

1964

THE
PALISADES
NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 1998

NUMBER 164

NATURAL DECORATIONS
FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Evergreen decorations, displayed in mid-winter when the days gradually begin to lengthen, has symbolized the triumph of light over darkness since ancient times. The Romans cut laurel and other evergreens for decoration during Saturnalia, a winter festival in honor of the god of agriculture. In pagan northern Europe, mistletoe was sacred and evergreens were honored as symbols of eternal life. During the Middle Ages, an evergreen tree hung with red apples, the Paradise tree, denoted the Garden of Eden in German mystery plays. Later, the custom evolved of decorating fir trees with colored paper, fruit, and candies around the time of the winter solstice.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the tradition of the decorated evergreen tree had spread widely. It was introduced into England by Albert, consort of Queen Victoria, and was brought to the United States by early German settlers. In 1851, two ox-sleds loaded with trees from the Catskills were hauled by one Mark Carr to New York City - the first retail Christmas tree lot in the country. (Though invariably known as Christmas trees,



these midwinter evergreens have as much connection with the religious festival as do Frosty or Rudolph.)

CUT TREES

Formerly, most evergreen trees were cut for the holidays out in the woods - and some families were lucky enough to cut their trees in their own wood lots. These wild trees tended to be somewhat scrawny or lop-sided. Today, almost all trees are grown on plantations, though it is still possible to find an old-type 'Charlie Brown tree' here and there. Plantation-grown

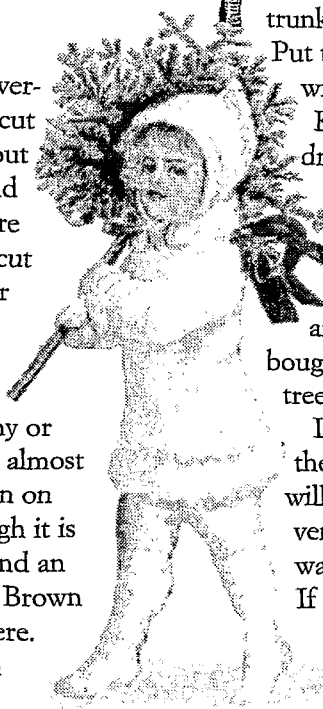
trees take up to fifteen years to reach 6 feet, the average height at sale. They are root-pruned, so that they don't grow too wide, and are sheared twice a year, for symmetry. (All this individual attention is reflected in the price.)

CARING FOR
YOUR TREE

Keep it outside, out of the wind, until you are ready to decorate. Before you bring it indoors, make a new cut straight across the trunk, just above the original cut. Put the tree in a tree stand filled with water.

Keep the stand filled. Trees drink mightily - as much as a gallon of water in the first 24 hours, one or more quarts a day after that. (Water keeps the needles from drying out and dropping off, helps the boughs stay stiff, and keeps the tree fragrant.)

If the water level falls below the stump, a seal of dried sap will form in just a few hours preventing the tree from absorbing water when the stand is refilled. If this happens, the solution -



NATURAL DECORATIONS

(continued from page 1)

a drastic one - is to remove all the ornaments, take the tree out of its stand, make a new cut and start again.

LIVING TREES

Some families purchase a living tree, rather than a cut one, and plant it outside after the holidays. The roots of the tree are held in a ball of earth, which may be wrapped in burlap or set in a biodegradable container. In our area, the species that have the best chance of survival outside after the holidays are Norway Spruce and White Pine.

❧ Until you are ready to decorate the tree, store it in an unheated but sheltered place. Never expose it to freezing temperatures.

❧ Choose the place where you will plant your tree and dig a hole before the ground freezes.

❧ When you bring the tree indoors, keep the root ball or the soil in the container damp, but not drenched. You might wrap the root ball in plastic to prevent it drying out.

❧ When it's time to plant, leave the burlap in place but remove any plastic wrapping. A tree in a biodegradable container can be planted as is.

❧ Plant the tree with the top of the root ball level with the ground and backfill earth around it. Mulch heavily.

Stake the tree to prevent the wind tipping it over.

If it is a dry winter, water the tree moderately every couple of weeks.

THE MOST POPULAR TREES FOR THE HOLIDAYS ARE:



FRASER FIR

Symmetrical, excellent needle-retention, very fragrant



BALSAM FIR

Thick, full boughs, dark green color, fragrant



SCOTCH PINE

Sturdy, with bluish-green sharp needles



WHITE PINE

Long needles with a silvery sheen



NOBLE FIR

a handsome West-coast native, now grown increasingly in the East

tion of juniper or cedar; they will last for weeks outdoors in temperatures 10 to 60 degrees F. Needle-bearing evergreens tend to dry out and drop indoors; there, ropes of boxwood or princess pine (which is not a pine but a moss-like perennial) are better choices. Boxwood roping benefits from occasional spritzes of water.

Wreaths large and small, indoors and out, add another dimension to holiday decorations. Balsam, dense and dark, is a popular material for wreaths, often with the addition of blue spruce, blueberry juniper, boxwood or holly. If you want to fashion your own holiday wreath, buy a plain balsam one from the garden shop and tuck in sprigs of more unusual evergreens: variegated holly, box or ivy; silvery Chinese juniper; bush ivy with its blue-green berries. Natural materials that can be used for accents on wreaths include pine cones of all sizes, nuts and acorns, wild rose hips, seed pods (catalpa, pawlonia), lavender sprigs, dried fruit.

Not all green wreaths are based on sturdy needle-bearing evergreens. For indoors — or a protected outdoor location — you might choose a wreath of evergreen magnolia, eucalyptus, rhododendron, or the delicate-seeming but long-lasting lemon-leaf.

Swags are simply groups of evergreen boughs gracefully tied together. They can take the place of wreaths in many situations. Use a variety of branches pruned in your own yard.

Caroline Tapley

ROPES, WREATHS, SWAGS

Ropes of evergreens looped over windows and doors, twisted around porch railings or spiraling up staircase balusters have a boldly festive look. They are usually made of balsam, hemlock, or white pine, sometimes with the addi-



REVOLUTIONARY WAR VETERAN REMEMBERED

Palisades remembered one veteran in a special way last month. Jonathan Lawrence Jr., the only Revolutionary War veteran buried in the Palisades

Cemetery, lived in the Big House, which still stands, and died in 1802. He enlisted in the Continental army in 1777, when he was only 17. Three years later, he was Captain of the local militia, providing important information about enemy troops to George Washington. His sandstone tombstone was recently cleaned and stabilized by P.L.O.T., the organization that has been maintaining the cemetery grounds.

When he was buried, the land was the Lawrence family burying-ground, but later became a cemetery for the whole community. At the rededication ceremony for Lawrence's tombstone, held on Sunday, November 8, Lee Sneden spoke on behalf of P.L.O.T., (P.O. Box 1, Palisades) asking for support for the work of the organization to preserve this historic graveyard. Mitchell Warner, a Palisades

resident and a direct descendent of Jonathan Lawrence, also spoke. He told how he had learned about the Lawrence connection from an aunt and had been given more information by Alice Haagensen. His house is actually located within the 520 acre farm owned by his ancestor.

Jacqueline Drechsler and Simon Gerard played 18th century duets to accompany the ceremony. Orangetown Historian Mary Cardenas, and Tappan residents Geri

Macauley and Keith Walker came in 18th century costume. The event was well attended, with about 70 spectators and participants at the ceremony, many of them from other communities.

After the ceremony, everyone was invited to the Palisades Library for refreshments and for exhibits on six important Palisadians of the past: Molly Sneden, Jonathan Lawrence Jr., Nicholas Gesner, Winthrop

Gilman, Mary Tonetti, and Mildred Rippey.

The exhibits were prepared by members of the Palisades Historic Committee.

Books on Palisades history were also for sale, including *In a Simpler Time*, the new publication of the Palisades Historic Committee. It can be

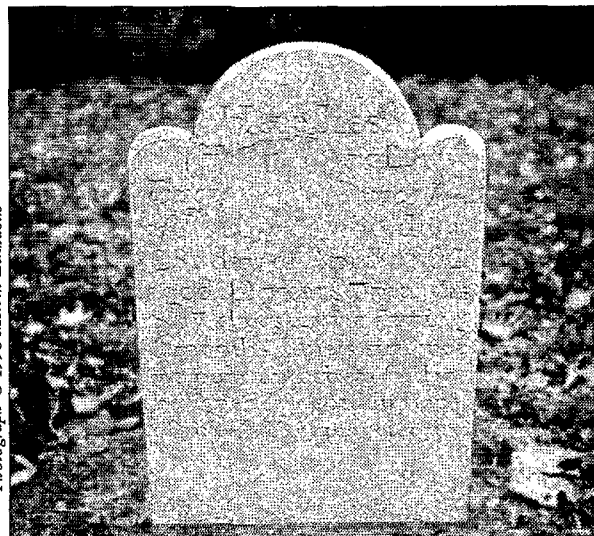
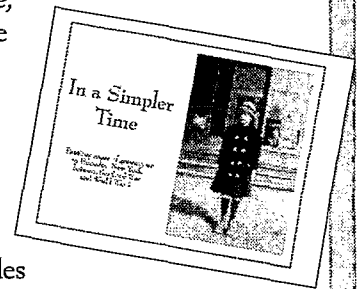
bought at the Library or from Alice Gerard, (359-4338) for \$15.00 plus tax. The book is a collection of memoirs by people who lived in the Palisades area between the Civil War and World War I. The first memoir, by Anna Gilman Hill, describes many of the old houses on the road to the river; houses of many

early residents still exist and are well-cared for by their present owners. In another memoir, Mildred Rippey gives a charming picture of Palisades at the turn of the century. The book is illustrated with many old photographs of the houses and of the community, and would make a good holiday present for people with ties to Palisades.

Alice Gerard



Photographs by Paul Melone



Photograph © 1998 Melvin Eckhaus

BULLETIN BOARD

Flautist **Jacqueline Drechsler** will be performing as soloist in a Mozart Concerto with the Rockland Symphony orchestra for the Annual Mozart Birthday Concert on January 24. The concert will be held at the Rockland Community College Cultural Center Auditorium on College Road in Suffern and begins at 7:30 p.m. For information and tickets call Jackie at 359-3112 or the College at 942-2574.



annual league championship by defeating another team, Veracruz, with a score of five to one. During the season the team has had twenty wins, three ties, and two losses. Team members include Palisades resident **Tony Gerard** and former residents **Kevin McNichol** and **Neville Clynes**. Three other members of the team, **Ahmed Bello**, **Muhammed Nuru**, and **Haruna Ibrahim**, work at Palisades Gardens.

On Oct. 10, **Abigail Lattes** and **Christopher Hartlove** were married in Baltimore, MD in a ceremony attended by many Palisadians including Laura Ratcliffe Kitselman, Abigail's childhood friend from Closter Road now living near Baltimore. Abigail is the Director of Public Relations at Rowland Park Country Day School in Baltimore and Christopher works as a professional photographer. Abby and Chris took their wedding trip to Botswana to visit the village where Abby had served in the Peace Corps.

Amelia Kidd and Allie **Rosenwasser** will perform in the full-length production of the ballet classic, *The Nutcracker*, produced by the Rockland Youth Dance Ensemble (RYDE) in December. Performances are Friday, Dec. 11 at 7 p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 12 at 3 and 7 p.m.; and Sunday, Dec. 13 at 1 and 4 p.m. -- at Rockland Community College Cultural Arts Theatre in Suffern. For information or tickets (\$15) call 914-624-RYDE.

Oak Tree Play Group (located in the Palisades School for 25 years) continues to offer a pre-

school program Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., which combines learning and creative play in a relaxed and supportive atmosphere. \$40 registration fee and hourly rate of \$4 per hour. Call 359-6472.

On November 20, at the annual meeting of the Tappantown Historical Society, **Alice Gerard** of Palisades was given an achievement award for her children's history book, *Adventures from the Past*.

Sylvia March will be holding her annual holiday pottery sale on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 5 & 6, and Dec. 12 & 13, from 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm at her house at 224 Route 9W. Also for sale will be silk scarves by Marianne Vonder Heide and Clay Animals by Shannon Fitzgerald. For those who cannot make it during those hours, please call Sylvia at 359-3767 for an appointment.

The Palisades Soccer Club, first established as an informal group in the mid 1970s, now plays as a team in the Liga Hispana International de Futbol de Rockland. On Sunday, Nov. 8, the Palisades Soccer Club won the

AND DON'T MISS . . .

. . . paying a visit to **Henry Ottley**, **Larry Bucciarelli**, and Marua Martin's newly opened restaurant, **MAURA'S ON MAIN**, located at 82 Main St. in Nyack (348-1921).

. . . hearing **David Shire** perform (with Loni Ackerman) an evening of theatrical music at the Helen Hayes Theater in Nyack on January 16.

. . . getting involved in the Goods & Services Auction to benefit the Palisades Library. Contact **Henry Ottley** at 365-1520 or **Lynn Sandhaus** at 359-7212 to contribute or volunteer.

BUS STOP SHELTER UPDATE:

The latest news about the proposed construction of two new bus stop shelters on Route. 9W at Oak Tree Rd. comes from Supervisor Thom Kleiner who reports that Palisades architect **Joe Tonetti** has been given the go-ahead to submit drawings to the Town Building and Planning Department for approval. It is hoped that the difficulties in dealing with County, State, and Town agencies is now past and that the shelters will appear "before the snow really flies." (Thanks go to **Reg Thayer**, who has diligently monitored this project over many months.)

NEW ROUTE 303 STUDY

Supervisor Thom Kleiner reports that Orangetown has been awarded a special grant of \$130,000 from the New York Metropolitan Transit Council to study two issues relating to Route 303: safety and aesthetics/ land use. He said that the purpose of the study was "to determine how to improve safety without widening Route 303."

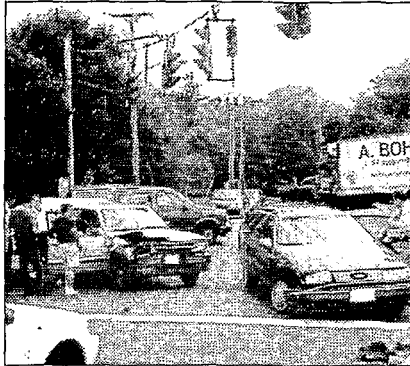
According to Kleiner, since the Palisades Mall has opened, danger has increased along the Route 303 corridor as more drivers unfamiliar with local lane turn-offs and speed limits use our roads.

In a telephone interview, Kleiner explained that the town will chose a consultant in the next few weeks. Community meetings with residents, home owners and business interests will follow in order to include as many points of view as possible in a final consensus about the future of Route 303.

In a September 30 interview that appeared in *Our Town*, Kleiner noted that the New York State Department of Transportation already has two projects on the books to improve the safety conditions on Route 303. The first concerns the stretch of road from Erie Street to Route 59, the second, from the New Jersey state line to Route 59. (This is the plan of most concern to Palisadians since it affects the Oak Tree Rd. intersection at Route 303.)

"While we acknowledge these improvements," Kleiner said, "we need the land use access management study because town residents cannot tolerate any improvements

that add capacity to Route 303. This was demonstrated several years ago, when plans to widen Route 303 from the New Jersey state line to Route 340 in order to improve truck access were met with overwhelming community opposition."



The dangerous intersection of Route 303 and Oak Tree Rd. has been the scene of several accidents this year.

AMBULANCE VOLUNTEERS
Palisadians Susan & Mike Dillon and Stacey & Jeff Weiss demonstrate their commitment to public service by

serving as volunteers in the South Orangetown Ambulance Corps, which covers the communities of Palisades, Sparkill, Tappan, Orangeburg and Blauvelt. The corps answers over 1,300 calls a year to provide lifesaving service -- but, according to Tappan Chief Operations Officer Jim Dress, more volunteers are desperately needed, especially "riding members."

Susan has been active as a volunteer since 1994 and Mike since 1990. They first met as corps members, and both have been trained and certified as EMT's (Emergency Medical Technicians) under N.Y. State Health Dept. guidelines. Before she had children, Susan volunteered

approximately 30 hours each month (about 1 weekend and 1 weeknight) and Mike continues to do so while also volunteering for the Fire Dept.

Jeff has been an Ambulance Corps volunteer for 13 years, beginning in Binghamton where he went to college, and Stacey has accumulated 15 years, first volunteering in the Youth Corps in Spring Valley. Both are also certified EMT's. Jeff currently volunteers 4 hours every week and one 12-hour shift on the weekend, while Stacey, because they have young children, now acts as the Youth Corps Advisor for the Ambulance Corps. (Young adults, ages 15-18, are welcome to join; they receive CPR and other EMS training and ride as trainees on ambulance crews.)

The S.O. Ambulance Corps maintains two state-of-the-art ambulances housed in Tappan at the Ambulance Headquarters on Independence Ave. that are manned by a combination of paid personnel during weekday hours and volunteers on nights and weekends. A standard "riding" crew includes one EMT, a driver, and a trainee. Volunteers have a radio at home to receive calls during their shift and respond by going to the headquarters and joining the ambulance. (Available supplementary services are paid professional medic units, Police and Fire Departments, helicopters from Westchester, and emergency room physician consultations.)

The Dillons and the Weisses say the paid workers are excellent and the volunteers are dedicated, all providing a quick and professional response. They encourage anyone interested to call SOAC at 359-3030 for further information -- and they remind you to call 911 in case of an emergency.

SOUTH ORANGETOWN SCHOOL NEWS

Editor's Note: In July, Eileen Gress began serving as Superintendent of Schools for South Orangetown. She graciously accepted our invitation to write a letter to the residents of Palisades, which we reproduce in its entirety. We hope to hear more from Ms. Gress in the near future.

A LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

As your new Superintendent of Schools, I feel fortunate to have joined a school system that has a strong commitment to high levels of student performance. My highest priority is to strengthen these commitments and build upon the district's reputation for academic excellence.

I am fortunate to have met a number of Palisades residents over the last several months. What a wonderful community! I value your commitment to high quality education and look forward to a continued partnership between the community and the schools.

Like many educators, I have been influenced by teachers who came before me. I'd like to tell you about two of them. Mr. Rubin, my geometry teacher at Lincoln High School in Brooklyn, taught more

than geometry: he taught students how to think mathematically. He convinced us that we could solve any geometry problem imaginable. So when he challenged my class to invent new theorems, we took the bait. We handed him our "theorems" the next morning. I don't know who was prouder, Mr. Rubin, for getting us to work so hard, or we students, for demonstrating our intelligence. Of course, not one of us proved a new theorem, but it didn't matter: we believed we could.

Years ago, before the word "scholar" was outdated, textbooks referred to students as young scholars. Today, some people scoff at the image of young scholars. But the tide is turning and I, for one, am very glad of it. It's time to put a capital S on Scholar. It's time to set the standards and use the instructional strategies that allow children to become scholars. We are here to facilitate scholarship, to bring out the scholar in each child, to recognize and reward each student who demonstrates scholarship.

Scholars have a deep understanding of content. They know the content, and they demonstrate understanding at increasingly complex levels. They not only know

information, but they explain it, reflect on it, write about it, analyze it, evaluate it, and inquire about it. Our task is to create young scholars.

But to be real scholars, our students need to be curious about learning, to be willing to persevere in the face of failure, and to try again when it seems that all has failed.

So now I must tell you the tale of the second teacher. I did not know him personally. He is the subject of the book, *Tuesdays with Morrie*. The book concerns a beloved Brandeis professor, Professor Morrie, who died of Lou Gehrig's disease.

Professor Morrie engaged his students: he raised questions that seemed important to them. He cared about them as individuals, not only as students. And students returned his care with increased commitment to his courses.

That is what educators aim to do every day — touch the lives of students.

When I think about those two extraordinary educators - Mr. Rubin from Lincoln High School and Professor Morrie from Brandeis - I realize that together they represent everything we are about as educators. We are here to create scholars, while remembering that minds are best schooled when we care about the individual that the mind embodies. Our mission is to pursue academic excellence in a caring and nurturing environment.

In the coming months I will bring forward a set of priorities for continued improvement of our school district. I look forward to sharing these priorities with you. Working together, we can continue to promote excellence and caring in our schools.

*Superintendent of Schools
Eileen Gress*

Palisades is a community blessed with abundant beauty and character. Not surprisingly, our surroundings are much in demand as a setting for filmmakers. Many residents may not be aware that the Orangetown Town Board adopted a law on commercial filming on January 16, 1996. Entitled "Chapter 14C, Filming," it applies to filming for commercial purposes. Space does not permit us to print the entire two-page document, which is available from the office of the Town Attorney. Some of its main points are summarized as follows:

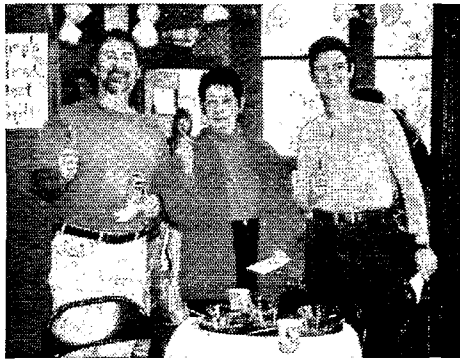
Film permits are needed in all cases where public lands are used (i.e. town parkland or vehicles parked on town roads, etc.) The permits are issued by the town clerk, and a separate permit is needed for each location.

Applicants need to provide proof of insurance coverage and take all reasonable steps to minimize interference with pedestrians and traffic. Filming is permitted Monday through Friday, 8am to 7pm, or sundown, whichever is earlier, in residential areas. The police department can give approval for filming at other days and times. Permit holders should make every effort to minimize the inconvenience and discomfort to their neighbors.

LIBRARY Fall Festival SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25



The children enjoyed festive face painting.



The distinguished panel of culinary judges, Bob Kidd, Geri Miras, and Maura Martin, is about to announce its decision.



Proud winner, Phoebe Rosenwasser, above, and her popular Chili, right.



Larry Bucciarelli was a runner-up!

This year, our traditional fall plant sale featured a Chili Taste-Off Contest, and a Blue-Ribbon panel of distinguished judges (Maura Martin, Bob Kidd, and Geri Miras) picked the best Chili of Palisades. The winning dish was created by Phoebe Rosenwasser, who delicately declined to provide an exact recipe for publication, saying only that she used "a little of this" and "a little of that." That was probably true, but the *thises* and *thats* were combined very effectively.

The runner-up was Larry Bucciarelli. All entries were quickly sold off after the judging, along with baked goods, books by the pound, shrubs, and bulbs for fall planting.

Special thanks goes to Bob Griffin, who once again this year, donated the portable stereo for the raffle. The raffle, along with the children's crafts and the hayrides, were a big success with the kids.



Smiling faces were everywhere!



Four little pumpkins.



People found bargaining in shrubs and bulbs, and the Community Center was filled with activity.



Beautiful blue nails were the hit of the festival.



LIBRARY NEWS



New Books

ADULT FICTION

Bayley, John	<i>Elegy for Iris</i>
Brookner, Anita	<i>Falling Slowly</i>
Cheever, Susan	<i>Note Found in a Bottle</i>
Cornwell, Patricia	<i>Southern Cross</i>
Grisham, John	<i>The Testament</i>
Kellerman, Jonathan	<i>Billy Straight</i>
Ledwidge, Michael S.	<i>The Narrowback</i>
McMurtry, Larry	<i>Duane's Depressed</i>
Mosley, Walter	<i>Blue Light</i>
Oates, Joyce Carol	<i>The Collector of Hearts</i>
Parks, Tim	<i>Europa</i>
Stout, Elizabeth	<i>Amy and Isabelle</i>
Trevor, William	<i>Death in Summer</i>
Weber, Katherine	<i>Music Lesson</i>
Wideman, John Edgar	<i>Two Cities</i>
Wolfe, Tom	<i>A Man in Full</i>

The Reading Club meets monthly. If you wish to join, please call Ms. Joan Sanders at 623-8262.

PALISADES FREE LIBRARY CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Story time for preschoolers is held every Wednesday at 1:30 pm. Children aged 3 years through kindergarten are welcome.

Wednesday, January 13, at 4:14 pm, there will be a craft program for children 6 through 12 years of age. We will beat the winter blahs by making beautiful little boxes decorated with shells. Please sign up at the library.

Wednesday, February 10, at 4:15 pm, we will hear the Russian Folk Tale "Stone Soup." We will make Stone Soup, so please bring a vegetable. This program is for children ages 5 and up. Please sign up at the library.

Tappan Zee Thrift Shop

The Tappan Zee Thrift Shop is an important source of regular income for the Palisades Free Library. Anyone wishing to contribute time as a regular or substitute worker may call 359-5753. Volunteers are always welcome. When donating articles, keep in mind seasonal clothing in good condition, household items, toys and small pieces of furniture. Donations are tax deductible. The Tappan Zee Thrift Shop is located at 454 Piermont Avenue and is open for donations on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday between 10 am and 4 pm. Please call first to see if the shop is able to take your donations.

Great News!

NEW, LONGER LIBRARY HOURS

The library has extended its hours. Our schedule is now:

Mon - Wed	2pm to 9pm
Thurs	10am to-noon 3pm to 9pm
Sat	11am to 5pm
Sun	1pm to 5pm

Christmas Season at the Palisades Church

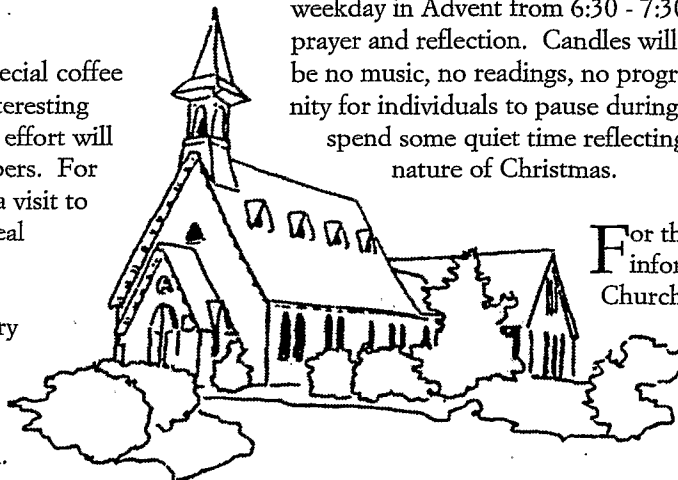
Tradition--old and new--reigns in this year's Advent and Christmas season at the Palisades Presbyterian Church. On December 13 at the eleven o'clock service, the children of the community will be featured in the annual Christmas pageant. Shepherds and angels, "wise persons" and little lambs will all adorn the sanctuary as the congregation joins in prayers and carols to welcome in the Christ child. This has been the custom for generations, and it is still as popular an event as ever.

On Sunday, December 20, a special coffee hour will follow worship. Interesting dishes will be served and a special effort will be made to reach out to nonmembers. For those who have been considering a visit to the Palisades Church, this is an ideal occasion.

On Christmas Eve, the sanctuary will come alive with worship at 5:30 pm, where children and families will be celebrated, and at a more solemn service at 11:00 pm.

The outpouring of love and joy from the congregation, the festive atmosphere, the sanctuary's beautiful architecture, the candles and the decorations make Christmas Eve one of the year's most popular services. Those who plan to attend should come early.

Finally, a new tradition that was begun just last year; to capture the peaceful mystery of the season, the sanctuary of the Palisades Church will be open every weekday in Advent from 6:30 - 7:30 pm for silent prayer and reflection. Candles will be lit, but there will be no music, no readings, no program--just an opportunity for individuals to pause during the busy season and spend some quiet time reflecting upon the true nature of Christmas.



For those needing more information about the Church and its activities, please call Robert Chase, Interim Pastor, at 359-3147.

The Chancel Players' production of Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*

For sixty years, Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* has been delighting audiences, and moving them to tears. On three memorable evenings in October, in a staging by the Palisades Presbyterian Chancel Players, produced by Robert Chase and directed by Cass Ludington, it did so yet again.

Wilder wrote in his preface to the play that it "is not offered as a picture of life in a New Hampshire village...It is an attempt to find a value above all price for the smallest events of our daily life." These small events in the lives of the simplest of people - putting up beans in preparation for winter, rehearsing the music for the Sunday service - have here a subtle poetry and are set against a broad sweep of time and space. It is not only at Emily's wedding that we are reminded of the presence of millions and millions of ancestors.

The choice of *Our Town* for presentation by the Chancel Players was an excellent one, the play fitting well with the available space and the available talent. The stark open space of the Parish House accommodated by turns streets, gardens and kitchens, drugstore, church, and hill-top cemetery. A couple of tables, a few plain chairs, a pair of step-ladders - these and the Stage Manager's eloquence were all that was needed.

As to talent, there was an abundance both on the stage and back of it. The cast list is long, with parts for young and not-so-young, experi-

enced and not-so-experienced players, so there was room for all to shine. The all-important role of the Stage Manager was played by John Garland with authority and

grace. As Emily, Stefanie Umlas was a charming girl, a radiant bride, and heart-rending in her return from the dead. James Dowd gave a fine performance as George, forthright and confident. Fred Griffing as Dr. Gibbs and Scott Russell as Editor Webb provided

sympathetic portraits of these pillars of any small town; their hard-working wives were played with subtlety by Susan Gunn and Diana Straeb. In smaller parts, Bill Menke was an appropriately pedantic Professor Willard; Ken Lindgren a pathetic drunk, bitter in his grave; Henry Shaw gruff as the constable and unctuous as the undertaker. Caroline Iosso and Spencer Harbo (replaced by Travis Tacon

on opening night) carried off the roles of the younger children with aplomb. Pam Sprosty as the exuberant Mrs. Soames got the best laugh of the evening. Vincent Umbrino made a fine milkman, Bessie beside him, while Jeff Rubenstone and Eric Prusinowski threw out the morning papers convincingly. As the anonymous dead, Carol and Robert

McGann-Moore and Kirsten Head spoke with a moving matter-of-factness.

Behind the scenes, many people worked hard and long to give substance to this New Hampshire village that is not a New Hampshire village. Johanna Albin produced costumes - for twenty-six people of both sexes and all ages - that read utterly true for time and place. The mothers and daughters of the two central families were especially well-put-together; the wedding dress was a triumph. Makeup, music (choir and organ), and lighting all contributed - and who present can forget, among the other live sound effects, the distant

whistle of the 5:45 for Boston?

The Producer's job was no armchair one. Bob Chase covered the white walls of the Parish House with yards and yards of black cloth, set up (and operated) the lighting, located and transported platforms for seating the audience. He and the five-person crew put in hours of hard work - and enjoyed it. Mary Ann Garland (Assistant Director) consulted, improvised, and pitched in - and enjoyed that too.

Finally: Cass Ludington (Director). Her vision - and

courage - set the project in motion. Her skill, enthusiasm, drive and enjoyment of the work brought it to its successful conclusion: a memorable experience of theater for participants and audience alike. She took a bow only once - on the last night. Let's call her back!

Caroline Tapley

"These small events in the lives of the simplest of people - putting up beans in preparation for winter, rehearsing the music for the Sunday service - have here a subtle poetry and are set against a broad sweep of time and space."

PALISADES ARTISTS:

GRACE KNOWLTON



Photographs by Mary Tiegreen

*Grace with Baba, her
sprightly standard poodle.*

*A devoted animal lover,
she also keeps a cat
named Agnes and a tiny
mouse she calls Tilly.*

A special feature of the Palisades landscape is the enigmatic collection of huge balls scattered across the field next to the path up to Lamont. While not precisely public items, they're there, seeable, and they are known about--children especially are fond of them and want to know what they are, why they are, and how did they get there into that field by the path to Lamont? The balls seem quite

friendly, perhaps a little bit eccentric, and they have, one suspects, family ties amongst themselves because they have so clearly chosen to sit together in congenial groups.

Recently, 10964 was delighted to meet with the creator of the balls, sculptor/painter Grace Knowlton, and find out some answers to these questions. During a walking tour of her house and grounds, Grace introduced us to most of the balls outside, and many more inside and we found that they do indeed project varied individual personalities, just as we had hoped they would.

The earliest ones are made of clay, and were fired with various combinations

of glazes and finishes so that they look like planets with fabulously exotic, tiny ecologies spread across their surfaces. They range in size from about 2 to 3 feet in diameter, which is perhaps about as large as one can go and still fit them into a kiln, and were built up in sections, to prevent the wet clay from sagging. A switch to concrete made it possible for Grace to make the balls larger, and some of the largest ones of 5 or 6 feet in diameter are made of design cast on a metal lathe armature or fiberglass. She singled out a group of copper balls with different patinas ranging from "bank roof" green to black as being among her favorites.

The solidity and closed sense of wholeness of these earlier balls began to open up as a result of a number of influences, including several unhappy accidental breakages. As it turned out, Grace found that reassembling the pieces of broken balls, like an archaeologist puzzling

together ancient potsherds, made tremendous artistic sense. The repaired balls had small gaps left by missing bits that let the viewer inside the spherical surfaces, opening up the balls to currents of air and hinting at the dark, hidden volume of space inside. The network of lines created by the bonds defined the surface in a new way as well.

Grace next began to make spheres out of found objects from the dump. Most of these mixed metal balls are easily seen from the Lamont road, and include a crushed Exxon sign, a gas stove/refrigerator combination, a gas pump combined with a stop sign, and mixed mishmash with a lamp in the side that still used to work until the end of last winter. Orphaned spheres from other places have found their way into the collection, including a wooden bowling ball and a retired buoy from one of Lamont's ocean-going research vessels.

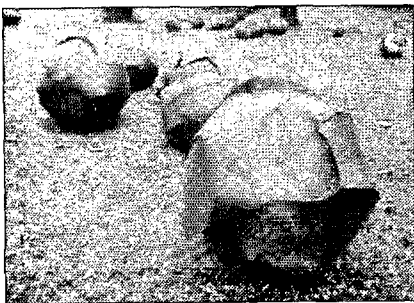
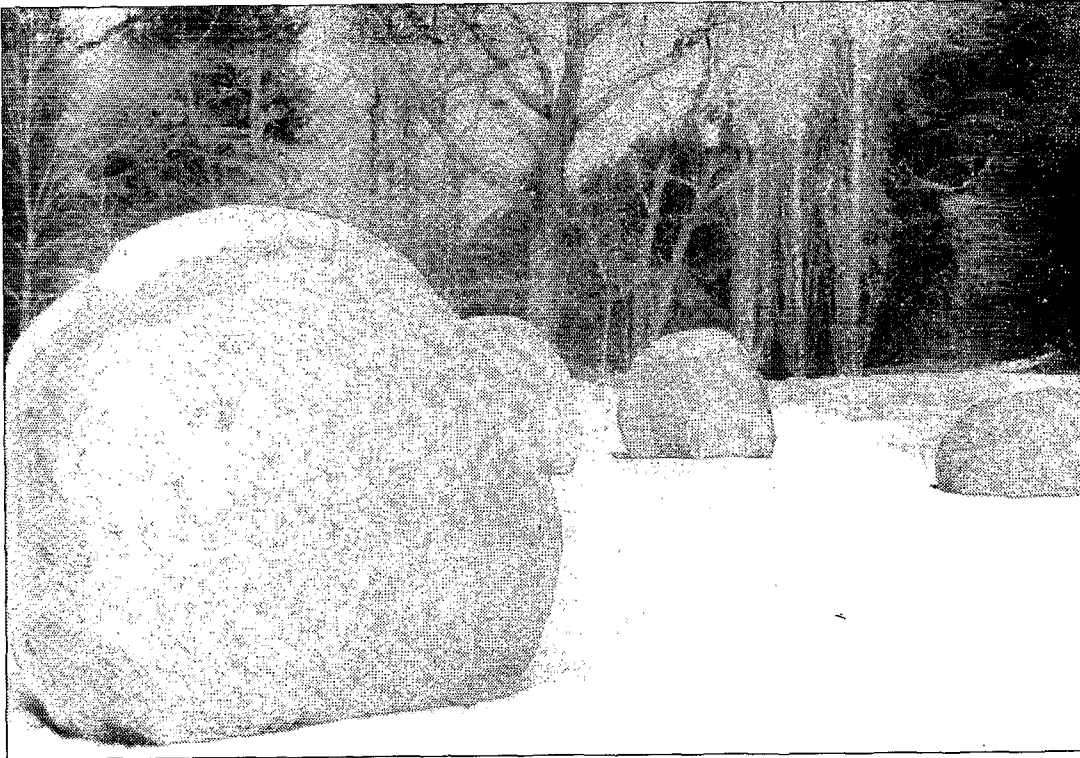
From the rough, geometrically complex surfaces of the found

objects, Grace then moved 180 degrees in the opposite direction, to work with ultra smooth sheets of aluminum with images printed and painted on them. Most recently, she has been painting old canvas tarps and assembling them in pieces around a spherical form so that painted surface and sculptured form are unified.

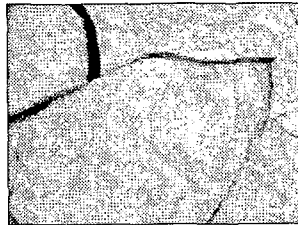
Grace defines the balls as self-portraits, and as a metaphor for life. They represent all the complexities of inner life in play with external appearances. She began to create the balls during her first pregnancy, inspired by the roundness that her body took on, and finds that the balls continue to express the personal, emotional side of her artistic vision today. At the same time, she also is very drawn to corners and angles, which she uses in paintings and photographs to express abstract forms, working mainly with shades of white as defined by shadows.

(continued on next page)

Photograph by Grace Knowlton



The balls bear witness to different phases in people's lives, showing smooth and broken surfaces.





Grace moved out to Palisades from New York City 30 years ago, and in that time has raised five children, built up a national reputation as a sculptor, and gradually expanded and improved her house, which began as an unimproved barn, into a work of art itself. She now shares the house with her poodle, Baba.

The barn that became her house used to belong to the Fox family, and has been gently improved for living without losing its organic, wandering nature. Architect Hugh Hardy did the main renovations, adding light and angular complexity to the main rooms. The house abounds with unexpected details such as old pressed tin ceilings covering the back wall of the living room.

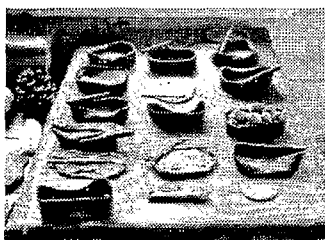
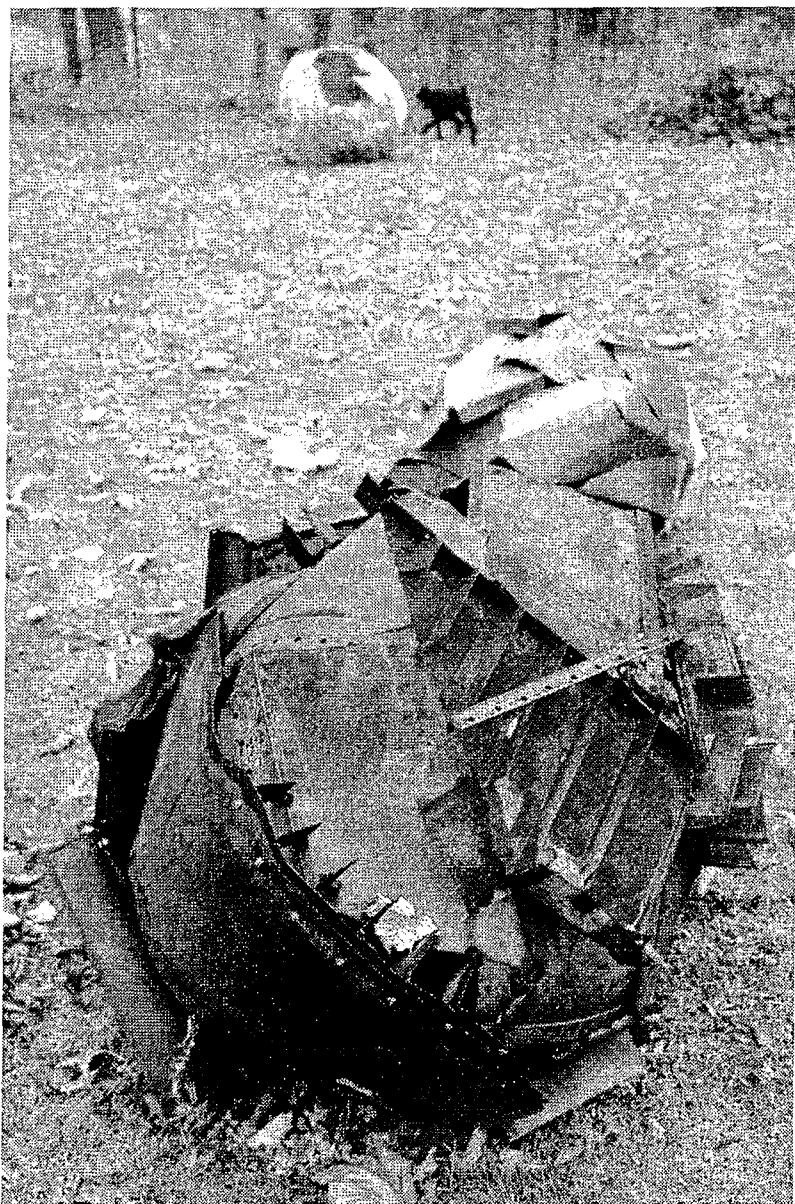
Indoors, Grace keeps many of the collections of natural forms that have caught her eye. For instance, on a small table in the kitchen are several rows of oyster shells that all look exactly like bony feet, lined up like shoes. Some perfect spheres displayed in an attractive saucer turn out to be dried camel dung from Morocco.

Indoors, one can also see the variety of media Grace uses. A large ball comprising torn-up bits of painted tarpaulins sits on a table, surrounded by photos, assemblages, paintings and diverse sculptures.

Her wry wit delights in testing certain bastions of stuffy propriety. In a recent series of paintings Grace focused on the smooth white surfaces of her bathroom fixtures; to her amusement, one of the galleries that represents her, located in the Upper East Side of Manhattan, couldn't bring themselves to include the toilet canvases in her latest show.

In her gentle way, Grace has brought her audience face to face with one of our suburban society's most durable taboos, which is evidently unchanged since Marcel Duchamp shocked audiences in 1917 with his "ready-made" sculpture of a urinal, entitled "Fountain."

Greta Nettleton



Found objects (above) arranged in a series include a collection of sardine tins from the Moroccan desert.

A variety of spheres (top and right) are scattered in groups across the land surrounding

Grace's home.



ArtNews

COMPILED BY CAROL ELEVITCH

ELMWOOD PLAYHOUSE

Through Dec. 5: *The Dining Room* by A.R. Gurney; "...funny and rueful, and by the end, very moving," *New York Times*.

January 15 - February 13: *Rumors* by Neil Simon; "Enough laughs to keep a TV sitcom running for a year or two," *USA Today*. All performances are Friday & Saturday evenings at 8:30; Sunday matinees at 2:30; Sunday evenings at 7:30. [Elmwood Playhouse is located at 10 Park St., Nyack. Call 353-1313 for reservations.]

Elmwood Playhouse actors will perform a one-act drama, *Shadows of Innocence*, free of charge at any organization's meeting place on week night evenings, beginning Dec. 1. Funded by the Arts Council of Rockland as part of a mental health outreach program, the play deals with various forms of sexual abuse presented in a tasteful, thought provoking way appropriate for mature teens or adults. After the performance, a discussion will be led by a professional in the field. For information, call 268-7470.

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THEATRE & MUSIC:

Dec. 11 - Jan. 3: *Jesus Christ Superstar*; **Dec. 14,** *A Night in November* (1 act play); **Jan. 4, 5, 6:** Jackie Mason in *Much Ado About Everything*; **Jan. 16:** *The Story Goes On: The Music of Maltby and Shire*; **Jan. 30:** *The Amazing Kreskin*; **Feb. 12 - March 7:** *World Premiere of Big*

Rosemary by Blake Edwards (a play with music).

PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN:

Jan. 10: *Black Beauty* (ages 3-11); **Jan. 16:** *Goowin's Balloowins* (ages 3-11) - Balloon artist and story teller Allynn Gooen; **Jan. 23:** *The Ishangi Family Dancers* (All ages) - African dance, music, stories; **Jan. 30:** *The Hundred and One Dalmations* (ages 3-11).

FILM SERIES:

Dec. 13: *The Spanish Prisoner* (1998), written by David Mamet; **Jan. 8 & 9:** *Marius & Jeannette* (1998), in French; **Jan. 15:** *Gadjo Dilo* (1998), in French; **Jan. 22:** *Western* (1998), winner of the Cannes Grand Jury Prize, in French; **Jan. 29:** *The Thief* (1998), in Russian. All films are shown at 7:30 pm. Films in a foreign language have English subtitles. [The Center is located at 117 Main St., Nyack. Call 358-6333.]

HOPPER HOUSE

Dec. 5 & 6, 12 & 13: Book Fair; **Dec. 8:** Metropolitan Museum of Art Tour; **Dec. 31:** First Night Celebration - Annual Members' Art Exhibition; **Jan. 5:** Life Drawing Workshop resumes - Tuesdays at 7:30 pm. [Hopper House is located at 82 North Broadway in Nyack. Call 358-0774.]

ROCKLAND CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Dec. 5: *Music of Tin Pan Alley*; narrative, piano and vocals. 8 pm. **Through Dec. 7:** Photography exhib-

it, "New York; A Century of Grit and Grandeur." Celebrating the 100th anniversary of New York with work of Lewis Hine, Jacob Riis, Helen Levitt, Ruth Orkin, Art Kane and others.

Mid-December: Registration begins for the spring session of classes in all the arts; for adults, teens and children. Classes begin at the end of January and the first week of February. A listing will be mailed upon request.

"Chasing Rainbows," a series of activities for children ages 4-7: **Dec. 20,** holiday gift making and games; **Dec. 29:** "Rainbow Children," making a native American vest, songs. **Dec. 30:** Paul the Clown. All sessions are scheduled from 10 am to 1 pm and include one section of arts & crafts and one section of theater activities.

Jan. 30 - Feb. 28: "Dreams of Haiti," paintings from the collection of Jonathan Demme. The exhibit will be held at two sites, Hopper House in Nyack and Rockland Center for the Arts in West Nyack on S. Greenbush Rd. Call the Center at 358-0877.

ARTS COUNCIL OF ROCKLAND

ACOR invites the public to submit nominations for the **13th Annual County Executive's Arts Awards**. The four 1999 awards will recognize those Rockland County residents who have made a significant contribution to the cultural and artistic life of the Rockland community. For nomination forms call 426-3660. Deadline for receipt of nominations is Jan. 4, 1999. The selected artists will receive a work contract, artist fees and recognition in the local media.

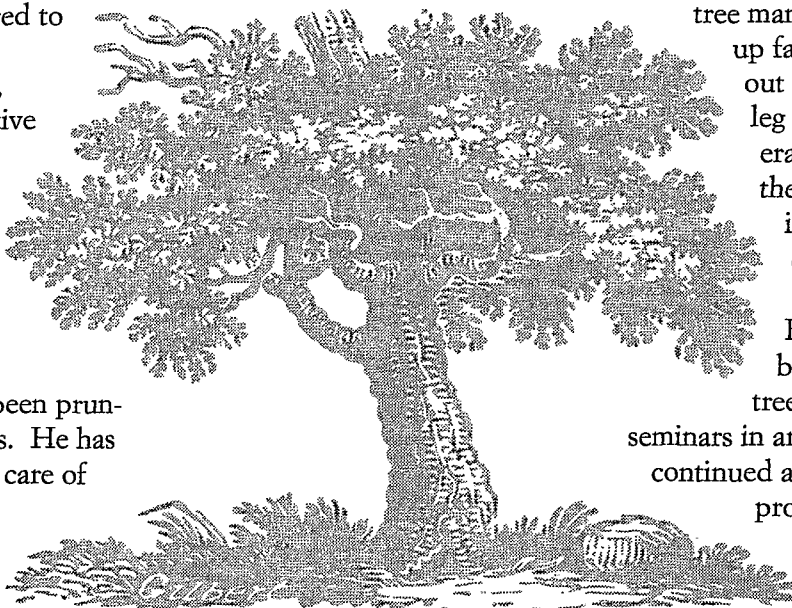
Performing artists currently living or working in Rockland County who wish to perform at the Arts Awards ceremony to be held on April 8, 1999, should call ACOR at 426-3660 for information. Deadline for applications and audio/video tapes is Jan. 4, 1999.

LINCOLN COLWELL, ARBORIST

AS TOLD TO MILBRY POLK

People aren't scared to watch me," says Lincoln Colwell, referring to the deceptive ease of his arboreal feats. Most days you can find Lincoln in Rockland's canopy, sometimes as high as ninety feet above the ground. For the past eighteen years he has been pruning and caring for trees. He has also been studying the care of trees, or arboriculture, for just as long. Lincoln's talents have found an outlet in Palisades, a town that has a long history of cultivating and valuing trees, beginning with ambitious planting of specimen trees in the last century.

Lincoln was born in Nyack, where his mother still works for Nyack Hospital. He went to school in Orangetown, later graduating from Mercy College in Dobbs Ferry. He got his start with heights climbing bridges. "I began climbing when I was in Tappan Zee High School. I must have climbed the Tappan Zee Bridge twenty five times, mostly at night. We also climbed the Verrazano, the George Washington and the other New York bridges." Lincoln got his start with trees soon after high school. "When I was 19, I began working with a



tree man in Nyack. I picked it up fast. But in 1983 I fell out of a tree. I broke my leg badly and needed several operations. During the time I was recuperating, I got my college degree in Business Administration. But as soon as I was better, I went back to trees. I started taking seminars in arboriculture and have continued attending at least six programs a year around the country since 1984. I am a certified arborist in the International Society

of Arboriculture and certified by New York State as an applicator for pesticides. I am very interested in the care of trees and helping people understand how to care for their trees. I guess you would say I am an advocate for trees." Lincoln points out that trees need attention and care like the rest of your garden. Trees are sensitive to changes people inflict on the land surrounding them. This is especially true during construction.

Lincoln is considering starting an apprentice program. Those interested in learning about tree care or anyone needing tree advice can call him at 365-1519. Look for a follow-up list of Dos and Don'ts for tree care in the next issue of 10964.

TREE CARE TIPS:

For this Fall/Winter season, Lincoln has the following advice:

THINGS YOU SHOULD DO:

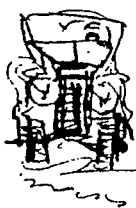
- Spray anti-desiccant on broadleaf evergreens, rhododendrons, azaleas and mountain laurels.
- Mulch under shrubs and trees if possible. Mulch acts like a blanket to lesson temperature extremes.
- Examine the base of trees for frass or sawdust, cracks, loose bark or other structural problems before winter. This is important because a weakened tree can blow down in a storm.

THINGS YOU SHOULD NOT DO:

- Mound up mulch at the base of trees. The ideal mulch shape is a saucer with a 2 - 3" depth at the base.
- Dig trenches, drive or park under the tree's drip line (the circle made by the outer reach of the branches). This will compact the earth around the roots. Water, air, and nutrients can't move easily through the compacted soil.
- Put salt for melting snow near valuable plantings. The salt will damage the roots.

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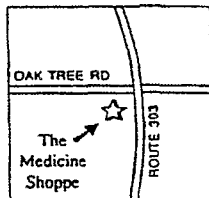
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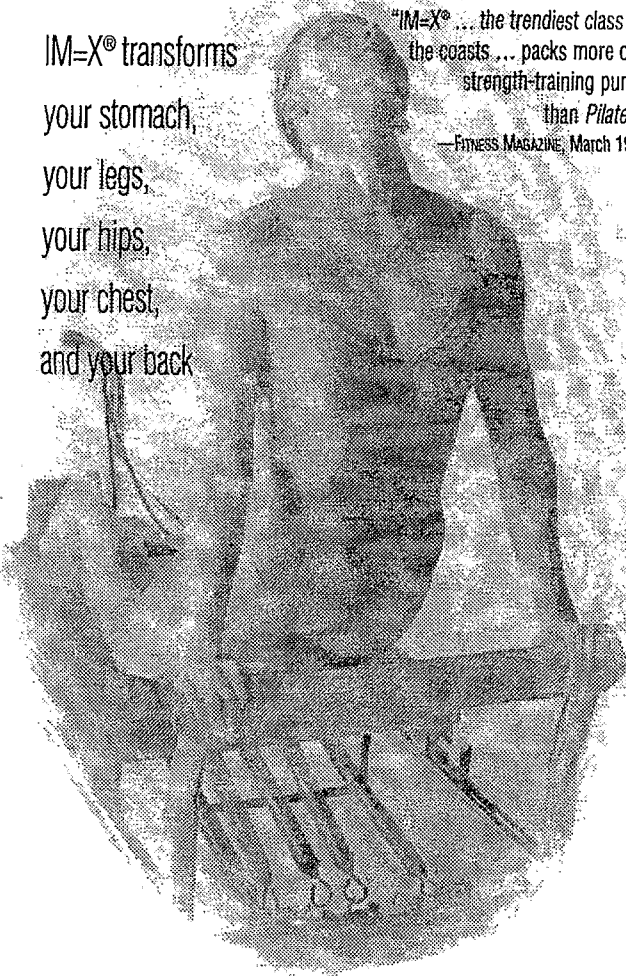
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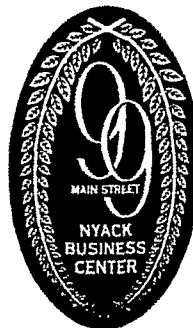
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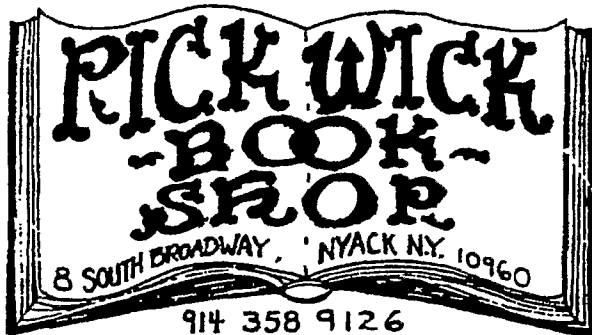


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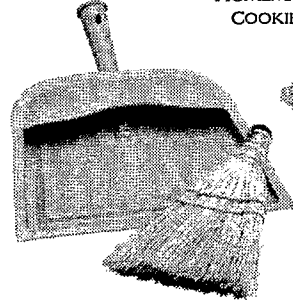
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The Library is planning an exciting event for next spring. The Goods and Services Auction promises to be a fun evening, offering a chance to socialize with your neighbors in a festive setting. The gala will include a cash bar, delectable foods and wonderful entertainment. The Goods and Services Auction Organizing Committee is open to all members of the community who cherish the library and would like a chance to help support it in a direct way. We not only expect to raise funds for the Library, but we also expect to have a lot of fun doing it.

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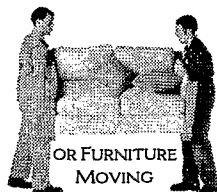


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