

# PREVIEWS

Information for the California and Nevada Motion Picture Theatre Industry

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## 2013 Membership Meeting Set for June 19th at The Landmark

The National Association of Theatre Owners of California/Nevada will hold its Annual Membership Meeting on Wednesday, June 19th, at The Landmark Theatre in the Westside Pavilion in West Los Angeles. A complimentary continental breakfast will be served beginning at 9:00 a.m., with the meeting to begin at 10:00 a.m.

Among the business items on the agenda will be the introduction of the Association's officers and board of directors for the coming year. We will be announcing this year's winners of the Association's annual post-secondary education scholarship competition, with recipients to be awarded \$10,000 each. Also to be announced are the winners of grants for graduate students attending the USC School of Cinema and Television, and those attending the UCLA School of Theatre, Film and Television.

The program will include a presentation by Rentrak, the leading domestic and international boxoffice reporting service. Janice O'Bryan, vice president, theatrical division and Daniel Livek, manager, client relations, will review recent box-office performance and industry trends and forecasts, with a view of our industry within the broader context of competition for the entertainment dollar.

The meeting will also include a presentation by Movie Heroes, Inc. partners Matt Sconce and Keith Walker who will discuss their innovative business concept and the grassroots marketing campaign mounted to resurrect the Met Cinema, a five-plex previously forced to close its doors for lack of business in rural Oakhurst, CA. (See separate story on Met Cinema)

Registration will be open from Monday, May 20<sup>th</sup> through Friday, June 7<sup>th</sup> in the Meetings and Seminars section of the Association website [www.NATOCalNev.org](http://www.NATOCalNev.org). Attendance is open to members only. Representatives from corporate headquarters and field locations are encouraged to attend as the information presented will provide a good insight into many different aspects of our industry.

Additional details and the announcement of this year's keynote speaker will appear in the next newsletter.

## Variety Boys' & Girls' Club Enhances Facilities with NATO of California/Nevada Grant

The Variety Boys' & Girls' Club serving the youth of East Los Angeles continues to enhance its facilities with the purchase of valuable new equipment made possible through a grant from NATO of California/Nevada.

By utilizing a portion of the \$100,000 grant awarded in 2012, the Club was able to expand the services and capabilities of the Multimedia Community Center, also known as the NATO Room. Recent purchases include two new 21.5 Inch Apple IMAC's (bringing to a total of six Apple IMACs for the NATO Room), a new Numark NS6 4 channel digital DJ controller with built in mixer, an Odyssey Flight Zone Numark NS6 Case to

hold the NS6 DJ system, new speakers and speaker stands, and wireless microphones, all serving to greatly strengthen the Club's popular music programs.

Cris Arzate, the Club's executive director, reports that five members who have been taking digital photography classes in the Club's NATO room, have been selected to compete as Finalists in the Boys' & Girls' Clubs of America Digital Photography Contest. Arzate said that this is the first time in well more than a decade that the Club has made it to the National level finalist designation, adding that the achievement would not have been possible without the NATO room and the support and generous funding from NATO of California/Nevada.

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11661 San Vicente Blvd., Suite 830  
Los Angeles, CA 90049  
Phone: 310/460-2900  
Fax: 310/460-2901  
E-mail: Office@NATOCalNev.org  
www.NATOCalNev.org

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## Innovative Subscription Plan Resurrects Small Town Theatre

Oakhurst, California, in Madera County, is one of many small towns nestled in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountain range about 14 miles south of the entrance to Yosemite National Park. The area's sole movie theatre, the 839-seat five-plex, Met Cinema, was forced to shut its doors in November 2012, due to lack of business. The next closest theatre to Oakhurst is 30 miles away.

Enter Matt Sconce, a young, award winning director/writer/filmmaker and a Jr. High youth pastor; Keith Walker, an aerospace industry veteran with a degree in Engineering Physics from University of the Pacific and a masters from Carnegie Mellon in Software Engineering; and James Nelson, a United States Air Force Veteran with a background in business strategy, and the winner of a national video gaming concept competition with Coca-Cola.

All Oakhurst natives and residents, the trio has been close friends since elementary school and, like so many in the area, lamented the closing of the Met Cinema. Long part of the social fabric of the rural community, the theatre held many fond memories dating from their childhood.

Not willing to simply see the Met disappear from the local landscape, they hatched an innovative plan to bring it back to life. Their idea was to enlist the support of the town and surrounding communities by mounting a "Save the Met" campaign, with an initial goal of signing up at least 3,000 subscribers paying \$19.95 per month. A membership entitles the holder to see as many of the five-plex's films as they like each month, but each film only once. Seeing a film a second time requires purchase of a ticket at regular box-office prices.

One key element of their campaign was a direct mail effort, placing a promotional flyer at the door of every home and in every P.O. Box for the entire area's 36,000 residents. The direct mail campaign was complemented by extensive street promotion. The results - in less than one month, they reached their goal of 3,000 subscribers. And since reopening the theatre a mere two months ago, they have gained an additional 700 subscribers.

For distributors, admissions to their films are shown as regular admissions at the prevailing box-office charge, regardless of whether the patron is a subscription holder.

The very successful program has already enabled the partners to recently complete a full conversion to digital projection and sound. They have also upgraded the lobby area and concession stand, and installed an espresso bar and adjoining lounge.

According to Matt Sconce, Met Cinema subscribers feel like they have a stake in the theatre, a sense of participation, almost like a pride of ownership. They know that they helped to save the Met Cinema, they value it and they take care of it. And with subscribers' email addresses in their database, they have a terrific marketing tool at hand in being able to email links to trailers of upcoming features, as well as other promotional material.

Sconce feels that their subscription program model could be a viable option for small, struggling theatres. He notes that admissions are way up, revenues are way up and film rentals are way up - a win, win all the way around.

We welcome the Met Cinema family as NATO of California/Nevada's newest member and wish them continued success.

(You can learn more about the Met Cinema at: [www.metcinema.com](http://www.metcinema.com))



*Good old fashion street promotion helped make the Save the Met campaign so successful*

# June is Ratings Awareness Month

## Is Your Theatre Prepared?

- ❑ **Employee Notification Regarding Ratings Awareness Month** – Member company executives should notify ALL employees that June 2013 is Ratings Awareness Month, and should describe the company's activities planned for the month. Theatre personnel responsible for press inquiries should be made fully aware of all activities undertaken by the company.

- ❑ **ID-Check Policy Reminder** – Member company executives should remind all company employees of your ID-Check policy for "R" and "NC-17" rated films, via company-wide memo, staff meetings, and other appropriate communication channels.

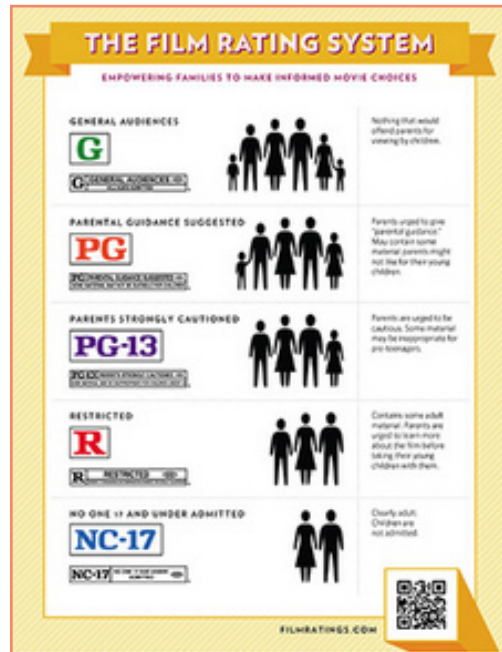
- ❑ **Personnel Policy Review** – Ratings compliance officers should review

their personnel policies to ensure proper emphasis on ratings education and enforcement. Any updates or enhancements in those policies should be promptly communicated to all employees.

- ❑ **Display Ratings Posters** – Ratings compliance officers should take steps to ensure that posters explaining the ratings system are displayed in every theatre complex. Contact NATO if you need additional posters. (can be found by clicking on the Ratings Links at [www.natoonline.org](http://www.natoonline.org).)

- ❑ **Include Ratings Information on Web Site** – Ratings compliance officers should work with their company information technology providers to ensure that ratings information is included on your company's web site. (can be found by clicking on the Ratings Links at [www.natoonline.org](http://www.natoonline.org))

- ❑ **Include Ratings Information and Protocols on Online Ticketing Systems and Kiosks** – Ratings compliance officers should review the online ticketing system and ticketing kiosks utilized by your company to make sure that ratings information is included in the system. You should also review the prompts utilized when tickets for "R" and "NC-17" rated movies are ordered to ensure proper age requirement notification.



- ❑ **Monitor One-Sheets to Ensure Ratings Information is Included Once the Movie is Rated** – Studio marketing departments should distribute movie posters with ratings information once a movie is rated. Theatre personnel must ensure that unrated posters are replaced with rated posters once they become available. If rated posters are not made available after a movie is rated, theatre personnel should inform NATO.

- ❑ **Ensure the Compatibility of Trailers** – Ratings compliance officers and theatre marketing personnel should always take steps to ensure that trailers are compatible with the feature film that follows. All trailers should be viewed prior to exhibition, with feature film audience

compatibility in mind. Trailers for "R" rated movies should never be shown before films rated "G" or "PG", and should be viewed and assessed before being shown in conjunction with a "PG-13" feature. Exhibitors receiving patron complaints regarding trailer compatibility should inform NATO.

- ❑ **Reach out to Local Newspapers** – Ratings compliance officers and company marketing executives should contact newspapers with whom you do business to encourage them to include reasons for the ratings in their movie reviews.

- ❑ **Reach out to Community, Parent and Religious Organizations** – Company executives and ratings compliance officers should consider using the NATO ratings power point to provide tutorials to local groups on the rating system. Electronic copies of the tutorial can be obtained by going to [www.natoonline.org](http://www.natoonline.org) and clicking on the Ratings Links.

- ❑ **General Patron Education** – Company executives and ratings compliance officers should investigate additional ways to use this month to educate patrons about the ratings system. Post your company's ratings policy where all patrons can see. Encourage box office attendants to mention the ratings in their conversations with patrons. Conduct theatre open houses and disseminate ratings information. Reach out to local schools. Create employee contests with ratings themes. Be creative and have fun!

# CALENDAR of EVENTS & HOLIDAYS

**NATO of CA/NV  
Summer/Fall  
Film Product Seminars**

May 7  
Southern California

May 9  
Northern California

**Mother's Day**

May 12



**Memorial Day observed**

May 27

**Flag Day**

June 14

**Father's Day**

June 16

**NATO of CA/NV  
Annual  
Membership  
Meeting**

June 19

**Summer Begins**

June 21



Watch for the June issue for photos and news from the  
Summer/Fall Film Product Seminar