

BIFF opens with block party

By Whitney Helm whelm@beloitdailynews.com | Posted: Saturday, February 21, 2015 10:00 am

The Beloit International Film Festival kicked off Friday night with its first-ever block party.

“We thought it would be a fun way to say thank you to Beloit for combining to make a great film festival,” said Rod Beaudoin, executive director for the film festival.

The kick-off party featured ice sculpting, fire throwers, life-sized puppets and a host of performances in the downtown Beloit area.

Judy Robson, a former representative of Beloit in the Wisconsin Assembly and Senate, came out to enjoy the festival. She wanted to see the Wisconsin-Illinois showdown shorts and was able to vote for a few films.

“It’s been fun,” said Robson.

Linda Watkins said she’s never been able to make the festival due to work.

“Finally this year, I’m off for the day ... I’ve been wanting to come and I figured the 10-year anniversary sounds like a good time to come,” said Watkins.

A science-fiction and mystery movie fan, Watkins said she’s interested in seeing what movies might be available for those genres.

For Beaudoin, BIFF has become what the committee originally dreamed it could be.

“We’re talked about around the world and that was something we always felt we could accomplish,” said Beaudoin.

Beaudoin is stepping down within the next two years and Marketing Director Kristin Peterson will take his place.

Peterson helped create the Wisconsin-Illinois showdown which showcases film-makers in the two states.



Celebrating 10 years

The Beloit International Film Festival (BIFF) is celebrating its 10th anniversary as activities kick off this weekend. Trinity Irish Dancers from Milwaukee entertained a packed house at Bushel and Peck’s on Friday night.

“I’m sure with her youthful energy and vision, BIFF will continue to thrive,” said Beaudoin.

Tonight’s big BIFF event will be the Sing-A-Long showing of the movie Grease at Schubert’s Luxury 10 Theater, 2799 Cranston Road. Special hosts for the event will be retiring Beloit City Manager Larry Arft and his wife, Karen. The event also will feature a costume contest, so audience members are encouraged to grease back their hair and dig out the poodle skirts for some flashback 50s fun.

Also, new this year will be a slot of horror short films to be shown starting at 10 p.m. at Domenico’s, 547 E. Grand Ave.

Sunday’s BIFF events will include a showing of comedy short films at 5 p.m. at Bagels & More, 324 State St., and a showing of the comedy The Yank at 7:30 p.m. at Bushel & Peck’s Local Market, 328 State St.

On Monday, a Sci-Fi short film slot will be featured starting at 5 p.m. at the Hendricks Center for the Performing Arts, 409 Pleasant St.

The Beloit International Film Festival continues through March 1. For more information, visit the website at <http://beloitfilmfest.org>.