

'Spider-Man 2' weaves a great story



By Jeremy Miller

"The Amazing Spider-Man 2" is Marc Webb's sequel to the much-needed reboot of the Spider Man franchise. Returning to the screen we have Andrew Garfield and Emma Stone as the leads, and welcome Jamie Foxx and Dane DeHaan.

Peter Parker (Garfield) continues his heroic day-to-day as Spider Man, swinging around through the city making criminals wish they'd stayed in school. Fighting crime is only half his battle, as he's more in love with his girl, Gwen Stacy (Stone), than ever before.

The first film concluded with Peter promising Gwen's father that he would break it off to spare Gwen from potential danger should his identity become known. When has that promise ever been kept? The guilt catches up from time to time, causing Peter to eventually decide to respect the promise despite Gwen's desire to stay together. As if that wasn't enough going against them, Gwen is accepted to Oxford and will be leaving for England.

As Peter works through the "coming of age" on and off again relationship with Gwen, evil starts brewing at Oscorp, the

company his father worked for prior to his disappearance. Spider Man saves a lonely pipsqueak Oscorp employee named Max (Foxx) who's desperate for someone's attention. Spider Man casually tells Max that he needs Max and that Max is his "eyes and ears out there" giving Max a false sense of friendship.



On Max's birthday he's kicked around by his co-workers and forced to work after hours leading to a careless accident involving Oscorp's experiments with electricity. As a result Max realizes he's able to channel electricity and manipulate it like a Sith Lord. He stumbles out to Times Square and makes one helluva scene that catches Spider Man's attention. Spider Man shows up to make it all better and Max quickly realizes that to Spider Man, he's just

like any other dude. Slowly and haphazardly Max transforms from victim to villain and bam! Electro is born.

Meanwhile, Peter's old friend Harry (DeHaan) is back in town after being shipped off to boarding school by his father Norman Oscorp (CEO of Oscorp). At his father's passing, Harry finds out he's got an "incurable" illness passed down to him from dad and he becomes desperate for a solution. As if that wasn't enough on the kid, the board at Oscorp set him up and took control of the company just left to him.

Poisoned by the idea that Spider Man's blood was the only cure and a polite refusal by Spidey to give it to him leads Harry to share a common reality with Electro, Spider Man must die.

Director Marc Webb really killed it on this one. The cinematography was absolutely perfect. So often action flicks get all excitable and you can't even tell what's what in a fight because it all moves so fast. The utilization of slow motion allows us to really get up close and personal with the

fight scenes, and it was refreshing. The love between Peter and Gwen was equally frustrating, as it was dear. It brought me back to those days and it frustrated the hell out of me, mostly because deep down as cheesy as it got (hence the not perfect rating) I was really pullin' for these kids. The villains were absolutely perfect and turned out just the way I wanted them. When Electro embraces who he was as a villain, I was pumped beyond belief. I also thought that the reimagining of the Green Goblin was a huge success, as DeHaan is a super creepy kid perfectly fit to play a goblin.

The fight scenes were epic and extremely entertaining and flowed well, packing punch yet making sense too. The last 15 minutes of the movie had my jaw dropping and overall I had a blast. Cheesy? Sure, at times. Still, it's my favorite of the Marvel sequels as I thought it was much more mature of a film than "The Amazing Spider Man". As I left the theater I touched the railing and felt the shock of some static electricity. I'm not going to lie, for a minute I felt like I was about to become way cooler than I already am.

South Lake Tahoe resident Jeremy Miller has more movie reviews online.

Smokey Bear turning 70, joining social media



Smokey Bear teaching kids.
Photo/LTN file

By Meg James, Los Angeles Times

Smokey Bear turns 70 this summer. But instead of kicking back in retirement – whacking golf balls or sniffing around for early-bird dinner specials – the bear in bluejeans is returning to work to educate people about wildfires.

Last year, there were 47,579 wildfires nationwide, according to the federal government. Typically, 9 out of 10 are caused by humans. Fire danger is expected to be high this summer, particularly in the parched Western states.

So, with the help of local ad agencies, Smokey Bear has been enlisted for a new marketing campaign to remind humans to be more careful.

Handlers of the iconic animal have decided he needed a younger and fresher look. They want him to fit in with the millennial generation of teenagers and young adults.

Read the whole story

Tahoe doc offers tips for a long, healthy life

By Kenneth Spielvogel

How can you live a longer, healthier life? The answer is complicated and simple. “Experts” claim every conceivable option: cleanses, hormones, pills, exercises, diets, the list goes on. The options are dizzying, even to healthcare professionals.

As a physician, I understand people want quick and easy answers. To be frank, consider the facts and what will likely be our demise. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, heart disease and cancer cause nearly half of all deaths. The risk of heart disease and the most common cancers, skin and lung cancer, can be greatly reduced with simple lifestyle choices.



Kenneth
Spielvogel

Consider this road map for a longer, healthier life.

If you use tobacco, quit. Tobacco products include cigarettes, cigars, e-cigarettes, and chewing tobacco. Twenty-eight percent of all cancer deaths can be attributed to lung cancer. Quitting isn't easy. Barton Health offers smoking cessation clinics. CT Scans of the lungs are also available at a reduced rate.

Exercise every day. Yes, every day. Break a sweat, breathe hard, stretch, lift weights, and move your body. Try a new sport: standup paddleboard, climb at the gym, or dance at Zumba.

Don't know how to start? Seek advice from a physician or professional trainer.

Eat whole foods. Avoid fast food and packaged food with ingredients you cannot pronounce. Eat fruits, vegetables, nuts, fish, chicken, soy, and lean protein. If needed, get help from a nutritionist.

Wear sunscreen and skin protection. Apply a minimum of SPF 30 and reapply every two hours. Hats and long sleeve shirts also provide extra protection.

Wear your seatbelt.

Get regular cancer screenings. Men and women over 50 should have regular colon cancer screenings. Men age 50 to 55 should start getting prostate cancer screenings. Women should have regular breast cancer screenings starting at age 40. If you have a family history, consider earlier screenings.

Check your cholesterol. If you have high cholesterol, decide with your medical provider what therapies are best.

Turn off the electronics. When you look back, you won't remember your high score in Candy Crush or the celebrity hashtag you followed this week. Spend face-to-face time with friends and family. Embrace your surroundings and the beautiful place we call home. A fulfilling life will feel like a much longer life lived.

Teach your children and other young people about the steps above. Encourage healthy lifestyle choices before unhealthy behaviors form habits.

Focus on these simple steps. Find support from others like

your healthcare provider, family, friends, or personal trainer. Their support is critical for success.

Kenneth Spielvogel is a board certified OB/GYN physician with Barton Women's Health.

'Godzilla' doesn't live up to expectations



By Jeremy Miller

I've been dying to see "Godzilla" for the past several months. Having been very well educated by my old man, Godzilla was a household favorite for me. Mothra, Rodan, whoever, I loved it.

So, when I heard that Gareth Edwards was doing the reboot I was pumped. He wrote and directed 2010's underrated "Monsters", which I thought was unique and promising, so when he was named director of "Godzilla", I had high hopes.

It stars Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Elizabeth Olsen, Bryan Cranston and Ken Watanabe. While living in Japan working at a nuclear

power plant Joe Brody (Cranston) is alarmed at unusual seismic activity. The further he investigates, the more paranormal it becomes. A freak “earthquake” of perfectly patterned shocks shakes the plant to the point of collapse causing evacuation.

In a pretty epic and suspenseful scene, Brody lost what was most dear to him. Fast forward 15 years or so and we see young Ford Brody (Johnson) all grown up and in the military. He returns home from tour to wife Elle (Olsen) and a kid. Almost immediately upon his return he receives word from Japan that his father had been locked up in jail for trespassing. He decides to go to Japan to bail his old man out and bring him to the States to try and help him out.



Once he reunites with his father he quickly see that his father’s obsession with trying to figure out what exactly happened that day at the plant hasn’t subsided with time. Ford Sr. goes on and on about how it wasn’t a quake, it was something else. What could it have been, I wonder?

We hop over to Dr. Ishiro Serizawa (Watanabe) who is a scientist experimenting on some sort of unknown creature. Stuff goes bad real quick (as it typically does in this scenario) and a massive winged creature takes flight from the site. It starts destroying everything around it and Ishiro’s path ultimately crosses with the Ford fam’s and they form an alliance.

Ford’s data from way back when proves to be useful in understand this creature in the here and now. Ford Jr. takes action as the military side comes out and starts to help them

search and destroy this newly freed monster. They learn that the monster feeds off nuclear energy, so they do have some ideas as to where they can look. Unfortunately for them (so we think) they start to notice some more unusual activity stemming from the depths of the sea. All of a sudden a massive reading pops up ... GODZILLA!

From here we have a battle of the monsters, with Dr. Ishiro in one corner saying that there's a natural order to things and we should let them fight, and then there's the guys in caps saying we need to blow them all up. It proved for a pretty entertaining little three-way of who's the antagonist. Cities are leveled, bombs blow up, monsters roar, people run, and the movie ends.

What's my take? Well, to be honest, the trailers made it look absolutely epic and amazing. It wasn't. Epic? Sure, I guess, but nothing like I expected. There wasn't enough battle between Godzilla and the others. I will say that when they did fight, and when we the audience were privy to it; I was blown away by the effects and really into it. It seemed like the action stopped as quickly as it started, leaving me wanting more at every fight scene. Not good considering it's an action/epic.

I did like all the characters and I loved the story. Everyone who showed up brought his or her A-game, especially Cranston. I just love that guy. There was a time about 1:15 in where I was getting bored and just so badly wanted to see Godzilla tearing it up and didn't. Another huge problem I have is when a key scene of a trailer doesn't make the cut of the final film. One of the coolest scenes I wanted to see wasn't even in the movie. Total bummer. Overall it was fun, and Godzilla is extremely rad, I just didn't get enough of what I wanted.

South Lake Tahoe resident Jeremy Miller has more movie reviews online.

Cyrus to play at Incline on Independence weekend

Billy Ray Cyrus will perform at the Red, White and Tahoe Blue Festival in Incline Village on July 4-5.

Performances will take place outside on the Village Green directly across from the beach.

On July 4 Cyrus will join the Reno Philharmonic during their grand concert celebrating the 200th anniversary of the “Star-Spangled Banner”. Cyrus will perform his song “Some Gave All,” which honors fallen heroes and veterans everywhere, alongside the Reno Philharmonic. The concert will conclude with synchronized music to the fireworks display.

On July 5 Cyrus and his band will perform a full concert at the Village Green.

For a complete schedule of all weekend events and VIP ticket packages, go online.

Rich families face a marriage problem

By Liz Moyer, Wall Street Journal

Being born to the manor is one thing. Marrying one of its occupants is something else altogether.

Just ask Steven Siig, a self-described “ski bum” and extreme-sports documentary filmmaker who was living near Lake Tahoe and scraping by as a landscaper when he met his wife, Melissa, in 2001.

Unbeknown to him, she was the oldest granddaughter of Richard Bloch, the co-founder of the tax-preparation firm H&R Block Inc. Melissa Siig, now 41 years old, didn’t tell him this right away. “We’re very guarded about it,” she said.

“It was kind of intimidating,” said Steven Siig, 45, when he learned of her background. “I said, ‘Wow, it’s someone I use to do my taxes when I do my taxes.’ I didn’t even know if I had done taxes the last few years.”

The couple was engaged six months after they began dating, and Siig began a rapid-fire process of education and assimilation into the family – a move some financial consultants call “onboarding.” Bloch family members gave him personal finance and career advice, and the couple later started meeting with a UBS AG financial adviser. Steven Siig joined the RA Bloch Cancer Foundation board, along with his new wife, and started attending twice-a-year family gatherings in Aspen, Colo., and Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.

The onboarding process is one way wealthy families are trying to smooth intrafamily relations and safeguard their fortunes for future generations. As the scions of the patriarchs grow up and get married, the importance of teaching about wealth and its preservation rises, according to families and their advisers.

Read the whole story

Marijuana boom spawns ancillary businesses

By David Pierson, Los Angeles Times

Ben Wu took a six-figure pay cut when he left a career in private equity for a shot at the marijuana boom.

Trained to spot small businesses with big potential, he started this year as chief executive of Kush Bottles, a Santa Ana company that sells child-resistant plastic cannabis containers.

It took some persuading to get his parents and girlfriend to embrace the move. But Wu insists it was a sound business decision. As the pot industry blossoms, he reasoned, a robust supply chain is needed to help grow, package and market legal marijuana.

"The sky's the limit," said Wu, 35, a New York University business school graduate and former vice president at Wedbush Capital Partners. "As long as states continue to adopt, we're going to double growth each and every year."

Read the whole story

Social media impacting hiring practices

By John Weber, Wall Street Journal

Social networks offer a window into how people live their

lives.

But should employers be looking into that window?

It's becoming an increasingly important question. The number of people fired over social-media posts is rising, and many employers look closely at a job candidate's online presence before making a decision.

For an idea of how prevalent those practices have become, consider a 2013 survey from CareerBuilder, which helps corporations target and attract workers. According to the survey, 39 percent of employers dig into candidates on social sites, while 43% said they had found something that made them deep-six a candidate—such as posting inappropriate photos or information, or bad-mouthing a former boss.

On the flip side, 19 percent said they found information that sold them on a candidate, such as communication skills or a professional image.

Read the whole story

Handbell concert at S. Lake Tahoe Library

There will be a handbell concert by Tintabulations, an ensemble from Reno, on June 14 at 3pm at the South Lake Tahoe Library.

The concert series entitled Greetings From Tintab weaves stories from the group's past with modern bell literature. Traditional folk songs, smooth jazz, and classic rock are all part of the concert, as well as original works for bells

written by some of the nation's foremost handbell composers.

Performing on 120 bells and chimes, the 14 musicians that comprise Tintabulations prove that bell ringing can be entertaining year-round and not just at the holiday season.

Tahoe Tails – Adoptable Pets in South Lake Tahoe



Sophie

Sophia is a playful 5-year-old Chihuahua mix with soft long hair.

She's very sweet and loves to go for walks, and would fit into just about any home.

Sophia is spayed, microchipped, tested for heartworm, and vaccinated. She is at the El Dorado County Animal Services shelter in Meyers, along with many other dogs and cats who are waiting for their new homes.

Go online or to the Tahoe animal shelter's Facebook page to see photos and descriptions of all pets at the shelter.

Call 530.573.7925 for directions, hours, and other information

on adopting a pet.

For spay-neuter assistance for South Tahoe residents, go online.

– *Karen Kuentz*