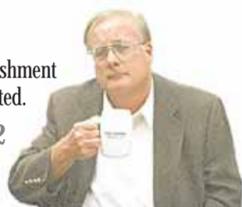


Pub grub

Lockerbie establishment delivers as expected.

See Page C12



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Your guide to music, movies, festivals, the arts and anything else that's cool

SECTION **C**

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'Alice' still works her magic

Audience participation encouraged during play

By ANNETTE JONES
DAILY JOURNAL FEATURES EDITOR
ajones@thejournalnet.com

Franklin College theater students will present the children's classic "Alice in Wonderland" for their winter-term project.

The quirky characters and audience participation in the show should keep children interested, says student director Sara Brown of Indianapolis.

The audience gets to boo the Queen of Hearts, she says, and they should especially enjoy the croquette scene.

The production is set for 7 p.m. today and Friday and 2 and 7 p.m. Saturday at Theatre Margot at the Johnson Center for Fine Arts on the college campus.

The plot will move along with the help of storytellers Nikki Brills of Greenwood, Caleb Dagger of Middletown, Courtney Davis of Fort Wayne, Martha Vance of Freelandville and Grace Adams of Ossian.

The storytellers also help change sets, moving furniture for various scenes on the black and white checkerboard floor.

As director, Brown chose the cast of 14 and crew of 12.

"I do what it takes to make it happen," she says.



Following the action on stage are, from left, stage manager Cory Morrow, sound board operator Brittany Burkett and assistant stage manager Julie Evans.

Brown plans to continue her education in museum studies at IUPUI. Her goal is to direct children's plays in a museum after graduation.

During a recent rehearsal, Brown watched every move and listened to every line of the performers, occasionally offering suggestions.

The cast includes students interested in theater as a career and stage novices who took the winter-term course for the experience of acting.

(SEE ALICE, PAGE C12)



"Alice in Wonderland" cast members, from left, Tashia Sizemore as the Doormouse, Lindsey Brand as the Mad Hatter and Robin Kidall as the March Hare rehearse a tea party scene.

IF YOU GO

'Alice in Wonderland'

What: A play for adults and children
When: 7 p.m. today and Friday and 2 and 7 p.m. Saturday
Where: Theatre Margot at the

Johnson Center for Fine Arts on the Franklin College campus
Admission: \$10; \$6 for seniors and students; free for Franklin College students with ID
Tickets: 738-8271



Dad-and-son duo Jaden Smith, left, and Will Smith star in "The Pursuit of Happyness." The elder Smith was nominated for a best actor Oscar for the role.

Oscar nods highlight new Hollywood diversity

Variety of races, ages represented in film honors

By CHRISTY LEMIRE
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif.

Led by the splashy black musical "Dreamgirls" and the multilingual "Babel," diversity took on a deeper meaning at the Oscar nominations Tuesday, extending beyond ethnicity to age, gender and experience.

"Dreamgirls" received a leading eight nominations, although it was left out of the best-picture race. Co-stars Eddie Murphy and Jennifer Hudson, already Golden Globe winners for their roles as tormented R&B singers, are both favorites in the supporting-acting categories.

"Babel," which has seven nominations, takes place over three continents in four languages. Among its nominees are two first-timers: Adriana Barraza of Mexico and Rinko Kikuchi of Japan, who are competing against one another for best supporting actress.

And "Babel" director Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu, one of the "big three"

(SEE OSCAR, PAGE C8)

Derivative 'Smokin' Aces' packed with two-dimensional, sleazeball characters

By CHRISTY LEMIRE
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

"Smokin' Aces" is so obviously derivative of Guy Ritchie's bloody, hyperkinetic style of ensemble crime flick, it could have been called "Lock, Stock and Two Smokin' Aces."

Writer-director Joe Carnahan also channels Quentin Tarantino and Tony Scott with his hip dialogue and high body count.

That is a shame, because Carnahan clearly has the capability of establishing a voice of his own: His previous films include the intelligent, vastly superior detective drama "Narc" from 2002.

But amid all the freakish and sadistic hit men (and women) converging on Lake Tahoe for the \$1 million prize to assassinate magician Buddy "Aces" Israel, it's impossible

MOVIE REVIEW

'Smokin' Aces'

Rating: R for strong bloody violence, pervasive language, some nudity and drug use

Stars: 1½ out of four

to care about or root for a single one of them.

They're all such self-consciously two-dimensional villains, and that especially extends to Israel himself, played by Jeremy Piven with an obnoxious mix of coked-up bravado and bleary-eyed paranoia.

After spending a little time with this guy, and the various thugs and hookers who surround him in his lavish penthouse suite, seeing him taken out wouldn't be such a bad thing, except that would mean

some other despicable figure has succeeded.

Carnahan veers wildly between dark comedy and over-the-top violence but never quite finds the right tone. (He does get a couple of good scenes out of Alicia Keys and Jason Bateman, though.) Ray Liotta, Ryan Reynolds, Ben Affleck, Taraji P. Henson and Andy Garcia are also among the overly large cast.

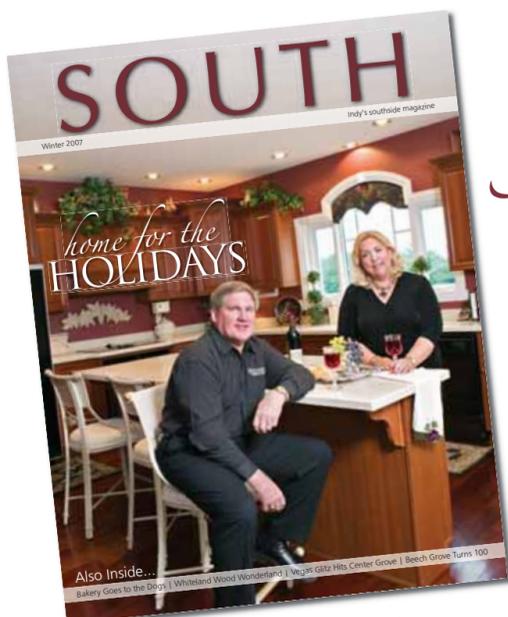
"Aces" opens with a mob boss putting a hit out on the schmaltzy Israel, a longtime associate who has agreed to serve as the prime witness in a mounting federal case against the family.

FBI agents Carruthers (Liotta, who also starred in "Narc") and Messner (Reynolds) swoop into Tahoe on the orders of the deputy director (Garcia)



A bodyguard confronts his boss, sleazy magician Buddy "Aces" Israel (Jeremy Piven), in "Smokin' Aces," a dark action comedy about the interlocking tales of high stakes and low lives.

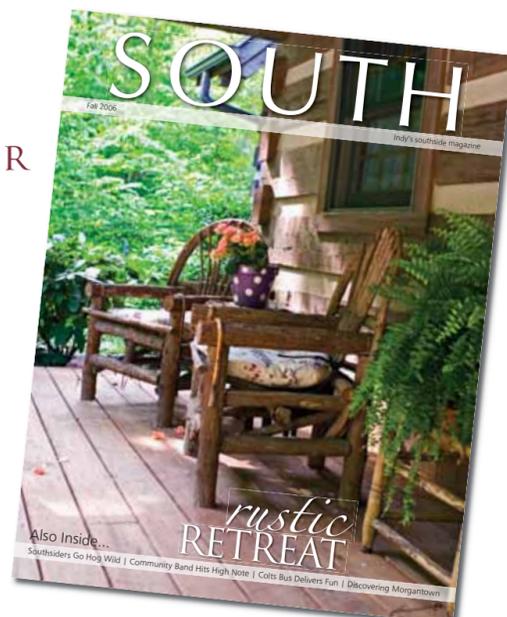
(SEE ACES, PAGE C12)



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