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FAMILY PERSPECTIVE ON FILMS



Jon Voight, center, stars as Adolph Rupp in "Glory Road."

'Glory Road'

- Rating: PG
- Suitable for: School-age children who can sit through a nearly two-hour movie and appreciate the subject matter
- What you should know: This film, based on a real story, dramatizes how the coach from a small Texas university changed basketball by recruiting and allowing black athletes to play instead of consigning them to the bench. It's inspiring, informative and entertaining.
- Language: Racial epithets are used.
- Sexual situations and nudity: None. Couples kiss, a student's romantic rendezvous lands his roomie in the hallway and a winking reference is made to a late night.
- Violence/scary situations: A young man is attacked in a restroom, and players discover their motel room has been vandalized, with racist graffiti on the walls.
- Drug and alcohol use: Basketball players indulge in tequila in a Mexican bar, and partygoers appear to be drinking beer.



Queen Latifah plays a shy, churchgoing woman who finds herself during a dream vacation in "Last Holiday."

'Last Holiday'

- Rating: PG-13
- Suitable for: Tweens, teens
- What you should know: Although the premise makes it sound dour, "Last Holiday" is a comedy with Queen Latifah. She plays Georgia, a meek saleswoman in New Orleans who, told she has only a month to live, withdraws her life's savings and heads to a luxurious European resort, where she blossoms.
- Language: A dozen mildly offensive words are used.
- Sexual situations and nudity: A man and his mistress are shown kissing, and there's talk about their affair.
- Violence/scary situations: Georgia's diagnosis is scary, although things aren't as dire as they seem. Other potentially scary scenes are played for laughs.
- Drug and alcohol use: Adults commiserate or celebrate with wine and champagne.

— Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

TAKE NOTES

Students of the month announced for November

Center Grove Middle School North has named its students of the month for November.

Sixth-grade students were Becca Planker, Miles Russell, Taylor West, Adam Nover, Leah Porter, Nick Marley, Mackenzie Thompson, Ryan Cain, Lauren Hines and Patrick Stemele.

Seventh-grade students were Mariah Killin, Jon Nicholson, Lindsey Freeman, Kolton Wise, Mackenzie Lenahan and Aaron Ross.

Eighth-grade students were Amber Elliott, Tony Gregory, Haley Clevenger, Sean Marley, Sarah Conlin and Jacob Paquette.

Storytime set at Indianapolis Zoo

Children can see storybook characters come to life at the Indianapolis Zoo, 1200 W. Washington St.

Storytime at the zoo will take place Jan. 21 in the Dolphin Adventure gallery at 9:30 a.m. for zoo members and at 11 a.m. for nonmembers.

Storytime is free with regular zoo admission.

It will feature the story of Corduroy Bear.

Information: 630-2001

Building interest in science, a block at a time



Robert LaCombe, 14, far right, and his teammates from J.W. Leary Junior High School in Massena, N.Y., test a robot on an obstacle course during a regional FIRST Lego League competition in December at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, N.Y. Organizers of the competition want to increase interest in science and engineering among elementary- and middle-school students.

AP PHOTOS

Legos today, engineering later

By MICHAEL HILL

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TROY, N.Y.

The crowd whoops and claps. Referees in striped shirts watch over young robot-makers who anxiously track their Lego creations zipping and turning on tabletops.

Teams of 9- to 14-year-olds with monikers like the Rambots and the Seymour Cyberteks have entered their robots in a regional FIRST Lego League competition conducted at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

This is a science lesson crossed with a sports competition.

For the kids, the contest offers fun and a shot at glory.

For organizers, the stakes are higher. They want to kick-start interest in science and engineering among kids, a subject that is lately preoccupying American business and academic leaders.

The fear is that a dearth of new science students will erode the nation's competitive advantages as the 21st century progresses.

Some educators have responded by adding a little sizzle, going beyond books and lectures to teach concepts through cartoons, videos and competitions like the long-running FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science Technology) series that made a recent stop at RPI.

"The goal is to create in the culture passion among kids to do something," said FIRST founder Dean Kamen, best known for inventing the scooter-like Segway. "I think the trouble is our culture does create a passion for kids, but their passion is related to one of two industries: entertainment or sports."

Doctors in computer sciences, mathematics, physics and engineering are down over the past decade, and more than half the recipients are not U.S. citizens, according to figures compiled by the National Science Foundation.

RPI President Shirley Jackson, a

member of the panel that produced the National Academies' report, calls the gap between the nation's need for scientists and engineers and the supply a quiet crisis. While such concerns are nothing new, Jackson said the situation has grown dire enough to attract more attention.

Reformers routinely focus on getting more kids interested in science, hoping to attack the problem at its roots. During the Lego competitions, sort of a Little League robotics competition, robots get points for completing a series of tasks arrayed around a tabletop, like knocking down flags.

The robots stall and ram into walls a lot. When machines miss their marks, the kids try again.

Just like scientists.

There's widespread fear that too few kids are interested in science these days and that the pipeline producing the next generation of American scientists is dribbling.

The influential National Academies sounded the alarm this fall with a congressionally requested report that counted more than 600,000 engineers graduating from higher education institutions in China last year, compared to 350,000 in India and about 70,000 in the United States.

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