



Kentlands Celebrates Memorial Day with a BBQ!

Photos on page 19.

# KENTLANDS TOWN CARRIER

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June 2006

## Kentlands Film Society Set To Take The Stage this September



The hardworking members of the Film Society Programming Committee finalize the list of five movies for the debut of their first season. L to R: Robert Randolph, Elly Shaw-Belblidia, Nora Caplan, Gloria Seelman, Maureen Green, Betty Hafner. Missing: Pouyan Amirshahi.

By ANDREA ESCHER

Calling all film enthusiasts! Thanks to five months of hard work by its dedicated volunteers, the Kentlands Film Society is excited to announce the launching of its first season of "extraordinary films." The first screening will take place on Sunday, September 24, at the Gaithersburg Arts Barn.

According to Kentlands Film Society co-Chair Judy Hubbard, the Film Society has selected five films to feature over the course of the next year. "We surveyed the

community starting in April to gain a better idea of what types of movies residents would be interested in viewing," says Hubbard. "We had an overwhelming 75 responses returned; we couldn't be more pleased with the response."

Film Society member Robert Randolph, who sparked the rebirth of the Film Society (an earlier incarnation existed for a time ca. 1999-2001), was responsible for tallying the results. Randolph says based upon resident

responses, "drama still tops the list of genres that would draw people out in the evenings." Randolph also says "independent, foreign, and classic follow close behind."

After reviewing the responses, members of the Programming Committee spent the past several weeks viewing films to determine which five would be chosen as this year's feature films. "Various committees have been working diligently to bring the first movie to fruition in September and the hard work on behalf of the committee should be commended," says Hubbard.

The first film chosen for the September viewing will be "Monsieur Ibrahim," nominated in 2004 Golden Globe Competition for best foreign film. "In a street called Blue in a very poor neighborhood in Paris, Monsieur Ibrahim (Omar Sharif) is an old Muslim Turkish owner of a small market. He becomes friend of the teenager Jewish Moises, tenderly nicknamed Momo (Pierre Boulanger), who lives with his father in a small apartment on the other side of the street. Monsieur Ibrahim gives paternal love and teaches the knowledge of the Koran to the boy, receiving in return love and respect."

"The surveys reflected the different interests of Kentlanders, and there was a strong interest in foreign films," says Hubbard. "So our first choice is a French film with English subtitles." Hubbard also says four of the five films chosen for the year are foreign films and an English documentary.

After the September 24 premiere, films  
FILM SOCIETY *Continues on page 7*

## Kentlands Says Hello To Summer!

By ANDREA ESCHER

It's that time of year again! The Kentlands community welcomed the start of summer on Memorial Day weekend with the opening of the pool and the traditional Memorial Day BBQ at the Clubhouse. It was a beautiful weekend as hundreds of neighbors stopped in for a dip in the pool while catching up with friends and neighbors they haven't seen since last summer.



The pool is open for business! This Kentlands cutie couldn't resist jumping in the cold water to kick off the summer season at the pool.

Photo Courtesy: Bob London

Summer not only means pool, but snack bar, swim meets, water aerobics, pool parties and concerts! Be sure to turn to page 17 for a complete listing of upcoming activities and events planned for this summer at the Kentlands Clubhouse. You won't want to miss out on these great events. ■

## Get Ready To Celebrate the 4th of July in Kentlands

### Annual Parade And Carnival Set To Kick Off The Holiday

By ANDREA ESCHER

It's time to show your patriotic pride as the annual 4th of July parade in Kentlands is set to take place on Tuesday, July 4 beginning at 9:30 a.m. Be sure to drag out everything and anything red, white and blue and decorate those strollers, bicycles, floats and vehicles in celebration of the holiday.

4TH OF JULY *Continues on page 8*



Photo Courtesy: Gina Dropik

It's just another 4th of July in Kentlands and you know what that means...a parade and carnival!

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# Kentlands Couple Enriches Children with Disabilities Through New Sports Program

BY GINA DROPIK

**K**entlands residents Natalie and Tom Liniak started what they call an odyssey in the year 2000 when they were told that their son Jonathon, who was 2 years old at the time, was autistic. Throughout the past five years the couple learned everything they could about autism and how best to deal with the disease. Autism, which now affects one in 166 children, is a complex neurobiological developmental disorder characterized by impaired social interaction, problems with verbal and nonverbal communication, and unusual, repetitive or severely limited activities and interests.

Raising a child with autism is very demanding, to say the least. The Liniaks both agree that despite Jonathon's

diagnosis he still needs to be a kid, and they still need to have a normal family life for the sake of their younger son, Robert (5). "We decided that we had to go on with our lives and keep Jonathon involved," says Natalie. "We want to immerse him in a normal life, so we take him everywhere." Natalie says this often means having to deal with stares from other parents when Jonathon misbehaves in public. "Now he loves to shop and he's very well-behaved," she says.

Both Tom and Natalie are athletic and have participated in sports all their lives. They longed for both of their children to be able to participate in sports as well. Tom says, "We've met a lot of people who are facing the same problems as we are and we've spent a lot of time saying that there ought to be some sort of sports program

for children with disabilities like ours." The pair realized they had two choices: they could keep talking about it, or they could do something about it. So they put their plan into action and, two years ago, they started Sports Plus, a nonprofit organization which offers a uniquely structured coed sports program for

children between the ages of five and nine with mild to moderate autistic spectrum disorders, ADD/ADHD and other developmental disabilities. "These kids are very capable, but they just can't do mainstream programs," said Tom.

In conjunction with the Discovery

*Continues on facing page*

Children with disabilities from all over the area participate in the Sports Plus soccer program as well as other sports programs at the Discovery Sports Center in Germantown.



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Natalie and Tom Liniak say they created Sports Plus for their children, Robert and Jonathan (shown here), as well as thousands of other children who deserve to enjoy a normal life despite a disability.

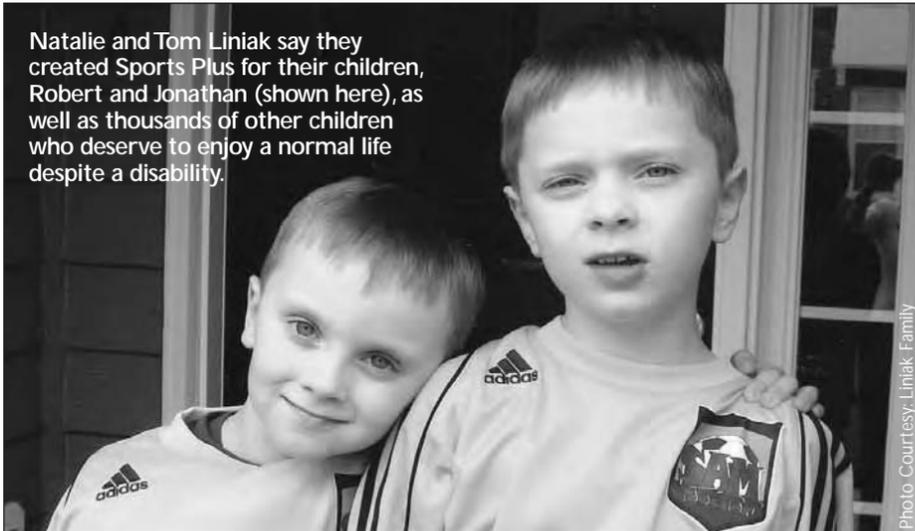


Photo Courtesy: Liniak Family

Continued from previous page

Sports Center in Germantown the Liniaks started a pilot program. They brought together a staff of highly trained coaches and special education professionals and chose soccer since it is simple in terms of both skill and success. They have since offered programs in baseball and basketball.

"For many of these kids this is their first sports program, so we want them to have the whole experience, from the uniforms to awards," said Tom. Each class has a practice segment in which a parent or sibling goes over a set of skills with the child after it is demonstrated and broken down into steps by the coaching staff. Parents are welcome to continue to assist throughout the class. Both younger and older siblings are welcome to participate as role models and assistant coaches. Special education professionals are also involved in each class.

All Sports Plus programs stress teamwork, social skills and sportsmanship. The player to coach ratio is never more than four to one, and consistent encouragement and positive reinforcement are always offered. "I have seen some tremendous improvement in these kids," said Tom. "Jonathon is seven now and he is ready to be mainstreamed into a typical gym class."

Natalie added that the program is particularly beneficial given the obesity issues prevalent in children today. "The obesity rate is especially high in children with autism because they spend so much time in classes and therapy. They need movement and when they get exercise it makes them feel better. They're more social."

Sports Plus is currently enrolling for their Summer Special Needs Indoor Baseball/Basketball Program at the Discovery Sports Center. For more information you can contact them at 301-452-3781 or by e-mail at sportsplus@comcast.net.

The Liniaks moved into the Kentlands in June 2005 and say they love it. "It has been a great way to immerse Jonathon socially. When he walks down the street he always encounters people and he loves to sit at the window and just watch people walk by." ■

## Eagle Scout Sends Aid to Afghanistan

By BOB TURNER

**N**ick Shawen is an Eagle Scout, and attends the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints on Kent Gardens Circle. Nick's father is serving with the U. S. Army, providing medical aid to the people of Afghanistan. Why are these two facts of interest to the readers of the Town Crier?

Nick's father has told Nick about conditions in Afghanistan, which has been in an almost constant state of war for the last 25 years. The countryside is littered with mines and other unexploded ordnance. A quarter of all Afghan children die before they attain five years of age. All of this and more made Nick aware of the desperate needs of many of the people in Afghanistan.



Photo Courtesy: Bob Turner

Eagle Scout Nick Shawen collected more than 69 boxes of goods to ship to needy people living in dire condition in Afghanistan.

Nick took on, as an Eagle Scout Project, the task of collecting clothing, shoes, and toys to be sent to Afghanistan via the U. S. Army mail service, and made the entranceway to the Church of Latter Day Saints of Jesus Christ the drop-off point for donations. All this took place on Thursday, May 25 and Saturday, May 27.

The reader can judge the success of Nick's project by the fact that he shipped 69 boxes of goods weighing 2,540 pounds. Articles of clothing included 872 pairs of pants, 1,720 shirts, 155 dresses and skirts, 350 pairs of socks, 180 sweaters, 169 coats, and 200 pairs of gloves. Nick also shipped 300 pairs of shoes, 130 hats, 25 balls, and 330 stuffed animals. We should all be proud of Nick Shawen for this prodigious accomplishment. ■

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\*No class July 4<sup>th</sup>

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