

## CHAT ROOM



Siva Shanmugasundaram

## Sometimes memories are best forgotten

A few days ago I watched yet another feature on JFK Jr. on TV. The media frenzy is amazing considering the fact that it has been more than two months since the death of JFK Jr. As the feature began, for the umpteenth time, they ran the clip.

There was little John-John saluting goodbye to his dad's coffin. We are familiar with the word good bye. We use the word "good-bye" many times a day. At the end of a phone conversation, as we shake hands after a meeting, as a loved one boards the airplane and as a train chugs away with a dear one.

How many times as we stood waving to a loved one have we not wished that we did not have to part? In every parting exists the knowledge that one day the final parting shall come, the knowledge that our loved one shall depart leaving us behind to grieve. Every final good-bye reminds us that each new day in our life is a blessed gift from God.

### Solace in memories

As they pulled out the wreckage of JFK Jr.'s Saratoga, we were reminded once again how life can be short and abrupt. It was a grim reminder that one more soul had departed the earth and all that is left behind are memories. We seek solace in memories at times of misery. We do so in order to recall the richness and glory of a life that is no longer with us. It is like being able to remember a beautiful warm Sunday afternoon by the beach on a cold winter day marked by wind and sleet.

For two weeks since the disappearance and death of JFK Jr.'s plane every channel I switched, to was doing a feature on JFK Jr.

Unfailingly each one of them ran "that" clip. There stood America's favorite son, then a bare-legged toddler, saluting his dad's coffin on that unfortunate cold November day. Why do we recall little John-John's salute so many times? Is it to celebrate the richness and glory of his life? Or is it just to highlight one of the unfortunate events that happened at such a young age in his life? The answer is "no."

### Frozen in time

Seldom do we recall memories such as this one for what actually happened.

Often our pitiful worship to such situations is based on thoughts of what we believe was happening - that little JFK Jr. was saying good bye to his father forever.

Little John-John did not know that he was saying good bye to his father forever as he saluted. True that the toddler's salute did leave an indelible mark in our hearts and minds. However, we seem to dwell upon the memory for nothing more than its sensationalism and story value.

Some memories are to be forgotten. This memory surely belongs to that category. We owe yet another tribute to JFK Jr. and it is to forget "that" memory and actually recall his various good deeds and charitable work. Those are the memories that depict the richness and wholeness of his life. That would be the best tribute to JFK Jr.

Maybe we have found the answer to the million dollar question, "Why didn't he get to say good bye to America's favorite son?" Probably Caroline feared that it might happen once again - that while we said good bye we might create an unwanted memory that might become impossible for us to forget!

Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg must be familiar with the phrase by Cesare Pavese, "The richness of life lies in the memories we have forgotten."

Siva Shanmugasundaram is a business owner and a Farmington Hills resident.

# Coming home to Angels' Place

## Developmentally disabled thrive in homey setting



Mother and daughter: Gerry Martin and her daughter, Noreen, sit at the piano in the Martins' living room in Bloomfield Hills. Noreen moved from her parents' home to Angel's Place two years ago.

■ A benefit for Angels' Place is scheduled Sept. 29 at Art Van Furniture in Novi. A new group home will open in Farmington Hills soon.

BY MARY RODRIGUE  
STAFF WRITER

As John and Gerry Martin of Bloomfield Hills watched their developmentally disabled daughter grow into adulthood, the nagging question "Who will care for her when we're gone?" began to tug at them.

Noreen Martin, who has cerebral palsy, speaks haltingly using single words. She spent her childhood in special education classes and her adult life in sheltered workshops. At home she was always cared for by her parents, now retired and increasingly aware of the need to find a good loving home for their daughter.

Two years ago the Martins heard about Angels' Place, a relatively new non-profit Christian organization in metro Detroit providing homes for people like their daughter. Through luck and maybe fate, Noreen moved quickly through the waiting list and was placed in a home when one of the intended occupants died.

### Angels' Place growing

Today Noreen, 43, and her three women housemates are scheduled to move to a new Angels' Place home being built in Farmington Hills. It will be the seventh such home operating in Oakland County. There is also one home in Wayne County and plans for two new Oakland County homes before

year's end.

That gives the Martins peace of mind.

"It's such a sense of relief, you can't imagine," says Gerry, who spent 17 years raising money for Detroit public television's channel 56. "We were so lucky. She's happy there, and that's the main thing."

Both she and John, a retired sales executive, are thrilled with Angels' Place and support the organization by attending fund-raisers year-round. Next Wednesday, Sept. 29, the Martins will be at Art Van Furniture in Novi for A Benefit for Angels' Place.

From 6-9 p.m., supporters who pay \$50 a ticket will enjoy a strolling supper and wine reception by Five Lakes Grill in Milford and live music in Art Van's newly remodeled furniture showroom. Cardinal Adam Maido of the archdiocese of Detroit will be a guest.

### Long time coming

"We had been trying to place our daughter for 12 years," said Gerry. "We didn't want her to go into the state mental health system."

It was the executive director of the Jewish Vocational Services in Southfield where Noreen worked at the time who told the Martins about Angels' Place.

"He said there is someone who might be interested in Noreen," recalled John. "Out of 375 who worked there, she stood out like an angel. She's very personable, lovable."

Adds Gerry, "She loves people. Her speech is limited, but she can communicate through actions and words. She is understandable and has a great sense of humor."

Noreen now works at New Horizons in Novi. Bead work has always been one of her strong suits, and she places

Please See ANGELS' PLACE, B2

# Seminar focus is job etiquette

BY MARY RODRIGUE  
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"Etiquette flew out the window sometime in the '60s and hasn't been back since," says Margit Erickson, a local etiquette specialist.

Proper Etiquette for a Job Interview is the topic of her upcoming three-session seminar to be held at the Longacre House in Farmington Hills beginning Thursday, Oct. 7. Erickson promises to give plenty of tips to help the job applicant stay calm, confident and in control.

"This is the class for recent college or high school graduates, for those joining the workforce for the first time, or for those changing careers in a downsizing situation," said Erickson, who has her own television show *The Elegant Life* on Time Warner cable channel 12.

"Attitude has a lot to do with it - how you're dressed, your makeup. Putting your purse on the desk (during an interview) is something you don't want to do. It's all the little things combined - the proper power handshake," said Erickson.

Topics covered will be how to dress, what questions to ask during an interview, what not to answer, how to write a resume and a cover letter, and positive body language. A workbook and handouts will be included. She hopes to draw men and women of all ages to the course.

Erickson stresses that her commitment to good manners is based on more than "just reading a couple of books on the subject."

With a lifelong interest in the social

graces, she studied her craft under Washington D.C. protocol expert Dorothea Johnson and at the Executive Etiquette Institute in Boston, Mass. She also has 10 years experience in the human resources field. She has been quoted as an etiquette expert in the nationally syndicated *Dear Abby* column.

More than a decade ago, she established Margit Erickson and Co. and has hosted seminars on etiquette for situations as varied as funerals to being guests in a bed and breakfast inn.

The seminar runs three consecutive Thursdays from 7-9 p.m. Since some interviews are conducted over the dinner table, the course culminates with a four-course dinner in an elegant restaurant Thursday, Oct. 23. Dinner price is included in the \$85 seminar fee.

Last year Erickson ran a popular seminar at Longacre House on proper etiquette for children. That course also culminated with the youngsters going out to dinner at an elegant restaurant.

Erickson believes rude behavior started becoming the norm a few decades ago.

"It began in the '60s with the 'me generation.' Do your own thing became the acceptable way, and I agree with that concept to a point, but there is that fine line of not hurting other people," she said. "We live in society and there are rules, and we need to be considerate of other people. Rules need to be followed, otherwise it's chaos."

"People tend to judge others by the way they dress, talk, their body language," she added. "That's always

been the way. I want to help others put their best foot forward."

Early registration is suggested as the

seminar is limited to 10 participants. Call the Longacre House at 477-8404 to register.



Ms. Manners: Margit Erickson will teach a job etiquette seminar at the Longacre House beginning Oct. 7.

# Farmington Musicale begins 34th season

The Farmington Musicale began its 34th season recently with its concert, "Let's Get Started."

The next program is scheduled for 12:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 6, at the Longacre House, 24705 Farmington Road north of 10 Mile.

With just three exceptions throughout the 1999-2000 season, all programs are on Wednesday, and anyone may attend and remain for refreshments at no charge.

The Musicale is a member of the National and Michigan Federation of Music Clubs, the Farmington Community Arts Council and the Michigan Association of Community Arts Agen-

cies.

The federation has become the largest philanthropic musical organization in the world. Musicale depends on fund-raisers and donations to operate.

### Music outreach

"Our purpose is to strive to make music an integral part of the cultural, social and spiritual life of our community through music outreach, to foster young talent through scholarships, and to showcase the musical talents of our members through program performance," said Bea Scaglione, Farmington Musicale president.

The chorus meets Wednesday morn-

ings at the St. John Lutheran Church on Gill.

Here's a rundown of the rest of the performance year.

■ Nov. 3 at 7 p.m. "A Parade of American Music" at the Costick Activities Center.

■ Dec. 1 at 12:30 p.m. "Twentieth Century Finale" at Orchard United Methodist Church, on Farmington Road south of 14 Mile.

■ Feb. 2, 2000 at 12:30 p.m. "To Russia with Love" at the Farmington Community Library 12 Mile branch.

■ March 1, 2000 at 12:30 p.m. "Livehearted" at the Longacre House.

■ April 14, 2000 Friday at 8 p.m. at

North Congregational Church, 12 Mile between Drake and Halsted. Tickets are \$15. This is the annual scholarship benefit.

■ April 30 to May 7. Costick Activities Center. Farmington Community Arts Festival.

■ May 3 at 12:30 p.m. Longacre House "Festival of Spring."

■ May 7-12. "Music ... A Gift To Share." At Tel-Twelve, Somerset and Livonia Mills, special concerts to mark National Music Week.

■ June 7 at 11 a.m. "June Jubilee" at the Farmington Community Library, business installation and luncheon, members only.