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Animation kicks off festival

DANA OLAND

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The Idaho International Film Festival opened Thursday with a big-budget animated movie that is unlikely film festival fare.

Sony Pictures Animation's first feature-length project, "Open Season," featuring the voices of Martin Lawrence, Ashton Kutcher and Debra Messing, has deep Idaho connections. The film's "location" is drawn to look like Idaho, and its creator and executive producer is Boise resident Steve Moore.

"I called the town Timberline, but it's really a combination of Ketchum and McCall," Moore told the modest opening night crowd at the Egyptian Theatre.

The film is inspired by articles Moore read about animals that live around Ketchum and McCall. They eventually make the townfolk cranky and get tranquilized and shipped off to the wild. The question becomes, "How do they survive?"

Moore and his film launched the four-day festival that will screen films at the Egyptian, Edwards BoDo and The Flicks through Sunday. More than 50 films -- both foreign and domestic -- will be shown.

Though it's more commercial than the edgier, small-budget films that programmer Bruce Fletcher put in the rest of this festival, Fletcher doesn't care, he said.

"No snobbery involved here, and the studio did not shoe horn it in," he said. "It's just a darn good film."

Moore, 52, who writes the syndicated "In the Bleachers" comic strip, also showed the film at Edwards Downtown as a benefit for St. Joseph's Catholic School in Boise. At that showing, Moore signed about 100 autographs for the students.

ONLINE

IdahoStatesman.com

See a complete schedule of films and festival events.

Film festival details :

What: Idaho International Film Festival

When: Today-Sunday

Where: The Flicks, 646 Fulton St., Egyptian Theatre, 500 W. Main St., Edwards
Downtown in BoDo.

Tickets: Individual tickets: \$8 general, \$6 before 5 p.m.; \$10 opening and closing films.
Saturday 10 a.m. film is free.

Parties: Closing party at Reef, 125 6th St. upstairs: \$20 per person/\$35 per couple
includes the film. Party only: \$15 at the door.

To offer story ideas or comments, contact reporter Dana Oland at
dolandidahostatesman.com or 377-6442.

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