

# Movies: Taking the films on the road

(Continued from Page D1)

you buy a ticket for someone and buy a Coke and a popcorn, it's another \$20."

Stekeur's big screens are frequently set up in the service of organizations, which use a cheap movie night as a different kind of fund-raising event. He recently brought his screen to Barnegat High School for an event to raise money for the class of 2010. For \$5 folks got to watch "A Night at the Museum."

"Selling cookies and Yankee Candles is so old and no one does it anymore," said Rich Dugan, 16, vice president of the sophomore student government at Barnegat High School, who found out about Movies Under The Starz through an online search.

It costs between \$1,500 and \$2,000 for an organization to rent one of the inflatable screens. Screens for private use, like a birthday party, rent for about \$400. Stekeur has the rights to show movies in a variety of genres. And he isn't the only outdoor movie buff to make a trade of his nostalgia for drive-ins. Another venture called Movies Under the Stars is operated by Tom Monaghan,

who provides a screen for anyone with a DVD and an audience, mostly at backyard parties for birthdays and graduations.

At hospitals, staff members have wheeled out patients on beds and gurneys for movies on the lawn. Setting up films for residents of assisted living facilities means a lot of Fred Astaire and Humphrey Bogart. Four nights before Christmas, Stekeur showed "It's A Wonderful Life" outside one extravagantly decorated house.

"People passing by will actually come by and watch," he said. "The police love it, it really clogs up the street."

Whereas in the past, each car received a speaker, Stekeur sets up an FM transmitter. All moviegoers have to do is switch on the station to listen to the film's soundtrack.

"When I went to the drive-in movie, you had to get close enough and you had to get the speaker put in your window," said Dave Levari, owner of Tuckahoe's Station House and Levari's Seafood and American Grill, formerly Triton Tavern. Friends of his who brought their children to a movie there last month said the younger viewers were impressed, he

said. "It's amazing that they didn't know what a drive-in movie was."

Stekeur is glad to help reignite some enthusiasm for "the campiness and the folklore of drive-in movies." He estimates that he has watched 3,000 to 4,000 films in his life, admitting to a "pretty big" movie collection.

In possession of a Moviefone-ready voice, he worked in radio before becoming a professional movie man and still hosts a radio show on Richard Stockton College's WLFR-FM 91.7 called Tie-Dyed, which he says is one of the last Grateful Dead radio shows in the country.

Stekeur's enthusiasm for film has rubbed off on his partner, Dwight Rose, who jumped into the grassroots of show business after wrapping up a career as a Wawa corporate employee.

"It's a heck of a lot of fun," said Rose, who was present at a recent showing of "Alvin and the Chipmunks" outside Tuckahoe's Station House catering hall. "The people were just oohing and ahing," he said.

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