

MONTVALE

Red carpet premiere

Film looks at Montvale murder decades later



PHOTO BY LAURIE KAPLAN

Academy Award-nominated actor Terrence Howard and son Hunter speak to Starline reporter Heather Parcels.

**BY LAURIE KAPLAN
OF PASCACK PRESS**

Over three decades ago, a horrific murder took place in the Borough of Montvale. This year marks the 30th anniversary of

the conviction of Harry De La Roche Jr. for the slaying of his parents and two brothers at their home in the borough during the 1976 Thanksgiving holiday weekend.

De La Roche graduated

from Pascack Hills High School in 1976 and is currently serving out a life sentence on four counts of murder.

Based on this case, John Doscher and Fran Ganguza of Starline Films, who are also

graduates of Pascack Hills High School, wrote, directed and produced a documentary aptly titled "Harry...A Communication Breakdown." The film is narrated by Academy Award-nominat-

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WESTWOOD

Home for the Holidays returns Dec. 6

**BY MICHELLE RILEY
OF PASCACK PRESS**

It's the sight of the beloved holiday icon, Santa Claus and his reindeer, displayed outside some storefronts. The throng of ornamental lights decorating

area trees and bushes. And the Nativity scene and other festive scenarios adorning home lawns. For some, these are the tell-tale signs of the upcoming holiday season. For the residents of Westwood and other surround-

ing towns of the Pascack Valley, though, there's one indicative event that jumpstarts this festive time of year - the annual community parade, Home for the Holidays.

An event that spans more

than 25 years, Home for the Holidays will commence at 6 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 6 this year. It will begin at the Five Corners (Westwood and Kinderkamack Road) and continue

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HELPING HAND

These Daisies did good deeds to earn donations of food for those in need.

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Rock in time...

What's missing from this 1932 photo of Veterans' Memorial Park in Westwood?

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Red Carpet

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ed actor Danny Aiello.

"We filmed portions of the documentary up at the high school," says Doscher. "Pascack Hills High School and the faculty have supported us from the very beginning, as well as other local commerce and businesses."

The documentary includes segments from a 90-minute interview Doscher conducted with De La Roche while visiting him in prison.

On Nov. 26, Starline Films, headquartered in Upper Saddle River, held a fund-raiser and Home for the Holidays preview premiere of "Harry...A Communication Breakdown" at Chakra Restaurant in Paramus. With each ticket costing \$150, a portion of the net proceeds of the premiere will benefit New Jersey Child Assault Prevention (NJCAP).

It was a star-studded event as celebrities including Danny Aiello, Artie Pasquale of "The Sopranos," Academy Award-nominated actor Terrence Howard, and Steven Van Zandt of both Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band and "The Sopranos" lined the red carpet. Haley Joel Osment, known for his role in the 1999 thriller "The Sixth Sense," also showed up but didn't make a public appearance on the carpet.

This documentary supports Starline's feature film project, "Anyone's Son," which is based on a book of the same title written by Roberta Roesch of Westwood and which also surrounds the De La Roche murders.

Aiello will make his directorial debut in "Anyone's Son,"

which is set to star A-list celebrities Sharon Stone, Val Kilmer, Robert Duvall, James Caan and Shirley MacLaine. Parts of this film will also be shot at Pascack Hills High School in Montvale.

Starline Films is also working on another feature film, "4Chosen," about four young basketball players shot by two New Jersey State Troopers in 1998 while heading to a college basketball camp on the New Jersey Turnpike. The feature film is supported by a documentary of the same name, which won "Best Documentary-Short" at the 2008 Garden State Film Festival.

For more information about New Jersey Child Assault Prevention, visit the group's Web site at www.njcap.org. For more information on any of the aforementioned films, visit www.starlinefilms.com.



Above: Roberta Roesch, a Westwood resident and author of "Anyone's Son," is interviewed.



Left: Actor Danny Aiello, who narrates the documentary, makes a red carpet appearance on Nov. 26.

Parade: Home for the Holidays returns Dec. 6

FROM PAGE 1

down Westwood Avenue to Veterans Memorial Park for the community tree lighting ceremony, hosted by Santa and his friends.

"It's the Westwood version of the Macy's parade," says Mike Fitzsimmons, president of the Westwood Chamber of Commerce and one of several people helping to organize the parade.

Similar to grand parades in the city, this local event attracts large crowds of onlookers hoping to be amazed by a glimpse of captivating floats and marchers in incredible costumes. Each year, Home for the Holidays denotes a different theme aimed at enticing guests of all ages, but primarily children. As part of this year's theme, "Holiday Magic," there will be magic-inspired floats based on child-wonders such as Harry Potter and Mickey Mouse as the Sorcerer's Apprentice. Additionally, several magicians, stilt walkers, and witches, both good and bad, will walk and prokeepsakes for many of the parade-goers.

"It's something little kids can relate to and get behind," says Fitzsimmons about the theme. "They're the focus. It's about seeing their face light up when they see their favorite character walk in the parade."

Besides celebrating the impending holiday season, the parade also serves to forge a festive gathering between local merchants and members of the community. According to Fitzsimmons, it's a time in which local businesses generously open their doors and give back to members of the community. Many local venues will provide an assortment of free goodies including hot cider, hot chocolate, popcorn, and soup.

Outside of food and drinks, highlights of this year's parade include free amusement-style hayrides around Veterans' Park and music from live performances and an on-site disc jockey.

Additionally, a specialized ornament featuring an acrylic and watercolor painting of children playing in the snow outside the Westwood Public Library will be available for sale by several parade merchants. Westwood artist Tom James painted the illustration. Although part of the parade's galore in the earlier days, the creation of these ornaments ceased for some time and did not become a fixture again until 2005. Since then there have been ornaments depicting local landmarks such as the bandstand at Veterans' Memorial Park and the Westwood Train Station.

Somewhat of a spectacle today and in its later years, it's hard to imagine that originally the parade was a simple event in which Santa Claus traveled down Westwood Avenue on a fire truck and greeted onlookers until he

arrived at Veterans' Park and gave treats to the children. The appearance of floats, performances and other parade attractions were not

No matter what that number ends up being, though, Fitzsimmons is certain that the parade will bring together everyone in the

extended community and start this holiday season with a spirit of hospitality.

With that said, this year's

parade looks to be another joyous holiday celebration for all involved.

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Hot Soup
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Hot chocolate for Westwood Fire Dept. & Ladies Aux. Courtesy of The Iron Horse

FREE RIDES Trackless Train around Veterans' Park will play at the Bandstand

FREE HAYRIDES around Veterans' Park courtesy of Peter Demarest of Demarest Farm

SUPPER with SANTA & MRS. CLAUS Westwood Women's Club on Kinderkameak Road.

Designed by Handyguide Inc for The Westwood Chamber of Commerce

PHOTO COURTESY IRIS ORSINI

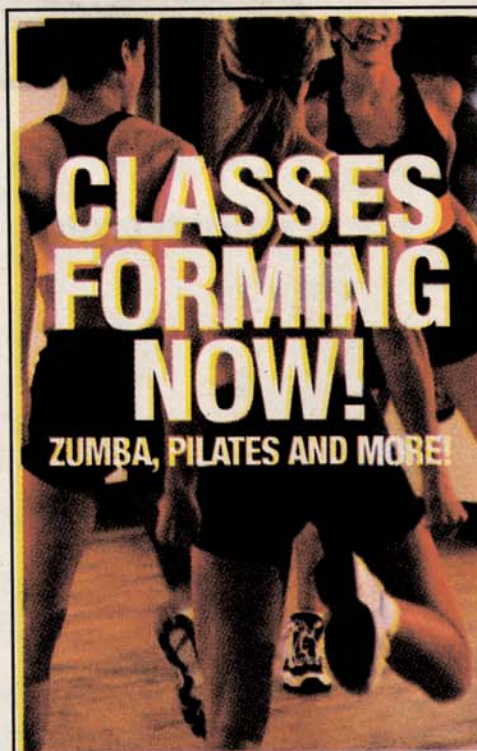
Local businesses will offer amenities along the parade route.

part of the festivities. That aspect did not come to light until local merchants got involved. Today, through the grassroots efforts of Mike Pellegrino and his wife as well as several local organizations such as the Westwood Chamber of Commerce, the parade remains an important tradition that seems to grow year after year.

Furthermore, as elements of the neighborhood seem to change so does the parade. For instance, with the closing of Pascack Valley Hospital in Westwood almost a year ago, neighboring hospitals such as Hackensack University Medical Center and Englewood Hospital and Medical Center have stepped in to fill the void of Pascack Valley Hospital. Both hospitals are expected to have floats in this year's parade.

"It's one of the things that makes Westwood special today," said Pellegrino about the overall impact of the parade. "People should expect feelings of good holiday cheer," he added. Pellegrino expects a crowd as large as 8,000 to 10,000 this year and says that previous years have garnered similar crowds.

"It's really going to be a magical event. We have no idea what the floats look like until we actually see them in the parade and there's always something that surprises us," said Fitzsimmons, who also foresees a large crowd somewhere in the thousands.



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