

julien dubuque international film festival DAY 3

A long way from ‘Nanook’

Documentaries tell riveting stories, reach wider audiences

BY MICHELLE LONDON • michelle.london@thmedia.com

“Nanook of the North,” in 1922, presented, for the first time, the details of the life of an Inuit family in Alaska.

It was considered the first feature documentary, but it was not without its controversies — Nanook’s name wasn’t really Nanook, he wasn’t married to the woman depicted as his wife and filmmaker Robert Flaherty staged many of the scenes, which were considered anachronistic and not an accurate portrayal of the culture.

Documentaries were once shown only in art houses or on PBS. But today, with streaming channels like Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu and others finding documentaries easy to license or buy, they are more accessible to movie watchers than ever before, and viewers are finding riveting stories of people, social issues and historic events that they might not have been exposed to otherwise.

‘FOR THE LIVING’

In “For the Living,” an annual 60-mile bike ride between Auschwitz and Krakow is the framework for a documentary that will stun you with its timeline of genocides through history, from the Spanish conquest of the Aztec Empire through the inter-ethnic wars after the split of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s.

“The patterns are indelible

and unmistakable,” said Tim Roper, who narrated the film and co-wrote and directed it with Marc Bennett. “The way we humans use ‘othering’ to dehumanize other people is bad enough, but then you push them to the fringes of society, and people start believing that they’re less than human.”

The annual ride retraces the steps of Marcel Zielinski, who was 10 years old when he was liberated from Auschwitz and made the walk in the middle of February back to his home



Contributed

Marcel Zielinski, who survived Auschwitz as a young boy, stands outside the fence of what is now a memorial and museum in Oswiecim, Poland, with his granddaughter.

in Krakow, where he found another family living in the home his parents had told him to return to when he could.

“These were Jews, the most hated people in Europe,” Roper said. “Bitter cold, no coat, a Jewish Star on his clothing, locals who weren’t helpful for fear of being rounded up themselves. And he was a little boy.” Zielinski’s father died on one of the Nazi death march-

es. His mother found her son six months later in an orphanage. Zielinski, now in his 90s, spent many years living in Canada and now lives in Tel Aviv, Israel. He still participates in the For the Living Ride when he can, which is a fundraiser for Krakow’s Jewish Community Center.

The documentary includes interviews with other survivors, historic experts and

with Ben Ferencz, a lawyer who investigated war crimes after World War II, and was the chief prosecutor for the U.S. Army during one of the Nuremberg trials. Ferencz died in 2023 at the age of 103.

“This is a story about human nature and human history,” Roper said. “Our mission is to start conversations, just like every other doc doing the festival circuit.”



Day 3

The TH will be covering the Julien Dubuque International Film Festival live this week.

Thursday: Familial connections on set and off.

Yesterday: Neurodivergence in film.

Today: Documentaries at JDIFF.

Roper, whose background is actually comedy, told his wife Lisa Effress, who produced the film, that there was a much larger story to be told.

“Telling the story of riding in the footsteps of a 10-year-old little boy is Empathy 101,” he said. “One of the assumptions people make is, ‘Oh, another Holocaust movie,’ but this is so much more. This is about all of us, and it has so much relevance to what we’re going through right now.”

‘THE LAST OF THE HOUNDS’

Adam Irving has been a Los Angeles-based documentary

See **DOCS, PAGE 8A**



Contributed

Greyhounds race at Greyhound Park in Dubuque. The park closed in 2022.

Where to see these documentaries this weekend

“For the Living”: 10 a.m. today, Hotel Julien Dubuque Ballroom, 200 Main St., and 4:15 p.m. Sunday, April 27, Five Flags Theater, 400 Main St. Writer-director Tim Roper will host a question-and-answer after both screenings.

“The Last Hounds”: While the screenings for this Dubuque-centered doc have passed, you can keep up with news on streaming or theatrical releases and other film fest screenings at lasthounds.com or on Facebook at facebook.com/thelasthounds.

“Standout: The Ben Kjar Story”:

12:45 p.m. today, The Grand Opera House, 135 W. Eighth St. Kjar will be hosting a wrestling clinic from 8:30 to 10 a.m. today at the University of Dubuque’s McCormick Gymnasium, 2000 University Ave. The clinic is free. The first 100 attendees will receive a free ticket to this afternoon’s screening, courtesy of Tom and Barb Barton, the film’s sponsors. Kjar and writer-director Tanner Christensen will host a question-and-answer after the screening.

Other docs to catch before the festival ends on Sunday:

Special Screening: “Tainted Love”: Academy Award-winner for

“The Cove” and Dubuque native Louie Psihoyos will present a special preview screening of his latest documentary about the dangers of microplastics in our world. Psihoyos will host a question-and-answer after the screening.

“Call Me Dancer”: 10 a.m. today, The Grand Opera House.

“Rebel with a Clause”: 10 a.m. Sunday, April 27, Five Flags Center, Majestic Theater.

“The Pantone Guy”: 8 p.m. Sunday, April 27, The Grand Opera House.

“The Ramba Effect”: 1:30 p.m. today, Five Flags Center, Majestic Theater.

Global ethic: Hope for the future from the world’s religions

BY CRAIG NESSAN
For the Telegraph Herald



The Roman Catholic theologian Hans Küng asked already in 1994, the burning question whether there can be peace in the world without peace among the religions.

To answer this question, he together with other global religious leaders advocated that the Parliament of the World’s Religions affirm a global ethic. A global ethic refers to shared religious values and teachings that de-

scribe a way of life for people of faith.

The Declaration of a Global Ethic is the fruit of those efforts. The declaration begins with recognition of the dangers we are facing: “The world is in agony ... Peace eludes us ... the planet is being destroyed ... neighbors live in fear ... women and men are estranged from each other ... children die!”

With a sense of urgency, the declaration affirms that core values already exist as the basis for a global ethic. These values begin with the Golden Rule: “Do to others whatever you would like

them to do to you.” This is the foundation for shared responsibility to treat all people humanely, the way we would like to be treated.

Four commitments summarize the core teachings of a global ethic. First, commitment to a culture of nonviolence and respect for life. This teaching is based on the inherent value of human life. Every person is made in the image of God and deserves respect and dignity. It asks us to search for peaceful ways to resolve conflict.

Second, commitment to a culture of solidarity and a just economic order. This

teaching holds that everyone deserves equal opportunity to attain their potential as a human being. It calls us to speak with compassion and to deal fairly with others, avoiding prejudice and hatred. It promotes an economy that meets the basic needs of all people as the basis for a just and peaceful world.

Third, commitment to a culture of tolerance and a life of truthfulness. This teaching encourages us to speak and act truthfully, learning to admit our mistakes and forgive others. It promotes learning from the past and

not being enslaved by memories of hate. Instead, it calls for opening our hearts to one another in building a world community.

Fourth, commitment to a culture of equal rights. This teaching regards the needs of the children, the aged, the poor, the sick, the suffering and the dying. It promotes partnership between men and women. No one should be treated as inferior or exploited in any way. We are interdependent with one another and with the earth, sky, waters and all their creatures.

These four pillars of a

global ethic from the world’s religions challenge us.

Are we committed to peacemaking, social justice, speaking truthfully and protecting the needs of the most vulnerable?

The core teachings from the world’s religions can inspire people of faith to “commit ourselves to a common global ethic, to better mutual understanding, as well as socially beneficial, peace-fostering and Earth-friendly ways of life.”

Nesson is a professor at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque.



Ben Kjar

Contributed

DOCS: Dubuque focus

Continued from page 7A

filmmaker for 15 years. He had never been to Dubuque, much less the state of Iowa, until he arrived to film “The Last of the Hounds,” a documentary about the closing of Iowa Greyhound Park in 2022.

Irving’s interest was piqued when he saw a headline about how the 100-year-old sport of greyhound racing was coming to an end.

“Analytics show that docs about dogs do well,” Irving, 43, said. “There were four parks left in 2022. And (Dubuque) was the only one of the four that got back to me.”

Irving talked to employees, dog owners, track officials and fans during his 12 days of shooting in Dubuque.

“That’s really efficient for a doc,” he said. “It’s really unusual. I could have spent months here, but the truth is I initially envisioned this as a short, but while I was filming, I realized it could be a feature film.”

Irving said the access that was afforded to him by the staff at the park was unprecedented.

“I’m used to, as a documentary filmmaker, not being trusted,” he said. “The assumption is that we’re going to come to the Midwest and portray them as simple or uneducated or unsophisticated, and I had to work hard to overcome that. They gave me a lot of access and pretty much let me go wherever I wanted to go.”

The park staff also directed Irving to Abilene, Kan., the location of the National Greyhound Association and the National Greyhound Hall of Fame. It is also the center of greyhound breeding.

“I can say these animals are treated very well,” he said. “They treat them first and foremost as athletes. They feed them well, they get veterinary care unlike what any pet gets. They are breeding all-star athletes.”

Irving said his research prior to filming any documentary is extensive, a practice that goes back to his first job in L.A.

“I was working on ‘Say Yes to the Dress,’” he said. “I became probably the most knowledgeable straight man on wedding dresses than anybody on the show. And so I have that knowledge about the greyhound breed and about the sport of greyhound racing.”

Irving was more than impressed with Dubuque and its residents and particularly the people he came in contact with while filming “The Last Hounds.”

“Many people had been there since Day One (in 1985),” he said. “And they were very emotional about the closing of the park.”

‘STANDOUT: THE BEN KJAR STORY’

Ben Kjar was born with Crouzon syndrome, a genetic disorder that results in a misshapen skull, shallow eye sockets and other abnormal features.

Most children born with Crouzon undergo numerous surgeries to keep from developing hydrocephalus, to make breathing easier or to correct alignment of the jaw or other issues.

In Centerville, Utah, where Kjar lived with his parents, Scott and Stana, everybody knew Ben, said writer-director Tanner Christensen, who also grew up in the town.

“We weren’t great friends or anything,” Christensen said. “I was friends with his older brother. You couldn’t live in Centerville without knowing who Ben was. He was just kind of a magnet.”

Christensen’s father, T.C., a well-known cinematographer in the film business and a producer for this film, started talking about a documentary when Kjar was still in middle school.

“He would say, ‘That kid has a story,’” Christensen said. “It took 30 years, but we made it happen.”

Kjar’s personality and natural charisma shine through, but it wasn’t always easy to escape the bullies.

“It always went in phases,” Kjar said. “The first time in new classes or at a new school, there were always kids who hadn’t seen me before. I needed to find something that gave me confidence and that would give me a reputation that would come before me. Wrestling was it.”

A three-time Utah State Champion in high school, Kjar would go on to wrestle Division I at Utah Valley University. He married LaCole, a track athlete he met at Utah Valley, and they would go on to adopt three children.

Kjar is a motivational speaker and real estate investor who still loves to talk about how wrestling helped him to overcome some of life’s biggest challenges.

“It’s not a sports story,” said Scott Kjar, Ben’s father. “It’s a story of rising above.”

A glossary of terms used in a papal transition

The Associated Press

A change in popes — through death or resignation — is a complicated process, with centuries-old rituals involving the transition in leadership for both the spiritual head of the global Catholic Church and the Vatican’s head of state.

These are the need-to-know terms — some of them in Latin — to help make sense of news in the coming days:

Who is the Vatican camerlengo? This is the “chamberlain” — the cardinal in charge of formally verifying the pope’s death — and then sealing his room and study. Between then and the election of the new pope, the camerlengo administers the “goods and temporal rights” of the Holy See. The current one is the Irish-born American Cardinal Kevin Farrell.

Who is in the College of Cardinals? There are 252 cardinals worldwide, and as a body, they are in charge of the Holy See’s affairs in-between popes, albeit with limits. Of them, 135 are “cardinal electors,” who gather in the Vatican to choose the new pope. For centuries, they have chosen one of their own. The vast majority of the electors — 108 — were made cardinals by Pope Francis, according to Vatican statistics.

What is the conclave? This is the closed-door meeting of the cardinal electors to choose the new pope in the Sistine Chapel. Its name, literally “with a key,” was used in the 13th century to describe the process of locking up the cardinals until the election is completed. It must begin no more than 20 days after the death or resignation of a pope. The electors are sequestered from all outsiders for the duration; the last three popes were chosen within days.

What does white or black smoke mean during a papal transition? After each round of voting in the Sistine Chapel, the ballots are burned in a special furnace to indicate the outcome to the outside world. If no pope is chosen, the ballots are mixed with cartridges containing potassium perchlorate, anthracene (a component of coal tar) and sulfur to produce black smoke. But if there is a winner, the burning ballots are mixed with potassium chlorate, lactose and chloroform resin to produce the white smoke. Bells also are rung to further signal there is a new pope.

Who is the dean of the College of Cardinals? The current dean is Italian Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re. He is the head of the College of Cardinals who informs the rest of the cardinals and the ambassadors to the Holy See of the pope’s death once he learns of it from the camerlengo. He convenes the conclave and presides as the electors take their oaths. Once a new pope is chosen, the dean asks him if he accepts and what name he wants to be called.

What does “extra omnes” mean? A Latin phrase for “all out,” it’s spoken by the master for papal liturgical celebrations, currently Italian Archbishop Diego Ravelli, to ask all those present except the cardinal electors to leave the Sistine Chapel to begin the voting process during the conclave.

Why is the pope’s ring called the fisherman’s ring? Each pope gets this ring at the Mass marking the beginning of his pontificate. It bears this name because Jesus told St. Peter, the first pope, that he would be “a



The Associated Press file

White smoke is seen billowing out from the chimney of the Sistine Chapel and announcing that a new pope has been elected in March 2013.

fisher of men.” Until the 1990s, it was destroyed upon a pope’s death. Now, it’s “annulled,” or marked in such a way that it can’t be used as a seal.

What are the General Congregations? This is the name given to the gathering of all members of the College of Cardinals after the pope’s death and before the start of the conclave to discuss major church affairs. All cardinals who aren’t infirm take part in this meeting in the Vatican’s Apostolic Palace. They also discuss preparations for the conclave, under oath and in secret.

What does it mean when they say, “Habemus Papam”? This Latin phrase translates to “We have a pope.” These are the words used by the “protodeacon” of the College of Cardinals to announce from the loggia of St. Peter’s Basilica that a new pope has been elected. He then says the new pope’s birth name and the name he has chosen

to use as pope, also in Latin. The current protodeacon is French Cardinal Dominique Mamberti.

Who are the revisers? These are the three cardinals, chosen by random drawing from the electors, who are charged with reviewing the ballots during the conclave.

Who are the scrutineers? These are the three cardinals, chosen by random drawing from the electors, who are charged with reviewing each ballot and announcing it to the assembled conclave after each round of voting. They then tally the votes — to win the election, two-thirds of the votes are necessary — and they also burn the ballots.

Who are the infirmarii? These are the three cardinals, chosen by a random drawing from the electors, who are charged with gathering the ballots of any electors who are ill during the conclave.

What does the text “Univer-

si Dominici Gregis” contain? This Latin phrase means “the Lord’s whole flock.” It’s the Vatican constitution that regulates the processes from a pope’s death until a new one is elected. St. John Paul II issued it in 1996 during his papacy, and Pope Benedict XVI twice amended it, most significantly by removing John Paul’s provision that after about 12 days of balloting a simple majority could elect a new pope rather than a two-thirds majority. If the conclave lasts that long, the top two vote-getters go to a runoff, with a two-thirds majority required to win. Neither of the top two candidates casts a ballot in the runoff.

What is a rogito? This is the document, or “deed,” listing key details of the pope’s life and papacy that is placed in his coffin. It’s written in Latin by the master for papal liturgical celebrations. A copy is kept in the Vatican archives.

What is St. Mary Major? This is the basilica in Rome where Pope Francis said he wants to be buried. Francis is breaking with the tradition of his predecessors who are buried inside the Vatican, saying he wanted to be near his favorite icon of the Virgin Mary, the Salus Populi Romani, a Byzantine-style painting of the Madonna draped in a blue robe, holding the infant Jesus who in turn is holding a jeweled golden book. The icon is located in the church first built in the fifth century and devoted to the Virgin Mary. In his will, Francis said he wanted a simple underground tomb with only “Franciscus” written on it.

Honor Your Athlete

Submit their photo in the

“HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETES”

special section!

Submit photos online at:
TelegraphHerald.com/Honor

These photos will be published inside the 2025 Gallery of Grads special section.
The athletes do not need to be graduates, they can be any age.

Sara Horsfield
Western Dubuque High School

Sport(s):
Softball, Bowling, Tennis

We can't wait to see what you accomplish!

Love,
Mom & Dad

\$30

Photo deadline:
Tuesday, April 29
at 5 PM

Additional copies: 5 for \$3 or 10 for \$5

PRICES STARTING AS LOW AS \$30

Larger blocks are also available.

For more information, call 563.588.5600 or 800.562.6014

ALL ADS IN COLOR!

TH MEDIA
Connecting our Community

adno=429689