

Take a wild ride to find out 'Where The Money Is'

BY VICTORIA DIAZ
Special writer

There's this young woman. Restless, wired-for-action type. Former prom queen, married to former prom king. Bored silly by her small-town life. One day, she needs a bank robbery. Why not enlist his help, she figures, recruit her oh-so-malleable husband, and steal a big bunch of money? That should take some edge off the ennui.

So goes the basic concept of Marek Kaniwka's "Where the Money Is," which, in itself, is not a bad movie, especially if you go for crime-is-cute stuff. The trouble lies in what has come before it. Watching Paul Newman as the bank robber, many moviego-

ers may suffer an unwelcome sensation of déjà vu. It's a little like witnessing a slightly frayed mix of Butch Cassidy, "Fast Eddie" Felson, James Gandolfini, and other wily types played by the screen icon through the years. Maybe he's done this variation on a theme enough already. Or maybe I've just reached my limit on caper flicks.

Partners-in-crime Carol and Wayne are played by deep-throated Linda Fiorentino and hunky Dermot Mulroney. Carol works in a nursing home and, one day, Henry Manning (Newman) is wheeled in, apparently the victim of a stroke. He's transferred there from a nearby prison, where he's serving a sen-

tence for bank robbery. Though he looks to be paralyzed and seems aphasic, we will soon learn that he's faking the stroke in order to slip the bonds of the slammer.

Maybe because it takes one to know one, Carol begins to suspect that Henry is not exactly trustworthy, that he is, in effect, "playing possum." To test her theory, she tries everything from whispering sweet nothings in his ear, to a lapdance, to shoving the poor guy into deep water, wheelchair and all. (Professionalism, you will note, is not Carol's strong suit.) This last finally blows his cover.

Sometime shortly after this splashy event, Carol persuades

the two slightly reluctant guys to go along with her dreamed-of heist, and the unholy trio eventually begins to iron out details. (One "practice run" involves Carol nabbing a giveaway toaster oven from the local bank.) Though all parties involved have slightly differing motivations, they nevertheless seem to fit together like the pieces in a crazy quilt and, one night, off they go.

Newman dons a fake mustache and everybody gets to dress up like an armed courier and tool around town in an armored truck as they lift the day's earnings from a retail outlet, a show bar, an amusement park, and several other spots. All of this is highly unlikely, of course, but we sweat a bit, anyway, and even laugh a little along the way.

Newman has this character down pat, of course, but then he's had plenty of practice. Fiorentino lends a kind of off-kilter charm as Carol, while Dermot Mulroney's slightly seedy Wayne is maybe the most understandable member of the three—although he's never to be mistaken for a rocket scientist.

Director of photography



Tango crime spree: Linda Fiorentino and Paul Newman dance their cares away in "Where the Money Is."

Thomas Burstyn and production designer Andre Chamberland add some engaging visual style to the film, and the script by E. Max Frye and Topper Lilien & Carroll Cartwright provides some rouch punch now and then.

Victoria Diaz is a Lionisa resident who writes for the Observer & Eccentric N-uspapers.

THE OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC GUIDE TO THE MOVIES

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HIGH FIDELITY (R)
EIN BROCKOVICH (R)
FINAL DESTINATION (R)
MY DOG SKIPPER (PG)
AMERICAN BEAUTY (R)

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NP KEEPING THE FAITH (PG13)
READY TO RUMBLE (PG13)
RULES OF ENGAGEMENT (R)
RETURN TO ME (PG)
THE ROAD TO EL DORADO (PG)
SKULLS (PG13)
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COMING ATTRACTIONS

Scheduled to open Friday, April 28

BOSSA NOVA
International love story of an American schoolteacher and a Brazilian lawyer who, alone and unhappy, have given up on finding their lifelong soulmate until a chance encounter brings them together. Stars Amy Irving.

COMMITTED
Heather Graham stars as a woman convinced she can save her marriage by traveling across the country to track down her AWOL husband. Also starring Casey Affleck.

DETERRENCE
Provocative political thriller set in the year 2008 stars Kevin Pollock as the embattled incumbent president of the United States. Trapped in Colorado by a freak snowstorm, an interaction incident occurs and the president must act quickly and threatens nuclear confrontation in a live worldwide broadcast.

THE FLINTSTONES' VIVA ROCK VEGAS
In a sequel to the 1994 release "The Flintstones," centers around Fred, a boy from the wrong side of the rock, who courts the beautiful Wilma. Joined by Barney and future-wife Betty, they take a romantic getaway to Rock Vegas.

THE HEART IS BASED
Written on the best-seller by Billie Letts, the story of a young woman who finds the strength to overcome adversity and begin a new life for herself and her child. Stars Natalie Portman, Ashley Judd, Stockard Channing, and Joan Cusack. Directed by Matt Williams.

SOUTH PACIFIC
Film version of Rodgers and Hammerstein's musical stage hit and adapted from James Michener's "Tales of the South Pacific," the film stars Mitzel Gaynor, Ray Winstone, and Rossano Brazzi. Exclusively at The Historic Red-

ford Theatre Friday-Saturday April 28-29.

BILLY ROSE'S DIAMOND HORSESHOE
Betty Grable and Dick Haynes star in this lightweight classic love story about a medical student who gets into show business and falls for his nightclub's sultry headliner. But she's got a plan all her own. Will she choose love or a life of luxury? Special showing 3 p.m. Tuesday, May 2 at Showcase Cinemas in Pontiac and 1 p.m. Wednesday May 3 at Showcase Cinemas in Westland.

Scheduled to open Friday, May 5

ADRENALINE DRIVE
Part of the Shooting Gallery Film Series at Great Lakes Crossing in Auburn Hills, the film shows how a timid young couple savors their first taste of real life as they fall in love dodging vengeance in this suspense comedy by director Shin-ya Yaguchi.

THE VIRGIN SUICIDES
Set in a Michigan suburb in the early 70s, the story tells of a quirky high school math teacher and his five daughters and the tragedy that changed their lives.

GLADIATOR
An exiled general seeks vengeance against the Emperor of the Roman Empire, played by Joaquin Phoenix. Stars Russell Crowe, Ridley Scott, Connie Nielsen and the late Oliver Reed.

SCARY MOVIE
Spool of horror films stars Jonathan Abrahams, Shannon Elizabeth, Regina Hall and Kimberly Jones.

UP AT THE VILLA
Kristin Scott Thomas plays a woman who retreats to a villa to get over the death of her husband. Will she become entangled in intrigue, romance and crime and begins a romance with an American visitor.

Twist adds intrigue to 'Gossip'



BY LANA MINT
Staff Writer
lmin1@oe.hometown.net

It's no Sixth Sense or The Crying Game but the surprise, twisted end of the drama Gossip makes this too-hip movie fun to watch.

When three beautiful, ultra-trendy, martini-sipping university students decide to use the concept of gossip as a thesis for their journalism final, the assignment spins wildly out of control and leads to violence, sex and deception... or does it?

Nearly everyone will be able to relate to the basic moral dilemma that Gossip's main characters face. Starring up-and-coming actors James Marden (Disturbing Behavior and Party of Five), Lena Headey (Waterland) and Norman Reedus (Six Ways to Sunday), the characters decide to start a rumor by claiming a rich virgin at their school isn't so scrupulous after all. Their goal is to see what form the rumors will take - and that's where the wild ride begins.

The students - a sexy, aspiring female journalist, a handsome risk taker and a brooding-but-kind male artist - learn the hard way that gossip not only ruins the reputation of the victim, it also smashes their own reputations in ways they could never imagine. Also worth attention is the modern, multi-phase collage (created by Robert Reinhardt)

Surprise: James Marden stars in 'Gossip,' a Warner Brothers film in theaters now.

invincible."

Produced by Outlaw Productions' Jeffrey Silver and Bobby Newmyer (Sex, lies and videotape and Don't tell Mom the Babysitter's Dead) and screenplay by Gregory Kirsch (The King of the Hill; Simba's Pride), the Warner Brothers film will probably be appreciated best by college students who can relate to the fact that gossip is a popular, but harmful, form of entertainment. But, then again, don't most adults also take part in rumor mills?

We won't give away the end of Gossip - let's just say that when it comes to gossip, truth and perception sometimes become synonymous.

Lies, sex, deceit and goodness prevail to make Gossip an unpredictable picture.

