

Promoting a thriving film & video production community, attracting and retaining production

# Alliance

work, and developing and supporting the production community in West Michigan.

A Monthly Newsletter

Volume 2, Number 2 — February/March 2006

## Celebrated Panelists to Join Motion Picture Industry Forum

The West Michigan Film Video Alliance in partnership with Kalamazoo Pictures and Southwest Michigan First present the **Motion Picture Industry Forum: A West Michigan Perspective** on Thursday, March 9, 2006, 6:00 – 8:00 PM, at Brook Lodge in Augusta, Michigan. A panel of producers, directors, and editors with major production credits includes



Bob Brown, Co-Founder (with Jeff Daniels) of Purple Rose Films and Avram Ludwig, Producer/Director from New York City where he serves on the board of the Actors Studio (alongside Paul Newman, Al Pacino, et al). Also from New York (born in Kalamazoo) is Lee Percy, Editor. Lee has edited three pictures that ultimately won acting Oscars: *Reversal of Fortune*, *Kiss of the Spiderwoman*, and *Boys Don't Cry*. Also on the panel are Representative Bill Huizenga (Zeeland), who chairs the Michigan House Commerce Committee. He recently sponsored the motion picture industry tax incentive legislation under consideration now in the state Senate. Senator Tom George (District 20) will also participate. He is chair of the Senate Appropriations History, Arts & Libraries Subcommittee. One of the duties of the HAL Subcommittee is to oversee funding for the Michigan Film Office.

The focus of the forum is three fold: 1) to gain insight into the process of filmmaking through open exchange with industry professionals; 2) to attract more motion picture industry projects to Michigan, and 3) to discuss how tax incentives supporting the motion picture industry in other states contribute dollars and jobs to their economy. The forum is FREE to the first 200 to register online at [RSVP@kalamazoopictures.com](mailto:RSVP@kalamazoopictures.com).

Participants will explore how West Michigan can begin to organize now to take advantage of the new motion picture tax incentive package moving through the Michigan legislature. The legislation, which includes commercial, television and film production formats, has passed the Michigan House and now rests with the Senate Tax Policy Committee, chaired by Senator Nancy Cassis.

The Motion Picture Industry Forum is presented by Kalamazoo Pictures Group, the West Michigan Film Video Alliance and Southwest Michigan First, in partnership with The International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE), Goodrich Quality Theaters, Kalamazoo Film Society, and the English and Theater departments of Western Michigan University's School of Communication. The International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Festival Playhouse: Theatre Arts at Kalamazoo College, Screen Actors Guild (SAG), and Theatre Kalamazoo are providing additional support.

## Summer Film Project Chooses Recovery Drama

The winner of the 12th annual GVSU International Short Screenplay Competition is *Story Time*, written by Elizabeth C. Grant of Sherman Oaks, California.

Elizabeth's writing credits include a produced one-act play and an article in *Playboy*. Having recently moved from Northern to Southern California, she currently teaches sociology and continues with her screenwriting. Her script was selected out of 68 entries from thirteen states and three countries. *Story Time* is a drama about a recovering alcoholic struggling to get her life together.

Robert Hurst, a filmmaker and visiting professor at GVSU, is slated to direct the film, leading an all-student film crew. Preproduction begins in May; filming occurs during the first two weeks of June. Meanwhile, last summer's comedy, *The Gospel According to Roy*, directed by Harper Philbin, has been accepted to the Durango Independent Film Festival and the East Lansing Film Festival, both happening in March. —John Philbin

## BBK's Design Services Benefit WMFVA

The WMFVA Board of Directors would like to thank BBK Design Studio for a year of partnership! Out of their vision and creativity, we have a new logo that really speaks to who we are and where we do business. BBK took us on as a community service, and

gave us top-notch support all the way. An earlier session with BBK officials analyzed in depth the community we serve and priorities in meeting our member needs. Using that information, the design-



ers defined who we are through the logo. We are deeply grateful for BBK's generosity and commitment to serv-

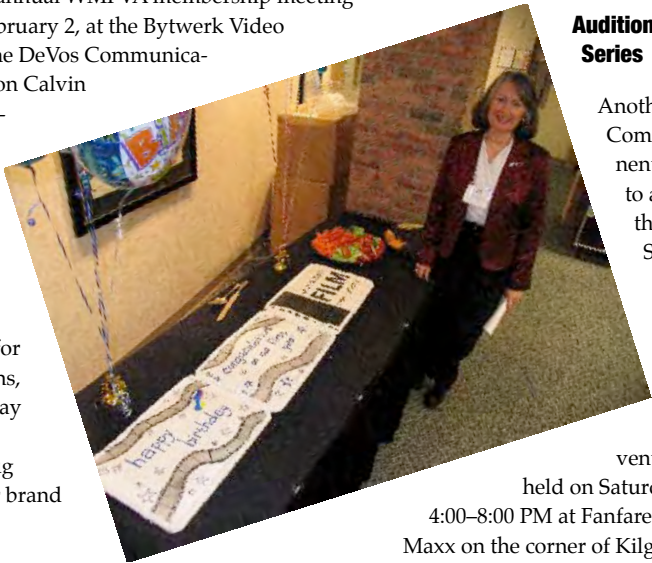
ing non-profits, plus their outstanding professional quality. BBK Design Studios is located in the Brass Works Building on Monroe Street in Grand Rapids.

The next step will be turning our logo into letter-head, our ALLIANCE newsletter, and other collateral materials. Graphic design artists who would like to work on this project, please contact board member Ken Robinson: [ken@wmfva.org](mailto:ken@wmfva.org).

# Members Celebrate First WMFVA Birthday!

The second annual WMFVA membership meeting was held February 2, at the Bytwerk Video Theatre in the DeVos Communication Center on Calvin

College campus and we decided to make it a party! Just over 40 members showed up for cake, balloons, and a birthday present—a WMFVA mug sporting our brand new logo!



Congratulations to Allen Ruhlandt and Jax Baker, Anthony Griffin, elected by unanimous consent of the membership to the WMFVA Board of Directors. Members approved amendments to bylaws that include permitting three new board members to be elected annually.



Above, Jake Bosmeijer, chief engineer of Calvin College's Communications Department, leads members on a tour of the production facilities. Below, Dick Buist, Dave Anderson, and David Ruck screened short pieces.

In addition to taking care of business matters, members also viewed short pieces from Jonathan Worful, Dave Anderson, Dick Buist, Ed deJong, Sean Kenny, Mark Schroeder, Muriel Zandstra, and David Ruck. Board members Deb Havens and Jax Baker lent drama to the unveiling of the new WMFVA logo, pulling away a



red velvet cover to reveal a pyramid-shaped stack of logo-embazoned mugs.

## Filmmaker News Notes

### Auditions March 11 for Shorts Series

Another Damn Production Company along with Imminent Entertainment is happy to announce auditions for the Greatest Television Show Never to be Aired on Television—*FANBOY!* *Fanboy* is a series of 30-minute scripts that follow Fanboy and his role-playing buddies through their misadventures. Auditions will be held on Saturday, March, 11th from 4:00–8:00 PM at Fanfare Comics, next to Stir Maxx on the corner of Kilgore and Westnedge in Kalamazoo. We will be shooting, off and on from April to September, a total of twelve scripts. If you have interest in auditioning or working behind the scenes, or just want to come and watch us role-play...the more the merrier! —Kevin Park

### Roy Goes to Durango, East Lansing

*The Gospel According to Roy*, a 28-minute comedy-drama directed by Harper Philbin with a GVSU student crew, was accepted to the Durango Independent Film Festival ([www.durangofilm.org](http://www.durangofilm.org)) this month in Colorado. Roy can also be seen later in March at the East Lansing Film Festival ([www.elff.com](http://www.elff.com)). —John Philbin

### River Documentary Awaits Funds for Completion

The feature length, digital-video movie *Kalamazoo, River: US* tells the Kalamazoo River's history as a natural and industrial resource in a creatively engaging and thought-provoking way, mixing documentary, humor, song, and hard-hitting facts. Dueling narrators Maximilian G. Buccus (a.k.a. Max Buccus) and Malcolm Drury tell the saga of the Kalamazoo River from competing perspectives: Max sings for "Industry" while Malcolm rants for "Nature," and though they may be bumbling, they more than make up for it in enthusiasm. With over ninety percent of shooting completed, the company currently seeks completion funds for post-production; producer-director Matt Dunstone urges any WMFVA members with an interest in the project to visit the website [KalamazooRiverUS.com](http://KalamazooRiverUS.com). This is the first feature shot by Dunstone's DV production company, Boiling Water Productions LLC. —Matt Dunstone



On the set of *Kalamazoo River: US*

### Fish Story Reunites Brauer, Borgnine

*Frozen Stupid* is a new feature-film comedy written and directed by Rich Brauer of Brauer Productions. Rich brought back Oscar-winner Ernest Borgnine (*Marty*, *Poseidon Adventure*, *Dirty Dozen*, *Barn Red*) to star in this wacky story of a cantankerous father (Borgnine), and his bumbling but well-meaning son (Joey Albright; *Escanaba in da Moonlight*, *Barn Red*) who share an obsession for ice fishing—even when it gets them in big trouble. The tale starts on a snowy midwestern Saturday; Tony really wants to go ice fishing instead of attending his mother-in-law's birthday, which leads to a day of comic misadventures.



Ernest Borgnine on the set at Houghton Lake

### Betrayal and Murder, Without a Budget

In Jim Robinson's *Next in Line*, Deborah Walker's husband Charlie (Will Frederick) has begun to let go of old high-school dreams and enjoy life in the present, so her shock is all the greater when he's killed on the way to work. Penetrating office politics and



official lies to find out who wanted Charlie dead and why, Deborah (Lindsay Deverman) finds a painful truth behind his death and learns

why the road to success isn't always smooth. Written and directed by Jim Robinson of Vapor Vision Pictures, the no-budget film, due for release in April, also stars Craig Bouwens, Jessica Plouff, Jose Ruiz, Mike Gordon, and Parker Wallace. Other credits include executive producer Pete Burd, assistant executive producer Stephen Fiorenzo, and director of photography Ryan Thompson.



Dick Buist's film *Video iPod Tricks* was a crowd-pleaser at the membership meeting.

## Muskegon Film Festival Attracts Record Audience

This year's Muskegon Film Festival was another successful event with a record turnout at screenings. Audiences really liked films like *AandolanJaariChha*, a student film made regarding street protests in Nepal and the violence that has erupted since the Maoist insurgency began in 1996. There was also a big turnout at the *Requiem for a Stream/What Will We Eat* show on Saturday. The former won the Audience Choice Award by popular vote. WMFVA will sponsor a showing of *Requiem for a Stream* on the 21st of March at the Wealthy Street Theater as part of the new WMFVA Presents series. The film can also be seen on the 26th of March at the East Lansing Film Festival.

The Muskegon Film Festival Board of Directors are eager to expand the program for next year. At this point, discussions surround topics like a third venue and the possibility of adding a Thursday night screening.

The College Film Competition grew this year. In 2005 the MFF had 8 college entries, while 2006 saw over 43 college films sent to the festival office.

The MFF's directors would love to hear your comments and suggestions so we can continue to make this a better event each year. Did you notice the WMFVA information table set up on the lobby? Thanks to everyone that attended and/or participated! [www.muskegonfilmfestival.com](http://www.muskegonfilmfestival.com) —David Ruck



### WMFVA and MFO Stay Connected

Board members Deb Havens, Allen Ruhlandt, Jax Baker and Mark S. Schroeder traveled to Lansing to meet with Janet Lockwood, Director of the Michigan Film Office (left). They introduced the new board members to Janet and discussed new opportunities for promoting filmmaking in West Michigan and updates on the tax-incentive package; to learn more attend the March 9 Forum. Photo by Mark S. Schroeder

## April WMFVA Seminar to Address Film Distribution

Now that you've made it, how do you get it seen? Ask the experts at the first WMFVA Seminar in 2006, "Distributing Your Film." David O'Malley and Joanna Clare Scott will lead the discussion. Along with Dana Kowalski they produced the feature *Kalamazoo?* which will premiere at the Kalamazoo 10 on Thursday, April 6, two days before the seminar. Look for details on the WMFVA website and register online.

The seminar is on Saturday, April 8 from 10:00 am–3:00 pm at GVSU's Pew Campus. The cost is \$35 for members, \$50 for non-members, and includes lunch.

Speakers will share their expertise in areas including indie distribution and sales, the film-festival circuit, sales/distribution of shorts vs. features, national vs. international marketplaces, and making a sale vs. showing your film for free to get exposure. Watch the listserv for details in March. —John Philbin

## WMFVA Board

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**Paul La Vigne — Treasurer**  
**Allen Ruhlandt — Secretary**

Jax Baker, A.E. Griffin, Chuck Peterson, John Harper Philbin, Ken Robinson, Mark S. Schroeder

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