



Shiver me timbers, it's a Jolly Roger invasion.

Fans of pirates, whether stage or screen, should be as delirious Friday as a rum-sodden Pegleg Pete. ● The same day "Peter Pan" opens at the Omaha Community Playhouse, "Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End" will fill silver screens nationwide. ● Avast, maties! Dig for pirate treasure below.

ARRRR!

To revive pirate genre, a little Depp will do ya

By BOB FISCHBACH

WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

With the plunder "Pirates of the Caribbean" has hauled in—\$1.7 billion for the first two movies—and anticipation over Friday's opening of the trilogy caper, "At World's End," it's hard to believe that pirates ever got the heave-ho.

But before Johnny Depp's loopy, Oscar-nominated turn as Captain Jack Sparrow, the pirate movie largely had gone the way of the western.

"There have been a few," said Omaha film historian Bruce Crawford, "but they stayed below the radar. They just haven't registered with the public in the past 10 years. The studios just gave up on them because a few didn't do very well."

Examples of expensive pirate flicks that sank, Crawford recalled, were Roman Polanski's "Pirates," starring Walter Matthau (1986) and Renny Harlin's "Cutthroat Island," starring Geena Davis and Matthew Modine (1995).

Even with star power like Julia Roberts, Robin Williams, Dustin Hoffman and Maggie Smith, the critics broadsided Steven Spielberg's take on Peter Pan, titled "Hook" (1991).

"In a lot of ways, the pirate movie is like the musical," said Omaha filmmaker Jim Fields ("Preserve Me a Seat," "416"). "In the late '60s and the '70s, realistic movies put a damper on fantasy-oriented films. After 'Chinatown,' 'Five Easy Pieces' and 'Taxi
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PIRATE HALL OF FAME

"Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End" is rated PG-13, but it should be rated Arrrrr for excessive eye patches, peg legs and walking the plank. Here are some other pop-culture pirates who hooked audiences in all kinds of entertainment:

Captain Feathersword

The friendly pirate is a mate of Australian children's musicians the Wiggles
Famous friend: Greg, the Wiggle who wears yellow
Catchphrase: "Ahoy there, me maties."

Patchy the Pirate

The host of Nickelodeon's "SpongeBob SquarePants" sings its theme song
Famous friend: SpongeBob, of course
Catchphrase: "If nautical nonsense be something you wish, then drop on the deck and flop like a fish."

Captain Morgan

A Welshman who was a privateer in the 17th century, but has since morphed into a pirate character on rum bottles
Famous friend: Coke.
Catchphrase: "Got a little captain in ya?"

Long John Silver

The character from Robert Louis Stevenson's "Treasure Island" who must have hit on hard times because now he's dabbling in the fast-food industry
Famous friend: Ronald McDonald
Catchphrase: "Would you like hushpuppies with that?"
—Staff writer Dane Stickney



Captain Morgan, a Caribbean privateer from Wales, is pushing rum these days.

POPULAR PIRATES

Need more evidence that pirates are hot stuff these days? Check this out:

If you Google "pirates" on the Internet, you come up with tens of millions of hits. Granted, many are devoted to the Pittsburgh Pirates, but plenty are tribute sites for those seafaring scoundrels, including some exhaustive research into the subject at the National Geographic site.

Stores in the metro area are pushing all things pirate. The very large, very neon sign at Mangelsen's near 84th Street and West Center Road, for example, promises everything you need for a pirate party.

A periodical — named, what else, Pirates magazine — is published four times a year for people who can't get enough of these guys.

And don't forget Talk Like a Pirate Day, celebrated on Sept. 19 each year.

Aerial expert flies in to add 'Pan' magic

By BOB FISCHBACH
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Over hill, over dale he's flying.

To make sure we believe it, the Omaha Community Playhouse has hired the nation's top specialist in onstage flying to help Peter Pan get airborne.

Wendy, John and Michael, too.

A representative of Flying by Foy, Bill Kimble, arrived at the playhouse early Tuesday to install patented harnesses,

track and pulleys, plus cable and rope. Wednesday the flying began in earnest, as Kimble started a week of teaching the actors and five backstage technicians the art of making the impossible look real.

The roots of Flying by Foy go back to 1940, when British actor Peter Foy flew onstage in "Where the Rainbow Ends." The process intrigued him.

A decade later, Foy came from London to stage the flying in a nonmusical Broadway version of "Peter Pan." In 1954 he re-

turned to work on the musical version that starred Mary Martin.

That time he created a new system, known as the interrelated pendulum.

Martin's soaring aerial choreography thrilled audiences, and in 1957 Foy left acting to start his company. Over the years his innovations have included a floating pulley, for theaters with lower ceilings; and the track-on-track system, which independently controls up-down
See 'Pan': Page 2



SO YOU KNOW

Battle of the fans

Will it be the strong-voiced 17-year-old or the hip, human drum kit? "American Idol" is down to its final two — wide-eyed phenom Jordin Sparks and multit talented Blake Lewis. The two make their final pitch to voters Tuesday with the season's last performances. After two hours of over-the-top pomp, the votes will be revealed Wednesday. Win or lose, both of the finalists — along with eight other contestants — are coming to Omaha on Aug. 3.



Bombarded by finales

"Idol" isn't the only show staging big-time season finales this week. Tonight's the quirky night, as "The Simpsons" and "Desperate Housewives" end. Monday is all about action, with "Heroes" and "24" wrapping up their seasons. Performers take center stage Tuesday with the finale of "Dancing with the Stars" and the last performances by the top two on "American Idol." Wednesday is dedicated to two kinds of drama — reality with "Idol" and scripted with the season's last "Lost."

Not just a forensic foot soldier

From comfields to the silver screen, Marg Helgenberger has carved out quite a career. The North Bend, Neb., native's first job was detasseling corn in hot, humid fields. Her latest is swapping scenes with Val Kilmer. Helgenberger — who recently finished another season on her TV show "CSI" and the movie "Mr. Brooks" with Kevin Costner — took a break from shooting the flick "Columbus Day" with Kilmer to talk about being a Hollywood starlet. Parade magazine, in today's paper, has the story.



'Prom' has legions of followers

The steamy reality Web soap "Prom Queen" is the latest tech phenomenon with teens. The show is garnering millions of page views and, more important, friends on MySpace. So far the site has more than 20,000 friends. Fans can stream the daily 90-second Webisodes that feature 13 teens and the final countdown to prom. Fans follow their favorite character's videos, blogs, comments and profiles. "Prom Queen" is broadcast on a number of popular sites such as YouTube. But MySpacers get to see episodes first.

Cake army, get uniforms ready

Pull out those short skirts and long jackets. The corny-cool rockers in Cake are at Harrah's Casino Stir Concert Cove on Saturday. If you have a sweet tooth for some retro rock, going the distance to Council Bluffs is probably worth it.

Unleashing DVDs of war

The video store isn't exactly pandering to pacifists this week. The two biggest releases feature a bunch of bloodshed. Mel Gibson's "Apocalypse" follows the not-so-nice fall of the Mayan Empire. "Letters from Iwo Jima" tells the story of the famous World War II battle from the Japanese point of view.

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BOOKS

THE PLOT RETURNS

The story's the thing in Michael Chabon's detective novel "The Yiddish Policemen's Union."
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TRAVEL

IN THE LOOP

Millennium Park has become a must-see in downtown Chicago.
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TWO FOR THE ROAD

Married country stars Tim McGraw and Faith Hill will hit the road together this summer on tour, starting in Omaha in early June. That's right. Lots of 24/7 contact. Will they survive the summer intact? How about you have you hit the road with your spouse or a significant other an extended trip? Did you send it to us about it? Share your stories by e-mailing freeman@owh.com or logging in to Betsie Freeman, 1314 Douglas St., Suite 700, 68102. Please include an address and a telephone number. Deadline for submission is May 29.



PEOPLE

Honors pile up for Blige



LOS ANGELES (AP) — Mary J. Blige better make room on her trophy shelf. The R&B diva, who won three Grammy Awards in February, will receive the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers' Voice of Music Award, the group announced last week. The award will be presented June 25 at ASCAP's 20th-anniversary Rhythm & Soul Music Awards. "Mary J. Blige is not only the 'Queen of Hip-Hop Soul,' but also a guiding light," said ASCAP President Marilyn Bergman. "Through all of her struggles, she was determined to find and maintain her own musical voice." Blige's honors also include awards from the American Music Awards, Billboard Music Awards and MTV Video Music Awards.

Johansson to star in epic

CANNES, France (AP) — Scarlett Johansson, whose screen credits include "Lost in Translation" and "Match Point," will star as Mary, Queen of Scots in a historical film epic by Relativity Media. The deal was announced last week at the Cannes Film Festival. Mary, a Roman Catholic, ruled Scotland from 1542 to 1567, but her designs on the throne of England — ruled by her Protestant cousin, Queen Elizabeth I — led to her downfall and beheading at the age of 44.

Madonna tune to aid charity

NEW YORK (AP) — Madonna, one of the headliners at this summer's "Live Earth" concerts, has released a new digital song for the musical event. The global concert series, taking place July 7, is designed to raise awareness about climate issues. "Hey You," which Madonna produced with Pharrell Williams, doesn't specifically talk about earth issues, but the ballad's lyrics refer to loving and saving each other. Madonna is scheduled to perform the song during the show at Wembley Stadium in London, one of the sites for the worldwide shows. "Hey You" is available on MSN.com. The first million downloads are free, and Microsoft is pledging to donate 25 cents per download to the Alliance for Climate Protection.



'Godfather of Soul' wowed conductor

NEW YORK (AP) — When conductor Michael Tilson Thomas was a music student, he practically broke into a cold sweat the first time he heard James Brown on the radio. "I was so struck by it that I actually had to pull to the side of the road, because I thought, 'I can't concentrate on my driving and listen to this,'" the San Francisco Symphony music director recalls in a coming segment of "The MTT Files," a series of radio shows he hosts. The show includes an interview of Brown by Thomas in April 2006, eight months before the "Godfather of Soul" died at 73. "From the first day I heard James Brown's music, I waited anxiously for each new song he would release. He became a hero of mine," Thomas, 62, tells the audience. Brown's song "Cold Sweat" in particular made a big impact. "This music completely knocked me out. I wanted to share it with all my classical music colleagues," Thomas says. "And it turned out all the hipster ones already knew the music. We were all amazed by the level of energy, the attacks, the precision, the syncopation, the wonderful empty spaces, the amazing singing, and the way you could use your ears to go down inside the music and explore all the amazing levels." — Compiled from World-Herald wire reports



James Brown, left, is interviewed by an admiring Michael Tilson Thomas, conductor of the San Francisco Symphony, in April 2006.

SWASHBUCKLERS



Johnny Depp: "Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl" (2003); "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest" (2006); "Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End" (2007)



Douglas Fairbanks: "The Thief of Baghdad" (1924); "The Black Pirate" (1926)



Tyrone Power: "The Black Swan" (1942); "Captain From Castille" (1947)



Errol Flynn: "Captain Blood," 1935; "The Sea Hawk," 1940; "Against All Flags," 1953



Burt Lancaster: "The Crimson Pirate" (1952); "His Majesty O'Keefe" (1954)

Pirates: Skull and crossbones back in the movies

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Driver, 'pirate movies just didn't fit."

Fields, who is in his early 40s, recalls no pirate movies from his growing-up years. But back in the 1940s and '50s, stars like Errol Flynn and Tyrone Power soared to box-office heights in swashbucklers, swooping down from the mizzenmast to cross swords with blackguards and sweep beautiful women off their feet.

Crawford's favorite is 1952's "The Crimson Pirate," starring Burt Lancaster as an acrobatic pirate amid a Caribbean revolution.

"It's a masterpiece, a fun romp, a real adventure," Crawford enthused. "It has inspired 'Pirates of the Caribbean' and others more than any other film. The stunts, the brilliant score, the athletic prowess of Lancaster, the location photography — it's the most fun pirate film you'll ever see."

Movie fans Tom Doll and Betty Munch of Omaha said it's their favorite, too.

"He's like the roadrunner of pirates, always causing havoc," Doll said. "And yet he has to win the respect and love of a maiden."

In Doll's favorite scene, Lan-

Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End

Plot: Lovers Elizabeth and Will unite with undead Capt. Barbossa to rescue Capt. Jack, last seen being dragged into the sea by Davy Jones' monster. Meanwhile, nine pirate lords join forces against the East India Trading Company's cold-eyed Lord Beckett for control of the seas.

Stars: Johnny Depp, Keira Knightley, Orlando Bloom, Geoffrey Rush, Bill Nighy, Tom Hollander

Director: Gore Verbinski

Rating: PG-13 for intense action, violence, disturbing images

Running time: Two hours, 47 minutes

Theaters: Q-Cinema 9, 20 Grand, Village Pointe Cinema, Great Escape 16, Cinema Center, Oak View 24, Star Cinema, Twin Creek Cinema

caster escapes in a hot-air balloon, throwing little bottles of nitroglycerine at the military giving chase.

"The overhead shots from the balloon are spectacular," he said.

Munch said Lancaster was a "blond, smiling, muscular, agile hunk!"

Another on Crawford's radar is 1958's "The Buccaneer," the last movie produced by Cecil B. DeMille. Directed by Anthony Quinn, it's set during the War of 1812 and stars Yul Brynner as Jean Lafitte and Charlton Heston as Andrew Jackson.

He also likes "His Majesty O'Keefe," again starring Lancaster; "The Sea Hawk," with Flynn; "The Princess and the Pirate," a

comedy starring Bob Hope and Walter Brennan; and "Pirates of Blood River," with Christopher Lee.

Fields' favorite harkens back to 1926 in the silent era: "The Black Pirate," starring Douglas Fairbanks.

"He laid the groundwork for that genre that Flynn and others built upon," Fields said. "Plus it has an incredible sword fight, maybe the best put on film."

For Bill Blizek, former editor of the Journal of Religion and Film and a philosophy professor at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, it's Depp all the way.

"Off the top of my head, I can't even think of pirate movies," Blizek said. "But I love Johnny Depp and 'Pirates of the Caribbean.'"

It's that great character he developed."

Blizek said movies are often character-driven. Once audiences find a character they like — "especially characters flawed like us" — they keep going back for more.

"And Sparrow is about as flawed as they get," he said with a laugh.

The best pirate movies, Blizek said, were so many decades ago, most people rarely get to see them.

"The swashbuckler is fun," he said. "It might be interesting to do a movie about real pirates. What real pirates do these days is kidnap people, kill them, take their boat. That's not a fun movie experience."

And it's all about fun.

"The reason they've come back now is that sense of adventure," Fields said. "Depp's odd-ball portrayal helps immensely."

Fields said Kevin Kline's performance in "The Pirates of Penzance" (1983), as a pirate played purely for laughs, opened the door for Depp.

Audience tastes have come full circle, Crawford said.

"People needed that escapist fare, with the Depression and World War II. . . . And the time is right for it again now."

'Pan': Company helps get actors off the ground

Continued from Page 1
and side-to-side movements.

Foy's firm also was hired when Sandy Duncan and Cathy Rigby starred in popular Broadway revivals of "Peter Pan."

Susan Baer Collins, who is directing the musical at the playhouse, saw Duncan on Broadway in 1979. Collins said the memory, especially of Duncan's flying, is indelible.

"We all have that piece of us that dreams we can fly," Collins said. "We want to do as much as we can to make this dramatic, to have Peter do some good zooming around."

Christina Rohling, the actress playing Peter Pan, has been exercising to build up strength in her core for five flying scenes.

"She has to keep her back arched so it always looks like she is powering the moves," Collins said.

That isn't easy, hanging by a wire that's between your shoulder blades. Rohling said she had heard flying would be painful, but at a Wednesday night rehearsal she found it "not as bad as I thought." The hard part, early on, was frustration as she learned to keep from spinning, facing front at all times.

"If I take off with one foot leaving the ground before the other, I'm out of luck," she said. "Touching the wall also causes me to spin, so I try not to touch. It's not scary, unless the wall's coming up really fast."

Flying by Foy

Founder: British actor Peter Foy, 1957

Specialty: Making people appear to fly in live shows

Inventions: The interrelated pendulum, the floating pulley, the track-on-track system, the multipoint balance harness, self-contained truss systems, radio-controlled flying system

Clients: Paula Abdul, Lucille Ball, David Bowie, Carol Burnett, Sean Connery, Sally Field, Holly Hunter, Michael Jordan, Gene Kelly, David Letterman, Jerry Lewis, Conan O'Brien

Claim to fame: Technical assistance on more than 3,000 productions of "Peter Pan"

Peter Pan

Where: Omaha Community Playhouse, 6915 Cass St.

When: 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays, 2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Sundays, through June 24.

Tickets: \$36 adults, \$22 students **Information:** 553-0800

Playhouse carpenters Ethan Hinton and Ryan Yorty, who man the ropes that control Rohling's flight, were literally learning the ropes — timing, how hard to pull, controlling landings onto the bed or the mantelpiece. Besides coordination, it's a physically demanding job.

For the young actors playing the Darling children, the discomfort of wearing harnesses was clearly worth the payoff.

"It's like you're free," said Caroline Iliff, 14, who plays Wendy. "It's exhilarating, a little bit scary at first."

Cole Edick, 12, who plays John, agreed.

"My stomach is kinda turned upside down, and I feel like I'm going to flip over. It made me

nervous at first, but as I'm getting more used to it, it's becoming more fun."

Jonathan Peterson, who manages Flying by Foy's main office in Las Vegas, said his firm works with dozens of "Peter Pan" casts each year. Last year — the 100th anniversary of the first Peter Pan book — saw even more productions than usual.

Flying by Foy also has flown actors in "The Lion King," "Angels in America," "Spamalot" and other Broadway shows. Its clients have included country star Garth Brooks and the Backstreet Boys for concert tours, plus Las Vegas revues, Royal Caribbean cruise shows, ballet, opera, television and commercial shoots.

From Jack Benny to Barbra

Streisand, Johnny Carson to Diana Ross, Foy has flown them all. At the Crystal Cathedral's Christmas and Easter pageants in Garden Grove, Calif., angels fly courtesy of Foy.

Though Peter Foy died about two years ago, his widow still runs the firm, and his son-in-law continues to hand down the techniques to Foy specialists.

Peterson said what happens backstage is as choreographed as what happens onstage.

"The person controlling the traveling must be in coordination with the person lifting," he said. "It's all a timing thing, working in tandem with the actor so Peter looks like he's flying."

The same five backstage volunteers will run the ropes for all the playhouse's performances. A painting above the mantel is actually a screen, so the five can see onstage movement from their backstage perches. Two will control Peter Pan, while the children get one controller each.

While Foy coordinates things in the air, head pirate Kevin Barratt is fight choreographer on the ground. Collins said the swordplay is frighteningly good, since both Rohling and Bill Hutson, who plays Captain Hook, came with fencing experience.

"I've got fabulous pirates and great leads," Collins said. "Everybody wanted to be on the bandwagon of this story. It means so much to them. We all have memories tied to Peter Pan."

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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| ESPOUSE | MOIRA | TOPEACE | | | |
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| NESTE | ACH | ESP | EDA | | |
| OLEG | BIOS | ROOTON | | | |
| COP | SLOST | LAW | AND | ORDER | |
| COP | SE | TWAY | LOAFED | | |
| HUH | OYEZ | TRIES | SSGT | | |
| A | TE | INTO | AETNA | TEATRO | |
| FULL | HOUSE | CHEERS | SHEROES | | |
| FRI | LLS | OMNES | CINEMAS | | |
| SEAN | ALBEE | DUHS | ASE | | |
| EST | ATE | ASTI | PATED | | |
| NASH | BRIDGE | SLAS | VEGAS | | |
| RED | SEA | SOLI | MELT | | |
| OOH | RRS | IMACS | RESORT | | |
| SNEER | AKIN | IOTA | NEA | | |
| TAR | ZAN | WING | SMEN | INTREES | |
| ETERNAL | FUSER | EDIFICE | | | |
| RED | ATES | OPERA | SANDLER | | |

5/20/07

JUMBLE

Answer :

POPLAR INJECT DISARM
CHEERY EYEFUL FLABBY

What the group turned into when they went on a treasure hunt —

A "SEARCH" PARTY

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Ex-pound pups fetch stardom

Broadway audiences roll over and beg for more of the mutts in "Legally Blonde."



Chico takes center stage with his "Legally Blonde" Chihuahua understudies, Teddie, left, and Boo Boo, at the Palace Theater in New York.

leigh Ashford, the two appearing to have a conversation.

The dog later elicits cheers when he scoots across the stage

to pop into a handbag.

For her part, Chloe — 47 pounds of glorious wrinkles — causes similar audience squeals

when she ambles on stage to play with a squeaky toy.

"When an animal comes out, we know that they're not acting. . . . So there's a sense of danger in having an animal on stage," said Berloni, their trainer. "I think it's the ultimate special effect."

The dogs seem to bask in the adulation. On opening night, the two lead pooches joined their human castmates on the red carpet; Chico, 2½, wore a tiny tux and Chloe, 3, was in pink tulle.

It's a far cry from where the animals started: caged in animal shelters before being rescued by Berloni, 50, now in his 30th year as an animal trainer.

Chico, who was severely abused, was found in a shelter in Newark, N.J. The 6-pound pup had been left outside to fend for himself for more than a year.

"When I met him, he was not afraid of anything because he survived the experience," Berloni said. "I thought 'That's the will we need to have a Chihuahua run out on stage in front of 1,700 people.'"