

Film Review Skip Sheffield

Fire, Aim, Ready: An Iraq Documentary

By Skip Sheffield

STAFF WRITER

★★★★

"No End in Sight" says it in a nutshell.

As the Iraq war drags on, more and more people become convinced it was an ill-advised, unfounded, badly-executed mistake.

If you are not yet convinced, this comprehensive documentary by Charles Ferguson may sway you. Ferguson has taken the time to interview U.S. and Iraqi government and military officials who tried in vain to dissuade President Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney presidential advisor Paul Wolfowitz and other top Republicans who were convinced it was necessary to invade Iraq, force president Saddam Hussein from office, and install "democ-

racy" for Iraq.

Ferguson is a former Brookings Institute scholar with a doctorate in political science, and he approaches the troubled Middle East from a rational, historical stance.

The roots of the current war were in the Iraq-Iran war that ended in stalemate in 1988 he reveals. At the time President Reagan supported Saddam Hussein.

An assassination attempt against the first President Bush in 1993 after he had urged a campaign against Saddam was something his son George W. evidently never forgot.

Ferguson has assembled an impressive cast of characters who tried to provide a voice of reason after the tragedy of Sept. 11, 2001 and before the decision was signed to go to war in January of 2003: Ambassador Barbara Bodine, who was in charge of Baghdad, Col.



Laurence Wilkerson, who was Chief of Staff for Secretary of state Gen. Colin Powell, Seth Moulton, a Harvard-educated lieutenant with the Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA) who was replaced by Bush party liner Paul Bremer.

Methodically, Ferguson shows the faulty decision-making process that led to war, the horren-

dous errors made once the attack was underway, and finally the extreme difficulty in finding any solution.

Ferguson shows that many Iraqis welcomed the U.S. intervention, but that good will was squandered when the incredibly stupid decision was made not to intervene when common criminals looted the national library

and museum of Iraq.

We have been paying for that single mistake ever since with more than 3,000 U.S. soldiers now dead, but there are so many more it boggles the mind.

"No End in Sight" is an enraging film, but maybe that's a good thing. Maybe cooler heads and sharper minds can figure our way out of this tragic mess.

★★★★

On the lighter side we have "Mr. Woodcock," with Billy Bob Thornton playing bad boy again as the coach from Hell.

Many of us have had a Mr. Woodcock in our lives: frustrated Phys-Ed teachers who bully the weak and fearful in sadistic ways.

Yes, there is plenty of low physical comedy as we see Coach Woodcock in action against his hapless subjects. One of the most hapless is flabby, uncoordinated John Farley.

John, played by Sean William Scott, "Stiffler" in the "American Pie" movies, grows up, slims down and becomes the author of a best-selling motivational book.

Imagine his chagrin when he learns his mother has fallen in love with Mr. Woodcock and wants to marry him.

What raises this comedy is the fact mother is played by formidable Susan Sarandon. There must be something more to Mr. Woodcock than meets the eye.

There is, of course, and that's why is often funny comedy is not totally mindless.

South Florida restaurant pays homage to Brazilian history

By Dale M. King

CITY EDITOR

The Gaucho Rodizio Restaurant in Lighthouse Point pays homage to Brazilian history.

It is, in fact, the only Brazilian steakhouse in the area, said Adam Antunes, banquet coordinator and public relations person for the restaurant and its Chateau de Ville banquet facility.

The food has become so popular, he noted, that many patrons using the banquet hall prefer to select from the Brazilian menu.

Antunes said Gaucho Rodizio is a South American style barbecue with offerings of steak, pork, lamb and poultry, among other items. "Rodizio is the Brazilian way of flaming and serving skewered meats, sausage and poultry," he said.

The restaurant opened four years ago, augmenting the Chateau de Ville banquet hall. Victor Smirnov is director of the restaurant, working in a partnership with colleagues in Brazil. Among his partners are Brazilians and Americans.

Gaucho Rodizio hearkens back to the early 1900s when many Europeans migrated to South America to escape an economic depression.

Immigrants from Germany and Italy settled in a little-known region in Southern Brazil, an area of expansive grasslands, rich fertile soil and a very mild climate.

The land provided excellent grazing conditions for livestock and yielded abundant quantities of fresh fruits and vegetables, said Antunes.

"To celebrate good fortune, the ranchers — or gauchos — hosted a thanksgiving feast twice a year. Fresh fruits and vegetables were served at a great table. Beef, chicken, pork and fish were carefully seasoned and cooked over an open fire."

"The gauchos presented the meats still on the skewer and carved the meat for each person individually. As population centers grew, people began to open restaurants which provided the same quality of food and service."

At Gaucho Rodizio, meats are marinated with special herbs and spices and then slowly grilled. The meat is then sliced directly from the skewer onto patrons' plates by gaucho-attired waiters.

Visitors can also choose selections from a salad bar and pasta station.

Earlier this month, the restaurant opened its bossa nova piano bar, open Tuesday through Saturday nights. Antunes said the inspiration came from the bossa nova — a style of Brazilian music created by Vinicius de Moraes, Antonio Carlos Jobim and Joao Gilberto and first introduced in Brazil in 1958.

Dale M. King can be reached at 561-549-0832 or at dking@bocanews.com.



The Gaucho Rodizio Restaurant on North Federal Highway in Lighthouse Point.

(Special to the News)



Providing entertainment are Atilano Muradas on guitar and Isildinha Muradas on tambourine.



Dancers perform at the Gaucho Rodizio.

(Ellen Cino/Staff Photo)

Boca Raton mortgage planner reaches out with 'webinars'

By Dale M. King

CITY EDITOR

Boca Raton mortgage planner Jay Robin says he will provide that service — and more — to his clients.

"My title is a mortgage planner," he said. "But I show people how to plan to create wealth."

The young entrepreneur has launched "webinars" — seminars available on the Internet. He held one on Aug. 29, and another one — dealing with credit education — is scheduled for Oct. 10.

"The concept has been out there," he said, referring to teleconferencing, where 1,000 people can link in to a workshop. He noted that the "webinars" are free.

But Robin isn't giving away the store. He anticipates that his mortgage planning, investing

and lending aspects will attract customers. People who see the "webinars," he said, will become educated. And, he hopes, when it comes time to buy a home or make an investment, they will come to him.

Robin puts a lot of stock in education. "My original thought is to keep people up to date," he said. He is currently in the process of becoming a certified mortgage planning specialist.

While Robin notes that the mortgage market has been hit hard by slow home sales, everyone should be aware of what's happening. People who don't want to buy or sell a home right now still need to know about credit, stocks, bonds and futures.

He urges the public to hang in there. "All markets, while cyclical in nature, are self-correcting,"



Jay Robin

(Special to the News)

he said. "For the last six or seven years, real estate was booming and riding high."

"The correction we're experiencing now," he said, "is, in a sense, natural, and directly related to the extremely loose guidelines and perhaps overzealous lending and leveraging during the boom cycle."

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