

Driving Back in Time: A Trip in Cinema History

By SHERIFA MEGUID
Staff Writer

Park your car as close to the screen as you desire. Sit on the hood or open the hatchback. Relax, lay back and enjoy the show.

If you want to see a movie the way people did in the '50s, the Starlite Drive-in is the only place left in the Triangle.

While most drive-in theaters are close to extinction, the Starlite is still showing both new releases and pictures dating back to the late '40s. Only five drive-ins are left in the entire state.

Hamburgers, onion rings, candy, popcorn, cotton candy, cappuccino and hot chocolate are just some of the concession stand items customers snack on while watching a movie.

Micah Spalding, a Durham resident, bought a snack before watching Martin Lawrence's "Blue Streak" with his girlfriend. "I like the laid-back atmosphere. I can smoke a cigarette in my car," Spalding said. "When it warms up it's the spot."

This Halloween, the theater showed "The Blair Witch Project." In the past patrons have watched a variety of films including "The Wizard of Oz," "Runaway Bride," "Star Wars" and "Rocky Horror Picture Show."

One of the most well-received

showings at the theater was "Texas Chainsaw Massacre" and the sequel, said Cathy Bednarz, who helps run the north Durham drive-in with husband Groves.

"We sold out for three days and people came all the way from Richmond, Virginia," she said.

Groves started working at drive-in theaters at the age of 14. First he worked as a ramp boy, then in the box office and finally as a projectionist.

"It gets in your blood. It's like the circus, once you join you can't leave," Groves said. "I quit a couple of times, but I always go back to it."

Fourteen years ago, Groves got the opportunity to work for Piedmont Theaters in Charlotte, Greensboro and Wilson. He ran the other two drive-ins in the Triangle - Midway and Forest. The company decided to get greedy and sell the other two off, Groves said.

Back then the Starlite showed X-rated films, but it changed back to regular movies when Groves became the owner 15 years ago.

The drive-in is open seven days a week in the summer, Groves said. Though the drive-in was open all year last year, its schedule really depended on mother nature, Bednarz said. In 1997, the drive-in closed from November to April.

"The first few years we just about went under," Groves said.

Groves said the majority of their profits came from the concession stand. But because the bills kept coming in during the winter months, the couple had to find alternate sources of



DTH/JEFF FOULAND

Cars pass by the Starlite Drive-In, one of the last remaining drive-in theatres in the area. Owner Robert Groves said drive-ins were dying on the East Coast but were still popular in California where the weather was better.

income to supplement ticket sales.

A flea market has operated on the Starlite property on the weekends since before Groves became the owner. People rent spaces to sell anything but prepared food, Groves said.

They also opened a small video club housed in the same building as the

concession stand.

Several customers kept asking where they could buy guns, so Groves applied for a Federal Firearms License as a way to boost his earnings.

Blacky, a large German shepherd, guards the gun shop and greets customers coming in for a snack.

The Starlite attracts customers of all ages and most of the business comes from repeat customers, Groves said.

The drive-in is located off Interstate 85 on East Club Boulevard.

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STANDARDS

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where the child is, and then make the intervention fit where the needs are," Pittman said.

He said it was important to make sure the intervention was focused on the individual student's weaknesses, instead of implementing a generalized solution to all students. Parents would also have to participate in the intervention to bring their child up to grade level.

"Parents are critical to this whole process," he said.

Pittman said the new standards aimed to do away with social promotion - the passing of students not meeting grade level requirements.

Pittman said some parents and teachers worried that teachers would begin to focus too much on merely preparing students for state exams.

But Pittman said he was not concerned because the standards simply set a statewide curriculum that would provide a basis for the testing.

But some local teachers, such as Mary Clayton, the English-language arts coordinator for Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, support the standards.

"I think you can be very creative and have a wonderful classroom, and teach the state curriculum," she said.

Elsie Leak, director of school improvement for the N.C. Board of Education, said teachers and students who already met the standards would also benefit from the new program.

"As teachers get more proficient in diagnosing and intervening, it will help students across the board."

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Judge Admits Lack of Faith in Gates

Associated Press

WASHINGTON - The judge behind the blistering ruling against the Microsoft Corp. didn't question the honesty of Bill Gates outright, but he rejected almost every explanation of events offered under oath by the world's most famous billionaire.

The lack of faith that U.S. District Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson showed in Microsoft's trustworthiness could hurt chances for a less severe punishment - or even for a settlement offer - that relied on a company pledge of some future behavior toward rivals in the technology industry.

Once the judge determines which antitrust laws Microsoft broke, he could order punishments as severe as breaking up the company unless a settlement is reached, which many lawyers and analysts consider unlikely.

Investors showed they weren't ready to abandon Microsoft on Monday. In very heavy trading - about five times the average for the company - shares

fell to \$83.50 but then recovered to \$89.93, down just \$1.62 from last week's close.

The judge, in his antitrust fact-finding statement on Friday, embraced the government's version of key events and Microsoft's motivations.

In one of its most sensational claims during the lawsuit, the Justice Department said Microsoft quietly met with software rival Netscape to illegally divide the market, a charge Gates himself called "an outrageous lie."

The judge called the offer "an effort to persuade Netscape to structure its business such that the company would not distribute platform-level browsing software for Windows." He didn't buy Microsoft's version of events throughout his ruling.

"That's the implication," said Robert Litan, a former senior Justice official now at the Brookings Institution. "He didn't come out and say it, but if you read between the lines, that's certainly what he ended up deciding."

"It's clear he didn't think they had

much (credibility)," agreed Marc Schildkraut, a former Federal Trade Commission official who questioned Gates during negotiations with Microsoft in the early 1990s in the FTC's antitrust investigation. "The findings are very one-sided. It's a tough row for them to hoe on that ground."

Throughout Microsoft's case, statements by Gates and others outside the courtroom seemed at times to contradict their legal claims. Stephen Houck, the lead lawyer for the 19 states joining Justice in suing Microsoft, said the company suffered from the problem of "the dogged witness."

"They encountered three problems: their own witnesses, their own exhibits and their own client, Mr. Gates," Houck said in closing arguments.

Microsoft trial attorneys, for example, said the company's Web browser was inextricably intertwined within Windows, but other company lawyers wrote for an obscure patent last year that "a Web browser ... is separate from the operating system."

DYSON

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issue. "(The students) showed up speaking ebionics," he said.

They did not need to learn it, he said. "Speaking ebionics isn't a problem," he said. "It's a problem if you want to get a job at Texaco."

Dyson emphatically dismissed the current idea that race no longer mattered.

Only in recognizing beliefs on race could society truly discuss and then reshape racial norms, he said.

Dyson said people should move beyond integrating American society to interacting in society.

"Integration is a vehicle for a larger end - not an end to itself," he said. "That end is racial justice."

Like integration, affirmative action was also a means, Dyson said. "Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X didn't die for affirmative action."

Despite his criticism, Dyson said racial change could occur. "We've got to learn to embrace one another."

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ROBBERIES

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Sunday and charged him with armed robbery and possession of drug paraphernalia after attempting to rob a man at knife-point in front of the Harris Teeter Supermarket at Carmill Mall at 310 N. Greensboro St.

According to police reports, Lever threatened the man with a pocketknife and demanded money.

The victim had no money and the suspect fled the scene.

When police found the suspect, he

was in possession of a crack pipe.

"He was pulled over shortly after the incident in front of Town Hall," Capt. Booker said. "The vehicle matched the description given to the police by the victim."

According to police reports, a pocketknife was found in the glove compartment of the car and the victim positively identified the suspect.

Booker said warrants were pending against the driver of the car who fled the scene with Lever.

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