

Film Clips

Favorite films for the end of December

By Derek Zemrak



Images provided

The weather outside is getting chilly and there is the scent of holidays in the air. It is also a great time to go to the movies in Lamorinda. This is the busiest time of the year for the theatres. There are so many choices heading to the Rheem and Orinda theatres – from Oscar contenders to family films. The following films are a few of my picks for the last half of December.

On Dec. 14, the most anticipated film of the year will be having its premiere screening at the Orinda Theatre at 7 p.m. Yes, “Star Wars: The Last Jedi.” Having taken her first steps into the Jedi world, Rey (Daisy Ridley) joins Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill) on an adventure with Leia (Carrie Fisher), Finn (John Boyega) and Poe (Oscar Isaac) that will unlock the mysteries as well as the secrets of the past.

You can expect long lines for the opening weekend of “Star Wars: The Last Jedi.” The film is rated PG-13 with a total running time of 2 hours and 20 minutes. Yes, it is the longest running Star Wars movie in its franchise history.

“Ferdinand,” the new animated film based on the beloved 1936 children’s book, hits theaters nationwide on Friday, Dec. 15. After Ferdinand (John Cena), a bull with a big heart, is mistaken for a dangerous beast, he is captured and torn from his home. Determined to return to his family, he rallies a misfit team on the ultimate adventure.

Adapting a film from a book is never an easy task. The screenplay is very well-written, and the humor is timely. I think it is the funniest children’s animated film of the year. Please do not let “Ferdinand” get overshadowed by “Star Wars;” take the time to see both films. “Ferdinand” is rated PG with a total running time of 1

hour and 46 minutes.

Looking for Oscar buzz in your movie watching experience? I recommend “Darkest Hour,” which will be at the Orinda Theatre beginning Dec. 22. During the early days of World War II, the fate of Western Europe hung on the newly-appointed British Prime Minister Winston Churchill (Gary Oldman), who must decide whether to negotiate with Hitler or fight against incredible odds.

Oldman (“Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy”) is overdue for an Oscar and I am making an early prediction that he wins Best Actor for his role of Winston Churchill in “Darkest Hour.” His performance is amazing, and he is truly transformed into Churchill. Do not miss acting at its best.

“Darkest Hour” is rated PG-13 with a total running time of 2 hours and 5 minutes.

See you at the concession stand!



Local artist exhibits



Jaya Griggs

Photo Wendy Scheck

The California College of the Arts Fall 2017 BFA Thesis Show will feature Moraga Illustrator Jaya Griggs, 2013 graduate of Campolindo High School. The show will be held at the McClintock Building, 100 Carolina, San Francisco and is open to the public from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. through Dec. 14 and an Artist’s Reception will be held from 6:30 to 9 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 14.

Griggs uses an ink and watercolor technique in many of her illustrations and captures human emotions in the various animal characters she creates. Some of her work has been on display at the Rheem Valley Pet Store in Moraga for the last several years where she has worked while attending CCA. For more information about the artist see www.jayagriggs.com. —W. Scheck

Service Clubs Announcements

<p>Meets Friday mornings at 7:00 am at The Lafayette Park Hotel & Spa, Mt. Diablo Blvd, Lafayette. Check us out at www.lamorindasunrise.com or email us at lamorindasunrise@gmail.com</p>	
<p>December 15</p> <p>Allan Martinson runs business and operations of Starship Technologies, a technology company revolutionizing last-mile delivery of goods.</p>	<p>December 22</p> <p>Photojournalist Paul Goldsmith shares how he happened to be in the “right” place at the right time!</p>
<p>Happy Holiday Wishes To All</p>	

Community builds the all-access playground in Moraga

By Sophie Braccini



Carlene McCart, right, the interim parks and recreation director talks with volunteers. Photo Sophie Braccini

Carlene McCart looked with an appreciative eye at the 50 or so volunteers working hard on Dec. 9 to build the new Moraga all-access playground. The interim parks and recreation manager for Moraga comes from San Rafael where a similar installation was under her supervision. She said that she was struck by the number of volunteers present, something quite unique from her perspective; she also noted how comprehensive and spacious the park was, a luxury very few have in the Bay Area.

For Kevin Reneau, the Moraga Rotarian who advocated for this project for his club and Steve Woehleke, the new club president, this was a day of hard work and immense pride. They worked side-by-side with Kiwanians, Saklan students, Boy Scouts from Troop 246, and residents with no particular affiliation that were there to be part of the project, such as Moraga Town Council Member Jeanette Fritzyk.

John Bawden, local representative of the playground equipment manufacturer Ross Recreation, explained that organizing this day

had required some preparation and needed constant management. But he said that the 50 volunteers would achieve in one day what a small team of professional builders would take a week to assemble. On the ground, stations were prepared, with parts laid out and plans to follow. Bawden noted that most people in fact needed little supervision and were doing a great job.

Public Works/Parks Maintenance Manager Kyle Salvin was also there. He commented that the town’s contractor still had work to do, sanding the concrete retaining walls and finishing the paths that would lead from the parking lot to the park. Reneau explained that the rubberized surface will be installed next week and that the inauguration should be scheduled sometime at the beginning of the year. The Rotary Club of Moraga will install a plaque in the park. The club raised over \$300,000 for the creation of this park, which is a gift to the town in celebration of the club’s 50th anniversary.

Salvin expects the inauguration to be held on Jan. 7.

Not to be missed

Others ... continued

visit www.DaughtersoftheGoddess.com.

SENIORS

Daughters of the Goddess, a Bay Area women-only Goddess Temple, will be holding its yearly Winter Solstice Ritual beginning at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 20. East Bay address given upon RSVP. This is our annual Peace ritual to help bring peace, love and joy into the World. At this sacred time of year come and join women and girls as we dance and sing in celebration of the returning of the light. Newcomers discount is \$15. Email Leilani@DaughtersoftheGoddess.com or

Senior Scam Workshop at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 13 in the Orinda Library Garden Room. Learn about the scams that target seniors the most. Get tips on how to avoid these tactics, which red flags to be aware of, and what resources to use to lower your chances of becoming a victim. Presented by the Better Business Bureau.

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In Memory

Frank Broad

July 26, 1919 – December 8, 2017



At age 98, Frank passed away peacefully. He lived a very full life: husband to Dorothy for 71 years, father to seven children, grandfather and great-grandfather, and officer in WWII. He and Dorothy lived in Moraga for 32 years. After retiring in 2001, they moved to Carmel Valley Manor where they have lived for 16 years.

A celebration of Frank’s life for family and friends will be held at 2:00 pm, Saturday, January 27, 2018, at the Meeting House, Carmel Valley Manor, 8545 Carmel Valley Road, Carmel, CA 93923. In lieu of flowers, due to allergies, donations can be made to the Carmel Valley Manor Endowment Fund.