

THE BUZZ

Compiled from H&R staff and news service reports

Nov. 13 birthdays

Producer-director-actor Garry Marshall, 79; country singer-songwriter Ray Wylie Hubbard, 67; actor Joe Mantegna, 66; actress Sheila Frazier



Goldberg



Butler

(“Superfly”), 65; actress Frances Conroy (“Six Feet Under”), 60; actor Chris Noth, 59; actress Whoopi Goldberg, 58; actor Rex Linn (“CSI: Miami”), 57; actor Neil Flynn (“Scrubs”), 53; trumpeter Walter Kibby (Fishbone), 49; comedian Jimmy Kimmel, 46; actor Steve Zahn, 46; actor Gerard Butler, 44; actress Aisha Hinds (“True Blood”), 38; bassist Nikolai Fraiture (The Strokes), 35; actress Monique Coleman (“High School Musical”), 33.

Language of Lungs

A Language of Lungs Community Health Fair will be 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 20, in the Madden Auditorium of the Decatur Public Library, 130 N. Franklin St.

Dr. J. Steven Arnold will give a presentation on COPD at noon, and Dr. Mark Muscato will discuss early lung cancer screening at 1:30 p.m. A variety of free health screenings will also be offered.

For more, call (217) 464-5125.

Pet of the week

Rum, a male Siamese mix kitten about 12 weeks old, is available for adoption at the Humane Society of Decatur and Macon County, 2890 N. Martin Luther King Drive.



He is neutered, is current on vaccinations and has an

ID chip. The fee is \$85.

Hours are 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. For information about Rum and other adoptable pets, call (217) 876-0000. To view all animals for adoption, go to www.hsdmc.org.

R/C Club swap meet

The ninth annual swap meet held by the Decatur Aerocommanders R/C Club, model aeronautics, will be Saturday, Nov. 16, at the Macon County Fairground, 3700 N. Westlawn Ave.

Doors open at 7 a.m. for vendors. Doors open for the public from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Admission is \$5. Table rental for vendors is \$10. Contact Weston H. Brohard, (217) 877-7066, (217) 433-7884, email: cockpit1_Wes@excite.com.

Walk Bement

The Bryant Cottage State Historic



Site is offering visitors a new way to enjoy local history: a booklet of historic photos and exact coordinates for seeing modern Bement from the same vantage points.

“Walk Bement: A Self-Guided Tour of Early Businesses and Landmarks,” is a free booklet written by Patrick Hunter with assistance from Marilyn Ayers, superintendent of the Bryant Cottage historic site. It provides 22 pictures showing Bement as it appeared from roughly 1893 to 1909.

The Bryant Cottage is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday through Sunday.

Retreat and Refresh Stroke Camp is more than a blessing Thursday



Questions or comments regarding this section? Contact Life Editor Jeana Matherly at (217) 421-6974

Writing
thank-you
notes never
goes out of
style/D2

Wednesday, November 13, 2013

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Herald & Review

Life

www.herald-review.com

Composer's loved ones compose a digital memorial

Family, friends of John Balamos seek web visitors

By **BOB FALLSTROM**
H&R Community News Editor

A website honoring the late John Balamos of Decatur and New York City has had more than 17,000 hits. The goal is to reach 20,000 hits by Tuesday, Nov. 19, the 86th anniversary of his birth.

From humble roots, Balamos wrote music from 1960-2009 — complete musicals, theatrical scores, children's theatre, Shakespearean pieces, Greek pieces, jazz. He wrote the soundtrack for “Hercules in New York,” a satire film featuring Arnold

BALAMOS MUSICAL SCORES

The Vegas Nation
English Muffins
Garden of Sweets
Shakespeare's As You Like It
Shakespeare's Twelfth Night
Glass Menagerie
John Henry
Hercules in New York
Emmanuel
Drum Taps
Gyrant The Terrible Tyrant
Ballad of Fangless McRattle

Schwarzenegger in his film debut.

During his last 25 years, Balamos was senior music director at the prestigious 92nd Street Y in New York City. He died Feb. 9, 2011, after a full day of work followed by dinner with family

and friends, leaving a legacy as an accomplished pianist, music teacher, composer, beloved family member and friend.

The website, www.johnbalamos.com, was established with the hope of building a music foundation for the perpetuity of his work. Under the composer tab on the website are two music videos of early Balamos compositions directed and performed by Millikin University students.

In order to reach 20,000 hits, Georgia Greanias Casciato, a niece, is asking:

Send a note to friends with the link.

Send it out to church groups, arts communities and social groups.

Revisit the site yourself

When you send the link, ask your recipients to also forward to their lists.



Submitted photo

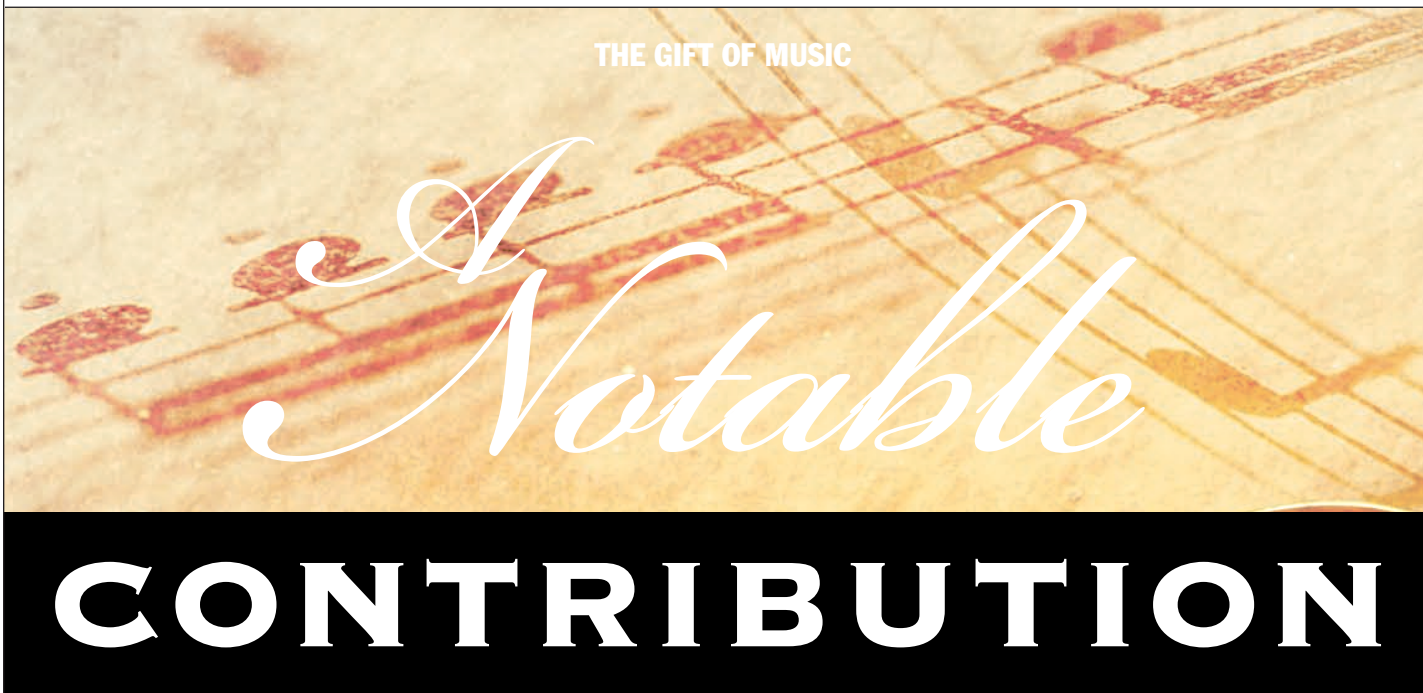
John Balamos, left, with his brother, Dino of Decatur, and sister, Bess Greanias of Peoria.

John Balamos had a passion for music and life. “I work long hours every day and love it — retirement is dumb,” Balamos emphasized in a Herald & Review article. “I can't imagine

doing nothing. As a rule, artists don't retire. Art is everything.”

Balamos composed numerous choral works and

BALAMOS/D2



Donations of used musical instruments may change a child's life

DECATUR — The Symphony Orchestra Guild of Decatur, in partnership with the Decatur Public Schools Foundation, is sponsoring a “Give the Gift of Music” drive. Unused musical instruments can be donated for use by students in the Decatur public schools who are unable to rent or buy an instrument.

Instruments in particular need include flutes, clarinets, violins and cellos. However, all instruments will be accepted.

A loan library of 180 instruments has been maintained by the Decatur Public Schools Foundation for the past five years. All of the instruments have been loaned this year. There was a waiting list of students who want to study music and were turned away because of lack of instruments.

Research has shown that music can create

a positive influence and academic success in a student's life.

To donate an instrument, contact Don Martin, (217) 428-4336 to arrange for pick-up or drop off instruments at the Decatur Area Arts Council, 125 N. Water St.; Thompson Kramer Music Store, 2102 N. Oakland Ave.; or the Decatur Public Schools Foundation, Keil Building, 101 W. Cerro Gordo St.

Another mission of the Symphony Orchestra Guild is to sponsor live performances in the schools by outstanding professional artists.

On Tuesday, a percussion master class for Mount Zion High School and MacArthur High School students was given by Ronni Wenzell, who has performed in Europe, South America and in China. He also conducted master classes at Millikin University.

bfallstrom@herald-review.com | (217) 421-7981



BOB FALLSTROM

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Wanted: WWII vet stories

This is for World War II veterans.

Have you talked with Patrick Sullivan? The 20-year-old Millikin University senior wants to contact you and you, all Decatur and Macon County World War II veterans.

He's compiling information about your experiences to be published in a book. Proceeds from the book sales will go to preserving the World War II Memorial.

He's collecting stories by contacting veterans from lists I supplied last year. He has about 40 stories in hand from the lists and from visiting Imboden Creek and Eagle Ridge retirement homes. He also has sent letters to a number of veterans.



Sullivan

Yes, we have the World War II Memorial in front of the Decatur Civic Center with your name on it. The book would add more documentation of your service, preserving information your children, your grandchildren and their children will want to know in years to come.

So far as I know, there is no comprehensive book of this kind. E.E. “Pete” Nicholls, who proposed the World War II Memorial and worked diligently for it, compiled a 1991 book “Heroes in Our Midst,” 330 pages, which listed the names of Macon County veterans from World War I through the Persian Gulf War and included some photos and articles.

When Nicholls and Gordon Brenner began research for the World War II Memorial, they found many more names. Sullivan knows he needs many more stories to finish a book with enormous historical importance.

He considers a talk with Art Jacoby Sr. most interesting. Jacoby, in his mid-90s, talked about his Navy days on the LST (landing ship tank) he served on in the South Pacific and about the battles of Iwo

BRIEFS

DECATUR

Basket project seeks funds, help

The Judy Mason Thanksgiving Basket Project, a component of The Community Foundation of Macon County, provides 4,000 food baskets to underprivileged families each year. The project is made possible by donations and volunteers who prepare, pack and deliver the boxes.

Volunteers are invited to participate at 1550 McBride Ave. on these dates:

■ Box construction: 9 to 10 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 16 and 23

■ Packing day: 3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 24.

■ Distribution day: 6:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday, Nov. 25.

Donations can be sent to: Judy Mason Thanksgiving Basket Project, c/o The Community Foundation, 125 N. Water St., Suite 200, Decatur, IL 62523. For more information, call (618) 201-0815.

SHELBYVILLE

Art Talk Tuesday set at Flourishes

The public is invited to free Art Talk Tuesday sessions at 3 p.m. Tuesdays in Flourishes Gallery and Studios. Sessions begin with a topic discussion and practice. Materials are supplied. Those interested in attending a class should call (217) 827-5690.

Future programs include:

■ Nov. 19: Training your eye IV

■ Nov. 26: Training your eye V

■ Dec. 3: Make and take a Christmas card

■ Dec. 10: Training your eye VI

■ Dec. 17: Working with oil pastels.

For more information, visit the website at www.flourishessgalleryandstudios.vpweb.com.

DECATUR

Kerans begins term on St. Mary's board

Lori Kerans will serve as a member of St. Mary's Hospital board of directors for a three-year term that began Nov. 1. Kerans is Millikin University head women's basketball coach.

DECATUR

Millikin honors October employee

Angie Hawk, associate director of donor engagement, was chosen as Millikin University's employee of the month for October. She began working at the university in August 2006.

Expressing gratitude never goes out of style

Dear Abby: With the holidays approaching, a reminder is in order. People: Don't forget those thank-you notes! I don't mean an email, but a REAL, honest-to-gosh thank-you note sent through the mail with postage.

My mother always told me that a gift is not truly yours until a proper thank-you has been sent. She said it "completed the transfer." I was not allowed to play with the item or use it until that note was written.

This is especially true for young people today, who seemingly were not taught this in school or by their parents. Very young children can draw a picture, and the parent can add a line to say it was drawn to express thanks. As the child matures, he/she can use his/her own words of



DEAR ABBY

gratitude.

I can't tell you how many parents comment on the absence of this display of etiquette. Good manners are never out of date. They are noticed and appreciated. From time to time I have seen you mention your booklet on "How to Write Letters." If it includes a section on thank-you notes, I'm sure it would be helpful to a lot of

people in the next two months.

— Elinor in Surprise, Ariz.

Dear Elinor: The booklet does. Not a day goes by that I don't receive letters and emails from readers who are upset enough to write because they haven't received a thank-you note for a birthday, graduation, wedding or holiday gift they sent. Some of the writers say they are so hurt and offended that they will stop giving gifts because they were left hanging, wondering if their gift was ever received. The problem may be that many parents no longer insist their children practice this courtesy, so the kids never learn how to do it.

Chief among the reasons that thank-you notes aren't sent is that many people don't know what to say. They think

the note has to be a long, flowery composition when, in fact, short and to the point is more effective.

Keeping a notepad handy when opening gifts and immediately taking a moment to jot down the first thought that comes to mind is helpful.

(Example: Do you like the color? The style? Is it something you had been looking for and couldn't find? Is it a special homemade treat? Mmmm.) WRITE IT DOWN.

While letter-writing or even emailing may seem like a chore, there are times when a handwritten note is the most appropriate means of communicating one's thoughts. My booklet contains sample letters for almost any occasion. It can be ordered by sending your name and mailing address, plus check or money

order for \$7, to Dear Abby — Letters Booklet, Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price. Inside you will find many samples that can be used as patterns from which to write your own.

For anyone who has ever wondered where to begin when writing a note of thanks, offering warm congratulations, condolences, composing a love letter or the opposite — announcing a broken engagement or a decision to divorce — "How to Write Letters" is a handy guide for people who put off writing because they don't know what to say.

Dear Abby is written by Jeanne Phillips for Universal Press Syndicate. Write to Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

BIRTHDAYS

Kenneth Siddens, 100

DECATUR — Kenneth Siddens of Decatur will observe his 100th birthday. Cards may be sent to 1908 N. Edward St., Decatur, IL 62526.

Mr. Siddens was born Nov. 19, 1913. He is retired from Wabash Railroad.

He is the father of Patsy Colebar of Decatur. He has four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Son, Robert Maston, is deceased.

Mary Greeson, 90

TOLEDO — Mary Todd Greeson of Toledo will celebrate her 90th birthday with an open reception from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 24, in Toledo Kiwanis Depot.

Mrs. Greeson was born Nov. 16, 1923, in Charleston. She married Golden Greeson in 1945. She is a former employee of Charleston Shoe Factory in Evansville, Ind.

She is the mother of Ronnie Greeson of Toledo; and Suzanne (Ron) Cummings of Moweaqua. She has four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

William Hoffman, 90

DECATUR — William N. "Doc" Hoffman of Decatur will celebrate his 90th birthday with an open reception from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 30, in the Angela Hall of St. Thomas Church, 2160 N. Edward St.



William Hoffman

Dr. Hoffman was born Nov. 19, 1923, in Chicago. He married Loretta Zackie. She is deceased. He later married Patty Parks on Feb. 8, 1997. He is a World War

II Army veteran and a retired optometrist.

He is the father of Will Hoffman of Collinsville; and Mary (Pat) Thelen of Muskegon, Mich. He has three grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Joe Josserand, 90

FORSYTH — Joe D. Josserand of Forsyth will celebrate his 90th birthday with a family gathering.

Mr. Josserand was born Nov. 17, 1923, in Decatur. He married Dorothy McCoy on Feb. 24, 1945, in Decatur. He is a World War II Air Force veteran and is retired from Caterpillar Inc.

He is the father of Sharon Titus of Santa Rosa Beach, Fla. He has two grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Son, Larry Josserand, is deceased.

Margret Bennett, 88

DECATUR — Margret Bennett of Decatur will observe her 88th birthday.

Mrs. Bennett was born Nov. 13, 1925, in Germany. She married Robert R. Bennett. He is deceased. She is retired from Aramark.

She is the mother of Robert (Brenda) Bennett of Long Creek; Steve (Shelly) Bennett of Mount Zion; Kathy (Thomas) Billingsley of Dalton City; Gary (Debi) Turgeon of Fresno, Calif.; Tom (Diane) Bennett of Decatur; and Sherrie (George) Syfert of Macon. She has 15 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren.

Virginia Swallow, 80

DECATUR — Virginia Swallow of Decatur will celebrate her 80th birthday with a family gathering.

Mrs. Swallow was born Nov. 13, 1933, in Sullivan. She married Donald R. Swallow on June 13, 1954.

She is the mother of Julie R. Fombelle and Brett A. (Kelly) Swallow, both of Decatur. She has five grandchildren.



Birthdays

Birthday announcements are published in the Wednesday Life section at 70-plus years of age. Forms with details are available at the Herald & Review, 601 E. William St., or by mail or fax by calling (217) 421-6979. PDF forms are available for download at www.herald-review.com.

KUDOS

PAPER CRUSADE: Shriners Hospitals for Children, Ansar Temple and the Decatur Shrine Club wish to thank everyone who donated to the annual Shriners Help Kids Paper Crusade on Oct. 5 and 12. Our thanks also goes to Walmart North and East and Kroger South Shores for letting us use their locations.

The Shriners support 22 hospitals for children under the age of 18 with orthopedic or burn problems. We provide care, "regardless of the patient's ability to pay."

All Shriners and Shrine kids say thank you for your support.

—Orv Schniepp, Decatur Shrine Club Paper

Crusade chairman

RECOGNITION: If you missed the Coalition of Neighborhood Organizations recognition dinner Oct. 22, you missed a great event.

Police Chief Todd Walker and Sheriff Tom Schneider read the biographies and delivered the rewards to our "red hot" neighborhood volunteers and supporters. Also attending was Mayor Mike McElroy, state Rep. Sue Scherer, City Councilman Pat McDaniel, State's Attorney Jay Scott and Richelle Irons. Listening to the nominations makes you appreciate the many tireless volunteers who strive to

make the neighborhoods a better place.

Kudos to all who make these awards possible, Dove Community Services, St. Thomas Church, First Presbyterian String Band and many others.

—Resa Benz-Spiker, CONO vice president

Kudos thank-you letters are published free in Wednesday's Life section. Limit contributions to 175 words and list of people or organizations thanked to no more than 10. Send information, with a daytime phone number, to: Kudos, Herald & Review, 601 E. William St., Decatur, IL 62523, fax (217) 421-7965 or email bballstrom@herald-review.com.

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BALAMOS

Continued from D1

New York productions. He received Rockefeller and Jim Kaplan grants that recognized his teaching innovations and creativity. At the time of his death, Balamos was working on "Drum Taps," a dramatic adaptation of the Civil War based on a play by Joseph Scott Kierland.

"John had a way of encouraging people to reach their potential whether in music or in life," praised his brother, Dino Balamos of Decatur. "John had an extraordinary impact on our organization and our multiple generations of students," said Jo Frances Brown,

director of the 60+ program at the 92nd Street Y.

Bess Greanias, Balamos's sister, remembered his earliest request for a piano. "It was the post-depression era, and our father told him the family couldn't afford a piano. The next day a piano was mysteriously delivered to our home."

Balamos trained in the classics and had a passion for Johann Sebastian Bach. He studied with Elizabeth Travis at Millikin University and at Indiana University. His early compositions integrated Eastern/Greek Orthodox and Byzantine music. He believed in living life to its fullest every step of the journey.

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