

BACK TO LOCAL NEWS (</news/local-news>)

BIFF REVEAL PARTY KICKS OFF PREP FOR SHOW

February 09, 2017 at 4:00 pm | By [Hillary Gavan \(mailto:hgavan@beloitdailynews.com\)](mailto:hgavan@beloitdailynews.com)



Hillary Gavan/Beloit Daily News (From left): David Luebke checks out a Beloit International Film Festival (BIFF) program booklet with Sue Hess and Danny Grayless. The BIFF reveal party was held Wednesday evening at Suds O'Hanahan's Irish Pub. Attendees were treated to movie clips and the newly printed program booklets.

BELOIT — Guests to the Beloit International Film Festival (BIFF) reveal party were diving into their newly minted program booklets and selecting the best flicks to see at the upcoming festival.

Held in downtown Beloit Wednesday at Suds O'Hanahan's Irish Pub and sponsored by Blackhawk Bank, the event featured film clips, freshly printed booklets and some exciting festival updates.

BIFF Assistant Director Max Maiken announced veteran Hollywood filmmaker Jon Pavlovsky was named Honorary Chair for 2017. Pavlovsky was producer of "American Street Kid" which earned the Best Social Impact Film prize at the 2016 Hollywood Film Festival. The film has also been honored with the People's Choice Award at BIFF. "American Street Kid" is part of this year's BIFF Cares series and the festival will hold a panel discussion on it.

Maiken said "American Street Kid" is about teen homelessness in Los Angeles.

"It's an excellent film. It not only addresses homelessness of that area, but all homelessness," Maiken said.

Honorary Chair Pavlovsky, who once was a child advocate and counselor in group homes for the Department of Children's Services, is currently in pre-production on "Lesser Evil," a feature written by Blake Heron (Bourne Identity). Pavlovsky is also in development with Anderson Media on several TV series including "Black Cell," based on the best-selling Seal Team Books by Ralph Perzullo and Donn Mann.

Maiken said the BIFF box office will open at CELEB-Gallery ABBA, 437 E. Grand Ave., on Monday, Feb. 13. The festival runs Friday, Feb. 24 – Sunday, March 5.

Maiken and Greg Gerard, director of BIFF programming and the Hollywood Film Festival, encouraged attendees to see the silent film showcase of the 1925 film classic, "The Freshman," attend BIFF After Dark parties, take in the live radio play "The Maltese Falcon" and see the Sing-A-Long film, the classic Beatles 1964 hit "A Hard Day's Night."

"Come scream like a little girl," Maiken said.

Rick McGrath of Resonate Web Marketing showed the crowd the painting by Jim Richter which is on the program booklet cover. Richter explained how he painted an original picture of the Majestic Theater, once located in what's now the Blackhawk Bank parking lot in Beloit. The movie theater was popular in the late 1940s and attracted Hollywood stars to promote their films as well as thousands of fans.

At Wednesday's event, board members and fans said they were thrilled about the upcoming festival.

"I love it. It's one of the highlights of Beloit," said board member Brian Ramsey.

Ramsey said he loves Biff Year 'Round where films are shown every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. at the Hendricks Center for the Arts from September until festival time. Although he's been at BIFF Year 'Round and will attend the festival, he still has plenty of film choices.

"You can't see them all during the festival, it's part of the beauty," Ramsey said.

Nearby, Sue Hess and Danny Grayless were preparing for the festival. Hess said she checks out the program book to select which films to volunteer for and view.

"I like the diversity of the movies, the documentaries and foreign films," Hess said. "It's fun and interesting to meet people who come from out of town. It's a good social event to get people out."

Diana Shadel and Jackie Wood Schooff of Janesville have been attending BIFF since its second year. On Wednesday they invited friends Richard and Diane Miller to the reveal party to introduce them to BIFF.

"I like the international flair," Shadel said.

In addition to seeing the creativity of the film creators, Wood Schooff said it's fun to get into all the different venues and restaurants as opposed to sitting in a movie theater.

"We love BIFF," Wood Schooff said. "Once we got the hang of it we were addicted. We are delighted to be at this kickoff."

Copies of the BIFF printed schedule revealed Wednesday evening will be delivered to *Beloit Daily News* subscribers with Saturday's newspaper. For more information visit <https://beloitfilmfest.org>.