

Movie Review

Shanghai Knights

By Moriah Geer-Hardwick

First off, anyone who goes to a kung-fu movie looking for a good plot should be kicked in the head with a spinning, back-snapping, eel heel kick. "Shanghai Knights," sequel to "Shanghai Noon," is the usual mishmash of clichés and standard narrative devices, all existing solely for the purpose of getting through to the next action sequence. As a flare of color, the movie also shares time with a humor element, Owen Wilson. Wilson, with his offhanded, imbecilic one-liners, counterbalances Chan's wild, mind-blowing martial arts, in a juxtaposition of Eastern style and grace, and Western attitude and loud mouth.

The story, for what there is of it, opens with an English noble, 10th in line for the throne, who steals a sacred seal in a conspiracy to seize power. In the process of stealing it he kills Chon Wang's (Chan) father, keeper of the seal. Seeking revenge, Wang's younger sister, Chon Lin (Fann Wong), follows him back to England. Wang meanwhile, in America, learns of his family's predicament, and immediately teams up with his old friend Roy O'Bannon (Wilson), to rescue his sister, avenge his father, and generally have a grand old time banging heads together and learning valuable lessons about friendship.

As with the first movie, Chan's choreography is stunning, and Wilson is utterly sidesplitting. Sadly however, the film is held back by a few crucial elements.

First, Chan's martial arts are good, but much slower, and less impacting than his other films. Also, directorially, the cinematography fails to keep up with the pace of the action.

Wilson, while still as funny as ever, relies more on innuendo and vulgarity for laughs rather than his usual quirky comedy. The kung fu is unfortunately sacrificed to make room for this, leaving the picture slightly under-whelming as far as action is concerned.

All in all, this is a typical sequel, in that it contains all of the formal elements of the fist movie, but none of its original panache. Fun, for what it's worth, but ultimately more like a good joke told one too many times, if you've seen any of Jackie's other movies.

Final take: Your kung-fu is weak; you need more training. For the price of going to this movie in the theatre, you can rent both the "Drunken Master," and "The Legend of Drunken Master." Think about it. Rated PG-13 for violence and innuendo.

Much Ado About Ministries: Small Group Style

By Lyndsay Mayer

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." -Mat. 18:20

There's no time like today to get involved! Check out the Bible studies and service projects below to find

something that speaks to you. If you have a ministry you'd like to add to the list, please contact Lyndsay Mayer at (828) 669-8012 ext. 5203.

Bible Studies

Jay Guffey welcomes any spirited

souls willing to brave the first light of dawn to study the book of Ephesians. This informal, inductive opportunity to walk in the Word will continue for the remainder of the semester. The group meets every Wednesday in the Belk conference room, from 6:30-7:45 a.m. Call Jay at (828) 669-8012 ext. 3406 for more information.

A study of the Holy Spirit convenes every Wednesday at 9 p.m. in the Belk prayer room. Outside material is used in broadening perspectives on the verses studied. This group is a great place to foster new friendships and to experience God's glory at work through the Holy Spirit. For more details, contact Jennifer Brooks at (828) 669-8012 ext. 5210 or Peter Thompson at (828) 669-4281.

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To my Valentine!

Emily,

I love you more each day.

I am so blessed to have you as my wife.

Happy Valentine's Day!

Brian

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Howerton Fans Spur Altitude to Victory

By Kendell Milton

Six Howerton residents cheered on the Asheville Altitude basketball team at their home game in Asheville, Wednesday, February 5.

The fans arrived at the Civic Center with tickets for the nosebleed seats. "At first I thought this was going to be lame, because no one cheered," remembers junior Clay Hannah. "I said we had to make something of this."

The guys rooted for the home team from up in the stadium seats, until an Altitude dancer spotted them and asked if they'd like to do a favor. "Oh yeah!" said freshman Eric Spoon. They were escorted down to the front row, courtside, in exchange for agreeing to continue to cheer loudly. The Howerton guys cheered the team to a victory of 84-74.

"We got thirty-five dollar seats for nine dollars. It was well worth it," said Sam Ivey. Eric Spoon and Kendell Milton came away from the game with T-shirts, and the group also got their picture taken with the

Altitude dancers.

Young-doo Shin commented, "The picture with the girls was good. I enjoyed the game. Basketball I love it."

Kendell Milton screamed his way to the title of "The Altitude's Wildest Fan." The team gave him the official game ball, autographed by the player of the game, Brandon Kurtz.

"My highlight was when Kendell got the game ball. And then he was talking with them, with us standing to the side," said Clay Hannah.

Josh Cruz enjoyed "just being there with a group of guys and actually getting the chance to express our love for the game."

Eric Spoon almost didn't go to the Altitude game. "When Sam and Clay were asking people if they'd like to go, I was like nah, I'm going to stay here and watch UNC beat Duke. After they left, I thought, I should go and ran down the steps with no shoes on, saying I'm going too! I'm glad I went."



The Howerton Guys posing with Asheville Altitude Dance Team after the game last Wednesday.

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