teaching Artists at William O. Schaefer School



William O. Schaefer School teachers participating in the Lincoln Center Institute program: left to right: Dr. Marianne Tully, Principal; Mrs. Valerie Beckman, district coordinator; Miss Anne O'Brien; Mrs. Victoria Zazyczny; Mrs. Shelley Stern; Mrs. Lynnette Pantale; and lead teaching artist Mr. Jeff Bliss. In front of Mr. Bliss, l to r: Mrs. Donna Schaefer; Mrs. Angela Piatek; Mrs. Christine Long; Mrs. Pamela Hess; Mrs. Eileen Griffith; and Mrs. Maryann Aaron.

The William O. Schaefer School (WOS) is one of three "focus" schools in the New York metropolitan area chosen by the Lincoln Center Institute to test new ways to broaden kids' access to the arts. This unique arts education program brings musicians, dancers, actors, and storytellers of the highest caliber to WOS for four shows during the school year. It further supports the performances by conducting four classes of introductory and follow up discussion with Lincoln Center teaching artists. In this way the children get the most understanding and enjoyment from their experience. They also work together with a senior citizen program comprised of retired teachers and enthusiastic grandparents. The seniors join the teaching classes to help when the class breaks down into small groups. They also learn something themselves.

Because many of the WOS teachers have attended the summer seminars offered at Lincoln Center to prepare them to participate in the program, most of the WOS students have had a chance to participate. Their parents, however, may not be sure just what this means. What really goes on at school when the kids are preparing to attend a show?

One day back in 1954, Thelonious Monk was in the middle of a session recording a new piece. He was interrupted by someone worried about administrative details who asked what the title of the song was. "Ah...we'll worry about that later," he answered. Thus the song was named. Forty-two years later, a rapt group of third graders in Mrs. Aaron's class are listening to the opening measures of this song over and over as Lincoln Center teaching artist Daniel Levy draws pictures on the flipchart of how the children think each musical phrase might look like.

The previous week, the children learned about the bass, piano, and ride cymbal they will soon see in the jazz trio. They became familiar with the sounds each produces, and the role each has in creating melody, harmony, and rhythm. This week they will put it all together. Levy takes out a large roll of white tape, and divides the floor into three pie-shaped sections. The class separates into three groups; each group jumps into a section and is assigned an instrument. The pianos put their fingers on their air keyboards, the ride cymbals hold their hands out ready to crash together, and the basses grab their air instruments ready for finger walking to the rhythm of the song. The senior participants join in. This time, with no tape playing, the kids create the song themselves. "We are a jazz trio!" exclaims Levy to his students. It is an intuitive approach to the most cerebral kind of art and it works like magic. No musical notes are needed—the children absorb the melody, the structure, and the rhythm directly and thus learn how individual parts make a tightly woven piece of music.

The next week, Mrs. Aaron's class joins ten others in the auditorium at the Middle School to hear the big concert by the pros from Lincoln Center — Eric Reed on the piano, Ben Wolfe on the bass, and Gregory Hutchinson on the drums. Many of the participating seniors also are in the audience. Two hundred children listen intently, many bouncing up and down on their seats to the rhythms of each song. After the concert is over, Eric Reed takes questions from the audience. The kids ask a million questions: "How did Thelonious Monk die?" "Why was the drummer playing with his hands?" "Was that you playing or a CD?" "Why do you like Monk's music?" and so on. Answering with unshakable patience and humor, Reed handles them all. The concert has been a success and the children file out of the auditorium excited and enthusiastic, ready for more learning about art and everything else it touches in the days ahead.

Greta Nettleton

BOOK REVIEW

Mary Lawrence Tonetti by Barry Faulkner

published by the Palisades Free Library and the Palisades Historical Committee in January 1996

Barry Faulkner, who lived from 1883 to 1966, was a distinguished painter of murals and great friend of many well-known Palisades artists, sculptors, and architects. Among his friends was Mary Lawrence Tonetti, whose creative energy and indomitable spirit led to the flowering of Palisades as a community of artists and intellectuals. Based on conversations with Mrs. Tonetti's daughter, Anne Gugler, he wrote up a short collection of reminiscences in 1958 "in order that Mary Tonetti's younger descendants may posses an intimate account of the life and character of their great grandmother, whose whims and talents delighted her contemporaries and whose wisdom and example made the lives of her children happy, dramatic, and fruitful."

The warmth and charm of Mrs. Tonetti's life shine throughout the book—one needn't be just a history buff to enjoy reading this book, and it can be recommended to anyone, non-Palisadian or local. It is a particularly good read on a dreary 1990's day burdened with grinding time pressures and "lean and mean" imperatives, when a trip outward to a magical time infused with spontaneity, exuberance, plenty of time, plenty of money, and plenty of eccentric and talented friends seems like a good idea.

Mrs. Tonetti had strong feelings about privacy,



and the manuscript remained in the Archives of American Art in Washington DC until the Palisades Historical Committee, inspired by Alice Haagensen, reprinted the manuscript. The newly issued pamphlet is just 69 pages long, and beautifully prepared, including photographs and drawings. The book closes with a moving poem to Mrs. Tonetti on her deathbed by her dear friend, the great poet Elizabeth Shepley Sergeant, who wrote, "The paths by the landing/ Were traced by your soul …" *Greta Nettleton*

Mary Louise Powell

Mary Louise Powell died peacefully at her home in Palisades, New York, on February 6, 1997, at the age of 90. She and her husband Victor Powell have lived on Woods Road for 52 years. Mary Louise McDaniels was born in McMinville, Tennessee, on August 26, 1906. She attended the University of Texas in Austin, where she studied English literature, wrote news stories for the Daily Texan, played the piano, and was the soloist for the Women's Glee Club. It was at the University that she met Victor, a 20-year-old freshman who was already teaching piano. When he met Mary Louise he took one look at her and said, "I'd love to have your hand." He was actually referring to the enormous stretch between her thumb and forefinger, but the remark was prophetic. They became engaged and married ten years later.

Mary Louise left the University of Texas with Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Comparative Literature and went on to teach English at Belle Haven College in Jackson, Mississippi. She and Victor were married at her parents' house in New Mexico in 1935 and then drove east to settle in a New York City apartment. Victor was already working as choir director at Grace Episcopal Church in Nyack and Mary Louise soon joined him there as organist. Their twins, Ernest and Helen, were born in 1939 and in 1945 they moved out to Palisades, first renting and then buying the "Thatched House" (because it had a thatched roof) on Woods Road. Their daughter Robyn was born here in 1947.

Mary Louise was a long-standing member and past president of the Thursday Reading Class of Nyack. An avid reader, lover of the theater, and devotee of the arts, she spent most of her life raising her three children and supporting her husband's music profession.

Mary Louise also enjoyed playing the piano, knitting, and traveling. For many years the Powells went to Paris for a few weeks in the spring and spent their summers in New Mexico. Mary Louise observed life with a wry wit and a quiet gaity which made her a very special presence. She is survived by her husband Victor, her children Helen, Ernest, and Robyn, seven grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Sven J. Kister

Palisades mourns the passing of Dr. Sven J. Kister, on February 3, 1997, after a long illness. Dr. Kister is survived by his wife, Christine; daughter Karin Kister Howard and son Karl Sven Kister; grandchildren Katherine and Elizabeth Howard; and brother Sigurd.

Born in Tallinn, Estonia, on April 23, 1927, Dr. Kister graduated from Dartmouth College, Dartmouth Medical School, and Harvard Medical School. He served as Associate Clinical Professor of Surgery at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, and was Attending Surgeon at the Presbyterian Hospital of Columbia-Presbyterian. Dr. Kister's research focused in the area of the etiology, diagnosis and treatment of breast disease, and breast cancer in particular.

Members of the Department of Surgery of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University expressed their regrets at the passing of their esteemed colleague and friend, stating that Dr. Kister leaves behind him a host of peers, students, patients, and friends who benefited from his personal and compassionate care of patients, his respected surgical skills, and his loyalty and support of his colleagues.





ost Palisadians are introduced to Oak Tree Playgroup when their young children are about two, and they are on the verge of losing their minds. Salvation comes in the form of Marianne Armistead, Director of Oak Tree Playgroup, and her colleague, Judy Koczynski. For about 25 years, with the actual dates lost in the mists of time, Marianne has been supervising one of the more active corners of our neighborhood, a haven for both parents and children.

Oak Tree Playgroup was founded by Palisadian Gail Hyde. The purpose was "to give children something better to do than go to the laundromat with their parents!" Times have changed. The Playgroup was originally housed in the Community Center, after its former tenant, a food coop, disbanded. When the School District decided to close the elementary school across the street, Oak Tree Playgroup was invited to use part of the school space. They have been there ever since. Originally, they shared the building with the Girl Scouts, local artists, classes from Rockland Community College and an after school program. Later, the building was taken over by the Pre-Kindergarten program, which was a nice complement to the Playgroup as many children spend a half day in each program.

Ironically, the forces that brought Oak Tree Playgroup to the Palisades School are now about to effect another change. Now, the school district plans to move the Pre-K program to one of the elementary school facilities, which leaves Oak Tree in a quandary. If the school building is closed, what happens to them? "We have no idea what is going to happen to us," said Marianne. "It would be difficult to relocate because we have been blessed by low rent." The future of Oak Tree Playgroup is a real concern for many parents.

Marianne and Judy began their respective careers at Oak Tree when their own children were small. Marianne began working when her son Eugene was born. Judy began as a coop parent then became fulltime staff member in 1982. Oak Tree's structure has evolved over the years. It began as a real cooperative with full parental involvement. "I started out as the re-scheduler, for the parents, who all used to work here," Marianne explained. "The parents used to do all the cleaning, made all the snacks, took the kids on field trips, and put in their allotted weekly hours supervising the day care. We even had mandatory monthly meetings. That didn't last too long! When the parents were involved we used to have pot luck suppers, spring carnivals and a flea market. But as the parents got busier we couldn't manage organizing these events on our own."

Activities in the Playgroup are a barometer of the times. "You could always tell what was going on in the real world by what was happening in the dressup corner," said Marianne. "First it was kids dressing up as Moms going to school, then Moms going to the lawyers, then Moms going to work," added Judy. From being very active in the first years of Oak Tree's existence, parents have sometimes gone to the other extreme. "One mother dropped her child off and never came back. I finally took the child home. The rest of the family was at the home, but we never did find out what happened to the mother! Another mother dropped her child off in the morning and didn't come back until after four. She said she was at the movies and forgot! Luckily that doesn't happen too often. We used to have a big trend of Dads bringing the children here. We don't see that too much any more," said Marianne. "Yeah" Judy laughed, "Now we get the nannies. One day we had three of them here just sitting and waiting. So we banned the nannies."

Marianne estimates that about 750 children have passed through her doors over the years, a majority from our neighborhood. Adorning the walls of the Playgroup are large photo murals of each successive year. Amazingly, Marianne and Judy can identify every child, back to the first years. Clippings are posted near the door about the successes their graduates have. "I claim credit for every one," exclaimed Marianne. "J.T. Farley was an Eagle Scout, and later did humanitarian work in China. Other graduates are singing at the Met, and attending prestigious colleges: Nicole Morris came back to Oak Tree to do community service work. Many graduates have become great baby-sitters in the community. Many return to Oak Tree to make sure their pictures are still on the wall! Palisadians who have worked at Oak Tree include Nina Thayer, Glynn Frederick and Jackie Drechsler."

Continued on page 8

Children's

Frilling

Frilling, flying, killing I hear it sizzling. I hear it drizzling. I see something. I think it's coming. I went in the house. I asked my spouse. What is that outside? It almost glides. It was a frilled lizard. I quivered. It couldn't be. It couldn't be. Even though it could climb a tree. With a frill all around. My feet could barely touch the ground. It spit out. But it couldn't shout. I closed the shutters. I shut the door. I peeked outside. Frill! Frill! Frill! Scared! With a solemn face. With flowers and a vase. I put it down. On the Ground. Snore!

By Peter Baryshnikov, Age 7

BUDS

I will be sad when we Are all grown up and gone No shiny faces to see No muddy footprints on the lawn.

No sticky hands to hold No folding tiny pairs of pants No thousandth time that we are told To avoid the budding spring plants.

No rooms will laughing voices fill With songs of baby babble No more nose-prints near the windowsill Or gleeful screams at Scrabble.

Yes, the buds will have grown at last Into big strong trees But is it worth it, may I ask To grow strong plants without wiping scraped knees?

By Maryam Moody, Age 12

Let Me Tell You

Page

Let me tell you And really good That I like this And I like that I almost like vampire bats I like trains And birds And I happen to like Butterfly wings I like cubes And let me tell you what I really like I like you.

By Peter Baryshnikov, Age 7

Science Fiction Serial

Part I.

When John saw the portal, he did not know what it was. He touched it and instantly fell through. "Mom!" he yelled, but he was already in dimension 4.

John was a boy of eleven, before he moved into this old house with his mom and dad. Now he was turning twelve. When he did not show up for his birthday party, his mom went to the closet that he was sulking in. When he did not show up in the closet, she noticed the wall of swirling colors. She also fell through.

On the other side, there was a blue hill, and blue dirt was everywhere. She saw John walking a way, but very slowly. She thought she could bring him back, as a green bluebird swam overhead. She was in a fishgarden, and looked at her hands. "Green thumbs," she thought. "Well, I was always good at gardening." "John!" she called, but her voice came out like it was light, and she almost could not hear it!

By Tyler Yamin, Age 9 To Be Continued in June Issue of 10964 MASON SAMETT ASSOCIATES, INC. REALTORS®

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