

Trump Comes to SOH

TRUMP

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'Apprentice' in Summit

the Trump National Golf Club of Bedminster and the Renaissance Church of Summit.

"Isn't this amazing? Look at this group of people!" Trump said, walking into the party held inside the Renaissance church, which is in the old Summit Opera House, alongside Winberie's Restaurant and Bar.

The episode featured Trump's New Jersey golf club, built on the former DeLorean estate, as the setting of a "reward" for the show's winning contestants — and the club's chairman, Ashley Cooper, as one of the heavies in the ritualized boardroom scene in which one of the losing contestants is fired.

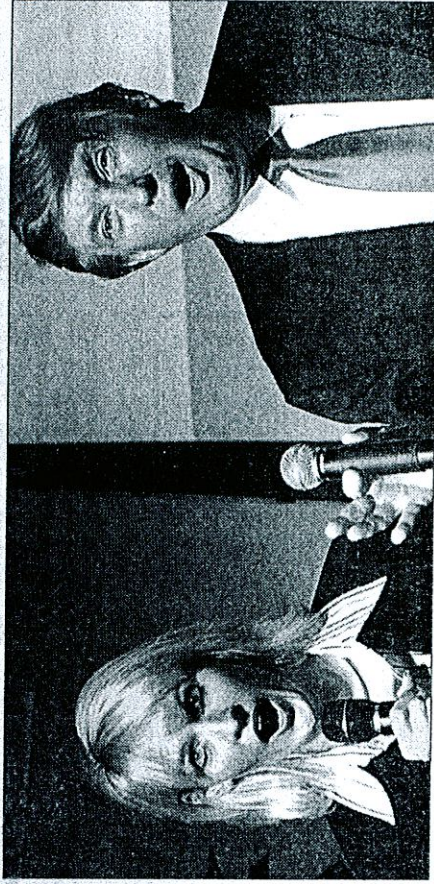
Cooper, a Summit resident and member of the church, hosted the event to celebrate his television debut, and, of course, to promote the club.

Trump was predisposed to be happy with the evening, enthusiastically endorsing the restaurant where he ate that night, Fiorino in Summit ("Excellent!"), and his new married life. ("Very, very nice. It's been really good.")

But what he really wanted to talk about were his golf courses.

"All these people are members," Trump said, waving to the crowd of more than a hundred who crowded around his towering frame. He and his platinum blond television sidekick, Carolyn Kepcher, happily shook hands and posed for pictures with children for almost half an hour until the show was broadcast on a super-sized TV screen at the front of the church.

"This is almost a family," he said of the group. "The course is so successful, it's a great golf club, and it's become almost like a family."



MARKO GEORGIEV/FOR THE STARLEDGER
Carolyn Kepcher and Donald Trump make a joke during the promotion of "The Apprentice" at the Summit Opera House.

It's really an amazing atmosphere."

The golf course was such a success, he said, that the remaining 240 acres he owns in Bedminster will not be made into housing, as he had originally planned, but turned into a second golf course.

"A second Tom Fazio course! And of course the community loves it, because instead of bricks and mortar going up, they've got grass."

He said he plays at the Bedminster course "as often as possible — I never do a course in a location that I can't get to a lot." (Indeed, the episode of "The Apprentice" showed Trump showing off his swing on the Bedminster greens. He arrives at the course in his own helicopter, prompting one of the contestants to squeal: "Donald Trump is the Mac Daddy of America!")

Trump said that for him to attend a show-watching party was "unusual," but that in general he enjoyed watching the broadcast of the show.

"They send me the tape, you know, but I'd rather wait to see it on TV, with the comm-

icals. There's something very cool about that," he said.

It's clear that the Donald finds his entire TV career very cool indeed.

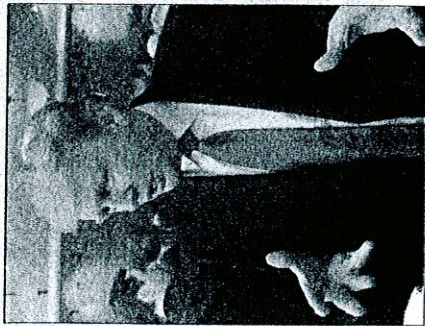
"It's been so much fun. When something is so successful, it's only fun, it's no longer work. You understand?" he asks.

Later, when he introduced the episode to the crowd, he said he knew "The Apprentice" was a bit when young people, who once would not have recognized him, started to "come up to me from all over the street, saying 'You're fired!' 'You're fired!'"

He amused the club and church members with his introduction and his enthusiasm for the club ("I'm gonna kick a lot of asses on that golf course!"), particularly when he stopped to make sure he wasn't talking over the beginning of the show.

"The beginning is sorta cool, you know. I love to watch myself!"

And indeed, while the party guests continued to mingle and chat throughout the show, Trump quietly watched the screen.



MARKO GEORGIEV/FOR THE STARLEDGER
Donald Trump takes questions as he arrives at the Summit Opera House for a viewing of "The Apprentice."

Trump brings show to Summit

BY JENIFER D. BRAUN
STARLEDGER STAFF

It was an odd scene: A church filled with uniformed waiters offering trays of hors d'oeuvres to families dressed in their Sunday best, tables loaded with bottles of "Trump Ice" water, and a church choir (which did have its own backup band) enthusiastically getting down to the O'Jays' "For the Love of Money."

But then, that famous strawberry-blond pompadour appeared over the crowd, and suddenly it all made sense.

Sort of.

Donald Trump spent Thursday evening in Summit, watching the latest episode of his hit TV show, "The Apprentice," with members of

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