

GUIDE TO THE MOVIES

General Cinemas
Bargain matinee daily plus \$3.25
(Two lines show daily)

Cartoon 6
Ford Rd. 114 West of 1275+
(313) 991-1000
Advanced same-day tickets available
*Desires 1/2 Price

SPAWN (PG-13)
12:35, 2:35 (4:45 @ 12:35) 7:40, 9:30
*AIR FORCE ONE (R)
12:45 (4:10 @ 12:35) 7:10, 9:50
*CONSPIRACY THEORY (R)
1:00, (4:00 @ 12:35) 7:00, 9:50
*PICTURE PERFECT (PG-13)
12:10, 2:30 (4:40 @ 12:35) 7:30, 9:45
*FREE WILLY 3 (PG)
9:40
*EVENT HORIZON (R)
12:20, 2:25 (4:10 @ 12:35) 7:35, 9:50
*AIR BUD (PG)
12:25, 4:40 (4:50 @ 12:35) 7:30

North Town Center 8
Hwy Rd. South of 1590
(313) 444-0077
Advance same-day tickets available

COPLAND (R)
2:35 (5:00 @ 12:35) 7:40, 10:00
*PICTURE PERFECT (PG-13)
2:00 (4:40 @ 12:35) 7:40, 10:00
*CONTACT (PG)
1:00, 4:00, 6:30, 9:30
*AIR FORCE ONE (R)
1:30 (4:10 @ 12:35) 7:05, 9:30
*GEORGE OF THE JUNGLE (PG)
1:45 (4:30 @ 12:35) 7:25, 9:40
*MY BEST FRIEND'S WEDDING (PG-13)
9:45
*STEEL (PG-13)
1:15 (4:10 @ 12:35) 7:30, 9:35
*FREE WILLY 3 (PG)
(4:15 @ 12:35)
*AIR BUD (PG)
2:15 (4:45 @ 12:35) 7:20, 9:40
*CONSPIRACY THEORY (R)
1:00 (4:00 @ 12:35) 7:00, 9:55

Keene-Twin Cinema
Orchard Lake Rd.
(810) 290-1900
Sat. & Sun. only 4:30
\$1.50 before 6 p.m., \$2.50 after

ENGLISH PATIENT (R)
SUN 11:45, 8:45, 9:45
MON-THURS 7:30
LOST WORLD (PG-13)
SUN 4:15, 7:00
MON-THURS 7:15
AUSTIN POWERS (PG)
SUN-THURS 9:45

National Amusements
Showcase Cinemas

Showcase
Auburn Hills 114
2150 N. Oak Rd.
Between University & Watson
Bldg.
(810) 373-2600
Bargain Matinee Daily
*All Shows until 6 p.m.
Continuous Shows Daily
Late Shows Fri. & Sat.
THRU THURSDAY

STEEL (PG-13)
11:10, 1:10, 3:10, 5:10, 7:10, 9:10
*AIR FORCE ONE (R)
12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:50
*EVENT HORIZON (R)
11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
*FREE WILLY 3 (PG)
10:55 AM
*CONSPIRACY THEORY (R)
11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
*AIR FORCE ONE (R)
12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:50
*GOOD BURGER (PG)
10:50, 1:10
*NOTHING TO LOSE (R)
9:30
*GEORGE OF THE JUNGLE (PG)
11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
*CONTACT (PG)
11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
*MEN IN BLACK (PG-13)
11:45, 2:00, 4:15, 6:30, 9:30
*FACE OFF (R)
9:30

Showcase Dearborn 118
Michigan in Dearborn
(313) 561-3449
Bargain Matinee Daily
*All Shows until 6 p.m.
Continuous Shows Daily

Star Theatres
The World's Best Theatres
Bargain Matinee Daily 11:00 AM
Shows Starting before 6:00 PM
Now accepting Visa & MasterCard
*No Desires No Pass
Engagement

Steel John 11
12289 John A. Road
(810) 345-2070
CALL FOR SATURDAY SHOWTIMES
No one under age 8 admitted for PG-13 & R rated films after 6 p.m.

NP EVENT HORIZON (R)
11:15, 12:15, 1:30, 2:30, 3:45, 4:45, 6:00, 7:00, 8:30, 9:30, 10:40
*NP STEEL (PG-13)
12:30, 3:00, 5:45, 8:00, 10:30
*NP AIR BUD (PG)
11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
*NP FREE WILLY 3 (PG)
10:55 AM
*NP CONTACT (PG)
11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
*NP MEN IN BLACK (PG-13)
11:45, 2:00, 4:15, 6:30, 9:30
*NP FACE OFF (R)
9:30

United Artists Theatres
Bargain Matinee Daily for all shows starting before 6:00 PM
Same day advance tickets available
*No No V.I.P. tickets accepted

United Artists Fairlane
Fairlane Town Center
West Fairlane Road
(313) 559-4790
ALL TIMES FOR SUN-THURS
BARGAIN MATINEE DAILY FOR ALL SHOWS STARTING BEFORE 6 PM. SAME DAY ADVANCE TICKETS AVAILABLE

NP EVENT HORIZON (R)
11:15, 12:15, 1:30, 2:30, 3:45, 4:45, 6:00, 7:00, 8:30, 9:30, 10:40
*NP STEEL (PG-13)
12:30, 3:00, 5:45, 8:00, 10:30
*NP AIR BUD (PG)
11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
*NP FREE WILLY 3 (PG)
10:55 AM
*NP CONTACT (PG)
11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
*NP MEN IN BLACK (PG-13)
11:45, 2:00, 4:15, 6:30, 9:30
*NP FACE OFF (R)
9:30

Star Rochester Hills
200 Barclay Circle
(810) 345-2600
SUNDAY THRU THURSDAY
No one under age 8 admitted for PG-13 & R rated films after 6 p.m.

NP COPLAND (R)
10:45, 1:10, 3:10, 5:10, 7:10, 9:10
*NP EVENT HORIZON (R)
1:00, 3:15, 5:25, 7:45, 10:40
*NP CONSPIRACY THEORY (R)
1:30, 3:45, 5:55, 8:15, 10:35
*NP SPAWN (PG-13)
11:15, 1:30, 3:45, 6:00, 10:15
*NP AIR FORCE ONE (R)
11:00, 1:20, 3:40, 6:00, 10:15
*NP CONTACT (PG)
12:00, 3:00, 6:00, 9:15

Star Southfield
12 Mile between Telegraph and Northwestern off 4696
248-353-STAR
No one under age 8 admitted for PG-13 & R rated films after 6 p.m.

NP COPLAND (R)
10:00, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
*NP EVENT HORIZON (R)
11:15, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
*NP FREE WILLY 3 (PG)
10:55 AM
*NP CONTACT (PG)
11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
*NP MEN IN BLACK (PG-13)
11:45, 2:00, 4:15, 6:30, 9:30
*NP FACE OFF (R)
9:30

Star Westland
11815 Westland Rd.
(810) 656-1160
No one under age 8 admitted for PG-13 & R rated films after 6 p.m.

NP STEEL (PG-13)
11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
*NP FREE WILLY 3 (PG)
10:55 AM
*NP CONTACT (PG)
11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
*NP MEN IN BLACK (PG-13)
11:45, 2:00, 4:15, 6:30, 9:30
*NP FACE OFF (R)
9:30

Star Westland
11815 Westland Rd.
(810) 656-1160
No one under age 8 admitted for PG-13 & R rated films after 6 p.m.

NP STEEL (PG-13)
11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
*NP FREE WILLY 3 (PG)
10:55 AM
*NP CONTACT (PG)
11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30
*NP MEN IN BLACK (PG-13)
11:45, 2:00, 4:15, 6:30, 9:30
*NP FACE OFF (R)
9:30

Birmingham Theatre
2115 Woodward
Downtown Birmingham
(205) 444-8000
*No Desires No Pass
Engagements

NP COPLAND (R)
12:30, 2:35, 5:15, 7:35, 9:55
*NP EVENT HORIZON (R)
12:40, 2:40, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
*NP CONSPIRACY THEORY (R)
1:00, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00

BOOKS

Legal drama 'Civil Action' wins praise, legion of readers

A Civil Action

By Jonathan Harr
(Random House, 1996, \$13)



ESTHER LITTMANN

"A Civil Action" by Jonathan Harr was first published in 1996 and awarded the National Book Critics Circle Award for Non-fiction. Newspaper critics called it "gripping," "brutally accurate," and "artfully written."

Two years later, the book is still hot. People are reading it and recommending it to their friends. And small wonder, since its topic is environmental pollution: Is setting the American legal form and its craftsmanship guaranteed to keep you glued to the page.

The true story told in "A Civil Action" goes back to the mid-1980s, when the residents of Woburn, Mass., began to notice that the water piped into their homes was "putrid and ill-smelling" and often turned their clothes a rusty red. Complaints to the water department were met with assurances that the tap water was perfectly safe to drink.

Better to put up with a little inconvenience, they were told, than to risk a water shortage by closing Wells G and H, which had only recently been drilled.

A year later, the Massachusetts Department of Health tested the water coming from the new wells and found bacteria. It recommended shutting them down, but the city

protested once more. Health authorities relented when officials agreed to subject the wells to chlorination.

By 1970, the first leukemia victim of Woburn was identified, a 3 1/2-year-old boy named Jimmy Anderson. After him, came Robbie, Jarrod, Patrick, and four others. All lived within a 1/2 mile radius, six of them almost next door to each other. All had consumed water from the targeted wells.

Nine years later, the Woburn police were summoned to investigate 184 barrels of industrial waste found on a vacant plot. Because of their proximity to Wells G and H, the water was tested once again. The verdict read "heavily contaminated with trichloroethylene (TCE)," an industrial solvent used to dissolve grease and oil. The EPA had already identified TCE as a "probable carcinogen." This time, the wells were promptly shut down.

Enter a thirty-something lawyer by the name of Jan Schlichtmann. He had gone to Cornell for his law degree and had already negotiated the largest wrongful death settlement in Massachusetts history—the Copley Plaza Hotel fire. Initially challenged by the desire to become rich and famous and the prospect of using the legal system to bring about social justice, Schlichtmann agreed to represent the eight families whose children had died of leukemia.

His legal partner, however, warned Schlichtmann that the case was a "black hole." The cause of leukemia was still unknown. And Beatrice Poode and Grace Chemicals, the two companies accused of dumping the toxic waste alleged to have contaminated the groundwater, were powerful Fortune 500 cor-

porations that could muster a huge arsenal to counter the charges. Schlichtmann would never meet a more fearsome Goliath in the courtroom.

"A Civil Action" is legal drama at its best: it is richly informative but does not lose sight of the human perspective. The author, a professor of English at Smith College, followed the case from its inception, accompanying the lawyers on interviews, sitting in on meetings with the plaintiffs, observing the fierce dynamics of the court trial, and witnessing the roller-coaster process of negotiations.

What stands out in Harr's narrative is the personality and drive of Jan Schlichtmann, the lawyer for the Woburn families. A man of almost heroic proportions, Schlichtmann stuck with the case against all odds: cunning and well-financed defense lawyers, a blatantly biased judge, suppressed information, and enormous personal debt. Devoted to his clients and obsessed with finding the truth, Schlichtmann sacrificed his health, wealth, and career to what had become for him a crusade for justice.

Describing only a single incident in the case, Harr speaks for the entire trial when he writes: "[It] stands out as an example of how the adversary process, the rules and rituals of the courtroom can obscure reality." The book is spellbinding! Read it, and then pass it on.

Esther Littmann is a resident of Bloomfield Township. She is a private tutor with Una Duorin and Associates. You can leave her a message from a touch-tone phone at (313) 953-2047, mailbox number 1893. Her fax number is (810) 644-1314.

BOOK HAPPENINGS

Book Happenings features various happenings at suburban bookstores. Send news leads to Hugh Gallagher, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, Inc., 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150, or fax them to (313) 691-7270.

BORDERS (ROCHESTER HILLS)
Grand Opening celebration continues at the store 3122 South Rochester Road, at Winchester Mall. 248-650-7179.

BORDERS (BIRMINGHAM)
Aug. 19 (7 p.m.) C.J. and Edna Elfont, photographer and writer of "Sand Dunes of the Great Lakes" will discuss their book of Great Lakes pictures. Aug. 26 (7:30 p.m.) author and priest Dr. Larry Ventline signs copies of new book "Guardian of Your Soul: A Class in Acceptance." Aug. 28 (7:30 p.m.), Dr. Carlyle Fielding Stewart, minister of Hope United Methodist Church in Southfield, will discuss and sign copies of his books, "Joy Songs and Trumpet Blasts," "Soul Survivors: An African American Spirituality," and "How Long Will You Limp." Aug. 23, 2-4 p.m., swing jazz sounds of Mike Karoub's cello jazz ensemble. 6 p.m. (7:30 p.m.) Gillian Helfgott discusses and signs copies of book "Love You to Bits & Pieces," the true story that inspired the movie "Shine." Her husband, Australian pianist David Helfgott, went through childhood as a musical prodigy, then a tormenting mental breakdown and finally a triumphant recovery. For kids: Aug. 20 (7 p.m.) a creepy critters presentation by Science Discovery, Inc. is set. Aug. 23 (11 a.m.) children can join Beth Katz for a "Punch-and-Judy" type puppet show. Aug. 24 (1 p.m.) a pirate party and storytime is planned with Copy Belns. Book discussion: Aug. 25 (7 p.m.) Sarah Deffen leads talk on "Mutant Message Down Under," the account of an American doctor's walkabout experience in Australia at the store, 31150 Southfield Road, Birmingham. (810) 644-1515.

BARNES AND NOBLE BOOKSELLERS (WEST BLOOMFIELD)
Storytime features "The Boy Who Wouldn't Go To Bed" by Helen Cooper Aug. 18 (10 a.m.) and Aug. 19 (7 p.m.). Susan Shapiro, native of West Bloomfield, Aug. 20 (7 p.m.) reads and signs her first volume of poetry, "Internal Medicine." Senior Women's Breakfast Club discusses Emily Dickinson with English professor Jane Donahue Eberwein Aug. 28 (10:30 until noon) at the store, 6800 Orchard Lake Road, West Bloomfield. (810) 626-6804.

TRUTH BOOKSTORE
E. Lynn Harris will sign and discuss his novel "If This World Were Mine," 3 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 10 at the store, 21500 Northwestern Highway, Southfield, Mich. 810-557-4824.

BORDERS BOOKS AND MUSIC (DEARBORN)
Writer Tim Sweeney, music consultant, shares knowledge and his book "Tim Sweeney's Guide to Releasing Unrecorded Records," at 7:30 p.m. Aug. 17, Barri Flowers author of "The Sex Slave Murders" will be on hand Aug. 21 at 7:30 p.m. "Murders" is true crime story of America's first husband and wife serial killers; the book tells the complete story including the trial that pitted husband against wife. Both writers will be at the store, 5601 Mercury Dr., Dearborn. (313) 271-4441.

SHAMAN DRUM

Estleman honored by library association

Loren Estleman, Michigan writer and creator of Detroit tough guy Amos Walker, has been selected for the Michigan Author Award.

The award is given by the Michigan Library Association, a professional organization for Michigan librarians, and the Michigan Center for the Book, a program of the Library of Michigan.

He will be given the award (\$1,000) at ceremonies Nov. 7 at Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, Grand Rapids.

Estleman has written 50 books, including the Peter Macklin mystery series, eight westerns, and the Page Murdock western series. He won a Shamus award in 1985 for "Sugartown," and was nominated for a Pulitzer in 1984 for "This Old

Bill."

Estleman was born in Ann Arbor, graduated from Eastern Michigan University and currently lives in Whitmore Lake.

His popular Walker series features a private detective from the hard-boiled school who operates in and around Detroit and its suburbs.