

# HOCKESSIN COMMUNITY NEWS

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## Hockessin woman tries to build cultural bridge between U.S.- Indonesia

By Angela O'Shaughnessy  
Special to the  
Community News

### Music the key to achieving goal

A Hockessin woman is an Indonesian-American crusader with the passion and focus of Joan of Arc.

Rissa Asnan, 37, was born in Indonesia, but she grew up knowing that she wanted to live in America. After immigrating

in 1989, attending college for two years, and then marrying and having children, she spent a great deal of time doing volunteer work. "If you volunteer, you feel good, and you can make a difference," she says.

By volunteering, she also learned many of the skills she puts to use today for her compa-

ny, NSR Productions (The letters NSR are the first initials of the names of her children: Nadia, Sabrina, Ricky).

Formed in 2004, NSR seeks to build a cultural bridge between the people of America and Indonesia.



Rissa Asnan

See CULTURE, page 4

**CULTURE – from page 1**

Asnan, says that she did not appreciate her own culture until she moved away from it. Now she takes pride in her native customs, but also sees the disparity between the wealthy and the poor in Indonesian. She believes that Indonesians can learn something from America generosity and resourcefulness. "I want them to see how great Americans are," she says. "When the real Americans and the real Indonesians come together, it's good for both of us."

Believing that using the universal language of music is the best way to accomplish her goal, she started her work by inviting Indonesian artists to perform in the United States. She continued to organize a half dozen concerts on the East Coast featuring performances by

acclaimed Indonesian singers, including Thomas Djorghji, Liza Natalia, Atiek CB, Rey Wowor, and others.

In 2006, Asnan partnered with Indonesian Indosiar public television to film a reality television series "AFI: Dreams Come True," which followed four young Indonesian talent competition finalists as they traveled throughout the northeast region of the United States.

During their trip, the Indonesian artists met American and Indonesian people who lived and worked at the various locations where the filming took place. The show culminated in a concert held at the Ernst Theater in Annandale, Virginia.

In 2007, Asnan filmed a documentary that follows her along on a journey in the United States

*'When the real Americans and the real Indonesians come together, it's good for both of us.'*

—Rissa Asnan

and Indonesia as she brings the two cultures together using Dangdut, Indonesia's popular folk music genre that mixes Indian, Arab, Malay and Portuguese and jazz rhythms.

The film begins in Philadelphia where Asnan organized public auditions for Americans interested in learning Dangdut. It then follows the three finalists as they learn Indonesian culture,

language, music and dance. The finale takes place in Indonesia as viewers get to see the reaction of Indonesian people to seeing Americans perform their favorite Dangdut songs. "Something magical happens at the end – we see Dangdut music bringing American and Indonesian people closer together!" Asnan declares.

She has used many of her resources and proceeds from concerts to help poor children in Indonesia and plans to keep up her work. "I have a big dream. Oprah is my icon. If I have that kind of power, I will use it to do good," she says.

Her latest ambition is to produce and release an album featuring American singers performing Dangdut music. She is looking

for talented American artists who are interested in performing in Southeast Asia. The plan is to release the album in the United States followed by release in Indonesia and an Asian concert tour.

Asnan believes this project is unique because American artists have an opportunity to start their careers while also acting as cultural ambassadors in Asia. American culture is typically emulated by Asians, but in this project, Americans will perform Indonesian music and add American influences.

Based on research done in Indonesia, Asnan believes such an album has the potential to become a huge success because it combines the attraction of

American artists with the popularity of Indonesian folk music.

She says of her ideas: "When people from one culture hear a foreign song that sounds nice to them, it makes them more friendly toward the foreigners. These people can share the joy of music and that can bring them closer. So music can be a more effective way of making cultures closer than commerce, diplomacy, or government decrees."

Musicians who are interested in being a part of the album and tour should send a demo and resume to NSR Productions, 12 Longacre Court, Hockessin, DE 19707.

To learn more about Rissa Asnan's work, visit [www.nsrproductions.com](http://www.nsrproductions.com).

**LIBRARY – from page 1**

and the Friends of Hockessin Library group, for which I am grateful."

The State provided \$3.52 million and the Friends raised \$840,000 to match the county's \$4.41 million.

"We are elated" Farley said, "to complete a project

as beautiful this, with as many amenities as this, in financial times as challenging as this. It is a real testament to strong partnerships."

The library will offer seven-day-a-week expanded hours during Kirkwood Highway Library demolition and reconstruction,

**NEW HOCKESSIN LIBRARY HOURS**

Monday – Thursday, 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.  
Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
Sunday, 1 p.m. – 8 p.m.

which began last month. Hockessin's new hours are: Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, 1 p.m. to 8 p.m.

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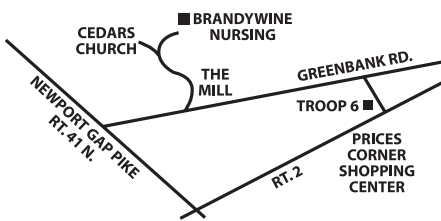
**Limestone Hills:** 7 Falcon Court, Wilmington; Stephen M. and Renee L. Kosc to Elaine M. Vignola; \$330,000.  
**Mendenhall Village:** 4 Tall Oaks Drive, Hockessin; Joyce H. Gasper and Nancy H. Maynard to Rodrigo and Jennifer Jae Gutierrez; \$304,000.  
**Mendenhall Village:** 600 Lamplighter Way, Hockessin; Gary R. Place to Megan R. Fioravanti; \$280,000.  
**Mendenhall Village:** 847 Stockbridge Drive, Hockessin; Francis Thomas Smith to John T. and Mary K. Coleman; \$247,000.  
**Mermaid Run Condominium:** 4850 W. Brigantine Court, Wilmington; Chris Tjaden and Talia Derman to William R. Darnell; \$155,000.  
**Mermaid Run Condominiums:** Unit 4940, 4040 W. Brigantine Court, Wilmington; Mary Elaine Manlove to Christopher Litwin; \$150,000.  
**Middle Run Crossing:** 212 Robin Redbreast Road, Newark; Larry A. and Stephanie A. Rietz-Hutchison to John R. Jr. and Karen C. Weinkowitz; \$550,000.  
**Middle Run Meadow:** 4 Fir Court, Newark; Roni B. and Robin L. Becker to Charles and Loretta O'Neill; \$379,900.

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