

Eye on Entertainment

Lion's paws: Places to go ... things to do

DVDs

Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl



For the first time in a while, a film has come along that is worth not only renting, but also owning. "Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl" (PG-13) is that film. The casting is at its best with Johnny Depp (Edward Scissorhands) as swanky drunk Captain Jack Sparrow, Orlando Bloom (Lord of the Rings) as hunky William Turner, and Keira Knightley (Bend It Like Beckham) as feisty lady Elizabeth Swann.

Captain Jack Sparrow has a vendetta to capture the ship, The Black Pearl. Will Turner and Miss Swann, childhood friends, get mixed up in the adventure and realize they are more involved than they thought.

The film's success is due to it having something for everyone: Action, adventure, romance and comedy. It's based on the attraction in Disney World's Magic Kingdom and produced by Jerry Bruckheimer (CSI). The film outdoes the taboos usually associated with pirate films by keeping the story moving and the action interesting.

The DVD has a second disc devoted to features and extras. It has more than 18 hours of extras, including deleted scenes, commentaries, and galleries. The rental does not include the second disc, which is more of a reason to own this film.

The success of the movie is prompting a sequel, so ride the wave of opportunity and see it today.

— JENNIFER RUFO

REALITY TV The Apprentice



"The Apprentice," a reality TV show on NBC, is a surprise hit this season but has both its good and bad points.

The show has had a couple of time slots but is scheduled to air Thursdays at 9 p.m.. It puts men against women on missions concerning tasks that would be presented in the business world.

The basic premise of the show is that from a large group of candidates who have business training and experience, competitions will be held to identify the person most worthy of becoming Donald Trump's "apprentice." It is a reality show for intelligent people.

Each week, the male vs. female teams compete against each other. Missions have included completing an advertising campaign and obtaining a list of goods for the least amount of money. The women have won all of the contests. The winner of each mission is given a reward such as dinner at the Twenty One Club or a one-night trip to Boston for dinner.

The losers of the mission must meet with Trump in the board room and he fires a member of their team. The meetings with Trump have been interesting because he gets input from members of the losing team about who should be fired.

In one case, a candidate was fired because he made a bad business decision by not seeking input from a company CEO in designing an advertising campaign. In another case, a candidate was fired because he did not have his team's confidence, was "odd" and basically hard to work with as a leader.

When watching the show, one can't help but compare it to "The Real World" or "Road Rules Challenge" on MTV, minus the binge drinking and emphasis on physical strength. Like these reality shows, "The Apprentice" does show personality conflicts and

extreme behaviors on the part of some team members. But it also emphasizes a person's negotiating skills and other mental abilities that are related to the field of business.

Trump shows no mercy when deciding who gets fired. He seems to try to teach a lesson about how to be successful in business with each show. The show is interesting; however, it lacks the dramatic situations that are found in most reality television shows.

"The Apprentice" is worth watching.

— SEAN ORNER

EATERIES Nifty Fifty's



Located at the intersection of Route 420 and MacDade Boulevard in Folsom is the unmistakable black-and-white checkered Nifty Fifty's.

Behind the array of bright neon signs displaying milkshake machines, Coney Island hotdogs and fresh-squeezed orange juice there are oldies playing while waiters with white hats bearing their names serve a wide variety of foods.

You can sit at the soda fountain or at one of the booths next to the neon exterior. For drinks, Nifty Fifty's boasts more than 100 flavors of soda from the standard cola to coffee mint and chocolate banana. I recommend the strawberry banana soda. Not to be forgotten are the blue ribbon milkshakes that come in more than 20 flavors from vanilla and chocolate to honeydew.

And the fries, of course, are top notch.

To go with your soda or shake, the freshly prepared chicken nuggets, both plain and spicy, are good choices. The burgers are great, too, and come in basic, cheese or chili and cheese.

You can't go wrong at Nifty Fifty's. The prices are reasonable, the service is friendly and the atmosphere is exciting.

— JEFF HUBER

HA-HA-ROSCOPES



AQUARIUS: You'll have good luck turning fantasy into reality, and soon.



PISCES: You'll feel like a hamster on a treadmill; turn down the setting.



ARIES: Keep your mouth shut around friends; they've heard it all already.



TAURUS: The new kid on the block is going to ask you to come out and play.



GEMINI: No need to worry. Valentine's Day will turn out fine.



CANCER: This month, you'll call a Happy Meal fine dining.



LEO: Pay close attention to warning labels.



VIRGO: You'll try doing all those reading assignments, but fall asleep.



LIBRA: You're understanding, sympathetic ... and a sucker.



SCORPIO: Don't be afraid to take risks; you won't know unless you try.



SAGITTARIUS: Why diet soda? You're eating a Big Mac and fries.



CAPRICORN: You'll have bad luck. A shame, because talent won't carry you.

Perhaps a little Mozart with that textbook?

By SARAH GALLATIG
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Have you ever tried studying to music? Don Campbell, author of "The Mozart Effect," suggests that it helps people learn better. And where better to check out this theory than the Learning Center.

Anyone who tries to study in the Learning Center, especially during Common Hour, finds the noise distracting.

"The size and amount of people makes it impossible for it to be silent," said Lisa Daniels, assistant to the director of the Learning Center. "The Mozart room is an option for many students to study better in a quiet environment."

Students who take advantage of the Mozart room find it a great place to spend their time.

"I feel that it is relaxing and helps me study because I can concentrate," said Jennifer Trier.

"The sound of Mozart makes studying more pleasant," said Marcel Sleiman. "It's a great quiet area in comparison to the downstairs library."

The organizer of the Mozart Room, Norma Notzold, the director of the Learning Center, is satisfied with the effect the room is having.

"I am really pleased in the participation," said Notzold. "When I look in the room I am happy to report

that everyone is really studying and not fooling around or talking."


There may be other benefits.

"I read studies that show listening to music increases your mood," said Daniels.

The Mozart Room is moderated by a peer tutor every day during Common Hour.

"This was a brilliant idea because it gives students a relaxing quiet time to do their homework," said Onah Dinh, a peer tutor. "A lot of people take advantage of it."

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