

some thoughts on M.M.'s 2nd Anniversary

On the occasion of Movie Monday's Second Glorious Anniversary we're showing 'Field Of Dreams'. The E.M.P. lecture auditorium has become a kind of 'theatre of dreams' for me. Not only has this little volunteer program been running for two whole years, 113 shows on schedule, but it has become a special place for events far greater in scope than 'just showing videos for people with mental illnesses'

Every week we get a mixed audience of people; 'in' the mental health system, 'graduates', people who just want to see a good movie in good company instead of at home alone, some who don't have access to a VCR, and others who choose not to have TV in their home. All kinds of people for all kinds of reasons. The answer I am most pleased to see so often checked off on the questionnaires is "Why do you come? (✓) because MM is usually a good event"

We call them 'Movie Monday Magic Moments' -- things that happen in our little theatre because of the unique nature and goodwill of a volunteer, labour-of-love operation. Some conspicuous examples have been:

- the Big One-- when we showed 'Cuckoo's Nest', Dr. Brooks, who played 'Dr. Spivy' came in answer to my inquiry and spoke of his experiences acting in the movie with Nicholson and being technical advisor on the film. (His presentation is on tape and will be presented this fall when we show the film again)

- other audience discussions, sometimes with guest speakers, have followed films like Awakenings, Benny & Joon, Jesus of Montreal, Fearless, Mr. Jones, Gordon's Head (a film by a local film maker about the impact of schizophrenia on family members)

- Atom Egoyan's dad, Joseph, came and talked at length about his son's growth to international stature in the film industry. He spoke with enthusiasm about Atom's recently released 'Exotica' (great movie! - coming soon to MM). It was the second time we'd screened Egoyan's excellent 'Next of Kin'. *With all due respect, this kind of show you don't get at Capitol 6!*

- I had the pleasure of chatting with Stan Rogers' mum to arrange, with her best wishes, to show 'One Warm Line' in a folk program last summer. - The agent for Bill Lishman the 'man who flies with geese' answered my correspondence and sent video cassettes of Bill's exploits which I screened with enthusiasm. - Rick Hansen replied to my letter, writing, "I'm sure that success will crown your efforts." *I feel it has.*

I feel it especially when some of my compadres help to host, or show their art or play music for the audience before the show, and when I see my faithful family and crew pitching in. I feel it when some of the regulars voice or nod their appreciation as they leave. That's the pay off! And we're not just talking about this thing happening, it's an event every week! It's running on a shoestring out of my back pocket and with the generous participation of GVHS.

Before I started Movie Monday, when I was 'upstairs' in E.M.P., I wondered if my life could ever get back on the rails. Now, 27 months later I'm rattling down that track. It's never straight forward but I'm coming across all kinds of possibilities around every curve. Much like Kinsella's 'Field of Dreams', -- with a lot of work, perseverance, some luck and imagination the same kind of magic is happening in our 'theatre of dreams'

Blaunders
May 15/95.

